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[PURĀṆAS IN TRANSLATION]

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VIṢṆUDHARMOTTARA

THE
PADMA-PURĀṆA

PART I

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

But he has neither the means nor the leisure to embark on that course. We have, therefore, planned to help him acquire knowledge by an easier course. We have started the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology in English Translation. Our goal is to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium of expression. The publication of the Purāṇas in English Translation is a step towards that goal.

PREFACE

This is the first part of the Padma Purāṇa in English translation and the thirty-ninth volume in the series on *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology*. It comprises the first thirty-three chapters of the first section called *Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa* or the *Section on Creation* of the Purāṇa which is very huge in size. This Purāṇa, as it appears in the Veṅkaṭeśvara edition which this translation follows, consists of seven big sections or Khaṇḍas, namely, Sṛṣṭi, Bhūmi, Svarga, Brahma, Pātāla, Uttara and Kriyāyogasāra and is said to contain 55000 verses, though the actual number is much less. The translation of the whole Purāṇa is planned to run into as many as ten volumes of the present size and may take some years for its completion.

The Padma Purāṇa takes its name after the Primordial Lotus from which god Brahmā, the Creator, was born. Dr. Deshpande has given a brief Khaṇḍa-wise summary of the Purāṇa in his Introduction which appears in this volume. As the 'Contents' show, the reader will find herein and enjoy some very interesting accounts and stories, such as that of the churning of the ocean by the gods and demons, the destruction of Dakṣa's sacrifice by god Śiva, the chopping-off of Brahmā's fifth head by the same god, the drinking-up of the ocean by the sage Agastya and so on. A very amusing story appears in Chapter 13, of how Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of gods, impersonates Śukra, the preceptor of demons, and how he corrupts and demoralizes the latter by preaching heretical doctrines to them with a view to make the gods who were very often defeated by the demons in war, victorious over them. A good portion of this Part is also devoted to the glorification of Puṣkara as a sacred place of pilgrimage. A number of fasts and vows are recommended and the merits of observing the same are described in detail.

The project of this series was envisaged in 1970 by the late Lala Sundar Lal Jain of Messrs. Motital Banarsidass. Thirty-nine volumes of the series including the present one have so far been published and others are in progress. Complete sets of

eleven major Purāṇas, viz. *Agni*, *Bhāgavata*, *Brahma*, *Brahmāṇḍa*, *Garuḍa*, *Kūrma*, *Liṅga*, *Nārada*, *Śiva*, *Varāha* and *Vāyu* are already available, many of which have been reprinted over and over again.

It is our pleasant duty to put on record our sincere thanks to Dr. R.N. Dandekar and the UNESCO authorities for their kind encouragement and valuable help which render this work more useful than it would otherwise have been. We are extremely grateful to Dr. N.A. Deshpande for translating the text. We are also thankful to all those who have been helpful in our project.

—*Editor*

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ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)—Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, V—Verse, VV—Verses, Ftn—footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo.—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S. M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F. E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series, MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch.S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, MLBD, Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgitā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha)
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka, Com. by Mahidāsa
DB	*Devi Bhāgavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N. L. De, Oriental Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* by Hastings
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa*, ed. R. S. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P. V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇi*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradiya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣiya Prācina Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd.P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi. 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Śat.Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

INTRODUCTION

Purāṇas

Originally the word *Purāṇa* seems to have been understood in the sense of an 'old legend' (पुराणम् आख्यानम्); but it is variously explained by different Purāṇas. *Vāyu Purāṇa* says that it is called Purāṇa because it lives in the past or it breathes ancient times (यस्मात्पुरा ह्यनतीदं पुराणं तेन तत्स्मृतम् / 1.203). *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* says that it is so called since it existed in olden times (यस्मात्पुरा ह्यभूच्चैतत्पुराणं तेन तत्स्मृतम् / I.1.173). *Padma Purāṇa* offers the following explanation: पुरा परम्परां वष्टि पुराणं तेन वै स्मृतम् (V.2.53): It is called Purāṇa because it desires or likes the past. It is, in other words, interested in the past, and therefore describes the past. Thus these explanations suggest that the Purāṇa literature deals with the past. *Matsya Purāṇa* (53.63), in fact, describes the Purāṇas as 'containing the records of past events'. It therefore appears that originally the term *Purāṇa* signified an ancient tale or narrative. Such tales existed prior to Vedas. This seems to be the meaning of such statements as पुराणं सर्वशास्त्राणां प्रथमं ब्रह्मणा स्मृतम् / (*Padma* I.1.45). Various traditions also accept the sacredness of Purāṇas. *Atharva Veda* refers to Purāṇas in the singular at XI.7.24 and XV.6.10-11. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XI.5.6-8) also mentions Itihāsa-purāṇa as one word. It gives Purāṇa the status of Veda. *Taittiriya Āraṇyaka* (II.10) refers to Purāṇas and Itihāsas. *Gautama Dharmasūtra* (XI.19), Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* (V.6, p.257), and Smṛtis like *Manu* (III.232) refer to Purāṇas. *Mahābhārata* refers to Purāṇas both in the singular (at Ādiparvan 5.2, Śāntiparvan 208.5 etc.) and in the plural (at Strīparvan 13.2). *Mahābhārata* also mentions by name Matsya Purāṇa (in Vanaparvan 185.53). It is not proved beyond doubt whether *Atharva Veda* XI.7.24 refers to actual books by the word Purāṇa. Thus it is not certain when actually Purāṇas as books came to be referred to. Purāṇas themselves say that originally there was one Purāṇa only (*Vāyu*

I.60.61; *Liṅga* I.2.2; *Padma* V.1.45). Later on they came to be divided into 18 (*Padma* V.1.51-52).

Amarasiṁha, the author of the *Amarakośa* gives the following verse explaining the characteristics of a Purāṇa:

सर्गश्च प्रतिसर्गश्च वंशो मन्वन्तराणि च ।
वंश्यानुचरितं चैव पुराणं पञ्चलक्षणम् ॥

This definition is also found in some of the Purāṇas like *Vāyu* 4.10-11; *Varāha* 2.4. Sarga—creation; Pratisarga—re-creation after dissolution of the world; Vaṁśa—dynasties of gods, the Sun and the Moon and the patriarchs; Manvantara—the vast periods of time, so called after a Manu; Vaṁśā (or Vaṁśyā) nucarita—deeds and history of the descendants of the solar, lunar and other dynasties. But the Purāṇas do not fully conform to this description. Some contain many more topics, while some barely touch these five topics at some length. It has been shown that these five characteristics occupy less than three percent (or about 1/40th part) of the extent of the Purāṇas that have come down to us. It is only *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* that largely conforms to this description; but even it also contains other religious and social topics. Dāna (gifts), Vrata (religious observances), Tīrtha (sacred places) and Śrāddha (rites in honour of the dead ancestors) occupy a bulk of the contents (at least one lakh ślokas) of the extant Purāṇas. The Pañcalakṣaṇa description, therefore, does not properly cover their contents. So it is maintained that the Pañcalakṣaṇa definition is applicable to Upapurāṇas, and the Daśalakṣaṇa definition to Mahāpurāṇas. The Daśalakṣaṇa definition runs as follows:

सर्गोऽस्याथ विसर्गश्च वृत्ती रक्षान्तराणि च ।
वंशो वंश्यानुचरितं संस्था हेतुरपाश्रयः ॥
दशभिर्लक्षणैर्युक्तं पुराणं तद्विदो विदुः ।
(*Bhāgavata* XI.7.9-10).

In addition to the topics like sarga, this definition includes Vṛtti (means of livelihood), Rakṣā (protection, i.e. incarnations of God for protection of devotees), Saṁsthā (four kinds of Laya), Hetu (Jīva—the soul, that is subject to avidyā, and that collects karman), and Apāśraya (Brahman, the refuge of individual

souls). *Matsya Purāṇa* (53.66-67) says that in addition to these ten characteristics Purāṇas also deal with such topics as the glorification of Brahman, Viṣṇu, the Sun, Rudra, preservation and dissolution of the world, the four goals of human life, like Dharma, Artha etc. But even this *Matsya* description is not adequate, since Purāṇas have undergone re-editions, due to the addition of fresh matter, substitution of existing matter, and omission and modification of it. As Haraprasad Sastri observes (*Journal of the Behar [and Orissa] Research Society*, XIV, p.329), "Anything old may be the subject of a Purāṇa, and it covers all the aspects of life."

The characteristics like Sarga are discussed in various Purāṇas: *Brahma* (1.3), *Brahmāṇḍa* (II.8-13), *Vāyu* (4-6), *Padma* (I.3) discuss Sarga. *Brahma* (2.32-37), *Viṣṇu* (I.2ff) deal with Pratisarga. *Vāyu* (99), *Viṣṇu* (IV), *Kūrma* (I.20-25), *Bhāgavata* (IX and XII) treat Vaṁśas; while *Viṣṇu* (III.1.2), *Kūrma* (I.51) deal with Manvantaras.

Purāṇas are divided into two categories: Mahāpurāṇas and Upapurāṇas. The number of Purāṇas is stated to be eighteen. As Kane observes, "The number 18 was probably due to the fact that the number is prominent in several connections as regards Mahābhārata. The Bhārata war was fought for 18 days, the total of the vast armies engaged in the conflict came to be 18 akṣauhiṇīs, the epic has 18 parvans, the Gītā also has 18 chapters" *History of Dharmasāstra*, Vol. V, p. 842). This list of 18 Mahāpurāṇas is given in almost every Purāṇa (see e.g. *Padma* IV.100.51-54). The order of Purāṇas that is generally accepted by the tradition is: (1) *Brahma*, (2) *Padma*, (3) *Viṣṇu*, (4) *Vāyu*, (5) *Bhāgavata*, (6) *Nāradiya*, (7) *Mārkaṇḍeya*, (8) *Agni*, (9) *Bhaviṣya*, (10) *Brahmavaivarta*, (11) *Varāha*, (12) *Liṅga*, (13) *Skanda*, (14) *Vāmana*, (15) *Kūrma*, (16) *Matsya*, (17) *Garuḍa*, and (18) *Brahmāṇḍa*. Some place *Devibhāgavata* (or *Kālikāpurāṇa*) in place of (*Vaiṣṇava*) *Bhāgavata* and *Śiva* in place of *Vāyu*. But *Śiva* is not looked upon as a *Mahāpurāṇa*. *Devibhāgavata* has the following couplet to help memorise the names of the Purāṇas:

मद्वयं भद्वयं चैव ब्रत्रयं वचतुष्टयम् ।
नालिपार्ग्नि कूस्कं गारुडमेव च ॥ (देवीभागवत I.3.2)

मद्वयम्—refers to the two Purāṇas the names of which begin with म. They are: मार्कण्डेय and मत्स्य. Similarly the word भद्वयम् signifies the two Purāṇas, the names of which begin with भ. They are: भागवत and भविष्य. The names of other Purāṇas are to be memorised similarly.

The controversy like the claim of *Śiva Purāṇa* to be a Mahāpurāṇa is tried to be set at rest by taking their number to be 19 or 20.

The total number of the ślokas in each Purāṇa is: (1) *Brahma*-10000 (according to Purāṇas like *Vāyu*; *Agni Purāṇa* 272.1 says that the number is 25000); (2) *Padma*-55000; (3) *Viṣṇu*-23000; (4) *Vāyu*-24000 (but the figures given by *Agni* 272.4-5 and *Devi Bhāgavata* I.3.7 are different); (5) *Bhāgavata*-18000; (6) *Nāradiya*-25000; (7) *Mārkaṇḍeya*-9000; (8) *Agni*-16000; (9) *Bhaviṣya*-14500; (10) *Brahmavaivarta*-18000; (11) *Liṅga* 11000; (12) *Varāha*-24000; (13) *Skanda*-81000; (14) *Vāmana*-10000; (15) *Kūrma*-18000 (according to *Agni* 272.19, the number is 8000); (16) *Matsya*-14000; (17) *Garuḍa*-18000 and (18) *Brahmāṇḍa*-12200. The total number of verses would come to 400600. As noted in the brackets after the figures of verses of some of the Purāṇas given above, it would be clear that *Agni Purāṇa* gives a different number of the ślokas from the one given by Purāṇas like *Matsya* or *Vāyu*.

Upa-purāṇas are also said to be eighteen. Their names are given as: *Sanatkumāra*, *Narasiṁha*, *Nanda*, *Śivadharma*, *Durvāsas*, *Nāradiya*, *Kapila*, *Vāmana*, *Uśanas*, *Mānava*, *Varuṇa*, *Kali*, *Maheśvara*, *Sāmba*, *Saura*, *Parāśara*, *Mārica* and *Bhārgava*. They do not generally differ essentially from Mahāpurāṇas in their contents. They have a more sectarian character. Their nature is composite. They are more akin to the local cults and historically not as important as Mahāpurāṇas.

Taking in view the Pañcalakṣaṇa description Purāṇas are divided into two classes as ancient and later. The older Purāṇas like *Vāyu*, *Brahmāṇḍa*, *Matsya* and *Viṣṇu* are more loyal to the Pañcalakṣaṇa descrition.

Haraprasad Sastri divides Purāṇas into six classes, viz. (1) Encyclopaedic Purāṇas—*Garuḍa*, *Agni* and *Nārada*; (2) Those mainly dealing with tīrthas and vratas—*Padma*, *Skanda*

and *Bhaviṣya*; (3) Those which apparently underwent two revisions—*Brahma*, *Bhāgavata* and *Brahmavaivarta*; (4) The historical group—*Brahmāṇḍa* and *Vāyu*; (5) Sectarian group—*Liṅga*, *Vāmana* and *Mārkaṇḍeya*; (6) Old Purāṇas 'revised out of existence'—*Varāha*, *Kūrma* and *Mastsya*.

The classification of Purāṇas based on the Vaiṣṇava standpoint is found in *Garuḍa*, *Padma* and *Matsya*. *Padma* (VI.236.18-21) gives the following classification:

(1) Sāttvika—*Viṣṇu*, *Nāradiya*, *Bhāgavata*, *Garuḍa*, *Padma* and *Varāha*.
(2) Rājasa—*Brahmāṇḍa*, *Brahmavaivarta*, *Mārkaṇḍeya*, *Brahma*, *Vāmana* and *Bhaviṣya*.
(3) Tāmasa—*Matsya*, *Kūrma*, *Liṅga*, *Śiva*, *Agni* and *Skanda*,

This classification slightly differs from the one given in *Garuḍa* and *Bhaviṣya*. *Padma* regards itself to be Sāttvika; *Bhaviṣya* agrees with it; but *Garuḍa* classifies *Padma* as Rājasa (see Giorgio Bonazzoli's article "Schemes in the Purāṇas", *Purāṇa*, Vol. XXIV, No. 1, p. 169). *Padma Purāṇa* (III. 62.1 ff) states that all the Purāṇas are parts of Viṣṇu's body, and so also are sacred. *Skanda* (Kedārakhaṇḍa, 1) says that 10 Purāṇas describe Śiva's greatness, four glorify Brahmā, two Devī and two Hari.

Purāṇas give various accounts of their origin. *Vāyu* (1.60-61) says that before Vedas were revealed to Brahmā, he had composed Purāṇas. That is why Purāṇas seem to claim themselves to be equal to Vedas (e.g. *Vāyu* 1.11—पुराणं संप्रवक्ष्यामि ब्रह्मोक्तं वेदसंमितम्; or *Brahma* 1.29—गुरुं प्रणम्य वक्ष्यामि पुराणं वेदसंमितम्). The task of the presentation of Purāṇas was assigned to Sūtas.

Viṣṇu (III.6.15ff) has a different account. It says that Vyāsa first divided the Veda and entrusted it to his four disciples. He also compiled a *Purāṇa-Saṁhitā*. In it he had included tales, anecdotes, songs etc. He taught this Saṁhitā to his fifth disciple, Sūta Lomaharṣaṇa or Romaharṣaṇa. He made six versions of this Saṁhitā and taught them to his disciples. The three known Saṁhitās, to which additions were made by his three disciples, after whom they are named, are: Kāśyapika, Sāvarṇika and Śāṁśapāyanika. 'These four were regarded as the "root-saṁhitās" (*Studies in the Epics and Purāṇas*, p. li.).

Various views are put forward about the growth of the Purāṇa literature. It is maintained by some that originally there was one Purāṇa only as the references in *Atharva Veda* (XI. 7.24 and XV.6.10-11) show. In his article on the "Date of the Purāṇas" (*Purāṇa*, Vol. II, Nos. 1-2) Gyani says that the Purāṇaliterature passed through the following four stages :

(1) Ākhyāna vaṁśa—circa B.C. 1200 to B.C. 950.
(2) Bifurcation stage—c. B.C. 950 to c. B.C. 500.
(3) Pañcalakṣaṇa stage—c. B.C. 500 to the beginning of the Christian era.
(4) Sectarian or Encyclopaedic stage—From the beginning of the Christian era to c. A.D. 700.

Haraprasad Sastri says that in the stage after the root-saṁhitās the number of Purāṇas grew to ten, and in the last stage it reached eighteen. *Amarakośa* mentions the five characteristics of Purāṇas. From this it may be concluded that before his time the number of Purāṇas was not large; nor were they inflated; and they had certain matters common with Itihāsa, with which they were often linked in usage. *Amarakośa* and the Purāṇas which gave the Pañcalakṣaṇa definition took up only those topics in which Purāṇas differed from Itihāsas. The title *Bhaviṣyat Purāṇa* found in *Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra* (II.9.24.6) indicates that during that period the term Purāṇa had lost its original meaning and had become a term denoting a particular class of works. Topics like dāna, śrāddha, vrata, which are mainly the subject of Smṛtis or Dharmaśāstras, found a place in Purāṇas; and soon they vied with *Mahābhārata* to become all-comprehensive; and with additions being made by every generation their contents included topics on creation, e.g. one account (*Padma Purāṇa*, Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa, ch. 2) tells how the self-existent Brahman enters Puruṣa or Pradhāna and how Mahat is produced from Pradhāna, and also how the subtle and gross elements and the eleven organs spring up. The same Brahmā, possessing Rajas, creates all beings; having Sattva, preserves the universe; and with Tamas being predominant, destroys it. The Sāttvika and Tāmasa forms are respectively known as Viṣṇu and Rudra. Another account occurring in the Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa (Ch. 6. 2-3) of *Padma Purāṇa* tells how the lord of the form

of Boar took out earth from ocean. Then came up Nāgas, animals etc. From the mind of Brahman came up gods, demons etc. He also created other beings like sheep, cows, buffaloes etc. Manvantaras are described and also the different yugas. The description of the earth's expanse, various islands and regions, as well as of the nether regions, and of the sun, the moon etc. seems to be exaggerated, and is at many places imaginary and fabulous.

The genealogies begin with Manu, who was the saviour of mankind at the time of the great flood. The first king Vaivasvata Manu had ten sons. The account of the various generations from Manu upto the Bhārata War and also of the dynasties subsequent to the War is given.

The chief deities of Purāṇas are Brahmā—the Creator, Viṣṇu—the Preserver, and Śiva (or Rudra)—the Destroyer. The old gods except Agni and Indra have almost disappeared. Varuṇa has changed his domain. In the Purāṇas he is the lord of ocean. The celestial beings like Gandharvas and Apsaras-s are present on many occasions to celebrate them with their music or dancing.

Though either Viṣṇu or Śiva is extolled in the Vaiṣṇavite or the Śaivite Purāṇas, other deities are not totally condemned. The ten avatāras (incarnations) of Viṣṇu appear in most of the Purāṇas. About the incarnations Pusalkar observes: "The Daśāvatāra (ten incarnations) theory suggests the idea of evolutionary process of human development. The fish emerges out of the early palaeozoic seas, followed by the tortoise and boar in the Mesozoic period. Next came the man-lion and dwarf in the period of cavemen and bushmen. Paraśurāma represents the nomadic or hunter stage and Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, the fully civilised stage of city life." (*Studies in Epics and Puranas*, p. lxi).

Though Dharma predominates in Purāṇas, they have not neglected the other goals of human life. Like the orthodox systems, the heterodox systems like Buddhism and Jainism find a place in them.

Thus they have not left any field of human life untouched, and so are useful for the study of early Indian life in all its aspects—religious, cultural, social, political and historical.

Padma Purāṇa

Padma Purāṇa tells us that it is called Padma or Pādma Purāṇa because it is based on the account of the lotus (Padma) that existed before Creation (I.1.56) or on the account of the lotus, of which the world is full (III.1.24-25). About its importance it says that it is a great holy text and gives the fruit of all the Vedas (III.62.24). It even claims to be equal to the Vedas (VI.255.118). It says that every Purāṇa is a part of the body of Viṣṇu, and *Padma* is his heart, since it is a great Purāṇa (III.62.2).

The total number of verses in *Padma Purāṇa* is said to be 55000, though the Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edition has a smaller number. It has seven Khaṇḍas: Sṛṣṭi, Bhūmi, Svarga, Brahma, Pātāla, Uttara and Kriyāyoga. The number of verses in each Khaṇḍa is: Sṛṣṭi-11603; Bhūmi-6609; Svarga-3107; Brahma-1068; Pātāla-9504; Uttara-15067 and Kriyāyoga-3179. Sṛṣṭi-khaṇḍa (Chap. 1) states that it has the following five Khaṇḍas: Sṛṣṭi, Bhūmi, Svarga, Pātāla and Uttara. It does not mention Brahma and Kriyāyoga. If, in the absence of the Brahmakhaṇḍa and the Kriyāyogakhaṇḍa, the number of ślokas (as stated in the Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa) in the *Padma Purāna* was 55000 and if, even after their being added to it, the number is almost constant, it is not altogether wrong to surmise that additions were made to and some verses or chapters were deleted from the Purāṇa as has been the case with other Purāṇas.

The Khaṇḍa-wise contents of *Padma Purāṇa* are as follows:—

I. Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa (number of chapters 82)—The first chapter tells how Sūta is asked by his father Lomaharṣaṇa, to go to the Naimiṣa forest and narrate the Purāṇa to the sages, who have been performing a sacrifice there. Accordingly Sūta goes to the Naimiṣa forest and narrates *Padma Purāṇa* to them. The Purāṇa is called Padma as it tells how the 'lotus' arose, how from it Brahmā came up and how he created the world.

He tells them about the birth of Vyāsa and salutes him. The chapter tells that first Brahmā had produced 100 crore Purāṇas. The demons Hayagrīva, Śaṅkhāsura etc. had tried to snatch them away and destroy them; but Viṣṇu had the two incarnations of Hayagrīva and Matsya and preserved them.

Sūta himself tells what topics will be covered by the Purāṇa. He tells that the cause of the world is unmanifest and of the nature of existence and non-existence. From it Mahat and others spring up. The golden egg from which Brahmā appeared, had a covering of water, which had that of air (Vāyu), which had that of the ether, which had that of Bhūtādi, which had that of Mahat, and which had that of the Unmanifest. From that egg came up the world, rivers and mountains. Then follows the description of Manvantaras and Kalpas, that of the end of the Brahmā-tree, and the springing up of the beings, Viṣṇu's lying in the water and uplifting the earth, the description of how Viṣṇu, as a result of Bhṛgu's curse, had to go through the ten incarnations, of the various stages of life (āśramas), divisions of heaven, creation of birds and beasts, recreation etc., the account of a different creation of sages like Bhṛgu, geographical information and astronomical information like the movement of the sun, the moon etc.

The third chapter describes the creation of the world, how Viṣṇu in his incarnation as Varāha took out the earth and put it safely on water, how Brahmā first created Nāgas, then beasts ete., then gods and lastly human beings. Thus the entire creation is described in this chapter.

The foruth chapter tells about the churning of the ocean by gods and demons, and the curse of Bhṛgu to Viṣṇu. The fifth chapter contains the story of Satī. The sixth tells how Dakṣa first created gods, sages, serpents and other creatures. Like Dakṣa, Kaśyapa also brought forth creation of thirteen types. The seventh chapter tells about the birth of fortynine Maruts from Diti. The eighth chapter tells how the earth was ruled over by king Pṛthu, and how, therefore, it was called 'Pṛthvī'. Then it was ruled over by the wicked king Vena, who was killed by the sages, and some other man enthroned in Vena's place. The chapter also gives the account of the solar dynasty. Chapters 9,10 and 11 tell about the greatness of Śrāddha and contain an account of the seven sons of Kauśika, who performed Śrāddha, in a queer way. Chapters 12 and 13 describe the lunar dynasty and the way in which Bṛhaspati spread the Jaina view among the demons (see, especially verses 45ff of chapter 13). Chapters 14, 15 tell about Śiva's visits to the holy places ,his observance

of the vow of a Kāpālika at Puṣkara, the origin of Kapālamocanatīrtha, the birth of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, greatness of Puṣkara and the characteristics of a brāhmaṇa. Chapters 16, 17 describe how, when at the time of Brahmā's sacrifice, his wife Sāvitrī did not turn up in time, Brahmā married the daughter of a cowherd brought by Viṣṇu, how Sāvitrī was angry, and how she was appeased. In verses 183ff various epithets of Sāvitrī are given. Chapter 18 narrates the importance of the river Sarasvatī and the story of the cow Nandā to emphasige the importance of truthfulness. Chapter 19 describes the killing of Vṛtra and Kāleya. Chapters 20, 21 describe the importance of Dvādaśīvrata, gifts like Lavaṇācala, Guḍadhenu etc., and many vows to be observed on the Saptamī day. Chapter 22 tells about the birth of Agastya, Urvaśī etc. Chapter 23 contains the description of the characteristics of Viṣṇu's devotee, of Bhīṣmadvādaśī, and the advice given by the sage Dālbhya to Kṛṣṇa's wives. Chapter 24 describes the vow of Aṅgārakī Caturthī (i.e. Caturthī falling on a Tuesday). Chapter 25 describes the Ādityaśayanavrata and chapter 26 the Rohiṇīcandraśayana-vrata. Chapters 27, 28 tell about the importance of constructing wells, tanks etc. and planting trees. Chapter 29 narrates Saubhāgyaśayanavrata; chapter 30 Balikathā; Chapter 31 narrates the account of Śivaśakti, the description of the rise of Nāgatīrtha, and the importance of Śrāddha etc. Chapter 32 tells the story of five corpses. Chapter 33 narrates Mārkaṇḍeya's story and Lakṣmaṇa's folly. Chapter 34 tells about the conclusion of Brahmā's sacrifice. Chapters 35, 36, 37, 38 contain the description of a few incidents from Rāmāyaṇa like Rāma's visit to the hermitage of Agastya. Chapter 39 tells about the recreation of the earth. Chapters 40-41 describe the killing of Madhu, Kaiṭabha and Kālanemi. Chapters 42, 43, 44 describe the birth of Tārakāsura, the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī and the birth of Kārtikeya and the killing of Tārakāsura. Chapter 45 describes the incarnation of Narasiṁha. Chapter 46 tells about the killing of Andhakāsura and the importance of Gāyatrī. Chapter 47 tells about Garuḍa's birth and his valour. Chapter 48 emphasizes the importance of brāhmaṇas and cows. Chapter 49 describes the importance of good conduct. Chapter 50 contains the story of Narottama, Chapters 55,52 tell about the importance of a chaste woman and

the conduct of a woman. Chapter 53 stresses the importance of greedlessness. Chapter 54 narrates the story of Ahalyā. Chapter 55 advises a man to curb his passions. Chapter 56 summarises the accounts told in the preceding chapters. Chapters 57, 58, 59 tell about the merit obtained by digging wells, planting trees, constructing bridges etc. The subsequent chapters (60 to 65) tell about the importance of Āmalaka and Tulasī, of Gaṅgā and Gaṇapati. Chapters 66 to 75 describe how the demons like Kāleya, Tāreya, Hiraṇyākṣa were killed. The remaining chapters (upto chapter 82) tell about the importance of various planets, birth of Maṅgala, and the pacification of planets.

II. Bhūmikhaṇḍa (number of chapters 125) : The first forty chapters deal with the fruit of obligatory and occasional gifts. Chapter 41 emphasizes the importance of chastity with the help of the story of Sudeva and Padmāvatī. The story is continued in chapters 48, 49, 50, 51 also. The war between the chief of boars and king Ikṣvāku is described in chapters 42 to 47. The stories of Indra and Sukalā, of Kṛkala occupy chapters 53 to 60. Chapters 61 to 64 describe the importance of father, mother etc. Capter 65 describes the human body in such a way that nausea for it should be produced in the minds of the readers and the listeners. Fruits of good and bad actions find a place in chapters 66-68, while enumeration of good acts is made in chapter 69. Chapters 70-71 describe Yama's world. Story of Yayāti covers chapters 72-83. Pūru's getting the kingdom is the topic of chapter 84, while chapter 85 tells the story of Cyavana and the importance of a preceptor. The story of Kuñjala and his four sons finds a place in chapter 86, and is continued in subsequent chapters upto chapter 102. Vratas like Aśūnyaśayana are described in chapter 87. Kṛṣṇaśatanāmākhyastotra is given in the same chapter. Chapter 95 states the importance of dāna. The distinction between those that go to hell and those who go to heaven is given in chapter 96. The story of the demon Huṇḍa, killed by Nahuṣa, and of Aśokasundarī, Nahuṣa's being consecrated as the king, and the account of Nahuṣa find a place in chapter 103. Kuñjala also tells his own account, the importance of a preceptor is narrated, and after the description of Vena's performing a horse sacrifice and going to heaven, the Khaṇḍa closes with the narration of the fruit of listening to or getting recited *Padma Purāṇa*.

III. Svargakhaṇḍa (number of chapters 62) : This Khaṇḍa opens with the arrival of Sūta and his commencing the narration of this Khaṇḍa (chapter 1). The second chapter describes Brahman, Prakṛti, and the origin of the world. Upto the 9th chapter description of Sudarśana country, Meru mountain, of countries lying to the south and the north of Meru, of Bhāratavarṣa, Jambudvīpa, Śākadvīpa etc. is given. Then from chapter 10 to chapter 40 the description of various rivers like Kāverī, Narmadā, mountains and sacred places like Śūlabheda, Bhīmeśvara, Varuṇeśvara, Nāgeśvara, Kuberabhavana, Kṣetrapāla, Śukla, Naraka, Daśāśvamedhika, Rudravedi, Bhṛgukṣetra, Vṛṣatīrtha on the bank of Narmadā, and also of the greatness of Narmadā, of Vitastātīrtha, Kurukṣetra, Brahmāvarta, Dharmatīrtha, Yamunātīrtha, Kapardeśvaratīrtha, Gayā, Koṭitīrtha is given. Chapters 41-49 narrate the importance of Prayāga. Chapters 50-55 describe the greatness of devotion to Viṣṇu, the duties of the various stages of life, prohibited deeds etc. The last chapters tell about articles of food which ought and ought not to be eaten, various kinds of gifts, way of life of a Vānaprastha and of a Yati, the superiority of devotion to Viṣṇu, and the importance of *Padma Purāṇa*.

IV. Brahmakhaṇḍa (number of chapters 26): The Khaṇḍa commences with the description of the characteristics of Viṣṇu's devotee. Then upto chapter 17, the description of the churning of the ocean, the coming up of the (Hālāhala) poison, of Alakṣmī, and Lakṣmī, of nectar, is given. A number of tales about Janmāṣṭamī-vrata, Lakṣmīvrata are told. From chapter 18 to chapter 24 various expiations are told. Also the importance of Ekādaśī of Kārtika and vows in Kārtika, of Tulaśī, Dhātrī, is given. The fruit of many gifts like that of a piece of land is stated. Chapters 25, 26 tell about the importance (of the muttering) of the name of the Lord and that of keeping one's promise.

V. Pātālakhaṇḍa (number of chapters 117) : The first 68 chapters of this Khaṇḍa narrate Rāma's life. The Khaṇḍa begins with the request of Śaunaka ete. to Sūta to narrate to them the life of Rāma. Rāma killed Rāvaṇa, gave Rāvaṇa's kingdom to Bibhīṣaṇa, and returned with Sītā. On way back he showed Sītā many holy places. In the end he came to Nandigrāma where Bharata was staying. Chapter 2 describes the meeting of Rāma

and Bharata. Chapter 3 describes Rāma's entry into Ayodhyā. Chapter 4 narrates how Bharata handed over the kingdom to Rāma. Chapter 5 describes how his subjects behaved righteously. In chapter 6 Rāma asks Agastya as to who Rāvaṇa was, and how he became so valourous. Agastya in the next (i.e. 7th) chapter tells Rāma how he is an incarnation of Viṣṇu, and how he has made the world happy by killing Rāvaṇa. In chapter 8 Rāma asks Agastya for an expiation as he has committed the sin of killing a brāhmaṇa like Rāvaṇa. Agastya recommends the performance of an Aśvamedha sacrifice. Chapter 9 tells about the requisites of an Aśvamedha. In chapter 10 it is told how Rāma gets fashioned a golden image of Sītā, and commences the horse sacrifice. Chapter 11 tells how the warriors get ready to protect the horse and how the horse proceeds towards the east. Thus upto chapter 68, the description of the horse sacrifice is given. Some didactic chapters like chapter 10, and the account of Cyavana given in chapters 14, 15,16, fruit of Karma narrated in chapter 48 are worth reading. After the account of Rāma follows the account of Kṛṣṇa upto chapter 84. The secret of the relation between Kṛṣṇa and the cowherdesses, the classification of Bhakti are told in chapter 85. Also the importance of Vaiśākha is told in these chapters. Chapters 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, and 93, are repetition. Chapter 87 corresponds with the first 40 verses from chapter 92. Chapters 88 to 92 which tell the importance of Vaiśākha have been taken from the Bhūmikhaṇḍa (ch.11ff) with a change in names. Somaśarman is told by Vasiṣṭha why he has obtained such a nice and Brahmavādinī wife (chapter 93). In these chapters many didactic and interesting tales are told to impress upon the readers, the importance of Vaiśākha (chapters 94-103). Then comes the description of Śiva-worship, wearing of Liṅga, ashes etc. Chapter 114 contains an accout of Gautama's hermitage. Chapter 116 tells the Rāma-story which differs from the usual Rāma-story. Chapter 115 tells the importance of listening to a Purāṇa. The chapter ends with the enumeration of 18 Mahāpurāṇas and 18 Upapuārṇas. He who would comment upon these should be regarded as equal to Manu. Chapter 117 narrates the story of Akatha and other stories.

VI. Uttarakhaṇḍa (number of chapters 255) ; The very first

chapter tells what the contents of the Khaṇḍa are. Śaṅkara says to Nārada that he would now narrate to him the Uttarakhaṇḍa

Out of the 255 chapters of the Khaṇḍa, the first eighteen contain the story of Jālandhara. Then upto the 34th chapter the importance of sacred places, Tulasī, gift of food is stated. The importance of the 24 Ekādaśīs of the 12 months and the two of the Adhikamāsa (the intercalary month) is told. This continues upto chapter 93, in which commences the description of the importance of Kārtika, which goes on upto chapter 124. In chapters 125 to 129 the importance of Māgha is told. The description of the various places and rivers is geographically important. The description of even the tributaries is given in detail. With chapter 174 ends the description of Sābaramatī, and the description of the importance of the *Bhagavad Gītā* commences. Viṣṇu is depicted as narrating the importance of the Gītā. In chapter 175 he tells that the eighteen chapters of the Gītā are the five mouths, ten hands, the belly and the two feet of Śiva. In each chapter from 175 to 192, a story referring to each chapter of the Gītā is given. The story is told to emphasize the importance of that particular chapter; but unfortunately not a single important principle of the Gītā-philosophy is reflected in any of these chapters. Two observations can be made: (i) The common man's level of understanding had gone so low that he did not easily understand the important teachings of the Gītā, and (ii) he had implicit faith in Purāṇas, for he accepted whatever they taught. With chapter 183 begins the importance of *Bhāgavata*. The handling of these chapters is better than those about Gītā. With chapter 199 begins the description of the importance of Yamunā. Chapter 202 contains the story of Dilīpa. The story has a remarkable resemblance with the story occurring in the first two cantoes of Kālidāsa's *Raghuvaṁśa*. The ten incarnations are described from chapter 230 onwards. Greatness of Viṣṇu is narrated in chapter 255.

VII. Kriyāyoga (number of chapters-26): This Khaṇḍa is the smallest one. After the first, which is the introductory chapter, the creation of the world and the virtues of Viṣṇu's devotee are narrated in the second chapter. Chapter 3 gives the story of king Manobhadra. Then in chapter 4 follow the description of the importance of Gaṅgā, and the story of Padmā-

vatī. Chapters 5 and 6 tell the story of Mādhava and Sulocanā. Then there is the description of Jagannāthapurī. The remaining chapters describe the importance of Tulasī, Śālagrāma, Āmalaka, Ekādaśī, etc. and the Khaṇḍa ends with the description of Kali, in which virtuous people will be ridiculed, population will grow enormously, and young girls of five or six years of age will conceive! But all the sins, the Purāṇa, tells, can be destroyed by uttering the name of the Lord.

The last part of the Khaṇḍa stresses the importance of this Khaṇḍa. It also says that he who will write down or cause someone else to write it down will have the fruit of worshipping Viṣṇu. This Purāṇa is very charming, and may the Lord be pleased with it.

A glance at the contents would show that *Padma Purāṇa* is Vaiṣṇavite in nature. It asks a person to serve Viṣṇu's feet only (I.5.10). Those who utter Viṣṇu's name are meritorious (IV. 10.66). The characteristics of the devotee of Viṣṇu are given at the beginning of Brahmakhaṇḍa. The story of Ajāmila emphasizes the importance of the utterance of Viṣṇu's names (III. 31.107). Svargakhaṇḍa (chapter 60) tells that the best Bhakti is Viṣṇu-bhakti. Uttarakhaṇḍa narrates the greatness of Viṣṇu in chapter 255. He is depicted as narrating the *Bhagavad Gītā* in the same Khaṇḍa (chapter 174). The story of Puṇḍarīka given in the 80th chapter of Uttarakhaṇḍa tells the importance of Viṣṇu-bhakti. He is said to be the highest god. The *Viṣṇu-sahasranāma* given in chapter 71 of Uttarakhaṇḍa, and its importance stated in the next chapter of the same Khaṇḍa, point to the same conclusion. Though the Purāṇa makes such statements as: 'That brāhmaṇa, who is not a devotee of Viṣṇu, is said to be a heretic' (VI. 262.27), yet it shows religious tolerance. It says that those who look upon Viṣṇu and other deities as one are not reborn (III. 50.106). As already noted, Viṣṇu himself tells that the various chapters of the Gītā are the limbs of Śiva's body (VI. 175). Thus the Purāṇa, though mainly teaching Viṣṇu-bhakti is not entirely sectarian. It divides Bhakti into three classes as Laukikī, Vaidikī and Ādhyātmikī.

Tīrthayātrās or visits to sacred places are said to give great religious merit. Svargakhaṇḍa (Ch. 10 to Ch. 40) gives

the description of many sacred places like Śūlabheda, Daśāśvamedhika, Gayā and the merit obtained by such visits which is said to be very great. For example *Padma Purāṇa* states (I.38.2) that by merely going to Gayā one gets the reward that one would get by performing a horse-sacrifice. Chapters 41 to 49 of Svargakhaṇḍa are devoted to the narration of the importance of Prayāga.

Like visits to holy places, vratas also are said to lead a human being to final beatitude with no more rebirth. The Dvādaśīvrata in Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa (chapters 20-21) or Saubhāgyaśayanavrata described in the same Khaṇḍa (chapter 29), or the Janmāṣṭamī-vrata or Lakṣmīvrata narrated in Brahmakhaṇḍa (chapter 17) or that of Vaiśākha given in the Pātālakhaṇḍa (chapters 85-86) are some of the many examples which stress the importance of vratas, and which are some of the very important and highly fruitful vratas.

Like visits to holy places and observance of vratas or vows, dāna or giving gifts is emphasized by *Padma Purāṇa*. The first forty chapters of Bhūmikhaṇḍa deal with obligatory and occasional gifts. Also chapter 95 of the same Khaṇḍa stresses the importance of dāna. Observing a fast and then giving a gift is said to be equal to the performance of sacrifices (III. 21.29). In chapters 18 to 24 of Brahmakhaṇḍa fruits of many gifts like a piece of land are stated along with various expiations etc. The gift of food is highly praised (VI. 33). A householder is asked to give as much food to an ascetic as would fill his begging bowl (V. 15.140-141).

Śrāddhas and expiations also find a place in the Purāṇa. Śrāddha or offering of oblations to the dead ancestors is said to be meritorious. The institution of expiation should not be looked down upon. It accepts the universal principle 'To err is human' and gives opportunity to every erring soul to correct himself.

From the literary point of view, it may be said that *Padma Purāṇa* is not very difficult to be understood by a person who has some grounding in the Sanskrit language. *Padma Purāṇa* does not have that literary charm which *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* possesses. For example, the story of Ajāmila is handled by *Bhāgavata* in a better way. The *Padma* handles it rather cursorily.

There are certain grammatical irregularities. Wrong forms like lapapsye for lapsyase (I.17.48), jago for jagau (I.30.67), kurate for kurute (I.20.45), vandya for vanditvā (I. 43.35b), use of a wrong gender like divasam for divasaḥ (III.31.170), lack of agreement between the subject and the verb in a sentence (III.39.85) are to be found in the Purāṇa; but when the bulk of the Purāṇa is taken into consideration, theyare negligible.

The Purāṇa contains a number of *subhāṣitas*. A few examples of such *subhāṣitas* are III.23.5, III.31.89, 95; III.31.174, 175; 60.24; IV.5.30 etc.

Certain descriptions have a poeticaroma, e.g. thedescription of women in III.21.65ff. Alliteration like the one in III.20.42 is rare. Certain definitions like those of the virtues like *Kṣamā* (forbearance), *Satya* (truthfulness), *Dambha* (religious hypocrisy) given in the 54th chapter of Svargakhaṇḍa are epigrammatic and precise.

Padma Purāṇa is neither the work of one author, nor does it profess to abound in poetic excellences. It would not, therefore, be justifiable to judge it as a work of poetry.

It is not easy to decide the date of *Padma Purāṇa*. There are clear indications of additions and omissions. It has already been shown above, while discussing the number of Khaṇḍas and verses in *Padma Purāṇa*, that certain portions were added to or taken away from the Purāṇa. A glaring example ofcontradiction noticed in Svargakhaṇḍa (chapter 50) would suffice to show that it is not the work of one hand. Verses 20b-21a of chapter 50 of Svargakhaṇḍa tell that those who look upon Viṣṇu and other deities as one are not born again, while verses 22b-23a of the same chapter say that those who look upon Viṣṇu and other deities as identical fall into hell. Sometimes the smooth, easy flow of the narration is marred by a clumsy construction (IV. 6.33).

To sum up, *Padma Purāṇa* does not belong to the class of the ancient Purāṇas like *Viṣṇu*, nor is it historically important like *Brahmāṇḍa*. Like *Skanda* and *Bhaviṣya* it mainly deals with vratas, dānas, tīrthas and lays special stress on *Viṣṇubhakti*. Its contribution may be said to lie in the fact that like other Purāṇas of

its class, it emphasized *Bhakti*, relegating *Jñānamārga* to a secondary position. For śūdras and women it recommended what was called the *Paurāṇika Dharma*. As the influence of Purāṇas went on increasing, the *Vaidika Dharma* gradually receded, and, the Dharma or way of life taught by Purāṇas, which was upto then supposed to be inferior, came to the forefront, and Purāṇas, like the Gītā, taught that people should not hanker after worldly gains, but should do their duty sincerely, dedicating it to God. The message of *Padma Purāṇa* is not different (VI.53.4-9).

I SṚṢṬIKHAṆḌA
(Section on Creation)

CHAPTER ONE

Introductory

1. May the water of the Puṣkara lake purify you—the water which is clean; which is clear like the moon; in which foam is produced by the commotion of elephants' trunks and of crocodiles; which is frequented by the chief Brāhmaṇas engaged in the (observance of) vows and restraints for the realisation of Brahman; which is sanctified by the sight of Brahmā adorned by Oṁkāra and the Lord of the three worlds; which is delightful due to (its being fit for) enjoyment; and which removes evil.

2. Lomaharṣaṇa[1] said to Ugraśravas, Vyāsa's highly intelligent pupil (well known as) Sūta who was sitting alone:

3. "O son, go to the hermitages of the sages and explain in brief to them, who will (i.e. when they) ask you, the duties (Dharmas) which you have heard from me in detail.

4. O son, I have narrated to you all the Purāṇas which I had obtained (i.e. heard) from Veda-Vyāsa; narrate them in detail to the sages.

5-6a. (Tell them) how at Prayāga the great sages asked the Lord (about Dharma); (how) on being asked by them who were desirous of knowing Dharma and of going to an auspicious country they were advised by the Lord desiring (their) welfare:

6b-7. 'Go carefully and with restraint after this rotating, matchless wheel, of a good nave, of a divine form, moving

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1. Lomaharṣaṇa: also Romaharṣaṇa; the pupil of Vyāsa, who taught him the entire Itihāsa and Purāṇa, in which he earned great proficiency (Mbh. Adi. 1; Vāyu 1.45, 2.4). He propogated the knowledge of Itihāsa and Purāṇa that he obtained from Vyāsa (Bhāgavata 1.4. 22; Viṣṇu 3.4.10; Vāyu 1.60.16; Brahmāṇḍa 2.34 etc. Vāyu 1.1.13 gives the derivation of his name).

effectually [or (capable of) going (even) to Satya Loka], of an auspicious pace, and you will reach the place that is beneficial.

8. That region in which the rim of the wheel wears out should be regarded as holy.' Thus spoke the Lord.

9a. Having thus spoken to all the sages, he again disappeared.

9b. It was Gaṅgāvartasamāhāra (in the place where there was a group of the eddies of the Ganges), where the rim (of the wheel) wore out.

10. At that time the sages were performing a sacrificial session in the Naimiṣa forest. Go there and speak to the sages who (will) ask you to clear their doubts about Dharma."

11-12a. Having gone from that place and having approached the best sages, bowing to them respectfully with palms joined in reverence and adoring them, that wise and intelligent Ugraśravas pleased the sages by salutation.

12b-13a. Those sacrificers too, along with their colleagues, were pleased with the magnanimous one, and together duly offered him homage.

The sages said :

13b-14a. O Sūta, whence have you come ? From which country have you come here ? O lustrous one like the gods, tell us the purpose of your arrival.

Sūta said :

14b. I was ordered by my father, the intelligent pupil of Vyāsa (thus) :

15-16a. 'Going to the sages wait upon them and tell them whatever they ask you.' The revered ones (therefore) may tell me which story I (should) narrate—Purāṇa or Itihāsa, or if I should describe the various kinds of duties (dharmas).

16b. The best sages heard the sweet words uttered by him.

17a. Then in them arose a desire to listen to Purāṇa.

17b-19a. Seeing that very confident learned Laumaharṣaṇi, the chief of the sages, Śaunaka by name, adept in all branches of knowledge, an intelligent teacher of profane knowledge and (the philosophical treatises viz.) the Āraṇyakas, depending

upon their intention (anticipating what the sages wished), and desiring to hear the religious observances, said :

19b-20. "O highly intelligent Sūta, for (learning) Itihāsa and Purāṇas, you had properly waited upon revered Vyāsa, the best among those who know Brahman. You drew (towards you) his auspicious mind attached to the Purāṇas.

21-23. O highly intelligent one, these eminent brahmins have now a desire to listen to the Purāṇa. Please, therefore, narrate it to them; for all these noble ones belonging to different families have gathered here. Let these teachers of Veda hear their own portions (of history) narrated in the Purāṇa. During this entire lengthy sacrificial session narrate them to the sages. O you very intelligent one, narrate the Padma Purāṇa to all of them:

24. How was the lotus produced ? How did Brahmā come into being there ? Narrate, in due order, how, He, after having sprung up (from the lotus) effected the creation ?"

25. Thus asked, he replied to them in sweet words: Ugraśravas, the son of Romaharṣaṇa spoke to them exquisitely and logically:

26. "By this encouragement of yours, I am pleased. I am favoured by you who are conversant with Purāṇa and who have mastered the entire Dharma.

27a. I shall narrate to you the entire well-known significance of the Purāṇa as I learnt it (from my father).

27b-29. This is the Sūta's duty from primeval times as perceived by the good to record the genealogies of gods, sages and kings of unlimited prowess and the eulogies of the noble who are seen in Itihāsa and Purāṇas to be the declarers of sacred lore. The sūta has no authority whatsoever over (the teaching or reciting of) Vedas.

30. When the sacrifice of the noble Pṛthu, son of Vena, was in progress, Māgadha and Sūta praised that king.

31a. Being pleased (with them), the large-hearted king granted them a boon:

31b. (He gave) the Sūta-country to Sūta and the Magadha (country) to Māgadha.

32-33a. The one born of Sūti is known here as Sūta. When a sacrificial session in honour of Indra proceeded, and Bṛhas-

pati was conjoined with (other) planets, that (offering) to Indra (was mixed up with that meant for) Bṛhaspati (and) there Sūta was born.[1]

33b-34a. As the preceptor's powerful offering got mixed up with the offering in the pupil's hand there arose the mixed castes due to the mixing up of lower and higher streams.

34b-35. Those here who were born of a Kṣatriya father and a brahmin mother formed a different group though (having) similarity with the former (i.e. Sūta).[2] To subsist on a Kṣatriya's profession is the secondary duty of a Sūta.

36. Here (in this world) Brahmins have delegated to me authority over the Purāṇas. Having perceived Dharma, you, the declarers of Veda, have asked me thus.

37a. Therefore, I shall narrate to you properly the Purāṇa revered by the sages on the earth.

37b-38. The mind-born daughter of the Pitṛs[3] got united with Indra and was cursed by the Pitṛs. Resembling Araṇi, the cause of holy fire, she got into the womb of a fish.

39-42a. From her by Parāśara the purified soul, Vyāsa, was born. I salute that Real one, the Creator, Viṣṇu, the Ancient

1. Vāyu 6.136.137 and Brahmāṇḍa 6.161, 162b, 163a tell how the offering meant for Indra got mixed up with the one intended for Bṛhaspati.

2. "The Sūta mentioned here is not the caste that was described as the offspring of a kṣatriya father and brāhmaṇa mother; that was a later application of the term. This Sūta was a bard like a Magadha...." (Ancient Indian Historical Tradition, F.E. Pargiter, p. 16). Vāyu 1.31-32 and Padma I.1.27-28 state the duties of the Sūta. They were required to preserve the genealogies of gods, sages and illustrious kings, and also the ballads about famous men, belonging to olden times.

3. 'The mind-born daughter...' According to the Mbh (Adi. 63) she is not the mind-born daughter of the Pitṛs, but the daughter of Uparicara Vasu and Girikā. An apsarā named Adrikā, who, as a result of a curse, had turned into a female fish swallowed the semen of the king. The daughter that was born of her was named Kāli, Satyavatī etc.

Vyāsa was the son of this Satyavatī and Parāśara. He was born in Yamunā-dvīpa; so he came to be called Dvaipāyana (Mbh. Adi. 60.2). He is called Purāṇa-pravaktā (Vāyu. 1.1; 1.60 etc.). In every Dvāpara one Vyāsa is born. He composed 17 Purāṇas, but not being content with this feat, he, at the behest of Nārada, composed Bhāgavata, and taught it to Sūta (Padma, Uttara-khaṇḍa 198).

Puruṣa, who conforms to the Vedic words, who had taken a human form, and who was extolled; whom, as soon as He was born, the Veda with all its collection stood by; who employing the churning-rod of his intellect produced in the world the light, viz. the moon in the form of the Mahābhārata from the ocean of the sacred lore.

42b-43a. If these three, viz. Bhārata, the sun and Viṣṇu were not there, what would have been the plight of the world blind with the darkness of ignorance ?

43b. Know Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana to be the Lord, viz., Nārāyaṇa.

44a. Who else but the Lotus-eyed one (i.e. Viṣṇu) would be the author of the Mahābhārata ?

44b-46. From that teacher of the Veda, the Omniscient one of bright lustre and revered in all the worlds, I learnt the Purāṇa. Of all the branches of knowledge, Brahmā first called to His mind Purāṇa—the best in all the worlds, the cause of all knowledge, the means to the three goals of human life (viz. Dharma, Artha and Kāma), and of an expanse of a hundred crores (of verses).

47. At the order of Brahmā, Keśava in the form of a horse, brought back the Vedas when all the worlds had nothing left in them.

48. The Asura had kept to himself after having snatched away the Vedāṅgas, the four Vedas, the entire religious literature with the extensive Purāṇa and Nyāya (treatises).

49. At the beginning of Kalpa, Keśava in the form of Fish snatched it back in the ocean of water; (and) remaining in the water, the Omnipresent one narrated the whole of it (to Brahmā).

50. The Four-faced one (i.e. Brahmadeva) having heard it (from Keśava) narrated the Vedas to the sages. Then, Purāṇa became the source of all the sciences.

51-52. Then Brahmā, the Supreme Ruler, seeing after (a lapse of) time the lack of apprehension of the Purāṇa (by people), sang it, in the form of Vyāsa at the measure of four lakhs (of verses) in every Dvāpara Yuga to (re-) collect it; then dividing it into eighteen parts He brought it to light in this world.

53. Even now in the worlds of gods its expanse is a hundred crores (of verses); the same is put here in an abridged form in four lakhs (verses).

54. I shall narrate the greatly meritorious Purāṇa called Pādma having fiftyfive thousand (verses) having (i.e. divided in) five Khaṇḍas.

55-56. There (i.e. in the Purāṇa) would be (i.e. there is) Sṛṣṭi-khaṇḍa at the beginning; after that (there is) Bhūmi-khaṇḍa; after that (follows) Svarga-khaṇḍa; then (comes) Pātāla-khaṇḍa; after that comes the fifth khaṇḍa known as Uttara-khaṇḍa (which is) the best. This alone is Mahā Padma that has come up and full of which is the world.

57-60. Because the Purāṇa is based on the account of it (i.e. the Padma), it is therefore called Pādma. This Purāṇa is pure and spotless due to the greatness of Viṣṇu; (and) which, Hari, the God of gods first narrated to Brahmā; and whichever portion Brahmā had formerly narrated to Marīci that (much) alone Brahmā narrated as Padma in the world. That (Purāṇa), the refuge of all beings, is called Pādma by the wise. That is Pādma; in it fiftyfive thousand verses are read (i.e. form the text). It is narrated in five Parvans in an abridgement made by Vyāsa.

61-63a. The first Parvan is 'Pauṣkara' in which Virāṭ Himself is (described to be) born; the second is 'Tīrthaparvan' based on (the accounts of) the groups of planets. The third Parvan records the (accounts of) kings (giving) ample gifts (to brāhmaṇas). In the fourth is narrated the history of dynasties. In the fifth the essential nature of final Bliss and of everything (else) is narrated.

63b-64a. In the Pauṣkara (Parvan the description of) the creation of nine kinds and of Brahmā's being the Creator of all gods and sages (is given); and also (the description of) the matchless creation of the fathers (is given).

64b. In the second (Parvan) the mountains and the seven islands with the seas (are described).

65. In the third one the creation of Rudra and Dakṣa's curse (are described); while in the fourth one the creation of kings and the narration of all genealogies (find a place).

66. In the last one the characteristic sign of absolution and the description of the science of final emancipation (occur); all this (is to be found) in this Purāṇa. O Brāhmaṇas, I shall recount it to you.

67. This (Purāṇa) is sacred; is the treasure of glory; it is (i.e. would be) extremely dear to the ancestors; it always makes God happy and destroys (even) the great sin(s) of men."

CHAPTER TWO

Contents of the Section on Creation

Sūta spoke :

1. I salute the Lord of all human beings and of the entire world, of the form of Creation and the Knower of Pradhāna (i.e. Sāṃkhya Prakṛti). He creates this disposition in me.

2. He, the Creator of the worlds, the Knower of their essential nature, conversant with Yoga (-doctrines), resorting to the concentration of mind created all immobile and mobile beings.

3. Being desirous of knowing the story of the Purāṇa I submit myself to Him—the unborn, the creator of everything, the Lord of souls, the Observer of the worlds, and the Supreme Ruler.

4-6. Being well-disposed, having saluted with a concentrated mind Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Indra, the Guardians of the Quarters of the world and the sun; and also the magnanimous Vasiṣṭha, the greatest among the sages and Jātukarṇya[1], with penance shining on his face, in the Cāksuṣa (Manvantara);

1. Jātukarṇya: "The Jātukarṇyas were a Vasiṣṭha gotra (Matsya 200.19; Vāyu 1.9-10; but see Bhāgavata IX.2.21). This name is a patronymic, and so there were several of the name. Jātukarṇya or Jatukarṇa is said to have taught Vyāsa the Veda (Vāyu 1.44; Harivaṁśa 42, 2364), and the Purāṇa (Brahmāṇḍa i. 1.11)" (Ancient Indian Historical Tradition, p. 217).

The Manu is called Cāksuṣa because he was born from the mouth of the Highest Lord (Mārkandeya Purāṇa 76.2).

and having saluted the revered Vyāsa, the Creator, the ancient Puruṣa who acted according to the words of Bhṛgu (I shall narrate the Purāṇa).

7. From Him, the declarer of the Vedas, the omniscient one, adored in all the worlds and of glowing lustre, I heard the Purāṇa.

8. It is a certainty that Unmanifest Eternal Cause, of the nature of being and non-being, creates all distinctions upto Mahat.

9-10. In the golden egg, the excellent birth of Brahmā (took place) first. The egg was covered by water, and water by light (or heat). It (i.e. light) was covered by air; air by ether; that by the source of the elements (i.e. Ahaṃkāra); that source of elements too was covered by Mahat, and Mahat by the Invisible.

11. And the coming into being (appearance) of the worlds in the egg itself is described; then follows the description of the coming into existence of rivers and mountains.

12. Then (follows) the description in brief of the periods of Manus[1] and of the Kalpas, (and also) of the extinction of the Divine Tree and the creation of the beings by Brahmā.

13. The passage of the Kalpas, the fixing of the world, Viṣṇu's sleeping in the water and the lifting up of the earth again (are also narrated).

14. Viṣṇu's passing through ten existences (i.e. the ten Incarnations) due to Bhṛgu's curse[2]; the arrangement of the Yugas (ages of the world); the division of (human) life into all the stages (are described).

15. The distinction in the conditions of the mortals moving in heaven (after death), as well as the origin of beasts and birds is narrated.

16-17. And also etymology and ritual (find a place here) and the inclusion of sacred study (is done); in the same way

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1. A manvantara is said to be the period of a Manu and the gods (Padma, Sṛṣṭi-khaṇḍa 3.12ff.).

2. The curse pronounced by Bhṛgu on Viṣṇu is attributed to different causes in Devi Bhāgavata (4.11.12) and Padma, Bhūmikhaṇḍa 121.

Brahmā's wilful dissolutions and creations, and also His three unwilful secondary creations (are recounted); and (how) Brahmā conceived the worlds (is told); and the rise of Bhṛgu and others from Brahmā's mouth (is described in the Purāṇa).

18a. The interval between two Kalpas is narrated and the period of transition between two creations (is described).

18b-19. The description of the origin of the progeny of Bhṛgu and other sages (as given here) and the greatness of the Brahmanical sage Vasiṣṭha is narrated; then follows the glorification of Svāyambhuva Manu.

20. (Account of) the creations of Nābhi and the noble Rajas (is told). The enumeration of the islands[1], oceans and mountains (is also done).

21. The inclusion among the seven of the various islands and oceans according to their arrangement and the residents thereof are described (in the Purāṇa).

22. Also the regions thereof, along with the rivers and mountains, as well as the islands like Jambū Dvīpa, surrounded by seven seas (are described).

23-25. (The accounts of) these worlds in the egg and the earth with its seven islands (are given); the movement of the sun and the moon and of the planets (and other) luminaries also due to the power of Dhruva is narrated; the good and bad fortune of the beings (is narrated), and (the description of) the sun's chariot fashioned for a purpose by Brahmā Himself, in which (chariot) regulated by him, the revered sun moves (is given). (It is also told how) the chariots of the sun and others proceed from Dhruva only.

26a. (The Purāṇa narrates how) He created Śiṃśumāra in whose tail Dhruva remains.

26b. Destruction coming at the end of creation and creation at the end of destruction (are described).

27. It is not possible to give in detail the account of gods, sages, Manu and the host of fathers; so it is narrated in brief.

28. The narration of gods and kings, past and future, in

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1. The seven islands are : Jambū, Plakṣa, Sālmala, Kuśa, Krauñca, Śāka and Puṣkara.

the periods of (various) Manus is similar to that in the (period of) Svāyambhuva (i.e. the first) Manu.

29. The 'dissolution-and-recreation' of the beings conceived to be of three types is called Naimittika, Prākṛtika, and Ātyantika.

30. Drought and the terrible fire of destruction from the sun, and the clouds causing general inundation, and also the night of the Highest Lord (are described).

31. The characteristic mark of the period intervening between the end of one Yuga and the commencement of another is described and especially that of Brahmā; also the description of the beings and seven worlds (is given in it).

32. I shall describe here (i.e. in the Purāṇa) the hells like Raurava of the Sinners (i.e. where the sinners go); also the consideration of the end of one and all beings.

33. (It contains) the secondary creation of Brahmā and the description of the total destruction; and the destruction of even the great beings in every Kalpa.

34. Having perceived after proper calculation (I shall describe) the evanescence of even Brahmā, and also the depravity of the enjoyments and the painfulness of the worldly existence.

35-36. (The Purāṇa describes) (how) salvation is difficult to attain, and (how) faults are noticed through detachment and (how) Reality, discarding the manifest and unmanifest, remains in Brahman. (The Purāṇa tells) how the untinged one called Virūpa, after realising the diversity, and having gone beyond the three miseries is happy and then, remains in it (i.e. Brahman). 'Experiencing the joy of Brahman he is afraid of nothing'. A full and proper description of the proof for such (statements) is given (here).

37. In it (lit. in which) the changes pertaining to the world like creation and dissolution are described; also the active worldly life and the fruits of resignation of worldly acts (are described).

38-44. (It describes) The origin of Vasiṣṭha; also the birth of Śakti[1]; his destruction by Kalmāṣapāda, the son of

1. Śakti : Eldest son of Vasiṣṭha and Arundhati. Adṛśyanti was his wife (Bhāgavata 4.1.41; Mbh. Adi 192.11). He defeated Viśvāmitra in a sacrifice

Sudāsa, through the act of Viśvāmitra; the birth of Parāśara the Lord from Adṛśyantī; also how Vyāsa was born of the daughter of the Pitṛs, and how Śuka was born; also of his intelligent son; how Parāśara was very much hated by Viśvāmītra; (how) fire prepared by Vasiṣṭha with a desire to kill Viśvāmitra was destroyed by intelligent Kaṇva—the Lord of the brāhmaṇas and non-brāhmaṇas—desiring the welfare of Viśvāmitra, to reconcile (the two sages). How Vyāsa, the Lord, favouring all, divided one Veda of four quarters into four parts; how his pupils and their pupils again divided (the Veda) into (various) branches; (how) the Lord (i.e. Vyāsa) was asked by the best sages at Prayāga and (how) those sages longing for Dharma, were advised by Kṛṣṇa (Dvaipāyana Vyāsa).

45a. O best sages, all this is correctly told (in the Purāṇa).

45b-46. So also (is told) the best course of the world of (i.e. as practised by) the sages always practising Dharma, which was in ancient times narrated to the noble Pulastya by Brahmā and by Pulastya to Bhīṣma at Gaṅgādvāra.

47. The narration or the listening to and especially the assimilation of this Purāṇa is blessed, leads to fame, prolongs life and destroys all sins.

48. To the brāhmaṇas Sūta declared in detail and in due order this Purāṇa which was formerly narrated by Brahmā.

49. There is no doubt that he, who, with his senses subdued, would study with proper understanding (even) a part of this, has studied the entire Purāṇa.

50. He, who knows the four Vedas, along with the Aṅgas (i.e. certain classes of works regarded as auxiliary to the Vedas) and the Upaniṣads and knows the Purāṇa also, is wiser than the one (described above).

51. One should nourish Veda with Itihāsa and Purāṇas. Veda, thinking 'he would deceive me', is afraid of a (person) of little learning.

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at the house of Saudāsa. Jamadagni again endowed Viśvāmitra with power. Then Viśvāmitra burnt him with the help of Saudāsa. At the time of his death Adṛśyantī was carrying. She gave birth to the celebrated Parāśara. In the present Manvantara the name of the 26th Vyāsa is Śakti. (Matsya iii. 2.12-18).

52. And having studied (even) one chapter (of this Purāṇa) narrated by Brahmā himself, one would be free from calamities (even) after having met with them and would get the desired course.

53. It tells about the old tradition; so it is called Purāṇa. He who knows its derivation is absolved of all sins.

The sages said to the Sūta:

54-58. How did the revered sage Pulastya, Brahmā's mind-born son, whose sight is difficult to be obtained, come in contact with Bhīṣma? It is a a great wonder, O Sūta, O highly intelligent one. Tell us how that great sage was propitiated by that kṣatriya (i.e. Bhīṣma). What kind of penance or what other religious observances did he practise by which that brahmanic sage talked to him in such a way that he explained to him a section or half a section or the entire (Purāṇa)? O fortunate one, tell us, in which place and in what condition the revered one was seen by him? We are ready to listen to it.

Sūta Said :

59-61. Where the Ganges, the benefactress of the good, the purifier of the world, having broken (open) the mountain, flowed forth, there—at the great sacred place—(named) Gaṅgādvāra, Bhīṣma, devoted to the forefathers, desirous of listening to (the Purāṇa), remained, for a very long time in the religious observances of (i.e. practised by) the great, for full hundred years, meditating with great concentration on the Highest Brahman, and bathed thrice (a day).

62. God Brahmā was pleased with the noble one who gratified the forefathers and gods with self-recitation, and who subdued himself.

63-65a. Brahmā said to his son Pulastya, the best among the sages: "Such as you are, ward off from penance that brave Devavrata Bhīṣma, a descendant of the Kuru-family, and tell him the reason (for doing so). The blessed one has remained (there) meditating upon his forefathers. What desire his mind has, fulfil it; do not delay."

65b-66. Having heard the words of Brahmā, Pulastya, the best of the sages, having come to Gaṅgedvāra, said (these)

words to Bhīṣma: "Welfare to you; ask for whatever boon is in your mind (i.e. you think of asking).

67. O warrior, god Brahmā himself is pleased with your penance. I, who am sent by Brahmā, will grant you your desired boons.

68-69. Bhīṣma too, having heard those words pleasing to the ears, opening his eyes and seeing Pulastya standing before him, (and) having saluted the best sage with the eight parts of his body and the entire body touching the earth, and thus bending, said:

70. "Today my birth is fruitful; and this day is very auspicious (as) here I have seen your feet adorable for the world.

71. And I have obtained the fruit of my penance since I have seen the venerable one, the granter of the boon, who has especially arrived at the river-bank.

72-73. I have made ready this comfortable seat; (please) be seated. In the offering-vessel made of Palāśa-leaves is the respectful offering with (i.e. consisting of) sacred dūrvā-grass, rice grains, flowers, barley and milk, for of yore the sages have recommended such an offering consisting of eight articles."

74. Having heard these words of Bhīṣma, of unlimited lustre the revered sage Pulastya, the son of Brahmā, sat on the seat.

75. Being pleased with him of good behaviour and being delighted the revered one liked the seat with the water offered for washing the feet and the (contents of) the offering-vessel.

Pulastya said:

76. You are a truthful munificent king, true to your word, modest, friendly, of a forgiving nature, (and) powerful in controlling the enemies.

77. O sweet-speaking one, you are conversant with religious law, grateful, kind. (You) honour those who deserve honour. You are intelligent, hospitable to the brāhmaṇas (and) kind towards the good.

78. O child, I am pleased with you who are always intent on obeisance. Tell me, O blessed one, what I (should) tell you.

Bhiṣma said:

79. O revered one, tell me during which time the venerable lord lived and formerly made the creation of gods and others.

80. (When) did revered Viṣṇu (effect) the preservation? How was Rudra creaetd? and how were the sages and gods created by that magnanimous one?

81. How (were) the earth, the sky, these oceans, the islands, the mountains, the villages, the forests and the cities created (by him)?

82-83. Tell me how (i.e. in the order in which) the lord created the ascetics, the (ten) lords of created beings, and the seven distinguished sages, the castes, wind, old places, Gandharvas, Yakṣas and demons, holy places, rivers, planets like the sun and stars.

Pulastya said:

84-85. He, the best among the best, the greatest, the supreme spirit—Brahmā—without any form or complexion, destitute of any attribute, decay or destruction, change, increase or birth, (and also) void of all qualities, alone shines.

86. He is regarded to be living equally everywhere, and is said to be matchless. The learned declare him to manifest himself in the form of Brahmā.

87-88. Having saluted him, the mysterious, supreme, eternal, unborn, inexhaustible, immutable one, that has remained in the form of time, I shall tell you, how having first risen from the lotus-bed, the lord of the world brought the creation.

89-91. O king, at the time of creation, Mahān, of three types, viz. Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa also, came out, endowed with the marks of the three constituents.

This Ahaṁkāra—resembling the principle of Pradhāna, and enveloped by seeds etc. of three types (viz. Vaikārika or Sāttvika, Taijasa or Rājasa and Bhutādi or Tāmasa) arose from the principle of Mahat. (From it arose) the five elements and organs of sense, along with the organs of action.

92. I shall narrate the nature of each one (of the five

elements, viz.) earth, water, and fire, air and Ākāśa in succession.

93. Ākāśa has the quality of sound; Bhūtadi[1] covered the sky; Ākśâa, being effected, created the quality of touch.

94. This Vāyu is indeed powerful; touch is regarded to be its quality. Ākāśa, having sound as its quality, covered the quality of touch.

95. From that Vāyu being effected, created the quality of form: that (arising from Vāyu) is of the form of lustre; it is said to be having form as its quality.

96. Vāyu, of the nature of touch, covered (lustre having) the quality of form; lustre too, being effected created the quality of water.

97. The quality of form covered the water arising out of it. The water being effected, created the quality of odour.

98. From it comes into being the aggregate (i.e. the earth). Odour is regarded as its quality; the sense-organs are said to be (arising from) Tejas. The ten of sense and action organs are products of the Sāttvika (Vaikārika Ahaṁkāra).

99. Here (i.e. of the organs) mind is the eleventh. The sense-organs are said to be Vaikārika. (They are:) Skin, eye, nose, tongue, and ear is the fifth of these.

100-102. The function of these is said to be the apprehension of sound etc. (The other are:) speech, hands, feet, anus, and the fifth of these is the sex-organ. The characteristics of these in reverse order are: discharge, manual work, movement and speech. Ākāśa, air, fire, water and earth are, O brave one, endowed with the successive qualities of sound etc.; therefore, the specific objects (or particularities) are said to be tranquil, violent and stupid.

103. Then being of diverse strength, and separated, they were unable to procreate without wholly coming together.

104-105. Having come together, by mutual contact and inter-dependence, having the target of one aggregate, completely being united, by being controlled by the Puruṣa, and by

1. Bhūtādi is the Tāmasa Ahaṁkāra. Ahaṁkāra is said to be of three types: (i) Vaikārika or Sāttvika, (ii) Taijasa or Rājasa, and (iii) Bhūtādi or Tāmasa.

the favour of the invisible (Prakṛti) (when favoured by the Avyakta), (they) beginning with the Mahān etc. and ending with the specific objects effect the egg.

106-110. That (egg) gradually manifested is like a water-bubble. In it, Brahmā himself, whose form is invisible, (who is) Janārdana of a visible form, remains in the form of Brahman. Of him, the great-souled one, Meru was the foetus, the (other) mountains were the outer skin of the embryo and oceans were the(foetus-) fluid. In that egg, O warrior, there were the islands, seas, and and the whole universe with the luminaries, with gods, demons and human beings. The egg has water, fire, air and ether (Ākāśa) concealed within and is, from outside, covered by Ahaṁkāra and by the ten powers[1] (i.e. ten organs) and Ahaṁkāra (is covered) by Mahān. O prince, Mahān, with all these, is covered by Avyakta.

111. The egg is endowed with all these covers and all beings as the coconut seed is covered by external scabbards.

112. Brahmā himself proceeds towards the creation of the world, and protects the creation yuga after yuga, as long as the kalpa is regulated.

113. That god Janārdana, all alone, enjoying pleasure, possessing virtues, of unlimited valour (now) gets an appellation.

114-115. At the end of the kalpa, O best of princes, he increases darkness and takes up a terrible form, and being very ferocious, eats up all beings; and, when the world becomes but one ocean, he, having eaten up all beings, and having assumed his own full form, sleeps on the bed of the serpent.

116. Being awake, he, taking up the form (of Brahmā) effects the creation. For creating, maintaining and destroying (the world he takes up) respectively the forms of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

117. The creator creates himself, and Viṣṇu protects (the world) that is to be protected, and the lord himself, the withdrawer, is withdrawn (into himself).

118. Since he, the immutable one of a universal form, is

1. Guṇa: the five subtle organs of perception, five subtle organs of action and the mind are the eleven śaktis or guṇas of Ahaṁkāra.

the lord of (all these) elements—earth, water, and also fire, air and ether, therefore beneficial creation etc. proceed from him only.

119. He—having the entire (world) as his form through such states as Brahman etc., the Supreme Being, the best one, the giver of boons and the worthiest—alone is the creation and the creator; he is the one that protects what is to be protected.

CHAPTER THREE

Kinds of Creation

Bhiṣma said:

1. How is it possible for Brahman, the quality-less, unlimited, pure and great, to be the author of the creation etc.?

Pulastya said:

2. As the potentialities of all objects are inconceivable and inapprehensible, so are those powers of creation of Brahman.

3. The wise one who is born is only secondarily described to be eternal; and by his own measure his life-span is said to be a hundred years.

4. O best prince, that is called *para*; half of it is said to be *parārdha*. Fifteen *nimeṣas* (= twinklings of an eye) are said (to form) one *kāṣṭhā*.

5. Thirty *kalās* make one *kāṣṭhā* (also called *nimiṣa*), (or) the period called *muhūrta*. *Muhūrtas* equalling that number (i.e. 30) form the human day and night (taken together).

6. As many (i.e. 30) days and nights (i.e. thirty days) form a month having two fortnights. With six of them an *ayana* is formed and a year has (two such *ayanas*, viz.) *Dakṣiṇa* and *Uttara*.

7-9. The *dakṣiṇāyana* is the night of the gods and the *uttarāyaṇa* is their day. The set of four *yugas* called *Kṛta*, *Tretā* etc. is formed by 12000 divine years. Learn from me their

division: Those acquainted with the past say that the number of a thousand divine years in the *Kṛta* and other *yugas* is respectively four, three, two and one. A (period called) *sandhyā* of equal number of hundred years (corresponding to thousands—the number of years of each *yuga*) is said to precede it (i.e. each *yuga*).

10-11. That period coming immediately after a *yuga* and equal to (the period of) a *Sandhyā* is (called) *Sandhyāṃśaka*. The period between a *Sandhyā* and *Sandhyāṃśa* is to be known as a *yuga* called *Kṛta*, *Tretā* etc. The *Caturyuga* is said to consist of *Kṛta*, *Tretā*, *Dvāpara* and *Kali*.

12-21. O prince, a thousand of such *caturyugas* is said to be a day of Brahmā. There are fourteen Manus during one day of Brahmā. Listen to the measure of their period : O prince the seven sages, Indra, Manu and his sons are created at one and the same time, and are also withdrawn as before (i.e. at one and the same time). The period of Manu and gods is called *Manvantara*, and is enumerated to form seventyone *caturyugas* (i.e. groups of four *yugas*). This span, O highly intelligent one, is said to be (equal to) eight lakhs and fiftytwo thousand divine years. According to the calculation, thirty crores, sixtyseven million ond twenty thousand human years without any addition is the number of years in a *Manvantara*. The day of Brahmā is fourteen times this period. At the end of it (i.e. this day) there is Brahmā's reabsorption (of the creation called) *Naimittika*. At that time all the three worlds like *Bhūḥ*, *Bhuvaḥ* are consumed. Residents of the *Mahas* world, afflicted by tormentation, go to the world of (i.e. called) *Jana*. When the three worlds just become one ocean, Brahmā, the lord of the world, the best among those who know Brahman, increased with the nourishment of the worlds, and being meditated upon by the yogins remaining in the *Jana*-world lies on the bed of a serpent.

22. At the end of the night which is of the same measure (as the day) he again brings about the creation. Such is the year of Brahmā and likewise are his hundred years.

23. Long is the life-span of that great one, viz. one hundred years. Only one *Parārdha* (half of the span) has rolled by, O sinless one.

24-25a. At the end of it there was the great *Kalpa* known as *Padma*. Of the second *Parārdha*, O king, this present *Kalpa* (called) *Varāha* is conceived to be the first one.

Bhiṣma said :

Tell me, O great, sage, how this Brahmā, called Nārāyaṇa, created all the beings at the beginning of the *Kalpa*.

Pulastya spoke :

25b-29. Brahmā, the lord, beginningless, cause of everything, who had slept at night, at the end of the bygone *Kalpa*, got up, with increased vitality, saw the world void; being in the water and noticing the earth plunged in the flood of water, and after a thought desiring to take it and comprehending up the form of Viṣṇu in order to carry off the earth he entered other forms like those of Matsya, Kūrma and Varāha.

30. Having resorted to the form of Vedic Sacrifice, the Creator, of a firm mind, the soul of all and the highest soul, remained (firm) for the stability of the world.

31-32. Then the sustainer of the earth entered the water in the ocean; then the goddess Earth seeing him who had come from the nether region, reverential through devotion, bowing down, praised him.

The Earth said :

33. Salutation to you, the all-existing one; salutation to you, the highest soul; lift me today from this (ocean); formerly I have risen from you. Salution to you, O highest soul; salutation to you, O soul of man.

34-36. Salutation to you who are the manifest form of *Pradhāna* (the Sāṃkhya *Prakṛti*), and who are the destroyer. You are the creator, the protector and the destroyer of all the beings; you, O Govinda, the highest Brahma, who, at the the beginning of the creation take the form of Viṣṇu and Rudra, having devoured everything when the world has just become one ocean, lie (in it) being meditated upon by the wise. Nobody knows that which is your highest form.

37. The residents of heaven worship that form of yours which (you take) in your incarnations. Those desirous of salvation have attained it after having propitiated you, the highest Brahman.

38-40a. For, who would attain salvation without propitiating Vāsudeva? All that form which can be mentally grasped, the external form that can be perceived by eyes etc. and that which can be defined by intelligence, is your form. I am full of you; you are my support; you have created me (and) I have sought your refuge. Therefore the people call me 'Mādhavī' (i.e. of or belonging to Mādhava i e. Viṣṇu).

40b-41 Being thus praised by the Earth, the lustrous sustainer of the earth, having the voice like the Sāman-notes, roared with a loud murmuring sound. Then the great boar, resembling a lotus-leaf, and having eyes like full-blown lotuses, having lifted the earth (from the ocean) with is fang, rose like a great blue mountain.

42. The water of the ocean struck by his breath when he rose, again made the sinless sages like Sanandana, who had resorted to the Jana world, the abode of purity.

43. When the base of the earth was struck by his hoof, the water moved on, and the row of clouds hurled by his breath moved all around, making a continuous (thundering) sound.

44. The sages that were between the hair on his body praised the great boar tossing his body of Veda when, he, with his sides wet, came out (of the ocean) after having rent the earth.

45. "O greatest lord, Keśava, you are the lord of the lords of people. O you, holder of the mace, conchshell and disc! You, are the cause of the creation, sustenance and destruction; you are the ruler, and you, and none else, are the place which is the highest.

46. The Vedas are at your feet, your tusk is the tying post, sacrifices are in your fangs, and the sacred texts in your mouth. Your tongue is fire, your hair the sacred darbha grass. O lord, you alone are the sacrificial man.

47. O you of matchless prowess, the distance between heaven and earth—or this entire world—is pervaded by your body; be, O lord, for the well-being of the world.

48-53. O lord of the world, you alone, and none else, are the lord of the world. It is the greatness of you alone by which the movable and the immovable are pervaded. The ignorant ones, who look upon this world, of the form of knowledge, to be

true, wander in the flood of darkness; but O lord, the wise ones of pure heart see the entire world, your form, to be of the nature of knowledge. O soul of all beings, be pleased for the existence of the world; O you lotus-eyed one, unlimited self, lift up this earth that is plunged (in the ocean). You are enhanced with energy, O lord Govind. Lift up this earth for the well-being (of the world); bring about the good of the world."

54. The highest soul, who had held the earth, being thus praised, put it in the great ocean. The earth remained over it like a boat in a stream of water.

55. The beginningless supreme being, then having flattened the earth, piled the mountains on it according to (its) divisions.

56. Then having accurately divided the earth into seven divisions, he conceived the four worlds *Bhūḥ* etc. as before.

57. This is exactly what was formerly shown to Brahmā by Viṣṇu. The god of gods who was pleased (said to Viṣṇu) :

58-59. "This world is to be sustained and protected by you and me with care. O mighty one, those chief *Asuras* who were granted a boon by me, are now to be killed by you, desiring the good of gods. I shall create the world. O supreme one, it is to be protected by you."

60. Viṣṇu, the eminent one, being thus addressed (by Brahmā) went (from that place) and created gods and others. From him spontaneous (creation) full of darkness proceeded.

61-62. From the great one, who did not ponder, five kinds of creation stood apart: *Tamas*, *Moha*, *Mahāmoha*, *Tāmisra*, *Andha*. It was dark from within and without, and of the form of (i.e. consisting of) the immovable. This is (called) *Mukhya Sarga* as the *Nāgas* are said to be pre-eminent in it.

63-64. Seeing that ineffective creation the lord thought of another (creation). From him, who was pondering, the creation called *Tiryak-srotas* stood out. As the movement (of the animals other than man) was horizontal (with their faces turned to the ground) the creation is said to be *Tiryak-srotas*. The beasts etc. too, were known to be almost full of ignorance and lacking perception.

65-67. Taking a wrong path they looked upon ignorance as knowledge. Self-conceited and self-loving, they were of twenty-eight kinds. All of them were shining within and had concealed

one another. When he looked upon that as ineffective, another creation came up from him, who pondered. This (creation) too he thought to be ineffective. Then from him, who pondered, another (creation) came up. This third creation was *Ūrdhva-srotas*, virtuous, and stood high up. They had abundant happiness and pleasure and were open and shining from within and without. Hence they are said to be *Ūrdhva-srotas*.

68. This third creation of him who was pleased, is known as the creation of gods (*deva-sarga*). When it was accomplished, Brahmā was pleased.

69. Knowing those, coming up from the *Mukhya Sarga* etc. to be ineffective, he then thought of another excellent effective creation.

70. When he was thinking thus, from him, the manifest one and of true thoughts, an effective creation (called) *Arvāk-srotas* proceeded.

71-72. Since they move on the lower side, they are *Arvāk-srotas*. They are rich in brilliance, enhanced in *Tamas* and strong in *Rajas*. Therefore they are full of grief and repeat the same things over and over again. They, the human beings, are bright within and without and are efficient.

73-75. Fifth is the *Anugraha Sarga* arranged in four ways: error, success, power and satisfaction. They again do not know the past and the present. The sixth *sarga* (creation) is said to be of the beings and the like. All of them have possessions, they become partners, follow instructions, mutter texts and should be known as beings etc.

76. Thus, O best king, the six creations are narrated. First one is the creation of *Mahat*; and that which is the second is of Brahmā.

77. The second one of the subtle and primary elements is known as the *Bhūtādi sarga*. The third one, the *Vaikārika*, is said to be of sense organs.

78. Thus this is (i.e. these three are together called) *Prākṛta sarga*, which has come up without deliberation. The fourth one is *Mukhya sarga*. The immovables are known to be *Mukhya*.

79-80. That (*sarga*) which is described as *Tiryak-srotas* is (also) called *Tiryak-yonya*. Then (comes) the sixth one of the *Ūrdhva-srotas* known as *Deva-sarga*. Then (follows) the

creation of the *Arvāk-srotas* (moving with their faces turned to the ground); and the seventh one is *Mānuṣa*. Eighth is the *Anugraha sarga*. It is both virtuous and vicious.

81. These five are *Vaikṛta sargas* (i.e. modified creations). (Other) three are known to be *Prākṛta* (natural). The ninth (*sarga* called) *Kaumāra* is both *Prākṛta* and *Vaikṛta*.

82. These nine creations of Prajāpati, viz. the *Prākṛta* and the *Vaikṛta* and the root causes of the world are enumerated to you.

83-84a. What else do you want to hear about the lord of the world—the creator ?

Bhiṣma said :

You have told in brief the *sargas* of gods and others from the lord. O best sage, I desire to hear about them from you in detail.

Pulastya said :

84b-87. Created due to their good and bad actions, and not devoid of the faculty of discrimination, they are withdrawn at the time of universal destruction. O king, the beings—beginning with gods and ending with the immovable—are of four types. They were created by Btahmā creating the world and are known to be *mānasa*. Then desiring to create the group of four, viz. gods, manes, demons and human beings, he employed himself (to create) this water. Then from Prajāpati free and wicked souls were born.

88. First, (from him) desirous of creating beings, the demons were born from his buttocks. Then he abandoned that wicked body full of vice only.

89-90. O best of kings, that body abandoned by him became the night. Then resorting to another body, he desired to create; and then, O king, gods, born from his mouth, were joyful (as they were) increased with brightness. He abandoned that body too, and (it became) the day full of brightness.

91-92. Therefore, the demons are powerful at night and the gods by day. Then he took up another body full of virtue only. The pitṛs looking upon him as their father were born

from (that body of) him. The lord having created the *pitṛs* gave up that body too.

93. That body, thus abandoned, became evening—the time between (the end of) day and (the beginning of) night. Then he took up another body full of activity only.

94-97. (From it) human beings, richly endowed with activity only, were born, O best among the Kurus. Prajāpati quickly gave up that former body also. That body became light, which is also called twilight. Therefore human beings are powerful when the light comes on (i.e. in the morning), and likewise the *pitṛs* are powerful (in the evening). Light, night, day and evening—these four are Brahmā's bodies supporting the three constituents (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*). Then he took up another body of the nature of activity (*rajas*) only.

98. Then Brahmā had a sneeze; and it produced anger (in him); affected by it the lord then created (certain beings) in darkness.

99-101. These deformed (beings) desiring to eat him up, ran to the lord. Those who said 'Protect him', became goblins. Those others who said 'Let us eat him', became spirits. The hairs of the creator who was very much afraid of them fell off, and those that fell off, again got on his head. They are known as serpents (*sarpa*) on account of their creeping (*sarpaṇa*), and snakes (*ahi*) on account of their having fallen (*hīnatva*).

102-104. Then the angry creator created fearful, angry-minded beings, pink in colour and flesh-eaters. Then *Gandharvas*, sucking the earth, sprang from him at that time. While sucking (the earth), they produced sounds; so on that account, they became *gandharvas*. Impelled by the respective capacity of them, he, having created these, created the birds at his free will.

105-114. He created sheep from his chest, and rams from his mouth. He created cows and buffaloes from his belly; and from his feet (he created) horses with elephants, donkeys, (a species of ox called) *gavayas*, deer, camels, mules, antelopes and other species; herbs having fruits and roots sprang up from his hair. At the beginning of the *kalpa*, and the introduction of *Tretā yuga*, Brahmā having duly created animals and herbs, employed himself in a sacrifice. Cows, rams, buffaloes, sheep,

horses, mules, and donkeys—these are called tame animals. Learn from me the wild ones: Beasts of prey, two-hoofed animals, elaphants, monkeys, birds, as the fifth (species), animals like camels as the sixth, serpents as the seventh. From his first mouth (i.e. facing the east) he created *Gāyatra*, *ṛks*, and also *Trivṛtsoma* and *Rathantara* and *Agniṣṭoma* of sacrifices. From his mouth facing the south (he created) the *Yajus*-formulae, *Triṣṭubh* metre, and *Stoma*, *Pañcadaśa*, *Bṛhatsāma* and *Uktha*. From his mouth facing the west he created *sāmans*, *Jagati* metre, and *Stoma*, *Saptadaśa*, *Vairūpa* and *Atirāja*. From his mouth facing the north, he created *Ekaviṁśa*, *Atharva*, *Āptoryāma*, *Anuṣṭubh*, and *Vairāja*. From the limbs of his body high and low animals were created.

115-116. Having created gods, demons, manes and human beings, the creator again at the beginning of the *kalpa*, created spirits, goblins, gandhavas and groups of celestial nymphs, siddhas, kinnaras, demons, lions, birds, beasts and reptiles.

117. Then Brahmā, supreme ruler, the primary cause, created whatever is unchanging and changing, movable and immovable.

118. Those beings being again and again created, enter upon those acts which they performed before (this) creation (i.e. in the previous creation).

119. Inspired by cruelty and kindness, right or wrong, truth or falsehood, they follow that; therefore each one likes a particular thing.

120. The creator, the lord, himself created diversity and employment among the objects of senses, the beings and (their) bodies.

121. From (i.e. by the authority of) the Vedic words, he, in the beginning, brought about the names and forms, and also the diversity in acts of gods etc.

122. He also gave names to the sages as reported in the Vedas, and also to others according to their respective duties.

123. Since, in the season the characteristics are seen and in the change (that an object goes through) various forms are observed, they are as they occurred in the beginnings of the *yugas*.

124. Desirous of creation, endowed with capacity and impelled by the potency of creation, he again and again brings about creation of this type at the beginning of a *kalpa*.

Bhīṣma said :

125. O brāhmaṇa, please tell me in detail how Brahmā brought about that creation of human beings called *Arvāk-srotas* which you mentioned.

126. (Tell me) O great sage, how he created the castes, and qualities; tell (me) what is said to be the duty of *brāhmaṇas* etc.

Pulastya spoke :

127. O best among the Kurus, formerly from the mouth of Brahmā, thinking of virtue and desiring to create, beings enhanced with virtue were created.

128. From his chest (sprang up those) who were enhanced with activity and others and from his thigh those who were enhanced with activity and ignorance.

129-130. Brahmā then created from his feet other beings. All those are dominated by ignorance. From it, O best of kings, castes have come : *Brāhmaṇa*, *Kṣatriya*, *Vaiśya*, and *Śūdra* have sprung up from his feet, thighs, chest and mouth (in the reverse order).

131. Brahmā did all this for the accomplishment of sacrifice. O great king, the four-fold caste is the best means of sacrifice.

132. Gods are satisfied by sacrifice; human beings by gift of rain; for this reason religious sacrifices are the cause of well-being.

133. They are accomplished by good human beings always engaged in good acts, keeping away from opposite (i.e. bad) conduct and going along the good path.

134. O king, from humanity men obtain (i.e. go to) heaven and salvation. O lord, human beings go to the place which is liked by them.

135-136. O best king, for the steadiness of the fourfold caste Brahmā created these beings duly, pure and of a good

conduct, living where they liked, destitute of all afflictions, of pure hearts, pure and spotless due to the practice of religion.

137. When Hari is well-settled in their pure minds and hearts, they, by that see that place called Brahman of pure knowledge.

138-139. Then that place of the nature of the Supreme Spirit is called the abode of Viriñca. O best king, *Tamas* (darkness), cause of falling into the mundane existence, extremely fearful, having little worth, the seed of unrighteousness, arising out of greed, and cause of the series of attachment etc. (springs up) in the beings.

140-141. Then the natural superhuman power does not quite arise in them. O king, there are eight other superhuman powers like subduing (others). When all of them become exhausted and sin increases, then the beings become afflicted with pain due to being overpowered by the pairs of opposite qualities.

142. Then they put up forts: in forests, on mountains, or in water they built forts, cities and villages.

143. O highly intelligent one, in the cities etc. they put up, according to propriety, houses for protection from afflictions like cold and heat.

144. After shunning cold etc. these beings again employed agriculture and manual labour as a result of their acts.

145-146. Rice, barley, and wheat, *aṇu*, sesamum, long pepper, *kovidāra* (trees), *kodrava* (grains) with grams, beans, *masūra* (pulse), *niṣpāva*, *kulutthaka* (pulse), *aḍhaka* (grains), grams and hemp are said to be seventeen.

147. These, O king, are the species of plants in a village. There are fourteen plants used for sacrifice and found in a village and a forest.

148-149. Rice with barley, beans, wheat, *aṇu*, sesamum with *priyaṅgu* as the seventh and *kulutthaka* (pulse) as the eighth. *Śyāmāka* grain, wild rice, peas, *gavedhu* (grass), bamboo-seeds are mentioned. So also *markataka* grain.

150. These fourteen plants are said to be found in a village and a forest. So also for the accomplishment of a sacrifice they are an excellent means.

151-153. Along with the sacrifice they are also a great cause (of the nourishment) of beings. Therefore, the wise,

who know the higher and the lower, perform sacrifices. O best king, performing sacrifices daily is useful to men desiring fruit (of the sacrifices); and for whom, O highly intelligent one, the *papābindu* created by time set the limit according to their position and qualities.

154. O best among the religious people, he prescribed the duties of castes and the stages of life and the worlds men properly practising the duties of their castes (would go to).

155-157. O king, the place of the *brāhmaṇas* (i.e. the place which the *brāhmaṇas* reach) is said to be of Prajāpati (i.e. Brahmaloka); of *kṣatriyas* not returning (i.e. not fleeing away) from the battle (the place) is that of Indra; of *vaiśyas* who follow their duties the place is of Vāyu; and for *śūdras* who adhere to (remain well in) service the place is that of Gandharvas. That place which is said to be of (i.e. reached by) the eightyeight thousand sages remaining in perpetual celibacy is also of (i.e. reached by) celibate students living with their teachers.

158-164. That place which is said to be of the Seven Sages is also said to be of (i.e. reached by) the anchorites. The place of (i.e. reached by) the householders is of Prajāpati and the place of (i.e. reached by) the ascetics is called Brahma. The place of (i.e. reached by) the yogins is the immortal place—the highest place of Brahman; of the yogins always remaining in secluded places constantly exerting and meditating, the highest place is the one which the wise (alone) see. The planets like the moon and the sun go and come; but those who are intent upon Nārāyaṇa do not return even now. For those who condemn the Vedas and create obstacles in (the performance of) sacrifices and who give up their duties, the place that is told is the terrible *Tāmisra*, *Andhatāmisra*, *Mahāraurava*, *Raurava*, *Asipatravana*, *Kālasūtra* and *Avīcimat*. Then from him who meditated, the mind-born beings sprang up. From the limbs of the intelligent one, souls came up along with sense-organs produced from his body and remaining there.

165. All those whom I have enumerated before sprang up: beginning with gods and ending with the immovable, and remaining in the sphere of the three constituents (of *Prakṛti* viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*).

166-169. Thus the beings—immovable and movable—were created. When all these created beings of that intelligent one increased, then he created other mind-born sons like himself: Bhṛgu, myself (i.e. Pulastya), Pulaha, Kratu and Aṅgiras also; Marīci, Dakṣa and Atri, and Vasiṣṭha. In the Purāṇa they are determined to be the nine Brahmās. Sanandana and others who were formerly created by the creator did not take interest in the worlds, as they were indifferent to (raising) progeny.

170-171. All of them were having knowledge, were free from attachment, and void of hatred. When they were thus indifferent to the creation of the world, Brahmā entertained great anger capable of burning the three worlds. From his wrath the series of burning flames arose. The flame (from the anger) of Brahmā was (capable of) burning all the three worlds.

172-173. From his forehead, with the eyebrows knit and blazing with anger sprang up Rudra, huge, resembling the mid-day sun, having a large body, consisting of half male and half female.

174. 'Divide yourself'. Saying so, Brahmā then vanished. Thus addressed, he divided himself into two (forms)—female and male.

175. He divided the male form into ten and one; and the female into mild and harsh and tranquil forms.

176-180. He also divided himself into many forms black and white. Then Brahmā appointed the self-existent one, the lord, the former Svāyambhuva Manu, who was but his own self, for begetting progeny. That Manu, named Svāyambhuva, the lord, took that lady Śatarūpā, with her sins completely washed, as his wife. From that supreme being, goddess Śatarūpā gave birth to (two sons, viz.) Priyavrata and Uttānapāda; (and two daughters, viz.) Prasūti and Ākūti. First he gave Prasūti (in marriage) to Dakṣa and Ākūti to Ruci. That Prajāpati (Ruci) accepted her (i.e. Ākūti). From that couple, O great one, Yajña, the son, along with Dakṣiṇā, was then born.

181. Twelve sons were born to Dakṣiṇā from Yajña. They were called Yama-devas, in the Svāyambhuva Manu (period).

182. In the same way, Dakṣa begot twentyfour daughters on Prasūti. Hear from me their correct names.

183-185. Śraddhā, Lakṣmī, Dhṛti, Puṣṭi, Tuṣṭi, Medhā, Kriyā; and also Buddhi, Lajjā, Vapu, Śānti, Ṛddhi, and Kīrti as the thirteenth. Dharma, the lord, accepted these daughters of Dakṣa as his wives. The remaining eleven, fine-eyed (daughters who were) younger than these were: Khyāti, Satī and Sambhūti, (also) Smṛti, Prīti, and Kṣamā, Sannati, Anasūyā, Ūrjā, Svāhā, and Svadhā.

186-187. O best king, the sages Bhṛgu, Bhava, Marīci, Aṅgiras, I (i.e. Pulastya), (and) Kratu—the excellent sage—and also Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Vahni, and the *pitṛs* married these daughters viz. Khyāti and others.

188-190. Śraddhā gave birth to a son, viz. Kāma, Lakṣmī to Bala, Dhṛti to Niyama; Tuṣṭi also gave birth to Santoṣa, and Puṣṭi to Lobha; Medhā to Śruta, Kriyā to Daṇḍa, Naya and Vinaya; Vapu gave birth to a son, viz. Vyavasāya; Śānti to Kṣema; (these and) Sukha, Ṛdhhi, Yaśas, Kīrti, are the sons of Dharma.

191. Nandī gave birth to Harṣa, Dharma's grandson from Kāma. Adharma's wife was Hiṁsā, who begot Anṛta and a daughter, viz. Nikṛti.

192-193. From the two (i.e. Anṛta and Nikṛti) were born Bhaya and Naraka; and also the pair Māyā and Vedanā. From the two Māyā brought forth Mṛtyu, who takes away (the lives of) the beings, and from Raurava Vedanā brought forth Duḥkha.

194. From Mṛtyu were born Vyādhi, Jarā, Śoka, Tṛṣṇā, and Krodha. All these are said to be accompanied by Duḥkha and are characterised by unrighteousness.

195-196. They do not have wives or sons, and all of them live in perpetual celibacy. O prince, these are Brahmā's terrible forms. They constantly become the cause of the destruction of the world. I shall (now) tell (you) the creation of Rudra as brought about by Brahmā.

197-199. When, at the beginning of the *kalpa*, he was thinking of a son, a boy, blue-red in complexion, and crying melodiously, arose from him. Out of pity, O king, god (Brahmā) said to him who was crying: 'Why are you crying?' He replied to the creator : 'Give me a name'. (Brahmā said:)

'On account of your crying, you are named Rudra. Do not weep; have courage'.

200-204. Thus addressed, he cried seven times. So the lord gave him seven other names; and for his eight forms he fashioned eight places. The creator said to Rudra (called) Bhava, Śarva, Īśāna, Paśupati, Bhīma, Ugra, and Mehādeva: 'The sun, water, earth, fire, air and the sky, the initiated brāhmaṇa and Soma—these are your bodies respectively'. Rudra, thus characterised, obtained Satī as his wife. That Satī gave up her body due to the wrath of Dakṣa. O best king, she became the daughter of Himālaya (born) from Menā.

205-206. Lord Bhava, soliciting her again, married her. Khyāti, the daughter of Dakṣa, gave birth to Dhātā and Vidhātā; and to Śrī, the wife of Lord Nārāyaṇa.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Birth of Lakṣmi

Bhiṣma said :

1. I have heard that Lakṣmī was born in the white ocean. How did you say that she was born of Khyāti from Bhṛgu ?

2. How did the auspicious daughter of Dakṣa give up her body ? And how was she conceived by Menā and born as Umā ?

3. Why did the lord of lords take Himālaya's daughter as his wife ? And why did he have hostility with Dakṣa ? May the revered one tell this to me.

Pulastya said :

4. O king, listen to this (account) since you have now asked me. I have heard about this connection of Śrī (with Bhṛgu and Khyāti) from Brahmā.

5-10. Durvāsas, Atri's son, wandering over this earth, saw a fragant, auspicious, garland in the hand of a Vidyādharī. He solicited her for it (saying) : 'Give it to me. I shall place it in the mass of my matted hair'. Thus the Vidyādharī was asked

by him. O king, being pleased, she then gave that garland to him. Taking it, he tied it to his head for a long time, and the brāhmaṇa looking like a mad ghost, said this :

'I saw the Vidyādhari maiden, with stout, high breasts, and having charm due to brilliant ornaments; and then my mind gets perturbed today; and I am not skilled in sex. So exhibiting my good fortune, I shall go somewhere else'. O king, saying so, he wandered over the earth.

11-12. Taking from his own head that garland with intoxicating bees hovering over it, he threw it at the bright lord of gods, king of the three worlds, Śacī's husband, mounted upon Airāvata.

13. Taking that garland, the king of gods, put it on the head of the elephant. There it shone like Ganges on Kailāsa.

14. The elephant, with his eyes blinded by intoxication, held the garland in his trunk for smelling its fragrance, and hurled it on the earth.

15-16. Then Durvāsas, the best of the sages, got angry; and, O king, being angry, said to the king of gods : 'O you Indra, with your mind (turned) wicked due to the intoxication of splendour, you are very stiff, since you do not rejoice at the garland, the abode of wealth, given by me.

17-23. Since you threw the garland given by me on the earth, therefore, O fool, the prosperity of the world will perish. Therefore, these three worlds of you, with their wealth perished, will stand perished. O lord of gods, you have slighted me, of whom, when angered, the movable and the immovable are afraid'. Indra, hastily getting down from the elephant's body, propitiated the sinless sage Durvāsas. Being pleased by (Indra's) prostrations, the brāhmaṇa left, saying: 'I won't pardon you; what is the use of talking too much ?' The lord of gods also, mounted upon that elephant, and went to Amarāvatī. Since then these three worlds, along with Indra, were void of affluence. Sacrifices were not performed; ascetics did not practise penance; and gifts were not given; the world had almost perished.

24. When thus the three worlds had become void of affluence and deprived of energy, the Daityas (sons of Diti) and Dānavas (sons of Danu) started military operations against gods.

25-31. The Daityas defeated gods; and Indra and others led by Agni, took refuge with the illustrious Brahmā. Being correctly informed by gods, Brahmā likewise spoke to them. With them he went to the northern shore of the white ocean. Having gone there, the revered Brahmā said to Vāsudeva : "Quickly get up and do whatever is good for the gods. Without you, the gods (would be) repeatedly defeated by the Dānavas." Viṣṇu, the supreme being, having eyes like lotuses, thus addressed, looking at the gods, in an unprecedented poise, said: "O gods, I shall nourish you with strength. I shall tell you what should be done by you. Bringing all herbs (and putting them) into the Milky Ocean, and making Vāsuki the string of the churning rod, O gods, with me to help you, churn out, along with the Daityas, the nectar (from the ocean)."

32. Talking to the Daityas in an appeasing manner about that operation (of churning the ocean) (he said to them) "Here you will share the fruit equally."

33-34. (To the gods he said): "O gods, by drinking the nectar which will come up when the ocean will be churned you will become strong. I shall, O gods, act in such a way that the enemies of gods will not obtain nectar (but will) merely suffer anguish."

35. All those gods thus addressed by the lord of gods, entering into a league with the Asuras, exerted to get nectar.

36-37. Gods, Daityas and Dānavas, having collected all herbs threw them into the water of the ocean which was bright like spotless autumnal sky, and having made Mandara mountain the churning rod and Vāsuki, the string of the churning rod, O best king, they started churning (the ocean).

38. All the gods remained (on that side) where the tail (of Vāsuki) was. Viṣṇu put the Daityas (on the side of the) forepart of (the body of) Vāsuki.

39. O you, lustrous like a god, all the Asuras deprived of lustre by his (Vāsuki's) breath and fire became powerless.

40. The gods became stout by the showering clouds produced by that breath on the region of (Vāsuki's) tail.

41-49. In the ocean, revered Brahmā, best among the wise, and Mahādeva of great lustre, remained on the back of Viṣṇu. Brahmā, tormenter of the enemies, holding the Mandara

(mountain) with both hands, and preparing a couple of chains for holding the Mandara (mountain) remained between the hosts of gods and demons (Dānavas). Viṣṇu himself, remaining in the ocean in the form of a tortoise, nourished the gods with unusual lustre. Then, when the Milky Ocean was being churned by gods and demons, first a fragrant receptacle of oblation honoured by gods, became (manifest). O highly intelligent one, the gods and the demons were then glad. Their minds were distracted and their eyes were motionless. While the Siddhas (semi-divine beings possessing eight supernatural powers) were thinking in heaven 'What is this ?', the goddess Vāruṇī became (manifest). Her eyes were rolling about due to intoxication. Then turning round from there, and faltering at every step, and having only one garment (on her person), with hair let loose, with her eyes motionless, and their corners red (she said) : "I am a goddess giving strength. The demons may take me". Regarding Vāruṇī as impure, the gods let her go. Then the demons took her. She became wine after being taken (by them).

50-54. During the churning, Pārijāta, the wealth of gods, the tree in the paradise, appeared; then came up the hosts of sixty crores of celestial nymphs, (to be) common to gods and demons; and all of them were determined to be common (i.e. available) to the doer of a religious act. Then the moon, delighting the gods, came up. God Śaṅkara implored: "(This) moon will be undoubtedly the ornament of my matted hair; I have taken him". Brahmā agreed to his being the ornament of Hara. Then the deadly poison (came up). By it all gods and demons with (other) deities were afflicted.

55. Mahādeva took and drank that poison at his will. Due to drinking it Mahādeva had his throat turned dark blue.

56. The Nāgas drank the remaining poison that had come up from the White Ocean. Then Dhanvantari himself holding a white umbrella sprang up.

57. He came up holding a pitcher full of nectar. Then the gods became at ease at the sight of the lord of physicians.

58-59. Then the horse (viz. Uccaiḥśravas) and the elephant Airāvata came up. Then goddess Śrī with throbbing lustre and seated upon a blooming lotus, and holding a lotus came from

that water. The great sages joyfully praised her with the hymn (called) Śrī-sūkta.

60. Gandharvas led by Viśvāvasu sang before her and the hosts of celestial nymphs headed by Ghṛtācī danced there.

61-62. The rivers, Ganges and others, came there for (giving Lakṣmī) a bath with their water. The quarter-elephants bringing pure water in golden pots, bathed the goddess, the great ruler of all the worlds. The Milky Sea himself gave her a garland of unblooming lotuses. Viśvakarmā put ornaments on her body.

63-66. The hosts of gods like Indra, the Vidyādharas and great snakes, demons (Dānavas), great Daityas, Rākṣasas with Guhyakas, longed for that maiden, who had bathed, put on divine flowers and garments and was adorned with ornaments. Then Brahmā said: "O Vāsudeva, you alone accept her, offered by me to you. The gods and demons have been forbidden by me in this case (i.e. from seeking her hand). I am pleased with your steady performance."

67. And the goddess was (thus) addressed by Brahmā: "O goddess, go to Keśava; obtaining the bridegroom given by me, be happy for many years."

68. When all gods were watching, she resorted to Hari's bosom. Then reaching the bosom she said (these) words to the god (Viṣṇu) :

69. "O dear to all the world, I am not to be forsaken by you. Being always obedient to you I shall stay on your bosom."

70-71. Then O best king, the gods seen by Lakṣmī, who had resorted to Viṣṇu's bosom, suddenly became very glad, but the Daityas (demons) who were opposed to Viṣṇu, became extremely dejected. Lakṣmī shunned the Dānavas (demons) led by Vipracitti.

72. Then the very powerful Daityas, full of sin seized the nectar which was in the hands of Dhanvantari.

73-75. But Viṣṇu, taking a female form, and alluring the Dānavas with a trick, approaching them, said: "Give the pitcher to me; being obedient to you I shall stay in your house." Seeing that beautiful lady, most lovely in the three worlds and of a charming body, they, with their minds overpowered by greed and longing for her, gave her that nectar and looked in front.

76. Taking that nectar from the Dānavas, Viṣṇu gave it to the gods. Then the hosts of gods led by Śakra drank that nectar.

77. With their weapons and swords raised, the Daityas attacked them. The army of Daityas was then vanquished by gods being mighty after having drunk the nectar.

78-79. Being killed (by gods) they turned to (different) quarters and entered the nether world. Then gods, being glad, saluting (Viṣṇu), the holder of the conch, disc, and mace, repaired, as before, to heaven. Since then, O Bhīṣma, the Dānavas have become eager for (the company of) ladies.

80-84. Mentally cursed by Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) they went to the lower world. Then the Sun of pleasing lustre, moved along his path. Fire, of charming brilliance blazed aloft and all the beings entertained regard for righteousness and the three worlds endowed with Śrī were protected by Viṣṇu. Then the gods were addressed by Brahmā, preserver of the world:

"I have appointed Viṣṇu and the chief of gods, Lord of Umā, for your protection. And since they are propitious to you when waited upon, they will look after your welfare, and they, taking care of your well-being will grant you boons."

85-86. Saying so the lord went his way. When the grandsire of all the worlds vanished and when Indra went to heaven, that moment Viṣṇu and Śaṅkara reached Vainkuṇṭha and Kailāsa.

87. Then the king of gods protected the three worlds. Thus glorious Lakṣmī sprang up from the Milky Ocean.

88-90. O great king, this eternal one (i.e. Lakṣmī) was again born with great splendour to Khyāti from Bhṛgu. The great sage Bhṛgu first made his capital, named after her, on the bank of the river Narmadā, and was approved by Brahmā.

Having given her city along with its key to her father, she came to the divine world and coming back again asked her father to return it.

91. When she did not get back the city given to Bhṛgu from him through greed, though she asked for it, then she said to Viṣṇu:

92. "I have been humiliated by my father; he has taken my city. Snatching it from him, give it to me."

93. The lord, with lotus-like eyes and holding the disc and mace, going to Bhṛgu spoke courteously to him:

94. "Give the city to your daughter. Be gracious; give to her both the key and the lock (of the city)." Being angry Bhṛgu said to him :

95. "I will not give her the city. O god, it is not Lakṣmī's city. I myself have fashioned it. Sir, I will not give it. Stop censuring me."

96. Again the lord said to him : "Give the city to Lakṣmī. By all means, O great sage, by my order you have to give it up."

97-98. Then, overcome with anger, Bhṛgu too said to Keśava: "O good one, due to your partiality for your wife, you are now harassing me. O Madhusūdana, you will have ten births in the human world. You will experience many agonies by separation from your wife."

99. Bhṛgu, extremely angry, thus cursed him. The noble Viṣṇu too, cursed him back.

100. "O best sage, you will not get the affection of your children." Having (thus) cursed the sage, he went to the world of Brahmā.

101-103. Seeing him (i.e. Brahmā), who was born from the lotus, Keśava said : "Sir, this your son Bhṛgu is very irascible. Without any reason he has cursed me: 'You will have ten births in the human world (as a human being), and as a result of that (you will) (suffer from) miseries of many kinds, (and have) suffering due to the separation from your wife, which would destroy your might and valour.' Leaving this world, I shall lie in the great ocean.

104-105. Invoke me for all divine missions". In order to please Viṣṇu, who was speaking thus, Brahmā, the lord of the world of gods, thus praised him: "You created this world, and the lotus issued from (your) navel. I was born there, and am your servant, O Keśava.

106. O lord, you are the protector of all the worlds, and the creator of the universe. You should not leave the three worlds. This alone is my wish.

107. With the desire for the well-being of the worlds, you

live for ten existences among human beings. You are the independent author. Nobody is capable of cursing you.

108. Who is this Bhṛgu ? How is it possible for him to curse (you) ? Always honour the brāhmaṇas; the brāhmaṇas are your own body.

109. Resort to light sleep (i.e. Viṣṇu's sleep at the end of a yuga) O lord; lie in the Milky Ocean. At the time of performing a mission, I shall wake you up.

110-112. Sir, this Śakra, grown by your power and killer of enemies, doing all your deeds as your secondary incarnation, will protect the three worlds; he will obey your order". Viṣṇu, thus praised, said to Brahmā : "I shall do all that you ask me (to do) O lord." The lord (Viṣṇu) disappeared; Brahmā did not notice it.

113. When lord Viṣṇu had left, lord Brahmā, the grandsire of the worlds, the source of the worlds, again created the world.

114. Seeing that, Nārada, the best among those conversant with speech, said (these) words: "The supreme being, with a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet, all-pervading, remained ten fingers above the touch of the earth.

115. Since you are whatever is past and whatever is future, therefore, O father, all this has come up from you, and will come up from you.

116. From you has come up Sacrifice with everything, such as the oblation, the ghee mixed with coagulated milk, and the beasts of two kinds. *Ṛks* and *Sāmans* have sprung up from you.

117. Sacrifices have come up from you, and also the elephants; cows have sprung up from you, and also birds and wild beasts.

118. From your mouth the *brāhmvṇas* came up; the *kṣatriyas* are born from you. The *vaiśyas* have been born from your thighs and the *śūdras* have come up from your feet.

119-121. From your eyes the sun came up; the wind has come from your ear; the moon (has sprung up) from your mind. Breath (has proceeded) from your internal cavity, and fire from your mouth. The sky came up from your navel, and the heaven from your head; quarters from your ear; the earth

from your feet; all this has come up from you. As the great fig-tree (the *Nyagrodha* tree) remains well in a small seed, so all this has come up (from you) with you as the seed.

122. As the fig-tree rises from the seed and the sprout, and grows, in the same way the world rises and grows from you.

123. As the plantain tree and nothing else is beheld from the barks and leaves, similarly, O lord, all this is seen to be residing in you.

124. In you is the pleasing power; it alone has come up with you. In you, free from qualities, the mixed power causing joy and affliction does not exist.

125. Salutation to you, who have remained separately and unitedly, and you who are all the beings. You are the manifest, the (unmanifest) *Pradhāna*, your first progeny (*Virāṭa Puruṣa*) and the universal lord.

126. In everything you are the all-in-all; you are everything, and you take up all forms; everything has come up from you; salutation to you, the soul of all.

127. O lord of all, you are the soul of everything, since you are present in all beings; what shall I tell you, since you know everything that is in (our) mind.

128. O lord, you have fulfilled the desire which I had. My penance is well-practised, as I have seen you, O lord of the world."

Brahmā said:

129. Son, that is the fruit of your penance that you have seen me now. Here, O Nārada, seeing me would not be in vain.

130. Therefore, ask for a boon of your liking. Everything is accomplished, O son, when I am seen.

Nārada said:

131. O sire, O lord of all beings, you remain in the heart of everyone. Is, what is mentally desired by me, not known to you?

132. O lord, I have seen the creation of the world as done by you. Therefore, seeing the gods, sages and demons, curiosity has sprung up in me.

Pulastya said :

133-134. God Brahmā, the lord of heaven, father of Nārada, was pleased, and gave a boon to Nārada: "You are the best among the sages. Due to my favour you will be fond of jesting and promoting discords, and you will move freely in the heaven, on the earth and in the nether region.

135. O sinless one, your ornaments will be, along with the sacred thread, a cloth thrown over the back, and hanging down the knees, a small umbrella, and a lute.

136. You will always obtain affection in the presence of (i.e. from) Viṣṇu, Rudra, and Śakra, and in the regions of kings.

137. You will be the instructor of the castes. This is the boon I have granted you, O sinless one. Live in heaven at your sweet will with gods waiting upon you."

CHAPTER FIVE

Destruction of Dakṣa's Sacrifice

Bhiṣma said:

1. How did Satī, Dakṣa's auspicious daughter, cast off her body ? For what reason was Dakṣa's sacrifice destroyed by Rudra ?

2. I have also a desire to know why lord Śiva, the destroyer of Tripura and greatly renowned, got angry.

Pulastya spoke :

3-8. O Bhīṣma, in olden time, Dakṣa commenced a sacrifice at Haridvāra. There hosts of gods, Pitṛs (manes), and great sages, all gods with Indra, Nāgas, Yakṣas, Suparṇas, creepers and herbs, and revered Kaśyapa, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Pracetas, Aṅgiras and Vasiṣṭha of great penance had assembled. Making the altar even, he appointed four priests. Vasiṣṭha was the Hotṛ (reciting the Ṛgvedic prayers at the sacrifice); Aṅgiras was the best Adhvaryu (officiating priest); Bṛhaspati was the Udgātṛ (chanting the hymns of Sāmaveda)

and Nārada the Brahmā (-priest). When the sacrifice commenced and oblations were offered into fires, all the Vasus and the twelve Ādityas, the two Aśvins, Maruts and the fourteen Manus arrived there.

9-11. When thus the sacrifice proceeded and (oblations were) offered into fires, then seeing that great bright splendour of food and the ground around upto ten yojanas, and the great altar prepared by all that had gathered there, and seeing, at the sacrifice, all gods led by Śakra, the auspicious Satī, spoke the following words to Prajāpati.

Sati said:

12. King of gods, Indra, mounted on Airāvata, has come with his wife Śacī, and has stayed here.

13. He, who curbs sins and who is by nature the lord of the virtuous, has arrived here with his wife Dhūmorṇā.

14. God Varuṇa (also called) Pracetas, lord of the aquatic animals and the creators of the world, has come to this pavilion along with his wife Gaurī,

15. The lord of wealth (i.e. Kubera), the supreme ruler of all the Yakṣas, and the son of the sage Viśravas, has come here with his wife Sahadevī.

16-17. He, who is the mouth of all gods, who resides in the bellies of all creatures, and for whom the sacrifices have come up, he, Nirṭī, the lord of the Rākṣasas, who has been appointed as the lord of the (south-western) direction, O dear father, has come to this sacrifice with his wife.

18-19. Lord Vāyu, the giver of life in this world, and created in olden time by Brahmā, and known as Prāṇa, Apāna, Vyāna, Udāna (and) Samāna, and surrounded by his fortynine attendants, has come to this sacrifice.

20-21. Bhāskara (the Sun), having twelve souls, lord of the planets, the (two) eyes of the world, and the best resort of the gods, the lord of life, of the forests and the lord of days, the husband of Saṁjñā and the purifier of the worlds, has come here.

22-23. Your Moon, born in the family of Atri, and lord of the brāhmaṇas, of great fame, delighting the eyes, lord of the

world, by all means the master of the herbs and creepers on the earth, the lord of the constellations, has arrived here with his wife.

24-28. The eight Vasus have come; the two Aśvins have arrived; and Trees, Herbs, Gandharvas and the groups of the celestial nymphs, Vidyādharas, groups of ghosts, vampires, Yakṣas and demons, goblins of horrible deeds, and others who take away life, great rivers, and streams, oceans and islands, with mountains, and wild beasts, as well as the movable and the immovable, revered Kaśyapa, Atri, and Vasiṣṭha with other (sages), and great sages like Pulastya, Pulaha and Sanaka and others, righteous royal sages, and also the kings of the earth, all people of various castes and of the orders of life, and all labourers (have arrived here).

29-30. What is the use of prolixity in this case? The creation of Brahmā has come here. Sisters, their sons and their brothers-in-law with their wives and sons, (and) with their relatives, all these—who have been honoured by you with gifts, regards and with attendants (are assembled here).

31. You have honoured all who were invited by you; but my revered husband alone has not come.

32. All this appears to me to be void without him. I think you have not invited my husband.

33-37. In all probability you have forgotten him. Tell me everything.

Pulastya said:

Having heard the words uttered by her, Dakṣa Prajāpati, placing that virtuous, magnanimous young woman on his lap, solemnly said to her, who was devoted to her husband, and was full of love for him, the one more important to her than her own life, who desired what was dear to and good for her husband: "My dear child, hear precisely why your husband was not invited. He holds the pot of skull; puts on a hide; his body is covered over with ashes; holds a trident; has a garland of heads round his neck; is naked; and always rejoices in the cemetery; he always rubs his body with ashes.

38-41. He puts on a tiger's hide, and has a garment of

elephant's skin. On his head there is a string of skulls and he has in his hand, a club with a skull at its top and has a snake tied round his waist; has put a ring round his organ of generation; has made Vāsuki, the lord of serpents, his sacred thread. He always moves in this form on the earth. (He has with him) many naked attendants, goblins, and groups of creatures. He has three eyes, a trident, and is always engaged in music and dance. Your husband always does similar (other) contemptible things.

42. (He) in the presence of gods would cause shame to me. What kind of garment does he have? He does not honour (i.e. care for) a residence.

43. O child, due to these faults and fearing public censure I have not invited him, O my daughter.

44-45. After this sacrifice is over, bringing your husband and honouring him with you, I shall offer the three-eyed one, with respects, a worship uncommon in the three worlds. I have told you this great reason for (my) shame.

46-49. You should not be angry for this; everyone should have what he deserves. O daughter, those who have done any good or bad deed in a previous existence, get its fruit like (i.e. according to) that in this existence. Seeing other's prosperity, charming with grace and good fortune, do not get excited· enjoy the fruit of (what was) done formerly. O you virtuous lady, appearance, beauty and blessedness, delightful ornaments, and birth in a great family, and extremely handsome body—all these are obtained by men due to good fortune.

50-51. Do not censure yourself, O virtuous lady, nor blame your destiny. This is the destined fruit. Who can give it to whom? No one is strong, or foolish, or wise. Wisdom or power comes due to former deeds.

52. These gods have secured heaven, and the shining ones have remained there and in various fields, for a long time by means of religious merit and penance.

53-57. They enjoy the fruit of the religious merit that they have earned."

Thus addressed, that chaste lady, full of terrible wrath, with her eyes red with anger, and condemning her father (said): "O father, it is as you told me. Every person partakes of his

religious merit; gets wealth by means of his merit; gets birth as a result of his religious merit; and enjoyments have their basis in religious merit. Therefore he is the lord of the worlds, and the best of the best. By him, the intelligent one, these positions are given to all these. That highest god has those virtues which even the tongue of the Creator is unable to narrate.

58. The ashes, bones, skulls, residence in a cemetery, the serpents like gonasa, evil spirits, his attendants, ghosts, fiends, Guhyakas are his ornaments.

59-64. He is the author and the creator; he guards the quarters. By the favour of Rudra, Indra attained heaven. If there is godhead in Rudra, if Śiva is omnipotent, then truly Śaṅkara should destroy your sacrifice. If I have some penance (to my credit), or if I have moral merit, then by the fruit of that merit your sacrifice will perish. If I am dear to the lord, if he will liberate me, then truly your pride will come to an end."

Speaking thus, and contemplating the supreme spirit, she burnt herself with the lustre residing in her body, while the gods, demons, serpents, Gandharvas, attendants and Guhyakas said: "Oh ! what is this, what is this ?"

65. Then she, the angry one, cast her body on the bank of the Ganges. That sacred place called *Saunaka* is on the western bank of the Ganges.

66. Hearing that news, Rudra, extremely pained at the loss of his wife, thought of destroying the sacrifice even when the gods were watching it.

67. For the destruction of Dakṣa's sacrifice, the crores of his attendants were ordered; and also the evil demons, the followers of Gajānana, the spirits, ghosts and fiends (were ordered).

68. Having gone (to the place of the sacrifice) they vanquished all gods; caused them to flee. When the sacrifice was destroyed, Dakṣa became devoid of energy and inactive.

69-70. Being alarmed, he approached Śaṅkara, the god of gods, and said to him: "I did not know your true character as the lord and master of the gods. You are the lord of this world,

and gods are conquered by you. O great lord, favour me and withdraw all your attendants.

71-77. The sacrifice has gone to the heaven after being caused to fly away by your brave attendants of various kinds, of various mouths, teeth and lips, ready with various kinds of weapons, shining with matted hair, being bitten (i.e. touched) by many great serpents, full of intense and excessive pride, terrible, and hitting terribly, taking forms according to their desire, ugly-looking, having all desires, having invincible power, fearful, having armours, and moving trickishly, having unsteady matted hair, their laughing faces looking fierce due to the fangs, having great energy like the cheeks of elephants (?), having bodies like lions, and some of them stinking with madness and staggering like lamp (-flames) having quivering brilliance. (They are) crying like beasts, tigers, and lions, wearing hides like hyenas, using the wreaths of sepents as sacred threads, holding lances, swords and sharp-edged spears, carrying in their hands hatchets and barbed missiles, and destructive weapons, saws, bows and (other) fatal missiles.

78. Sacrifice, surrounded by very invincible powerful attendants like the sun with planets, O Śaṅkara, and taking the form of a deer, and being frightened, fled and went to heaven.

79-80. My saluation to the god resembling a conch, accompanied by his attendants, and by Nandi. My salutation to Soma, seated on a bull, and the destroyer of the sacrifice and time, and to him having the quarters as his garments, and to him of strong lustre.

81-87. My salutation to Brahmā, Brahmaṇya, having the body of Brahmā, to the unlimited one, to Girīśa, to the lord of gods, and to Īśāna, to Rudra, to him resembling the thunderbolt, to Śiva, to Krathana, to the lord of the gods, and of demons and sages; to Dhūmogra, Virūpa, Yajvan, to the one of a fearful form, to Virūpākṣa, Aśubhākṣa, and Sahasrākṣa; to Muṇḍa, Caṇḍamuṇḍa, the holder of an excellent club with a skull at the top, to Kavyarūpa, Havya, and the destroyer of all; my salutation to (the lord), compassionate to his devotees and to him praised by the muttered prayer (addressed) to Rudra; to Virūpa, Sarūpa, to him who takes hundreds of forms; my salutation to Pañcāsya, Śubhāsya and Candrāsya, to the giver of

boons, to Varāha, to Kūrma and to Mṛga; to him having a sportive lock of hair, and to the holder of a water-pot, to Viśvanāman, to Viśva and to Viśveśa.

88. O three-eyed one, O destroyer of Tripura, give protection to us (and to me) who have taken refuge in you, through sincerity of speech, mind and body."

89. The lord, thus praised by Dakṣa, with his body afflicted, and propitiated very much with this divine eulogy (said):

90. "O Prajāpati, I have given you the entire fruit of the sacrifice. You will get its excellent fruit leading to the accomplishment of all (your) desires."

91. Thus addressed by the lord, Dakṣa, having saluted the lord of gods, and being watched by Śiva's attendants, went to his residence.

92. (And) then the lord, due to the grief for his wife Satī, and thinking of her—'Where has (my) beloved gone?'—remained at Gaṅgādvāra.

93. Nārada approached him who was overpowered by grief. (He said): "O lord of gods, that Satī, your wife, is dead.

94. She, the knower of the Vedas and their significance, has taken up another body as the daughter of Himavat, born from the womb of Menā."

95. Having heard this, the lord saw her descending into his meditation. Regarding himself blessed, the lord then remained (there).

96. Attaining youth, the goddess married again. Thus, O Bhīṣma, I have told you how the Sacrifice perished in olden times.

CHAPTER SIX

Birth of Devas, Daityas, Birds and Serpents etc.

Bhīṣma said:

1. O sire, tell me duly and in detail, about the birth of gods, demons and of the Gandharvas, serpents and goblins.

Pulastya spoke :

2. The creation in ancient times is said to be effected by volition, sight and touch; (but) the creation after Prācetasa Dakṣa is effected by coitus.

3-4. Listen, O Kaurava, as to how he created (gods etc.): When he was creating groups of gods, sages and serpents, the world did not grow. So Dakṣa generated thousands of sons on his young maid-servant.

5-6. Seeing those magnanimous ones (i.e. Dakṣa's sons), desiring to create various kinds of beings, Nārada said to Dakṣa's sons who approached him:

"O you best sages, knowing the entire measure of the earth up and down, you should (proceed to) create with discrimination."

7. Having heard these words, they went in all directions; and even now have not returned as rivers from the sea.

8. When Haryaśvas had disappeared, Dakṣa Prajāpati again produced a thousand sons on Vīriṇī.

9-10. Those (sons) named Śabalāśva gathered in the act of creation. To them, who went after (i.e. approached) Nārada, the sage told as before:

"Having known the entire extent of the earth, and coming back, you will especially undertake the creation."

11. They followed their brothers along the same path. Since then a younger brother does not desire (to follow) the path of the (elder) brother.

12-16. The one who follows, gets into trouble; therefore, one should avoid it. When they too disappeared, Prācetasa Dakṣa Prajāpati generated sixty daughters on Vīriṇī. He gave (in marriage) ten (daughters) to Dharma, and thirteen to Kaśyapa, twenty-seven to Soma, and four to Ariṣṭanemi, two to Bhṛgu's son, two to intelligent Kṛśāśva, and gave two to Aṅgiras. Hear in detail the names of these mothers of gods and the expanse of mankind from the beginning: Arundhatī, Vasu, Jāmī, Lambā, Bhānu, Marutvatī, Saṅkalpā, Muhūrtā, Sādehyā, and the beautiful Viśvā.

17. These are known to be the wives of Dharma. Know from

me their sons; Viśvedevas were (the sons) of Viśvā, and Sādhyā gave birth to Sādhyas.

18. Marutvāns were born of Marutvatī, and Vasavas of Vasu; Bhānus of Bhānu and Muhūrtajas of Muhūrtā.

19. Those known as Ghoṣa were born of Lambā and Nāgavīthīs were born of Jāmī. Pṛthvītala and Sambhūta were born of Arundhatī.

20-23. Saṁkalpas were born of Saṁkalpā. Understand (now) the progeny of Vasu. Gods, bright and pervading all quarters, are called Vasus. Hear their names from me: Āpa, Dhruva, Soma, Dhara, Anila, Anala, Pratyūṣa and Prabhāsa are known as the eight Vasus. Āpa had four sons: Śrānta, Vaitaṇḍa and Śānta and the sage Babhru—(they were) the officers protecting the sacrifice. Kāla was the son of Dhruva, and Varcas was born from Soma.

24-25. Draviṇa and Havyavāha—these two are said to be the sons of Dhara. Hari's sons were: Kalpāntastha and Prāṇa, Ramaṇa and also Śiśira, as well as the charming Dhava and Śiva. Śiva obtained a son, having the mind's speed and giving (causing) unknown speed.

26. Anala also obtained sons like Śākha, Viśākha—self-existent in (supreme authorities on?) the Vedas—having mostly the qualities of fire.

27. Then Kārtikeya was known to be the child of the Kṛttikās. Ṛbhu, Muni and Devala were the sons of Pratyūṣa.

28-34. Viśvakarmā Prajāpati was the son of Prabhāsa. He was an architect (skilled) in (fashioning) palaces, houses, gardens, images, ornaments, lakes, parks and wells; he also was the carpenter of gods. Ajaikapāda, Ahirbudhnya, Virūpākṣa, Raivata, Hara, Bahurūpa, Tryambaka the lord of gods, Sāvitra, Jayanta, Pinākin, and Aparājita—these eleven, the lords of (Śiva's) attendants, are called Rudra. These mind-born ones and holders of tridents are said to have eightyfour crores of imperishable sons, who, being the principal attendants in all the directions, protect; these are the sons and grandsons born from the womb of Surabhi. I shall name the sons and grandsons of Kaśyapa's wives: Aditi, Diti, Danu, Ariṣṭā, Surasā, Surabhi, Vinatā, Tāmrā, Krodhavaśā, Irā, Kadrū, Khasā, and Muni.

35-39. Hear now the (names of the) sons born from them: Those gods who were known as Tuṣita in the period of Cākṣuṣa Manu were known as the twelve Ādityas in the Vaivasvata period. Indra, Dhātā, Bhaga, Tvaṣṭā, Mitra, Varuṇa, Aryaman, Vivasvān, Savitā, Pūṣan, Aṁśumān, and Viṣṇu—these twelve are thousand-rayed Ādityas. From Kaśyapa, the son of Marīca, were born the sons of Aditi. The sons of the sage Kṛśāśva are known as Devapraharaṇa. These groups of gods, O dear one, are born and perish in the Manu-periods and in each Kalpa.

40. We have heard that Diti got two sons, Hiraṇyakaśipu and Hiraṇyākṣa, from Kaśyapa.

41. Similarly, four sons were born from Hiraṇyakaśipu: Prahlāda, Anuhlāda, Saṁhlāda, and Uhlāda.

42. The sons of Prahlāda were Āyuṣmān, Śibi, and Bāṣkali. The fourth son was Virocana by name. He got a son named Bali.

43. O king, Bali had a hundred sons with Bāṇa as the eldest; and also Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Sūrya, Vivasvān and Aṁśutāpana.

44. Nikumbha, Nāmāgu, Vakṣa, Kukṣi, Bhauma, and Bhīṣaṇa were many other (sons): but the eldest, viz. Bāṇa was preeminent in virtues.

45-47. Bāṇa had a thousand arms, and was endowed with excellence (in the use) of all missiles; and in his city the Trident-holder, pleased by his (i.e. Bāṇa's) penance lived, and his being the destroyer (Mahākāla) of the world became significant. Hiraṇyākṣa's son was Andhaka by name. And Bhūtasantāpana, and Mahānāga also were (his sons). From these were born seventyseven crores of sons and grandsons.

48. They were very powerful, had gigantic bodies and many forms and were very vigorous. From Kaśyapa, Danu obtained a hundred sons proud of boons.

49-53. Among them Vipracitti, of great power, was the chief. (Others were) Dviraṣṭamūrdhā, Śakuni, Śaṅkuśirodhara, Ayomukha, Śambara, Kapila, Vāmana, Marīci, Māgadha, and Hari. Gajaśiras, Nidrādhara, Ketu, Ketuvīrya Taśakratu, Indramitragraha, Vrajanābha, Ekavastra, Mahābāhu, Vajrākṣa, Tāraka, Asiloman, Puloman, Vikurvāṇa, Mahāpura, Svarbhānu, and Vṛṣaparvan—these and others were also Danu's

sons. Suprabhā was Svarbhānu's daughter, and Śacī was the daughter of Puloman.

54. Maya's daughters were Upadānavī, Mandodarī and Kuhū. Vṛṣaparvan's daughters were Sarmiṣṭhā, Sundarī and Caṇḍā.

55. Pulomā and Kālakā were the two daughters of Vaiśvānara; Mārīca's very spirited wife had many children.

56. From the two, sixty thousand Dānavas were born in olden times; Mārīca generated the Paulomas and Kālakhañjas.

57. They, living in Hiraṇyapura, having obtained a boon from Brahmā, were incapable of being killed by men, but were killed by Arjuna.

58-60. Vipracitti begot nine sons on Siṁhikā. Hiraṇyakaśipu's sister's sons were thirteen: Kaṁsa, Śaṁkha, Rājendra, Nala, Vātāpi, Ilvala, Namuci, Khasṛma, Añjana, Naraka, Kālanābha, Paramāṇu and the well-known Kalpavīrya, who exalted Danu's race.

61-63. In the family of the demon Saṁhlāda, (were) born the Nivātakavacas, incapable of being killed by all gods, Gandharvas, serpents and fiends, (but) who were killed in battle by Arjuna resorting to power. From the semen of Mārīca, Tāmrā gave birth to six daughters: Śukī, Śyenī, Bhāsī, Sugṛdhrī, Gṛdhrikā and Śucī. Śukī lawfully gave birth to parrots and owls.

64. Śyenī gave birth to hawks and Bhāsī to ospreys, Gṛdhrī to vultures and Sugṛdhrī to birds like pigeons.

65-67. Śucī gave birth to swans, cranes and ducks. These are said to be the sons of Tāmrā. Listen to (the names of the offspring) of Vinatā: Garuḍa, the best among birds, and Aruṇa, the lord of birds, and daughter Saudāminī well-known in the sky. Sampāti and Jaṭāyu were the two sons of Aruṇa; Sampāti's son was Babhru, who was swift and very well-known.

68. Jaṭāyu's famous sons were Karṇikāra and Śatagāmin. From them innumerable sons and grandsons of birds were born.

69. A thousand serpents were formerly born on Surasā. Kadrū, of a good vow, obtained a thousand (sons), the Nāgas.

70-74. Of them, O subduer of enemies, twentysix prominent ones are famous: Śeṣa, Vāsuki, Karkoṭa, Śaṅkha, Airāvata, Kambala, Dhanañjaya, Mahānīla, Padma, Aśvatara, Takṣaka, Elāpatra,

Mahāpadma, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Balāhaka, Śaṅkhapāla, Mahāśaṅkha, Puṣpadaṃṣṭra, Śubhānana, Śaṅkha, Romāca, Nahuṣa, Ramaṇa, Paṇina, Kapila, Durmukha, and Patañjali. These had innumerable sons and grandsons, who were mostly burnt in the abode of Janamejaya. Krodhavaśā gave birth to the well-known group of demons.

75-76. A lakh of these snakes perished at the hands of Bhīmasena. From Kaśyapa Surabhi formerly gave birth to snakes, jackals, crows etc. and the triad of buffaloes, cows and excellent ladies. Similarly, Muni gave birth to a group of sages and of the celestial nymphs.

77. In the same, way, Ariṣṭā gave birth to many Kinnaras and Gandharvas; Irā created all the grass, trees and clumps of creepers.

78. Khasā gave birth to crores of Yakṣas and demons. These hundreds and thousands are Kaśyapa's relatives.

79. O Bhīṣma, this is known to be the creation in the Manu-period named Svārociṣa. Then, O you, conversant with religious law, Diti gave birth to fortynine Maruts, all dear to gods.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Description of Manu Periods

Bhiṣma said :

1. How did Maruts, the sons of Diti, become dear to gods, and how did they have excellent intimacy with gods?

Pulastya spoke :

2. Formerly, in the war between the gods and the demons, when, by Hari and gods, her sons and grandsons were killed, Diti, afflicted with grief, went to the excellent terrestrial globe.

3. At the great sacred place in Puṣkara, on the auspicious bank of the Sarasvatī, Diti the mother of the Daityas, intent upon propitiating her husband, practised a severe penance.

4-6. She, of a good vow, afflicted with old age and grief, subsisting on fruit, performed fully, for a hundred years, a penance, with vows like Kṛcchra-cāndrāyaṇa, for the sages. Then she, tormented by penance, asked Vasiṣṭha and others: "Tell me a vow that will remove my grief for my sons and will cause good luck in this and the next world".

7. Vasiṣṭha and others told (her) about the vow of the full-moon night of Jyeṣṭha, due to the auspiciousness of which she became free from the grief for her sons.

Bhiṣma said:

8. O brāhmaṇa, I wish to hear about the vow of the full-moon of Jyeṣṭha, by which Diti got back her fortynine sons.

Pulastya said:

9. Hear from me in details the vow which was formerly told by Vasiṣṭha and others to Diti.

10-13. In the bright fortnight of Jyeṣṭha, on the full-moon day, one, of a pure vow, should place an unbruised pitcher filled with white rice, and having many fruits and sugarcanes, covered with a couple of white clothes, and besmeared with sandal; then one should put on it a copper-vessel, containing gold according to one's capacity, and various kinds of eatables and jaggery; in a hollow of a lotus, one should instal a golden image of Brahmā. To his (i.e. Brahmā's) left, one should fashion (the image of) Sāvitrī made of sugar.

14. To them he should offer perfume and incense and have vocal and instrumental music. How can one do it without it since Brahmā lives in the lotus?

15-18. Having fashioned an auspicious image made of jaggery and called Brahmā, one should worship Brahmā with white flowers, sacred grains and sesamum; one should worship him, saying 'Salutation to Brahmā' while worshipping his feet; saying 'Salutation to Saubhāgyada' while worshipping his shanks; saying 'Salutation to Viriñca' while worshipping his hair of thinghs; saying' 'Salutation to Manmatha' while worshipping his waist; saying 'Salutation to Svacchodara' while worshipping his belly; saying 'Salutation to Atandra' while worshipping his chest; saying 'Salutation to Padmamukha'

while worshipping his face; saying 'Salutation to Vedapāṇi' while worshipping his arms: saying 'Salutation to Sarvātman' while worshipping his head; and one should also worship the lotus. Then in the morning one should present the pitcher to a brāhmaṇa.

19-20. With devotion one should feed the brāhmaṇa and oneself eat saltless (food), and devoutly cicumambulate and recite this hymn: 'The revered one, the grandsire of all the worlds, who lives in the hearts of all people, and who is called Ānanda (joy), may be pleased now'.

21. With this rite one should practise the vow every month; and observing a fast, one should worship the immutable Brahmā on every full-moon day.

22-23. Eating one fruit (only) one should at night sleep on the ground. Then in the thirteenth month one should give a bed to Viriñca with ghee and a cow and with all ingredients, and fashioning a golden image of Brahmā and (an image of Sāvitrī) of silver.

24-25. (One should say:) 'May the creator born from a lotus obtain Sāvitrī.' Honouring a brāhmaṇa with his wife, by (giving them) garments and ornaments, one should give a cow etc. according to one's ability and should say: 'Be pleased'. One should perform a sacrifice with white sesamum and utter the names of Brahmā.

26. One, knowing the religious practices, should, along with ghee made from cow's milk, give money and a garland of flowers to brahmaṇas according to one's capacity.

27. One, who—even ladies (can observe this vow)—observes (the vow) according to the rite on a full-moon day, being free from all sins, gets identity with Brahman.

28. In this world (such a) one certainly obtains excellent sons and good fortune. He, who is Brahmā, is known to be Viṣṇu, to be the essence of joy, and Maheśvara.

29. One who desires happiness should remember the lord in any form one likes. Having heard this, Diti did everything fully.

30. Kaśyapa, due to the great virtue of her vow, having come there with great joy, made that rough (lady) full of form and beauty.

31. He persuaded her (to ask for) boons, and she chose an excellent boon: "I desire a powerful, very lustrous, magnanimous son, capable of killing all gods, to murder Indra."

32-34. Kaśyapa uttered these words: "With this (boon) I shall give you a powerful son who will kill Indra; but, O you auspicious one, do this: O you of beautiful breasts, I shall today perform the Āpastamba sacrifice for (obtaining) a son. Then I shall deposit my semen (into you) after touching your breasts, O auspicious one. O lady, you will have a son capable of killing Indra."

35. Then he performed the Āpastamba sacrifice with (i.e. spending) great wealth for (obtaining) a son, and hurriedly offered the oblation saying: "O enemy of Indra, be (conceived)."

36. The gods fainted and the demons and the fiends turned away their faces. Kaśyapa then put the semen into Diti, and again said to her:

37. "Your face is like the moon; your breasts resemble the *bilva*-fruit (are stout). Your lips have the form of corals and your complexion is very lovely.

38. Seeing you, O you lady of large eyes, I forget my own body. Therefore, O lady, of charming hips, I have, with my own hand (i.e. myself), deposited my seed into your body.

39-41. You should, O lady, having an excellent face, take care of this foetus in a penance-grove for one hundred years. During pregnancy you should not eat in the evening; you should not remain under, or go to the roots of, trees. You should not resort to (i.e. handle) instruments like mortar, pestle etc.; you should not plunge into water, and should avoid a vacant dwelling.

42. You should not remain on ant-hills; you should not be dejected in mind; you should not write (i.e. scratch) with nails on the ground, on charcoal, or ashes.

43. You should not always be sleepy, and should avoid (acts causing) fatigue. You should not come to rest upon charcoal or ashes of husk or bowls of bones.

44. You should avoid quarrel with people, and should avoid smearing your body with oily substances; you should not remain with loose hair and should never remain impure.

45. You should never sleep either by raising or lowering your head; should not be without garments (on your person); should not be dejected or with wet feet.

46. You should not utter inauspicious words; you should not laugh excessively Intent upon auspiciousness, you should everyday perform worship along with the elders.

47-48. You should take bath with water connected (i.e. mixed) with all herbs; having protected yourself and with a desire to serve, and intent upon worshipping with vows, you should keep a pleasing face, and be engrossed in the things dear to your husband; should never condemn (your) husband in any condition.

49. Should never say: 'I am emaciated, weak; old age has come upon me; my breasts have moved (away) from their place, and face is curled with folds. You have made me like this'." (Before departing, he said:) "may it be well with you. I shall go (now)".

50-51. When she said "All right", he, in the presence of all beings, vanished there only. Then she took to the vow as told by her husband.

52-57. Knowing that and leaving gods' residence, Indra came near her and remained there desiring to hear what she said. Indra wanted to know the weak points of Diti. He was acting in a false manner, distracted interanally and having a smiling face outwardly, as it were not knowing her mission and doing (only) what was good for him. She regarded herself as blessed, and with a proud mind, through joy, not cleansing her feet, lay anywhere by day, with hair let loose and with her head raised. when only three days were left for hundred years to be completed. Then, taking that opportunity, the lord of Śacī, and the ruler of gods, entering inside (her body), cut the foetus into seven parts with his bolt; then those (pieces) were born as sons, as bright as the sun.

58-59. Those seven boys who were crying were suppressed (i.e. appeased) with the water of libation. Again Indra, with the bolt in his hand, cut each of the crying ones, who were in the womb, into seven pieces. Thus cut into fortynine (in number) they cried very much.

60-62. Again and again Indra suppressed (i.e. appeased) them by saying, 'Do not cry'. Then the killer of Vṛtra conjectured: 'Due to the virtue of which act have they survived? He knew by means of (his) religious merit that this was the fruit of the Paurṇamāsī (vow), or indeed this happened as a result of the worship of Brahmā; (so) though struck by the bolt, they did not perish.

63. Even one became many. Since the foetus was protected, and they indeed could not be killed, let them be gods.

64-65. Since, when born from the womb, they were told not to cry, therefore, let them be named Maruts, and let them be happy'. Then the lord of gods, having propitiated Diti, (said to her): "Forgive me; resorting to the rule of need, I did this bad act."

66. The lord of gods, making the group of Maruts equal to gods, and putting Diti along with her sons in an aeroplane, went to heaven.

67. Since then all the Maruts enjoyed a share in the sacrificial offerings. They did not have unity with the Asuras; therefore, they were dear to gods.

Bhiṣma said:

68. O brāhmaṇa, you have explained to me in detail the initial creation. Tell me what is the secondary creation and (who are) the lords (and) of which (species).

Pulastya spoke:

69-70. When Pṛthu was crowned (as the king) of all the kingdom, he became the lord on the earth; Brahmā made Soma (the moon) having radiance within, the lord of the herbs, sacrificial vows, and austerities and of constellations, stars, brāhmaṇas, clumps of trees and spreading creepers. Similarly he made Varuṇa the lord of waters, and Vaiśravaṇa (i.e. Kubera) the lord of wealth.

71. He made Viṣṇu the lord of the suns and Vasus, and Agni the lord of the worlds; made Dakṣa the lord of Prajāpatis, and Śakra the lord of Maruts.

72. He made Prahlāda the lord of the kings of Daityas,

and of Dānavas. He made the trident-holder the lord of demons, fiends, beasts, spirits, Yakṣas and vampires.

73. He made Himālaya mountain the lord of mountains, and ocean the lord of rivers. He made Citraratha the chief of the Gandharvas, Vidyādharas and Kinnaras.

74. He appointed Vāsuki of strong power as the lord of serpent-demons, and Takṣaka as the lord of snakes. He made the lordly elephant, Airāvata by name, the lord of the quarter-elephants.

75. He made Suparṇa the lord of birds and Uccaiḥśravas the lord of horses. He made lion the lord of beasts, bull the lord of cows, and the fig tree with waving leaves the lord of plants.

76. Then Brahmā consecrated these as the lords of quarters: He consecrated Suvarman, eminent as a foe, as the lord of the eastern quarter.

77. Then he made him—Śaṅkha by name—the lord of the south. Brahmā made Ketumanta the lord of the (western) direction.

78. Then Prajāpati made Hiraṇyaroman, the son of Megha, the lord of the northern direction.

Even now, the lords of quarters always carrying upon them (the responsibility of the protection of the earth) protect the earth.

79. Along with these four, he first installed as the king of the earth (a man) Pṛthu by name. When the period of Manu named Cākṣuṣa was over, he made this (period) of Vaivasvata (Manu) on the earth.

80. When the period of Manu by name Cākṣuṣa was over, and when the period called Vaivasvata set in, he, born in the solar family, became the king, with his insignia, of this movable and immovable (creation).

Pulastya said:

81-82. O son of Kuru, listen, in short, with concentrated and gracious mind, to all the periods of Manus and their lives, the measure of a Kalpa, and the creation in it. Formerly in the period of Svāyambhuva Manu, there were gods called Yāmā.

83-84. And also seven sages only like Marīci and others were said to be there. These ten increased the race of Manu: Āgnīdhra, Agnibāhu, Vibhu, Savana, Jyotiṣmat, Dyutimat, Bhavya, Medhā, Medhātithi, Vasu.

85. These, having brought about secondary creation, reached the highest place. Thus is described the Svāyambhuva period; after this comes the Svārociṣa.

86. Svārociṣa's four sons, having god-like lustre were: Nabha, Nabhasya, Bhāvana, and Kīrtivardhana.

87. The seven sages were: Datta, Agni, Cyavana, Stambha, Prāṇa, Kaśyapa and Arvābṛhaspati.

88-93. Then, in the Svārociṣa period, gods were called Tuṣita. The seven sons of Vasiṣṭha were then the Prajāpatis: Havi, Indra, Sukṛta, Mūrti, Āpa, Jyotiratha, and Smṛta. This is said to be the second period of Manu.

After this I shall narrate the next auspicious period of Manu. In it the Manu named Auttami produced ten sons; Iṣa, Ūrja, Tanūja, Śuci, Śukra, Madhu, Mādhava, Nabhasya, Nabha, Saha, Sahasya and excellent Kīrtivardhana were the twelve Ādityas. Gods were (then) called Ūrja. The seven sages were:

Kaukabhiṇḍa, Kutuṇḍa, Dālbhya, Śaṅkha, Pravāhita, Miti and Sammiti; and these seven increased the contemplation of the supreme spirit.

94-95. The fourth period of Manu is known as Tāmasa. The names of the seven sages in it (are): Kapi, Pṛthu, Agni, Akapi, Kavi, Janya and Dhāman. The hosts of gods in the Tāmasa period were called Sādhyas.

96-98. All the ten sons of Tāmasa, viz. Akalmaṣa, Tapa, Dhanvi, Tapomūla, Tapodhana, Taporāśi, Tapasya, Sutapasya and Parantapa increased the race. Similarly, listen to the fifth, i.e. the Raivata:

Devabāhu, Subāhu, Parjanya, Samaya, Muni, Hiraṇyaroman, Saptāśva are said to be the seven sages.

99-102. The gods Bhūtarajas are similarly said to be the elements. These ten are the sons of Raivata, (they are) endowed with piety, vigour and power:

Avaśa, Tattvadarśin, Vītimān, Havyapa, Kapi, Mukta, Nirutsuka, Sattva, Nirmoha, and Prakāśaka.

Bhṛgu, Sudhāma, Viraja, Sahiṣṇu, Nārada, Vivasvān and Kṛti were the seven sages in the Cākṣuṣa period; and the gods were known as Lekhā; and the Vibhus also were separately termed as gods.

103-104. When the Cākṣuṣa period set in, the gods had the fifth world: and similarly Cākṣuṣa had ten sons—Ruru and others. They have already been mentioned by me in the Svāyambhuva family. Thus I have described the Cākṣuṣa period to you.

105-106. I shall (now) tell you about the seventh which is called Vaivasvata. Now the seven great sages are: Atri and Vasiṣṭha, Kaśyapa and Gautama, the contemplative Bharadvāja, the valorous Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni.

107. After setting the religious order, they will reach the highest place. I shall describe to you the future period of Sāvarṇya Manu.

108. The sages (of this Manvantara) are said to be : Aśvatthāman, Śaradvān, Kauśika, Gālava, Śatānanda, Kāśyapa and Rāma.

109-110. Dhṛti, Varīyān, Yavasu, Suvarṇa and Dhṛti (again), Variṣṇu, Vīrya, Sumati, Vasu and powerful Śukra are said to be the sons of the future Sāvarṇi Manu. Raucya and others also are said to be Manus.

111. Raucya, the son ef Prajāpati Ruci will be a Manu; and also Bhautya, the son of Bhūti, will be a Manu.

112. Then Merusāvarṇi, son of Brahmā, is said to be a Manu. And also Ṛbhu, Ṛtudhāman, Viśvaksena will (each) be a Manu.

113. Past and future Manus are (thus) described (by me). O prince, a thousand *yugas* will be occupied by (each one of) these.

114. Having created all these mobile and immobile beings in their own periods, they will, at the end of the *kalpa*, obtain release along with Brahmā.

115. At the end of a thousand *yugas* they will again and again perish, and led by Brahmā will then be absorbed in Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Description of the Solar Race

Bhiṣma said:

1. It is heard that the earth was formerly enjoyed by many kings. They are (called) Pārthiva on account of their connection with the earth; but on account of (its) connection with whom is the Pṛthvī (earth) so called ?

2. Why is the earth given that technical name ? Tell me why it has the name Gau, or why it is (called) Bhū ?

Pulastya said :

3. Formerly Aṅga by name was the Prajāpati of the *Kṛta-yuga*. He married Mṛtyu's extremely ugly daughter named Sunīthā. Her son was Vena.

4-12. This king was attached to wickedness, and was lustful and powerful. He did unrighteous things to people, and took away others' wives. Though entreated by the great sages for his success and for the (good of the) world, he, of an impure mind, did not grant them safety. The sinless brāhmaṇas distressed with the fear of anarchy, having killed him, with a curse, forcibly churned his body. From that body, being churned, the Mlecha tribes, dark like collyrium, due to the (presence of) the mother's portion in the body were created. Due to the contact of the father's portion, from the right hand of the body a pious son, full of divine lustre, doing righteous things, and with a bow, an arrow, a mace and gems, an armour and armlets, named Pṛthu, who was Viṣṇu himself, was born. Being consecrated by the brāhmaṇas, and having practised a very difficult penance, he, due to Viṣṇu's boon, became the lord of all. Seeing the earth without sacred study, without oblation to deities, and void of righteous behaviour, he, of unlimited valour, was, through anger, quite ready to pierce it with his arrow. Then the earth, taking up the form of a cow, was about to flee.

13. Pṛthu, having a bow and arrows, pursued her. Then remaining in one place, she said: "What should I do ?"

14. Pṛthu also uttered (these) words : "O you of righteous vow, give quickly what is desired by the world—immobile and mobile".

15. The earth said: "All right". Then king Pṛthu, making Svāyambhuva Manu the calf, milked her (milk in the pot) in his hand.

16. That milk turned into food on which the creatures subsist. Then the earth was milked by the sages, when Soma was the calf.

17-18. Vācaspati (then) milked her (lit. became the milk-man); Veda was the pot, and penance the milk. Then the gods milked her when Marut was the milkman. Indra became the calf and mighty power was the milk. The pot of the gods was golden and that of the Pitṛs was silvery.

19-21. The god of death milked her when Yama was the calf and Svadhā the milk. The pot of the serpents was a hole and Takṣaka was the calf, and poison was the milk. And Dhṛtarāṣṭra and the demons too, milked her (taking the milk) in an iron pot, the milk being the trickery harassing the enemies. The calf was Virocana, the son of Prahlāda. The milkman then was Trimūrdhan, who promoted deceit.

22. O king, the Yakṣas desiring to conceal themselves, also milked the earth in ancient days, making Vivasvān, having the gem, the calf.

23. The groups of evil spirits and fiends milked the earth, marrow and clotted blood (being the milk). Raupyanābha was the milkman and Sumālin the calf.

24. The Gandharvas again, along with the groups of the celestial nymphs milked the earth, making Citraratha (Gandharva) the calf, and the fragrances in the lotus-petal (the milk).

25. Vararuci, the expert in Atharva Veda milked the cow. The mountains also milked her with various jewels (as the milk).

26. Mountain Meru milked (her with) divine herbs (as the milk). The Himālaya was the calf and the pot was made of mountains.

27. The trees also milked the (milk of the) earth, into the pot made from the Palāśa tree; the cut-off sprouts were the milk and Sāla full of flowers and woods was the milkman.

28. And the fig-tree, the lord of all trees and woods, was

the calf. Thus others also milked the earth according to their desire.

29. While Pṛthu was ruling, there prevailed longevity, wealth, and happiness. There was no poverty, and also no sick person, no poor person and no sinner.

30. When Pṛthu was ruling, there were no calamities; there was no misfortune; people not having sorrow or grief, were ever joyful.

31. Having uprooted, with the end of his bow, the big mountains, he, with the desire to do good to the people, made the terrestrial globe (i.e. the earth) even.

32-33. There were no inaccessible cities or villages; men did not die with weapons in their hands; there was no sorrow, and science of politics was honoured; men were given to piety when Pṛthu was ruling. I have narrated to you, in the manner mentioned (above), (which were) the pots, which was the milk (etc.).

34-35. He, the wise one, gave those whatever they liked, when all were giving importance to sacrifice (or, when all were giving i.e. pouring wealth into sacrifice). I have (thus) told you, O highly intelligent one, that since the earth became the daughter of Pṛthu, she accordingly was known by the wise to be Pṛthivī.

Bhiṣma said :

36. O brāhmaṇa, tell me in due order, about the entire solar dynasty; please also explain (to me) the lunar dynasty, O you who know the truth.

Pulastya said :

37. Formerly Vivasvān was born to Aditi from Kaśyapa. He had three daughters : Saṁjñā, Rājñī and Prabhā.

38. Raivata's daughter Rājñī gave birth to a son (called) Revata. Prabhā gave birth to Prabhāta and Saṁjñā to Manu.

39-40. The twins Yama and Yamunā were also born (to Saṁjñā). Then unable to bear Vivasvān's lustre, she, the beautiful daughter of Tvaṣṭṛ, produced from her own body, a blameless lady, Chāyā by name.

41-42. To her, who stood before her saying; "what should I do?" she said : "O beautiful Chāyā, you serve my husband, nourish my children with motherly affection" Saying "All right" she of a righteous vow, went to god (Vivasvān) for sensual enjoyment.

43-45. The god too, taking her to be Saṁjñā, longed for her with regard, (and) generated Sāvarṇi Manu resembling Manu (the son of Saṁjñā) in form due to his having complexion similar to that of Vaivasvata Manu. Then in due order he generated a daughter by name Tapatī, on Chāyā, the daughter of Tvaṣṭṛ, taking her to be Saṁjñā. Chāyā loved her son Manu more.

46. The former Manu (i.e. the elder one) did not tolerate it. So Yama, violent with anger, and raising his right foot, threatened (her).

47. Chāyā too, cursed Yama: "This one foot will be full of worms and pus, and blood will ooze from it."

48-49. Insulted by this curse, Yama told his father: "O god, mother has angrily cursed me without any reason. Due to child-like nature, I raised my foot a little. O lord, even though warded off by Manu, she gave me a curse.

50-52. Probably she is not our mother, since she is partial in her love." God (Vivasvān) also said in return to Yama: "O highly intelligent one, what should I do ? Who does not get misery after happiness ? Or (rather), the flow of karma is difficult to be resisted even by Bhava, then what about other creatures ? A cock will eat the worms on your leg. This leg of yours will be lame and charming."

53-54. Thus addressed and consoled, he, through detachment, and subsisting on fruits, foam and wind, and propitiating Brahmā, practised, for myriads of years, a severe penance at Puṣkara Tīrtha. The lotus-born one was pleased by the power of his penance.

55. He asked for the lordship of the world and for the eternal world of Pitṛs, and putting to test this world full of piety and impiety.

56. O innocent one, he thus obtained the lordship of the world, the supremacy over the Pitṛs and over piety and impiety.

57. Vivasvān then having come to know that act of Saṁjñā, went to Tvaṣṭṛ and angrily reported it to him.

58-60. Then Tvaṣṭṛ said these kind words to him: "O remover of darkness, not being able to bear your severe lustre, she came to me here, I, fearing you, kept her off, O lord of the sky. 'Since you have come to me here without your intention being known (by your husband), please do not enter my house'.

61. Thus addresed, she the blameless one, quickly went to the Maru country and taking the form of a mare, lived on the earth.

62-66. "Therefore, show favour to me if I deserve it. Putting you on a machine I shall take off your lustre and will make your appearance delightful to the eyes of the world, O lord." When the Sun said to him, "All right", he separated the Sun's lustre from him, and fashioned from it Viṣṇu's disk, and also Rudra's trident and Indra's bolt (all) capable of destroying the demons and the friends. Tvaṣṭṛ made the Sun's form matchless and having a thousand rays, (but) without feet. He could not see the form of the feet of the Sun. Even now nobody should ever fashion the (Sun's image with) feet.

67. He, the most sinful one, who fashions it, reaches a censured condition, and contracts leprosy, known to be miserable in this world.

68. Therefore one, desiring religious merit and sensual enjoyments, should never fashion in pictures and temples the feet of the intelligent lord of lords.

69-70. Then the love-striken lord of gods going to the earth in the guise of a horse and endowed with great lustre, had oral coitus with her; and the mind of Saṁjñā, afflicted by fear, became agitated.

71. Suspecting him to be a stranger, she threw out (his semen) through her nostrils. We have heard that from that semen Aśvins were born.

72. They became known as Dasra (wonder-workers) and Nāsatya (truthful) (due to their being born) from the nostrils.

73. Full of joy, he went to the heaven with his wife in an aeroplane. Sāvarṇya Manu also is even now practising penance on Meru.

74. Śani also, due to the power of his penance, attained equality with the planets, and Yamunā and Tapatī became rivers.

75. Similarly, Viṣṭhi too, of a terrible form, settled in the form of time. Vaivasvata Manu too had ten sons.

76-77. Out of them Ila was the first who was born as a result of a sacrifice performed to obtain a male issue. (The ten sons were:) Ikṣvāku, Kuśanābha, Ariṣṭa and Dhṛṣṭa, Nariṣyanta, Karūṣa, and very powerful Śaryāti, Pṛṣadhra, and Nābhāga; all these were divine men.

78. Manu, having first consecrated his righteous son Ila, went to the Puṣkara penance-grove for (practising) penance.

79. For his success Brahmā, the giver of boons, came there, (and said to him:) "Well-being to you, O Mānaveya; ask for a boon".

80-81. Then he said to the lotus-born god, having lotus-like eyes : "O lotus-born, lord, let all the righteous kings, the lords on the earth, be under my control, through your favour". Saying "Let it be so", the lord of gods vanished there only.

82-85. Then coming (back) to Ayodhyā, he lived as before. Then, once, Ila, Manu's son, seated in a chariot, moved out on this earth, rich with kings, for the fulfilment of an object, and roaming over all regions and subduing kings; and he, the brave one, being attracted, went to Śaṅkara's great grove called Śaravaṇa, full of desire-yielding creepers and trees, in which, Śiva, lord of gods, having the crescent moon on his head, sports with Umā. Formerly a convention was fixed about that Śaravaṇa :

86. "Whatever called male enters our grove, all that, within a radius of ten yojanas, will turn into a female."

87. Not knowing this convention, king Ila entered Śaravaṇa, (and) instantly became a woman, and the same moment (his) horse turned into a mare.

88-91. And while in the female body, he forgot everything that he did as a man; he became a slender lady called Ilā, having plump, raised and compact breasts, raised hips and loins, having long and dark eyes like lotus-leaves, having a face like the full moon, having plump, raised and long arms, and dark, curly and fine hair, of a charming face and talking sweetly and

indistinctly, of a slender shape, with a fair complexion, and having thin, reddish, sprout-like nails, having bow-like eyebrows, and with a gait concealing (i.e. superior to) that of a swan.

92-94. The beautiful young woman, wandering in the forest, thought: 'Who would be my father, or brother, or mother here ? To which husband am I given ? For how many years am I (living) on the earth ?' While thinking (thus), she, a lady of an excellent complexion, was seen by (Budha), the son of Soma, with his mind seized by the figure of Ilā. Budha, oppressed by love, tried to secure her.

95-96. He, of a distinguished form, bald-headed, entered the grove with a water-pot and a book, a bamboo-stick in his hand, having a ring of kuśa-grass and a shovel, with a brāhmaṇa's form, having a tuft of hair, reciting Veda, wearing earrings, accompanied by young boys and having sacred fuel, flowers, kuśa grass and water.

97-100. At that time, having looked into it, he hastily concealing himself in a bower outside the grove, called that Ilā, and it was, as it were, an unexpected taunt (for her). "Leaving the service of my sacred fire, where have you gone ? Now the time for your sport is over, O you of large hips, come on; why are you confused ? This evening time is here, the time for diversion. Having besmeared ground, adorn my house with flowers".

101. She said: "O you having penance as your wealth, I have forgotten all this. Tell me all about myself, about you—my husband, and my family, O sinless one."

102. Budha said to that slender lady : "O you of excellent complxion, you are Ilā, and I am known as passionate Budha, well-versed in many lores.

103-105. I am born in the family of the brilliant one (i.e. Soma); my father is the chief of the brāhmaṇas." After these words uttered by him, she entered Buddha's abode, full of jewelled pillars, fashioned with divine illusion. Ilā, having remained in that house regarded herself to be blessed. 'Oh ! wonderful are the vow, the figure, the wealth and the family of this my lord'.

106. And Ilā sported with him in the forest for a long time, in the house full of all enjoyments as in Indra's residence.

107. Then the king's brothers, the sons of Manu, Ikṣvāku and others, looking for him, came to that Śaravaṇa.

108. Then they all saw an excellent mare, shining with rays shooting from the points of gems, standing in front of them.

109-110. Recognising her, all of them were amazed. 'This is the horse, Candraprabha by name, of that magnanimous one. Why has he turned into an excellent mare?' Then they asked Maitrāvaruṇi (i.e. Vasiṣṭha), their priest (about it).

111. "O you best among the contemplative sages, tell us, as to what this extraordinary appearance is". Vasiṣṭha too, knowing all that by means of his divine intuition, said:

112-114. "Formerly in the Śaravaṇa a stipulation was laid down by Śambhu's wife: The man who would enter this grove will become a woman. This horse also, along with the king, turned into a female. Propitiating the trident-holder (i.e. Śiva), make such an effort that this Ilā will (again) turn into a man resembling Kubera."

115. With various eulogies they praised Pārvatī and the highest lord (Śiva). They (two) said: "Severe is the stipulation.

116. What indeed is proper? Having given us that fruit which will accrue through Ikṣvāku's horse-sacrifice the brave one will undoubtedly be a low man (kiṁpuruṣa?)."

117. Saying "All right", all those sons of Vaivasvata went (from that place). After the performance of the horse-sacrifice, Ilā became a low man.

118-119. The brave one became a man for one month, and a woman for another. Remaining in the house of Budha, Ilā became pregnant, and gave birth to a son endowed with many good qualities. Budha, having generated that Pūru, again went to heaven.

120. Then, after Ilā's name that region became (i.e. came to be called) 'Ilāvṛta'. King Ila born in the lunar and solar families, increased his family.

121. Similarly Purūravas, who increased the family was born from Pūru. And king Ikṣvāku was said to (belong to) the solar race.

122-126. Ila is called Sudyumna in his low man's condition. Again, three victorious sons were born to Sudyumna: Utkala, and Gaya, and powerful Haritāśva. The city of Utkala is Utkalā by name; that of Gaya is Gayā; (to its) south, along with the Kuru-country is said to be the region of Haritāśva. Having consecrated his son Purūravas, as the king, he went to Ilāvṛta to enjoy (there) for a divine year, subsisting on fruits. Ikṣvāku, the eldest son, got the Madhyadeśa (as his kingdom). Śuka of great strength was the son of Nariṣyanta. Ambarīṣa was born from Nābhāga.

127. Dhṛṣṭa had three sons: Dhṛṣṭaketu, Svadharman and the valorous Raṇadhṛṣṭa. Śaryāti's son was Ānarta, and his daughter was Sukanyā.

128. Brave Rocamāna was the son of Ānarta; his country was Ānarta, and (capital) city was Kuśasthalī.

129. Rocamāna's son was Reva, and from Reva was born Raivata; his other name was Kakudmin; he was the eldest among (Reva's) sons.

130. Revatī was his daughter; she is known to be the wife of (Bala-) Rāma; and from Karūṣā, were born Kārūṣas, well-known on the earth.

131. Pṛṣadhra became a Śūdra as a result of a cow's slaughter, due to his preceptor's curse. Ikṣvāku's sons named Vikukṣi, Nimi, Daṇḍaka were pre-eminant among his hundred sons.

132. His other fifty sons became best kings to the north of Meru.

133. Fortyeight out of the hundred were known to be the kings to the south of Meru.

134. From the eldest son was born Kakutstha. His son was Suyodhana. His son was Pṛthu. Viśva was the son of that Pṛthu.

135. His (Viśva's) son was Ārdra; from him was born Yuvanāśva.

136. Yuvanāśva's valourous son was Śāvasta, by whom was set up Śāvastī in the Aṅga country, O prince.

Bṛhadaśva was born of Śāvasta, and from Bṛhadaśva Kuvalāśva was born.

137-138. He became (i.e. came to be called) Dhundhumāra for having formerly killed the demon Dhundhu. He had three sons; Dṛḍhāśva and Ghṛṇi, and the brave Kapilāśva was also the famous son of Dhundhumāra. Dṛḍhāśva's son was Pramoda, and his son was Haryaśva.

139. Haryaśva's son was Nikumbha, and from him was born Saṁhatāśva. Akṛtāśva and Raṇāśva were the two sons of Saṁhatāśva.

140-141. Raṇāśva's son was Yuvanāśva and from him was born Māndhātṛ. Purukutsa and king Dharmasetu, well known Mucukunda and the brave Śakramitra were born from Māndhātṛ. Dussaha, Narmadā's husband, was the son of Purukutsa.

142. His (Dussaha's) son was Sambhūti; from him was born Tridhanvan; the son born to Tridhanvan is known as Trayyāruṇa.

143. His son was Satyavrata; his son was known to be Satyaratha; his son was Hariścandra; Rohita was born from Hariścandra.

144. Vṛka was born from Rohita, and Bāhu from Vṛka. Sagara who was a very religious king was his son.

145. Sagara had two wives; Prabhā and Bhānumatī. In olden days they propitiated Aurvāgni (the sub-marine fire).

146. Aurva, pleased with them, granted them an excellent boon as desired by them.

147. One asked for sixty thousand sons; the other chose a son continuing the race. Prabhā chose many sons, Bhānumatī chose one son, viz. Asamañjasa.

148. Prabhā, of the Yadu family, gave birth to sixty thousand sons, who pursuing the (Aśvamedha) horse dug the earth and were burnt in a group by Viṣṇu.

149-150. The well known son of Asamañjasa was Aṁśumān; his son was Dilīpa; from him Bhagīratha was born, who, by performing a penance brought down the Ganges (known) as Bhāgīrathī (after him) (to the earth). Bhagīratha's son was the well-known Nābhāga.

151. Nābhāga's son, was Ambarīṣa; from him Sindhudvīpa was born; his son was Ayutāyu, and from his Ṛtuparṇa was born.

152. His son was Kalmāṣapāda. Sarvakarman is known to have been born to him. His son was Anaraṇya; his son was Nighna.

153. Nighna had two sons : Anamitra and Raghūttama. Anamitra went to the forest after having destroyed his enemies.

154. From Raghu was born Dilīpa and from Dilīpa Aja was born. Dīrghabāhu was born from Aja and from him (Dīrghabāhu) Prajāpāla was born.

155. From him was born Daśaratha; he had four sons, of the nature of Nārāyaṇa, and Rāma was his eldest son.

156. He destroyed Rāvaṇa and increased the race of Raghus. Vālmīki, the best of the Bhārgavas, composed his biography.

157. His son was Kuśa by name, who increased the Ikṣvāku-race. Atithi was born from Kuśa and Niṣadha was hīs (Atithi's) son.

158. From Niṣadha was born Nala; from him was born Nabhas. From Nabhas Puṇḍarīka was born and from him Kṣemadhanvan was born.

159. His son was the brave Devānīka; his son was Ahīnagu; Sahasrāśva was born from him.

160. From him (Sahasrāśva) was born Candrāvaloka and from him Tārāpīḍa was born. His son was Candragiri, whose son was Candra.

161-162. From him was born Śrutāyu, who was killed in the Bhārata war; in his family two Nalas only were particularly famous: the son of Vīrasena and the king Naiṣadha, i.e. the son of Niṣadha. These were the kings in Vivasvat's race, who gave rich presents. (Thus) the important kings in the Ikṣvāku race have been described.

CHAPTER NINE

General Rules of Śrāddha Performance

Bhiṣma said:

1. O revered one, I wish to learn about the best family of the manes (*pitṛs*), and also particularly of Ravi, of the deity of Śrāddha i.e. Soma.

Pulastya said:

2. I shall narrate to you the best family of the manes. In the heaven there are seven groups of the manes. Out of them three are incorporeal.

3. Of all (the manes) of unlimited lustre four are corporeal. The incorporeal groups of manes are said to belong to Vairāja Prajāpati.

4. They are (whom groups of gods worship) called Vairāja. They fallen from Yoga, attained eternal worlds.

5. Again at the end of Brahmā's day, these teachers of Veda are born and would again get recollection and the excellent Sāṁkhya and Yoga.

6. Again by means of deep and abstract meditation they would attain the state of perfection, (reaching) which rebirth is not obtained. Therefore, givers of gifts should offer obsequial oblations to the Yogins only.

7. The mind-born daughter of these is supposed to be the wife of Himālaya. Her son was Maināka, and his son was Krauñca.

8-10. He is remembered to have held together the fourth Dvīpa, viz. Krauñca. Menā gave birth to three daughters possessing deep and abstract meditation, viz. Umā, Ekaparṇā and Parṇā, engaged in severe vows. Himavat gave these daughters, superior due to their austerities, (marrying) one to Rudra, another to Bhṛgu and the third to Jaigiṣavya. I shall now tell you about the music in the world of manes; listen to it.

11. There are worlds named Somapatha, where live the sons of Mārīca; by (living there) they are manes, and gods honour them fully.

12. They lived where the sacrifices are called 'Agniṣvātta'. Their daughter was Acchodā of excellent complexion.

13. Formerly the manes also fashioned there a lake named Acchodā. Acchodā practised penance for one thousand divine years.

14-15. The manes, having divine forms, having divine flowers and unguents, all pre-eminent, strong and resembling Cupid, came there and being pleased would indeed grant her a boon. That lady, having seen among them a mane named Amāvasu being oppressed by passion and desiring a groom, longed for him.

16-18. Due to that violation that beautiful lady deviated from her concentration, went (down) to the earth, though she never touched the ground. And Amāvasu due to his steadiness did not long for her who had bowed to him. She came to be known in the world as Amāvāsyā. Since she was dear to the manes, she made the gift (given on Amāvāsyā) inexhaustible.

19. Acchodā, helpless and with her face hung down due to the loss (of the merit) of her penance, again entreated the manes for her prosperity.

20. The bashful and miserable one was thus addressed by the manes taking into consideration her future and her worship of gods.

21. The magnimous ones thus spoke to her with words auspicious due to their favour:

22. "O you of excellent complexion, the fruit of whatever is done with a divine body in heaven is to be enjoyed with that (body) only. The deeds done in human life give their fruits instantly after death, in the divine life.

23. Therefore perform good deeds whose fruits you will obtain after death. In the twenty-eighth Dvāpara-period you will be born in the fish species.

24. Due to your disregard for the manes you will obtain (birth in) an evil family. Thence you will certainly be the daughter of king Vasu.

25. As a maiden you will certainly obtain the divine worlds difficult to get.

26. From the semen of Parāśara you will get a son named

Bādarāyaṇa in a grove full of the *badari* trees. That your son will divide one Veda into many.

27-28. Having begotten these two sons, viz. Vicitravīrya and Citrāṅgada, to that intelligent Paurava, viz. Śantanu, the secondary incarnation of Śiva, you will be again born as Prauṣṭhapadī and Aṣṭakā in the world of manes.

29-30. In the (mortal) world you will be Satyavatī and Aṣṭakā in the world of manes. You will be giver of (long) life, health and wealth and will always fulfil all desires (while) in the other world; and you will become the river named Acchodā of holy water and the best river in the worlds."

31. Thus addressing her the groups (of manes) vanished there only; and she also obtained the fruit of her bad deed which I have already told.

32-34. In heaven there are other very lustrous worlds called Vibhrāj, where there are manes called Barhiṣad, of good vows, where (i.e. in these worlds) there are thousands of aeroplanes equipped with seats of Kuśa grass, where there are desire-yielding trees, in the halls for festive occasions in which those groups of demons, gods, Gandharvas, Apsarasa-s, also groups of Yakṣas, fiends, making obsequial offering are delighted and worship deities in heaven.

35. They (the Barhiṣads) are hundreds of sons of Pulastya; they are endowed with austerities and concentration of mind.

36. They are magnanimous ones and give security to their devotees.

37. Their mind-born daughter is known as Pīvarī. She, a contemplative saint and a divine mother, of abstract meditation, practised a very severe panance. The lord was pleased with her, and then she asked for a boon.

38. "O god, the foremost among the eloquent, if you are pleased, give me a husband possessed of abstract meditation, handsome and one who has controlled his organs of sense".

39. The lord said: "When Śuka, the master of Yoga (and), Vyāsa's son, will be born, you, of a good vow, will be his wife.

40. You will have a saintly daughter Kṛtti by name; you should give her in marriage to Sāttvata, the lord of Pāñcāla.

41. Then she will be the mother of Brahmadatta and will

be known as having mastered the tenets of Yoga. You will have sons named Kṛṣṇagaura and Śambhu.

42. They will be (regarded as) holy even among the specially respected ones who have all their desires fulfilled and are devoted; what to speak of the devoted brāhmaṇas who make obsequial offerings and perform (religious) rites?

43. They have in heaven, a mind-born daughter named Gau. She is a good daughter, a loving wife and adds to the fame of the Sādhyas.

44. In the orb of the sun there are worlds named Marīci-garbha where the manes getting oblations and sons of Speech live.

45. To these worlds go the best Kṣatriyas performing obsequial rites at sacred places; they are the ancestors of kings and are givers of fruits like enjoyments in heaven.

46. The mind-born daughter is known to be Yaśodā, who is the wife of Aṁśumat and the eldest daughter-in-law of Pañcajana.

47. She is the mother of Dilīpa and grand-mother of Bhagīratha. There are worlds named Kāmadugha giving the fruits in the form of enjoyment of desires.

48-50. There live sonless manes named Susvadhā. In the worlds named Ājyapā of Kardama Prajāpati, there are the elderly relatives of Pulaha and the Vaiśyas honour them; those who perform the obsequial rites go there and simultaneously meet their mothers, brothers, fathers, sisters, friends and relatives, thousands of whom, not known before, are seen there after myriads of existences.

51. The mind-born daughter of these is known as Virajā. She was the wife of Nahuṣa and the mother of Yayāti.

52. Later, she, having gone to the Brahmaloka, became Aṣṭakā. I have told you about these three groups. I shall (now) describe the fourth.

53. There are worlds by name Sumanas which exist beyond the world of Brahmā. Here manes named Somapā live eternally.

54-57. All they were further than Brahmā and were piety embodied. Born at the end of deluge, they, practising deep meditation having reached Brahman, and having fashioned the

world etc. have now settled in Mānasa. Their daughter is the river Narmadā, who purifies beings and flows to the Western Ocean. Men, knowing that all beings and whatever is created at the time of creation are (created) from them, always devoutly offer obsequial offerings to them. From them only due to their favour a man gets devoted children.

58-59. Thus Śrāddha had been created at the first creation of the manes. Whatever is offered with the utterance of Svadhā to all these manes in a silver pot or a pot of imitation silver always pleases them. The wise should always satisfy the Āgnīdhra and the Somapā.

60. In the absence of fire the offering (should be) made on the brāhmaṇa's hand or under the Ajākarṇa or Aśvakarṇa tree or in a cowpen or near a god.

61. The proper place for the manes is said to be the southern direction. (While making offerings to them) the sacred thread should be worn over the right shoulder and passed under the left arm and offering of sesamum (should be made).

62-63. The flesh of rhinoceros, food, *śyāmāka* and *śāli*-grains, barley, *nivāra* grains, kidney-beans, sugar-cane and white flowers and fruits are always dear to and commended for the manes, and also, *Darbhas,* beans, *Ṣaṣṭikā*-rice, sweetened milk, honey and ghee.

64-65. I shall now tell you things to be avoided at the obsequial rite. *Masūra*-pulse. hemp (seeds), winnowed bean and *Kuluttha* grains, lotuses, *bilva*, flowers of sun-plant, of *Duttūra, Nimba*-leaves, *Aṭarūṣa*, and also goat-milk.

66. One desiring wealth should not give *Kodrava*, *Varāṭa*, *Kapittha*, *Aśoka*-flowers and flax.

67. Him, who pleases the manes with devotion, the manes also please. The manes give him the fruit in the form of nourishment, health, and progeny.

68. Again the rite in honour of manes is superior to that in honour of gods. It is said that manes are to be satisfied before gods.

69. They are pleased quickly; they are wrathless; are unattached and of a steady affection, of a tranquil mind, intent on purity, and always speak pleasing words.

70. The manes, the deities of the Parvans always love their devotees, give them happiness; and the Sun, the god of the obsequial rite, is said to be the chief of those who receive oblations.

71. I have narrated to you all this account of the family of manes. It is meritorious, holy and leading to health. It should always be recited by men.

Bhiṣma said:

72. Having heard all this, a great devotion has again arisen (in me). (Tell me about) the time of Śrāddha, its rite, and the *Śrāddha* itself.

73-74. Which kinds of brāhmaṇas are to be fed at *Śrāddhas* and which ones are to be avoided; at what division (i.e. time) of the day should one begin the *Śrāddha* in honour of the manes? O best of brāhmaṇas, how does the food offered at a *Śrāddha* proceed? With which procedure should it be offered? How does it please the manes?

Pulastya said:

75. Having love for the manes one should everyday offer *Śrāddha* with food and water, or with milk, roots and fruits.

76-77. *Śrāddha* is said to be of three kinds: *Nitya* (regularly performed); *Naimittika* (occasionally performed); and *Kāmya* (performed for some particular desire). I shall explain to you the *Nitya* (*Śrāddha*). One should know it to be without a respectful offering and invocation and deity. The *Śrāddha* performed on the change of the moon is called *Pārvaṇa*. O King, the *Pārvaṇa* is said to be of three kinds. Please listen to them.

78-81. Listen O king, as to who are to be appointed at a *Pārvaṇa*: a Brāhmaṇa who keeps the fires; one who has returned from the preceptor's house and become an initiated householder; one who has studied the *Trisuparṇa*; one who knows the six limbs of the Veda; one who is well-versed in the Vedas or his son; one who is proficient in the ritual; one who knows everything; one who possesses (the knowledge of) the Vedas; one who knows the incantations, endowed with knowledge and belonging to a good family, *Triṇāciketa*; *Trimadhu*; well-settled in

other scriptures also; knower of the Purāṇas; knowing Brahma; studying Vedas; eagerly engaged in muttering prayers; a devotee of Brahma; obedient to his father; devoted to the Sun and Viṣṇu; having firm faith in abstract meditation; having control over his mind; and of a good character.

82. These are to be satisfied with effort. Now listen to those who are to be avoided: a brāhmaṇa who is fallen, or his son, an impotent brāhmaṇa, a wicked one, and a deformed one.

83. All these are to be avoided by those who know what is right. Either on the previous or on the same day one should invite the learned brāhmaṇas.

84. The manes turning themselves into air remain by those brāhmaṇas who are invited; they go to them and sit by them when they (i.e. the brāhmaṇas) sit.

85-88. Kneeling with the left leg by touching the right knee of the brāhmaṇa he should invite him. (He should tell the brāhmaṇas) 'You should be wrathless, intent on purity, well-bathed and reciting the Vedas. I should be also like that at the obsequial rite'. One who maintains the fire, should, having performed the sacrifice in honour of the manes called *Tarpaṇa* (satiating), and having done *Piṇḍānvāhāryaka* (i.e. having offered a meal in honour of the manes), perform a *Śrāddha* at the wane of the moon. Having besmeared with cow dung (a spot near the) bathing place in the south, he should devoutly begin the *Śrāddha* either in a cowpen or (at a place) near water. He, maintaining the fire, should offer the (rice or barley-flour cooked in) the saucepan in honour of the manes with handfuls of barley-flour.

89. Saying, 'I am offering this to the manes', he should keep all that in the southern direction. Then having restrained himself, he should, in front of him, thrice make offerings in honour of the manes.

90. The length of these (fires) should be of the measure of twelve *aṅgulis* and the breadth should be four *aṅgulis*. He should also make three laddles of *Khadira* wood, fixed with silver. Its length should be a cubit; it should be smooth, excellent and its end should have the shape of the hand.

91. He should make the vessels of water of bell-metal, and also a wooden stick (for stirring up the *Caru*) and sacred fuel and *Kuśa*.

92. Making the sacred thread hang down towards the left part of the body over the right shoulder he should slowly place all (these things, viz.) pots containing sesamum, a good piece of cloth, incense and unguent at his right hand.

93-94. Having procured all these, he should, at the northern part of the house, on the ground besmeared with cow-dung and encircled with cow-urine, wash with water (mixed) with whole rice grains and flowers, the feet of the brāhmaṇas when they are duly seated on Darbha-seats, saluting them again, placing his sacred thread once on the right and once on the left shoulder.

95. Having (thus) seated the brāhmaṇas, who have sipped water, he should invite them.

96. He should give food to two brāhmaṇas for a rite in honour of gods, to three for a rite in honour of the manes or one at each of these two rites, even though he is rich; a wise man should avoid multiplying (the number).

97. Having first performed the worship in honour of gods and having made to them respectful offering, permitted by the wise brāhmaṇa he should duly make offerings into fire.

98-99. Performing all rites according to the rules in the *Gṛhya-sūtras* of his branch the wise brāhmaṇa should (offer worship) to satisfy Agnīṣoma and Yama, when the southern fire is kindled, that is not the same fire. Then the best brāhmaṇa changing the sacred thread from the left shoulder to the right should do the sprinkling round of water silently and without uttering any ritual formula etc.

100-101. Then taking from it (some fire) discriminately he should prepare the Piṇḍas and offer water. He should offer water from the water-pots with his right hand. Being restrained and free from hatred he should offer all this.

102. Carefully drawing a line he should, facing the south, offer oblations in honour of the manes and (after feeding the brāhmaṇas) (give them water for) washing (their hands etc.)

103. Then placing the *darbhas* he should place serially one *piṇḍa* each on all the *darbhas*. Then he should offer libation on the *darbhas* by uttering his name and family.

104-105. Then he should touch the *darbhas* meant for the paternal ancestors of the 4th, 5th and 6th degrees; and also he should mutter prayers and having worshipped (the brāhmaṇas) reverentially with fragrance, incense etc. he should again wash (his hands etc.).

106. Having thus invoked all that he, maintaining a fire, should also offer the spoon with water, and with Vedic hymns as mentioned. Then the wise man, preparing *Kuśas* should offer them to the manes.

107-108. Then preparing *piṇḍas* etc. he should invoke and allow (the deities) to go. Then taking portions from the *piṇḍas* serially and feeding these very brāhmaṇas first, the man should praise the food, desired (by the brāhmaṇa) and pure.

109. He should, remembering Nārāyaṇa Hari, avoid wrath. Knowing the brāhmaṇas to be pleased he should again distribute all kinds (of food).

110. Then picking up food, he should place it on the ground with water and sesamum. When they have rinsed their mouths, he should again offer water and flowers and whole rice grains.

111. Then declaring the oblation of food to the manes he should worship the *piṇḍas*. He should complete (the *Śrāddha*) by honouring the gods, otherwise the *Śrāddha* perishes.

112-114. Having given leave to the brāhmaṇas and going round them keeping them to his right, and desiring the southern direction and mentioning the manes the man (should pray): "May our donors increase; may the Vedas flourish; may our progeny increase; may our faith not go away from us; may we be able to give much; have ample food; may we have guests; may sufficient be ours (i.e. come to us); may we not beg of anyone."

115. This is called the *Anvāhārya* (i.e. the monthly *Śrāddha* performed in honour of the manes on the day of the new moon). As it is said on the new moon day it is also said to be performed on other days.

116. The *piṇḍas* should be given to a cow, a goat or brāhmaṇas or may be cast into fire or water, or near the rampart.

117. He should make his modest wife eat the middle *piṇḍa*. (If this is done) the manes deposit a foetus into her womb which would increase the sons and (other) progeny.

118. Till the brāhmaṇas are dismissed the oblation should stand (should not be removed). Having performed the rite in honour of the manes, he should then make an offering to all gods.

119. He should then calmly eat the food partaken of by the manes, along with his dear persons.

120. One who performs a *Śrāddha* or eats at it should avoid eating again, should avoid journey, (or) going in a vehicle, exertion and coitus, study, quarrel and sleep by day.

121. Thus one should offer *Śrāddha* to anyone of the three castes, when the sun is in the zodiacal sign, viz. *Kanyā*, *Kumbha* or *Vṛṣabha* and always in the dark fortnights.

122. Wherever *Sapiṇḍa Śrāddha* is to be offered it should always be offered according to this procedure by one who maintains a fire.

123. Hereafter I shall explain (to you) the *Sādhāraṇa Śrāddha* as told by Brahmā and giving enjoyment and salvation.

124-126. (*Śrāddha* should be offered) during the solstices and the sun's equinoctial passage, on a new moon day, and during the sun's passage from one zodiacal sign to another; on an aṣṭakā (i.e. a collection of three days, viz. 7th, 8th and 9th beginning from the seventh day after the full moon, new moon day, and the 15th day of the dark half, and on the days of *Ārdrā*, *Maghā* and *Rohiṇi* when the materials and brāhmaṇas are available; on *Gajacchāyā* day (when an elephant's shadow falls in the east), on the *Vyatipāta* (i.e. new-moon-day when it falls on Sunday and when the moon is in certain *Nakṣatras*), on a rainy day, on the day of *Vaidhṛti* (i.e. the day of the conjunction of the sun and the moon), the third of *Vaiśākha*, the ninth of *Kārtika*, the fifteenth of *Māgha*, the thirteenth of *Bhādrapada*.

127-131. These are said to be the *Yuga-tithis* and favourable for 'the fortnight of the manes'. So also *Śrāddha* should be offered on the *Manvantara tithis* i.e. the ninth of the bright half of *Āśvina*, the twelfth of the bright half of *Kārtika*, the third of the bright half of *Caitra*, the third of the bright half of *Bhādrapada*, the new moon day of *Phālguna*, the eleventh of the bright half of *Pauṣa*, the tenth of the bright half of *Āṣāḍha*, the seventh of the bright half of *Māgha*, the eighth of the dark half of *Śrāvaṇa*, and the full moon days of *Āṣāḍha*, *Kārtika*, *Phālguna* and *Jyeṣṭha*. These are *Manvantara tithis* making the gifts inexhaustible. A restrained man should give on these days at least water mixed with sesamum.

132. The manes say that the secret is that such a man has performed *Śrāddha* for a thousand years.

133. A wise man should offer *Śrāddha* on the full moon day of *Vaiśākha* and on fast days, during festivals and in sanctuaries, at sacred places and in cowpens, in islands, gardens and houses, in solitary places that are besmeared.

134. Politely he should invite the brāhmaṇas, endowed with character and (good) behaviour and virtues and age and form, either on the previous or the same day.

135. Even though he is very rich he should feed two brāhmaṇas at the rite in honour of gods and three at the rite in honour of manes or one brāhmaṇa at (each of) the two; he should not indulge in multiplying (the number).

136. Having worshipped the Viśvedevas with barley (-flour) and flowers after offering them a seat, he should fill a couple of pots (with water) and place it on the *darbha*-blades.

137. Reciting (the hymn) '*Śan no deviḥ*' (may the deities be to our welfare) he should offer water; reciting '*Yavaḥ asi*' (you are barley) he should offer barley grains. Having worshipped Viśvedevas with sandal and flowers he should place them.

138. Having invoked them with these two (incantations) '*Viśvedevā saḥ*', he should scatter the barley-grains.

139. Reciting 'you are barley, the king of grains dedicated to Varuṇa, and mixed with honey, destroyer of all sins, holy and praised by the sages', and adorning them with sandal and flowers he should scatter them.

140-141. Having (thus) worshipped them and having cast away the sandal etc. he should commence the rite in honour of the manes. Making seats of *darbha* etc. he should first consecrate three pots; putting the *darbha* blades in them he should sprinkle water reciting the incantation '*Śan no deviḥ*'. Reciting '*Tilosi*' (you are sesamum), he should again put sesamum, sandal etc.

142. He should make a pot made from a tree or of leaves or of silver or gold.

143. A golden pot or a silver pot or a copper pot is said to be the pot of manes; or even the mention of silver, seeing it or its gift (delights them).

144. Even water given with faith to these manes in silver pots or pots (of metal mixed with) silver becomes inexhaustible.

145. Even now among the pots meant for (making offerings to) manes, one having silver in it, is excellent and dear to the manes, since it has originated from Śiva's eye.

146. Thus securing the pots as available, he, without ill-feeling, should place the *darbhas* in his hand reciting the incantation '*yā divyā*'; (mentioning) the name and family of the manes (he should say) 'I shall invoke the manes'.

147. When they (brāhmaṇas) say 'all right' he should invoke the the manes with the two *ṛcs* '*Uśantastvā*', '*Āvantu* (*naḥ pitaraḥ*)'.

148. Having made a respectful offering with (the incantation) '*Yā divyā*', he should offer sandal etc. First the *darbhas*, then a piece of cloth should be offered, and a resting place from the beginning.

149. Keeping (these) in the pot meant for manes, then having bent he should keep it to the north. Saying, 'You are the place for the manes' he should serve up meals (to the brāhmaṇas).

150. There also he should first, free from ill-feeling, perform the rite with reference to fire. Holding the pots of the food with both hands he should serve up (the brāhmaṇas).

151. With the (hymn) '*Uśantastvā*' he should keep the food in his hand on the *darbha*, along with subordinate dishes, vegetables etc., and eatables of various kinds.

152. Brahmā said that food with curds, milk, ghee made from cow's milk, and with sugar pleases all the manes for one month.

153. They are pleased for two months with the flesh of fish, for three months with the flesh of deer, for four months with the flesh of ram and for five months with bird's flesh.

154. They get excellent satisfaction for six months by pig's flesh, for seven months by red goat's flesh, for eight months by a lamb's flesh.

155. The flesh of a spotted antelope gives (them) satisfaction for nine months. They are satisfied for ten months with the flesh of boar and buffalo.

156. (They are satisfied) for eleven months with the flesh of hare and tortoise; for a year with cow's milk or sweetened milk.

157. They are satisfied for fifteen months with hog's flesh and satisfaction for twelve years is brought about by the flesh of rhinoceros. Eternal satisfaction comes by the *potherb ocimum sanctum* and also by the flesh of a rhinoceros.

158. The old deities—the manes—say, 'Whatever cow's milk, curds and sweetened milk, mixed with honey is offered becomes eternal'.

159. One should narrate the passages sacred to the manes and all the *Purāṇas*.

160. So also the various eulogies of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Arka and Rudra, of Indra, Īśa, Soma and Pavamāna, according to his ability.

161. So also *Bṛhadrathantara*, *Jyeṣṭhasāman*, *Rorava*, and propitiatory passages and *Madhu brāhmaṇa*.

162. So also *Maṇḍala brāhmaṇa* which is agreeable. He should narrate all this to the brāhmaṇas and himself.

163. He should listen to the chapters from *Bhārata* very dear to the manes.

164. O Prince, when the brāhmaṇas have eaten, he should bring carefully food of all kinds and water etc. He should spread it on the ground before the brāhmaṇas who have eaten.

165. 'Those who in my family were *Agnidagdhas* (i.e. a class of *pitṛs*, who, when on earth, maintained a sacred fire) and those who were not, may be pleased with (the food) given on the ground and may get the highest place as a result of satisfaction.

166. This food is offered on the ground for the satisfaction of those who do not have mother, father, brother, not a friend; since they may go in for abstract meditation from wherever they are.'

167-168. Giving a seat to them who died without any purificatory rite being performed over them, also to the relatives who have left the family, and partaking of the remaining; knowing them to be satisfied one should offer water on the scattered (food), when the surface of the earth is besmeared with cow-dung, cow-urine and water.

169. Placing carefully the *darbhas* with their tips facing the south he should offer the *piṇḍas* of all the varieties as in the rite in honour of the manes.

170-171. After washing (his hands etc.) the man uttering his name and family, offering flowers etc., doing the washing off again, with the thread on the left and then the right shoulder should go round thrice. One should perform with *darbhas* in one's hands the rite in honour of one's mother like that of one's father.

172. In the same way the wise one should burn the lamp and should worship with flowers; then when they have sipped water he should, having sipped water, offer water once.

173. Then he should offer flowers and whole rice-grains and inexhaustible water along with sesamum and uttering the name and family and should give presents according to his capacity.

174. He should give cows, land, gold, garments, large beds and whatever is dear to the brāhmaṇas, to himself and to the mane.

175. Void of perfidy due to wealth he should have love for the manes, then should do the recitation of '*Svadhā*' and offering of water to Viśvedevas. Offering prayers to the brāhmaṇas the wise one should accept blessings from them.

176-177. He should say, 'May the manes be amiable', when the brāhmaṇas in return say, 'May they be so'; 'May my family increase', when they in return say, 'Let it be so'. He should make the complimentary present after devoutly lifting up the *piṇḍas*.

178. The remainders should remain till the brāhmaṇas are dismissed. Then he should make the domestic oblation (i.e. offering of the remnants to all creatures and household deities). This is the settled practice.

179. The remnant on the ground, the portion of the *piṇḍas*, is said to belong to honest and diligent servants.

180. This act of satisfying was formerly prescribed by the manes for those not practising any vow, and for the sonless and the wifeless, O King.

181. Then standing ahead of the seat and washing the water-pot, one should dismiss with the tip of a *Kuśa* muttering '*Vāja, Vāja*'.

182. He should circumambulate and walk eight steps with his relatives, sons and wife.

183. Then returning and saluting, he, knowing the incantations, employing the fire, should offer the *Vaiśvadeva* (rite) and make the daily offering.

184. Then at the end of the *Vaiśvadeva* (rite) he should, along with his servants, sons, relatives and guests eat what was enjoyed by the manes.

185. Even one who has not undergone the thread ceremony should offer this *Śrāddha* called *Sādhāraṇa* (general) fulfilling all desires on all *parvans* (the eighth and fourteenth day of each month and the days of the full moon and new moon).

186. Even one without a wife or while journeying, or even a Śūdra should devoutly offer the *Śrāddha* according to this procedure, without the accompaniment of the sacred prayers. The third *Śrāddha* that is enjoined is *Vṛddhiśrāddha* leading to prosperity.

187-188. In a festival or a happy sacrament, at a sacrifice or an auspicious celebration like marriage one should first worship the divine mothers and then the manes, then one's mother and then the Viśvedeva, by circumambulation and with curds, whole rice-grains, fruits and water.

189. He, facing the east, should offer the earlier and the later *piṇḍas*. He should declare 'It is accomplished' and should make respectful offering to two brāhmaṇas.

190. The brāhmaṇas should be honoured in pairs with pieces of cloth or clothe etc.

191. He should speak auspicious things to the brāhmaṇas. In the same way a wise Śūdra should always perform the general *Vṛddhi-śrāddha* (an offering made to manes on prosperous occasions such as the birth of a son) and make presents with salutation and incantations.

192. The lord said : 'For a Śūdra, giving gifts is the principal thing, since all his desires are fulfilled by giving in charity'.

CHAPTER TEN

The Greatness of Pitṛs

Pulastya said :

1. I shall now explain the *Ekoddiṣṭa* (a *śrāddha* performed for one definite deceased individual, not including other ancestors) described by Brahmā formerly as to how the sons should perform it till the purification from personal defilement caused by the death of the father.

2. For a brāhmaṇa the defilement caused by the death is said to be for ten days; for a kṣatriya it is for twelve days, for a vaiśya it is for a fortnight and for a śudra it is for one month on the death of a *Sapiṇḍa*.

3. In the case of a child dying before the tonsure-ceremony is performed, the defilement (i.e. mourning period) is for a night only. Afterwards it is said to be three nights.

4. It should always be like this also at the time of birth in all castes. After the collection of bones (i.e. the ashes after burning a corpse) touching (one another's) body is laid down.

5. One should give *piṇḍas* to the dead person for twelve

days, that is said to be his provender since it gives him great joy.

6. Since the dead person is taken to the city of the dead at the end of twelve days, he sees (is able to see) his son and wife in the house for twelve days.

7. Therefore, for ten nights (and days) water removing the fatigue of journey should be offered in the sky for the cessation of all tormentation.

8. Then on the eleventh day a man should feed eleven brāhmaṇas; so also at the end of the defilement due to the birth of a child in the family.

9. In the same way, on the next day he should perform the *Ekoddiṣṭa*. Invocation or preparation of fire is not done there according to the procedure and may be without worship offered to gods.

10. (For it) only one *Kuśa*-ring, one object and one *piṇḍa* are laid down. First he should say '(Please) be near', and then should offer water with sesamum.

11. He should say, 'May it be well with (us)' and should take interest in scattering (the food) and offering it.

12-14. With this procedure he should do all this month after month. On the second day after the defilement due to birth is over, he should present an unusual bed, so also a golden image along with fruits and cloth. Having worshipped a brāhmaṇa couple adorned with various ornaments and seating them on the bed he should make a respectful offering of honey mixed with curds and milk to the couple from a silver pot.

15. Taking a bone of the forehead, pounding it and mixing it, and with devotion to the manes, he should make the couple drink it.

16. This alone is the procedure as observed by the best brāhmaṇas living in the mountains. Due to it (i.e. the couple's sitting upon it) the bed is defiled and so should not be accepted by best brāhmaṇas.

17. If it is accepted it again requires sanctification—(such) a bed is condemned everywhere in the *Veda* and the *Purāṇa*.

18-20. Those who accept it all go to hell. Those who unknowingly touch (such) a bed woven with excellent texture and

used by a couple go to hell. One should enjoy by means of a new *Śrāddha*, and after having enjoyed should practise the *Cāndrāyaṇa* vow. Sons should always perform it out of their devotion for the dead ancestors. One should present a bull (to a brāhmaṇa) or an auspicious tawny cow should be presented.

21-23. O prince, till one year is over, he should give a jar of water along with eatables. Then when the year is complete there should be *Sapiṇḍikaraṇa* preceded by water with sesamum. After the *Sapiṇḍikaraṇa*, since the dead person becomes the enjoyer of the *Śrāddhas* offered on the *parvan*, a householder should have *Sapiṇḍikaraṇa* in rites preceded by the *Vṛddhi* (*Śrāddha*). One should perform the *Sapiṇḍikaraṇa Śrāddha* after the rite in honour of gods.

24. In it (i.e., this *Śrāddha*) he should invite the dead ancestors and should indicate the dead person separately. He should keep (ready) four pots with sandal, water and sesamum for respectful offering.

25-26. He should sprinkle the pot for the dead person kept among the pots meant for the manes. Similarly, being solely devoted to the manes and having prepared four *piṇḍas* for the dead, with the two incantations '*Ye samānā*' he should divide the *piṇḍas* into three parts. And with this procedure he should offer them preceded by the respectful offering (of water etc.).

27. Then the fourth one that attained the status of manes obtains immortality among the *Agniṣvāttas* etc.

28. After the *Sapiṇḍikaraṇa*, a separate offering is not to be made to him. The *piṇḍa* should be offered to him who has (now) settled among the dead ancestors.

29. Since then on *Saṁkrānti* or on the days of solar and lunar eclipse, he should perform the *Tripiṇḍa Śrāddha* with the *Ekoddiṣṭa*.

30. On the day of the death anniversy of a person one who moves without the *Ekoddiṣṭa* harms the gods and manes and also his brothers.

31. If a man performs a *pārvaṇa* (a general ceremony of offering oblations to all the manes) on the day of the death of a person, he has a downward fall, from which the dead person may get release if he gets contact with the course to heaven.

32. Then the knower of the procedure and giver of the *Śrāddha* should perform the *Āma-śrāddha*. With that he should make the offering and offer the *piṇḍas* into fire.

33. When with three *piṇḍas* he performs *sapiṇḍīkaraṇa*, then after one month or three months, the person to whom the *Śrāddha* is offered becomes free from bondage.

34. Even a free soul gets a share in the offerings by sprinkling with a *Kuśa* blade. The dead ancestors beginning from the fourth are *lepa-bhāja*, and the first three share the *piṇḍas*.

35. The offerer of the *piṇḍa* is the seventh among them and the seven are called *sapiṇḍas*.

Bhiṣma said :

36. In this world how should people make offerings to gods and deceased persons? Who generally accept these in the world of manes? With which (signs) are they enumerated? If on the earth a brāhmaṇa is fed or if offering is made into fire how is it that the dead with good and bad minds enjoy that food?

Palastya said :

37. The fathers are of the form of Vasu; and the grandfathers are Rudra. Similarly, the great-grandfathers are Āditya. So says Vedic text.

38. The (mention of) the name and family of the manes takes to them the offerings meant for divinities and manes.

39. One should devoutly understand the truth about the *Śrāddha* offered with incantations. The *Agniṣvāttas* and others are kept as their chiefs.

40. The names and families also of those to be born are controlled by them. This worship when accomplished pleases beings.

41. If the father or the mother or an elderly person is in the heaven due to good deeds, their food (i.e. food offered) becoming nectar goes to them even in their godhead.

42. It takes the form of a repast if they have became (i.e. are born as) demons, and turns into grass if they have become (i.e. are born as) beasts.

43. The food offered at a *Śrāddha* stands by them by becoming air (even) if they have become (i.e. born as) serpents.

It turns into a drink if they have become (i.e. born as) Yakṣas and becomes flesh if they have turned into fiends; similarly it becomes a drink if they are demons and becomes blood like water if they have become ghosts.

44-45. If they are born as human beings it turns into food and drink; it is (thus enjoyed) in many ways by the enjoyers. The flower of *Śrāddha* is said to be sexual power in a lady and the husband's ability to feed others. It is the power accompanied by prosperity; it is to give handsomeness, and health; and the fruit is union with Brahman.

46. O King, when the hosts of the manes are pleased they grant (long) life, sons, wealth, knowledge, heaven, final release and pleasures and kingdom also.

47. It is heard that Kauśika's sons after having five existences reached the highest place, viz. that of Brahman.

Bhiṣma said :

48. How did the sons of Kāuśika obtain the best union (with Brahman) after having five existences? How does the destruction of (the bondage due to one's) deeds come about?

Pulastya said :

49. In Kurukṣetra there was a great high-souled sage Kauśika by name. Listen to the names and deeds of his sons from me (i.e. as I tell you) :

50. Svasṛpa, Krodhana, Hiṁsra, Piśuna, Kavi, Vāgduṣṭa, and Pitṛvartin. They were then the disciples of Garga

51. When their father died, they had to face a great famine; there was also drought causing great fear to all the world.

52. Those (Kauśika-sons), whose wealth was their penance, protected in the forest, (Garga's) milch-cow by his order. 'We are very much oppressed by hunger, (so) we shall eat up this tawny cow'.

53. When they were conceiving this sinful idea, the youngest brother said: "If she must be killed, then utilize her for a *Śrāddha*. When she will be utilized for a *Śrāddha*, our sin will certainly perish".

54. When Pitṛvartin was permitted by his brothers with the words 'Do so' he, being concentrated, performed the *Śrāddha* by utilising her.

55. He employed, in (due) order two brothers (to receive offerings made to) gods, three (to receive offerings made to) manes, employed one as the guest and himself became the performer of the *Śrāddha*.

56. Being devoted to his dead ancestors, he performed the *Śrāddha* with (the recital of) the sacred texts.

57. Then they free from fear, went (to their teacher) and told him: "(Your) cow was killed by a tiger; (please) take back this calf".

58. In this way the seven ascetics fearless due to their depending upon Vedic power in (doing) the cruel deed, had consumed the cow.

59. Then after having died in (due course of) time, they were born in Daśapura. Transformed into the state of manes, they remembered their (former) existence.

60-61. Then understanding the true character of asceticism and giving up life religiously not being seen by people, dying near a sacred place, they were born as deer on the Kālañjara mountain. Having secured, through knowledge, contemplation of the Supreme Spirit, they gave up those bodies also.

62. With indifference to world produced in their minds they died by falling (from the mountain). The seven ascetics were born as Cakravāka (birds) in the Mānasa lake.

63-64. By name and by deeds they were: Sumanas. Kusuma Vasu, Cittadarśī, Sudarśī, Jnātā and Jnānapāraga. They loved the eldest brother and (all) the seven were holy due to control of mind. Out of them three of unsteady minds had swerved from the path of yoga.

65-69. Then one of the aquatic birds—brāhmaṇa Pitṛvartin, devoted to manes who performed the *Śrāddha*, seeing the bright, strong and brave king Aṇuha of the Pañcāla family accompanied by ladies, sporting with various enjoyments, having a large army and vehicles, desired the kingdom (i.e. to be the king). Seeing (Aṇuha's) two ministers, the other two best brāhmaṇas desired to be his ministers. One of them became Aṇuha's son (who came to be) known as Brahmadatta. The minister's sons also came to be known as Puṇḍarīka and Subālaka. Brahmadatta was consecrated in the excellent city of Kāmpilya as the Pañcāla King.

70. He was devoted to his dead anecstors and performed *Śrāddha*, knew (the path of) Yoga (contemplation of the Supreme Spirit) and read the minds (of others).

71. His wife, the queen, was the daughter of Vāsudeva. She was well known as Sannati and was the same tawny cow (in the former existence).

72. Being engaged in deeds relating to manes she became the expounder of the Vedas. The king ruled over the kingdom with her.

73. Once he went to a garden with her, and (there) he saw a couple of insects (ants) engaged in love-quarrel.

74. The he-ant with his body tormented with sex love said in a faltering tone to the she-ant in front of him and with her face hung down:

75-76. "Nowhere in the world there is a loving female like you, slender in the waist, of large hips, of expansive breasts, of an excellent gait, having a golden complexion, of a charming face and sweet smile; your face is sweet like jaggery and sugar.

77. You eat after I do and bathe after I bathe. You are distressed when I go on a journey and you are uneasy with fear when I am angry.

78. Why is that, O auspicious one, you always remain with your face hung down?" She with blazing anger said: "What are you speaking?

79. You ate the powder of the *modakas* without me. Being passionate you gave it to someone else".

The he-ant said :

80-81. O you of excellent complexion, due to similarity with you I gave it to other ant; O you beautiful lady, please forgive (this) one fault of mine; O you of charming breasts, I shall not do so again; give up your anger. Verily I touch your feet (i.e. I salute you), please be pleased with me.

82. O you of beautiful hips, when you are angry, death would stand before me; O you of charming thighs, when you are pleased, all my desires are fulfilled.

83. O you of beautiful buttocks, drink (i.e. kiss) fully the face of me who am always passionate like the full moon and resembling nectar in taste.

84. Granting this, O you auspicious one, you should always show favour to me.

Hearing these words she then became pleased.

85. The she-ant offered herself to the fascinating one. Brahmadatta too, conversant with the sounds of all animals due to the efficacy of the deeds (in his) former (existence) knowing all that, smiled in amazement.

Bhiṣma said :

86. How did king Brahmadatta know the (meaning of the) sounds of all (animals)?

87. Where did the group of the four Cakravākas live? O omniscient one, tell me all that and (tell me) in which family that (group) of good vows was (born)?

Pulastya said :

88. O king, the Cakravākas were born in the same city as the sons of an old brāhmaṇa and all they—the wise brāhmaṇas—remembered their (former) birth.

89. They were the sons of a brāhmaṇa named Sudaridra,

90. Their names and deeds befitted them: Dhṛtimān, Tattvadarśī, Vidyāvarṇa and Tapodhika. The brāhmaṇas had a mind to practise penance.

91-93. The best brāhmaṇas said: "We shall attain great superhuman power". Hearing these words of them, Sudaridra, a great ascetic, said with piteous words: "What is this, O sons?" He said to them "O sons, this is a failure in your duty; forsaking your old father, living in a forest, what merit, what scope will you have by doing this?"

94-98. They said: "O father, we have arranged for your subsistance; listen to our words. The King (here) maintains an old vow. He will give much wealth, a thousand villages to you who (should) tell him in the morning, 'Those who were brāhmaṇas in Kurukṣetra, who were hunters in Daśapura, they became deer on the Kālañjara (mountain) and Crkravākas in the Mānasa (lake)'. Speaking thus to the father they went to the forest for (practising) penance. O King, that old (brāhmaṇa) too, went to secure his object. Formerly, Vaibhrāja, named

Aṇuha, the lord of Pañcāla, desiring a son, engaged in severe penance, propitiated eternal Brahmā, the lord of lords.

99. Then after a long time Brahmā was pleased with him (and said to him); "Well-being to you; choose a boon—the desire of your heart".

Aṇuha said :

100-102. O lord of gods, give me a son of great strength and valour, master of all lores, religious, and best among the devotees. Give me a son, a devotee and one who would know (the meaning of) the sounds of all beings.

The lord, the universal soul, said to him: "Let it be so," and disappeared there only when all the beings were seeing (i.e. in the presence of all beings). Then he had that brave son, Brahmadatta.

103. (He was) compassionate to all beings, and was more powerful than all of them; he knew (the meaning of) the sounds of all beings and was the lord of lords of all beings.

104. Due to his inherent power, he, naturally disposed to concentration of mind, came to the he-ant to that place where the couple of the sporting ants had remained.

105. Then that Sannati, seeing him smiling and very much amazed, suspecting something, asked the king:

Sannati said :

106. O King, why this untimely smile? I do not know the reason for which you have smiled untimely.

107-108. The prince told her the words of the ant. "O you of excellent face, this sympathetic smile has sprung up from great interest; O you of bright smile, there is no other reason for my smile". The queen did not agree with him, She said: "You are telling a lie.

109. You laughed at me only. Now I won't live with you. How can a mortal, who is not a god, understand the talk of ants?

110. Therefore, today you laughed at me only. What else (can be said) ?"

111. The king, unable to answer, desiring to know (seek) Hara's advice observed, remaining pure, his (Hara's) vow for

seven nights. Brahmā while wandering in the city in the morning, said to him at the end of his (King's) dream:

112-113. "Your beloved will learn every word from the best of brāhmaṇas." Saying so, Brahmā disappeared. In the morning the king moving out of the city with his minisrers and wife saw the old brāhmaṇa, saying (something) and coming before (i.e. towards) him.

114. The brāhmaṇa said: "Those sages who were the chief brāhmaṇas in Kurujāṅgala, fishermen in Daśapura, and deer in Kālañjara mountain and the seven Cakravākas in the Mānasa lake, they are living here".

115. Hearing these words of him, he fell down with grief and recollected his (past) birth; the minister's two sons also (remembered their past birth).

116. That boy Bābhravya who knew all sciences, came to be known as Pañcāla in the worlds and was the expounder of the science of love.

117. Pious Puṇḍarīka too, the founder of the science of Veda, recollected his former birth and through grief fell before them in the same way.

118. 'Oh ! Due to passion, we had, due to the bondage of our actions, fallen from our (proper) deeds'.

119. The three, well-versed in Yoga, having thus lamented again and again, repeatedly praised with wonder the greatness of *Śrāddha*.

120. The king, then having given (the old brāhmaṇa) wealth with many villages and having dismissed him, full of joy, due to (having received) wealth, consecrated on the throne his son, Viṣvaksena by name and endowed with kingly qualities.

121-123a. Then all the best ascetics, Brahmadatta and others, devoted to their parents and free from hatred, went to the water of the Mānasa lake. Sannati too, was glad saying "O King, I pointed out to you all this and the fruit of abstract meditation—that is seen".

123b. Then (in the sequel) praising her the king said:

124. "It is so; through your favour I have obtained all this fruit."

125. Then all these residents of forest, contemplating on

the Supreme Spirit, obtained, by the strength of their penance, the highest place through the aperture in the crown of the head.

126. Thus the ancestors, when pleased, give men (long) life, wealth, knowledge, heaven, final release and pleasure, and also son and kingdom.

127. O king, one who reads out to brāhmaṇas or listens to or reads this *Pitṛ-māhātmya* (greatness of the ancestors) of Brahmadatta, is honoured in heaven for a full hundren crores of *Kalpas* (*Kalpa*=432 million years of mortals).

CHAPTER ELEVEN

A List of Sacred Places

Bhiṣma said :

1. During which portion of the day should the performer of a *Śrāddha* perform it? O brāhmaṇa, what are the sacred places in which *Śrāddha* performed gives abundant fruit?

Pulastya spoke :

2-3. The sacred place named Puṣkara, is said to be the greatest. Presents or offerings made there, or muttering done there certainly becomes endless. It is always dear to the manes and is regarded as great by the sages.

4. So also, O king, Nandā, Lalitā, so also the sacred place, viz. the auspicious Māyāpurī, so also Mitrapada; Kedāra is still better.

5. Gaṅgāsāgara is also said to be an aupsicious sacred place composed of all sacred places; similarly Brahma-tīrtha is auspicious having the water of Śatadru.

6-7. There is a sacred place named Naimiṣa giving the fruit of all sacred places. On (the bank of) Gomatī there is a sacred place called Gaṅgodbheda, where Brahmā, Viṣṇu and (Śiva) the trident-holder came up; where golden gifts are offered, and Hara with eighteen arms (lives).

8. That is the Naimiṣa forest where formerly the rim of the wheel of Dharma wore out. It is waited upon by all (other) *Tīrthas*.

9. There also one can have the sight of (Viṣṇu in his) Varāha (incarnation). One who goes there, goes, with his soul purified, to the city of Nārāyaṇa.

10. Another sacred place is Kokāmukha; Indramārga is also noted (as a *Tīrtha*). Another *Tīrtha* is Pitṛ-tīrtha (sacred to) Brahmā, manifesting his existence.

11. That lord Brahmā resides in Puṣkara forest. The sight of Brahmā is most prosperous and gives the fruit in the form of final release.

12. Kṛta is (one more) sacred place of great religious merit and it destroys all sins; where Janārdana, the first Narasiṁha (resides).

13. Ikṣumatī is a sacred place auspicious to the manes; at the confluence of the Ganges and Jumna the manes are always pleased.

14. Kurukṣetra has great religious merit; where the path (to heaven) is also noticed. Even now (this) *tīrtha*, sacred to the manes, fulfils all desires.

15-16. O King, (there is another sacred place) called Nīlakaṇṭha, sacred to the manes. Similarly other *tīrthas* are: Bhadrasaras, Puṇyasaras, and Mānasa. So also Mandākinī, Acchodā, Vipāśā, and Sarasvatī, Sarvamitrapada, Vaidyanātha giving great fruit.

17. River Kṣiprā is similarly sacred; so also Kālañjara is auspicious; (other *tīrthas* are) Tīrthodbheda, Harodbheda, Garbhabheda, Mahālaya.

18. Bhadreśvara, Viṣṇupada and Narmadādvāra, Gayā; the great sages say that they resemble (one another) (are equally meritorious) because of the offering of *piṇḍas* i.e. as far as offering of *piṇḍas* goes.

19. These places sacred to the manes remove all sins, even of those people who remember them; then what about those who offer *Śrāddha* (at these places)?

20-21. Oṁkāra is (another) place sacred to the manes; so also Kāverī and Kapilodaka; Sambheda on (the bank of) the

Caṇḍavegā (river); so also Amarakaṇṭaka; bath etc. in it gives merit which is double that of Kurukṣetra. (Another) well-known sacred place is Śuklatīrtha; Someśvara is a great *Tīrtha.*

22. It removes all ailments, is meritorious and gives a crore times greater fruit by (one's) offering *Śrāddha,* giving gifts, performing sacrifice or reciting sacred texts in its vicinity.

23. Another sacred place is by name Kāyāvārohaṇa where, in the auspicious dwelling place of Brāhmaṇas, there is a lovely form of the trident-holder, lord of gods.

24. It has become extremely meritorious; similarly the river Carmaṇvatī (is a *tīrtha*); Śūlatāpī, Payoṣṇī and the confluence of Payoṣṇī (with Śūlatāpī).

25. Mahauṣadhī, Cāraṇā and the meritorious Mahāveṇā flowing to Nāgatīrtha; so also Mahāśāla.

26. So also Gomatī. Varuṇā is a great sacred place of Agni. Bhairava, Bhṛgutuṅga and Gaurītīrtha are incomparably the best.

27. (Then there is) a sacred place by name Vaināyaka; so also the best tīrtha Vastreśvara. Similarly (there is the tīrtha) named Pāpahara and there is the holy river Vetravatī.

28. (The *tīrthas*) Mahārudra and Mahāliṅga (are other sacred places) and the great river Daśārṇā. So also Śatarudrā, Śatāhvā and the city called Pitṛpada.

29. (River) Aṅgāravāhikā and the two big rivers Śoṇa and Gharghara, the holy river Kālikā and the auspicious river Pitarā.

30. These are sacred places for manes which are recommended for bath and for making presents. *Śrāddha* offered here is said to have an inexhaustible fruit.

31. The river Śatāvaṭā, so also Jvālā and Śaradvī. Dvārakā, Kṛṣṇatīrtha and the Northern Sarasvatī.

32. River Mālavatī; so also Girikarṇikā; so also the Dhūtapāpatīrtha in the southern ocean.

33. Gokarṇa and Gajakarṇa; similarly the auspicious river Cakra. Śrīśaila, Śākatīrtha and then Nārasiṁha.

34. So also Mahendra, Pnṇya and the holy Mahānadī. A *śrāddha* offered at these places also is said io give unending fruit.

35. Even their sight gives religious merit and they instantly remove sin. Tuṅgabhadrā is a holy river; so also is Cakrarathī.

36. Bhīmeśvara, (and rivers) Kṛṣṇaveṇā, Kāverī and Añjanā. River Godāvarī is holy; Trisandhyāpūrṇa is the best.

37. The *tīrtha* named Tryambaka is a complete and excellent *tīrtha* and is respected by (i.e. superior to) all other sacred places. Here the terrible three-eyed lord (i.e. Śiva) himself resides.

38. *Śrāddha* offered at these places is a crore times merit-giving; O king, even by remembering these (places) sins go away in a hundred ways.

39. The river Śrīparṇā is holy, so also the Vyāsatīrtha is unparalleled. So, also Matsyanadī, Kārā and Śivadhārā.

40. There is the well-known Bhava-tīrtha and the eternal Puṇyatīrtha. Similarly there are the holy Rāmeśvara and Veṇāpura and Alaṁpura.

41. The famous Aṅgāraka, and Ātmadarśa and Alambuṣa; so also Vatsavrāteśvara and the great Gokāmukha.

42. Govardhana, Hariścandra, Puraścandra, Pṛthūdaka, Sahasrākṣa, Hiraṇyākṣa, so also the river Kadalī.

43. The (other) names are: Lakṣmaṇa-tīrtha, Indranīla, Mahānāda; so also Priyamelaka.

44. These also are very much recommended for the performance of *śrāddha*, since it is said that in these holy places all gods are present.

45. Presents made at all these become a crore times more fruitful. Similarly there is the river Bāhudā, so also the auspicious Siddhavaṭa.

46. And the holy place Pāśupata, similarly river Paryaṭikā. Presents made at all these places become a crore times greater.

47. So also the Pañcatīrtha where the river Godāvarī, flowing towards left, comes in contact with Liṅga-sahasra.

48. The place sacred to Jāmadagnya is the best place for (getting) final release; where the river stands ready due to the fear of an adversary.

49. That is the holy place for making offerings to gods and manes and has a host of the celestial nymphs.

50. So also Sahasraliṅga and excellent Rāghaveśvara with the sacred river Indrakālā; there Śakra had formrely gone.

51. Having killed Namuci he reached heaven by (practising) penance. *Śrāddha* offered here by men gives inexhaustible fruit.

52. The sacred place Puṣkara, so also Śālagrāma; then the well-knwon Śoṇapāta where there is the abode of Supreme Being.

53. Then (there are) the Sārasvatatīrtha, and Svāmitīrtha also; then the holy river Malandarā, so also Kauśikī and Candrakā.

54. Then (the river) Vidarbhā, and Vegā and Payoṣṇī flowing towards the east. Kāverī flowing in the northern direction; similarly the mountain Jālandhara.

55. *Śrāddha* offered at these holy places meant for offering *Śrāddha* becomes endless. Similarly Lohadaṇḍa is a *tīrtha*, so also Citrakūṭa.

56. Similarly the bank of the river Ganges is everywhere divine and auspicious. Then (there are the *tīrthas*) Kubjā, Āmraka and Urvaśīpulina.

57. (Then there are) the Saṁsāramocana-tīrtha, so also Ṛṇamocana. *Śrāddha* offered at these places meant for offering *Śrāddha* is inexhaustible.

58. Similarly is the *tīrtha* Aṭṭahāsa; so also Gautameśvara; then is the Vasiṣṭha-tīrtha; next one is Bhārata (tīrtha).

59. Similarly Brahmāvarta, Kuśāvarta and Haṁsatīrtha (are other *tīrthas*), so also (are) the well-known Piṇḍāraka and Śaṁkhoddhāra.

60. So also Bhāṇḍeśvara, Bilvaka and Nīlaparvata; Similarly (is) Badaritīrtha, the greatest of all holy places.

61. And (there is) the holy place called Vasudhārā, so also Rāmeśvara; then Jayantī, Vijayā and Śukla.

62. Those who offer *Śrāddha* at these places go to the highest place; (then there is) a sacred place named Mātṛgṛha; also Karavīra.

63. (The *tīrtha*) Sapta-godāvarī is the best among all the holy places; those desiring inexhaustible fruit should offer *Śrāddha* there.

64. The holy Gayā is in the Kīkaṭa country; the Rājagṛha forest is holy; so also (is) Cyavanāśrama; the river Punaḥpunā is also holy.

65. The holy place Viṣayārādhana and the sacred river Punaḥpunā, where the (following) verse composed by Brahmā is (still) floating.

66. 'If someone desires many sons he should go to Gayā; one should either perform a horse-sacrifice or should let loose a bull at the Nīla (mountain)'.

67. This is the verse floating at the sacred (and other) places; all men, O best king, came saying:

68. Will any son from our family go to Gayā, who, will propitiate the seven earlier and later (members of the family)?

69-70. Among the maternal grandfathers these words have become long-standing: (Will there be) a son, who, having gone (to the Ganges), will drop the collection (of the ashes) of the bones into the Ganges and offer water with even seven or eight sesamum seeds or offer *piṇḍas* in (one of) the three forests (viz. Puṣkara, Naimiṣa and Dharma)?

71. (Who) with devotion will offer a *śrāddha*, first in the Puṣkara-araṇya, then in the Naimiṣāraṇya and then in Dharmāraṇya?

72. Whatever is offered to the manes at Gayā or in Dharmāraṇya or at Brahmasaras and at Gayāśīrṣavaṭa becomes inexhaustible.

73. One who going to these places and having made a libation moves round, quickly takes to heaven the manes residing in hell.

74. O best king, in his family no one becomes an evil spirit, (because) the evil spirit attains liberation due to the offering of *piṇḍas*.

75. A holy man with water in his right hand gives water at the root of mango (trees). (Thereby) the mango-trees are watered and the manes are propitiated; thus one action is known to serve two purposes.

76. There is no other offering surpassing that made at Gayā; those (manes) moving towards liberation are pleased by one offering of *piṇḍas*.

77. The best sages say that giving grains is (an) excellent (gift), so also giving wealth. They say that whatever is given by men at holy places like Gayā is a great source of religious merit.

78-79. Those who go to the south and north of the Mānasa lake and with all their heart and with love see Mahācala and Mahānadī after having saluted chief brāhmaṇas, get the fruit of their life. Whatever a mortal desires, he undoubtedly obtains it.

80. I have briefly stated this compendium of the holy places. Even the lord of speech cannot describe it in detail; then what about a human being?

81. Truth is a holy place; compassion is a holy place; restraint of senses is a holy place; in the houses of those (who observe) the castes and the four stages of life, tranquility is said to be a sacred place.

82-83. Since whatever *Śrāddha* is recommended at the holy places is laid down to (have) a crore-fold (fruit), and since, the *Śrāddha* offered at Gayā is the giver of final release, therefore an effort should be made to offer a *Śrāddha* at a holy place. The morning time has three *muhūrtas* (a *muhūrta*=48 minutes), the *saṅgava* (period after morning time) has a similar duration; fore-noon has three *muhūrtas*; then afternoon follows.

84. The evening time has three *muhūrtas*; a *śrāddha* should not be performed during that period.

85. That time is *rākṣasī* (demonish) and is condemned for all rites; the *muhūrtas* of the day are always said to be fifteen.

86. Among them the eighth period is said to be *Kutapa*; since after noon the sun always becomes mild.

87-91. Therefore, the act during that period, is specified as the giver of eternal fruit. A sword, a vessel, the *Kutapa* (period), so also a blanket made in Nepal, gold, *darbhas*, sesamum seeds and cows (these are the seven necessary things for a *Śrāddha*); and a daughter's son is said to be the eighth. Sin is said to be *Kutsita* (condemned); since these eight torment it, they are known as *Kutapa*. After the *Kutapa*-period there are four *muhūrtas*; so also is the fifth one (which) is laid down for the performance of a *Śrāddha*. *Kuśas*, so also black sesamum are said to have sprung up from Viṣṇu's body. The wise say that black is the mark of a *Śrāddha*; the residents of a holy place should offer water with sesamum seed after water is offered (to the manes).

92. With *darbha* in one hand one should offer in one's house a

Śrāddha (which is) meritorious and holy, gives (long) life, and destroys all sins.

93. And this glory of *śrāddha* is narrated by Brahmā too; a man who listens to or recites it becomes rich.

94. Similarly the residents of a holy place should, at the time of a *Śrāddha*, say it for the cessation of all sins (the following verse) which is regarded as the remover of poverty:

95. 'This is pure, the treasure of fame; this is the destroyer of great sins; the greatness of *Śrāddha* is honoured by Brahmā, Arka and Rudra—(thus) declare the wise'.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Dynasty of Yadu

Bhiṣma said:

1. O learned one, tell me now how the Soma dynasty came up and which kings were born in that family that increased its fame.

Pulastya said:

2-3. Formerly Atri was ordered by Brahmā to create. Then the lord practised penance for creation. (It was) delightful, removing the trouble of Brahmā, nearest to Brahmā, Rudra, Indra and Sūrya and supra-sensual.

4-5. Having made his mind tranquil Atri then remained restrained. Even the greatness of penance causes great delight. Since the chief of the dynasty then stood out it increased by half and since Soma having seen him reported it he became mighty.

6. Then from Atri's eyes water of tears, illuminating all the mobile and immobile things with its moonlight, flowed.

7. The quarters in the form of ladies drank it up; it turned into an embryo generated by Atri and remained in their uterus.

8-9. Then the quarters unable to hold it dropped it. Brahmā then took the embryo and put it together and (thus) fashioned a youth skilled in using all weapons.

10. Having put him with his own hands in a chariot, full of the power of Vedas, he took him to the world. Then the brāhmaṇic sages said: Let him be our lord.

11. Then the interior of that (Soma) who was being praised by sages, Gandharvas and celestial nymphs became very great.

12. From that expanding lustre the host of herbs sprang on the earth; his lustre is great; so he always is (i.e. shines) during the night.

13-15. Therefore Soma became the lord of herbs; he is also counted among the brāhmaṇas; as he is the Vedic lustre and the fluid. The auspicious disc in the dark and bright (fortnights) wanes and waxes. Prācetasa Dakṣa gave him (his) twentyseven brilliant daughters endowed with form and beauty and then ten thousand of thousand (-fold) powers.

16-17. Soma intent on meditating upon Viṣṇu practised penance. Then the lord, Nārāyaṇa-Hari, the supreme Janārdana was pleased with him and said to him, "Ask for a boon." Then Soma asked for a boon: "I shall perform a sacrifice in the world of Indra.

18-19. The groups of gods with the four led by Brahmā should in person enjoy (the offerings) in my house, at the *Rājasūya*. The trident-holder god, Hara, should be our protector." When Viṣṇu said, "Let it be so" he performed the *Rājasūya*.

20. Atri was the *Hotṛ* (the priest reciting the prayers of the Ṛgveda). Bhṛgu was the *Adhvaryu* (an officiating priest). Brahmā became the *Udgātā* (one who chants the hymns of Sāmaveda), and Hari himself was the superintendent.

21. All the (other) gods were assisting priests; the rite was laid down (said) to be *Rājasūya*. The Vasus and also the Viśvedevas were the officiating priests.

22. He gave the three worlds as the sacrificial fee to the priests. Having obtained splendour which was difficult to obtain, and which was honoured by the world, Soma, by means of his penance, got the sovereignty of the seven worlds.

23-24. Once he saw in a garden Bṛhaspati's wife, Tārā, adorned with many flowers and ornaments, of large hips, oppressed with the burden of breasts, so feeble (i.e. delicate) (that

she would not) even (tolerate) the plucking of flowers, charming like Cupid's arrows and having broad and beautiful eyes.

25. In that secluded region, the lord of stars, being smit with love, seized her with her hair. She too, (equally) love-sick with her mind attracted by his form and handsomeness, enjoyed with him.

26. Having sported for a long time Soma took Tārā to his house; then even in his own house he, attached to Tārā, was not satisfied with the (sexual) pleasures.

27-28. Bṛhaspati, scorched by the fire of the separation had his mind contemplating on her only. He was unable to curse him (i.e. Soma), nor was (the lord of speech) able to harm him by means of many chants, missiles, fire or poisons; or by various stratagems or by magical spells. Being tormented with love, he besought god Soma to (return) his wife.

29. Being infatuated with love, he, though besought by Śiva or Brahmā, by the Sādhyas, and Maruts along with the regents of the quarters, did not give (back) Bṛhaspati's wife.

30. When he did not give her (back) Śiva, who (also called Vāmadeva) was well known on the earth and whose lotus like feet were worshipped by many Rudras, became angry.

31. Then, Śiva the trident-holder, along with his disciples, bound by love for Bṛhaspati, resorted to by the lords of spirits, and Siddhas, taking his bow called Jagava, went (forth) to fight with Soma.

32-34. He, especially brilliant, of a terrible form and terrible and cruel due to the fire in his third eye, and the eighty lords of his attendants and with the lords of Yakṣas seated in a war-chariot, and Soma too, with his anger, and with a thousand billions of Vetālas, Yakṣas, Snakes and Kinnaras, so also of serpents, so also with thirty-six thousand chariots, with his lustre increased by Śani and Aṅgāraka came there, accompanied by the army of the Nakṣatras, demons and fiends.

35. The seven worlds, earth, forests, islands and the interiors of the oceans got frightened. The trident-holder, who had taken the blazing missile and great fire went forth to (fight) Soma.

36. Then took place a great war between the terrible armies of Rudra and Soma. Capable of destroying all animals,

it (i.e. the war) of the form of intensive and pre-eminent fire, escalated.

37. The full armies of both with sharp and poignant missiles met destruction. Bright missiles, capable of burning heaven, earth and the nether region were discharged.

38. Through anger, Rudra released the missile Brahmaśiras; Soma too released the missile 'Soma' of infallible power. By the fall of the two (missiles) fear spread in the ocean, on the earth, in the atmosphere.

39. Then seeing that war escalating and capable of destroying the worlds, Brahmā along with gods, entering there, somehow averted it.

40-41. "O Soma, why are you, without any cause, doing this ignoble deed, leading to the destruction of people ? Since you waged this terrible war for taking away the wife of someone else you will be (taken to be) an evil planet among people; you are a sinner; you will be equal to the eaters of brāhmaṇas. Honouring my word, restore this Bṛahspati's wife to him."

42. Saying 'let it be so', Soma, being tranquilled, kept away from fighting; Bṛhaspati taking Tārā and being delighted, went home; so also Rudra.

Pulastya said:

43-45. Then at the end of a year, a boy resembling twelve suns, wearing a divine yellow garment, adorned with divine ornaments, and like the sun, was born to Tārā. He knew all the sciences, and was the propounder of the science of elephants. Named Rājaputra he was a well-known royal physician. He was known as Budha, being the son of king Soma.

46. He, the powerful one, snatched all the lustre of all people. Brahmā and others came there; so also gods with the divine sages came to the house of Bṛhaspati at the time of the ceremony performed at the birth of the child.

47. The gods asked Tārā by whom was the boy begotten (i.e. who was his father—Soma or Bṛhaspati) ?

48-49. She, ashamed of them, did not say anything, at that time. The excellent lady, being again asked, replied shamefully after a long time that the son was Soma's. Then Soma took the son, named him 'Budha' and gave him a kingdom on the earth.

50-51. Then having consecrated him, the supreme lord Brahmā offered him a seat in the planets; having given it he, along with the brāhmaṇic sages, disappeared there only even as all beings were watching. Buddha produced the most religious son in (i.e. from) the womb of Ilā.

52. He (i.e. the son) fully performed a hundred horse-sacrifices, and due to his lustre was known as Purūravas and was honoured by all people.

53. Having propitiated Brahmā on the peak of the Himālayas, he, the lord of the seven islands, obtained the lordship of the world.

54. The demons Keśin and others became his servants; Urvaśī, enamoured of his handsomeness, became his wife.

55. Desiring the good of all the people, he justly protected the earth having seven islands, with mountains, forests and groves.

56. Due to the favour of Brahmā (he obtained) fame that became his carrier and waiting girl holding the chowrie. The lord of gods offered him half (of his) seat.

57. He protected *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma* equally and justly.

58. *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma* came to see him with curiosity, desiring to know how he maintained them equally. With devotion he then offered them offerings, water for washing feet etc.

59. Having brought three seats adorned with gold, and seating them on the seats, he offered them worship, (offering) slightly superior worship to *Dharma*.

60. *Kāma* and *Artha* then became very angry with the king; *Artha* cursed him: "You will perish due to greed."

61. *Kāma* also said: "You will become insane in the Gandhamādana, after having gone to the grove (sacred to) Kumāra due to the separation from Urvaśī".

62-64. *Dharma* too said: "You will have a long life and will be religious; O lord of kings, your progeny will increase hundred times as long as the sun and the moon stay (in the sky) and will not perish on the earth. The madness caused by (the longing for) Urvaśī will last for sixty years; and that celes-

tial nymph, your wife, will soon be won over by you". Saying so all of them disappeared.

65-66. Purūravas everyday went to see Urvaśī. Once while moving in the sky in the southern direction seated in the chariot with Indra he saw Urvaśī and Citralekhā being taken (away) in the atmosphere by the lord of demons, Keśin.

67-68. Having in a battle vanquished him (i.e. Keśin) who had formerly vanquished in battle even Indra by throwing various missiles (at him), he (i.e. Purūravas) became friendly with Indra and gave Urvaśī to him. Since then Indra became his friend.

69. Indra being pleased, with Purūravas, excelling (everyone) in the world, said to him: "You take her".

70. Due to love she sang to Purūravas a great story enacted by Bharata and named *Lakṣmī-svayaṁvara.*

71. He (i.e. Bharata) ordered Menakā, Urvaśī and Rambhā to dance. There Urvaśī, in the role of Lakṣmī, danced with proper pauses (in music).

72. She, while dancing, seeing Purūravas, became oppressed by love and forgot all acting that was directed before.

73-74. Bharata angrily cursed her that separated from him (i.e. Purūravas) she would turn into a creeper, live on the earth for fiftyfive years. Then Urvaśī having gone to him, made him her husband for a long time. After experiencing the curse, Urvaśī gave birth to eight sons by (Purūravas), the son of Budha.

75-77. Listen to their names from me (as I tell them). Āyu, Dṛdhāyu, Vaśyāyu, Balāyu, Dhṛtimān, Vasu, Divyajāyu, and Śatāyu—all were having divine strength and vigour. Nahuṣa was the son of Āyu, so also was Vṛddhaśarmā; and Raji, Daṇḍa and Viśākha; these five were brave warriors. A hundred sons were born to Raji; they were known as *Rājeya.*

78. Raji propitiated pure Nārāyaṇa; Viṣṇu who was (thus) propitiated by penance, gave a boon to the king.

79. He then became the conqueror of gods, demons and men. Then the war between gods and demons continued for three hundred years.

80. A terrible battle took place between Prahlāda and

Śakra, and none of them came out victorious. Then gods and demons separately asked Brahmā:

81. "Who will be victorious out of the two ?" He said: "He, where (i.e. on whose side) Raji is (will be victorious)."

82. The demons requested the king, "Help us to victory". He said: "If I shall be your lord (I shall help you); otherwise enough of it (i.e. I shall not help you)". The demons did not accept it; but the gods did.

83. "Be our lord and destroy the enemy's army." Then he destroyed all that were to be killed by Indra.

84. By that deed of his, Indra then became his son. Then giving the kingdom to Indra, Raji went (to perform) penance.

85. Then, Raji's sons endowed with the merit of penance and power, forcibly snatched the kingdom from Indra and his portion in the sacrifice.

86-87. He, deprived of the kingdom and oppressed by Raji's sons, being helpless, said to Bṛhaspati: "O Bṛhaspati, I am harassed by Raji's sons; I who am oppressed, am not having the kingdom nor the portion in the sacrifice; master of intellect, strive to get the kingdom for me."

88. Then Bṛhaspati, by means of the rite to pacify the planets and to promote welfare, made Indra haughty with power.

89-91. Bṛhaspati, having gone to Raji's sons, stupefied them. The lord of intellect (i.e. Bṛhaspati) who knew religion, resorting to the religion of the Jainas, which was out of the Vedic fold, made them fallen from the three Vedas. Knowing them to be out of the Vedic fold and endowed with disputation, Indra with his bolt killed them all—who were excommunicated from the (Vedic) religion. I shall tell you about the seven pious sons of Nahuṣa:

92. Yati, Yayāti, Śaryāti, Uttara and Para; so also Ayati and Viyati; these seven propagated the race.

93. Yati became an anchorite even in his boyhood. Yayāti, always given to piety, ruled his kingdom.

94. Śarmiṣṭhā, the daughter of Vṛṣaparvan, was his wife; so also Bhārgava's daughter Devayānī of a good vow (was his wife).

95. Yayāti had five sons; I shall mention them by names.

Devayānī gave birth to a son (named) Yadu and also (another son) Vasu.

96. Śarmiṣṭhā gave birth to (three) sons: Druhyu, Aṇu and Pūru. Yadu, Pūru and Bharata continued the race.

97-98. O King, (now) I shall describe the Pūru-race, in which you are born. From Yadu the Yādavas were born, among whom were (born) Bala (-rāma) and Kṛṣṇa for taking down the burden of Pāṇḍavas and for their welfare. Yadu's five sons were like god's sons.

99. The eldest was Sahasrajit, then Kroṣṭṛ, Nīla, Añjika and Raghu. King named Śatajit was Sahasrajit's son.

100. Śatajit had three extremely religious sons: Haihaya, Haya and Tālahaya also.

101. Dharmanetra was the well-known son of Haihaya; Dharmanetra's son was Kunti and his (Kunti's) son was Saṁhata.

102-104. The king named Mahiṣmān was Saṁhata's son. Brave Bhadrasena was the son of Mahiṣmān. He was a king in Vārāṇasī, who has already been mentioned. The religious son of Bhadrasena was Durdama by name. The terrible son of Durdama was named Dhanaka. Dhanaka had four sons well-known in the world.

105. Kṛtāgni, Kṛtavīrya, so also Kṛtadharma; the fourth son was Kṛtaujas; that (well known) Arjuna was (the son) of Kṛtavīrya.

106. By means of his thousand arms the king became the lord of seven islands. Then the lord of the earth practised penance for ten thousand years.

107. Kārtavīrya propitiated Datta born of Atri. Datta, the best among men granted him four boons.

108. The best king, first chose a thousand arms. (By the second boon he chose that) one thinking impiously would incur fear and be warded off.

109. (By the third boon) he would conquer the earth by fighting and would get strength by means of religious acts; and by the additional (i.e. the fourth boon) he would kill anyone that would stand before him in a battle.

110. He conquered this earth by his heroism with its seven islands and cities and surrounded by seven seas.

111. Of him, the intelligent one, a thousand arms were produced as desired by him; he performed all sacrifices in which large fees were paid.

112. All of them had golden sacrificial posts and golden altars; all were attended by gods seated in aerial cars and adorned.

113-116. They were always attended by the Gandharvas and the celestial nymphs also. In his sacrifice Gandharva and Nārada sang a verse, after having seen the greatness of the royal sage Kārtavīrya. Kings would never attain to the position of Kārtavīrya by means of sacrifices, gifts, austerities, valour or learning. Moving swiftly on the seven islands the king, comparable to wind, became the sovereign emperor of the earth with seven islands, for eightyfive thousand years.

117. He became the protector of beasts; he alone was the protector of fields; he alone became cloud by means of showers and became Arjuna by means of his diligence (assiduity).

118. By means of his thousand arms, and with skin rugged on account of the strokes of the bowstring he shone like the autumnal sun with thousand rays.

119. In Māhiṣmatī he was (a man) of great brilliance among men; in the rainy season he would meet the agitation of the ocean.

120. He sports (i.e. sported) against the current, for his own pleasure; sporting with the lashes he tied down the sea.

121-123. Narmadā, frightened and having a series of knittings of her eye-brows in the form of her ripples flowed to him. He alone, from Manu's family, would, plunge into the sea, by drawing out, with one hand the ocean and plunging into it by pleasing the beautiful ladies. When by his thousand arms the great ocean would be agitated, the great demons of the nether region would hide themselves and remain motionless.

124-128. The great serpents stunned by the agitation of his thighs, and suspecting that nectar was being churned out, bent down keeping their heads motionless. This archer discharged arrows against Rāvaṇa. This archer taking a bow, having (with force) stupefied and vanquished the haughty lord of

Laṅkā—Rāvaṇa, with five arrows and having arrested and brought him to Māhiṣmatī imprisoned him there. Then to propitiate that Arjuna, I went to him; having made friendship with my grandson (i.e. Rāvaṇa) he released him. The sound of the bow-string of him having a thousand arms was like that of the fire, that would spread on the earth at the end of a Yuga (the age of the world).

129. (Paraśurāma) cut off in battle the thousand arms like the grove of golden Tāla-trees. The powerful Vasiṣṭha getting angry cursed that Arjuna:

130. "Since, O Haihaya, you burnt my well known grove, so someone else will destroy your wicked deeds.

131. That powerful ascetic brāhmaṇa Bhārgava, having powerfully cut off your thousand arms (and thus) having harassed you, will kill you."

132-134. Paraśurāma was thus the killer of that intelligent (Kārtavīrya). O very powerful (Bhīṣma), he had a hundred sons; out of them (the following) five were great warriors, trained in the science of missiles, mighty, brave and religious: Śūrasena, Śūra, Dhṛṣṭa, Kṛṣṇa and Jayadhvaja; he was the builder of Avantī and the lord of the earth. Tālajaṅgha of great might was Jayadhvaja's son.

135. His hundred sons were known as Tālajaṅghas. Of these Haihayas there were five families.

136. The Vītihotras were born (in this family), so also Bhojas and Avantis, and Tuṇḍakera; (all these) were called Tālajaṅghas.

137. The powerful son of Vītihotra was Ananta. His son was Durjaya who tormented his enemies.

138-140. The great king Kārtavīrya by name having a thousand arms protected the subjects sincerely, who with his bow vanquished the earth bounded by the oceans; and a man who getting up at daybreak utters his name, never loses his wealth; he regains what is lost. One who narrates the life of the intelligent Kārtavīrya, becomes honoured in heaven like a donor or a sacrificer.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Deeds of the Avatāra (Incarnation)

Pulastya said:

1. O king of kings, listen to (the account) of Kroṣṭṛ's family (in which) excellent men (were born). In his family was bornViṣṇu, the perpetuator of the Vṛṣṇi family.

2. From Kroṣṭṛ was born Vṛjinīvān, of great fame. His son was Svāti, and Kuśaṅku was his (i.e. Svāti's) son.

3. Kuśaṅku had a son Citraratha by name; his son named Śaśabindu became a sovereign emperor.

4-5. About him this verse containing the genealogical table was formerly sung. The hundred sons of Śatabindu had a hundred sons. From those hundred intelligent, handsome and important sons resplendent with great wealth were born the very mighty kings having the appellation Pṛthu.

6. Pṛthuśravas, Pṛthuyaśas, Pṛthutejas, Pṛthūdbhava, Pṛthukīrti, Pṛthumata were the kings (in the family) of Śaśabindu.

7-8. Those well-versed in the Purāṇas praise Pṛthuśravas to be the best. He had sons. (Out of them) Uśanas tormented the enemies. Uśanas's son was Śineyu by name and was most virtuous. Śineyu's son was known as Rukmakavaca.

9-10. Rukmakavaca, skilled in fighting, having killed the archers with various arrows and having obtained this earth, gave gifts to brāhmaṇas in the horse-sacrifice. Parāvṛt, the killer of the rival heroes was born from Rukmakavaca.

11. Five sons were born to him who were very powerful and valourous: Rukmeṣu, Pṛthurukma, Jyāmagha, Parigha and Hari.

12. The father put Parigha and Hari in Videha. Rukmeṣu became a king and Pṛthurukma lived with him.

13-14. Jyāmagha, exiled by these two, lived in a hermitage. He, living peacefully in the hermitage and being roused by a brāhmaṇa took his bow and carrying a flag and seated in a chariout went to another country. Being all alone and distressed for want of subsistence he went to the mountain Ṛkṣavān on the bank of Narmadā, deserted by others, and sat there.

15. Śaibyā was Jyāmagha's chaste wife old (in age).

16-17. The king too, being sonless, thought of taking another wife. He got victory in a war and securing a maiden in the war he through fear said to his wife, "O you of bright smile, this is your daughter-in-law." When he said this, she said to him: "Who is she ? Whose daughter-in-law is she ?"

18-19. The king replied, "She will be the wife of the son that will be born to you." Due to the severe penance of that maiden that old Śaibyā gave birth to the son (named) Vidarbha.

20. Vidarbha generated on the princess, (Jyāmagha's) daughter-in-law, two sons, Kratha and Kauśika and later the third son Lomapāda by name, who was extremely pious, brave, and skilled in fighting.

21. Babhru was Lomapāda's son; Babhru's son was Dhṛti; Kauśika's son was Cedi and the kings who are known as Caidya were (born) from him.

22. Kunti was the son of Kratha who was the son of Vidarbha. Dhṛṣṭa was Kunti's son; from that Dhṛṣṭa brave Sṛṣṭa was born.

23. Sṛṣṭa's son was pious Nivṛtti, the killer of rival heroes. Nivṛtti's son named Daśārha was the same as Vidūratha.

24-25. Daśārha's son was Bhīma; Bhīma's son is said to be Jīmūta; Jīmūta's son was Vikṛti; Bhīmaratha was his son; and Bhīmaratha's son was said to be Navaratha. His son was Daśaratha; his son was Śakuni.

26. From him was born Karambha, and from him Devarāta; from Devarāta was born the very renowned Devakṣatra.

27. A god-like and very bright son by name Madhu was born of Devakṣatra. Kuruvaśa is said to be born from Madhu.

28. A brave son Puruhotra was born from Kuruvaśa. From Puruhotra Aṁśa was born on the sporting Vaidarbhī.

29-30. Vetrakī was Aṁśu's wife; on her Sātvata (i.e. Aṁśu) endowed with energy and of growing fames generated Sātvatas. One having children and knowing this progeny of the magnanimous Jyāmagha, becomes united with the intelligent Soma.

31-32. Kausalyā gave birth to the sons called Sātvata, endowed with energy. Their creations (i.e. lines) are four;

listen to them (as I tell you) in detail: On Sṛñjayī, Bhajamāna got a son named Bhāja. Then Bhājakas were born on the daughter of Sṛñjaya.

33. The two wives of that Bhāja gave birth to many sons: Nemica, Kṛkaṇa and Vṛṣṇi, the conqueror of the enemies' cities.

34. Since they were born from Bhajamāna they came to be called Bhājaks. There was Devāvṛdha Pṛthu and he increased friendship with the Madhus.

35-36. This king was sonless, so desiring 'I should have a son endowed with all virtues' and concentrating upon Kṛṣṇa only and touching the water of the Parṇāśā (river), he practised a great penance. Due to his touching the water the river came near him.

37-38. Then the river worried about the well-being of him who was practising penance. With her mind full of anxiety she resolved: 'Turning myself into a woman I shall go (to him), from whom a son like this (i.e. endowed with all qualities) would be born. Therefore today I shall (be his wife who would) give him a son'.

39. Then becoming a maiden and taking up an excellent body she informed the king (about herself); the king then longed for her.

40. Then from Devāvṛdha, that best river, in the ninth month, gave birth to a great son viz. Babhru endowed with all virtues.

41. We have heard that those who know the Purāṇas, narrating the virtues of the magnanimuos Devāvṛdha, say that:

42. Babhru was the greatest among men; Devāvṛdha resembled gods; from Babhru and Devāvṛdha seventy thousand and six hundred sons were born and they became immortal.

43-46. Bhoja (given to performing) sacrifice, (giving) gifts, (practising) penance, intelligent, pious and of a very strong vow, handsome and very bright (married) Mṛtakāvatī. (This) daughter of Śarakānta gave birth to four sons: Kukura, Bhajamāna, Śyāma and Kambalabarhiṣa. Kukura's son was Vṛṣṭi and Vṛṣṭi's son was Dhṛti. His son was Kapotaroman; and his son was Tittiri; his son was Bahuputra. It is said that

(his) learned son was Nari; his other name is said to be Candanodakadundubhi.

47. His son was Abhijit; from him Punarvasu was born.

48. Abhijit was first sonless; but this (king), best among men, encouraged by sages gladly performed the horse-sacrifice to obtain a son.

49. When he was moving in the gathering (at the sacrifice) from it arose blind Punarvasu learned, well-versed in religion and giver at sacrifices.

50. It is said that Vasu had a couple of sons. O best among the intelligent, they were known as Āhuka and Āhukī.

51-52. In this matter they quote very interesting verses. They had ten thousand armoured and mailed chariots, thundering like cloud and having their bottoms with attachments. The Bhojas never told a lie; they never remained without performing sacrifices; and never gave less than a thousand.

53. There was never a purer or a more learned person than a Bhoja. This family is said to have come down upto Āhuka.

54-55. And Āhuka gave his sister (to the Avanti-king) in Avanti. And the daughter of Āhuka gave birth to two sons; Devaka and Ugrasena who were like divine children; and the sons that were born to Devaka were like gods.

56. (They were) Devavān, Upadeva, Sudeva and Devarakṣita; they had seven sisters whom he (Ugrasana) gave to Vāmadeva:

57. Devakī, Śrutadevā, Yaśodā, Śrutiśravā, Śrīdevā, Upadevā and Surūpā was the seventh.

58-60. Ugrasena had nine sons and Kaṁsa was the eldest among them: Nyagrodha, Sunāman, Kaṅka, Śaṅku, and (he) who (was called) Subhū. The other one was Rāṣṭrapāla; so also (were) Baddhamuṣṭi and Samuṣṭika. They had five sisters: Kaṁsā, Kaṁsavatī, Surabhī, Rāṣṭrapālī and Kaṅkā; they were beautiful ladies. Ugrasena along with his children belonged to the Kukura (i.e. Daśārha) country.

61. Vidūratha, best among the warriors, was Bhajamāna's son. The brave Rājādhideva was Vidūratha's son.

62. The two sons born to Rājādhideva were Śoṇāśva and

Śvetavāhana. They were liked by brave men, very much given to the Kṣatriya-vow.

63. Śoṇāśva had five brave sons skilled in fighting: Śamī, Rājaśarmā, Nimūrtta, Śatrujit and Śuci.

64. Pratikṣatra was the son of Śamī and the son of Pratikṣatra was Bhoja and his son was Hṛdīka. Hṛdīka had ten sons of fearful valour.

65-66. Among them Kṛtavarman was the eldest, and best was Śatadhanvan. (Others were) Devārha, Subhānu, Bhīṣaṇa and Mahābala, and Ajāta, Vijāta, Kakara and Karandhama. A son, Kambalabarhiṣa was born to Devārha; (he was) learned.

67. He had two sons: Asamauja and Samauja. Two valourous sons were born to the son of Ajāta.

68. Samauja had three well-known and very religious sons. Their names in order were: Sudaṁśa, Suvaṁśa and Kṛṣṇa.

69. One who everyday glorified this family of the Andhakas, consequently had a large family and progeny.

70-71. Kroṣṭṛ had two wives: Gāndhārī and Mādrī. Gāndhārī gave birth to Sunitra affectionate to his friends; Mādrī gave birth to a son Yudhājit (by name), then to Devamīḍhuṣa, (then to) Anamitra and Śini. These five possessed lucky marks (on their bodies).

72. Nighna was Anamitra's son; Nighna had two sons: the two were Prasena and the very brave Śaktisena.

73. Prasena had the best and unparalleled gem by name 'Syamantaka'. It was described as the 'King of best gems in the world'.

74. Wearing that gem on his chest very many times he shone brightly. Śauri asked for that excellent gem for his king.

75. Govinda too did not obtain it; though capable, he did not snatch it. Some time Prasena, adorned with it went ahunting.

76-77. He heard a sound made by a certain being in a cave. Then entering the cave Prasena encountered a bear (viz. Jāmbavān). The bear attacked Prasena and Prasenjit also attacked the bear and (thus) they, desirous of vanquishing each other, fought.

78-79. The bear, having killed Prasena took that gem.

Hearing that Prasena was killed Govinda was suspected by his (i.e. Prasena's) brother, so also by others that Prasena was killed by Govinda to get the gem.

80-81. Prasena, adorned with that best gem, had gone to the forest; seeing him who was not willing to part with Syamantaka, Kaśava had killed him (Prasena) as he, by not giving the gem, had turned into his enemy. This rumour started by Satrājit spread everywhere.

82. Then after a long time, Govinda who had again set out for hunting, by chance came near the cave.

83-84. Then that mighty lord of bears (viz. Jāmbavān) made a sound as before. Govinda having heard the sound and entering the cave with a sword in his hand, saw the very mighty king of the bears, viz. Jāmbavān. Then Hṛṣīkeśa, with his eyes reddened with rage, at once seized Jāmbavān very violently.

85-86. Then seeing him as Viṣṇu in Viṣṇu's body due to his (past) deeds the lord of the bears too quickly praised him with Viṣṇusūkta (a eulogy in honour of Viṣṇu). Then the lord being pleased, favoured him with a boon.

87. Jāmbavān said: "It is desirable and auspicious to meet death at your hands with the stroke of your disc. This virgin daughter of mine should have you as her husband.

88. O lord, you should take the gem which I obtained from Prasena by killing him. The gem is here".

89. Keśava having killed Jāmbavān who had spoken thus with his disc, he of mighty arms, having achieved his purpose, took that daughter.

90-92. Then in the presence of all Yādavas, Janārdana, who was angry due to the false rumour, gave to Satrājit that best gem which he had received from the bear-king. Then all the Yādavas said to Vāsudeva: "We had thought that you had killed Prasena". Satrājit had ten sons from each one of his ten wives.

93. He had hundred and one sons born of Satyā. They were well-known and very brave, and Bhaṅgakāra was the eldest.

94. Satyā, Vratavatī and Svapnā, elder to Bhaṅgakāra, gave birth to those boys. Śinīvāla was brave.

95. There was (born) the warrior Abhaṅga; Śini was his son; from him Yugandhara (was born); he is said to have had a hundred sons.

96. He was called Anamitra; was well known as a descendant of the Vṛṣṇi family. From Anamitra was born Śini, the youngest member of the Vṛṣṇi family.

97. From Anamitra again was born Yudhājit, a warrior of the Vṛṣṇi family. Two other sons also (were born from Anamitra): Ṛṣabha and Citra.

98. Ṛṣabha got as his wife the praiseworthy daughter of Kāśirāja, and Jayanta obtained auspicious Jayantī as his wife.

99. Then Jayanta's son was born of Jayantī. He always performed sacrifices, was very courageous, learned and was dear to the guests (or he) liked guests.

100. From him Akrūra, very diligent and giver of large presents was born. Śaibyā was the gem among virgins; Akrūra obtained her (as his wife).

101-102. On her he generated eleven very mighty sons: Upalambha, Sadālambha, Utkala, Āryaśaiśava, Sudhīra, Sadāyakṣa, Śatrughna, Vārimejaya, Dharmadṛṣṭi, Dharma and Sṛṣṭimauli.

103-106a. And all of them were born (so brave) that they took away gems. Two sons, resembling gods, and delighting the family were born on Śūrasenā from Akrūra: Devavān and Upadeva. From Akrūra twelve sons were born to Aśvinī: Pṛthu Vipṛthu, Aśvagrīva, Aśvabāhu, Supārśva, Gaveṣaṇa, Riṣṭanemi Suvarcas, Sudharman, Mṛdu, Abhūmi and Bahubhūmi; and two daughters: Śraviṣṭhā and Śravaṇā.

106b-107a. An intelligent preson, who knows about this false accusation of Kṛṣṇa can never be assailed by anyone with a false curse.

107b. Aikṣvākī gave birth to a brave son—the wonderful Mīḍhuṣa.

108-111. Ten brave sons were generated on Bhojā by Mīḍhuṣa: Vasudeva (was born) first, (then) Ānakadundubhi; so also Devabhāga was generated (by Mīḍhuṣa); and Devaśravas, Anāvṛṣṭi, Kunti, and Nandi and Sakṛdyaśa, Śyāma, Śamīka (also) known as Sapta. He had five beautiful wives: Śrutakīrti, Pṛthā, and Śṛutadevī and Śrutaśravā and also Rājādhidevī.

These five were the mothers of heroes. Vṛddha's wife Śrutadevī gave birth to king Kāruṣa.

112. From Kaikaya Śrutakīrti gave birth to king Santardana. Sunītha was born on Śrutaśravas from Caidya.

113. From Dharma Bhayavivarjita was born on Rājādhidevī. Śūra, bound by friendship, gave (in adoption) Pṛthā to Kuntibhoja.

114. Thus, Pṛthā, Vasudeva's sister was also called Kuntī. Kuntibhoja gave that praiseworthy Pṛthā to Pāṇḍu as his wife.

115. That queen gave birth to five brave sons for Pāṇḍu : Yudhiṣṭhira was born from Dharma; Vṛkodara (i.e. Bhīma) was born from Vāyu.

116. Dhanañjaya (i.e. Arjuna) comparable to Indra in valour was born from Indra; he the brave one, was born with the three portions from three gods.

117. He worked for gods, and killed all demons; he killed those demons whom even Indra was unable to kill.

118. He who had obtained vigour was placed in heaven by Indra. We have heard that two sons were generated on Mādravatī (by the Aśvins).

119. (They were) Nakula and Sahadeva and were endowed with handsome form and goodness. Ānakadundubhi had a wife named Rohiṇī of the Pūru family.

120-121. He had (from her) a son Rāma dear to him; so also Sāraṇa, Caraṇapriya, Durdhara, Damana, Piṇḍāraka and Mahāhanu. That who was Māyā Amāvāsyā would be Devakī. First that mighty Prajāpati was born from her.

122. Then from her the darkish Subhadrā, gracious in speech, was born; so also (were born) Vijaya, Rocamāna, Vardhamāna and Devala.

123-126. All these were born on the subordinate queen. Bṛhaddevī gave birth to the magnanimous Agāvaha. He himself was born by name Mandaka on Bṛhaddevī. Devakī gave birth to her seventh son Romanta, and Gaveṣaṇa unvanquished in battles. While formerly wandering in the forest, Śauri produced in Śrutadevī's pleasure-house, the eldest son viz. Kusika on a Vaiśya lady. Śrutandharā was one of the queens (of Vasudeva).

127. Vasudeva's mighty son Kapila, having divine fragrance, the first archer, caused grief to the people.

128a. These two, viz. Saubhadra and Bhava were very energetic.

128b-129. (Obscure) Devabhāga's son (named) Prastāva together with Budha is remembered. The first and best Devaśravas is said (बाहु or प्राहु:?) to be a scholars. His daughter Yaśasvinī was born from Manasvin of Ikṣvāku family. (Her son was) Śatrughna.

130-131a. (Obscure) His enemies had retreated from him; he was the killer of enemies; Śraddhā was born from him. Kṛṣṇa being pleased gave a hundred children to Gaṇḍūṣā, with the moon, magnanimous, powerful and strong(?)

131b-133. Nandana's two sons were Rantipāla and Ranti-Śamīka's four brave and very mighty sons were: Viraja, Dhanu and Vyoma and Sṛñjaya. Vyoma was childless; Dhanañjaya was Sṛñjaya's (son); he who was born as Bhoja became a royal sage.

134. The man who always narrates or listens to Kṛṣṇa's birth and rise is freed from all sins.

135. Kṛṣṇa, the great god, formerly the creator, was born even among men.

136. By means of penance Vasudeva produced on Devakī the lotus-eyed (Kṛṣṇa), having four arms, of a divine form and the refuge for people.

137. Having seen him with the sign of Śrīvatsa and resembling gods, Vasudeva said to him "O Lord, withdraw your form.

138. O god, I am afraid of Kaṁsa, therefore I am saying this to you. He killed my six pre-eminent sons of terrible valour."

139. Having heard Vasudeva's words Acyuta withdrew his form.

140. After he agreed to it, Śauri took him to the house of the cowherd Nanda. Having handed him over to Nanda, he said to him, "Protect him; then only all the Yādavas will be happy.

141. As soon as this embryo (i.e. son) of Devakī will kill

Kaṁsa, there will be happiness in the world, which would greatly remove the burden (of the earth).

142. Who (i.e. he) will kill all those kings who are wicked, when there will be a war among the Kauravas where all the Kṣatriyas will assemble.

143. This god himself will be the charioteer of Arjuna; having rid the earth of the Kṣatriyas he will enjoy the rest (i.e. void of the Kṣatriyas) and will take the entire Yadu-race to the divine world."

Bhiṣma said:

144. Who is this Vasudeva? Who is this glorious Devakī?

145. Who is the cowherd Nanda? Who is Yaśodā rigidly observing vows, who nourished Viṣṇu and whom he called his mother?

146a. Who gave birth to (a son) an embryo and brought him up?

Pulastya said:

146b. Kaśyapa was the Supreme Being and Aditi is said to be his beloved.

147. Kaśyapa was a portion of Brahman and Aditi that of the earth. Nanda was said to be a cloud and Yaśodā was the earth.

148. He satisfied many desires of Devakī, which she had formerly entertained from the great unborn one.

149-150. Soon that great god entered a human body. He (lord Viṣṇu) possessed of magical powers, stupefying all beings with his superhuman faculties came (down) in the family to establish righteousness and destroy the demons, when righteousness and sacrifice had perished.

151-152. Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā, Satyā, so also Nāgnijitī and Sumitrā, Śaibyā, Gāndhārī and Laksmaṇā. So also Subhīmā, Mādrī, Kausalyā and Vijayā. These and others were his sixteen thousand wives.

153. Listen to the (names of) sons born of Rukmiṇī: Cārudeṣṇa who was brave in battles, and very mighty Pradyumna.

154. Sucāru and Cārubhadra and Sadaśva and also Hrasva.

155-156. The youngest was Cāruhāsa, and a daughter (named) Cārumatī. On Rohiṇī were born Bhānu, Bhīmaratha, Kṣaṇa, Rohita and Dīptimān, Tāmrabandhu, Jalandhama. Among them, four daughters were born and they were younger.

157. From Jāmbavatī was born the extremely charming Sāmba. He was the author of solar science, and an image in the house.

158. The magnanimous one entered the very base (supreme spirit); (then) the god of gods being pleased destroyed his leprosy.

159. Mitravindā gave birth to Sumitra and Cārumitra. From Nāgnajitī were born Mitrabāhu and Sunītha.

160. Know these and others to be thousands of (Kṛṣṇa's) sons; the sons of Vāsudeva are eighty thousand.

161. Pradyumna's most intelligent son, viz. Aniruddha, a warrior in battle and Mṛgaketana (having the deer on his banner) was born of Vaidarbhī.

162. Kāmyā, the daughter of Supārśva obtained Tarasvin from Sāmba. The other five were declared to be good-natured gods.

163. There were three crores of the great Yādavas. Sixty thousand were brave and very mighty.

164-165. Portions of gods were born in the form of all of these of great prowess. Or mighty demons killed in the war between gods and demons were born here among men and harassed all men. For their emancipation they were born in the Yādava-family.

166. There were a hundred families of the magnanimous Yādavas. Viṣṇu was their promoter and was placed as their lord.

167. All those Yādavas remaining obedient to him prospered.

Bhiṣma said:

168-169. The seven sages, Kubera, Maṇidhara, Yakṣa, Sātyaki, Nārada, Śiva and Dhanvantari, Viṣṇu the first god

along with (other) deities—why were all these hosts of gods born together on the earth?

170. How many manifestations of this great one will be there? For which purpose is he born in all fields? For what purpose is Viṣṇu born in the Vṛṣṇyandhaka family? Please tell me who am asking you.

Pulastya said:

171. O prince, listen, I shall tell you a very great secret as to why Viṣṇu of a divine body is born among men.

172. When the Yuga comes to an end, and time becomes lax, Hari, the lord, is born among gods, demons or men.

173-174. The demon Hiraṇyakaśipu was the ruler of the three worlds; again subsequently when Bali was the ruler of the three worlds there was great friendship of the gods with the demons. Ten complete yugas passed; the world was unperturbed.

175. The gods and demons were obedient to those two. Bali was bound (by Vāmana). His destruction was extremely fearful, (which) brought a great loss both to gods and demons.

176-177. Here (in this world) he is then born among men due to Bhṛgu's curse to establish religious order for gods and men.

Bhiṣma said:

178. Why did Hari take up a body for gods and demons? O you of good vow, tell me the (full account of the war) between gods and demons as it took place.

Pulastya spoke:

Terrible battles were fought between them for victory.

179. Ten and two pure incarnations are said (to have been taken) in the period of Manu. Listen to their names as desired to be told by me.

180. First (incarnation) is Narasiṁha; and the second one is Vāmana; the third is Varāha and the fourth is (Kūrma at the time of) churning out nectar.

181. Fifth one is the very terrible war Tārakāmaya involving Tāraka. The sixth one is called Āḍīvaka; similarly the seventh is Traipura.

182. Eighth is that of the murder of Andhaka, the ninth is that of the murder of Vṛtra. Tenth of them is that of Dhvaja, and Hālāhala is next to that.

183. The twelfth is known as the terrible Kolāhala. The demon Hiraṇyakaśipu was killed by Narasiṁha.

184. Formerly Bali was bound by Vāmana at the time of overpowering the three worlds.

185. The deities killed Hiraṇyākṣa in an encounter. The Boar (incarnation) made him into two when he dwelt in the ocean.

186. At the time of churning nectar (out of the ocean i.e. during the incarnation as Tortoise) Indra vanquished Prahlāda. Virocana, the son of Prahlāda, was always intent on killing Indra; but Indra having overpowered him killed him in the Tārakāmaya battle.

187-188. When the gods were unable to conquer Tripura, the enemy of gods, they having deluded the demons drank the nectar and came to life again and again. All the demons in the three worlds were killed by Śiva.

189. At the murder of Andhaka gods, men and manes killed demons, goblins and fiends everywhere.

190. In the terrible tumult Vṛtra who was (formerly) sprinkled (with nectar) by the demons was struck and destroyed by Indra with the help of Viṣṇu.

191. Having approached Vipracitti with his followers Mahendra with his bolt killed him who knew magical art and had concealed himself wickedly.

192. The demons and gods who had fully gathered had fought twelve battles causing destruction of gods and demons and leading to the well-being of the beings.

193-194. Hiraṇyakaśipu ruled as a king and enjoyed sovereignty in the three worlds for a hundred and seventy-two million and eighty thousand years.

195. Bali, in turn, became a king (and ruled) for a hundred and twenty million and sixty thousand years.

196. Pralhāda enjoyed with the demons for the same period as Bali was said to have ruled.

197-198. These(wars)of the mighty Indra should be known (to have been fought) for conquering the demons. This entire

group of the three worlds is then protected by Indra, when for ten thousand years it was not prosperous. When after a lapse of time Indra obtained the (kingdom) of the three worlds, *Yajña* left the demons and went to the gods.

199. When *Yajña* went to gods, the sons of Diti said to Śukra:

200. "Indra has snatched our kingdom; *Yajña*, deserting us, has gone to gods. We can't remain here; we shall enter the lower world."

201. Thus addressed, Śukra said to the dejected demons, consoling them with(these) words: "Do not be afraid, O demons. I shall support you with my might.

202. Whatever chants and herbs are there on the earth all that is with me; only a portion of it is with gods.

203. I shall give you all that is kept for you by me". Then gods seeing them supported by Śukra and being dejected held consultation with a desire to kill them:

204. "This Śukra will with his might, withdraw all this from us. We shall well go (ahead) before he deprives us (of the kingdom).

205. Having forcibly conquered the remaining (demons) we shall send them to the nether world."

206. Then the enraged gods approached the demons and the demons being killed by them rushed to Śukra himself.

207. Then Kāvya (i.e. Śukra) seeing them being attacked by gods, brought them together for protecting them who were harassed by gods.

208a. They stopped after seeing Kāvya, and the gods killed them without any fear.

208b-210. Then Kāvya pondering over the beneficial words of Brahman(?) and remembering the former account said to them: "Vāmana snatched the three worlds in three strides; Bali was bound; Jambha was killed; Virocana also was killed. The gods killed the great demons in the twelve battles.

211. With various expedients many prominent demons among them were killed. A few of you have survived; I think this is no war.

212. Political wisdom must be employed by you. I shall stand by you till the times change. I shall go to Mahādeva for (obtaining) a chant that would bring victory to you.

213. Getting from god Maheśvara chants favourable to us we shall again fight with gods; then we shall get victory."

214. Having agreed (having conversed among themselves) the demons said to gods: "All of us have put down our weapons; we are without armours and chariots.

215. Covered with bark-garments, we shall practise penance."

216. Gods having heard their words spoken truthfully, being free from heat and being delighted retired from there. When the demons had laid down their weapons, then the demons also retired.

217-218. Then Kāvya said to them: "Being free from pride and endowed with moral virtue pass the time taking care of your bodies. Remaining in the hermitage of Brahmā, wait for me, O demons." Kāvya approached Brahmā for those demons.

219. Śukra said: "For the defeat of gods and victory of demons, O god, I want those chants which Bṛhaspati does not have."

220. Thus addressed the god said: "O Bhārgava, with your head bent down, you practise the Kaṇadhūma vow for a full thousand years; if you practise it, God bless you, you will obtain the chants."

221-222. Saying "all right" Śukra, son of Bhṛgu, being permitted by Brahmā and touching the feet of the lord said, "Yes sir, I shall, as ordered by you, practise the vow."

223.-225. As ordered by the god of gods, sage Bhārgava did (as he was told). Then when that Śukra went for the good of the demons he observed celibacy to get the chants from Maheśvara. Then knowing that joy of them due to political wisdom, at this vulnerable point gods furnished with armours and weapons and led by Bṛhaspati, vehemently attacked them.

226. Seeing the groups of gods holding weapons all demons getting frightened, emerged into view and said to them (these) words:

227. "O gods, while our preceptor is practising a vow we have laid down our weapons. Having promised us security you have now approached us with a desire to kill us.

228. We all are free from jealousy and have remained (here) with our arms laid down. Clothed in rags and deer-skins we have remained inactive and possessionless.

229. In no way we are able to conquer gods in a battle." (To one another they said:) "We shall surrender to Kāvya's mother without (waging) war.

230. (And) we shall acquaint her with this misery until our preceptor returns. When Śukra returns we, furnished with armours and arms, shall fight (with gods)."

231. Speaking thus to one another, they who were frightened, took the shelter of Kāvya's mother. She too granted them security.

232. "Do not be afraid; give up your fear, O demons. Remain with me; (then) you will have no fear."

233. Gods then seeing the demons protected by her, and without judging their strength or weakness forcibly assailed them.

234. Then that goddess (i.e. Kāvya's mother) seeing the demons being murdered by gods, got angry and said to the gods: "I shall stupefy you with sleep."

235. Collecting all materials she then brought about sleep (to the gods); she rich in penance and endowed with meditation stupefied (them) with her power.

236. Then seeing Indra paralysed (by Kāvya's mother) the army of gods fled. The gods, seeing Indra subdued, ran through fear.

237. When the hosts of gods had fled, Viṣṇu said to Indra, "Enter me, God bless you, O best of gods, I shall protect you."

238. Indra, thus addressed, entered Viṣṇu. Seeing him protected by Viṣṇu the enraged goddess said (these) words:

239. "O Indra, I shall now with force burn you along with Viṣṇu, when all the beings are looking on; see the might of my penance!"

240. The two gods, Indra and Viṣṇu, were overpowered by her. Viṣṇu said to Indra: "How should I get free with you?"

241. Indra said: "Kill her as long as she does not burn us, O lord; I am especially subdued by her; kill her; do not delay."

242. Then observing her, Viṣṇu determined to do the evil deed of killing a woman (?) and the lord quickly approached the distressed Indra.

243-244. Then Viṣṇu, struck with fear and moving with speed, and knowing the cruel act desired to be done by the goddess got angry, took his disc and through dread cut off her head. Seeing that dreadful murder of the woman Lord Bhṛgu got angry.

245-246. Then Viṣṇu was cursed by Bhṛgu for his wife's murder.

Bhṛgu said:

Since you, knowing *Dharma*, have killed a lady who should not have been killed, therefore you will be born among human beings seven times.

247. Then due to that curse he is repeatedly born among human beings for the well-being of the world, when *Dharma* disappears from it. Then, after having spoken to Viṣṇu, himself bringing the head, and bringing her body and holding (the head and the body) in his hand he said:

248. "O goddess, I am reviving you, who were killed by Viṣṇu. If I know the entire sacred law or have practised it, and if I am telling the truth, (forsooth) come back to life."

249. Then having sprinkled her with cold water, he said: "Come back to life, come back to life."

250. When he spoke (thus) the goddess came back to life.

251. Then all the beings having seen her as if awakened from sleep, uttered the words 'good ! good !' from all sides.

252. Thus that Bhṛgu then brought back to life that respectable lady. While the gods were watching that wonderful thing took place.

253. Unperplexed Bhṛgu again brought back to life his wife; but seeing it, Indra, through fear of Kāvya, did not get happiness.

254. Then after lying awake at night (i.e. sleepless) Indra, desiring peace said (these) words to his daughter, Jayantī:

255. "This Kāvya is observing a terrible vow to destroy Indra (i.e. me). O daughter, he, the intelligent one, has very much frightened me.

256. O daughter, propitiate him with service pleasing to his mind in such a way that the brāhmaṇa would be pleased.

257-259. Go to him; I have given you to him; make an effort for me."

Comprehending well the words of her father, Jayantī went to that place where he remained after having undertaken the terrible vow. Seeing him with his face bent down, drinking the particles of smoke, dropped by a Yakṣa from a dripping bowl, seeing Kāvya who remained (there) trying and striving for the destruction of his enemies, reduced to a weak condition, she acted with Kāvya as she was told by her father.

260-263. The sweet-speaking girl praised him with agreeable eulogies. At the (proper) time she gently rubbed his limbs which soothed the skin and in keeping with the practice of the vow served him for many years. When that terrible vow (called Kaṇa-) Dhūma was over after a thousand years, Śiva being pleased granted him a boon. Maheśvara said: "You alone have observed this vow; none else has observed it.

264. Therefore, by your penance, intellect, knowledge and might and brilliance you (all) alone will overcome all gods.

265. O son of Bhṛgu, I shall give you all that I have; do not disclose it to anyone. What is the use of talking much? You will be immune to death."

266. Having granted those boons to Bhārgava, he also granted him the lordship of beings, of wealth and immunity from death.

267. Kāvya, receiving these boons was happy with his hair standing on end.

268. Speaking thus to lord Śiva, the god of gods, Śukra,

endowed with intelligence, joining his palms bent down before him.

269. Then, when god (Śiva) vanished, he said this (i.e. these words) to Jayantī: "O auspicious one, whom do you belong to? Who are you that you are afflicted when I am distressed?

270. Why do you, endowed with great penance, want to win me over? You have remained (here) with this (i.e. such) devotion, respect and restraint and affection; O you, charming lady of attractive hips, I am pleased with you.

271-272. O you beautiful lady, what do you desire? What wish was arisen (in your mind)? I shall fulfil it even though it is difficult to accomplish."

Thus addressed, she said to him: "By means of your penance you can know, O brāhmaṇa, what I desire you to do for me. (Now) tell me precisely (what you would do)."

273. Thus addressed, he, looking at her with a divine eye, said to her:

274. "O beautiful young lady, unseen by all beings you desire a union with me for a thousand years.

275. O respectable young divine lady, charming like the blue lotus, having beautiful eyes, and sweet-speaking thus you choose enjoyments.

276-277. Let it be so; O you very beautiful and fascinating lady; we shall go to (my) house."

Then having come to his house with Jayantī, Uśanas the son of Bhṛgu who had fulfilled his vow, lived for a hundred years unseen by all beings with that respectable lady.

278. All the sons of Diti, having come to know that Śukra had returned after having gained his object, being delighted went to his house to see him.

279. When, after having gone there they did not see their preceptor who had concealed himself by his magical power, and not seeing any sign of his (having returned), they (concluded), 'Our preceptor has not yet come'.

280. And so they went to their abodes as they had come. Then all the hosts of gods having gone to Aṅgiras, said to him:

281. "You, the revered one, go to the residence of the demons, and after stupefying their army, quickly bring it under your control."

282. Bṛhaspati said to those gods: "Just so, (just now) I go." Having gone (there) he subjugated Prahrāda, the lord of demons.

283. Transforming himself into Śukra, he worked there as (their) priest. He stayed there for a full hundred years, when Uśanas came back.

284-285. The demons saw Bṛhaspati in the assembly. "Here there is (already) one Uśanas. Why has the other one come here? It is a great wonder; a great quarrel will ensue (now); what will people say (about) this one who is seated at the door?

286. (And) what will our preceptor, seated in the assembly say to us?" When the demons were speaking like this, Kavi came (there).

287. Seeing there Bṛhaspati who had taken his form and who was seated there, he, being angry said (these) words: "Why have you come here?

288-289. You are confusing my disciples. Is it proper for you (who are) the preceptor of gods? Being certainly stupefied by your trickery, the ignorant ones do not recognise you. So, O brāhmaṇa, it is not proper for you thus to ill-treat another's disciples.

Go to the abode of gods (and) stay (there). Thus (i.e. by doing so) you will obtain religious merit.

290. O brāhmaṇa, formerly the best of the demons had killed your son and pupil Kaca who had come here as a student. (So) your entrance here is improper."

291-293. Hearing those words of him, and smiling, Bṛhaspati said: "There are thieves on the earth, who snatch away others' wealth; (but) such thieves (like you as) take away another's appearance and body, were not seen. Formerly, Indra by killing Vṛtra committed a brāhmaṇa's murder. You have surpassed it by (i.e. by teaching) the science of the materialists (like *Cārvāka*). I know you to be Āṅgirasa Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of gods.

294. O demons, all you observe (him) who has come (here

after) taking my form. Through the efforts of Viṣṇu he, capable of infatuating you, has come here.

295. So binding him with chains you should throw him into the salt ocean."

296. And again Śukra said: "He is the priest of gods. Stupefied by him, you will perish, O demons. O lord of demons, this wicked one has deceived me.

297. Why did you leave me and take up another priest? This is Bṛhaspati only, the preceptor of gods and the son of Sarasvatī.

298. You have been deceived in the interest of gods. There is no doubt (about) it. O magnanimous one, forsake him who would bring victory to the enemies.

299. O lord, through anxiety about my disciples formerly only I went from here and remained in water. I was drunk by the great god Śambhu.

300-301. I indeed passed a complete hundred years in his belly. I was discharged by him in the form of (his) semen through his generative organ. The god, granter of boons said to me; 'Śukra, choose a boon liked by you.' O king, I chose a boon from the god of gods, the trident-holder.

302. 'O Śaṅkara, let all the objects entertained by my mind and desires residing in my mind be (fulfilled) through your favour.'

303-305. Saying 'Let it be so' the god sent me to you; (but) thus by the time (I returned) I actually saw this Bṛhaspati to have become your priest. O lord of demons, listen to my words." Bṛhaspati again said these words to Prahrāda: "I do not recognise him as to whether he is a god or a demon or a human being; he has, after assuming my form, come here to deceive you, O king."

306. Then all the demons said: "Well-said; we would have the former priest; whosoever he may be; we have nothing to do with this (later); let him go as he has come !'

307-308. Kāvya angrily cursed all the lords of demons that had gathered there: "Since you have abondoned me, I shall see all of you void of wealth, dead (or) leading a miserable life for a long time.

309. And by all means an extremely terrible calamity will very soon befall you."

Speaking thus Kāvya at his will went to a penance-grove.

310. When that Śukra had (thus) left, Bṛhaspati remained there for some time, looking after the demons.

311-312. O King, then when a long time elapsed, all the demons collecting together asked Bṛhaspati: "Give us some knowledge (useful) in this worthless worldly life, by which we shall obtain release through your favour, O you of good vow."

313-314. Then Guru, the preceptor of gods, who had then assumed the form of Kāvya said: "I had already the same idea as expressed by you (now); so together you, being composed and pure, find leisure (so that), O demons, I shall tell you that knowledge which will give you release.

315. That knowledge called Ṛg(veda), Yajur(veda) and Sāma(veda) is *Vaidika* (knowledge); and is due to the favour of Vaiśvānara (the Supreme Being) but it causes grief to the beings in this world.

316-318. The mean, intent upon material self-aggrandisement, perform sacrifices and *Śrāddhas*. These unkind ones along with their wives follow the bad practices—practices laid down by Viṣṇu and by Rudra. How will Rudra, whose form is half male and half female, who is surrounded by hosts of goblins and is adorned with bones give release (to a person)? There is neither heaven nor release; people are afflicted here.

319. How will Viṣṇu, practising violence, lead one to release? Brahmā of the nature of Rajas subsists on his own progeny.

320-321. The others i.e. the divine sages, who have resorted to the Vedic fold are full of violence, always cruel and eat flesh; the gods also are sinners by virtue of their drinking wine. These brāhmaṇas are flesh-eaters. Who will and how will he, by (practising) such observances go to heaven or (get) release?

322. Those religious rites like sacrifice etc. and like *Śrāddha* recorded in the *Smṛtis* etc. which the scriptures enjoin to be leading to heaven or release do not do so.

323. If a person is taken to heaven by performing a sacri-

fice and causing mire of blood by killing a beast, then what (is it) by which a person is taken to hell?

324. If by one's eating (food), someone else is satisfied then *Śrāddha* should be offered to one who has gone on a journey; he should not (then) take food (with him).

325. O demons, (even) brāhmaṇas moving in the sky, fall by eating flesh; for them there is neither heaven nor release here (i.e. in this system of the *Vaidikas*).

326. For every being that is born his life becomes dear (to him); how would a wise man eat flesh which is like his own flesh?

327. How do these (followers of the *Vaidika* practices) enjoy the female organ (i.e. have copulation) from which they are born? O lord of demons, by copulation how can they go to heaven? What kind of purity is that which is had by means of clay and ashes?

328-330. O demons, see how very perverse this world (of the *Vaidikas*) is! After passing urine or after excretion the organ of generation or the anus are cleansed with clay and water, but the same provision is not made in the case of the mouth after eating. Then O king, why are the organ of generation and anus not cleaned in the same way? This state (of things) is perverse (for) they do not do cleansing where (actually) it is enjoined.

331. Formerly Soma went away after snatching Tārā, Bṛhaspati's wife. A son Budha was born on her (from Soma); and Guru again accepted her.

332. Śakra himself took away Gautama's wife named Ahalyā; see what kind of religious practice this is!

333. This and other things causing sin are seen in this world. When such kind of religious practices exists then tell me, which is said to be the highest good.

334. O lord of demons, ask me and I shall tell you again."

Hearing Bṛhaspati's words full of truth, the demons with curiosity risen in them and being detached from the worldly existence, said:

335-336. "O preceptor, initiate all of us, who have approached you and are firm in our devotion, so that with your

instruction we shall not again be infatuated; we shall remain very much detached in this worldly existence causing grief and infatuation.

337. O preceptor, draw us out from the well (of mundane existence) by pulling our hair; O best of brāhmaṇas, which god should we take shelter of?

338-339. O highly intelligent one, show us who have approached you, a deity by remembering, serving or meditating on, so also by having worshipped which, release will be obtained (by us). We are displeased with the family, and we won't strive again here (i.e. to have a family)."

340. When Guru, who was disguised, was thus addressed by the best of the demons, he thought about that undertaking: 'How shall I bring about this?

341. How can I make them sinners (and consequently) denizens of hell, outcast from the Vedic fold due to their ridiculing it and (therefore) being laughed at in the three worlds?'

342-344. Saying thus (to himself) Bṛhaspati meditated on Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu). Knowing that meditation of his Janārdana created Māyāmoha (i.e. a being who would delude the demons with his tricks) and presented him to Bṛhaspati and said to him: "This Māyāmoha associated with you will infatuate all demons, outcast from the Vedic path." Having instructed thus the lord disappeared.

345. That Māyāmoha went to the demons who were engaged in penance. Bṛhaspati approached them and said:

346. "This naked, clean-shaven ascetic holding a peacock's feather, being pleased with your devotion has come to favour you."

347-349. After Guru had spoken thus Māyāmoha said (these) words: "O demons, you who are engaged in penance, tell (me) whether you desire as the fruit of your penance something worldly or otherworldly?" The demons replied: "In our opinion performance of penance is for the acquisition of religious merit in the other world; (so) we have started it; what have you to say in this matter?" The naked one (i.e. Māyāmoha) said: "You act according to my words if you desire release.

350. The entire door to release as advised by the Arhat is

open. This *Ārhata* (way) is for release from the (Vedic) path; there is none greater than he.

351. Remaining here (i.e. in his fold) only you will reach heaven and release."

352. The demons were taken out of the Vedic path by Māyāmoha (saying) "This leads to merit, this to sin; this is good and this is bad.

353. This leads to release, this would not give release; this is the highest truth.

354. This ought to be done; this ought not to be done; this is not this (i.e. as it is said to be so); this is clear; this is the practice of the naked, this is that of those who put on many garments."

355. Thus Māyāmoha told the demons the words of the Arhats, and made them give up their own (old) practices.

356. When Māyāmoha told them the words of Arhat, viz. 'Honour my way of life', they resorted to him and therefore they became the followers of the Arhats.

357-358. After they had given up (the path of the) three Vedas Māyāmoha made them wholly absorbed in the Arhat way; others also were instructed by him; they instructed others; these instructed still others; these also still others. 'Salutation to Arhats' thus they spoke firmly in their congregation.

359. Within a few days the demons almost gave up (the path of the three) Vedas. Māyāmoha with his senses conquered again became the wearer of red garments.

360-361. He too, going to other demons, spoke sweet words: 'If you have a desire for (going to) heaven or for release, then enough of the wicked practices like killing the beasts. (Please) understand (it). Know this all to be of the nature of worldly knowledge.

362. Understand my words properly; they are said by the wise. This world is propless and erroneous knowledge is pre-eminent in it.

363. It is very much defiled by passions like attachment and gets one involved in the peril of rebirth."

364. He said manifold words intended for their release in such a manner that they abandoned their (former) practices.

O king, some condemned the Vedas, while others condemned gods.

365. Others condemned the group of religious practices and others brāhmaṇas. These logical arguments do not lead to the practices involving killing (i.e. are against killing):

366-367. "O wise ones, if the oblations burnt in fire become fruitful, or if it is laid down that a beast killed in a sacrifice obtains heaven, then why does the sacrificer not kill his own father there (i.e. in the sacrifice)? If something eaten by one leads to the satisfaction of someone else, then Śrāddha should be offered to those who are travelling and they should not take (provender etc.) with them.

368-369. After having obtained godhead by performing many sacrifices if wood of Śamī etc. is eaten by Indra then a beast eating leaves is certainly better. Knowing that his words are not to be relied on by men, ignore them, and be pleased (to take) the words uttered by me to be leading to final beatitude.

370. O great demons, those whose words are authoritative do not fall from the sky.

371. Words having propriety should be accepted by me and others like you."

The demons said:

372-374. We all are resorting with devotion to this statement of facts made by you. If you are pleased, O lord, favour us today. We shall bring all the material necessary for initiation, by doing which, through your favour release would quickly be obtained by us.

Then Māyāmoha said to all these demons: "This my preceptor of best intellect, has betaken himself to this discipline. The best one will initiate you at my direction: 'O brāhmaṇa, initiate these sons at my instruction' ".

375. The demons, when infatuated, said (these) words to Bhārgava:

376. "O magnanimous one, give us initiation, that will free (us) from the entire worldly existence." Uśanas said to the demons: "All right, let us go to (the river) Narmadā.

377. O you, strip off your garments, I shall initiate you." Thus, O Bhīṣma, the intelligent son of Aṅgiras in the form of Bhṛgu made the demons naked.

378-379. And giving them peacock's feathers, flags, berries of gunja plant, charming garlands, he got their hair plucked, (for) plucking out hair is a great means of (acquiring) religious merit.

380. God Kubera became the lord of wealth due to having plucked out his hair. By always remaining dress-less (devotees) obtained great superhuman power.

381. Arhat himself has formerly said that in this way (i.e. by following the Arhat-practices) eternity is obtained. Godhead is obtained here (only) by men by plucking out their hair.

382-383. Why then not do it since it gives great religious merit? It was a great desire of gods: 'When would we be born in the family of a layman in Bhārata country and would be endowed with penance after plucking out our hair.'

384-385. They had adored the twentyfour *Tirthaṅkaras.* (For them) Praising with the muttering of incantations the Arhat covered over with the lord of cobras and showing the path of meditation, heaven was (quite) at hand or release would come. Which thought is expressed by them?

386-387. (The thought) is: Being similar to the sun and fire in lustre when shall we be sages? When shall we be passionless by (means of) muttering (incantations) and the five modes (of devotion)? For the heads of those religious people practising penance in that way and having met with death are broken with a stone.

388. When shall we reside in a solitary forest? (When) will the calm layman mutter secretly into our ears:

389-391. 'O sage, do not go, since you are a traveller on the path to release. Whatever places you have secured cause further activity (and) so they are to be forsaken—these words of ours are true. By means of our penance and various restraints go to the best place and along that path of release which the wise ones, being endowed with penance obtain by means of devotion'.

392. That is said to be the practice of penance where there

is the restraint of senses and compassion for all beings; everything else is mockery'.

393. Knowing this you should obtain the highest position worth going to and (should obtain) the same condition which the *Tirthaṅkaras* and ascetics have obtained.

394. Thus (only) the deities, the Vidyādharas and the great serpents formerly entertaining desires day and night (obtained that state).

395. If you have entertained a desire to end the course of worldly life then leave (your) wives that are impediments in the path to heaven.

396. How do you enjoy that female organ of generation into which your father entered (i.e. had coitus)? How is it that beings eat flesh which is similar to their own?

397. Then all those terrible demons said (these) words to Guru: "O magnanimous one, initiate us (your) children who are before you!"

398. Having done so the priest at that time said: "You should never salute any other deity (than the Arhat).

399. When you are required to eat at a place you have to eat by putting the food in the cavity of your hands and should look equally upon the water likeable or otherwise (which is) without hair and worms and not contaminated by other's glance.

400. O lord, one should eat according to this practice. Do like that. Those fit for release and you should remain together."

401-402. O prince, telling thus the restraints to those best demons, Guru went to heaven, the abode of gods and told them all that he had made the demons to do.

403-406. Then the demons went to Narmadā and lived by it. Seeing there those demons except Prahrāda, the lord of gods, being pleased said (these) words ro Namuci: Seeing these—Hiraṇyākṣa, the destroyer of sacrifices and of religious practices and the censurer of the Vedas, so also Praghasa the demon of wicked deeds, and Vighasa, and Muci, and Bāṇa and Virocana, Mahiṣākṣa, Bāṣkala, Pracaṇḍa, Caṇḍaka, so also the shining and very cruel Suṣeṇa, the best among the demons—and others he said to the lords of demons:

Indra said:

407-408. O lords of demons, you were born in olden days; and you ruled over heaven; how is it that now you have started practising this vow destroying the Vedas, (being) naked, clean-shaven (and with) a pitcher and holding the peacock and have remained here?

The demons said:

409. Having given up all our demonhood we have remained in these practices of the sages.

410. We are doing deeds leading to the enhancement of religious practices in all the beings. O Indra, enjoy the kingdom of the three worlds and (now) depart (from here).

411. Saying 'All right' Indra again went to heaven. O Bhīṣma, all those (demons) were thus stupefied by (Bṛhaspati) the priest of gods.

412. Going to the river Narmadā the best demons stayed (there). Knowing all that account Śukra again advised them.

413. Then they again entertained the wicked idea of conquering the three worlds.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Chopping-off of Brahmā's Head by Rudra

Bhiṣma said:

1-2. Tell me how Arjuna, the killer of the brave enemies, was born from Tripuruṣa; how again, Karṇa, the son of an unmarried woman is known as born from a charioteer; how enmity sprang up between the two. I have a great curiosity; so please tell me that.

Pulastya said:

3-4. Formerly when his face was rent, Brahmā, overpowered by great anger, took up the perspiration produced on his forehead and struck it on the ground; from that perspiration

a brave hero having rings, arrows and a great bow and having a thousand armours was born and he said: "What shall I do?"

5. Pointing, with vigour, to Rudra, Brahmā said to him: "Kill this wicked-minded one so that he will not be born again."

6. Hearing the words of Brahmā and raising the bow from behind Maheśa, he with arrows in his hand and having very angry eyes started (to kill him).

7-8. Seeing that very terrible man, Rudra being frightened speedily went away from there and reached Viṣṇu's hermitage. "O Viṣṇu, killer of enemies, save me from this man; this terrible sinner of the form of a Mleccha is created by Brahmā. O lord of the world, act in such a manner that he, an angry man, would not kill me."

9-11. Lord Viṣṇu, invisible to all beings (yet himself) seeing everything and possessed of magical powers having deluded that man, concealed Virūpākṣa (i.e. Rudra) who had come there. God Viṣṇu saw him who had bent himself (before Viṣṇu) on the ground.

Viṣṇu said to him:

O Rudra, you are my grandson, tell me which desire of you I should fulfil?

12. Seeing god Viṣṇu and blazing exceedingly with lustre and pointing to his (begging) skull, he said, "Give me alms".

13. Seeing Rudra with the skull in his hand Viṣṇu thought: 'Now who else (but you) would be proper for giving alms to?'

14. Thinking 'this one is proper' he offered him his right arm. Śiva cut it with his sharp trident.

15. Then from the lord's arm a stream of blood like liquified gold produced from a flame of fire started (to flow).

16. It fell out of the skull, and Śambhu begged it; it was straight, strong and touched the sky with speed.

17. From Viṣṇu's arm it flowed for a thousand years and was fifty-five Yojanas long and its expanse was ten Yojanas.

18. The lord, the beggar, received the alms for such (a long) period. It was given (i.e. put) by Nārāyaṇa into an excellent (begging) skull.

19. Then Nārāyaṇa said these words to that great Śambhu (i.e. Rudra):

20-21. "Is the pot filled or not?" Then the great lord, hearing Viṣṇu's words resembling the thundering of clouds, having eyes like the moon and the sun and adorned with the (crescent) moon on his head, fixing (all his) three eyes on the skull, and reaching it said to Janārdana: "The skull is full."

22-24. Hearing those words of Śiva, Viṣṇu withdrew the stream. When Hari was observing, the lord (i. e. Rudra) churned (stirred) that blood with his finger and his glances for a thousand divine years. When the blood was (thus) churned (stirred), it gradually became first a mass, then a bubble and after that a man with a crown (on his head), with a bow, having bull-like (i.e. strong) shoulders, with two quivers tied to his back, with a finger-protector, appearing like fire, in the skull.

25. Seeing him lord Viṣṇu said these words to Rudra:

26-27. "O Bhava, who is this man (Nara) that has sprung up in the skull?" Hearing (these) words of Viṣṇu, Śiva said to him: "O Lord, listen; this is the man named Nara, best among those who know (the use of) great missiles. You called him Nara, so he will be (called) Nara.

28-30. Both Nara and Nārāyaṇa will be famous in the Yuga and in battles, in deeds helping gods and in the protection of people. This Nara, therefore, will be the friend of Nārāyaṇa. This one of great lustre will help you in killing the demons; he will be a sage in testing knowledge and a conquerer in the world. This is the fifth head of Brahmā, with a superior lustre.

31-33. Born from the combination of the three lustres that rose from the blazing lustre of Brahmā and the glance that I cast, he will conquer the enemy in battle. He will be terrible to those who cannot be killed by Indra and (other) gods and also to the others who will be invincible to Indra and (other) gods."

Saying so, Śambhu then stood still and Hari too stood wondering.

34-37. The (man) remaining in the skull praised Śiva and Viṣṇu. The hero, of generous mind, joining his palms together and raising them to his head said to them: "What should I do?" Saying so he remained bent (i.e. humble) before them. The glorious Hara said to him: "With his own lustre Brahmā has

created a man with a bow in his hand. You kill him". Śaṅkara, speaking thus, holding the man's both hands which were joined like that in satisfaction, and lifting up the man, who was praising him, from the skull said these words again:

38-39. "This is the terrible man about whom I told you, he has been put to sleep. Awaken him quickly." Saying so Hara disappeared. Then in the presence of Nārāyaṇa, the mighty one struck by the left foot by Nara, got up.

40-41. Then between the two born of (Brahmā's) perspiration and (Viṣṇu's) blood, took place a great battle in which the sound of the extended bow spread (everywhere) and the entire earth resounded with the sound (of the battle).

The one born of (Viṣṇu's) blood (i.e. Nara) took off the armour of the one born of perspiration.

42-43. O king, a couple of divine years passed when the two thus met in battle and fought. Seeing the two-handed one born of (Viṣṇu's) blood and the one born of (Brahmā's) perspiration thus encountering (each other) Viṣṇu after having thought, went to the great abode of Brahmā.

44-46. Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) spoke, in alarm, these words to Brahmā: "O Brahman, the one born of (your) perspiration was today hurled down by the one born of (my) blood."

On hearing this Brahmā who (became) distressed said to Madhusūdana:

"O Hari, let this my man live (again) in this existence."

Viṣṇu being pleased said: "It shall be so."

47. Going to their battlefield and warding them off he said to both of them: "In the intervening period between the Kali and Dvāpara yugas, in your next birth there will be (a war); when the great war will take place I shall bring both of you together (to fight)."

48. Viṣṇu having called the lord of planets and the lord of gods told them: "By my command these two good men are to be protected by you.

49. O sun (having a thousand rays), this one born of the perspiration (of Brahmā) is to be descended on the earth as your portion at the end of the *Dvāpara* (yuga) for the success of gods.

50. In the family of the Yadus there will be born very mighty Śūra.

51. His glorious daughter Pṛthā, incomparable in beauty on the earth will be born for the success of gods; and Durvāsas will grant her a boon and a group of spells:

52. 'Whatever god she (i.e. you) would invoke with that spell by the favour of that god, O venerable lady, you will obtain a son'.

53. O Sun, she during her menses seeing you rising will long for you; when she is (thus) afflicted with anxiety you should enjoy her.

54. In her i.e. Kuntī's womb he will be (conceived and) born as the son of an unmarried woman for the success of gods, O lord."

55. The Sun, the heap of lustre Saying "All right" spoke (further) : "On the maiden I shall generate a son who will be proud of his power.

56. And all people will address him by the name Karṇa. O Viṣṇu, due to my favour in the world there will be nothing with him, of a pure soul, that will not be given to brāhmaṇas, O Keśava.

57. By your direction I shall generate him of such a prowess."

58. Having thus addressed the magnanimous god Nārāyaṇa, the destroyer of demons, the Sun disappeared there only.

59. When the Sun-god, the robber of clouds, diappeared (Viṣṇu) with his mind pleased said to Indra also:

60. "O Indra, this Nara sprung up from (my) blood due to my favour and who is a portion of me should be placed by you on the earth at the end of *Dvāpara*.

61. O magnanimous one, when the illustrious Pāṇḍu will obtain Pṛthā as his wife and so also Mādrī he will go to a forest.

62. A deer will give him a curse when he will be in the forest; with aversion produced by that he will go to Śataśṛṅga.

63. Desiring sons to be born on his wife (by another) he will say (so) to her. Then Kuntī unwilling (to do so) will say to her husband (i.e. Pāṇḍu) :

64. 'O King, I do not at all desire sons (begotten) by a mortal. O King, I desire sons from the deities by their favour.'

65. O Śakra then you should present Nara to Kuntī who would beseech you. O Lord of Śacī, do so by my direction."

66-72. Then the unhappy lord of gods said (these) words to Viṣṇu: "When this period of Manu passes, then in the twenty-fourth Yuga you, descending (i.e. being born) as Rāma in Raghu's family, in Daśaratha's house for killing Rāvaṇa and for causing peace to the gods, (while) wandering in the forest for Sītā, desiring the good of Sun's son, (will have) killed my son, named Vālin, the chief of the monkeys. Being, tormented by this grief, I shall not accept that son viz. Nara." To Indra, the lord of gods, who did not accept Nara and telling some other reason, Viṣṇu spoke for taking down the burden of the earth: "O Lord, I shall take an incarnation in the mortal world for destroying Sun's son and for your son's success. I shall also act as (Arjuna's) charioteer and bring about the destruction of the Kuru-family."

73. Then with these words of Viṣṇu, Śakra accepting Nara, was pleased. Being delighted he (said): "May your words come true." God Viṣṇu himself, granting the boon thus and sending (Indra) and having gone to Brahmā, the lotus-eyed one (i.e. Viṣṇu) again said to him:

74-85. "You have created the three worlds (consisting of) the movable and immovable. O lord, we two shall help you in the execution of (your) job. O lord, you do not realize that you are destroying (the world) after having yourself created it. Desiring to kill this Śambhu, you have done the censurable deed. Due to your anger for god (Śiva) you created the man. To absolve you of this sin undertake great expiation. O god, accepting the three fires offer an oblation to Agni, either at a sacred place or in a sacred region or forest. O Pitāmaha, perform, with your wife, a sacrifice under our protection. O lord of the worlds, all gods, so also Ādityas and Rudras will obey your command as you are our lord. One is the *Gārhapatya* fire, second is the *Dakṣiṇāgni* and the third is the *Āhavanīya*. Prepare these in three fire-vessels. Worship yourself in a circle, me in a bow-like figure and god Hara in a quadrangle by means of (the recitation of) the Ṛks, Yajus and Sāmans. Having generated fires by means of penance and obtaining great affluence, you will put out the fires after having offered oblations into them for

one thousand divine years. Nothing is said to be more sacred than offering oblations to fire in this world. Brāhmaṇas are purified on the earth by well-offered oblation to fire.

These are indicated by the brāhmaṇas to be the paths leading to the world of gods. A brāhmaṇa householder should always maintain a fire. The status of a householder can never be obtained by a brāhmaṇa without (maintaining) a fire."

Bhiṣma said:

86. Was that archer, named Nara, who sprang up from the skull, born from Mādhava or due to his own deeds? Or was he deliberately created by Rudra?

87. O brāhmaṇa, Brahmā, the Hiraṇyagarbha, sprang up from an egg. How is it that that fifth face came up?

88. *Rajas* (a cosmic quality—the cause of activity) is never seen in *Sattva* (quality of goodness), nor *Sattva* in *Rajas*. How did Brahmā (always) remaining in *Sattva* have excess (of *Rajas*) by which he with his mind deluded, sent the man to kill Hara?

Pulastya said:

89. Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva) and Hari both these remained on the good path.

90. For the two magnanimous ones, nothing that is either unaccomplished or accomplished, is unknown. The fifth face of the great Brahmā had come up.

91. So, growing with Rajas Brahmā became deluded. He thought that he had fashioned the creation (i.e. the world) with his lustre.

92. 'There is no other god than I, who set forth the creation including gods, Gandharvas, beasts, birds and deer.'

93. And the five-faced Brahmā was thus deluded. His face facing the east was the originator of Ṛgveda.

94. His second face set forth Yajurveda. The third one was the originator of Sāmaveda and fourth of Atharvaveda.

95. With the fifth face looking upwards he studies the Vedas with limbs (i.e. the *Vedāṅgas*) and sub-limbs (i.e. the supplementary works to the *Vedāṅgas*), history, secret sciences and compilations (of laws).

96. By the lustre of that face of wonderful brilliance all demons and gods lost their brilliance like lamps at sunrise.

97. The perplexed ones being disgusted remained in their own cities. One neither cared for another nor offended others with his might.

98. All the frightened gods were unable to approach or to see or to go near that great lord Brahmā.

99. Dimmed in lustre they regarded themselves as overpowered. All they pondered over their own good—the good of gods.

100a. 'We, who have lost our lustre by his brilliance will resort to Śiva.'

Gods said:

100b. Salutation to you, O lord of all beings, great god, we repeatedly salute you.

101. O you source of the world, O you highest Brahman, you are eternal. You are, along with Viṣṇu, the support and the cause of all the worlds.

102. He, being thus praised by gods, sages, forefathers and demons, remaining hidden, said: "O gods, ask for your desired object."

Gods said:

103. O god, appearing in person, give us as much as is desired by us. Have pity on us and give us a boon also.

104. Whatever great valour, lustre, power we had—all that has been eclipsed by Brahmā with his fifth face.

105. All lustres have perished. O great lord, act in such a way that everything becomes as before.

106. Then Śiva, with his face pleased and saluted even by gods, went there where Brahmā was with his mind deluded by the pride of his Rajas quality.

107. (Gods) praising the lord of gods and surrounding him approached him. Brahmā enveloped in (i.e. overpowered by) the Rajas quality did not recognise Rudra who had come to him.

108. At that time the soul of all, the creator of the universe

and the illuminator of everything was seen to please the world with his lustre (like that) of crores of suns.

109. Then Rudra, approaching Brahmā, the Almighty, seated (there) with the entire group of gods (said):

110. "O god, with great lustre your face shines more !" Saying so Śiva laughed loudly.

111. As a man cuts off the interior of a plantain tree with his nails, Śiva cut off Brahmā's fifth head with the nail of the left thumb.

112. That head that was cut off then remained in the hand of Śiva, like another moon remaining in the midst of planets.

113. Maheśvara danced with the head held up in his hand like the Kailāsa mountain with the sun on its peak.

114. When the head was chopped off, the gods being pleased, praised Vṛṣabhadhvaja Kapardin (i.e. Śiva), the god of gods, with various hymns of praise.

Gods said:

115. Salutation forever to the holder of the skull, to the destroyer of great death, to him who is endowed with splendour and knowledge and is the giver of all portions (of enjoyment).

116. Salutation to him who is the flash of joy, and who is full of all gods. You are the destroyer in the Kali (age), hence you are known to be *Mahākāla*.

117. You destroy the afflictions of (your) devotees; you are called *Duḥkhānta* (i.e. one who puts an end to all miseries). As you quickly bring about the welfare of (your) devotees you are called *Śaṅkara*.

118. O god, since you hold (Brahmā's) head that is cut off and the skull, you are therefore *Kapālin*. Favour us as you are praised by us.

119. Thus praised, Śaṅkara with his mind pleased, sent the gods to their respective abodes and remained there full of joy.

120-121. Knowing the mind of Brahmā and the birth of Vīra, Śiva, throwing off the head at the words (i.e. request) of the people, having put his joined palms on his head and having saluted Brahmā praised him for appeasing his anger and to

know the Brahman, the greatest storehouse of lustre with expressions, hymns, secret (chants) and texts from Ṛg(veda), Yajur (veda) and Sāma (veda) thus:

Rudra said :

122-123. Salutation to you, O infinite one, and the supreme spirit of the highest one; you are the origin of wonderful things; you are an inexhaustible treasure of lustres. Due to your success you are the soul of all. You are the author of the creation, O you of great lustre.

124. Salutation to you, O you having one face turned upwards, of the nature of goodness, of the form of the earth, O you lying in water, born of water and having your abode in water.

125. O you born of water, having eyes like blooming leaves; victory to you O grandsire, O god, O lord; you formerly created me for the creation.

126. O you who always took oblations made into the sacrifice, O you the lord of the constituents of sacrifice, salutation to you, O you the interior of gold, of lotus, of gods, O you lord of beings.

127. O you born of lotus, you are the sacrifice, the *Vaṣaṭkāra* (the exclamation Vaṣaṭ used on making an oblation to a deity) and the *Svadhā* (oblation offered to the pitṛs). O lord, I cut off the head at the direction of gods.

128. I am humiliated with the murder of a brāhmaṇa; O lord of the world, protect me.

Thus addressed by the god of gods, Brahmā said (these) words:

Brahmā said:

129. God Nārāyaṇa, (our) friend, will purify you. You should praise that virtuous one; the self-mighty one is venerable to me.

130. Indeed you were thought of by that god Viṣṇu, so as devotion in you was produced, and a desire to praise me sprang up in you.

131. You are *Kapāli* for having cut off the head. You are

the author of the Soma doctrine. O you of great lustre, you have emancipated a hundred crores of brāhmaṇas.

132. You should perform the vow (of expiation) for killing a brāhmaṇa; there is no other course. The sinful, cruel murderers of brāhmaṇas who are sinners, should not be talked to.

133. Sacrificers, doing wrong acts, should never be talked to. If they see one, one should look at the sun (to be free from the sin).

134. O Rudra, if they touch one's body, one should, with one's garments on, enter water. Thus one obtained purity as formerly observed by the wise.

135. Such as you are, you are the murderer of a brāhmaṇa; observe a vow for (getting) purity. On your having observed a vow you will obtain many boons.

136. Having spoken thus Brahmā went away. Rudra did not understand that. He then meditated on Viṣṇu himself.

137. Trilocana (i.e. Rudra), the god of gods, bowing, saluting, with the eight parts of the body, touching the ground, praised (Viṣṇu), the eternal god, giver of boons, accompanied by Lakṣmī and the holder of the conch, disc and mace.

Rudra said:

138-139. I mentally recall Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa who is immortal through continuous series, who is old, who has infinite power, who is eternal, is the most distinguished person, is matchless, is greater than the greatest, the first-born and very powerful and is the chief among those whose intellect is inscrutable and profound.

140. I salute god Hari, the controller, the greatest abode, the supreme place, that highest and distinguished resort, the highest lord and the huge being.

141. I (shall) praise Nārāyaṇa, of a pure nature, (who) created this high and low and the subtle. (I praise him who) being always present (everywhere) is the highest person, calm and prominent. Let him be my refuge.

142-143. I (shall) always praise Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa, free from impurity, old, greater than the greatest, having no end, ancient, chief among the prudent, given to courage, forgiveness and peace, the lord of the earth, auspicious, of great prowess,

having a thousand heads and many feet and innumerable hands, having the moon and the sun as his eyes, of the nature of the mobile and the immobile, lying in the ocean.

144. I (shall) praise Nārāyaṇa, the supreme one, the highest lord, greater than the greatest, who cannot be approached (even) by gods, living in the three creations, having three principles, absorbed in three and having three eyes.

145-146. I salute the immeasurable Nārāyaṇa white in the *Kṛta* (yuga), red in the *Dvāpara* (yuga) and black in the *Kali* (yuga); I salute him who from his very mouth, created the Brāhmaṇas. (I salute him who created) the Kṣatriyas from his arms, (created) the Vaiśyas from his two thighs and the Śūdras from the tips of his feet. I salute him having the universe as his body, profoundly learned and infinite.

147. I salute the lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu) of a subtle form, of a great form, having learning as his form and formless (also) and the armour of all gods.

148. I salute that lord of gods (viz. Viṣṇu) of a thousand heads, thousand eyes, of great arms, that great god remaining after having pervaded the (entire) world.

149. I salute god Viṣṇu, the protector, the refuge, the conquerer, the ancient one, resembling a dark-blue cloud and having the Śārṅga bow in his hand.

150. I salute the omnipresent, pure, eternal, ancient Hari, of the form of the sky, free from existence and non-existence.

151. O Acyuta, I see here nothing except you. I see all this mobile and immobile (world) as full of you.

152. When that Parameṣṭhin (i.e. Rudra) was thus speaking, he, the eternal and the highest one appeared before him in person.

153. He, having the disc in his hand and Garuḍa as his seat, rose like the sun illuminating a mountain. The ancient one said, "I, the giver of boons, have come. Ask for a boon."

154. After having thus praised (Viṣṇu) the best Rudra said: "O lord of gods, let me be extremely pure. I do not see anything better than you that will remove this sin.

155. The body of mine tortured by the murder of a brāhmaṇa has become dark. My body is stinking with the odour of a dead body and my ornaments are of iron.

156-157a. O Janārdana, (tell me) how my form will not remain like this. Tell me, O Acyuta, O great god, what I should do so that I shall have my old body by your favour."

Viṣṇu said:

157b. A brāhmaṇa's murder is very cruel and highly painful.

158. One should not even mentally think of such a sin. You have expressed such devotion because of the words of gods.

159-160. O you of mighty arms, now do what Brahmā has told you. Rub with ashes all your limbs, (rub ashes) on your body thrice (a day). Wear bones on your crest, on your ears and hand. By doing this, O Rudra, you will have no pain.

161. Having thus instructed (Rudra), the lord, accompanied by Lakṣmī, vanished there only. Rudra did not know it.

162-165. The lord of gods with the skull in his hand and tortured by a brāhmaṇa's murder wandering over this earth (and visiting) (the mountains viz.) the Himālaya, Maināka with Meru, Kailāsa, Kala, Vindhya, and the great mountain Nīla, (and places like) Kāñcī, Kāśī, Tāmralipta, Magadhā, Āvilā, so also the regions like Vatsagulma, Gokarṇa, North Kuru, Bhadrāśva, Ketumāla and Hairaṇyaka, Kāmarūpa, Prabhāsa and the mountain Mahendra, did not get refuge (anywhere).

166. Always seeing the skull in his hand, he, overcome with shame, shook his hands many times and was again and again distracted.

167. When (even) after he shook his hands, the skull did not fall off, it came to his mind: 'I shall observe this vow.

168. Brāhmaṇas will always follow my path only'. Thinking thus for a long time the god wandered over the earth.

169-171. Having reached Puṣkara, he entered the best forest, full of many trees and creepers and with the sounds of many beasts, which was perfumed with the fragrance of abundant flowers of trees, the land of which was as it were decorated intentionally with flowers put (on the ground), (which was full of) many perfumes and juices and other ripe and raw fruits. He, greeted by the fragrance of flowers of the grove of trees, entered it.

172-173. 'Brahmā will grant a boon to me who will propitiate him here. Due to the favour of Brahmā I have come to know about this Puṣkara (forest), which destroys sins, pacifies evils, and increases nourishment, affluence and power.'

174. When that Rudra of infinite lustre was thus thinking, there came Brahmā, the lotus-born. The lord having raised Rudra who had bowed down said to him:

175-177. "By the observance of a divine vow you have, with a strong desire to see me, propitiated me with devotion; for by remaining in a vow only men can see deities. I shall therefore grant an excellent boon according to (your) desire. Since, to accomplish your desires you have observed this vow mentally, physically and with speech and with your mind pleased, tell me which boon, desired by you, I should grant."

Rudra said:

178-183a. This in itself is a very adequate boon that I could see you, O you venerable to the (entire) world. O creator of the world, my salutation to you. O god, you are seen by means of a penance to be had by a great sacrifice performed over a long time and causing (even) death. O Almighty lord, this skull did not fall off my hand. Since I observed this vow of a Kāpālika (i.e. a wandering sage holding the skull and eating and drinking out from it) my bearing causes shame to the sages and is contemptible. This great vow (undertaken) by me who sought refuge with you is fulfilled. Now tell me. Say in which auspicious region I should throw this (skull), by (doing) which I shall be pure (in the eyes) of the sages of purified souls.

Brahmā said:

183b-184. Avimukta is an ancient place of (i.e. sacred to) the lord; there you will find the sacred place for dropping the skull (which will be called) Kapālamocana. You and I dwell there. So also Viṣṇu will be there.

185. By seeing you there, even those who are great sinners will obtain enjoyments in my abode.

186. Between the two rivers, dear to gods, viz. Varaṇā and Asī, there will be a region where no killing will ever occur.

187-188. It will be the best sacred place and the best place of pilgrimage (in) your (honour). Those men who, before the fall of their bodies, resort to this sacred place, will, being immortal, and having no fear from anywhere reach heaven along the path of Brahman. I have given you this sacred place measuring five Krośas.

189. O Rudra, when the Gaṅgā will flow through the sacred place, to the lord of rivers (i.e. the ocean), then that will be a great holy city.

190. The holy Gaṅgā faces (i.e. flows towards) the north and the Sarasvatī the east. The river Jāhnavī (Gaṅgā) flows for two *Yojanas* towards the north.

191. There all gods with me and Indra have arrived or will come. Leave the skull there.

192. Those who, going there, please their forefathers by offering *piṇḍas* and *Śrāddhas*, obtain in the heaven, an eternal region.

193. A man having bathed at the great sacred place in Vārāṇasī, is released. Merely by going there he is free from sins committed during seven existences.

194. That holy place is said to be the best of all holy places.

195-197. Those beings, who, bowing to you, die there, obtaining Rudra (i.e. your status), rejoice with you. O Rudra, whatever a person with a controlled mind offers there, gives him, of a pure soul, a great fruit. Those men, who perform there the rite of destroying their bodies (i.e. ending their life), reach Rudra's world and always being happy rejoice there.

198. Worship, a muttered prayer, a sacrifice performed there lead to heaven, the giver of eternal fruit to one whose heart is full of devotion. A man offering a lamp there would be a man of intellectual vision.

199-200. One who leaves there, after marking it, a bull that is uncrippled, young, mild and having good features goes to the highest place; there is no doubt that with his forefathers he obtains salvation. What is the use of prolixity? Whatever act is done here by men with a view to (obtaining) religious merit would give (them) an eternal fruit.

201. That, which is the cause of heaven and salvation, is regarded as a sacred place on the earth.

202. By means of a bath, a prayer or a sacrifice (performed there) it (the Tīrtha) becomes the means of an everlasting fruit.

203-204. Those devotees, absorbed in Rudra, who go to sacred place Vārāṇasī and die there, should be regarded as Vasus, Pitṛs, Rudras and grand-fathers and great-grand-fathers and Ādityas—so says the Vedic text. O sinless one, I have described a threefold rite for offering piṇḍas.

205. Men who come here should always offer *piṇḍas*. Their sons should also respectfully offer *piṇḍas* there.

206. Such good sons give joy to their forefathers. I have told you about the sacred place, which, by the very sight of it, gives final release.

207. By bathing here one is free from the bondage of birth. Rudra, I have given you this sacred place viz. Avimukta. Being free from (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder live there with your wife.

Rudra said:

208. I shall stay with Viṣṇu in the sacred places which are on the earth; this is the boon I have chosen, as you told me (to choose).

209. I am the great god; you should always propitiate me.

210. I too with my mind pleased, shall grant you a boon. And I shall grant boons to Viṣṇu also as desired by him in his mind.

211. I am the giver to, and I am to be implored by, all the gods and sages of pure souls; and none else.

Brahmā said:

212. O Rudra, I shall carry out your auspicious command. Nārāyaṇa also, will undoubtedly follow your advice.

213. Thus dismissing Rudra, Brahmā disappeared there only. Mahādeva having gone to Vārāṇasī, encamped there.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Importance of Dwelling at a Sacred Place

Bhiṣma said:

1-3. What did Brahmā do after having sent (Rudra) to Vārāṇasī? What work did Viṣṇu do? Tell me (also), O sage, what Śaṅkara did, which sacrifice he performed, and at which sacred place (he performed it). Who were the assistant priests and who were the officiating priests? Tell me about them all. I have great curiosity (to know) who were the gods that he gratified.

Pulastya said:

4. On Meru's peak there is a city named Śrīnidhāna. It is variegated with jewels; is the abode of many wonders; is full of many trees; is variegated with many minerals and is clear like spotless crystal.

5. It is beautified with the expansion of the creepers; it resounds with peacocks' cries; it is fearful due to (the presence of) lions; it is full of herds of elephants.

6-7. It is cool with the sharp sprays rising from the water falling from the springs; it is variegated with pleasing taverns of the groves of trees struck by wind; the entire forest of it is made fragrant with the excellent perfume of musk; in its bowers of creepers the travelling Vidyādharas sleep due to the fatigue caused by sexual pleasures.

8. It is resounding with the sweet sounds of the songs sung by the groups of Kinnaras. In it there is Brahmā's mansion by name Vairāja, the entire floor of which is decorated with various arrangements.

9-14. In it there is a hall named Kāntimatī. It resounds with the sweet sound of songs sung by divine ladies; it has the garlands of sprouts shooting from the Pārijāta trees; It is variegated with many colours rising from a number of rays of the gems; crores of pillars are fixed in it; it is adorned with spotless mirrors, and with the splendour of the graceful movements of the dance presented by the celestial dancers; it resounds with the number of sounds produced by the many musical instruments,

graced with many songs and musical instruments with pauses and beating time. It gives joy to gods; it is full of the groups of sages and is resorted to by ascetics. It resounds with the texts of Sāman (sung by) the brāhmaṇas and causes delight. In it Brahmā, honoured (i.e. served) by (his wife) Sandhyā, resided.

15. He meditated on the highest god who created this world. While meditating it came to his mind: 'How shall I perform a sacrifice?

16. Where on the earth—at which place—should I perform the sacrifice?

17. Kāśī, Prayāga, Tuṅga and Naimiṣa and Śṛṅkhala, so also Kāñcī, Bhadrā, Devikā, Kurukṣetra and Sarasvatī, Prabhāsa and others are the holy places on the earth.

18. These are the places which are holy places of pilgrimage and also others which Rudra established on the earth at my command.

19. As I have been settled as the first god among all gods, so I shall make one great sacred place as the first one.

20. That lotus, that sprung up from Viṣṇu's navel, and in which I was born, is called the Puṣkara-tīrtha by sages who recite the Vedic texts.'

21. When Brahmā was thus thinking, this idea came to his mind: 'I now go to the earth.'

22-24. Reaching the place first, he entered that best forest, full of many trees and creepers; adorned with many flowers; filled with the notes of many birds; crowded with groups of many beasts; making gods and demons fragrant with the perfumes of the abundant flowers of trees; its ground was graced with flowers which were as it were intentionally placed there.

25-28. The (seasons there) were fully enveloped with many perfumes and juices, and it was full of fruits of the six seasons, which were endowed with golden appearance delighting the sense of smell and sight; where wind, as it were through favour, throws out worn-out leaves, grass and dry wood and fruits; where wind, taking fragrance from the heaps of flowers, (and) perfuming the sky, earth and quarters, blows (being) cold; (which is) adorned with green glossy large trees without any opening and without groups of worms and with tops and of various names.

29. Everywhere it appears as a family of brāhmaṇas with healthy, handsome, virtuous and bright priests on account of trees covered with sprouts resembling minerals.

30-31. They look like men covered (i.e. endowed) with noble and fautless qualities; with their tops tossed by wind they as it were touch one another; and with ornaments of flowery branches as it were smell one another.

32. At some places the *Nāga* trees with the filaments of the ratan look beautiful as it were with eyes with their black pupils unsteady.

33. *Karṇikāra* trees in pairs and in twos with their tops full of flowers look like couples. The rows of the *Sinduvāra* trees with the abundance of good flowers actually appear to be the sylvan deities that are worshipped.

34. At places the *Kunda* creepers, bright with the ornaments of flowers, (look) like young moons risen on (the tops of) trees and in the quarters.

35-39. In some parts of the forest the flowered *Śarja* and *Arjuna* trees look like men covered with white silken garments. Similarly trees embraced by the blooming *Atimukta* creepers look like lovers embraced by their own beloveds. The *Sāla* and *Aśoka* trees with their leaves clinging to one another as it were touch one another like friends touching one anothers' hands when they meet after a long time. *Panasa*, *Sarala* and *Arjuna* trees bending due to abundance of fruits and flowers as it were worship one another with flowers and fruits.

40. *Sāla* trees, with their arms (in the form of branches) touched by the flurry of the wind have, as it were, risen (to greet) the approaching people with the same feelings (i.e. affection).

41-42. With the covering of flowers, trees planted there for beauty, having reached the spring-festival, as it were vie with men (having arms). With their tips bent with abundance of beautiful flowers and tossed by wind, the trees dance like men, who are pleased and whose heads are adorned with garlands.

43-47. Trees with rows of flowers on their tops tossed by wind dance with the creepers like men with their beloveds. At paces trees surrounded by creepers bent due to their (abundant) flowers appear like the autumnal sky with variegated

clusters of stars. The blossomed *Mālati* creepers on the tops of trees look charming like chaplets arranged intentionally. Green trees with wealth of beauty, having (abundant) fruits, and flowers, show friendliness like men on the arrival of a good man. Bees, tawny due to the filaments of flowers, moving in all directions, as it were announce the victory of the *Kadamba*-flower and intoxicated with (i.e. due to having sucked) honey, fall here and there.

48-56. At places the flocks of male cuckoos (are seen) in the thickets of trees with their mates. At places the parrot-couples resembling the *Śirīṣa*-flowers speak interesting word like brāhmaṇas that are honoured. Peacocks with variegated plumage accompanied by their mates dance like richly decorated dancers even in the interiors of the forests. The cooing groups of birds giving out various notes, make more charming the (already) charming forest, full of many herds of beasts and always delighting the birds, resembling Indra's garden and delighting the mind and eyes. The lotus-born lord saw with his pleasing eyes as it were removing evil, that best forest of that nature resembling a mirror. All those rows of trees, seeing god Brahmā who had arrived like that, and presenting themselves to him with devotion, poured forth their wealth of flowers. Accepting the flowers (offered) by the trees Brahmā said to them, "Welfare to you; ask for a boon." The trees, free from (any) control, with humility (lit. with their palms joined in obeisance) having saluted Brahmā said: "If, O god, affectionate towards people, who take refuge with you, you are granting a boon then always stay by us in the forest.

57. This is our greatest desire; salutation to you, O grandsire.

58-59. O lord of gods, O creator of the universe; if you stay in this forest, (that would) be the best boon for us seeking your refuge and desiring a boon. Give us this boon—more adequate than crores of other boons. This (forest) will be more distinguished and greater than all other holy places by your presence."

Brahmā said:

60-62. This (place) will be best of all sacred places and

auspicious. By my favour you will always be full of flowers and fruits; you will always have very steady youth; you will (be able to) move at your desire; you will (be able to) take any form desired by you; you will give pleasant fruits; you will present yourselves to men at will and will (give) splendour to men in fulfilment of their penance; you will be endowed with great affluence.

Thus Brahmā, the granter of boons, favoured the trees.

63. Remaining (there) for a thousand years he threw a lotus on the ground. The earth by its fall trembled upto bottom.

64-65. Helpless oceans, with agitated waves, crossed their boundary. Thousands of mountain-peaks occupied by tigers and vicious elephants struck as it were with Indra's bolt, were shattered.

66-67. The mansions of gods and Siddhas (semi-divine beings characterised by eight special faculties), the cities of Gandharvas shook, tottered and penetrated the earth. The Kapota-clouds, showing a collection of sheaths fell (i.e. showered rain) from the sky. There were poignant suns, covering the clusters of luminaries.

68. Due to the great sound of that the three worlds with the mobile and immobile in it, rendered dumb, blind and deaf were frightened.

69-70. The bodies and minds of all gods and demons sank down and did not know what it was. Mustering courage all of them looked for Brahmā. They did not know where Brahmā had gone. (They could not understand) why the earth quaked and why the omens and portents appeared.

71. Viṣṇu just went there where the gods had remained. Gods saluting him said these words:

72-73. "O revered one, why is this appearanee of omens and portents by which, the three worlds as it were joined with death are made to tremble, and the *Kalpa* has come to an end and the oceans have crossed their boundaries? Why have the four steady quarter-elephants become unsteady?

74-75. Why is the earth covered over with the water of the seven seas? O lord, the sound could not have been produced without any cause; such a terrible sound which, when it arose,

made the three worlds frightened is not remembered to have ever occurred before nor will it occur again.

76. If, O lord, you know whether this is an auspicious or inauspicious sound to the three worlds and to the gods, tell us what this is."

77. Thus addressed, Viṣṇu, cherished by the supreme, said: "O gods, do not be alarmed; all of you listen to the cause of this.

78. This I, perceiving (the cause) definitely will tell you as it happened.

79. Revered Brahmā, the grandsire of the worlds, with a lotus in his hand, settled in an extremely beautiful region—a heap of religious merit—on the slope of mountains to perform a sacrifice.

80. And from his hand the lotus fell on the ground. It made a great sound which caused you to tremble.

81-84. There, being greeted with the fragrance of flowers by the trees, he favoured the forest with beasts and birds, and for favouring the world took delight in residing there. The revered one, benefactor of the worlds, put up that best holy place (called) Puṣkara. Going there with me propitiate Brahmā. The revered one, when pleased, will give you excellent boons."

85-93. Saying so, divine Viṣṇu went with those gods and demons to that forest-region where Brahmā dwelt. They, delighted and with their minds pleased, and conversing among themselves like cooings of the cuckooks entered Brahmā's forest bright with heaps of flowers and praiseworthy. That forest, reached by all gods and resembling Indra's garden, and rich with lotus-creepers, beasts and flowers, then looked beautiful. Then the gods, entering the forest adorned with all (kinds of) flowers said (to themselves), 'The god is here'; and desiring to see Brahmā wandered (in it). Then all gods, with Indra, searching for Brahmā did not see the interior of the forest. Then the gods looking for god (Brahmā) saw Vāyu. He said to them, "Without penance you will not (be able to) see Brahmā." Then being dejected and keeping in mind what Vāyu had told (them), all the gods again and again looked for Brahmā on the slope of the mountain, in the south, in the north and in between

(the two directions). Vāyu again spoke to them, "There is always a threefold means to have the sight of Viriñci (i.e. Brahmā). It is said to be by faith-born knowledge, penance and deep and abstract meditation. Those who follow the path of deep and abstract meditation see the god both with and without parts. The ascetics see him with parts while the wise see him without them.

94. On the other hand when worldly knowledge is produced one with indifference does not see (Brahmā). Those who follow the path of deep and abstract meditation speedily see the god by means of their great devotion.

95. One should see that changeless lord of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*.

96. Always being absorbed in the god by acts, mind and speech, and intent on propitiating Brahmā, observe penance; god will bless you. He always thinks: 'I should appear before those who have dedicated themselves to Brahmā and before brāhmaṇa devotees.' "

97-98. Hearing the words of Vāyu and thinking them to be beneficial (and) with their minds possessed of the desire for (seeing) Brahmā they then said to the lord of speech (Bṛhaspati), "O you god of knowledge, initiate us into (the path of) the realisation of Brahmā."

99. Desiring to initiate them into (the path), the great Guru initiated them according to the Vedic rules.

100. Dressed in a simple way and being humble, they became his disciples; they obtained the favour of Brahmā; the knowledge about Puṣkara was given to (them).

101. Guru, the best of the officiating priests performed a sacrifice according to rules.

102. By employing the (method of the) consecration of the lotus the sage, propelled by the desire of those gods, made a lotus full of fibres and (thus) favoured the gods.

103. The highly intelligent Bṛhaspati knowing the rules stated in the Veda and casting off doubt initiated the discreet (gods).

104-111. The magnanimous Āṅgirasa (i.e. Guru), being pleased and having consecrated a fire, gave (i.e. taught) the gods muttered prayers as laid down in the Vedas. The highly

intelligent one taught (the gods) (Vedic chants called) *Trisuparṇa*, *Trimadhu* and all muttered prayers etc. That bath (accompanied by the chant) *Āpohiṣṭhā* is called Brāhma. It removing sins, subdues the wicked, increases fulness, wealth and strength, gives (the special faculties called) *Siddhis* and fame, and destroys the sins of the *Kali* (age). So one should by all means take that bath. All (of them) taking a bath observing the vow of silence, being restrained (for the vow), and being prepared (for the vow), and with their senses destroyed (i.e. curbed), with water-pots (in their hands), with the ends of their lower garments loosened, having rosaries, carrying staffs, clothed in bark or rags, very much adorned with matted hair, engaged in taking a bath and (particular) postures, meditating with great effort, and desiring limited food after having united the mind with Brahmā, remained there avoiding visiting (any one), talk, company or thought (about worldly objects). Endowed with great devotion and a great sacred precept, their minds had, through meditation, the knowledge of the god, after (a lapse of some) time.

112. When their minds were absolutely pure, being fully burnt by means of the meditation on Brahmā, the lord became visible to all.

113-114. They were pleased with his lustre (yet) their minds were perplexed. Then mustering courage, with their mind pleased and intent on him they placed their folded palms on their heads, and putting their heads to the ground (i.e. bowing with their heads) praised the lord, the author of the creation and maintenance by resorting to the Vedas with their six limbs (i.e. with Vedic texts and texts from the six limbs).

The gods said:

115-121. O god, we, well-controlled, salute you, the Brahman, the one having the body of Brahmā, friendly to brāhmaṇas, the unconquered one, the giver of sacrifices and Vedas, kind to the world, of the form of creation, extremely compassionate to your devotees, one who is praised by the muttering of the texts from the Vedas, one whose form consists of many forms, one who takes up hundreds of forms, the lord of Sāvitrī and Gāyatrī, seated on a lotus, (yourself) a lotus

and having (a beautiful) face like a lotus, the giver of boons, worthy of a boon, the *Kūrma* (the second incarnation) and *Mṛga*, having matted hair and a crown, holding a ladle, having the characteristics of the moon and a deer, and having the eyes of Dharma, having every name and the lord of the universe. O you, having the eyes of piety, please protect us more; O grandsire, we have sought your refuge by speech, mind and body.

122. Brahmā, the best among those who know the Vedas, thus praised by gods (said to them): "All right, when remembered by you I shall give (you what you want); your seeing me will be fruitful.

123. O sons, tell (me) what is desired by you; I shall give you excellent boons!" Thus addressed by the lord, the gods said (these) words:

124. "O revered one, this in itself is a great boon which is quite enough, that a good sound was heard by us when you threw the lotus.

125. Why did the earth tremble? Why were the people distressed? That cannot be without any purpose. Tell (us) the cause of this, O god."

Brahmā spoke:

126. This lotus is held by me for your good and for protecting the gods. Now listen what was the cause.

127. This demon Vajranābha by name, takes away the life of children. He remains taking shelter in the nether world.

128. Knowing about the arrival of you, remaining in penance, having laid down your weapons, the wicked one wanted to kill (you) the gods along with Indra even.

129. I brought about his destruction by dropping the lotus; he was proud of his kingdom and splendour; so I killed him.

130. At this time there are in the world, devotees, brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas. May they not meet with misfortune, but may they have good fortune.

131. O gods, I am equal (i.e. impartial) to gods, demons, men, reptiles, friends, and the entire host of beings.

132. I killed the sinner with a spell for your well-being. He

has reached the worlds of the religious due to the sight of this lotus.

133. Since I dropped the lotus (here), therfore this place will be known as Puṣkara, a great, sanctifying holy place, giving religious merit.

134-135. For all the beings on the earth it will be said to be holy. (I) have, being requested by the trees, O gods, shown favour to devotees desiring devotion, by staying here eternally. O sinless ones, when I arrived here Mahākāla (also) has come here.

136. You who have been practising penance, have demonstrated great knowledge, O gods; bear in mind your own interest as well as of others.

137. Taking various forms on the earth you have to show that a man hating a wise brāhmaṇa is afflicted by sin only.

138-141. Even after crores of existences he would not be free from sins. One should neither kill nor find fault with a brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Veda and its limbs (i.e. the *Vedāṅgas*); since if one is killed, a crore (of them) are killed. One should feed with faith (at least) one brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Veda. There is no doubt about it that one would feed a crore of brāhmaṇas (by just feeding one such brāhmaṇa). One who offers a potful of alms to ascetics is free from all sins and does not meet with misfortune. As I, the grandsire, am the eldest and the best among gods, similarly, a wise man, not having the feeling of mineness and possessions, is always respectable.

142-148. I have promulgated this vow, preserved in the Vedas, for (getting) freedom from the bondage of the worldly existence and leading to the absence of rebirth in the case of brāhmaṇas. One, who, after accepting the maintenance of the sacred fire, (and) not conquering (i.e. losing control over) his senses, gives it up, would, led by Yama's servants, immediately go to Raurava (hell). (By talking to one) who cavils the way of the world and does a mean act, has his heart full of attachment and erotic sentiment, is fond of women and wealth, eats all alone very sweet things, follows agriculture and commerce, does not know the Veda and censures the Veda, and enjoys other's wife; by talking to such a person who is defiled with such faults, a man

goes to hell; so also one who spoils a good vow. One should not have a bodily contact with one who is not satisfied, is of a split or wicked mind and is a sinner. If one touches (such a person) one would be pure after taking a bath.

Thus speaking, lord Brahmā, with the gods, founded a sacred place there. I shall tell (about) it to you in (due) order.

149-150. It is in the north of Candranadī; Sarasvatī is (flowing) by its east; it is superior to Indra's garden; and the entire one with Puṣkara (Tīrtha) will remain there till the end of the Kalpa. This is the altar in (i.e. of) the sacrifice, made by Brahmā, the author of the worlds.

151-153. The first one should be known as the best and purifying the three worlds. That is said to be sacred to the deity Brahmā. The middle one (i.e. the second) (is sacred to) Viṣṇu. The last one is sacred to the deity Rudra. Brahmā first fashioned (these). This great sacred place viz. the forest called Puṣkara is said to be the foremost mystical region in the Vedas. Lord Brahmā is present (there). Brahmā himself favoured this region.

154-156. For favouring all the brāhmaṇas wandering over the earth he made the land bounded by gold and diamonds, and marked by an altar; he made it all beautiful with the variegated jewels of the floor. Brahmā, the grandsire of the worlds, stays here. So also the gods Viṣṇu, Rudra and Vasu and the two Aśvins also, and Maruts with Indra stay here.

157-158. I have told you this fact, the cause of favouring the worlds. Those brāhmaṇas, who are engaged in serving their preceptors, and who recite here the Vedas according to proper rules and with chants in order of the hymnical text of the Veda, live in the vicinity of Brahmā, being helped by him.

Bhiṣma said:

159-160. O revered one, tell me all this: Following which rules should the men, the residents of the region, desiring Brahmā's world, stay in the Puṣkara forest? And what should the men or the women having (i.e. belonging to) various castes and stages of life, living here, practise?

Pulastya said:

161-162. Men and women of (various) castes and living in (different) stages of life, engaged in following the duties of their own class, free from deceit and delusion, devoted to Brahmā by acts, mind and speech and with their senses controlled, and free from jealousy and meanness, engaged in the good of all beings, should stay here.

Bhiṣma said:

163. Tell me, doing which act is a man said to be the devotee of Brahmā. Of what nature are the devotees of Brahmā among men?

Pulastya said:

164. Homage is said to be of three kinds: effected by mind, speech and body; so also it may be worldly, Vedic and relating to the soul.

165. That is said to be mental homage which, in the recollection of the significance of the Veda with mind holding fast (i.e. meditating) causes love for Brahmā.

166. The homage by speech is laid down (to be done) by means of chants, (recital of) Vedic texts, obeisance, (offering oblations into) fire, performing *Śrāddha* and thinking (about these), and by means of muttering essential texts.

167-168. For the brāhmaṇas homage by body is said to be of three kinds: *Kṛcchra* (bodily mortification), (rigid penance like) *sāntapana* and others, so also (religious observances depending upon the phases of the moon like) the *cāndrāyaṇa*, regulated by vows and fasts restraining the senses, so also *Brahmakṛcchra*-fasts and other auspicious vows.

169-171. That worship with reference to Brahmā is said to be worldly homage which is done by men with cow's ghee, milk and curds, jewelled lamp, darbha grass and water, sandal, flowers and various minerals that are made ready, clarified butter, *guggulu* (a kind of fragrant gum resin) and fragrant incense of the sandal, ornaments rich in gold and jewels, and variegated garlands, dance, instrumental music and songs, presents of all (kinds of) jewels, and with eatables, meals, food and drinks.

172-176. The homage (offered) with Vedic chants and oblations is said to be *Vaidikī*. Offering to fire should be made on every new-moon day and full-moon day; a present to brāhmaṇas is recommended; a sacrificial oblation made of powdered rice, so also an oblation of boiled rice, barley and pulse; similarly a sacrifice in honour of the manes giving them joy is always (regarded as) a sacrificial act. So also (that is *Vaidikī* homage in which) texts from the Ṛgveda, Yajurveda and Sāmaveda are muttered and the hymnical texts of the Veda are studied according to the rules. All the rites performed with reference to fire, earth, wind, sky, water, the moon, and the sun belong to the deity Brahmā. O King, the homage to Brahmā (called) spiritual is of two kinds: one is called *Sāṁkhya* and the other is born of Yoga.

177-178. Hear from me the divisions in it (i.e. the *Sāṁkhya*). The number of the (*Sāṁkhya*) principles like *Pradhāna*, that are insentient objects of enjoyment, is twentyfour. The soul is the twentyfifth. The sentient soul is the enjoyer of an act but not its agent.

179. The soul is eternal, immutable, controller and employer; and Brahmā, the unmanifest, eternal, supreme being is the cause.

180-182. There is truly the creation of the principles, of the dispositions and of the beings. The *Sāṁkhya* enumerates the *Pradhāna* to be of the nature of the (three) constituents. It resembles the lord in respect of certain qualities and is also different from him. This (resemblance) is said to be the condition of cause and of Brahmahood; that of *Pradhāna*'s being used (by *Puruṣa*) is said to be its dissimilarity. Brahman is all-potent; while the soul is a non-doer.

183. The sentience in *Pradhāna* (due to its contact with the lord) is said to be its similarity (with the latter). This another principle (*Pradhāna*) is the cause of the active property of the other principles.

184. No purpose is to be attributed to this principle (the other principle viz. *Pradhāna*). The wise, who ponder over the truth, having ascertained (it) say it is reflection (*Saṁkhyā*).

185-186. The wise ones, having thus learnt the collection of the principles, and their number properly, so also the princi-

ple of Brahman as an additional one, have grasped the truth. The propounders of the *Sāṁkhya* (sytem) have termed this (kind of) worship as spiritual. Listen to the homage, arising from (i.e. as told in the) Yoga (philosophy), which is paid to Brahmā:

187-189. Intent on restraining the breath, always meditating and with one's senses restrained, eating food got by begging, observing vows, and with all one's senses withdrawn one should meditate upon and keep in one's mind, the lord of the created beings, remaining in the pericarp of the lotus of the heart, having red face(s), beautiful eyes, and with his faces illuminated all round, with a sacred thread (around) his loins, having four faces, four arms, with his hands granting boons and safety.

190. The great mental accomplishment due to the yogic practices is said to be the homage to Brahmā. One who has such a devotion for Brahmā is said to be *Brahmabhakta* (a devotee of Brahmā).

191-196. O best of kings, listen to the mode of living laid down for those who live in the sacred place. It was formerly told in detail by the lord himself in the presence of all the brāhmaṇas and in the congregation of Viṣṇu and others. (The residents of this place should be) without the feeling of mineness; without ego; without attachment and possessions; without feeling of love for the host of relatives; looking upon a clod of clay, a stone and gold equally; granting safety to beings by various obligatory acts; always intent upon restraining their breath; and engrossed in the meditation on the supreme soul; always performing sacrifices and pure; given to the ascetic practices; knowing the rules of the *Sāṁkhya* and Yoga (systems); well-versed in the religious practices and having their doubts removed. Listen to the good fruit obtained by those brāhmaṇas, living in (this) sacred place, who perform sacrifices according to these precepts and die in the Puṣkara forest. They get complete and inexhaustible absorption with Brahmā, which is difficult to obtain.

197-202. Having got this absorption in Brahmā, they avoid rebirth, and remaining in the knowledge of Brahmā, they do not get rebirth; others who live in the (various) stages of the

(illusory) world, have to be born again. One (i.e. a brāhmaṇa) following the rules of the householder's stage, and always engaged in the six duties (learning, teaching, performing sacrifices and acting as priests at sacrifices and giving and accepting gifts), who, when invited to (act as a priest) at a sacrifice offers (oblations) properly with the chants, being free from all miseries, gets a greater fruit. His movement in all the worlds is never prevented. Being self-dependent due to divine power, he with his wife (or belongings), surrounded by thousands of ladies, going to places at his sweet will, in a very bright aeroplane resembling the young sun, moves uninterruptedly and as he likes, in all the worlds. He becomes most desirable among men; he, performing the best duties, becomes a wealthy man.

203-207. Fallen from heaven he would be born in a great family (as a) handsome (person). He becomes well-versed in the moral duties and is devoted to them; he masters the significance of all the lores. Similarly with (the practice of) celibacy, service to preceptors, and study of the Vedas, subsisting on alms, with his senses conquered, always engaged in the vow of truth, not erring in his own duties, being unrestricted (he goes) to the world of Viṣṇu in an aeroplane richly endowed with all objects of desire and supporting (i.e. fulfilling) all desires, and as it were being another sun; he, endowed with the splendour similar to that of Brahma-attendants named Guhyakas, who are very much esteemed, who have infinite power and splendour and who are honoured by gods and demons, resembles them.

208-213. His weapons are unrestrained among gods, demons and mortals. In this way he is honoured in the world of Viṣṇu for thousands of crores, hundreds of crores of years. Having thus stayed there with great slpendour, when he again falls from Viṣṇu's world, he is born in heavenly places by dint of his own deeds; or having come to the Puṣkara forest and ramaining in the stage of celibacy, he lives studying the Vedas; and after death, looking auspicious like the moon, he goes by divine aeroplane with its lustre like the fullmoon-light (to Rudra's world); having reached Rudra's world he rejoices there with the Guhyakas, and being the lord of the entire world obtains great affluence.

214-217. Enjoying (like this) for thousands of *yugas* he is

honoured in Rudra's world. Always rejoicing there, enjoying sound happiness and then having fallen from that Rudra's world, he is born in a divine, great brāhmaṇa family. Among the human beings that religious soul would be (born as) handsome and as a master of speech; he has an enviable body, he is the powerful husband of ladies, who enjoys greatly; he (then) leads the life of an anchorite and is free from vulgar tricks; his movement even in the divine worlds is not hampered.

218-219. He eats withered leaves and fruits, and flowers and roots. He lives like the pigeons or by pounding them (i.e. leaves etc.) with stones or using the teeth as mortar, and wearing rags or bark garments. He has matted hair, bathes thrice a day, gives up all faults and has a staff.

220. He is engrossed in the *Kṛcchra* vow, even if he is an outcast or of a superior (caste). He remains in water, observes the (*agni-sādhana*) penance, remains in the rains during the rainy season.

221. Similarly he lies on the ground, full of insects, thorns and stones; he remains in the standing posture or in the posture of sitting on the hams; he shares (articles with others) and is of a firm vow.

222-225. He eats the herbs in the forest, and gives safety to all beings. He is always engaged in earning religious merit, controls his anger and senses. He is a devotee of Brahmā, and lives in a sacred place like Puṣkara. Such an ascetic gives up all attachment, is delighted in himself and is free from desires. O Bhīṣma, listen to what course he, who lives here, gets. Such a devotee of Brahmā, goes by the aeroplane of those who move according to their own will, which shines like the young sun, and looks charming by means of a raised seat and pillars; he shines in the sky like a second moon.

226-227. For hundreds of crores of years he is in the company of celestial nymphs knowing vocal and instrumental music and dancing. To whichever god's world he undeterred, goes, remains there by Brahmā's grace.

228-230. Fallen from Brahmā's world, he goes to Viṣṇu's world, and fallen from Viṣṇu's world he goes to Rudraloka; and fallen from that place also, he is born in the (various) divisions

of the world, so also in other heavens, enjoying pleasures as desired. Having enjoyed affluence there he is born among the mortals as a king or as a prince or a wealthy or happy person—very handsome, very fortunate, loveable, famous and endowed with devotion.

231-238. O King, Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas or Śūdras residing in the sacred places, engaged in (practising) the duties of their own class, well-behaved and having a long life, devoted completely to Brahmā, showing kindness to beings, who live in the great sacred place viz. Puṣkara, go, after death, to Brahmā's abode in richly decorated aeroplanes, beautified by the hosts of celestial nymphs, and going as desired (by the occupants), and taking any form as desired (by the occupants). One who, very pious, meditating upon Brahmā, offers his body into an all-blazing fire, would go to Brahmā's abode. Brahmā's world, best among all worlds, charming and accomplishing the desired objects, becomes his permanent abode with all (its) greatness. O Bhīṣma, those magnanimous ones also, who cast their life in the water at the very meritorious Puṣkara, go to the imperishable world of Brahmā. They actually see the god, the destroyer of all miseries, and accompanied by all gods and by the hosts of Rudras and Viṣṇus.

239-241. The Śūdras who die at Puṣkara, never causing frustration, go in an aeroplane yoked with swans, resembling the sun in lustre, rich with various jewels and gold, strong and made fragrant with perfumes, of (several) other matchless qualities, resounding with the songs of celestial damsels, fixed with banners and flags, and, sounding with many bells, endowed with many wonders and acquainted with pleasures and very lustrous, endowed with qualities and being borne by excellent peacocks.

242-244. The wise men who die in the unperishable (Puṣkara) rejoice in Brahmā's world. Having lived there for a long time and having enjoyed pleasures as desired, the mortal coming (to this world) is born in a brāhmaṇa family, is a rich man enjoying pleasures. A man, who, accomplishes the *Karīra* rite at Puṣkara, leaving all (other) worlds goes to Brahmā's world. He would dwell in Brahmā's world till the *Kalpa* comes to an end.

245. He does not at all see a man being tormented by his

own deeds. His course is undeterred—slanting, upwards and downwards.

246. He is revered in all worlds, spreading his fame and controlled. His behaviour is good, he knows the rules and all his sense organs are attractive.

247. He is well-versed in dancing, instrumental music, fortunate and handsome. He is always like an unfaded (i.e. a fresh) flower, and adorned with divine ornaments. He is dark-blue like the petals of a dark-blue lotus, and his hair is dark and curly.

248-249. Ladies there, who are of a high origin and of a graceful waist, and (who are) full of all good fortune and endowed with all rich qualities, (who are) very proud of their youth serve him and delight him in bed (i.e. give him sexual pleasure).

250-252. He is awakened from his sleep by the sound of lutes and flutes. Due to the favour of the lord viz. Brahmā, the doer of auspicious things, he enjoys pleasure of great festivity, which is difficult to be obtained by the ignorant ones.

Bhiṣma said:

(Good) practices are a great religious merit; to me it is not a wonder, that those who are intent upon (following) the customary observances of a sacred place, who are engaged in following the duties of their class, and who have conquered their anger and senses, go to Brahmā's world.

253. There is no doubt that Brāhmaṇas go even to other worlds without waiting upon Brahmā or observing restrictions.

254-255. O brāhmaṇa, tell me the course followed by the women, Mlecchas, Śūdras, cattle, birds and quadrupeds, (so also) the dumb, the dull, the blind, the deaf, who live in Puṣkara (but) do not practise the penance or observe the restrictions.

Pulastya said:

256-259. O Bhīsma, women, Mlecchas, Śūdras, cattle, birds and quadrupeds, who die in Puṣkara go to Brahmā's world with divine bodies in aeroplanes resembling the sun in lustre, endowed with divine forms, having excellent golden banners, decorated with staircases of gold and diamonds and with jewelled

pillars, rich in all pleasures, moving at the desire (of the occupants) and having any form (as desired by the occupants). The great ones, surrounded by thousands of ladies go to Brahmā's world full of many charms or to other worlds as desired by them. Fallen from Brahmā's world they go to other terrestrial regions in due order.

260-267. A brāhmaṇa becomes rich (being born) in a great large family. Those born as lower animals like serpents, insects, ants, so also the land-born, water-born, sweat-generated, oviparous, plants and the viviparous animals who, with or without any desire, die in Puṣkara go to Brahmā's world in a plane resembling the sun in lustre. In the Kali-age the beings are impelled by sin. In this (yuga) neither religious merit nor heaven is obtained by any other means. Those men who live in Puṣkara and are intent on the worship of Brahmā in the kali-yuga are blessed;others having no goal, suffer. A man is free from the sin which he commits at night by his five sense-organs, by action, thought and speech and under the influence of desire and anger, when, after going to the water of Puṣkara he reaches the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā) and becomes pure. Seeing the sun from his rise to his going up (in the sky) removes a man's sin after he meditates in Brahmā's union called mental (union). On seeing Brahmā at mid-day a man is free from sin.

268. A man is free from that sin which he commits from mid-day to sun-set when he merely sees Brahmā in the evening.

269-270. Even though that devotee of Brahmā who lives at Puṣkara remaining in penance enjoys all objects of senses like sound, and remaining in the Puṣkara forest eats dainty dishes even three times a day is regarded as equal to one who subsists on air.

271. Those men who live in Puṣkara doing pious deeds, obtain great pleasures by the power of this sacred place.

272. As there is no reservoir comparable to the great ocean, similarly there is no sacred place like Puṣkara.

273-275. There is no other sacred place like Puṣkara that can surpass it in merits. I shall tell you (the names) of other (gods) who have settled in this sacred place: All gods along with Viṣṇu and Indra and others; Gajānana, Kārtikeya; Revanta with the sun; Śiva's messenger goddess Durgā, who is always

propitious. Enough of (i.e. no need for) penance and restraints for them who do good deeds and (pay) respect to deities and superiors.

276-277. A brāhmaṇa, who, having done such acts as vows and fasts, stays in the best Puṣkara forest without doing anything, has always all his desires fulfilled even when he simply lives here. He goes to the great imperishable place resembling that of Brahmā.

278-279. The residents of this sacred place obtain in this sacred place (just) in a day that fruit which is obtained in twelve years in the *Kṛta* (*yuga*), in a year in the *Tretā* (*yuga*) and in a month in the *Dvāpara* (*yuga*). Thus was I formerly told by Brahmā, the god of gods.

280. There is no other sacred place superior to this on the earth. Therefore one should, with all efforts, resort to this forest.

281. A householder, a celibate, an anchorite and a mendicant—all those told (above) reach a great position.

282. He, who, without any desire or hatred, duly follows the religious precepts in a (particular) stage of life is honoured in the next world.

283. Brahmā has set up here a ladder with four rungs. One resorting to this ladder is honoured in Brahmā's world.

284. He, who knows moral merit and worldly prosperity should live with a preceptor or his son for one-fourth (span) of his life and perform the worship of Brahmā.

285. He, who wants to be excellent in moral duty, should learn from a preceptor; should give present (to the preceptor); and when called should assist the preceptor.

286. (While staying) in the preceptor's house, he should sleep after him and should get up before the preceptor gets up. He should do all that i.e. service etc. that ought to be done by a disciple.

287. Having done all that service, he should stand by (the preceptor). He should be a servant, doing everything and proficient in all (kinds of) work.

288. He should be pure, diligent, endowed with qualities and, give the preceptor a desired reply with his senses controlled; he should gaze steadfastly at the preceptor.

289-290. He should not eat unless the preceptor has eaten; he should not drink (water) unless the preceptor has done so. He should not sit when the preceptor is standing, and should not sleep unless the preceptor has slept; with his hands stretched out he should press the (preceptor's) feet; and should press the (preceptor's) right foot with his right hand and the left foot with his left hand.

291. Announcing his name and saluting the preceptor he should say, 'O revered sir, I shall do this, and I have done this'.

292. Having informed the preceptor of all this, and having offered money to him, he should do all that work (assigned to him) and should inform the preceptor of (having done) it.

293. (Only) after having returned from the preceptor's house he should enjoy all those odours and flavours, which a celibate does not enjoy. This is the fixed opinion of the law (-books).

294. The disciple and devotee of the preceptor should observe all the rules prescribed in detail for a celibate.

295. The disciple himself, having, according to his power, bestowed affection on his preceptor, should live by performing his duty in the hermitage outside the village.

296-297. Similarly a brāhmaṇa lying low should learn a Veda, two Vedas or (three) Vedas from the mouth of the preceptor, and practising the vows laid down in the Veda and giving the preceptor one-fourth of his acquisition he should duly return home from the preceptor's house.

298. Having a wife endowed with religious merit, he should propitiate fires after having invoked them. (Thus) a householder should behave in the second part of his life.

299-300. The sages have formerly laid down four modes of a householder's life: first is to store corn sufficient for three years; the second is to store corn sufficient for one; the third is to store corn sufficient for a day; the fourth is to store little corn. Of them the last is the best as it conquers (all) the worlds (for him).

301. One follows the six duties (viz. learning, teaching, sacrificing, acting as a priest at a sacrifice, giving and receiving gifts); another leads his life (performing) three duties; the fourth

one (lives) by only two duties. Such a brāhmaṇa remains in Brahman.

302-305. No other great sacred place is said (to exist) than the vow of a householder. One should not cause food to be cooked for oneself; one should not kill a beast for no reason, (but) an animal or a non-animal deserves a sacrifice (i.e. may be sacrificed) after (proper) sanctification. He should never sleep by day nor in the first or the last part of the night. He should not eat at a wrong time—between the two meals, and should not tell a lie. No brāhmaṇa coming to his house should remain unhonoured; and his guests are venerable and are said to convey offerings made to gods and manes. They are bathed in the vow of (studying) the Vedic lore, are learned and have mastered the Vedas.

306. They obtain their livelihood by (doing) their own duty, are restrained, are engaged in (their) work and practise penance. Offering made to gods and manes is laid down for honouring them.

307-308. (But) he who has attached himself with perishable things, and has deviated from religious practices, and has broken the vow of keeping sacred fire, and plays false with his teacher, and is devoted to falsehood, has no right to perform these two duties (i.e. offering oblations to gods and manes) and in such a case sharing (food) with all beings remains (undone).

309. Similarly a householder should give (food) to those who do not cook (for themselves). He should always be *vighasāśi* (one who eats the remains of food eaten by others) and *amṛta-bhojana* (one who tastes the residues of a sacrifice).

310. *Amṛta* is the remains of a sacrifice; and *bhojana* is said to be equivalent to oblations. He, who eats the remains of what is eaten (by others), is called *vighasāśi*.

311-313. He should be devoted to his wife, should be restrained, diligent and should have his senses very much controlled. He should not argue with old people, children, sick persons, persons belonging to his caste and relatives, his mother, father, son-in-law, brother, son, wife, daughter and servants. Having avoided (i.e. if he avoids) argument with these he becomes free from all sins.

314-318. Won over by these he undoubtedly conquers all the worlds. The preceptor is the lord of Brahmā's world. The father is the lord of whatever is sacred to Prajāpati. The guest is the lord of all the worlds. The officiating priest is the resort of the Vedas and a supreme authority. The son-in-law is (the lord) in the world of the celestial nymphs. The kinsmen belong to all the gods. The relatives are powerful in the quarters. The mother and maternal uncle are powerful on the earth. Old people, children and sick persons are powerful in the sky. The family-priest is the lord of the world of the sages. The dependents are the rulers of the (particular class of celestial beings called) Sādhyas. The physician is the lord of the world of Aśvins. And the brother is the lord of the world of Vasus. The wife is the ruler of the world of the moon. The daughter is powerful in the house of the celestial nymphs.

319. The eldest brother is equivalent to the father. The wife and the son are one's own body. The clerks, servants, the daughter are very piteable. Therefore, (when) insulted by these, he should without getting angry, always bear with them.

320. A wise man, devoted to a householder's life, firm in religious duties, and undepressed should not commence many acts (simultaneously) (but) being dutiful he should start a little.

321. The modes of subsistence of a householder are three. Their main aim is the highest bliss. Similarly they say that four stages of life are mutually (dependent).

322-323. And he who desires to be (a householder) should follow all the rules that are laid down. They should (live) by storing grain in jars for six days (or for one year's consumption), or should live by gleaning grains like pigeons (i.e. by storing very little); and that nation, in which such significant persons live, prospers. Such a person purifies the former ten paternal grandsires (i.e. ancestors) and the ten of the successive (generations).

324. He, who, free from anguish, follows the way of the life of a householder, would obtain a position similar to that of the worlds of Viṣṇu.

325. Or this is said to be a condition of those who have

conquered their senses. Heaven is the habitation of those who are self-controlled.

326. This ladder is laid down by Brahmā. One liberated from this, getting the second in due order, is honoured in heaven.

327. I shall narrate the third one—the stage of the anchorite; (please) listen. When a householder sees himself to be with wrinkles and grey hair, and sees his child's child, he should then resort to forest only.

328-337. Well-being to you, O Bhīṣma, listen to (the account) of those who are disgusted with the householder's stage, who live in the stage of the anchorite, the supporters of all the worlds, who have retired to forest after being initiated, who live in holy countries, who have the power of intelligence and who are endowed with truth, purity and forgiveness. Living in the third part of life in the stage of the anchorite, he, a sacrificer, should tend the same divine fires (as he tended as a householder). Controlled and moderate in food (habits) and devoted and attached to Viṣṇu, he should by all means (continue) the *agnihotra* (maintenance of the sacred fire) and other sacrificial requisites. He (should subsist on) rice and barley growing wild and on leavings of food eaten. He should offer oblations in the summer season (beginning) with the month of Māgha. These four modes of subsistence are said (to be found) in the stage of the anchorite. Some eat instantly (i.e. do not store anything); some store (grains) lasting for a month, or lasting for a year or for twelve years for honouring the guests and sacrificial rituals. In the rainy season they remain under the sky; in the winter they resort to water; in the summer they practise the penance of the five fires (i.e. four fires placed around one in the four directions and the sun is the fifth fire); in the autumn they eat unsolicited alms. They roll on the ground or stand on the forepart of their feet. They remain in the stationary posture or even in their (own dwellings). Some use their teeth for a mortar, while others use stones for pounding things.

338-339. Some drink boiled sour gruel during the bright fortnight; or some in the dark fortnight; or eat as (and when) they get something (to eat); practising the mode of the ancho-

rite's life, and of a firm resolve some properly live on roots, others on fruits and (still) others on water.

340-341. These and others are the various religious rites of those high-minded ones. The fourth mode of life (i.e. *Saṁnyāsa*) as laid down in the Upaniṣads is said to be universal. The mode of the life of an achorite is one; another is the mode of the life of a householder. In the same life the other one (i.e. the *Saṁnyāsa*) proceeds (after these). (This is said) by sages who see everything.

342-343. These (sages) viz. Agastya and the seven sages, Madhucchandas, Gaveṣaṇa, Sāṁkṛti, Sadiva, Bhāṇḍi, Yavaprotha, Atharvaṇa, Ahovīrya, so also Kāmya, Sthāṇu, and the wise Medhātithi, Manovāka, Śinīvāka, Śūnyapāla, Kṛtavraṇa, knowing well their duty, went to heaven.

344-345. Those who are religion incarnate, so also the groups of the vagrant mendicants from among the sages practising severe penance and showing skill in religious matters, having propitiated the lord of gods, have resorted to a forest.

346. Brāhmaṇas who have repented, have, having given up deceit, resorted to a forest. Vagrant and unapproachable groups are seen to be away from their homes.

347-349. Being afflicted by old age and troubled by disease (brāhmaṇas) have gone to the remaining stage of life viz. the fourth, from that of the anchorite. Quick in action, he who has finished (the study of) all Vedas and (has performed sacrifices) with presents, is one who looks upon all beings as self; is of a soft mind, sporting in himself; self-dependent, having placed fire in the self and having given up all possessions, he should always perform sacrifices (or a sacrifice).

350-351. (In the case) of those who always perform sacrifice it goes into the self At a fit moment he should duly surrender the three fires with his individual soul into the supreme self. He should eat, without censuring, whatever he gets in whatever manner. One who is fondly attached to the (third) stage of life viz. that of the anchorite, should cast off the hair on the head and other parts of the body.

352-359. Being instantly purified by his acts he goes from one stage of life to another. That brāhmaṇa, who resigns the

world after having granted security to all beings, goes to lustrous worlds after death and attains infinity. He, of a good character and with his sins removed, does not take delight either in this or the next world. Free from anger and infatuation, without friendship or strife, he remains indifferent as a result of self-meditation. He is not perturbed by the deaths of others; is mentally indifferent to his scriptures and does not err in (understanding) self. For him, free from doubt, looking upon all beings as self, and intent on righteousness and with his senses conquered, acquisition (of things) becomes agreeable to his desire (i.e. things may take their own course). Now listen to (the description of) that fourth stage of life, which is said to be the greatest stage, being described (by me). It is the highest goal, very much surpassing (other) stages of life. Listen, with concentration, to that which should be done for (reaching) the supreme soul and which has received refinement from the two stages (viz. that of a householder and of the anchorite) and (which should be undertaken) after them. Listen to how he, having put on red garments in the three rungs (i.e. who accepts asceticism)—the unsurpassed stage—and having renounced (everything) with that thought (of renunciation), behaves; unaccompanied by anyone else, he should all alone practise righteousness. He, who, a discerning person, practises (righteousness) by himself, does not forsake (anyone nor is deficient in anything).

360-363. Not maintaining any fire, nor having any abode, he should resort to a village (only) for alms. Endowed with the thoughts (befitting) an ascetic, he should not keep anything for the future. He should eat little, have control over food (habits), and should eat food once (in a day). He should (use a begging-) bowl, should (stay) at the roots of trees, should (wear) rags, and be all alone. He should be indifferent to all beings. These are the signs of an ascetic. He, to whom words go as dead bodies (are) in a well, and never return to him who utters them (i.e. he who is deaf to all criticism) should remain in the ascetic's stage. He should not see (unworthy things) nor should hear what is not worthy of being told to others.

364. This should especially take place in the case of brāhmaṇas on any account; he should always speak what is agreeable to a brāhmaṇa.

365. Taking care of himself he should keep mum when he is censured (by others); so that by him being but one the entire space is filled.

366. Gods look upon him as a brāhmaṇa, who has filled up a void.

367. Gods look upon him as a brāhmaṇa, who covers himself with anything, and is satisfied by eating anything.

368. Gods look upon him as a brāhmaṇa, who like a serpent, is afraid of people, or who, like a man of good heart, is afraid of (falling into) a hell, or who, like a vile person, is afraid of ladies.

369. When honoured he should not be elated, nor should he be dejected when insulted. Gods look upon him as a brāhmaṇa, who grants security to all beings.

370. He should welcome neither death nor life. He should just observe (the workings of) destiny as an ox waits for (his master's) order.

371. Then (such) a man, with his mind unaffected, self-restrained, and with his intellect unimpaired, being free from all sins, would go to heaven.

372. To him, who has no fear from all beings and who grants safety to beings, and who is liberated in the body (i.e. while living), there is no fear from anywhere.

373. As the footprints (of) others lie (i.e. disappear) under the footprints of an elephant, similarly all kinds of knowledge lie in his heart.

374. Thus everything, so also piety and worldly prosperity, increase when harmlessness (is practised); he who does harm to others, is always dead.

375. So one who does no harm (to anybody), who is properly courageous, who has his senses controlled. and who is a refuge to all beings, obtains the best position.

376. Thus, for the wise one, who is content with knowledge, who is fearless, death is not an additional condition; and, he reaches immortality.

377. Gods look upon him as a brāhmaṇa, who is a sage free from all attachments, remains like space, does what is dear to Viṣṇu and is calm.

378. Gods look upon him as a brāhmaṇa, whose life is for

piety, and whose piety is (meant) for affection; and whose day and night are for (doing) meritorious deeds.

379. Gods look upon him as a brāhmaṇa, who keeps away from (all) actions, who avoids salutation and praise, who is unaffected, and (the effects of) whose actions are diminished.

380. All beings enjoy happily; all sorrows are excessive; being dejected due to their causing birth he should perform his acts (i.e. duty) with faith.

381. His gift is granting safety to beings; it stands superior to all (other) gifts in the world. He who first offers his body to severity obtains infinite security from beings.

382. He offers the oblation frank-mindendly with his mouth (i.e. he performs the sacrifice only verbally). He everywhere obtains a high position for an endless period. All this has gone forth due to the contact with his body; has reached Vaiśvānara (the Supreme Being).

383. Whatever, he, sacrificing for himself, offers into his heart, which has spread (i.e. is) of the measure of the span between the thumb and the forefinger, remains in the soul, in the presence of all the people along with the deities.

384. Those, who know the three-fold god of a fine complexion, who has become the highest object, being honoured in all the worlds (and becoming) powerful gods, reach immortality.

385. Always all move by him who finds in his individual soul the Vedas, that which is to be known, the entire rite, the etymological interpretations and the highest truth.

386-388. He, who, having blazing rays, knows that wheel of time, which does not stick to the ground, which cannot be measured in the sky, which is golden in the orb, which is in the south in the atmosphere, and not in himself, which is revolving and turning round, which has six fellies and three periods, in the opening of which everything falls (i.e. is included), to have been placed in a cave (i.e. is unintelligible), by the favour of which he knows the body of the world and all the people here, in it he pleases the gods and (thus) becomes eternally free.

389-390. In the world he becomes lustrous, omnipresent, eternal and approaches (the supreme being) due to the fear of worldly objects; of whom (i.e. him) the beings are not afraid,

nor is he fed up with the being, that brāhmaṇa, not being censured, does not censure others; he should very much look into his own soul. With his confusion removed, and sins destroyed, he becomes stiff in this world and the next, as desired.

391. Free from anger and delusion, looking upon equally on a clod of clay and gold, with his grief destroyed, with his friendship and quarrel ceased, free from censure or praise, not having anything dear or disagreeable, he is an anchorite indifferent (to the world).

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Acquisition of Gāyatri

Bhiṣma said :

1-2. O brāhmaṇa, (now) that you have narrated to me the excellent importance of the sacred place, that the sacred place was produced on the surface of the earth by the fall of the lotus, best among the sages, tell me all that revered Viṣṇu and Śaṅkara, who stayed there, did.

3. (Tell me) how the sacrifice was performed by the all-powerful god. Who were the members? Who were the priests? Which brāhmaṇas arrived there?

4. What were the portions of the sacrifice? What was the material? What was the sacrificial fee? What was the altar? What was the measure (of the altar) that Brahmā adopted?

5. Entertaining which desire, did Brahmā, to whom sacrifice is offered by all gods and who is described by all Vedas, perform the sacrifice?

6-11. As this god, the lord of gods, is unaging and immortal, so also the heaven is inexhaustible for him. The great one has granted (a place in) heaven to other gods also. The Vedas and the herbs have come up for an oblation to fire. The Vedic texts say that whatever other beasts are (seen) on the earth all of them have been created for the sake of sacrifice by this lord.

Having heard these words of you, I have a curiosity in this matter. Please tell me all that with reference to what desire, what fruit and what idea he performed the sacrifice. Here it is said that the lady with a hundred forms is Sāvitrī. She is said to be the wife of Brahmā and the mother of the sages. Sāvitrī gave birth to the seven sages like Pulastya and others and the lords of the created beings like Dakṣa.

12-17. Sāvitrī also gave birth to Manus like Svāyambhuva. How is it that Brahmā, dear to the brāhmaṇa, abandoned that religiously wedded blessed wife, endowed with sons, devoted (to her husband), of a good vow and smiling charmingly, and take to another wife? What was the name (of the other wife)? How was her conduct? Of which lord was she the daughter? Where was she seen by the lord? Who showed her to him? Of what form did she, alluring the mind, look—seeing whom the lord of gods came under the influence of lust? (Was) she, O sage, who allured the all-powerful lord of gods, superior to Sāvitrī in complexion and beauty? Tell me all that as to how the god accepted that lady (most) beautiful in the world, and how the sacrifice proceeded.

18. What did Sāvitrī do on seeing her by the side of Brahmā? and what was Brahmā's attitude towards Sāvitrī at that time?

19. Please tell (me) all that—which words did Sāvitrī, who was addressed by Brahmā, again utter?

20-28. What did you do there? (Did you express) anger or (did you show) patience? I desire to hear in detail what you did and saw and whatever I have asked you now and all the deeds of the lord. So also (I wish to hear) fully the great performance of the sacrifice. So also the order of acts and their beginning. Similarly (I wish to hear about) the oblation,[1] the food of the sacrificial priest. To whom was worship first offered? How did venerable Viṣṇu (act)? Who offered which help? Please (also) tell me what the gods did. How (i.e. why) did Brahmā leave the divine world and come (down) to the mortal world? (Please) tell me also how according to the (prescribed) rite he established the three fires, viz. the householder's per-

1. *Hotra*: Anything fit to be offered as an oblation (as ghee).

petual fire, the southern fire called *Anvāhārya* and the consecrated fire. How he got ready the sacrificial altar, the sacrificial ladle,[1] the water for consecration, the wooden ladle[2], the materials for the oblation. So also how he prepared the three sacrifices and the portions of the oblations; how he made the gods the recipients of the offerings meant for gods,[3] and the manes the recipients of the offerings meant for them,[4] the various (small) sacrifices performed according to the sacrificial procedure for portioning (the shares) in the sacrifice. (So also please tell me) as to how Brahmā made (ready) the sacrificial materials like the tying posts, the sacred fuel and the *darbha* (grass), Soma, so also the two blades of *Kuśa* grass,[5] and the sticks laid round the sacrificial fire.[6] (Tell me also) how he formerly shone by means of his supreme act.

29-38. The creator of a great mind, formerly created moments, twinklings, *Kāṣṭhās*, *Kalās*, the three times, *Muhūrtas*, dates, months, day, year, seasons, timely incantations[7], the threefold sacred authority (i.e. the scriptures), life, sacred spots, decrease, signs and excellence of form. (He created) the three castes, the three worlds, the three lores (i.e. the Vedas) and the three fires, the three times, three (kinds of) acts, the three castes and the three constituents, so also the superior and other worlds. (He laid down) the course followed by those endowed with (i.e. practising) righteousness, so also of those of sinful acts. He is the cause of the four castes, the protector of the four castes, who (i.e. he) is the knower of the four lores (i.e. the Vedas), is the resort of the four stages of life, is said to be the highest light and the highest penance, is greater than the

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1. *Srwa*: a sacrificial ladle
2. *Sruc*: a kind of wooden ladle, used for pouring clarified butter on sacrificial fire. It is usually made of Palāśa or Khadira.
3. *Havya*: An offering to gods.
4. *Kavya*: An offering to manes.
5. *Pavitra*: Two blades of Kuśa grass used at sacrifices for purifying and sprinkling ghee.
6. *Paridhi*: A stick of a sacred tree like Palāśa laid round the sacrificial fire.
7. *Yoga*: Incantation.

highest, who (himself) is the supreme (spirit) and is self-possessed, is the bridge of the bridges (in the form) of the worlds, is fit for sacred acts, is fit to be known by those learned in the Vedas, the lord of the creators, is the life of the beings, the fire of those who are vigorous like fire, who is the mind of men, the penance of those who practise it, the modesty of the prudent, and the lustre of the lustrous; thus the grandsire of the worlds created all this. (Please tell) me what course he desired as a result of the sacrifice and how he decided (to perform) the sacrifice. This, O brāhmaṇa, is my doubt—this is my great doubt.

39. Highest Brahmā is said to be a wonder by gods and demons. Though he is wonderful due to his (wondrous) deeds, he is here actually described to be so (i.e. a wonder).

Pulastya spoke:

40-49. The load of questions asked by you about Brahmā is great. I shall tell (i.e. answer your questions) according to my capacity. Listen to his great glory. (Hear about him) whom the brāhmaṇas knowing the Vedas describe (as follows): He has a thousand mouths, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet, a thousand ears, a thousand hands. (He is) immutable, he has a thousand tongues, (he is) thousandfold, thousand times a great lord, he is giver (in) a thousand (ways), is the origin of thousands, and is the immutable one having a thousand arms. (He is) the oblation, the extracting of *Soma* juice, the offering and the priest. (He is) the vessels, the blades of *Kuśa* grass used at sacrifices in purifying and sprinkling ghee, the altar, the initiation, the oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled for presentation to the gods and manes, the sacrificial ladle, so also the wooden ladle used for pouring clarified butter on sacrificial fire, the *Soma*, the oblation, the holy water,[1] the money for (paying) the sacrificial fees, the officiating priest, the brāhmaṇa versed in the Sāma-veda, the members (present at the sacrifice), the chamber, the assembly, the tying post, the sacred fuel, the spoon[2], the pestle and the mortar, the room in which the friends

1. *Prokṣaṇī*: Holy water.
2. *Darvī*: Ladle, spoon.

and family of the sacrificer assemble, the sacrificial ground, the hotṛ-priest, the binding, the short (or) (proper-) sized inanimate objects (like clay, stones), the *darbhas*, so also the Vedic hymn, the sacrifice, the offering of an oblation with fire, the portion of the fire, and that which is the excellence, the one who enjoys first, the enjoyer of the sacrifice. He is of an auspicious lustre, one who has raised his weapon, the sacrifice and the eternal lord. (I shall tell you), O great king, this divine account about which you are asking (me) and the reason for which lord Brahmā performed a sacrifice on the earth, for the good of gods and mortals and for the production of the worlds.

50-51. Brahmā, and Kapila, and Viṣṇu, gods, the seven sages, Śiva of great prowess, the high-souled Manu, the revered creator, all these resembling fire in lustre were created by the ancient god.

52-53. Formerly when the lotus-born (Brahmā) was performing penance in his abode—in Puṣkara—where gods and groups of sages were produced, the manifestation of him, the high-souled one, is called Pauṣkaraka, about which the Purāṇa, agreeing well with the Vedas and *Smṛtis* is narrated.

54-67. A boar, with a face of scriptures appeared there. The lord of gods resorting to a boar-form, having made an extensive sacred place at Puṣkara—for it is the opening of a red lotus—manifested himself there for the help of Brahmā. He had the feet in the form of the Vedas, fangs in the form of tying posts, hands in the form of sacrifices, face in the form of an oblong[1], tongue in the form of fire, hair in the form of darbhas, head in the form of sacred texts and had great penance (to his credit). He had eyes in the form of day and nights, was divine, had the body of the Vedas and the ornaments of scriptures, had a nose in the form of ghee, mouth of a sacrificial ladle, was great with the sound of Sāman. He was full of truth, possessed splendour, and was adorned with his steps and strides. He had nails in the form of expiation, and was firm; had knees in the form of beasts and the figure of a sacrifice; had *udgātṛ*-priest as his intestine, had sacrifice as his genital organ; he was a great plant with fruits and seeds; he had wind as his mind, hymns as

1. *Citi*: An oblong with quadrangular sides.

his bones, water as his lips and Soma as his blood; his shoulders were the Vedas, he had the fragrance of the oblations; he was very speedy with oblations offered to gods and manes. His body was the sacrificial room having its columns turned towards the east; he was bright; and was decorated with initiations; he, a contemplative saint, had the sacrificial fee as his heart; and the great one was full of great sacrificial sessions. He was charming on account of the sacrificial ceremony of *Upakarma*[1]. He had ornaments in the form of the ceremonies preliminary to Soma-sacrifices.[2] He was accompanied by his wife like his shadow, and was lofty like a jewelled peak. He who looked to the interest of the people uplifted the earth with his fang. Then he, the holder of the earth, having brought the earth to its own place, became satisfied with having sustained the earth. Thus, the first boar, desiring the good of Brahmā, having seized the earth, uplifted it which had formerly gone down into the water of the ocean. Brahmā, remaining at the opening of the red lotus, covered with (i.e. full of) tranquility and restraint, the lord of the movable and the immovable, endowed with splendour, best among those who knew the Vedas, accompanied by deities like Ādityas[3], Vasus[4], Sādhyas[5], Maruts[6], Rudras[7]—the friends of all, so also by Yakṣas, demons and Kinnaras, directions and intermediate directions, rivers on the earth along with oceans, said these words (to Viṣṇu in the form of the boar): "O lord, you will please always look after and protect the sacred place Kokāmukha (i.e. Puṣkara); here, at the sacrifice you will undertake the protection (of the sacrifice)."

68. Then he said to Brahmā: "Revered one, I shall do so". Brahmā again said to god Viṣṇu who stood before him:

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1. *Upakarma*: A rite performed at the commencement.
2. *Pravargya*: A ceremony preliminary to the Soma-sacrifice.
3. *Ādityas*: They are twelve suns and are supposed to shine only at the destruction of the universe.
4. *Vasus*: They are a class of deities; they are eight in number: Āpa, Dhruva, Soma, Dhara or Dhava, Anila, Anala, Pratyūṣa and Prabhāsa.
5. *Sādhyas*: A class of celestial beings.
6. *Maruts*: A class of gods.
7. *Rudras*: Name of a group of gods, eleven in number, supposed to be inferior manifestations of Śiva or Śaṅkara, who is said to be the head of the group.

69-76. "O best of gods, you are my greatest god, you are my best preceptor; you are my highest resort and of Śakra and others. O you having eyes like bloomed, spotless lotuses, you who bring about the destruction of the enemy, you should act in such a way that the demons do not destroy the sacrifice of me who am bending before you; my salutation to you." Viṣṇu said: "Give up your fear, O lord of gods; I shall destroy all those others (like) the evil spirits and the demons who will cause obstructions." Saying so he, who had taken a pledge to help (Brahmā), remained there. Auspicious breezes blew and the ten quarters were bright. The very bright luminaries went round the moon. The planets did not have (any) strife, and the seas were appeased. The ground was dustless; water gave joy to all; the rivers followed their own course; the seas were not agitated; the senses of men with controlled minds were conducive to good. Great sages, free from grief, recited the Vedas loudly.

77. In that sacrifice ready with oblations, the fires were auspicious, people followed righteous behaviour and were of a good conduct with their minds pleased.

78-89. Having heard the words of Viṣṇu of a truthful vow, about (his) killing the enemies, the gods along with demons and evil spirits arrived (there). Spirits, goblins, ghosts—all came there successively; so also Gandharvas,[1] celestial nymphs, serpents and groups of Vidyādharas[2] (arrived there). By the order of Brahmā, the wind brought, from all quarters, trees[3] and herbs that wished and that did not wish to come. Having reached the sacrificial mountain towards the southern direction, all the gods remained on the frontier mountain in the north. At that great sacrifice, the Gandharvas, the celestial nymphs and the sages who had mastered the Vedas having resorted to the

1. *Gandharvas*: A class of demi-gods regarded as the singers or musicians of gods and said to give good and agreeable voice to girls.

2. *Vidyādharas*: A class of semi-divine beings or demi-gods. Himālaya is regarded as their favourite haunt. Whenever they notice any act of extra-ordinary merit performed by mortals, they are described as showering heavenly flowers. They are said to wander in the air.

3. *Vānaspatya*: A tree, the fruit of which is produced from the blossom e.g. the mango.

western direction, remained there. All groups of gods, all demons and the hosts of evil spirits kept their wrath concealed and were mutually affectionate. All of them waited upon the sages and served the brāhmaṇas. Chief sages, brāhmaṇic sages, brāhmaṇas and divine sages, so also royal sages had come from all sides. (All were eager to know) for which god would this sacrifice be performed? Beasts and birds, with a desire to witness it, so also brāhmaṇas desirous of eating and all castes in due order had come there. Varuṇa himself careful in (choosing) the best gave the food. Having arrived from the Varuṇa-world he dressed the cooked food of his own accord. Vāyu digested the varieties of food and the sun the liquids. Soma, the digester of food and Bṛhaspati, the giver of intelligence (were) present. The lord of wealth (looked after) giving of wealth, and garments of various kinds. Sarasvatī, the head of rivers, goddess Gaṅgā with Narmadā (had come there).

90-111. All other auspicious rivers, wells and lakes, pools and ponds, wells consecrated to some deity or holy purpose, many main streams dug by gods, so also all reservoirs of water and seas seven in number; salt, sugarcane, spirituous liquor, clarified butter and curds with milk and water (were there); the seven worlds with the seven nether worlds, the seven islands with the towns; trees and creepers, vegetables with grass and fruits; the earth, the wind, the ether, the water and fire as the fifth (element)—these elements; so also whichever were the codes of laws (were there), the glosses on Vedas, the *sūtras* were present in person; (thus) the unembodied, the embodied and the extremely embodied, so also all (that was) visible—(thus) all (objects) created by Brahmā (were present there). When thus the sacrifice of the grandsire was performed at that time in the presence of gods and in the company of the sages, eternal Viṣṇu remained on the right hand side of Brahmā. Rudra, the trident-holder, the giver of boons, the lord, remained on Brahmā's left side. The great-souled one (Brahmā) also chose the priests to officiate at the sacrifice. Bhṛgu was chosen as the official priest reciting the prayers of the Ṛgveda[1]; Pulastya was

1. *Hotṛ*: A sacrificial priest, specially one who recites the prayers of the Ṛgveda at a sacrifice.

chosen as the best *Adhvaryu*[1] priest. Marīci (was chosen as) the *Udgātṛ*[2] priest (one who chants the hymns of the Sāmaveda) and Nārada (was chosen as) the *Brahmā* priest. Sanatkumāra and others were the members (of the sacrificial assembly), so also Prajāpatis like Dakṣa and the castes preceded by the brāhmaṇas (attended the sacrifice); the (seating) arrangement of the priests was made near Brahmā. They were endowed with clothes and ornaments by Kubera. The brāhmaṇas were adorned with rings along with bracelets and fillets. The brāhmaṇas were four, two and ten (thus making the total) sixteen. All of them were worshipped by Brahmā with a salutation. (He said to them): "O brāhmaṇas, during this sacrifice you should favour me; this is my wife Sāvitrī; you are my refuge." Having called Viśvakarman, the brāhmaṇas got Brahmā's head shaved, as it was laid down (as a preliminary) in (the performance of) a sacrifice. The brāhmaṇas also (secured) flaxen clothes for the couple (viz. Brahmā and Sāvitrī). The brāhmaṇas remained there filling (i.e. the brāhmaṇas filled) the heaven with the sound (of the recitation) of the Vedas; the kṣatriyas remained there with weapons protecting this world; the vaiśyas prepared various kinds of food; food and eatables full of great flavour were also prepared then; seeing it unheard and unseen before, Brahmā was pleased; the lord, the creator, gave the name *Prāgvāṭa* to the vaiśyas. (Brahmā laid it down:) 'Here the śūdras have always to serve the feet of the brāhmaṇas; they have to wash their feet, eat what is left over by them (i.e. the brāhmaṇas) and cleanse (the ground etc.). They also did (these things) there; then having again said to them, "I have put you on the fourth position for serving the brāhmaṇas, the kṣatriya brothers, and (other) brothers like you; you have to offer service to the three". Saying so Brahmā appointed Śaṅkara so also Indra as the gate-superintendents, Varuṇa to give water, Kubera to distribute wealth, Wind to offer scents, the Sun to (arrange) lighting and Viṣṇu stayed as the (chief) authority. The Moon, giver of Soma resorted to the path on the left side.

112-125. Sāvitrī, his beautiful wife, who was well honoured,

1. *Adhvaryu*: An officiating priest.
2. *Udgātṛ*: One of the four principal priests at a sacrifice; one who chants the hymns of the Sāmaveda.

was invited by the *adhvaryu*: "Madam, come quickly, all the fires have risen (i.e. are well-kindled), the time for initiation has approached." She, engrossed in doing some work, did not come promptly, as usually happens with females. "I have not made any decoration here, at the door; I have not drawn pictures on the wall; I have not drawn the *Svastika*[1] in the courtyard. The cleansing of the pots has not at all been done here. Lakṣmī, who is the wife of Nārāyaṇa has not as yet arrived. So also Svāhā, the wife of Agni; and Dhūmrorṇā, Yama's wife; Gaurī, the wife of Varuṇa; Ṛddhi, the wife of Kubera; Gaurī, Śambhu's wife, dear to the world. So also the daughters Medhā, Śraddhā, Vibhūti, Anasūyā, Dhṛti, Kṣamā, and the rivers Gaṅgā and Sarasvatī have not as yet come. Indrāṇī, and the Moon's wife Rohiṇī, dear to the Moon. Similarly Ārundhatī, Vasiṣṭha's wife; so also the wives of the seven sages, and Anasūyā, Atri's wife and other ladies, daughters-in-law, daughters, friends, sisters have not as yet come. I alone have remained here (waiting for them) for a long time. I shall not go alone until those ladies come. Go and tell Brahmā to wait for a while. I shall hurriedly come with all (those ladies); O you of high intellect, you surrounded by gods, will attain great grace; so also shall I; there is no doubt about it." Leaving her talking like that the Adhvaryu came to Brahmā.

126-127. "O god, Sāvitrī is busy; she is engaged in domestic work. I shall not come till my friends arrive—Thus she has told me. O lord, time is passing away. O grandsire, do today whatever you like."

128-130. Brahmā, thus addressed (got) a little angry and said to Indra: "O Śakra, get here quickly another wife for me. Do that quickly by which the sacrifice proceeds (properly) and is not delayed; bring some woman for me till the sacrifice is over; I am soliciting you; make up your mind for me; I shall again free her after the sacrifice is over."

131. Thus addressed, Indra having gone (i.e. roamed) over the entire earth observed women, (but) all of them were others' wives.

132-133. There was a cowherd's daughter, endowed with

1. *Svastika*: A kind of mark denoting good luck.

beauty, of a fine nose and charming eyes. No goddess, no Gandharva woman, no demoness, no female serpent, no maiden was like that excellent lady. He saw her of a charming form, like another goddess Lakṣmī, and curtailing (i.e. distracting) the powers of the mind's functions by means of the wealth of her beauty.

134-137. Whatever object distinguished by beauty is found anywhere, every such excellent object was seen to be attached to the lady with a slim body. Seeing her Indra thought: 'If she is a maiden, then on the earth no other god is more meritorious than I. This is that gem of a lady, for whom, if the grandsire longs, then this my exertion would be fruitful.'

138. He saw her having the beauty of the blue sky, a golden lotus and a coral, (having) lustre by means of (i.e. in) her limbs, hair, cheeks, eyes and lips and resembling the sprouting bud of an apple-wood or aśoka tree.

139. 'How was she created by the creator, with the burning dart in his heart and with heaps of flames (of passion) of fire in his eyes, without seeing a likeness?

140-151. If he has fashioned her after his own idea then it is the highest product of his skill. These two breasts of high tips are fashioned (by him); seeing which (i.e. them) I am getting pleasure. In whose heart great wonder would not be produced on seeing them? Though this lip has obviously its form overpowered by passion (also, redness), yet it will give great joy to its enjoyer. The hair, in spite of its having crookedness (i.e. the curly hair) is giving pleasure. Even a defect, when it resorts to abundant beauty appears to be a merit. The decorated corners of (her) eyes have come upto (i.e. reached her) ears; (and for this) reason the experts describe beauty as the (very) spirit of love. Her eyes are the ornaments of her ears (and) her ears are the ornaments of her eyes. There is no scope here either for the ear-rings or for the collyrium. It does not behove her glances to split the heart into two (parts). How can those who come in contact with you share (i.e. have) unhappiness? (Even) a deformation becomes all-beautiful (in contact) with natural qualities. I have seen the valued possession of my hundreds of large eyes. This is the limit of his skill that the creator has well demonstrated in creating this beautiful form.

By means of her graceful acts (i.e. movements) she engenders love in men's minds.' The body of him, whose brilliance was taken away when he was thinking thus, was covered over with horripilation rising continuously. Having seen her having charm like new gold, and having long eyes like lotus-leaves (he thought:) 'I have seen many ladies of gods, Yakṣas, Gandharvas, snakes and demons, but nowhere such wealth of beauty (was seen). The creator has fashioned her form after having especially collected whatever things there are in the three worlds.'

Indra said:

152-155. O you of charming eye-brows, tell me—who are you? Whom do you belong to ? Whence have you come? Why do you stand in the middle of the road? These ornaments which add excitement to your body and which you put on do not adorn you; (but rather) you adorn them. O you of beautiful eyes, no goddess, no Gandharva lady, no demoness, not a female serpent, not a Kinnara female was seen as beautiful as you. Though repeatedly spoken to by me, why do you not give a reply?

And that maiden, overpowered by bashfulness and trembling, said to Indra:

156-157. "O warrior, I am a cowherd-maiden; I sell milk, this pure butter, and curds full of cream. Whichever taste you want—that of curds or butter milk—tell it (to me), take as much as you desire."

158. Thus addressed (by her), Indra firmly seized her hand, and brought that lady of large eyes to (the place) where Brahmā was stationed.

159. She, who was being taken by him, was crying for her father and mother. 'O father, O mother, O brother, this man is taking me (away) forcibly.'

160-161. (She said to Indra): "If you have something to be done by me, then request my father. He will give me to you; I am telling the truth. Which maiden does not long for a husband affectionate with attachment? Nothing will be accepted from you, O you devoted to righteousness, by my father.

162-163. I shall propitiate him with (the bowing down of) my head, and being pleased he will offer (me to you). If I offer myself to you without knowing the mind of my father, much

of my religious merit will perish and so I shall not (be able to) please you. I shall submit myself to you if (only) my father presents me to you."

164-168. Even though Śakra was thus being addressed by her he took her, and having placed her before Brahmā said: "O lady of large eyes, I have brought you for this (lord); do not be grieved, O you of excellent complexion." Seeing the cowherd's daughter of a fair complexion and great lustre, he (i.e. Brahmā) thought her having eyes like lotuses, to be Lakṣmī herself. Resembling the portion of a wall of heated gold, she, too, seeing him having a stout chest, having round thighs like the trunks of intoxicated elephants, having the lustre of nails red and bright, looked upon herself as animated with (the feeling of) love. With a desire to secure him (as her husband) the cowherd-maiden appeared to be senseless. She also thought to have (i.e. she had) the authority to offer herself (to him). (She said to herself:)

169-180. 'If he, due to my beauty, insists on having me, there is no other woman luckier than I am. Since he saw me, he brought me. If I leave him I shall die; if I do not leave him my life will be happy; and due to insult I—with my form condemned—will be causing unhappiness (to others); whichever lady he sees favourably with his eyes, she too would be blessed. I have no doubt about it; (then) what about her whom he embraces? The entire beauty of the world has moved to various ways (i.e. had remained in different places); (now) the origin of the universe (i.e. the creator) has manifested the beauty in one place only. He is comparable to Cupid only; comparison to Cupid due to his brilliance is good. I give up this grief (of mine). Neither the father nor the mother is the cause (of whatever one gets in life). If he does not accept me or does not talk to me a little, I shall, longing for him, meet death due to grief. When this innocent one goes to his wife (i.e. acts as a husband to his wife), such brilliance like pure lotuses will be (the cause of) the grace of gems on the breasts. The mind of me, seeing him, has entered contemplation. (She says to her mind:) If you do not look highly upon the touch of and contact with his body, then, you, not touching (such) an excellent body, are wandering fruitlessly. Or it is not his fault; for you roam at

your sweet will. O Cupid, you are indeed robbed. Protect your own beloved Rati, since, O Cupid, he looks superior to you in handsomeness. He has certainly snatched away the gem of my mind and all my possessions. How (can one find) the beauty on the moon which is seen on his face? Comparison between an object with spots and a spotles object is not advisable.

181-183. A lotus does not attain resemblance with his eyes. How can the water-conch be compared with his conch (-like) ears? Even a coral certainly does not obtain the resemblance of his lip. Nectar resides in him. He certainly causes a flow of nectar. If I have done some auspicious deed in hundreds of my former existences, then due to its power let him, whom I desire, be my husband'.

184-187. When that cowherd-maiden was thus beyond herself due to being engrossed in thought, Brahmā quickly said these words to Viṣṇu for (expediting) the sacrifice: "And this is, O lord, the goddess named Gāyatrī, the greatly blessed one." When these words were uttered, Viṣṇu said these words to Brahmā: "O lord of the world, today marry, in the *Gāndharva*-style (of marriage), her whom I have given to you. Do not hesitate any longer. O lord, without being perturbed, accept this hand of her." (Then) the grandsire married her in the *Gāndharva*-style of marriage.

188-191. Having obtained her (as his wife), Brahmā said to the best of the *adhvaryu*-priests: "I have taken this lady as my wife; put her into my house." The priests, masters of the Vedas, then took that young lady, holding the deer's horn and clothed in a silken garment, to the chamber meant for the sacrificer's wife. Brahmā with the *audumbara* staff (in his hand and) covered with deer-hide, shone there at the sacrifice, as it were with his own lustre. Then the brāhmaṇas, with Bhṛgu, commenced the sacrifice as laid down in the Vedas. Then that sacrifice lasted (i.e. continued) at the Puṣkara-tīrtha for a thousand *yugas*.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Sāvitrī's Curses and Gāyatrī's Boons

Bhīṣma said:

1-3. O best brāhmaṇa, then what was the wonder there at the sacrifice? How did Rudra stay there? How also did Viṣṇu, the best of gods, reside there? What did Gāyatrī, who was positioned as (Brahmā's) wife do there? O sage, what did the cowherds of good conduct do after having come to know (about the seizure of Gāyatrī)? Tell me this story—as to what took place and what was done by the cowherds and Brahmā. I have a great curiosity (to know) it.

Pulastya spoke:

4-7. O king, I shall tell you the wonderful things that took place at the sacrifice. Listen with concentration. Rudra, after having gone to the (sacrificial) assembly, did a great wonder. The god (i.e. Rudra) having taken up a censurable form, came there near the brāhmaṇas. Since Viṣṇu had occupied an important place, he did not do anything (to stop Rudra from entering the assembly). The cowherd boys and all the cowherdesses having learnt about the loss of the cowherd maiden, came near Brahmā.

8-10. Seeing her with a girdle tied round (her waist), and seated at the boundary of the sacrifice (the cowherds cried). Then the mother (cried): "O daughter"; the father (cried): "O daughter"; the brothers (cried): "O sister"; the friends (cried) with affection: "O friend, who brought you, the beautiful one, marked with red resin, here? Removing your garment who put the blanket on you? Who has, O daughter, tied a red string round your matted hair?" Having heard such words, Hari himself said (to her father):

11-20. "We brought her here and appointed her as (Brahmā's) wife. The girl is attached to Brahmā. Do not lament. She is auspicious, and the cause of good luck to all, and of delight to the family; if she were not auspicious, how would she have come to the (sacrificial) assembly? Realising this, O blessed one, do not grieve. Thus your daughter is very

lucky (as) she has come to god Brahmā. Your daughter has secured that position which the brāhmaṇas, adept in and endowed with the contemplation on the supreme spirit, and masters of the Vedas, do not get. Having known you to be a religious person of a good conduct and devoted to righteousness, I have given this daughter to Brahmā. Liberated by her go to divine and prosperous worlds. For the fulfilment of a divine mission I shall be born in your family. It will just be a sport. When Nanda and others will be born on the earth, I shall stay among them. All your daughters will live with me. There will be no sin, no hatred and no jealousy. The cowherds or men will also cause no fear. As a result of this act (of having married Brahmā) this (your daughter) will incur no sin." Having heard (these) words of Viṣṇu, (all of them) having saluted him left (the place).

21. (*The father said*:) "Let me have (i.e. enjoy) the boon which you have given me. You will take an incarnation, bringing about religious merit, in our family.

22-28. Merely by your sight we shall be the residents of heaven; and this my daughter will liberate me with (the members of) my family. O master, lord of gods, may you grant us a boon like this." The god Viṣṇu himself pleased the cowherds. By means of (i.e. by waving) his left hand, Brahmā also communicated the same idea. The lady of excellent complexion, Gāyatrī, the cowherd-daughter, embarrassed on seeing her relatives, met them and saluting them all with her left hand, said: "Who told you (the news) about me so that you have come to this place? O mother, having come to Brahmā, I have remained here; I have today obtained as my husband the lord of the entire world. You should not grieve for me, nor my father, nor my relations. Tell about my safety (i.e. I am well) to the group of my friends and to my sisters along with the children; I am staying here with deities."

29. When all of them had left, that Gāyatrī, of a charming waist, having gone with Brahmā to the place[1] prepared and enclosed for the sacrifice, shone there.

1. *Yajñavāṭa*: A place prepared and enclosed for sacrifice.

30. The brāhmaṇas asked Brahmā for boons. (They said): "Give us the desired boons". Brahmā too granted them the desired boons.

31. That goddess Gāyatrī also gave her consent to what was granted (by Brahmā); and that good lady too remained near the deities at the sacrifice.

32-37. That sacrifice continued for more than a hundred divine years; and Śiva, having taken a big skull (as the begging bowl) and adorned with five heads came to the place of sacrifice for alms. He, standing at the door, was reproached by the priests and members (of the sacrificial assembly): "How have you, who are censured by the expounders of the Vedas, arrived here?" Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva) thus being expelled condemned by the brāhmaṇas with a smile said to all those brāhmaṇas: "At this sacrifice of the grandsire which pleases all, no one, but me, is being driven away, O best brāhmaṇas." Śiva[1] was told by them: "Eat food and then go". Śiva too said to them: "O brāhmaṇas, I shall leave after eating (food)." Saying thus, and keeping the skull in front of him he sat there.

38-41. Seeing that act of theirs, the god (i.e. Śiva) acted crookedly. Leaving the skull on the ground and looking at the brāhmaṇas he said: "O best brāhmaṇas, I am going for a bath to (the sacred place) Puṣkara". Being told by them 'go quickly', the lord left; he, having stupefied the gods, remained in the sky with eagerness. When Śiva had gone to Puṣkara for a bath, Brahmā soon said: "When there is the skull in the sacrificial assembly how can the sacrifice be performed here? There are filthy things in the skull."

42-48. A brāhmaṇa in the assembly said: "I shall throw off the skull". That member (i.e that brāhmaṇa) picked it up with his own hand and threw it off. Just then another skull appeared there; again it was picked up; in this way second, third...twenty...thirty...fifty...hundred...thousand...ten thousand (skulls appeared there). The best brāhmaṇas found no end to the skulls. Having reached the Puṣkara forest, and having saluted god Śiva they submitted to him with Vedic prayers

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Kapardin: An epithet of Śaṅkara. Kaparda: Braided and matted hair, especially of Śaṅkara.

muttered by them; and all together very much propitiated him. Then Śiva himself was pleased. Then Śiva manifested himself before them as a result of their devotion. Then that god said to those best brāhmaṇas, humble due to their devotion (for him): "Without the skull, the sacrificial oblation made of ground rice and offered in vessels[1], cannot be prepared. O brāhmaṇas, do as I tell you; (keep for me) a well-offered portion. If this is done all my directions would be followed."

49-50. The brāhmaṇas said: "All right, we shall follow your instructions". The lord, with the skull in his hand, said to the illustrious grandsire: "O Brahmā, ask for the boon that you hold dear to your heart. I shall, O lord, give you everything. There is nothing that I can't give".

51-60. Brahmā said: "As I am initiated, and I am seated here in the sacrificial assembly, I shall not accept a boon from you. I shall give all that is desired by him who solicits me here." Saying "All right" to the grandsire, the granter of boons, who was thus speaking at the sacrifice, that Rudra asked for a boon from him. Then, when the Manu-period passed over, the lord himself (performed a sacrifice) in the same way. Śambhu fixed a place for himself to the north of Brahmā's (place). He, the god, who had the complete knowledge even of the four Vedas, (had) at that time (gone) to see the city. (On hearing) the talk of the brāhmaṇas he went to the sacrificial assembly out of curiosity. Maheśvara, who entered Brahmā's residence (clothed) in the same crazy dress, was seen by the best brāhmaṇas. Some laughed at him, and some censured him. Similarly other brāhmaṇas threw dust at the insane (Śiva). Other strong brāhmaṇas, proud of their strength, ridiculing him, and making (various) signs with their hands, beat him with clods of clay and clubs. So also other lads (going) near (and) seizing him with his matted hair asked him: "Who instructed you this way of observing a vow? Here there are beautiful ladies; you have come for them. Which preceptor, directing (you) the sinful (way) has shown you this course, that, talking like a mad person, you are running through (this place)?"

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1. *Puroḍāśa*: A sacrificial oblation made of ground rice and offered in *Kapālas* or vessels.

(*Śiva replied*:)

61-74. "My generative organ is the form of Brahmā; and my pudendum muliebre is Viṣṇu; this seed is to be sown; otherwise the world will suffer. This son was generated by me, and by him I was produced; the creation is for Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva); (my) wife is created on Himālaya; Umā was given to Rudra; tell (me) whose daughter she is. You stupid ones, you do not know (it); may the lord speak (i.e. explain) it to you." "(This) course was not followed by Brahmā, nor was it shown by Viṣnu; nor was it shown by Śiva, the killer of Brahmā." "How (is it that) you are censuring the god? Today you must be killed by us". O king, Śaṅkara, thus being beaten by the brāhmaṇas, smiled and said to all the brāhmaṇas (there): "O brāhmaṇas, have you not recognised me the frantic one, who has lost his sense? All of you are kind and have abided in friendship (with me)." The best brāhmaṇas stupefied by the trick of Hara, speaking (i.e. giving) a plea and having (put on) a brāhmaṇa's guise, beat him, who had put on a mad man's dress, with hands, feet, fists, sticks and blows with elbows. Thus being tormented by the brāhmaṇas he became angry. They were then cursed by the god (i.e. by Śiva): "You will be abandoned by the Vedas, will have your matted hair erect, will fall from sacrifice, enjoy others' wives, will be delighted in the (company of) prostitutes and in gambling, will be forsaken by your fathers and mothers. A son shall not get the parental wealth or knowledge and may all of you, being stupefied, and abandoned by your senses, and depending on others' food, obtain Rudra-like alms. Behaving (like this) and devoid of piety, you do not belong to me; but those brāhmaṇas who showed compassion towards me, will have wealth, sons, maids, servants and small cattle, and will have ladies born in noble families (as their wives) since I am now pleased (with these brāhmaṇas)."

75-93. Giving a curse and a boon like this, the god disappeared. When he had left, the brāhmaṇas, taking him to be lord Śaṅkara, tried to look for him; but when they did not find him, they, endowed with self-imposed religious observances, came to the Puṣkara forest. Having bathed in the pre-eminent lake, the brāhmaṇas muttered the hundred (names) of Rudra. At the end of the muttering of the prayer, the god (i.e. Śiva)

spoke to them in a heavenly voice: "Even in a free talk I have never told a lie; then how (would I do so) when I have curbed my senses? I shall again confer happiness on you. The Vedas (i.e. Vedic knowledge), wealth and progeny of those brāhmaṇas who are tranquil, restrained, devoted to me and steady(-minded) in me, will not be taken away. Nothing inauspicious exists for those (brāhmaṇas) who are engaged in maintaining the sacred fire, are devoted to Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), worship Brahmā (and) the Sun—the heap of lustre, and whose minds are steady in equilibrium." Saying these words he remained silent. All (the brāhmaṇas) having received a boon and favour from the great god (i.e. Śiva) went together to (that place) where Brahmā (stayed). They, together propitiating Brahmā, remained before him. Brahmā, being pleased, said to them: "Choose a boon from me also." With these words of Brahmā, all those best brāhmaṇas were pleased. (They said to one another:) "O brāhmaṇas, which boon should we ask for when Brahmā is pleased? Let us have, as the result of the grant of this boon, the maintenance of the sacred fire, the Vedas, the various religious treatises, and the worlds relating to (i.e. due to) offspring." When the brāhmaṇas were thus talking (among themselves) they became angry; "Who are you? Who are pre-eminent here? We are superior here." The other brāhmaṇas said: "No, (it is not so)." Brahmā, seeing the brāhmaṇas that were there and were full of anger, said to them: "Since you remained in three groups out of the sacrificial assembly, therefore, brāhmaṇas, one group of you will be called *āmūlika*; those who remained neutral, will be called *udāsīna*; the third group, O brāhmaṇas, will be of those who have weapons with them and have equipped themselves with swords and will be termed *kauśikī*. This place, thus occupied in three ways (by the three groups) will be entirely yours. The subjects (living) here will be called a 'world' from outside (i.e. by the outsiders); Viṣṇu will certainly look after this unknown place. This place given by me will last eternally and be complete." Saying so Brahmā thought of the conclusion of the sacrifice. All these brāhmaṇas who were (some time back) full of anger and jealousy together fed the guests and became engrossed in the Vedic studies.

94-99. This Puṣkara, also called Brahma, is a great sacred

place. To the tranquil brāhmaṇas living in that sacred place nothing is difficult to obtain in the world of Brahmā. O best king, fulfilment of an object, which takes place at other sacred places after twelve years is had by men within six months only at these sacred places, viz. Kokāmukha, Kurukṣetra, Naimiṣa where there is the congregation of the sages, Vārāṇasī, Prabhāsa, so also Badarikāśrama, and at Gaṅgādvāra, Prayāga, and at the point where the Ganges meets the ocean, Rudrakoṭi, Virūpākṣa, so also Mitravana[1]; (about the fulfilment of the object of a man) there is no doubt if the man is intent on religious study. Puṣkara is the greatest of all sacred places and the best of all; it is always revered by the respectable ones devoted to the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā).

100-118. Hereafter I shall tell you the great dispute, caused by jest, of Sāvitrī with Brahmā (i.e. between Sāvitrī and Brahmā).

After Sāvitrī had left, all the divine ladies came there. The daughter of Bhṛgu born of Khyāti, viz. Lakṣmī, (ever) successful, always invited by (Sāvitrī) came there hurriedly. The very virtuous Madirā, giver of Yoganidrā (a state between sleep and wakefulness) and prosperity; Śrī, residing in a lotus, Bhūti, Kīrti and the high-minded Śraddhā: all these goddesses who gave nourishment and satisfaction had arrived (there); Satī, Dakṣa's daughter, auspicious Pārvatī or Umā, the most beautiful lady in the three worlds, giving good fortune (absence of widowhood) to ladies; Jayā and Vijayā, Madhucchandā, Amarāvatī, Supriyā, Janakāntā (had all gathered) in Sāvitrī's auspicious residence. They, who had put on fine dresses and ornaments, had arrived with Gaurī. (There were ladies like) Śakrāṇī, Puloman's daughter, along with the celestial nymphs; Svāhā, Svadhā and Dhūmorṇā, of a beautiful face; Yakṣī and Rākṣasī and the very wealthy Gaurī; Manojavā, Vāyu's wife, and Ṛddhi, the beloved (wife) of Kubera; so also the daughters of gods and the Dānava-ladies dear to Danu had come there. The great beautiful wives of the seven sages,[2] in the same way sisters, daughters and the

1. *Mitravana*: Name of a forest.

2. *Saptarṣi*: The seven sages i.e. Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasiṣṭha.

hosts of Vidyādharīs; the Rākṣasīs, daughters of manes and other world-mothers. Sāvitrī desired to go (to the place of sacrifice) with the young married ladies and daughters-in-law; so also all daughters of Dakṣa, like Aditi and others had come. The chaste lady viz. Brahmā's wife (Sāvitrī), having a lotus as her residence, was surrounded by them. Some beautiful lady had taken sweets in her hand, someone with a winnowing basket filled with fruits approached Brahmā. Similarly others taking measures of winnowed grain; so also a beautiful lady carried various kinds of pomegranates, citrons; another took bamboo-shoots, so also lotuses, and saffron, cumin-seeds, dates; another took all coconuts; (another) took a vessel full of grape(-juice); so also the *śṛṅgāṭaka* plant, variegated camphor-flowers and auspicious roseapples; so also someone else took walnuts, emblic myrobalan and citrons; a beautiful lady took ripe bilva-fruits and flattened rice; someone else took cotton-wicks and saffron-coloured garment. All the auspicious and beautiful ladies having put these and other things in winnowing baskets, reached there with Sāvitrī.

119-120. Purandara, seeing Sāvitrī there, was frightened; Brahmā (too) remained there with his face hung down (thinking): 'What will she (now) say to me?' Viṣṇu and Rudra were ashamed, so also all other brāhmaṇas; the members (of the sacrificial assembly) and other gods were frightened.

121-122. Sons, grandsons, nephews, maternal uncles, brothers, so also gods named Ṛbhus and other deities—all remained embarrassed as to what Sāvitrī would say (then).

123-124. The cowherd daughters remained silent by the side of Brahmā listening to the words of all that talked there. 'The lady of best complexion, though called by the (chief) priest did not come; (so) Indra brought another cowherdess (and) Viṣṇu himself presented her to Brahmā.

125-129. How would she be (behaving) at the sacrifice? How would the sacrifice be accomplished?' When they were thus thinking, there entered (Brahmā's wife) living in the lotus. Brahmā was, at that time surrounded by the members (of the sacrificial assembly), the priests and the deities. The brāhmaṇas who had mastered the Vedas were offering oblations to the fires. The cowherdess, remaining in the chmber (meant for the

sacrificer's wife) and having a deer's horn and a girdle, and clothed in silken garments, meditated on the highest position. She was loyal to her husband, her husband was her life; she was seated prominently; she was endowed with beauty; in lustre she resembled the sun: she illumined the assembly there as (does) the brilliance of the sun.

130. The priests also worshipped the blazing fire (offering) portion of the sacrificial animals.

131-136. Gods desirous of receiving portions of oblations at the sacrifice then said: "(The sacrifice) should not be delayed; (for an act) performed late, does not give its (desired) fruit; this is the rule that is seen in the Vedas by all the learned." When two milk (-pots) were ready, the food was jointly cooked, and when the brāhmaṇas were invited, the adhvaryu to whom the oblation was offered had come there, and the pravargya was performed by brāhmaṇas skilled in the Vedas; the food was being prepared. Goddess (Sāvitrī) seeing that said angrily to Brahmā who was sitting silently at the (sacrificial) session: "What is this misdeed you are about to do, that through lust you have abandoning me and committed a sin? She, whom you have put on your head (i.e. whom you have given so much importance) is not comparable with even the dust of my foot. This is what people gathered in the (sacrificial) assembly say. If you so desire, follow that command of those who are (like) gods.

137-141. Through your longing for beauty you have done what is condemned by people; O lord, you were not ashamed of your sons nor of your grandsons; I think you have done this censurable deed through passion; you are the grandsire of gods and the great grandsire of the sages! How did you not feel shame when you see your own body? You have become ridiculous for people and have harmed me. If this is your firm feeling, then O god, live (alone); salutation (goodbye) to you; how shall I (be able to) show my face to my friends? How shall I tell people that my husband has taken (another lady as) his wife?"

Brahmā said:

142-144. Immediately after the time of initiation, the priests prompted me: Without wife the sacrifice cannot be performed; bring your wife quickly. This (other) wife was

brought by Indra, and presented to me by Viṣṇu; (so) I accepted her; O you of beautiful eyebrows, pardon me for what I have done. O you of good vow, I shall not wrong you like this again. Pardon me, who have fallen at your feet; my salutation to you.

Pulastya said:

Thus addressed, she got angry, and set about to curse Brahmā:

145-148. "If I have practised penance, if I have pleased my preceptors in the groups of brāhmaṇas, and at various places, brāhmaṇas will never offer you worship, except your annual worship (that falls) in the month of Kārtika which the brāhmaṇas will (alone) offer, but not other men at any other place on the earth." Saying these words to Brahmā, she said to Indra who was nearby: "O Śakra, you brought the cowherdess to Brahmā. Since this was a mean deed you will obtain its fruit.

149. When you will stand (ready to fight) in a battle, you will be bound by your enemies and will be reduced to a very (pitiable) plight.

150. Being without any possession, having lost your energy, you will, having faced a great defeat, live in your enemy's city, (but) will soon be released."

151-153. Having cursed Indra (like this) the goddess then spoke (these words) to Viṣṇu: "When, due to the curse of Bhṛgu you will be born in the mortal world, you will there (i.e. in that existence) experience the pain of separation from your wife. Your wife will be taken by your enemy beyond the great ocean; with your mind struck by grief you will not know (by whom she is) taken, and you will be unhappy along with your brother after having met with a great calamity.

154-156. When you will be born in the Yadu-family, you will be named Kṛṣṇa; and being the attendant of beasts will wander for a long time." Then the angry one said to Rudra: "When you will stay in the Dāruvana, then, O Rudra, the angry sages will curse you; O you skull-holder, mean one, you desire to snatch away a lady from amongst us; therefore, this arrogant generative organ of yours will today fall on the ground.

157-160. Void of manliness, you will be afflicted by the sages' curse. Your wife residing at the Gaṅgādvāra will console you." "O Agni, you were formerly made all-consumer by my son Bhṛgu, always righteous. How shall I burn (you) who are already burnt by him? O Agni, that Rudra will submerge you with his semen, and your tongue (i.e. your flame) will blaze more while consuming things not fit for a sacrifice." Sāvitrī cursed all the brāhmaṇas and priests who had become the sacrificial priests for looting her husband, and who had, for nothing, resorted to the forest:

161. "Resort to all sacred and holy places through greed only; you will always be satisfied only (when you get) food of others; but will not be contented with food (prepared in) your own houses.

162-164. By sacrificing that which is not to be sacrificed and by accepting what is contemptible, by earning wealth and spending it purposelessly—by that (your) dead bodies will only be departed spirits without obsequial rites (being offered to them)." In this way that angry (Sāvitrī) cursed Indra, so also Viṣṇu, Rudra, Agni, Brahmā and all the brāhmaṇas.

165-166. Having thus cursed them, she went out of the (sacrificial) assembly. Having reached the preeminent Puṣkara, she settled (there). She said to Lakṣmī who was laughing and also to the beautiful wife of Indra and also to young ladies (there): "I shall go there where I won't hear any sound."

167. Then all those ladies went to their respective residences. Sāvitrī, who was angry, set about to curse them too.

168. "Since these divine ladies have abandoned me and gone, I, who am extremely angry, shall curse them also:

169-171. Lakṣmī shall never stay at one place. She, the mean and fickle-minded one, will stay among fools, among the barbarians and the mountaineers, among the foolish and the proud; so also as a result of (my) curse, you (i.e. Lakṣmī) will stay with mean persons such as the accursed and the wicked ones."

172-174. Having thus given a curse (to Lakṣmī), she cursed Indrāṇī: "When Indra, your husband, oppressed by (the sin

of) murder of a brāhmaṇa, will be unhappy, and when his kingdom will be snatched away by Nahuṣa, he will, having seen you, ask for you. (He will say) 'I am Indra; how is it that this childish (lady) does not wait upon me? I shall kill all gods if I do not obtain Śacī (i.e. Indrāṇī)'. Then you who will have to run away, and will be alarmed and grieved, will stay in the house of Bṛhaspati, as a result of my curse, O you of wicked conduct and proud (one)."

175-178. Then she pronounced a curse on all the wives of gods: "All these (ladies) will not get affection due from children; they will be scorched (with grief) day and night and will be insulted and called 'barren'." Gaurī, of an excellent complexion was also cursed by Sāvitrī. She, who was weeping, was seen by Viṣṇu and he propitiated her: "O you of large eyes, do not weep; you ever-auspicious one, (please) come on; entering the (sacrificial) assembly, hand over your girdle and silken garments; O you wife of Brahmā, receive the initiation, I salute your feet."

179. Thus addressed, she said to him: "I shall do as you say; and I shall go there where I shall not hear (any) sound."

180-215. Having said this much, she (going) from that place and having climbed up a mountain, remained there. Remaining in front of her with great devotion, Viṣṇu, joining his hands and having bent down, eulogised her.

Viṣṇu said:

You, all wonderful, are everywhere, and are to be seen in all beings. Whatever is good or bad, is not to be seen without you; yet, I shall hereafter tell you in which places you should be seen by those who are desirous of success and remembered by those desirous of (having) land. You will be remembered (or called) Sāvitrī at the sacred place called Puṣkara, the preeminent and auspicious (sacred place) among all the sacred places.[1] (You will be known as) Viśālākṣī at Vārāṇasī; Liṅgadhāriṇī at Naimiṣa; Lalitā Devī at Prayāga; Kāmukā at Gandhamādana; Kumudā at Mānasa; Viśvakāyā at Ambara; Gomatī at Gomanta; Kāmacāriṇī at Mandara; Madotkaṭā

1. From this onwards various names of Sāvitrī are given.

at Caitraratha; Jayantī at Hastināpura; and Gaurī at Kānyakubja; Rambhā on the Malaya mountain; Kīrtimatī at Ekāmraka; so also as Viśvā and Viśveśvarī; Puruhastā at Karṇika; Mārgadāyikā at Kedāra; Nandā on the back (i.e. slope) of the Himālaya; Bhadrakālikā at Gokarṇa; Bhavānī at Sthāṇvīśvara; Bilvapatrikā at Bilva; Goddess Mādhavī, Bhadrā and Bhadreśvarī at Śrīśaila; Jayā at Varāhaśaila; Kamalā at Kamalālaya (literally abode of Kamalā) ;Rudrāṇī at Rudrakoṭi; Kāli at Kālañjara (mountain) ; Kapilā at Mahāliṅga; Maṅgaleśvarī at Karkota; Mahādevī at Śāligrāma; Jalapriyā at Śivaliṅga; Kumārī at Māyāpurī; Lalitā at Santāna; Utpalākṣī at Sahasrākṣa; Mohotpalā at Hiraṇyākṣa; will be called as Maṅgalā at Gayā; Vimalā at Puruṣottama; Amoghākṣī at Vipāśā; Pāṭalā at Puṇyavardhana; Nārāyaṇī at Supārśva and Bhadrasundarī at Trikūṭa; Vipulā at Vipula; as Kalyāṇī on the Malaya mountain; Koṭavī at the sacred place called Koṭavī; Sugandhā in the Mādhavī forest; Trisandhyā at Kubjāmraka; Haripriyā at Gaṅgādvāra; Śivanandā at Śivakuṇḍa; Nandinī at Devikā-bank; Rukmiṇī at Dvāravatī and Rādhā at Vṛndāvana; Devakī at Mathurā and Parameśvarī at Pātāla; Sīta at Citrakūṭa; Vindhyavāsinī on the Vindhya (mountain) ; Ekavīrā on the Sahya mountain; Candrikā at Hariścandra; Ramaṇā at Rāmatīrtha; Mṛgāvatī in (the vicinity of the Yamunā river) ; Mahālakṣmī at Karavīra; Rumādevī at Vināyaka; Arogā at Vaidyanātha; Amṛtā in the Vindhya-cave; Goddess Māṇḍavī at Māṇḍavya; Svāhā at the city of Maheśvara; and Pracaṇḍā at Vegala; Caṇḍikā at Amarakaṇṭaka; Varārohā at Someśvara; Puṣkarāvatī at Prabhāsa; Devamātā in the vicinity of Sarasvatī living on both her banks; Mahāpadmā at Mahālaya; Piṅgaleśvarī in (the vicinity of) Payoṣṇī; Siṁhikā at Kṛtaśauca and Śaṅkarī at Kārtikeya; Lolā at Utpalāvartaka; Subhadrā at the confluence of Sindhu; Umā at Siddhavana; Lakṣmī (and) Anaṅgā at Bharatāśrama; Viśvamukhā on the Jālandhara (mountain) ; Tārā on the Kiṣkindha mountain; Puṣṭi in Devadāruvana; Medhā in the Kāśmīra region; Goddess Bhīmā on the Himālaya mountain; and Tuṣṭi at Vastreśvara; Śraddhā at Kapālamocana; Mātā at Kāyāvarohaṇa; Dhvani at Śaṁkhoddhāra; and Dhṛti at Piṇḍāraka; Kālā in (the vicinity of) Candrabhāgā; Siddhidāyinī at Acchoda; Goddess Amṛtā in

(the vicinity of) Veṇā; Urvaśī at Badarī; Auṣadhī in the Uttarakuru (region); Kuśodakā in the Kuśadvīpa; Manmathā at Hemakūṭa; Satyavādinī at Kumuda; Vandanīyā at Aśvattha; Nidhi at the abode of Kubera; Gāyatrī at the (time of the) recitation of the Vedas; Pārvatī near Śiva; and Indrāṇī in the heaven; and Sarasvatī in the mouth of a brāhmaṇa; Prabhā in the sun's orb; Vaiṣṇavī among the divine mothers[1]; Arundhatī among the chaste ladies; Tilottamā among beautiful ladies; Brahmakalā in picture; and Śakti (strength) in all the embodied ones. I have enumerated these one hundred and eight of the names (of Sāvitrī); I have also told the names of the hundred and eight sacred places. He who mutters or hears these will be free from all sins. He, the best of men, who bathes in these sacred places and sees (Sāvitrī), will, being freed from all sins, live in the city of Brahmā for a Kalpa. A man who recites these hundred and eight names in the vicinity of Brahmā, on the full-moon or the new-moon day will have many sons. He, who listens to it at the time of offering a cow or a *śrāddha* or everyday at the time of offering worship to god(s), reaches supreme Brahman.

216-219. Sāvitrī, of a good vow, said to Viṣṇu who was thus praising her: "Son, you have properly praised me; you will be unconquerable; in your incarnation you will be along with your wife, dear to your father and mother; and he, who, having come here, praises me with this eulogy, will, being free from all sins, go to the highest place. Go to Brahmā's sacrifice, O son, and complete it. At Kurukṣetra and Prayāga, I shall be the giver of food; and remaining by my husband do what you have said."

220. Viṣṇu, thus addressed, went to the excellent (sacrificial) assembly of Brahmā. When Sāvitrī had left. Gāyatrī uttered (these) words:

221. "May the sages listen to my words uttered in the

1. *Mātṛs* These are divine mothers said to attend upon Śiva, but usually on Skanda. According to some they are eight: Brāhmi, Māheśvari, Caṇḍī, Vārāhi, Vaiṣṇavi, Kaumāri, Cāmuṇḍā and Carcikā. Some say they are seven: Brāhmi, Māheśvari, Kaumari, Vaiṣṇavi, Māhendri, Vārāhi and Cāmuṇḍā.

presence of my husband—whatever I, pleased and ready to grant a boon, say.

222-223. (Those) men (who), endowed with devotion, worship Brahmā, will have garments, grains, wives, happiness and riches; similarly (they will have) unbroken happiness in their house and (will have) sons and grandsons. Having enjoyed (happiness) for a long time, they will, at the end (of their life) attain salvation."

Pulastya said:

224-225. Listen, with a concentrated mind, to the fruit one gets after having installed, with all care and according to the sacred rule, (the image of) Brahmā. By means of this installation one would get that fruit, which is a crore times surperior to the fruit of all sacrifices, all penance, charity, sacred places and Vedas.

226-227. O king, that man, who fasts with devotion on the full-moon day and worships Brahmā on the first day (i.e. the day succeeding the full-moon day) goes, O great-armed (i.e. mighty) one, to the place of Brahman; and he who worships him through priests especially goes to Viriñci (or) Vāsudeva (i.e. the lord of souls).

228-239. The chariot-procession of the lord is prescribed in the month of Kārtika; doing (i.e. taking) which with devotion men reach Brahmā's world. With a number of musical instruments one should take out, along the road, the procession of Brahmā, with Sāvitrī on the full-moon day of Kārtika, O best king. He should move (i.e. take out in procession the image of Brahmā) with people (i.e. the citizens) through the entire town. Then having thus taken out the procession, he should bathe him. Having fed the brāhmaṇas and first worshipped Agni, he should place (the image of) the god in a chariot accompanied by the sounds of auspicious musical instruments. Having worshipped Agni, according to the sacred precept, in front of the chariot, and having invoked the blessings of the brāhmaṇas, and repeating 'this is an auspicious day' three times, and placing (the image) of the god in a chariot, he should keep awake at night by means of many shows and the sound (of the recitation) of Vedas. O king, having kept awake the god, and

having, in the morning, fed the brāhmaṇas with a number of articles of food according to his capacity, and, O king, having worshipped, with the recitation of sacred formula, and with clarified butter and milk, and according to the sacred rules; so also having invoked, according to the sacred precept, the blessings of brāhmaṇas, and having declared it to be an auspicious day he should move (i.e. take out in procession) the chariot through the city. The chariot of Brahmā should be moved (i.e. dragged) by brāhmaṇas learned in the four Vedas; so also, O brave one, by those skilled in the Atharva Veda, having (i.e. knowing) many verses and by priests—the chanters of Sāmaveda. He should thus take the chariot of the highest god round the city along a very even path. O brave one, the chariot is not to be moved by a Śūdra desiring his welfare; and no wise man, but the *bhojaka*, is to mount upon the chariot.

240-253. O king, he should place Sāvitrī to Brahmā's right, *bhojaka* to his left and should place the lotus in his front. Thus O brave one, with many sounds of trumpets and conchs, the wise one should, having moved the chariot round the entire city, place the (image of the) god at the proper place after waving lights before it as an act of adoration. He, who takes out such a procession, or he who sees it with devotion or he who drags the chariot, would go to Brahmā's place. He who offers lights in Brahmā's hall (i.e. temple) in the new-moon day in the month of Kārtika and adores himself with sandal, flowers and new clothes on the first day (of Kārtika) would reach Brahmā's place. This is a very holy day, on which Bali's[1] kingdom was founded. The day is always very dear to Brahmā. It is called *Bāleyi*. He who, on this day, adores Brahmā and more specially himself, he goes to the highest place of Viṣṇu of unlimited lustre. O you of mighty arms, the first day of Caitra is auspicious and best. He, the best man, who, on this day, touches a Cāṇḍāla and bathes has no sin, no mental agonies or bodily

1. *Bali*: Celebrated demon, a son of Virocana, the son of Prahlāda. When Viṣṇu, as a son of Kaśyapa and Aditi, came to Bali, noted for his liberality, and prayed to him to give as much earth as he could cover in three steps, and when he found that there was no place to put the third step, he planted it on the head of Bali and sent him with all his legions to the Pātāla and allowed him to be its ruler.

diseases; therefore one should take bath (on this day) or it is a divine waving of lights before an idol, which destroys all diseases. O King, he should take out all the cows and buffaloes; then outside (the house) he should put up an arched door-way with all clothes etc. Similarly, O sustainer of the Kuru-family, he should give food to the brāhmaṇas. O you descendant of the Kuru-family, I have formerly told about these three days in the months of Kārtika, Āśvina and Caitra, O king; bath, giving gifts (on these days) (give) hundred-fold merit. O king, the (first) day of Kārtika is auspicious for king Bali, and beneficial to beasts !

Gāyatri said:

254-255. O you born of the lotus, (though) Sāvitrī uttered the words that the brāhmaṇas will never worship you, (yet) on hearing my words they will worship you; having enjoyed pleasures here (i.e. in this world), they will obtain salvation in the other world. Knowing this to be a superior view(-point), he, being pleased, will grant them a boon.

256. O Indra, I shall grant you a boon: When you will be arrested by your enemies, Brahmā, having gone to the abode of the enemy will free you.

257. Due to the destruction of your enemy, you will have great joy and will get back your (capital-) city which (you had) lost. In the three worlds yours will be a great kingdom without any vexation.

258-259. O Viṣṇu, when you will take an incarnation on the earth, you will, with your brother, experience great grief due to the kidnapping of your wife etc. You will, having killed your enemy rescue your wife in the presence of gods. Having accepted her and having governed the kingdom again, you will go to heaven.

260. You will (rule) for eleven thousand years and (then) will go to heaven. You will enjoy great fame in the world, and will love people.

261. O god, those men who would be emancipated by you in the form (i.e. incarnation) of Rāma, will have (i.e. will go to) the celebrated worlds called *Sāntānika*.

262-265. Then *Gāyatrī*, the giver of boons said to Rudra: "Those men, who will worship your genital organ (in the form of phallus) even though it had fallen, being purifed and earning merit thereby, will share (i.e. enjoy) heaven. That state which men get by worshipping your genital organ (in the form of phallus), cannot be had in (i.e. by) maintaining sacred fire or offering oblations into it. Those who will, in the early morning worship your genital organ (in the form of phallus) with a bilva-leaf, will enjoy the world of Rudra."

266-267. "O Agni, you too, getting the status of the devotee of Śiva, be a purifier. There is no doubt that when you are pleased gods are pleased. The offerings are received by gods through you (only). Certainly when you are pleased, they, being pleased, will enjoy (the offerings); there is no doubt about this, since such is the Vedic statement."

Then *Gāyatrī said* these words to *all those brāhmaṇas*:

268-284. There is no doubt that men having propitiated you at all the sacred places, will go to the place called *Vairāja* (i.e. of Brahmā). Having given various kinds of food and many gifts, and having pleased (the manes) they become gods of gods. Gods immediately enjoy offerings and manes immediately enjoy oblations in (i.e. through) the mouths of those who are the best brāhmaṇas, for you alone are capable of sustaining the three worlds—there is no doubt about it. You will all be purified by the restraint of breath; O best brāhmaṇas, you will not incur the sins for receiving gifts especially after having bathed at Puṣkara and having muttered (the names) of the mother of the Vedas (i.e. Gāyatrī). All deities are pleased by offering food (to brāhmaṇas) at Puṣkara. Even if (a man) feeds one brāhmaṇa, he obtains the fruit of (having fed) a crore. Men (destroy) all their sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa and other bad deeds done by them by giving money into the hand of a brāhmaṇa. He is to be thrice worshipped using prayers to be muttered in my honour. That moment (even) a sin like the murder of a brāhmaṇa perishes. Gāyatrī destroys the sin committed during ten existences (or) even during a thousand existences and thousand groups of the three ages. Thus knowing and having muttered prayers in my honour you will be forever

purified. There is no doubt or no hesitation about this. Having muttered, with your heads (bowed), (my) prayers especially with the utterance of 'Om' having three syllables, you will be undoubtedly purified. I have remained in the eight syllables (of the Gāyatrī metre). This world is pervaded by me. Adorned with all the words I am the mother of the Vedas. The best brāhmaṇas will attain success by muttering my names with devotion. All of you will have pre-eminence by muttering my names. A well-controlled brāhmaṇa having just the essence of Gāyatrī is better than one knowing the four Vedas, eating everything and selling all things. Since in the assembly Sāvitrī pronounced a curse on the brāhmaṇas, whatever is given or offered here, all that becomes inexhaustible. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇas, I have given (this) boon. The brāhmaṇas who are devoted to the maintenance of sacred fire and offer sacrifice three times (i.e. morning, noon and evening), will go to heaven along with their twentyone generations.

285-293. Thus having given an excellent boon to Indra, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Fire, Brahmā and brāhmaṇas at Puṣkara, Gāyatrī remained by the side of Brahmā. Then the bards narrated the cause of the curse to Lakṣmī. Gāyatrī, the beloved wife of Brahmā, having come to know about the several curses given to all these young ladies and to Lakṣmī, granted a boon to them: "Making all always praiseworthy, and looking charming with wealth, you, causing delight to all, will shine. O daughter, all, whom you look at, will share (i.e. have) religious merit; but abandoned by you all they will experience grief. They alone (whom you favour) will have (i.e. be born in high) caste and (noble) family, (will have) righteousness, O you of charming face. They alone will shine in the assembly and (they alone) will be (favourably) looked at by the kings. The best brāhmaṇas will solicit them only, and will be courteous to them only. 'You are our brother, father, preceptor and relative too. There is no doubt about it. I can't live without you. When I look at you my sight becomes clear and beautiful; my mind is very much pleased, I am telling you the truth and the truth only'. Such words delighting the people, will they, the good ones, who have been looked at (favourably) by you will hear.

294-299. Nahuṣa, having obtained Indrahood, will implore you. The sinner, put down through Agastya's words, by you, will after being changed into a serpent, request him: 'O sage, I am doomed through pride; be my refuge (i.e. help me)'. Then the revered sage, having pity in his heart (moved) by those words of his (i.e. of Nahuṣa), will say these words to him: 'A king, honour to your family, will be born in your family. Seeing you in the form of (i.e. as) a serpent, he will break down your curse. Then you, giving up your state of serpent, will again go to heaven'. O you of beautiful eyes, as a result of my boon you will again reach heaven with your husband, who will have performed the horse-sacrifice."

Pulastya spoke:

300-302. Then all the wives of the gods were addressed by (Gāyatrī) who was pleased: "Even though you will be having no children, you will not be grieved". Then Gāyatrī grown with joy, advised Gaurī also. The high-minded beloved wife of Brahmā, granting the boons, desired the accomplishment of the sacrifice. Rudra, seeing Gāyatrī, the granter of boons, like that, saluted her and praised her with these words :

Rudra said:

303-317. My salutation to you, the mother of the Vedas, and purified by eight syllables. You are Gāyatrī, who helps people to cross difficulties, and speech of seven types[1], all the treatises containing eulogies, so also all verses, similarly all letters and signs, all treatises like the glosses, so also all precepts, and all letters. O goddess, my salutation to you. You are fair and of a fair form, and your face resembles the moon. You have large arms, delicate like the interiors of plantain-trees; you hold a deer's horn and an extremely clean lotus in your hand; you have put on silken garments and the upper garment is red. You are adorned with a necklace, brilliant like the moon rays, round your neck. You are well beautified with ears having divine earrings. You shine with a face rivalling with the moon. You look charming with a hair-band having an extremely pure crown. Your arms like the hoods of serpents adorn the heaven.

1. *Saptavidhā Vāṇī*: Seems to represent the seven notes of Indian gamut.

Your charming and circular breasts have their nipples even. The triple fold on the belly is proud of the divisions with the extremely fair hips and loins. Your navel is having a circular shape, is deep and indicates auspiciousness. You have expansive hips and loins and attractive buttocks; your couple of thighs is very beautiful and round; you have good knees and legs. Such as you are, you sustain the three worlds, and requests to you are truthful (i.e. are surely graceful). You will be a very fortunate one, the granter of boons and of an excellent complexion. The pilgrimage to Puṣkara will be fruitful on seeing you. You will receive the first adoration on the full-moon day of the month of Jyeṣṭha; and those men who knowing your prowess, will worship you, have nothing wanting as far as sons and wealth are concerned. You are the highest recourse to those who are plunged in a forest or in a great ocean; or those who are held up by bandits. You are the success, the wealth, the courage, the fame, the sense of shame, the learning, the good salutation, the intellect, the twilight, the light, the sleep and also the night of destruction at the end of the world. You are Ambā, Kamalā, the mother, Brahmāṇī and Durgā.

318-331. You are the mother of all gods, Gāyatrī and an excellent lady. You are Jayā, Vijayā (i.e. Durgā), and Puṣṭi (nourishment) and Tuṣṭi (satisfaction), forgiveness and pity. You are younger than Sāvitrī and will always be liked by Brahmā. You are having many forms, a universal form; you are having charming eyes and move with Brahmā; you are of a beautiful form, you have large eyes and are a great protector of your devotees. O great goddess, you live in cities, in holy hermitages and in forests and parks. You remain to the left of Brahmā at all the places where he stays. To Brahmā's right is Sāvitrī, and Brahmā is between (Sāvitrī and you). You are in the altar of the sacrifices, and you are the sacrificial fees of the priests; you are the victory of kings and the boundary of the ocean. O Brahmacāriṇī, you are (that which is the) initiation, and are looked upon as great beauty; you are the lustre of the luminaries and are goddess Lakṣmī living in Nārāyaṇa. You are the divine power of forgiveness of the sages, and are Rohiṇī among the constellations. You stay at the royal gates, sacred places, and at the confluences of rivers. You are the full-moon day in the

full moon, and are intellect in prudence, and are forgiveness and courage. You of an excellent complexion, are known as goddess Umā among ladies. You are the charming sight of Indra, and are near Indra. You are the righteous outlook of the sages, and are devoted to the gods. You are the furrowed land of the agriculturists, and are the earth (or ground) of the beings. You cause the absence of widowhood to (married) ladies, and always give wealth and grains. When worshipped, you put an end to disease, death and fear. O you goddess, giving auspicious things, if you are properly worshipped on the full moon day of the month of Kārtika, you fulfil all desires. A man, who recites or listens to this eulogy repeatedly, gets success in all his undertakings; there is no doubt about it.

Gāyatrī said:

O son, what you have said will come about. You will be present at all places along with Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Greatness of Nandā-Prāci

Bhīṣma said :

1-2. Indeed, O brāhmaṇa, I am hearing something very wonderful—the consecration of Gāyatrī performed like that in the (sacrificial) assembly; Sāvitrī's opposition and curses; Viṣṇu's glorification of all her places.

3-8. Gāyatrī, of an excellent complexion, also was praised by Rudra. Hearing in detail about the grandsire the very likeness of the soul, my hair has bristled, and my mind has become very tranquil. Having heard it I am very much pleased and have great curiosity (to know what took place later). Revered Nārāyaṇa, having in that way very much praised Brahmā's wife with devotion, and placed her on the mountain, uttered the words giving satistaction and strength. I heard (about) Śrīmatī, Hrīmatī and (about) the chief goddess—this much only that came

out of your mouth (i.e. whatever you said). The revered one may please tell me in order as to what took place afterwards and what was done at that place. There is no doubt that by hearing it my body will be purified.

Pulastya spoke:

9-26. O king, listen to this as to what wondrous thing was done at Puṣkara when the highest lord was performing the sacrifice. When in the *Kṛtayuga*, in the beginning, the grandsire was performing the sacrifiee, Marīci, Aṅgiras and Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Dakṣa Prajāpati saluted him. All men shining and adorned with ornaments and groups of the celestial nymphs danced near Viṣṇu. Then Tumbaru, having blessed him with the (sounds of the) musical instruments, sang along with the Gandharvas. O Kaurava, gods and Gandharvas like Mahāśruti, Citrasena, Ūrṇāyu, Anagha, Gomāyu, Sūryavarcas and Somavarcas, Tṛṇāyu, Nandi, Citrarartha, Śāliśiras as the thirteenth, Parjanya as the fourteenth, Kali as the fifteenth and Tāraka as the sixteenth, so also the Gandharva Hāhā by name, the Hūhū class of Gandharvas, so also very bright Haṁsa, simultaneously sang (the praise of) the lord. Similarly divine nymphs sang his praise. The twelve Ādityas, glowing and bright with lusture, viz. Dhātā, Aryaman, Savitā, Varuṇa and Aṁśa, so also Bhaga, Indra, Vivasvat, Pūṣan, Tvaṣṭṛ and Parjanya, and lords of gods saluted him at this sacrifice of Brahmā. The Rudras, Mṛgavyādha and Śarva, Nirṛti of great fame, Ajaikapād, Ahirbudhnya, and Pinākin the undefeated, Bhava, Viśveśvara and Kapardin, Sthāṇu and revered Bhaga remained there, O king. The (two) Aśvins, the eight Vasus and the very mighty Maruts, so also the Viśvedevas[1], the Sādhyas remained with their hands folded (showing respect) to him. The great serpents like Śeṣa with Vāsuki as the chief, so also Kāśyapa, Kambala and also the very powerful Takṣaka remained with their hands folded (in adoration to) him. The sons of Vinatā, viz. Tārkṣya, Ariṣṭanemi, the very strong Garuḍa, Vāruṇi and Aruṇi, were well settled there; and

1. *Viśvedevas*: Name of a particular group of deities ten in number and supposed to be the sons of Viśvā; their names are—Vasu, Satya, Kratu, Dakṣa, Kāla, Kāma, Dhṛti, Kuru, Purūravas and Mādrava.

revered Nārāyaṇa the lord of the worlds, possessed of wealth, himself having come there along with the sages, said to the chief (god i.e. Brahmā): "O lord of universe, you have pervaded all this; you have created it; therefore you are the lord of the world; O you born from the lotus, my salutation to you.

27-39. Specify what ought to be done by me here (i.e. at this sacrifice)." Thus the revered lord, along with the divine sages, said (to Brahmā), after having saluted Brahmā, the lord of gods, of an inscrutable origin; and that lord Brahmā illumining the quarters with his lustre, covered with a curl of hair on the chest, shining with a golden thread (i.e. necklace), resembling a divine sage, possessing majesty, (himself) the cause of the beings, having bright hair on his body, having a mighty chest, and full of all lustre, remained there—he, who was the recourse to the righteous ones and unapproachable to sinners, whom the great-souled ones having attained divine faculties by means of the concentration of mind regard as the best world (to reach), who possesses the eight divine faculties, whom they call the best of gods, having reached whom the eternal one the restrained brāhmaṇas desirous of final salvation and sanctified with meditation become free from (the cycle of) birth and death. (He is) what (people) residing in all the stages of life, controlled and repeatedly serving him and resorting to a vow difficult to perform, describe as penance; who is described as Ananta among the serpents by the contemplative saints; and as having a thousand heads and red eyes by the excellent (serpents) like Śeṣa; who is adored as a sacrifice by brāhmaṇas desiring heaven; who (i.e. he) can (simultaneously) move at many places; he possesses splendour; he alone is the matchless omniscient one. We, desirious of a refuge, betake ourselves to that god, the god of gods, whom one knows to be the knower, to be giving a portion in the sacrifice, to have the eyes of a bull, fire, the sun and the moon, to have the sky as his body, who is the protector and refuge and who is the cause of the birth of all gods, and who is the creator of the sages and the worlds. We bow down to that best god, who, for doing what is agreeable to the gods and for the stability of the entire universe, made *kavya* (oblations offered to manes) suitable to the manes, and *havya* (offerings made

to gods) best (suited) for gods, (and made) all things in the world).

40-63. God Brahmā, who was performing the sacrifice with the sacrificial fires,[1] fashioned the creation again as he had done before. Revered, aged, intelligent Brahmā, the grandsire, of an immeasurable nature, being followed by Viṣṇu, who maintained the worlds, came to the place of sacrifice, full of the rich, the priests and the members and protected by mighty Viṣṇu holding a bow. Kings of the demons, and the groups of friends were (present) there. He quickly meditated upon himself with his self; then properly conceiving the sacrifice, the eternal, revered one chose the priests there (i.e. for the sacrifice). Bhṛgu and other priests, well-versed in the performance of a sacrifice performed (the sacrifice), and the prominent sages listened to the auspicious words uttered by the chief of those who knew many Vedic verses at the sacrifice that was being performed. The sacrificial lore—the Vedic lore—abided there, with the resounding sound of the great sages conversant with theorder of the worlds. The etymology of words was discussed in various ways at the sacrifice by the brāhmaṇas who were conversant with the proper performance of a sacrifice, who knew the science dealing with the proper pronunciation of words and laws of euphony,[2] who knew the meanings of words, who were adept in all lores, who had the knowledge of the system dealing with the correct interpretation of the ritual of Veda and the settlement of dubious points in regard to the Vedic texts and conversant with logical aphorisms. At every place, O best king, (people) saw important restrained brāhmaṇas, who had fulfilled their vows, who were engaged in muttering (sacred hymns) and (performing) sacrifices. At the sacrificial place there, Brahmā, the grandsire of the worlds, the preceptor of the gods and demons, possessing splendour, was (being) waited upon by gods and demons. Dakṣa, Vasiṣṭha, Pulaha, Marīci, the best brāhmaṇa, so also Aṅgiras, Bhṛgu, Atri, Gautama, Nārada, Knowledge, Authority, the Sky, Wind, Fire Water, Earth, so also Sound, Touch, Form, Taste and Odour,

1. *Tretāgni*: The sacrificial fires taken together.
2. *Śikṣā*: The science dealing with the proper pronunciation of words and laws of euphony.

so also the changes and modifications, and whatever was a great cause, and the four Vedas, viz. Ṛk, Yajus, Sāman and Atharvan along with the (sciences of) sound, phonetics, etymology, ritual, and metrics, and with the sciences of health, archery, investigation, of knowing(the signs of) elephants and horses, and with history—with these supplementary sciences, all the well-adorned Vedas waited upon the grandsire—the great-souled one—along with Oṁkāra. O you belonging to the family of Bharata, Penance, Sacrifices, and the Solemn vow to perform an observance, and Breath—these and others—waited upon the grandsire. Artha (Worldly prosperity), Dharma (Good works), Kāma (Love of sensual enjoyments), Hatred, Joy, Śukra, Bṛhaspati and Saṁvarta (a kind of cloud), so also Budha, Śanaiścara, Rāhu and all (other) planets, and the Maruts, Viśvakarman, the manes, the Sun, the Moon, all these ever waited upon Brahmā; Gāyatrī, the remover of difficulties, speech of seven kinds, all syllables, so also the constellations, glosses, all sciences in an embodied form, were there, O king, so also the Moments, Lavas[1] (i.e. minute divisions of time), Muhūrtas and Day and Night, Fortnights and Months, so also all sacrifices, along with the deities, waited upon the magnanimous Brahmā.

64-66. Other important goddeses, all the divine mothers—Hrī, Kīrti and Dyuti, Prabhā, Dhṛti, Kṣamā, Bhūti, Nīti, Vidyā, so also Mati, Śruti, Smṛti and Kṣānti, Śānti, Puṣṭi and Kriyā; so also all celestial nymphs skilled in dancing and singing waited upon Brahmā.

67-81. Vipracitti, Śibi, Śaṅku, Rayaḥśaṅku, Vegavān, Ketumān, Ugra, Sogra, Vyagra, Mahāsura, Parigha, Puṣkara and Sāmba, so also Aśvapati and Prahlāda, Bali, Kumbha, Saṁrāda, Gaganapriya, Anuhrāda, Hari and Hara, Varāha and Kuśoraja, Yonibhakṣa, Vṛṣaparvan, Liṅgabhakṣa and Kuru, Niḥprabha, Saprabha, Śrīmān, so also Nirūdara, Ekacakra, Mahācakra, Dvicakra, Kulasambhava, Śarabha and Śalabha, Vakrapatha, Krāpatha, Kratha, Bṛhadvānti, Mahājihva, Śaṅkukarṇa, Mahādhvani, Dīrghajihva, Arkanayana, Mṛḍakāya, Mṛḍapriya, Vāyu, Gariṣṭha, Namuci, Śambara, Vijvara, Vibhu,

1. *Lava*: The sixth part of a twinkling. *Muhūrta*: a period of 48 minutes.

Viṣvaksena, Candrahartṛ and Krodhavardhana also, Kālaka, and Kalakānta, Kuṇḍada, who loved fighting and Gariṣṭha, Variṣṭha, Pralamba, Naraka, Pṛthu, Indratāpana, Vātāpī, and Ketumān proud of his strength, Asiloman, Suloman and Bāṣkali, Pramada, Mada, Śṛgālavadana and Keśin, so also Śarada and Ekākṣa, Varāhu, Vṛtra and Krodhavimokṣaṇa. These and other powerful demons said to Brahmā who was being waited upon by them: "O revered one, you created us; you gave the three worlds; O best among the prominent gods, you made the gods superior to us; O holy grandsire, what should we do at this sacrifice of yours? Tell us what is beneficial; we are not able to decide what to do. What is the use of these poor gods to you—these gods who are born of Aditi, are always struck down by all and are always defeated? You are the grandsire of us along with the gods; when your sacrifice will be over, there will be a (quarrel) with gods and there will be hostility about wealth; there is no doubt about this. We shall, with all demons (therefore, only) witness your sacrifice."

Pulastya said:

82-86. Having heard their proud words, Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) of great fame, along with Indra said these words to Śambhu: "O Rudra, these prominent demons have come here to create obstacles; invited by Brahmā, they will try to create an obstacle here (i.e. in the sacrifice). We have to forgive (i.e. put up with) them till the sacrifice is completed. When this sacrifice will come to an end, gods should fight (with demons). O lord, you have to act in such a way that the earth gets rid of the demons. So also you have, along with me (to do various things) for Indra's victory. The Maruts are appointed to surround the brāhmaṇas (for their protection).

87-90. We shall perform a sacrifice by seizing whatever wealth the demons have. When the brāhmaṇas and other people that have come here are sad, we who are appointed to serve (at Brahmā's sacrifice), shall spend it." Brahmā said to that Viṣṇu who was thus speaking: "These sons of Danu are angry, and are not desired (i.e. liked) by you also; you along with Rudra and other gods have to forgive them. When the Yuga is terminated and the sacrifice is over, you and these brave (sons of) Danu

will be dismissed by me; at that time (only) you should have peace with them or fight with them."

Pulastya spoke:

91-93a. Brahmā, the lord himself, again said to the demons: "In this sacrifice I have no hostility whatsoever against the demons. You have always remained well-disposed (to me) and interested in my undertaking."

The demons said :

O grandsire, we shall do all this that you command. Gods are our younger brothers. They have no fear (from us).

Pulastya said:

93b. Hearing these words (uttered) by them, the grandsire was pleased.

94-96. When they waited for a while, a crore of sages, having heard about the sacrifice of Brahmā, came (there). Viṣṇu (offered) worship to them and the Trident-holder (i.e. Śiva) gave them a respectful offering; and having presented them with a cow and a respectful offering, having offered them a residence at Puṣkara, told them to stay (there).

97-99. Then all the sages having matted hair and deer-hide, adorning the best lake as the gods do the Ganges (stayed there). Some were clean-shaved; some had put on red garments; others had long beards; the teeth of some were not compact; some had small eyes; some had very thin or very big (i.e. bulging) bellies; some were squint-eyed; some had long ears; some had deformed ears; the ears of some were cut off.

100-137. Some had put on long cotton garments; some had no garments; some were covered with sinews and skin. The bellies of (some of) those holy sages had bulged out. O King, seeing the sacred place, viz. Puṣkara, shining all around, the sages, with a strong desire (to stay at a holy place) settled there. There were high-souled Vālakhilyas[1]; the others were

1. *Vālakhilyas*: A class of divine personages of the size of a thumb and produced from the Creator's body, and said to precede the sun's chariot. Their number is said to be sixty thousand.

Aśma-kuṭṭas (using stones for pounding); (some) were Dantolūkhalins (using only the teeth as pestle and mortar); others were Samprakṣāla (having full oblation); others subsisted on air (only); some observed many restraints; so also (some) slept on barren field (bare ground). Having seen (the reflections of) their faces in this lake in a moment they became handsome. Thinking 'What is this?' and observing one another, (and finding that) their faces had become charming after seeing their reflections in the holy water, the ascetics named the holy place as 'Mukhadarśana'. At that time they had bathed, were restrained, and had become handsome; endowed with incomparable qualities they were (i.e. could be) likened to gods' sons. O king, all the forest-dwellers (i.e. the ascetics) shining only with their sacred threads, and properly worshipping the sacred place, lived there. Making offerings into (and thus maintaining) the sacred fires, they performed various rites; with their sins burnt by penance they remained there, and thinking 'We shall promote this holy place to the highest position' (those) brāhmaṇas named it 'Jyeṣṭha Puṣkara'. People who came there were astonished to see the many dwarfs who lived by the holy place. (They) gave gifts and various kinds of utensils to brāhmaṇas; hearing about Sarasvatī and Prācī, the brāhmaṇas desiring to bathe there came there. The best holy place on the Sarasvatī was (crowded) with many hosts of brāhmaṇas. It was adorned with trees growing on the Sarasvatī-tīrtha like jujube trees, *iṅguda* trees, *kāśmarya* plants (called *gāmbhāri*), Indian fig trees, so also the holy fig trees, *atimukta* creepers, Terminalia Belerica, *pauloma* trees, *palāśa* trees, shoots of bamboos and *pīlu* trees, so also with dry soils and with *syandana* trees, the wood-apple trees, *karavīra* trees, *bilva* trees, embic myrobalan trees, and groups of palm trees. It had mainly the clusters of *kadamba* trees, and was delightful to all beings. It was chosen (for residence) by those who subsisted on air, water, fruits and leaves, so also by those who used their teeth as the mortars (i.e. those who ground grain to be eaten between their teeth), so also by the chief of those who pounded the grains with stones, so also by superior sages. It was noisy with the sound of the recitation of the Vedas; and was crowded with hundreds of herds of deer. Similarly it looked extremely beautiful with (the presence of) those who observed non-violence

and were very righteous. At that Puṣkara the river was (flowing) in five streams: Suprabhā, Kāñcanā, Prācī[1], Nandā and Viśālakā. In the sacrificial assembly of the grandsire, in the extensive place of the sacrifice (being performed) on the earth, when brāhmaṇas were well-received with the announcement of the day being auspicious and similarly, with the observance of restraints by the gods, O great king, when they (the gods) were engaged in the sacrifice and when Brahmā, after being initiated was performing the sacrificial session, rich (in the fulfilment) of all desires, objects mentally thought of and conducive to *Dharma* and *Artha* stood by the brāhmaṇas, at every place, O best king; and the gods and Gandharvas sang and groups of celestial damsels danced. Divine musical instruments (were) duly sounded. Even gods were greatly amazed at the grandeur of the sacrifice, what to say of human beings! O Bhīṣma, when that sacrifice (of the grandsire) was being performed, and when the grandsire remained at Puṣkara, O best of kings, the sages, being pleased, spoke to Sarasvatī, (one of the streams of which) was named Suprabhā. All those sages seeing Sarasvatī (flowing) with speed and illumining the grandsire, looked highly upon the sacrifice. Thus this best of the rivers i.e. Sarasvatī, arose for the grandsire and for pleasing the sages, at that place, where the tranquil sages reciting various Vedic texts (resided); and the river Sarasvatī herself having five streams and making religious merit (more) meritorious, was named Suprabhā. The sages coming together, remembered Sarasvatī. She, the blessed one, was thought of by the sages engaged in sacrificial sessions; the great river, pleased with (their) devotion resorted to (i.e. flowed towards) the eastern direction. (This stream of) Sarasvatī flowing to the east was called Prācī. O great king, listen to this another great wonder on the earth. We have heard that a brāhmaṇa, Maṅkaṇaka (by name) was injured by the tip of a darbha. From that wound on his palm, it is said that the juice of vegetables flew. Seeing that juice of vegetables, he, overcome with joy, danced. Then, when he started dancing, all the mobile and immobile world being deluded by his lustre, (also) danced.

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1. *Prācī*: The stream of Sarasvati flowing to the east was called Prāci.

Gods like Indra, and sages with penance as their wealth, requested Brahmā to do that by which he would not dance. O King, for the sake of the sages, Brahmā directed Rudra, "O Śiva, speak (to him) in such a way that he would not dance." Rudra, having gone (there) saw the sage overpowered with joy (and said): "O best brāhmaṇa, why are you dancing? With you dancing, the entire world is dancing."

138a. Restrained by him, this best sage, (who was) dancing said:

138b-147. "O god, do you not see the juice of vegetables flowing from my hand? Seeing it, and filled with great joy I am dancing." The god laughed and said to the sage deluded with passion: "I am not being amazed, O brāhmaṇa, observe me (properly)." O Kaurava, the best sage, thus addressed by the great god then thought: "Who is this one who has stopped me?" Śiva struck his thumb with his own finger. Then, O king, from the wound, ashes white like snow, oozed out. Seeing it and being ashamed, he fell at his (i.e. Śiva's) feet, and said: "I do not regard anyone else greater than Rudra. O Trident-holder, you are the recourse to the movable and immovable world. The learned say that you have created all this; and at the time of the deluge everything enters you again. Even gods cannot know you properly; then how can I? All gods, even Brahmā and others are seen in you. You are all (in all) of the gods, you are the doer and you get things done. Due to your favour only all gods become fully fearless here". The sage, thus praising Mahādeva, saluted him and said: "Revered one, by your favour penance does not wane here".

148-149. Then god (Śiva), being pleased, again said to the sage: "O brāhmaṇa, by my favour may your penance increase thousandfold. With you I shall always live here by the Prācī, the very auspicious stream of Sarasvatī—especially more so at this holy place."

150-151. For him, who casts his body at the northern bank of Sarasvatī, nothing would be inaccessible in this and the next world. Again, he who is intent on muttering prayers at the bank of Prācī, does not die. (On the contrary) being floated (i.e. saved) he attains great fruit of the horse-sacrifice.

152-154. That best brāhmaṇa, an ascetic, emaciating his body by means of restraints and fasts, subsisting on water, wind and leaves, sleeping on the sacrificial ground, and also following other restraints individually, with his body purified, reaches the highest place of Brahman.

155-157. Formerly Brahmā said that whatever (piece of) gold (even of the size of) a sesamum is offered at that sacred place is equal to the offering of Meru. Those men who make the Śrāddha-offerings at that holy place go to heaven along with twentyone (members of) their family. It is an auspicious holy place for the manes; they, rescued here with the presentation of one obsequial rice-ball by their son, will go to heaven. Again (i.e. after that) they do not desire (any) food, and go along the path of salvation.

158-161. Hear as to how Sarasvatī obtained this ancient status. In olden times Sarasvatī was (thus) told by gods including Indra: "You should flow in the western direction towards the shore of the salt sea. Taking this Vaḍavāgni, drop him into the sea. When this is done all gods will be fearless; otherwise (i.e. if the fire is not dropped into the sea), this will burn (the gods) with his lustre. Therefore, protect the gods; for a long time they are afraid of him. O you of beautiful buttocks, be a mother to the gods; grant them fearlessness."

162-165. That goddess thus addressed by that mighty Viṣṇu said: "I am not free; let my father, the supreme being, choose (me to do the job); I am a maiden having a vow; I always obey his order; without the command I would not move even a step; therefore, O (gods), find out some other way." Knowing her intention, they, having approached the grandsire, said to him: "O grandsire, no one except your daughter, the faultless maiden, can take the Vaḍavāgni (to the oceans)."

166-167. (Brahmā then) having brought Sarasvatī and having placed her in his lap and having smelt at her head, said to her affectionately: "O goddess, the gods have asked me to tell you, the glorious one, to carry and drop this Vaḍavāgni into the salt sea."

168-172. Having heard those words of her father, the girl, of a helpless mind, wept like a segregated osprey. Her face,

turbid with tears of grief, appeared like a white blooming lotus sprinkled with drops of water. Seeing her like that, all gods, led by the grandsire (i.e. with the grandsire being preeminent), were overpowered by grief. Then having propped up her heart tormented with grief, the grandsire said to her: "Do not weep; there is no cause of fear for you. Due to the prowess of gods you will get respect. O daughter, taking the fire (to the sea) drop it into it."

173. Thus addressed, that girl with her eyes bedewed with tears, having saluted the lotus-born (i.e. Brahmā), said: "I shall go."

174. She was again told by them (i.e. the gods) and also by her father not to entertain fear. Giving up fear, and with her mind pleased, she set out.

175-218. At the time of her departure the world was filled with the auspicious sounds of conchs and drums and of (other auspicious (musical instruments). She, the blessed one, had put on white garments, was decorated with white sandal, and adorned with a radiant necklace resembled white lotuses. Her face was like the full moon, her long eyes resembled lotuses; she filled the white fame of the lord of gods in the ten quarters. With the lustre in her heart she, illuminating the entire world, went out. Gaṅgā following her, was thus addressed by the excellent one: "O my friend, I shall see you again, where are you going?" Gaṅgā, thus addressed, said to her in sweet words: "O auspicious one, when you will go to the eastern direction you will see me. You will be surrounded by gods. I shall have your sight (i.e. I shall see you) after turning to the north; you of a bright smile, give up your grief. O Sarasvatī, I who will turn to the north will be auspicious; (so will you be when) you turn to the east. O you of a good vow, those men who perform there a hundred auspicious sacrifices by means of a bath, offering presents and Śrāddha, and also inexhaustible oblations to the manes, are free from the three debts. They will go along the path of final bliss. There is no doubt abaut it." Then Gaṅgā again said to her: "May I see you again; go to your own residence; O sinless one, you should remember me." In the same way, Yamunā too, and charming Gāyatrī along with Sāvitrī saw their friend off. Then the high-minded Sarasvatī, dismissing the gods and becoming a river

appeared in Uttaṅka's hermitage; after having put down that form under an Indian fig-tree, the revered one descended there in the presence of gods. That tree, of the form of Viṣṇu, is always revered by gods. For obtaining (desired) fruit this very glorious tree should always be waited upon by brāhmaṇas. It is extended with many branches and is like another Brahmā. Various words of the brāhmaṇas and gods with their hearts tinged by emotion, who have entered the hollows (of) and huts (near) the tree are heard. The tree though having no flowers appears to be flowered. The excellent river looked splendid with flowers like jasmine and *campaka* and with auspicious parrots sticking to (i.e. perching on) the branches, and with fragrant *ketaka* flowers. By means of the cuckoos she appears to have put on a garland, and due to the foam she appears to have flowers—as Gaṅgā appears with Śiva similarly she appears with the fig tree. Remaining in that water there she said to god Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu): "Give that fire, I shall obey the order of the god." Viṣṇu thus addressed, said to her: "You need have no fear of getting burnt; you yourself should drop this royal fire, this Vaḍavāgni, after having taken it to the western ocean, O auspicious one. If you go in this way you will reach the water of the ocean. Govinda, having placed the fire into a golden pot, put it into the interior (i.e. water) of Sarasvatī. That (goddess) of beautiful buttocks, that great river, taking it went towards the west, and having disappeared (from there) reached Puṣkara. The pure great river rose on the boundary-mountain and came to the big Puṣkara-forest, which was resorted to by the gods and Siddhas (semi-divine beings), and where the grandsire had performed a sacrificial session, for the success of principal sages. She rose after having inundated all the pools into which Brahmā had made (offerings of) the sacrifice. She, very auspicious, rose like that in the sacred place Puṣkara. Therefore, it is said to be filling up with wind, the life of the world. That great auspicious river, that goddess Sarasvatī that destroyed the sins of mortals too, reaching that auspicious holy place remained there. Those of auspicious deeds who see Sarasvatī remaining at Puṣkara, do not have a very fearful downfall. And again that man, who bathes there with devotion, having reached Brahmā's world enjoys with Brahmā. He, again, who gives curds pleasing to the mind, he too, reach-

ing Agni's world, enjoys excellent pleasures. He too, who gives with devotion, an excellent garment to a brāhmaṇa, obtains ten-fold the fruit of the present of a garment. That man of a pure intelligence, who having bathed in the Jyeṣṭha Kuṇḍa, offers oblations to the manes, frees all of them even from hell. The son of Brahmā said: "What other sacred place would a man desire after having reached the auspicious Sarasvatī at the holy place of Brahmā? Therefore a man who bathes (but) once in the Jyeṣṭha Kuṇḍa, obtains all that fruit that he would obtain after having bathed in all (other) holy places. What is the use of prolixity in this matter? The sacred place is an auspicious course. He who has obtained this triad, has obtained the highest station. He who bathes and makes offerings at the holy place in Kurukṣetra at the proper time and gives money to a brāhmaṇa in the bright half of Kārtika or of Vaiśākha or at the time of lunar or solar eclipse, obtains unending happiness. 'Of the bathing places, the sacred places described by the best sages, this is the most meritorious'—so said the grandsire. He who having bathed in the Madhyama Kuṇḍa on the full-moon day of Kārtika, gives money (to a brāhmaṇa) obtains the merit (that accrues by the performance) of Aśvamedha. In the same way a man, who takes a bath with devotion in the Kaniṣṭha Kuṇḍa, and gives a beautiful small dwelling to a brāhmaṇa, quickly goes to the world of Agni; and along with twentyone members of his family enjoys a great fruit there. Therefore a man should, with all efforts, make up his mind to go to and to reach Puṣkara—where having reached Puṣkara forest Prācī Sarasvatī, is called Mati, Smṛti, Śubha Prajñā, Medhā, Buddhi and Dayāparā.

219-221. These six are said to be the synonyms of Sarasvatī. Since the time Sarasvatī became Prācī, those, who remaining on the bank, even see the water there, also obtain the fruit (of the performance) of *Aśvamedha*; and a man, who getting down there (i.e. into the water) bathes with devotion, would become the follower of Brahman.

222-239. He, too, who there worships his manes with vegetables etc. obtains many pleasures due to their prowess; and men who offer a śrāddha there according to the rules, take their dead ancestors to heaven from the painful hell. The dead

forefathers of him who after having bathed there offers them water with sesamum and mixed with darbhas are pleased. Of all the holy places this one is declared to be uncommon; therefore it is known to be the first of all the holy places. It has remained as an abode of sport for righteousness and salvation; again it is connected with Sarasvatī and is superior in merit. It is the giver even of the four goals of human life, viz. *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Mokṣa*. Even those men who enter the water here for the destruction of their sins, easily obtain the fruit equivalent to the presentation of a cow. The wise say that it is equal to the offering of gold. The dead ancestors rescued there by the son by presenting libation of water and balls of rice, go to heaven even if they had stayed in hell. Those men who drink the water of Sarasvatī at Puṣkara obtain the inexhaustible worlds adored by Brahmā, the lord of the universe. At Puṣkara, the Sarasvatī has become a flight of steps (leading) to heaven. She, the great river, residing at various places, is capable of being reached by men of religious merit, sages knowing the essential nature of righteousness. Therefore, that pure goddess is present everywhere—especially at Puṣkara, for she is pure, most pure. The auspicious river Sarasvatī has remained easily accessible in the world; but at Kurukṣetra, Prabhāsa, so also at Puṣkara, she is the best. That holy place is said to be the best of all the holy places on the earth. It is (said) to accomplish the four (goals of human life) viz. *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Mokṣa*. He, who having reached Prācī Sarasvatī, desires (to go to any) other holy place, having abandoned nectar in his hand longs for poison. She is said to be the greatest in Jyeṣṭha (Puṣkara and) mediocre in Prayāga; from there a wise man should go to the less important (i.e. the Kaniṣṭha) to the south. He should take bath in all these three (pools), should also go round (them); to him who gives the water of these with sesamum to his dead ancestors, they being pleased again (i.e. in return) give him unlimited fruit. He, who after having bathed and having become restrained, always sees the grandsire in natural or reverse order, either jointly or separately (gets unlimited fruit).

240-251 a. One who desires (to go to) Brahmā's world should always bathe in Puṣkara. The three projections and the three white streams of Puṣkara are well-known. We do not know its cause.

(The three pools are): Kanīyāṁsa (or Kaniṣṭha), Madhyama and the third is the Jyeṣṭha Puṣkara. The white streams are known as Śṛṅgas. A man, who, with his desires for *Dharma, Artha, Kāma* and *Mokṣa* unsatiated, casts his body there undoubtedly gets salvation; one, who being devout and restrained, and having bathed there gives an auspicious cow purified with sacred prayers to a brāhmaṇa obtains (i.e. goes to) the worlds giving salvation. What is the use of prolixity in this matter? He, who even at night, after bathing offers money to a suppliant obtains endless happiness. The best sages recommend making offerings of sesamum there. A bath (there) on the fourteenth of the dark half is prescribed. One who being self-subdued offers a round lump of food with an oil cake or jaggery to the manes goes to their world. Having reached Puṣkara forest, Sarasvatī, the very charming one, disappeared and went from there. Then she proceeded towards the west and not far away from that Puṣkara, she reached the Kharjūra-forest, delighting the minds of the sages, full of flowers in all seasons, and resorted to by the Siddhas[1] and the celestial singers. She came to be known as Nandā, the best among rivers. She was possessed of fish, aligators, and large fish and full of pure water.

Sūta said:

251b-253. Then Devavrata (i.e. Bhīṣma) said: "O brāhmaṇa, which is that other excellent river, viz. Sarasvatī named as Nandā? I have curiosity (to know) about it, as to how this best river came about, and for which reason she was produced." Thus addressed, Pulastya started to tell Bhīṣma the old story as to why she was called Nandā.

Pulastya said:

254. There was a king Prabhañjana, who followed the vow of a Kṣatriya. He, the powerful one, proceeded to kill deer in the forest.

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1. *Siddhas*: Semi-divine beings supposed to be of great purity and holiness, and said to be particularly characterized by eight supernatural powers called Siddhis, viz. Aṇimā, Laghimā, Prāpti, Prākāmya, Mahiṃā, Īśitva, Vaśitva and Kāmāvasāyitā.

255. Then he saw a female deer staying in that thicket; he struck her, that came in front of him, with a very sharp arrow.

256. Looking in all directions and seeing him with an arrow in his hand she said (to him): "O fool, why have you done this wicked deed?

257. I, bending down, was just giving a suck to my son. I not entertaining fear from any quarter, was quickly struck (by you) through greed for (my) flesh.

258-259. O king, I have formerly heard that one should not kill a deer when it is suckling or concealing a young one (i.e. pregnant) or is mating privately. When I was breast-feeding this my son you struck me who am innocent and who had come to this forest, with an arrow like Indra's bolt.

260. Therefore, O you of wicked mind, you will become a carnivorous animal. Be a tiger in this forest full of thorns."

261. Hearing the curse thus pronounced on him, the king stood before (her). Being afflicted, and joining his hands in supplication the king said to the female deer:

262. "I did not know that you were giving a suck to your son (i.e. your young one). O good one, I struck you through ignorance; being well-reconciled (please) be gracious.

263. O female deer, tell me when I shall abandon the tiger's form and shall (again) get the human form? (Tell me) how I can get free from such a curse."

264-267. Thus addressed by him, the female deer said these auspicious words to him:"O king, at the end of a hundred years, having had conversation with Nandā as a cow, your curse will come to an end." When these words were uttered by the female deer, the king turned into a tiger having the weapons like nails and fangs and extremely fierce. He, a quadruped remained there, killing and eating beasts, and also the bipeds whose turn of fate was ordained by death. Thus he, condemning himself and eating flesh of beasts, passed a hundred years in that forest.

268-270. "When shall I again become a human being? I shall not (again) do such a vile deed causing a debased birth.[1]

1. *Viyonikaraṇa*: Causing an ignominious or debased birth.

Running and hunting through greed for flesh I obtained, along with a calamity, a sight causing fear to human beings, and painful to beasts and human beings.

271-284. Though born in a sinless family of the good, I am made wicked by a sin, and my form is changed. Mark (how) time changes. So I have no good deed (to my credit). Only the condemned violence (stands to my credit). It leads to grief, and no freedom is possible. How will (the words of) the female deer come true?" When a hundred years passed as he was living in the forest, once a herd of cows came there for (eating) grass and (drinking) water. It remained there in cow-pens or enclosures, and remaining in the neighbourhood of the forest it filled it with the sound of rumination. The forest was crowded with excited cowherds and trees. At night it had the sound of the bamboos and was auspicious to the cowherdesses. When he was thus staying in the group of the date-trees, a cow by name Nandā (came there); she was delighted, glad and (well-) fed; she was the chief of the herd of cows; her complexion was (white) like that of a swan; her udders oozing (milk); her skin was thin; her throat was dark-blue; her nose was long; her lovely body was ornamented[1]; her neck was white; her neighing was sweet like (the jingling of) a row of bells. Fearless, she grazed at the front of the entire herd; going to a place covered (with grass), she, the virtuous one, moved freely and ate the grass secretly. On the bank of the river there was another mountain named Rohita, which was having many dens and valleys and caves and which was frequented by many beasts. In its north-east region, in an inaccessible place, which was fearful, full of grass, impassable and rough, which was difficult of access, terrible and causing horripilation, which was scattered over with dear and lions, which was resorted to by many beasts of prey, which was dense with creepers, trees etc., which was resounding with (the cries of) hundreds of female foxes, lived a fearful tiger taking any form and causing fear, with his shoulders besmeared with blood and having weapons in the form of fearful fangs and nails. (There was a cowherd) named Nanda, who was righteous-minded.

1. *Vibhakta*: Ornamented.

285-287a. He was engaged in the good of the cowherdesses. He protected his wealth of cows with long blades of grass with their tips uncut. That cow Nandā, separated from the herd through desire for grass stood before him. The tiger rushed to her and said "Stop, stop. You are decreed to be my prey today; and O cow, you have come (to me) on your own."

287b-289. Hearing the tiger's words which were cruel and caused horripilation, that cow, full of love and with a stammering tone, affectionate towards her calf and being scorched by grief for her son (i.e. her calf), weeping piteously, disappointed in seeing her son, remembered her good calf, of a white complexion and resembling the moon in radiance.

290-292. The tiger, seeing that cow piteously and very much grieved, said these fearful words to her: "O cow, why are you weeping? Luckily you have come to me; accidentally you have become my prey. The life of you weeping or laughing is in (my) possession. In the world one enjoys what is ordained; O cow, you have come of your own accord. Your death is ordained for today only; why do you bewail in vain?"

293. The tiger again asked her: "Why did you weep? I have a great curiosity in this matter. So (please) tell me."

294. Having heard the tiger's words, Nandā said these words: "O you (tiger) who changes your forms according to will, please forgive me.

295. Salutation to you. Having met you the (beings in the) world have no protection. I am not lamenting for my own life; I have to meet death.

296-301. One that is born is sure to die, and one that is dead is sure to be born. There, O lord of beasts, I am not grieving over an inevitable thing. As even all gods, being helpless, are sure to die, therefore, O tiger, I am not the one to repent for my life. But O good one, I wept through love (for my calf) and (consequent) distress. There is torment in my heart, please listen to it. O king of beasts, I brought forth (a calf) in my youth. My calf—my son, is liked by me and is my first-born. My calf sucks milk and does not yet (even) smell grass. He is tied in the cowherd's residence, and being hungry is waiting for me. I am bewailing him; how will my son live. Overpowered by my love for my son I desire to give him a suck.

302-315. Having given him a suck and having licked him on his head, having handed him over to my friends and instructed them about proper and improper (things for him), I shall again come back; then you will eat me as you like." Hearing Nandā's words, the lord of beasts spoke again: "What have you to do with your son (now)? Why do you not think about your death? All beings, on seeing me, are frightened and die, but you, full of pity, are saying 'O son, O son.' Sons, penance, gifts, mother, father, preceptor—none of these can save a person oppressed by death. How will you come back after having gone and seen that cow-house full of the cowherdesses, charmingly resounding with (the sound of) bulls, adorned with young calves, ornament of the divine world, and undoubtedly resembling the heaven, always joyful, divine, worshipped by all gods, which is (most) pure of the pure and (most) auspicious of the auspicious, which is the (most) sacred place of all the sacred places, which is the most blessed of all blessed things, (which is) endowed with all qualities, and is a great abode of the lord, which is known as the matchless heaven on earth among all the sacred places, where poverty is driven away by the sound of churning made by the cowherdesses, and (by the sound) of the young calf, and also by the lowing of the cows, where the calves desiring (to meet) their mothers low piteously, which is protected by the brave cowherds, exerting in fighting with arms, where there is the sound of excellent music and dance, which resounds with clapping (done) with joy, and with the calves moving here and there, which shines like a lake with moving lotuses, which is a pleasing abode of Lakṣmī and which is crowded with delighted and nourished people and which resembles the world of cows? O good one, let my five elements (i.e. the five elements in me) drink your blood. I shall not make them sad merely by speaking (to you)."

Nandā said:

316-324. O lord of beasts I am like this, a cow who has brought forth her first calf; (please) listen to my words: Seeing my friends, my young calf, the cowherds (who) protected me, and taking my leave of the cowherdesses and especially of my

mother, I shall surely come back; if you trust me, leave me. If I do not come back, I shall be tainted by that sin that accrues due to the murder of a brāhmaṇa and of the mother and father. If I do not again come back I shall be tainted by that sin which the hunters or barbarians or those that administer poison, commit. If I do not return again, I shall be tainted by that sin of those who cause trouble to the cows and beat their wife (wives). If I shall not come back again I shall be tainted by the sin of him who, having given (i.e. promised to give) his daughter to one, desires to offer her to another man. If I do not return again I shall be tainted with the sin of him who drives unfit bulls over a rugged (surface) or who creates interruption when a story is being narrated. If I do not come back again I shall be tainted by the sin of him, whose friend, having come to his house, goes back disappointed. (I shall be tainted) by such terrible sins (if I do not come back; therefore) I shall come back again.

325-333. Having comprehended the agreement the tiger again spoke (these) words.

The tiger said:

O young cow, by means of your oaths an understanding (now) has been produced (i.e. reached) between us. Perhaps having gone (back) you may think, 'This fool has been duped by me'. In this matter (of oaths) also, some say that there is no sin in (taking and then breaking) a promise by oath (given to) ladies, in case of marriages and freeing cows, and when there is a danger to one's life; but you should not believe (in such words). In this world certain heretics or fools who regard themselves to be wise, will confuse your mind in a moment as if put on a wheel. Mean persons, with their minds covered with ignorance and not well-versed in the scriptures delude people with accounts based on false logic. The very clever ones show what is false to be true, as those who know surprising acts show low and high parts on an even surface. Generally a successful person does not respect his benefactor; a calf seeing the loss of milk abandons his mother. I do not see anyone in this world who returns a (good) turn; the design of everyone who is successful becomes changed. Formerly the sages, gods, demons

and men mutually made promises by oath; we do not honour them.

334-335. King Vaivasvata (i.e. Yama) cuts off half the merit of him who swears by truth in the presence of gods, fire or (his) preceptor. Let you not think that this one is deceived by your oaths. Do all that you indicated now.

Nandā said:

336-338. It is so, O great king, who is able to deceive you? He who will deceive others will have deceived himself.

The tiger said:

O young cow, affectionate towards your son (i.e. your calf), look (here). Go to your son. Giving him a suck and having licked him on the head, having seen your mother, brother, your friends and relatives, keep(ing) truth in the fore (i.e. honour truth and) come back quickly.

339-344. That truth-speaking cow affectionate towards her calf, having thus taken an oath and being permitted by the lord of beasts went to (the cow-house). Her face was bedewed with tears; she was helpless; she was weeping and extremely distressed; she was lowing and had fallen into the ocean of grief; she was repeatedly weeping, being unable to protect herself like an elephant whose leg was seized (by an alligator) in a lake. She reached the cowpen situated on the green river. Seeing her weeping calf she ran to him, approaching (i.e. she approached) that young one with his eyes full of tears. The calf, reaching his mother and (being) apprehensive asked her: "I am not finding (you) in your (usual) spirits, or fortitude, today; your eyes appear dejected, you appear to be very much frightened."

Nandā said:

345-348a. O son, drink (the milk from) my breasts today. If you ask the cause (of my dejection), I am unable to tell it (to you). Satisfy yourself as much as you like. O son, this is the last (time you have the) sight of your mother. It will be difficult to have it hereafter. Today I am alone (here with you). Having sucked my udders today, whose udders will you suck in

the morning? O son, abandoning you I have to go, since I have come here with a binding by oath. I have to give up my life to a tiger who is emaciated with hunger.

Hearing the words of Nandā the calf said (these) words:

The calf said:

348b-350. I shall go there where you desire to go. There is no doubt that my death with you (i.e. when you die) is praiseworthy, (for) being (left all) alone and being unhappy, I have to die. O mother, if the tiger eats me up with (you), then I shall certainly have the same path as those who are devoted to their mothers have.

351-355. Therefore I shall certainly accompany you. There can be no doubt about it; or O mother, you remain (here); let me have the bindings by oaths. What is the use of the life of me who is separated from (my) mother? In the forest, who will be the protector of me who has never had a protector? For children, living on (their mothers') milk there is no relative like a mother. There is no protector like a mother; there is no asylum like a mother; there is no love (i.e. there is none who loves) as a mother (does); there is no face like (that of) a mother; there is no god like a mother—in this or the next world. Such is the great law made by the creator. Those sons who remain in it (i.e. follow it) reach the highest place.

Nandā spoke:

356-370. O son, only my death is ordained; (therefore) you will not come (with me); the death of some other being does not take place by the death of someone else. Carry out, O son, this excellent, last message of your mother; then have a desire to hear (i.e. listen to what I say). My dear child, do not be careless whenever you move on a watery place or on ground. Due to negligence all beings perish. There is no doubt about this. Do not, through greed, graze (i.e. eat) the grass that exists at a difficult place; for everyone perishes through greed in this or the next world. Deluded by greed, O son, beings enter an ocean or a forest. Even a learned man would undertake a very wicked deed through greed. Men may perish through (these) three—greed, negligence, trust. Therefore one should not

be greedy, one should not be careless and one should not trust (others). O son, one should always protect oneself with great care from all beasts of prey and from danger from barbarians or thieves. O son, the perverted minds of animals of foul birth though staying together cannot be known. You should not trust animals armed with claws, and rivers, horned animals, persons carrying weapons, so also ladies and servants. You should not trust an untrustworthy person; nor should you very much trust a trustworthy person. Fear caused by trust cuts off even the roots. One should not even trust one's strongest body with the mind frightened. Through the negligence of a sleeping or intoxicated (person) they may carry him to a very secret place. One should carefully inhale the smell of every place (where one goes, for) cows perceive through smell and the kings perceive with the eyes of the spies. One should not stay all alone in a fearful forest; and one should think of righteousness only. You should not be dejected; for one is sure to die. As a traveller stays (i.e. rests) by resorting to a shadow and having rested proceeds—in the same way beings come together (and are separated). The entire world is perpetuated because of a son (only); then how do you all alone bewail in this matter? Just give up your grief and follow my words (i.e. advice).

371-372. She, having smelt the son (the calf) on his head and having licked it, and overcome with great grief, with her eyes full of tears, (and) repeatedly heaving hot sighs like a female serpent, appeared to see the world as a void without her son.

373. As if sunk into dense mud she ramained there disheartened.

The cow bewailing again said these words to her son:

374-376. There is no (object of) love like a son; there is no happiness like (i.e. except that obtained from) a son; there is no (object of) affection like a son; there is no resort like a son; For a sonless person the world is a void, there is unhappiness in the house of a sonless person. The (best) world is obtained through a son; a sonless person goes to hell. People say these words: Indeed sandal is cool; (but) the embrace of a son's body is much cooler than sandal.

377. Thus narrating a son's merits, and seeing him again

and again, she hurriedly took her leave of her mother, friends and cowherdesses.

(*She said*:)

378-386. A tiger approached me who was grazing before the herd; he freed me by binding me with the oath that I would go (back) there. With the promise (i.e. promising him) that I would again go there, I have come (here) to see my son, my mother, my friends and my cowpen. O mother, (please) forgive all that I did through ill behaviour. This child (i.e. this calf) is your grandson (i.e. your daughter's son); what else should I say in this matter? O Vipulā, Campakā, O mother, O Bhadrā, Surabhi[1] Māninī, Vasudhārā, Priyānandā, Mahānandā, Ghaṭasravā, O you magnanimous ones, please forgive me whatever I did knowingly or unknowingly and whatever else I did. All of you are endowed with all virtues; all of you are the mothers of the world; all you are always the givers of all things; (please) protect my child. Protect my son who is helpless, alarmed and miserable. O sisters, look after my son who is tormented with grief of (separation from) his mother. O magnanimous ones, forgive me; since you will look after my helpless, poor son like your own sons, I, resorting to truth (i.e. to keep my promise), am going (to the tiger). My friends should never very much worry (about me). When (just) this first son is born to me, my death has stood before me (i.e. is imminent).

387. Hearing the words of Nandā, her mother and friends who were (already) grieved, were very much dejected, and being amazed uttered (these words):

388-393. "Oh! it is a great wonder that the words of the tiger have made you undertake a terrible act; you are truth-speaking. Having deceived the very fearful one by oaths and true words (i.e. promises), carefully avoid him; you should in no case go (to him). O Nandā, you should not go at all; (in going to him) you are failing in your duty, since you are going (there) through greed leaving your young calf (here). In this case there runs a verse related formerly by sages knowing the Vedas: There is no sin (in getting oneself bound) by oaths when there is a danger to one's life; if by telling a lie the life

1. *Surabhi*: The divine, desire-yielding cow.

of a being can be saved (then) (telling) a lie is (telling) the truth; truth may become falsehood (in such a case); there is no sin in taking oaths when ladies are concerned in (settling) marriages, for releasing cows (from danger) and when brāhmaṇas are in a calamity."

Nandā said:

394-396. I would certainly tell a lie to protect the life of others; I do not dare tell a lie for myself—(I shall) never tell it to save my own life. One adheres (i.e. remains all) alone in the womb, in death and in nourishment; one (all) alone enjoys pleasure or pain; therefore, I am telling the truth. The worlds are established in (i.e. rest on) truth; righteousness is established in truth; the ocean does not transgress its boundary due to being truthful in speech.

397-404. Having presented the earth to Viṣṇu, Bali resorted to the lower world; Bali was (thus) bound (by Viṣṇu) with a trick; (yet) he did not give up truth-speaking. When Vindhya, the lord of mountains with a hundred peaks, was growing, he was fixed (there only by Agastya) by means of truthful words. Heaven, salvation and hell are fixed in truthful speech. He who causes his speech to swerve from truth has lost everything. What sin has the thief, the imposter, not committed who considers himself otherwise than what he is? If I offend against my soul, I shall go to hell (like the imposter). King Vaivasvata cuts off half the merit of him (of such a person). Having bathed in the unfathomable pure water—in the holy place of truth and in the pool of forgiveness, one being free (from the bonds of Karma) goes to the highest place. If a thousand horse-sacrifices and truth are counterpoised, truth excels a thousand horse-sacrifices. Truth is well-known to have a great fruit; it is great, and free from sufferings; it is near the good; it is the family-wealth of the virtuous; it is the fruit of all the stages of (human) life. Since he who having well secured it, goes to heaven, how can he be abandoned by people in the society? (Therefore) do speak the truth everyday.

Friends spoke:

405-420. O Nandā, such as you are, you who are giving up your life difficult to part with, are fit to be saluted by all

sages, gods and demons. O auspicious one, what should we say (to you) who are the foremost in (practising) righteousness? There is not a single thing in the three worlds that cannot be had by this sacrifice (of yours); and we think that due to this sacrifice you will not be separated from your son. Nowhere calamities befall a lady of a virtuous mind.

Having seen the cowherdesses, having gone round the cow-pen, and having taken her leave of the gods and trees, that Nandā again proceeded (to the tiger). Having again and again prostrated herself before the earth, Varuṇa, Agni, Vāyu and the Moon, (so also) the ten quarter-deities, trees, constellations along with the planets she requested all of them: "May the Siddhas and the sylvan deities who have resorted to the forest, protect my son grazing in the forest. May all the trees like *campaka*, *aśoka*, *punnāga*, *sarala*, *arjuna* and *kiṁśuka* listen to the message of mine who is overcome with fear. (Please) protect as your own son, with love, my young lonely calf grazing in the dangerous forest, and an orphan—abandoned by his parents—and with his mind afflicted, wandering along this ground, weeping and very unhappy. You should protect with pity, in this great forest, my weeping son, overpowered with great grief and afflicted with hunger and thirst, desolate and lonely and feeling the world to be void."

Having thus given a message, Nandā, overcome with love for her son, scorched by the fire of grief, and torn asunder on seeing the son, separated like a Cakravākī, (or) like a creeper fallen from the (supporting) tree, like a blind person deprived of sight, staggering at every step she went to that place where the fearful flesh-eater (i.e. tiger) with his mouth wide open, having sharp fangs was (waiting for her). Just then her son, the calf, with his tail lifted, speedily came before his mother and stood before that lord of beasts. Seeing the son that had come there and death i.e. the tiger that stood before, the cow uttered these words:

421-423. "O lord of beasts, I, who remain in the vow of truth, have arrived. Now satisfy yourself at your sweet will by (eating) my flesh. Gratify your (inner) elements, drink my blood; and when I die eat up this child (i.e. calf) of mine."

The tiger said:

424-437a. O auspicious cow, welcome to you. You have told the truth. Nothing inauspicious ever takes place in the case of those who speak the truth. O cow, what you said before has come true by your coming back. That has made me wonder. 'How would she go when she has come?' (So I thought); (but) I sent you to test your truthfulness. Otherwise how would you have gone alive (when I had) taken your flesh? It has made me wonder that my search after (your honesty) has come true. Therefore by this truthful behaviour of yours, you are now freed by me; you are my sister and this your son is the nephew of me of the most sinful act and to whom advice has been given, O auspicious one. Worlds are established in (i.e. depend upon) truth; righteousness is established in (i.e. depends upon) truth. Due to truth a cow pours a stream of milk dear to oblations (i.e. useful in sacrifice). That cowherd who lives on your milk is most blessed. O auspicious one, those parts of land, and those creepers with grass (by which you move) are blessed. Those who drink your milk are lucky and blessed; they alone have done a good deed; they alone have obtained the quintessence of life.

Being convinced, the lord of beasts was greatly amazed. "Indeed gods have shown this warning to us. Seeing that truth is liked by the cows I have no desire to live. So (now) I shall do that act by which I shall be free from sin. I have eaten up hundreds and thousands of beings. What will be my condition on seeing such truth followed by the cow? I am a sinner, doer of wicked deeds, malicious and killer of animals; which worlds shall I go to by doing a very horrible deed? I shall go to holy places and have expiation for (i.e. shall atone for) my sin. (Or) having gone up a mountain I shall fall from it, or I shall enter fire. O cow, tell me in brief what penance I should practise for purifying (myself) from the sin. There is no time for prolixity."

The cow spoke:

437b-444. In *Kṛtayuga* penance is praised; in *Tretā* (*yuga*) they recommend knowledge; in *Dvāpara* (*yuga*) sacrifice is

praised; in *Kali* (*yuga*) they praise charity alone. Of all (kinds of) charity the best is to give fearlessness to all beings; there is no greater charity than this. He who causes fearlessness in all beings—movable and immovable, being free from all fear obtains the highest Brahman. There is no charity like harmlessness; there is no penance like harmlessness. O tiger, as all other feet (i.e. foot-prints) are absorbed in the foot(-print) of an elephant, similarly all virtues are absorbed in harmlessness. (A person practising harmlessness rests in) that shadow of the tree in the form of deep meditation which removes the three kinds of miseries;[1] its flowers are righteousness and knowledge and its fruits are heaven and salvation. The shadow of the tree in the form of deep meditation is laid down for one who is tormented by the three kinds of miseries. He is not again troubled by miseries and gets excellent bliss. Thus I have told you in brief the highest religious merit. You certainly have known all this; but are just asking me.

The tiger said:

445-449a. Formerly I was cursed by a female deer; and remained in the form of a tiger (i.e. was transformed into a tiger). Then due to my killing animals I forgot all the rest. Due to your contact and advice I have recollected (all that). As a result of this truth (fulness) of yours, you will obtain the highest position. I shall then ask you a question lurking in my mind. A full hundred years have passed since (the time) I have been thinking about it, O auspicious one. O you, adorning the heaven, due to your good luck you established on the path of the good have made the accumulation of virtue. O you of a good vow, tell me what your name is; (since) I am ignorant of (i.e. I do not know) it.

Nandā said:

449b-455. My master named me Nandā. (You should have said): 'Now I shall eat you'. Then why do you tarry?

1. *Tāpatraya*: The three kinds of miseries which human beings have to suffer in this world: (1) Ādhyātmika—caused by the mind; (2) Ādhidaivika—caused by fate and (3) Ādhibhautika—caused by animals.

Having heard her name to be Nandā, Prabhañjana, freed from the curse, again became (i.e. turned into) the king, endowed with strength and handsomeness. In the meanwhile, Dharma knowing her to be of a truthful speech, came there to see the milch-cow and said to her: "Pleased with your vow of truthfulness, I, Dharma, have come here. O Nandā, God bless you; ask for the most selected boon."

Thus addressed, that goddess Nandā, asked for a boon from him. "Due to your prowess let me, along with my son, go to the best place. Let this holy place be the best one giving religious merit to the sages. By your granting me the boon let this river be named after me as Nandā-Sarasvatī. This is what I solicit."

Pulastya said:

456-473. That moment only the respectable (cow) went to the auspicious place of the truthful ones. Prabhañjana too got that kingdom which he had formerly earned.

She was called by the name Nandā-Sarasvatī, on account of that (path) along which Nandā went to heaven. Sarasvatī again, inundating the earth went (i e. flowed) from that forest called 'Kharjūra', to the south. A man, who even while approaching (that place) utters her name, gets happiness while alive and after death moves in the sky. Those men of pious deeds who cast their bodies there, the happy persons, become Vidyādhara kings. For people on account of their bathing in and drinking the water of Sarasvatī, she becomes the flight of steps to heaven. Those, who, being well composed take a bath there on the eighth day (of a month), being immortal and very attractive, having reached heaven, enjoy (there). There Sarasvatī always gives good fortune (i.e. absence of widowhood) to ladies; and if one stays by her (i.e. observes a fast there) on the third day (of a month) she becomes the repository of good luck. One even is absolved of a heap of sins even by having a sight of her at that place. Those men again, who touch her should be known as the chief of the sages. A man becomes handsome by offering silver. This big, auspicious river, of auspicious water and the daughter of Brahmā and named Nandā flowed towards the south. Having gone (i.e. flowed) not far from there she has again turned to the other side, and having manifested herself forcibly

has stayed there. All the holy places and abodes (i.e. temples) that are (situated) on her holy banks are resorted to on all sides by sages and *Siddhas*. The gift of gold, or of a dwelling or of land made at the holy place of Nandā by people who have bathed there, creates inexhaustible fruit. The best sages also recommend the gift of grains or of wealth. Whatever is offered by men at the holy places is said to be an excellent cause of religious merit. A man or a woman, who undertakes fast unto death, carefully, at the holy places gets absorbed in his deity[1] and enjoys the fruit (of the fast) at his will in Brahmā's house. Those movable and immovable ones that die near that holy river, as a result of the destruction of (the bonds of) their deeds, would at once obtain the fruit of a sacrifice, which is difficult to obtain. Then she gives the fruit of virtue to men whose hearts are afflicted by such sorrows as birth etc. Men should with all their heart resort, with perseverance, to the great river Sarasvatī, the giver of religious merit.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Conversation of the Seven Sages

Bhiṣma said:

1-6. I have heard the excellent (account of) the greatness of Puṣkara and Nandā. I have heard all that, viz. that a crore of sages came there and all became handsome on seeing the (reflections of their) faces in (the water of) Puṣkara. Tell me how they divided the portions of land. How did the magnanimous ones divide the sacred place? How did they fashion the other holy hermitages also? Viṣṇu first stepped on the sacrificial mountain. Then serpents of great (i.e. severe) poison fashioned a holy place there. Who first fashioned the well for the offering of balls of rice to the manes? How did Gaṅgā-Sarasvatī, going underground, flow towards the north? (Please) tell me how the

1. *Sāyujya*: Identification with or absorption, especially in a deity.

brāhmaṇas well-versed in the Vedas should undertake the pilgrimage of the triad of Puṣkara and what fruit accrues from it.

Pulastya spoke:

7-10. You have got ready with a great burden (i.e. volley) of questions. So please listen with a concentrated mind to the great fruit of (a visit to) a sacred place. He whose hands and feet and mind are well-controlled, and who has knowledge, penance and fame (to his credit) gets the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place. He who keeps himself away from accepting a donation, is content with whatever he gets and is free from egotism gets the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place. O lord of kings, he who is free from anger, is of a truthful disposition and of a firm vow, who looks upon other beings as himself obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place.

11-12. This is a great secret of the sages, O best of Bharatas. Formerly at (the time of) Brahmā's sacrifice a crore of sages with severe penance came there and seeing (the reflections of their own) faces lived at Jyeṣṭha Puṣkara.

13-14. Having become extremely handsome the best sages overcome with great joy and desirous of seeing (the deities), having measured with the sacred thread that land in the four directions and thus having divided it into the various sacred places, lived there with great devotion.

15. The grandsire being pleased with them lived near them having made their division of (i.e. having divided) the crore and seeing the (land measured by) the wise ones (said to them):

16-18. "From today your merit will enhance. A man, who having come here, first bathes his body in the water (here) for (obtaining) handsomeness, will have undoubtedly turned this place into a holy place (with its effect spreading over) a circle (i.e. radius) of the length (i.e. measure) of a Yojana (a measure of eight or nine miles). Its breadth is half a Yojana and length is a Yojana and a half: this is the measure of the holy place that is introduced by the crore of sages."

19. By merely going to Puṣkara a man obtains the fruit of Rājasūya and Aśvamedha sacrifices, O lord of kings.

20-26a. The very holy Sarasvatī has entered Jyeṣṭha Puṣkara. On the fourteenth day in the first half of Caitra, O

lord of kings, gods like Brahmā, sages, divine beings with special faculties and divine singers go there. A man, who, engrossed in worshipping gods and manes, bathes there, obtains the (fruit of) having offered a cow. Those sages have thus made the (various) divisions of the holy place. Having satiated the gods and manes a man is honoured in Viṣṇu's world. Having bathed there a man becomes spotless like the moon; he obtains Brahmā's world and gets the highest position. The holy place named Puṣkara in the world of men is well-known in the three worlds as the destroyer of great sins. The thousands of crores of holy places reside in Puṣkara for (all) the three times (of the day), O you scion of the (Kuru) family.

26b-29a. O lord, Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Sādhyas with the hosts of Maruts, Gandharvas and celestial nymphs are always present there; where (i.e. at this holy place) gods, demons, brahmanic sages having practised penance got united with the divine and were endowed with great religious merit. All the sins of a person even desiring (to visit) Puṣkara are purified (and) he enjoys at the top of heaven.

29b-31a. Brahmā, liked by gods and demons and being very much delighted, always lived at the holy place. O great king, gods along with sages obtained great well-being and were endowed with great religious merit.

31b-33. The wise say that one, who, engaged in worshipping manes and gods, bathes there (gets) religious merit (which is) ten times more than (the one obtained by) a horse-sacrifice. If a person living in Puṣkara-forest feeds even one brāhmaṇa, by that food a crore (of) brāhmaṇas are worshipped and well-pleased. By that act he becomes happy here (i.e. in this world) and after death (i.e. in heaven).

34-41a. A person, who himself lives on vegetables or roots or any other (eatable), should, being free from jealousy, and with faith, offer the same to a brāhmaṇa. O best king, by (offering vegetables etc. to a brāhmaṇa) a man—whether he is a brāhmaṇa, or a kṣatriya or a vaiśya or a śūdra—gets the fruit of a horse sacrifice. The lake by name Puṣkara, belonging to the grandsire, gives religious merit to anchorites, siddhas and sages; from which (holy place) most auspicious Sarasvatī went to the great ocean; where (again) the first god, the great ascetic,

killer of Madhu (i.e. Viṣṇu) lives who is known as Ādivarāha (the first boar) and was worshipped by gods. Even those magnanimous ones who belong to the low castes go to the holy place of the grandsire (i.e. Puṣkara), and who bathe in it do not get an ignominious birth. We have heard that he who goes to Puṣkara especially on the full-moon day of Kārtika gets there an inexhaustible fruit. He who with his hands joined in reverance recollects the holy place (called) Puṣkara in the morning and evening, has (i.e. may be said to have) bathed in all holy places.

41b-46a. Whatever may be the sin of a man or a woman all that perishes merely by having a bath in Puṣkara. As the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā) is said to be best among gods, in the same way Puṣkara-tīrtha is said to be the first among the holy places. He, who, being restrained and pure, considering this, lives for ten years at Puṣkara, gets the (merit of) all sacrifices and goes to the world of Brahmā. One who maintains the sacred fire for a hundred years or one who lives at Puṣkara on (just) one full-moon day of Kārtika—(the religious merit of bath) is the same. Performing a sacrifice at Puṣkara is difficult. Practice of penance at Puṣkara is difficult. To give a gift at Puṣkara is difficult. So also residence at Puṣkara is difficult.

46b-49a. A brāhmaṇa, well-versed in the Vedas visiting Puṣkara and bathing there attains salvation and by offering a Śrāddha becomes the saviour of his manes. (If) a brāhmaṇa in name only goes to Puṣkara and offers Sandhyā[1], (it may be said that) he has offered Sandhyā for twelve years. There is no doubt in this (for) Brahmā himself has formerly said so. The defect mentioned by Sāvitrī is not produced in his family.

49b-53. A wife who offers, with a copper water-pot, water to her husband who offers Sandhyā, being released (from the cycle of birth and death) goes to heaven. Reaching the world of Brahmā she stays there for (an entire) day of Brahmā. One, who all alone goes (to Puṣkara), performs Sandhyā in due order with the water of Puṣkara put in a pitcher, has also performed Sandhyā for twelve years. There is no doubt about this. While he is making oblations to his manes his wife should

1. *Sandhyā*: The morning, noon and evening prayers of a brāhmaṇa.

be by his side. O best of kings, by him resorting to the southern direction the manes are satisfied for twelve years.

54-56a. With (the muttering of) Gāyatrī prayer, with (i.e. by offering) a ball of rice the manes are satisfied for a thousand yugas; and with (i.e. by offering) a śrāddha they get eternity. For this (i.e. śrāddha etc.) a man marries. Those (who say): going to the sacred place we shall offer the balls of rice with faith, obtain sons, wealth, grains and uninterrupted lineage. There is no doubt about this. This is what the grandsire said.

56b-60a. One would get (i.e. one gets) the fruit of the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice by satisfying manes and gods. O king, I shall also describe to you the hermitages; listen with a concentrated mind. Agastya has put up here a hermitage liked by the gods, of the seven sages, the brahmanic sages; so also the great hermitage of Manus. The beautiful city of the Nāgas is (situated) on the mountain-slope. O great king, I shall tell you in brief (about) the prowess of Agastya of immeasurable vitality; listen quite attentively.

60b-62. O Bhīṣma, formerly in the Kṛta-yuga there were very fearful demons, known as the Kāleya hosts, who were maddened with fighting. Resorting to Vṛtra they were eager to defeat gods. Then gods, being dejected, waited upon Brahmā. The highest lord, seeing all of them (waiting upon him) with the palms of their hands joined, said (to them):

63-65. "O gods, I have understood what you desire to be done. I shall tell you a stratagem (adopting) which you will kill Vṛtra. There is a generous-minded great and well known sage by name Dadhīci. All of you going together to him ask for a boon. He, of a righteous mind will grant it very gladly. All of you desiring victory should thus speak to him:

66-68. 'Desiring the good of the three worlds (please) give (us) your bones.' Casting his body he will give (you) his bones. With his bones fashion a very terrible great destructive weapon like the thunderbolt. That great divine missile, capable of killing the enemy is called *Aśani*. With that thunderbolt Indra will kill Vṛtra. All this I have explained to you; do all that (as explained)."

69-76. Then the gods, being thus addressed (by Brahmā),

sought his leave and led by Indra went to Dadhīci's hermitage. It was on the other bank of Sarasvatī; it was covered with various trees and creepers, resounding with the hummings of the bees like the sounds of the Sāma-singers; resounding with the notes of the *cakora*-birds[1] mixed with the notes of the male cuckoos; it was resounding with the cries of buffalos, boars, *ṣṃara* and *camara*[2] deer, free from the fear of tigers and roaming at various places (in it); so also with trumpetings of female and male elephants in rut and resounding with the cries (of) the sporting lions and great tigers roaring loudly; so also it was resounding with the cries of peacocks secretly dwelling in various dens and caves. (Gods) came to Dadhīci's hermitage well-known like heaven. There they saw that Dadhīci having lustre like that of the sun shining with his body like the four-armed (Viṣṇu) with Lakṣmī. Having saluted and paid homage to his feet, all gods asked him for a boon as they were told by Brahmā.

77. Then that very well-known Dadhīci spoke thus to the best gods: "O gods, I shall do whatever is beneficial to you; I shall even cast my body."

78-81. Speaking thus to them, he, the greatest among the bipeds (i.e. human beings), abandoned his life. Those gods, along with Indra, took his bones to use them as required; and the gods, with their appearances pleasing in view of the victory, finding (i.e. going to) Tvaṣṭṛ told him (their) desire. Tvaṣṭṛ too, hearing their words, pleased in appearance and self-restrained, carefully fashioned the very powerful thunderbolt; and being delighted (on) having fashioned that missile said to (Indra): "O god, today reduce to ashes, with this excellent missile, that fearful enemy of gods (i.e. Vṛtra). Then with your enemies killed, you, remaining in the heaven along with the group of your attendants (the gods) happily rule over the three worlds." Thus addresed by Tvaṣṭṛ Indra, who was delighted and self-restrained, took that thunderbolt.

82-83. Then he, provided with the thunderbolt, and adored by gods, found out Vṛtra who had remained by covering the

1. *Jīvaṁjīvaka*: The *cakora* bird.
2. *Ṣṃara* & *Camara*: Are kinds of deer.

heaven and the earth, who was all around protected by Kālakeyas[1] of big bodies and with their weapons ready and (looking) like mountains with their peaks.

84. Then O best of Bharatas, a great war, causing fear to the world, of the gods with the demons took place for a while.

85-86. A clanging noise of the swords repulsed by the raised arms of the heroes, was produced (there;) O king, with the bodies pierced, and the heads falling from the sky, the earth appeared to be covered by tāla-trees.

87. The Kāleyas, putting on golden armours, having (iron) beams as their weapons, and, looking like trees burnt by wild fire attacked the gods.

88. (The gods) could not put up with the force of them (i.e. of the Kāleyas) who were together forcibly rushing (to the gods); being defeated they (i.e. the gods) fled through fear.

89. Seeing them frightened and fleeing, and seeing Vṛtra strengthened, the thousand-eyed Indra became very much dejected.

90. Seeing that Indra (thus) overcome with dejection eternal Viṣṇu put his own lustre into Indra and increased his power.

91. The hosts of gods and all the pure brahmanic sages, seeing Indra (thus) strengthened by Viṣṇu, mustered strength.

92. Indra, who was (thus) strengthened by Viṣṇu along with gods and illustrious sages, became powerful.

93. Coming to know that the lord of gods (i.e. Indra) had become powerful Vṛtra cried very loudly. Due to his shouting, everything—earth, quarters, the sky, heaven, mountains—shook (up).

94. Then that great Indra, who was very much agitated, sank with fear on hearing that fearful, great shouting and quickly discharged his thunderbolt on his head.

95. He, who had put on golden flowers, struck by Indra's thunderbolt, fell down with a great sound in front (of Indra), like a very great mountain along with Mandara, released from Viṣṇu's hand.

1. *Kālakeyas/Kāleyas*: Name of a kind of demons.

96. When that greatest demon was killed, Indra, struck by fear, ran to enter a lake. He thought that the thunderbolt had slipped from his hand due to Vṛtra's fear, and did not notice Vṛtra (who was) killed by him.

97. All the gods along with the sages were happy and delighted and praised him (i.e. Indra); and the gods, agitated due to Vṛtra's murder, together quickly killed the remaining demons.

98-100. Being killed at that time by the gods, the great demons, with speed like that of the wind, and struck by fear, entered the vast ocean full of large fish and gems, and together held consultations. There some of them of a firm mind conceiving various remedies, and distressed with fear and tormented by the groups of gods, decided to destroy the three worlds. Due to their (imminent) contact with destructive death, they who were thinking there, had a terrible idea.

101-102. (They said:) "Those who are endowed with learning and penance should be destroyed (i.e. killed) first; and as all the worlds are sustained by penance, make hurry to destroy penance. Quickly murder those on the earth who are ascetics, well-versed in piety and wise; (for) when they are destroyed the world will be destroyed."

103-106. Thus all of them with their understanding and disposition lost, became very much delighted at (the idea of) the destruction of the world. They resorted to the inaccessible treasure of gems (i.e. the ocean) of great waves and the abode of Varuṇa. (Thus) having obtained (as their resort) the ocean, the treasure of water and (the abode of) Varuṇa, the Kāleyas became busy in the destruction of the three worlds. They who were very angry, devoured, at night, the sages that lived in the hermitages and auspicious abodes. They ate up one hundred and eightyeight brāhmaṇas in Vasiṣṭha's hermitage and also others practising penance in the forest.

107-110. Having gone to Cyavana's holy hermitage inhabited by brāhmaṇas, they ate up a hundred sages subsisting on fruits and roots. Doing such (things) at night, they entered the ocean in the day. Having gone to Bharadvāja's hermitage, they killed twenty restrained celibates subsisting on air and

water. In this manner the powerful demons, due to the might of their arms, rushed at night to devour the sages.

111-122. During a long period they killed many hosts of sages; and, O lord of men, men did not recognise them. The world distressed with the fear of the Kāleyas was without any sacred study, exclamation of Vaṣaṭ or sacrifices, festivals and (other sacred) rites and (therefore) without any exertion. O lord of men, men being thus destroyed, being frightened, and intent upon their own protection, ran into the ten directions. Some entered the caves, while others were scattered (i.e. ran here and there); some others, distressed with fear, gave up their life through fear. Certain very proud, brave, great archers strove hard to find out the demons; but they could not pursue them who had entered the ocean. They did not get much peace, and returned home. When there was (thus) slaughter in the world and when sacrifices, festivals and sacred rites were no more (observed), O lord of men, the gods, very much dejected, came back through fear to the unconquered Viṣṇu after having gathered together; and led by Viṣṇu, they held consultations. Then the gods who had gathered (there) said to Viṣṇu: "O lord of the world, you are our creator, protector and commander; you have created all this world—that which moves and that which does not move. O you lotus-eyed one, formerly, assuming the boar's form you took up (i.e. out) the earth that had disappeared (i.e. sunk into the ocean) for (the good of) the world. O you best of men, taking up the body (i.e. form) of Narasiṁha, you formerly killed the very mighty and foremost demon Hiraṇyakaśipu. Assuming the form of Vāmana, you threw out from the three worlds, the great demon Bali, who could not be killed by any being.

123-130. The gods killed the cruel demon Jambha[1] who was a great archer and caused disturbance in sacrifices. Such deeds, which are innumerable (were done by you). O killer of Madhu, you are the recourse of us who are very much frightened; therefore, O god, lord of gods, we are requesting you to (save) the world. Protect the worlds and Indra too, from great fear. The

1. *Jambha*: The name of a demon killed by Indra; here, however, he is said to have been killed by gods.

beings of the four kinds act by your favour. Men are happy and the residents of heaven are happy because of the oblations offered to gods and manes. Thus people, depending upon one another and unexcited due to your favour and protected by you alone, act; and this very great fear has now come to the worlds; we do not know by whom the brāhmaṇas are killed at night; when the brāhmaṇas are weakened, the world will perish. O you of mighty arms, O lord of the universe, due to your favour let not all the worlds, protected by you alone, perish."

Viṣṇu said:

131-134. O gods, I know the entire cause of the destruction of the beings; and I shall tell (it) to you; being free from distress listen (to me). The very terrible groups (of demons) called Kālakeya, seeing Vṛtra killed by the intelligent Indra, (trying) to protect their life, entered the ocean. They entered the fearful ocean full of alligators, (and) at night killed the sages for the destruction of the world. As they are hidden (i.e. as they hide themselves) within the ocean, they cannot be destroyed. You should (therefore) think of destroying the ocean.

135. Hearing these words uttered by Viṣṇu and having met Brahmā, the gods went to Agastya's hermitage.

136. There they saw the magnanimous Agastya, of a blazing lustre and waited upon by the sages as the grandsire by gods.

137. Having gone to the noble, excellent, careful Agastya, the heap of penance due to his having done the deeds assigned to him, the gods said:

138. "Formerly you were the refuge of the worlds tormented by Nahuṣa. For the (good of the) people you deprived him, the thorn (i.e. troublesome) to the worlds, of the throne.

139. Due to his being angry with the Sun, the best mountain viz. Vindhya grew (in height); but not transgressing your words (i.e. obeying your order) he does not grow now.

140-141. As the world is covered with darkness, and the beings are afflicted with (the fear of) death, we, having come to you, the protector, are very happy. You are always the refuge of us who are very much afraid. Therefore, because you are the giver of boons, we shall today seek a boon from you."

Bhiṣma said

142. O great sage, I wish to hear in detail why all of a sudden Vindhya was filled with anger and why he grew (in height).

Pulastya said:

143. At the time of rising and setting, the Sun went round the great golden mountain Meru, the lord of mountains.

144-146. Seeing the Sun like that (i.e. going round Meru) the Vindhya mountain said to him: "As you go to the mountain Meru everyday and go round him, you should do the same to (i.e. go round) me (also)." Thus addressed, the Sun replied to the lord of mountains: "I am not going round the (Meru) mountain by my desire. This path is ordained for me by Him who created this world."

147. O you who torment the enemies, the (Vindhya) mountain who was thus told (by the Sun), being angry and desiring to block the path of the Sun and the Moon suddenly grew (in height).

148. Then all gods gathering together with Indra (and) coming to the lord of mountains warded (i.e. tried to ward) off the growing (mountain), but he did not do what they told him.

149. All those gods together went to the respectable sage Agastya residing in his hermitage and best among those possessing penance and piety, and having glowing power.

The gods said:

150-151. O best sage, this lord of mountains, Vindhya, being under the influence of anger, blocks the path of the Sun, the Moon and the Constellations. None else (except you) is able to ward him off.

Having heard these words of the gods, he went to the mountain.

152-154a. Having gone to Vindhya, he said to him who stood by him with respect: "O best of mountains, I desire that a passage be given (to me) by you; for some work I am going to the southern direction; (please) wait till I come back. O lord of mountains, after I return you may grow as you like."

Pulastya said:

154b-157. (Even till) today, Agastya has not returned from the southern region. You asked me and I have told you why Vindhya does not grow due to the prowess of Agastya. Now, O king, listen to me. I will tell you how all the gods, after going to the door of (the hermitage of) Agastya, killed the Kāleyas. Having heard the words of gods, Agastya said to them: "For what purpose have you come (to me)? What boon do you desire from me?."

158-159. Thus addressed by him at that time, the gods said to the sage: "We desire (to have) a wonderful boon (from you). O divine sage, O high-souled one, drink (up) the ocean. O great sage, we thus desire the great ocean to be fully drunk by you. Then we shall kill the army of god's enemies, called Kāleyas, along with their descendants."

160. Hearing the words of the gods, the sage said: "All right. I shall fulfil your desire which would cause happiness to the worlds."

161. O you of good vow, saying this he then went, along with the sages mature in penance, and gods, to the ocean, the abode of water.

162-165. Men, serpents, Gandharvas, Yakṣas and Kimpuruṣas (beings with human heads and forms of horses) desiring to see that wonder went after the noble sage. Then with them he saw the ocean roaring fearfully, as it were dancing with waves and leaping with the wind, as it were laughing with the heaps of foam and tumbling into the crevices, crowded with crocodiles (or sharks) and full of hosts of birds. Gods with Agastya, great serpents, Gandharvas, and noble sages reached the great ocean.

166-171. Having reached there the revered and best of the sages, Agastya desiring to drink (up) the ocean said to the gods and sages that had assembled there: "For the good of the worlds I will drink up the ocean. Do quickly what you want to do." Saying this much (i.e. these words), that angry Agastya drank up the ocean when all the world was watching. Gods with Indra, seeing the ocean (thus) being drunk up (by Agastya) were very much amazed and adored him with eulogies. (They said to him:)

"O you creator of the worlds, you are the protector and creator of us and (also) of the worlds. This flat world will be elevated by your favour." The great one being (thus) adored by the gods when the chief Gandharvas were shouting (joyfully), and being showered upon with flowers, made the great ocean void of water.

172-177. All the gods became very much delighted on seeing the ocean emptied (by Agastya); and holding divine and excellent weapons the gods, of great energy, killed those demons. They (i.e. demons) being thus killed by the noble, violent and roaring gods, were unable to bear the force of the high-souled gods. O you born in the family of Bharata, the demons who were making fearful sounds, being killed by the gods fought very fiercely for a while. They who were striving hard with their might were formerly burnt by the sages, whose souls were purified and were killed by gods. They (i.e. the demons) who had put on golden ornaments[1] on their chests and wore earrings and bracelets[2], when killed shone very much like blossomed *Kiṁśuka* trees. Some of the best followers of demon Kāleya, that remained (i.e. escaped being killed), tore asunder goddess earth and entered the lower region.

178. Having seen the demons killed, the gods praised the best sage with various words and said these words to him:

179-180. "O illustrious one, the worlds have obtained great happiness by your favour. The Kāleyas of a fearful valour have been killed by your lustre. O great brāhmaṇa, fill up (with water) the ocean, the promoter of the welfare of the world. Pour out again the water that you had drunk."

181-182. Thus addressed, the revered sage, best among the sages, said: "That water has been digested by me; you who strove (to empty the ocean should now) think of some other way for filling the ocean (with water)."

183-188a. Hearing these words of the great holy sage (all the) gods together became amazed and dejected. Requesting one another and saluting the best sage, all the beings and the brāhmaṇas went as they had come, O great king. Gods along with Viṣṇu, consulting one another about the filling up of the

1. *Niṣka*: A golden ornament for the neck.
2. *Aṅgada*: Bracelet.

ocean, followed (i.e. went to) the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā), and with the palms of their hands joined, all of them told him about the filling up of the ocean. Brahmā, the grandsire of the worlds said to them, who had gathered (there): "O gods, all of you (may) go as you like and as you wish; after a long period the ocean will go back to its original condition. The great king Bhagīratha, making his relations the cause (i.e. for the sake of his relations) will again fill up the ocean with the stream of the Ganges."

188b. Thus (i.e. having told them like this) Brahmā dismissed the gods and the best sages.

189-190. The lord who was pleased said to Agastya, the best sage: "You have performed this operation—the destruction of the demons—for gods; since you saved the gods, I am pleased with you, O sage. Ask for a boon that you desire to have; I shall grant it."

191-192. Agastya, thus addressed by Brahmā, saluted Brahmā (and said to him): "O god, I did this mission of the gods by remaining here. Let this hermitage be the best of all; and there is no doubt that when you say it will be so (i.e. best of all), it will be like that."

Brahmā said:

193-195. "Having had a pilgrimage to Puṣkara those men, who, having come here bathe in the pools here and satisfy (by making offerings) manes and gods and offer worship to gods which causes everything to be inexhaustible, and taking (in their hands) high and low materials of worship offer baked cakes[1] and small round cakes[2] to brāhmaṇas, will reside in heaven; the manes are satisfied with the śrāddha (offered here) till the submersion of the beings (i.e. final deluge).

196-200. He, who, having climbed up the sacrificial mountain, sees the outflow of the Ganges, pleases a sage with bulbs, roots and fruits, reaches the place of seven sages and enjoys happiness (there) for eternal years. The divine river flowing to the north has come up to Puṣkara. There is no doubt

1. *Śaṣkula*: A kind of baked cake.
2. *Apūpa*: A small round cake of flour, meal, etc.

that he who bathes here and is engaged in worshipping manes and gods, gets the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. O best of sages, he who feeds (but) one brāhmaṇa (here) has (indeed) fed a crore of brāhmaṇas; the food-and-drink offered here is inexhaustible. Whatever he desires, all that he obtains. A man who has just bathed here does not have an ignominious birth.

201-202. The place that I have given (you), O best of sages, will be the best among places, and the best sacred place of all sacred places. There is no doubt about it. All that sin of a man or a woman perishes merely by his (or her) having bathed here.

203-204. Having thus spoken, and having taken his leave of the best sage Agastya and of other sages, revered Brahmā, the grandsire of the worlds went (to his abode); and, O hero, Agastya too lived in his own hermitage. I have thus narrated to you the origin of the hermitage of Agastya.

205-211. O you born in the Kuru-family, I shall also describe to you the hermitages of the seven sages: These sages, viz. Atri and Vasiṣṭha, and Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Aṅgiras, Gautama, also Sumati and Sumukha, Viśvāmitra, Sthūlaśiras, Saṁvarta and Pratardana, Raibhya, Bṛhaspati and Cyavana, Kaśyapa, Bhṛgu, Durvāsas, Jamadagni, Mārkaṇḍeya and Gālava, Uśanas and Bharadvāja, and the sage Yavakrīta, (also) Sthūlākṣa, Sakalākṣa, Kaṇva, Medhātithi and Kṛta, Nārada and Parvata, Svagandhi and brāhmaṇa Cyavana, Tṛṇāmbu, Śabala, Dhaumya, Śatānanda and Kṛtavarṇa, Jamadagni, also Rāma and Aṣṭaka and others, also Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana along with his sons and disciples, came to Puṣkara and in the hermitage of the seven sages, got engrossed in restraints and these ascetics were full of compassion.

212-216. (All these virtues, viz.) kindness, victory, courage, penance, truth, uprightness, pity, charity, muttering were established in all of them. The (fruit of the) deed which is done here is enjoyed in the next world. Knowing this to be so, the sages are intent upon the highest goal. Atheists, thieves, those who have not restrained their senses, (also) the cruel and wicked, the ungrateful and the haughty men do not come here. Those who are truthful and lustrous, brave, kind and given to forgiveness, (also) those who perform and are disposed to sacri-

fices, who are desireless and innocent, who do not have the sense of mineness and egotism go there to Puṣkara.

217-224. The noble ones there do not have (i.e. do not contract) a disease or old age or death. Fools, also sensual persons, and those who are perturbed by love of sensual enjoyments, greed, passion, treachery, anger and delusion do not enter (i.e. go) there. Those who look upon honour and dishonour as equal, who are indifferent to pairs of opposite feelings (of pleasure and pain), and who have controlled their senses and who are intent on meditation and concentration of mind go to Puṣkara. The brāhmaṇas who, as already told, live in the hermitages to protect themselves from Yama, get (i.e. go to) glorious worlds; (also) those who do not harm beings by act, thought or speech, who are more (i.e. very) kind, good and always speak agreeably, who always maintain the sacred fire, who always honour guests, who always study the Vedas, and are always engaged in bathing, and who, being free from desire, always look upon other's wife as their own mother or sister or daughter (go to the glorious worlds). (Similarly) those who do not get angry when insulted, do not harm when harmed, look upon pleasure and pain as equal, (who) are noble and have their senses controlled, all of them perceive (everything) and all of them, thinking about the eternal world of Brahmā with profound meditation, formerly moved on this earth.

225-227. Some time there was the entire world, oppressed by hunger, was full of miseries. Then when thus there was no food in the world, they (i.e. the sages) desirous of obtaining (i.e. sustaining) themselves, and being very miserable got (the) dead (body of) a boy and cooked it. A king walked about there. Seeing the distressed sages and being struck by dejection he said these words (to them) at that time:

The king said:

228-229. Receiving gifts is observed to be a praiseworthy mode of leading life for the brāhmaṇas. Therefore, O sages, accept from me gifts like excellent villages, rice, barley, drinks, jewels, gold, cattle and milch-cows. (Take) all that, (but), O brāhmaṇas, do not cook flesh.

The sages spoke:

230-236. O king, accepting gifts is terrible, it is tasting wine; it is like poison. Why do you allure us who know this? An oilman is equal to ten slaughter-houses; a vendor of spirituous liquors is equal to ten oilmen; a prostitute is equal to ten vendors of spirituous liquors; (and) a king is equal to ten prostitutes. So a king is comparable to a vintner who carries (i.e. is equal to) ten thousand slaughter-houses. Acceptance of gifts from him is fearful. A brāhmaṇa, who, deluded by greed, accepts (gifts) from a king, is cooked in the terrible hells like Tāmisra.[1] Therefore O king, go (your way); may you prosper with your gifts. Give this (host of gifts) to others.

Saying so, they went to a forest. Then the king's ministers went there at the bidding of the king and scattered on the ground *udumbara* fruits containing gold. Then (while) collecting food they picked up the *udumbara* fruits also. Seeing them to be heavy, Atri said, "These are not to be taken."

Atri said:

237-240. We are not fools, we are not dullards. Being wise and learned we know that these (fruits) are golden. It gives great pleasure here (i.e. in this world); but it impedes the rise (of the person) after death; therefore he who desires happiness and eternity should not take it. He who receives a golden coin multiplied by hundred or endowed with a thousand (i.e. he who receives a hundred or thousand golden coins) from another (person), goes to the most sinful condition. Whatever rice, barley, gold, beasts or ladies are there on the earth—realising that (all) this is not eough for one, one should be tranquil.

Vasiṣṭha said:

241-244. Between the accumulation of penance that one has and the accumulation of wealth that another has, the former is superior to the latter. Calamities of a person who discards all accumulations, vanish. No hoarder is ever free from calamities. According as a brāhmaṇa does not accept a bad

1. *Tāmisra*: A division of hell. There are twentyone different parts of the internal regions where different kinds of tortures are inflicted on sinners.

gift, his brahmanic lustre increases as a result of contentment. If poverty and kingdom are weighed (i.e. compared) with each other, then poverty is superior to kingdom for one of a good mind.

Kaśyapa said:

245-249. This accumulation of wealth is a great calamity for a brāhmaṇa. A brāhmaṇa deluded by material prosperity is deprived of final beatitude. Material wealth leads to delusion, and delusion leads to hell. Therefore, one who desires bliss should abandon from a distance (i.e. keep away) material wealth called misery. The desirelessness of him, who desires material things (only) for religious merit, is superior; for it is better not to touch mud than to wash it (after being smeared with it). That religious merit which is obtained through material wealth is said to be perishable. That sacrifice which is done for others is inexhaustible and is a cause of salvation.

Bharadvāja said:

250-253. The hair of one who grows old, wears out. The teeth of one who grows old, perish. (But) the desire for wealth and for life, even of him who grows old, does not wither away. The eyes and ears wear out, (but) desire alone is undisturbed. As a tailor brings together (i.e. stitches) two pieces of cloth with a needle, similarly the thread of the mundane existence is brought near (a person) by the needle of desire. Like the growing horn of the *ruru* deer when his body grows, desire is unlimited, difficult to satiate, the cause of hundreds of miseries and full of unrighteous things; therefore one should avoid it completely.

Gautama spoke:

254-257. Who, content even with fruits, is not able to excel? A man plunges into miseries because of the fickleness of the greedy senses. For him, whose mind is contented, wealth exists everywhere; for him, with his feet covered with hide, the earth is at it were, covered with hide. How can that happiness, which, those who are gratified with the nectar of contentment get, be obtained by those who are greedy of wealth and who

run here and there (for wealth)? Want of contentment is a great misery, and contentment is great happiness. Therefore, a man desiring happiness should always be contented.

Viśvāmitra said:

258-261. If one desire of a person entertaining it is satisfied, another desire pierces him like an arrow. Desire never ceases by enjoying the desired things; like fire with oblations put into it, it again grows. A man who longs for desires (being satisfied) does not get happiness like a *cātaka* bird going to the shadow of a tree which has a hawk's nest on it. A king who enjoys this earth begirt by four oceans is not (so) happy (as) he who looks upon stone and gold as equal.

Jamadagni said:

262-265. He who does not accept a gift even though he is fit to receive it goes to those eternal worlds to which the charitable people go. A brāhmaṇa who desires wealth from a king should be deplored by great sages. The fool does not realise the fear of tortures in hell. Even though one is worthy of receiving a gift one should not be attached to it. By (accepting) a gift the brahmanic lustre of the brāhmaṇas comes to an end. Those, who are worthy of receiving gifts, but desist from doing so (i.e.) those who do not receive gifts, go to the same worlds as the givers.

Arundhatī spoke:

266-267. As the lotus-fibre remaining in a lotus would always pervade it, similarly desire, having no beginning and no end, and which is difficult to be abandoned by the wicked and which does not grow old even though the person (who entertains it) grows old, is always associated with the body. Gladly give up this desire which is a fatal disease.

Cāṇḍāla said:

268. As these kings dread (i.e. entertain) the fear from Rudra etc. (or) as a weak person is afraid of a powerful one, I am afraid of (greed).

Paśusakha said:

269a. A learned man desiring his well-being should do that which the wise always intent upon piety do.

269b-273. Speaking thus, all the sages firm in their vows abandoned those fruits containing gold and went elsewhere. Then as they were wandering they went to Madhyama Puṣkara. There they saw a wandering mendicant, Śunaḥsakha (by name) who had all of a sudden come there. Accompanying him to some other forest they saw a great lake—a reservoir—covered with lotuses. Thinking about an auspicious way they encamped on the bank of Sarasvatī. Then that ascetic Śunaḥsakha (lit. one with a dog) said to all the hungry sages: "Tell me, all of you, what kind of pain hunger is."

274a. All the sages together said to that Śunaḥsakha (the mendicant with a dog):

The sages said:

274b-277. Even that pain (that one has) when one is wounded by a (missile called) Śakti, a sword, a mace, and a disc, a javeline or an arrow, is vanquished by the pain caused by hunger. That pain also caused by diseases like asthma, leprosy, consumption, knee-ache, fever, epilepsy, gout is not greater (i.e. acuter) than the pain caused by hunger. Men who have put on golden armlets, anklets, crowns or bright ear-rings do not shine when they remain in hunger (i.e. when they are hungry). As the sun's ray draws the water fallen on the ground, similarly the arteries in the body are dried up by the digestive fire of the stomach.

278-281. A person oppressed by hunger does not hear, does not smell, does not see with his eyes, is scorched, gets emaciated, is perplexed and parched up. Overpowered by hunger he does not recognise the directions like the east, the south, the west and the north; and also the lower and the higher. Due to hunger dumbness, deafness, dullness, lameness, horror aggravate excessively. A person oppressed with hunger abandons his father, mother, sons, wife and daughter, and also his brother and kinsman.

282-284. A person oppressed with hunger, does not worship properly the manes, god or preceptor, and also sages that have

followed (i.e. approached) him. Thus left by himself, (he suffers from) these troubles which happen to (cause pain to) men. So a person, endowed with faith, should thus offer food. Then being one with Brahman, he rejoices with Brahman.

285-286. The manes of that man, who everyday offers well-cooked food to a brāhmaṇa, who declares offering of food especially at the time of śrāddha, who at a śrāddha where the spirits have undergone destruction, ever narrates (texts), are pleased till death.

287-288. There is no doubt about this. One who offers food in the vicinity of gods and brāhmaṇas gets salvation. He who hears (texts about charity etc.) is free from sin whether he is enlightened, or intoxicated or has arrived accidentally, or is void of devotion.

289-292. Brāhmaṇas endowed with charity are happy and share piety. Those who know the truth have laid down restraint, control and curbing of the passions. It is especially an eternal duty for brāhmaṇas; curbing the passions increases lustre; curbing the passions is pure and excellent. A man becomes free from sin and lustrous by means of curbing his passions. Whatever restraints and religious duties of good families are prescribed, or even whatever fruit of sacrifices that is said to be obtained, curbing the passions excels (all) of them. From curbing of passions only proceed penance, sacrifice and charity.

293-295. What (can) an unrestrained person (get) in a forest or what (can) a restrained person (get) in a hermitage? Wherever a restrained person stays, that is a forest, that is a great hermitage. What is the use of the hermitages to him endowed with a virtuous mode of life and with sense-control? Mistakes occur in the case of (i.e. are committed by) impassioned persons even in a forest, (while) penance of the nature of the control of five senses is possible (even) at home. For him who indulges in a praiseworthy deed, his house (itself) is a penance-grove.

296-299. Those who earn their livelihood by (doing) good deeds and righteously, who are always pleased and rejoice in their (own) house, who have conquered their senses, to whom guests are dear and who abide by restrictions, follow piety in

their house (itself). Salvation is not had by him who is engrossed in (the study of) grammar, who is interested in fame, who is intent upon (getting) food and clothes, and who is delighted in knowing the behaviour of (other) people. Salvation is certainly possible for him who is given to loneliness, who is of a firm vow, who withdraws affection for all the senses, whose mind is directed to the supreme spirit and meditation on it and for him who is always harmless. A person whose passions are curbed, sleeps and wakes up happily. He, whose mind is awakened, behaves equally with all beings.

300-303. A person does not move as happily in a chariot, or on (the back of) a horse or an elephant, as he moves, with his mind disciplined, on the passage into the next world. (As) one should not touch a lion, nor very much anger a serpent, nor should always make one's enemy wrathful, so also one should not make one's mind void of control. Yama is not called Yama. It is one's self that is called *Yama* (restraint). That yama by which one's self is controlled, is called *Yama* (restraint), but a man is dejected without any reason. What can Yama do to him who has controlled himself?

304-306. There is always fear from the carnivorous and (other) animals. To control them the Self-born one (i.e. the creator) has created the rod or sceptre (as the symbol of authority and punishment). The sceptre protects the beings; the sceptre guards the subjects; the sceptre, difficult to conquer, keeps off the most sinful ones. The dark, young, red-eyed sceptre, in which customary observances have been established, governs men.

307-311. (Now) in all the stages (of human life) restraint is the best vow. I shall tell all the characteristics[1] by which a person is said to be one whose passions are curbed. (They are:) want of lightness of spirit, want of harshness, contentment, good manners, absence of jealousy, revering the elders, kindness and absence of wickedness towards beings. Curbing passions is said (to consist) of these six (characteristics) by the sages of tranquil minds. Piety and salvation are dependent up-

1. Though the characteristics are said to be six, they are really eight, beginning with akārpaṇya and ending with apaiśunya.

on kindness; so also is heaven, O king. He is said to be tranquil who is not angry when insulted, or is not delighted when honoured, and who looks upon pleasure and pain as equal and who is wise. A tranquil person sleeps happily and awakens happily; so he remains superior. He who despises, perishes.

312-313. Even though insulted by (another person) he should never think ill about him; looking to the duties of his own class, he should not find fault with those of others. He should know himself and should not insult another person by (finding) his faults.

314-316. As a garment covers a defective body, similarly curbing the passions covers one who is deficient in sacred formulae, acts or also in birth. Those who do not know (what) curbing the passions (is), have studied in vain. Restraint is the root of sacred learning; it is an eternal law; he who holds his restraint as equal to gold, is called firm by (i.e. on account of) that (attitude); and not one who is deluded by wealth. Of all the vows restraint is the highest one.

317-318. Even if a brāhmaṇa, knowing the real nature of the Vedas, studies the six limbs (of the Vedas) but is destitute of restraint, he is not honoured here (i.e. in this world). Even though Vedas are studied along with their six limbs, they do not purify a person who is void of restraint. (The study of) *Sāṁkhya* or Yoga or birth in a (noble) family, or a bath in a holy place is useless (without restraint).

319-320. A brāhmaṇa well-versed in the meditation on the supreme spirit would be gratified with an insult as with nectar, and would always despise honour as poison. Penance increases (in strength) by means of insult and decreases by means of honour. A brāhmaṇa who is adored and worshipped goes (away) like a cow (after being) milked.

321-324. As the cow again swells with grass and water, similarly the brāhmaṇa again grows (in strength) by means of repeating prayers and sacrifices. There is no other friend like censure which, receiving sin, gives its own merit. A person should not revile the revilers, should abstain from anger; then (i.e. by doing this), controlling his self he sprinkles it with nectar. A skull (as a begging bowl), roots of trees (as a resi-

dence), rugged garments, solitude, indifference, and celibacy lead (one) to the highest position.

325-328. What will he do in a forest (i.e. what is the use of living in a forest) after having conquered desire and anger (i.e. if he has controlled his desire and anger)? Scriptures are (i.e. scriptural knowledge is) retained by study and a family is sustained by good character; sacred prayers are retained by their use, and anger is retained (i.e. checked) by goodness. Who is like him on the earth, who controls his anger that is produced (in his mind), and who, the brave one, mutters prayers without anger? I regard him as the best man who remains after (i.e. by) curbing his anger that is produced, and not that man who sinks into anger. I have told you in detail this rule of piety, which has come down from the grandsire, which is sacred, which is the collection (i.e. essence) of the Vedas and which is eternal.

329-333a. Worlds of those who perform sacrifices are different; so also worlds of those who practise penance are different. Different are the worlds of those whose passions are curbed; and they are greatly honoured. Those who forgive have one fault (only) and no other; and it is that people look upon a person given to forgiveness as weak; (but) this should not be looked upon as a fault (for) forgiveness is the strength of the intelligent. He who knows tranquility greatly values performing sacrifices and digging wells and doing other acts of charity.[1] He who mutters prayers or offers oblations or worships with anger, all that (he does) leaks like water from a broken jar.

333b-342a. He who, getting up in the morning, recites this chapter on restraint, will, after having got into the boat of religious merit, overcome difficulties. A brāhmaṇa should always recite this chapter on restraint. He (then) goes to the world of Brahmā. From it he does not fall down. Listen to the all-in-all of righteousness; retain it after having heard it. Do not do to others what is unfavourable to yourself. He who looks upon other's wife as his mother, and upon other's wealth as a clod, and upon other beings as himself (alone) perceives (i.e.

1. *Iṣṭāpūrta*: Performing sacrifices and digging wells and doing other acts of charity.

is wise). Cooking (food) for (offering it to) all gods, and living for others—this is the all-in-all of everything as gold is of (all) metals. Remembering (what is) beneficial to all beings one gets immortality, O king.

Thus having spoken about the essential nature of religious merit to Śunaḥsakha, all of them stayed there on the bank of the lake with him. They saw the extensive lake covered with (i.e. full of) lotuses blooming at sunrise and moonrise. Getting down into the lake, they put the bundles of fibres of lotuses on the bank of the lake, and performed the auspicious rite of offering water. Having come out of the water, and having met one another, and not seeing these lotus-fibres, they said these words:

The sages said:

342b-344a. Which sinful and cruel person, desiring to eat (the lotus-fibres) has taken away the lotus-fibres of us who are tormented with hunger?

Those best brāhmaṇas, suspecting one another, asked one another; and O king, they decided to swear.

Kaśyapa said:

344b-347a. May he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres, lose everything everywhere, be deprived of his deposit, be a false witness. May he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres practise unjust acts through trickery; and have the fruit of those who serve a king. May he, who has stolen the lotus-firbes, (drink and) eat liquor and flesh, always tell lies and always enjoy objects of senses. May he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres, give his daughter (in marriage) after (receiving) her purchase-price.

Vasiṣṭha said:

347b-348. May he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres, have sexual intercourse during a period unfavourable for conception, sleep during the day, and be the guest of one another. May such a brāhmaṇa and the husband of Śūdra female live in a village having one well only.

349-351a. May he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres, get the same world as he (i.e. the Śūdra-female's husband) gets. May

he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres, be cruel and proud of his prosperity, and be jealous and wicked. May he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres, revile when he is reviled (by others) and beat when he is beaten by others; and may he sell liquors.

Gautama said:

351b-353a. May he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres, spoil the food after the guest has arrived, and always eat the food of a śūdra; having given gifts, may he proclaim them, and may he be pleased with (i.e. enjoy) others' wives. May he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres eat sweat-meat all alone.

Viśvāmitra said:

353b-357a. May he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres, always indulge in sex and have sexual intercourse by day, and be a sinner always. May he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres, censure others and enjoy other's wife, and be interested in blaming others. May he, of a wicked mind who has stolen the lotus-fibres, slight his mother and father, and have a different (i.e. a mean) attitude towards his mother. May he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres, always eat other's food and sell the (knowledge contained in the) Vedas.

Jamadagni said:

357b-358a. May he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres, be other's servant in every existence, and be destitute of all religious rites.

Śunaḥsakha said:

358b-360a. May he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres, study the Vedas justly and be a householder to whom guests are dear, and may tell the truth continuously. May he, who has stolen the lotus-fibres, offer (oblations) to fire according to the proper rites. May he always perform sacrifice(s), and go to the abode of Brahman.

The sages said:

360b-361a. This swearing that is done (now), is desirable

for the brāhmaṇas; O Śunaḥsakha, you have stolen the lotus-fibres of all of us.

Śunaḥsakha said:

361b-363a. O brāhmaṇas, these lotus-fibres were concealed by me, who also desired to hear (about) religious merit (from you); know me to be Indra. O sages, due to your greedlessness you have won the inexhaustible worlds. Get in the aeroplane; we shall go to the abode of gods.

363b-367a. Then the great sages, who recognised Indra, and who were well-versed in speech, said these words:

"A man, who, having come here, enters the Madhyama Puṣkara, gets the necessary fruit after having fasted for three nights. There is also no doubt that he would get here the entire fruit of the twelve-year initiation which is laid down for those who live in forests. He does not meet with misfortune and enjoys with his own hosts (i.e. his own kinsmen); and having reached Brahmā's place lives there for (such a long time as) Brahmā's day."

Pulastya said:

367b-369. The sages, being very much pleased, went to heaven with Indra. Since though thus subjected to various temptations, they did not indulge in greed, so they went to heaven. He who always listens to the auspicious account of the sages, becomes free from all sins and is honoured in heaven.

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Rules of Ablution

Bhīṣma said:

1-3. Please narrate in detail and truthfully, to me who am asking you, another charming account (capable of) destroying sins, also of the Madhyama (Puṣkara) glorified by the sages and the fruit of (offering) food, and the importance of restraint

(as told by them). And also, O great sage, tell me where Viṣṇu planted his foot, and how the Kaniṣṭha (Puṣkara) came about.

Pulastya said:

4-5. Formerly in the Rathantara Kalpa, there was a king by name Puṣpavāhana who was well-known among people and like the sun in lustre. Pleased with his penance, the four-faced one (i.e. Brahmā) gave him a golden lotus going at will, O king of the Bharata-family.

6. It always moved at will on the seven islands and the earth. At the beginning of the Kalpa, the people living in Puṣkara honoured it like an island; hence it is called Puṣkara-dvīpa.

7-8. Just that lotus-aeroplane was given to him by Brahmā. Therefore gods and demons called him Puṣpavāhana. There was no match to the king seated in that lotus (aeroplane) given by Brahmā in the three worlds.

9. Due to the prowess of his penance he had a queen named Lāvaṇyavatī, who was as it were saluted by thousands of ladies and was like Pārvatī, who was most liked by Bhava (i.e. Śiva).

10. He had ten thousand sons who were religious-minded and were foremost among archers. Seeing his sons, the king again and again became proud.

11-14a. He said these words to the best and revered sage Pracetas who had come to him: "How did I get this steady prosperity? How am I honoured by gods and mortals? How did I have this good queen resembling Lakṣmī as my wife? O best sage, the creator who was pleased with my penance, gave me this lotus-abode (i.e. this aeroplane) which is not noticed though a hundred crores of kings along with their ministers, elephants, flow of chariots and surrounded by people enter it, and also (it is not noticed by) those who move in the sky (and ask) 'Where has it gone'? It is not accessible to the Moon and the Sun in the sky. Therefore, O Pracetas, tell me whether I have earned religious merit etc. surpassing all that of other people when I was born from the womb of other mother (than my present one, i.e. in the previous existence), or all my sons had done (such religious merit) or this my good wife had done

(such religious merit as a result of which I have obtained such prosperity)".

14b. He (i.e. Pracetas) viewing completely (what had happened) in the previous birth said: "O king, listen to that wonderful account.

15. Your awful birth took place in the family of a hunter (i.e. you were born in the awful family of a hunter); and day by day you became a sinner. Your body again became one with the male organ (i.e. of generation) and joints having bad smell all around and having the ornaments of bad nails like those of animals.

16. You did not have a friend nor a son, nor a brother, nor a sister, nor mother, nor someone to govern you; but O king, this beautiful lady was very much liked and loved by you and was friendly with you.

17. There was a fierce drought; on a certain occasion, you who were oppressed by hunger, did not get anything like wild fruits etc. for her to eat.

18-20. You saw a great lake full of lotuses and its bank filled with mud. Taking from it (i.e. the lake) many lotuses you went to a city named Vaidiśa. To get the price of the lotuses you wandered in the city for a whole day. (Then) there was a buyer for (i.e. who bought) the lotuses. You were very much fatigued and oppressed with hunger and sat, with your wife, in the courtyard of a house. Then at night you heard there an auspicious sound.

21-24a. With your wife you went there where (from) that auspicious sound was (i.e. came). There you saw the worship of Viṣṇu in a circle. A prostitute by name Anaṅgavatī was observing the *vow of Dvādaśī* Having adorned (the) golden (image of) Viṣṇu, and having, on the twelfth day of Māgha, prepared a heap of salt, she presented a prepared bed to her preceptor. They (i.e. the hunter and his wife) saw her (i.e. Anaṅgavatī) and thought thus:

24b-27a. 'What is to be done with these lotuses? It is better to adorn Viṣṇu (with them).' O king, thus devotion was produced in (the minds of) that couple. At that time, having worshipped Viṣṇu and the heap of salt, the bed was worshipped by them with heaps of flowers on all sides. Anaṅgavatī, who was

pleased, ordered (her servants) to give them three hundred (measures) of corn and three palas of gold.

27b-29. Due to their very good nature they did not accept them. Then, O king, Anaṅgavatī again brought food of four kinds[1] and told them to eat it. The couple refused that also (and told her:) 'O you of a beautiful face, we shall eat it tomorrow. Due to contact with you we are observing this fast. Let it lead (us) to good fortune.

30. O you good lady of a firm vow, we are the most sinful (persons) from our birth. Let there be a portion of religious merit for us due to our association with you in this your house.'

31-33. Thus due to their association with her they kept awake (during the night). In the morning she presented with devotion the bed with the heap of salt and a hamlet to her preceptor and presented twelve cows endowed with gold and with garments and ornaments to brāhmaṇas and fed them with friends and allies and blind and helpless persons. She also dismissed the couple of hunters honouring them.

34-37. Along with his wife that hunter was born as you, the lord of kings. O king, due to your offering that heap of lotuses and worshipping Viṣṇu, and due to the greatness of the truth (you always spoke) and due to that greedless penance of you, the four-faced one (i.e. Brahmā) was pleased with you whose sins had perished and gave you that lotus-dwelling (i.e. the aeroplane) and (said to you): 'Resort to (i.e. take) this Puṣkara (plane). O lord of kings, taking to proper disposition observe this mighty *vow of Dvādaśī*; you will certainly attain salvation.'

38-39. Saying this much, the sage vanished there (only); and king Puṣkaravāhana did as (he was) told. O king, he who practises this, has his vow uninterrupted, as after some time twelve dvādaśīs (will be over).

40-43. O king, one should give presents to brāhmaṇas according to one's capacity; a village should be given to the

1. *Caturvidham annam*: Food is, in fact, said to be of five, and not four, types. The five types of food are: (1) Bhakṣya—to be chewed and then eaten, as bread. (2) Bhojya—to be eaten without chewing, as rice. (3) Coṣya—to be sucked, as a mango. (4) Lehya—to be licked, as thin luquid condiments. (5) Peya—to be drunk, as milk.

seniormost brāhmaṇa; an excellent (piece of) land should be given to a brāhmaṇa of the middle order; gold should be given to the juniormost brāhmaṇa. This is laid down as to the presents (to be offered). The first one belongs to god Brahmā, the second one to Viṣṇu and the third one to Rudra. The three gods reside in the three (brāhmaṇas). Thus he who reads or hears, with devotion, this (account) destroying the sins of people, or he, who thinks about it, lives in the world of gods for as many years as there is hair (on the body). Now I shall tell (you) the best of the vows.

44-47. It is told by that Rudra and destroys great sins. Eating only at night for a year, one should give, along with a cow, a golden disc and trident and garments to a brāhmaṇa having a family. One who performs this religious vow, delights in the world of Śiva. This alone is the vow destroying great sins; one who, eating only once (a day) offers a cow with a bull (or) gives a cow made of sesamum goes to the place of Śiva. This is called the *vow of Rudra* ; it destroys great sins.

48-49. He, who, eating every alternate night, offers at the end of a year a golden lotus along with a pot (full) of sugar and (a cow) with a bull attains the affluence of Viṣṇu; this is said to be *Nīla-vrata.* A man should avoid smearing the body with unctuous substances during the (period of) four months beginning with Āṣāḍha.

50. He should offer articles of food (to a brāhmaṇa). He goes to the abode of Viṣṇu. The vow is called *Prīti-vrata* as it delights the people.

51-52. Avoiding, in the month of Caitra, (eating) curds, milk, ghee and sugar, one, after having honoured a brāhmaṇa-couple. should offer them, saying 'May Gaurī be pleased with me', fine garments with a pot of juice. This is *Gaurī-vrata* (vow in honour of Gaurī), and gives (i.e. takes one to) the world of Bhavānī.

53-55a. He, who, eating only at night on the thirteenth day of Pauṣa etc., gives to a brāhmaṇa, a golden *aśoka* with a sugar-cane ten fingers in length and with a garment saying, 'May Pradyumna be pleased', becomes, O king, free from grief having lived in the city of Viṣṇu for a *Kalpa.* This is called *Kāma-vrata*; it always destroys grief.

55b-57a. He, who, avoids eating fruits during the vow practised in Āṣāḍha etc., and after the four months are over, offers, on the full-moon day of Kārtika, a golden pitcher with ghee and jaggery, obtains (i.e. goes to) Śiva's world. This is called the *vow af Śiva.*

57b-59a. He who avoids the (use of) flowers in the winter season (comprising the months of Mārgaśīrṣa and Pauṣa) encompassed by (i.e. along with) the cold season (comprising of the months of Māgha and Phālguna) and offers, according to his capacity, three golden flowers (to a brāhmaṇa) at an auspicious time (i.e. when it is not the time of Saturn[1]) saying 'May Śiva and Viṣṇu be pleased with me', goes, by making such offerings to the highest position. This is called *Saɯya-vrata.*

59b-61a. He, who, on the third day of Phālguna etc., avoids (eating) salt, and, at the end of a year, having honoured a brāhmaṇa-couple, gives to them, saying, 'May Bhavānī be pleased', a bed and a furnished house, lives for a Kalpa in the world of Gaurī. This is called *Saubhāgya-vrata.*

61b-63a. He who, observing silence in the evenings, gives at the end of a year, a pitcher full of ghee, a pair of garments, sesamum, and a bell to a brāhmaṇa, goes to the world of Sarasvatī, from which return is difficult. This (vow) is called *Sārasvata*, which gives form and learning.

63b-65a. A man, worshipping Lakṣmī on the fifth day, should observe a fast. At the end of a year, he should present a golden lotus with a cow (to a brāhmaṇa). He goes to the position of Viṣṇu and has wealth in every existence. This is *Lakṣmī-vrata* which destroys grief.

65b-67a. Besmearing (with sandal the image of) Śiva before that of Viṣṇu, a cow and a water-pitcher should be given upto a year. (He who does this) would become a king for a myriad existences, and then would go to Śiva's city. This is called *Āyur-vrata*, which gives (i.e. fulfils) all desires.

67b-69. A man, free from jealousy, saluting with concentrated mind the *Aśvattha* tree, the Sun and the Ganges, should eat once a day for one year. At the end of the vow he should honour

1. *Kālavelā*: The time of Saturn i.e. a particular time of the day (half a watch everyday) at which any religious act is improper.

a brāhmaṇa-couple along with three cows. He should (also) give a golden tree. He would obtain the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. This vow is called *Kīrti-vrata*; and gives the fruit viz. prosperity and fame.

70-74. Besmearing Śiva or Viṣṇu with ghee and making a circle with cow-dung along with rice (used for sacred purposes) and flowers, one should give (a brāhmaṇa) a golden lotus along with sesamum and a cow and a pike having the length of eight fingers at the end of a year. He is honoured in Śiva's world. He should also have the singing of Sāmans. This is called *Sāmavrata* in the world. On the ninth day, having eaten once a day, and having fed, according to his capacity, maidens, he should give (them) gold, bodices and garments. He should (also) give a golden lion to a brāhmaṇa; he would go to Śiva's position. For a hundred million years he would be handsome and would not be defeated by his enemies. This is called *Vīra-vrata*, and it gives happiness to men.

75-78. Being kind, he should offer water (to the needy) for four months beginning with Caitra. At the end of the vow he should give a ruby along with food and garments, so also a pot (full) of sesamum and gold (to a brāhmaṇa). He is honoured in Brahmā's world; and at the end of a *Kalpa* gets a prosperous birth (i.e. is born in a prosperous family). This is called *Ānanda-vrata*. Having bathed the lord with five sweet things[1] (viz. milk, sugar, ghee, curds and honey) for one year, he should give a cow with the five sweet things and a conch to a brāhmaṇa at the end of the year; he goes to the position of Śaṁkara. At the end of a *Kalpa*, he becomes a king. This is known as *Dhṛti-vrata*.

79-81. A man should avoid flesh (-eating) and should give a cow and a golden deer at the end of the vow. He gets the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. This is called *Ahiṁsā-vrata*. At the end of a Kalpa he would become a king. Having got up at day-break, and having bathed, he should worship a (brāhmaṇa-) couple, and feed the couple, according to his capacity, along with (i.e. give it) flowers, garments and ornaments. He would live in the Sun's world for a *Kalpa*. This is known as *Sūrya-vrata*.

1. *Pañcāmṛta*: The collection of five sweet things used in worshipping deities: milk, sugar, ghee, curds and honey.

82-88a. In the four months beginning with Āṣāḍha, a man should bathe in the morning. Having given food to a brāhmaṇa, he should give a cow (to a brāhmaṇa) on the full-moon day of Kārtika. He goes to the position of Viṣṇu. This is called *Vaiṣṇava-vrata*. A man should avoid from one year to another (i.e. for one year) flowers and ghee; and at the end of it should give flowers, food, ghee with a cow and rice boiled in milk and mixed with ghee, to a brāhmaṇa; he goes to Śiva's position; this is called *Śila-vrata*; it gives good character and health. A man who observes the vow of (drinking) milk (only) on the fifteenth day (of every month) and at the end of the year offers a *śrāddha* and gives five milch-cows, tawny clothes with water-pitchers, goes to the position of Viṣṇu; and would liberate a hundred ancestors, at the end of a *Kalpa*, O king of kings. This is known as *Pitṛ-vrata*.

88b-90a. He, who offers an evening lamp with ghee, should avoid oil. At the end of the year he should present a golden lamp, a disc and a golden pike and a pair of garments to a brāhmaṇa. Such a man becomes lustrous; he obtains the Rudra-world. This is known as the *Dīpti-vrata*.

90b-92a. (A man) having drunk cow's urine and (eaten) food prepared from barley[1] on the third day of Kārtika etc., should eat only at night for one year and offer a cow (to a (brāhmaṇa). For one *Kalpa* he would reside in the world of Gaurī and after that would become a king on the earth. This is known as *Rudra-vrata* and always leads to good fortune.

92b-98a. He who avoids besmearing (his body) with sandal paste (etc.) for four months, and gives (a kind of perfume called) *Śukti*, sandal-paste and sacred rice grains and a couple of white garments to a brāhmaṇa goes to the position of Varuṇa. This is called *Dṛḍha-vrata*. He who avoids (using) flowers and salt in Vaiśākha and presents a cow (to a brāhmaṇa), stays for a *Kalpa* at the place of Viṣṇu and becomes a king on the earth. This is said to be *Śānti-vrata*; it gives fame and gives the fruit of (i.e. satisfies) one's desires. He, who, having made a golden egg (representing the egg of) Brahman, gives it along with a heap

1. *Yavaka*: Food prepared from barley.

of sesamum with ghee to someone else, and having gratified a brāhmaṇa and having honoured a brāhmaṇa-couple with flowers, garments and ornaments according to his capacity (saying) 'May the world-soul be pleased', gives (gold) weighing more than three *palas*[1] (to a brāhmaṇa) goes to Brahman not to be born again. This is called *Brahma-vrata*. It gives men the fruit viz. eternal bliss.

98b-101a. He who gives a pregnant cow with a low sound and remains for a day observing the vow of milk (i.e. subsisting on milk) goes to the highest position. This is called *Suvrata*, (having done which) rebirth is not easy. He who, remaining for three days observing the vow of milk, gives according to his capacity a golden (representation) of the desire-yielding tree weighing more than a pala along with rice measuring a *prastha*,[2] goes to the position of Brahmā. This is known as *Bhīma-vrata*.

101b-104. He, who, observing fast for a month gives a beautiful cow to a brāhmaṇa, goes to Viṣṇu's position. This is called *Bhīma-vrata*. He who fashioning a golden image of the earth weighing more than twenty palas gives it (to a brāhmaṇa) and observes the vow of milk (i.e. subsists on milk) for a day is honoured in the world of Rudra. This is said to be the giver of wealth for the next seven hundred *kalpas*. He who gives a cow made of jaggery on the third day in the month of Māgha or Caitra is honoured in the world of Gaurī.

105-108. This *Guḍa-vrata* is called *Mahā-vrata* and gives great joy. He, who observes fast for a fortnight and gives a couple of tawny cows to a brāhmaṇa, being honoured by gods and demons obtains the world of Brahmā, and becomes a sovereign king at the end of a *Kalpa*. This is called *Prabhā-vrata*. He who eats once a day for one year and gives a pitcher of water with food (to a brāhmaṇa) lives for one *Kalpa* in the world of Śiva. This is known a *Prāpti-vrata*. He who eats (only) at night on the eighth day (of every month) and gives a cow to a brāhmaṇa at the end of a year goes to the city of Indra. This is said to be *Sugati-vrata*.

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1. *Pala*: A particular weight equal to four karṣas. A karṣa is equal to sixteen māṣas. A māṣa is said to be equal to ten guñjas.

2. *Prastha*: A particular measure of the capacity equal to thirtytwo palas.

109-110a. He who gives fuel to a brāhmaṇa during four seasons like the rainy-season, and gives ghee and cow to a brāhmaṇa, goes, after death, to the highest Brahman. This is known as *Vaiśvānara-vrata.* It destroys all sins.

110b-113. He, who, eating only at night on the eleventh day of a month and having made a golden disc, offers it (to a brāhmaṇa) at the end of the year, obtains Viṣṇu's position. This is said to be *Kṛṣṇa-vrata,* which secures for him kingdom. One who drinks milk (only) and gives a couple of cows to a brāhmaṇa, would live, for a *Kalpa,* in the world of Lakṣmī. This is known as *Devi-vrata.* He who eats (only) at night on the seventh day of a month and gives a milch-cow (to a brāhmaṇa) at the end (of the vow) obtains the world of the Sun. This is said to be *Bhānu-vrata.*

114-116a. Eating (only) at night on the fourth day of (every month) during winter, one should (at the end of the vow), give a couple of cows (to a brāhmaṇa). This is *Vaināyaka-vrata,* giving (i.e. taking one to) the world of Śiva. One should avoid (eating) bitter gourds for four months and give golden ones along with a couple of cows to a brāhmaṇa at the end of a sacrifice. This is called *Saura-vrata.* It gives the fruit (of going to) the world of the Sun.

116b-119. O king, a man, who observes fast on the twelfth day and worships, according to his capacity, brāhmaṇas with a cow, garments and gold, obtains the highest position. This is known as *Viṣṇu-vrata.* He who eats (only) at night on the fourteenth day (of every month) and gives, at the end of the year, a couple of cows (to a brāhmaṇa), goes to Śiva's position. This is known as *Tryambaka-vrata.* Having observed fast for seven days one should give a pitcher (full) of ghee to a brāhmaṇa. This is called *Vara-vrata.* It gives the fruit of (going to) the world of Brahmā.

120-122. One, who, having gone to Kāśī, gives a milch-cow (to a brāhmaṇa), would live in the world of Indra for a *Kalpa.* This is known as *Mantra-vrata.* One, who, having avoided perfumes used to scent the mouth,[1] gives, at the end of the year, a cow (to a brāhmaṇa), goes to the world of Varuṇa. This is

1. *Mukhavāsa*: A perfume used to scent the mouth.

called *Varuṇa-vrata*. He who (i.e. one) should observe the *Cāndrāyaṇa*[1] (vow); should present a golden (image of) the Moon. This is called *Candra-vrata* which gives (i.e. leads one to) the world of the Moon.

123-124. He who observes the *Pañcatapas*[2] vow in (the month of) Jyeṣṭha and at the end (of the vow) offers a golden (image of a) cow (to a brāhmaṇa) on the eighth or the fourteenth day goes to heaven. This is known as *Rudra-vrata*. One should once observe a sacred rule (i.e. a vow) on the third (of a month) in a Śiva-temple. One, who, at the end of it, offers a cow (to a brāhmaṇa) goes to the (world of Śiva); this is called *Bhavāni-vrata*.

125. He, who, with wet clothes on his person on the night (s) of (the month of) Māgha, gives a cow (to a brāhmaṇa) on the seventh day, having lived for a thousand Kalpas in heaven, would become a king on the earth. (This is called) *Pavana-vrata*.

126. A man, having observed fast for three days should give an auspicious house (to a brāhmaṇa) on the full-moon day of Phālguna. He obtains the world of Āditya. This is known as *Dhāma-vrata*.

127-130a. He, who, observing a fast, worships a (brāhmaṇa) couple by giving them ornaments gets eternal bliss. This is said to be *Mokṣa-vrata*. He, who having offered on the second of the bright half a pot (full) of salt in (honour of) the Moon and a cow at the end of the vow (to a brāhmaṇa) goes to the abode of Śiva. O lord of kings, he also, who, (during the vow) gives a bell-metal (-vessel) with a garment and presents, and also a cow at the end (of the vow), goes to Śiva's abode; and at the end of a *Kalpa* becomes a king of kings. This is called *Soma-vrata*.

130b-132. He, who eats (only) once on the first (of every fortnight) and offers fruits (to a brāhmaṇa) at the end (of the vow),

1. *Cāndrāyaṇa*: A religious observance of expiatory penance regulated by the waxing and waning of the moon. In it the daily quality of food, which consists of fifteen mouthfuls at the full moon, is reduced by one mouthful everyday during the dark fortnight till it is zero at the new moon, and is increased in like manner during the bright fortnight.

2. *Pañcatapas*: An ascetic who in summer practices penance sitting in the middle of the four fires with the sun burning right over his head.

goes to the position of Vaiśvānara; this is known as *Śikhi-vrata*. He, who, observing a fast, gives a golden chariot with the horses, weighing more than two palas (to a brāhmaṇa), would live in heaven for a hundred Kalpas; and at the end of that (period) would become a king of kings; this is known as *Aśva-vrata*.

133-135. Similarly he, who gives a golden chariot with two elephants (to a brāhmaṇa), would live in the Satyaloka for a thousand *Kalpas*; and having come to (i.e. being born on) the earth he would become a king; this is known as *Kari-vrata*. Eating once only on the tenth of a month and giving ten cows at the end of the vow, one should give a golden lamp (to a brāhmaṇa); one would be the lord of the universe. This is called *Viśva-vrata* which destroys great sins.

136-140. He, who offers a daughter (in marriage) on the full-moon day of Kārtika at Puṣkara, having earned twentyone-fold religious merit, goes to the world of Brahmā; there is no greater gift than offering a daughter. Presents should be duly given to a brāhmaṇa specially at Puṣkara, and especially on the full-moon day of Kārtika. Such people (i.e. who give such gifts) will get (i.e. go to) an inexhaustible world (and live there) till universal deluge. He, who recites and listens to the best vow (called) *Ṣaṣṭhī-vrata*, (he) too becomes the lord of Gandharvas for a hundred *Manvantaras* (ages of Manu).

141-145. O you descendant of the Bharata-family, I have told you this auspicious vow good for all mankind. If you desire to hear, O king of kings, listen to these duties of the brāhmaṇa-caste. Cleanliness and purity of mind cannot take place without a bath. Therefore, a bath is first laid down for the purification of the mind. He should bathe with water that is either not drawn out (i.e. of a lake etc.) or drawn out. (Such) a wise man knowing the original sacred texts should prepare a holy place with (the recitation of) an original sacred text. The original sacred text that is laid down is: 'Salutation to Nārāyaṇa'. He, the wise one, with *darbhas* in his hand, who has duly sipped water, who is restrained and pure, having prepared a quadrangular measuring four hands, should invoke Gaṅgā with these basic texts:

146-149. 'You have sprung from the feet of Viṣṇu, you are (therefore) Vaiṣṇavī (of Viṣṇu). Viṣṇu is your deity; therefore,

protect us from the sin upto (i.e. from) birth and (upto) death. Vāyu said that there are three crores and a half sacred places; these (holy places), O Jāhnavī, belong to you in the heaven, on the earth and in the intermediate region between heaven and earth. Among the gods your name is (i.e. you are known as) Nandinī and Nalinī. You are also (known as) Dakṣā, Pṛthvī, Śubhagā, Viśvakāyā, Śivā and Sītā, Vidyādharī, Suprasannā and Lokaprasādinī, Kṣemā, Jāhnavī, and also Śāntā and Śāntipradāyinī.'

150-151. One should recite these holy names at the time of bathing. Then Ganges, moving (i.e. flowing) along the three paths (viz. the sky, earth and the lower world) is near. Having muttered (the names) seven times, one should put the water, held in the cavity of his hands, on one's head three, four, five or seven times.

152-154a. Having similarly invoked (the earth) duly, one should bathe with clay (besmeared on one's body): 'O you earth, you clay, who are trodden over by horses, chariots and by Viṣṇu, remove my sin—the wicked deed—I did. You were drawn up (out of the ocean) by Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) having a hundred arms. (My), salutation to you who are the origin of all the people, O you of a good vow!

154b-155. Having thus (i.e. with this sacred text) taken bath, then having duly sipped water after that, one should stand up and having put on a couple of pure white garments one should present libations of water to the manes of his deceased ancestors for satisfying the three worlds.

156-158. First one should gratify Brahmā (by offering water and then) Viṣṇu, Rudra and Prajāpatis: 'I offer this (libation of) water to satisfy the gods, Yakṣas, also Nāgas, Gandharvas and the hosts of the celestial nymphs, the cruel serpents, Suparṇas, trees like the citron tree, Vidyādharas, Jaladharas, also those who can move in the sky, and those beings who are without any support and those whoare engaged in sinful acts.'

159-160. With the investiture of the sacred thread (i.e. wearing the sacred thread over the left shoulder) one should gratify (i.e. offer libation of water) to gods; then one should

wear the sacred thread round one's neck (like a garland)[1] and should offer libations of water with devotion to human beings, sons of sages and sages also. (The sages are:) Sanaka and Sananda and the third is Sanātana; also Kapila and Āsuri and Vodhṛ and Pañcaśikha.

161-164. (One should say:) 'May all the sages be always pleased with the water offered by me.' With sacred rice grains and water he should make offerings to all the divine and brahmanic sages (like) Marīci, Atrí, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Pracetas, Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu and Nārada. Then wearing the sacred thread over the right shoulder and keeping the right knee on the ground, he should devoutly gratify with water, sesamum and sandal paste (the sages, viz.) Agniṣvāttas[2] (manes of brāhmaṇas), Haviṣmantas[3] (sons of Aṅgiras), Ūṣmapas, Sukālins[4] (manes of Śūdras and sons of Vasiṣṭha), Barhiṣads (sons of Atri and manes of demons, Yakṣas etc.) and Ājyapas[5] (sons of Pulastya).

165-166. Then one, with darbhas in one's hand, should duly offer libations of water to one's own manes. Having, with devotion and according to proper rites, offered libations of water to one's manes, (uttering) their names and appellations and the maternal grandfathers and others, one should recite this basic sacred text: 'May they who were my relatives in this existence and also may they who were my relatives in a past existence, be completely satisfied, and also those desiring water.'

167-170a. Having duly sipped water one should properly draw a lotus in front; (and) uttering the names of the Sun, one should carefully offer oblations with sacred rice grains, flowers, sesamum and reddish sandal paste: 'My salutation to (the Sun) of a universal form; my salutation to (the Sun) of the form of Viṣṇu; my salutation to all gods; O Bhāskara, be pleased with me; O Divākara, my salutation to you; O Prabhākara, my salutation to you.'

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1. *Nivītī*: Wearing the sacred thread, round the neck, making it hang down like a garland.
2. *Agniṣvāttas*: Are manes of gods, and are said to be the sons of Marīci.
3. *Haviṣmantas*: Sons of Aṅgiras.
4. *Sukālins*: Manes of śūdras and sons of Vasiṣṭha.
5. *Ājyapas*: Are sons of Pulastya.

170b-172. Having thus (that is, with the utterance of this sacred text) saluted the Sun and gone round (the lotus) three times, one should see and touch a brāhmaṇa, a cow and gold and then go home. One should then worship the holy image (of the deity) in one's house. Then one should after feeding the brāhmaṇas eat meal. By (performing) this rite all the sages attain perfection.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

The Greatness of Puṣkara and Some Important Vows

Pulastya said:

1-3a. Formerly in the *Bṛhatkalpa*, there was a king by name Dharmamūrti who was a friend of Indra and who had killed thousands of demons. Due to his lustre, the Moon and the Sun had lost their brilliance. He had defeated demons in hundreds, could take any form he liked and was undefeated even among (i.e. by) men.

3b-4. That king had the chief queen Bhānumatī by name, the most beautiful lady in the three worlds, who resembled Lakṣmī in beauty and had vanquished divine beauties (by means of her beauty), and who was greater (i.e. dearer) to the king than his own life.

5. Among ten thousand ladies she shone like Lakṣmī. He cannot be said to be equalled (even) by a thousand crores of kings.

6-7. Once when he was seated in his assembly he, filled with amazement, asked his priest, Vasiṣṭha, the best sage, "Revered Sir, due to which religious merit have I this excellent wealth and for what reason is there always great and excellent lustre in my body?"

Vasiṣṭha said:

8-9a. Formerly there was a prostitute Līlāvatī by name, who was devoted to Śiva. She duly offered, at Puṣkara, a

mountain (i.e. a heap) of salt with a large number of golden trees, on the fourteenth day of the month.

9b-15. There was a śūdra servant, a goldsmith in Līlāvatī's house. O king, he, full of faith, fashioned trees with golden flowers, (well) formed, extremely charming and beautiful. Knowing it to be a pious deed he did not accept wages for it; and his wife polished the golden trees; and O king, the two honestly did service in the house of Līlāvatī like waiting upon the sages etc. And that prostitute Līlāvatī, O sinless one, after a long time, being free from all sins, went to the abode of Śiva; and now you are that goldsmith who, though poor, was very good and (so) did not accept the price (i.e. the wages for his work) from the prostitute. He has become the lord of the seven islands and is lustrous like myriad Suns.

16. This is your (wife) Bhānumatī, who (as) the wife of the goldsmith, had polished the golden trees fashioned by (her husband) the goldsmith.

17. Therefore, in the worlds of mortals you are unvanquished; and your wealth is safe and full of good fortune. Therefore, O king, you too should, in keeping with sacred precepts, fashion mountains of grains etc.

Pulastya said:

18. Saying 'all right' he, the fine image of religious merit, having honoured Vasiṣṭha's words, duly gave all the mountains of grains etc., and being respected by gods he went to the world of the enemy of Cupid, (i.e. of Śiva).

19. A man, whc sees these (mountains of grains) being brought or sees them being given by men or hears (about such a gift) with devotion or thinks (about it), too, being free from sins, goes to heaven.

20. A man destroys the (effect) of bad dreams by big mountains (of grains etc.) being invoked, (which are the) destroyers of the fear of the mundane existence; then, O best of men, what about him, who, with a tranquil mind and with his sins removed, gives the entire lord of mountains?

Bhiṣma said:

21. What is there on the earth, capable of removing the

association with the grief arising from the separation of the dear ones? Or what fast or vow is there that would certainly bring about prosperity or that would destroy man's fear of the mundane existence?

Pulastya said:

22. You have asked me about this vow dear to the world and difficult to perform even for the wise on account of its importance. Yet I shall explain this vow—a secret among Indra, gods and men—to you who are devoted.

23-25a. This is *Dvādaśi-vrata* (to be performed) in the holy month of Āśvina. A wise man eating little on the tenth day, should begin it with restraint, after brushing his teeth and facing the north or the east. On the eleventh, he should not eat anything and having properly worshipped Viṣṇu and having also duly worshipped Lakṣmī (he should say:) 'I shall eat on the next day (i.e. tomorrow).'

25b-26. Having thus taken a pledge, a man, having got up in the morning, should bathe with all herbs and the five products[1] of the cow taken collectively. Having put on white flowers and a garment he should worship the lord of Śrī with lotuses.

27. He should worship the feet (of the deity) saying, 'My salutation to Viśoka.' He should worship the shanks saying, 'My salutation to Varada.' He should worship the knees saying, 'My salutation to Śrīśa.' He should worship the thighs saying, 'My salutation to Jalaśāyī.'

28-32a. He should worship the waist saying, 'My salutation to Mādhava'. He should worship the belly saying, 'My salutation to Dāmodara'. He should worship the sides saying, 'My salutation to Vipula'. He should worship the navel saying, 'My salutation to Padmanābha'. He should worship the heart saying, 'My salutation to Manmatha'. He should worship the chest of the lord saying, 'My salutation to Śrīdhara.' He should worship the hands saying, 'My salutation to Madhubhid.' He should worship the throat saying, 'My salutation to Vaikuṇṭha.' He should worship the face saying, 'My salutation to Aśoka-

1. *Pañcagavya*: The five products of the cow taken collectively viz. milk, curds, clarified butter or ghee, urine and cowdung.

nidhi.' He should worship the eyes saying, 'My salutation to Vāsudeva.' He should worship the forehead saying, 'My salutation to Vāmana.' He should worship the eyebrows saying, 'My salutation to Hari.' He should worship the hair saying, 'My salutation to Mādhava.' He should worship the crest saying, 'My salutation to Viśvarūpin.' Similarly he should worship the head saying, 'My salutation to Sarvātman.'

32b-38a. Thus having worshipped Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) with incense, flowers and anointing, and then having made a circle he should get fashioned an altar with clay; (it should be) having four corners; (it should) have the length of a cubit; and (should) have a slope towards the north. (It should be) smooth, pleasing and surrounded by three ramparts on all sides. The ramparts should be three fingers high, and two fingers in expanse. Above the altar there should be a wall eight fingers high. He should put (i.e. make) the image of Lakṣmī in the (circle representing the) Sun with sand from the river. The wise man should worship Lakṣmī in the (circle representing the) Sun on the altar. (He should say) 'My salutation to Devī; my salutation to Śānti; my salutation to Lakṣmī; my salutation to Śrī; my salutation to Tuṣṭi; my salutation to Puṣṭi; my salutations Puṣṭi and Sṛṣṭi. Being happy she should remove your grief and be a giver of boons to you. Being happy she should grant me wealth and all (kinds) of success.'

38b-42a. Then having covered the (representation of the) Sun with white garments all round, he should worship it with fruits and eatables of various kinds, and also with a golden lotus. The wise one should put water with darbhas in silver pots. Then for the whole night he should arrange dancing and music. When three watches have passed, the man, having got up and having approached three couples or one couple of brāhmaṇas, should worship them (or it) according to his capacity with garments, flowers and incense. He should worship the couples seated on the beds, saying 'My salutation to Jalaśāyin.'

42b-44. Then having kept awake for the (whole) night with singing and (playing upon) musical instruments, and having bathed in the morning he should worship a couple (of brāhmaṇas) and without conceit born of wealth he should feed them according to his capacity; and listening to the Purāṇas

with devotion he should pass the day. He should perform this rite every month.

45-47. At the conclusion of the vow he should present a bed with a cow made of jaggery, with a cushion, with a rest and an auspicious coverlet. (He should say:) 'O lord of men, as Lakṣmī never goes abandoning you, similarly good form, health and absence of grief should always be with me (good form, health and absence of grief should never leave me). As Lakṣmī would never be (i.e. remain) without god (Viṣṇu), similarly may I have freedom from grief and best devotion, O Keśava.'

48-50a. Repeating this sacred text, he, who desires his well-being, should offer a bed with a cow made of jaggery, and also (the representation of) the Sun with Lakṣmī. (He should always offer) a lotus, a *Karavīra* flower, a fresh saffron flower, and flowers of *ketaka*, *sindhuvāra*, *camallikā* reddish with fragrance, *kadamba*, *kubjaka* and jasmine.

Bhīṣma said:

50b-51a. O lord of the sages, tell me about the cow made of jaggery. Tell me now of what form it is and with the recitation of which sacred text it is to be given.

Pulastya said:

51b-52a. I shall now tell you the nature and the fruit of the rite of (offering) a cow made of jaggery, which (i.e. which offering) removes all sins.

52b-54a. A man should spread deer-hide on the ground with the neck (of the deer-hide) in (i.e. facing) the east; he should scatter *darbhas* all over the ground smeared with cow-dung; he should spread a small (piece) of deer-hide and prepare a (representation of a) calf. He should fashion a clay (representation of a) cow (without or) with a calf.

54b-56. (A representation of) a cow made of jaggery weighing four *bhāras* is the best. The weight of the calf should be a *bhāra*. The (representation of the) cow weighing two *bhāras* is said to be second-rate; (then) the representation of the calf would weigh half a *bhāra*; the smallest type would weigh a *bhāra*; (then) the calf would weigh one-fourth *bhāra*, according to the expanse of his dwelling and wealth. The two, viz. the

cow and the calf (thus) fashioned should be covered with white fine garments.

57-60. Their ears should be made of conch shells, feet of sugarcanes, eyes of bright pearls, arteries of white thread, and dewlaps of white blanket, backs of reddish coins[1] and hair of the white bushy tail of *camara*; these two (i.e. the cow and the calf) should have the pair of eyebrows made of coral; their udders should be fashioned with butter; they should have a pair of golden eyes, and pupils (of their eyes) should be (made of) sapphires; their tails should be (made) of silk; their udders of bronze—white and very charming; they should be adorned with golden horns, and their hoofs with silver; the two should be furnished with many fruits and baskets of scents.

61-64a. Thus having arranged (the two) like this he should worship them by (waving) a light and incense. (He should recite the basic text:) 'May that goddess in the form of the cow, who is Lakṣmī to all beings and who has remained in gods, remove my sin. May that cow, who is Lakṣmī resting on Viṣṇu's bosom, and who is Svāhā in the fire, and who is the power of the Moon and the Sun, grant me boons. Since you, (O cow,) are the Svadhā of the chief manes, and the Svāhā of those who enjoy the sacrifices (i.e. of gods), and (since) you remove all sins, grant me well-being.'

64b-66a. Having thus invoked the cow he should offer her (i.e. the representation of the cow) to a brāhmaṇa. This rite (of offering) is laid down for (the offering of) all cows. O king, I shall tell you (about) the form and names of the cows that are said to remove sins.

66b-68. The first cow is *guḍa-dhenu* (i.e. made of jaggery); the second is *ghṛta-dhenu* (i.e. of ghee); the third one is *tila-dhenu* (i.e. of sesamum); the fourth one is called *jala-dhenu*, (i.e. of water); the fifth one is *kṣīra-dhenu* (i.e. of milk); the next one is *madhu-dhenu* (i.e. of honey); the seventh one is *śarkarā-dhenu* (i.e. of sugar); the eighth one is fashioned with curds; the ninth one is of (i.e. represented by) juice; and the tenth one is of the original form (i.e. an actual cow).

1. *Gaṇḍaka*: A coin of the value of four cowries.

69-70. Pitchers should be used for the liquid (representations of) cows, and heaps of their sizes for (representation of) other cows. Some men also desire to offer golden cows. Some other great sages desire to offer cows (represented) by butter and oils. The rite is the same and the ingredients are also the same.

71-73. Always at every *parvan* (i.e. the eighth and the fourteenth day of each half month and the days of the full moon and the new moon) these (representations of cows), giving enjoyment and salvation, should be offered (to brāhmaṇas), with invocation of sacred texts as at a *śrāddha*. On the occasion of (telling you about the offering of a) *guḍa-dhenu*, I have explained all of them, which give the fruits of all sacrifices, which remove all sins and which are auspicious. Since the *Viśoka-dvādaśi-vrata* is best of the vows, the (offering of) a *guḍa-dhenu*, is recommended as auxiliary to it.

74. *Guḍa-dhenu* etc. should be offered during the period of the Sun's passage from one solstice to another[1], during the auspicious equinoctial period, when a portent forebodes a great calamity[2], and also on eclipse days etc.

75-77. And this *Viśoka-dvādaśi* removes all sins and is auspicious, fasting on which (day) a man reaches that highest position of Viṣṇu. In this world he obtains good fortune, (long) life and health, and on death he reaches Viṣṇu's city and has the recollection of Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu). O king, he does not meet with grief, sorrow or calamity for nine thousand and ten and eight hundred millions (of years)[3].

78-79a. A woman, who, devoted to dancing and singing (on this day), observes this vow of Viśoka-dvādaśī, would also get that fruit; since dancing, singing and playing upon musical instruments in front of Viṣṇu (gives) unending (fruit).

79b-80a. He who recites like this or listens to this properly or observes the worship of the enemy of (the demons) Madhu,

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1. *Ayana*: The sun's passage, north and south of the equator; hence the period of the duration of this passage, half year, the time from one solstice to another.

2. *Vyatīpāta*: A portent foreboding a great calamity.

3. *Arbuda*: One hundred millions.

Mura and Naraka, or even suggests people (to observe this vow), lives in the world of Indra and is honoured by streams (i.e. large groups) of gods for a Kalpa.

Bhiṣma said:

80b-81a. O revered one, I desire to hear the great importance of (that) offering which is inexhaustible in the other world and is honoured by hosts of gods and sages.

Pulastya said:

81b-83a. O best of kings, I shall tell you (about) the ten ways of the gift of theMeru, the giver of which obtains unending worlds honoured by gods. One does not get fruit of that (gift) (even) by studying the Purāṇas and the Vedas and performing sacrifices and (visiting) holy places.

83b-86. (Now), therefore, I shall serially describe the gift of mountains: The first is *dhānya-śaila* (the mountain of grains); the second is *lavaṇācala* (the mountain of salt); the third is *guḍācala* (the mountain of jaggery); the fourth is *hema-parvata* (the mountain of gold); the fifth is *tila-śaila* (the mountain of sesamum); the sixth is *kārpāsa-parvata* (the mountain of cotton); the seventh is *ghṛta-śaila* (the mountain of ghee); the eighth is *ratna-śaila* (the mountain of gems); the ninth is the mountain of silver and the tenth is *śarkarācala* (the mountain of sugar). I shall tell (you) in proper order the manner in which they are observed.

87-89a. Mountains (i.e. heaps) of grains should be given as prescribed during the auspicious half of the year, or in the evening at the time of a portent foreboding a great calamity, or on the third day of the bright half, or on the day of a lunar eclipse, or at the time of marriage, festival or sacrifice, or on the twelfth day, or on the fifteenth day of the bright half, or when constellations are auspicious, or on the full moon day of Kārtika at Jyeṣṭha Puṣkara.

89b-90. In the holy places or in a cowpen or in the courtyard of the house, he should, with devotion, get prepared an auspicious pavilion having four corners, facing the south, and having a slope towards the north-east or facing the east according to the prescribed rules.

91-92. Having spread *darbhas* on the ground smeared with cowdung, he should fashion among them a mountain with pillars in the form of (other) mountains. This best mountain should be (made of) a thousand *droṇas*[1], that of a middle size should be (made of) five hundred *droṇas*, and the smallest one should be (made of) three hundred *droṇas*.

93-95a. In the centre should be the Meru mountain made of rice along with three golden trees. Through best brāhmaṇas one (or) more (pieces of) cloth should be put at the top. It should have four silver peaks, and also the slopes should be made of silver; in the east, it should be (decorated) with pearls and diamonds; in the south with *gomeda*-gems and rubies; in the west (it should be decorated) with emeralds and sapphires, (and) in the north with lapis lazuli and topaz.

95b-97. It should be decorated with bits of sandal and corals on all sides, (and also) with creepers, and with pearls and gems. Golden (representations of) revered Brahmā and Viṣṇu and Śiva and (and also of) the Sun should be (installed) here; similarly its caves should be covered with sugarcanes and bamboos, and the streams of water in the form of ghee (should flow) in (various) directions. The row of clouds would be (represented by) pieces of cloth—white in the east, yellow in the south, variegated in the west and red and compact in the north.

98-100a. One should instal the silver (images of) chief kings and of the eight lords of the worlds in (proper) order. There should be various rows of forests round about, and also flowers and perfumes. At the top, it should have a canopy of five colours, and should have the decoration of fresh white flowers. Thus having placed the best mountain (viz. Meru) and the pillar mountains in (due) order, one should with (i.e. in the remaining) fourth part establish (the representations of) the four quarters decorated with flowers and perfumes.

100b. In the east should be the Meru mountain with many fruits and shining as it would be full of gold.

101. Gandhamādana, made of heap of wheat and adorned with silver should be installed in the south. It should be end-

1. *Droṇa*: A measure of capacity equal to 128 sers.

owed with golden representation of Viṣṇu[1] or his Mānasa (form)[2] made of ghee and with a piece of cloth and silver forests.

102. In the west one should get fashioned a mount of sesamum, (decorated) with many fragrant flowers and a golden *pippala* tree and a golden swan; there should be a cluster of silver flowers, and it should be decorated with a (piece of) cloth, and at the front there should be a lake with white water in the form of curds.

103-104a. Having placed the big mount he should get fashioned in the north mount Supārśva made of beans and along with cloth and flowers, and having at its top a golden bunyan tree and shining with a golden flag, and with a forest (on it) having an auspicious lake of honey and a bright silver canopy.

104b-105. Through four self-controlled brāhmaṇas, knowing Vedas and Purāṇas and of praise-worthy character and forms, a sacrifice should be performed with sesamum, barley, ghee, sacred fuel and *darbhas*, after having made a pool of the measure of a hand, in the east. At night one should keep awake with (i.e. by singing) mild songs and (staging) plays. I shall now tell (you) about the invocation of the mountains.

106-109. 'O treasure, you are the abode of the hosts of all gods; O you immortal mountain, destroy whatever is adverse in his house; bring about wellbeing and excellent peace, for you have been worshipped by me of great devotion. You alone are revered lord, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Divākara (i.e. the Sun); you are the embodied and unembodied seed; therefore, O eternal one, protect me. Since you are the abode of the regents of the quarters of the world and of the omnipresent one, and also of Rudra, Ādityas and Vasus, therefore, grant me peace. Since your top is crowded with gods and ladies, therefore emancipate me from this painful ocean of worldly existence.'

110-114a. Having thus worshipped Meru one should worship Mandara: 'O Mandara, since you look charming with Caitraratha and Bhadrāśva, therefore give (me) happiness. O Gandhamādana, you are the crest-jewel in Jambū-dvīpa and look charming with the hosts of Gandharvas, therefore let me

1. *Yajñapati*: A name of Viṣṇu.
2. *Mānasa*: A form of Viṣṇu.

have enduring fame. Since you have the beauty of golden slabs with Ketumāla and Vaibhrāja forest, therefore, let me have permanent nourishment. O Supārśva, since you always shine with Uttara Kuru and Savitra forest, therefore let me have inexhaustible prosperity.'

114b-115. Having thus invoked all those (mountains) and having taken bath in the bright morning one should present the middle mountain to his preceptor; then O king, he should give the pillar-mountains to the priests one by one.

116-117. According to one's capacity one should give twentyfour or ten cows, O king, or if one does not have the capacity one should give seven or eight or five cows. At least one tawny milch-cow should be offered to the preceptor. The same procedure should be followed in the case of the remaining.

118. The same sacred texts and ingredients (should be used) for the worship of all the planets, regents of the quarters of the world and Brahmā etc.

119-122. A sacrifice on all mountains is laid down with (the accompaniment of) one's own sacred text. One should (during the vow) always observe fast; if one is weak, meal at night is prescribed. O king, listen, according to the proper order, to the procedure to be followed in case of all mountains; (listen) also (to) the sacred texts to be recited at the time of making gifts on (i.e. with reference to) the mountains and their fruit. 'As food is said to be Brahman, as food is declared to be life, as beings are born from food, as the world grows on food, as food is Lakṣmī, as food is Viṣṇu himself, so, O best mountain, protect me by means of your form of the mountain of grains.'

123-125a. He, who gives the mountain full of grains with this rite, is honoured in the world of gods for full hundred *manvantaras*. O best of king, accompanied by hosts of celestial nymphs and Gandharvas, he goes to heaven in an aeroplane; and after the destruction of (the bonds of) his deeds he obtains the kingdom of kings; there is no doubt about it.

125b-129. Now I shall describe to you the (rite of the) best mountain of salt, by giving which a man goes to the world connected with Śiva. The best mountain of salt should be fashioned with sixteen *droṇas*; the middle one should be fashioned with half (the quantity) of it; and the lowest one is said (to

consist) of four (*droṇas*). A poor person should (get a mountain fashioned) which (consists of) more than a *droṇa*, according to his capacity. He should get the four pillar-mountains fashioned separately with one-fourth (*droṇa*). He should always follow the same procedure as formerly told in the case of Brahmā and others. Similarly he should instal golden abodes of all the regents of the quarters of the world, and also lakes and forests and trees etc.

130-133a. Here (i.e. in this case) also keeping awake during the night (as usual) is recommended. Listen to the sacred texts (to be recited at this time): 'Since this taste in the salt is associated with good fortune and since all other tastes do not excel without salt, therefore, being identical with it, O best mountain, (please) protect me who am afflicted. As you are always dear to Śiva, so give (me) peace. Since you have sprung up from the body of Viṣṇu and increase good health, therefore, you, of the form of a mountain, protect me.'

133b-135a. He, who, presents the mountain of salt (to a brāhmaṇa) with this rite, would live for a *Kalpa* in the world of Umā, and thence would get the highest position. Hereafter I shall describe (the rite of) the mountain of jaggery, by making the present of which a man, honoured by gods, obtains heaven.

135b-138a. The best (jaggery-mountain) is deemed (to weigh) ten *bhāras*; the middle one is (deemed to weigh) five (*bhāras*); the smallest is (said to weigh) three *bhāras*. A person with small wealth (should have the mountain weighing) half of it (i.e. one *bhāra* and a half). He should have the same invocation, the same (type of) worship, the same (kind of) golden trees, worship of gods, pillar-mountains, and also (the same type of) lakes and sylvan deities, the same (type of) sacrifice, keeping awake (at night), and abodes of the regents of quarters of the world, as in the case of (the offering of) the mountain of grains. He should recite this sacred text:

138b-141. 'As among gods this Janārdana, the universal soul, is the best, as Sāmaveda is the best among Vedas, as Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva) is the best among those who practise abstract meditation, as Oṁkāra is the best of all sacred texts, as Pārvatī is the best among all ladies, in the same way the

taste of sugarcane is regarded as the best of all tastes. Therefore, may the mountain of jaggery give me great wealth. O you mountain of jaggery, since you have been created by Pārvatī, the giver of good fortune, as her abode, therefore always protect me.'

142-143. He, who gives according to this rite, a mountain (made) of jaggery (to a brāhmaṇa), being honoured by Gandharvas, is respected in the world of Gaurī; (and) again at the end of a hundred Kalpas becomes the lord of the seven islands; and is endowed with (long) life and health and is not defeated by (his) enemies.

144. Now I shall describe (to you the rite of) the golden mountain giving which men go to the world of Viriñci (i.e. Brahmā).

145-149a. The best one (is said to weigh) a thousand *palas*; the middle one (is said to weigh) five hundred *palas*; the lowest one (is said to weigh) half of it. Even a man with small wealth, free from jealousy, should give (a golden mountain weighing) more than a *pala*. O best king, all the procedure should be the same as in the case of (the present of) a mountain of grains. As (in the case of the present of) that (i.e. a mountain of grains) he should offer the pillar-mountains to the priests. He should recite the text: 'O mountain, since you give unending fruit, therefore (please) protect me. O best of mountains, since you are the child of Agni, since you are the lord of the universe, therefore, in your form of the golden mountain (please) protect me.'

149b-150. He, who gives, according to this rite, a golden mountain (to a brāhmaṇa) goes to the delight-giving world of Brahmā; he would stay there for a hundred *kalpas* and then he goes to the highest position from there.

151. Now I shall tell (you about the present of) a mountain of sesamum along with the rite, by giving which a man goes to the excellent world of Viṣṇu.

152. The best one is said to weigh ten *droṇas*; the middle one (is said to weigh) five *droṇas*; O best of kings, the lowest one is said to weigh three *droṇas*.

153. Other things like the pillar-mountains are the same as before. O best of kings, I shall tell you the sacred text that

accompanies the presentation:

154-155. 'Since sesamum, *darbhas* and beans were produced from the perspiration of the body of Viṣṇu at the time of the murder of Madhu, and since sesamum seeds alone are the protection in the offerings made to gods and manes of ancestors, therefore, grant us peace; and O best of mountains, give (me) wealth; (my) salutation to you.'

156. He, who, invoking in this way, presents an excellent mountain of sesamum, goes to the position of Viṣṇu, from which return (i.e. rebirth) is difficult.

157. The mountain of cotton weighing twenty *bhāras* is the best; the middle one is said (to weigh) ten *bhāras*, and the lowest is said to weigh five *bhāras*.

158. A poor man, free from pride born of wealth, should give the mountain of cotton weighing one *bhāra*. O best of kings, everything is to be accomplished as in the case of the presentation of the mountain of grains.

159-161a. When the dawn has broken, he should give it and recite this (sacred text): 'O mountain of cotton, since you always are the covering of people, destroy the stream of (my) sins. (My) salutation to you.' Saying this, he, who gives the mountain of cotton (to a brāhmaṇa), would live for a Kalpa in Rudra's world with Śarva (i.e. Śiva); then he would be a king in this world.

161b. Now I shall describe (to you) the (rite of the) excellent mountain of ghee, which is lustrous, auspicious and destroyer of great sins.

162-164. The best mountain of ghee would weigh twenty (*bhāras*); the middle is said to weigh ten (*bhāras*); and the lowest one is said to weigh five (*bhāras*). Even a poor person should prepare one weighing two *bhāras*, according to the procedure. Similarly the pillar-mountains should be prepared with the fourth portion of it, and one should put the vessels of rice on a pitcher.

165-166. He should get fashioned compact (mountains) according to the procedure and (as would look) charming. He should surround them with pieces of cloth and sugarcanes and fruits etc. Here (also) the entire procedure is the same as in the

case of the mountain of grains. The installation (of the deities etc.) and a sacrifice and worship of deities, are (to be done) like that (i.e. as in the case of the mountains of grains).

167. When the dawn has broken, he should offer it to his teacher; and with a tranquil mind he should present the pillar-mountains to the priests.

168-169. He should recite the following text: 'Since ghee was produced due to combination (of curds etc.) in milk, therefore, may Śiva, the universal soul and a blazing fire, be pleased here. O mountain (of ghee), since Brahman, full of lustre, is settled in ghee, therefore, protect me with your mountain-form of ghee.'

170-172a. He should present the excellent ghee-mountain (to a brāhmaṇa) with this rite. Even though he is filled with great sins, he goes to Śiva's world in an aeroplane to which swans and cranes are yoked, and has a mass of strings of bells attached to it, and is surrounded by celestial nymphs and Siddhas and Vidyādharas; he would move there with the manes till deluge.

172b-173. Now I shall explain to you (the rite) of the excellent mountain of jewels. (This) mountain would be the best with a thousand of pearls. The middle one should be fashioned with five hundred pearls; the lowest one is said to have been fashioned with three hundred pearls.

174-176. All around it there should be pillar-mountains made from one-fourth portion (of the material viz. the pearls). The wise should fashion the (Mandara) (mountain) in the east with diamonds and gems brought from the Himālayas, should fashion the Gandhamādana in the south with sapphires and topaz; the Vipulācala should be fashioned in the west with lapis lazuli and corals; he should also place in the north (the Supārśva mountain) with rubies and gold. In this case also he should arrange everything as in the case of the mountain of grains.

177. Having invoked like that (i.e. as in the case of the mountain of grains), the golden trees and (images of) deities he should worship them with flowers, sandal etc. In the morning he should allow (the deities invoked) to go.

178-180a. And as before he (should give them) to the priests (and) recite this sacred text: 'O great mountain, as all the hosts of gods are settled in all jewels and as you are always full of jewels, (please) protect me. Since Viṣṇu is pleased with the offering of jewels, and with the worship, the sacred text and the food offered (to the deity), therefore, O mountain, protect us.'

180b-183a. O king, he, who presents the jewelled mountain (to a brāhmaṇa) with this rite, being worshipped by the lord of gods, goes to Viṣṇu's world, and lives there for a full hundred Kalpas. He, being endowed with a (good) form, health and virtues, would become the lord of the seven islands. And all that (sin) like the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc. committed in this or the other world perishes as a mountain struck with the thunderbolt.

183b-184. O king, I shall now describe (to you the rite of) the excellent silver mountain, by offering which man goes to the world of Soma (i.e. the Moon). The best silver mountain is (that which is fashioned) with silver weighing ten thousand *palas*.

185-186. The middle one is said to be (fashioned) with silver (weighing) five thousand *palas*. A poor person should get a silver mountain fashioned with more than twenty *palas* (of silver) according to his capacity. Similarly he should fashion the pillar-mountains with one-fourth portion (of the silver), and as before he should get fashioned Mandara and other (mountain) according to the procedure (that is laid down).

187-188. The wise one should get the regents of the quarters of the world fashioned with silver. The slope (of the mountain) having Brahmā, Viṣṇu and the Sun on it should be golden; (or it may be made of) silver. The other mountains should be (made of) gold. The remaining (items) like sacrifice, keeping awake (at night) should be as before.

189-190a. And like that (i e. as before) he should give, in the morning, the silver mountain to his preceptor and the pillar-mountains along with garments and ornaments to the priests; and being free from jealousy and with *darbhas* in his hands, he should, reciting this sacred text, offer it:

190b-192a. 'As silver is dear to the manes, to the Moon and to Śiva, so, O silver, protect us from this ocean of mundane existence (full) of grief.' The man, who, declaring in this way, gives the excellent silver mountain, gets the fruit of (offering) thousands of myriads of cows.

192b-193a. Being honoured by Gandharvas, Kinnaras and hosts of celestial nymphs, he would live in the world of the Moon till deluge.

193b-195. Now I shall describe (to you the rite of) the best mountain of sugar, by offering which Viṣṇu, the Sun and Śiva are always pleased. The best mountain would be (the one weighing) eight *bhāras* of sugar; the middle one is said (to weigh) four *bhāras*; and the lowest one is said (to weigh) two *bhāras*. He who is very poor should fashion it with silver (weighing) a *bhāra* or half a *bhāra*.

196-199a. The man should fashion the pillar-mountains with one-fourth portion (of the silver); all other things would be like the mountain of grains with gold and cloth (etc.). On Meru, the three golden trees, viz. Mandāra, Pārijāta and Kalpa as the third, should be placed; this triplet of trees should be placed at the top of all. (The two trees, viz.) Haricandana and Santāna[1] should be placed in eastern and western regions on all the mountains, especially on the mountain of sugar.

199b-200. On the Mandara mountain (the image of) god Cupid facing the west should be (placed). On the peak of Gandhamādana, (the image of) Kubera, facing the north, should be (kept). The representation of the Vedas should face the east, and (the image of) Viṣṇu should be (placed) on the Vipula-mountain.

201-202. The golden (representation of a) cow of good flanks should face the south. Having done the invocation, the sacrifice as in the case of the mountain of grains, he should give the excellent middle mountain to his preceptor; he should give the four mountains to the priests and recite these secret texts:

203-205. 'Since this sugar-mountain is the essence of the

1. *Santāna*: One of the five divine trees. The other four are: Mandāra, Pārijātaka, Kalpavṛkṣa and Haricandana.

nectar of good-fortune, therefore, O lord of mountains, always be pleasure-giving. O sugar-mountain, you have sprung up from the drops of nectar that fell on the earth when gods were drinking it; (please) protect us. Sugar again has come up from the bow of Cupid. O great mountain, you are made of it (i.e. sugar); protect us from the ocean of the worldly existence.'

206. The man, who presents sugar-mountain according to this rite, being free from all sins, goes to the abode of Brahmā.

207. Then getting into an aeroplane shining like the Moon and the Sun, he would rise from there (and go to) the heaven of lord Viṣṇu.

208-209. After that at the end of a hundred Kalpas, he, endowed with (long) life and (good) health, would be the lord of the seven islands for three myriads of existence. In (the rites of) all (these) mountains, he, free from jealousy, should have (i.e. offer) meals (to brāhmaṇas) according to his capacity, and with their permission should himself eat food without salt.

210-211a. He should send all the ingredients (used for the rite) of the mountain to the house of the brāhmaṇa (invited for the rite). I have (thus) told you this (observance of the rite of the) gift of a mountain. O king, ask me what else you like (to hear from me).

Bhiṣma said:

211b-212a. O revered sir, tell (me about) some vow capable of taking one out of the ocean of the worldly existence and giving the fruit (in the form) of heaven and (good) health.

Pulastya spoke:

212b-214. I shall explain to you a religious observance with reference to the Sun, which is called *Kalyāṇa-saptamī*. So also *Viśoka-saptamī*, and a third one, viz. *Phala-saptamī*. One should observe (the vow of) *Śarkarā-saptamī* and *Kamalā-saptamī* also; (similarly one should observe the vow of) *Mandāra-saptamī*, the sixth (vow), and *Śubha-saptamī* the seventh (vow). All (these) are said to give religious merit and all are honoured by gods and sages.

215-216. I shall tell (you) in their order the manner in which they are to be observed. When on the seventh of any of the bright fortnights it is Sunday (i.e. when the seventh day of the bright fortnight falls on Sunday), it is called Kalyāṇinī and Vijayā also. In the morning one should bathe in the river with cow's milk (i.e. after applying cow's milk to one's body).

217-220. Wearing a white garment and facing the east, one should prepare, with sacred rice grains, a lotus having eight petals with a pericarp in its centre. In due order one should instal the lord of gods everywhere (i.e. in all the petals) with (i.e. offering) flowers and sacred rice grains (and paying homage to him). (One should offer flowers and sacred rice grains to the representation installed) in the eastern direction (saying, 'I offer) this to Tapana;' then one should offer flowers and sacred rice grains to the representation in the south-east direction (saying, 'I offer this) to Mārtaṇḍa;' then to the one in the south (saying, 'I offer this) to Divākara;' (then to the one) in south-west direction (saying, 'I offer) this to Vidhātṛ'; (then to one) in the north-west (saying, 'I offer this) to Bhāskara;' (then to the one) in the north (saying, 'I offer this) to Vaikartana;' and then keeping (the flowers and sacred rice grains) on the eighth petal (one should say, 'I offer this) to Deva.' At the beginning, in the middle, and at the end (of the rite, one should say,'my) salutation to the highest soul.'

221-225. Having worshipped the deity with sacred texts and having saluted it, one should worship it on the altar with white garments, fruits, eatables, incense, and unctions, and with jaggery and salt. Then having with the utterance of vyāhṛti[1] allowed the best brāhmaṇas to go, one should devoutly and according to his capacity please them with jaggery, milk, ghee etc. One should also offer the pot of sesamum and gold to a brāhmaṇa. A man, having accepted a vow thus, should sleep, and having got up in the morning, and having bathed and muttered sacred texts, and having eaten ghee and rice boiled in milk, he should give the pot of ghee with gold

1. *Vyāhṛti*: A mystic word uttered by every brāhmaṇa in performing his daily sandhyā—adoration. These Vyāhṛtis are three—Bhūr, Bhuvas and Svas or Svar, usually repeated after Om; according to some, they are seven in number.

and water-pitcher to a brāhmaṇa who is not a religious hypocrite.[1]

226. (He should say:) 'May the highest soul, Divākara (i.e. the Sun) be pleased here (i.e. with this offering)'. He should perform this rite every month.

227-228. Then in the thirteenth month he should give thirteen milch-cows with pieces of cloth and ornaments, and with golden horns (i.e. with their horns decked with gold) or if he is poor, he, free from jealousy, should give one cow; he should not be proud of his wealth, for due to that he, through delusion, falls down (i.e. into hell).

229-231. He, who observes (the vow of) *Kalyāṇa-saptamī* in this manner, is free from all sins and is honoured in the world of Sun; and in this world he has unlimited life, (good) health and prosperity. This (vow of *Kalyāṇa-saptamī*) removes all sins and is honoured by all gods. (This) *Kalyāṇa-saptamī* destroys all evils.

232-234. He, who listens to the (description of the vow of) *Kalyāṇa-saptamī*, or reads it, becomes free from all sins. O best king, like this (vow of *Kalyāṇa-saptamī*) I shall explain (to you) the vow of *Viśoka-saptamī*, having observed which a man never meets with grief in this world. On the fifth day of the bright half of Māgha, he, having bathed with black sesamum, having, after brushing the teeth, eaten the mixture of rice and peas with a few spices[2], should observe a fast, and avoiding sexual intercourse, should sleep at night.

235-237. Then getting up in the morning and having bathed and muttered sacred texts and (thus being) pure, he should fashion a golden lotus and should worship (the Sun with it saying: 'I offer this) to Arka.' Also (he should worship the Sun) with a red *Karavīra* and with a pair of red garments. (He should say:) 'O Āditya, as the world is free from grief due to you only, let me in the same way have freedom from grief

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1. *Vaiḍāla-vrata*: 'A cat-like observance'. Concealing one's malice or evil designs under the garb of piety or virtue. Vaiḍāla-vratin is one who leads a chaste life simply for want of female company and not because he has controlled his senses.

2. *Kṛsara*: A dish consisting of the mixture of rice and peas with a few spices.

and devotion to you in every existence.' Thus worshipping the Sun on the sixth day, he should devoutly honour the brāhmaṇas.

238-242a. After getting up (in the morning) and after drinking cow's urine and after having performed his daily rites, and having carefully worshipped brāhmaṇas, he should give a pair of good garments and (the golden) lotus with a pot of jaggery. Then eating (food) without oil and salt on the seventh day, and observing silence, he, desiring his well-being, should listen to the (recital of) Purāṇa. He should observe (this vow on the sixth and seventh days) of both the fortnights upto the seventh day of the (next) Māgha. At the end of the vow, he should give a pitcher along with a golden lotus and a furnished bed and a milch-cow.

242b-246a. He, who, being free from the conceit of wealth, observes (the vow of) *Viśoka-saptami* goes to the highest position; and till an entire crore of hundreds of existences pass, he, being free from calamity, does not meet with grief. He fully satisfies whatever desire he entertains. He, who observes (this vow) without any desire, goes to the highest Brahman. He too, who listens to the vow called *Viśoka-saptami*, reaches Indra's world, and is never unhappy.

246b-247a. I shall (now) tell (you) about another (vow) called *Phala-saptami*, observing which, a man, being free from sins, goes to heaven.

247b-250. On the fifth day of the auspicious month of Mārgaśīrṣa, he, with a firm devotion and having fasted on the sixth day, (and) getting fashioned a golden lotus, should offer it with sugar to a brāhmaṇa having a family; and he, knowing (what) religious merit (is), should make a golden form of a fruit (i.e. should fashion a golden fruit) and give it in the evening (to a brāhmaṇa saying): 'May Bhānu (i.e. the Sun) be pleased with me.' Having honoured the brāhmaṇas according to his capacity on the seventh day, he should have the meal with (sweetened) milk; and give up (eating) fruit upto the seventh day of the dark fortnight.

251-252a. And according to this procedure one should fast on that day. Similarly one should present a golden fruit, along with a golden lotus, a pot (full) of sugar and a garment and a garland.

252b-253a. For a year having fasted on both the seventh days (of a month), he should present (the above-mentioned things) in due order and should recite this sacred text in honour of the Sun.

253b-254a. 'May Bhānu, Arka, Ravi, Brahmā, Sūrya, Śakra, Hari, Śiva, Śrīmān, Vibhāvasu, Tvaṣṭṛ (and) Varuṇa be pleased.'

254b-256a. On the seventh day of each month he should recite one of these names. He should observe (the vow also) by giving up eating one (species of) fruit per fortnight. At the conclusion of the vow he should honour a couple of brāhmaṇas with garments and ornaments. He should (also) give a pitcher (full) of sugar along with a golden fruit.

256b-257a. (He should pray as follows:) 'Since the desire of your devotees is never fruitless, therefore let me have an unending fruit in every existence.'

257b-260a. He who observes this (vow of) Saptamī, giving unlimited fruit, liberates twentyone past and future male (-members) (of his family). He, who listens to or recites (the procedure of the vow), too, becomes virtuous; and with his heart purified he is honoured in the world of the Sun. Whatever sin like drinking of wine is done (i.e. committed) by a man in this or in the next world, all that (sin of him) who observes the vow of *Phala-saptamī*, is destroyed.

260b-264. Like this (vow of *Phala-saptamī*) I shall describe (to you) *Śarkarā-saptamī* that destroys sins, and by (observing) which unending (long) life, good (health) and prosperity are produced (i.e. are obtained). On the seventh day of the bright half (of the month) of Vaiśākha, he, of a firm faith, after having bathed in the morning with white sesamum and having had pure garland and anointment, and after having drawn a lotus with a pericarp (in it) with saffron, he should offer on it sandal and flowers (saying:) 'My salutation to Savitṛ.' He should instal a water-pitcher with a sugar-pot after having adorned it with white flowers and anointing (it), and also with a golden flower. He should worship it with this sacred text:

265-266. 'Since you are described in the Vedas as full of all Vedas and since you are all-in-all of immortality, give me peace.' Then having drunk (the mixture of) the five products of a cow,

he should sleep by its side on (bare) ground. He keeps on reciting the *Saura-sūkta* (i.e. the eulogy of the Sun) and listening to the Purāṇas (i.e. He should recite the Saura-sūkta and listen to the recital of the Purāṇas).

267-271. When a (whole) day and night have passed, he after having performed the daily rites, should present all that to a brāhmaṇa, well-versed in the Vedas. He should feed the brāhmaṇas, according to his capacity, with sugar, ghee and (sweetened) milk; (but) he himself, restrained in speech, should eat (food) without oil and salt. Every month, he should (observe this vow) according to this procedure. And, he, according to his capacity, should give, at the end of the year, an all-furnished bed, with a pitcher of sugar, a milch-cow and a well-furnished house; and should offer a thousand, or a hundred or ten, or three *niṣkas*, or one *niṣka*.

272. He should, according to his capacity, give a golden lotus and should recite the sacred text as before. He should not be proud of his wealth, for doing so, he would incur sins.

273. (He should say:) 'May you have the rice, kidney-beans[1] and the sugar-canes (which are) the drops of nectar that had fallen on the ground from the mouth of the Sun (when he was) drinking nectar.'

274. Therefore, the taste of sugar has the essence of sugar-canes and has nectar as its soul. So, this sugar, dear to the Sun, is auspicious at the time of making offerings to gods and manes.

275-277. And this *Śarkarā-saptamī* gives the fruit of a horse-sacrifice, removes all evils and increases (the number of) sons and grandsons. He, who observes this vow with great devotion, goes to the highest Brahman; for one year he would live in heaven and then he goes to the highest position. O sinless one, he who listens to this (account), or recollects it, or recites it or thinks about it in this world, is honoured by gods and best sages in the city of gods, in the world of the lord of gods.

278. Hereafter I shall likewise, describe to you the *Kamala-saptamī*, by the mere mention of which the Sun is pleased.

279-281a. Having well-bathed with white mustard, and having put in a sesamum-pot, an auspicious golden lotus, and surrounding it with a pair of garments he should worship it

1. *Mudga*: Kidney-bean.

with sandal and flowers. (He should recite this sacred text:) 'My salutation to Padmahasta; my salutation to Viśvadhārin; my salutation to Divākara; my salutation to Prabhākara.'

281b-282. Then in the evening, he should offer it with a water-pitcher to a brāhmaṇa after having honoured him with garments, flowers and ornaments; he should (also) give, according to his capacity, a cow after adorning her according to the (proper) procedure.

283-284. When a day and a night have passed, he should feed the brāhmaṇas on the eighth day; and he himself should eat (food) without flesh and oil. He being free from pride about his wealth, should, with devotion, observe all this according to the proper rite on the seventh day of the bright half of every month.

285-286. At the conclusion of the vow he should give golden cows, (or) milch-cows, vessels, beds etc. and also the desired household articles.

287-292. He, who observes the (vow of) *Kamala-saptami* according to this procedure goes to (i.e. obtains) unlimited wealth and is delighted in the world of the Sun. He would partake of (i.e. go to) each of the seven worlds in a *Kalpa*, and being surrounded by the celestial nymphs, he then reaches the highest position. He who witnesses or listens to, or recites at the (proper) time or devoutly thinks about this vow, too, obtaining spotless wealth, goes to the world of Gandharvas and Vidyādharas. Hereafter I shall describe to you (the vow) called *Mandāra-saptami* which destroys all sins, fulfils all desires, and is auspicious. A wise man, eating (very) little on the fifth day of the bright half of Māgha, should, after brushing his teeth, observe a fast on the sixth day. Having honoured the brāhmaṇas he should pray to Mandāra at night. Then having got up in the morning, and having bathed, he should feed the brāhmaṇas according to his capacity.

293-296. He should (then) fashion a group of eight mandāra flowers; similarly he should fashion a golden (image of a) man with a very charming lotus in his hand. Having made of black sesamum, a lotus having eight leaves, in a copper-vessel, (he should worship the Sun) with the golden mandāra flowers. While offering the flowers in the eastern direction (he should say, 'I offer)

this to Bhāskara.' In the same way (he should offer) two spotless petals with a salutation (saying 'I offer) these to the Sun.' In the same way (when offering the flower) in the southern direction (he should say 'I offer) this to Arka'; (while offering it in the north-west direction he should say, 'I offer) this to Aryaman.' Similarly (while offering it) in the west (he should say 'I offer) this to Vedadhāman,' and (while offering it) in the northeast direction he should say, 'I offer) this to Caṇḍabhānu.' And he should worship Pūṣan in the north (saying 'I offer) this to Ānanda.'

297-301. (An image of) a man should be installed in a pericarp. (He should) also (make an offering) to (the highest god) the soul of all, after having surrounded it with white garments, articles of food, flowers and fruits. Having thus worshipped (the deity), he should give all that to a brāhmaṇa, learned in (all) Vedas; and the householder, observing silence, and facing the east should eat without oil and salt. Being free from the vanity of wealth, he should do everything according to this procedure on the seventh day of every month for a year. He who desires his well-being should place this on a pitcher and give it according to his wealth (i.e. economic condition) with cows (to a brāhmaṇa). (While making the offering he should say) 'Salutation to Mandāranātha and to Mandārabhavana. O Ravi, rescue us from this ocean of the worldly existence.'

302. The man, who observes the vow of *Mandāra-saptami* according to this procedure, being free from sins, and being happy, delights in heaven for a *Kalpa*.

303. A man taking with him this torch in (i.e. for removing) the terrible darkness in a train of sins does not fall down in the night of the mundane existence.

304. Even he, who recites, or listens to (the account of this vow of) *Mandāra-saptami* which gives the desired fruit, becomes free from all sins.

305. Now I shall tell you about another vow, viz. of the good *Śubha-saptami*, having fasted on which a man becomes free from the stream of diseases and griefs.

306. In the month of Āśvina, having solemnly bathed and muttered sacred texts, and having become pure, and having

informed the brāhmaṇas, he should begin the (vow of) *Śubha-saptamī*.

307-311. He should devoutly worship a cow with sandal, flowers and anointment. (While making the offering he should say) 'O Śubha-kalyāṇī, I salute you, who are born from the Sun and are the abode of the entire world, for the purification of (my body).' (Saying,) 'May Aryaman be pleased,' he should, in the evening, give an offering of a *prastha* (-measure) of sesamum after having prepared it, with a copper-vessel, and also a golden bull, with a piece of cloth, flowers and jaggery, and with a cushion, repose, vessels and a seat, along with fruits and various articles of food with ghee and (sweetened) milk. Having drunk the (mixture of the) five products of cow, he should sleep on a bare ground; then, when the morning has dawned, he should devoutly offer it to the brāhmaṇas.

312-317. A man should offer, according to this rite, a couple of garments, a golden bull and a golden cow. And at the end of the year he should, saying, 'May the universal soul be pleased,' give a bed with a sugar-cane and jaggery, and a *prastha* (-measure) of sesamum (after having put it) in a copper-pot, as well as a golden bull, to a brāhmaṇa learned in the Vedas. A wise man, who observes the vows of *Śubha-saptamī* according to this procedure, gets wealth (and) pure fame in every existence; and being honoured by the hosts of celestial nymphs and Gandharvas in the abode of gods, he, being, the chief of the troop of demigods—attendants of Śiva, lives (there) till deluge; and having descended (on the earth) at the beginning of a Kalpa, he would become the lord of the seven islands. This *Śubha-saptamī* is said to be capable of destroying the sin of a thousand killings of embryos or of brāhmaṇas.

318-319. He, too, who recites, listens to this (vow), or, by chance sees for a while the gifts being given, with his body freed from all sins, obtains the leadership of Vidyādharas. A man, who observes the vow of the (*Śubha-*) *saptamī* for seven years, gradually becomes the lord of the seven worlds and (then) goes to the position of Murāri.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

On Vows

Bhiṣma said:

1-3. *Bhūḥ*, *Bhuvaḥ*, *Svaḥ*, *Mahaḥ*, *Jana*, *Tapas* and *Satya* are said to be the seven worlds. How can one have the lordship over all these in turn? O brāhmaṇa, who are honoured by gods, how can one have handsome form, (long) life and (good) health, and also ample wealth in this world?

Pulastya said:

4-10. Formerly Indra ordered Agni, along with Vāyu, to destroy the enemies of gods. When he consequently burnt the demons in thousands, (the demons) Tāraka, Kamalāksa, Kāladaṁṣṭra, Parāvasu, Virocana and Saṁhrāda entered the ocean and remained deep in it. Taking them to be weak, Agni and Vāyu ignored them. Since then they harass gods, men and snakes and all sages and then again enter the ocean. In this way, O king, those heroes have harassed, on the strength of the water (of the ocean) being inaccessible, the three worlds for seven and five (i.e. twelve) thousand *yugas*. Then again Indra ordered Agni and Vāyu: "Dry up this ocean immediately. Since this abode of Varuṇa (i.e. the ocean) is the shelter of our enemies, therefore you should today only dry it up."

11-13. They said to Indra, the killer of Maya and Śambara: "It is a wicked act, O lord of gods, to destroy the ocean; since by doing so a large group of beings would be destroyed, therefore, O Indra, adopt some other remedy. O best of gods, how should the ocean, in the portion measuring just a (square) *yojana* of which crores of beings live, be destroyed?"

14-21. Thus addressed, the lord of gods, whose eyes were reddened due to wrath, said these words to Agni and Vāyu: "The gods never obtain (i.e. accept) the union of impiety with piety. Especially you two are magnanimous. Since you, O Agni, along with Vāyu, did not obey my order, therefore, you both, intent on the vow of a sage, will obtain a human body, and will be born as a sage, in an existence bereft of the true meaning of the science of sacred precepts; and when in your human exist-

ence you will dry up the ocean just with a mouthful you will (again) obtain godhood". Thus, due to the curse of Indra, that moment only they fell down on the earth, obtained human bodies and were then born from a pitcher. From the semen of Mitrā-varuṇa, Vasiṣṭha was born as the son; then was born Agastya of severe penance. This sage was (thus) the younger brother of Vasiṣṭha.

Bhiṣma said:

22. How are Mitrā-varuṇa said to be his fathers? Tell me now how Agastya was born from a pitcher.

Pulastya said:

23-27. Formerly the eternal man, Viṣṇu, after becoming the son of Dharma, at some time practised ample penance on the Gandhamādana (mountain). Śakra, afraid of his penance, sent Spring and Cupid, along with the hosts of celestial nymphs, to create an obstacle in his penance. When Viṣṇu could not be fascinated by Cupid and Spring with songs and instrumental music and coquettish[1] and amorous gestures[2], the group of the ladies that had accompanied Cupid and Spring became dejected. Then Nara's elder brother[3] (i.e. Nārāyaṇa) produced from his thigh a lady fascinating the three worlds, to agitate them. Gods, including the two gods (i.e. Cupid and Spring), were fascinated by her.

28-33a. In the presence of the celestial nymphs, Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) said to the gods: "She will be known in the world as Urvaśī." Then Mitra, longing for Urvaśī, called her and said (to her): "Satisfy me." She said: "All right". Afterwards, Varuṇa wooed the lotus-eyed lady (when she was) going to the Sun's world. She said (these) worlds to him: "I have been chosen before by Mitra, O lord, the Sun is my husband." Varuṇa said: "Resigning your heart in (i.e. to) me, you (can) go." When she left, saying "All right", Mitra cursed her: "Since you thus be-

1. *Hāva*: Any feminine coquettish gesture calculated to excite amorous sensations.
2. *Bhāva*: Amorous gesture, gesture of love.
3. *Narāgraja*: is *Nārāyaṇa*.

haved falsely, go, today only, to the human world and resort to the grandson of Soma."

33b-38a. Then Mitra and Varuṇa deposited their seed in a water-pitcher; and (from that) two best sages were born. Formerly a king by name Nimi played with ladies with dice; that time Vasiṣṭha, born from Brahmā, came there. The sage cursed the king who did not honour him: "You become bodiless." He too cursed the sage (in the same way). Due to the curse (given to) each other, the two (who had become) bodiless lustres went to Brahmā, the lord of the world, for the destruction (i.e. cessation) of the curse. Then by the order of Brahmā Nimi lived in the eyes (of people). So, O king, people have the twinklings of eyes in order to give him rest.

38b-43a. Vasiṣṭha also appeared as before in the water-pitcher. From that sprang up Agastya of four arms and with a rosary and a water-pot, the best sage of a tranquil mind. In the manner of ascetics, he, with his wife and surrounded by brāhmaṇas performed a very difficult penance in a part of Malaya. Then after a long time, seeing the world being harassed by Tāraka and others he, being angry, drank the abode of Varuṇa (i.e. the ocean). Then all (gods) like Śaṅkara granted him boons. Brahmā and revered Viṣṇu also went to give him a boon. (They said:) "Well-being to you, O sage, ask for a boon."

Agastya said:

43b-47. For a period of twentyfive thousand crores of Brahmā's years I should be borne in an aeroplane in the southern tract in the sky. He who offers me worship before the rise of my heavenly car (in the sky), becomes, in turn, the lord of (each of) the seven worlds. May he, who glorified the hermitage named after me at Puṣkara, obtain religious merit. This is the boon I choose. The hosts of the manes of those who offer a Śrāddha with devotion and (with the offering of) rice balls, will stay in heaven with me, for this much period (i.e. as long as I stay there). This is the boon (I ask for).

48. Saying, "let it be so," the gods went as they had come. Therefore the wise should always offer a respectful offering to Agastya.

Bhiṣma said:

49. In what manner should an offering be made to that sage? Tell me (about) the procedure for Agastya's worship.

Pulastya said:

50-60. At the rise of him (i.e. the Agastya constellation) in the night (i.e.) in the early morning a wise man should take bath with white sesamum. Like that, he, the householder, having put on white flowers and garment, should instal an unbroken jar decorated with flowers and cloth, (and also) with five jewels along with a pot of ghee. In the same way having placed at the top of the pitcher a golden human figure of the measure of a thumb with four long hands and arms, and also grains with seven mountains and with a bronze pot, sacred rice grains and silver, he should offer this to the best brāhmaṇa after reciting a sacred text. Having, with a concentrated mind and facing the south, picked up the long-armed (human figure), he, after having saluted a brāhmaṇa, should offer a white milch-cow having silver hoofs and golden face along with a calf and adorned with a garland, a piece of cloth and a bell, if he has a capacity (to do so). O king, a man should give all this for seven nights at the rise (of Agastya). This he (should continue) for seventeen years, or some say (he should continue) even longer. (He should recite the sacred text:) 'O you born from Agni and Vāyu, O you son of Mitrā-varuṇa, O you resembling the *Kāśa*-flower, O you born from the pitcher, my salutation to you.' He, who gives a fruit like this, never sinks; after having performed a sacrifice, a man then should live on a fruit. A man who offers reverential offering in this way, obtains this world (i.e. *Bhūḥ*), causing handsomeness and (good) health. By (offering) the second (reverential offering) he obtains the *Bhuvaḥ* world, then by (the one) after that (i.e. by the third) he obtains heaven (*Svaḥ*); he who offers seven reverential offerings obtains the seven worlds. He, who in this way recites or listens properly to the account of Agastya, or he, who does the worship of Agastya or intends to do it, (he) too, having gone to Viṣṇu's abode is honoured (there) by hosts of gods.

Bhiṣma said:

61. O you highly intelligent one, tell me that which gives the fruit of good-fortune, (good) health, which brings about the destruction of the enemies and which gives enjoyment and liberation.

Pulastya said:

62-63a. I shall now tell you that, which formerly god (Śiva), the killer of Andhaka,[1] told Pārvatī, when very religious and charming stories (talks) were going on, and which causes enjoyment and liberation.

Gaurī said:

63b-64a. O lord of gods, Sāvitrī gave a curse[2] to me, the wife of a hero. Tell me how I shall be prominent like Lakṣmī?

Śaṅkara said:

64b-68. O respectable lady, listen attentively to another form of worship done by oneself, which is an excellent worship for men as well as women. A man, having bathed with white mustard on the third day of the bright half of Śrāvaṇa, or Vaiśākha or of the auspicious Mārgaśīrṣa month, should put on his forehead a mark of the bright yellow pigment[3] with cow's urine and milk and mixed with curd and sandal, since it causes good fortune and good health and is always dear to Lalitā. A man or a married lady should put on red garments and white flowers on the third day of every fortnight.

69-70. A widow should put on one white garment only. A maiden should put on two white, fine garments. Then he (or she) should give bath to (the image of) the goddess with the five products of a cow, then only with milk and also with honey and with sandal mixed with flowers.

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1. *Andhakasūdana*: is Śiva. He killed Andhaka, a demon and a son of Kaśyapa and Diti.

2. For this curse see I 17.76 above.

3. *Gorocana*: A bright yellow pigment prepared from the urine or bile of a cow, or found in the head of a cow.

71-72. He (or she) should worship (the image) with white flowers and fruits of various kinds (and) with grains, parched grains[1] etc. together with salt, jaggery, milk and ghee. O respectable lady, you should always worship (the image) with sacred rice grains and white sesamum. In every fortnight worship should be offered to the feet (of the image of the goddess), O you beautiful lady.

73-77. (While offering worship) to the feet (he should say) 'My salutation to Varadā;' (while offering worship) to the ankles (he should say) 'My salutation to Śrī.' (While offering worship) to the shanks (he should say) 'My offering to Aśokā'. (While offering worship) to the knees (he should say) 'My salutation to Pārvatī.' (While offering worship) to the thighs (he should say) 'My salutation to Vāmadevī.' (While offering worship) to the belly (he should say) 'My salutation to Padmodarā.' (While offering worship) to the throat (he should say) 'My salutation to Śrī.' (While offering worship) to the arms (he should say) 'My salutation to Darpavināśinī,' and (while offering worship) to her (face with a) smile (he should say) 'My salutation to Smaradā.' (While offering worship) to the nose (he should say) 'My salutation to Gaurī.' (While offering worship to the eyes (he should say) 'My salutation to Utpalā.' (While offering worship) to the forehead and hair (he should say) 'My salutation to Tuṣṭi.' (While worshipping) the head (he should say) 'My salutation to Kātyāyanī.' (He should also say) 'My salutation to Gaurī, to Puṣṭi, to Kānti, to Śrī, to Rambhā, to Lalitā, to Vāmadevī.'

78-82a. Having thus offered the worship according to the procedure he should draw (the figure of) a lotus with sixteen leaves one after another and with a pericarp. He should install (the image of) Gaurī in the east; next to it (i.e. in the south-east) he should install (the image of) Aparṇā; similarly he should install (the image of) Bhavānī in the south; next to it (i.e. in the south-west) he should install Rudrāṇī. In the western region (i.e. direction) he should install (the image of) Saumyā Madanavāsinī; in the north-west he should install (the image of) Pāṭalā Ugrā; he should install (the image of) Umā in the north; he should place in the centre (the images of)

1. *Lājā*: Fried or parched grain.

Sādhyā, Pathyā, Saumyā, Maṅgalā, Kumudā, Satī and Bhadrā and should place (the image of) Lalitā on the pericarp. He should install them with (the offering of) flowers, sacred rice grains, water and salutation.

82b-84. Having made auspicious sound of music, he should offer worship to a married lady whose husband is alive, with red garments, red flowers and anointing; and he should drop (powder of) red lead and aromatic powder on their heads, because bath with red lead and saffron is extremely desirable. Similarly he should carefully worship his spiritual preceptor.

85-90. All the rites performed in a place where the preceptor is not honoured become fruitless. A man should always worship Gaurī with muttered prayers and dark (-blue) lotuses; in the welcome month of Kārtika he should carefully worship her with *bandhujiva* flowers; in Mārgaśīrṣa (he should worship her) with jasmine flowers; (he should worship her) with yellow *kurantaka* flowers in Pauṣa; and should worship the goddess with *kunda* flowers and lotuses in Māgha; a man should worship her with vitex negundo or jasmine flowers in Phālguna. He should worship her with jasmine and *aśoka* flowers in Caitra; he should worship her with fragrant trumpet-flowers in Vaiśākha; he should worship her with lotuses and *mandāra* flowers in Jyeṣṭha; and with water-lilies in Āṣāḍha; he should always worship her with *mandāra* and *mālati* flowers in Śrāvaṇa; and in proper order should always feed her with (i.e. offer) cow-urine, cow-dung, milk, curds, ghee, *darbha* and water, *bilva*-leaves, *arka*-flowers, lotuses, water from a syringe, mixture of the five products of a cow and *bilva*.

91-96. Thus feeding (i.e. offering) is said to be done in Bhādrapada etc. O you beautiful lady, on the third day of every fortnight he should feed a (brāhmaṇa) couple and should honour them devoutly with garments, flowers, anointing. He should give two yellow garments to the man, and two silken garments to the woman. He should give the woman winnowed (i.e. cleaned) cumin seed with salt, with sugarcane and jaggery; and should give the man a fruit with a golden lotus. He should say, 'O goddess, the lord does not go away after abandoning you; therefore, lift me up from this entire unhappy ocean of the mundane existence. May Kumudā, Vimalā, Nandā, Bhavānī,

Vasudhā, Śivā, Lalitā, Kamalā, Gaurī, Satī, Rambhā and Pārvatī be pleased in the months Śrāvaṇa etc. At the conclusion of the vow he should give a bed with a golden lotus (to a brāhmaṇa couple).

97-98. He should honour twentyfour or twelve (brāhmaṇa) couples; or should honour eight couples (each time) in the period of four months. Having first made an offering to his preceptor, he should then honour others. This is called Ananta-tṛtīyā, which always gives unending fruit.

99. The goddess removes all sins and enhances good fortune and good health. A man should never ignore her through vanity of wealth.

100. If a man or a woman observes the vow of fast, (if) a pregnant woman or if a woman recently delivered, or a maiden or a sick woman observes fast at night (he or she would get unending fruit).

101-104a. When impure (i.e. during menstruation), she, being restrained, should get it done by someone else. He, who observes (the vow of) this *Ananta-phaladā* (giving unending fruit) *Tṛtīyā*, is honoured in Śiva's world for a full crore of *Kalpas*. Even a poor person should observe a fast (on the third day of every month) for a year, with the rite of offering flowers with sacred texts. He too will get the same fruit. A woman, who, desiring her good, observes (this vow), gets birth as a man, favoured by Gaurī.

104b-105. He, who thus recites or listens to or thinks about this vow in honour of the daughter of the (Himālaya) mountain (i.e. Pārvatī), is, while living in Indra's world, honoured by young divine ladies and Kinnaras. I shall also tell you about another (vow of) *Tṛtīyā*, which removes sins.

106-108a. Those born in the former age (i.e. those who are very old) know it as *Rasakalyāṇinī*. Reaching the third day (i.e. on the third day) of the bright half of the month of Māgha, he should, in the morning, bathe with sandal, water and sesamum; (then) he should give bath to the (image of the) goddess with honey and sugarcane-juice; and he should (offer) worship to her with sandal (mixed with) water and saffron.

108b-116. Having (first) worshipped the left parts (of her body), he should then worship the right parts. While worshipp-

ing the foot (he should say), 'My salutation to Lalitā;' then he should worship the left ankle, (saying) 'My salutation to Devī.' (While worshipping) the shanks and knees (he should say) 'My salutation to Śāntā.' (While worshipping) the thigh (he should say) 'My salutation to Madālasā;' similarly (while worshipping) the belly (he should say) 'My salutation to Amalā.' (While worshipping) the breasts (he should say) 'My salutation to Madanavāsinī;' (while worshipping) the neck (he should say) 'My salutation to Kumudā.' (While worshipping) the arm and its tip (he should say) 'My salutation to Mādhavī, Kamalā, Sukhasmitā;' (while worshipping) the eyebrows and forehead (he should say) 'My salutation to Rudrāṇī;' similarly (while worshipping) the hair (he should say) 'My salutation to Śaṅkarā.' (While worshipping) the forehead (he should say) 'My salutation to Madanā;' (while worshipping) the eyebrows (he should say) 'My salutation to Mohanā'. (While worshipping) the eyes (he should say) 'My salutation to Candrārdhadhāriṇī.' (While worshipping) the mouth (he should say) 'My salutation to Tuṣṭi.' (While saluting) the throat (he should say) 'My salutation to Utkaṇṭhinī.' (While worshipping) the body (he should say) 'My salutation to Amṛtā.' (While saluting (the great arms (he should say) 'My salutation to Rambhā.' (While worshipping) the hands (he should say) 'My salutation to Viśokā.' (While worshipping) the heart (he should say) 'My salutation to Manmathāhvā.' (While worshipping the belly (he should say) 'My salutation to Pāṭalā.' (While worshipping) the waist (he should say) 'My salutation to Suratavāsinī.' (While saluting) the thighs (he should say) my salutation to Paṅkajaśrī. (While worshipping) the knees and shanks (he should say) 'My salutation to Śāntā.' (While worshipping) the feet (he should say) 'My salutation to Dharādharā'. (While saluting) the head (he should say) 'My salutation to Viśvakāyā.' (He should also say) 'My repeated salutations to Bhavānī, Kāminī, Vāsudevī, Jagatśrī, Ānandadā, Nandā, Subhadrā'.

117-118. Having thus worshipped (the image) according to the proper rite, he should honour a brāhmaṇa-couple. Having them fed (the couple) with sweet food, he, free from jealousy, should, after having given them a water-pitcher with

modakas (sweet-meats) and a pair of white garments, worship the couple with sandal and flowers.

119-125a. (Saying) 'May Kumudā be pleased here (i.e. with this),' he should accept the vow of (avoiding) salt. Every month he should worship the goddess according to this procedure. He should avoid (eating) salt in Māgha and jaggery in Phālguna; similarly (eating) butter should be avoided in Caitra, and honey in Vaiśākha.[1] He should avoid (drinking) a beverage in the month of Jyeṣṭha; similarly he should avoid cumin seed in Āṣāḍha; he should avoid milk in Śrāvaṇa and similarly curds in Bhādrapada. In the same way he should avoid ghee in Āśvina, and honey in Kārtika.[2] He should avoid coriander in Mārgaśīrṣa, and sugar in Pauṣa. At the end of the vow, and in every month he should give, in the evening[3] a pot full of these along with a pot containing articles of food. Similarly in (the months) beginning with Māgha he should give sweet balls, sevaka, cakes, round cakes, and also pots full of ghee, and jars full of flour. (He should give) milk, vegetables, curds, food with curds, food and vegetables.

125b-128. He should, in every month, beginning with Māgha, say in order, 'May Kumudā, Mādhavī, Rambhā, Subhadrā, Śivā, Jayā, Lalitā, Kamalā, Anaṅgā, Ratilālasā be pleased.' Every time the drinking of the mixture of the five products of a cow is enjoined. He should every time observe a fast; fast at night is laid down for a weak person. A woman should thus observe the vow called *Rasakalyāṇinī*.

129-136a. When again (the month of) Māgha arrives, having made a golden (image of) Gaurī, having four hands, endowed with pearls and silver eyes and covered with a garment, and with five jewels, and also with a rosary of the size of her thumb and a pitcher, similarly a golden couple of cows (i.e. a cow and a bull), white garment, he should give all this along with cloth and pots (to a brāhmaṇa couple), saying 'May Bhavānī be pleased.' He, who, observes the *Rasakalyāṇinī-vrata* according to this procedure is free from all sins instantly;

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1. *Mādhava*: is Vaiśākha.
2. *Ūrja*: is Kārtika.
3. *Vikāla*: Evening.

and is never unhappy in a thousand existences. He would get that fruit which is obtained by performing a thousand *Agniṣṭoma*-sacrifices. O you of a beautiful face, a woman, or a maiden or an unhappy widow would get the same fruit. He, who happens to read or hear this, being free from sins, goes to Pārvatī's world. He, who thinks about the good of the people, would go to the world of the lord of gods and become successful.

136b-140a. I shall similarly tell you about another (vow observed on the) tṛtīyā which destroys sins. This is well-known in the world and gives best joy. When on the third day of a month there is (the rise) of the constellation Āṣāḍhā, or Brahmā or Maghā or Hasta he should properly bathe with *darbhas*, sandal and water. Having put on white flowers and a white garment and having anointed himself with sandal he should worship Bhavānī devoutly with white fragrant flowers; and also Mahādeva, seated by the side (of Bhavānī), O you very chaste lady.

140b-148. He should worship the feet (of the images of Bhavānī and Mahādeva saying) 'My salutation to Vāsudevī, Śaṅkarā, Hara.' (While worshipping) the shanks (he should say) '... to the destroyer of grief (and) giver of respect to the lood'; 'My salutation to the destroyer of grief (and) giver of respect (Mānada) to the lord'; (while worshipping) the thighs (he should say) 'My salutation to Rambhā, and to Śiva Pināki (i.e. the trident-holder)'. (While worshipping) the waist (of the image) of the goddess (he should say) 'My salutation to Ānandinī and the trident in the hand of Śūlin.' (While worshipping) the navel (he should say) 'My salutation to Mādhavī and Śambhu, Bhava.' (While worshipping) the breasts (he should say) 'My salutation to Ānandakāriṇī and Śaṅkara having the moon.' (While worshipping) the throat (he should say) 'My salutation to Utkaṇṭhinī, and Nīlakaṇṭha Hara.' (While worshipping) the hands (he should say) 'My salutation to Utpaladhāriṇī and to Rudra, the lord of the world.' (While worshipping) the arms (he should say) 'My salutation to Parirambhiṇī and Hara, the one fond of dancing.' (While worshipping) the mouth (he should say) 'My salutation to Vilāsinī and the lord's bull'. (While worshipping) the smile (he should say) 'My salutation to Smaraṇīyā and the universal face of the lord.' (While worshipp-

ing) the eyes (he should say) 'My salutation to Mandāravāsinī and to the universal lustre of the trident-holder.' (While worshipping) the eyebrows (he should say) 'My salutation to Nṛtya-priyā and the noose with the trident of Śambhu.' (While worshipping) the forehead of the goddess (he should say) 'My salutation to Indrāṇī and the lord's vehicle—the bull.' (While worshipping) the crown (he should say) 'My salutation to Svāhā and Gaṅgādhara the lord.' (He should also say) 'I salute Pārvatī and Śiva, the body, arms, feet, faces of the universe, being auspicious and granting boons when pleased.'

149-156. Having thus worshipped Śiva and Pārvatī according to the proper procedure he should design, in front (of the images) of Śiva and Pārvatī, lotuses with pollen of various colours; also conch and disc with bracelets and *svastika* leading to auspiciousness. He is honoured for as many thousands of years in Śivaloka, as many particles of pollen have fallen on the ground. According to his capacity, he should present four pots of ghee with gold to a brāhmaṇa (and also he should give the brāhmaṇa) a water-pot with water. He should give this every fortnight for four months. Then, in the four months beginning with Mārgaśīrṣa, he should offer as (told) before, four pots (filled) with ghee and then four pots (filled) with sesamum after a water-pot is given. He should also offer sandal-water, flowers with water, sandal and saffron (mixed with) water, and also crude curds and milk and water from a syringe, and cloud-water, as well as water with powder of *Kuṣṭha* and *Uśīra*[1]; then having taken sesamum water and water with barley-powder also he should sleep; in the months like Mārgaśīrṣa the feeding (i.e. offering) is recommended in both the fortnights.

157-165a. In all cases for worshipping, white flowers are recommended; and in all cases the (following) sacred text should be recited at the time of making a present: 'May the auspicious Gaurī be always pleased with me to destroy my sins. May Lalitā Bhavānī lead (me) to good fortune for the attainment of all (objects).' To please Gaurī, he should offer at the end of the year, salt with jaggery and saffron, and also a pitcher

1. *Uśīra*: The fragrant root of a plant.

with sandal and a golden lotus, as well as (objects of) gold with sugarcane and fruits, and a bed with a covering and resting-place to a brāhmaṇa with his wife (saying), 'May Gaurī be pleased with me.' A man (who observes this vow) would obtain wealth called Ātmānandakarī (giving delight to himself); and being endowed with (long) life and joy would never meet with grief. A lady or a virgin or a widow who observes (this vow), being favoured by the goddess, gets the same fruit. Thus having observed a fast in every fortnight with the procedure (of the recital) of sacred text and worship, he obtains the world of Rudras from which return (i.e. rebirth) is difficult. He who devoutly listens to this (account) or causes others to hear it goes to Indra's world, and living there for a Kalpa is honoured there.

Śaṅkara said:

165b-168. If a woman becomes intent upon (the observance of) the vow, what kind of curse is that of poor Sāvitrī (i.e. what can Sāvitrī's curse do to her)? There is no significance (to her curse) since Lakṣmī due to her being accepted (as his wife) by Viṣṇu was worthy of reverence to the ancient ones; for you I formerly destroyed the sacrifice of Dakṣa. Viṣṇu too formerly churned the ocean for obtaining Lakṣmī. You two (i.e. Lakṣmī and you) are obedient. Do not be afraid at all.

169. Sāvitrī is to be honoured; she who is angry is to be propitiated by me, by Viṣṇu and by Brahmā desiring respect (being given to him).

170-176a. I shall go to Brahmā's residence. O you of a beautiful face, wait (here).

Saying so Rudra went (to Brahmā's residence) and Gaurī lived there for an entire Kṛtayuga. In that sacrifice (which he performed) Agni carried oblations to gods and pleased the three worlds; the lord gave everything—food to chief brāhmaṇas, objects of enjoyment to the host of Vidyādharas and satisfied the desires of men. Then Rudra said to Viṣṇu, "(Please) explain the duties of Gaurī; also (explain) that which is said to be the vow of Sarasvatī." Thus addressed by Rudra, Viṣṇu said, "I shall now not explain the duty (sacred) to me, O Śaṅkara. O best of gods, you may explain my greatness; formerly you have told it; having done which (vow) sins

are destroyed; there is no doubt about this; you will be purified."

Bhiṣma said:

176b-178a. O best of sages, O best one, tell me by (performing) which vow (one's) words would be sweet (i.e. one would be sweet-tongued), and also (one would have) good fortune among men, (would have) intelligence and skill in lores, as well as (give) concord between husband and wife, and company of relatives.

Pulastya said:

178b-182a. O king, you have asked well; listen to the vow of Sarasvatī, by the mere narration of which goddess Sarasvatī would be pleased, as long as the devotee eulogises her; this is the best vow. Before the day begins (i.e. in the early morning) a man having worshipped her, should begin (reciting) the divine eulogy; or on a Sunday when the planets and stars are powerful, he should feed brāhmaṇas with milk and should proclaim (the vow) to the brāhmaṇas; and having given them white garments along with gold according to his capacity, he should worship Gāyatrī with white flowers and anointment.

182b-185a. (He should pray to her:) 'O goddess, since revered Brahmā, the grandsire of the world, does not stay without you, (please) grant (me) a boon. O goddess, the Vedas, the (other) sacred treatises, practices, dance and singing (all this) is not (i.e. has no existence) without you; so let me have Siddhis; O Sarasvatī, protect me with your eight forms viz. Lakṣmī, Medhā, Dharā, Puṣṭi, Gaurī, Tuṣṭi, Jayā, and Mati.'

185b-186. He, the knower of the religious practices, having thus, with devotion, worshipped Gāyatrī, the holder of lute and lotus, and a pot and a book, with white flowers and sacred rice grains, he should observing the vow of silence, eat in the morning and evening.

187-188. And on the fifth day of every fortnight, he, (saying) 'May Gāyatrī be pleased with me,' should give an auspicious cow, and also rice (measuring) a prastha with a pot (full) of ghee, and milk and gold to a brāhmaṇa; he should, observing silence, do this in the evening.

189-191a. For thirteen months he should not take food at night; and when the vow is concluded, he should give food in the form of white (boiled) rice; he shouid give a cushion, a charming bell along with a fine silken garment; he should also give sandal, a pair of garments and tasty rice with curds.

191b-194. Being free from the vanity of wealth he should also honour his preceptor with garments, flowers and anointments. He who observes the Sārasvata vow according to this procedure, is endowed with good fortune, intellect and fine voice; and is honoured in Brahmā's world due to Sarasvatī's favour. A lady who observes this vow also gets the same fruit. She would live in Brahmā's world for three Kalpas. He who would listen to the Sārasvata vow or would read it, would live in the city of Vidyādharas for three myriads of years.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Vow for Prostitutes

Bhiṣma said:

1. O lord of brāhmaṇas, tell me what kind of practices in honour of Viṣṇu are (observed), as Rudra had told them, and what their fruit is.

Pulastya said:

2-4. Formerly, in the Rathantara Kalpa, Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva), the trident-holder (who was), living on Mandara, was asked by Brahmā, the great-souled one, himself: "How can men always have good health, endless prosperity and salvation by (practising) little penance, O god? O Adhokṣaja[1] what is that knowledge, which (obtained) through your favour even by little penance is said to be very fruitful in this world?"

5. Thus asked by Brahmā, (Śiva), the lord of Umā, the universal soul, the creator of the worlds, said this (that) delights the mind:

1. *Adhokṣaja*—an epithet of Viṣṇu.

The god said:

6-9. When from this *Rathantara Kalpa*, there again will come the twentieth *Varāha Kalpa*, and when the seventh auspicious Manu-period called Vaivasvata will arrive, and when there will be a *yuga* numbering twenty-seventh called *Dvāpara*, at the end of it, Vāsudeva Janārdana (i.e.) Viṣṇu will be born in three ways for taking down the burden (i.e. for destroying demons etc.) as the sage Dvaipāyana, Balarāma and Keśava (i.e. Kṛṣṇa called) Kaṁsāri, Keśimathana, Keśava and Kleśanāśana.

10-12. O Brahmā, Tvaṣṭṛ will, at the order of the lord of the world, fashion a city, which is now called Kuśasthalī, named Dvāravatī, endowed with divine splendour, for the residence of Śārṅgin (i.e. Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa). Sometime he, of an unlimited lustre and killer of Kaiṭabha (would) be seated in his assembly, along with his wives, Yādavas, many learned men (receiving) large (fees), Kurus, gods and Gandharvas.

13. When old and religious stories would be going on, he, the valiant one observing distinctions (i.e. a keen observer), on being asked by Bhīmasena, will explain the religious practices (about which a question is) asked by you.

14-17a. O Brahmā, he will be the founder of the practices and the very mighty Vṛkodara, Pāṇḍu's son, will be the propagator. He, the religious-minded one, is (called) Vṛkodara because in his belly lies the sharp fire called Vṛka. The great one, who would have the strength of a myriad of elephants, would be a great eater, (for) even the fire of hunger of a religious but weak person is sharp while fasting.

17b-19. This vow is superior to all (other) vows since Vāsudeva, the lord of the world will tell (so). The vow gives the fruit of all sacrifices and destroys all sins. It subdues all evils; it is honoured by all gods. It is the (most) pure of the pure (objects); and the (most) auspicious of the auspicious things; it is the best among the future and the past things.

Vāsudeva said:

20-21. O Bhīma, if you are not able to observe a fast on the eighth or fourteenth or on other days (with the rise) of

auspicious stars, then having fasted on this excellent day, the destroyer of sin, according to the proper rite, reach the highest position of Viṣṇu.

22-28. When it is the tenth day of the bright half of Māgha, anointing his body with ghee, a man should bathe with sesamum; similarly (saying) '(My) salutation to Nārāyaṇa' he should worship Viṣṇu. Worshipping the feet (of the deity he should say) 'My salutation to Kṛṣṇa'; worshipping the head (of the deity he should say) 'My salutation to Kṛṣṇātman'; worshipping the throat (he should say) 'My salutation to Vaikuṇṭha'; and worshipping the chest (he should say) 'My salutation to Śrīvatsadhārin, to Śaṅkhin, Gadin, Cakrin and Varada'. Thus having worshipped Sava Nārāyaṇa, invoking (him by various epithets) in due order, he should further worship the belly (saying) 'My salutation to Dāmodra'; he should worship the waist (saying) 'My salutation to Pañcajana'; he should worship the thighs (saying) 'My salutation to Saubhāgyanātha'; he should worship the knees (saying) 'My salutation to Bhūtadhārin'; he should worship the shanks (saying) 'My salutation to Nīla'; he should worship the feet saying 'My salutation to Viśvabhuj'. (He should also say), 'My salutation to Devī, to Śānti, to Lakṣmi, to Śrī, to Tuṣṭi, to Puṣṭi, to Dhṛti, to Vyuṣṭi'. He should worship Garuḍa (saying), 'My salutation to the bird, viz. Vihaṅganātha (i.e. the lord of birds), Vāyuvega (i.e. having the speed of wind), and Viṣapramathana'.

29-32. Having thus worshipped Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu), and Śiva and Vināyaka (i.e. Garuḍa) with sandal, flowers, incense and eatables of various kinds, and having eaten with ghee, the (boiled) mixture of rice and peas with a few spices,[1] sprinkled over with ghee (prepared from the milk) of cow, and having gone to another place, should take a piece of stick of *nyagrodha* or *khadira* and clean his teeth; and facing the north-east direction he should offer the evening prayer at the sunset; he should say, 'My salutation to Nārāyaṇa; I have sought your refuge.'

33-35a. Going without food on the eleventh day and

1. *Kṛsara*: a dish consisting of sesamum and grains, mixture of rice and peas with a few spices.

having worshipped Keśava, and remaining that night by him, who lies on the bed of Śeṣa (i.e. Viṣṇu) and having offered (an oblation) to fire with ghee through best brāhmaṇas, (he should say), 'I shall have the food with sweetened milk on the twelfth; let me have it without any difficulty'.

35b-38. O king, having said so, he should sleep on the ground; having heard a historical story and having, when the dawn has broken, gone to the river and having taken a bath he should avoid heretics.

Having offered the Sandhyā (prayer) according to the proper procedure and having offered libation to the manes, and having saluted Hṛṣīkeśa, lying on a bed, the wise one should get fashioned a pavilion in front of his house; and also, O killer of enemies, he should fashion an altar four hands (in length and breadth).

39-41. There he should put an ornamental arch of the length of four hands; in the middle he should put a pitcher with a hole of the size of a bean and full of water; sitting on the deer-hide, under the pitcher, he should sustain (i.e. allow to fall) the stream of water with (i.e. on) his head for the whole night. Since those who are well-versed in the Vedas know that many streams give great fruit, therefore, O best of the Kurus, a restrained brāhmaṇa should get it done.

42-44a. He should get fashioned a crescent moon in the south, a circle in the west and the figure of an *aśvattha*-leaf in the north; the brāhmaṇa, devoted to Viṣṇu, should get fashioned a lotusfigure in the centre; and also at various spots to the east and south of the altar; and being intent on Viṣṇu, he should sustain on the head the stream of water (i.e. allow the stream of water to fall on his head).

44b-45a. The second altar is of (i.e. meant for) the deity; there he should fashion a lotus with a pericarp; in the centre of it he should install (the image of) the god viz. Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu).

45b-46. He should, having made there a basin, having three girdles (i.e. parts), and having the face like the female organ of generation, offer into the fire in it, barley, ghee and sesamum through brāhmaṇas, (to the accompaniment) of (the recital of) sacred texts.

47-48. Having done (this) he should perform there a sacrifice in honour of Viṣṇu. He should carefully offer (i.e. drop) a stream of ghee into the central (part of the) basin; he should drop a stream of milk on (the image of) the god of gods and that water on himself. He should drop the stream of pure ghee of half the size (of the water stream).

49-51a. O you of great might, he should also (drop) the streams of water and milk if he so desires for the whole night. Having put thirteen water-pitchers along with eatables of various kinds, decorated with white garments and with vessels having *udumbara*-shoots and jewels of five kinds, he should get a sacrifice performed byfour brāhmaṇas knowing many Ṛgvedic verses and facing the north.

51b-53. He should also get the Rudra (-prayers) repeated by four brāhmaṇas well-versed in Yajurveda. He should get the songs of praise of Viṣṇu recited by four brāhmaṇas well-versed in Sāmaveda. Thus he, free from the vanity of wealth, should honour the twelve brāhmaṇas by (giving them) clothes, flowers, anointment, rings, bracelets, golden chains, and also garments and beds.

54. He should thus pass the night with songs and auspicious sounds. All these (presents mentioned above) should be (given) in duplicate to the (family-) preceptor.

55-56. Then O best of the Kurus, having got up in the clear (i.e. bright) morning, he should give thirteen good-natured milch cows with their horns covered with gold, with udders, (adorned) with bell-metal, with their hoofs (decorated) with silver, with calves, and decorated with sandal.

57-58. Having given these (cows) to the brāhmaṇas, pleased with (their having eaten articles of) food, and having given various kinds of umbrellas to them, and himself having eaten food without salt, he should allow (the brāhmaṇas) to go, following them, with his sons and wife for seven or eight steps.

59-61a. (At this time he should say) 'May the lord of gods viz. Keśava, the destroyer of sufferings, be pleased here (i.e. with this)'. In this way, by the order of his preceptor he should send the pitchers, the cows, the beds, the garments to the houses of all (the brāhmaṇas). O Bhīma, in the absence of

many beds, a householder should give (at least) one fully furnished bed.

61b-63. O foremost of the Kurus, he who desires ample wealth, should pass that day having read (i.e. by reading accounts in) history and Purāṇas. Therefore, O Bhīmasena, mustering courage and being free from jealousy, observe properly this vow as told by me to you through love. This vow observed by you will be (known) by your name.

64. This is that auspicious *Bhīmadvādaśī* which destroys all sins and which was called *Kalyāṇinī* in former *Kalpas*.

65. O you best among the great heroes, be the first observer (of this vow of *Bhīmadvādaśī*) by remembering and telling (about) which all the sin of the lord of gods was destroyed.

66. Having seen her (i.e. Śacī) dear to the celestial nymphs and made a prostitute in other existences, (the lord favoured her and) though she was born in a Vaiśya family, she, the daughter of Puloman[1], became the wife of Indra.

67. There (i.e. in that existence) also she (i.e. Śacī, wife of Indra) had an attendant who is now my (wife) Satyabhāmā. She formerly did this very auspicious thing; and so became (i.e. was born as) Vedavatī, a brāhmaṇa's daughter.

68. Formerly the Sun, of a thousand rays, bathed with a thousand streams on this auspicious day; he then having reached the lustrous orb, became the lord of the stars and planets.

69. This vow (alone) was observed by great Indras, and many crores of gods and their enemies. Even though there be myriads of tongues in the mouths it is not possible to describe the fruit of this (vow).

70. Even the son of the lord of Yādavas will tell that the (observance of this) vow destroys the sins in the *Kali* age and (gives) unending (fruit). He, who observes this (vow), is able to emancipate his manes even though they have gone to a hell.

71-72. O sinless one, he who listens to (the account of) this (vow), or talks about it, or recites it with devotion for obliging others, would be Viṣṇu's devotee and would be

1. *Puloman*: Name of a demon, the father-in-law of Indra (Puruhūta).

honoured by Indra. O sinless one, that twelfth day of the bright fortnight of Māgha, which was called *Kalyāṇinī* in a former creation, will be observed (as auspicious) by Pāṇḍu's son, will give inexhaustible merit and will have (its name) preceded by (the word) Bhīma (i.e. will be called *Bhīma-dvādaśī*).

Brahmā said:

73-74a. O revered one, in (i.e. from) the Purāṇas, I have heard about the origin of the castes and the stages of human life; and also I have learnt about good conduct along with the details of the branches of the science of religion. I (now) desire to hear the true account of the conduct of prostitutes.

The Lord said:

74b-77. O Brahman, born from the lotus, in the same city there will be sixteen thousand wives of Vāsudeva. Kṛṣṇa, the universal soul, having eyes like those of a deer, the dignified scion of Yadu family, who had put the garland of *Mālatī* flowers on his head, and being adorned with his praiseworthy wives, will enjoy with them in a garden rich with flowers, and situated on the bank of a lake, in the spring season abounding in cuckoos and swarms of bees.

78-79. Sāmba, Jāmbavatī's son, adorned with all (kinds of ornaments), going along with the path nearby, really of the form of Cupid, will be longingly seen by the ladies and passion will be aroused in the hearts of them who will be tormented by the arrows of Cupid.

80-83. He, the lord of the world, the omniscient master, having perceived it with his eye of contemplation, will say to them: "The evil being will kidnap you, since you have thus entertained the passion of love (for Sāmba) in my presence." Then the revered lord, the cause of beings, the holder of the bow made of horn, being propitiated (by the ladies) tormented with the curse, will say this: "(You will observe) the vow, beneficial in the future, which sage Dālbhya, emancipator of the fishermen living in the north and of an unlimited (generosity of) mind will tell you."

84-87a. Saying so and leaving them, the lord vanished. Then after a (long) time when the burden (on the earth as a result of the great Bhārata war) will be lightened and when the fight with clubs[1] (among the Yādavas) will be over, when Keśava will have come back to the heaven, when the entire Yadu-family will be no more, when even Arjuna will be defeated by the thieves, when Kṛṣṇa's wives will be kidnapped and will be enjoyed by the fishermen for a hundred million years and when they will be (thus) tormented, a devout soul, Dālbhya by name, with great penance (to his credit) will come there.

87b-90. Having honoured him with a respectful offering, having saluted him again and again, (and) being frequently talked to, with their eyes full of tears and remembering various enjoyments and divine flowers and anointment, and also their husband, the undefeated and endless lord of the worlds, (also remembering) the (Dvārakā) city of a divine prowess, and the many jewelled houses, as well as all the residents of Dvārakā and the boys of a divine form, they, standing before the sage, will put to him this question:

91-93. "O revered sir, all of us have been perforce enjoyed by the evil beings; we have slipped from (i.e. erred in) our duty. You are our refuge. O brāhmaṇa, you have been formerly instructed by the intelligent Keśava. Why have we become prostitutes after having come in contact with the lord? O you, whose wealth is penance, explain to us the duties of the prostitutes."

I shall tell you what Dālbhya Caikitāyana said to them.

Dālbhya said:

94-95. Formerly Nārada approached you, who were proud, while (you were) sporting in the water of the Mānasa lake. All of you were daughters of Agni and were the nymphs in olden days. Not saluting Nārada through haughtiness you asked the sage conversant with deep and abstract meditation:

96-99. "Advise us as to how Nārāyaṇa will be our hnsband." From him, this boon and this curse came forth (i.e. Nārada

1. *Mausala*: The civil war among the Yādavas.

gave this boon to and prouounced this curse on the ladies) in ancient days: "By giving a couple of beds with articles of gold (to a brāhmaṇa) on the twelfth day of the bright fortnight of Caitra and Vaiśākha, Nārāyaṇa will certainly be your husband (i.e. you will obtain Nārāyaṇa as your husband); (and) since, you asked me (a question) without saluting me, due to your selfish addiction to your beauty and good fortune, you will be kidnapped by thieves and will become prostitutes."

100-106. Thus, due to the curse of Nārada and also that of Keśava, all of you, deluded by passion, have become prostitutes. O you excellent ladies, listen, even now, to what I shall say. The lord of lords, the best speaker, formerly said to the hundreds and thousands of thousands of the wives of the demons, the asuras (the evil spirits—enemies of gods), the sons of Diti and the goblins, when these (ladies) were married and enjoyed by force (by the gods), after hundreds of the asuras and demons were killed by the gods in the war between gods and asuras (that took place) in ancient days: "O you devout and beautiful ladies, now live as prostitutes in king's residences and in temples of gods; you will obtain your livelihood from the king and the master; and all of you will have good fortune as per your capacity. He, who enters your house with the fee should be served by you with attitude of love void of deceit.

107. When the days auspicious to deities and manes approach, you should give, according to your capacity, cows, land, gold and grains.

108. Observe fully the vow which I shall tell you (now). Those who are conversant with the Vedas say that this vow is powerful enough to get one across (the ocean of) mundane existence.

109. When (the rise of the constellation) Hasta, Puṣya or Punarvasu falls on a Sunday, a lady should bathe properly with (her body anointed with) herbs.

110. At that time, he, having the five arrows as his soul (i.e. Cupid), will go (i.e. remain) near Hari. She should worship the lotus-eyed (god i.e. Viṣṇu), followed by eulogies of Cupid.

111-117a. She should worship the feet (of the image of the deity saying:) 'My salutation to Kāma'; (she should worship)

the shanks (saying:) 'My salutation to Vaimohakārin'; (she should worship) the generative organ (of the image of the deity saying:) 'My salutation to Kandarpanidhi'; (she should worship) the waist of (the image of the deity saying:) 'My salutation to Prītimān'; (she (should worship) the navel of the deity's image saying:) 'My salutation to Saukhyasamudra'; similarly (she should worship) the belley (of the deity's image saying:) 'My salutation to Vāmana'; (she should worship) the heart (of the deity's image saying:) 'My salutation to Hṛdayeśa'; (she should worship) the breasts (i.e. the chest of the deity's image saying;) 'My salutation to Ālhādakārin'; she should worship the left shoulder (of the deity's image saying:) 'My salutation to Puṣpabāṇa;' (she should worship) the head (of the deity saying) my salutation to Mānasa'; (she should worship) the hair (of the deity's image saying) 'My salutation to Vilola'; similarly she should worship the head of the god of gods (saying:) 'My saiutation to the soul of all'. (She should also say:) 'My salutation to Śiva, Śānta, Cāpāṅkuśadhara (the holder of a bow and goad), to Gadin (holder of a mace), to Pītavastra, and Śaṅkhacakradhara (holder of the conch and disc).' 'My salutation to Nārāyaṇa, to Kāmadevātman. My salutation to Śānti, Prīti, Rati, Śrī, Puṣṭi, Tuṣṭi, and Sarvārthasampadā (i.e. having all kinds of wealth)'.

117b-121. Having thus worshipped Govinda, the lord of the form of Anaṅga, the lady having made an offering with sandal, flowers and incense, and then having invited a brāhmaṇa knowing customary observances, who has mastered the Vedas and who is without any deformity, and then having honoured him with adoration of sandal, flowers etc. she should give the brāhmaṇa rice of the measure of a *prastha*[1] along with a pot of ghee, (saying:) 'May Mādhava be pleased'. She should bear in mind that the best brāhmaṇa, who has eaten well according to his sweet will, is Kāmadeva meant for Rati. The lady should do whatever the best brāhmaṇa desires.

122-123a. She, speaking with a smile, should offer herself with all sincerity (to the brāhmaṇa). In this way she should do

1. *Prastha*: a particular measure of capacity equal to 32 palas.

all this on a Sunday. The offering of rice of the measure of a prastha (should be made) for thirteen months.

123b-130a. Then when the thirteenth month arrives, the wise lady should give the brāhmaṇa a furnished bed, well-arranged with a pillow and an auspicious coverlet, along with a lamp, shoes, an umbrella, and wooden shoes. Having adorned him, along with his wife, with golden strings and rings, fine garments with bracelets, and incense, flowers and anointment, she should give the brāhmaṇa with the accompaniment of the sacred text, 'As I never see any difference between Kāma and Keśava, so like that only I should always have my desires fulfilled', the image of Kāmadeva with that of his wife, fixed on a pitcher (full) of jaggery, and seated on a copper pot, with golden eyes and covered over with (a piece of) cloth, along with a pot of bell-metal and a sugar-cane, and also and complete cow. Similarly the best brāhmaṇa should accept the golden (image of the) deity and should recite the Vedic text 'Who gave it? Kāma gave it'.

130b-132a. Then having circumambulated and allowed the best brāhmaṇa to go, she should take all (the articles) like the bed, the seat, to the brāhmaṇa's house. Since then whosoever comes to her house for sexual enjoyment should be similarly honoured on a Sunday and should always be adored.

132b-135. Thus till the thirteenth month arrives, she should gratify a brāhmaṇa and then send him to his house; with his permission (she may entertain) a handsome (person) till he arrives (to her residence). When she has a difficulty as a result of impurity due to child-birth or abortion or from the king or a difficulty due to divine or human (forces) or due to an eclipse, then she should offer herself according to her capacity, for fifty-eight times.

136-142. This (vow) I have especially narrated to you, since this is the duty that should be always performed by the prostitutes in this world. (She should pray to God:) "O god, as you are never abandoned by (i.e. as you are always in contact with) your bed, similarly, O Madhusūdana, may my bed be always occupied." She should also get produced (i.e. have) the sound of songs and musical instruments. I have told you this entire practice (to be followed) by prostitutes, which was

formerly narrated by Indra to the demonesses. Therefore now it is proper for you too (to follow it). She, the auspicious lady, who serves this exalted vow, destroying all sins and giving an unending fruit, and which is said to be difficult to be observed by auspicious ladies, establishes herself in the world of Mādhava. Being honoured by all the hosts of gods she goes to Viṣṇu's position, causing delight.

Having told the ladies this vow called Anaṅga-dāna, that (sage) whose wealth is his penance, will go to his place; and O you superhuman being, the ladies will observe this full vow.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

The Vow of Aṅgāraka Caturthī

Brahmā said:

1. O revered sir, tell me (about) that (vow) which causes blessing (i.e. divine favour) to a man as well as a woman, and by (the observance of) which there will be no grief, disease, fear or sorrow.

Śaṅkara said:

2-3. On the second day of the dark half of Śrāvaṇa, Madhusūdana always lives with his wife in the milky ocean. A man would get (i.e. fulfil) all his desires by worshipping Govinda on that (day). He should give the present of a cow, gold etc. as was done in seven hundred *Kalpas*.

4. He should arrange invocation, worship as (told) before. This *dvitīyā* (i.e. the second day) is called *Aśūnyaśayanā*.

5-10. On that day, having worshipped Viṣṇu according to the proper procedure with the following sacred texts he should have the sound of singing and musical instruments: "O Śrīvatsadhārin, O Śrīkānta, O Śrīpati, O Śrīdhara, O Avyaya (the immutable one), may not my stage of a householder, which grants righteousness, worldly prosperity and desire of sensual enjoyments, perish. O Puruṣottama, may my fires, my deities

not perish. May my manes not perish, due to the discord between husband and wife. As god Hari is never separated from Lakṣmī, in the same way let my relation with the wife be not severed. O Varada (granter of boons), O Madhusūdana, as your bed is not unoccupied by Lakṣmī, in the same way may my bed also remain occupied." A person (who is economically) weak, (should use) the bell, as it contains (the sounds of) all musical instruments.

11a. Having worshipped Govinda thus he should take meals without oil. At night (he should eat food) free from salt till the four watches (pass).

11b-14a. When the morning breaks, he should give an unusual bed with a lamp, food, vessels, and with wooden sandals, shoes, an umbrella, a chowrie, and also with the desired articles, and covered with white flowers and cloth to a brāhmaṇa who is not deformed who is a devotee of Viṣṇu, who is a man of family and who is well-versed in the Vedas, but never to the husband of a barren woman.

14b-16a. Having seated there a (brāhmaṇa-) couple and adorning them properly he should give the wife a vessel with (articles of) food. To the brāhmaṇa also he should give a golden image of the god of gods with (other) ornaments along with a pitcher of water.

16b-20a. A man who, in this way, free from the vanity of wealth and intent upon Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), observes (the vow of) *Aśūnyaśayana* (in honour) of Hari, is never separated from his wife. O Brahman, a woman also (who observes this vow does not become) a widow as long as the moon, the sun and the stars last. A couple also does not become deformed and afflicted with grief. O grandsire, his sons, beasts and jewels do not perish. One who observes (this vow of) *Aśūnyaśayana* is honoured in the world of Viṣṇu for thousands and hundreds of Kalpas.

Brahmā said:

20b-21a. How can there be (i.e. how can one have) good health, prosperity, intellect and firmness in religious practices? How also can there be (i.e. can one have) perfect devotion for Viṣṇu?

The Lord said:

21b. O Brahman, you have asked well. I shall now tell you about the conversation between Virocana and Bhārgava.

22-23. O Brahman, seeing the sixteen-year old son of Prahlāda and seeing his form that son of Bhṛgu laughed. "O Virocana of mighty arms, bravo, well-being to you."

24-25a. The destroyer of the gods (i.e. Virocana) seeing him laughing, asked him: "O brahman, why did you laugh at me like this and why did you say to me 'Bravo'?"

25b-27a. The best among speakers (i.e. Bhārgava) said to him who spoke like this: "I laughed through wonder due to the greatness of the vow. Formerly when the trident-holder (i.e. Śiva) was angry (and ready) for destroying Dakṣa, a drop of perspiration produced on the forehead of him of a fearful face, dropped down.

27b-28. That (drop) having broken asunder the seven nether regions consumed the seven oceans. He was having many faces and eyes and terrible like bright fire. Being endowed with hands and feet, he was known as Vīrabhadra.

29-33. He who had destroyed (Dakṣa's) sacrifice, and had submerged the beings was prevented from burning the three worlds by Śiva (who said:) 'O Vīrabhadra, you have destroyed Dakṣa's sacrifice; now desist from this act of burning the (three) worlds. By giving peace (to all) be the foremost among all the planets. Purified in mind people will worship you, (and) O son of the earth, you will be known as Aṅgāraka. Your form will be matchless in the world of gods. Those men, who will worship you on the fourth day (of the month), will have unending beauty, (good) health and prosperity.'

34. O King, thus addressed, he who took any form at his will, became calm, and at that very moment turned into a planet.

35-36a. Once standing near, you saw that (planet) being worshipped with oblations etc. by a Śūdra. Due to that you became a handsome demon-fire to the family of your enemies.

36b-37a. Since from you, far-going lustre of various types was produced, therefore gods and demons call you Virocana.

37b-38. I was amazed because (merely) by seeing the vow

(being observed) by a Śūdra, you got such a handsome form. Therefore I uttered (the word) 'Bravo', O your excellent greatness !

39-41a. If merely by seeing (the vow being performed) one gets handsomeness and prosperity, then what (would one get) who observes (the vow)? O demon, since you saw the worship of the son of the earth (i.e. Aṅgāraka) which was offered with devotion by a Śūdra, you were born from the womb (of the wife) of the enemy of gods." Having heard these words of the great-souled Bhārgava, the hero, the son of Prahlāda again asked Bhārgava.

Virocana said:

41b-42. O revered sir, I desire to listen to (the account of) that vow fully and accurately. Please explain to me the gift that was seen by me when it was being given (to a brāhmaṇa) and about the importance and procedure of that vow.

43-46. Hearing these words (of Virocana) the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Bhārgava) spoke respectfully:

"O demon, when the fourth day of a month falls on Tuesday, a man adorned with a ruby should bathe with (i.e. after anointing himself with) clay. Having bathed, and facing the north, he should mutter the sacred text: 'Fire is the head of the heaven'. Free from any enjoyment, a Śūdra, remembering Bhauma, should observe silence; and when the sun has set, he should smear the courtyard with cowdung and having decorated it with garlands of flowers and sacred grains all round, should draw there a lotus having eight leaves, with saffron.

47. In the absence of saffron, red sandal is recommended. Four pots containing food should be prepared, along with anointed śāli-rice and rubies.

48-52a. Putting them in four corners, he should put various fruits and also everything like sandal, flower etc. Having adorned a tawny cow having golden horns and udders of bell-metal with silver hoofs and a piece of cloth, and also having adorned an auspicious bull with red hoofs, he should give them and grains with seven garments, as well as a golden (image of) man of the size of the thumb, having four long arms and hands made of gold (and placed) in a copper vessel on jaggery and with

ghee—he should give all this to a brāhmaṇa, who knows the notes of the Sāma (veda), who has restrained his senses, who is endowed with (good) speech, (handsome) form and (good) character, who is a man with a family and who does not have religious hypocrisy.

52b-53a. 'O illustrious son of the earth, O you born of the sweat of the trident-holder (i.e. Śiva), I, desiring a (handsome) form, am seeking your refuge; accept my respectful offering; my salutation to you.'

53b-54. Having offered a respectful offering with sandal-water to the accompaniment of this sacred text he should then honour the brāhmaṇa with flowers, garments etc. To the accompaniment of the same sacred text he should give (the representation of) Bhauma along with a pair of a cow and a bull.

55-56a. He, who has the capacity should give a fully-furnished bed. Desiring the imperishability of whatever is given (in charity) he should give whatever is most liked in the world and desired in the house to a virtuous brāhmaṇa.

56b-57. Then having circumambulated the best brāhmaṇa he should allow him to go. At night he should take (sweetened) milk. In this way (he should observe this vow of) Aṅgāraka eight times or four times. I shall tell you what religious merit is (got by observing this vow).

58-61. A devotee of Viṣṇu or Śiva endowed with good form and fortune in every existence would become the king of the seven islands. For seven Kalpas he is honoured in the world of Rudra. Therefore O lord of demons, you too observe the full vow (i.e. observe it fully). O king, you too observe all this, since those well-versed in the Vedas describe it to be inexhaustible. The lord bestows everything on him who listens to its account with a concentrated mind."

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

The Vow of Ādityaśayana

Bhiṣma said:

1. Tell me about the vow that is desirable for one who is unable to observe fasts due to lack of practice or ill health.

Pulastya said:

2. Hear about that great vow in (the performance of) which meal at night is prescribed for those who are unable to observe fasts.

3. It is called *Ādityaśayana* in which Śaṅkara is to be properly worshipped. (Listen to) the conjunctions of constellations (and planets), which, those who are well-versed in the Purāṇas, prescribe.

4. That seventh day of the month which falls on Sunday with Hasta (rising on that day), and on which there is also the transition[1] of the Sun, is the one which satisfies all desires.

5. With (the utterance of) the names of the Sun, a man should worship Umā and Maheśvara; and hereafter he should worship both the Sun and the Phallus of Śiva.

6. Since no distinction is ever made between the lord of Umā (i.e. Śiva) and the Sun, therefore, O best of kings, he should worship the Sun at his house.

7. With (the appearance of) Hasta (in the sky he should worship the feet (of the image of the Sun, saying:) 'My salutation to Sūrya.' On (the appearance of) Citrā (in the sky, he should worship) the region of the ankles (of the Sun's image, saying:) 'My salutation to Arka'. On (the appearance of) Svāti (in the sky, he should worship) the shanks (of the Sun's image, saying:) 'My salutation to Puruṣottama'. On (the appearance of) the Viśākhā (in the sky, he should worship) the region of knees (of the Sun's image, saying:) 'My salutation to Dhātṛ.'

8. Then (on the appearance) of Anurādhā the couple of the thighs of (the image of) the Sun should be worshipped. On

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1. *Saṁkrānti*: Passage from one point to another, transition, the passage of the Sun or any planetary body from one zodiacal sign into another.

(the appearance of) Jyeṣṭhā (in the sky, he should worship) the organ of generation (of the image of the Sun saying:) 'My salutation to Anaṅga'. On (the appearance of) Mūla (in the sky, he should worship) the waist of the image, saying:) 'My saluation to the fearful Indra'.

9. On (the appearance of) the two viz. Pūrvā and Uttarā Āṣādhā (in the sky, he should worship) the navel (of the image saying:) 'My salutation to Tvaṣṭṛ with seven horses'. On (the appearance of) Śravaṇa (in the sky, he should worship) the ears (of the image saying:) 'My salutation to Tīkṣāṁśu'. On (the appearance of) Dhaniṣṭhā (in the sky, he should worship) the sides and the back (of the image, saying:) 'My salutation to Vikartana'.

10. On (the appearance of Śatatārakā (in the sky, he should worship) the chest (of the image, saying:) 'My salutation to Dhvānta-vināśana (i.e. to the destroyer of darkness)'. On the appearance of the two, viz. Pūrvā and Uttarā Bhādrapadā (in the sky), he should worship the arms (of the image saying:) 'My salutation to Caṇḍakara'.

11. O king, on (the appearance of) Revatī (in the sky), the couple of the hands (of the image) should be worshipped (saying:) 'My salutation to Sāmnām Adhīśa (i.e. to the lord of the Sāmans)'. Similarly on (the appearance of) Aśvinī (in the sky), the nails (of the image) should be worshipped by a man (saying:) 'My salutation to Saptāśvadhurandhara (i.e. having seven excellent horses).'

12. On (the appearance of) Bharaṇī (in the sky), the throat (of the image) should be worshipped (saying:) 'My salutation to Divākara of severe lustre'. O you descendant of Bharata, on (the appearance of) Kṛttikā and Rohiṇī (in the sky, a man) should worship the lips (of the image).

13. On (the appearance of) Mṛga (in the sky), the tongue (of the image) of Purāri should be worshipped. On (the appearance of) Ārdrā (in the sky), (a man) should worship the teeth (of the image saying:) 'My salutation to Hari'. On (the appearance of) Punarvasu (in the sky), the nose (of image) of Śiva, should be worshipped (saying:) 'My salutation to Savitṛ'.

14. On (the appearance of) Puṣya (in the sky), the forehead (of the image should be worshipped saying:) 'My salutation to Ambhoruha, and the hair (should be worshipped saying: 'My salutation' to Vedaśarīradhārin'. On (the appearance of) Āśleṣā (in the sky), (he should worship) the head (saying:) 'My salutation to Vibudhapriya'. On (the appearance of) Maghā (in the sky), he should worship the ears (of the image).

15. On the appearance af Pūrvā (in the sky), he should properly worship the eyes of (the image of) Śambhu (saying:) 'My salutation to Go-brāhmaṇa-nandana (i.e. to him who delights the cows and the brāhmaṇas).' On (the appearance of) Uttarā-phālgunī (in the sky), he should worship the eye-brows of the image (saying:) My salutation to Viśveśvara'.

16. (He should also say:) 'My salutation to the holder of the noose, the goad, the lotus, the trident, the skull, the serpent, the (crescent-) moon and the bow, and also to Śiva, the root (i.e. the cause) of the destruction of the demon Gaja and of Cupid, and (the demon) Andhaka etc.'

17. Thus having worshipped the various parts (of the body of the image), he should worship the head saying: 'My salutation to Śiva'. Here (i.e. during this vow) also he should eat food free from oil and salt, should not eat flesh and food left over.

18-19. Thus, O king, having eaten only at night, he should, on the day of Punarvasu, present a measure of *Śāli*—rice, an *udumbara* fruit, ghee, along with gold, after having placed (these things) in a vessel, to a brāhmaṇa. On the seventh conclusion of the fast he should give a pair of garments or more (to a brāhmaṇa).

20. O you descendant of Bharata, when the conclusion of the fourteenth fast has come (i.e. at the time of the conclusion of the fourteenth fast) he should devoutly feed a brāhmaṇa with jaggery, (sweetened) milk, ghee etc.

21-25. Having fashioned a golden lotus with eight leaves and a pericarp, which should be pure, of the length of eight fingers and should have petals of rubies; having prepared an excellent bed, free from improper protuberances, with a pillow and a cushion, with a good carpet and a coverlet, along with wooden sandals, shoes, an umbrella, a chowrie, a seat, a mirror and ornaments, and also with fruits, garments; and having placed

that (golden) lotus on it (i.e. on the bed), he should give it (and) a tawny cow of good qualities, giving profuse milk, having good habits, with her hoofs (adorned) with silver, horns decorated with gold, udders with bell-metal, along with her calf to a brāhmaṇa in the forenoon to the accompaniment of the sacred text (given below); he should not tarry (in this matter).

26-27. 'O Āditya, as your body is always occupied by *Kānti* (lustre), *Dhṛti* (energy), *Śrī* (splendour) and *Puṣṭi* (nourishment), in the same way may I have prosperity. As the gods do not know anyone other than you as superior and innocent, so emancipate me from the entire painful ocean of the worldly existence.'

28. Then having gone round (the brāhmaṇa) he should allow (him) to go. He should take all that—the bed, the cow etc. to the house of the brāhmaṇa.

29. One should not disclose this vow of (Śiva) having the crescent-moon on his head, to a man of bad character, or a hypocrite or to those who are connected with impious acts with reference to cows, brāhmaṇas and gods or to him who very much indulges in calumny.

30. This secret (vow) which causes delight and which is auspicious, should be narrated to a restrained devotee. Those who are well-versed in the Vedas say that this (vow) destroys the sin of people (who are) great sinners.

31. A man, who observes this vow devoutly, is not separated from his relatives, sons, wealth, wives and gives delight to gods. He, and also a woman, who observe this vow devoutly do not meet with a disease, nor with grief or delusion.

32. This (vow of Śiva) was formerly observed by Vasiṣṭha, Arjuna, Kubera (and) Indra. Even by its narration all sins perish. There is no doubt about it.

33. He, who thus recites or listens to this (vow called) *Ravi-śayana*, would become dear to Indra. He, who observes this (vow) brings (i.e. takes) to heaven even (those of) his manes who have fallen into hell.

34-35. The great sages have recommended *aśvattha*, *vaṭa* and the *udumbara* tree, and also the tree of *nandīśa*, of *jambu* and *bilva*; in each of the couple of months, beginning with Mārga-

śīrṣa, he should use, one by one, (the wood of) each of these trees (for making a brush) to clean his teeth.

36-37. At the conclusion (of the vow), he should give food with curds, a cushion, a flag and a chowrie, and also five water-pitchers with gems to brāhmaṇas. He should not have vanity about his wealth; if he has, he gets blemishes.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

The Vow of Rohiṇīcandraśayana

Bhiṣma said:

1. Tell me properly about the vow of the cool-rayed one (i.e. the Moon), by (the observance of) which a man would be endowed with a long life, good health and his family's great prosperity, as well as a (handsome) form and (noble) family, in every existence.

Pulastya said:

2-3. I shall (now) tell you fully the secret (vow) leading to the unending (residence in) heaven, (and) which those who are well-versed in the Purāṇas know. This vow is here called *Rohiṇi-candra-śayana*. A man should perform Nārāyaṇa's worship with the accompaniment of the epithets of the Moon in (i.e. while observing) that vow.

4-5. When the fifteenth day of the bright fortnight (i.e. the full-moon day) falls on Monday or the Brahmanakṣatra appears on the full-moon day, a man should bathe with the mixture of the five products of the cow and with mustard; the wise one should again mutter the text '(Please) grow' for one hundred and eight times.

6. Even a Śūdra, free from (the company of) heretics, should devoutly repeat (the text:) 'My repeated salutations to Soma Varada and to Viṣṇu'.

7. Having muttered the text, and having come (back) to his own house, he should, repeating the names of Soma, worship Madhusūdana with fruits and flowers.

8. He should worship the feet (of the image saying:) 'My salutation to Soma Śānta.' (He should worship) the knees and shanks (of the image saying:) 'My salutation to Anantadhāman (i.e. having unending lustre)'. He should worship the pair of the thighs (of the image saying:) 'My salutation to Jalodara'. He should worship the organ of generation (of the image, saying, 'My salutation to Anaṅgadhāman'.

9. The waist of Śaśāṅka (i.e. of the image of Śaśāṅka, the Moon) should always be worshipped (with the utterance of the text:) 'My repeated salutations to Kāmasukhaprada'. Similarly he should worship the belly (of the image saying:) 'My salutation to Amṛtodara'. The navel of the image should be worshipped (to the accompaniment of the text:) 'My salutation to Śaśāṅka.'

10. He should always worship the mouth (of the image saying:) 'My salutation to Candra'; the teeth (of the image) should be worshipped (to the accompaniment of the text: 'My) salutation to the lord of brāhmaṇas (i.e. the Moon)'. The smile (of the deity) should be honoured (by saying:) 'My salutation to Candramas'. He should worship the lips (of the image saying:) 'My salutation to Kaumodavanapriya.'

11. (He should worship) the nose (of the image saying, 'My salutation to the lord of the excellent herbs', and (should worship) the eyebrows (of the image saying:) 'My salutation to Ānandabīja.' He should similarly worship the pair of the eyes (of the image) of Indu (i.e. the Moon, saying:) 'My salutation to him who causes Viṣṇu's lotus to bloom'.

12. He should worship the pair of the ears (of the image saying:) 'My salutation to Samastādhvarapūjita (i.e. who is honoured in all sacrifices and) to Daityaniṣūdana (i.e. the killer of the demons)'. He should worship the forehead (of the image) of Indu saying, 'My salutation to Udadhipriya (i.e. he who is dear to the ocean)'; the hair of the lord of rays should (also) be worshipped.

13. The head of Murāri (should be worshipped by a man saying,:) 'My salutation to Śaśāṅka'; (he should worship) the

crown (of the image saying:) 'My salutation to Viśveśvara'; he should also salute the Moon's spouse by name Rohiṇī addressing her as Padmapriyā, Lakṣmī, (and should also say:) 'My salutation to Saubhāgya-saukhyāmṛta-sāgara (i.e. to the ocean of the nectar of good fortune and happiness)'.

14-15a. Having honoured the goddess, viz. the wife of Indu (i.e. the Moon), with fragrant flowers and with offerings and incense etc. and having slept on the (bare) ground, and having got up and bathed and having enjoyed the offerings, he should give, in the morning, a golden water-pitcher to a brāhmaṇa, (to the accompaniment of the text) 'My salutation to Pāpa-vināśana (i.e. the destroyer of sins).'

15b-16a. Having drunk cow-urine and having eaten food void of flesh and free from salt and having eaten eight and thirty and three morsels with ghee, he should for a while, listen (to accounts from) history.

16b-17. He should offer the flowers of *Kadamba* and blue lotuses and *Ketaka*-flowers, jasmine flowers, lotuses, (other) fresh flowers, *Sinduvāra*-flowers and the flowers of jasmine to the Moon, O you descendent of Bharata. He should also offer to the Moon a white flower, a *Karavīra*-flower and a *Campaka*-flower.

18. Beginning with the month of Śrāvaṇa, he should, in the serial order, always offer these flowers to Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu); he should offer in that month the flowers at the observance of the vow, which are available in that month.

19. Thus having fasted for a year according to the prescribed rules, he should give a furnished bed (to a brāhmaṇa) at the end of the vow.

20-23. Having got fashioned golden (images of) Rohiṇī and Candra—the image of Candra should be six fingers (in length) and that of Rohiṇī (should be) four fingers—he should, (placing the images) on the pitcher (containing) sweetened milk, give in the morning, (to a brāhmaṇa couple) the images with eight pearls and having silver eyes, along with a vessel of bell-metal and sacred grains, and with rice and sugar-cane, to the accompaniment of a religious text. Having decorated a virtuous brāhmaṇa-couple with ornaments he should give the couple a cow with garments and pots, and also a shell-pot.

24-26a. He should imagine that the Brāhmaṇa along with his wife is Candra himself. (He should pray as follows:) 'O Kṛṣṇa, as Rohiṇi would never abandon the bed of you of the form of Candra, so (should I have) food and absence of separation from welfare. Since, O Candra, you are the giver of great joy and salvation to all, may I have enjoyment and salvation (due to you, and may I have) firm devotion to you.'

26b-27. Thus, O sinless one, this vow is excellent (as) it gives a handsome form, good health and long life to one who is afraid of the mundane existence and desires salvation. O king, this (vow) alone is always dear to the manes.

28. Being the lord of the three worlds for three hundred *Kalpas*, he obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of the Moon from which return (to the mortal world i.e. rebirth) is difficult.

29. If a lady observes (this vow of) *Rohiṇi-candra-śayana*, she too gets that fruit whereby return (to the mortal world) is difficult.

30. By thus narrating (the account of the vow) of the Moon, he, who recites or listens to the worship of Madhumathana (i.e. destroyer of Madhu, i.e. Viṣṇu) or intends to perform it, too, having gone to the residence of Śauri (i.e. Viṣṇu) is honoured by streams (i.e. groups) of gods.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Installation of Lakes etc.

Bhiṣma said:

1-3a. O brāhmaṇa, tell me in detail, about the rite (which is performed) with reference to lakes, gardens, ponds, wells and ponds full of lotuses, and temples of deities. Tell me which brāhmaṇas are employed as the priests there; (tell me) also (about) the fees to be paid to the priests, (about) the offerings, the time, the place and the preceptor. O you of a good vow, tell me also about the components that are prescribed (for the rite).

Pulastya said:

3b. O king of mighty arms, listen to the description of the rite performed with reference to the lakes etc.

4-6. O best king, this account is narrated in the Purāṇas. When *Uttarāyaṇa* comes, a man, having obtained (i.e. having chosen) the auspicious bright half of a month, on a day declared to be auspicious by the brāhmaṇas, should get fashioned an altar measuring four cubits, even, and having four corners and four openings in a region free from evil things and near a lake. Similarly there should be a pavilion open on four sides and of the measure of sixteen cubits.

7. Around the altar there should be holes of the measure of the cubit of the middle length and having three belts. O prince, they should be nine, seven or five (in number), and should not have curved openings.

8. The receptacle should be of the measure of the length equal to twelve *aṅgulas*[1], and six or seven fingers[2] in expanse. The holes should be of the measure of a cubit[3] and should have three belts raised at three steps.

9. On all the sides there should be banners of the same colour, along with flags. He should get fashioned doors of the branches (i.e. parts) of (the trees viz.) *Aśvattha*, *Udumbara*, *Plakṣa* and *Vaṭa*, for the pavilion in every direction.

10-12a. There should be eight sacrificial priests (who recite the prayers of the Ṛgveda) and eight door-keepers. There should be eight brāhmaṇas, well-versed in the Vedas, as the mutterers (of sacred texts). He should place (i.e. appoint) best brāhmaṇas, endowed with all (good) signs, knowing the sacred texts, with their senses curbed and (belonging to good) family and having a (noble) character.

12b-13. In every hole he should put pitchers, and materials for the sacrifice; the seat should be white and (equipped) with

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1. *Vitasti*: a measure of length equal to 12 *aṅgulos* (being the distance between the extended thumb and little finger).

2. *Hasta*: a measure equal to 18 inches.

3. *Ratni*: (seems to be a corruption of *aratni*)—the distance from the elbow to the end of the closed fist, a cubit.

a fan; there should be a very big copper-vessel. Then there should be offerings of various colours for each deity.

14-15. The wise preceptor should put (the various things) on the ground after having consecrated them. The sacrificial post, made of the *Kṣīra* tree, should be of the length of a cubit[1] or of the size of the sacrificer; desiring his well-being, he should fix it. He should engage twentyfive priests with golden ornaments on their persons.

16-17. He should give to all the priests, equally, golden armlets, bracelets, and also finger-rings, and various kinds of garments; it is prescribed that the preceptor should be given double (of what is given to other priests). He should also give (these things) with a bed and also whatever is dear to himself.

18-20. O king, having first obtained all these, viz. golden (images of) a tortoise and a crocodile, silver (images) of a fish and a (kind of) snake (not poisonous), copper (images of) a shark and a frog and iron (image of) a porpoise, the sacrificer, along with his wife, sons and grandsons, should be bathed by all (brāhmaṇas) who have mastered the Vedas, with water (mixed) with all herbs.

21-22. (Then) he, having reached the western entrance, should enter the pavilion. He, knowing the truth, should draw a circle with dust of five colours to the accompaniment of auspicious sounds and the sound of kettle-drums; and also (he should draw) a wheel with sixteen spokes and the figure of Brahmā within a lotus.

23-24. It should have four corners (i.e. it should be drawn within a square), should be circular on all sides and richly decorated in the middle. The wise one, having fashioned the images of the planets and the regents of the quarters around the altar, should properly install all of them in every direction. Having recited the text sacred to Varuṇa he should place the pitcher at the centre.

25-26a. The wise should install (the images of) Brahmā, Śiva and Viṣṇu there only. Having installed (the images of) Vināyaka, Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī) and Ambikā (i.e. Pārvatī),

1. *Aratni*: a cubit of the middle length, from the elbow to the tip of the little finger.

he should, then, for the peace of all worlds, install (the images of) the group of spirits.

26b-28a. Having thus made the installation with flowers, eatables and fruits, he should cover those pitchers containing gems with pieces of cloth. Having on all sides, decorated the door-keepers with flowers and sandal he should say to them: '(Please) proceed with the sacrifice' and should honour the preceptor.

28b-29. Two (brāhmaṇas) knowing the Ṛgveda should be kept (i.e. seated) in the east; two (brāhmaṇas) knowing the Yajurveda should be kept (i.e. seated) in the south. Two (brāhmaṇas the) singers of the Sāmaveda should be kept (i.e. seated) in the west; and two (brāhmaṇas) knowing the Atharvaveda should be seated in the north. The sacrificer, facing the east, should sit in the south.

30. He should again tell the sacrificing priests to (commence the) sacrifice: 'Please resort to the muttering of excellent sacred texts.'

31. Having thus advised all those mutterers (of the sacred texts) and he, knowing the sacred texts, having kindled the fire, should offer into it ghee and sacred sticks (to the accompaniment of the recital) of sacred texts.

32a. The sacrificial priests of the Ṛgveda should make offerings all round into the fire with (the recital of) texts sacred to Varuṇa only.

32b-35a. Having duly made offerings to the planets, and also to Indra and the lord, to the Maruts, the regents of the quarters and to Viśvakarman, the priest (called) *Bahṛc* (seated) in the east should mutter separately the auspicious *Śāntisūkta*, the prayer to Rudra and Pavamāna, the *Puruṣa-sūkta*. The priests knowing Yajurveda seated in the south should recite the *sūkta* (i.e. eulogy) of Śakra, Rudra, Budha, and also a hymn addressed to the demons called Kuṣmāṇḍa[1], the *sūkta* (i.e. eulogy) of Jātavedas (i.e. Fire), and of the Sun.

35b-37a. The *Sāma*-singers seated at the western door (of the pavilion) should sing the *Sāmans* called *Vairāja Pauruṣa Sūkta*[2], *Sauparṇa Sūkta*, *Rudrasūkta*, *Śaiśava Sūkta*, *Pañcanidhāna Sūkta*,

1. *Kauṣmāṇḍa*: addressed (as a hymn) to the demons called *Kuṣmāṇḍa*.
2. *Pauruṣa Sūkta*: Ṛgveda X.90. It is regarded as a very sacred hymn.

Gāyatra Sūkta, Jyeṣṭha Sāman, Vāmadeva Sūkta, Bṛhatsāman, Rauravа, Rathantara, the celebrated *Gavām Vrata,* (the hymns called) *Rakṣoghna* and *Yama.*[1]

37b-38. The priests of the Atharva Veda (seated) in the north, should, resorting mentally to Lord Varuṇa, repeat the *Sāntika* and *Pauṣṭika* hymns (from the Atharvaveda).[2]

39-41a. Having thus fully made the consecration of the image at night of the previous day, and having brought earth from a hamlet where cowherds and cows stay, and where elephants, horses, chariots and anthills are found, he should put it and the herbs also into pitchers. Then bringing the yellow pigment, white mustard, sandal and a fragrant gum resin, he (i.e. the sacrificer) should be bathed with (water mixed with) the five products of a cow.

41b-43. Having thus first duly done the bathing of the sacrificer to the accompaniment of great religious texts, and having thus spent the night in the acts performed according to sacred precepts, he should at clear daybreak give a hundred or eighty-eight or fifty or thirtysix or twentyfive cows to brāhmaṇas.

44-45. Then when the time of an auspicious moment of the Sun's entrance into a zodiacal sign approaches, he should take down into water, a cow decorated with gold to the accompaniment of Vedic texts, divine music and various musical instruments. O king, that cow should be given to a singer of *Sāmans.*

46-48a. Then having taken a golden vessel (decked) with five jewels, and then having fully placed into it the (golden) crocodile, fish etc., he should put it, while held by four brahmaṇas well-versed in Vedas and *Vedāṅgas,* and containing the water of great rivers, into water with its opening turned down and facing the north.

48b-49. Then having well-bathed (the image of) Māyā, he should put it (into water) to the accompaniment of the sacred

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1. *Śaiśava, Pañcanidhāna, Vairāje* are names of various *Sāmans—Sāman* is first mentioned in Ṛgveda X.90.9. *Jyeṣṭhasāman*—Name of a *Sāman*; see Mahābhārata XII. *Vāmadevya*—perhaps *sāmans* composed by Vāmadeva, who was a sage credited with the authorship of a larger portion of the IV *maṇḍala* of the Ṛgveda.

2. *Śāntika, Pauṣṭika*—Certain hymns from the Atharvaveda. *Atharvaṇa*—a priest or brāhmaṇa whose ritual is comprised in the Atharva Veda.

hymn *Āpohiṣṭha* and then having come (back) to the pavilion, and having honoured the members (of the sacrificial session) he should make offerings on all sides.

50. Then he should make offerings for four days. He should perform the (proper) rite on the fourth day and at that (rite) also he should give (presents to brāhmaṇas) according to his capacity.

51. Arranging the sacrificial vessels and the sacrificial material, he should distribute these equally among the priests.

52. Then he should pull down the pavilion; and he should give the golden vessel and a bed to a brāhmaṇa. Then, according to his capacity, he should feed one thousand, or eight hundred or fifty brāhmaṇas.

53-54. The rite about the lakes is thus narrated in the Purāṇas. The same rite is prescribed in the case of all wells and reservoirs of water and lotus-pools; and in the case of installation (of images).

55. In the case of palaces and gardens the difference lies in the sacred texts (i.e. the sacred texts are different). In the case of one who does not have the capacity (to spend so much), the rite as decided by Brahmā (is to be performed) with half (the expenditure).

56. When (the means) are few, the rite should be performed (as in the case of a rite with one fire) by (men) free from the vanity of wealth. The water that remains in the lakes in the rainy season after such a rite is performed, is considered to be equal to (i.e. gives the fruit of) the *Agniṣṭoma* sacrifice.

57. That (water) which remains (in the lakes) in the autumn gives the fruit described above. That (water) which remains in the lakes in the cold and winter seasons (comprising of the months of Mārgaśīrṣa to Phālguna) is equal to the *Vājapeya* and *Atirātra* sacrifices (i.e. gives the fruit of *Vājapeya* and *Atirātra*).

58. That (water) which remains (in the lakes) in the spring season is equal to (i.e. gives the fruit of) the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice; and that water too that remains (in the lakes) during the summer excels (the fruit of) the *Rājasūya* (sacrifice).

59-60. O great king, he, the pure one, who, of an extremely pure mind, performs these special religious deeds, goes to

Brahmā's abode only, and (there) rejoices for many *Kalpas*. Having moved in many worlds, and having enjoyed (in) the worlds like *Svaḥ*[1], with beautiful ladies for two *parārdhas* (i.e. for a very very long period), he, again goes to Viṣṇu's place, obtainable by the power of deep and abstract meditation.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

The Planting of Trees

Bhiṣma said:

1-2a. O brahman, tell me in detail about the rite (which is performed) with reference to (the planting of) trees. Also tell me about the worlds that are said (to exist).

Pulastya said:

2b-3. O King, I shall describe to you the rite with reference to the (planting) of trees in gardens and other places. O lord of the worlds, having accomplished everything as in the case of the rite with reference to the lakes, he should worship the priests, parts of the pavilion and also the preceptor like that (i.e. in the same way).

4-5. He should similarly honour brāhmaṇas with gold, garments and anointment. He should cover the trees with garments after having sprinkled them with water containing all herbs and with curds, and (after having) decorated them with curds and sacred grains. Their ears should be pierced[2] with a golden needle.

6-8. He should also give (i.e. apply) collyrium to them with a small golden stick. He should also get fashioned seven or eight silver fruits; and should put each one of them on the altar (in the form) of the trees. Here the incense of guggulu is the

1. *Svaḥ*: is one of the seven worlds viz. *Bhūḥ, Bhuvaḥ, Svaḥ, Mahaḥ, Jana, Tapas* and *Satya*.

2. *Karṇavedhana*—ear-boring; a religious ceremony sometimes performed as a *saṁskāra*.

best. O king, having filled pitchers with seven kinds of grains, having covered them with cloth, (having applied) sandal and anointment to them and having placed them in copper-vessels, he should put them on the trees.

9-10a. After worshipping them in the evening, and after properly making offerings to the regents of the quarters (and gods) like Indra, the brāhmaṇas should thus consecrate the tree.

10b-11. Then from the midst of the trees, he should give a cow covered with white cloth, with her girdle made of gold, her udders decorated with bell-metal and looking charming with golden horns and with her face turned towards the north.

12-15. Then the best brāhmaṇas should bathe with (the water in) those very pitchers to the accompaniment of religious texts (used at the time) of holy bathing, and also of musical instruments and auspicious songs and also to the accompaniment of sacred texts from the Ṛgveda, Yajurveda and Sāmaveda and texts sacred to Varuṇa. The host, having bathed and put on a white garment, should worship with grandeur, all the well-composed priests with (i.e. by giving them) cows, golden strings with bracelets, rings and sacred threads, as well as garments, beds, pieces of furniture and wooden sandals. For four days he should bathe with milk.

16. He should perform a sacrifice with ghee, barley or even with black sesamum. The sacrificial sticks of *Palāśa* are recommended. Similarly a festival (should be celebrated) on the fourth day.

17-18a. He also should give presents (to brāhmaṇas) according to his capacity. He should, without being jealous, do whatever is most desirable. He should give double (the presents given to brāhmaṇas) to the preceptor; and having saluted him, he should seek his pardon.

18b-19a. A wise man, who celebrates the tree-festival according to this rite, obtains (i.e. fulfils) all his desires, and an endless position.

19b-20. O lord of kings, he, who, thus installs (i.e. plants) a tree, would also live in heaven as long as three myriads of Indras (rule there); and would save (from falling into hell),

past and future men (i.e. his relatives) equal to the number of hair on the body (i.e. a large number).

21-22. He attains great prosperity (making) rebirth difficult. Even that man, who listens to this, or makes others to listen to it (i.e. reads it to others), is honoured by gods and in the world of Brahman. The trees alone make a sonless person have a son.

23-24. They offer libations etc. to plants at sacred places. O lord of kings, plant an *aśvattha* tree even with great effort. It alone will give you a thousand sons. And by (planting) an *aśvattha* a man becomes wealthy; the *aśoka* (tree) destroys grief.

25. The *plakṣa* tree is said to give (the fruit of) a sacrifice; the *kṣīra* tree is said to cause (long) life. *Jambuki* gives daughters; *dāḍimi* gives a wife.

26. *Aśvattha* leads to the destruction of diseases; *palāśa* gives (i.e. takes one to) Brahman. A man who plants a *vibhītaka* (tree) becomes a ghost.

27. (The planting of) *Aṅkola* tree leads to the expansion of the family. Health is (caused) by (the planting of) the *khadira* (tree). The sun is ever pleased with the *nimba* shoots.

28. God Śiva (is pleased) when *śrī* (tree is planted); and Pārvatī (is pleased) with the red *lodhra* (being planted). The celestial nymphs (are pleased) with (the planting of) *śiṃśapā*, and the best Gandharvas with the *kunda* tree.

29. (One would get) groups of servants (if one plants) *tintiḍika* tree; similarly (the planting of) *vañjula* (leads to the rise of) robbers. *Candana*, and *panasa* also give religious merit and wealth.

30. (Planting of) *campaka* gives good fortune, and that of *karira* makes one an adulterer. (Planting of) *tāla* destroys one's progeny; while (planting of) *vakula* (i.e. bakula) expands the family.[1]

31. The planting of coconut tree brings many wives, while planting of the grape-creeper (makes one have) an all-beautiful

1. *Tāla*: Planting of this tree is said to destroy children and that of *bakula* to increase the family.

(wife). Similarly (planting of) *kolī* causes sexual enjoyment; (planting of) *ketakī* destroys one's enemies.

32. These trees and others which are not mentioned (here) are givers (of various objects). Those who have planted trees will go (i.e. attain) high position.

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

The Vow Called Saubhāgyaśayana

Pulastya said:

1. Similarly I shall tell you about another (vow) fulfilling all desires. Those who are well-versed in the Purāṇas know it to be *Saubhāgya-śayana*.[1]

2. Formerly when worlds like *Bhūḥ*, *Bhuvaḥ*, *Svaḥ* and *Mahaḥ* were burnt, then the good fortune of all the beings became (concentrated) at one place.

3-5a. All that, having reached Vaikuṇṭha, remained in the chest of Viṣṇu. O king, then, when, after some time, at the time of creation again, the world was covered over with *Ahaṃkāra*, and was linked to *Pradhāna* and *Puruṣa*[1], and when the rivalry between Brahmā and Viṣṇu had increased, a terrible tawny flame of fire arose.

5b-7. Heated by the flame, the good fortune (of the beings) which had resorted to Viṣṇu's chest, turned into a liquid (form), even before it reached the surface of the earth; and intelligent Dakṣa, Brahmā's son, drank it which caused good form and handsomeness—when it was thrown up from the heaven.

8. (By drinking that) great power and lustre came to the great Dakṣa. The remaining, which fell on the earth, became (divided) into eight parts.

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1. *Ahaṁkāra*, *Pradhāna* and *Puruṣa* are principles accepted by the *Sāṁkhya* school of philosophy. For a detailed description of these, see Chapter 2 above.

9-10. From them the seven herbs, causing good fortune, came up: sugarcane, the *tālā* tree, beans, rice, the product of the cow's milk (i.e. curds), saffron and flowers, and the eighth one was salt. (This group of eight) is called the group of the eight things leading to good fortune.

11. From that which Brahmā's son, well-versed in concentrated meditation, drank in olden times, a daughter sprang up. She is called Satī.

12-13. Since she excels the worlds in charm, she is also called Lalitā. The trident-holder (i.e. Śiva) married the goddess (who was the most) beautiful in all the three worlds, and who was full of auspiciousness in the three worlds, and who gave enjoyments and salvation (to people). What is it that a man or a woman does not get by worshipping her devoutly.

Bhiṣma said:

14. O sage, tell me in what way that Lalitā is to be propitiated. Tell me also its mode which would lead to the peace in the world.

Pulastya said:

15-16. Having reached the spring season (i.e. when the month of Caitra in the spring comes), he, who is dear to the people, should bathe with sesamum in the morning of the third day of the bright half (of Caitra). It is said that on that day that goddess of an excellent complexion was married by the universal soul (i.e. Śiva) to the accompaniment of sacred hymns (recited at the time) of marriage.

17. He should worship the lord of the universe along with her only on the third day (of Caitra) with fruits of various kinds, lamps and incense with offerings.

18. Having bathed (her) image with the five products of cow[1] and with water mixed with sandal, he should worship Gaurī with (the image of the god) having the crescent-moon on his head (i.e. god Śiva).

1. *Pañcagavya*—the five products of the cow taken collectively, viz. milk, curds, clarified butter or ghee, urine and cowdung.

19. (While worshipping) the feet (of the images) of Śiva and Gaurī (he should say:) 'Salutation to Pāṭalā'. Saying, 'Salutation to Śiva and Jayā' he should worship the ankles of both.

20. (Saying) 'Salutation to Tryambaka and Bhavānī' (he should worship) the two shanks of Rudra (and Lalitā). (Saying:) 'Salutation to 'Rudreśvara and Vijayā' (he should worship) the knees (of the images).

21. (Saying) 'Salutatiou to Harikeśa and to you, O giver of boons' (he should worship) the thighs. (Saying) 'Salutation to Rati' he should worship the waist, and (saying) 'Salutation to Śaṅkara' he should worship Śaṅkara.

22-23. (Saying) 'Salutation to Koṭavī[1] and the Trident-holder' (he should worship) the two armpits and the Trident-holder respectively. (Saying) 'Salution to you, Maṅgalā', he should also worship Rudra and the breasts (of the image of Gaurī). In the same way he should worship Śiva (saying) 'Salutation to Vedātman' and should worship the throat (of Gaurī's image saying) 'Salutation to Rudrāṇī.'

24. He should worship Viśveśa (the lord of the universe, saying) 'Salutation to Tripuraghna'. (Saying) 'Salutation to Trilocana' he should worship Hara, and should worship the arms (of Gaurī's image, saying) 'Salutation to you, O Kālānalapriyā'.

25. He should always worship the ornaments (of the image saying) 'Salutation to Saubhāgyabhavana (i.e. the abode of good fortune)'. He should worship the mouth (of the image saying) 'Salutation to Svāhā Svadhā' and should worship Śūlin (i.e. the Trident-holder saying) 'Salutation to Īśvara'.

26. (Saying) 'Salutation to Aśokavanavāsinī' he should worship (the image's) lips, granting well-being. He should worship Hara (saying) 'Salutation to Sthāṇu'. In the same way he should worship the face (of the image saying) 'Salutation to you, O Candramukhapriya'.

27. (Saying) 'Salutation to Ardhanārīśvara', he should worship (Śiva, and should worship) the nose (of the image of

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1. *Koṭavī*—an epithet of the goddess Durgā (represented as naked).

Gaurī, saying) 'Salutation to you, O you of white complexion.' He should worship Lokeśa (the lord of the worlds saying) 'Salutation to Ugra', and should worship the eye-brows (of Gaurī's image saying) 'Salutation to you, O Lalitā'.

28. He should worship Purāhartā (saying) 'Salutation to Śarva', and should worship the (image's hair saying:) 'Salutation to Vasudevī'. (Saying) 'Salutation to Śrīkaṇṭhanātha', he should worship Śiva's hair.

29-32a. Saying 'Salutation to Bhīmarūpiṇī, of a terrible and fierce form, and to Sarvātman', having duly worshipped Hara and the group of eight objects causing good fortune he should place them before him. (They are:) greasy beans, saffron, milk, cuminseeds, *tāla*, sugarcane, salt and gourd as the eighth. He should offer this group of eight '*saubhāgya*' (to a brāhmaṇa), as it causes good fortune. Having thus presented all that in front of Śiva and Pārvatī, he should eat *Śṛṅgāṭakas* in Caitra, and should sleep on the (bare) ground, O you tamer of enemies.

32b-34a. Then again in the morning, having bathed and muttered sacred texts (and thus having become) pure, and having honoured a brāhmaṇa couple with flowers, clothes and ornaments, he should give a couple of golden images (of Śiva and Pārvatī) along with the eight auspicious things to a brāhmaṇa, (saying) 'May Lalitā be pleased here (i.e. as a result of this vow) with me'.[1]

34b. O king, he should always do like this on the third (day of every month) for a year.

35. Listen to the speciality (that lies) in eating (*Śṛṅgāṭakas* etc.) and in the sacred text used at the time of making an offering. In Caitra water (flowing from) a cow's horns is recommended while in Vaiśākha cowdung is recommended.

36. *Mandāra*-flower is recommended in Jyeṣṭha, and *bilva*-leaf in Āṣāḍha. In Śrāvaṇa curds should be eaten and water flowing from *darbhas* should be drunk.

37. In the month of Āśvina milk should be drunk, and ghee mixed with coagulated milk should be eaten in Kārtika. He should drink cow-urine in Mārgaśīrṣa, and ghee in Pauṣa.

1. The list given here slightly differs from the one given in 29.9; and the last word is not clear.

38-39. He should eat black sesamum in Māgha and the five products of cow in Phālguna; and at the time of making an offering he should say: 'May Lalitā, Vijayā, Bhadrā, Bhavānī, Kumudā, Śivā, Vāsudevī and also Gaurī, Maṅgalā, Kamalā, Satī and Umā be pleased'.

40. Then in the twelfth month he should worship Kṛṣṇa on the twelfth day; similary he should worship Lakṣmī along with her husband there only (i.e. on the same day).

41. A wise man desiring his well-being in the next world should similarly worship Brahmā with his wife on the full-moon day.

42-43. Similarly desiring his well-being he should give the *Saubhāgyāṣṭaka* (i.e. the group of eight things leading to good fortune). (He should also offer) the flowers of *mallikā* (i.e. jasmine) and of *aśoka*, lotuses, *kadamba* flowers, blue lotuses, *campaka* flowers, flowers of *kubjaka*, *karavīra*, *bāṇa*, and fresh lotuses. *Sindwāra* flowers and (other) flowers are recommended in all the months.

44. The flowers of *japā* (i.e. the china roses), safflowers, flowers of *mālati*, *śatapatra* and *karavīra* flowers when available are always recommended.

45-46a. Thus, for one year, a man or a woman or a maiden, having duly observed a fast at night and having devoutly worshipped Śiva for a year, should give a fully furnished bed at the end of the vow.

46b-47a. Having placed on the bed golden images of Umā and Maheśvara, and also (the image of) a bull with a cow he should offer it to a brāhmaṇa.

47b-48. A man, who, for one year on the twelfth day (of every month) worships Keśava with Mahālakṣmī, and Brahmā with Sāvitrī fulfils all desires that he thinks of.

49-50a. He, free from vanity of wealth and free from pride, should worship other couples (i.e. couples of images of other deities), according to his capacity, with garments, grains, ornaments and gifts of cows and other large quantities of valuables.

50b-51. He, who properly observes the vow of *Saubhāgya-śayana*, obtains all desired things and an eternal position. He should, while observing this vow, abandon eating one fruit each month.

52-53a. O king, he (then) gets success and fame. O king, he who makes gifts at the vow of *Saubhāgya-śayana*, is not separated from good fortune, good health, handsome form, garments, ornaments and decorations.

53b-55a. He, who observes the vow of *Saubhāgya-śayana* for twelve years, or for seven or eight years, is honoured in in Brahmā's world. Then having reached the world of Viṣṇu and that of Śiva, and being honoured there he duly lives there for a couple of *Kalpas*.

55b-56a. O lord of men, a lady or a maiden who observes that vow, also, being graced by the favour of Lalitā, gets the same fruit.

56b-58. He too, who listens to (the account of the vow) or intends to observe it, becomes a Vidyādhara, and lives for a long time in heaven. This vow was formerly created (i.e. introduced) by Madana. It was observed by Śatadhanu and Nara, also by Pavana and Nandī. How then, O lord of people, is it not wonderful?'

CHAPTER THIRTY

Origin of Viṣṇu's Steps:

Bhīṣma said:

1-4a. Having reached the sacrificial mountain the powerful Viṣṇu planted his foot (-steps) there. What is the purpose of this line of the foot (-steps) which the lord of lords planted? O highly intelligent one, tell me (about) that. O great sage, tell me which demon he subdued after having planted his foot (-steps) there. The residence of Viṣṇu is in heaven, the great-souled one lives in Vaikuṇṭha. How is it that he planted his foot (-step) in the human world?

4b-5. O brahman, lords of gods (i.e. great gods) with Indra as their leader, and also devotees who continuously (please) the lord by means of great penance (live in the world of gods). It is said that the residence of Śrīvarāha is in the *Mahar*-world.

6-8. Similarly the residence of Nṛsiṁha, the great-souled one, is said to be in the *Jana*-world. The residence of Trivikrama is said to be in the *Tapas*-world. Tell me in detail, O brahman, how (is it that the lord), leaving these worlds, planted his two foot-steps on the earth and (how is it that he) planted his foot-steps on the sacrificial mountain in this place, viz. Puṣkara, which is sacred to Brahmā. By hearing (this account) all sins will certainly perish.

Pulastya said:

9. That you have asked properly, listen attentively to (the account as to how) in olden days, lord Viṣṇu having come to the sacrificial mountain, planted his foot (-step) on the embankment of it.

10-12a. O Bhīṣma, formerly in the *Kṛtayuga* Viṣṇu performed a (mighty) deed for the attainment of gods' purpose and for the (good of the) earth. The stronger demons, having conquered gods along with Indra, had brought under their control the entire heaven, after subduing the three worlds.

12b-14a. The very mighty demon Bāṣkali had made the stronger demons the enjoyers (of portions) at sacrifices. When the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile were reduced to this condition, Indra, being disappointed with life, became very much distresed.

14b-16a. (He thought:) 'Due to the grant of boon to him by Brahmā, that Bāṣkali, the lord of demons, cannot be killed in a battle by all the residents of heaven. So surrounded (accompanied) by all gods in the world of Brahmā, I shall seek refuge with the lord (i.e. Brahmā). There is no other course.'

16b-18a. O Bhīṣma, thinking thus, the lord of gods, surrounded by all residents of heaven, quickly went to Brahmā's place. Surrounded by those residents of heaven he reached (i.e. touched) the feet of Brahmā and told (i.e. acquainted) him (with) what should be done about the world and also about the worst calamity that had befallen the world.

18b-20. "O god, do you not know wherefrom fear has come to us? O lord, I have told you what the demons have snatched,

and also everything of (i.e. done by) that wicked Bāṣkali; you are our grandsire; (so) do (something) without delay (to save us). O lord of gods, think now about some measures for world-peace.

21. When they (i.e. the demons) have been watching, the rites laid down in the śrutis and smṛtis have not proceeded. Everyday they are causing harm to us.

22. As an insignificant person speaks about (i.e. gives importance to) his own interest, in the same way, we who have thrown into the background your obligations, have always spoken to (i.e. requested) you.

23-24. If a man with a false mind does not do (i.e. return the favour) thousandfold to him who has obliged him, then for that bad and shameless man of wicked action and scorched by obligation there is residence in hell alone.

25. Goodness does not lie in this much (i.e. in merely) returning an obligation; but those whose minds are bent on selfishness do not do even this (i.e. do not even return a good turn).

26. (I wish) if only the stability of the world should not have become a cause of worry; my heart is rent into a hundred (pieces); it is not satisfied (i.e. happy).

27. I am going (i.e. wandering) here and there (for help). (Please) drag us up who are drowned (in grief), by telling us a means by which our lustre will again shoot up.

28. I have told you as I have seen the world. You (can) see it as it is. It is bereft of Vedic studies and the exclamation of Vaṣat. Festivals (and other) auspicious (rites) have ceased.

29. Contact with study i.e Vedic study has been abandoned (by the brāhmaṇas); agriculture[1] is given up; it (i.e. the world) is left by administration of justice; it remains merely in breath (i.e. it is barely alive).

30. The world has met with distress; and by (the passing of) this much time we are exhausted."

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1. *Vārtā*—agriculture, the occupation of Vaiśya.
Daṇḍanīti—administration of justice, judicature.

Brahmā said:

31. I know that Bāṣkali has become arrogant as a result of (my) having granted him a boon; I think he cannot be conquered by you; (but) he will be conquerable by Viṣṇu.

32-33. Having restrained (his senses) Brahmā then remained in his original nature (i.e. resumed his usual silence). When the self-born Brahmā was thinking about him, the four-armed one[1] (i.e. Viṣṇu) came there after a while merely as the result of Brahmā's meditating on him, when all (the gods) were looking on.

Viṣṇu said:

34. Warded off (by) me, O Brahman, stop this meditation. I, for whom this meditation was intended, have approached you.

Brahmā said:

35. It is indeed a great favour that the lord has manifested himself here. Who else would have so much anxiety for the world as the lord has ?

36. For the (good of) the world I brought about its creation. Virtually the world depends upon you. There is no doubt about this.

37-38. You should protect the world, and Rudra should destory it. When such was the case with the world, Bāṣkali snatched off the kingdom consisting of the three worlds and of the mobile and immobile, of (i.e. from) this great-souled Indra. O Keśava, help your servant by offering him counsel.

Vāsudeva (i.e. Viṣṇu) said:

39. That demon (viz. Bāṣkali) has been now immune to being killed due to your having granted him a boon. By captivating him he must be conquered by intelligent handling.

40. I shall be a dwarf, the destroyer of the demons. This one (i.e. Indra) should go with me to Bāṣkali's residence.

41. Having gone there he should ask him for this boon for me:

1. *Caturbhuja*—an epithet of Viṣṇu.

42. 'O king, O magnanimous one, give (a piece of) land (measuring) three steps to this short brāhmaṇa. This is the request I make to you'. Asked by Indra the lord of the demons might offer even his own life.

43-44. O grandsire, having accepted the gift from that demon, having bound him carefully and made him the resident of the nether world, I shall be (born), taking the form of a boar, to kill that wicked one. There is no uncertainty about this. O Indra, move on quickly.

45-46a. Having thus told (Brahmā) he ceased (speaking) and disappeared. Then after some time, when Viṣṇu was conceived by Aditi,[1] many fearful ill omens appeared.

46b-47a. When Viṣṇu, the prop of the entire world, was conceived (by Aditi), an excellent auspicious omen also appeared.

47b-48. Breezes carrying the fragrance of *Mālati* flowers blew. Then, having reached (i.e. at) the time as ordained, the god, the lord of gods (i.e. Viṣṇu), kind to all beings, of pure and scanty hair, having the beauty of the moon, the conch and the (sun-) rise, became (i.e. was born as) Aditi's son.

49. When Viṣṇu thus descended (on the earth), the faces of Siddhas, gods and demons with the winkings of their eyes stopped, were pleased; and that day, too, on which Viṣṇu got into that excellent womb, was having breezes, of scanty pollen, blowing (gently).

50. That respectable Aditi also, having the unborn one (i.e. Viṣṇu) in her womb, walked charmingly, distressed by her heavy hips. Her face was dull, gloomy and pale. Thus she carried the embryo that was heavier and was (lying) low (in her womb).

51. When, Nārāyaṇa thus entered the womb (of Aditi) as a result of the past and future (deeds), all beings got their desires fulfilled without any difficulty.

52-53. (When) the wind was blowing very gently; and (when) indeed people had gone to other regions by isolated paths; when the sky was being deserted by dust-particles and

1. *Aditi*—daughter of Dakṣa and wife of Kaśyapa and mother of Ādityas.

when darkness was gradualsly disappearing; (and) when Viṣṇu was in (Aditi's) womb, that mother of gods entertained a malicious design.

54-55. Listen to it, O lord of kings, in succession: "What is the use of proceeding in order? I shall spring over the heaven; and I shall make that Bāṣkali, the lord of demons, the resident of the nether world. I have (already) given wealth and handsomeness to Indra.

56. I alone shall be able to destroy the demons. I shall throw (at them) volleys of arrows and trains of discs in many ways.

57-58a. (I shall also discharge) multitudes of maces for the destruction of the demons; and as fate would have it, I shall make gods the residents of heaven and the demons the residents of the nether region".

58b. (Thus) the words that were (lingering) in her mouth at once came out.

59. "See (now), I shall, through anger, bind the chief of the demons in such a way as was not thought of before, nor seen before nor (also) heard of before.

60. Formerly I have given wealth and handsomeness to Kaśyapa. Why has he lost his energy and (why is) the wind gusty?

61. My eyes are as it were reeling; let me not have conceived this form. By what am I possessed that I am uttering these improper words?"

62. Got into (i.e. caught between) alternatives she repeatedly reflected in her heart. She carried (in her womb) the divine lord for a thousand divine years.

63. Then Vāmana (i.e. Viṣṇu), the cause of the beings, was born of her—(Vāmana) who, when born, attracted the eyes of the demons.

64. As soon as that Janārdana, the god of gods, was born, rivers flowed with clear water, and fragrant breezes blew.

65-66. Kaśyapa too obtained pleasure due to that bright son. O lord of men, no sooner was Janārdana born, than the minds of all the residents of the three worlds were full of enthusiasm, and kettle-drums that were beaten in heaven gave out sounds.

67-68. Due to extreme joy the delusion and miseries of the three worlds came to an end. The group of Gandharvas sang with notes full of emotion; and the groups of heavenly damsels, mingling with their lords, and full of emotions, danced there (i.e. in the heaven). In the same way, groups of Vidyādharas and Siddhas wandered in (i.e. being seated in) aeroplanes.

69-71. They discussed the verdict about good and bad deeds and exhibited acting and singing. Free from passions and full of pain and pleasure they sang songs, and being in the heaven they danced and (i.e. since they) have gone to the heaven from here after having obtained it by dint of their religious merit. Then some, being very much delighted, uttered (the words:) 'Victory (to you), O lord'. Others, with a steady mind, repeated these words loudly. Others secretly meditated upon him through fear of (re-) birth and for the destruction of old age and death. Thus the entire world was fully delighted.

72-73. (It was said:) 'Though a dwarf, this is the lord, who has been born for you, and after having approached whom, Brahmā had told (i.e. requested) about the (well-being of the) world. This one (i.e. he) is Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva) himself; also be is the sacrifices; he is the heaven. There is no doubt about it.

74. This entire world—immobile and mobile—is pervaded by Viṣṇu. He, the self-born one, though one only, is known to be many.

75. The crystal-gem is (i.e. appears) variegated at a place where there are colours (which get reflected in the gem). The self-born one behaves in the same way (i.e. appears to be many) due to (his contact with) the constituents (like *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*).

76. As the Gārhapatya fire gets another name, similarly this lord gets appellations like Brahmā etc.

77-78a. By all means god Vāmana will accomplish this feat (of subduing Bāṣkali).' When the residents of heaven were thus thinking and reflecting, (Viṣṇu), with Indra, went to Bāṣkali's residence.

78b-80. Having seen (i.e. he saw) the city adorned with prominent white buildings approachable by Gandharvas, and decorated with all (kinds of) jewels, and well-separated (from

one another) by big roads; (it was) adorned with hundreds of elephants always in rut, resembling the mountain of collyrium, and born in the family of divine elephants.

81. (It was also) adorned with horses with bodies having (almost) no flesh (i.e. having slim bodies), having small ears, having the speed of the mind, having long necks and long prominent parts of the foreheads above the eyes.

82. There were thousands of courtesans having excellent complexion like the interiors of lotuses, having faces resembling the full moon, and skilled in conversation and caressing.

83. There was no religious merit, no lore, no architecture, no art that did not exist (i.e. that was not found) in the city of this Bāṣkali.

84-86. It was crowded with hundreds of gardens. In it having a series of social festivals, endowed with all chief demons except Yama, resounding everywhere with sounds of lutes, flutes and tabors, sons of Danu, always joyful, decorated with many jewels, were seen sporting like gods on the Meru mountain. There was a great sound of (the recitation of) the Vedas made by the venerable demons.

87-88. That demon Bāṣkali having subdued the three worlds lived happily in that city, the sins in which were destroyed by the smoke of the ghee of (i.e. put into) fires, and by wind, in which the breezes were made fragrant by the moving about of the fragrant incense, and which was crowded with virtuous demons.

89-90. Living there he protected the three worlds along with the mobile and the immobile. He was conversant with righteousness, was grateful, truth-speaking, and had his senses controlled, was handsome, and knew the good and bad ways of life of the ancient gods. He was well-versed in the Vedas, was a protector and was kind to the distressed.

91-92. He was endowed with all the (regal) powers[1] like the Vedic, that of good counsel, personal preeminence and energy. He was interested in the six measures to be practised

1. The three *Śaktis* (powers) are—(1) *Prabhutva*—personal preeminene; (2) *Mantra*—good counsel; (3) *Utsāha*—energy. *Sāḍguṇya*—the six expedients to be used by a king in foreign policies: (1) *Sandhi*—peace or

by a king, and talked with a smile. He knew the essence of the Vedas and the *Vedāṅgas*, performed sacrifices and was engaged in (practising) penance. He was not ill-mannered and always abstained from causing harm to others.

93. He honoured those who deserved honour, was pure, pleasing, and worshipped the venerable. He knew all objects; he was invincible, agreeable and of a pleasing appearance.

94. The demon had ample grains, wealth, and vehicles. He always accomolished the three objects[1] (of worldly existence). He was the best person in the three worlds.

95-97a. He always lived in his own city nnd always removed the pride of gods and demons. In this way he protected all the beings in the three worlds. When he was the king (i.e. in his kingdom) there was no mean person, no poor person, no sick person, no short-lived person, no unhappy person, no foolish person, no person of a dull form, no unfortunate person, nor a person that was expelled.

97b-99a. Seeing that excellent chief of the demons, who was endowed with multitudes of pure qualities and who was bright like the sun, and taking him to be a person of a controlled mind, and capable of sustaining the three worlds, Indra was amazed.

99b-100a. O king, seeing Indra to have entered the city the demons maddened for fight, said this to the lord of demons:

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alliance, (2) *Vigraha*—war, (3) *Yāna*—march or expedition, (4) *Sthāna* or *Āsana*—halt, (5) *Saṁśraya*—seeking shelter, (6) *Dvaidha* or *Dvaidhībhāva*—duplicity.

Vedāṅga—Name of certain classes of works regarded as auxiliary to the Vedas and designed to aid in the correct pronunciation and interpretation of the text and the right employment of the mantras in ceremonies. They are six in number: (1) *Śikṣā*—the science of proper articulation and pronunciation; (2) *Chandas*—the science of prosody; (3) *Vyākaraṇa*—grammar; (4) *Nirukta*—etymological explanation of difficult Vedic words; (5) *Jyotiṣa*—astronomy and (6) *Kalpa*—ritual or ceremonial.

1. *Trivarga*—the three objects of worldly existence viz. *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma*.

100b-101a. "It is something strange that Indra is doing when he, all alone, except being accompanied by a short pre-eminent brāhmaṇa, is coming.

101b-102. O king, tell us what we should do now." He said to all the demons: "Assembled together you remain in the city. Let the lord of gods enter the city. Today he is to be honoured by me."

103. In the meantime that short (brāhmaṇa) and Indra arrived there; they were looked at affectionately by the lord of demons.

104. He regarded himself as blessed and the king, the leader of the demons said (to them) after saluting them:

105-106. "Today, in the three worlds, there is no person who is luckier than I, who, chosen by Glory, am seeing Indra coming (to me). With a desire to receive something from me he will beseech me. I shall certainly give (up) even my life for him who has come to my house.

107a. (I shall even give up) my wife, sons, and also my residence. What then should I say (even) about the three worlds?"

107b-108. Going to meet him, and bringing him near himself with respect, and embracing and greeting him, and carefully offering him welcome and worship with materials of worship etc. he brought him (i.e. Indra) into his house.

109. (He said:) "Today my birth is fruitful, all my desires are fulfilled, that, O Indra, I am seeing you who have visited my house.

110. O lord of gods, I have (today indeed) been proclaimed to be the king of demons by you who have come to my house. It is my great religious merit.

111. O Purandara, one would get that fruit, which is obtained by sacrifices like the Agniṣṭoma, on seeing you.

112. I have today obtained that fruit which is obtained by the grant of land, or of cows to a priest, or (the fruit that is obtained by the performance) of the *Rājasūya* sacrifice.

113. O Vāsava, you are not to be seen by little penance. Tell me what I can do, that is dear to you, in my house.

114. Do not entertain any other doubt in your heart. Know that it shall be done even if it is very difficult.

115. O you, killer of enemies, I am lucky, I have obtained religious merit on having seen you, since I have saluted your feet adored by excellent gods.

116. O lord, tell (me) all that has made you come (to me). I take the intention of your arrival to be a great surprise (your arrival has caused surprise)."

Indra said:

117. O Bāṣkali, I know you to be the chief among the pre-eminent demons. It is not a great surprise to have seen you, O best of the demons.

118. Suppliants who have visited your house never go (back) being averse (i.e. disappointed). You are the desire-yielding tree to the suppliants. There is no other donor (like you).

119. In lustre you (i.e. as far as lustre is concerned) are comparable to the sun; in (i.e. as far as) depth (i.e. seriousness is concerned), you are the earth and in (i.e. as far as) wealth (is concerned) you are like Nārāyaṇa.

120. This short brāhmaṇa is born in the auspicious family of Kaśyapa.

121. I was requested by him: "Give here (a piece of) land measuring the distance covered by three steps, to me who want a fire-sanctuary where I would perform a sacrifice." I have, therefore, O lord, asked you on his behalf.

122-123. O Bāṣkali, having overpowered (me) you have taken away the three worlds belonging to me. I have nothing to subsist upon; I am poor; I do not want for myself what you desire to give. For someone else I am going to beseech you as a suppliant (does). For this (brāhmaṇa) I have turned a suppliant. Do what is proper.

124. You, who have exalted the family, are born in the family of Kaśyapa. You are born from the womb of Diti and your father is revered in the three worlds.

125-126. Knowing that you are like this I am requesting you. O demon, give a piece of land measuring three footsteps to this one (i.e. this brāhmaṇa) —this dwarf, with short limbs, who desires to have a fire-sanctuary.

127. I do not dare to give the portion of land belonging to someone else. This is what is given (i.e. what is said)

by me since you asked me to ask for something. You may give the piece of land measuring three steps if your preceptors and ministers agree.

128. When I, your kinsman of the same family have come to your house as a suppliant, do what is proper.

129. O you hero, O you lord of demons, O you of great lustre, if you like then quickly give (a piece of land) to this short, great-souled (brāhmaṇa).

Bāṣkali said:

130. O lord of gods, welcome and well-being to you. With pleasure look upon yourself as the highest object of all.

131. The grandsire, having placed the burden (i.e. the responsibility of looking after the three worlds), given to meditation and reflecting upon the highest position, lives happily.

132. Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu), exhausted due to (having fought) many battles, after having given up anxiety about the world, and after having gone to the milky ocean, sleeps (there) happily.

133. O Śakra, even all other powerful demons having weapons were destroyed by you without (the help of) anybody else.

134-135a. The twelve Ādityas, the eleven Rudras, the two Aśvins, the Vasus and eternal Dharma are enjoying the portions of sacrifice in the heaven (only because they have) resorted to the power of your arms.

135b-136a. You have performed a hundred sacrifices endowed with excellent sacrificial fees; and O Pākaśāsana, you killed Vṛtra Namuci.

136b-137. Powerful Viṣṇu, who obeyed your order, formerly also killed Hiraṇyākṣa, the brother of Hiraṇyakaśipu. He also killed Hiyaṇyakaśipu by striking on his shank.

138. All demons seeing you, when you, with the thunderbolt in your hand and seated on the head of Airāvata, come to the battle-field, flee away.

139. In no way shall I be even equal to one-thousandth part of you who formerly defeated the very powerful demons.

140. O lord of gods, you are like this. What need I say

about you? You have arrived here with a desire to emancipate me.

141. I shall do (what you tell me). There is no doubt that I shall even give up life. For what purpose, O lord of gods, you have asked me to give this land?

142. Let all these—my wife, sons, cows, and whatever other wealth I have, and also this entire kingdom of the three worlds be given to this brāhmaṇa.

143. There is no doubt that infamy will accrue to me and my ancestors, viz. 'Bāṣkali did not give to Śakra (what he asked for and) who had come to his house.'

144. Even if some other suppliant had come here, he would be dearer to me. You are especially so. Do not hesitate at all.

145. O lord, O god of gods, it causes me great shame that you have asked only for a piece of land measuring three steps and that too for the sake of a brāhmaṇa.

146-147. I shall give this brāhmaṇa excellent villages and will give you heaven; (I shall give him) horses, elephants, land, wealth and ladies with sprout-like breast-nipples, seeing whom even an old man becomes young. The brāhmaṇa will receive those ladies and this earth.

148-149a. I shall give (these things), O lord of gods. (Please) favour me (by accepting them).

When, O king, Bāṣkali had said these words, his family priest Uśanas (i.e. Śukra) said these words to the lord of demons:

149b. "O lord of demons, you are a king remaining in (i.e. having) eightfold prosperity.[1]

150-151. (But) you do not realize what is proper and what is improper. (You also do not understand): 'I should give something to someone after having consultations with my ministers and after having assessed what is proper and what is improper'. Having conquered the gods along with Indra you have obtained the kingdom of the three worlds. (Just) as the sentence (I am speaking) is over you will be made a captive.

152-153. This dwarf is that eternal Viṣṇu only. Do not give (anything) to him. This is the one who is the killer of your

1. *Aiśvarya*—divine faculties like omnipotence, omnipresence etc.

father, mother, and relatives. He has formerly cut off (i.e. destroyed) your family and will do the same in future.

154. Interested in the well-being of Śakra and others he does not know (i.e. does not care for) moral merit. He is the deceitful one who vanquished the demons with trickery.

155. He has manifested this form of a dwarfish brāhmaṇa through trickery (only). What is the use of prolixity in this matter? Nothing should be given to him.

156. You will perish even if you give a (particle of) land measuring just the foot of a bee. This is the truth, the only truth I have heard about."

157. Even though he was thus addressed by his preceptor he again spoke (these) words: "O preceptor, desiring religious merit I have made this promise.

158. It is the eternal duty of the good to keep their promise. If this is revered Viṣṇu then there is none else luckier than I (am).

159. (Even) after receiving a gift from me he (still) desires to become (i.e. to be called) a god, (then) I am, O preceptor, again made blessed by this god.

160. I have seen him, whom the devotees meditating on him with concentration and the brāhmaṇa also, do not see.

161-163. They, who give gifts with darbhas and water in their hands and utter the sacred text, 'May the revered Viṣṇu, the highest soul and the eternal one, be pleased,' share (i.e. obtain) salvation. If there was any doubt doing this act (of giving, it was because) I was advised and was determined to be a fool by you. There is nothing that should not be given even to an enemy when he comes to one's house.

164-166a. O preceptor, having given thought to this, I shall give even my life to this dwarf and heaven to Indra. In this world that gift which causes suffering is said to be impure." Having heard this, the preceptor remained there with his face hung down in shame.

Bāṣkali said:

166b-167a. O god, when you have asked for (a gift of land) I should give you the entire earth. It would be shameful to me to give him (the piece of) land measuring three (foot-) steps.

Indra said:

167b-169a. O lord of demons, these words which you have said to me are true; (but) this brāhmaṇa has asked me for a piece of land measuring three (foot-) steps (only). He has asked me for this much land; and I have (therefore) asked you to give that much (only). You, the son of Danu, have thus been implored by me. Grant me this boon.

Bāṣkali said:

169b-170a. O King of gods, accept from me (the piece of land measuring) three (foot-) steps for (this) dwarf; (and) O lord of gods, live there (i.e. in the heaven) happily for a very long time.

170b-171a. Saying so, Bāṣkali then gave (the piece of land measured by) three (foot-) steps to the dwarf, after (pouring) water (on his hand), saying, 'Let Hari himself be pleased with me.'

171b-172. Desiring the well-being of gods, Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), when he was given the gift by the lord of demons, gave up the dwarf-form and with his face turned towards the north, he having reached the sacrificial mountain, took possession of the worlds.

173. The residence of the demons came to be put under the god's left foot. Then the lord of the world first put his step on the Sun.

174. He placed the second step on Dhruva, and with the third, the god of wondrous deeds, struck the universe.

175-176. When the universe was pierced with the tip of his toe profuse water flowed out. That stream, having inundated all Brahmā-worlds one by one, and also the place of Dhruva, the world of the Sun, and the sacrificial mountain, entered, having washed Viṣṇu's feet, the Puṣkara (Tīrtha).

177-178. He, who, having gone to (the spot) where the foot-prints were produced on the earth, bathes in the well in the hermitage (there), gets the fruit of the Aśvamedha (sacrifice) merely by seeing (the spot). With the group of the twentyone attendants he obtains (i.e. reaches) Vaikuṇṭha.

179. Then having enjoyed many pleasures (there) for three hundred Kalpas, he, at the end of it (i.e. that period), becomes a sovereign emperor on this earth.

180. O Bhīṣma, the stream of water that flowed out from the tip of (Viṣṇu's) toe, is called the river Viṣṇupadī (since) it sprang up from Viṣṇu's foot.

181. For this reason (i.e. this is the reason why), O king Gaṅgā became (i.e. came to be known as) Viṣṇupadī, which has pervaded all this universe along with the mobile and the immobile.

182. That auspicious water, which entered (Puṣkara after flowing out) from the wound (i.e. the hole made into) the universe caused by the tip of (Viṣṇu's) toe, obtained the status of a divine river. It is that river called Viṣṇupadī.

183. O you illustrious one, that divine river, with a desire to favour all, has occupied the universe with the mobile and immobile, by means of its splendours.

184. Vāmana said to that Bāṣakali: "(Now) fill out (i.e. give space for) my steps". He hung down his face (as) he did not find an answer (i.e. a solution).

185-186a. Seeing him silent the family-priest (i.e. Śukra) said (these) words: "The power of giving is natural (i.e. it cannot be increased and so) we are not able to create (another earth where Vāmana could put his steps). O lord, he has given you whatever land exists."

186b-187. Bāṣkali said to Viṣṇu: "That much earth (i.e. of that extent) which you formerly created (has been given to you); I have not held it back. The earth is small (and) you are great; (and) I am not capable of creation.

188. O lord, your will power always prevails." Viṣṇu, finding no reply, and taking him to be truth-speaking, (said to him):

189-190. "O chief of the demons, tell me, which desire (entertained) by you I should satisfy. Since I have in my hand the water offered by you, you, deserve a boon. You are an auspicious receptacle of boons. I shall give what you desire. Ask for the object of your desire."

191-193. He (i.e. Bāṣkali) then requested Janādana, the lord of gods: "O, lord of gods, I seek devotion to you and death at your hands. I shall enter Śvetadvīpa[1], which is inaccessible

1. *Śvetadvīpa*—name of one of the eighteen minor divisions of the known continent.

to the ascetics." When he spoke thus, Viṣṇu, said to him: "Do remain (there) till the end of the age of the world. When I, taking the boar-form, shall enter (i.e. come to) the earth, I shall kill you when you will come before me."

194. The demon, thus addressed by him, went away from him. Then, O king, Vāmana occupied all worlds.

195. Those demons then gave up speaking truthfully with gods. The powerful lord, having snatched the three worlds, disappeared.

196. Bāṣkali lived happily in the nether world where he took residence. The wise Indra also protected the three worlds.

197. This manifestation of the lord of the world is called Traivikrama. It is connected with the rise of the Ganges and is the destroyer of all sins.

198. O king, I have told you this origin of the steps of Viṣṇu hearing which a man becomes free from all sins.

199. At the sight of the three steps of Viṣṇu, (the effects of) an evil dream, an evil thought, a difficult or bad deed perish quickly.

200-202. Sinful beings (have emancipated themselves) age after age after having seen (the steps of Viṣṇu). O Bhīṣma, Viṣṇu has shown ingenuity in manifesting the steps. A man, who, observing silence, climbs up (the mountain) and takes up the pilgrimage of Puṣkara gets the fruit of *Aśvamedha* (sacrifice). He is free from all sins and would go to Viṣṇu's city.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

The Account of Śivadūti

Bhiṣma said:

1-2. O revered one, the killing of Bāṣkali is a great wonder I have heard (the account) being narrated by best brāhmaṇas (that Viṣṇu) had taken the form of Trivikrama (i.e. Vmana) when he had formerly subdued Bali, the son of Vairocana who even now stays in *Pātāla*.

3. (Tell me now as to) how Nāgatīrtha came into being, and also (tell me about) the origin of goblins, and how Śivadūtī came there and who made her auspicious.

4. O great sage (tell me) who took Puṣkara into the intermediate space. Tell me all this as (you told me) about the killing of Bāṣkali.

5. Formerly (i.e. when he subdued Bali) god Viṣṇu had trodden upon the earth. What is the reason for the second treading for which he (again) did it?

6. Tell me all that accurately and as it took place, for it destroys sins, and should be heard by him who desires his well-being.

Pulastya said:

7. O king, you have put on me this load (i.e. volley) of questions through curiosity only. O best king, I shall tell you all as it happened.

8. The subduing of Bāṣkali (took place) in connection with the steps of Viṣṇu. You have heard all that. I have narrated all that to you.

9-10. When the age of Vaivasvata (Manu) set in, Viṣṇu again did it. The three worlds were occupied by Bali. Powerful Viṣṇu, having gone all alone, subdued Bali like that in a sacrifice. The lord of gods again trod upon the earth.

11. O king, Vāmana appeared like that. Vāmana having become Trivikrama, again became Avāmana (non-Vāmana).

12. O you descendant of the Kuru(-family), I have told you all (about) this becoming visible (of Viṣṇu). O you of a great vow, listen as to how the place sacred to the Nāgas (came about).

13-15. Ananta, Vāsuki and the very powerful Takṣaka, Karkoṭaka—the chief of Nāgas, and also another Nāga (named) Padma, Mahāpadma, as well as Śaṅkha, and Kulika, the undefeated one: these were the heirs of Kaśyapa and had occupied the world. Their issues also ocoupied this world. These (issues) were crooked, performed fearful acts, had sharp mouths, and were strong with poison.

16. Seeing dull persons, they reduced them to ashes in a

moment. O king (merely) by seeing them people perished (i.e. died).

17-18a. Day by day very terrible destruction took place. All the beings seeing their destruction sought refuge with the great god Brahmā.

18b-19a. O king, with this object in mind all the beings saw the ancient (god) born from a lotus and named Brahmā and said to him:

19b-22a. The beings said: "O lord of gods, the origin of the worlds, O highest god, protect us from the great-souled serpents of sharp fangs. We, the extremely distressed ones, day by day are seeing (i.e. anticipating) fear. All men, beasts and birds will be reduced to ashes. O god, you fashioned the creation of the world; but that is being destroyed by the serpents. O grandsire, considering this, do what is proper."

Brahmā said:

22b-23a. I shall undoubtedly protect you. Go to your (respective) residences without anguish and fear.

23b-24a. Thus addressed by Brahmā, who had manifested his form, all the beings, being very much pleased, returned (home) after having praised the self-born one.

24b-25a. When the beings had left, Brahmā who was very angry, called the serpents led by Vāsuki and cursed them.

Brahmā said:

25b-27. The wicked ones are day by day eating the beings. Men and beasts, bitten by serpents, are perishing. (He said to them:) Since you are always destroying the men born of (i.e. created by) me, therefore due to my terrible wrath, you you will meet with a terrible destruction in the future Vaivasvata Manu-ages.

28-29. Similarly king Janamejaya, of the Lunar dynasty will burn you in blazing fire by (performing) serpent sacrifice; and the son of your mother's sister (viz. Garuḍa) will (also) swallow you. Thus all of you of wicked hearts will perish.

30a. I curse the thousand families (i.e. the effect of my curse will last) till only one family (of the serpents) survives.

30b-31a. When Brahmā spoke like this, the excellent serpents, trembling, fell at the feet of Brahmā and said these words to him):

31b-32. "O revered sir, O you cause of the beings, our species is crooked. O god, you have effected in us profuseness of poison, cruelty and biting. Then how do you curse us now ?"

33. Brahmā said: "Granted that I have made you of crooked hearts. Then, why say much? You (should) always eat without anxiety."

34. The serpents said: "O lord of gods, fix a rule and allot separate places (to men and us) and bring about an agreement between men and us.

35. You have given us this curse that a man (called) Janamejaya will bring about a great destruction of the serpents in a serpent-sacrifice."

Brahmā said:

36. There will be a man, best among the knowers of the Veda, by name Jaratkāru[1]. Jaratkanyā will be given to him (in marriage). A son will be born to her.

37. That brāhmaṇa will be your protector and the purifier of your family. I shall also bring about an agreement between the serpents and men.

38-39a. So listen with concentration to my order. I have given you three places of residence, viz. *Sutala, Vitala* and the third called *Talātala.*[2] You will go there.

39b-41. By my order, enjoy there pleasures of various kinds. Remain there till the seventh *Kāla* i.e. the *kalpa* period. Then at the beginning of the Vaivasvata the son of Kaśyapa, Suparṇa the relative of all gods, the devourer of all serpents, will be born.

42. Then the progeny of the serpents will be burnt by fire. There is no doubt that your progeny will be (burnt by fire). Those serpents who are cruel and wicked will perish. This (statement) will not be falsified.

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1. *Jaratkāru*—a great sage who married a sister of Vāsuki.

2. The seven lower regions under the earth are: *Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Rasātala, Talātala, Mahātala* and *Pātāla.*

43a. You should eat that being which is possessed by death and also (you should eat) a man when (he) has done harm to you.

43b-44a. Of those men, who are endowed with charms against snake-poison or spells or snares, you should be afraid. Do not entertain any other idea in your mind. Otherwise you will perish.

44b-45a. When Brahmā finished speaking thus all the serpents went to the place named Sutala. All (the serpents) lived in the lower world enjoying pleasures. They lived there comfortably.

45b-46. Thus having received a curse and a favour from Brahmā, they lived in (the lower world viz.) *Pātāla* with their hearts pleased. Again when (some) time passed, they thought like this:

47. 'There will be born a king of the Bharata race, and a descendant of Pāṇḍu who, through some (stroke of ill) luck, will destroy us.

48. How is it that the grandsire, the lord in (i.e. of) the three worlds, the creator, and the one respected by the world cursed us?

49. We have no other recourse than god Brahmā. That god stays in Vairāja, the best residence.

50. Now, that god, living in Puṣkara, is performing a sacrifice. Going (there) we shall propitiate him. Being pleased he will grant (us) a boon'.

51. Thinking thus, all the serpents, having reached the sacrificial mountain, resorted to its slope.

52. Seeing the serpents fatigued like that cool streams of water, turned towards the north, came out and delighted all.

53. O best among the Bharatas, as a result of those (streams) Nāgatīrtha was formed. Some call it Nāgakuṇḍa; others call it a river.

54-55a. The sacred place is the holiest of all and destroys (i.e. removes the effect of the) poison of serpents. Serpents do not cause any harm to any member of the family of those mortals who bathe there on the fifth day of Śrāvaṇa.

55b-56a. There is no doubt that Brahmā gives an excellent place to those men who offer *Śrāddha* to their dead ancestors in that region.

56b-59a. Realising the fear of the serpents, Brahmā again said the words which he had uttered before: "That fifth day (of Śrāvaṇa) is blessed, removes all sins and is auspicious, since the work of the emancipation of the serpents was done on that day. They befriend him who completely avoids pungent and sour (things) on this day and bathes (an image of) a cow with milk."

Bhīṣma said:

59b-60a. You (please) tell me how Śivadūtī was born and how she was installed.

Pulastya said:

60b-61a. O king, a power called Śivā, sprung up from the matted hair of Rudra, and determined to (practise) penance went to Nīlagiri. Listen to (the account of) the vow in her (honour).

61b-62a. 'Practising penance, I shall devour the entire world.' With this intention, the beautiful young woman accomplished (the vow of) the five fires.

62b-65a. When that goddess was practising excellent penance, there lived in the wealthy city called Ratnākhya in the middle of the ocean, a demon by name Ruru, who was very lustrous and to whom a boon was given by Brahmā. That lord of demons, fearful to all gods, wealthy and respected by many hundred thousands of excellent demons, was like another Namuci.[1]

65b-66. After a long time he went to the city of the regent of the quarter. He, desirous of conquering, and adorned with an army liked enmity with gods. When that great demon rose up, the water of the ocean increased with a great speed.

67-69 Possessed of many sharks, crocodiles and fish it inundated the peaks of mountains. A huge, fearful army, having in it many groups of the enemies of gods, having a variegated beauty due to various armours and weapons, consisting of excellent warriors, set out of the water of the ocean. Elephants, with demon-warriors (on their backs), with moving bells, and endowed with supremacy, and very much demonstrating their

1. *Namuci*—a demon slain by Indra.

similarity with large fish by means of their own figures, moved out.

70. Lakhs and crores of horses, tied with golden strings, resembling rohita fish, arranged in order in the water also quickly moved out with them (i.e. elephants).

71-72a. Similarly, chariots, having the speed of the Sun's chariot, with wheels and sticks and with unrent bamboos, with banners moving (on their tops), made a noise. In the same way warriors, with excellent missiles in their hands, hidden in boats and desiring to cross (the ocean in the boats), victorious in every battle and the followers of the demon shone very brightly.

72b-73a. When in the fights the gods fled, the demons particularly pursued all of them.

73b-74a. Then all groups of gods, distressed with fear and fleeing went to that excellent Nīlagiri, where the goddess herself had remained.

74b-76a. That goddess, Raudrī (i.e. sprung up from Rudra), endowed with penance, blessed one, and the excellent power of Śambhu, causing destruction, and known as the night of the destruction of the world, and having eyes like blooming lotuses, seeing the gods distressed with fear and confounded, asked them through amazement:

76b-77a. "I am not seeing any (cause of) fear for you. How is it that all gods, led by Indra, have fled away?".

The gods said:

77b-78. This Ruru, the lord of demons, of a fearful valour and surrounded by great complete army is coming. Therefore, we being distressed, have sought the resort of you, the goddess.

79. Hearing these words of gods she laughed loudly. From the mouth of her who was laughing, excellent ladies came out.

80-81. They all held nooses and goads; their breasts were stout and raised; all held tridents, all were fearful; their mouths had goads in the form of large teeth; they had put on crowns; they bit their lower lips; they frightened the mobile and the immobile with the sounds of their hissing.

82. Some had put on white garments; some had put on

variegated garments. The garments of some were dark-blue; some had a strong desire to drink blood.

83. Their faces had various forms; their dresses were of various kinds, so also their bodies. That goddess, causing absence of fear among the gods, was thus surrounded by them.

84-85a. No sooner did she say to the gods, 'O gods, do not be frightened; well-being to you', than the demon Ruru came with his complete army[1], to that excellent Nīla-parvata, in search of gods.

85b-86a. Seeing in front of them the army of gods with the goddess, the demons came there saying, 'Wait, wait'.

86b-90a. Then a great war was waged between them, when all the demons who had come to the battlefield, whose bodies were pierced with arrows, who were moving on the ground, whose staffs were broken in anger, and who were creeping (i.e. moving) like serpents, with the wounded horses, the broken chariots, the injured elephants and the foot-soldiers, with their chests pounded by the mace that came out from the heart of that Śakti (i.e. that goddess), with their heads cut off with axes and broken with pestles, with their bellies pierced with the tips of tridents, and with their necks cut off with excellent swords, fell (on the ground) in the war, except Ruru.

90b. Then seeing his army destroyed Ruru created (malignant) illusion.

91. Gods and goddesses were deluded by that (illusion) on the battlefield. Everywhere pitch-darkness prevailed due to the malignant illusion.

92. Then the goddess (i.e. Śivadūtī) struck the demon with great power. When the demon was struck by her, the darkness (caused) by the demon passed away.

93-94. When the illusion came to an end, the demon Ruru quickly entered Pātāla. There too the angry goddess, along with (other) goddesses stood before Ruru, the lord of demons, who had gone there before.

95-96a. Cutting off Ruru's head with the tips of her nails,

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1. *Caturaṅga sainya*—a complete army consisting of elephants, chariots, cavalry and infantry.

and taking off his skin, she speedily went out of *Pātāla*, and again came to the Puṣkara (Tīrtha) and to the mountain (called Nīlagiri), along with the bright and multi-formed army of the maidens (created by her).

96b-98a. The gods saw with amazement the goddess holding Ruru's head and skin and remaining at the place of her penance. Then the magnanimous, hungry and bewildered goddesses (created by Śivadūtī) stood surrounding her and implored her:

98b. "O goddess, we are hungry; give us excellent food."

99. Thus addressed, she pondered over the food to be given to them. But she did not get the food though she very much thought about it.

100. Then she meditated upon the mighty Mahādeva, the lord of beings. He, the three-eyed highest soul, stood up (before her) as a result of her meditation.

101. Rudra said to that goddess: "What is the mission that you desire to tell me? O you goddess, the great creator of illusion, tell me what is in your mind."

Śivadūtī said:

102. O you god, in a goat you remain in the form of a goat. These will eat you with great respect as their desired food.

103. O lord of gods, please give them something as their food. Otherwise the mighty ones, desiring food will put me (and roast me) on an iron-spit.

104. The hungry ones may even forcibly devour me. Taking me to be like this (please) prepare (i.e. bring about) food quickly.

Rudra said:

105. O Śivadūtī, I am telling you one (incident) that took place in another (i.e. previous) yuga. My attendants destroyed Dakṣa's sacrifice (being performed) at Gaṅgādvāra.

106. There (i.e. at that time) sacrifice, being (i.e. turning himself into) a deer ran fast. He was pierced by me with an arrow and (as a result) he was sprinkled with blood (i.e. started bleeding.

107-108. Then Ajagandha sprang up. Gods gave me the (same) name (saying:) 'You yourself are Ajagandha'. I shall give (these goddesses) other food also. O you Kālarātri of great lustre and beautiful one, listen to (the name of) the food suited to these (goddesses, now) being told by me.

109-110a. Let that woman, who, while pregnant, puts on or touches the garment of another woman and especially of a man be the food of some of these (goddesses) on the earth, O you chief goddess.

110b-111. Also let them forcibly seize the child of such a lady till that child becomes a year old, and then let them remain well-pleased for many hundreds of years. Let others, who will not be worshipped, find a flaw in the lying-in chamber.

112. Also, (some goddesses) seizing new-born infants will live in houses, fields, lakes and also in gardens.

113. Those and others possessing the bodies of those women who always weep, will satisfy themselves (by eating) such women.

Śivadūtī said:

114-115. O Śaṅkara, you have given them (food) which is despised and which would inflict pain on them. You do not realize that you should give them some special food. O Śaṅkara, please do not give them food which would cause shame to them, and which would cause pain to the beings.

Rudra said:

116-117a. When, formerly, in Avanti, I (got) Skanda shaved, (that is) when the auspicious tonsure-ceremony[1] of Kumāra (i.e. Skanda) took place, the mothers, having come there, prepared unprecedented food.

117b. Groups of gods came from the world of gods to enjoy the food of (i.e. prepared by) the mothers.

118-121. At that olden time in their house best gods like Brahmā and Gandharvas, celestial nymphs, Yakṣas and Guhyakas, mountains like Meru and rivers like Gaṅgā, as well

1. *Cūḍākarman*—Ceremony of tonsure.

as all serpents, elephants, Siddhas, birds and killers of the demons, female goblins with vampires[1] and surrounded by all planets had gathered. What should I say, O goddess? All that was created here by Brahmā was given.

Śivadūtī said:

122. For these goddesses give me food which is inaccessible in heaven, which is oily, mixed with jaggery, tasty and well-cooked and which is intended for them, and which is not enjoyed by anyone else before, O great god.

123. Thus addressed Maheśvara, the god of gods, told them in the vicinity of Pārvatī about their food:

124. "I have accomplished the food prepared in many ways. All that is exhausted. And no other (kind of food) is seen here.

125. Tell me what I should today give to you who have come (to me). I have especially to give something quite new.

126-127. I shall give you as food which has never been tasted before by anyone. Below my navel are these two circular long and fruit-like testicles. Even with this food you will have great satisfaction."[1]

128. Receiving that great favour all the goddesses saluted Śiva. Śarva said these words to them:

129-130. "The wealth, beasts, sons, wives and houses etc. of those who perform auspicious deeds without laughing, will be given to you by me; and also whatever else is in your mind. Those who by laughing have long teeth (i.e. show their teeth) (will) become poor.

131. Therefore, one who is wise, should not indulge in censuring or laughing (at others). In this world you will be known as mothers.

132-133a. The lineage of those men, who, along with their relatives and kinsmen, prepare (articles from) a lotus, grams, and also cakes and sorts of bread with (i.e. having the shape of) testicles, as an offering, is not cut off.

133b-134. A man who has no son, gets a son; he, who desires

1. *Vetāla*—a kind of ghost—particularly a ghost occupying a dead body.

wealth, obtains it; he, being handsome, lucky, enjoyer, well-versed in all sciences, is honoured in Brahmā's world with (i.e. being taken in) a vehicle to which swans are yoked.

135. O Śivadūtī, thus I have given them food. Does it bring shame to you? Please listen to what I said:

136-142. Be victorious, O goddess, Cāmuṇḍā; victory to you who snatch away beings. Victory to you who are omnipresent; O goddess Kālarātri, salutation to you. O you (goddess) endowed with the universal form, O you Virūpākṣī (of deformed eyes), O you Trilocanā, O you Bhīmarūpā (i.e. of a terrible form), O Śivā, Vidyā, Mahāmāyā, Mahodarā, Manojayā, Manodurgā, Bhīṃākṣī, Kṣubhitakṣayā, Mahāmārī, Vicitrāṅgī, O you to whom singing and dancing are dear, O you auspicious one, O Vikarālī, Mahākālī, Kālikā, Pāpahāriṇī, Pāśahastā, Daṇḍahastā, Bhīmahastā, Bhayānakā, Cāmuṇḍā, Jvalamānāsyā, Tīkṣṇadaṃṣṭrā, Mahābalā, Śivayānapriyā, Devi, Pretāsanagatā, Śivā, Bhīmākṣī, Bhīṣaṇā, O you goddess, Sarvabhūtabhayaṅkarī, Karālī, Vikarālī, Mahākālī, Karālinī, Kālī, Karālavikrāntā, Kālarātri, salutation to you. O you goddes, salutation to you who hold all weapons and who are saluted by all gods.

143. Śivadūtī, who was thus praised by Parameṣṭhin Rudra, the great goddess was pleased and said these words:

144a. "O lord of gods, ask for a boon which you have in your mind."

Rudra said:

144b. O goddess of a beautiful face, being present everywhere grant boons to those men who praise you with this eulogy.

145-146a. May he, who climbing up this mountain, worships you with devotion, have sons, grandsons and prosperity.

146b-147a. He, who hears this eulogy rising from (i.e. about) the goddess, becomes free from all sins, may obtain (i.e. obtains) the highest bliss.

147b-148. If a king, who has lost his kingdom, being controlled and pure, (praises) while observing a fast, (the goddess)

on the ninth, or eighth or fourteenth (day of a month), he regains his kingdom, free from enemies, after a year.

149-151a. This power endowed with knowledge is called Śivadūtī. O king, he, who listens to this (eulogy) with great devotion, being free from all sins, would obtain the highest salvation. He, who, after having bathed in the water of the Puṣkara (Tīrtha), recites this (eulogy), gets all this fruit, and is honoured in the world of Brahmā.

151b-152a. That house, in which a written (copy) of this (eulogy) is kept, has no fear of terrible fire or fear due to thieves etc.

152b-154. A wise man, who devoutly worships this remaining in a book-form, has everything desired by him—(even) the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. Many sons are born (i.e. he gets many sons, and also he gets) wealth, grains, and excellent ladies; and also quickly gets gems, horses, elephants and servants. All this will certainly take place in the house in which this is kept in a manuscript-form.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

Descent of a Holy Place

Bhīṣma said:

1. O you highly intelligent one, tell me, as a result of which deeds the condition of an evil spirit is produced (i.e. as a result of which one turns into an evil spirit after death); and also (tell me) by (doing which) deeds one is freed from here (i.e. this condition of evil spirit).

Pulastya said:

2. O best king, I shall entirely tell you all this, hearing which you will not be deluded.

3. I shall tell you by which (deeds) one is reduced to the condition of a spirit, and by (doing which deeds) one is freed

from it; (I shall also tell you how) one reaches a terrible hell which is insuperable even to gods.

4. Men who have been reduced to the state of an evil spirit are emancipated by conversation with the good, and by (listening to) accounts of holy places.

5-6. O Bhīṣma, it is learnt that in olden times there was a brāhmaṇa, named Pṛthu, who had fulfilled his vow, who was well-known everywhere, who was always content, who was devoted to the study of sacred texts in his house, who always engaged in the practice of yoga (deep and abstract meditation) and who was a knower of yoga. He passed his time in muttering prayers and performing sacrifices.

7. He was endowed with forgiveness and kindness and with forbearance, and was a knower of truth. He had put his mind in (i.e. practised) harmlessness, and also he was steady in gentleness (i.e. he was gentle).

8. He was devoted to self-restraint and penance and meditation; he was engaged in (performing) rites (in honour) of the dead ancestors and in rites enjoined by the Vedas.

9. He entertained fear of the other world; he was given to truthful speech; he was devoted to (speaking) sweet words and to honouring guests.

10. He was engaged in performing sacrifices and doing acts of charity[1]; he avoided the pairs (of pleasure, pain etc.); he performed his duties; and busied himself in the study of sacred texts.

11. Thus many years passed when the brāhmaṇa, residing in his house, performed acts like these with a desire to conquer (i.e. to go beyond) the worldly existence.

12. He made up his mind to visit holy places: 'I shall make my body wet with the auspicious water of the sacred places.'

13. At the time of sun-rise, he, having bathed in the Puṣkara (Tīrtha) and become pure, and muttered prayers and having saluted (the deities), resorted to the path (i.e. walked ahead).

14. In a lonely forest, full of thorny trees and void of birds, he saw in front of him five very fearful men.

1. *Iṣṭāpūrta*—performing sacrifices and digging wells and doing other acts of charity.

15. Seeing the deformed, very terrible men of a wicked appearance he, with his heart slightly frightened, remained still.

16. He, of a sweet tongue, then mustered courage and casting off his fear asked them (in sweet words) : "Who are you and what makes you deformed ?

17. Or which deed did you perform by (i.e. as a result of) which you got this deformity? How are you like this? Which way are all of you setting on (i.e. where are you going) ?"

The evil spirits said:

18. We are always hungry and thirsty, and are enveloped by great grief. We all have lost our understanding, our intellect and have become confounded.

19. We are unable to recognize a direction or an intermediate direction, nor are we able to recognize the sky, or the earth or heaven.

20. But it would be (i.e. it is) a pleasure that we have told all (this) grief (of ours to you). Now it seems to be the morning that the sun is seen rising.

21. I am Paryuṣita by name. (This) other one is Sūcīmukha. (This is) Śīghraga. (This is) Rohaka and this fifth one is Lekhaka.

The brāhmaṇa said:

22. How is it possible that those, who have turned into evil spirits as a result of their deeds have names? For what reason did you have (these) names?

The evil spirits said:

23. I always eat (i.e. ate) dainty food; and would give stale food to a brāhmaṇa. For this reason my name is Paryuṣita.

24. This one pierced many brāhmaṇas desiring food etc.; for that reason he is regarded as having the name (i.e. he is named as) Sūcīmukha.

25. O best brāhmaṇa, I am (called) Śīghraga for the reason that when solicited by a hungry brāhmaṇa I moved (away) quickly.

26. This one, through fear of (being requested by) a brāhmaṇa (to give him food), always ate delicious food on the top of

the house (to avoid the brāhmaṇa) of whom he was afraid. So he is called Rohaka.

27. This one is called Lekhaka, the most sinful amongst us, who always remained silent, scratching on the ground, when solicited (by someone for something).

28. Lekhaka walks with (great) difficulty. Rohaka has his head hung down. Śīgharga has become lame. Sūcīmukha has become (like) a needle.

29. Paryuṣita's neck is long and he is called pot-bellied. As a result of this sin his scrotum and his lips are protruding.

30. Thus I have told you everything about our mode of life and its cause. If you have a strong desire, then ask (further questions). When (thus) asked we shall state (further).

The brāhmaṇa said:

31. All the beings that live on the earth, depend upon food. I desire to hear the truth about your food.

The evil spirits said:

32. O brāhmaṇa, listen to (the description) of our food condemned by all beings, hearing which you will again and again censure us.

33. The evil spirits enjoy in those houses where purity is ignored (i.e. which are impure) due to phlegm, urine, feces and the dirt of the bodies of women.

34. The evil spirits enjoy there (i.e. in those places) where the remnants of food are burnt or scattered or thrown out by ladies or which are censured due to fith.

35. The evil spirits enjoy there (i.e. in those houses) where there is no sense of shame in the hearts (of the residents), in which no sacrifices are performed, and which are void of vows.

36. The evil spirits enjoy in those houses where the elders are not respected, and which are dominated by ladies, and (the inmates of) which are overpowered by anger and greed.

37. O dear, I am ashamed of telling you about my food. It is not possible even to tell you still further.

38. O you of a firm vow, I am asking you about (i.e. as to how to bring about) the cessation of this condition of an evil

spirit. O you whose wealth is penance, tell me how (a man) does not become an evil spirit.

The brāhmaṇa said:

39. A man does not become an evil spirit if he always performs vows lasting for a day or two days or *Kṛcchra Cāndrāyaṇa* and other vows.

40. One who, full of compassion for beings, serves (i.e. worships) three, five or one fire everyday does not become an evil spirit.

41. One who looks equally upon honour and dishonour, upon gold and a clod of earth, and upon friend and foe, does not become an evil spirit.

42. One who is always engaged in worshipping deities, guests and preceptors and also in worshipping his dead ancestors, does not become an evil spirit.

43. One who, with faith, offers a *śrāddha* on the fourth day of a month which falls on a Tuesday in the bright half of a month, does not become an evil spirit.

44. One who has conquered his anger and doubt and is free from desire and attachment, is given to forgiveness and charity, does not become an evil spirit.

45. One, who salutes cows, brāhmaṇas, sacred places, mountains and rivers, and also gods, does not become an evil spirit.

The evil spirits said:

46. O highly intelligent sage, we have heard about various duties. Being distressed we are asking you. Tell us (about that) by (doing) which a man becomes an evil spirit.

The brāhmaṇa said:

47. If a man, especially a brāhmaṇa, dies having eaten Śūdra's food, (with the food) lying in his belly, he becomes an evil spirit.

48. He, who abandons his mother, father or brothers, or his sister or his son in whom no fault is seen, becomes an evil spirit.

49. A man who performs sacrifices for those for whom no

sacrifice should be performed, or who does not perform sacrifices for those for whom they should be performed, or who is engaged in serving the Śūdras, becomes an evil spirit.

50. A man who takes away a deposit (kept with him), or harms his friends, or is always engaged in cooking for a Śūdra, or is a betrayer of trust (i.e. deceives a person who trusts him), becomes an evil spirit.

51. A man who kills a brāhmaṇa or a cow, who is a thief, or who drinks liquor, or who violates his teacher's bed (i.e. his teacher's wife), who abducts a virgin or misappropriates a land, becomes an evil spirit.

52. He who, having received a gift in common, conceals it (for himself), or he who is attached to atheism, is born as an evil spirit.

53. When the best brāhmaṇa was speaking like this, there was (produced) a sound of kettle-drums in the sky and a shower of thousands of flowers discharged by gods fell on the earth.

54. Due to the talk of the brāhmaṇa and his telling about virtue many aeroplanes of the evil spirits came (there) from all sides.

55. Therefore, O Gaṅgāsuta (i.e. son of Gaṅgā), if you want bliss, then being vigilant, make every effort to converse with the good.

56. In the family of him who recites for a lakh of times this account of the five evil spirits—which is the ornament of all virtue—no one is born as an evil spirit.

57. He, who, endowed with devotion, repeatedly listens to it with great faith, is not born as an evil spirit.

Bhīṣma said:

58. Why is Puṣkara (Tīrtha) said to be (situated) in the sky? How is it that the sages, given to virtue, have it here (i.e. on the earth)?

59. Tell me, who am asking through curiosity, all that as to who secures it and (tell me) how it gives fruit when secured?.

Pulastya said:

60. O king, a crore of sages, living in the southern part came to Puṣkara to bathe; but Puṣkara went up to the sky.

61. All the sages, knowing this, absorbed in suspending the breath, remained there for twelve years, meditating upon the highest Brahman.

62. Brahmā, great sages, gods with Indra came there. The (great) sages, concealing themselves, told the very difficult restraints:

63. "O brāhmaṇas, invoke Puṣkara with a prayer. It will come near you by your reciting (i.e. if you recite) the three *ṛks* (beginning with) *Āpohiṣṭha.*

64. It will give you fruit by your muttering the expiatory prayer".[1] At the end of the words (uttered by the sages) all brāhmaṇas did like that (i.e. as they were told).

65-66. The brāhmaṇas, who did like that according to the instruction, obtained religious virtue. The brāhmaṇas living in the south and north censured in the codes of laws and other brāhmaṇas dwelling in mountains do not deserve an invitation to a *śrāddha.* O king, for this reason, it (i.e. Puṣkara) remained in the sky only.

67. O king, Puṣkara gives purity (to a person) by bathing (in it) on the full moon day of Kārtika. It gives religious merit to all including even Brahmā.

68. O king, (persons of) all castes who come there to obtain religious merit become equal to brāhmaṇas (even) without (the recitation of) a prayer.

69. The day on which the Moon is in the lunar mansion viz. Kṛttikā on the full moon day of Kārtika, should be regarded as important, and is good for (taking) a bath and (giving in) charity.

70. When on this day the Moon is in the lunar mansion called Bharaṇī that (day) also is declared to be very auspicious by the ascetics.

71. That full moon day of Kārtika on which the Moon enters the mansion called Rohiṇi, that day, O king, is said to be *Mahākārtikī*; it is difficult to be had even by gods.

72. Brahmā himself has declared these three lunar mansions (to be auspicious) when they fall on Sundays or Thursdays or Mondays.

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1. *Aghamarṣaṇa*—a prayer repeated by brāhmaṇas: Ṛgveda X.190.

73. He, who takes a bath (on one of these days in Puṣkara), obtains greater religious merit than (by performing) an *Aśvamedha* sacrifice. Gifts (given on one of these days) and also offering of libations to the manes (made on one of these days) become inexhaustible.

74. That combination when the Sun is in the Viśākhā and the Moon in the Kṛttikā is called Puṣkara and very difficult to be had at the Puṣkaras.

75. Those, who take bath at Puṣkara, which has come down (to the earth) from the sky, which is auspicious and which is sacred to the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā), obtain worlds of prosperity.

76. O great king, I have told you the truth that these people will not long for any other religious merit done or undone.

77. It is said to be (the best) holy place of all holy places here on the earth. O king, no holy place is said to be superior to this.

78. Especially on the full moon day of Kārtika that auspicious Sarasvatī that removes sins has arrived (here) from that Udumbara forest.

79-80a. She has filled up (with her water) the holy place resorted to by sages. Not far from it shines the mountain-peak called Nīlāñjanacaya and dark- blue in colour like a grass-plot.

80b-81. Due to her the peak appears to be the Puṣkara high up in the sky full of lofty multitude of clouds in the rainy season. It was full of the fragrance of *Kadamba* flowers and decorated with *Kuṭaja* and *Arjuna* flowers.

82-83. It remained there as it were to go up to the path of the Sun. The peak shines (i.e. shone) with beautiful coconuts on all sides. The coconuts were round like the glossy round breasts of ladies full of horripilation. It was adorned all round with the humming swarms of bees.

84-85. It was charming with the notes of cuckoos and full of the notes of peacocks. This auspicious river, having auspicious water, the daughter of Brahmā and very beautiful has risen on that charming peak; and from that cluster of bamboos that very great river has flowed towards the north.

86-87a. Not flowing far away from that place she again flows towards the west. Thereafter that goddess, who was pleased,

having given up her concealment, stays manifest due to her compassion for beings.

87b-88a. At Puṣkara Brahmā has given her, having five streams (five names viz.) Kanakā, Suprabhā, Nandā[1], Prācī and Sarasvatī.

88b-89. On her bank there are very charming holy places and temples, which have been resorted to by sages and Siddhas from every side. In all these (sacred places etc.) the cause of religious merit is Sarasvatī.

90. Gift of gold, dwelling or land made at these holy places by men who have bathed (i.e. after having bathed) causes great prosperity and generates inexhaustible fruit.

91. The best sages declare that the gift of grains is excellent, and also the gift of oil. That which is given by men at the holy places is said to be superior.

92. A woman or a man, who, being restrained and having fixed her or his mind on the holy places would fast unto death with perseverance, enjoys fruit at Brahmā's residence as much as he desires.

93. All those—the immobile and the mobile—who die in her vicinity as a result of the exhaustion of their deeds, get the excellent fruit of a sacrifice which is difficult to obtain.

94. Therefore, men with all their heart should, with great effort, resort to the great river Sarasvatī that gives a charming fruit, gives the reward of religious merit to those whose minds are afflicted with the grief of birth etc.

95. Those who always drink that sacred water there, are not men but gods dwelling here on the earth.

96. That fruit which the brāhmaṇas get by (performing) sacrifices, (making) gifts, is obtained even by śūdras born according to their innate nature by taking a bath here.

97. Even great sinners, by the sight of Puṣkara, being free from sins, go to heaven after they cast their body.

98. By observing a fast at Puṣkara a man quickly and with little effort obtains that fruit which is the fruit of a fire-sacrifice.

99. He, who, in the month of Māgha, offers, with devotion

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1. The reason why she is called Nandā is given in Chapter 18 above.

and according to his capacity, sesamum to a virtuous brāhmaṇa, would live in the house of Viṣṇu.

100. That man also, who observes a fast there, bathes and eats the five products of a cow, would obtain (i.e. go to) heaven after death.

101. Even the thieves who live in its vicinity go to heaven due to its power. There is no doubt about it.

102-103. Also men following the occupation of śūdras, who, by fasting for three nights, give money to brāhmaṇas, being endowed with the power due to pious utterances, and being immortal and having four arms, get into a vehicle having a lotus-seat and obtain union with Brahman and are not reborn.

104. Gaṅgodbheda is the place where Gaṅgā came to see and appease Sarasvatī, the best river, rising from the sky.

105-106a. He, who, having gone there, has drunk a cavity-ful pure water (of Gaṅgā) resorted to by gods and Siddhas and also the pure water of Sarasvatī, worshipped by groups of Vidyādharas, attains to that highest (Brahman).

106b-107a. Looking in the east, Sarasvatī said: "O friend Gaṅgā, you have left me alone. Where are you going? I am friendless."

107b-108a. Gaṅgā, finding her to be weeping and distressed with grief, came there from the eastern region to see her of afflicted mind.

108b-111a. Seeing the highly virtuous one and having embraced the distressed one, and having wiped her eyes Gaṅgā said these words at that time: "O you glorious one, do not weep. O friend, you have done, for the gods, a difficult task, which none else can do. For this reason, O you highly virtuous one, gods have come to see you. Worship them with words and with mental and physical acts."

111b-112a. Sarasvatī, Brahmā's daughter, having duly worshipped the best gods, got united with (i.e. mixed with) her friend.

112b-114a. The confluence of the two between the Jyeṣṭha and the Madhyama Puṣkara is well-known in the world. Brahmā's daughter (i.e. Sarasvatī then flowed) towards the west

and Gaṅgā towards the north. Then all the gods who had come to Puṣkara, realising the difficult task (she had done) praised her:

114b-115. "You are intellect; you are thought; you are Lakṣmī (i.e. prosperity): you are knowledge; you are faith; you are highest devotion; you are intellect; you are retentive faculty; you are love; you are forbearance; you are success; you are libation offered to dead ancestors; you are oblation offered to gods; you are pure thought.

116. You are twilight, night, lustre, prosperity, retentive faculty, and faith. You are sacrificial lore, great knowledge, secret knowledge and bright.

117. You are said to be metaphysics, agriculture, and judicature. O you of auspicious water, salutation to you who go to the ocean.

118a. Salutation to you who liberate (persons) from sins; salutation to you, O goddess dear to the world".

118b-119. Thus the divine goddess was praised by (the gods) intent upon securing their own interest. Thus that goddess Sarasvatī, full of all holy places, remained there with all gods, facing the east.

120. She is to be known as Prācī—these are the words of Brahmā. There is a place named Śuddhavaṭa, said to (be sacred) to the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā).

121. Even those, who are great sinners, becoming pure merely by seeing it, obtain the pleasures of the happy persons, in the vicinity of Brahmā.

122. Those who observe there a fast unto death, being immortal and having no fear from anywhere, go to heaven in Brahmā's vehicle.

123. Those who have even given very little to the knowers of Brahman—to those whose thoughts are fixed on the supreme spirit—have given a hundred existences (are not to be born for at least a hundred existences).

124. Those men who perform there the purificatory rite called *Khaṇḍasphuṭita*[1], reach the world of Brahmā and are always happy there.

1. *Khaṇḍasphuṭitasaṁskāra*—repairing of dilapidations.

125. The fruit of the worship offered, or prayers muttered or sacrifice performed here, which is obtained by men whose minds are engrossed in devotion to Brahman, is infinite.

126. A person offering a lamp there, gets intellectual vision and becomes one with the supreme soul. A person, by offering incense (there) obtains the place resorted to by Brahmā.

127. Or what is the use of talking much? Whatever is offered at the confluence (of Gaṅgā and Sarasvatī) is said to give infinite fruit to a person alive or dead.

128-129a. An unending fruit accrues by taking a bath or muttering prayers or performing a sacrifice there. Having come to that place Rāma offered a *piṇḍa* and a *śrāddha* to Daśaratha as directed by that (sage) Mārkaṇḍeya.

129b-130a. There is a well with four corners. All men who offer *piṇḍas* there go to heaven (borne) in a car to which swans are yoked.

130b-131. Brahmā, the best among those well-versed in (performing) sacrifices, performed at that well a sacrifice in honour of manes in which excellent gifts were given. Vasus should be known as the manes and Rudras as the grandsires.

132. Similarly Ādityas are mentioned as their great grandsires. (All these) of the three categories were called and addressed by Brahmā:

133a. "Always remaining here you should accept the offering of *piṇḍas* etc."

133b-134. Since what is done for (i.e. offered to) manes for their maintenance would give unending fruit, the manes and the grandsires also are pleased with them. By the libation they are satisfied and by the offering of *piṇḍas* they obtain (i.e. go to) heaven.

135. Therefore leaving everything (else) (a man) should offer *piṇḍas* at Prācīna. A son by offering (*piṇḍas*) should please all his manes.

136. It is preferred and valued by Prācīneśvara, is called the Āditīrtha (i.e. the best sacred place) and brings about salvation even by (merely) being seen.

137. A person merely by touching the water there becomes free from the bondage of birth (and death); by bathing in it he ever becomes the follower of Brahman.

138. A man who having bathed at Āditīrtha, gives even little food, would generally obtain (i.e. go to) heaven.

139. A man, who, after having bathed there, would offer money with a dish consisting of sesamum and rice and with gold, being happy, enjoys in heaven.

140. Prācī Sarasvatī resides there; what else do men seek? The fruit of a bath in her (water) leads to satisfaction, and is of the nature of (the fruit of) penance, sacrifice etc.

141. Those men who drink the auspicious (water of) goddess Prācī Sarasvatī are not men. They should be known as gods. So said sage Mārkaṇḍeya.

142. After having reached river Sarasvatī, there is no (strict) rule about bath. (A person can have it) after having eaten food or without having eaten food, or by day or at night.

143. That sacred place, viz. Prācīna is said to be best of all. It is said to destroy the sins of beings, and to be give religious virtue.

144. Again, those devout persons, who having bathed there, worship Janārdana according to their capacity, go to heaven.

145. Viṣṇu is the best among gods. So that place where he resorted to Sarasvatī is a great holy place—so said the son of Brahmā.

146. Therefore (i.e. because Viṣṇu resorted to that place), Sarasvatī, looking upon it as a great and very glorious sacred place, remained there waiting for Mandākinī (i.e. Gaṅgā).

147-148a. The son of Brahmā said, that sacred place is the best of all sacred places; gods praised Sarasvatī that remained there, where they obtained religious merit equal to (that obtained by resorting to) Gaṅgā.

148b-149. Knowing her to be of a melancholy face and of a distressed mind, Brahmā created her beautiful friend of spotless eyes.

150-151a. Viṣṇu also created Lakṣmī of eyes like lotuses. Śiva (called) Nīlakaṇṭha, Vṛṣadhvaja, Vajrapāṇi, who was the lord of lords, created Sarasvatī's friend, viz. Vajriṇī, having the lustre of an excellent doe.

151b-153a. That great river, that divine beauty, being seen by her friends and being very much delighted started to pro-

ceed by the command of gods. Then that Sarasvatī, regarded as the best of all those (friends), turning towards the east, was eager to proceed.

153b-154. Even those beasts who drink the water of Prācī Sarasvatī go to heaven as the best brāhmaṇas (go to heaven) by (performing) sacrifices. Prācī Sarasvatī at this place should be looked upon as the desire-yielding gem.

155-156. Like it this great river has become the fulfiller of desires. Having seen (i.e. flowed towards) the southern direction she has gone to the west. She said to Gaṅgā: "Go to the eastern region; forget me not; O goddess, go as you had come."

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

Rāma's Visit to Mārkaṇḍeya's Hermitage

Bhīṣma said:

1. O sage, how was Rāma enlightened here by Mārkaṇḍeya? How did they meet? When did they meet?

2. Whose son was Mārkaṇḍeya? How was the one of great penance born? O great sage, tell me the exact explanation of his name.

Pulastya said:

3. I shall tell you about the birth of Mārkaṇḍeya. In the old Kalpa there was a well-known sage by name Mṛkaṇḍu.

4. The illustrious (sage), the son of Bhṛgu, practised penance with his wife. When he was living in a forest, a son was born to him.

5. That boy, superior in virtues, became five years old. At that time a sage saw the boy roaming about in the courtyard.

6. Remaining there for a pretty long time, he knew the future (events in the life of the boy). He was asked by the boy's father: "What is the spanof the life of my son?

7. Calculate and tell me (the number of) years (of the

span of his life—whether they are) few or many." Thus addressed by Mṛkaṇḍu, the wise sage spoke:

8. "'O best sage, the Creator has determined (the span of) your son's life to be six months. Do not grieve. I have told you the truth."

9. The father, having heard what the sage had said, then performed the thread-ceremony of the boy.

10. And the father said (to the son): "O son, salute the sages." Thus told by the father, he took delight in saluting people.

11. He did not care for the (high) caste or the absence of it (in the case of persons whom he saluted since) he saluted (persons belonging to) all castes. (In this way) five years and twentyfive days rolled by.

12. There were going seven sages along the path. The boy saw them, and he saluted them all.

13. The boy having a staff and wearing a *muñjā*-girdle was addressed by them: "Live long". Having spoken thus, they observed (that) the boy (would) be short-lived.

14. O king, knowing that his life would be just five days (more), they were frightened. Taking the boy, they went near Brahmā.

15. And, O king, leaving (i.e. placing) him there, they saluted the grandsire. They gave Brahmā information about (i.e. told Brahmā the account of) the boy. Then he saluted Brahmā.

16. In the presence of the sages, Brahmā said to the boy: "Live long". Then all the sages. having heard those words from the grandsire, were pleased.

17. The grandsire, seeing the sages, was amazed and said (to them): "Tell me for what purpose this boy has come to me and also tell me who is."

18. Then, O king, the sages told him everything. "This is the son of Mṛkaṇḍu. His life is short. Make him long-lived.

19. The sage (Mṛkaṇḍu) tied a (*muñjā*-) girdle (round) his (waist), gave him whose life was short a sacred thread and a staff (i.e. the sage Mṛkaṇḍu performed his thread-ceremony) and advised him:

20. 'O boy, salute every person whom you see going about on the earth'. The father said these words to him.

21. O grandsire, we, who were going on a pilgrimage, saw, by chance, this boy disposed to saluting (everyone he saw).

22. We said to him: O son, live long. How will our words along with (words uttered by) you come true?"

23. Thus addressed by them, Brahmā, the grandsire of the worlds (said): "This land stands fearless due to true words (being spoken on it)".

Brahmā said:

24. This boy, Mārkaṇḍeya, will have the (span of) life as I (shall have). (This) best sage is commended by me (to be present) at the beginning as well as at the end of a *Kalpa*.

25-26. Thus the sages having got the boy made safe by the grandsire, sent him to the earth, and proceeded with their pilgrimage. Mārkaṇḍeya went home. When they had left, he said to his father:

27. "Sages, teachers of the Vedas, had taken me to Brahmā's world. Having made me a long-lived person (i.e. granting me a long life) and having given me boons, they sent me (home).

28-29. (They gave me) this and other things. The cause of your anxiety has (now) gone. I shall be present continuously at the beginning and also at the end of a Kalpa, as a result of the favour of Brahmā, the creator of the worlds and the father (of all). Being eager I shall (now) go to Puṣkara to practise penance.

30-31. There I shall wait upon the grandsire, the lord of gods. I shall please Brahmā, who fulfils all desires, who destroys all enemies, who gives all pleasures, who is the highest object of Indra and others and who is the grandsire of all the worlds."

32-33a. Having heard the words of Mārkaṇḍeya, the best sage Mṛkaṇḍu was extremely pleased. Being relaxed in a moment, and mustering courage with a good (i.e. strong) mind, he said these words:

33b-34a. "Today my existence is fruitful and my life has proved to be well-lived, since I have seen the grandsire, the creator of all worlds.

34b. With you as my son, upholding (i.e. continuing my) family, I am having an heir.

35. Go and see the lord of gods, the grandsire, living at Puṣkara. When that lord of the worlds is seen (by a man) neither old age nor death (comes to him).

36. Men obtain pleasures, and also prosperity and inexhaustible penance. There are three white peaks and three streams.

37. Similarly there are three (holy places called) Puṣkara. We do not know the reason (for this number three): There is Kanīyāṁsa (Puṣkara), (there is) Madhyama (Puṣkara) and there is Jyeṣṭha (Puṣkara).

38-39. There are also the three white streams called Śṛṅga. The three viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra are always present in the vicinity of the (three) Puṣkaras. O great king, there is no other place more auspicious than these. The water there is free from dust, is pure, and is well-known in the three worlds.

40-41a. The blessed (alone) see Puṣkara, the path to Brahmā's world. (The fruit that) one, who maintains the sacred fires for full one hundred years, obtains, is equal (to the fruit that one would get) by giving at Puṣkara on (just) one full moon day of Kārtika.

41b-42. O boy, you have, without effort, accomplished that which I could not do, or what I could not accomplish by means of deeds (i.e. rites), viz. you have conquered death that takes away everyone. There you saw that Brahmā, the lord of gods and the grandsire of all the worlds.

43. There is no other mortal on the earth who can be compared to you, who, being just five years old, have pleased me.

44. As a result of my boon you will obtain the resemblance of a long-lived one (i.e. you will live a very long life); there is no doubt about it; for such is my blessing.

45-47a. All they (i.e. all people will) say to you: 'Go to the worlds liked by you.'" A hermitage was (then) set up by Mṛkaṇḍu's son, who had thus obtained (his father's) favour. It is (called) Mārkaṇḍeya's Hermitage. One would get the fruit of *Vājapeya* (-sacrifice) by bathing there and by (thus) purifying

(oneself). A man (who bathes there) becomes purified from all his sins and lives a long life.

Pulastya said:

47b-49a. Similarly I shall narrate to you another old historical account as to how Rāma brought about the sacred place, viz. Puṣkara. Rāma, having come from Citrakūṭa with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, to Atri's hermitage, asked the best sage.

Rāma said:

49b-50. O revered saint of a good vow, tell me which are the auspicious sacred places or which is the sacred place, going where, a man is not separated from his relatives?

51. I am being tormented by the three, viz. this residence in the forest, the death of King (Daśaratha) and the separation from Bharata.

52. The best brāhmaṇa (i.e. Atri), having heard the words uttered by Rāma, and having thought for a very long time, said these words:

Atri said:

53. O you here, the perpetuator of the Raghu-family, you have asked well. My father has fashioned the well-known sacred place, viz. Puṣkara.

54. (He has also fashioned) the two well-known mountains Maryādā and Yajña. Between them there are three wells (called) Jyeṣṭha, Madhyama and Kaniṣṭhaka.

55. Go to them and gratify Daśaratha by offering him a piṇḍa. It is the best among the holy places and the best place of pilgrimage.

56. O you, perpetuator of the Raghu-family, there is a well, containing good water, called Aviyogā. O you descendant of Raghu, there is also another well containing good water called Saubhāgya-kūpa.

57. If piṇḍas are offered into these (wells), the manes obtain salvation till the time of the destruction of beings. This (is what) the grandsire said.

58. O Rāghava, go there; and come back again.

Saying 'All right' Rāma too decided to go (there).

59. Having approached Ṛkṣavān and Vidiśā city, and having crossed (the river) Carmaṇvatī, he reached Yajña-parvata.

60. Having crossed it speedily, he arrived at the Madhyama Puṣkara. He fully gratified the manes and gods with (libation of) water.

61. After Rāma had finished his bath, he, the intelligent one, saw the best sage, viz. Mārkaṇḍa, arriving (there) with his disciples.

62. Having gone facing (i.e. to) him, and having respectfully saluted him he asked him: "O lord, in which direction is the well called Aviyogadā (i.e. that brings about union)?

63. I am Daśaratha's son, known by people by the name Rāma. By Atri's instruction I have come here to see that Saubhāgya-vāpī.

64. May the revered one tell me about the place and the two wells." Thus addressed by Rāma, Mārkaṇḍa replied:

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

65. Well, O Rāghava, well-being to you; you have done a meritorious deed, since, now, while on a pilgrimage to sacred places, you have come here.

66-67a. Come, come along, see that Aviyogadā vāpī (i.e. the well bringing about union). Here union with all (one's kinsmen)—residing in the other or this world and living or dead—takes place.

67b-68. O king, at that time, Rāma, the elder brother of Lakṣmaṇa, having heard these words of the best sage, remembered king Daśaratha, Bharata with Śatrughna, and other citizens also.

69-70a. When he was thinking like this, the evening-time came on. Rāma, having offered the evening prayer with the sages, slept there that night with his brother and wife.

70b-71a. At the end of the night and after his sleep was over Rāma verily remained in Ayodhyā with his father, mother and others.

71b-72. When his auspicious marriage took place, he was seated there along with his wife and many relatives and was surrounded by sages. Lakṣmaṇa also saw him exactly like that i.e. along with Sītā.

73. In the morning he told all that to the sages. The sages also said: "O best among the Raghus, it is true.

74. *Śrāddha* is said to be essential on having the sight of the dead. The manes have a longing for prosperity and they desire food.

75-76. O Rāghava, they appear before a devout person in (his) dream. O Rāghava, surely for fourteen years you will not have separation from your brother, father and Bharata. O hero, perform a *Śrāddha* (in honour) of King Daśaratha.

77-78. All these sages, your devotees, are impatiently waiting for the exact moment (i.e. for the invitation). Six best brāhmaṇas are present at the *Śrāddha*: I myself (i.e. Mārkaṇḍeya), Jamadagni, Bhāradvāja, Lomaśa, Devarāta and Śamīka. O mighty one, fetch the requisites.

79. The chief (things are): *Iṅgudi*, an oil-cake with *badaras* and *āmalakas*; ripe coconuts, roots of various kinds.

80. O you of a good vow, satisfy the brāhmaṇas with musk, and flesh and various kinds of grains, and by offering a *śrāddha*.

81. He, who, being restrained and having come to the Puṣkara-forest, and having controlled his diet, satisfies his manes (with a *śrāddha*), would get the fruit of a horse-sacrifice.

82. O Rāma, we are (now) going to Jyeṣṭha Puṣkara to have a bath (there)." O king, speaking thus to Rāma all the sages went (to Jyeṣṭha Puṣkara).

83-84. Rāma said to Lakṣmaṇa: "Bring me a deer fit for a sacrifice. Also bring a hare with bright eyes, black vegetable, *jambīras*, and various important roots, as well as ripe *kapitthas* and whichever other fruits (you can get) at (i.e. for) the *Śrāddha*.

85. This should be (done) quickly, O Lakṣmaṇa." Lakṣmaṇa did all that according to the instruction of Rāma.

86. Having brought *badaras*, *iṅgudis*, vegetables and various roots, Rāma made a great heap of them.

87. Having cooked and made ready (the food), Jānakī

reported to Rāma. Rāma bathed in the Yoga-vāpī and looked after the sages.

88. All the sages that were invited by Rāma arrived when the sun moved on from the mid-day and when it was eighth *muhūrta*[1] of the day.

89-90a. Janaka's daughter, Vaidehī) (i.e. Śītā), having seen the sages that arrived there, being abashed, left Rāma's vicinity and with her eyes blooming with amazement, and reflecting and trembling, she remained somewhere else.

90b. The brāhmaṇas, who had come there at the time of the *śrāddha*, did not know this.

91. Rāma fed the brāhmaṇas according to the proper procedure (and) as prescribed in the *Smṛtis*; he performed all the auspicious rites that were prescribed (in the Vedas).

92-93. He also performed the rite as prescribed in the Purāṇas after (having performed) the sacrifice in honour of the Viśvedevas. When the priests had eaten (the food), and when they were dismissed after the *piṇḍas* had been offered in due order and after gifts had been given to them according to (Rāma's) capacity, and when the chief brāhmaṇas had left, Rāma said these words to his beloved.

94-95. "O you of charming eyebrows, why, did you disappear (i.e. go away) when you saw that the sages had come here? Tell me all the true reason for this. Do not delay. There must be some reason for this. Do not hide it from me. O you of bright smile, I swear you by my life and that of Lakṣmaṇa also."

96. Thus addressed by her husband at that time, Sītā remained with her face hung down through shame. Shedding tears, she said (these) words to Rāma:

97-98. "O lord, listen to what kind of miracle I saw here. O Rāma, the lord of kings (i.e. Daśaratha) being thought of by you, came here with all ornaments (on his person). Two more persons also, (adorned) like that (came there). O you descendant of Raghu, they were united with the bodies of the brāhmaṇas.

99. On the bodies of the brāhmaṇas I saw the manes. See-

1. *Kutapaka Kāla*—eighth *muhūrta* of the day.

ing them and (overcome) with bashfulness, I went away from your vicinity.

100-101a. You fed the brāhmaṇns, you performed the *Śrāddha* according to the proper procedure. O you killer of the heroes of the enemy, how should I, clad in bark-garments and deer-hide, move before the king? I have told you the truth.

101b-102. Kaikeyī had taken away all the silken garments. Since then I, clad in tattered garments, and knowing that I have to resort to (i.e. live in) a forest, I do not (i.e. did not) say anything, so that you should not be unhappy.

103-104. I am neither thinking of (my) mother or (of my) father, O conqueror. O lord, O Rāma, I swear by your feet that I pass my days repeatedly and incessantly thinking as to when this residence in the forest will come to an end.

105-107. How should I, with my own hand give (i.e. serve) the king (with) food which even a servant of servants would not enjoy? How would I, who was formerly seen by the king adorned with all ornaments, and who had fanned him with a fly flapper in my hand, (now) like this (i.e. reduced to such a condition) dare give (him i.e. serve him with food)? How should I, with my body smeared with perspiration and dirt, see the king (now)?

108-109a. It is elear that he, emancipated by you, his son, has reached heaven. Seeing me, an innocent unhappy young lady, being distressed in the forest, the king would have been pained; so I concealed myself.

109b-110a. O Rāma you are like my (own) life; so nothing is to be concealed from you. This being the truth I touch your feet (i.e. I swear by your feet that this is the truth)".

110b-111. Hearing those (words of Sītā), Rāma was pleased. He put that sweet-speaking beloved (of his) on his lap and embraced her closely and respectfully. The two heroes (i.e. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) then took food and after (they had eaten) Sītā took food.

112. She and the two descendants of Raghu (i.e. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) remained there like that. When the sun rose, they decided to go.

113-114a. When Rāma walked towards the west for two Krośas upto the Jyeṣṭha Puṣkara, and when he stood in the

eastern region of Puṣkara, he heard the words uttered by a divine envoy:

114b-115. "O Rāghava, well-being to you; this is a holy place access to which is difficult. O hero, remaining here, bring religious merit to yourself. You have to carry out the mission of gods. You have to kill the enemies of gods."

116. Then the hero, with his mind pleased, said (these) words to Lakṣmaṇa: "O son of Sumitrā, I have been favoured by Brahmā, the lord of gods.

117. O Lakṣmaṇa, putting up a hermitage here, I desire to observe an excellent vow, purifying my body for a month."

118-119a. When Lakṣmaṇa said, "All right", Rāma completed the vow, and gratified, according to the proper rites, the grandsires by means of offering piṇḍas, giving gifts and performing *śrāddhas* there i.e. at Puṣkara.

119b-121a. At the (three) Puṣkaras there is the river pleasing the manes and having the five streams viz. Kanakā, Suprabhā, Nandā, Prācī and Sarasvatī. Rāma having daily worshipped first his father and then other manes said (these) words to Lakṣmaṇa:

121b-122. "Come on, O Lakṣmaṇa, quickly bring water from Puṣkara. Having washed (my) feet sleep on the bed. When the night will come to an end (i.e. in the morning) we shall proceed towards the southern ditection.

123. But Lakṣmaṇa said (these) words: "Let Sītā bring the water. I shall not always act as your servant, O Rāma.

124. She is (more) strong and stout (than) even I (am). Tell me now, what You will do with a wife like this.

125. Will this one, dear to you, follow you when you die? You have always been protecting this very stout (lady).

126. O best of the Raghus, she, being delighted, torments me (i.e. she takes delight in tormenting me); O Rāma, you too trouble me. In the sequel there is a loss.

127. For you I am always putting up with thirst and hunger. There is no doubt about it. Listen further:

128. The wise say that nobody—the wife, the son—goes after a dead person. Nor even wealth goes (after a dead person).

129. With a desire to do what was dear to Kaikeyī, your father put you, O Rāma, into the forest and (then he) died leaving the kingdom free from any source of vexation.

130. That Kaikeyī, (this) wealth and all (his) relatives remained here (i.e. on the earth only). The great king all alone went his way.

131. I think Sītā will certainly not accompany you. Tell me now, O Rāghava, what will you do with her?"

132. Having heard (these) words of Lakṣmaṇa, which he had never heard before, Rāghava remained dejected; so also Sītā of a charming face.

133-134. Sītā did whatever was told by Lakṣmaṇa. The two lotus-eyed heroes, having bathed at Puṣkara and having eaten (food there) and having passed the night there, decided to leave that place. (Rāma said to Lakṣmaṇa): "O son of Sumitrā, come on, get up. We shall proceed to southern direction."

135. Lakṣmaṇa said: "O Rāma, I shall in no case go (with you). O you lotus-eyed one, go with this your wife.

136. O Rāghava, I shall not go to any other forest, nor shall I go to Ayodhyā. For fourteen years I shall stay in this forest (only).

137. If you will not go (i.e. if you do not want to go) to Ayodhyā without me, then O king, O lord, (please) come this way.

138. If till that time I shall survive then I shall go to (our) father's city (with you). I shall practise penance (here). What will you (i.e. what have you to) do with me?

139. O dear one, go; a happy journey to you. Let there be no obstructions in your journey. I shall see you, the lotus-eyed one, when you will again come with your wife.

140. O king, in Ayodhyā there is the kingdom that has come down from our grand-father and father. Śatrughna and Bharata obey your orders.

141-142. I am against you, especially as far as the residence in the forest is concerned. O you tormentor of enemies, I am unable to work incessantly day and night. O dear one, go as you please." Rāma said to Lakṣmaṇa, who was speaking thus:

143-144. "How (is it that) you formerly went out of (i.e.

left) Ayodhyā with me? (Why did you say) 'Rāma, I shall stay in the forest with you for fourteen years but not even in heaven without you; O best among men, I shall meet the same fate as you.

145. O Rāghava, (please) do me a favour; take me too (with you).' Then, O you killer of enemies, how are you remaining (i.e. leaving me) halfway?"

146. However, Lakṣmaṇa said to Rāma: "I shall not go to the forest again". Seeing Lakṣmaṇa stationary (i.e. not making a move), Rāma said (these) words:

147-148. "O Lakṣmaṇa, follow me, or I shall (all) alone go to forest. This Sītā will be second to me (i.e. will accompany me)." Thus addressed by Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa accepted (i.e. agreed to) Rāma's words, and got up. The two tormentors of enemies (i.e. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) reached the boundary of the sacred place, the Maryādā mountain.

149-151. Rāma, having gained the virtuous feeling[1] and having cast off the feelings of great activity and ignorance, joining the palms of his hand, and with his body horripilated, having made a respectful obeisance by the prostration of the eight limbs of his body to Ajagandha, the trident-holder, the god with three eyes, the god of gods, and remaining restrained, glorified Śaṅkara, dear to Pārvatī. He regarded the god, the lord of gods, as the cause of the worlds.

Rāma said:

152. "I seek the refuge of that Śaṅkara, who affords protection, who has fashioned this entire mobile and immobile world and who is the doer of (all) deeds and who gives pleasure and pain, and who, at the time of the end (of the world), is also the cause of the destruction of the world.

153. I seek the refuge of that Śaṅkara, who affords protection, and who held on his head, like a garland of unsteady flowers, Gaṅgā with her water at once pure, charming and rolling, and having fearful waves, falling from the sky.

154. I seek the refuge of that Śaṅkara, who affords protection, and sustained by whose lotus-like foot the peak of the

1. *Sāttvika bhāva* etc. see chapter 2 above.

Kailāsa-mountain, when tossed by Rāvaṇa resembling the peak of the Kailāsa-mountain, became steady.

155. I seek the refuge of Śaṅkara, who affords protection, and who on many occasions destroyed the sons of Danu and who united with (i.e. granted) boons to the groups of Vidyādharas and serpents and the best sages eating (i.e. subsisting on) fruits and roots.

156. I seek the refuge of Śaṅkara, who affords protection, and who in Dakṣa's sacrifice destroyed Bhaga's[1] eyes and knocked out Pūṣan's rows of teeth, and who paralysed Indra's hand holding the thunderbolt.

157. I seek the refuge of that Śaṅkara, who affords protection, and by resorting to whom men who have committed sins, whose minds are attached to sensual pleasures, and who are not endowed with qualities of learning, following understanding, become enjoyers of happiness.

158. I seek the refuge of that Śaṅkara, who affords protection, and whose lustre resembles that of a crore of moons and suns, who is held in awe, by the best demons and gods and who drank the exceedingly burning Kālakūṭa.

159. I seek the refuge of that Śaṅkara, who affords protection, and who, the revered great lord, many times would grant (i.e. has granted) a boon to Brahmā, Indra, Rudra, Maruts and Skanda and who also took out Nandi from the jaws of death.

160. I seek the refuge of that Śaṅkara, who affords protection, who was propitiated (by Pārvatī) by means of the *Dhūmavrata* involving a severe penance in Himālaya's bower, which was even mentally inaccessible; and who, the great-souled one, told Bhṛgu (the lore of) bringing back (a being) to life.

161. I seek the refuge of that Śaṅkara, who was worshipped by various mighty lords of his attendants having faces like those of elephants and cats and destroying Dakṣa's sacrifice and (who was) also (worshipped) by the groups of gods along with the regents of quarters.

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1. *Bhaga*—according to a later legend his eyes were destroyed by Rudra.

Pūṣan—In the *Brāhmaṇas*, he is represented as having lost his teeth and feeling on a kind of gruel (See e.g. *Kauśītaki Brāhmaṇa*—VI.13), whence he is called Karambhād.

162. I seek the refuge of that Śaṅkara, who affords protection, who, having mounted upon a strong bull white like a conch-shell, a *Kunda* flower and the moon, and (who) being followed by the daughter of the lord of mountains, moves in the sky decorated with the clouds at the dissolution of the world.

163. I seek the refuge of Śaṅkara, who affords protection, who vehemently protected the tranquil sage, humble with devotion, intent on praising (Śaṅkara), that was being taken back by those terrible and very fearful men bent upon the application of restraints.

164. I seek the refuge of that Śaṅkara, who affords protection, and who, the god, forcibly cut off the fifth head of Brahmā resembling a fresh lotus in the presence of gods with the nail-tip of his lotus-like right hand.

165 I seek the refuge of that Śaṅkara, who affords protection, and having saluted the feet of whom, the granter of boons, with devotion, and having praised whom with chaste words, the careful, blazing sun, removes the darkness with his rays.

166. (O god) those stupid men of impure minds, who, due to their close attachment to grandeur, pride and trade, do not recognise you to be the lord of the best gods and of this mobile and immobile world, (later) experience tortures of hell.

167. To Rāma, who was praising (Śiva) with these words, Vṛṣadhvaja the trident-holder, being glad and with his mind pleased said (these) words:

Rudra said:

168. I am pleased; well-being to you; you are born in a pure family. You are god, who has taken up a human form and are adorable to the world.

169-171. With you as their lord, gods will enjoy happiness for a long time. Those men on the earth who will see you having returned to Ayodhyā after fourteen years have elapsed, will be happy here (i.e. in this world) and will also have an unending residence in heaven. Come back to the city (of Ayodhyā) after having done a great mission for the gods.

Rāma also, saying 'All right', quickly left.

172. Having reached the Indramārgā river and having tied the long tresses of hair twisted on the top of his head he said to Lakṣmaṇa: "Give this bow to me."

173. Hearing those words of Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa said to Sītā: "O revered lady, why has Rāma abandoned me without any reason?

174. I do not know the fault for which the great-armed one has forsaken me. Rāma has abandoned me. I shall certainly give up my life.

175. There is no use of this life to me? Fie upon me who am a disgrace to the family, and who, a sinner have thus angered my elder brother.

176. When the great-souled one has had a bad opinion about me which worlds shall I go to?" Putting both his hands on his face, he, with his throat (choked) with tears, said this (i.e. these words):

177. "I (shall) not harm Rāma by means of deed, thought or speech. O revered lady, I have touched your feet. I have no other course."

178. Then Sītā said to Rāma: "Why have you forsaken your younger brother? Give up harshness to young Lakṣmaṇa, bestower of prosperity".

179. Then Rāma said to Sītā: "I shall not forsake Lakṣmaṇa; O dear one, I have not given up thinking about Lakṣmaṇa even in a dream.

180. I have formerly heard about the working of this holy place. In this place all people are really intent upon self-interest.

181. They do not care for one another, nor do they listen to words beneficial to themselves. Sons do not (care to) listen to the words of their father, nor do fathers (care to) listen to the words of their sons.

182. Also disciples do not (care to) listen to the words of their preceptor nor preceptor to those of disciples. Love always depends upon money. No one is dear to anyone (else)."

183. While talking like this only, he reached the great river

Revā. (Then) the descendant of Kakutstha[1] (i.e. Rāma) with his younger brother and Sītā bathed (there).

184. Having gratified his manes and deities with water, and having repeatedly looked up, at the Sun and (other) deities, he remained in abstract meditation.

185. Rāma who had bathed (there) shone with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa like lord Śiva with Pārvatī and Skanda.

1. *Kākutstha*—descendant of Kakutstha.

Kakutstha is an epithet of Purañjaya, a king of the solar race. See *Raghuvaṁśa* 6.71.

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THE
PADMA-PURĀṆA

PART II

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY
Dr. N.A. DESHPANDE

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

But he has neither the means nor the leisure to embark on that course. We have, therefore, planned to help him acquire knowledge by an easier course. We have started the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology in English Translation. Our goal is to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium of expression. The publication of the Purāṇas in English Translation is a step towards that goal.

PREFACE

Here is Part II of the *Padma-Purāṇa* in English translation, being the 40th volume in the series of *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* (AITM). It comprises the remaining 49 chapters, viz., chaps. 34-82, of the first *Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa* or the *Section on Creation*, which is now complete.

The reader would like to have some idea of the contents of this part at the outset. As usual this part also contains a number of well known narratives such as those of Rāma, Śiva-Pārvatī, Nṛsiṁha, Garuḍa, Gaṇeśa, the rape of Ahalyā, Viṣṇu's incarnation in the form of Varāha, the descent of Gaṅgā etc. The birth stories of Kapila, Vajrāṅga, Pārvatī, Kārtikeya and a number of demons such as Madhu and Kaiṭabha are also found in this part. The long-drawn war between gods and demons is described graphically in detail in several chapters, some prominent generals of the latter mentioned by name being Kālanemi, Tāraka, Namuci, Muci, Kālakeya, Kāleya, Tāreya, Devāntaka, Durdharṣa, Durmukha, Madhu and Vṛtra. Finally gods come out victorious with the slaying of Hiraṇyākṣa by Viṣṇu.

Several stories occurring in this part are related for the inculcation of religious and pious deeds as well as moral virtues, e.g., celibacy, chastity, truthfulness, making various kinds of gifts, adoration of parents, devotion to the performance of duties pertaining to one's caste (*varṇa*) and stage (*āśrama*), of *Śrāddha* etc. In this connection mention may be made of the stories of kings Śveta, Akṣaya and Daṇḍa, of Mūka, Tulādhāra, Adroha, Pativratā, Vaiṣṇava, Sevyā, Māṇḍavya etc.

The reader will also find here a number of hymns to gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Gaṇapati, the Sun, the Moon etc. composed for the benefit of the devotees. Rites are described for the appeasement of evil Planets. Great merit has been attached to benevolent deeds such as digging wells and tanks, planting trees, constructing bridges, providing drinking water to pilgrims and travellers etc. Some chapters are devoted to the praise of

Rudrākṣa, Tulasī and Dhātrī (Āmalaka). An interesting and noteworthy feature of this part is the mention of sinful tribes such as Nagnakas, Avācakas, Kuvadas, Kharpas, Dāruṇas—probably some heretical religious sects of India—and, more importantly, of foreigners such as hairless and beardless Yavanas, cow-eating Turuṣkas (Turks?) and Mlecchas, obviously referring to the historical event of foreigners' invasion of India especially by the Muslims. This event gave rise to the glorification and worship of cows which came to be considered as sacred as Agni and Brāhmaṇas, all the three together with the Vedas spoken of as born from Brahmā's mouth.

Acknowledgements

It is our pleasant duty to put on record our sincere thanks to Dr. R.N. Dandekar and the UNESCO authorities for their kind encouragement and valuable help which render this work more useful than it would otherwise have been. To Dr. N.A. Deshpande we are grateful for giving this nice translation. We are also thankful to all those who have been helpful in our project.

—Editor

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ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)—Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, V—Verse, VV—Verses, Ftn—footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo.—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S. M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F. E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series, MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch.S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, MLBD, Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgītā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha)
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka, Com. by Mahidāsa
DB	*Devi Bhāgavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N. L. De, Oriental Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* by Hastings
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa*, ed. R. S. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāsira*, P. V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇi*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradīya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣiya Prācina Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd.P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi. 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Śat.Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

The Gift of Brahmāṇḍa

Bhīṣma said:

1. Please tell me when revered Brahmā, the creator of the worlds, commenced to perform a sacrifice with the requisites.

2. Who were the priests that he employed at the sacrifice? What sacrificial fees did the great-souled one pay them?

3. (Please) tell me as it happened, as it took place; there is a great curiosity in me to know about the sacrifice of (i.e. performed by) Brahmā.

Pulastya said:

4. I have already told you that he having created the (ten) lords of created beings said to Svāyambhuva Manu, "Fashion the creation".

5. He himself, having gone to Puṣkara, and having collected the minute details about the sacrifice, and having brought the materials, lived in the fire-chamber.

6. (At the sacrifice) Gandharvas continually sang (songs) and the hosts of celestial nymphs danced. (There were) the four performing priests, viz. Brahmā, Udgātṛ, Hotṛ and Adhvaryu.

7. He himself also appointed three attendants to each of them. (The first group consisted of) Brahmā, Brahmaṇācchaṁsī, Potṛ and Agnīdhra[1].

8. This group of four was metaphysics, all lores and Vedic lore (combined). The second group consisted of Udgātṛ, Pratyudgātṛ, Pratihartṛ and Subrahmaṇya.

---

1. Brahmā—One of the four priests employed at a Soma-sacrifice.
Brahmaṇācchaṁsi—A brāhmaṇa in the second stage (between brāhmaṇamātra i.e. a brāhmaṇa only by birth and śrotriya).
Potṛ—One of the sixteen officiating priests at a sacrifice; assistant of the priest called Brahman.
Agnidhra—The priest who kindles fire.

9-10. This second group of four belonged to (i.e. was led by) Udgātṛ[1]. The third group consisted of Hotṛ[2], Maitrāvaruṇa, Acchāvāka and Grāva. The fourth group consisted of: Adhvaryu, Pratiṣṭhātṛ, Neṣṭṛ and Unnetṛ.[3]

11. O you son of Śantanu, this is said to be the fourth group. Those who have pondered over the Vedas have recommended these sixteen priests.

12. The self-born one has created three hundred and sixty sacrifices. They (the authorities) say that these brāhmaṇas are always (employed) at these sacrifices.

13. Some also desire (i.e. recommend) a superintending priest, a group of three sāmans and the Adhvaryu also. He made Nārada the Brahmā-priest; he appointed Gautama as the Brahmaṇācchaṁsī-priest;

14. He (appointed) Devagarbha as the Potṛ-priest and Devala as the Agnīdhra-priest. Aṅgiras was the Udgātṛ-priest and Pulaha the Pratyudgātṛ-priest.

15. Nārāyaṇa was the Pratihartṛ-priest and Atri was said to be the Subrahmaṇya-priest. In that sacrifice Bhṛgu was the Hotṛ-priest, Vasiṣṭha the Maitrāvaruṇa-priest.

16. Kratu was the Acchāvāka-priest and Cyavana was the Grāva-priest. Pulastya (i.e. I) was the Adhvaryu-priest and Śibi was the Pratiṣṭhātṛ-priest.

---

1. Udgātṛ—One of the four chief priests at a sacrifice; he chants the hymns of the Sāmaveda. Pratyudgātā, Pratihartā and Subrahmaṇya are his three assistants.

2. Hotṛ—A sacrificial priest, especially one who recites the prayers of the Ṛgveda at a sacrifice.

Maitrāvaruṇa—One of the sixteen officiating priests at a sacrifice.

Acchāvāka—The invoker or inviter; a priest who is employed at Soma-sacrifices and is a co-ordinator of Hotṛ.

Grāvastut—One of the sixteen priests called after the hymn (Ṛgveda X.94) addressed to the Soma stones.

3. Adhvaryu: One of the priests at a sacrifice. His duties are: to measure the ground, to build the altar, to prepare the sacrificial vessels, to fetch wood and water, to light the fire, to bring the animal and immolate it. While engaged in these duties he repeated hymns from the Yajurveda.

Pratiṣṭhātṛ—Adhvaryu's assistant.

Neṣṭṛ—One of the chief officiating priests at a Soma-sacrifice; he leads forward the wife of the sacrificer and prepares Surā.

Unnetṛ—The priest who pours Soma into the receptacles.

17. There (i.e. at the sacrifice) Bṛhaspati was the Neṣṭṛ-priest and Śāṁśapāyana was the Unnetṛ-priest. Dharma was the Sadasya-priest; he was assisted by his sons and grandsons.

18-20. Others that were appointed as Sāma-singers and Adhvaryus were Bharadvāja, Śamīka, Purukutsa, Yugandhara, Enaka, Tīrṇaka, Keśa and Kutapa, also Garga and Vedaśiras. Similarly Kaṇva and others, and also Mārkaṇḍa and Gaṇḍi were present there with their sons, grandsons, disciples and relatives. They carefully worked there day and night.

21. (Thus) when one Manu-period passed (i.e. at the end of one full Manu-period) the ablution at the (completion of the) sacrifice took place. As the fee the (region of the) eastern direction was given to Brahmā and (the region of) the southern direction was given to Hotṛ.

22. The (region of) the west was given to Adhvaryu, and (the region of) the north to Udgātṛ. Brahmā gave all the worlds as the (sacrificial) fee to them.

23. For the successful accomplishment of the sacrifice a hundred cows should be given to a wise man. Eight (cows) should be given to the performing priests or more than forty also (may be given).

24. Gift of twentyfour cows is recommended for those of the second rank. Also sixteen auspicious cows should be given to the priests of the third rank.

25. Similarly other twelve cows etc. should be caused to be given to Agnīdhras etc. The same number of villages, maids and small cattle (should be given).

26. At the bathing at the completion of a sacrifice a feast to one thousand (brāhmaṇas) should be given. The self-born has said that the sacrificer should give all his wealth (to brāhmaṇas).

27. Gift according to the desire of the sacrificer is recommended to the Adhvaryus and the superintending priests. Brahmā called Viṣṇu and said to him gladly:

28. "O you of good vow, having propitiated Sāvitrī, bring her here. That (goddess) of an auspicious face, will not be angry on seeing you (i.e. when she will see you).

29. You, using pleasing, courteous and especially logical speech, always speak sweetly. Your tongue oozes nectar.

30. No one who would not do what you tell is (to be) seen in the world. Going with Gandharvas, bring my beloved (here).

31. The good lady, propitiated by you, will certainly come. You should not delay. O Mādhava, go quickly. Do not tarry.

32. Auspicious Lakṣmī should go before you to Sāvitrī's residence. Follow her path, and pacify my beloved.

33. O goddess (Lakṣmī), Sāvitrī does not desire to do anything all alone, which is not liked by you. O beautiful lady, she always behaves (by) seeing your face (i.e. as you desire).

34. Such and many other sweet words should be spoken to the goddess, so that she would be soon pleased."

35. When Viṣṇu was addressed like this by Brahmā, the creator of the worlds, he quickly went to that place where Sāvitrī remained.

36. (When she saw) even from a distance Viṣṇu coming with his wife, she quickly got up, and was saluted by Viṣṇu.

37. "My salutation to you, O chief goddess; my salutation to you, O wife of Brahmā, for every person gets absolved of sin (only) after he salutes you.

38. You are loyal to your husband; you are illustrious. You are in the heart of Brahmā. Thinking of you day and night, he desires your favour.

39. You (may) even ask this your dear good friend Lakṣmī, the daughter of Bhṛgu. O you of beautiful eyes, if (you feel), trust these words."

40-42. Speaking thus, Śauri (i.e. Viṣṇu) then touched with both his hands the two feet of Sāvitrī saying: "Pardon me, O goddess, salutation to you, O you venerable to the world and the mother of the world." Withdrawing her feet, the goddess holding with her hand the hands of Viṣṇu, said to him: "O Acyuta, I have forgiven everything. O son, this Lakṣmī will always live in your heart.

43. She will never have attachment for anyone else but you. This one, born of Bhṛgu's wife, is your good-vowed wife.

44. By the effort of gods and demons she was again born of the ocean. She would incarnate where you, the revered one, would (take birth).

45. In godhead (i.e. when she is born as a goddess), she has a divine body, and (when born) as a human being she has a human form. With you as her companion, she has been practising the vow of matrimonial relation for a long time.

46. O lord, tell me what I have to do in this matter."

Viṣṇu said:

The end of the sacrifice has come. I have been sent to your vicinity (i.e. to you, by Brahmā).

47. (He told me:) "Bring Sāvitrī quickly; she would bathe with me." (Therefore) O goddess, come on quickly. Go there happily.

48. Going there, see your husband followed by all gods.

Lakṣmi said:

O noble lady, get up quickly, go where the grandsire is.

49. I shall not go without you. I have touched (i.e. I am touching) your feet.

Getting up, the generous one held her hand in (i.e. with) her right hand.

50. The grandsire (i.e.) god (Brahmā) seeing that Sāvitrī was getting late, said these words to Mahādeva, who was near him:

51. "O you destroyer of the demons, go with this Pārvatī. Let Gaurī go before you, and O Śaṅkara, you go after her.

52-53. Having advised her, bring her (here). Act in such a way that she comes quickly." That couple viz. Pārvatī and Śiva, thus addressed and instructed (by Brahmā), went and spoke to Brahmā's beloved (i.e. Sāvitrī): "O you loyal wife, you have to do a lot of work there.

54. O you of a charming face, ask this beautiful Pārvatī, the daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain or this Lakṣmī of broad eyes or this Indrāṇī.

55. Or, O goddess, ask them whom you trust. Salutation to you." She gave a blessing to the trident-holder, the god of gods:

56. "O Śaṅkara, O you handsome one in the three worlds, Gaurī will remain on (i.e. occupy) half of your body. O god, you will look graceful on account of her.

57-58. O killer of enemies, the entire world is enjoying happiness due to you." Gaurī held the left hand, and Lakṣmī the right hand of Sāvitrī, the beloved of Brahmā, who was speaking thus. Saluting that goddess, Śaṅkara said these words:

59. "Come on, come, O illustrious one, go to that place, O you beautiful lady, where your husband is (waiting). For women husband is the highest resort.

60. Due to (this) great persistence (of us) please show regard (for us), and go. O goddess, this Lakṣmī and this Pārvatī are standing before you.

61. By (honouring) the words of these two and of us two (i.e. of Viṣṇu and Śiva), O you of a charming face (please come). O you beloved of Brahmā, the sacrifice is not being performed to insult you.

62. Requested by us, O goddess, please go there gladly."

Gaurī spoke:

O goddess, you yourself always say that I am dear to you.

63. Lakṣmī also has held your right hand; I too have held (your left hand). O you illustrious one, come to that place where your husband is (waiting).

64-65. Then keeping her between themselves the two (i.e. Lakṣmī and Pārvatī) took her. Viṣṇu, Rudra and other gods like Śakra led them, and also Gandharvas, celestial nymphs and the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. That goddess Sāvitrī, Brahmā's beloved, came there (i.e. to the place of the sacrifice).

66. Seeing Sāvitrī, of a beautiful face, the grandsire of all the worlds with Gāyatrī, said these words to her:

67. "This goddess (Gāyatrī) is (your) servant; and I am obedient to you. O you beautiful lady, order what I should do for you."

68. When that goddess was thus addressed by the self-born god Brahmā himself, she, with her face hung down through bashfulness, did not say anything.

69. Directed by Brahmā, goddess Gāyatrī fell at (her) feet. (She said:) "O goddess, I have offended you; (please) pardon me; my salutation to you."

70. Having firmly and respectfully embraced her at the throat, she consoled Gāyatrī (thus) pressed (i.e. embraced by her) : "This my husband is honourable.

71. You should obey his words (i.e. command). A husband is the master of the life of women. Formerly, at the time of creation revered Brahmā has said:

72. 'For women no separate sacrifice or vow or fast (is enjoined). A woman should do, without censure, whatever her husband tells her.

73. She, who censures or scandalizes her husband or sister or wails, goes to hell.

74. That woman, who observes the vow (involving a) fast even while her husband is alive cuts off her husband's life, and desires (i.e. goes to) hell after death.'

75. O you good lady, realising this, you should not do anything not liked by your husband. You should never resort to right side of his body.

76. (For) in all deeds (i.e. rites he has performed) I have resorted to his right side. O you good lady, you should come (and resort) to his left side, and Nārada and Puṣkara will be by his side.

77. There are other places for Brahmā (i.e. Brahmā resides at other places) and (there are) his temples also. I, looking beautiful, (shall) obtain them, till the creation is fashioned.

78. There is no doubt that you and I should stay by the side of Brahmā at Puṣkara. You should resort to his left side.

79. With (i.e. following) this advice stay happily with me."

Gāyatrī said:

Following your advice, I shall do so.

80. I shall obey your order only. You are my friend (and are) like my life (to me). O goddess, I am younger to you; please always protect me.

81. Then Brahmā, the god of gods, after having bathed at Puṣkara with Viṣṇu, granted boons to all gods.

82. He made Indra the lord of gods; the Sun the lord of luminaries; similarly (he made) the Moon the lord of the stars; and Varuṇa the lord of liquids.

83. (He made) Dakṣa the lord of Prajāpatis, and (made) the Ocean the lord of rivers. (He made) Kubera the lord of wealth and demons.

84. (He made) the trident-holder (i.e. Śiva) the lord of all beings and attendants. (He made) Manu the lord of human beings and Garuḍa the lord of birds.

85-86. (He made) Vasiṣṭha the lord of sages and the Sun the lord of planets. Granting all these (positions), the grandsire, the lord of lords, respectfully said to Viṣṇu and Śaṅkara: "At all sacred places on the earth, you will be most adored.

87a. No sacred place will have religious merit in your absence.

87b-88a. That sacred place where the Phallus or image is seen is auspicious, and gives all the fruit.

88b-89a. Where can there be a fear of disease to those men, who worship you with me being prominent, with gifts?

89b-90a. Listen to the fruit that will be obtained in those countries where your festivals like your worship etc., and also rites in your honour will take place.

90b-91. There will be no mental pains, no bodily pains, no calamities, no fear of hunger, no separation from one's dear ones, and no contact with those that are not desired (i.e. liked); there will be no eye-disease, no pain of veins, no pain due to (excess of) bilious humour, no fistula.

92-94a. There will be no fear of employment of magical spells for malevolent purpose, no cholera. There will be prosperity though not longed for; there will be proper and excellent thoughts. There will be absence of disease everywhere, and the wealth in the form of beings will be long-lived. There will be no untimely death and the cows will not yield small (quantities of) milk. The trees will not have fruits out of season, and there will not be the slightest fear of portents."

94b. Hearing this, Viṣṇu, then engaged himself in praising (i.e. began to praise) Brahmā.

Viṣṇu said:

95-96. My salutation to Ananta (i.e. the endless one), to Viśuddhacetas (i.e. of a pure heart), to Svarūparūpa (i.e. of a lovely form), to Sahasrabāhu (i.e. having a thousand arms), to

Viśuddhakarman (i.e. of pure deeds), to Samastaviśvārtihara (i.e. he who removes all the sufferings of the entire universe), to Śambhu, to Samastasūryānilatigmatejasa (i.e. having scorching lustre of all the suns and fires); my salutation to Vidyāvitata (i.e. spread out with knowledge), to Cakrin (i.e. having a disc); I ever salute Samastadhīsthānakṛt (who abides in every mind).

97. I always salute you, O Anādideva (i.e. beginningless god), O Acyutaśekharaprabhu (i.e. he, who, being the lord, is at the top of all gods like Viṣṇu), O Bhāvyudbhava-bhūtapati (i.e. the lord of the future, present and past objects), O Maheśvara (i.e. great lord). I always salute you, O Mahatpati (i.e. mighty lord), O Sarvapati (i.e. lord of all), O Jagatpati (i.e. the lord of the worlds), O Bhuvanapati (i.e. lord of the world).

98-99. O Yajñeśa (i.e. lord of the sacrifices), O Nārāyaṇa, O Viṣṇu (i.e. victorious), O Śaṅkara, O Kṣitīśa (i.e. lord of the earth), O Viśveśvara (i.e. lord of everything), O Viśvalocana (i.e. seeing everything), O Śaśāṅkasūryācyuta-vīraviśvamūrti (i.e. from whom all forms like the moon, the sun, Viṣṇu, the heroes proceeded), O Amṛtāmūrta (i.e. of an immortal form), O Avyaya (i.e. the immutable one), O Jvalahutāśārciniruddhamaṇḍala-pradeśa (i.e. who has confined the global region to the flames of blazing fire), O Nārāyaṇa, O Viśvatomukha (i.e. having faces on all sides), O Samastadevārtihara (i.e. remover of the afflictions of all gods), O Amṛta (i.e. the immortal one), O Avyaya (i.e. the immutable one), O lord, protect me who am seeking your refuge.

100. O supreme lord, I see many faces of you; my salutation to you who are the ancient asylum of sacrifice; my salutation to Brahmā, the lord and the origin of the worlds; my salutation to you, the great grandsire.

101. Why are you, the lord of great gods, at times served by many beings purified by all that knowledge after having wandered in the cycle of the mundane existence? I salute you.

102. One who knows you to be superior to Prakṛti, is the greatest among those who know (everything). You deserve to be known very much among the virtuous ones. Your form is extensive and (at the same time) subtle.

103. How is it that you have a good speed and you do good deeds, even though you have no organs like (that of) speech, hands and feet? How are you, who, in spite of your senses being placed in the mundane existence, are the best god, to be known?

104. Incorporeal things are not had (i.e. known) from corporeal objects; but your highest form is known as having four faces by the sacrificers having pure thought like gods, and cutting off the (bonds of the) mundane existence.

105. Since, O you who take wonderful forms, even the gods and others do not know your form, O mighty one, a man should propitiate the old and the foremost god seated on the lotus-seat during the lord's incaration.

106. Even a man with a pure heart does not know the truth about you and the origin of (you) the creator of the universe. How then can I know you the ancient (god), the first (one) and pure with penance ?

107. The lotus-seated one is known as the father (i.e. the creator); that this (i.e. he) is conceived to be so is again and again known from the Purāṇa. O lord, a man having no penance to his credit does (i.e. can) not know you, the mighty one.

108. O god, those fools, without (i.e. not knowing) the Vedas, divide their thoughts (i.e. apply their mind) and desire to make known you who (in fact) should be made known by excellent (gods) like us.

109. Even though they are generous-hearted, they have no knowledge and after many existences having discriminating mind due to the (study of) Vedas and intent upon Brahmā, a man does not get the birth of a man or of the lord of gods or Gandharvas; he would be Śiva (i.e. get final beatitude).

110. You, being very subtle, are not of the form of Viṣṇu; you are gross (also); you are the master of realisation. O god, though gross, you are subtle. You are easy to be obtained. Those who do deeds outside you (i.e. prohibited by you) fall into hell.

111. A man with his original nature expanded is released by the original elements like the moon, the sun, the fire, the wind and the earth possessing their respective forms, when you, the wonderful one, remain in your original form.

112. O endless one, accept this praise of me, (who am) especially your devotee, who am endowed with concentration, who have a pure heart and who mentally follow your true state.

113. O revered one, my salutation to you, who always live in my heart. O ancient lord, I always salute you. Thus, O you knowing every condition, I have expressly praised you.

114. We (entertain) fear due to our moving in the cycle of worldly existence. Please protect us.

Brahmā said:

115. O Keśava, you are omniscient, there is no doubt. You are a heap of intellect (i.e. you are very intelligent). You will always be the first to be adored by gods.

116. After Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), Rudra, bending down, praised with devotion, Viriñci (i.e. Brahmā) born from the lotus:

117. "(My) salutation to you, O Kamalapatrākṣa (i.e. having eyes like lotus-leaves); (my) salutation to you, O Padmajanman (i.e. born from a lotus); (my) salutation to you, O Surāsuraguru (i.e. best among gods and demons), O Kārin (i.e. creator), O Paramātman (i.e. highest soul).

118. O Sarvadeveśa (i.e. lord of all gods), (my) salutation to you; O Mohanāśana (destroyer of delusion), (my) salutation (to you) who remain in Viṣṇu's navel (and) who are born in a lotus-seat.

119. (My) salutation to you, O Vidrumaraktāṅga (i.e. whose body resembles coral), who look handsome with (tender) hands like foliage. I have sought your refuge; protect me from moving (in this cycle) of worldly existence.

120-121. O you grandsire, formerly having seen a full-blown lotus, resembling the shape of a dark cloud, and of red colour, and with leaves and filaments, and having many leaves, and spotless and not known before, you sat in it and brought forth this creation.

122. Leaving (i.e. without) you there is no protection from any other (source); my salutation to you, O adorable to the world. I am scorched by the curse of Sāvitrī. My genital organ has fallen on the ground.

123. Appease me now. Protect me along with my life. May Brahmā protect my feet. May Kamalāsana protect my shanks.

124. May Viriñci protect my waist. May Sṛṣṭikṛt (i.e. the creator) protect my organ of generation. May Padmanibha (i.e. one resembling a lotus) protect my navel. May Caturānana (i.e. one with four faces) protect my belly.

125. May Viśvasṛk (i.e. the creator of the universe) protect my chest. May Padmaja (i.e. born from the lotus) protect my heart. My Sāvitrīpati (i.e. the husband of Sāvitrī) protect my throat. May Hṛṣīkeśa protect my mouth.

126-127a. May Padmavarṇa (i.e. whose complexion is like a lotus) protect my eyes. May Paramātmā (i.e. the highest soul) protect my head." Thus having assigned the different parts of the body to deity, viz. Brahmā (while uttering) the epithets of the lord, Śaṅkara, who brings about the well-being, said: "Salutation to you, O Brahmā, O revered one", and ceased.

127b-128a. Then Brahmā, who was pleased, said these words to Śiva: "Which desire of you should I fulfil today? Ask me for whatever you desire."

Rudra said:

128b-130. O lord, if you are pleased with me, and if you (will) grant me boons, then tell me one thing, O lord: In which place do you reside? In which places do the brāhmaṇas always see (i.e. find) you? By which name does that place shine on the surface of the earth? O lord of all, tell that to me who am devoted to you.

Brahmā said:

131. I reside as (i.e. I am called) Suraśreṣṭha (i.e. best of gods) at Puṣkara. (I am called) Caturmukha (i.e. having four faces). (I am called) Devagarbha (i.e. containing all gods) at Kānyakubja. (I am called) Pitāmaha (i.e. grandsire) at Bhṛgukakṣa.

132. (I am called) Sṛṣṭikartā (i.e. the creator) at Kāverī. (I am called) Bṛhaspati at Nandipurī. (I am called) Padmajanma (i.e. born from the lotus) at Prabhāsa. (I am called) Surapriya (i.e. dear to gods) at Vānarī.

133. (I am called) Ṛgvedī at Dvāravatī. (I am called) Bhuvanādhipa (i.e. the lord of the worlds) at Vaidiśa. (I am called) Puṇḍarīkākṣa (i.e. having lotus-like eyes) at Pauṇḍraka. (I am called) Piṅgākṣa (i.e. having tawny eyes) at Hastināpura.

134. I am called Vijaya at Jayantī. (I am called) Jayanta at Puṣkarāvata. I am Padmahasta (i.e. having lotus-hands) at Ugra. (I am) Tamonuda (i.e. remover of darkness) at Tamonandī.

135. (I am called) Jayānandin at Ahichanna. (I am called) Janapriya (i.e. dear to people) at the city of Kāñcī. (I am called) Brahmā at Pāṭalīputra. I am called Muni at Ṛṣikuṇḍa.

136. (I am called) Mukunda at Mahitāra. (I am called) Śubhākāra (i.e. of an auspicious form) at Kāmarūpa. (I am called) Śivapriya at Vārāṇasī.

137. Similarly (I am called) Viṣṇu at Mallikākṣa; and Bhārgava at Mahendra. I am called Sthavirākāra (i.e. of an ancient form) at Gonarda. (I am called) Pitāmaha (i.e. grandsire) at Ujjayinī.

138. (I am called) Mahābodhi at Kauśāmbī. (I am called) Rāghava at Ayodhyā. (I am called) Munīndra (i.e. the best sage) at Citrakūṭa. (I am called) Varāha on the Vindhya mountain.

139. (I am called) Parameṣṭhin at Gaṅgādvāra. (I am called) Śaṅkara on the Himālaya (mountain). (I am called) Srucāhasta (i.e. having a wooden ladle in his hand) at Devikā, and Sruvahasta (i.e. having a sacrificial ladle in his hand) at Caturvaṭa.

140. (I am called) Padmapāṇi (i.e. having a lotus in his hand) at Vṛndāvana; and (I am called) Kuśahasta (having the darbha grass in his band) at Naimiṣa. (I am called) Gopīndra (i.e. lord of the cowherdesses) at Goplakṣa; and (I am called) Sacandra (having the moon) at the bank of Yamunā.

141. (I am called) Padmatanu at (the bank of) the Bhāgīrathī. (I am called) Jalānanda at Jalandhara. (I am called) Madrākṣa in Koṅkaṇa. (I am called) Kanakapriya (i.e. to whom gold is dear) at Kāmpilya.

142. (I am called) Annadātā (i.e. giver of food) at Veṅkaṭa

and Śambhu at Kratusthala. I am Pulastya in Laṅkā and Haṁsavāhana (i.e. having swans as his carriers) in Kāśmīra.

143. I am (called) Vasiṣṭha at Arbuda. I am (called) Nārada at Utpalāvata. I am (called) Śrutidātā (i.e. the giver of scriptures) at Melaka. I am (called) Yādasāmpati (i.e. the lord of the aquatic animals) at Prapāta.

144. I am Sāmaveda at a sacrifice. I am (called) Madhurapriya at Madhura. I am Yajñabhoktṛ (i.e. enjoyer of sacrifices) at Aṁkoṭa. (I am called) Surapriya (i.e. dear to the gods) at Brahmavāda.

145. (I am called) Nārāyaṇa in Gomanta and Dvijapriya (i.e. dear to brāhmaṇas) at Māyāpurī. (I am called) Durādharṣa (i.e. unassailable) at Ṛṣiveda and Suramardana at Devā.

146. (I am called) Mahārūpa at Vijayā, and Svarūpa at Rāṣṭravardhana. (I am called) Rasapriya at Śākambharī.

147. I am called Gopāla at Piṇḍāraka. I am called Aṅgavardhana at Śaṁkhoddhāra. (I am called) Prajādhyakṣa (i.e. lord of the beings) at Kadambaka. (I am called) Devādhyakṣa (i.e. lord of gods) at Samasthala.

148. (I am called) Gaṅgādhara at Bhadrapīṭha. (I am called) Jalaśāpī at Arbuda. I am Tripurādhīśa (i.e. lord of the three cities) at Tryambaka and Trilocana (i.e. having three eyes) at Śrīparvata.

149. (I am called) Mahādeva at Padmapura and Vaidhasa at Kāpāla. (I am called) Śauri at Śṛṅgiverapura, and Cakrapāṇika at Naimiṣa.

150. (I am called) Virūpākṣa (i.e. of deformed eyes) at Daṇḍapurī, and Gautama at Dhūtapātaka. (I am called) Haṁsanātha at Mālyavān, and Dvijendra at Valika.

151. (I am called) Devanātha at Indrapurī, and Purandara at Dyūtapā. (I am called) Haṁsavāha at Lambā, and Garuḍapriya (i.e. dear to Garuḍa) at Caṇḍā.

152. (I am called) Mahāyajña at Mahodaya; and Padmavarṇa at Siddhismara. (I am called) Padmabodhana at Vibhā.

153. (I am called) Liṅga in Devadāruvana. (I am called) Vināyaka at Mahāpatti. (I am called) Tryambaka at Mātṛkāsthāna. (I am called) Kulādhipa at Alakā.

154. (I am called) Gonarda at Trikūṭa; and similarly

Vāsuki in Pātāla. (I am called) Padmādhyakṣa at Kedāra, and Suratapriya (i.e. playful) at Kūṣmāṇḍa.

155. (I am called) Śubhāṅga at Kuṇḍavāpi and Takṣaka at Sāraṇī. (I am called) Pāpahā at Akṣoṭa and Sudarśana at Ambikā.

156. (I am called) Mahāvīra at Varadā and Durganāśana (i.e. destroyer of difficulties) at Kāntāra. (I am called) Ananta at Parṇāṭa, and Divākara at Prakāśa.

157. (I am called) Padmanābha at Virājā and Svarudra at Vṛkasthala. Also (I am called) Mārkaṇḍa at Vaṭaka and Mṛgaketana at Vāhinī.

158-159a. (I am called) Padmagṛha at Padmāvatī and Padmaketana at Gagana. I have (thus) narrated to you one hundred and eight places, where, O destroyer of Tripura, I am present for all the three times when Sandhyā is offered (i.e. I am always present).

159b-160a. A devout man, who sees (i.e. visits) even one of these (places), reaches Brahmā's place and enjoys for many years.

160b-161a. All that sin, committed mentally or in speech or with the body, perishes. No doubt should be raised in this matter.

161b-162a. A man who, after visiting these, sees me (there), enjoys salvation, and remains where I stay.

162b-163a. The highest god is immediately reached by him by means of offering flowers, incense, and gratifying the brāhmaṇas, and also by means of concentrated meditation.

163b-164a. The fruit of his religious merit is superior, and in the end he gets the fruit (in the form) of salvation. He instantly reaches Brahmā's world and stays there.

164b-165. He, with great penance (to his credit), would become a god among those belonging to Brahmā[1]; and all his sins committed intentionally or unintentionally like a brāhmaṇa's murder perish at that moment only.

166-167. He, who, in this world has become poor or is deprived of his kingdom, goes to these places and sees me (i.e. visits temples built in reverence to me) with concentration, and

1. Vairāja = belonging to Brahman.

having offered worship (to me) and having bathed, makes, offering (of *Śrāddha*) to the manes and offers *piṇḍas* (to them) is quickly freed from grief.

168-169a. He would become a sovereign emperor. There is no doubt about this. Kingdoms, good fortune, wealth, grains, excellent women of various kinds are his (i.e. are got by him) who has undertaken a pilgrimage to Puṣkara.

169b-170. He who executes or gets executed this pilgrimage or hears about it, becomes free from all sins; also a man, who knows he had a union with a woman with whom union is forbidden (becomes free from that sin).

171. A man who has missed the Vedic rites for many years would obtain the purity due to recitation of the Vedas, by undertaking this pilgrimage just once.

172. O Śaṅkara, what is the use of talking much in this matter? By it (i.e. by visiting Puṣkara) that which is unobtainable is obtained and the sin too perishes.

173-174. It is equal to the fruit of all sacrifices; it gives the fruit of (a visit to) all sacred places; all Vedas are accomplished by him who has offered Sandhyā at Puṣkara and waited upon Sāvitrī with water of Puṣkara offered by his wife.

175-176. Having brought that auspicious water in an excellent clay-pitcher[1] he should offer Sandhyā in the evening with concentration and with controlled breath. O Hara, today hear from me, what religious merit accrues to a man on having offered that (Sandhyā).

177. By (doing) that Sandhyā is well-worshipped (i.e. well-offered) for twelve years (i.e. doing it is as good as offering Sandhyā for twelve years). By bathing there one gets the fruit of an *aśvamedha* (-sacrifice), and by making offerings there the religious merit is ten-fold.

178-179. The fruit of fasting too is endless, O sinless one. One who offers food to a couple in front of Sāvitrī, feeds me by that. There is no doubt about it. He who offers food to a second couple, feeds Keśava.

180. He (i.e. Keśava), the granter of boons, accompa-

1. Bhṛṅgāra is a pitcher of a particular type.

nied by Lakṣmī, gives him boons. (O Śaṅkara) there is no doubt that you, with Umā, are fed when he feeds a third couple.

181-182a. And in the family of that woman, who devoutly offers food to maidens, an unfortunate barren woman is never born. Also a woman giving birth only to girls or one who is not dear to her husband (is never born in her family).

182b-183. Therefore, O Bhīṣma, men desiring (anything) either in the next or in this world should always give (food) that is not bitter and that is free from oil.

184. Food that is sour or salt should never be eaten by women. The food should be of five types and should be well-dressed (i.e. should have all the tastes).

185-186a. Cakes well-fried in ghee and (accompanied) with profuse milk (should be eaten) and *śikhariṇī* (i.e. a dish of curds and sugar with spices) with curds and milk should be drunk. It gives delight to men and is very much liked by women.

186b-187a. Wealth, grains, men and hundreds of women and also breads and cakes are had by (eating) it.

187b-188a. (In the family) there is no fever, there is no tormentation, no grief, no separation. He emancipates twentyone generations of his family.

188b-190a. The family of her who gives a fried cake, becomes full of relatives, sons and innumerable maids and servants. The entire family of him, who offers a baked cake, prospers with sons and grandsons for a long time.

190b-191a. The daughters of those young women who give *śikhariṇī* have sons, and their family is full of brothers.

191b-192. Her family with all desired things accomplished, is delighted by offering sweetmeats. This is what the creator has said. O Śiva, the same food is recommended for young girls eight years old.

193. O Śiva, she who gives food to a thousand persons, is fortunate, pious, has sons, and is endowed with wealth and prosperity, for existence after existence (i.e. many existences).

194-196. Sweetened cakes also are meritorious. One should cause to give food mixing it with Khandari made from corn obtainable in autumn and with grape-juice as the (ingredient), and mixed with jaggery-pieces. One should also give drinks

and articles of food to brāhmaṇa women; in the same way (one should give) woollen garments and garments fit for (being worn) in the rainy season and whichever drinks are suitable.

197. One should worship (women) according to the proper procedure by giving them money and bodices. One should besmear their bodies with saffron and adorn them with wreaths and garlands.

198. One should give (them) shoes for their feet, and also a coconut; should give them collyrium (to be put into) their eyes and place red lead on their heads.

199. Having given them jaggery and tasty, soft fruits desired by them and vessels into their hands, one should salute them and dismiss them.

200. After that one should eat along with one's relatives and children; or rather there is no accomplishment (without all this). One should give gifts (and) vessels at a sacred place.

201a. (One should say:) 'I shall make offerings on going home; O god, being pleased, favour me.'

201b-202. In the same way, after having come (back) to one's own residence, one should duly offer a *śrāddha* to the manes with the offering of *piṇḍas*. The manes become pleased with him (and remain so) for the (entire) day of Brahmā.

203. The religious merit obtained by those who give gifts at their residence is eight times more than that obtained by giving at a sacred place. And the low ones do not see the *Śrāddha* performed by brāhmaṇas (at the residence).

204. A *śrāddha* performed in honour of the manes secretly in a (well-) guarded house is desirable. If it is struck (i.e. spoilt) by the sight of a mean person it does not reach the manes.

205. Therefore one should, with all care, get performed a *śrāddha* secretly. It is said to satisfy the manes. This is told by the self-born himself.

206. That rite which involves greater devotion to Gaurī (and so is superior), is said to be a familiar rite. The mental one is (called) Rājasī and gives fame to people.

207. One who desires one's own good should always give secret gifts (i.e. give gifts secretly). If cooked food is given on the earth it is seen by people.

208-209a. If it is seen being given it never leads to anybody's satisfaction. If one brāhmaṇa is fed in the house a crore of brāhmaṇas are fed (i.e. feeding one brāhmaṇa in the house amounts to feeding a crore of brāhmaṇas). There is no doubt about this. The statement made in the Purāṇas is true.

209b. One should never test a brāhmaṇa at a sacred place.

210-211. Manu has said that a brāhmaṇa who comes with a desire for food should be fed. The sages have recommended an offering of *piṇḍas* with (i.e. made of) flour of barley first fried and then ground, and with cakes of wheaten flour or with milk or with oil cakes or nuts of *iṅgudi* tree. Men with devotion should always make offerings with oil (and) oil cakes.

212. Men should perform a *śrāddha* there without offering and invocation. Vultures or crows do not take away offerings made to manes of the deceased ancestors on being seen.

213. That is called a *śrāddha* offered at a sacred place and it satisfies the manes. It should be performed with great care. The cause for it is devotion alone.

214. The manes are pleased with devotion; and (when) pleased, they direct (i.e. fulfil) desires. They satisfy desires for sons, grandsons, wealth, grains and other desires as mentally entertained.

215-216. The grandsire, being propitiated with devotion (is) pleased (and) gives (desired objects) to men. Men, after having reached the sacred place, should always perform a *śrāddha* at a proper or improper time. They should bathe (there) and offer oblations to the manes. They should also offer *piṇḍas*, since it is very dear to the manes.

217. The manes, full of great hope, and desiring (oblation of) water, observe the man born in their family, who has come to the sacred place.

218. (Therefore) men should not delay (the offering), nor cause an impediment. They will always have (a) continuous (line of) descendants.

219. Manes give sons. They desire the prosperity (of their descendants) and *śrāddha*. Therefore, they never cut off the line of descendants.

220-221. For this reason (only), formerly the self-born one has himself recommended *śrāddha*, which brāhmaṇas devoted

to their manes should perform at a sacred place or in their houses on *Saṁkrānti* (i.e. passage of the sun from one zodiacal sign into another), on an eclipse (-day), on the equinoctial and solstitial points or when the star on which a person is born is suppressed.[1]

222-223. Formerly Svāyambhuva declared these to be the occasions of a *śrāddha*. When a *śrāddha* is performed, there is no bodily harm to a person; all bad deeds done by the son go away; and also there is no harm from the planets (turning evil) or thieves or kings.

224. (The effects of) all evil deeds perish, and (the son) obtains (i.e. goes to) a happy condition. There is no doubt about this; since (these) are the words of Prajāpati (himself).

225. The three Puṣkaras are said (to be meritorious) during the Kṛta age, Naimiṣa is said (to be meritorious) during the Tretā age, Kurukṣetra is said to be so during the Dvāpara age and one should resort to Gaṅgā during the Kali age.

226-227a. Residence at Puṣkara is difficult to be had; penance at Puṣkara is not easily had. (The effects of) sins committed elsewhere are diminished at Puṣkara; but the (effects of) sin committed at (this) sacred place are not removed at any other place.

227b-229a. O Bharata, who, with the palms of his hands joined, remembers Puṣkaras in the evening and in the morning, has (indeed) bathed at all the sacred places. Having bathed at Puṣkara in the evening and in the morning (i.e. one who has bathed at Puṣkara in the evening and in the morning), obtains (the fruit of) all sacrifices, and goes to the world of Brahmā.

229b-230. He who continuously stays at Puṣkara for twelve years, twelve days, a month or half a month would reach the highest station. Brahmā's world stands above all the (other) worlds.

231-232a. He who desires to go to Puṣkara should resort to it. He who bathes in Puṣkara with other people or singly, gets the fruit (of the bath which is) a crore times more.

1. Viṣuva—The first point of Aries or Libra into which the sun enters at the vernal or autumnal equinox.

Ayana—Equinoctial and solstitial points.

Janmarkṣa—The star under which a person is born.

232b-233a. The fruit which a man obtains by duly performing rites at different sacred places is obtained by one by merely looking at Puṣkara.

233b-234a. On the surface of the earth there are ten thousand crores of sacred places. O you descendant of Kuru, they are (said to be) in the vicinity of Puṣkara (i.e. are present at Puṣkara).

234b-236. There is no doubt that those who die at Puṣkara will go to Brahmā's world for as long as the mountains and the oceans stand (on the earth). The effect of all the evil deeds done (by a man) during thousands of existence, and from birth to death (during this existence) is completely burnt after having bathed in Puṣkara. Puṣkara is a sacred place to which access is not easy. It destroys all sins.

237. O king, now hear from me about the sacrifice in honour of the god of gods, which destroys the five sins and which gives Brahmanic power, sons and wealth.

238-239a. Wealth, full (span of) life, sons and happiness instantly come to that man who is oppressed with poverty, diseases, leprosy etc., who has no wealth or no son (if he visits Puṣkara).

239b-243. He, who sees the image of Brahmā, the highest god, the unborn one, conceived by prayers, along with (those) of the regents of quarters drawn in a circle, duly worshipped with Navanābha; or he, who worships (the image of) Brahmā in the month of Kārtika, especially on the full moon day, or duly worships (the image) on all full moon days, or he, who, O you of mighty arms, O king, sees (the image of the) mighty god worshipped by his preceptor on a *Saṅkrānti*-day or (a day auspicious due to the position) of the moon or the sun, gets satisfaction instantly and his sins are destroyed. O lord of men, he is honoured by gods here (i.e. in this world).

244. For one year, the preceptor should test the brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya and vaiśya devotees by birth and rites like those of purification etc.

245-246. Knowing him to be suitable he should understand him accurately. They (i.e. the devotees) too, being devout, should, for one year, be attached to the preceptor as (they

would be) to Viṣṇu; and then at the end of the year they should propitiate the preceptor.

247-249a. 'Instruct us, O revered sir, in such a way that we would cross the ocean of worldly existence by means of your favour, meditation on the highest Brahman, worship of Viriñci (i.e. Brahmā), muttering prayers to the thousand-headed (god i.e. Viṣṇu), Maṇḍala brāhmaṇa and by means of meditation; we especially long for the prosperity of the Vedas; (please) favour (us)'.

249b-252. The intelligent preceptor who is thus requested by them at that time should duly worship Brahmā and Viṣṇu first. On the fourteenth day (of the lunar fortnight) of (the month of) Kārtika they (i.e. devotees) with their eyes blindfolded should be made to sleep (?). Then they, having got up before sunrise and taking the posture known as *padmāsana*,[1] and meditating upon the main image of the preceptor in the Sahasrāra[2] with a white garment and a sacred thread, and white flowers and cloth, and with white sandal (applied over the body) should go out (of the village) to a river and perform the daily routine carefully.

253-254. The preceptor should give them a toothbrush made from the Kṣīra-tree; going to a river flowing seawards they should chew it; or having gone to some other tank, or even in the house (itself), they should chew it consecrated with the prayer addressed to the highest lord.

255. Having consecrated it seven times with the sacred prayer 'Āpohiṣṭhā', and with 'Devasya tvā', and 'Āyuñjānā...' he should put it in his hand.

256-257a. Washing it with the prayer 'Irāvatyā...' he should put it into the mouth, and chewing it, should throw it away and note if it has fallen in front, behind him, or in an intermediate direction.

257b-259. When it falls in front, the deity is obtained (i.e. reached), and the prayers are fruitful. When the toothbrush

1. Padmāsana—A particular posture in religious meditation in which the left foot is placed at the root of the thigh and the right foot on the left thigh.

2. Sahasrāra—One of the mystic centres of spiritual energy, located on the top of the brain and like a thousand-petalled lotus in shape according to the teachers of Kuṇḍalini Yoga and Tantra.

falls behind, all the gods turn their faces away. When it has fallen in the northern direction, success may or may not be had. If it has fallen in the southern direction the teacher would die. There is no doubt about it. Seeing the inauspicious (omen) he should sleep on the (bare) ground near the lord of lords.

260. The wise ones, seeing dreams, should tell them before (i.e. to) the teacher. Then the great teacher should note the auspicious and inauspicious (omens).

261. The preceptor, having bathed on the full-moon day should go to a temple and draw a circle on the ground prepared (for that purpose).

262-263. Having duly marked the ground with various signs, he should draw there a lotus with sixteen or nine or eight petals. The wise (preceptor) should show it to the disciples. He should carefully cover their eyes with a white piece of cloth.

264-265a. He should bring in the disciples with flowers in their hands, in an alphabetical order. When the wise one would fashion the Navanābha circle with colours, he should worship Indra preceded (i.e. accompanied) by Indrāṇī in the east.

265b. The king should, like that, also worship Agni along with the regents of the quarters.

266. He should worship Yama in the southern direction, and Nirṛti in the south-east direction, and Varuṇa in the western direction and Vāyu in the north-west direction.

267. Keeping (the image of) Kubera in the northern direction he should place (the image of) Rudra in the north-east direction. He should put the water-pot in the east and the wooden ladle in the south.

268. He should place (the image of) Brahman in the west and the sacrificial ladle in the north. He should place the ascetic's seat in the south-east and the wooden sandals in the south-west.

269. He should put the *yogapaṭṭa*[1] and a small pitcher[2] in

1. Yogapaṭṭa—A cloth thrown over the back and knee of an ascetic during abstract meditation.

2. Galantikā—A small water-jar with a hole in the bottom from which the water drops upon the object of worship.

north-east direction. Viṣṇu should be worshipped in the east and Śaṅkara in the south.

270. God Ravi (i.e. the image of the Sun) should be worshipped in the west, and the sages in the north. Brahmā himself should be put in the centre and Sāvitrī to his south.

271-273a. (The image of) lotus-eyed Gāyatrī should be placed in the north. Having placed Ṛgveda in the east and Yajurveda in the south, and also Sāmaveda in the west and Atharvaveda in the north, he should put Itihāsa-Purāṇas, metrics, astronomy, Dharma-śāstras and other (lores) in the eastern and other directions.

273b-274. Having worshipped Bala(rāma) on the eastern petal, he should worship Pradyumna on the southern petal, Aniruddha on the western petal and Vāsudeva (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) on the northern one. He should worship Vāmadeva on the eastern (petal) and Śiva on the southern one.

275. He should place Īśāna (i.e. Viṣṇu) on the western petal and the supreme spirit (i.e. Brahman) on the northern petal. Aghora (i.e. one of Śiva's forms) should be worshipped on all sides. This is the worship (to be offered to the deities) in the circle.

276. He should worship Bhāskara in the east, Divākara in the south, Prabhākara in the west and the lord of planets in the north.

277-278. Having thus worshipped Brahmā, the highest lord, according to the proper procedure and having duly placed eight pitchers in the circle in various directions, he should keep the ninth pitcher—the one intended for Brahmā in the centre. He (i.e. the preceptor) should bathe him, who desires salvation, with (the water poured from) the Brahmā-pitcher.

279. O king, he should bathe him, who desires wealth, with (the water poured from) the pitcher meant for Viṣṇu. He should bathe him, who desires kingdom, with (the water poured from) the pitcher sacred to Indra.

280. He should bathe him, who desires wealth and valour, with the water (poured from) the pitcher intended for Agni.

He should bathe a man desiring victory over (i.e. to overcome) death with (water poured from) the pitcher sacred to Yama.

281. Bath with water from the pitcher sacred to Nirṛti, is laid down for the destruction of the wicked. He should bathe a man with (the water poured from) the pitcher sacred to Varuṇa, for the quick destruction of sins.

282. He should bathe a man, who desires health, with (water from) the pitcher placed in the north-west direction (and sacred to Vāyu). Bath with (water from the pitcher) sacred to Kubera is laid down for him who desires wealth.

283-284a. Bath with (water from) the pitcher sacred to Rudra is (laid down) for him who desires knowledge. These are the pitchers (sacred to) the regents of quarters. A man who bathes with water from each of these pitchers becomes free from all faults and instantly becomes a king like Brahmā.

284b-285a. Or he should duly worship the regents of all the quarters one by one with water from the pitchers by uttering the names of everyone of them.

285b-287a. Having thus worshipped the deities—the regents of the quarters—he, with a pleased mind, bring in the disciples with their eyes blind-folded, after having tested them. Burning (the sins of) them with (the power of) Agni with sustained breath, he should shake them (i.e. make them alert) with Vāyu, and making them corpulent with Soma, he should then make them hear (i.e. tell them) the usual practices.

287b-288. A man should not censure brāhmaṇas, gods, Viṣṇu and Brahmā, and also Indra, Āditya, Agni and regents of quarters and planets; also his preceptor, a brāhmaṇa, or a superior sage who has been formerly initiated.

289-290. Having thus made him hear (i.e. having thus told him) the usual practices, he should make him perform a sacrifice. 'Om, (my) salutation to revered Brahman of all forms. Huṁ, Phaṭ, Svāhā'. With (this) sacred text of sixteen letters he should make offerings into the blazing fire. He should offer into this fire all offerings made at the time of the rite of conception etc.

291. The initiated one (performing the sacrifice) should, at the end of the sacrifice (and) in the vicinity of the god of

gods, cause the sacrificial fee to be given to the teacher to the accompaniment of the three Vyāhṛtis[1] (i.e. the mystic utterances).

292. The wise one should cause to give (i.e. offer) elephants, horses, vehicles and carts, gold, grains etc. to the preceptor. O king, to the middle preceptor (i.e. the preceptor second in order) he should give mediocre ones (i.e. the elephants etc. of the second grade).

293-294a. To the next one he should give a couple (of cows etc.) along with gold. It is not possible to describe the religious merit produced when this is done even for hundreds of years (i.e. even if the description continues for hundreds of years).

294b-296a. He who, being initiated first, listens to the Padma (Purāṇa), has muttered all the Vedas, the Purāṇas, all the sacred texts in totality, at the holy place of Puṣkara, or at Prayāga or Sindhusāgara, or Devahrada, or Kurukṣetra or particularly at Vārāṇasī.

296b-298a. He, having seen (i.e. who sees) the grandsire residing at Puṣkara, gets the fruit that is equal to hundred times the fruit obtained by those who mutter sacred texts on (days of) equinoctial points and eclipses. If he entertains many desires (they are satisfied) if he, having been initiated, worships (the deity) and listens to the Purāṇa.

298b-300. O king, even gods, having practised penance, meditate and say: 'When shall I get birth (i.e. when shall I be born) in Bhārata? When shall we be initiated and listen to the Padma (Purāṇa)? When shall we, having put the Padma of the sixteen essences on our bodies, go to the highest place, having gone to whieh, there will be no rebirth ?'

301-302. The gods speak like this and think (like this). O king, (they also say:) 'When shall we see the sacrifice of Brahmā on the full moon day of Kārtika?'. O you best of the Kurus, I have thus told you the sacred precept of the gods, Gandharvas and Yakṣas, for it is always excellent.

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1. Vyāhṛti—The mystic utterances. They are three, viz. Bhūḥ, Bhuvaḥ and Svaḥ as mentioned here, or seven. They are preceded by the utterance of 'Om'.

303. The scriptures say that he who knows it correctly, he who sees the circle (in which the pitchers are placed), and he who would listen to this (account), all they are freed (from the mundane existence).

304-305a. Hereafter I shall tell you this excellent secret, with (the help of) which men can have wealth, steadiness, satisfaction and nourishment; and with (the help of) which, O king, all the planets become agreeable.

305b-306. Selecting first, a Sunday with the Hasta (constellation in union with the Moon), he should thereafter devoutly pass seven such Sundays eating once a day. When thus the seventh Sunday is over (i.e. on the seventh Sunday) he should feed brāhmaṇas.

307-308a. A man should fashion with care a golden image of the Sun, should cover it with a pair of red garments, and should place in a copper vessel the umbrella and wooden sandals and shoes to be presented (to a brāhmaṇa).

308b-309a. Having bathed it with clarified butter he should cause it to be given to a brāhmaṇa with full form (i.e. not having a deformed body), and especially to a brāhmaṇa, well-versed in (the performance of) rites.

309b-310a. If this is done, its fruit is excellent health, and also wealth, prosperity and the acquisition of everything. Such is the rite as described in the Purāṇas.

310b. It is not inconsistent, and gives peace and satisfaction to men.

311. Similarly a wise man should select a Monday when Citrā is (in union with the Moon); he, eating (only) at night, should carefully pass eight Mondays (in this way).

312. On every Monday wise brāhmaṇas should be fed (by him). When the ninth Monday is over (i.e. on the ninth Monday) he should feed brāhmaṇas.

313. He should give them pairs of garments, and should also cause (the image of) Soma, placed in a pot of bell metal full with milk, to be given.

314. Similarly an umbrella, two wooden sandals with shoes should be given to a brāhmaṇa, especially to one of a perfect body (i.e. whose body is not deformed).

315. He should similarly worship Aṅgāraka (i.e. Mars) on (the union of) Svāti (with the Moon) and pass eight Tuesdays by eating only at night till (on the last Tuesday) brāhmaṇas are fed.

316. He should cause to give golden image of Mars placed in a copper-vessel to a brāhmaṇa having a complete (i.e. not deformed) body.

317. A wise man should pass seven days in the order of the constellations by eating only at night, and on the eighth should cause to give golden horses (to a brāhmaṇa).

318. He should perform the fire-rites (i.e. the sacrifices) according to the procedure as seen (in the religious texts). O king, listen to what would happen when this is done.

319-320. All unfavourable planets become agreeable; all diseases vanish and deities are pleased. The serpents, and manes that are satisfied (by him) do not act against him. The wicked dreams of those who listen to or recite (the text), vanish.

321-322a. If Bhauma (i.e. Mars), the son of Ravi (i.e. Saturn), Bhāskara (i.e. the Sun), and Ketu stand atop and are terrible and cause trouble, they become auspicious when this is just done.

322b-323a. O king, all the planets become favourable to him and grant him peace who, full of devotion, always observes this (vow); not otherwise.

323b-324. He should place (the image of) Śanaiścara (i.e. Saturn), Rāhu and Ketu in an iron pot. He should get (the images of) these fashioned with iron and should cause them to be given to brāhmaṇas; and to please these (brāhmaṇas) a pair of black garments should be given.

325-326. Those who desire peace, wealth and victory should give golden (images of) cows. At the culmination of the vow the golden images of these planets should be given by those who desire peace. O king, at the end of the vow food should be served to brāhmaṇas. Similarly gifts according to one's capacity should also be given to please (i.e. pacify) the planets.

327-328. O lord of kings, he would fulfil all his desires with little effort. One should seek knowledge from Śaṅkara, and

(good) health from Bhāskara (i.e. the Sun). One should desire wealth from Hutāśana (i.e. Fire), and position from Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu). One should seek Vedic (i.e. sacred knowledge), giving peace to all beings, from the grandsire.

Bhīṣma said:

329. The sacrifice which you described as giving great fruit to the sacrificers, cannot be obtained (i.e. performed) by others due to the short span of life.

330. O best of the sages, tell me about the auspicious vow, practised with little effort by observing fasts during a year, and giving a great fruit.

Pulastya said:

331. O great king, for this reason only, king Śveta of great fame, very much oppressed with hunger, put a question to Vasiṣṭha.

332. In the country named Ilāvṛta there was a very powerful king named Śveta. He conquered the entire earth with the seven islands and cities.

333-334a. Vasiṣṭha, the son of Brahmā, was his family-priest. That best king, who was greatly religious, having (i.e. who had) conquered (the earth), once said these words to Vasiṣṭha, the best among those who muttered the sacred prayers.

Śveta said:

334b-336. O revered sir, I strongly desire to perform a thousand horse-sacrifices, and to give gold and gems to brāhmaṇas. O preceptor, I do not wish to give the gift of food on the earth. It is no use giving food, O master, when I gave gold as a gift; I never gave food as a gift taking it to be a non-entity (i.e. of no avail).

337-338a. That king Śveta, of great fame, gave red garments, ornaments, villages and cities to brāhmaṇas; but that king never gave food and water (to brāhmaṇas).

338b-339. Then, O best bing, that king having performed many horse-sacrifices went to heaven conquered (i.e. obtained) by religious merit after having practised penance (for three

arbudas (i.e. three hundred million years). Adorned with all ornaments he lived in the world of Brahman.

340-341. The celestial nymphs danced there and the Siddha-women sang (songs). Both Tumburu and Nārada, who were very intelligent, always arrived there and sang (there). Sages, with penance (to their credit), praised him, who had performed many sacrifices, with prayers from the Vedas.

342. The body of the great-souled king, who was endowed with such grandeur, was oppressed with hunger, and particularly with thirst.

343. That best king oppressed by that (strong) hunger, left heaven in an aeroplane, and came to the mountain Ṛkṣa.

344. He came to that great forest where formerly his body was burnt. There the king took the bones (of his body) and remained licking them.

345-346a. The king again got into his aeroplane and went to heaven. After a long time the king, of a praiseworthy vow, was seen licking his own bones (i.e. the bones of his body in the former existence) by his family-priest Vasiṣṭha.

346b-347. He said to the king: "O lord of kings, O king, why are you eating (i.e. licking) your own bones?" King Śveta thus addressed by the great sage Vasiṣṭha, said these words to the sage:

348. "O revered sir, I am oppressed with thirst and hunger. O best sage, formerly I never gave food (to anyone); therefore hunger is excessively oppressing me."

349. Thus addressed by the king, the great sage Vasiṣṭha, best among sages, again said these words to the king:

350-352a. "O lord of kings, what can I do for you especially (when you are so) hungry? A thing that is not given to anyone does not serve a person. A man gets enjoyments by giving gems and gold (to others). By giving food he shines with all desires (i.e. all his desires are fulfilled); (but) O king, you did not give that (i.e. food) taking it to be little (i.e. insignificant)."

Śveta said:

352b-353a. O preceptor, tell me how that which is not given is compensated. By your favour (i.e. favour me and) tell me who am asking you, O Vasiṣṭha.

Vasiṣṭha said:

353b-354. There is a cause for this about which there is no doubt. O best among men, listen to it as it is being told by me to you. In the former Kalpa there was a king known as Vinītāśva.

355-356. That king commenced to perform an excellent horse-sacrifice. At the end of the sacrifice he gave cows and horses to the best brāhmaṇas as asked by them; but he did not give them food looking upon it as insignificant; as you (regarded gift of food unimportant). Then after a long time he expired on the bank of Gaṅgā.

357. That king Vinītāśva became a sovereign emperor in Māyāpurī. O lord, like you he too went to heaven.

358. O king, he too, oppressed with hunger like you came in a bright aeroplane resembling the sun in colour, to the Nīla mountain on the bank of the river Gaṅgā on the earth.

359-361a. There, on the bank of Jāhnavī, he saw his own body and his priest by name Brāhmaṇa, performing a sacrifice. O king, seeing him, he too again asked him the reason for his hunger. The priest said to him:

361b-363a. "O best person, O king, quickly give a cow made of sesamum, and a cow made of ghee, and also of water, an (actual) cow and a liquid one, by (giving) which you will be free from thirst and hunger, and will enjoy in heaven as long as the sun and the moon shine (in the sky)."

363b-364a. Thus addressed, the king again asked him this (question): "Tell me the conditions (i.e. the attributes) of the cow of sesamum. I will fashion one accordingly and give it."

364b-365. The priest said (in reply): "O king, listen to the sacred injunction about the cow of sesamum: The cow should be fashioned out of sesamum measuring sixteen āḍhakas[1], and the calf (should be fashioned) out of sesamum measuring four (āḍhakas). The feet (of the cow) should be of sugarcanes and the bright teeth of flowers.

366. The nose should be made of sandal and the tongue should be made of jaggery. For the tail a garland should be used, and the cow should have a bell as her ornament.

1. Āḍhaka—A measure of grains, the fourth of a droṇa.

367. He should fashion the cow like this; she should have golden horns, silver hoofs and udders of bronze like the cow as told previously[1].

368-369. O king, having fashioned her like this, he should quickly cause it to be given to a brāhmaṇa, after having sanctified it with sacred texts. He should cause the auspicious cow, remaining (i.e. placed) on a black deer-hide, covered with clothes, tied with a thread, (adorned) with five gems, endowed with all herbs, to be given (to a brāhmaṇa).

370-371. (He should pray to the cow as:) 'O sesamum-cow, let me instantly have food, drink and all (kinds of) liquids. O you, who are presented to a brāhmaṇa, satisfy our desires. I am, O goddess, taking (to) you with devotion, especially for (the good of) my family. Satisfy all my desires. Salutation to you, O sesamum-cow.'

372. O best king, the sesamum-cow presented with this procedure, satisfies all desires. There is no doubt about this.

373. The cow of water is fashioned with pitchers only (i.e. pitchers are filled with water). When she is duly presented, she instantly satisfies all desires.

374. Similarly if a hundred cows are given following the rule (of the vow) of the full-moon day, Sāvitrī would satisfy all one's desires here (i.e. in this world) as well as in heaven.

375. Similarly the cow made of ghee presented like this according to the proper procedure by the wise men, satisfies all desires and would give lustre.

376. Similarly, O king, the cow of liquids given in the month of Kārtika, would satisfy all one's desires and would always give good position.

377. I have told you in brief this very extensive (account). It is described by Brahmā, the doer of all actions, to give unending fruit.

378-379. O best king, if a person is oppressed with thirst or hunger he should give this gift in Kārtika. Give first, O king, O lord, the 'Egg of Brahman', full of everything, having beings and gems and herbs, also full of gods, demons and Yakṣas.

380-381. Fashioning all this (and the egg covered) with

1. Pūrvadhenuvidhānataḥ... (see Chapter 21 above).

silver all round, endowed with gems and (forms of) the Sun and the Moon, a devout man should cause it to be given to his preceptor-priest on the twelfth day in (i.e. of) Kārtika or on the fifteenth day of Kārtika only, and not in any other way.

382. O king, all beings that lie within the 'Egg of Brahman' are (i.e. must be said to be) given by him. I have told you (this) in brief.

383. O king, all that fruit of the performance of sacrifices, accomplished with excellent gifts, which is obtained by a sacrificer, is obtained by the gift of a portion of the 'Egg', especially (i.e. more so) by the gift of the (entire) 'Egg of Brahman.'

384. A man, who again gives this (form of the) entire "Egg of Brahman', has (i.e. should be said to have) muttered prayers, offered oblations, given gifts and narrated (the account)."

The king said:

385-386. O innocent brāhmaṇa, one would be obtaining salvation by performing the rite of the gift of the 'Egg of Brahman.' Tell me about the time, region and the sacred place for it (i.e. tell me when and where it should be performed); (so that) by doing it I shall get all the fruit, and shall soon get rid of this contemptible condition.

Vasiṣṭha said:

387. O king, having heard this, the brāhmaṇa priest got fashioned the Egg of Brahman out of gold and all (other) metals.

388-390. He fashioned that lotus (-seat) of Brahman with a thousand niṣkas. In it (he placed the image of) Brahmā adorned with rubies, Sāvitrī, Gāyatrī, sages and ascetics. In front of (the image of) Brahmā he put the golden images of all sons of Brahmā like Nārada and all gods like Indra. There should also be the image of the eternal lord in the form of the boar along with Lakṣmī.

391-394. For his decoration he should use green emeralds. The wise one should adorn it with the gems called gomeda[1]. The (form of) Moon should be decorated with pearls and (that of)

1. Gomeda—A gem brought from the Himalayas and Indus, described as of four different colours: white, pale-yellow, red and dark-blue.

the Sun with diamonds. He should also cause golden (forms) of planets to be given. (If silver is used) its quantity should be seven times that of gold; similarly the quantity of copper should be seven times that of silver. The quantity of bronze that may be used should be seven times that of copper. The quantity of tin (if used for forming the images) should be seven times that of bronze. O king, the quantity of lead should be seven times that of tin, and the quantity of iron should be seven times that of lead.

395-396. In accordance with this number he should get fashioned by skilled artisans seven islands, seven seas and seven principal mountains[1]. He should get fashioned the trees and beings with silver; and he should get fashioned the forests and beasts with gold.

397. The wise ones should duly get fashioned trees, plants, thickets, grass, leaves and creepers and should present them at a holy place.

398-399a. At the time of the lunar or the solar eclipse he should present these things at these sacred places: Kurukṣetra, Gayā, Prayāga, Amarakaṇṭaka, Dvāravatī, Prabhāsa, Gaṅgā-dvāra and Puṣkara.

399b-400. O lord of kings, all this should be given on all the openings of days, during the summer and the winter solstice. It is very meritorious on days of portents and especially on equinoctial points. He should entertain no doubt about this.

401-403a. Appointing a brāhmaṇa who is handsome and endowed with five qualities as the chief of the fire-chamber, and having honoured him with his wife, and making him the chief priest, and in the same way, having invited other brāhmaṇas with twentyfour qualities, along with their wives, he should give them rings and ear-rings.

403b-404. Having honoured them thus and having placed himself before them, and having again and again saluted with the eight parts of his body touching the ground, he, with the palms of his hands joined in obeisance, (should praise the

1. Kulaparvata—These principal mountains are seven in number. Their names are: Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Śukitmat, Ṛkṣa, Vindhya and Pāriyātra.

brāhmaṇas) with the family-priest in the fore (i.e. headed by the family-priest with these words:)

405-407. 'O brāhmaṇas, being pleased you should favour (me) with a friendly attitude, and a kind disposition. I have again been more purified. Due to your devotion the grandsire himself is pleased. May Janārdana be pleased with (this) gift of Brahmāṇḍa. And also, O best brāhmaṇas, may the Pināka-holding god and Śakra, the lord of gods, be pleased by (my) meditation on them.'

408-409. Having thus praised the brāhmaṇas, who had mastered the Vedas, the king in a moment, duly presented the Brahmāṇḍa to his preceptor. Then with all his desires satisfied the king went to heaven.

410. That priest shared that (Brahmāṇḍa) with (the other) brāhmaṇas (i.e.) he too gave (portions of) it to other brāhmaṇas, O king. There should not be only one recipient of Brahmāṇḍa or the gift of land.

411-412. If only one man receives it he commits a sin—brāhmaṇacide—there is no doubt about it. This is witnessed by all. One should proclaim and give. Those also who see (the gift) being given are purified. Merely by seeing it, they are liberated. There is no doubt about this.

413-414. (On the day) which is called Bhīma-dvādaśī, he should make (offerings of) gold, water and deer-hide. Let them (i.e. people) see these. When seen by them they easily get the fruit of the rite, and get (i.e. go to) the same world as the performer (of the rite). O king, cows should always be saluted with this sacred prayer:

415. '(My) repeated salutation to the prosperous cows that have descended from Surabhi. (My) repeated salutation to the pure daughters of Brahman.'

416-417a. One would obtain the fruit of the gift of cows (merely) by remembering this sacred prayer. Therefore, O king, you too will obtain the fruit of the gift of cows, especially on the full-moon day of Kārtika, at the excellent holy place, viz. Puṣkara.

417b-418. Whatever sin is of (i.e. committed by) a woman or a man, all that (sin) completely perishes by merely having a

bath at Puṣkara. O descendant of Bharata, whichever sacred places there are on the earth right from the sea, they go to (i.e. merge into) Puṣkara, especially on the full-moon day of Kārtika.

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

The Killing of a Śūdra Ascetic

Bhīṣma said:

1. The revered one has told (me) everything based on the Purāṇa; and also (has narrated to me) how (king) Śveta presented Brahmāṇḍa to his preceptor.

2. Hearing this curiosity has arisen (in me) as to how, O brāhmaṇa, he licked (his own) bones in the absence of (i.e. as a result of his non-gifting of) food.

3. I desire to hear that; I also desire to hear about other kings on the earth who reached heaven due to (i.e. as a result of) giving food; for sacrifices are based on food.

4. How is it that the great-souled Śveta lost his good sense with the result that he neither gave food to the sages nor showed it to them.

5. Ah, just see the greatness of food. The fruit of the food that is given here is enjoyed by men in heaven; and (due to it) one would have unending (residence in) heaven.

6. The prominent brāhmaṇas have declared the gift of food as great. Due to the gift of food the lord of gods enjoys the three worlds.

7. All best brāhmaṇas call him Śatakratu. Due to that (i.e. the gift of food) the lord of the gods has attained that position.

8-9a. He went to heaven because of having given food. All (this) I have heard from you. If something else has formerly taken place I desire to hear that too again; so, O highly intelligent one, now tell me about it.

Pulastya said:

9b-10a. O king, formerly this old episode was narrated to Rāma by the great-souled Agastya. I shall now tell it to you.

Bhīṣma said:

10b-11a. In which family was Rāma, the best king, to whom Agastya narrated the old episode, born?

Pulastya said:

11b-12a. The very mighty (hero) named Rāma was born in the family of Raghu. He did the mission of gods: he killed Rāvaṇa in Laṅkā.

12b-13a. (Once) sages came to the house of him who had settled (himself) as (the king) of the kingdom of the world. The great-souled (sages) arrived at Rāghava's residence.

13b-14a. The doorkeeper, at the bidding of Agastya, immediately informed Rāma that the sages had come (to see him).

14b-16a. Seeing Rāma, like the full moon that had risen (he said:) "O son of Kausalyā, well-being to you. The night (has ended and) an auspicious dawn has broken. O king, O descendant of Raghu, to see your prosperity Agastya has today come with sages. He is waiting at the door."

16b-17. Hearing that the sages, resembling the sun in lustre, had arrived, Rāma said (these) words to the doorkeeper: "Quickly bring them in. Why have you detained the best sages at the door?"

18. At these words of Rāma the doorkeeper gladly ushered them in. Seeing the sages who had arrived, Rāma, with his hands joined in obeisance, spoke (words of greeting to them).

19-20. Rāma, having humbly saluted them made them sit on (i.e. offered them) seats. The best sages sat all around on golden, variegated, well-spread, comfortable seats, covered with Kuśa-grass. The family-priest offered them water for washing their feet, for rinsing their mouths and a respectful offering.

21. Rāma enquired after the health and welfare of all the sages. The great sages, well-versed in the Vedas said these words:

22. "O you Raghu's descendant of mighty arms, welfare to you everywhere. Luckily we are seeing you happy with your enemies killed.

23. O best of Raghus, the extremely vicious Rāvaṇa, the villain, kidnapped Sītā, your wife. He was killed by her vigour only.

24. O Rāma, you all alone killed him in a battle. No other person is (seen) who would do the deed that you did

25. We had come here to talk to you; and now, on seeing you, we all the ascetics, are purified, O lord of kings.

26. You have today wiped the tears (of the world) by killing Rāvaṇa (i.e.) by giving this auspicious gift of fearlessness to the world, O hero.

27. O Rāghava, we are glad due to this victory of yours, O you of unlimited valour. Now that we have seen and talked to you, we shall go to our respective hermitages.

28. O you tormentor of the enemies, I had given Indra's bow and two inexhaustible quivers and an armour to you when you had (formerly) entered the forest.

29. O you descendant of Raghu, (please) visit my hermitage again." Saying so all the sages disappeared.

30. When the chief sages had left, Rāma, the best among the supporters of righteousness, thought about the work (the sages wanted to assign to him. He said to himself:)

31. "What could be the mission (for which) the sage said to me: 'O you descendant of Raghu, please come to my hermitage again ?' I must certainly go to Agastya.

32a. I must hear (what the) secret (intention) of the gods is, and the mission that he would tell (me to do)."

32b-33. Rāma, of unlimited lustre, thought like this: "I shall surely perform my duty; for duty is the highest recourse." He ruled for ten thousand years.

34. That great-souled Rāma, who gave gifts, performed sacrifices and protected his people, passed (this period just) like a year.

35. On this very day an old brāhmaṇa villager bringing with him his dead son, came to the door of (the residence of) Rāma.

36-37. He uttered many sentences with words full of affection: "O son, what wicked deed had I done in my previous existence, that I am seeing you, my only son, a child, who has not even attained youth and has just lived for five years, dead?

38. O son, you have died prematurely (only) to cause me grief. Without doing the obsequial rites you have gone to Yama's residence.

39-40. (Indeed) Rāma's wicked deed is evident that death has come to you. When I die with my wife the sin of killing a child, a brāhmaṇa, and a woman will accrue to Rāma; there is no doubt about it." Rāghava listened to all that accompanied by (i.e. causing) grief.

41. Rāma said (these) words to Vasiṣṭha who was sending the brāhmaṇa back: "When this is the state (of things) what should I do today?

42. I shall sacrifice my life or fall from a mountain. How shall I get purity (i.e. feel innocent) after I have heard the brāhmaṇa's words?"

43. Nārada who was there in Vasiṣṭha's proximity, told the dejected Rāma the words he had heard in the vicinity of (i.e. from) the sages:

44-45. "O Rāma, listen (how) at the right time the child's death has taken place. O Rāma, formerly in Kṛtayuga, everywhere there was the superiority of brāhmaṇas. No non-brāhmaṇa, O Rāghava, even practised penance. All (men) then were immortal and long-lived.

46. Again in Tretāyuga brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas became superior. In Dvāparayuga their sin entered vaiśyas and śūdras.

47. Thus falsehood that was continuously resorted to, again came up (i.e. became effective). Three feet (i.e. three quarters) of unrighteousness and (only) one foot (i.e. quarter) of righteousness appeared there.

48. Then there were many casteless persons led by brāhmaṇas. Then again the second foot (i.e. quarter) of righteousness came (up).

49. In that (yuga) called Dvāpara, penance entered (i.e. went to) vaiśyas. The unrighteousness of the three yugas stood

50. O best man, then when the last yuga called Kali came, (both) unrighteousness and falsehood increased.

51-52a. In (this) Kaliyuga practice of penance will be (found) in the persons born as śūdras. O king, a śūdra, the tormentor of his enemies, and of a wicked mind, is practising a very severe penance at the border of your country. He killed the child.

52b-53. O best of kings, a king, in whose kingdom or (capital-)city, a wicked person does an unrighteous thing unfit to be done, instantly goes to hell (and stays there) till deluge.

54-55a. The king takes the fourth portion of his sin. So, O best among men, you go to that (part of) your country where you will see a wicked deed (being committed). Make an effort (to stop it).

55b-56a. O best of men, by (doing) this your religious merit and might will increase, and also (the span of) this child's life."

56b-57a. Thus addressed by Nārada, the descendant of Raghu, who was astonished, obtained incomparable joy, and said these (words) to Lakṣmaṇa:

57b-59a. "O dear Lakṣmaṇa, go to the best brāhmaṇa and console him. Get the boy's body placed in a trough containing oil. O dear one, using abundant perfumes and fragrant oils do that by which (the body of) the boy does not decay.

59b-60a. Do that by which the body of the boy, who has not done any deed of distress, would be preserved, and by which there would be no mishap or decomposition."

60b-61a. Having thus ordered Sumitrā's son Lukṣmaṇa of good marks he, of great fame, mentally thought of the Puṣpaka aeroplane and ordered it, "Come (here)".

61b-63a. Knowing the internal thought (of Rāma) that aeroplane, decorated with gold and moving according to (the occupant's) desire came near Rāma in a short time. He (i.e. the presiding deity of the aeroplane) joined the palms of his hands as a mark of humility and said: "O king, (here) I am. This servant, O you of mighty arms, stands before you."

63b-64a. Having heard, for a long time, the words (of the presiding deity) of the plane, the king saluted those great sages, and got into it.

64b-65. He, the well-composed one, leaving the two heroes Lakṣmaṇa and Bharata in the city, and taking his bow and two quivers as well as his very powerful sword, looking for (the culprit) quickly went towards the west.

66-67. Then he went to the north which was resorted to by the Himālaya (mountain). Then the king went in all parts of the eastern direction (where people followed) good practices and which was spotless like a mirror. Then the descendant of Raghu traversed the south.

68-69a. On the northern side of a mountain he saw a very big lake. In it Rāghava saw a terrible sage hanging upside down, practising very great (i.e. severe) penance.

69b-70a. Rāghava, the descendant of Kakutstha[1], approached the ascetic practising penance, and said (these) words: "O you having lustre like a god, you are lucky.

70b-71. O you of a firm resolve, in which caste does this penance prosper (i.e. to which caste do you, performing this severe panance, belong)? I am Rāma, Daśaratha's son, (who am) asking you through curiosity. Which object do you have in mind: heaven or some other world?

72-73a. O ascetic, I desire to hear (i.e. to know) why you are practising penance. Are you a brāhmaṇa? Well-being to you. Or are you an invincible kṣatriya? Or are you a vaiśya i.e. belonging to the third caste? Or are you a śūdra? Tell (me) the truth.

73b-74. Penance is full of truth (and) is always (useful) in obtaining heaven. Penance is Sāttvika and Rājasa and it (i.e. Sāttvika) is of the nature of truth. It is the cause of (i.e. leads to) helping the world, and is created by Viriñci.

75. The Raudra (i.e. terrible) penance springs from kṣatriya's lustre, and is called Rājasa. That which is (used) for the destruction of others is called Āsura.

76. He who conceals one by one the parts of his body smeared with blood, or he who practises penance to conquer the five fires[2]

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1. Kakutstha—See note on I.33.183.

2. Pañcāgni-sādhana—A form of self-mortification in which the ascetic sits with four fires burning in the four quarters around him with the sun, the fifth fire, overhead.

or (tries to) accomplish perfection or conquer death (belongs to the Āsura category).

77. This your disposition is Āsura; and I do not think you are a brāhmaṇa. If you speak the truth you will accomplish perfection; if yon tell a lie you will nol live."

78. Having heard those words of Rāma, who haa never done any harmful deed, the ascetic remained hung upside down like that (i.e. before) and said:

79. "O best king, welcome to you. O Rāghava, you are seen after a long time. O innocent one, I am your son, and you are my father.

80-82. Or this is not so; for the king is the father of all (his subjects). O king, such as you are, you deserve to be honoured. We are practising penance in your country. In it (you have) a share which is formerly produced (i.e. fixed) by the self-born. O Rāma, we are not lucky. You are lucky, O king, in whose country the ascetics desire perfection like this. O Rāghava, obtain prosperity with (i.e. as the the fruit of) my penance.

83-84. As to what you said (as to the question that you asked, viz.) 'in which caste (are you born and) are practising your penance' (I would say:) I am born in a śūdra family; and have resorted to a severe penance. O Rāma, of a good vow, I desire to have godhood with my body (i.e. I want to be a god, without casting off this body). O king, I am not telling a lie with a desire to conquer (i.e. go to) the world of gods.

85-86a. O descendant of Kakutstha, know me to be a śūdra, Śambūka, by name." When he was thus talking, Rāma, the descendant of Kakutstha, took out from the sheath, a spotless sword, and cut off his head.

86b-88a. When the Śūdra was killed, gods with Indra, led by Agni, repeatedly praised Rāma (saying), 'Well (done, well done)'; and a very fragrant shower of flowers discharged by the gods from the sky, scattered all around Rāghava.

88b. The gods, very much pleased, said these words to Rāma, the best among those who knew (the meaning of) sentence.

89-90a. "O you descendant of Raghu, O you good one, you have done this mission of the gods. O Rāma of a great vow,

take (i.e. choose) whichever boon you like. By your deed this śūdra has physically gone to heaven."

90b-91a. Hearing (these) words of the gods, Rāghava who was well-composed, and who had joined his palms in obeisance, said these words to Indra, the thousand-eyed (god):

91b-92. "If gods are pleased with me, if I deserve a (grant of) boon, if they are happy with my deed, then let this brāhmaṇa-boy come to life (again). This is the best boon desired by me from you.

93-94. Due to my fault this boy, the son of a brāhmaṇa, has met with an untimely death. He has been taken by Death to Yama's abode. Revive him, well-being to you, I should not prove to be a liar to my preceptor. I have given a promise to the brāhmaṇa: I shall bring back your son to life.

95. O gods, let this boy live by having the full span of my life, or half a portion or a quarter portion of (the span of) my life".

96. Hearing those words of Rāghava, the best gods who were pleased and were full of affection, said to the great-souled one:

97-98. "O descendant of Kakutstha, give up your anxiety; the only son of the brāhmaṇa has regained his life and is united with his relatives. O descendant of Kakutstha, the boy suddenly became united with (i.e. regained his) life, (just) at the moment when this śūdra was destroyed by you.

99-100. Obtain welfare; well-being to you; O you tormentor of your enemies, we (now) go (back). We shall see the great sage (viz. Agastya) in Agastya's hermitage". Having promised the gods with the words 'All right', the descendant of Raghu got into the Puṣpaka aeroplane decorated with gold.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

Conversation between Rāma and Agastya

Pulastya said:

1. Then the gods went by many aeroplanes. Rāma too quickly went to the penance-grove of Agastya.

2. (He thought:) 'The revered one, who had formerly come to see me in my assembly, had told me to go to him again.

3. So by the order of gods and for their work I shall go and see that great sage, honoured by gods and demons.

4. And the best one will advise me so that I shall never again be unhappy in this mortal world.

5. My father is Daśaratha and Kausalyā is my mother. I am born in the solar family. Still I am so much unhappy!

6. I had to stay in the forest with my wife and younger brother at the time (when I should have enjoyed) the kingdom. My wife also was abducted by Rāvaṇa.

7-8a. I met Sītā after having crossed the excellent ocean without anybody's help and having besieged that city (of Laṅkā) and having destroyed his (i.e. Rāvaṇa's) family. I abandoned her in front of the gods.

8b-9. They (then) told me that she was pure, so I, full of love, brought her home; but (again) forsook her on account of (an adverse) public opinion. That respectable lady is living in a forest, (while) I am living in the city.

10. I am born in the best family; I am best among the archers; I am suffering from the worst misery; (yet) my heart is not rent.

11. Surely the creator has created me with an adamantine essence. Now following the instruction of a brāhmaṇa, I wander over the surface of the earth.

12. Obeying the words of gods, I have destroyed this sinful śūdra who was practising penance. Again my life has stood still in my heart (i.e. I am very uneasy).

13. I (shall now) see the adorable sage, engaged in the well-being of this world, so that by seeing him my grief will soon come to an end.

14. As at the rise of the sun snow melts, in the same way (by seeing him) all the grief that has come to me will completely come to an end.'

15. The revered sage Agastya too, seeing the gods who had come there, and being very well pleased offered them a respectful offering and worshipped them.

16. They too, having talked to the great sage, and being delighted went to heaven with their followers.

17. When they had left, the descendant of Kakutstha (i.e. Rāma) got down from Puṣpaka and went to salute the best sage Agastya.

The king (i.e. Rāma) said:

18. O best sage, I am Daśaratha's son. I have come to salute you. (Please) look at me with a pleasing eye (i.e. favour me).

19. By seeing you my sins will be shaken off. There is no doubt (about it).

20. Saying this much and saluting the sage again and again, he (enquired after) the welfare of the servants, the beasts and his son (and said:) "After having killed the śūdra (viz. Śambūka) I have come here to see (you) the revered one."

Agastya said:

21-22. O you best among the Raghus, O you highly lustrous one, (please) accept the respectful offering meant for you. O best among the Raghus, O you who are adorable to the world, O you eternal one, welcome to you. O descendant of Kakutstha, your visit has purified me along with the sages. O you killer of enemies, due to my good luck, you have come here.

23. You are always very much respected due to your many excellent qualities. Therefore you deserve to be honoured. You have always remained in my heart.

24. The gods also proclaim that you, the killer of the śūdra, have come. You have righteously brought the brāhmaṇa's son back to life.

25. O Rāghava, (please) live with me. O you highly in-

telligent one, you will go to Ayodhyā in the Puṣpaka (next) morning.

26. O Rāghava, O gentle one, O king of kings, (please) accept this divine ornament well fashioned by Viśvakarman of a divine body and shining with its own lustre.

27. Do what is agreeable to me. It is said that great fruit accrues (to a person) when what is obtained is again given (by him).

28. You are capable of protecting the best gods including Indra. Therefore I shall duly offer (this to you). O best of men, (please) accept it.

29. Then the great warrior of mighty arms (i.e. very powerful) among the Ikṣvākus, remembering his duty, with the palms of his hands joined in obeisance, said:

30. "O revered sir, accepting a gift from you is censurable on my part. O brāhmaṇa, how can a wise kṣatriya accept a gift given by a brāhmaṇa? Please tell (i.e. explain) it to me.

31. I have sons, I am a householder and I am capable (of securing such gifts), O great sage.

32. I am not overcome with a calamity. (Then) how can I accept this gift? My wife has deceased long back: and I have not (taken to) another wife.

33-34a. Here (i.e. if I accept the gift), I shall merely commit an offence. There is no doubt about it. If a kṣatriya accepts a gift when he is reduced to a miserable condition, he does not incur sin. Manu is the authority in this matter.

34b-35. Manu has said that old parents, a virtuous wife, a young son should be taken care of (by a man) even by doing a hundred evil deeds. (So) O brāhmaṇa sage, I shall not accept the gift offered by you.

36. O you bonoured by gods, (please) do not be angry with me."

Agastya said:

37. O king, there is nothing wrong if kings accept a gift offered to them. O Rāghava, you are able to protect even the three worlds.

38. O Rāma, then protect this brāhmaṇa especially when he is also an ascetic. Therefore I shall duly give (the gift). (Please) accept it, O king.

Rāma said:

39. O brāhmaṇa, please tell me how should a wise kṣatriya accept what is offered by a brāhmaṇa.

Agastya said:

40. O Rāma, in the old Kṛtayuga, that had become one with Brahman, all the beings were without a king: (only) Indra was (the king) of gods.

41-42. Those beings went to the great lord of gods for (securing) a king. (They said to him:) "Gods have a king viz. Śatakratu (i.e. Indra), the gods of gods. O lord of the worlds, for our well-being make (someone) our king, offering worship to whom men enjoy the earth."

43. Then Brahmā, the greatest among gods, called the regents of the quarters with Indra, and said to all of them: "Bestow here a part of your lustre."

44. Then the regents of the quarters (each) gave a quarter of their lustre. Due to that Brahmā became inexhaustible (in lustre), and from (i.e. due to) him the king also became inexhaustible (in lustre).

45. Then Brahmā bestowed the portion (s) of the lustre of the regents of the quarters upon men. Due to that a king is skilled in (looking after) the welfare of these beings.

46. Due to the portion (received) from Indra, the king should order all; and on account of Varuṇa's portion (that he has in him) he nourishes all men.

47. The king directs (i.e. gives) wealth by means of the portion of Kubera (that he has in him); and the king governs his subjects with the portion of Yama that (he has) in him.

48. O best of Raghus, when such is the case, you are the lord of men due to Indra's portion (that you have in you). O lord, (please) accept the ornament to protect me.

49. Then Rāma accepted from the hand of the great-souled sage, the divine, bright ornament blazing like the sun.

50-53a. Rāghava, the killer of the heroes of enemies for a long time examined the ornament and thought again and again, and seeing that it had many bright pearls (big) like the āmalaka-fruits, and it was inlaid with gold, and was well-knit, well-divided and well-fashioned with diamonds, corals, sapphires, rubies, gomedhas[1], Lapis Lazuli and topaz, by Viśvakarman, he was pleased and again thought thus:

53b-54. 'I have never (before) seen such gems inlaid for beauty and worth the price of the earth. I have not seen them even in Bibhīṣaṇa's Laṅkā.'

55. Thinking like this mentally (i.e. in his mind), Rāghava again began to ask the sage about the acquisition of the divine (ornament):

56. "O brāhmaṇa, it is very wonderful, and not obtainable (even) to kings; how did the revered one obtain it? Wherefrom did you obtain it? Who has fashioned it?

57-58a. O you highly intelligent one, I ask you only through curiosity. If the middle portion of the palm of the hand is illuminated when the gem is put on the palm, then one should know it to be of the lowest (quality), and it is condemned in all treatises.

58b-59. O best of sages, that which illumines the directions, is mediocre. That is said to be the best having three rays shooting up. These are said to be of the best kind by the sages.

60. The revered one is a treasure of many divine marvels." When the descendant of Kakutstha was speaking like this, the sage said (these) words:

Agastya said:

61. O Rāma, listen to the great ancient account of what formerly took place in Tretāyuga, when Dvāpara was about to set in, and what I saw in a forest.

62-63a. O descendant of Raghu, O you of mighty arms, know (i.e. listen to) the great wonder. Formerly in Tretā-yuga there was a very extensive forest, measuring a hundred yojanas on all sides, and without beasts and tigers.

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1. Gomedha—Same as gomeda, for which see note on I.34.391.

63b-64a. With a desire to practise excellent penance in that manless forest I went to the forest to enter it, O gentle one.

64b-65a. The centre of the forest was always full of roots and fruits, vegetables of various shapes, and good groves of many forms.

65b-67a. In the middle of the forest I saw a wonder, viz. a very beautiful lake five yojanas in length, abounding in swans, ducks and adorned with ruddy geese, crowded with large tortoises and full of the rows of cranes.

67b-68. Formerly I had gone near the lake to practise penance. O best of men, having gone near the auspicious region free from all kinds of violence, I stayed there for one summer night.

69-70a. Having again got up in the morning, I went to that lake; and not far from the lake I saw a dead body not at all touched by decrepitude and lying with great loveliness.

70b-73a. O Rāghava, (I stood) for a while thinking about it: 'There is no being on the bank of this lake; or who is (i.e. can be) this excellent god? Or can this be (the body of) a sage or a king? But where can there be such a sage or a king (near about)? Or how can there be the possibility (of the dead body being that) of a prince here? If the person died the previous day or night or in the morning, I must certainly know the vital part played by the lake (in bringing about the death).'

73b-74. O best of the Raghus, while I thus stood thinking, in a short while I saw before me a very big divine aeroplane looking wonderful, to which swans were yoked and which had the speed of mind.

75. In the aeroplane a thousand celestial nymphs and an equal number of Gandharvas were amusing an excellent man.

76-77a. (Some) were singing divine songs, others were playing on the musical instruments. O you perpetuator of Raghu's family, I saw a man getting down from the aeroplane and eating, after having bathed, the flesh of (that) dead body.

77b-78a. Then having eaten a very large (quantity) of the flesh to the satisfaction of his desire, he quickly got down into the lake and then again went up to heaven.

78b-79. (I said to) him who resembled a god, and who was endowed with great loveliness: "O you resident of heaven, O you

magnanimous one, I (would like to) ask you: "How is it that your food is (so) condemnable while your position is (so) excellent?

80. If it is not a secret, you may (please) tell it to me today. I have a desire to hear what important words they are (i.e. what important things you have to say).

81. Who are you? (Please) speak (and remove) my doubt. O gentle one, why do you eat this censured food? Where do you stay?

82. Whose lordly condition is created as (i.e. transformed into) a dead body (i.e. who was the mighty person that is transformed into a dead body)? How is it that (you are enjoying) condemned food? I desire to hear the truth."

83. Hearing (these) words of (i.e. uttered by) me, O Rāma, best among the good, the resident of heaven, replied with the palms of his hands joined in obeisance, O descendant of Raghu:

84. "Today hear, how this, caused by pleasure and pain, happened in my case. O brāhmaṇa, desire is difficult to be resisted; hear (the reply to) what you ask.

85. Formerly there was a king of the Vidarbha country. He, of great fame, was my father known in the three worlds as Vāsudeva and was religious.

86. O brāhmaṇa, he had sons born from two wives. I (the elder one) was known as Śveta, and the younger one was Suratha.

87. When the father expired, the citizens consecrated me (as the king). There I ruled and was well-settled in righteousness.

88. As I was ruling over the kingdom and protecting my subjects in this way, many thousand years passed.

89. O best of brāhmaṇas, that I (i.e. I who lived like that), due to indifference to the world, as a result of some cause, thought of dying and went to the penance-grove.

90. That I (i.e. who thought...etc.) entered this very charming forest, free from birds, (and came) near this lake only.

91-92. Having placed Suratha on the throne as the king, I having come to this lake, practised a very severe penance. Having

practised penance for ten thousand years in the great forest, I reached an auspicious residence, viz. the healthy world of Brahmā.

93. O best of brāhmaṇas, hunger and thirst tormented me even when I was in heaven; and my organs of sense were very much afflicted.

94-95. Then I said to the grandsire, the greatest in the three worlds: 'O revered sir, this heaven is free from hunger and thirst. Of what deed (of mine) is this the result that I am having (i.e. am oppressed by) hunger and thirst? O respectable grandsire, tell me what food I should eat.'

96. Then, O great sage, the grandsire having thought for a long time said (these) words to me: 'You have no other food than that produced from your own body.

97. You always eat your own flesh. While you were practising excellent penance you have nourished your body.

98-99. O Śveta, note that nothing that is not given springs up (i.e. the fruit of what is given only is obtained by human beings) on the earth. Formerly you never even gave anything as alms to a (human) being pressing (you i.e. entreating you) for it; in your house also you never gave anything to a guest (even) through a mistake (or) ignorance. Therefore hunger and thirst are oppressing you now even though you are staying in heaven.

100. O best king, you eat your own body well-nourished with (different kinds of) food. That would give you satisfaction.'

101-102. Thus addressed (by Brahmā), I said to god Brahmā: 'O lord, when I would have eaten my body, I would not have any food, except boiled rice, that would satiate my hunger. I shall eat my body till it is exhausted. Nothing agreeable comes to me.'

103. Then Brahmā again said to me: 'I have made your body inexhaustible. O Śveta, day by day your dead body (of the previous existence) will be (more and more) fat.

104-105. O king, till hundred years are over, eat your own flesh. When the revered Agastya, of great penance and very inaccessible comes to the Śvetāraṇya, you will be free from the calamity; for he is able to protect (i.e. free) gods and demons including even Indra.

106. Then what about this censurable food of you (i.e. he will easily make you get rid of this censurable food)? That great-souled one (i.e. Agastya) has well accomplished a great mission of the gods.

107. Having rendered the ocean waterless (i.e. having emptied the ocean) he destroyed the demons. He also stopped Vindhya who was growing due to his hatred for the Sun.

108. And he also made this dangling earth settled (i.e. steady) with heaviness. The southern direction had gone to the heaven, and the three worlds were in distress.

109-110. Having gone to him with the gods I sent him to the southern direction. O magnanimous one, I said, make the earth well-poised with heaviness (i.e. by making it heavy). O lord of kings, the sage remaining (there) made the entire earth even. It is seen like that even now.'

111. That I (i.e. I who was told like that) having heard the words of the revered lord of gods, am eating this condemnable food, this excellent body of mine.

112. Today a hundred years have completed (since) I (have been eating) this censurable food. O brāhmaṇa, it is not getting exhausted, and I am fully satisfied.

113. I, who am tormented by this calamity, am thinking about the sage day and night. 'When will that sage appear before me in (this) forest?'

114-115a. Thinking thus I have passed a hundred years. O brāhmaṇa, that Agastya (alone) will certainly be my refuge. No other brāhmaṇa than the pitcher-born (Agastya) will be my refuge."

115b-116. O Rāma, hearing these words (of Śveta), and seeing censurable food, I, who was full of great compassion, thought: 'I shall make that king, going to heaven, an enjoyer of nectar and shall put an end to his abominable food'.

117. And I said to him: "What will Agastya do? I shall destroy this censurable food of yours, O you highly intelligent one.

118-119. Ask your mind for the desired object; (for) the mind is highly agreeable." Then that resident of heaven said to

me: "O sage, how can I falsify the the words of Brahmā. None else but the pitcher-born son of Maitrā-Varuṇa will save me.

120-121a. O brāhmaṇa, even without being asked by me Brahmā has told me thus." I said to that Śveta, who was speaking thus: "Through your good luck, you have seen me, who have come here. There is no doubt about it (i.e. about your good luck)."

121b-122a. Then that resident of heaven, having recognised me, fell (i.e. prostrated himself) on the earth like a staff. Raising him I then said to him: "What can I do for you ?"

The king said:

122b-123a. O brāhmaṇa, today protect me from this wicked deed of eating this abominable food, so that by what you will do I shall have inexhaustible heaven (i.e. live in heaven eternally).

123b-124. Then the kiṇg, adorable to the world, gave me (this) gift. "You may (please) favour me. (Please) accept this gift. O best and gentle brāhmaṇa, this ornament (I am giving you) for my protection.

125-127a. O brāhmaṇa-sage, accept it. Please favour me. O brāhmaṇa, I offer you these cows, this gold, wealth with garments, articles of food and this ornament satisfying all desires and also (giving) all pleasures. O brāhmaṇa sage, please favour and protect me."

Agastya said:

127b-128a. O descendant of Raghu, having heard the words of the resident of heaven full of pain and pleasure, I made up my mind to save him and not through greed.

128b-130a. When I accepted the ornament, and when it was in my hand, the former human body of the king was no more. When the body was destroyed, the royal sage, instructed by me, went in the aeroplane to heaven with great joy.

130b-131. He, comparable to Śakra, gave this auspicious ornament to me. For that reason, O Kākutstha, he, of wonderful deeds, gave me the ornament. Then Śveta, the king of Vidarbha became free from sins.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

Rāma's Abstaining from the Performance of Rājasūya

Pulastya said:

1. The descendant of Raghu, having heard those most wonderful words, asked Agastya again, prompted by the importance of the ornament and through amazement.

Rāma said:

2. (Tell me) O revered sir, (about) the fearful forest where the Vidarbha-king Śveta practised penance. Tell me how the wonderful thing took place there.

3. Tell me how, (when) the fearful forest was desolate and void of beasts the king entered it to practise penance, O great sage.

4. Tell me how it was manless for a hundred yojanas around and how and on what business you entered it.

Agastya said:

5. Formerly in Kṛtayuga there lived Manu, the king who wielded the rod (as a symbol of judicial authority and punishment). His son was Ikṣvāku by name, whose lustre was unlimited.

6. (Manu) installed him, the elder son, on the throne on (i.e. of) the earth with the consent (of all) and said to him: "Be the king of royal families on the earth."

7. O Rāghava, the son promised to the father to do so. Then being highly pleased, he again said to him:

8. "I am pleased with your very generous deeds. There is no doubt about it. Protect the subjects with the rod. The rod (should not be used) without (proper) reason.

9. That rod (i.e. punishment), which is inflicted upon the culprits by men here (i.e. in this world), being duly freed (from any blemish) takes the king to heaven.

10. Therefore, O (my) son, O you of mighty arms, be

scrupulous (about using) the rod. If you do so, then you will have great religious merit in this world."

11. Thus having very much advised his son with perfect concentration and being happy, Manu went to the world of Brahmā.

12. He (i.e. Ikṣvāku) became anxious (with the thought): 'How shall I generate sons?' As a result of various deeds he became united with (i.e. he had) many sons.

13. He gratified his dead ancestors with (i.e. by giving birth to) (his) sons resembling sons of gods. Best among them was the youngest.

14-15a. He was brave, had mastered the lores and was important as he was honoured by people. Foreseeing that (for committing a grave sin) the rod in future will fall on his person (i.e. on him), the intelligent father named him Daṇḍa.

15b-16. Seeing that terrible blemish of the son, O Rāghava, the lord gave him kingdom between Vindhya and Nīla (mountains). That Daṇḍa became the king there on the beautiful top of the mountain.

17. Similarly he fashioned a matchless city for his residence; and he himself named the city Madhumatta.

18-19a. Thus endowed with (i.e. possessing) that region the brave (Daṇḍa) lived there. Thus the king with (the help of) his priests governed that kingdom, full of subjects that were very much pleased, as the king of gods (i.e. Indra) ruled in heaven.

19b-20a. O descendant of Kakutstha, the righteous-minded Daṇḍa governed the kingdom, free from any source of vexation for many groups of myriads of years.

20b-21a. Some time during the charming month of Caitra, the king approached the beautiful hermitage of Śukra.

21b-23. There he saw Śukra's daughter of matchless beauty on the earth, who was wandering in the forest. Seeing her tall and stout, being in (the prime of) youth, with moon-like face, beautiful, of a fine nose, charming in all limbs, with stout and raised breasts, slim in the waist and big (in size), he was pleased.

24. Seeing her who had put on (only) one garment, who was (all) alone, and who was in her first (i.e. prime) youth, he naturally became tormented by love.

25-26. Approaching the well-reposed unmarried girl he said (these) words to her: "O you lady of beautiful buttocks (i.e. O you beautiful lady), wherefrom do you come? Whose daughter are you, O beautiful lady? I am tormented by love, therefore I am asking (you), O you beautiful lady. O charming lady, merely on seeing you, my heart is snatched by you.

27. Know me to be dead if I do not get to enjoy this your beautiful face which attracts the hearts of sages.

28. My life is taken away by you; O beautiful lady, revive me. O you charming lady, I am your servant. Accept me who am your devotee."

29. When the king, intoxicated by the passion of love, was thus talking, the daughter of Śukra politely spoke to him:

30. "Know me to be the daughter of Bhārgava, i.e. Śukra of pious deeds. (I am) Arajā by name and the eldest daughter of (Śukra) living in the hermitage.

31. O best king, my father is Śukra, and you are the disciple of that great-souled one. So, O king's son, I am your spiritual sister.

32. O king, please do not utter such words. You should (in fact) protect me from other very wicked men.

33-34. My father is irascible and (when) angered will reduce you to ashes. Or (if) in view of the customary laws laid down for a king you (desire) to have union with me per force, ask my father through a prescribed course of conduct. O best king, request my father of a great lustre.

35. Otherwise you will certainly meet with a great terrible grief. When my father is angry he would burn (even) the three worlds."

36. Hearing these inauspicious and very fearful and terrible words from (i.e. of) her, Daṇḍa, who was intoxicated by passion, said again with his head hung down:

37-38. "O you beautiful lady, favour me who am mad with lust. O you beautiful lady, you have arrested my life; it will (now) perish. Let there be hostility or let me be even killed very (mercilessly) after I obtain you. O you timid one, resort to me—your devotee. I have great attachment for you."

39-40. Speaking thus, the king forcibly seized the girl with one hand, and snatched off her garments with the other (hand).

He pressed her body with his body and put his mouth into hers (i.e. kissed her) and started copulating freely with her who was trembling (with fear).

41. Having wrought that very dreadful and fearful mischief, Daṇḍa quickly went to his city like an intoxicated elephant.

42. That daughter of Bhārgava (i.e. Arajā), helpless, dejected and weeping, waited, (there) not far away from the hermitage, for her father, honoured by gods.

43. That royal sage of great lustre, oppressed with hunger, and surrounded by his disciples, returned, after having bathed, to his hermitage.

44. He saw the helpless Arajā with an overflow of menstrual discharge (i.e. bleeding profusely) resembling the subjugated moonlight in union with the clouds.

45. The great-souled one, being oppressed with hunger, was very much angry. Burning the three worlds as it were (with his anger) he said to his disciples:

46-47. "See the terrible calamity, resembling the blazing flame of fire, of (i.e. brought about by) the perverse and short-sighted Daṇḍa, due to which (calamity), he along with his followers, will meet with a disaster. There is no doubt about it. He has here touched the flame of a blazing fire.

48. Since the wicked-minded one committed such a terrible sin, therefore he will get the worst shower of dust.

49. The wicked king, who has done a sinful deed, will, along with his country (-men) and servants, and army and vehicles, meet with destruction.

50. May Indra agitate with great shower of dust (i.e. dust-storm) the wicked king's region, upto a range of hundred yojanas on all sides.

51. All mobile and immobile beings that are here (i.e. in his country) will soon perish due to the shower of dust (i.e. the dust-storm).

52. For seven nights there will be an unexpected shower (i.e. storm) of dust in (the area over which) Daṇḍa's kingdom—including forests and hermitages—extends."

53. Bhārgava, who was inflamed with anger, saying these

words to the inmates of the hermitage, told them to stay at the end of (i.e. outside) the country.

54. When Uśanas said (this much), the people living in the hermitage quickly made their abode outside that region.

55-56. Having spoken these words to the sages, he spoke these words to Arajā: "O you of very wicked mind, being well-composed live in here. This hermitage, shining charmingly, extends supto a hundred yojanas. O Arajā, remain here without menstrual discharge for a period of one hundred years."

57. Hearing the order of the brāhmaṇa-sage, Bhārgavī, being extremely grieved said to Bhārgava, her father: "All right."

58. Saying so Bhārgava shifted his residence to somewhere else. Within a week the region was reduced to ashes as was said by (the sage), the expounder of the Vedas.

59-60. O kind Rāma, therefore, Daṇḍa's region of the Vindhya mountain was cursed by Uśanas (i.e. Bhārgava) when that offence was committed (by Daṇḍa). Since then (that region) is called Daṇḍakāraṇya, O descendant of Kakutstha. O Rāghava, I have told you all this that you ask (i.e. have asked) me.

61-62. O hero, the time for offering the evening prayer is passing away. O best among men, O Rāma, these great sages, with their pitchers full (of water), are, after offering libations of water, worshipping the Sun, everywhere; all the sages (have offered prayers) with the eulogies composed by Brahmā etc. and learnt by heart by them.

63a. O Rāma, the Sun has set. Go and sip water.

63b-64a. Obeying the words of the sage, Rāma, the descendant of Raghu, proceeded to that auspicious lake to offer his evening prayer.

64b-66. A vulture and an owl had been living for years together, in the charming forest-region, adorned with trees rendered auspicious by a river, having, a big mountain, adorned with hundreds of cuckoos, having parks (resounding with) the cries of various birds, full of many beasts, crowded with lions and tigers, and full of many brāhmaṇas.

67. The vulture of a wicked resolution, fought with the owl claiming the owl's residence to be his (vulture's) own.

68. (They decided:) Lotus-eyed Rāma is the king of all the world. We shall quickly approach him and (seek his verdict as) to whom this residence belongs.

69-70. The angry and intolerant vulture and owl approached (Rāma). Having quickly approached Rāma, the two, with their minds agitated with dissension, and hating each other, touched Rāma's feet. Seeing the best of the descendants of Raghu the vulture said (these) words:

71. "In may opinion you are the best among gods and demons. You, who are highly intelligent, are superior to Bṛhaspati and Śukra (in intelligence).

72. You know the higher and lower among the beings and are like another Indra in the mortal world. Like the Sun you are difficult to look at. In dignity you are like Himālaya.

73. In gravity you are the ocean. You are Yama, the regent of the quarter. In forgiveness you are like the earth, in quickness you resemble the wind.

74. You are the lord, endowed with everything; O Rāghava, you are of the nature of Viṣṇu. You are intolerant, difficult to conquer, victorious and are the master of the science of the use of all missiles.

75-77a. O best among men, O lord of gods, (please) listen to my request. O lord, I have, with the might of my arms, formerly constructed my residence. The owl snatches it off. O king, (it is too much when he does so) especially in your presence. O king, he disobeys your order. Rāma, inflict capital punishment on him."

77b. When the vulture said like this, the owl said (these) words:

78-79. "O lord, O king, (please) listen with concentration to my request. O Rāma, the king is born (with portions) from the Moon (Soma), Śakra, the Sun, Kubera and also Yama. There is little in him that is human; and you are said to be full of all gods and are devoted to Nārāyaṇa.

80. O king, your being Soma (i.e. your having the portion of Soma in you) consists in that after a proper thought is given to what should be done you protect the beings from miseries; for you dispel darkness (i.e. ignorance).

81. In the event of an offence, you, due to the rod (i.e. punishment) remove the fear of the subjects from the wicked and since you are a donor, a striker and a protector, therefore you are Indra.

82. You are unassailable among all beings. You are said to be fire on account of your lustre. O Rāma, you are Bhāskara (i.e. the Sun) as you repeatedly torment the wicked.

83. You are evidently comparable to the lord of wealth (i.e. Kubera) or (rather) you are superior to Kubera. O you best of kings, your wife Śrī (i.e. Lakṣmī) always rests in your mind.

84-85. On account of your having Kubera's treasure, you are Kubera; you are equal to (i.e. look equally upon) the immobile and the mobile beings; and O Rāghava, you look (equally) on your enemy as well as your friend. You always rule according to the law, by following (i.e. by paying regard to) usage and methods.

86. Death, O Rāma, is said (to come) to him, with whom you are angry; therefore, O king, your praise is sung and you are known as Yama.

87. O best king, your manly disposition is solely devoted to compassion. You are full of pity for all.

88. The king is the strength of the weak and the helpless. He is the sight of those who have no eyes; he is the intellect of those who have no thoughts.

89. You are even our lord; (please) listen, O you righteous one. You should think as do the birds.

90. You should appoint him, who is our protector, as the lord of birds. O lord, when you are nearby, let us not be without a lord.

91. Formerly you yourself have created the aggregate of living beings of four kinds. O king, this vulture, who has entered (i.e. taken unlawful possession of) my residence, troubles me.

92a. O best of men, you rule among gods and human beings."

92b-93. Having heard this Rāma called his ministers—Viṣṭi, Jayanta, Vijaya, Siddhārtha, Rāṣṭravardhana, Aśoka, Dharmapāla, Sumantra and Mahābala.

94-95a. These were the ministers of Rāma and also King

Daśaratha. They were wise, magnanimous, and were well-versed in all sciences; and also they were very calm, were of a high descent, and were proficient in politics and (in giving) counsel.

95b-97a. Having called them and having got down from Puṣpaka, the best of the Raghus asked the vulture and the owl who were quarreling: "O vulture, tell me in truth for how many years you have made (i.e. have been living in) that residence? I am curious to know it."

97b-98. Hearing this, the vulture spoke to Rāma, who remained there: "O Rāma, my house has stood since the time this earth was filled with lofty men having many arms."

99. The owl said to Rāma: "This residence belongs to me O king, since the time the earth was adorned with trees."

100-101a. Hearing this, Rāma spoke to the members of the assembly: "That is no assembly where old men are not present; they are not old, who do not tell about moral virtue; that is not moral virtue which has no (element of) truth; that is not truth which approaches deceit.

101b-102a. All those members of the assembly who, after having gone to (i.e. attended) the assembly, sit silent, brooding (on something else) and do not speak out what is proper for the occasion, are liars.

102b-103. A thousand nooses of Varuṇa bind that man who does not say wise things through passion, through anger through fear. One noose out of those (nooses) gets untied after one year is over.

104a. Therefore, one who knows the truth should speak it properly."

104b. Hearing this the ministers then said to Rāma:

105. "O you highly intelligent one, the owl seems to be the proper (owner of the residence), and not the vulture. O great king, you are the authority, for the king is the greatest resort.

106-107a. All the subjects have the king as their foundation. He is the eternal virtue. Those men whom the king rules, do not suffer. Such best men are spared by Yama."

107b. Hearing the words of his ministers, Rāma said:

108-109. "(Please) listen to the old account which has been

narrated (often) and which I shall (now) tell you. At that time (i.e. in the beginning) all these three worlds with the heaven, the moon, the sun, the stars, the mountains, the earth, the trees, the ocean, the mobile and the immobile, were one as though it were one sky.

110-111. The reborn (?) entered, with Lakṣmī, the belly of Viṣṇu. Having arrested her the great-lustred and self-possessed one, having entered the ocean, slept there for many hundred years. When Viṣṇu had (thus) slept, Brahmā entered his belly.

112. Knowing him to be multi-streamed, the great one possessed of superhuman powers entered him. From the navel of Viṣṇu arose a lotus decorated with gold.

113-114. Then the great lord Brahmā possessed of superhuman power having come out of (Viṣṇu's belly), desiring to create the earth, the wind, mountains and trees, the one of great penance created (all these) and all beings in between them, (and also) human beings, creeping animals, viviparous animals, and egg-born animals.

115-116. From his body sprang up Kaiṭabha with Madhu. The two very powerful and fearful demons, who had obtained boons, seeing the creator, got angry, and O king, they ran to the self-born one to eat him.

117-118. Seeing them all the beings got out separately (i.e. one by one). Being eulogised by Brahmā, Viṣṇu killed Madhu and Kaiṭabha, and for the stability of the earth, augmented it with their marrow (*meda*). The earth, having the odour of (their) marrow, came to be called Medinī since then.

119. Therefore the vulture is a liar; the sinner is claiming other's residence as his own. The wicked one must be punished. There is no doubt about it."

120. Then an unembodied voice spoke from the sky: "O Rāma, do not kill the vulture who was burnt by the power of penance.

121-122. O lord of men, this lord of beings was formerly burnt by Gautama. His name is Brahmadatta. He, a brave one, of a true vow and pure, having gone to the house of the brāhmaṇa-sage, begged him for food. O best king, he enjoyed it for a full hundred years.

123-124. O you of great lustre, having offered Brahmadatta water for washing his feet and respectful offering he himself made (arrangements) for his meal. Having entered the house of the great-souled one for food, he, seeing a lady withfull (i.e. plump) breasts, touched them with his hand.

125. Then the angry sage gave a very cruel curse: O you fool, be a vulture.

126-128a. Then the king said to the sage: "O glorious one, favour me (so that) there will be freedom from curse (i.e. I shall be free from your curse)." O king, the kind (sage) having heard his words, again said (to him): "In Raghu's family, Rāma of great fame and having eyes like lotuses will be born as the (most) illustrious among the Ikṣvākus. Seen by him, you will be free from sins, O best among men."

128b-129. Hearing that Rāma saw him and he became a king. Then quickly giving up his vulture-form, and besmeared with divine sandal, he, a man of divine form, said to that king:

130-131 "O Rāghava, well-versed in piety, well (done). Due to your favour I have been freed from a terrible hell. You have made me free from sins. I have given up the vulture-form." Then the king in a human form said to the owl: "O you owl, conversant with piety, enter your own house.

132-134. After having offered evening prayers I shall go to the place where that sage (Agastya) is." Then having sipped water, and offered the evening prayers, Rāma entered the hermitage of the pitcher-born, great-souled (sage). Agastya respectfully brought for his meal excellent fruits and roots and tasty vegetables. That best among men (i.e. Rāma) ate that food resembling nectar.

135-136. Pleased and fully satisfied he lived (there) that night. Getting up at day-break, and having performed the daily rites, the best of the Raghus went to the sage (to get his leave) to go, O you subduer of enemies. Having saluted the great sage born from a pitcher, Rāma said to him:

137-138a. "O brāhmaṇa, I take my leave of you. I am leaving. (Please) allow me (to go). O great sage, by seeing you I am blessed; I am favoured (by you). Luckily due to you I shall have my soul purified."

138b-139a. When Rāma was speaking thus the sage, the treasure of penance, being very much pleased and with tears in his eyes, said to him of a wonderful appearance:

139b-140a. "O Rāma these auspicious words uttered by you are extremely wonderful. What you said, O descendant of Raghu, will purify all beings.

140b-142. O Rāma, those who look at you even for a short while with friendly eyes are purified by eulogies: so say the gods; and those beings on the earth, who look at you with fearful eyes are instantly killed by Brahmā's rod (of chastisement) and go to hell. O best of Raghus, you are like this. You are the purifier of all human beings.

143-145a. O Rāghava, those who describe you (i.e. your merits) will attain perfect success. Go safely, without any fear from anywhere, along the path free from any danger. Govern your kingdom righteously. You are the refuge of (all) the worlds." Thus addressed by the sage, the king (i.e. Rāma), with the palms of his hands joined in obeisance, saluted Agastya, the best sage.

145b-146a. Having saluted the best sage and (others) superior in penance, he, unbewildered, got into the Puṣpaka, decorated with gold.

146b-148a. The groups of sages on all sides honoured him, who was leaving, with blessings as gods honour Indra. When it was half a day (after having left Agastya's hermitage i.e. after travelling for half a day), Rāma who knew everything, reached Ayodhyā and went to his private chamber on foot.

148b-149a. Then having dismissed the charming, Puṣpaka, taken (anywhere) at will, the king, the descendant of Kakutstha, having come out of the private chamber, said these words to the door-keepers:

149b-150a. "Go quickly to Lakṣmaṇa and Bharata. Tell them about my arrival, and bring them (here); do not delay."

150b-151. The door-keepers, having heard (these) words of Rāma, of unimpaired deeds, went to the two youths, and having invited them, reported to Rāghava. The door-keepers had brought the two youths as per Rāma's order.

152. Rāma, seeing beloved Bharata and Lakṣmaṇa, who

had come (there) embraced them and said these words to them:

153. "I have properly carried out the excellent mission of the brāhmaṇa. O descendants of Raghu, hereafter I wish to do (something) which is the cause of (i.e. which would lead to) religious merit.

154. With you who are my (very) souls I desire to perform the excellent Rājasūya sacrifice in (i.e. by) which eternal merit (is obtained).

155-156. Formerly, Brahmā, the creator, living at Puṣkara, performed three hundred and sixty sacrifices. Soma, the knower of piety, having performed the Rājasūya sacrifices, obtained an excellent famous position in all the worlds.

157. Mitra, the destroyer of enemies, having performed the Rājasūya at a very auspicious time, became Varuṇa.

158a. Terefore, you two, having given a thought to this act, tell me (your opinion) about it."

Bharata said:

158b-160. O Righteous one, you are the highest Dharma. All the earth is supported by you, O you of mighty arms. O you of unlimited valour, (your)fame is great. All the kings look up to you as the great-souled gods look up to the Creator. O lord of the world, similarly we also (look up to you). O you highly intelligent one, O king, the subjects also look upon you as their father.

161-162a. O Rāghava, here, on this earth, you have beeome the shelter of beings. You who are like this (i.e. as described), O tormentor of enemies, (should) not perform such a sacrifice; since due to it the destruction of all the beings on the earth appears (imminent).

162b-164a. O best of kings, O lord of men, it is heard that in the Tārakāmaya war a great battle took place between Soma and the Stars. Soma bad taken away, through lust, Tārā, the wife of Bṛhaspati. Then a great battle took place, which destroyed gods and demons.

164b-166a. O best king, when the sacrifice performed by Varuṇa was over, all the aquatic animals like the fish and the tortoises perished. O Rāghava, at the end of the Rājasūya

sacrifice performed by Hariścandra, a great and terrible battle, Āḍībaka[1], took place which destroyed the entire world.

166b-167a. All the beings that were in the earth turned into animals walking horizontally. It is heard that (even) divine kings perished in the Rājasūya sacrifice.

167b-168a. O you best among men, O king, such as you are, having carefully thought about the well-being of beings, (please) practise auspicious and complete piety.

168b-169. Having heard Bharata's words, Rāma respectfully said; "O you knower of Dharma, O you killer of enemies, I am pleased with these words (uttered) by you. O you who are devoted to righteousness, I have taken away my mind (i.e. have refrained) from (performing) the Rājasūya sacrifice.

170-171. I shall practise complete virtue and will install the (image of) Vāmana at Kānyakubja. O great hero, that fame of mine (i.e. my fame due to that will) have gone to heaven, as Gaṅgā (bacame famous) due to Bhagīratha. There is no doubt about it.

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

The Installation of the Image of Vāmana

Bhīṣma said:

1. O brāhmaṇa-sage, how did Rāma install (the image of) Vāmana at Kānyakubja? Where did he get him (i.e. the image)? Tell me (all this) in detail.

2. O revered one, similarly the sweet words with which you described Rāma, gave pleasure to my ears.

3-4a. People look at Rāma with love and affection. Rāma, who knows virtue, who is grateful, who is firm in mind and who is well-composed, rules over the entire world righteously.

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1. Āḍibaka—According to Monier-Williams a combat fought by the birds Āḍi and Baea (into which Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra had been transformed respectively).

4b-5. When he is ruling the kingdom, trees are abundant and full of juice and satisfy all desires; there are various garments (easily available); the earth has (on it) exuberant growth (of corn etc.); great-souled men have no rivals.

6. He has done a (good) deed for gods, since he easily destroyed Rāvaṇa, who was a nuisance to the world, along with his sons and ministers.

7. O best brāhmaṇa, he thought of practising full virtue (i.e. practising virtue fully). O sage, I desire to hear his full life.

Pulastya spoke:

8. O king, listen with concentration to what Rāma did after he established himself on the path of virtue.

9-13a. He remembered that lord of demons (viz. Bibhīṣaṇa): 'How will the demon viz. Bibhīṣaṇa, well-established in Laṅkā, be governing (his kingdom)? Hostility with gods is a sign of destruction. I have given him that kingdom (lasting) till the time of the moon and the sun (i.e. as long as the moon and the sun shine in the sky). If he does not perish, I shall have eternal and stable fame. Here (i.e. in the world) Rāvaṇa practised penance for his own destruction. That most sinful (demon) has now been destroyed as a mission of gods. Therefore now I should myself go and look for Bibhīṣaṇa. I should advise him what is good for him so that he would remain (there) permanently'.

13b-14a. When Rāma of unlimited lustre was thinking[1] like this, Bharata came (there). Seeing Rāma he said this (i.e. these words):

14b-15a. "O lord, O best among men, what are you thinking about? If it is not a secret about your mission for gods, or about a deed on the earth or about your own undertaking, then tell (it to) me."

15b-20a. Rāghava said (these) words to Bharata who was speaking thus and standing there and contemplating: "There is nothing that is secret for you (i.e. I hide nothing from you).

1. Cintayataḥ—see 'Sasmāra' in 9 (a) above.

You are my external life; so also is Lakṣmaṇa of great fame. There is nothing that I have which should not be known by you (two). Take this to be the truth. This is my great anxiety as to how Bibhīṣaṇa, for whose well-being I destroyed Rāvaṇa, behaves with gods. Therefore I shall go to Laṅkā where that Bibhīṣaṇa resides. Having seen that city and having told the demon what ought to be done, and also having seen the entire earth and Sugrīva, the lord of monkeys, as well as having seen Śatrughna, the great king and my brothers' sons on all sides (I shall come back)."

20b-21a. When the descendant of Kakutstha (i.e. Rāma) was speaking like this, Bharata who was standing in front of him, said (these) words to Rāghava: "I shall accompany you".

21b. "O you of mighty arms, let it be so. Let Lakṣmaṇa stay here."

22. Speaking like this to Bharata, Rāma said to Lakṣmaṇa (who was to remain) in the city: "O brave one, till we two come back you have to protect (the subjects)."

23. Having thus instructed Lakṣmaṇa, and having thought of the Puṣpaka, he, who enhanced the joy of Kausalyā, got into the plane.

24-26a. Puṣpaka then reached that region from where it was the Gāndhāra country (from where the Gāndhāra country started). Having seen Bharata's sons, and having observed the behaviour of the world they went to the eastern direction where (there were) the two sons of Lakṣmaṇa. The two descendants of Raghu (viz. Rāma and Bharata), having stayed in those cities for six nights went in the plane towards the southern direction.

26b-27. Having paid homage to Prayāga, the place of the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, resorted to by sages, and having paid obeisance to Bharadvāja, the two went to Atri's hermitage. Having conversed with the sages there, they went to Janasthāna.

Rāma said:

28. Formerly the wicked Rāvaṇa kidnapped here, Sītā, after having killed the vulture Jatāyus, who was the friend of our father.

29. Here we had a great fight with that vile, accursed Kabandha. Sītā remained in Rāvaṇa's house.

30-31a. "On the excellent mountain Ṛṣyamūka lives a monkey named Sugrīva. He will help you. With your younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) go to Pampā. Having reached the lake Pampā go to the female ascetic Śabarī."

31b. Rāma who was thus told, was sad and had no hope for life.

32-33a. "O hero, this is that pond of lotuses at (i.e. by the side of) which Lakṣmaṇa said to me: 'O best among men, O destroyer of enemies, do not grieve. When I am your obedient servant you will (re)gain Sītā.'

33b. Here I spent the months of the rainy season like a hundred years.

34-35. O you tormentor of the enemies, here only I killed Vālin for Sugrīva. O hero, this Kiṣkindhā, maintained by Vālin, where that virtuous lord of the monkeys, viz. Sugrīva, lives for a hundred years with the monkeys, is seen (now)."

36-37a. Then the two heroes, Bharata and Rāma, just went into the city. Seeing the two brothers that had arrived (there, Sugrīva) having saluted them, said these words:

37b. "O brave ones, where are you proceeding? What mission are you undertaking?"

38-42. Making them seated (i.e. offering them seats) he made a respectful offering to them. When thus the most righteous descendant of Raghu sat there in the court, Aṅgada, Hanūmān, Nala, Nīla and Pāṭala, and also Gaja, Gavākṣa, Gavaya and the very famous Panasa, the priests and ministers, astrologer Dadhivakraka, and Nīla, Śatabali, Mainda, Dvivida, Gandhamādana, Vīrabāhu, Subāhu, Vīrasena, Vināyaka, Kumuda—lustrous like the sun, Suṣeṇa—the chief of the herd of monkeys, Ṛṣabha, Vinata and Gava of a terrible valour, and also the king of the bears, Dhūmra came there with their armies.

43-44a. All the inmates of the harem, also Rumā, Tārā, similarly (ladies in) Aṅgada's harem and other female attendants having incomparable joy, said: "Fine, fine".

44b-45. The magnanimous monkeys with Sugrīva, also the very fortunate female monkeys like Tārā, having seen Rāma, with throats (choked) with tears, saluted and said to him:

46-47. "O lord, where is that respectable lady whom you had, after having totally vanquished Rāvaṇa, got purified in fire before my father and the lord of Umā (i.e. Śiva), and whom you had brought to this city? I am not seeing her before you. O you descendant of Raghu, you do not look charming without her.

48-49a. Nor does that chaste lady (look charming) without you. Where indeed is that Jānakī (now)? I do not know your having any other wife. You do not look charming without (your) wife, as the pair of the Krauñca birds or that of the Cakravāka birds (does not look charming without either of the mates, i.e. one of the two is not charming)".

49b-51. Lotus-eyed Rāma, the best among speakers said to Tārā, having her face like the moon (and) who was speaking like this: "O you of fine teeth, O you of broad eyes, it is difficult to resist destiny (Kāla).[1] Know that all this mobile and immobile world is fashioned by destiny." Having dismissed all those ladies, Sugrīva stood before (Rāma).

52. Sugrīva said: "O lords of men, tell me quickly about that mission also for which you have come here. It is time to do what should be done."

53-54a. Bharata, urged by Rāma, told Sugrīva, who was speaking like this, about Rāma's going to Laṅkā. Sugrīva said to them, "With you I shall go to the city (of Laṅkā) to see the demon Bibhīṣaṇa, O lord."

54b. Thus addressed by Sugrīva, Rāma said, "Go (i.e. accompany us)."

55. The three, viz. Sugrīva and the two Rāghavas got into the Puṣpaka. Just then the plane reached the other shore of the ocean.

56-57. Rāma said to Bharata, "With four ministers, Bibbīṣaṇa the lord of demons, saw me here to save (i.e. so that I should save) his life. Then he was consecrated by Lakṣmaṇa on the throne of Laṅkā; and here, on the other shore of the ocean I lived for three days.

58. (I thought): 'He (i.e. the ocean) will appear before

1. Kālo hi... an oft-repeated saying in the Sanskrit language.

me and the mission of the kinsmen will be done;' but, O you killer of enemies, he did not appear before me.

59. O Rāghava, on the fourth day I became angry. I stretched my bow and held the divine missile in my hand.

60. Seeing me (angry, the ocean) seeking shelter resorted to Lakṣmaṇa. I was pacified by Sugrīva (with the words): 'O Rāghava, pardon him'.

61-62. Then the arrow discharged by me went off (and fell in) to the Maru country. Then the ocean-king, being very modest, said to me: 'O Rāma, O best of men, build a bridge and go to Laṅkā (along it), (thus) crossing the great ocean full of water'.

63. I have built this bridge on the ocean, the abode of Varuṇa. Within three days it was (i.e. its construction was) completed by the best monkeys.

64. On the first day they constructed (its part of the length of) fourteen *Yojanas*. On the second day, they constructed (its part of the length of) thirtysix *Yojanas*, and on the third day (they constructed its part of the length of) half a hundred (i.e. fifty) *Yojanas*.

65. This (i.e. here) is seen that Laṅkā with golden ramparts and portals. Here a great siege was laid by the best monkeys.

66. On the fourteenth day of the bright half of Caitra a great battle took place here. (This is the place) where on the eighteenth day that Rāvaṇa was killed.

67. Here Prahasta, the best among the demons, was killed by Nīla. Here Dhūmrākṣa was killed by Hanūmat.

68. (Here) the maganimous Sugrīva killed Mahodara and Atikāya. Here Kumbhakarṇa was killed by me and Indrajit by Lakṣmaṇa.

69-70a. I also killed here Rāvaṇa, the best demon. Here arrived Brahmā, the grandsire of the worlds to talk (to me), and also the trident-holder, the bull-bannered (Śiva) along with Pārvatī.

70b. (Here) also (came) the hosts of gods led by the great Indra with Gandharvas and Kinnaras.

71. The great king, my father, surrounded by groups of celestial nymphs and of Vidyādharas, also arrived from heaven.

72. In the presence of all of them, I desiring Sītā's purification, told her (to enter fire); she entered fire and was purified.

73-74. She was seen by the rulers of Laṅkā, gods and was accepted by me at the behest of my father. Then my father also said to me: 'O son, go to Ayodhyā. O Rāghava, I do not very much like heaven without you. O son, you have emancipated me; I have reached Indra's world.'

75. The king (i.e. Daśaratha) also said to Lakṣamaṇa: 'O son, you have earned religious merit. With your brother you will obtain (i.e. go to) best worlds.'

76-77a. Calling Sītā, the king said these words to her: 'O you of a good vow, do not entertain anger against your husband. O you of auspicious eyes, your husband will get excellent fame'."

77b-78. When Rāma was speaking like this, and when Puṣpaka came to a halt, the best demons that were there and the spies having quickly gone to Bibhīṣaṇa told him that Rāma had arrived with Sugrīva.

79. And Bibhīṣaṇa, having heard about Rāma's arrival in the vicinity, honoured the spies with (i.e. by satisfying) all their desires and with (i.e. by giving them) gold.

80-81a. Having adorned that city, he came out with his ministers. Seeing Rāma seated in the aeroplane like the sun on the Meru mountain, he saluted Rāma by the prostration of the eight parts of his body and said:

81b-83a. "My existence is fruitful today. All my desires are fulfilled, since I have seen the lord's feet fit to be adored by the world. I am made respectable among the gods like Indra. I am regarding myself superior to Indra, the lord of gods".

83b-84. When Rāvaṇa's residence was illumined, being adorned by all (kinds of) gems and when Rāma was seated, Bibhīṣaṇa, having offered him a respectful oblation, and with the palms of his hands joined in obeisance said to Sugrīva and Bharata:

85-86a. "I do not have that which I can give to Rāma

who has come here. Formerly, having killed his enemy, the sinner, the nuisance to the three worlds (viz. Rāvaṇa), Rāma gave this city of Laṅkā to me.

86b-87a. (O Rāma), all this—this city, these wives, these sons and (even) I (myself)—is given (to you). Let it be with you eternally."

87b-88. Then all the subjects, and all those who were the residents of Laṅkā, being full of curiosity, came there to see Rāghava. They said to Bibhīṣaṇa: "O lord, show us Rāma".

89-90. They were told (i.e. introduced) to Rāma by Bibhīṣaṇa. Bharata, directed by Rāma received all the presents offered by them; and the lord of the monkeys (i.e. Sugrīva) received the heap of the gems pouring in. Thus Rāma staged in the demon's residence for three days.

91-92. When the fourth day came, and when he was (seated) in the court, Kekasī[1] said these (words) to her son; "O son, I shall see Rāma. The sages obtain (i.e. have obtained) great religious merit when they saw him. This highly virtuous one is eternal Viṣṇu of four forms.

93-94. O illustrious one, Sītā is Lakṣmī. She was not so regarded by your elder brother (i.e. Rāvaṇa). In the gathering of gods in heaven at a former time your father had said: 'In the family of Raghus, Viṣṇu will be (born) as Daśaratha's son in order to destroy the demon viz. Rāvaṇa.'"

95-97a. Bibbīṣaṇa said: "O mother, do so. Put on a new garment. See the prince (taking) with (you) a vessel with sandal, honey and sacred rice grains and *dūrvā*-grass as a respectful offering. Putting Saramā[2] and other young divine ladies in front go near (i.e. approach) Rāghava. I (shall) then (just) go ahead."

97b-98. Saying so, the demon went (to the place) where Rāma was seated. Having dismissed all the demons that had come there to see Rāma, and making the court clean, Bibhīṣaṇa said to Rāma who was sitting facing him:

99-100. "O god, O king, (please) listen to a request of

1. Kekasi—Mother of Bibhīṣaṇa.
2. Saramā—Wife of Bibhīṣaṇa.

me, who am telling it. O god, that mother of us, who gave birth to Rāvaṇa, Kumbhakarṇa and me desires to see your feet. Favour her and allow her to see you."

101. Rāma said: "O lord of demons, with a desire to meet her, I shall approach her. Quickly go before (i.e. lead) me".

102. Having made this statement (i.e. having said like this), Rāma got up from the excellent seat. Joining the palms of his hands and keeping them on his head in obeisance, the lord saluted (Bibhīṣaṇa's mother and said to her:)

103-104. "I salute you. You are virtually my mother, O madam, if a man, as a result of his great penance and various (kinds of) religious merit, sees these feet of yours, he would be perfect. I am, therefore, pleased on seeing these, O you who love your sons.

105a. As Kausalyā is my mother, you are also my mother."

105b-107a. Kekasī too said to Rāma: "Live long, be happy. O lord, my husband had told (me) that Viṣṇu, taking a human form had descended (i.e. was born) in the family of Raghu for the well-being of gods, for the destruction of Rāvaṇa and for granting prosperity to Bibhīṣaṇa.

107b-109. (He also told me that) that son of Daśaratha will do all this, viz. killing Vālin and constructing a bridge over the ocean. Recollecting those words of my husband, I have now recognised you. Sītā is Lakṣmī; you are Viṣṇu and the gods are monkeys. (Now) O son, I shall go home, obtain stable fame."

110. Saramā said: "Here only, Sītā who remained in the Aśoka-vana, was served by me. (I hope that) that your beloved Jānakī is happy.

111. O you tormentor of your enemies, I daily remember the feet of Sītā. I am thinking as to when I shall (again) see Sītā.

112. Why is it that the lord of gods has not brought Sītā here? Without that lady you, all alone, do not look charming.

113. O you tormentor of enemies, Sītā looks charming in your company and you in her company." When she was speaking thus Bharata said (these words); "Who is she?"

114. Then Rāma, who knew the internal thoughts, quickly said to Bharata: "(She is) Bibhīṣaṇa's wife by name Saramā.

115. This virtuous one was Sītā's friend, and was very much liked by her. Know that everything is wrought by destiny. I do not know what she will do (when she does not see Sītā).

116. O you fortunate one, go and, O you auspicious one, look after your husband's house. The respectable lady (viz. Sītā) has gone leaving me, as (an excellent) position leaves a luckless person.

117. O you lady of beautiful eyebrows, I am not getting any delight; and (when) I wander here (i.e. on the earth) I find all the directions to be vacant."

118. He dismissed Saramā, the dear friend of Sītā (with these words). When Kekasī had left, Rāma said to Bibhīṣaṇa:

119. "Do what is liked by gods. You should not offend the demons. O sinless one, you should behave by the order of king of kings.

120. Any man, who somehow comes to Laṅkā should not he killed by demons. He should be looked upon as I (am)."

121. Bibhīṣaṇa said: "O lord of men, I shall do all according to your order." When Bibhīṣaṇa was speaking, Vāyu said to Rāma:

122. "Here is the image of Viṣṇu that formerly restrained Bali. Take it and install it at Kānyakubja."

123-124a. Understanding the purport of what Vāyu said, Bibhīṣaṇa having adorned (the image of) Vāmana with all jewels and having brought it (to Rāma) presented it to Rāma and said these words:

124b-125. "O you lotus-eyed one, this (image of) Vāmana was brought when Meghanāda (i.e. Indrajit, the son of Rāvaṇa) vanquished Indra, O Rāghava. O lord, take (with you) this (image of) god of gods and install it."

126-127. Saying, "All right," Rāma got into the Puṣpaka. Taking immeasurable wealth, jewels and (the image of) Vāmana, Sugrīva and Bharata got into the plane after (the image of) Vāmana, the best of gods (was put into the plane). Rāma who was going into the sky (in the plane) said to Bibhīṣaṇa: "(Please) Wait."

128. Hearing the words of Rāma, he again said to Rāma: "O lord, I shall do all that you have ordered me.

129. O best of kings, all men on the earth will come (to Laṅkā) along this bridge and will harass (us); and thus your command will be violated.

130a. What restriction should I observe here, and what is my duty, O lord?"

130b-131. Hearing these words spoken by the best demon, Rāma took his bow, and with it, broke the bridge into two. Then he quickly divided it at the centre into three parts of the length of ten *Yojanas*.

132-134. Breaking it again he divided into three parts, each of the length of a *Yojana*. (Then) having reached the Velāvana, and having worshipped the lord of Ramā (i.e. Viṣṇu), and sprinkling (the image of) Janārdana, the god of gods, named Rāmeśvara, and taking with him the image of Vāmana, the descendant of Raghu quickly went from the northern (beach) of the ocean. From the sky arose a voice, deep like the thunder of a cloud.

135-136a. Rudra said: "O Rāma, well-being to you. Now I am here. O Rāghava, as long as the earth remains, so long this your sacred place, viz. Setu will remain."

136b-137. Hearing those nectar-like words of the lord of lords Rāma said: "O lord of gods, salutation to you, O you who grant fearlessness to your devotees. Salutation to you, O Gaurīkānta (i.e. husband of Pārvatī), Dakṣayajñavināśana (i.e. destroyer of Dakṣa's sacrifice).

138-144. My constant salutation to Bhava, Sarva, Rudra, Varada, to the lord of beings, to Ugra, to Kapardin, to Mahādeva, Bhīma, Tryambaka, lord of quarters, Īśāna, Bhagaghna (i.e. killer of Bhaga), Andhakaghātin (i.e. the destroyer of Andhaka), to Nīlagrīva, Ghora, Vedhas, O you praised by the creator; to Kumāraśatrunighna (i.e. the killer of Kārtikeya's enemy), Kumāra-janana (i.e. Kumara's father), to Vilohila, Dhūmra, Śiva, and to Krathana; my salutation to Nīlaśikhaṇḍa, Śūlin, Daityanāśin, Ugra, Trinetra, Hiraṇyavasuretas, Anindya, Ambikābhartṛ (i.e. the lord of Pārvatī), Sarvadevastuta (i.e. praised by all gods), Abhigamya, Kāmya, Sadyojātas; to Vṛṣadhvaja, Muṇḍa, Jaṭin, Brahmacārin; to Tapyamāna, Tapya, Brahmaṇya, and Jaya; to Viśvātman (i.e.

the universal soul), Viśvasṛj (i.e. the creator of the universe); and to him who remains by occupying the universe.

145. My repeated salutations to you—Divya, Prapannārtihara (i.e. who removes the affliction of him who has sought his shelter), to Bhaktānukampin (i.e. who takes compassion on his devotees), O lord, O you who are all-lustre and have the mind's speed."

Pulastya said:

146. O king, Hara, the lord of gods, being thus praised (by Rāma), said (these) words to Rāma who was standing in front of him and was humble with devotion.

147. Rudra said: "O Rāghava, well-being to you, tell me what is in your mind (i.e. your desire). You are indeed Nārāyaṇa who has descended on the earth being concealed in a human form.

148. O sinless one, you have performed the mission of gods. Now go (back) to your own place. O you killer of the enemies, you have done your duty.

149. You have set up the great sacred place called 'Śetu', O descendant of Raghu. O king, men will come here and see it (situated) in the ocean.

150-151a. The sins of those who have (committed) great sins perish. The painful sins like brāhmaṇacide perish merely by the sight (of the sacred place). No doubt should be raised about this.

151b-152. O best of Raghus, having installed (the image of) Vāmana on the bank of the Ganges go (to your place). O you tormentor of the enemies, having made eight portions on the earth (i.e. having divided it into eight parts), (please) go to your place—Śveta Dvīpa; O god, my salutation to you."

153. Then having saluted (Rudra) Rāma reached the sacred place, viz. Puṣkara. But the Puṣpaka did not go up. It was encompassed.

154. Rāghava remains in the propless sky. There must be (some) reason for this. He told the monkey (i.e. Sugrīva): "See" (why it has stopped).

155-156a. At the order of Rāma Sugrīva, getting down on

the earth, saw (there) Brahmā, with gods and Siddhas, with the group of brahmanic sages and with four Vedas.

156b-157. Having seen and come (back) he said to Rāma "The grandsire accompanied by the regents of quarters, and the groups of Vasus, Ādityas and Maruts (is here). That is why the Puṣpaka cannot transgress the grandsire."

158-159. Then Rāma, having got down from the Puṣpaka, decorated with gold, humbly saluting Brahmā by prostrating the eight parts of the body and touching the earth with five parts of the body, praised Viriñci (i.e. Brahmā), the god of gods.

Rāma said:

160. I salute (you) the creator of the worlds, adored by the (ten) lords of created beings and gods, (you who are) the protector of the worlds and of beings and the lord of the world.

161. My salutation to you, O lord of the lord of gods, (to you) who are saluted by gods and demons, (to you) O lord of the past, future and present and (O you) of tawny eyes.

162. You are a child; you also have an old form; you put on the garment of deer-hide; you are the protector, the god, the lord of the three worlds and the ruler.

163-164. O you Hiraṇyagarbha, Padmagarbha, Vedagarbha (contained in the Vedas), Smṛtiprada (i.e. giver of Smṛtis), you are Mahāsiddha, Mahāpadmin (i.e. having a great lotus), Mahādaṇḍi in (i.e. having a great staff), Mekhalin (i.e. having a girdle); you are Kāla (i.e. Destiny), Kālarūpin (i.e. of the form of Death); Nīlagrīva (i.e. having a dark-blue neck) Vidāmvara (i.e. the wisest one), Vedakartā (i.e. the author of the Vedas), a child, an eternal and immutable one and the lord of beings.

165. You are Darbhapāṇi (i.e. having darbhas in your hand), Haṁsaketu (i.e. having a swan as banner). You are the doer (of actions), the one who takes away; you are Hara, Hari; you are Jaṭin (i.e. having matted hair); you are Muṇḍin (i.e. shaved); you are Śikhin (i.e. having a tuft of hair); you are Daṇḍin (i.e. having a staff); you are Laguḍin (i.e. having a club); you have great fame.

166. You are Bhūteśvara (i.e. the lord of beings), Surādhyakṣa (i.e. the chief of the gods). You are Sarvātman (i.e. the soul of all); you are Sarvabhāvana (i.e. the cause of all); you are Sarvaga (i.e. omnipresent), Sarvahārī (i.e. snatching everything), Sraṣṭā (i.e. the creator), Guru (i.e. the lord), Avyaya (i.e. the immutable).

167-168. You are the god holding the pitcher, the spoon, the wooden ladle etc. You are Havanīya (i.e. to which oblations are offered), you are Oṁkāra; you ure Jyeṣṭhasāmaga (i.e. chanter of the Jyeṣṭhasaman). You are Mṛtyu (i.e. death), Amṛta (i.e. immortal), Pāriyātra (i.e. an inhabitant of the Pāriyātra[1] mountain), Suvrata (i.e. having good vows). You are Brahmacārin (i.e. a celebate), Vratadhara (i.e. possessing a vow), Guhāvāsin (i.e. living in the cave of the heart), Supaṅkaja (i.e. born of a good lotus).

169. You are Amara (i.e. immortal), Darśanīya (i.e. handsome) and you resemble the young sun. You are resorted to by your two wives (viz. Sāvitrī and Gāyatrī) on your right and left sides.

170. You are a Bhikṣu (i.e. a mendicant), are of the form of a bhikṣu; you are Trijaṭin (i.e. Śiva); you have obtained what you decided (to have); you are the cause of mental functions; you are Kāma (i.e. Desire); you are Madhu (i.e. the Spring season); also you are the cause of the Spring season.

171. You are a Vānaprastha (i.e. an anchorite); you stay in a forest, in a hermitage, and are worshipped as such. You are the supporter and the cause of the world; and are the eternal, stable Puruṣa.

172. You are Dharmādhyakṣa (i.e. chief of moral virtue), Virūpākṣa (i.e. Śiva), Tridharma (i.e. the three types of Duty) Bhūtabhāvana (i.e. the cause of beings); you are the three Vedas; you are multiformed; your lustre is like that of a myriad suns.

173. You are especially Mohaka and Vandhaka among the demons. You are the god of gods, Padmāṅka (i.e. characterised by a lotus), Trinetra (i.e. Śiva), and Abjaja (i.e. lotus-born).

1. Pāriyātra—the mountain referred to here is one of the seven principal mountains. See note on 34.395.

174a. You are Hariśmaśru (i.e. having tawny beard), an archer; you are fearful and have piety as your valour.

174b-175a. The grandsire, Brahmā, the best among those who know Vedas, who was thus praised by Rāma, who was humble, held his hand, and said:

175b-176a. "You are Viṣṇu who has descended on the earth in a human form. O you great lord, you have done all the mission of the gods.

176b-177a. Installing (the image of) god Vāmana on the right bank, go to the city of Ayodhyā and (finally) to heaven."

177b-178a. Rāma, (thus) dismissed by Brahmā, saluted the grandsire, got into the Puṣpaka aeroplane, and went to the sweet city (of Mathurā).

178b-179a. Seeing (there) Śatrughna, the killer of enemies, and (seeing) his sons with him, the great Rāma, with Bharata and the lord of monkeys (i.e. Sugrīva), was pleased.

179b-180a. Śatrughna went to his two brothers resembling Indra and Upendra. He saluted them by touching the earth with five parts[1] of the body.

180b-182a. Rāma quickly raised his brother and put him on his lap. Then Bharata sat down and then Sugrīva. He quickly made a respectful offering to Rāma and reported to him about the kingdom consisting of eight parts.

182b-183a. Having heard that Rāma had come, all the people of Mathurā, the castes mostly consisting of brāhmaṇas came (there) to see him.

183b-184a. Having talked with the subjects and the interpreters of the Vedas[2], with the Brāhmaṇas, Rāma, having remained there for five days decided to leave.

184b-185a. Then Śatrughna presented Rāma with horses, elephants and refined and unrefined gold.

185b-186a. Then Rāma, being pleased, said: "O son, all this I have given you. Consecrate your two sons as the kings of the residents of Mathurā."

186b-187. Saying so Rāma then reached Ayodhyā on Sunday afternoon. Finding a lucky (time) he installed (the

1. Pañcāṅga—The five limbs which must touch the ground are: (1) hands, (2) knees, (3) head, (4) chest, and (5) eyes.
2. Naigama—interpreter of the Vedas or sacred texts.

image of) Vāmana on the bank of the Ganges and said to the brāhmaṇas and to the future kings:

188-190a. "I have prepared this Dharma-setu ('bridge of piety') which enhances welfare. At the proper time you have to observe (the vow with reference to it). You have never to drop (the vow). O kings, I have made this appeal with my hands spread out. When I have thus requested you, do what would lead to welfare. All of you should always carefully perform the daily worship."

190b-191. Having given to them villages and wealth brought from Laṅkā, and having sent Sugrīva, the lord of monkeys (back) to Kiṣkindhā, Rāma came to Ayodhyā and then said to Puṣpaka:

192. "Do not come (here) again. Remain where Kubera is (i.e. stay with Kubera)". Then Rāma who had done (all) his duties, did not see anything (left) to be done.

Pulastya said:

193-194. O Bhīṣma, I have thus told you about the origin of Vāmana in course of the story of Rāma. What more do you want to hear? O King, I shall tell you all that about which you have a curiosity. O prince, I shall tell you everything which you desire (to know).

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

The Birth of the Lotus

Bhīṣma said:

1. You have narrated in detail the importance of Vāmana. Tell me again any other (point of) importance than this, pertaining to Viṣṇu.

2. How did the lotus arise in the lord's navel from which the world sprang up? How did the creation of Viṣṇu formerly take place in the lotus?

3-4a. How was the world of lotus formed in the great cycle of time (Mahākalpa) called Padma in the navel of Viṣṇu, who had entered the ocean and slept there?

4b. How did the groups of sages come up at Puṣkara in olden times?

5. O you lord of those who know Yoga (i.e. abstract meditation), tell me all about that. How did (the lord) fashion there this eternal world?

6-8. How indeed did the lord of the universe, of great lustre and brilliance, well-versed in abstract meditation, stable in contemplation, remain doing action, when there was a void, when (the whole world was) but one ocean, when the immobile and the mobile had vanished, when the globe had been scorched, when reptiles and demons had vanished, when fire, wind and others had disappeared, when piety had vanished from the earth, when there was a vacuity, and when the gross elements had undergone a change?

9-10a. O brāhmaṇa, please tell fully about the success of Nārāyaṇa to me who am listening devoutly. O revered one, please tell it to me who have faith in you and who am well-posed (to listen to it).

Pulastya said:

10b-14a. O you perpetuator of the Kuru family, it is proper for you purified by (being born in) a good family that you have a desire to listen to (the account of) the glory of Nārāyaṇa. I shall devoutly tell you as I heard what the great preceptor Dvaipāyana, Parāśara's son, lustrous like Bṛhaspati, said, after he had heard it in (i.e. from) the old Purāṇas, from gods, and from great-souled brāhmaṇas who narrated it, and after he had seen (i.e. known) it through penance. (And also I shall tell you,) O best one, what I properly learnt through the sages.

14b-15a. Who dares to know the supreme spirit of the form of Nārāyaṇa, whom—the permanent among all—even Brahmā does not know truly.

15b. (Even) all gods (do not know) his acts; among sages (also) his secret (is not known).

16-20. He is the one to whom all sacrifices are offered; he is the truth that is seen by those who know the truth (i.e. the

First Principle) ; he is the supreme spirit for those who are well-versed in metaphysical knowledge; he is the deity which is the presiding deity called *Adhidaivata*; he is the being that is the highest being; he is the highest object for those who have the spiritual knowledge; he is the sacrifice, indicated by the Vedas; him (alone) the wise know to be the penance. (It is he) who is the doer, the cause, the intellect and the individual soul. He is *praṇava* (i.e. the sacred syllable Om) ; he is the supreme being; he is the ruler (of all); he (alone) is contemplated on; he is the five vital airs[1]; he is fixed and unchangeable; he is destiny; he is the completion; he is the sacrifice; he is what is studied; that highest one is described as being in various conditions.

21. The revered one alone does and (at the same time) does not do everything. In this (world) he gets everything done; by him are the actions of those, who occupy place, performed.

22. We offer sacrifice to him, who is the first one; he is satisfied with the rise (i.e. creation). He is who is the speaker, what is spoken and also what I am speaking to you.

23. He is that which is heard and which is fit to be caused to be heard (i.e. which is told); (he is) whatever else is spoken; he is whatever is (called) a story, or whatever the scriptures are; he is whatever has attributes; he is the one who is intent on righteousness.

24-25a. That Nārāyaṇa is said to be the universe and its lord. He, the highest being, the chief one is whatever is truth, whatever is falsehood, whatever is in the beginning or in the middle, whatever is terminal, whatever is limitless and whatever is future; whatever moves in the end and whatever else there is (in the world).

25b-26. O descendant of Kuru, that which is said to be (a period) of four thousand years is Kṛtayuga[2]; the period intervening between its expiration and the commencement of the next is double hundred years of this (i.e. eight hundred years) where (i.e. in which period) Dharma (i.e. piety) is four-footed while Adharma (i.e. impiety) has one foot.

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1. *Pañcavidha prāṇa*—The five life-winds or vital airs: prāṇa, apāna, vyāna, udāna and samāna.

2. *Kṛtayuga*—For the yugas, sandhyās etc. see Chapter 3, where a detailed description of these is given.

27-28. There (i.e. in this period) men, who are engrossed in their duties and who are tranquil are born. brāhmaṇas are attached to moral virtue and kings remain in (i.e. follow) the course of conduct meant for kings; vaiśyas are engaged in agriculture and śūdras desire to serve. At that time (i.e. in this period) truth, goodness and piety increase.

29-30a. The good practise (that) virtue by which the world proceeds. O king, in Kṛtayuga this (mode of behaviour) happens in the case of all beings who have the knowledge of moral virtue and men of a mean birth.

30b-31. It is said that Tretāyuga (lasts for a period) of three thousand years. The period succeeding it and preceding the next *yuga* is supposed to double hundred years of this (i.e. six hundred years). (In this period) Adharma (i.e. impiety) stands on two feet and Dharma (i.e. piety) on three.

32-33. There (i.e. in this period) truth, goodness and (good) acts are said to be Dharma. In Tretāyuga, the castes, connected with (i.e. full of) greed, undergo a change from their natural state. The woeful plight of the four castes is forbearance and weakness. This is the strange course of Tretāyuga as created (i.e. decided) by god.

34. O you descendant of Kuru, Dvāparayuga (lasts for a period) of two thousand years. The period coming between it and the next *yuga* is double hundred years of this (i.e. four hundred years).

35. There (i.e. in that period) too beings intent on gaining wealth and overcome with activity, O descendant of Kuru, rogues and wicked and mean persons are born.

36. Dharma stands on two feet, and Adharma on three. In Kaliyuga, Dharma perishes due to hundreds of errors.

37. Brāhmaṇa-hood falls off (i.e. brāhmaṇas swerve from their duties) and belief in God is abandoned. In Kaliyuga, a changed *yuga*, vows and fasts are given up.

38. Then the (Kali)yuga (lasts for a period of) one thousand years, and the intervening period between it and the next *yuga* is two hundred years. There (i.e. in this period) Adharma is (just) four-footed and Dharma stands on one foot (only).

39. There (i.e. in this period) lustful men, ascetics and mean men are born. No man has a firm resolve, no one is good and no one speaks the truth.

40. The brāhmaṇas (posing) to be devotees are atheists; men are overcome by pride, and have their ties of love very fragile.

41. In Kaliyuga all brāhmaṇas behave like śūdras. In Kaliyuga the (various) stages of life are reversed.

42. O you descendant of Kuru, there is a danger to the castes also at the end of the period (called Kaliyuga). This period of twelve thousand (years) called the (four) *yugas* has been fashioned in old time.

43-47. The duration of a thousand *yugas* is called the day of Brahmā. When that (day) is over, O king, Kāla[1], i.e. Brahman the lord of beings, becoming the five elements, seeing the (imminent) death of all beings, of deities, of all brāhmaṇas, of Daityas (i.e. sons of Diti) and of demons, of Yakṣas, goblins and birds, of Gandharvas, celestial nymphs and serpents, of mountains, rivers and birds, O best one, and also of lower animals, insects and flies, brings about a great destruction for ending the world.

48. He, taking the eyes, becomes the sun; he becomes Vāyu, taking the entire vital airs of living beings; he becomes fire, burning all the worlds; he becomes a terrible cloud and (sends down) showers.

49. The lord of abstract meditation, Nārāyaṇa, turning himself into the sun, dries the oceans with his bright rays.

50-51. The one well-versed in abstract meditation, then drinks all oceans, rivers and wells, and taking the water of the mountains on all sides, and turning himself into a thousand-rayed one, and having broken the earth, enjoys at the Rasātala[2], drinking an excellent drink.

52. The lotus-eyed supreme being takes (up) all that is material and immaterial, and other than that in the beings.

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1. *Kāla*—The supreme spirit regarded as the destroyer of the universe, being a personification of the destructive principle.

2. *Rasātala*—One of the seven regions below the earth; the other six are: Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talātala, Mahātala and Pātāla.

53. Hari, becoming a strong wind and shaking the entire world, obtaining respiration, fills (the world) with wind.

54-58. Then the lord destroyed in a short time, all the qualities apprehended by the five sense organs of the groups of gods and human beings and also all the beings, as well as that which is smelt, that which smells, the body, the qualities residing in the earth and the course of worldly life; taste and viscidity—the qualities residing in water; colour, sight, distinction (between one object and another)—qualities residing in the lustre of the eyes (i.e. the faculty of seeing); touch, breath, movements—qualities residing in wind (i.e. air); sound, ears, what is heard—qualities residing in ether; mind, intellect, reason—qualities residing in the individual soul; and also the highest lord (—all these) finally taking resort to Viṣṇu.

59. Then (they), surrounded by the rays of that lord and impelled by wind resorted to various sections of the earth.

60. Fire, risen due to their being collected together, blazing in a hundred ways, and burning the entire universe, became the destructive fire (at the time of universal destruction).

61-63a. It profusely burnt mountain-trees, thickets, creeping and winding plants, grass, divine palaces and various cities, and all asylums. He, the lord of the lords of worlds, having reduced all the worlds to ashes, applied to himself the ashes born of the consumption of the world.

63b-64a. Becoming a great cloud he sent down thousand showers in a hundred ways. He gratified the earth with the oblation of divine water.

64b-65a. Then the earth became pacified with that cool, auspicious, sweet and superior water resembling milk.

65b-66a. Sprinkled with that water resembling milk, the earth became inundated with water like one ocean, void of all the beings.

66b-70a. Even great beings entered the lord of unlimited prowess. The eternal one resorting to his ancient form, sleeps all alone, contracting himself, after having burnt all the worlds and after having himself dried up all the beings in the oceans and when (thus) the Sun, wind and ether had perished, and when the world had become subtle. He possessed of wonderful powers, who had gone into the water of the only ocean, is

worshipped in a sacrifice. (He resides) in the water of that only ocean for many thousand yugas. No individual is able to know the unmanifest one.

70b-71. Who is this Puruṣa (i.e. Primordial Being) ? What is deep and abstract meditation? Who possesses it ? Nobody knows him from behind, from his vicinity, from his side or from his front. The best of gods is not seen.

72. Having accomplished the sky, the earth, the wind, the water the illuminating one, the lord of the beings, the support of the world, the lord of gods, the grandsire, the abode of scriptures, the lord made the bed agreeable.

73. Thus the very lustrous one sleeps (on the bed) where the world has become one ocean. The supreme soul having covered the earth with water acts like Nārāyaṇa.

74-75. The lotus-eyed lord of great arms, whom they know as inexhaustible Brahman, (remains) in the great *Rajas* resembling a great ocean; (is) surrounded by *Tamas* having the same form as himself, and has his good mind placed in that *Sattva* (i.e. goodness),

76. The correct and highest knowledge (leads to) the (chief) being, viz. Brahman; the secret about (Brahman) is also said to be like that in the *Upaniṣads*.

77. The highest principle is termed as Puruṣa (the Primordial Being) or Yajña (sacrifice). The other one who is called Puruṣa is the same Viṣṇu.

78. It is learnt that those brāhmaṇas performing sacrifices who are known as *ṛtvij* (i.e. priests officiating at sacrifice), have in ancient days, sprung up from his mouths.

79-83a. From his mouth he first created *Brahmā*[1] (priest), then *Udgātṛ*, the singer of *sāman*; the lord created *Hotṛ* and *Adhvaryu* from his two arms; also *Brahman* (priest) and *Brahmaṇāccha̱ṁsi* (priest), and *stotṛ* (priests); from his organ of generation (he created) Maitrāvaruṇa and *Pratiṣṭhātṛ* and O king, from his belly (he created) *Pratihartṛ* and *Potṛ*; from his hands (he created) *Agnīdhra* and *Unnetṛ* of the *Yajurveda*; from his thighs (he created) *Subrahmaṇya*, the singer of *sāmans*. Thus

1. *Brahmā* etc.—See notes on 34.7 and ff.

the revered lord of the world, the self-born one, created the sixteen best priests at (i.e. for) all sacrifices.

83b-84. Then he, the highly powerful supreme being, known as yajña slept in (that) ocean—so (say) the *Vedas* and the *Vedāṅgas* and the same acts are described in the *Upaniṣads*; when, at that ancient time, a wonder took place.

85-88a. Listen to it: Mārkaṇḍeya, the great sage, who had obtained a (long) life of many thousand years, and who had been swallowed by the revered one through curiosity (shown by Mārkaṇḍeya) (saw, in the lord's belly), while going to various sacred places on pilgrimage, auspicious hermitages and temples of gods, countries, nations, wonderful cities of various kinds, where (people were) intent on muttering prayers and (performing) sacrifices, and which were said to be tranquil and pure on account of penances.

88b-89a. Then Mārkaṇḍeya slowly got out of his mouth; and due to the illusion (created) by the lord he did not realise that he was going out.

89b-90a. Mārkaṇḍeya, having got out of his belly saw the world that was but one ocean and veiled with darkness everywhere.

90b-91. It caused him great fear and hindrance to his life. He who was delighted by seeing the god, was very much amazed. That Mārkaṇḍeya of an infallible mind, being afraid, thought:

92. 'Is it the bewilderment of my mind or am I experiencing a dream? Certainly I am experiencing one of the two conditions.

93-94a. This is not a dream, since here truth is accompanied by (i.e. depends upon) facts'. He became distressed with the thought: 'Which world can this be from which the moon, the sun, the air and the mountains have vanished?'

94b-96. He also saw a man, like a mountain, sleeping, half-drowned in the water like a cloud in the ocean; he was as it were blazing with great lustre due to having put on (his person) the moon and the sun; due to his prowess he appeared like the ocean on account of its depth. 'Who are you that have come to see the god?' (He asked) through wonder.

97-98. Then the sage again entered the belly (of Viṣṇu). That Mārkaṇḍeya with amazement again entered the belly (of Viṣṇu). Again realising that he saw a dream he, as before, wandered on the earth through forests.

99-101a. He saw sacred places with water, various hermitages and sacrificers with (i.e. performing) sacrifices accomplished with big gifts and hundreds of brāhmaṇas at sacrifices—(all) remaining in the belly (of Viṣṇu). He duly saw, as before, all the castes led by brāhmaṇas behaving virtuously, and the four stages.

101b-102a. In this way, that intelligent Mārkaṇḍeya, wandering over the earth for a full hundred years saw it in (Viṣṇu's) belly itself.

102b-103. Then some time he again got out of the belly. When the world, the sport of the Unmanifest, was void of beings, the sage, full of wonder, saw a child sleeping on a branch of fig-tree in the water of the only ocean, covered over with fog.

104-107a. He could not look at the child resembling the sun. He too, sitting all alone near the water thought: 'I have seen this (child) before; I have been bewildered by the supernatural power of the lord. The (child) is sleeping in the unfathomable water'. Mārkaṇḍeya with amazement and with his eyes frightened again went to see it as before.

107b-108. The lord said to him: "O boy, welcome to you". The supreme being spoke with a voice like that of a cloud (i.e. with a deep and pleasant voice): "Mārkaṇḍeya, do not be afraid; come near me".

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

109. Who addresses me by my name and insults me treating with indignity my age of a thousand divine years?

110. This is not the proper mode of behaviour; even among gods I have not seen it. Even Brahmā addresses me as 'long-lived (one)' with affection.

111. Who, today, having terrible mortification, having cast his life (i.e. not caring for his life), addressing me as 'Mārkaṇḍeya' sees his death (to be imminent)?

112. Thus the great sage Mārkaṇḍeya became disturbed through anger. Revered Madhusūdana again spoke to him:

The revered one (i.e. Viṣṇu) said:

113. O boy, I am Viṣṇu, your great father, who created you. I gave you life. I am the Primeval (Being). Why do you not approach me?

114. O son, your father, viz. the sage Āṅgirasa, resorting to severe penance, first propitiated me.

115. Seeing him performing severe penance and possessing lustre like the best of gods, I gave the great sage a son, viz. you of unlimited prowess.

116. Who else is able to see me of the nature of one having supernatural power, and playing, having entered the only ocean, by means of my divine wonderful power?

117-118. Then Mārkaṇḍeya, pleased in heart and with his eyes dilated with wonder, having joined and put the palms of his hands in obeisance on his (fore-) head (and) who lived long and was adored by the world, announced his name and family and devoutly saluted the revered one.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

119. O sinless one, I desire to know correctly this wonderful power of yours, since, taking the form of a child, you are sleeping in this only ocean.

120. O lord, by what name are you known in the world? I guess you are the supreme soul. Who else can remain (like this)?

The lord said:

121. I am Nārāyaṇa, O brāhmaṇa, the destroyer of all beings. I am the one having a thousand heads and faces. I have a thousand feet.

122. I am the supreme being of the complexion of the sun and am having Brahman in my mouth. I am fire, carrying oblations, accompanied by the sun.

123. I am Śakra, (seated on) Indra's seat; I am the year (consisting) of the seasons. Among the ascetics I am (the ascetic) called Sāṁkhya; and am the eddy at the end of a yuga.

124. I am all beings and all deities. I am Śeṣa among the snakes; I am Garuḍa[1] among all the birds.

125. I should be known as Yama, the god of death called Kāla. I am the moral virtue and the penance of all the hermits.

126. I am the prescribed course of conduct based on compassion; I am the ocean (called) the milky ocean. I am that which is the highest truth; I alone am the lord of beings.

127. I am the Sāṁkhya (school of philosophy); I am the Yoga (school of philosophy). I am that highest position (reached by devotees). I am the sacrifice, I am the rite, I am known to be the Lord of Knowledge.

128. I am lustre, I am the wind, I am the earth, I am the water. I am the sky, and the seas and the stars and the ten quarters.

129. I am the shower, I am Soma (the moon), I am the rain, and the sun. I am the most ancient (being); similarly I am the highest object.

130-131a. I shall be everywhere and be the collection of all (the future objects). O brāhmaṇa, whatever you see or hear or experience in the world, know all that to be me.

131b-132. I formerly created the universe, and even now I am creating (it). Look at me. O Mārkaṇḍeya, in every *yuga* I protect the entire world. O Mārkaṇḍeya, know accurately all this that is told to you.

133. Desirous of hearing about the prescribed course of conduct, move happily in my belly. Brahmā remains in my body, and also gods with the sages.

134. Know me, the enemy of Mura, to be the manifest, unmanifest and the abstract meditation. I am the mono-syllabled and tri-syllabled prayer (viz. Om); I am the grandsire.

135. I am the highest states (of loss, stability and increase); I am the highest soul manifesting (myself). O you highly intelligent one, thus the first Purāṇa describes me.

136. The sage went through the mouth of the lord; then the best sage entered his belly.

137. (Mārkaṇḍeya) desirous of listening to the unchangeable supreme soul, remained facing Nārāyaṇa in solitude. The

1. *Tārkṣya*=Garuḍa.

inexhaustible one was variously resorted to in the great ocean when the moon and the sun had disappeared.

138. The lord called Haṁsa (i.e. the supreme being), moving slowly and creating the world at the change of the time, enjoyed (there). Then being pure, he chose (to practise) penance.

139. The one born in the lotus, having covered his body with water—the very powerful lord—thought of everything about the great beings at the time of the creation of the mortal world.

140-141. When he was thus thinking, when the ocean had remained restrained, when the world had become skyless, full of water and subtle at the time of destruction, the lord, having gone into the water, agitated the ocean.

142. Then from within the water first a cleft appeared. Then the wind, produced from the cleft, went to (i.e. made) a sound.

143. The wind, receiving the internal agitation, increased. The ocean was greatly agitated by the powerful wind.

144. From the agitated ocean (being thus) churned, the lord, the great fire, Vaiśvānara, sprang up in the water.

145. Then the fire very much dried the water. The entire cleft in the ocean became the extensive sky.

146. Water, resembling nectar, rose from his lustre. The sky sprang up from the cleft; and the wind sprang up from the sky.

147-148. Then seeing the fire caused by friction from it, the father, the great god, of many forms, clearly seeing the gross elements, seeing the elements, thought of the excellent things along with the birth of Brahman.

149-150. At the expiration of a *yuga* a thousand *catur-yugas* (i.e. the four *yugas*) are counted, when Hari is said to belong, on the earth, to best brāhmaṇas, whose souls are purified by penance during many existences. The universal soul, attains capacity after having observed the knowledge of those who resort to abstract meditation.

151. He, knowing the concentration of mind, knowing the one having abstract meditation, having complete grandeur and

being the best, relying on him, fixed (i.e. put) him in the position of brahman.

152. Then the great god, the creator of all the worlds, i.e. Acyuta, Hari, duly sported in that great water.

153-154. Then he fashioned a lotus coming out from his navel, which was having a thousand colours, was without pollen, bright like the sun, made of gold, bright like the blazing flames of fire, prominent and like the clear autumnal sun (i.e. not covered with clouds). The very bright lotus, the charming moss, growing on his body, shone.

CHAPTER FORTY

The Army of Demons

Pulastya said:

1-2. Then the lord, created Brahmā, the best among those endowed with yoga, of a great lustre, the creator of all worlds and having faces in all directions, in that golden lotus, extending over many *Yojanas*, having all qualities of lustre and covered over with (i.e. having) earthly characteristics.

3. The great sages say that that excellent lotus formed in olden times, and of the nature of the earth, sprang from Nārāyaṇa.

4-6. What that lotus is, is said to be that goddess earth. They know that the principal pollen in the lotus are the divine mountains: Himavān, Nīla, Meru, Niṣadha, the mountain Kailāsa, the mountain Gandhamādana, and the auspicious Triśikhara (i.e. Trikūṭa) and the beautiful Mandara; also Udāra, Piñjara and Vindhya and the Astācala.

7. These mountains only are the shelters of the great-souled *Gaṇas* (i.e. Śiva's attendants) and *Siddhas* having religious merit and they satisfy all desires.

8. In between them is said to lie Jambudvīpa. That is the position of Jambudvīpa where sacrificial rites are performed.

9-12. The water that flows from it, is like divine nectar. Everywhere hundreds of the lovely streams of that divine holy (water) are said (to flow); and those which were the filaments of that lotus, became the innumerable mountains on the earth; and those which were formerly the many petals of the lotus are said to be the Mleccha countries difficult of access and full of mountains; and O king, those that were the petals on the lower portion (of the lotus) became the abodes of gods, demons and serpents according to their share.

13. The distance between them is called Rasātala, where human beings committing great sins sink.

14. In the four directions are said to exist the four oceans. Thus on account of Nārāyaṇa the earth has come up from the lotus.

15-16. The coming into existence of this place called Puṣkara is also due to it. For this reason only, the ancient great adorable sages, who had mastered the Vedas, piled the tying posts by the (performance of) sacrifices. Thus the lord, having occupied everything, put the earth together.

17-18. He also constructed the mountains and the rivers. He who is the matchless creator of this universe, whose lustre is like that of the sun, who is Varuṇa of unlimited brightness, who is self-born and who is full of (i.e. occupies) the world, slowly created the sleeping Padmanidhi in the great ocean. A great demon named Madhu was an obstacle in the penance.

19-24a. With him sprang up another demon named Kaiṭabha. The two (demons) were together born from *rajas* (the quality of activity) and *tamas* (the quality of darkness or ignorance). The two very mighty (demons) agitated the entire world turned into one ocean. They put on divine red garments, and had white, bright, terrible fangs. They were exalted on account of the crest and crown. They were bright due to armlets and bracelets. Their eyes were dilated and red. Their chests were broad, and arms large. They, who appeared like moving mountains, were strong like mountains. They appeared like new clouds. Their faces were (bright) like the sun. They looked very fierce due to the very extensive armlets put round their arms. They were as it were violently agitating the ocean by the

movements and plantings of their feet. They were shaking Viṣṇu, who was sleeping there like a lion.

24b-26a. They, having their faces (turned) in all sides, and moving there, then saw the best among the ascetics i.e. Brahmā, who was extremely bright, who was ordered by Nārāyaṇa, (Brahmā) who was creating all beings, all deities and the sages, his mind-born sons.

26b-27a. Then the two best and wicked demons, desiring to fight and very angry and with their eyes agitated with anger said to Brahmā:

27b-30a. "Who are you, who remain in this lotus, who have put on a white turban and have four arms and who, not caring for us through infatuation, stay here without any desire? O you lotus-born, come, come on and fight with us. In this ocean, you are unable to stand before us who are mighty lords. Who can be the one who has put you here? Who is your creator, who is your protector? By what name is he addressed?"

30b-31a. Brahmā said: "He is called Viṣṇu, the lord, having unending power. Know me to be the creator born from him."

31b-32. Madhu and Kaiṭabha said: "O great sage, there is nothing superior to us in the world; the universe is covered by us with *tamas* and *rajas*. We are made of *rajas* and *tamas* and we outshine the sages.

33. We screen the (real) nature of piety, and destroy all living beings. In every *yuga* the world is connected with us, difficult to be overcome.

34-35a. We are *artha*, *kāma*, sacrifice, and all possessions. Know that we are (there) where there is happiness, where there is madness, where there is wealth and where there is fame. Know that we are whatever is desired by people".

35b-38a. Brahmā said: "Having seen that you together were formerly defeated by the two of us (viz. Sattva and myself), I have, having accomplished the virtuous Sattva, resorted to him, who, the highest one, possessing abstract meditation, is immutable, is Sattva also, who is the creator of *rajas* and *tamas* and from whom everything springs. That Vāsudeva (i.e. Viṣṇu) alone will destroy you."

38b-40a. Then that Nārāyaṇa-Brahman, while sleeping only, extended his arms over many *yojanas* due to his divine power. The two (i.e. Madhu and Kaiṭabha), shining with their (mighty) arms, and moving there, were dragged by the two arms (of Viṣṇu) and dropped like fat birds.

40b-41a. Then they, having gone to the eternal Vāsudeva, Padmanābha, Hṛṣīkeśa, and having saluted him, said to him:

41b-43. "We know you to be the source of the universe and the only highest being; we know you to be our cause and that of intellect. Since we know you whose sight is unfailing, who are the Truth, and who are eternal, therefore, lord, we desire to see everything around you. O you victorious in battles, your sight is unfailing. O one victorious in battle, we bow to you"

44. The lord said; "O you best of demons, why do you speak to me? Do you want to die or to live?"

45. Madhu and Kaiṭabha said: "O god, we desire death there where no one (ever) died; O you of great penance, we also desire to be your sons."

46. The lord said: "This will certainly happen in your case. I shall be born in *Kaliyuga*; you will also be born then; there is no doubt about it; I am telling you the truth."

47. The highest god, the prop of the universe, the eternal being, the lord of gods, having granted them a boon crushed under his thighs the two (demons) born from *rajas* and *tamas*, and resembling collyrium.

48. Brahmā, of a great lustre, the best among those who know the Vedas, remaining in that lotus, and with his hands raised up, resorted to a severe penance.

49. Burning as it were with his lustre and brilliance and removing darkness, he, the pious soul, (shining) like the sun with rays spoke (to them).

50-52. Then taking some other form, the lord i.e. unchangeable Nārāyaṇa, the lord of abstract meditation, of great lustre and great fame, came there; and also Kapila, the intelligent one, the lord of Sāṁkhyas and best among brāhmaṇas (came there). They both respected great souls knowing the difference between the high and the low, and adored by great sages, said, after having come there, to Brahmā of unlimited lustre:

53-54. "O you extensive Brahmā, your world should be known as it abides." Brahmā, the leader of all beings, and revered by the three worlds, having heard those excellent words of them, who had left, having informed him, fashioned these three worlds as the Vedic scriptures say.

55-56. He also produced from himself a son called Bhū. He (i.e. Bhū), Brahmā's mind-born son, then came in front of him. (This) mind-born son, as soon as he was born, said to Brahmā: "What help should I give you? The revered one may please tell it."

57. Brahmā said: "O you highly intelligent one, do that what this (sage named) Kapila and Brahma-Nārāyaṇa tell you."

58. O king, thus addressed by Brahmā, he got up, joining his palms in obeisance, (and said:) "I desire to listen to (i.e. obey) you; what should I do?"

59. The lord said: "Remember that highest one, that is the eighteenfold, immutable Brahman which is the truth".

60. Hearing these words he went to the northern direction. Going there, he reached Brahman through intellectual vision.

61. Then the lord Brahmā of a great heart, having mentally conceived, created another son called Bhuva.

62. Then he too said (these) words: "O grandsire, what should I do?" Ordered by the grandsire he stood by Brahmā.

63. He then experienced the taste of the Brāhmaṇic nectar. Having reached the highest position he came to their side (i.e. near them).

64. When he too had gone, the detached lord created the third (son) skilled in the path to salvation, and named Suva (Svar).

65. He too resorting to piety, followed their path only. Thus the three sons of the great-souled Śambhu, went to (Kapila and Brahma-Nārāyaṇa).

66. Nārāyaṇa and Kapila, the chief of ascetics, taking the (three) sons went to an exalted place.

67. At the time they left, Brahmā, resorting to the highest place, performed a more severe penance.

68. Then Brahmā, who was practising penance, could not

do so all alone. So he created an auspicious wife from half the part of his body.

69. (Then) the grandsire created sons resembling himself. They all were the lords of beings and from them the worlds came out.

70. The great-souled one, first created, by means of penance, a son by name Dharma, the lord of the universe, who had everywhere accumulated religious merit.

71. (He created) Dakṣa, Marīci, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vasiṣṭha, Gautama, Bhṛgu and the sage Aṅgiras.

72. These great sages should be known to be very wonderful on account of their own deeds, and the families of the sages have thirteen virtues as their basis.

73-74a. O king, these twelve daughters are the offspring of Dakṣa: Aditi, Diti, Danu, Kālā, Anāyu, Siṁhikā, Khasā, Prācī, Krodhā, Surasā, Vinatā and Kadru[1].

74b-75a. (Dakṣa gave) (other) twentyseven bright (daughters i.e.) Stars to Candra (i.e. the Moon). Kaśyapa was created as his son from (i.e. by) Marīci with (i.e. as a result of) penance.

75b-76. Dakṣa agreed (to give) those twelve daughters to him. Similarly the sage gave all the auspicious Stars (i.e. the twenty-seven daughters) like Rohiṇī etc. to Soma (i.e. the Moon), O you descendant O Kuru.

77-78. Formerly Brahmā created Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Sandhyā, Viśveśā and Mahāyaśā. O king, well-being to you; these five superior ones were given to Dharma, the best among gods, by Brahmā, who had observed religious rites.

79. That wife, who was half the form of Brahmā, and who took any form at her will, suddenly turned into Surabhi, and stood by Brahmā.

80. O best one, then Brahmā, adored by the world, realising the purpose of the creation of the world, copulated with her for (the good of) the cows.

81. He produced eleven strong, mighty sons, called Dharma, resembling the tawny cloud at the time of twilight, and of a bright lustre.

1. The names of Dakṣa's daughters given here are different from those given in Chapter 6.

82. Crying and running they went to the grandsire. They were known as Rudra on account of their crying and running.

83-84. Nirhṛti and Sandhya, and the third one called Ayonija, also Mṛgavyādha, Kapardin, Mahāviśveśvara, Ahirbudhnya, revered Kapālin and Piṅgala, Senānī and Mahātejas, are said to be the eleven Rudras.[1]

85. Cows and deities were born of her, O best king, and also goat and swan.

86-89a. Herbs also sprang from that excellent Surabhi. From Dharma[2] Lakṣmī (obtained a son viz.) Kāma; Sādhyā gave birth to Sādhyas: Bhava, Prabhava, Kṛśāśva, Suvaha, Aruṇa and Varuṇa, Viśvāmitra, Caladhruva, Haviṣmān and Tanūja, Vidhāna, Abhimata also, Vatsara and Bhūti who killed all demons, and Suparvan, and Bṛhatkānti, saluted by the world.

89b-92. The goddess, approached by Indra gave birth to the gods: The first one was god Dhara; the second one was unchangeable Dhruva; the third was Viśvāvasu; the fourth was lord Soma; then Anurūpamāya (was the sixth); after him the seventh was Vāyu; and the eighth was Nirhṛti. This was Dharma's progeny Born from Surabhi. It is also said that Viśvedevas were born on Viśvā from Dharma.

93-94. Dakṣa of mighty arms, Puṣkara and Tama, then Cākṣuṣa, Citra, also Bhadra and Mahoraga, Viśvāntakavasu, Bāla Nikumbha of great fame, Rudra and Atisiddhaujā with lustre superior to the son (were born).

95-98. The mother of the gods gave birth to the sons, viz. the gods. Marutvatī gave birth to the sons, viz. the Marutvats: Agni, Cakṣu, Ravi, Jyoti. Sāvitrī gave birth to the god Mitra, Śaravṛṣṭi and the great Sukarṣa, also to Virāja and Rāja, Viśvāya and Sumati, to Aśvaga, Citraraśmi and also king Niṣadha; again (she gave birth to) Ātmavidhi, Cāritra, Pādamātraga, Bṛhanta, Bṛhadrūpa and Vasanābhiga.

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1. The names of the Rudras given here differ from those given in Chapter 6.

2. The names of other wives of Dharma, mentioned in Chapter 6, are not repeated here.

99-100. Marutvatī gave birth to the progeny, viz. the host of Maruts ending with Jyeṣṭha. From Kaśyapa Aditi gave birth to the twelve Ādityas: Indra, Viṣṇu, Bhaga, Tvaṣṭṛ, Varuṇa, Aṁśa, Aryaman, Ravi, Pūṣan, Mitra—the giver of boons, Dhātā and Parjanya.[1]

101-102. These are the twelve Ādityas superior among gods. Two excellent sons of Āditya were born on Sarasvatī. They were best in (the performance of) penance, in virtues and were very much liked in heaven. Danu gave birth to Dānavas and Diti to Daityas.

103. Kālā gave birth to the demons and goblins, viz. the Kālakeyas. The very powerful diseases (Vyādhis) were the sons of Anāyuṣā.[2]

104. Siṁhikā was the mother of planets, and Muni[3] was the mother of Gandharvas. O descendant of Bharata, the other viz. Prācī was the mother of the auspicious celestial damsels.

105. Krodhā gave birth to all spirits and also Piśacā gave birth to the groups of Yakṣas and to demons, O King.

106. Saurabhī gave birth to the quadrupeds and these cows. The ancient supreme being, the lord Viṣṇu, Hari generated Māyā (his supernatural power).

107-108a. I have described him, as praised by the great sages, in due order. The man, who would listen to this best Purāṇa or would read it on the days of Parvan (i.e. the eighth and fourteenth day of each month, and the days of the full and the new moon), obtaining (this) world (i.e. being happy here) enjoys heavenly fruits in the other world.

108b-109a. He who propitiates Kṛṣṇa in four ways with eyes (i.e. by seeing him), with mind (i.e. by thinking about him), with words (i.e. muttering his names), or by deeds (done for him), is favoured by Kṛṣṇa.

109b-110a. A king (who has lost his kingdom) gets (back) his kingdom; and a poor person obtains excellent wealth. One

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1. The names of the Ādityas mentioned here differ from those given in Chapter 6.

2. Anāyuṣā—This is daughter no. 5; see 73 above.

3. Muni—The name is not given in the list mentioned in v. 73 above; but it occurs in Chapter 6.

with a short (span) of life gets a (long life); one who desires a son obtains progeny.

110b-111a. Those who desire (to perform) sacrifices, get their desires (fulfilled), and have various (kinds of) penance. Whatever desire one entertains would have it fulfilled from (i.e. by) the lord of the world.

111b-113a. O you best among men, no evil would come to him, who, giving up everything (else) would recite this account of Hari's manifestation of Puṣkara. This manifestation of the great-souled one called Pauṣkaraka, is described in Vyāsa's sacred text.

113b-114. Listen, from me (i.e. as I shall describe it) to Viṣṇu's being Viṣṇu and Hari in the Kṛtayuga; and his being Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu) among gods and his being Kṛṣṇa among the human beings. The course of the actions of that god is hard to be understood.

115-116. O king, now listen to the accurate (account of) past and future. This revered, unmanifest lord, with his characteristics being manifest, is Nārāyaṇa, of an unending soul and is devoid of origin and destruction. This one being Nārāyaṇa was the ancient Hari.

117. He (was) Brahmā, Vāyu, Soma, Dharma, Śakra, Bṛhaspati. O you descendant of Kuru, the unborn one also becomes the son of Aditi.

118. This eternal one, the younger brother of Indra, is known as Viṣṇu. Pleasing to him was the cause of Aditi's getting a son.

119. In the Kalpa (i.e. Brahmā's day) he created gods, Brahmā, and Prajāpatis (i.e. the mind-born sons) for killing gods' enemies, viz. Daityas, Dānavas and demons.

120. He also created excellent mental families of Brahmā. From these magnanimous ones the eternal and supreme Brahman came up.

121. I have told you this deed of Viṣṇu who (himself) is a wonder. Know from me the deed being narrated (since) it deserves to be told in the worlds.

122-123. O Bhīṣma, in the present Kṛtayuga, after Vṛtra was killed, there took place the well-known war called Tārakā-

maya, in which the terrible Dānavas, all difficult to be conquered in a battle, killed all gods and Asuras and Yakṣas, Uragas and Rākṣasas.

124. They being killed, and with their weapons cut off in the battle, turned back and mentally approached their protector, the god, lord Viṣṇu.

125-126. In the meanwhile, the clouds with brilliance (i.e. like) extinguished charcoal, covered the sky (as) with the solar and lunar eclipses. They were accompanied by multitudes of fierce (flashes of) lightning. They were making terrible sounds. They were obstructed by the speed of one another. The seven (kinds of) winds blew.

127. The clouds had the water heated due to their thunder strokes along with thunderbolt and winds. The sky was as it were being burnt by portents with terrible sounds.

128. Thousands of meteors fell; also those moving in the sky fell down. Heavenly cars fell down and jumped up.

129. That fear which would be there at the time of the end of the four *yugas* (spread everywhere). Forms became invisible due to the portents.

130. As a result (of this) everything became screened, and nothing was recognised. Even the ten quarters surrounded by the flood of darkness, did not shine.

131. (Goddess) Kālī, covered with black clouds entered (i.e. appeared there) in an embodied form. The sky did not shine (as usual) with the sun being predominant (but) was covered with fearful darkness.

132. (Then) that lord Hari of a dark body, having rent, with his arms, that stream of clouds with darkness, manifested his divine body.

133. He resembled a cloud and collyrium, the hair on which was like a cloud, which was like a black mountain in respect of lustre and form.

134. He had on a bright yellow garment. The ornaments were of gold purified in fire. He was like a column of smoke and darkness, (and) like the fire rising at the time of the destruction of the world.

135. The shoulders were round and doubly plump, the

hair on the head was covered with a crown. He shone more due to the weapons resembling gold.

136. He was bright like the rays of the moon and the sun, lofty like a mountain-peak, with one hand blissful due to (holding) the Nandaka sword. His chest shone with the Kaustubha[1] gem.

137. He was exalted on account of the power causing various results. He held a conch, discus and mace. He resembled an extensive mountain. He was of a forgiving nature. He had a curl of hair on the chest and the Śārṅga bow in the hand.

138. He gave generous fruits to gods, was charming and dear to the divine women, pleased the minds of all people, and attracted the minds of all beings.

139. He had a large branch in the form of divine power, was rich in knowledge, ego and pride and was the germination of the gross elements.

140. He was overcast with copious leaves, and had flowers of planets and stars; was the great stem of the world of Daityas, and was manifested in the mortal world.

141. He had the (huge) shape and sound of an ocean; he had resorted to the earth; he was covered with bonds of the lords of serpents, and was full of birds and creatures.

142. He was endowed with natural fragrance of virtue; was a great tree for all the worlds; had the water of the joy of the unmanifest and had the foam of the manifest ego.

143. He had the great stream of the rays in the form of the gross elements, had the bubbles in the form of planets and stars; was pervaded by the aeroplanes; was full of the roaring of clouds.

144. He was crowded with groups of creatures and fish; was united with groups of mountains, and conches; had the eddy of the sensual objects based on the three properties (viz. *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*) ; was swallowing the (big fish called) *timi* in the form of the worlds.

145. He had the thickets in the form of heroes; had the moss emitted by the serpents, was the great shelter of the twelve Suns; was the city of the eleven Rudras.

1. Kaustubha is the name of the celebrated gem obtained with thirteen other jewels at the churning of the ocean and worn by Viṣṇu on his chest.

146. He was endowed with the mountains in the form of the eight Vasus; was a great ocean having the three worlds as its water; had the water having tawny ripples of the twilight; was adorned with wind that had filled it.

147. He had hosts of Daityas and Yakṣas; was full of the (fish called) *jhaṣa* in the form of the groups of demons; had the mighty power of the grandsire; was thronged with the gems of celestial women.

148. He was full of the rivers in the form of wealth, fame, charm and Lakṣmī; was violent due to the dissolution having great showers caused by destiny.

149. They saw the great ocean in the form of Nārāyaṇa having company of the good as its great extremity—Nārāyaṇa, who was the god of gods, who was a granter of boons, who was affectionate to his devotees.

150-153. (They saw him as one) who showed favour; who brought about tranquility and who was auspicious; who shone with pearls attached to the chariot to which bay horses were yoked; seated in a chariot in the form of the divine world, (a chariot) to which bay horses were attached and which was adorned with the banner of Garuḍa, to which were fixed the wheels of the moon and the sun, had boundless reins, which was difficult to be seen (i.e. of an unbearable sight), which had Meru as its pole, which had the variegated flowers of stars (attached to it), which was pleasing due to planets and stars, which granted fearlessness in (times of) fear, which (remained) in the sky, which was invincible to gods and demons.

154. All those gods led by Indra and with palms joined in obeisance, and (uttering) cries of victory sought the refuge of him who was a protector.

155. That Viṣṇu, the god of gods, having heard their words, decided to destroy the demons in a great war.

156. Viṣṇu having resorted to (i.e. taken up) an excellent body and standing in the sky, said these words, containing a promise, to all the gods:

157. "Be calm, well-being to you; do not be afraid, O host of gods. All the demons are conquered by me; accept the three worlds."

158. Then the gods, pleased with the words of Viṣṇu, faithful to his promise, became very much delighted as if after having drunk excellent nectar.

159. Then withdrawing darkness, the clouds disappeared. Auspicious breezes blew. The ten quarters became bright.

160. The luminaries, almost pure, went round the moon. The planets did not fight. The rivers also were (having) clear (water).

161. The paths, and the three worlds, heaven and others, were free from dust. The rivers flew properly. In the same way the ocean did not agitate.

162. The internal organs of men were auspicious (i.e. functioned well). The great sages, free from grief, recited the Vedas loudly.

163-164a. Auspicious oblation was made in sacrifices. Fire roasted (the oblation) fully. People, set upon practising piety, were pleased at heart after having heard the words about killing the enemies—of Viṣṇu faithful to his promise.

164b-165a. Then the Daityas and Dānavas having learnt about the (imminent) fear from the mouth of Viṣṇu, exerted hard for the fight and victory (in it).

165b-171. Maya, desirous of fighting, mounted like the Sun on the Meru mountain, upon his imperishable, golden, divine chariot, which had its interior of the length of three *nalvas*[1] (i.e. twelve hundred cubits), which had four wheels, which was very big, in which great weapons were well-arranged, which made the sound of the multitudes of bells, which was adorned with the hide of a tiger, which was charming with a mass of reins, which was adorned with golden lattices, which was crowded with groups of wolves, which was decorated with flocks of birds, which was bright with divine weapons and missiles, which was resounding like (thundering) clouds, which had a good (i.e. a strong) axle, which was the best among excellent chariots, the middle part of which was good (i.e. strong), which resembled the sky, which was full (i.e. well-equipped) with maces and iron-bars, which was as it were the ocean embodied, which had on it golden armlets, which was beautiful like the orb of the

1. Nalva—A measure of distance equal to 400 *hastas* or cubits.

moon, which had banners and flag like the Mandara mountain with the Sun, the body of which was like the expanse of an elephant, which, at places, was bright like filaments of flowers, which had a thousand stars (studded to it), which was resounding like clouds with big showers, which was bright, and harmed the enemies' chariots.

172-177a. Tāra also mounted upon an excellent chariot, the breadth of which was two miles, and which was like that (i.e. two miles) in length also, which resembled a rocky pole, which was like a heap of dark collyrium, to the pole of which a heap of black iron and gems was tied, which was full of (i.e. equipped with) iron bars, as well as with mallets that could be thrown, and with large darts and fetters, and with portions (i.e. pieces) of bamboos, which was decorated with fearful iron clubs with hatchets attached below, which was raised (i.e. lofty) like the Mandara for the sake of (the destuction of) enemies and to which a thousand asses were yoked.

177b-178a. And Virocana, who was angry and who had a mace in his hand, remained at the head of the army like a mountain with a radiant peak.

178b-179a. The powerful demon Hayagrīva went round the arrayed army, having a thousand horses, of the demons.

179b-181a. Vipracitti's son Śveta, having white bracelets as his ornaments, the destroyer of the enemy's army, stretching far his bow of the length of a thousand cubits, drove his chariot; and he stood at the head of the army like a mountain with a sprout.

181b-182a. Khara scattering (i.e. shedding) from his eyes water (i.e. tears)due to anger, with his teeth, lips and eyes throbbing, desired to fight.

182b-183a. Demon Tvaṣṭṛ having occupied a chariot to which eighteen horses were yoked, stood ready for battle facing the divine army.

183b-184a. Bali's most distinguished son, Ariṣṭa, having invincible weapons, and causing the mountains to tremble, stood ready for the battle.

184b-185a. Kiśora, prompted by great joy like a young boy, remained in the midst of the demons as the Sun remains in the midst of planets.

185b-186a. Lamba, resembling a fresh cloud, and decorated with a long garment, remaining in the demons' army, appeared like the Sun with fog.

186b-187a. After him Vasundharābha, laughing, and having missiles in the form of teeth, lips and eyes, stood among the demons like a cruel great planet.

187b-188. Others were seated upon horses; still others on intoxicated lordly elephants; others were seated on lions and tigers; others on bulls and bears, some were seated upon asses and camels and some were using clouds as their vehicles.

189. Other demons, fearful and of deformed faces, were foot-soldiers. Desiring to fight, the one-legged ones and those with small legs, danced.

190. Many snapped their fingers, and others made a noise. Roaring like arrogant tigers the best demons thundered.

191. They, having rocks and hammers in their hands threatened the gods with their fore-arms like iron-beams and with maces and fearful iron beams.

192-193a. They sported with the weapons used as missiles[1], with mallets having a hundred edges, with rock-like swords, with iron beams and raised weapons.

193b. The sky was covered everywhere with multitudes of clouds.

194. Thus the army of the demons, furious with spirit and madness, stood before the gods like a host of clouds that had come up (in the sky).

195. And that army shone with thousands of demons pressed closely to one another, resembling wind, fire, mountain, clouds and water. That army elated because of being full with multitudes of troops, appeared to be mad with the desire to fight.

196. O you descendant of Kuru, you have listened to the expanse of the army of the demons. Now listen to the expanse of the army of the gods led by Viṣṇu.

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1. Śataghni—A kind of weapon used as a missile supposed by some to be a sort of rocket, but described by others as a huge stone studded with iron spikes and four *tālas* in height.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

The Rise of the Lotus and the War between Gods & Demons

Pulastya said:

1. The Ādityas, the Vasus, the two mighty Aśvins got ready for battle with their troops and followers in due order.

2. The thousand-eyed Indra, the guardian of the worlds and the leader of gods mounted on an excellent elephant.

3-6a. To his right stood the chariot, which had the best bird (i.e. Garuḍa) as its banner; which moved on very fine wheels; which was adorned with a golden umbrella; which was followed by the multitudes of gods, Gandharvas and Yakṣas in thousands; which was eulogised by brahmanic brilliant sages living in heaven; having mounted upon which chariot, furnished with multitudes of clouds having the lustre of lightning and rain-bow risen due to the vibration of the thunderbolt, and resembling mountains moving according to their will, the lord moves in the entire world.

6b-7. The brāhmaṇas remaining at the front of a sacrifice sing at the (time of the) presentation of oblations. Hundreds of groups of celestial nymphs dance by him accompanied by Indra when the sounds of the trumpets of gods were (heard) at the heavenly battle.

8-9. The best chariot which was at that time occupied by Mātalin, to which a thousand horses, having the speed of the mind and the wind, were yoked, shone, like the Sun, with the banner of the lord of serpents; (it shone) like the Meru mountain which is fully covered with the Sun's lustre.

10. And Yama, raising his staff and his fatal mallet and displaying them to the demons, stood in the army of gods.

11-14. Varuṇa, who held the nooses, who was accompanied by four oceans and the repeatedly licking snakes, who had put on ornaments of conches and pearls, who possessed a watery body, who had held together his fatal nooses, who wore excellent white garments and coral ornaments, who had an excellent body brown with gems, who indulged in thousands of sports with his horses of a watery appearance and resembling the

moon and being impelled by the wind, remained in the gods' army, desiring (i.e. waiting for) the time to fight, (looking) like the ocean that had broken the coast.

15-16. Dhanada (i.e. Kubera), accompanied by the army of Yakṣas and demons, and by the hosts of Guhyakas, endowed with a conch and a lotus, who was the lord of treasures, and king of kings, possessed of prosperity and holding a mace in his hand, and fighting by remaining in an aeroplane, was seen there seated in the Puṣpaka.

17a. He i.e. Kubera, the king of kings, the lord of Yakṣas, shone (there).

17b-18a. Indra remained in the eastern wing, Yama in the southern, Varuṇa in the western and Kubera in the northern wing (of the army).

18b-19a. The very mighty four regents of quarters remaining in the four wings moved in their respective regions of that army of gods.

19b-20. The Sun, moving in a chariot to which seven horses were yoked, which was moving like the wind, which was resplendent with beauty, and which was shining with rays, and which went to the skirt of Meru, rose and set (i.e. went up and down).

21-22a. The Sun, of twelve forms, heating the unchangeable world with heat by means of the orb at the gate of the heaven which had a thousand rays and which had illuminating lustre, moved among the gods.

22b-23a. Soma (i.e. the Moon), of white horses, having cool rays, delighting the world with lustre full of cool water, shines (i.e. shone) in his chariot.

23b-26a. The demons saw that Soma, who was accompanied by Stars, whose rays were cool, who was the lord of brāhmaṇas, whose form was marked with the shadow of a hare, who removed the nocturnal darkness, who was the lord of the Stars in the sky, who gave nectar, who was the immutable lord, who was the store of pure herbs and of nectar, who was the great lot of the world, who was agreeable, who was full of nectar, who had the snow-weapon, and who remained (in his chariot).

26b-30a. The Wind,[1] that is the life of the beings, and has divided himself into five in men (i.e. remains in five forms in the bodies of men), who went along seven tracts, who supports and has fashioned the three worlds, whom they call Agni, the creator of the worlds, and the lord, the source of all, whose origin, found in the seven notes (of the gamut), is proclaimed by words, whom they describe as a moving element and as one having no body, whom they call as moving in the sky, as quick moving, and as being produced from the source of sound, who is the life of all beings, who was stirred up by his own lustre, blew, with clouds, in a hostile manner and troubled the Daityas.

30b-31a. The Wind, along with the gods, Gandharvas, and hosts of Vidyādharas, sported with the rays white like serpents that had lately cast their skins.

31b-32a. Lords of serpents, producing strong poison of wrath, being thin and turning themselves into arrows and with their mouths wide open moved (there).

32b-33a. The mountains also stood with their rocky peaks and trees having hundred branches, by the gods in order to strike the army of the demons.

33b-35. He, god Hṛṣīkeśa, Padmanābha, Trivikrama[2], who is the fire at the end of the *yuga*, who is the lord of the entire world, who is the source of all, who killed (the demon) Madhu, who enjoys the oblations, who is the soul of the elements like earth, water and ether, who is dark, who brings about peace, who kills the enemies, who holds the mace and the disc, getting well-settled, caused absence of danger among the gods and others.

36-37. The very powerful lord, having the enemy of the serpents (i.e. Garuḍa) as his banner, held, in his right hand, the great mace, destroying all weapons, fatal in nature and bringing destruction to the enemies, and held in his other bright hands, the multitudes of other weapons like (his bow) Śārṅga etc.

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1. *Prāṇa* of five kinds: Prāṇa, Vyāna, Apāna, Udāna, Samāna.
2. *Trivikrama*—Viṣṇu in his fifth or dwarf (Vāmana) incarnation. He was born as a dwarf to humble the demon Bali.

38-44a. On the battlefield, the lord, having mounted upon the best bird (i.e. Garuḍa)[1], who was the offspring of Kaśyapa, who was the younger brother of Aruṇa, who had serpents as his food, who shone with the lord of serpents put into his mouth, who was (formerly) connected with the activity of (carrying) nectar, who was lofty like Mandara, whose valour was many times seen in the war between gods and demons, who was used like the thunderbolt for (securing) the nectar by Indra, who had put on a garment in the form of variegated wings, who was like a mountain full of minerals, who was, in the sky, covered beautifully with the brightest gem with its lustre like the moon and (as it were) a prop of increased wrath, adhering to the hood of a serpent, and with two wings having charming feathers, like the sky being covered with two clouds with the rainbow, at the time of the destruction of the world, who was adorned with dark and reddish banners, whose wings were golden (was ready to fight).

44b-45a. All the hosts of gods and sages, calm in mind, followed him and praised the mace-holder with words couching great sacred texts.

45b-47. That mighty army of Viṣṇu, who was victorious, who was tolerant and bright, (the army) which was joined by Kubera, led by Yama, encircled by Varuṇa, adorned by the lord of gods, in which great sound was made by Vāyu, which was blazing with Agni was arranged for the battle.

48. Bṛhaspati said: "Well-being to the gods." Uśanas (i.e. Śukra) said these words: "Well-being to the demons".

49. Then a fierce battle took place between the two armies of gods and demons who were desirous of conquering each other.

50. The demons, with many weapons raised, went to fight with the gods, like mountains with mountains.

51. That was a very wonderful fight between the gods and the demons, charged with piety and impiety and pride and politeness.

52-54. Then with the very speedy horses, and with elephants that were goaded, and with warriors having swords in their

1. *Garuḍa*—Son of Kaśyapa and Vinatā.

hands and jumping, with pestles being thrown, with falling arrows, with stretched bows, and with very fearful missiles being dropped, that battle, in which gods and demons had crowded, and which produced fear to the world and which resembled the fire of destruction, took place.

55. The demons struck the gods led by Indra in the battle with iron bars, mallets and rocks.

56. The gods, who were being killed by the strong demons behaving like conquerors, whose faces were dejected, were very much afflicted in the war.

57-58. They, crushed down by missiles and spears, and with their heads broken with iron bars, with their chests pierced by the sons of Diti (i.e. the demons), and bleeding profusely, were killed with volleys of arrows; their exertion was rendered useless, and getting (caught) into the illusion of the demons, they were unable to move.

59. The exertion of the army of the gods which as it were appeared to be arrested by the demons and which was (almost) lifeless, was rendered useless by the demons.

60. Indra, of many (i.e. a thousand) eyes, cutting off the terrible arrows discharged from the bows of the demons, entered the fierce army of the demons.

61. He, having killed all important demons rendered the army of the demons covered with darkness by a multitude of darkening missiles.

62. They, overpowered by darkness due to the prowess of Indra, did not recognize one another nor the vehicles of demons.

63. The gods, freed from the nooses of illusion, exerted, and felled (on the ground) the heads of the hosts of demons which were (covered with) darkness.

64. The wretched demons, who became unconscious due to the darkness of a black colour, instantly fell down like mountains with their wings cut off.

65. There (i.e. on the battlefield) the body of the lord of demons, who was overcome (with darkness) was, as it were, full of internal darkness.

66. Maya, burning the illusion (produced by gods)

produced a great illusion like the one at the time of the destruction of the world produced by the *Aurva*[1] fire.

67. That illusion produced by Maya burnt the illusion created by Indra; and the demons instantly rose (taking up) the forms of gods in the battle.

68. Reaching (i.e. being covered by) the *Aurvī* illusion, the gods being burnt (by the fire produced by it) resorted to the pond of water cool (with) the rays of the moon on the region of tbe moon.

69. The gods, being burnt by that *Aurva* fire and being insensible and afflicted, seeking the refuge of Indra, praised him.

70. When the army (of gods) was (thus) distressed and was being killed by the demons, Varuṇa, impelled by the lord of gods, said (these) words:

Varuṇa said:

71. O Indra, formerly, Urva the son of a brāhmaṇic sage, and bright due to qualities similar to those of Brahman, practised a very severe penance.

72. Hosts of sages and gods with divine sages approached him, who was as it were tormenting the world with his penance, like the sun.

73. The demon, Hiraṇyakaśipu, the lord of demons, also formerly requested that sage (Urva) of a great lustre.

74-75. The brāhmaṇic sages spoke words conforming to dharma: "O revered sir, this family has its root cut off among the families of sages. You are all alone, without a child. There is on one else (to continue) the family. Practising the vow of abstinence you are following (i.e. suffering from) affliction only."

76-77a. "Many brāhmaṇa families, those of sages of purified souls remain all alone and secluded and without progeny. When all of them are like that, I have nothing to do with sons."

77b-78. "You are the best among ascetics and are bright like the creator. Therefore proceed to continue your family and multiply your self by yourself. Put together your mighty lustre and make your body a second (i.e. generate a son)".

79. The sage thus addressed by the sages being hurt in the mind censured all those and said these words to them:

1. *Orva*—It should be Aurva.

80-81. "As the eternal duty of the sages, it was laid down formerly that the only duty approved by seers, of a brāhmaṇa who eats (i.e. subsists on) wild roots and fruits, and who is born in a brāhmaṇa family and who lives by himself, (is celibacy). If celibacy is well-practised it would even move Brahmā.

82-83. There are three courses of conduct of people: (One is that of those) who live as householders; (there is another) of those like us who live in the forest; and those who live in hermitages, eating (i.e. drinking) water, eating (i.e. living on) air, using their teeth as the mortar (i.e. the anchorites) and those who break things on stones, and there is the one of those who practise penance with five fires.[1]

84. These remaining in penance, and giving importance to celibacy (by performing) vows very difficult to perform, desire the highest position.

85. The brāhmaṇa-hood of a brāhmaṇa is occasioned by (i.e. is due to) his celibacy. This is what people knowing (the importance of) celibacy say in the other world.

86. Piety resides in celibacy; penance resides in celibacy. Those brāhmaṇas who remain in celibacy, reside in heaven.

87. Perfection is not possible without yoga (deep and abstract meditation); glory is not possible without yoga. O you tormentor of the enemies in this world, there is no better means of glory than austerity (in the form of) celibacy.

88. For him, who restrains the group of the organs of sense and the group of the five elements, and concentrates on celibacy what greater penance than that is there?

89. Having (i.e. growing) hair without yoga (a deep and abstract meditation), performing a vow without (proper) volition and religious mendicant's life without celibacy—these three are called religious hypocrisy.

90. Where is (the need of) a wife and of union (with her)? Where again is the need of the perverse (i.e. unnatural) condition (viz. that of a householder etc.)? Indeed these mind-born offsprings were created by Brahmā with his mind.

1. *Pañcāgnitapas*—A kind of penance practised with five fires: four fires in the four directions around the person practising the penance; and the fifth fire is the sun, above the head.

91. If you, who are self-subdued, have the power of penance then by the act like that of Brahmā, create mind-born sons.

92. The ascetics should have mentally produced offspring. There is no union with a wife, no (depositing of) seed (i.e. semen)—this is said to be a vow of the ascetics.

93. What you, the good and fearless persons have said here, is indeed like that which is very much liked by bad persons.

94. This I, making by body blazing with the soul, will produce a mind (-born) son without copulation with a wife.

95. Thus, with the act like that of the creator my soul (i.e. I) will produce another self (i.e. a son), as it were desiring to burn the beings".

Varuṇa said:

96. (Then) Urva engrossed in penance, put his thigh into the fire, and shook with one *darbha* the fire-producing wooden stick (for) generating a son.

97. Suddenly breaking his thigh, an excellent fire came up. The son—the fire, became desirous of burning the world.

98. Breaking open the thigh of Urva a destructive fire called *Aurva*, very angry and as it were desiring to burn the three worlds, was produced.

99. While being produced he said to his father in piteous words: "O father, hunger is oppressing me; I shall swallow the world; leave me."

100. He, resembling Yama, spreading in the ten quarters with his flames going up to the heaven, and consuming all beings, grew.

101-102. In the meanwhile, Brahmā came to the sage Urva, and said (to him): "(Please) ward off your son; show pity for the world. O brāhmaṇa, I shall give excellent help to this your son. O you son, O you best among the speakers, listen to these true words of me."

Aurva said:

103. I am blessed, I am favoured that you, revered sir, O highest soul, are giving this idea to this child (viz. me).

104. When the morning time has arrived, and when his

association is to be desired, revered sir, satisfied with what oblations would my son obtain happiness?

105. Where will be his residence? What will be the nature of the mighty food of him of great lustre that the lord will give?

Brahmā said :

106. His residence will be in the mare's mouth in the ocean. O brāhmaṇa, my source is water that is immeasurable. Let him go there.

107. There he will certainly live, drinking the oblation of the form of water. I am giving him that residence, viz. that expanse of water (i.e. the ocean).

108. Then, O son, he and I removing things of the past will move together at the end of the *Yuga*.

109. This fire, who is made by me to eat (i.e. subsist on) water, will, at the time of the deluge, burn all being along with the demons and goblins.

110. Saying, "Let it be so", that fire, having suppressed the circle of flames, entered the mouth of the ocean and not his father, the lord, viz. Urva.

111. Then Brahmā returned, and also the great sages. Knowing the prowess of the fire *Aurva* they took their respective courses.

112. Then, seeing that great wonder, Hiraṇyakaśipu, saluting Urva by touching the ground with all the limbs of his body (i.e. prostrating himself before Urva), said these words (to him):

113. "O revered sir, this wonder has taken place in the presence of the world. O greatest sage, the grandsire is quite pleased with your penance.

114. O you of a great vow, I should be looked upon as the servant of your son and you. You are fit to be praised due to (your having done) this deed.

115. Then see me to be distressed and engaged in propitiating you. If, O greatest sage, I sink into distress, that would be your defeat."

Urva said:

116. I am blessed, I am favoured since you have looked upon me as your preceptor. O you of good vow, you have no fear due to this penance.

117. Accept that illusion only, which is created by my son, which is fuel-less and full of fire, which is difficult to be touched even by fires.

118. While subduing the enemy it will be under the control of you and (the members) of your family. It will protect your side and will burn (i.e. destroy) the enemy.

Varuṇa said:

119. This illusion unassailable even by gods, was formerely created by Aurva, the fire, the son of Urva.

120. When the demon was afflicted it would become powerless; there was no doubt about it. That was the curse given by him who had created it with his lustre.

121. O Śakra, if this (illusion) is to be set aside and the lord is to be made happy, then give me, as my companion, the Moon, born of water (of the ocean).

122. There is no doubt that united with him and surrounded by the aquatic animals, I shall destroy this illusion through your favour.

123. Śakra, who helped the gods to prosper, being delighted, said, "Let it be so," and ordered Soma, having cold weapons, to fight at the head (of the army):

124. "O Soma, help Varuṇa for the destruction of the demons and the victory of the gods.

125. You are regarded as being of matchless prowess[1] and the lord of the luminaries. Those well-versed in the Vedas know that all juices are full of you.

126. None like you having cold weapons is (to be found) in the world. Your waning and waxing are uncreated in the ocean as well as in the sky.

127. Deluding the world you cause the time through day and night. Your characteristic is reflected in the world and the spot on you is of the form of a hare.

1. *Prativīrya*—should in fact be 'aprativirya'.

128. O Soma, those who are not born of kṣatriya wombs do not know your illusory power. You remain above the course of the Sun, and above the luminaries.

129. Driving away darkness suddenly, you illumine the entire world. You are cool-rayed, snow-bodies, the lord of the luminaries and have the form of the hare on your body.

130-133a. You are also of the nature of destiny; you are fit to be offered a sacrifice to; you are the sacrifice; and you are the unmanifest one; you are the lord of the herbs; you are the source of rites; also of water and you are cool-rayed; your rays are cool; you are the prop of nectar; you are smart and have a white vehicle; you are the loveliness of the lovely bodies; you are the Soma of those who drink Soma. You are agreeable to all beings; you destroy the darkness; you are the lord of the constellations. Therefore, O you commander of a large army, go with Varuṇa, wearing an armour. Put an end to the demonish illusion, by which we are being burnt."

Soma said:

133b-134. Since, O king of gods, O giver of boons, you tell me to fight I shall shower hoarfrost which would remove the demonish illusion. See these my cool and tormenting rays, covered with snow.

135. So the snow-showers discharged by the Moon, with nooes (of Varuṇa) surrounded the demons as the wind surrounds the multitudes of clouds.

136. The two mighty (heroes), Varuṇa and Indu (i.e. the Moon), holding nooses and cool rays, killed the demons by sending down snow and nooses.

137. The two lords of water—the two warriors fighting with nooses and snow moved with water in the army like two agitated great oceans.

138. The entire great army of the demons was filled, as the entire world is covered by the showering destructive clouds (at the time of deluge).

139. The two lords of water, viz. Soma and Varuṇa, getting ready, destroyed that illusion created by the lord of demons.

140. Consumed by the multitudes of the cool rays, and assailed by (Varuṇa's) nooses, the demons could not move in the battle like topless mountains.

141. All the demons struck down by Soma, were destroyed. Their bodies were flooded with snow like fires that were not hot (i.e. that were extinguished).

142. The variegated and auspicious heavenly cars of those demons fell down. They fell down and again came up.

143. Maya, the demon skilled in magic, saw, in the heaven, the demons bound by the groups of nooses and covered over with the lunar rays.

144-146. He released the celebrated, mountainous illusion with a group of mountains, with swords and sharp-edged spears, with heaps of trees standing at the top, crowded with groups of lions and tigers when the hosts of gods were making noise, crowded with herds of wolves, with trees shaken by wind; it was created by his own son, it was warbling and it moved freely in the heaven everywhere.

147. The demons struck the gods with showers of rocks accompanied by sounds of swords and with falling trees (i.e. trees that fell) and did not allow them to live.[1]

148. The two illusions—that of the demons and that of Varuṇa—then disappeared. Movement on the earth became fearful as it were with mountains (everywhere).

149-150. No god was seen as (each one) was screened by multitudes of trees. Except the Mace-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) all other (soldiers in) the army of gods had their bows destroyed, had become loathsome due to the weapons being broken, and had discontinued their exertion. That majestic lord, who had entered the war, did not tremble at all.

151-152. The lord of the world, Hari, who resembled the (dark) destructive cloud, who knew the occasion, and who realized (imminent) death in the war, who desired to witness the fight between gods and demons, did not get angry because of his forbearance. Then the lord ordered Fire and Wind to fight.

1. Stanzas like this are not quite intelligble.

153-155. Impelled by the words of Viṣṇu they drew the illusion. That mountainous illusion perished (when) it was burnt by the two, who had been roaming about and had commenced to exert themselves. That Wind accompanied by Fire and that Fire in the company of Wind, augmented as it were at the time of deluge, burnt the army of demons. Wind became speedy there; and then Agni also became like that due to Māruta (i.e. Wind).

156-166a. Fire and Wind who were amusing themselves, moved in the army of the demons. Then the beings were (being) reduced to ashes and they were rising and falling. Everywhere the aeroplanes of the demons were falling. The branches (of trees) were being thrown off by Wind, and Fire was doing his duty. The killing by Māyā (i.e, illusion) was going on; the Mace-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) was being praised; the exertion of the demons had stopped; the three worlds were free from bondage; gods were pleased. Good people said: 'Well (done), well (done).' The thousand-eyed one (i.e. Indra) achieved victory, and the demons were defeated. All the directions were pure; the righteous began to increase. The course of the Moon was uncovered, and the Sun remained steady in his own place. Beings were taking an active part in worldly affairs; people were endowed with good character; the bonds of death were unaffected. Oblations were offered into fire; gods shone with sacrifices and they showed the path to heaven. All the regents of the quarters supported their quarters; the perfect ones remained in penance; the sinful ones did not exist. The side of the gods was glad and the side of the demons was dejected. Righteousness had the three feet, and unrighteousness had just one foot (i.e. righteousness was very much predominant). The great gate (to righteousness etc.) was open, and good path existed; people were inclined to piety, and the hermitages proceeded with their activity uninterruptedly (i.e. the hermits led a peaceful life). Kings were engaged in protecting their subjects and shone; the worlds were calm (and) the dark demon was subdued.

166b-172. When that (great) deed of Agni and Vāyu took place in the war, all worlds were wholly interested in them, were bright and performed acts (celebrating) their victory. Hearing about the great fear caused to the demons by Agni and

Vāyu, the well-known demon Kālanemi took notice (of what was happening). He was having a crown of the shape of the sun, and tinkling ornaments and armlets. He resembled the Mandara mountain. He was covered with great pearl-ornaments, and looking fearful due to having hundreds of weapons, a hundred arms and a hundred faces, and a hundred heads. He stood like a majestic mountain having a hundred peaks and augmented in the great side, (looking) like fire in the summer. He had smoky hair, ruddy moustache, projected teeth, and a hideous face. He had a large body expanding in the three worlds, lifting up the sky with his arms, and throwing off the mountains with his two feet, and setting in motion showering clouds with his breaths.

173-177. All gods, with their eyes afflicted with fear, saw Kālanemi, whose broad red eyes were (looking) obliquely, whose exalted lustre was like (the) Mandara (mountain), who was, while approaching the groups of gods, as it were desiring to burn them in the battle, who was threatening the hosts of gods, and covering the ten quarters, who was seen like Death risen and delighted at the time of deluge, and who said to the demons, struck by gods, 'Wait, wait!' with his strong right hand lifted up, which had a raised nice palm, the fingers of which had large joints, which was long and full of ornaments, which did not move at all.

178. Beings observed that Kālanemi destroying (the gods), like another Trivikrama Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) overcoming everything.

179. That demon, having shaken the sky with wind, and rising again, came and started to fight causing fear to all gods.

180-181. That demon Kālanemi, while moving (on the battlefield), being encircled by Indra, came near him, and shone like Mandara with Viṣṇu. Seeing Kālanemi, like another death, coming to them, all the gods, led by Indra were very much frightened.

182. That great demon, desiring to do what was agreeable to the demons, and of great lustre, increased (in size) like a cloud at the end of the summer.

183. The lordly demons, seeing him to have entered the

three worlds, stood up unfatigued (i.e. enthusiastically) as if after having drunk the excellent nectar.

184. The demons, desiring to fight, free from fear and alarm, led by Maya and Tāra, behaving like conquerors in the Tārakāmaya war, and going (out) to fight, shone.

185. They who were repeating (magic) formulas, who were running through the army became glad when they saw the demon Kālanemi.

186. All those chief (soldiers) of Maya, who were leaders in the battle, gave up their fear (and) stood (near him) to fight.

187-195. These successful demons, knowing the (art of the use of) missiles, well-settled in penance, viz. Maya, Tāra, Varāha, Hayagrīva, Vipracitti's son Śveta, both Khara and Lamba, Bali's son Ariṣṭa, so also the one known as Kiśora, and the great demon Surbhānu, famous like gods and as (an expert) fighter in a circular military array, went to Kālanemi, with (i.e. taking with them) very heavy maces, discs, chariots, hatchets, pestles resembling death, slings, mallets, stones like missiles, so also terrible rocks, sharp-edged weapons, small javelins and bars of excellent iron, heavy destructive śataghnī missiles, pairs of fetters, so also ploughs that struck fiercely when discharged, with long arms, nooses and (weapons) like iron-bars, with arrows having the licking and spreading mouths of serpents, with destructive weapons and shining iron-clubs, with sharp unsheathed swords, with sharp and bright lances, and with bright demons holding bows.

196. That army of the demons, excellent on account of shining weapons, then led by Kālanemi, shone in the battle.

197. The army of the gods, which was closed (i.e. encircled) on all sides by them (i.e. the demons) like a thicket of trees at the time of the advent of the clouds, also became glad (as) it was protected by Indra.

198-202a. That great shining (divine) army, which was endowed with cold and hot lustre (respectively) of the Moon and the Sun, which was speedy like the wind, which was agreeable, which was having the banners of stars, which had put on the garments of clouds, which was smiling with the planets and

constellations, which was protected by Yama, Indra, Kubera, and also by intelligent Varuṇa, which was having (in it) blazing fire and wind, which was devoted to Nārāyaṇa, and which resembled a current in the ocean, which had missiles which are fearful and had (in it) Yakṣas and Gandharvas, shone. At that time, the encounter between the two armies took place like the union of the heaven and earth at the time of the expiration of a Yuga.

202b-204a. That war in which gods and demons had thronged, in which forgiveness and valour were excessive, which had arrogance, politeness and speed, was fierce. The gods and demons set out with terrible armies like the excited clouds from the eastern and the western oceans.

204b-205. The gods and demons were delighted with the two armies, as the mountains with the blossomed thickets on them. They beat the drums and blew the conches repeatedly.

206-207. The sound of the stroke of the bow-string on the fore-arm, filling the universe, the earth and the directions, so also the twangs of the bows and the sound of the drums obscured the cries of the demons. Making each other go forward and backward, they (i.e. the gods and demons) assailed one another.

208-210. Others desiring hand-to-hand fight, broke (the arms of tbeir enemies) with their own arms. The demons discharged terrible thunderbolts, iron bars, excellent missiles[1], swords and heavy maces on the gods, in the battle. Some, with their bodies broken by the fall of the maces, and shattered to pieces (i.e. excessively wounded) repeatedly fell down, while others struck again. In the battle, those who were much excited, angrily encountered one another, with chariots, horses, aeroplanes and elephants etc.

211-213. Moving in the battle (i.e. on the battlefield), biting their lips (literally, having faces the lips of which were bitten), those (who were seated in) the chariots fought with (those who also were seated in) the chariots, and the foot-soldiers fought with foot-soldiers. The great sound of those noisy chariots resounded in the sky as by the thundering of the

1. *Uttamāyuyudhān*—The correct word appears to be Uttamāyudhān.

clouds in the rainy season. Some broke the (enemy's) chariots (while) some were crushed under chariots.

214. Others were distressed; the chariots could not move on. Some lifting up their enemies with their hands in the fight were bitten (by the enemies).

215. Those strong ones, having swords and being covered with hides struck (the enemies) with joy. Others pierced with missiles and struck (with weapons) in the battle vomitted blood.

216. Some, resembling clouds dripping water, came (there). Due to their showering of arrows on one another, the day of the fight appeared to be a rainy day.

217. In the meanwhile that demon Kālanemi grew like a cloud being filled with the ocean-floods.

218. Due to his limbs resembling elephants and mountains, clouds, having chaplets of lightning, and showering blazing fire, fell down.

219. Far extended flames with fire-sparks went out from his mouth, who was showering sweat and knitting the eyebrows, when he was hissing with anger.

220. His arms grew obliquely and upwards in the sky like serpents with five mouths coming out from a mountain.

221. He screened the divine sky with multitudes of missiles of many kinds, with bows and with iron-bars as with lofty mountains.

222. He desiring to fight and with his garments tossed by wind[1] remained there actually like Meru mountain with its rocks scorched by the evening sun.

223. He struck down the hosts of gods with peaked mountains and tops of trees, hurled with great speed, (as Indra struck down) the great mountains with (his) thunderbolt.

224. The gods struck by Kālanemi in the battle, with the hair on their heads cut off and removed, with his arms having swords, could not move.

225. Some Yakṣas, Gandharvas, birds and Kinnaras with great serpents were struck with fists and some were split into two parts.

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1. *Anilodbhūta*—should be aniloddhūta.

226. The gods, who were frightened in the battle by that Kālanemi, and who were perplexed, were unable to exert themselves.

227. He rivetted the thousand-eyed Śakra with arrows thrown round him, and stopped all his exertion in the war.

228. In the battle he made Varuṇa like a cloud without water, like a waterless ocean and nooseless and motionless.

229. He, of the form of death, surrounded Kubera in the war. Dhanada (i.e. Kubera), the lord of the regents of quarters was made actionless by him in the battle.

230. On account of that the frightened Yama, who snatches all, whose weapon is deadly, gave up his state of Yamahood in the battle and entered his own (i.e. the southern) direction.

231. Having driven away the Guardians of the Quarters and assumed their protection duties he divided his body into four parts corresponding to the four directions.

232. Having gone to the divine path of the luminaries indicated by the divine Sun, he took away Soma's grandeur and all his great domain.

233. He drove away Bhāskara (i.e. the Sun) of bright rays by means of Dharma and snatched his rule, his domain and his daily activity.

234. Having conquered Agni, the gods' mouth, he made him resort to his own mouth; and having speedily conquered Vāyu, he brought him under his own control.

235. Forcibly bringing (back) the great rivers from the ocean he made them, the embodied ones, give him comfort and power[1].

236. Having brought under his control the water in the heaven and on the earth, he covered the earth well-protected by the mountains.

237. The great demon, occupying all the worlds, and causing fear to all the worlds, appeared like the self-born one, the lord of the gross elements (or of the great beings).

238. The demon, having the body of the regents of quarters, having the soul of the Moon and the Sun, born of Fire and Wind, shone in the battle.

239. The demons praised him, who remained at the position

1. *Abhisukha Vīrya*—the expressions are not very happy.

of the highest god, resembling the creator of the worlds, as the gods praised the grandsire.

240. Due to his perverse deeds (these) five, viz. Vedas, Righteousness, Forbearance, Truth, and Śrī, who had resorted to Nārāyaṇa, did not go to him.

241. That lord of demons, getting angry because the five did not approach him, went to the place of Viṣṇu where the god remained.

242. (There) he saw (Viṣṇu) who was seated on Garuḍa, who held a conch, a discus and a mace, and who whirled round the auspicious mace to destroy the demons.

243-244. That demon (viz. Kālanemi), with his mind agitated, seeing Viṣṇu, who resembled a cloud containing water, whose garments were like lightning, who had mounted upon the bird, Kaśyapa's son, of golden wings, and moving in the sky (i.e. upon Garuḍa) and who as it were, remained in the sky, and who was unperturbed, and was ready to destroy the demons said:

245. "This is our enemy who destroyed our ancestors and also Madhu and Kaiṭabha who lived in the ocean.

246. This is our enemy who is indeed described to be matchless. In many battles he killed many demons.

247. This is the one who is cruel in the world and is impudent to women and children. He uncovered the parted hair of (i.e. behaved impolitely with) the wives of demons.

248-249. He is the Viṣṇu or Vaikuṇṭha of the gods, the residents of heaven; among the serpents he is Ananta; he is the self-born of the self-born (i.e. superior to him); this is the lord of the gods who will be wronged by us. Getting (i.e. inviting his anger) Hiraṇyakaśipu was killed.

250. Gods, having resorted to his shadow (i.e. having sought his protection), remain at the mouth of the sacrifice and eat the clarified butter offered in three ways by the great sages.

251. He (alone) is the cause of the death of all the enemies of gods. In the war all our families entered his discus (i.e. were destroyed by his disc).

252. He is said to have given up (i.e. offered) his life for

gods. He, the lord, discharged the disc endowed with lustre on the enemies.

253. When I, who am death, remain here, he has become the death to the demons. Keśava will get the fruit of the time that has gone by.

254. Luckily (for me) now this Viṣṇu has come before me. Crushed with my arm[1] in the battle by me, he will perish.

255. I shall luckily pay homage to the former demons, by killing, in the battle, this Viṣṇu causing fear to the demons.

256. In the battle I shall quickly destroy the hosts of gods. Even though he has gone (i.e. has taken up) another existence, he torments the demons in battle.

257. He was formerly (called) Ananta and also well-known as Padmanābha. In the terrible single ocean he killed both Madhu and Kaiṭabha.

258. Dividing his body into two halves—one half of lion and another of man—he (all) alone formerly killed my father, Hiraṇyakaśipu.

259. Aditi, the origin (i.e. the mother) of gods conceived him as an auspicious embryo. Walking three steps he alone had the three worlds (under his control).

260. Now that god, when he has encountered me, when this Tārakāmaya battle has come up, will perish."

261. Speaking like this in many ways, he quickly caused Nārāyaṇa to like (i.e. made Nārāyaṇa) to fight by (saying) ugly words to him in the battle.

262. The Mace-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), being (thus) abused by the lord of demons did not get angry. With great power of forbearance and with a smile, he said:

263. "O demon, the power of arrogance is small, (while) the power of (i.e. due to) the suppression of anger is steady. You, who, forsaking forbearance, talk (like this), are doomed by (i.e. as a result of) faults due to pride.

264. I look upon you as mean; fie upon your might of words! Which men would remain there where women shout?

265. O demon, I shall see that you go along the same path

1. *Bahunā*—should be bāhunā.

as your predecessors have gone. Who would be prosperous by giving up (i.e. violating) the rule laid down by the creator?

266. Today I shall kill you who destroy the operation of gods; and I shall (re-)place the deities in their own respective positions."

267. When, in the battle (i.e. on the battlefield) Viṣṇu was speaking like this, the demon laughed, and made his hands endowed with weapons (i.e. took weapons in his hands).

268. He, with his eyes doubly red due to anger, raised his hundred hands, and dropped all the multitudes of weapons on the chest of Viṣṇu in the battle.

269. The demons too, led by Maya and Tāra in the battle, and with their weapons and swords raised, attacked Viṣṇu in the war.

270. He, being struck by the very mighty demons, with all their weapons raised, did not move from there (i.e. from that place) like an unmoving mountain.

271-272. Kālanemi, the great demon, encountered by Garuḍa, got excited, and raising with his arms his terrible, blazing mace, released it on Garuḍa, with all his life (i.e. with all his might). Viṣṇu was amazed by that deed of the demon.

273-274. Then he (again) hit the mace on Garuḍa's head. Seeing Garuḍa afflicted, and his own body unhurt, Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu) with eyes red due to anger, took his disc; and with Suparṇa, the lord speedily grew up.

275-277a. His arms, pervading the ten quarters, also grew. He, as it were desiring to occupy all the worlds with his prowess, filling the intermediate directions, and the sky and the earth as well, grew (in size). The sages with Gandharvas praised Madhusūdana, growing (in size) for the victory of the gods.

277b-283a. He scratching (i.e. touching) the sky with his crown and shining head, having pervaded the earth with his two feet and having covered the directions with his arms wetted with fat, blood and marrow of the demons, held his discus, which resembled the sun in lustre, which had a thousand spokes which destroyed the enemy, which was like a blazing fire, which was fierce (yet) beautiful to look at, which had golden particles stuck to its circumference, which caused fear, which was match-

less, the circular edge of which was razor-like, which was filled with wreaths, garlands and chaplets, which moved according to its desire, which took up any form it liked, which was fashioned by the Self-born himself, which caused fear to all enemies, which was full of wrath, and arrogant in the war, by the discharge of which the worlds, along with the immobile and the mobile, got bewildered, and the ghosts eating raw flesh were satisfied in the great war.

283b-285a. The Mace-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), blazing with anger, having raised his discus of a matchless action, and resembling the sun in brilliance, and destroying the demon's lustre with his own lustre, cut off with that (discus) only the arms of Kālanemi in the battle.

285b-286a. Hari forcibly destroyed with that discus the discus (of Kālanemi) which had a hundred points, and which was (as it were) laughing loudly due to fire-powder (i.e. splinters of fire).

286b-288a. That demon, with his arms cut off and without a head, did not move. With his headless trunk firm he stood in the battle like a branchless tree. Garuḍa, spreading out his two wings, and having speed like that of the wind, struck Kālanemi with his chest.

288b-289a. He (i.e. Kālanemi) facing Garuḍa's body, and having no arms, whirling from the sky, fell down leaving (i.e. from) the sky, and shaking the earth.

289b-291a. When the demon fell down, gods along with hosts of sages, (saying) 'Well (done), well (done)', together honoured Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu). Other demons whose valour was seen in the battle, were all pervaded by (his) arms and could not move in the battle.

291b-293a. He seized some with their hair; pressed the throats of some; cut off the face of someone; and held someone by his waist. They, who were consumed by the mace and the discus, who had lost their energy, and life, tumbling with all their bodies (i.e. fully) from the sky, dropped down on the earth.

293b-295. When all the demons were killed, Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu), having performed that (feat) dear to Indra, was

successful. When in the Tārakāmaya battle that destruction took place, Brahmā, the grandsire of all the worlds, came to that region with all brāhmaṇic sages and hosts of Gandharvas and celestial nymphs.

296-297a. The god (i.e. Brahmā) honouring Hari, the god of gods, said: "O god, you have done a great job; you have taken out the dart in the form of the demons; and we are pleased by the death of the demons.

297b-300. O Viṣṇu, there is none else except you who would have controlled that great demon, Kālanemi, whom you killed. He, insulting the gods and the movable and immovable worlds, having destroyed the sages, even opposed me. So, I am pleased with this your deed, viz. that you struck down Kālanemi, resembling death. So come on, well-being to you; let us go to the excellent heaven.

301. There the brāhmaṇic sages, sitting in the assembly are waiting for you. O you best among those who have boons, which boon shall I grant to you?

302-304. You grant boons to the gods when they are in their positions. You have delivered these big three worlds (by) killing the troublesome fellow. O Viṣṇu, in this very war (you have helped that) great-souled Indra."

Thus addressed by revered Brahman, the immutable Viṣṇu spoke in auspicious words to all gods led by Indra:

Viṣṇu said:

Let all the gods that have come here listen:

305-307a. Led by Indra, all of us with Garuḍa have killed in the battle demons led by Kālanemi and endowed with valour and superior even to Indra. In this great war only two have escaped: the demon Virocana and the very mighty Svarabhānu.

307b-308. Let Indra resort (i.e. go) to his own direction; so also let (Varuṇa go to his own direction); let Yama look after his (i.e. southern direction), and Kubera the northern direction. Let Candramas (i.e. the Moon) be always united with the constellations.

309-311. Let this Sun go to (i.e. be united with) the first day of the season with the equinoctial and solstitial points. Let

the portions of clarified butter, presented with respect by the members (of the sacrifice) proceed. Let oblations be offered into fire by Brāhmaṇas according to rites mentioned in the Vedas. Let gods be pleased with offerings in the sacrifices, great sages with the Vedic studies, and the dead ancestors with śrāddha, as they like. Let Vāyu, taking his course, move (i.e. blow). Let Agni blaze in three ways.

312-314a. Let the (first) three castes please the three worlds by their own virtues. Let sacrifices be performed by brāhmaṇas fit to be initiated. Let the sacrificing priests receive presents separately. Let the Sun, the Moon and Vāyu, proceed by gratifying cows, fluids and life in beings (respectively) by their pleasing deeds.

314b-315a. Let all the big rivers, the mothers of the three worlds, rising from Mahendra and Malaya, go one by one to the sea as before.

315b. O gods, give up the fear of the demons and be calm. Well-being to you.

316-317. I shall go to the eternal world of Brahmā. Do not ever fearlessly (i.e. without proper caution) go to your own house or to heaven, and especially to the battle(-field); for the demons are mean. They strike at the weak points. Their position is fixed.

318a. Let you who are good and remain in (i.e. behave according to) your own nature, have your mind in honesty.

318b-320. Speaking thus to the hosts of gods, that very successful Viṣṇu, the revered lord, of a true (i.e. unfailing) valour, went with Brahmā, to Brahmā's world, after having created great affection for him in (the minds of) gods. This was the wonder in the Tārakāmaya battle between the demons and Viṣṇu about which you have asked me.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

Tāraka's Victory in the War between Gods and Demons

Bhiṣma said:

1-4. O brahman, I have listened to (the account of) the rise of the lotus which you described in detail. O brahman, (now) I desire to hear from you about the greatness of Bhava (i.e. Śiva) and the birth of Guha (i.e. Kārttikeya)—how he was born and what he did; how Tāraka the demon became more powerful and how that great demon was killed (by Kārttikeya); how Rudra sent the sages to the Mandara mountain; how Rudra, the supreme lord, obtained Umā there. O great sage, tell me all this as it took place.

Pulastya said:

5-6a. Formerly Kaśyapa said to Diti, the auspicious origin (i.e. the mother) of demons: "O respectable lady, you will obtain a son having limbs as strong as thunderbolt. You will have a son by named Vajrāṅga, devoted to piety."

6b-7. The honourable lady, who had (thus) obtained a boon, got a son difficult to be cut (i.e. destroyed) like thunderbolt. As soon as he was born, he became the master of the significance of all sciences (i.e. branches of learning). He said devoutly to his mother: "O mother, what should I do?"

8-9a. Diti, hearing (these) words of the lord of demons, became delighted, and said: "O son, Indra has killed many of my sons. Go to kill (i.e. go and kill) Indra to make up the loss due to (i.e. to avenge) them."

9b-10. Saying, "All right", to her, he forcibly went to the heaven. Then having tied Indra with a noose of unfailing power, he came to his mother as a hunter (would bring) a poor deer.

11. In the meanwhile, Brahmā and Kaśyapa of great penance came there where the fearless mother and son remained.

12-14. Seeing them Brahmā as well as Kaśyapa said these words: "O son, release this lord of gods. What have you to do

with him? O son, for a respected person his insult is said to be his murder. He who is freed from your hand on our telling (you to release him) is certainly dead. That enemy, who is released in the battle through generosity by his enemy, is, though alive, dead, day after day."

15-17. Hearing this, Vajrāṅga, bowed (to them) and said (these) words: "I have nothing to do with him. I have (simply) obeyed my mother's order. You are the lord of the gods and demons; and you are (my) respectable great grandsire. O god, I shall do as you say: this Śatakratu (i.e. Indra) is released (by me). O god, I have a liking for penance; O lord, let it be practised without any obstacle through your favour."

18a. Saying so, he ceased (speaking). When the demon remained silent, the grandsire said these (words):

Brahmā said:

18b-19a. Being free from difficulty, remaining under my command, practise penance. With this purification of the mind (i.e. having thus purified your mind) you (will) have obtained the fruit of your existence.

19b-20. Saying so, the Lotus-born (Brahmā) created a broad-eyed daughter. The Lotus-born god gave her to him as his wife. Having named her Varāṅgi, the grandsire went (back).

21-23a. Vajrāṅga too went to a forest with her for (practising) penance. The lord of demons, having eyes like lotus leaves, of a pure mind, and having a great penance (to his credit), practised penance for a period of a thousand years with raised hands. Till that (period was over), he remained a great ascetic with his face hung down and remaining in the midst of five fires[1], not eating anything and practising severe penance.

23b-25a. Then for a thousand years he resided in water. The great-vowed wife of him, who had entered the water, remained, observing silence, at the bank of that lake only. Without eating anything, the very lustrous one entered upon a severe penance.

25b-26. When she was practising penance, Indra scared

1. Pañcāgni—See note on 41.83. above.

her. Going in the form of a monkey to that great hermitage, he snatched her holy seat and casket containing sandal etc.—(the material of) worship.

27-28a. Then, he, taking up the form of a lion, frightened her; then taking up the form of a serpent he bit both her feet; but due to the power of penance she did not die.

28b-30. When Indra, troubling her with many scares, did not stop (from doing so), the queen of Vajrāṅga, thinking it to be the wickedness of the mountain (on which she was seated), set about to curse the mountain. Seeing her about to pronounce a curse, the mountain, in a human form, with frightened eyes, said to that beautiful Varāṅgī:

The mountain said:

31. O you lady of a great vow, I am not wicked. I deserve to be resorted to by all human beings. This angry Indra is doing what is disagreeable to you.

32-33a. In the meantime the period of a thousand years was over. Knowing it, the Lotus-born (i.e. Brahmā) came to the lake and being delighted said to Vajrāṅga:

Brahmā said:

33b. O son of Diti, I shall satisfy all your desires; get up.

34. Thus addressed, the lord of demons, the treasure of penance, with the palms of his hands folded in obeisance said (these) words to the grandsire:

Vajrāṅga said:

35. Let me not have the demonish disposition. Let me have (i.e. let me go to) the eternal worlds. Let me be interested in penance. Let the body stay (as it is).[1]

36-37. Saying, "Let it be so," the lord (Brahmā) went home. Vajrāṅga too, of a firm control, completed his penance. Desiring to meet his wife (i.e. he desired to meet his wife, but) did not see her in his own hermitage. Afflicted with hunger, he entered a thicket of the forest.

1. Śarirasya.... text is not quite clear.

38-39a. (When he looked here and there) in the thicket to obtain fruits and roots, he saw his dear helpless wife, whose face was covered with a tree. Seeing her, the demon, consoling her, said:

Vajrāṅga said:

39b-40a. O good one, who, desiring to go to the world of Yama, has harmed you? O you proud one, quickly say which desire you want to be satisfied.

Varāṅgi said:

40b-42a. I am repeatedly scared, tossed away, beaten up and harassed, like one without a husband, by the fearful lord of gods. Not seeing the end of my grief, I am determined to give up my life. Give me a son, who would save me from the ocean of misery.

42b-44. The very mighty lord of demons, thus addressed, and with his eyes full of anger, though capable of retaliating the king of gods, set about to practise penance again. Knowing his harder intention, Brahmā again hurriedly came to the place where the son of Diti remained.

Brahmā said:

45. O son, why are you again setting about to practise the vow? I shall give you the son (endowed) with vigour, (as) desired by you.

Vajrāṅga said:

46-47a. I, who got up by your order from the profound meditation saw my wife scared by Indra. The beautiful lady, said to me (that) she desired a son. O grandsire, you, who are pleased with me, give a saviour son (Tāraka) to me.

Brahmā said:

47b-48. O hero, enough of your penance; do not get into insuperable suffering. A very powerful son, who will loose the braided and ornamented hair of divine ladies will be (born to you).

49-51. Thus addressed, the lord of demons, having saluted the great grandsire, and having gone to his queen delighted her, whose mind was distressed. The fortunate couple then went to their own hermitage. That Varāṅgī, of an excellent complexion, carried in her womb for a thousand years, the embryo (i.e. the seed) deposited (by Vajrāṅga). At the end of a thousand years Varāṅgī brought forth (a son).

52-53. When that demon, fearful to all the world, was being born, the whole earth trembled, the great oceans were agitated, the mountains shook, and fierce winds blew; the best sages muttered prayers, and fierce beasts roared.

54-55. Lustre left the Moon and the Sun, and the directions were covered over with mist. When that great demon was born, all great demons, being delighted, came there, and also the demon-females. Full of joy they sang, and hosts of celestial nymphs danced.

56. O you of great lustre, when the great festival of the demons was (being celebrated), gods along with Indra, became mentally dejected.

57. At that time seeing the son, Varāṅgī was filled with joy. The lord of the demons also greatly prized that (newly-) born son.

58-59a. As soon as Tāraka, the lord of demons, was born he was consecrated as the sovereign emperor of the entire kingdom of the Asuras, which was capable of being compared with the earth, by the chief demons like Kujambha, Mahiṣa etc.

59b-60a. O great king, when Tāraka got the great kingdom (i.e. when he became the emperor), he, the greatest among the demons, said these proper words:

Tāraka said:

60b-62. O mighty demons, listen, all of you, to my words. O demons, gods would destroy all the families (of us). (Between gods and us) eternal enmity due to the practice of our families has mounted. All of us, resorting to (i.e. depending upon) the might of our own arms will practise penance for curbing gods. There is (i.e. should be) no doubt about this.

63-64a. Saying so, and getting their consent, he went to the Pāriyātra mountain. For a hundred years he practised all the penances like not eating at all, honouring the five (fires), eating leaves of trees (only) or subsisting on water (alone).

64b-65. When thus his body was emaciated and his penance grew in strength, Brahmā, having come there, said to the lord of demons: "O you of a good vow, ask for a boon". He chose (the following boon): "I should not die (i.e. be immune to death) from all beings".

66. To him then Brahmā said: "Since death is certain to beings, (you may) ask for death at the hands of him of whom you are not afraid."

67. The great demon, the lord of demons, deluded by pride, thought (for a while) and chose death from a child seven days old.

68-69. Saying, "All right", Brahmā went home, and also the demon. Then he said to his ministers: "Make ready my army quickly. If you desire to do what I like, then you must supress the best gods. O demons, I shall have uncommon joy when they will be suppressed."

70. Having heard Tāraka's words, a demon named Grasana, the general of the king of demons, made ready the army.

71. Having beaten the deep (-sounding) kettle-drum, he quickly called the demons, and also very brave ten crores of lords of demons.

72-73. Leading them was Jambha. Next was the demon Kujambha. Mahiṣa, Kuñjara, Megha, Kālanemi, and Nimi, (and also) Manthana, Jambhaka, Śumbha—these ten lords of the demons were the leaders. There were hundreds of others, who were capable of being compared with the earth.

74. The chariot of Tāraka was decorated (i.e. yoked) with a thousand eagles, and with eight wheels; it had a train of poles and its expanse was four yojanas.

75. The chariots of Grasana, Jambha, Kujambha and Kumbha were yoked with tigers, lions, donkeys and horses.

76. The chariot of Megha was yoked with elephants; that

of Kālanemin with a demon. Nimi's great elephant had four tusks (like the Airāvata) and resembled a mountain.

77. The lord of demons, named Manthana, was seated in a chariot, having its horses a hundred cubits in length. The very mighty Jambhaka had mounted a camel resembling the lord of mountains.

78-79. Śumbha was mounted upon a ram. Thus, other mighty demons, seated in various vehicles, had put on bright armours and were decorated with bracelets and turbans. That army of the lion of demons (i.e. of the brave demon) appeared to be of a terribe form. The army had very intoxicated elephants and was crowded with horses and chariots, a number of foot-soldiers and banners.

80-83a. In the meanwhile, Vāyu, the messenger of gods, seeing that army of the demons in the residence of the demons went to report it to Indra. Having gone to the divine assembly of the great-souled Indra, he told (him) among the gods, the time for action that had approached. Hearing it, the great-armed lord of gods, having closed his eyes, said these words to Bṛhaspati at that time.

Indra said:

83b-84a. Now comes this fight of the gods with demons. Tell (us) that should be done (which is) supported by political wisdom.

84b-85a. Hearing these words of Indra, the lord of speech, the magnanimous, the highly intelligent Bṛhaspati said these words:

Bṛhaspati said:

85b-88a. O best among gods, this is said to be ancient, natural state of those who wish to be victorious: political stratagem preceded by negotiations, and (keeping ready) the army with its four divisions.[1] These are the four constituents (of

1. The fourfold army: (1) Elephants, (2) Chariots, (3) Cavalry and (4) Infantry.

political wisdom)[1]: negotiation, creating dissension, bribery and punishment (i.e. open attack). The greedy cannot be won over by negotiation (or conciliation); those having same qualities (i.e. belonging to a homogeneous group) cannot be won over by creating dissension; here bribery will not lead to success; if you like (i.e. if you please), in this case, openly attacking the plunderers by force is the only remedy.

88b-89a. Indra, thus addressed, giving thought to what should be done, said these words in the assembly of gods:

Indra said:

89b-92. O you residents of heaven, listen attentively to my words. You, of divine souls, are the enjoyers of sacrifices; and always remaining in (i.e. adhering to) your own greatness with your families, you are always engaged in protecting the world. Be prepared to fight; unite my army; get (your) weapons; worship the deities of weapons. O you lords of gods, having made Yama the General, quickly bring together the vehicles and the aeroplanes.

93-94. Thus addressed, those who were prominent among the gods armed themselves. The invincible chariot of the lord of gods was yoked with a myriad horses, was decorated with golden bells; it had many wonderful properties; it was approached by gods and demons: it was harnessed by Mātalin.

95-96a. Yama, surrounded on all sides by fierce servants, filled with flames that would rise at the time of the universal destruction, having seated himself upon a he-buffalo, and moving in the sky, remained at the head of the army.

96b. Agni, mounted upon a goat, and having a kind of missile in his hand, settled himself.

97. Vāyu, with a goad in his hand, increased his speed. The revered lord of water (i.e. Varuṇa) had mounted upon a lordly serpent.

98. The lord of demons, moving in the sky, and (looking)

1. Aṅgacatuṣṭaya: (1) Sāman (conciliation or negotiation), (2) Dāna (bribery), (3) Daṇḍa (punishment, open attack), (4) Bheda (creating dissension).

terrible on account of having a sharp sword, occupying a chariot, to which men were yoked, got settled in the battle.

99-100. The lord of wealth (i.e. Kubera) with a mace in his hand, (was seated) in a chariot to which large lions were yoked. The Moon, the Sun, the two Aśvins, the invincible generals of the divine army in the three worlds were endowed with the army having four divisions. That assemblage of the divine army numbered thirty-three crores.

101-103a. Indra was seated upon the elephant named Airāvaṇa, which looked like Himālaya, (decorated with) white charming chowries, and (with) golden lotuses and spotless, beautiful garlands, made charming (i.e. decorated) with sprouts (i.e. lines) of saffron and with his temples crowded with sporting swarms of bees. He, of a magnanimous mind, who had put on variegated ornaments and garments, whose thunderbolt was big, who was decorated with a cushion, who had serpent-like scattered armlets, whose sproutlike feet were honoured by a thousand eyes, looked charming in the heaven.

103b-104a. That army was thronged with streams of groups of horses and elephants; its umbrella and banner were white; it had continuous (streams) of invincible foot-soldiers; it was difficult to be subdued on account of warriors having various weapons.

104b-105. Then the very mighty Aśvins, Maruts, with Sādhyas and Indra, Yakṣas, goblins, Gandharvas, having many missiles in their hands, all came together and struck the lord of demons.

106-108a. However, the missiles did not cling to his body resembling thunderbolt and a mountain. Then having jumped down from his chariot, Tāraka, the king of the demons, hit crores of gods with his hands and kicks. The armies of gods, that escaped being killed, being afraid, and having given up weapons, fled in (various) directions.

108b. Seeing the gods fleeing, Tāraka said (these) words:

109. "O demons, do not kill the gods. Tying them, bring them quickly, and show them to Vajrāṅga. Let him see gods."

110-112. Then the demon, being praised by Diti's sons and well-served by the celestial damsels, having tied, in the battle, the regents of quarters led by Indra and with Rudra, with

strong bonds, as a herdsman leading the beasts, again went, after getting into his chariot, to his own house, beautified with Siddhas and Gandharvas, and having a top like the Vipula mountain.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

Gauri's Marriage

Pulastya said:

1-2. The door-keeper, who had put on a bright silken garment appeared (before the king of demons). Going down to (i.e. touching) the ground on his knees, he, without delay, said the following adorned with (i.e. couched in) few words, to the lord of demons, having a bright body resembling a host of suns.

3. "Having brought the gods, after binding them, Kālanemi stands at the door. He respectfully asks: 'O lord, where should the captives stay?' "

4-5. Having heard those words of the doorkeeper, the demon said: "Let them stay as they like. The three worlds are my residence. Release only Indra, after having clean-shaved him, after making him put on white garments and after having marked him with a dog's foot."

6-7. When this was done, gods, with their minds dejected went to the lord of the world, the Lotus-born one to seek his shelter. The despondent gods, having reached him, prostrated themselves with their heads touching the ground, and praised the Lotus-seated (god) with words (couched in) beautiful syllables.

The gods said:

8-10. Salutation to you, the origin of Oṁkāra etc., the first and unending cause of the diversity of the universe, (to you) who are at the root of the beings immediately after creation; O you, of a pious form, salutation to you who desire to withdraw (the world unto you); on account of your greatness,

you are the cause of the manifested forms; and due to this appellation, you, having thought about us, divided the worlds above the heaven and the earth, and the ones below them, from (i.e. out of) the cosmic egg. It is clear that Meru was your outer skin of the embryo; we know that the space was put forward by you; it is clear that from your body the gods were created; the embodied ones move within your body.

11. The heaven is your head; the moon and the sun are your eyes; the serpents are your hair; the directions are the cavities of your ears; sacrifice is your body; rivers are your joints; the earth is your feet; the oceans are your belly.

12. You are the author of illusion; you are the cause; you are declared to be calm by the Vedas; you are said to be the light and the sun. With the help of the meaning of the Vedas, they by intellect, expound you, the ancient one, who are placed in the lotus of the heart.

13. Those who have mastered abstract meditation, describe you as (their) soul; (they describe you) to be the source of the seven subtle (pricinples) propounded by the Sāṁkhyas, and also of the eighth one, told by them. You alone being the soul, live in them.

14. Having perceived, you fashioned a subtle and (at the same time) a gross form; those entities which are said to exist in the cause, are said to have come up from you at the time of the first creation; again, they are to be reached after the impressions according to desires (?).

15. Kāla (i.e. desitny) is conceived by you; its origin is concealed in you; it is immeasurable; in it the uncertainty about number has disappeared; it is the cause of the withdrawl of the manifestation of entities and non-entities; it is endless; you are its author, and its abode.

16. All that is gross is useless; that which is other than that is said to be subtle and (therefore) important. You are presented in the Purāṇa to be even grosser than those which cover the gross objects.

17. You join (i.e. bestow) prosperous condition to every being, and in every existence you put what is cherished (by you); driving out what is joined to a manifested form you bring about manifestation in every place.

18a. Thus the lord is protector of those who possess individuality; and also he having endless forms, is their saviour and protector.

18b-20a. Thus having praised Brahmā, the cause (of everything) the gods ceased (praising him). Then they remained thinking about the objects they wanted. Brahmā, thus praised, was extremely pleased. Pointing out with his left hand, he, the giver of boons, said to the gods:

Brahmā said:

20b-22a. Why do you, with the lotus of your face faded, look like a widow who has discarded ornaments from her hands, O Indra? O Agni, you too, without smoke, do not look charming, (as it were) remaining for a long time covered with grass and with famished wild fire.

22b-23a. O Yama, you, distressed with a diseased body, do not appear splendid, being as it were dragged at every step by your staff, your prop.

23b. O lord Moon, why do you talk as if you are afraid?

24-25a. As you are wounded by the enemy in the seizure done by the lord of demons, O Varuṇa, your body is dry as it were surrounded by fire. Observe your foot from which blood has flowed.

25b. O Vāyu, you are gloomy, and (appear) as if you are driven away with the tips of swords (pointed towards you).

26-27a. O Dhanada (i.e. Kubera), why have you, abandoning your status of Kuberahood, bowed down? O Rudra, being the trident-holder, you have earned the reputation of being very brave. Who has taken away your sharpness? Tell it to us.

27b-28a. Thus addressed by Brahmā, dwelling in the Supreme Being, the gods urged Vāyu to speak on account of his being pre-eminent in speech.

28b-29a. The gods urged Vāyu through Śakra. He said to the four-faced god (i.e. Brahmā): "You know the mobile and the immobile.

29b-30. Gods, led by Indra, were forcibly vanquished along with their army, by hundreds of demons. You have laid down the performance of sacrifices, having wonderful and varied

merits, for the stability of the worlds. Then before them you placed the sages, performers of sacrifices, who got the well-known fruits of their desires.

31-33. Due to your order, heaven always became (accessible) to the enjoyers of sacrifices. The demon, snatching the host of heavenly cars, converted the mountain, which you had made to possess excellent qualities conforming to its being the lord of all mountains, which was adorned by (i.e. had been a site for) sacrifices, which had set a limit to the (sun's) rays, which was always the abode of gods in heaven, the slopes of which were made unfit for living and sporting as the jewelled caves on it had gone down, into the resort of many demons.

34-35. The excellent thunderbolt, which was fashioned by you only, which had host of splendours, which for a long time had filled the quarters with pure lustre, which was intended for enjoyment, broke into a hundred parts, after having reached the body of the demon, like the change of views of those who know little, and has gone (out of use) due to its form being depressed.

36-37. O god, we, whose bodies were pierced with arrows in the war, who were directed by the door-keepers at the door, and who did not talk at all, were ushered into the assembly of gods' enemy and were dragged and seated there by them (i.e. the door-keepers) with canes in their hands and were laughed at by the enemies.

38-39a. 'O gods, you are rich, you have accomplished all your objects, you talk little. Talk according to the rules. Do not talk much. This is the assembly of the king of the demons and not that of Indra, where there is no restraint.'

39b. We were very much derided by the demon's servants who talked like this.

40-41. The seasons being embodied day and night serve the sinful and fierce (demon), and do not forsake him, in whose residences Siddhas, Gandharvas and Kinnaras sing (songs) with the (proper) rhythm on the wires of the lute, methodically, melodiously and with excellence.

42-43. He who gives relative importance to his friends etc. by favouring or not favouring them, who forsakes those who

have come to seek his refuge and who has given up (giving) shelter to truth—who is thus able to describe fully or how can one describe fully his impudence? The creator alone is the best resort."

44. Having thus gradually told about the movements of gods (to Brahmā) Vāyu ceased (speaking). Then the lord with the lotus of his face smiling said to the gods:

Brahmā said:

45. The demon Tāraka cannot be killed even by all gods and demons. The man, who will kill him, is as yet not born in the three worlds.

46. After having pleased him by granting a boon I have dissuaded him just now from burning (even) the three worlds.

47-48a. The demon has chosen his death (at the hands) of a child seven days old. The boy, born of Śaṅkara, and resembling the Sun, will be, when he will be seven days old, the killer of Tāraka.

48b-50. The revered lord Śaṅkara is at present without a wife. Tāraka, encountering him, to whom Himālaya's daughter who will be a goddess, will give birth, as fire is born from the wooden stick, will not survive. I have told you the remedy by which he will (not) survive.

51. Then you should divide (among yourselves) his remaining wealth. Wait, with a fearless heart, for some time.

52-54. The gods, the residents of heaven, thus addressed by the Lotus-born himself, having saluted the lord, went as the circumstance (demanded). When the gods had left, revered Brahmā, the grandsire of the world, remembered that goddess Niśā, born earlier. Then the revered (goddess, viz.) Rātri, approached the grandsire, Having seen Vibhāvarī in a solitary place he said to her:

Brahmā said:

55. O Vibhāvarī, an emergent business of (i.e. for) the gods has approached. O goddess, you should do that. Hear about the details of the business.

56-58. There is the lord of demons, the enemy of gods who is not vanquished (by gods). The revered lord will generate a son for his destruction. He (i.e. the son) will indeed be the killer of Tāraka. That Satī, the goddess, who was Dakṣa's daughter, and got angry with her father for some reason, will be born as Himālaya's daughter, the most beautiful women in the world.

59-61a. Hara, due to her separation, will regard the three worlds as void, will live in the cave of that mountain, which is resorted to by Siddhas, waiting for her birth. The great son that will be born to the two who (will) have practised penance, will be the destroyer of that demon, viz. Tāraka.

61b-62. That respectable, beautiful lady, as soon as she is born, having just a little knowledge, will become extremely distressed by the absence of her husband (i.e. Hara), and eager for union with him. The union of the two having practised good penance, would be auspicious.

63. Then there will be a wordy quarrel between the two caused by both of them. Then a danger to Tāraka is indicated.

64. Listen as to how you will create a distraction to them when they will be united through sexual desire.

65-66a. When he would be in the womb of his (i.e. Guha's) mother in his own form, Śarva, laughing, and with gesture, (pretending to be) dejected, will deride the respectable lady in jest.

66b-67. Then being angry, she will leave to practise penance. Then she, endowed with penance, from Śarva, give birth to him of an unlimited orb of lustre. Undoubtedly he will be born as the killer of the enemies of gods.

68-69. O goddess, you should also kill them who are invincible in the world. As long as the goddess remains with the multitude of virtues transferred to her body, you will not be able to kill the demons due to them. When you have acted thus, she, having practised penance, will do everything.

70. When, O goddess, Umā will have completed her religious observance, she, the Mountain's daughter, will obtain her own form.

71. Then with you too, she will be Bhavānī (i.e. Śiva's wife). You will also have a portion of Umā's form.

72. O you giver of boons, the world will worship you as Ekānaṁśā—you—who would be going everywhere in various forms and who would satisfy desires (of your devotees).

73. (You will be looked upon as) Oṁkāravaktrā Gāyatrī, of a bright form, by those who are well-versed in the Vedas and by great-armed kings who are overcome.

74. As the mother of vaiśyas you will be known as Bhūḥ; you will be worshipped as Śaivā by śūdras. You will be the compassion of the restrained ones.

75. You will be the doubt in a great exertion, and the prudence of the politicians. You will be the intimacy with wealth, and the desire lying in the heart of beings.

76. You are the shelter of all human beings. You are the delight of those whose minds are delighted. You are the affection in the heart of human beings.

77. You are the fame of true (i.e. honest) beings. You are she tranquility of those who do evil deeds. You are the error of all beings. You are the recourse to the performers of sacrifices.

78. You are the great tide of oceans. You are a sportive lady, giving joy to the lover by embracing him. You are Vibhāvarī.

79-80a. In this way, O goddess, you are worshipped in many forms. There is no doubt, O giver of boons, that those who please and also worship you, certainly get all their desires satisfied.

80b-81a. Goddess Niśā, thus addressed, saying, with salutation, 'All right', quickly went to the great house of Himālaya.

81b-85. There in a great chamber in a large mansion, which was illumined with a great light of multitudes of jewelled lamps, where there were many accomplished, agreeable attendants scattered (here and there), which had an umbrella (i.e. a ceiling) of pure china-silk, which was bright with the bed spread on the ground, which was pleasing to the mind due to the fragrance of incense, in which all necessary things were kept ready, she saw Menā, who was seated leaning against a wall, whose lotus-like face had a pale complexion, who was a little emaciated, who was slightly stooping because of the tips

of her (stout) breasts going up to her face, who was taken care of by the best of charms tied with multitudes of great herbs, who looked charming on account of an amulet used as a preservative, covered with gold and worn (on her body).

86-90. When the day had gone far (i.e. had come to a close), when enjoyment of pleasure had reached its climax, when men were almost asleep, when remedies causing sleep (were being used), when the light of the moon was clear, when the nocturnal birds were wandering, when the quandrangular places had been filled with beings moving at night, when persons talking sweet things were locked in close embraces, when the two lotus-like eyes of Menā had become a little drowsy, Rātri, bringing about a wonderful union, easily entered her mouth and then her belly for maddening the mother of the world, (thinking) 'when will the matchless birth (take place)?'

91a. Vibhāvarī (i.e. Rātri) tinged the house of the queen in the forest of caves.

91b-92a. Then, the cause of joy of the world, the beloved of Himālaya, gave birth to the mother of Guha[1] in the early part of the day.

92b-93a. When she was born, all mobile and immobile livings beings residing in all the world became happy.

93b-94. At that time, even the cruel beings, living in hell, enjoyed pleasure as in heaven. The minds of human beings became tranquil. The lustre of even the luminaries became exceedingly great.

95-98. The herbs remained in the thickets; fruits became tasty; flowers became fragrant; and the sky was clear. Breezes were pleasing to touch; the quarters were very attractive; and goddess Earth was bright with the quality of ripeness due to her contact with the seasonal fruits, and full of the rows of śāli (-plants). Penances of sages with purified souls and of pure heart, which were practised for a long time became fruitful at that time; sacred books that were forgotten became manifest again.

99. The power of the principal sacred places became most

1. Guhāraṇi—mother of Guha or Kārttikeya; i.e. Pārvatī.

auspicious at that time. And in the sky thousands of gods led by Indra, Varuṇa, Vāyu and Agni remained in the aerial cars.

100-102. They showered flowers on Himālaya mountain. The chief Gandharvas sang (songs) and groups of celestial nymphs danced. The great mountains like Meru became personified; came there at the great festival; and divine beings with their hands stretched out, and oceans and rivers came from all directions.

103. At that time Himālaya, the best of mountains, became fit to be resorted to by and accessible to and a refuge to all the mobile and immobile (beings).

104-105. Having enjoyed the festival the gods then went home. The respectable daughter of Himālaya was imparted knowledge (i.e. instructed) by groups of charming ladies from among gods, best of serpents, Gandharvas and from (i.e. living on) the (Himālaya) mountain with emulation and also by industrious learned persons, in due order.

106. She duly became endowed with all good signs in all the three worlds due to her charm, good fortune and understanding.

107. In the meanwhile, Indra, closely intent on accomplishing an undertaking, remembered the divine sage Nārada honoured by gods.

108. That revered (sage) knowing the desire of Indra, then gladly came to the residence of Indra.

109. Seeing him, Indra, the thousand-eyed god, got off from his great seat and honoured him with (i.e. by offering him) water for washing his feet as he deserved it.

110-111a. Having accepted the worship duly offered by Indra, Nārada asked Indra about his well-being. When Indra was (thus) asked about (his) well-being, the lord spoke (these words:

Indra said:

111b-113a. The sprout of well-being has made its appearance in the three worlds. O sage, I am looking upon you (for helping me) in (making it) bear the wealth of fruit. You know all that; still you are (thus) directed (by me); for one gets joy by telling (about) one's desires to those who love one.

113b-114a. So, all belonging to our side should quickly exert in such a way that the respectable daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain becomes united with the Trident-holder (i.e. Śiva).

114b-116a. Understanding the object fully and then taking his leave (of Indra) the revered Nārada quickly went to the residence of the Himālaya mountain. There, at the door full of variegated staffs of the doorkeepers (i.e. full of doorkeepers), the sage was honoured by the Himālaya Mountain, who had come out (of the house) before (the sage reached it).

116b-117. Having entered, with the Mountain, his house which had become the ornament of the world, the best sage, of matchless lustre sat upon a great spacious seat, indicated by the Himālaya Mountain himself.

118-120a. The Mountain offered him proper respectful worship and water for washing his feet. The sage then duly accepted the respectful worship. The Mountain, with his lotus (-like) face blooming, gently asked the best sage in mild words if his penance was going on well enough. The sage too asked the Lord of mountains about his well-being.

Nārada said:

120b-122. O great Mountain, your vicinity is fit for piety. The largeness of your caves is comparable (only) to your mind. The greatness of the multitudes of your virtues excels a mountain. The perspicuity of your water is greater than (that of) the sages. O best of mountains, I cannot locate where impoliteness has remained.

123-124. You are always purified by sages who are lustrous like fire and the sun, and who resort to your caves for the practice of various (kinds of) penance. Gods, Gandharvas and Kinnaras, having disregarded aeroplanes, and being indifferent to staying in heaven, are dwelling in you, as in the house of their sire.

125. O lord of mountains, you are lucky that Hara, the lord of the world, intent upon meditating upon Rāma lives in your cave.

126-128a. When the divine sage was speaking these words with respect, Menā, the queen of Mountain Himālaya, who was

followed by her daughter, who had a few friends and attendants (with her), and who was humble due to bashfulness and courtesy, entered, with a desire to see the sage, the house, where the best and restrained sage was staying with the Mountain.

128b-129a. Joining her lotus-like hands and concealing her face the beloved of the Mountain saluted the sage, a heap of lustre.

129b-130a. The divine sage, of matchless lustre, having seen the magnanimous lady, congratulated her with blessings resembling the stream of nectar.

130b-131a. Then the respectable daughter of the Himālaya mountain, whose mind was amazed, saw the sage Nārada of a wonderful form.

131b-133a. The sage also addressed her with (these) affectionate words: "Come, O daughter". But embracing the father, she sat on his lap. The mother said to the respectable girl: "O daughter, salute the revered sage, blessed with penance. (Thereby) you will obtain a husband of your liking".

133b-135. Thus addressed[1] by her mother, she, having covered her face with her garment and with her head slightly trembling, did not utter any word. Then the mother again said these words to her daughter: "O daughter, salute the divine sage. I shall give you a fine jewelled toy, which I have kept (aside) for a long time."

136. Thus addressed, she placing together her hands like lotus-buds on her (fore-) head, quickly went to the (sage's) feet and saluted them.

137-138. When she had (thus) saluted the sage, the mother (i.e. Menā), as is the nature of ladies, through her friend gently urged (upon Nārada to tell about) the indication of her good fortune and for understanding the auspicious signs on her body.

139. Knowing that intention of his queen, the Mountain of an humble form, entertaining anxiety about his daughter, thought that it was a nice thing that had come up.

140-142a. Urged on by the queen's friend, Nārada, the excellent maganimous sage, with a smiling face said (these) words: "O good lady, her husband is not born at all; (and when born)

1. Ityuktvā—should be ityuktā.

he will be without all good signs. Her hands are always stretched out; and due to her feet deviating (from good signs), she is shadowy; whats the use of saying much?"

142b-143a. Hearing these words, the great Mountain, overcome with confusion, and with his courage sinking and with his throat (choked with) tears, again said to Nārada:

Himālaya said:

143b-145. Since the course of the mundane existence, full of many faults, since the limit of the creation, which is sure to take place, has been laid down by the creator of a superior soul, and is fixed for those who remain in the worldly existence, he, who is born from the seed of a particular person accomplishes the desired object of his father, but it is clear that the father does not accomplish the desired object of his progeny.[1]

146. The various species of beings are born as a result of their own deeds. As oviparous being born from an oviparous being may be born as a man.

147-149. A man may also be born in the species of serpents and not as a man. In a higher existence obtained by the excellence of righteousness (certain) other beings are unperturbed by the non-birth of a son (i.e. even though they have not a son). (Only) men very much follow piety with prudence. By the order of the creator, who has expanded the worldly existence, the acquisition of various stages of life beginning with the vow of a celibate, takes place.

150-151. The worldly life would not have come up, if all remained without a house (i.e. a family). The creator has, in all sacred books, praised the acquisition of a son, for deluding beings and for protecting (the ancestors) from (falling into) hell. Without a female, birth is not possible for beings.

152. The females are naturally pitiable and miserable; and in them the creator has placed faults as a result of their not being able to grasp the scriptures.

153-158. He has repeatedly made a definite and very significant statement that in that class none will have higher knowledge. A daughter, even if she is void of (good) character, is equal to

1. Some such verses are not quite intelligible.

ten sons. The statement that 'A daughter, full of all accomplishments, and endowed with a husband and sons, is miserable, pitiable and enhances the father's grief' is fruitless and would cause depression to men; then what about the luckless one who is without a husband or sons or wealth? And you have said that there is a heap of faults in my daughter's body. O Nārada, I am deluded; I am being dried up; I am fatigued; I am sinking. O sage, to favour me, remove my grief due to (my having) a daughter; though it is not to be had now and though it is improper (to do so), it has to be expressed. Though the (mother) is accurately defined, (my) mind is in doubt due to (the fear of) insult.

159-160a. Desire again robs (even) a clever person due to his having greed. The birth of women designated as the acquisition of a good husband—is said to be great as it leads to happiness of both the families here and in the other world.

160b-166a. Due to a good husband being difficult to obtain, even a defective husband in never got by a woman without religious merit. Since piety has no means, interest rises after maturity. The wealth of the wife remains in the husband till death; for a husband, even though he is poor, ugly or without any auspicious signs, is always said to be a great deity of (i.e. for) the wife. You, the divine sage, said that her husband is indeed not born. This misfortune is matchless, unintelligible, and difficult to bear. O sage, the anxiety pervades the entire creation of beings including the mobile and the immobile. Knowing (from you) that he (i.e. my daughter's husband) is not born, my mind is perplexed. Marks on the hands and feet of the species of human beings and gods are said to be the auspicious signs indicating bad or good (things) about them.

166b-169a. O best of sages, you described her to have stretched out hands, and the state of the ever stretched hands, which you referred to, is never seen in the case of prosperous, rich givers. You said that her shadowy feet are deviating (from good signs). (So) in that case also, O sage, I do not have any hope for (something) good. The other marks on the body also indicate different fruits.

169b-170a. When the Mountain, who, full of (such) very painful thoughts, stopped speaking, Nārada, adored by gods, said with a smile, these words:

Nārada said:

170b-171. On an occasion of great joy, you are talking (about) sad things. Not having ascertained the meaning of my words, you, O great Mountain, are getting confused. Listen to these words of mine (i.e. which I utter), which are well-fixed (i.e. based) on a secret.

172-173. O great Mountain, being composed, (give) a thought to what I said. Her husband is not born—this is what I said truly. O Himālaya, that Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva) is unborn, and is the origin of the past, future and present. He is the protector, ruler, benefactor and the highest lord.

174. O Mountain, Brahmā, Rudra, Indra, sages—all of them oppressed by being subjected to conception, birth and old age, are his toys.

175-176. The universe has sprung up from him, according to his desire. He is the lord of the world. O Mountain, even after the destruction of the inaminate the soul does not perish. The body of a living being, being subject to birth and death in the mundane existence, alone perishes. The soul is said not to perish.

177. What is said to be the mundane existence beginning with Brahmā and ending with the inanimate things is afflicted with birth, death and grief and is ever changing.

178. Mahādeva is stable, is unborn, is unchanging and is the creator (of all this). He, the lord of the world and pure, will be her husband.

179. Listen to the correct meaning (i.e. explanation) of what I said, viz. that this respectable daughter of yours is void of auspicious signs.

180. An auspicious mark is a mark found on parts of a body. It indicates one's (span of) life, wealth, and the effect of good fortune.

181. O Mountain, there is no mark put on the body, of (i.e. which would indicate) unending, immeasurable good fortune.

182-183. Therefore, O you highly intelligent Mountain, there is no auspicious mark on her body. What I (mean by having) said that her hand is stretched out is that the hand of

the respectable girl will always be stretched out to grant a boon. She will be a granter of boons to a host of gods, demons and sages.

184-186a. O best of mountains, listen also to the explanation of my utterance that her feet would be shadowy and deviating (from good signs): Due to the lustre of the jewels of many colours in the crowns of gods and demons bowing (before her), and looking at her feet, they (i.e. the feet) will have their reflections, and (therefore will appear) shadowy.

186b-188. O Mountain, she is born to be the wife of Śiva, the lord of the world, and to be the source of all beings. She is auspicious, of a purifying lustre and (is born) on (i.e. from) your wife for the purification (of everything) only. Therefore, O best of mountains, you should duly do that by which she would be quickly united with the Trident-holder.

189a. O Mountain, here a great mission of the gods is to be executed.

189b-190. Having heard all these words from Nārada, the lord of mountains, the husband of Menā, regarded himself as reborn. He, the Himālaya mountain, being delighted, said to Nārada:

191. "O lord, you have taken me up from a terrible, insuperable hell. Having raised me from Pātāla (i.e. the last of the seven regions under the earth), you have made me the lord of the seven worlds.

192. I am well-known as the Himālaya mountain. Now, O best sage, you have raised me a hundred times above the Himālaya mountain.

193-195. O great sage, my heart, being captivated due to (i.e. by) joy, does not determine the consideration of (i.e. is not in a fit condition to appreciate) the division of deeds. O sage, the sight of persons like you is certainly fruitful. You yourself have said that I am a proper resort for the sages and deities of the nature of the soul. Yet command me to do one thing."

196-197a. When the lord of mountains spoke these words, Nārada, full of joy said: "O lord, all is done. That is the object of the mission of the gods and it is much more important than yours."

197b-199a. Speaking thus, Nārada quickly went to heaven from there. He went to the gods' residence and saw Indra (there). Then, the sage, who was seated on a great seat proper for him, being asked by Indra, told (him) the account pertaining to the Mountain's daughter (i.e. Pārvatī).

Nārada said:

199b-200a. The mission that was told (i.e. entrusted) to me is done; but (now) the influence of the arrows of the five-arrowed one[1] (i.e. Cupid) is required.

200b-202. Venerable Indra, who was thus addressed by the sage who knew the business, remembered him whose missiles are mango-sprouts (i.e. remembered Cupid). He, of graceful movements, and having jhaṣa as his banner (i.e. god of love), who was (thus) remembered by the intelligent Indra, quickly stood by him with Rati. Seeing Manmatha (i.e. god of love) who appeared there, Indra said to him:

Śakra (i.e. Indra) said:

203. What is the use of giving you profuse instruction, O you dear to Rati? You are mind-born; therefore you know the intentions of beings.

204-205a. Therefore, O you mind-born (god), do in due order what is dear to the residents of heaven, i.e. quickly unite Śiva with the daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. With this Spring and accompanied by Rati, go (to execute your mission).

205b-206a. Thus addressed by Indra for accomplishing his mission, Madana—the five-arrowed one—being afraid said (these) words to Indra:

Kāma (i.e. Madana) said:

206b-207. O you lord of the world, O god, do you not know that with this collocation of materials causing fear to gods

1. Pañcaśara—God of love. His five flowery arrows are: aravinda (a lotus), aśoka, cūta (mango-blossom), navamallikā (jasmine flower), nilotpala (a blue lotus).

and demons, Śaṅkara is difficult to be conquered? You know that the immutable position of that god is his (chief) ground.

208-209a. Generally in the case of the great, everything—their favour or wrath—is great. Divine beauty is the essence of all enjoyments. O Indra, those who desire a special fruit, fall from (i.e. do not get even) the ordinary fruit.

209b. Hearing these words, Indra, with gods, said to him:

Śakra said:

210-211a. O Rati's husband, here we are your authority (i.e. we empower you to do things); there is no doubt about it. Power is not expected for a blacksmith (i.e. a blacksmith has no power) without a pair of tongs. The power of one is seen somewhere (i.e. in a particular field), and not everywhere.

211b-212. Thus addressed, Kāma went (i.e. left) taking with him Spring. With Rati he went to the peak of the Himālaya (mountain). Having reached there, he thought about the means to (bring about) the mission.

213. 'Great-souled ones are steady, and their mind is difficult to conquer; therefore it should be agitated first; otherwise it would not be won over.

214-215. Generally success comes after the mind is first cleansed. In the absence of hatred, and with such pure thought, how can there be anger without contact with a more cruel feeling? And jealousy is a terrible great friend, which is very powerful, as, due to rashness, it first destroys fortitude—which is a great prop.

216. I shall first join him with (i.e. create in him) that (i.e. jealousy), which is the perturbation of mind, by closing the channels of courage and taking away his delight.

217-219a. Nobody there will be clever enough to recognize me. Having entered Hara's passion which will remain only as an uncertainty (i.e. which will be unsteady), I shall be like a difficult eddy to cross to Hara of a firm mind and engaged in penance, and will begin my work, after having closed (i.e. controlled) the group of senses and employing charming means.'

219b-221. Having thought like this, Madana then went to the hermitage of the lord of beings. The hermitage was the essence of the world; it had raised seats in the form of the sarala trees; it was full of peaceful beings; it was steady; it was crowded with beings; it had masses of many flowering trees; it had the lord of Śiva's attendants seated on the top; it was resounding (with the bellowing) of a fully agitated bull; it had a peak having dark-green grassy spot.

222-223. There he saw, (as it were) another Śiva, the charming Vīraka, lord of the world of the brave, bright like Śiva, mature, having matted hair like saffron and a mass of filaments of flowers, having a cane in his hand, unruffled, fierce, and having inauspicious ornaments.

224-227. Then gradually as Madana came near Śiva, he saw Śiva, whose lotus-like eyes were closed but with their corners open; who was looking straight at (with his eyes fixed on) the tip of his nose; who had the upper garment in the form of an excellent hide of the best lion; who was tawny due to the fire of the breaths (i.e. hisses) given out by the hoods of serpents on his ears; whose long mass of hair was oscillating by the cheeks and touching them; who had Vāsuki whose end had entered the navel of Śiva; whose hands were respectfully folded, and whose nose tip was adorned by a serpent.

228-229. Then resorting to humming of the bees on the tops of trees, Madana entered Śiva's mind through the cavity of his ear. Śaṅkara then having heard that sweet humming resorted to by Madana thought of Dakṣa's daughter, and desired to sport with her.

230. Then gradually the abstract meditation of Śiva having vanished there appeared the actual form of the target.

231. Then with his heart covered with an obstacle he became one with that. (Thus) the (mind of the) lord of gods was (temporarily) possessed by a change in the form of amorous sentiment.

232. Śiva (however) slightly angry and having mustered courage, having driven away Madana, remained there being covered by his divine power.

233-234. Madana, taking any form as he desired, difficult

to understand, with night as his abode, of a great heart, being overpowered by that power, (began to) burn and he, full of the danger of ignorance, moved out of (Śiva's) heart. He, the jhaṣa-bannered, reaching an outside place, remained there.

235-236. He was followed by his friend Spring. Makaradhvaja Madana discharged at the chest of Hara, a charming bunch, tossed by a gentle breeze, of mango blossoms, (which) was an arrow called Mohana (i.e. deluding).

237. That great, harsh, long, flowery arrow causing delusion, and resplendent with (i.e. true to its) name (Mohana) fell on the pure heart of him.

238. When his heart with the group of senses was pierced, Śiva, the protector of beings, with his courage shaking, became prone to passion.

239. Then he realised that his passion was caused by the influence of emotions. Then he spoke many words due to the obstruction (caused to his penance).

240. Then on the face, fearful on account of his terrible 'hum' sound caused by the fire of anger, of Rudra of a terrible form, a third eye, full of fire appeared.

241-242. Śiva flashed it at Madana who was nearby. By the spark (of fire) from the eye, Madana, the proud Kāma, was quickly reduced to ashes, while the residents of heaven were crying.

243-246. Then the fire that rose from Śiva's (third) eye spread out to burn the world. Realising the fire voracious with the hum-sound, Śiva, then divided it (for the well-being) of the world, by putting the fire burning Madana, part by part, into the mango-tree, into wine, into the moon, into flowers and other objects, into bees and cukoos. That Śiva, pierced with Madana's arrows internally and externally, saw the fire, causing agitation in the worlds, and spreading in such a way as to be difficult to be checked, as it were entering these parts, after being divided.

247. The fearful one (i.e. Śiva), burning in the heart with full passion due to the strong desire to obtain her (i.e. Pārvatī) came under the influence of grief.

248. Rati, seeing Madana reduced to ashes by the flame

of Hara's hnm-sound, wept excessively with (Madana's) friend, Spring.

249-250. Then repeatedly weeping and being consoled by Spring, she sought the refuge of the three-eyed Śiva who had the crescent-moon on his head, taking with her a twig with flowers, of a mango-tree accompanied by bees and covered with leaves, and with a cuckoo as her friend.

251-252a. Rati, having tied her mass of curly hair, and having besmeared her body with the white ash of Madana, and having knelt down said to Śiva, adorned with the (crescent-) moon.

Rati said:

252b-258. My salutation to Śiva who has fully occupied my mind, who has occupied the world, whose ways are wonderful. My salutation to Śiva, who is worshipped by gods. Salutation to you (O Śiva), who are always intent on showing favour to your devotees. My salutation to Bhava and the origin of the worldly existence. My salutation to you, who destroyed Madana. Salutation to you who are adorned with the filthy things in nature. My salutation to the immeasurable one, to the abode of virtues, to the ancient Siddha. My salutation to the protector, to the virtue (incarnate), to the leader of the fearful attendants. My salutation to the author of many (kinds of) prosperity in the world. My salutation to you who give what is liked by your devotee. My salutation to the origin of (every) act. My constant salutation to you whose form is ever unlimited. My salutation to you whose anger is unbearable; to you having the mark of the moon (on your head). My salutation to you whose unlimited sports are excessively praised; to you whose vehicle is a bull (Nandi); to you who destroyed the city (of Tripura). My salutation to you who are famous, who are a great medicine having various forms. My salutation to Kāla (i.e. destiny), Kalā, to you who go beyond Kāla and Kalā; to you, O spiritual guide of the mobile and the immobile; to the best of those who should be thought of; to you who fancied the creation of beings.

259. For getting (back) my husband, I have suddenly

sought the shelter of you, the great god, having the (crescent-) moon on your head. Give me Kāma, glory and prosperity. O lord, without that husband, I cannot live.

260. O lord of gods, who is greater and dearer to the beloved in the world than her lover, who is the lord, who is powerful, who is the source of dear things, who is clever, who knows various ways[1] and who does not torment others?

261a. You alone are the lord, you (alone) are the protector of the world, you (alone) are kind, who have uprooted the fear of your devotees.

261b-262a. Śaṅkara having the moon on his head, (called) Vṛṣākapi, thus praised by Madana's beloved, was pleased, and looking at her spoke to her (these) sweet (words):

Śaṅkara said:

262b-263a. O beautiful lady, after a long time this Madana will (again) be (alive). In the worlds he will be known as Anaṅga (bodiless).

263b-264. Thus addressed, Rati, the beloved of Kāma, having saluted Śiva by (bowing down) her head, went to another garden on the Himālaya mountain. The distressed one wept many times at every charming spot.

265a. Though she was determined to die, she abstained from (doing so) by Śiva's order.

265b-268. The (Himālaya) Mountain, impelled by Nārada's words, with a full (i.e. pleased) mind, took, at an auspicious time, his daughter, who had put on ornaments, who had performed an auspicious ceremony, who had put on a chaplet of divine flowers, who had worn a white silken garment, and who was accompanied by her friends, proceeded, and having approached thickets and gardens he saw (at one place) a lady who was weeping, about whom no guess could be made, and who had great prowess.

269-270a. There was none like her in (point of) beauty in the world, in the beautiful forests and on the (mountain-)

1. paryāyapara: the expression is not very clear.

peaks. Seeing her weeping, the Mountain thought with curiosity. Having gone near her, he asked her:

Himālaya said:

270b-271a. O auspicious one, who are you, to whom do you belong, and why are you weeping? O you most beautiful lady in the world, I think the reason (for your weeping) is not small.

271b-272a. Hearing his words, she, accompanied by Spring wept and heaved a sigh and uttered words that caused grief and increased distress.

Rati said:

272b-274. O you of a good vow, know me to be the dear wife of Kāma. On this mountain, Śiva was practising penance. Being annoyed by an obstacle (in his penance), he, through anger, flashed his (third) eye, and discharging a flame of fire, reduced Kāma to ashes. Overcome with fear I sought the refuge of that god.

275-277. (When) I praised him, he was pleased, and then he i.e. Śiva said (to me:) "O beloved of Kāma, Kāma will be born (again). A man resorting to me, and reciting this eulogy (made) by you, will obtain (i.e. get fulfilled) his desire, and will even come back from (the clutches of) death. Waiting for the fulfilment of his promise, I am, O you of great lustre, preserving my body for some time.

278-279. The Mountain, thus addressed by Rati, (looking) terrific due to alarm, held the hand of his daughter, and desired to go to his city. As what was going to happen was to happen, she the future cause of beings, being abashed, said to her father, the Mountain, through her friend:

The Mountain's daughter said:

280-282. What is the use of this wretched body to me? How would Śaṅkara, who has reached that state, be my husband? What is desired can be obtained by austerities? There is nothing that cannot be obtained by one who practices penance. When a legitimate means is available, wretchedness is useless (has no

meanining) in the world. With my doubts about penance removed, and with a desire to live for (my) self, I shall thus practise penance; I shall go (to practise it).

283a. To his daughter, who spoke like this, the lord of mountains spoke words with the letters of them (i.e. with his voice) choked:

Himālaya said:

283b-284a. Do not (do this) rash act, O daughter. Your body is not capable of bearing (the trouble of) penance which is fit for (persons) capable of suffering, O you of pleasing appearance.

284b-285a. Even if a person does not desire future acts (i.e. that are to take place) do take place; and also future (i.e. would-be) objects[1] come up.

285b-286a. Therefore, O daughter, you have nothing to do with penance. I shall go home (with you) and will think about this (there only).

286b-287. Even after he had said so, when the Mountain's daughter did not go home, the Mountain, full of anxiety, approved of (what) his daughter (had decided). Then a divine voice was heard in (i.e. from) the sky, (spreading) in the three worlds:

288-290a. "Since, you said, 'O daughter, do not (do this) rash act', to your daughter, her name will be 'Umā' in the worlds. She is success incarnate, and will accomplish what she thinks about." Hearing these words (uttered) in the sky, he allowed his daughter (to practise penance) and went home.

Pulastya said:

290b-294. Followed by her two friends, the restrained daughter of the lord of mountains too, went to the peak of the mountain which was inaccessible even to deities, which was auspicious, which was adorned with many minerals, which was full of divine creepers, the trees in which were beautiful with bees, which had divine streams, which was full of many birds, which was adorned with Cakravāka birds and with fully blown

1. padārthāni—the gender is wrong here.

auspicious (flowers) growing in water and on land, which had many secret caves, and which had divine chambers, which was resounding with groups of birds, and which was full of the desire-yielding trees.

295-296. There she saw a tree, which had large branches, green leaves, flowers of all seasons, which was decorated with Cakravāka birds, which was full of hundreds of flowers of various kinds, which had various kinds of fruits, which was forsaken (i.e. untouched) by the sun's rays, the sprouts of which were expanded and well-knit.

297-298. Leaving her garments and ornaments there, the Mountain's daughter, clad in divine bark-garments and wearing a girdle made of darbha-grass, bathed thrice (a day), ate red lodhra flowers for a hundred autumns. Then she subsisted on one withered leaf for a hundred years.

299-301. She, the treasure of penance, remained without food for a hundred years. Then by the fire of her penance, all the beings were frightened. Then revered Indra remembered the seven sages. All of them gladly came there; and they, who were glad, after being honoured by Indra, asked him the reason of that (i.e. for inviting them): "O best among gods, why have you remembered us?"

302-303. Indra said: "O you revered ones, listen to the reason (why I invited you). The daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain is practising a severe penance on the Himālaya mountain. Please do quickly what is pleasing to her, by (bringing about) the completion of the respectable lady's penance for the (good of the) world."

304-305. Saying, "All right", the sages having come to the mountain resorted to by the multitudes of Siddhas, spoke to her in sweet words: "O daughter having lotus-like eyes, what is the desire that you have set about (to be fulfilled)?" The respectable girl said to the sages with respect and regard:

The respectable girl said:

306-307. O you magnanimous ones who practise penance by observing silence, to salute people like you I have made up my mind which does not entertain doubts. You with pleased

faces, please, be seated first, and being free from fatigue, then ask me (what you want to ask).

308-309. Thus addressed, they took seats there; she too, breaking her vow of silence and saluting the sages duly, and worshipping them according to the proper rite, gently spoke to the seven sages resembling the sun.

310. The revered seven ones also, after the end of her silence (i.e. when she broke her silence) again asked her who deserved honour.

311. She too, of a charming smile, with a mind full of honour (for the sages), seeing all the sages (seated) like that, spoke with restraint in speech:

312. "You, the revered ones, know the desire of the mind of beings, for human beings very much torment their bodies, etc.

313. Certain clever ones exert themselves with (in) various efforts. With (certain) means, they, being careful obtain objects difficult to get.

314-315. Others, having accurately fixed various undertakings, resort to the vow with effort for the (good) in another body (i.e. next existence); and my hand, desiring to touch the Vindhya-peak, decorated with the garland of flowers produced (i.e. grown) in the sky, repeatedly spreads out.

316-318a. Indeed, I am eager to obtain Bhava (i.e. Śiva), who is, by his (very) nature, difficult to please, and who is now practising penance, whom (even) gods and demons have not (properly) judged, and who is the abode of the action undertaken for (reaching) the supreme spirit. By him, free from attachment, Madana has now been burnt. How should a person like me propitiate Śiva whose nature is like that!"

318b-319a. In order to know the steadiness of her mind, the sages spoke to her about (her) present undertaking from the beginning.

The sages said:

319b-320. O daughter, in the world two kinds of happiness are observed: Contact with this body and the joy of mind.

He (i.e. Śiva), the naked one, is, by nature, fierce and has ashes and bones as his ornaments.

321. He wears skulls, is a mendicant, is naked, has deformed eyes, and his actions are unsteady. He is heedless, has an insane figure, is loathsome, and has stored nothing.

322-324. You will not obtain your desired object by having this husband (entertaining) formless and worthess objects. If you desire eternal happiness of your body, how can you get it from Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva) who dwells among ghosts, who is abhorred, from whose ornaments made of bones and skulls human marrow is trickling, who is adorned with ornaments made of hissing and fierce lordly serpents, who lives in crematory and who is followed by Pramathas (i.e. a class of beings attending upon Śiva).

325. There is Hari, whose feet are rubbed by the multitudes of crowns of lordly gods, who is the killer of (his) enemies, who is the creator of the world, who is the husband of Śrī (i.e. Lakṣmī), and whose form is infinite.

326. Similarly there is Indra, Pākaśāsana in whose honour prayers are muttered[1]. (And also) there is Agni, the treasure of gods and the yielder of (all) desires.

327. There is Vāyu, the supporter of the world and the life of all beings. And also there is king Vaiśravaṇa (i.e. Kubera), the lord having greatness due to (his having) all wealth.

328. Why do you not desire to have one of these? Or you can have the pleasure kept in your mind (i.e. entertained by you) from someone else.

329-330. Thus, O daughter, the efficacy of the worldly wealth will lead to your good in this or the next world. Your father has everything that is offered to gods. The trouble that you will take for obtaining your husband is a fruitless tree.

331. Generally an object in full is difficult to be obtained by (merely) leaving one's place; it may be obtained even (by remaining) there.

332. The Mountain's daughter got angry when the best

1. japya—in whose honour prayers are muttered.

sages were speaking like that, and with her eyes red, and lips throbbing, she spoke:

Devi said:

333-334. What can be the (proper) guidance for a wrong perception? Where can there be a curbing of crime? Who can put you, teaching perverse things, on the right path, (since) you thus take me to be wicked, liking wrong position and wrong perception? I have no deliberation since I am an egotist.

335-336a. All of you are, like the creator, omniscient. (Yet) you do not know that god, the eternal lord of the world, who is unborn, who is the ruler, who is immutable and whose greatness and rise are immeasurable.

336b-340. Let that undertaking (of yours, viz. trying to dissuade me) stop. Even lords of gods like Viṣṇu, Brahmā have not known him, who is the reality, and correct knowledge that is just covered. Do you not even know that greatness of him, which has spread in (all) the worlds and is clear to all beings, whose form is the sky or the fire or the earth, or Varuṇa, whose eyes are the moon and the sun, whose genital organ in the form of a phallus do the demons and gods, led by lords of gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Indra, and also the sages, devoutly worship? Do you not even know him, the source of their power?

341-342. Gods like Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) are born on Aditi from Kaśyapa; Kaśyapa is the son of Marīci, and Aditi is Dakṣa's daughter. It is said that Marīci and Dakṣa also are the sons of Brahmā. Brahmā has achieved his power from the golden egg itself.

343-347. From whose meditation has the original division (of the world) been manifested? Nārāyaṇa, with his own desire and impelled by him, would get birth as Nārāyaṇa. (Even) the thought of those who are subject to urge is due to his act (only). It is the idea of one who is spoiled by madness (by which) one looks upon desirable things as perverse. Such a person always ridicules the affairs (of people) when they are seen by him in the world. Know Viṣṇu to be the cause of the attainment of religious merit and demerit. O sages, know this much and like farmers sowing a handful of seeds in an excellent

field on the earth for obtaining good fruits, listen repeatedly to my words near (i.e. within the range of) the hearing of the lord of mountains.

348. They, known as masters of speech, and (looking) handsome due to smile, having heard that charming speech describing that undertaking in order, spoke:

The sages said:

349-351. O daughter, when the world was in distress, his mission was really excellent. Probably the fear of (i.e. entertained by) the Himālaya mountain was due to his form at that time. Those that are ready to do a deed are indeed eager (to do it). Even their hearts are impatient; then what about the hearts of the magnanimous ones? Especially those who desire to speak in particular should follow the course of the conduct of the world; since those who accept their authority live in comfort.

352-353a. Saying so, the sages quickly went to the Himālaya mountain. There, respectfully honoured by the Mountain, the best sages, being pleased, hastily spoke a few words.

The sages said:

353b-355a. The trident-holding god himself seeks (the hand of) your daughter. So quickly purify yourself as by offering an oblation into fire. That is the mission of the gods which has turned round after a long time. This effort should be done for the emancipation of the world.

355b-357a. Thus addressed, the (Himālaya) Mountain, overcome with joy, and as it were looking for a reply, was unable to speak. Then Menā, overcome with love for her daughter and having saluted the sages, herself spoke these significant words to the sages:

Mena said:

357b-360a. Now all that, for which they desire the birth of a daughter, has come up in due course. Even to him, who is endowed with being born in (a good) family, with (young) age, with handsome form, with power, a daughter should not be given by inviting him if he is not seeking her

hand. How is it that he, who has the quarters as his garment (i.e. who is naked), who grants Kāmas (i.e. satisfies desires) though he has burnt Kāma (i.e. Madana), is worshipped by my daughter?

The sages said:

360b-363a. Understand the supremacy of Śaṅkara. Gods and demons, worshipping the pair of his lotus-like feet, become very happy. That form which is useful to a person is desired by him for a long time. The girl, pleased with that form (of Śiva) is practising a severe penance. When she will have finished the divine vows she will listen to us only.

363b-364. Saying so, they went to the place where the Mountain's daughter was (practising penance). That resolute Umā, full of lustre because of her having vanquished the heat of the sun and that of fire's flames, being affectionately addressed by the sages, spoke (these) significant words:

365-367a. "I do not desire (to be favoured) by any mean one except Śarva, the trident-holder. I have sought Śiva who remains with distinction, who gives great prosperity to beings, whose great matchless standard is his courage and deeds of grandeur, than whom there is nothing other (to be sought), from whom all (else) proceeds, and whose affluence is without a beginning or an end.

367b. He is impartial, resolute and his (so called) perverse deeds are far-reaching."

368-369a. Having heard these words, the best sages, with their eyes full of tears, embraced that devout (girl). They, being very much pleased spoke (these) sweet words to the Mountain's daughter.

The sages said:

369b-371a. It is a great wonder, O daughter; you, like a spotless form of knowledge, are, by resorting to Bhava (i.e. Śiva), pleasing our hearts. We indeed know the wonderful supremacy of that god. We have come here to guage the firmness of your resolve.

371b-372. O you of slender body, this (your) desire will be soon fulfilled. The sun moves with his radiance. Is the lustre

of the gems separate from them? Which object gives up its own colour? In the same way you are without Śiva (i.e. cannot be separated from him).

373-374. We (now) go to request him with (i.e. using) not one (i.e. many) means. We too have the same object in our heart. Since you are the intellect and the wisdom (of Śiva), Śaṅkara too will certainly accomplish the mission.

375-376. All the sages who spoke thus, were honoured by the Mountain's daughter, and then they went to the great peak of the Himālaya with the water of the Ganges and had their tawny hair matted; in their hands they had the wreaths of the Mandāra flowers followed by bees.

377-378a. Reaching the mouatain-peak, they saw Śaṅkara's hermitage where all the beings were tranquil, where the thicket was quiet, where water flowed in all directions without (making) any noise or agitation.

378b-379. Then at the door they saw Vīraka, with a cane in his hand. The sages, the best speakers, who were polite, worshipped him and on account of the importance of the mission spoke to him in sweet words:

380-381. "Know that we, urged by the (importance of) the mission of gods, have come to see Śaṅkara, the most virtuous three-eyed (god). O lord, you alone are our refuge; (see that) there will be no delay. This is a general rule that a door-keeper should be requested (first)."

382-383a. Thus addressed by the sages with respect, he said to them: "He has gone to the Ganges for offering his last prayer of the sacrifice. O sages, sanctified by meditation, you will see Śiva after a while."

383b-384a. Thus addressed, the sages, expert in the mission, remained there with watchfulness, as the thirsty Cātaka-birds remain (waiting) for the rainy season with deep-sounding clouds.

384b-386a. Then Vīraka, bowing down and touching the ground with his knees, gladly said (these words) to Śaṅkara who had assumed Vīrāsana[1] (pose) and had deer-hide fastened

1. Vīrāsana—also called 'paryaṅka': sitting on the hams. It is a posture practised by ascetics in meditation.

to his body and who was the abode of affection:

386b-387a. "The seven sages have come to see you of blazing lustre. O lord, order (them) to see you, then you (may) resort to meditation."

387b-388a. Then Śiva, who was thus addressed by the magnanimous Vīraka, gave an order, with a gesture, viz. moving his eye-brows, for their entry.

388b-389a Vīraka also, by nodding his head, called the seven great sages remaining at a distance to see Śiva.

389b-390. They too, quickly tying their hair and wearing long hides of black antelopes as their garments, entered the divine sacrificial ground of lord Śiva.

391-392. Then with their hands folded, and having thrown a heap of divine flowers (at Śiva's feet and thus) worshipping the pair of Śiva's feet, the residents of heaven, affectionately looked at by Śiva, together saw Śiva and were glad.

The sages said:

393. We are blessed now, since we are seeing the sprout-like feet (of Śiva) saluted by the lords of gods having the wealth of the greatness of virtues. Order us what we should do for the protection of all.

394. The omniscient one then laughed and said to the best sages: "Carry out the mission that you have in mind."

395-397a. Thus addressed, the sages quickly came to the place where the Mountain's daughter was, and they who knew distinction (between one thing and another) spoke to the Mountain's daughter in the mountain's cave: "Do not burn your charming, dear and attractive form with penance. Śaṅkara is pleased with you; he will accept your hand. Desiring the same thing, we approached your father before you. Go home with your father, we (too) shall go home".

397b-398a. She (i.e. Pārvatī), who was thus addressed, thought: 'There is a fruit of penance (i.e. penance gives its fruit)'. She hastily went to the divine, well-decorated house of her father.

398b-399a. The daughter of the Himālaya mountain, eager to see Hara (i.e. Śiva) regarded one night as equal to a myriad years.

399b-400. Then the (inmates of Himālaya's house) performed a friendly rite in the early part of the day[1], and many groups of auspicious rites duly and in proper order, and also combinations of divine, auspicious (rites).

401-402. Seasons, being embodied and satisfying all desires waited upon the Mountain. The breezes were comfortable in the act of sweeping the Mountain. Goddess Lakṣmī herself made many decorations in the mansions; there was Kānti in every object, and Ṛddhi was full of ornaments.

403-405a. Gems like Cintāmaṇi (i.e. the desire-yielding gem) stood around the Mountain. Creepers and great trees like Kalpa (i.e. the desire-yielding tree) also stood (by him). Herbs in embodied forms with divine herbs, and all liquids and minerals were the Mountain's servants; the servants, the inmates of the hermitage, were engrossed in work.

405b-406. Rivers, all oceans, and whatever was mobile and immobile—all these enhanced the greatness of the Mountain. The sages, serpents, Yakṣas, Gandharvas, Kinnaras became (engrossed in work).

407. The gods, with pure forms, stood ready with decorations for Śaṅkara on the Gandhamādana mountain.

408. The grandsire, with his eyes widely dilated due to affection (for Śaṅkara) tied the piece of the moon (i.e. the crystal-moon) on the matted hair of Śaṅkara.

409-410a. Kālī, Cāmuṇḍā, tying a large garland of skulls on his head, said to Giriśa (i.e. Śaṅkara) : "O Śaṅkara, produce a son, who after killing the family of the lord of demons, will satisfy me with blood."

410b-411a. Śauri (i.e. Viṣṇu), taking the best of ornaments viz. a bright neck-ornament, a snake-ornament, became ready before Śiva.

411b-412a. Indra hastily put on his (body with a) perspiring large lotus-like face, an elephant-hide, with its extending ends smeared with marrow.

1. Brāhmamuhūrta—the last watch of the night i.e. the early part of the day.

412b-413a. Sharp breezes blew, and decorated Śaṅkara's bull, his vehicle, having the speed of mind and resembling the brilliance of the Himālaya mountain.

413b. The sun, fire and the moon that dwelt in Śaṅkara's eyes, shone.

414. The funeral ashes, bright like silver, on (i.e. applied to) the forehead of the lord of the worlds, the witness to the deeds of the world, had their own lustre.

415. With his hand he tied the wreath of human bones. The lord of dead bodies (i e. Yama) remained, through fear, at a distant city (i.e. place).

416-417a. The lord (i.e. Śiva), discarding the jewelled ornaments of various sizes brought by Kubera, himself, with his own hand, having bracelets of bright lordly serpents, put on spotless Takṣaka as his ear-ornament.

417b-418a. Decorating the lord with various decorative articles they (i.e. gods etc.).... (obscure).

418b-419a. Goddess Earth, charming in all respects, and eagerly occupied, let out new, all-beautiful rice and juicy herbs.

419b-420. God Varuṇa, who knew everything about everybody, himself took ornaments decked with jewels, and also variegated flowers full of gems, and remained there (ready) with ornaments.

421. Devout Fire too (was ready with) divine golden ornaments and silver vessels.

422-423. Fragrant Wind, pleasant to the touch for the lord, blew. Graceful Indra, having the thunderbolt as his ornament and being glad, held the umbrella bright and large with the lunar rays. The chief Gandharvas sang (songs) and groups of celestial nymphs danced.

424. Gandharvas and Kinnaras playing on musical instruments, sang very sweetly. In a while the Seasons also sang and danced there.

425-427a. The unsteady attendants (of Śiva) disturbed the Himālaya mountain (by their movements). In due order, (Śiva), the creator, the author of everything and the destroyer of Bhaga's eyes[1], performed with his wife (i.e. bride) the rites

1. Bhaganetrahā—See 33.156 above.

relating to marriage as told (in sacred books). He, the destroyer of the cities (of Tripura), to whom worship was offered by the lord of mountains (i.e. Himālaya), and who was amused by hosts of gods, lived there that night with his wife.

427b-428a. Then the lord of gods was awakened (next morning) by the singing of the Gandharvas and the dancing of the celestial nymphs, and the praises of (i.e. sung by) the gods.

428b-429a. Next morning, taking his leave of the lordly Himālaya mountain, he, with his wife, went to Mandara mountain (carried) by Śṛngin, having wind's speed.

429b-430a. When lord Śiva had (thus) left with Umā, the (Himālaya) Mountain, along with his relatives, experienced joy (i.e. became happy); for, the mind of which father having a daughter is not free (when the daughter is given) away to a worthy groom!

430b-431. He, the destroyer of the eyes of Bhaga, with his heart that was very much attached, sported with the respectable lady (viz. Pārvatī) in charming city-gardens and secluded thickets.

432-433a. When a long time (like this) passed, the Mountain's daughter played with artificial sons (i.e. dolls) with her friends (in) a game called 'Son'. Sometime the Mountain's daughter anointed her body with fragrant oil and rubbed and cleaned it which was filled (i.e. covered) with dirt.

433b. Taking those unguents used for rubbing and cleaning the body, she prepared a human (shape) having an elephant's face.

434. The respectable lady (i.e. Pārvatī) while playing, once threw that human (form) into the water of the auspicious friendly Ganges. Then that (form) turned into one having a big body (i.e. increased in size).

435. With his very vast body he filled the world. The respectable lady (i.e. Pārvatī) addressed him 'O son'; and Jānhavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) also called him 'O son'.

436. That form having the face of an elephant, was worshipped by the gods as Gāṅgeya (i.e. the son of Gaṅgā); and the grandsire, gave him supremacy as Vināyaka, over the attendants (of Śiva).

437-438a. Again while playing the lady of excellent complexion fashioned a tree. The lady of an auspicious face nourished a charming sprout of Aśoka that had shot forth by treating it with auspicious operations.

438b-439a. Then the respectable lady was addressed in these words by gods along with sages through brāhmaṇas like Bṛhaspati, the priests of the lord of heaven.

439b-440a. "Now please formulate rules on (i.e. for) the path shown (by you). O respectable lady, what will be the fruit of such trees and (dolls called) sons?"

440b. Thus addressed, she, with her body full of joy, spoke extremely auspicious words:

441-443a. "The wise man, who gets fashioned a well in a village where there is want of water, lives in heaven (for as many years as there are drops in the well, at the rate of) one year for one drop. (The fashioning of) a large well is equal to (the fashioning of) ten wells; (the fashioning of) a deep lake is equal to (the fashioning of) ten large wells. (The offering in marriage of) a daughter is equal to (the fashioning of) ten deep lakes; and (the planting of) a tree is equal to (the offering in marriage) ten girls. This is the auspicious rule that would definitely take place in future in the world."

443b. The brāhmaṇas, led by Bṛhaspati, thus addressed, went home after having saluted the mother viz. Bhavānī (i.e. (Pārvatī).

444-450. When they had gone, Śaṅkara too, holding the hand of the Mountain's daughter went to his own residence, which gave delight to the mind, which had mansions with upper stories and gateways, which had long strings of pearls (hanging about), the quadrangular spot in the courtyard of which was full of jasmine creepers, which was well tied (i.e. decked) with gold, which had a sporting chamber as desired, which was resounding with the humming of bees intoxicated with the fragrance of flowers that had scattered there, the walls of which were (as it were) covered with the songs sung loudly by Kinnaras, which had a mass of fragrant incense obtainable as desired (yet) unseen, on all sides of which pet pea-hens were zealously kept, to the crystal-pillars and arches of which groups

of swans were assigned, which was clean, and was mostly crowded with Kinnars without flurry, where parrots, through misunderstanding, saw the walls, reflected with pearls and made of rubies (as containing) their own species (i.e. other parrots).

451-453a. There the lord began playing with dice with his beloved. At that portion of the ground (decked) with spotless sapphires, where the two remained sporting, their bodies gladdened with their interest in amusement, entered into companionship. When thus the respectable lady and Śaṅkara were sporting, a great sound like the falling sky arose.

453b-454a. Hearing that the respectable lady (i.e. goddess Pārvatī) asked Śaṅkara, the best of gods, through curiosity, as to what it was.

454b-455a. The god said with a smile: "O you of bright smile, you have never seen this before. These are lords of my attendants, dear to me; they are playing on this mountain.

455b-456a. They who formerly were best among men, have pleased me by means of penance, celibacy, muttering my names and by resorting to sacred places.

456b-457. O you of an auspicious face, they have come to me and are dear to me. They take any form they like; they are very energetic; they are endowed with great forms and virtues. I am amazed by the deeds of them who are mighty.

458-459. They are capable of destroying this creation along with gods. Even though left by Brahmā, the Moon, Indra, Gandharvas, the great serpents and Kinnaras, I still rejoice; (but) without them I never rejoice. O you beautiful in all limbs, these dear to me are playing on the mountain."

460. The lady thus addressed by him, being full of amazement approached a window and with all wonder (on) her face she saw them all (through the window):

461-463. They were thin, tall, short, fat, large-bellied. The faces of some of them were like those of tigers and elephants. Some appeared like rams and he-goats. They had the forms of many beings, had flames in their mouths, were dark and brown; (some were) pleasing, (some) fearful, (some) had smiling faces, (some) always had black and brown matted hair; the faces of some resembled those of various birds, or those of gods; their

garments were silken or made of hides; (some were) naked, others were deformed.

464-466. The ears of some were like those of cows or like those of elphants; they had many faces, eyes and bellies; had many feet and arms; they had various divine missiles in their hands; they had put on chaplets of flowers; they were agitated and fierce; they had held various weapons and were adorned with many armours; they had got into strange vehicles; they had divine forms; they moved in the sky; they were proclaiming to the accompaniment of the sound of lutes and other musical instruments; they were dancing at various places.

467a. Seeing the lords of attendants like that the goddess said to Śaṅkara:

The goddess (i.e. Pārvatī) said:

467b-468a. What is the number of the lords of the attendants? What are their names? What is their nature? Tell me about each one of them, who are settled down.

Śaṅkara said:

468b-469a. Their number runs in crores, and their valour is known in many ways. The entire world is occupied by these who are fierce and very mighty.

469b-470. These, eating various kinds of food, and enjoying (themselves), joyfully enter the places sacred to Siddhas, paths, old gardens, houses, bodies of demons, children and mad persons.

471-472. Some of them drink hot (liquids), some drink foam, some drink (i.e. inhale) smoke, some drink honey, some eat marrow, some drink blood, some eat all things, some do not eat all. Some eat the (food of) gods, some eat the food of ascetics, some like many musical instruments and enjoyment. Due to their unlimited number it is not possible to describe them separately.

The goddess said:

473-475. O lord, who is that lord of attendants? Who is followed by Kinnaras, who has put on the upper part of his body

the hide of elephant, whose body is pure, who has put the girdle of muñja (around his waist), who, the smart one, has dyed his face with the tenacious paste of red arsenic, who has put on the garland of lotuses bitten (i.e. stung) by bees, who has a charming figure, who is producing the rhythmic sound of (the cymbals of) bell-metal with pieces of stone, and who is repeatedly listening to the songs of the attendants? What is his name?'

Śarva (i.e Śiva) said:

476. O lady, he is Vīraka, who is always dear to my heart, who is the support of many wonders and virtues and who is honoured by the lords of attendants.

The goddess said:

477. O you destroyer of the cities (of Tripura), I long for such a son. When shall I see such a son, causing delight?

Śarva said:

478. Just this is your son giving delight to you. Vīraka too will be lucky to have a mother like you, O lady of charming waist.

479-480. Thus addressed, the Mountain's daughter quickly sent her friend Vijayā, eager with joy, to bring (to her) Vīraka. Getting down quickly from the mansion touching the sky, Vijayā said to (Vīraka), the protector of the attendants, who remained in their midst and who prompted a crore of suns:

481-482. "O Vīraka, come on; you have pleased the goddess with your smartness; she is calling you." He, bright like a red lotus blooming on the top of the mansion, thus addressed by her dropped the pieces of stone, and, followed by Vijayā, approached the goddess.

483. Seeing him, Pārvatī started oozing profuse milk from her breasts. The Mountain's daughter said (to him): "O child, drink as much as you desire, this milk, oozing (from my breasts)."

484. The goddess affectionately said in sweet words, "O Vīraka, come on quickly: you have now become my son, given by the god of gods".

485-486. Saying so and placing him on her lap, she embraced him and kissed him on his cheeks; then smelling his head,

stroking his limbs, herself, decorated him with many divine ornaments like girdles with bells, anklets and with anklets and necklaces strewn in invaluable strings, also with tender leaves and beautiful auspicious bracelets.

487. Then she performed the rite for the protection of his body with many white mustards sanctified by divine hymns. Taking (him) thus she fashioned a wreath on his head by drawing lines of bright yellow pigment, and said to him:

488. "Like a child play well with the attendants, slowly and carefully go by avoiding holes. The trees on the mountain peaks are full of lines (i.e. groups) of serpents; their branches are broken by elephants.

489-490. O boy, do not enter a place agitated by the eddies in the Ganges, and also the forest resorted to by many tigers. O boy, in many inaccessible places a man with a pure heart gets what thing is desired by him, being pleased by all his qualities." Thus addressed, that Vīraka, smiling, and his mind overpowered by sport, said to his mother:

491. "This bracelet is made by my mother herself, it is painted with reddish dots. This delicate garland made of charming jasmine flowers is placed on my head. I shall please the goddess."

492-495a. Saying so, he, being happy, went out to play with his attendants. The Mountain's daughter, moving from the southern window to the western, from the western window to the northern window, from the northern window to the eastern one, along with her friends, saw from (each) window Vīraka playing outside and due to her love for the world she attached to her son said: "Who is here? One having a body—the aggregate of flesh, feces and urine—and knowing little gets infatuated. When the residents of heaven went to another chamber to see Śiva, the regents of quarters got into the vehicles.[1]

495b-496. This sword is spotless, it cuts off; please tell whose sword has been snatched by whom? It is no use having a staff. What shall we say? There is some fierce actual mission of the attendant on the mountain. This is a noose; nobody is bound here; O followers of the regents of quarters, do not stay in vain."

1. Vv 494ff are not properly worded.

497-498. They said, "It is so". Then seeing Vīraka, the protector, following the gods the goddess said: "O protectors of beings, do not (go to) thickets on the mountain, to the door of of fire-chamber; do not dive into the falls of streams; and do not (go into) residences to which masses of flowers are tied; do not move as you like into deep mountain caves full of sounds produced by wind."

499-500. He having a tawny lustre like a mass of golden pollen on the region of the slope of the lofty golden peak, having the wealth of handsomeness, appeared to give fragrance even in the charming forest of gods and in caves, on the bank of a charming well, having the flowers of kunda, mandāra, sprouts and lotuses. The Mountain's daughter, longing for her son and desiring to amuse herself, in a moment remembered her son, whose nectar of handsomeness was drunk by Siddha-women with large winking eyes.

501-505. He was her son in the previous birth and had his religious merit rising at that moment only. How can he, who was fashioned by the creator with attention, be satisfied when he was playing? The lord of the lords of attendants (sported) giving delight to the deities—for a moment looking (here and there); for a moment singing divine (songs); for a moment moving with the lords of attendants, unsteady due to (i.e. while) dancing; (remaining) for a moment on a mountain-peak full of roars of lions; for a moment on blazing masses of jewels; for a moment on a lofty Śāla or Tāla tree; for a moment on blossoming Tamāla trees, dark like bees; for a moment at the root of tree; for a moment in water having some mud and marked with lotuses; for a moment on mother's auspicious and spotless lap. In this way the lord of the lords of Śiva's attendants, spreading (i.e. indulging in) child-like sports, and giving delight to the deities, with his life being loudly sung by Vidyādharas, and having the same sport as the trident-holder, played,

506-507. When the sun, after having illumined the world, with his rays went to another region, the wealthy Mountain, remaining away and making clear in his heart his very fast friendship, was always propitiated by brāhmaṇas. Meru did not oblige the falling sun.

508-510. About one stumbling down it is always heard: 'This is the order among people.' The day fulfilling (the desires) of people, followed the sun. When the sages, keeping off the feeling of heat, and with the palms of their hands folded in obeisance, and with their faces turned towards the sun, performed their evening prayer, the nocturnal darkness spread over this world, as foulness spoiling the mind of a crooked person spreads over his heart.

511-514. When the movements in heaven had become dull, Śiva remained, with his neck clasped by the hands of the Mountain's daughter, and his senses very much filled with (i.e. affected by) the white moonlight, on a bed, the partitions of which were illumined by the jewelled lamps on the blazing hoods (of serpents), the coverlet of which had gems of groups of moons which imitated the bow of Indra (i.e. the rainbow) due to its shining with various gems, which had heaps of bright pearls along with gems and a mass of bells and which had been covered with a charming, moving, graceful expansive cloth.

515. The Mountain's daughter too, with the corners of her eyes, dark, her feet having the charms of blue lotuses, touched by (i.e. due to the coming on of) night became very much overpowered by passion. Then the god spoke to her who was full of the art of (love-) sport.

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

The Birth of Kumāra and the Death of Tārarka

Śarva (i.e. Śiva) said:

1-2. O you of slender body, joined with my white body, you will shine like a black female-serpent clung to a white sandal tree or like night covered with reddish garment touched by moonlight.

3. Thus addressed by him, the Mountain's daughter, with her eyes red due to anger, and her face changed due to (the knitting of) the eye-brows, loudly spoke.

The goddess said:

4-5. Every person grieves due to the foolish acts done by him; O you, having the moon as your decoration, a suppliant certainly meets with a rebuff. You are certainly, at every step, insulting me, who sought you by means of penance practised for a long time.

6. O Śarva, I am not crooked, nor am I, O Dhūrjaṭī, rough. (On the contrary) you are known in the world to be possessing poison and a shelter to the mines of faults (i.e. those who commit faults).

7. You snatched away the teeth (of Pūṣan) and destroyed Bhaga's eyes.[1] The twelve-fold Sun knows you well.

8. Insulting me by (pointing out my) defects, you are causing headache to me. You who called me 'black', are well known to be very black (Mahākāla).

9-10. I shall go to a mountain to give up my life through penance. Humiliated by a rogue (like you)—a mean skull-carrier, always living in a crematory, with your body smeared with ashes, and moving among the divine mothers[2]—I do not want to live.

11. Hearing her words, harsh due to anger, Hara, confused by this unwelcome (reply) and with the moon on his head shaking, said:

Śarva said:

12. O Girijā, you are the daughter of a Mountain; I do not mean to find fault with you. With a desire to utter flattering words, I resorted to this (apparent) madness.

13-14. O Mountain's daughter, in the regular course there is (really) no suspicion (about you) in my firm heart. O you timid one, if you are angry like this, I shall not speak in joke to you. O you of bright smile, give up your anger. I, bowing my head, have joined my palms in obeisance to you.

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1. Bhagasya netrahantā—At the time of the destruction of Dakṣa's sacrifice, Śiva knocked out Pūṣan's teeth and destroyed Bhaga's eyes. See 33.156 above.

2. Mātṛ—An epithet of the divine mothers, said to attend on Śiva, but usually on Skanda. They are generally said to be eight; but according to some they are seven; some increase the number to sixteen.

15. (Only) a low person gets excited by an insult or a censure. Indeed a man (would) not (use) poignant (words) towards the bad or the good.

16-17. The goddess, struck to the core, (though) advised by the god with many sweet words, did not give up her severe anger. The Mountain's daughter, pulling off her garment clasped by Śaṅkara with his hand, and with her hair dishevelled, desired to go at once.

18-19. When she was (thus) going angrily, the destroyer of Tripura again spoke: "Really with all your limbs you behave like your father. Your mind is overpowered with turbidness like the mass of clouds on the peak of the Himālaya mountain. Your heart is unfathomable like that mountain.

20-22a. (You have received) hardness from (things) like stones, and thickness from the thickets; (you have taken) crookedness from rivers, and are difficult to be employed like snow. All this has been transferred to you from the Himālaya mountain, O you of slender body." Thus addressed, the Mountain's daughter, with her head trembling through anger, and her lips throbbing, spoke again.

Umā said:

22b-24. By blaming and censuring a virtuous person strongly one might get everything. Due to your contact with the wicked, every (bad) thing has been transferred to you: From serpents you have received many tongues (i.e. saying contradictory things); from the ashes you have got want of oiliness (i.e. affections); the wickedness of your heart has sprung up from the moon, and severe torment from poison. What is the use of prolixity in this matter? Enough of exerting myself in talking about you.

25. You are fearless on account of your stay in the crematory; you have no sense of shame because you are naked your cruelty is due to your being a skull-holder; compassion has left you long back.

26. Saying so the daughter of the Himālaya mountain went out of that dwelling. When she was leaving the attendants (of Śiva) made a sound (i.e. cried in grief).

27. "O mother, where are you going?" Saying so, they, weeping, again ran to her. Vīraka, clasping the feet of the goddess, said with a voice faltering due to tears:

28. "O mother, what indeed is this? Afflicted and angry, where are you going? I shall follow you going without any affection.

29. Otherwise, I, abandoned by you, will fall (i.e. throw myself down) from the peak of this mountain."

30-31. The goddess, the mother, raising his face with her right hand said: "O son, do not grieve. It is not proper for you either to fall from the mountain-top or to accompany me; O son, hear about the undertaking for which I am going. Hara addressed me as 'Kṛṣṇā' (i.e. black); he suppressed and insulted me.

32-33. That I (i.e. I who was treated like this) shall practise penance by which I shall have fair complexion. This god is lustful; after I leave you have to keep guard at the door and always be watchful about the weak point so that no woman will approach Hara.

34. O son, when you see another woman, inform me; then I shall quickly do what is proper."

35-36a. Vīraka said to the great goddess: "Let it be so". With his body sprinkled with the food of nectar in the form of his mother's command, and with his affliction removed, he, having saluted his mother, went to look after the guard.

36b-38a. The goddess also saw her mother's friend, the deity of the mountain, Kusumāmohinī by name, who was well-adorned, coming (to her). That deity too, seeing the Mountain's daughter, and with her mind overcome with affection, embraced her (i.e. Umā) and said aloud: "O daughter, where are you going?"

38b-39a. She (i.e. Umā) told her all that that caused her anger due to Śiva's (humiliating her). The Mountain's daughter again spoke to her, who was like her mother.

Umā said:

39b-41. You are for ever the mountain's deity, O you, who are never censured (i.e. who are praiseworthy). Your presence is everywhere. At heart you are very affectionate. Therefore, O

mother, I shall tell you what should be done by you. With great care you have to stop the entry of another woman (into Śiva's mansion). Secretly and with care you have always to wait upon him on the mountain.

42-44. O you sinless one, you should inform me if some other woman enters Śiva's (mansion); then I shall do what is proper." The auspicious (deity) thus addressed, said, "All right" and went to the (Himālaya) mountain. Umā, the Mountain's daughter too, went to her father's wonderful garden, that had entered the sky and the brightness of which was darkened by the row of clouds. Then she cast off her ornaments and put on the garments of the barks of trees.

45-46a. In the summer she was tormented by five fires.[1] In the rainy season she remained in water. She subsisted on food growing in forest; (sometimes) she did not eat anything; she lay on dry heap of clods. Thus she settled there practising penance.

46b-48. In the meanwhile, coming to know that the Mountain's daughter had left, the demon, Āḍi by name, the son of Andhaka, was delighted. Remembering his father's murder, he, the brother of Baka, and mighty in battles, the enemy of (Śiva) the destroyer of Tripura, always observing the weak point of the god with crescent-moon on his head, came to the city (of Śiva) after having conquered all gods in a battle.

49. Having come there he saw Vīraka stationed at the door. He also thought about the boon given by the Lotus-born (god, i.e. Brahmā).

50-52a. When the demon Andhaka was killed by Śiva, the enemy of the demon, Āḍi practised a very severe and ample penance. Brahmā, being fully pleased, came there and said: "O Āḍi, the greatest among the demons, what do you desire to obtain by means of penance?" The demon said (i.e. replied) to Brahmā: "I seek immortality".

Brahmā said:

52b-53a. In this worldly existence, since it is not possible for those that are born to be without death, therefore, O lord of demons, those that are living shall meet with death.

1. Pañcāgni—See note on 41.82 above.

53b-54. The mighty demon, thus addressed, said to the lotus-born (god): "O you Lotus-born (god), let death come to me when there is a change in my form; otherwise I shall remain immortal."

55-58a. Thus addressed, the very mighty son of the demon (Andhaka), regarded himself as immortal. At that time not remembering (i.e. forgetting) the means of his murder, not being within the range of sight of Vīraka, the counter-striker, the fearful demon, difficult to conquer, entered (Śiva's mansion) in the form of a serpent after avoiding the range of the sight of the lord of attendants.

58b-60a. Then the foolish great demon, giving up the serpents' form, and entering another form unnoticed by the lord of the attendants, took the form of Umā to please Śiva.

60b-62. The demon, taking up a charming, unconceivable, illusory form, complete with all limbs, nourished (i.e. accomplished) with all signs of recognition, and keeping a strong adamantine tusk with a sharp point in the pudanum muliebre, was ready to strike Śiva through delusion. The sinful demon, taking up the charming form of Umā, and having put on variegated ornaments and garments, approached Śiva.

63-65. Seeing him, and taking him to be Umā having all limbs (i.e. complete in all limbs), Giriśa became glad, and having embraced asked her (i.e. said to her): "O Mountain's daughter, since you, of an excellent complexion have come here after knowing my intention (I think) your devotion (to me) is natural and not artificial. My abode, the three worlds, are a void to me without you.

66-67a. O you of a pleasing face, you have come here. Such (a gesture) is (quite) proper for you!" The lord of demons, thus addressed, gently spoke to him with a smile; he too had recognized the destroyer of Tripura by means of signs of recognition, and (then) spoke to him (i.e. Śiva).

The demon said:

67b-68a. I had gone to the Himālaya mountain, with a desire to (practise) penance to obtain a boon. I was not happy there; therefore, I have (again) come to you.

68b-70a. Thus addressed, God Śiva, of a smiling face, entertaining a doubt in his mind, thought: 'She was angry; is it that she, who is naturally of a firm vow, has come back without having her desire fulfilled, knowing me to be angry (i.e. after having come to know that I am angry)?'

70b-72. Thinking thus and reflecting on her token of recognition, the lord did not see the sign of lotus caused by the eddy (i.e. lock) of hair on her left side. Then the Trident-holder knowing it to be illusion created by the demons, concealed the expression of his face, and taking the missile of penis-like tusk, killed the demon.

73-75a. Vīraka, the door-keeper, did not know this account. Kusumāmohinī, seeing that lord of demons in a feminine form, immediately informed the daughter of the Himālaya Mountain (of it) through the messenger in the form of Vāyu. Hearing it (i.e. the news) from Vāyu, her eyes red and turbid due to anger, she saw her son Vīraka with a painful heart.

The goddess said:

75b-77a. Since, abandoning me, your mother, overcome with affection you gave Śaṅkara an opportunity to have a private (sexual) affair with a woman, therefore I curse you that a dull, heartless stone resembling the form of the lord of attendants will be your mother in the human world.

77b-78a. This apparent cause about Vīraka's (birth) is well-known, through respect for the son (?) This is known to be the doubtful peculiar statement about Vīraka's birth and course (of conduct).

78b-79a. When thus the Mountain's daughter had pronounced a curse, very mighty wrath in the form of a lion went out of her mouth.

79b-80. The lion's mouth was fearful. His neck had mane. He had raised his tail. The cavity of his face was furious on account of the fangs. His mouth was wide open; his tongue was long; he was thin in the waist and in the (other parts of his) body.

81-82. Then the goddess settled to remain in his mouth. Knowing her intention, the four-faced god (i.e. Brahmā), came

to the hermitage, the receptacle of good fortune. The lord of gods, having arrived there, spoke to the Mountain's daughter in dear words:

Brahmā said:

83. What do you want to have again? What is not obtainable to you? I shall give that to you. By my order desist from this penance causing great suffering.

84. The Mountain's daughter, hearing the sire's words, restrained with dignity and having the desirable expression of words spoken by him of an enticing speech, said:

The goddess said:

85-86. With a penance difficult to practise, I obtained Śiva as my husband. Many times he called me 'dark-complexioned' in private. Therefore let me have a complexion resembling gold and let me be connected with that name, and the body of my husband, the lord of beings, should be free from poison.

87. Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) her, the lord of the world said: "You be like this and also occupy half the portion of your husband's body.".

88-89a. Then she cast off that dark skin like a blooming blue lotus. That skin also turned into a fearful (goddess), having a bell in her hand, having three eyes, full of (i.e. having) many ornaments and wearing a yellow silken garment.

89b-93a. Then Brahmā said to that goddess having lustre like a blue lotus: "O Niśā (i.e. night), due to the contact with the body of the Mountain's daughter, you have, through my order, done what was to be done. Now you are complete before (me). O you goddess of an excellent face, let the very mighty lion that rose from the anger of the goddess (viz. Umā) be your carrier. Let him also remain on your banner. Go to the Vindhya mountain; there you will carry out the mission of gods. O goddess, this Yakṣa, Pañcāla by name, and followed by the steps of lakhs of Yakṣas and endowed with hundreds of tricks, is given as a servant to you by me."

93b-95a. Goddess Kauṣikī, thus addressed, went to the Vindhya mountain. Umā too, who had fulfilled her desire went

to Śiva; but Vīraka, who had held a golden staff, turned her away from the door and stopped her who was entering (Śiva's mansion).

95b-100a. Angrily he said to her whose form was changed: "You have no business here; go (away) till you are not eaten up. A demon, taking up the form of goddess (Umā) had come to deceive the lord; he entered without being noticed (by me), and was killed by the lord. When he was killed, Śiva who was angry ordered me: 'Since you are not attentive at the door (since you are not attentively guarding the door), you will not be my doorkeeper for many multitudes of years.' Therefore, I am not allowing you to enter here; leave quickly. O you lotus-eyed one, except my mother, the affectionate daughter of the Mountain, none else will get an entry here."

100b-102. Thus addressed, the goddess then thought to herself: 'The one of whom Vāyu informed me was that demon, and not a woman. In vain did I, overcome with grief, curse Vīraka. Generally fools, full of anger, do what ought not to be done. Fame perishes on account of anger; anger destroys steady prosperity.

103. I, without properly ascertaining the truth, cursed my son. Calamities easily come to those whose intellect is perverse.'

104. The face of the Mountain's daughter thinking like this, which had lotus-like lustre, changed due to the sense of shame.

The goddess said:

105-108. O Vīraka, I am your mother; let there be no confusion in your mind. I am the beloved of Śiva, and the daughter of the Himālaya mountain. O son, do not entertain a doubt because of the change in the complexion of my body. This fairness (in my complexion) is granted to me by the Lotus-born one, who was pleased. Coming to know about the entry of a woman when Śaṅkara remained in a lonely place, and not knowing the account of the demon, I cursed you. It is not possible to withdraw the curse; but I tell you that you will soon come back from the human world, after having satisfied all your desires.

109. Having saluted, with all his heart, the chaste (lady), his mother, and the daughter of the Himālaya mountain, having the lustre of the full moon, bowing down his head, he said:

Viraka said:

110. O you (goddess), having toes the fearful nails of which have excellent charm due to the shining gems on the heads of the gods and demons bending (before you), O you Mountain's daughter, O you who are affectionate to those who seek your shelter, O you who destroy (i.e. remove) the affliction of those who bow down to you, my salutations to you.

111. O you whose neck is adorned with the ring of suns, O you who snatch away the lustre of the expansive golden mountain, O you daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, I, frightened by the crookedly moving serpents, resort to you.

112. Who else, but you, has, in this world, quickly given success as desired by one who bends before (the deity)? In the world, to whom but you would Śaṅkara, the sustainer of the worlds, salute and (to whom would) the sages (bow)?

113. O you difficult to conquer and born at an auspicious combination of stars, you are coiled with the fine body of the great lord; you are joined with him who crushed the relatives of Andhaka; you were first praised by the best of gods.

114-115. You have your neck raised to the white mass of matted hair (of Śiva); you sit on the impetuous great lion. You are described as Caṇḍikā by the worlds; O mother, you are the destroyer of Śumbha and Niśumbha; be the giver of what is desired by one who has bowed down to you. On the earth you have vigorously shown the only interest in putting down the demons.

116. O you unvanquished, matchless goddess, O you who created the worlds, O you who are dear to Śiva, I salute that body (i.e. form) of you which is (seen) in the sky, the path of the wind, on the earth overcome with fire.

117. The oceans, with their waves sportively rising, the fire, that has consumed, with its brilliance, the mobile and the immobile, the serpents having thousands of hoods—you will set these forth as not causing fear to me.

118. O you revered (goddess), you are the resort of firm devotees; I have come to seek the shelter of your feet. Let all my senses be, today, the abode of the pleasurable experiences of your playful activities.

119. Then the goddess, the Mountain's daughter, pleased when thus praised by Vīraka entered the auspicious mansion of her husband.

120. Vīraka too, remaining at the door, respectfully sent home the gods who had desired to see Śiva.

121. "O gods, there is no opportunity (for you to see Śiva). Vṛṣākapi (i.e. Śiva) is sporting in private with the goddess."

122. Thus addressed, they went as they had come. When a thousand years passed, gods with swift minds (i.e. thoughts), urged Agni to find out the movements of Śiva.

123. Hutāśana (i.e. Agni), taking the form of a parrot, entered (Śiva's chamber) through the hole meant for birds, and saw all (the love-sport of Śiva) with the Mountain's daughter on their bed.

124. The lord of gods also saw Agni who had taken the form of a parrot. To him, the great god, who was a little angry said:

Śiva said:

125-126a. O you Agni, who have taken up the form of a parrot, I have deposited half (the portion of my) semen into the goddess (Umā). Through sense of shame its (flow) has stopped. You (now) drink the (remaining) half. It is proper for you (to drink it) since the obstacle was due to (i.e. caused by) you.

126b-129a. Thus addressed Agni drank the semen deposited (by Śiva). Since gods have Agni as their mouths, they were flooded with that (semen). Then that semen of the great god (Śiva), which resembled heated gold, having torn asunder their bellies, came out (and spread) in the extensive hermitage (i.e. dwelling) of Śiva. There a great, pure lake came up. It (spread over) many yojanas; it had blooming golden lotuses and it resounded with the notes of many birds.

129b-130a. Goddess (Umā) having come to know that that

lake with big golden lotuses had come up, being full of curiosity, went to that lake of golden lotuses.

130b-131a. Having sported in its water, and having put a chaplet of its lotuses on her head, she sat, surrounded by her friends, on its bank.

131b-132. Desiring to drink its water, sweet and with spotless lotuses, she saw six Kṛttikās[1], resembling the lustre of the sun, who had proceeded home, after having taken its water in (a cup made of) a lotus-leaf.

133a. Through joy she said: "I shall drink the water remaining (i.e. put) in (the cup of) the lotus-leaf."

133b. Then the Kṛittikās said to the daughter of the Himālaya mountain.

Kṛttikās said:

134-135a. We shall give you (the water), O dear lady (if) the son that would be born in (i.e. from) your womb will be an active son of ours, well-known in all the three worlds, O you of an auspicious face.

135b-136a. Thus addressed, the Mountain's daughter said: "How is it that the son with all his limbs generated from my limbs, will be a son (born) from (i.e. of) you?"

136b-137a. Then the Kṛttikās said to her: "If this (i.e. what we say) will take place (i.e. be accepted by you) then we shall place best heads (on the body—the trunk—of the boy)".

137b. Thus told, the Mountain's daughter said: "O you blameless ones, let it be so."

138. Then, full of joy, they gave her the water (put) in (the cup made of) a lotus-leaf. She too gradually drank that water.

139-140. The moment the water was drunk (by her), an excellent, wonderful boy, removing diseases and griefs, rising from the right side of the goddess, after having torn it, came out. The lord resembled the heap of a variety of the masses of the sun's rays.

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1. Kṛttikā—The six stars represented as nymphs acting as nurses to Kārttikeya.

141. Having taken a spotless spear, a spike and a goad, he, the fire of a golden colour, rose to kill the demons.

142. For this reason only he too became (i.e. came to be called) Kumāra. The child again came out by tearing the left side of the goddess.

143. (He was) also (called) Skanda on account of his having come from Agni's bright mouth (where Śiva's semen was deposited). The killer of enemies was also called Ṣaḍvadana (i.e. having six faces). He was born from the water given by the Kṛttikās, particularly with (many) hands.

144. Hands are said to be auspicious. They extended over his six faces. Therefore Ṣaṇmukha (i.e. the six-faced one) came to be called as Viśākha in the world.

145-147a. He is (thus) known as Skanda, Viśākha, Ṣaḍvaktra and Kārttikeya. The two, resembling the sun, were born (from the two sides of Umā) on the fifteenth day of the dark half of Caitra, in the extensive thicket of canes. These two i.e. Agni and Vāyu joined them into one for the good (of the world) on the evening of the fifth day of the bright half (of Vaiśākha).

147b-149. On the same sixth day, the six-faced lord i.e. Guha (or Kārttikeya) was consecrated with due rite (as the general of the Gods' army) by all the hosts of gods including Brahmā, Upendra, Indra and Bhāskara (i.e. the Sun) with sandal, flowers, auspicious incense, and also with toys, umbrellas, group of chowries, ornaments and unguents.

150-154a. Indra gave him as his wife his (own) daughter known as Devasenā. The lord of gods, Viṣṇu, also gave him a weapon. The lord of wealth (i.e. Kubera) gave him ten lakh Yakṣas. Agni gave him lustre and Vāyu gave him a vehicle. Tvaṣṭṛ gave him a toy, viz. a cock changing form at will. Thus all the gods, with their minds pleased, gave an endless retinue to Skanda, resembling the sun in lustre. The hosts of gods, the principal gods, having knelt on the ground, praised Ṣaṇmukha with the (following) hymn of praise:

The gods said:

154b-156a. (Our) salutation to Kumāra of a great lustre; to Skanda who destroyed the demons. O you whose prowess is

like the orb of the new (i.e. morning) sun, (our) salutation to you, Guhya (the secret one) and Guha. (Our) salutation to you who remove the fear of the worlds; to you who are given to (doing) favour to the people. (Our) salutation to you having large and lotus-like eyes; (our) salutation to Viśākha of a great vow.

156b-157. (Our) salutation to you who are fearful in the battle; (our) salutation to you having a bright vehicle, viz. the peacock. (Our) salutation to you who wear the armlets, to you who hold aloft a banner. (Our) salutation to you, who are saluted due to your prowess; our salutation to the holder of the bell having courage.

Kumāra said:

158. Being reposed, tell me which desire of you should I give (i.e. satisfy). A deed, which you have thought of for a long time, must be done even if it is not easily accomplished.

159. Thus addressed by him, all the gods, with their minds delighted, and with their heads bent down, spoke to the magnanimous Guha:

160. "The lord of the demons by name Tāraka would destroy the entire race of gods; he is mighty, difficult to conquer, sharp, of wicked deeds and very wrathful.

161-163a. Just kill that fearful demon, destroyer of all. The remaining part of the undertaking which causes fear to us is: Hiraṇyakaśipu, who is fierce, cannot be killed by the hosts of gods. He destroys the sacrifices, his deeds are sinful and he has tormented even Brahmā. Conquer these two. You (alone) have that great might."

163b-164. Thus addressed, he, who was followed by all gods, and he, the lord of the world, who was praised by lords of gods, said 'All right' and proceeded to kill Tāraka, the fellow troubling the worlds.

165-166a. Then Indra, resorting to secret (strategy) sent a messenger, saying harsh words, to the lord of demons. He, being fearless, went to the demon of a fearful appearance, and said to him:

The messenger said:

166b-168a. O demon, Indra, the lord of gods and of heaven says to you: "O demon Tāraka, encounter his might as you please. I am the king in the three worlds, who will destroy the sin that you have committed and that is blazing like a fire to the world."

168b-169a. Hearing these amazing words, the wicked demon, with his eyes red due to wrath, and with his might almost vanished, said to the messenger:

Tāraka said:

169b-170a. O Śakra, in a great war your power has been observed (by us) a hundred times. O Indra, of a wicked mind, you have no peace because of your shamelessness.

170b-171. When the messenger, who was told like this, had left, the demon thought: 'Indra, without having received a support, would not talk like this. From the fact that Śakra has a support it is known that Skanda is born.'

172-174. Then he saw a number of evil omens indicating (his) destruction. (He saw) shower of dust and fall of blood from the sky to the earth. He mentally saw (i.e. he thought) that his left eye was throbbing, and his mouth was parching. He also saw that the lotus-like faces of his kinsmen were fading. He also saw wicked and terrible beings talking ill. Without even bringing it before his mind, the son of Diti became dejected in a moment.

175-179a. For the demon, remaining in his palace saw the army of the residents of heaven (i.e. the gods), which was terrible on account of the deep sounds of the troops of elephants, which was adorned with the energetic neighing of the groups of horses, which was shining withdivisions and lofty excellent flags, which was shining with aeroplanes of wonderful shapes and moving chowries, which had put on ornaments, which was resounding with the loud singing of Kinnaras, which had worn many chaplets of full-blown flowers of the desire-yielding trees, which looked bright due to the large shields and the missiles causing great grief, which was bright due to being nourished by

lightning, and which was resounding with many musical instruments.

179b-180a. With his mind a little confused, he thought: 'This must be an extraordinary warrior who has not been vanquished by me.'

180b-c. Then the demon, overcome with anxiety, heard these words, fearful to the heart, and containing harsh syllables, loudly proclaimed by the semi-divine bards:

181. "Be victorious, O you of matchless power, O you aviary of rays, O you stronger with mighty arms, O you, who quickly cause to bloom the face-lotuses of the gods, O you of playful eyes, O you excellent youth.

182. Be victorious, O you submarine fire to the great ocean of the family of the demons, O you having a charming chariot of a peacock, O you whose sprout-like nails have been bent by the tips of the crowns of gods (when they salute you), you commander of a great army.

183-184. Be victorious, O you whose charming mass of hair is unsteady, O you, who are charming like a fresh, spotless, lotus-stalk, O you, who are the unbearable wild fire to the family (also, bamboos in the form of the members) of the lord of demons. Be victorious, O Viśākha, O lord; be victorious, O you destroyer of the foremost sons of Diti (i.e. the demons) in all the worlds, O Skanda".

185. Hearing all this proclaimed by the bards of gods, Tāraka remembered the words of Brahmā (which indicated) that his death was imminent.

186. Remembering them, he, the destroyer of a stream of good deeds, always followed by warriors, with his mind stricken with grief, quickly went out of his mansion.

187. Demons led by Kālanemi, being frightened, and with their minds confused and disconcerted with hurry then (remained) in their own houses.

188-190a. Hiraṇyakaśipu, the leader of the demons, said: "Running away from this child would be shameful to me. If I go to (i.e. attack) him, he too is supported by glory (i.e. is powerful); and if I kill this child, I shall unnecessarily be (look-

ed upon as) 'unfit for touch'. Come, run, seize, bring together the army."

190b-192a. On seeing Kumāra (i.e. Kārttikeya), Tāraka, (the demon) of a fierce figure said: "O boy, why do you want to fight? Play with a ball, since you have been set free in the sun, O you good fighter and speaker; and your mind is like this —seeing only insignificant things—because of your being a child."

192b-195a. Kumāra too, spoke to him who was most glad: "O Tāraka, listen, the meaning of sacred precepts is being explained here only. Ends are not seen (i.e. cannot be gained) on the battle-field which is excessively fearful. Do not belittle my childhood. A child is a troublesome serpent. As the young sun is difficult to look at, I am a child difficult to be conquered. O demon, is a magic formula, having few syllables, not seen to be throbbing (i.e. powerful)?"

195b-197. When Kumāra was thus speaking, the demon hurled his mallet. Kumāra destroyed it with his disc of unfailing power. Then the lord of demons threw an iron javeline. Kārttikeya, the killer of the enemies of gods, seized it with his hand. Getting up he cast a mace, making a sharp sound, at the demon.

198. The demon, struck by it, shook like a lofty moving mountain. Then the demon found the boy to be invincible and irresistible.

199-200a. He thought in his mind (i.e. to himself) that his death had undoubtedly come near. Seeing (the demon) shaking, all the lordly demons, led by Kālanemi, struck Kumāra, fierce in battle.

200b-201. (Though) hit by those strokes and troubled by the mighty (demons), that boy of great lustre fought with them with great speed in the battle. The lordly mighty demons, skilled in fighting, and a nuisance to the gods, again struck Kumāra with arrows.

202-203. Though struck by the missiles of the demons, Kumāra did not have any pain. The fight with the demons proved to be fatal to the gods. Seeing the gods harassed (by demons) Kumāra became angry.

204. Then he tore asunder, with missiles, the army of the demons. The (demons) troubling the gods, were struck with the missiles which could not be repulsed.

205-206. All (demons) led by Kālanemi, remained with their faces turned away from the battle. When the demons, that were struck ran helter-skelter on all sides, he, with his mind fixed in laughter (i.e. being very much rejoiced) by the loud songs of Kinnaras, struck Kumāra with a mace shining like heated gold.

207-208. He made him turn away from the battle (by) discharging various arrows. The god Kumāra, who had turned away his face from the battle, seeing his own vehicle (i.e. the peacock) bleeding, took a spotless missile, adorned with gold, with (i.e. in) his hand, shining with a golden armlet.

209-210a. Then Mahāsena (i.e. Kārttikeya) spoke to Tāraka, the lord of the demons: "O you of a wicked mind, stop, stop; you (will) see the world of Yama. O demon, you are (now) killed by me with (my) missile; (now) remember your (evil) deeds."

210b-211. Saying so, he discharged his missile towards the demon. That (missile) discharged by the hand of Kumāra and imitating the sound of his armlet, broke (i.e. pierced) the heart of the demon who was like the thunderbolt or a lordly mountain.

212. With his crown and turban dishevelled, and with all his ornaments slipped off, he fell dead on the ground like a mountain at the time of universal destruction.

213. When that demon, the leader of the demons, was killed, nobody—not even a sinner in hell—was sorry.

214-215. Gods, with smile (on their faces) praised Kumāra, and amused themselves. Being eager they went to their respective abodes, leaving their seats. All gods, being pleased, as they had accomplished all their ends, with Siddhas, the treasures of penance, gave a boon to Kumāra.

Gods said:

216-218. That man of great intellect, who recites this story about Skanda or who listens to it or causes others to listen to it

(i.e. tells it to others), will be famous. He will have a long life, he will be fortunate, wealthy, famous, handsome, and will have no fear from beings and will be free from trouble. He, who, having offered the first (i.e. morning) prayer, recites the account of Skanda, will be united with Kinnaras and be the lord of great wealth.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

The Manifestation of Narasiṁha

Bhiṣma said:

1. Now I desire to hear about the killing of Hiraṇyakaśipu, about the greatness of Narasiṁha and about the destruction that he brought about.

Pulastya said:

2-4. O king, formerly, in the Kṛta age, Hiraṇyakaśipu, the lord of demons, practised a very great (i.e. severe) penance. He, surrounded by (i.e. observing) tranquility, restraint and celibacy and having taken up the vow of bath and silence lived in water for ten thousand and ten hundred years. Brahmā was pleased with him as a result of his penance and restraint.

5-8. Then, (seated) in a bright aeroplane, whose colour (i.e. brilliance) was like the sun, and to which swans were yoked, the self-born lord himself came there, with Ādityas, Vasus, Sādhyas, Maruts, (other) deities, Rudras accompanied by Viśvas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, serpents, also with quarters, intermediate quarters, rivers and oceans, also with constellations, instants, beings moving in the sky, great planets, gods, brahmanic sages, Siddhas, also the seven sages, and also with meritorious royal sages, and hosts of Gandharvas and celestial nymphs.

9-10. Brahmā, the affluent lord of the mobile and the immobile, the best among those who knew Brahman (i.e. the

supreme spirit), surrounded by the residents of heaven, said (these) words to the demon (Hiraṇyakaśipu): "O you of a good vow, I am pleased with this penance of yours, (my) devotee. Well-being to you; ask for a boon; obtain what you desire."

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

11. O best of gods, no gods, no demons, no Gandharvas, no Yakṣas, no serpents, no Rākṣasas, no men, no goblins should kill me.

12. O grandsire, sages or men should not curse me with curses. If the lord is pleased, this is the boon chosen by me.

13. I should not be killed with a weapon, or a missile, with a mountain (or a huge rock), or a tree, with a dry or a wet object, or by any other object.

14-15. Let me be the Sun, the Moon, Vāyu, Agni, Water, the Sky, the constellations and the ten quarters. I am wrath; I am desire, I am Varuṇa, Indra and Yama. I am Kubera, the lord of wealth, and the king of Yakṣas and Kinnaras.

Brahmā said:

16. O child, I have granted you this divine, wonderful boon, giving (i.e. satisfying) all desires. O child, you will obtain (whatever you want).

17-18. Saying so, the lord went to his residence, Vairāja (i.e. of Brahmā), attended upon by hosts of brahmanic sages. Then gods, Gandharvas with sages, the Cāraṇas (i.e. bards), having heard about the grant of the boon (to Hiraṇyakaśipu) approached the grandsire.

The gods said:

19-20. O lord, due to your having granted him a boon, the demon will kill us. So be pleased, and think as to how he also could be killed. You, the lord, are the first creator of all beings. You are the author of the offerings meant for gods and manes. Your nature is unmanifest; you are the greatest (god).

21. Having heard those words beneficial to all the worlds, the creator consoled them with the very cold water of his words:

22. "O gods, he must get the fruit of his penance. Lord Viṣṇu will kill him at the end of his penance."

23. Hearing these words from the mouth of the Lotus-born one, all the gods gladly went to their own divine abodes.

24. That demon Hiraṇyakaśipu, who had become proud due to the grant of the boon, harassed all beings as soon as he got the boon.

25. The demon offended holy sages observing vows and following the path of truth with self-restraint in hermitages.

26. The great demon having defeated the gods living in the three worlds, and having brought under his control the three worlds, lived in heaven.

27. When he was haughty due to (the grant of) the boon, and when he was (thus) urged by Death, he made the demons the recipients of portions at sacrifices and deprived gods of these portions.

28-29. Daityas, Sādhyas, also all Vasus, Rudras, hosts of gods, Yakṣas, deities, brāhmaṇas and great sages approached, for shelter, Viṣṇu, the ancient Vāsudeva, of great might, the god of gods, full of (i.e. of the nature of) sacrifice.

Gods said:

30-31. O glorious Nārāyaṇa, (we) the gods have sought your refuge. Protect (us), kill Hiraṇyakaśipu, the lord of demons, O lord. You are our great preceptor. You are our highest god; you are the best god among Brahmā and others.

Viṣṇu said:

32. O gods, give up your fear; I shall grant you fearlessness (i.e. I shall remove the cause of your fear). And, O gods, go to heaven, do not tarry.

33. I shall kill this lord of demons, who has become haughty because of the grant of a boon (to him by Brahmā) and who could not be killed by great gods.

34-35a. Saying so, the immutable lord Viṣṇu, Hari, the lord and the protector of the universe, who looked like the sun due to his brilliance and was as it were another moon due to his charm, went to the place of Hiraṇyakaśipu.

35b-41. Having made his body having half the portion of human body and half of a lion's body, and holding (one) hand with another, he, with the Narasiṁha form, saw Hiraṇya-kaśipu's assembly, which was huge, divine, charming and pleasing to the mind, which was endowed with all desires (i.e., desired objects), bright, which was a hundred yojanas in lengh, fifty yojanas in breadth, which was aerial, which moved according to the desire (of the inmates), which was five yojanas in height, which was free from old age, grief and forbearance, which did not shake, which was auspicious and pleasant, which had water inside and which was laid by Viśvakarman, which was endowed with trees of a divine colour giving flowers and fruits, and with dark-blue, white, dark white, reddish, bright thickets having red sprouts floating (in the atmosphere) like a mass of white clouds.

42-45. It was naturally brilliant, and was agreeable due to divine fragrance. Those who reached it, did not have hunger, thirst or fatigue. It was decorated with bright pictures of many kinds. Its brightness surpassed that of the sun, the moon or the fire, and it was self-shining. Illuminating (other objects) that very brilliant assembly shone in the heaven. All men, being pleased, shone in it. In it there was excellent, tasty and abundant food to eat.

46. There were wreaths of auspicious fragrance; there were trees always giving fruit. The water there was cold in the hot season and warm in the cold season.

47. The lord saw there the Kalpa trees, with their tops having flowers, having large branches, and shoots and sprouts, and covered with the spreading out creepers.

48. The flowers were fragrant, and the fruits were juicy. The lord also saw there the lakes—the sacred places—(having) cold and hot (water).

49-51. They had (by them) fragrant lotuses, white lotuses, red lotuses, blue lotuses, white lotuses, water-lilies, and other very likeable flowers full of many wonders; they looked like spotless crystals with birds like Kāraṇḍava, Cakravāka, cranes and ospreys and with birds of white wings.

52-54. They had the cooings of many swans and the notes

of cranes. The lord was happy to see fragrant creepers having flowers and blossoms, and khadira, vetasa and arjuna trees. In the assembly there were trees like the mango, nimba, nāga, kadamba, bakula, dhava, priyaṅgu, pāṭala, śālmali, haridrava, śāla, tāla, tamāla[1] and beautiful campaka.

55-60. Also other blossoming trees shone in the assembly. There were trees like cardamom, arjuna, kaṅkola, levalī, karṇapūraka, madhuka, kovidāra tall like many tālas, aṅjana, aśoka, parṇāsa, many citraka trees, varuṇa, capalāśa, panasa with sandal trees; nīla nimba, nīpa, aśvattha and tinduka, pārijāta and jasmine (creepers) and pine trees[2], aṭarūṣa, groups of palm trees, cardamom and camphor trees, mandāra, kurabaka[3], punnāga and kuṭaja, also red and blue kurabaka with sandal, big kiṁśukas and pomegranate trees, black sandal trees, dukūla, hiṅgu, and sandal trees.

61-62. Date trees, coconut trees, harītaka, madhūka, saptaparṇa, bilva, yava, śarāvata, and asana, tamāla, covered with many clusters of trees, creepers of various forms, with flowers and leaves (were there).

63-64. These and other wild trees with many flowers and fruits shone all round. Partridges, peacocks, intoxicated cuckoos and sārikā birds flew down on the great trees full of flowers and having flowers on their tops.

65. The delighted small and big birds—red, yellow, and tawny in colour—perching on the tops of trees, looked at one another.

66-67. In that assembly demon Hiraṇyakaśipu, the lord of demons, with bright bracelets, was seated on a variegated, divine seat, of the measure of four hundred cubits[4], resembling the sun and covered over with a divine coverlet.

68-71. Great demons at that time waited upon Hiraṇyakaśipu. Best Gandharvas sang songs having a divine rhythm. Viśvācī, Sahajanyā, honoured Pramlocā, Divyā, Saurabheyī,

1. The Tamāla tree is mentioned again in 62 below.
2. Bhadradāru is a kind of pine.
3. The Kurabaka tree is mentioned twice.
4. Nalba is a measure of distance equal to 400 cubits or hastas.

Samīcī, Puñjikasthalā, Miśrakeśī, Rambhā, Citrabhā, Śrutivibhramā, Cārunetrā, Ghṛtācī, Urvaśī, thousands like these and other celestial nymphs, skilled in dancing and music, waited upon the lord i.e. king Hiraṇyakaśipu.

72-75. All the sons of Diti, who had obtained boons, waited upon Hiraṇyakaśipu. They were: Bali, Virocana, Naraka, the son of Pṛthivī, Prahlāda, Vipraciti, and the great demon Gaviṣṭha, Surahantā, Duḥkhakartā, Sumanas and also Sumati, Ghaṭodara, Mahāpārśva, Krathana and Pithara, Viśvarūpa, Svarūpa, Viśvakāya, Mahābala, Daśagrīva, Vālin, and the great demon Meghavāsas, Ghaṭābha, Viṭarūpa, Jvalana and Aindratāpana.

76-78a. All the groups of brave demons, who had put on bright ear-rings, who wore wreaths and armours, all of whom had practised vows, all of whom had obtained boons, all who had ordained death (i.e. were ready to die)—these and others, with divine retinues waited upon the magnanimous Hiraṇyakaśipu.

78b-79. (They had) aeroplanes of various shapes, as it were blazing with fires. All the sons of Diti, with bodies of lordly demons, with ornaments round their arms, with their bodies decorated, waited upon him on all sides.

80. Affluence like that of the lord of demons was never heard of or seen before as belonging to any other individual in the three worlds.

81-82. The lord (i.e. Narasiṁha) saw that Diti's son, whose body was decorated with golden bracelets and necklaces, who was bright like the brilliance of the sun's rays, and who was being waited upon by hundreds of thousands (of demons).

83-84. Then seeing the magnanimous one, concealed in the body of Narasiṁha like fire covered with ashes, coming like the wheel of time, Hiraṇyakaśipu's brave son, Prahlāda by name saw the god coming there in the form of Narasiṁha.

85. Seeing him taking up that extraordinary form shining like a golden mountain, all the demons were amazed; so also was that Hiraṇyakaśipu.

Prahlāda said:

86. O great king, O you of great arms, O you first-born among the demons, I have never heard of or seen this body of Narasiṁha (before).

87. Of what (i.e. taking which) form has this great unmanifest divine one come? My mind tells that this terrific one is the destroyer of the demons.

88-91. Gods, oceans, and rivers reside in his body. Himālaya, Pāriyātra and other principal mountains (reside in his body). The Moon with constellations, the Sun with rays, Kubera, Varuṇa, Yama, Indra the lord of Śacī, the Maruts, gods and Gandharvas, sages having penance as their treasure (reside in his body). Serpents, Yakṣas, demons of terrific valour, Brahmā, (other) gods, and the lord of beings (i.e. Śiva) and also all the immobile and mobile (objects) residing on his forehead, are moving.

92-93. With us you are surrounded by the hosts of demons. O king, this your assembly crowded with hundreds of splendid rooms, also all the three worlds, the eternal dharma of the worlds, and this entire world are seen in Narasiṁha.

94-95. Here (i.e. in Narasiṁha's body are seen) the creator, the great-souled Manu, planets and (their) conjunctions, the earth and the sky, the time of portents, and Dhṛti (courage), Mati (intellect), Rati (pleasure), Satya (truth), Tapas (penance) and Dama (restraint), Sanatkumāra of great prowess, Viśvedeva[1], and all sages, Krodha (anger), Kāma (desire), Harṣa (joy), Darpa (pride), Moha (delusion) and all the dead ancestors.

96. Having heard the words of Prahlāda, lord Hiraṇyakaśipu, the head of the hosts of attendants, said to all the groups of his attendants:

97. "Seize this lordly lion, who has taken up an extraordinary body; if you have any doubt, kill this wild animal."

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1. Viśvedevāḥ—Name of a particular group of deities ten in number and supposed to be sons of Viśva; their names are: Vasu, Satya, Kratu, Dakṣa, Kāla, Kāma, Dhṛti, Kuru, Purūravas and Mādrava.

98. All those followers of the demon, vigorously surrounding the lordly lion of terrible valour, joyfully frightened him.

99. With his mouth widely opened like that of Yama, the very powerful Narasiṁha roared and destroyed that divine assembly.

100. When the assembly was being destroyed Hiraṇyakaśipu himself, with his eyes full of anger, threw missiles at the lion:

101-108. The very terrible missile of all missiles called 'Daṇḍa', the fierce deadly disc, another missile called Viṣṇucakra, the great missile of the grandsire—the great and fearful missile fashioned in the three worlds, the wonderful Aśani missile, the two Aśani missiles—dry and wet, terrible and fearful spear, skeleton (used as a missile), pestle, the missile called 'Brahmaśiras', the missile known as 'Brahmāstra', the missile called 'Nārāyaṇāstra' (i.e. of Nārāyaṇa), 'Aindrāstra' (of Indra), 'Āgneyāstra' (i.e. of Agni) and 'Śaisirāstra' (i.e. of the winter, i.e. causing cold), 'Vāyavyāstra' (i.e. of Vāyu), 'Mathana' (i.e. destructive), 'Kapāla' (skull) that was (always) obedient, a powerful missile never repulsed, a missile named 'Krauñca', 'Mohana' (deluding), 'Śoṣaṇa' (drying up), 'Santapana' (tormenting) and 'Vilapana' (causing to weep), 'Kampana' (causing to tremble), 'Śāntana' (making dull), the great missile that would obstruct (the movements), fatal mallet, the very powerful tormenting missile that could not be stumbled, the destructive, deluding and excellent missile having (the power of causing) illusion, the missile called 'Gandharvāstra' dear to him, 'Nandaka', the gem of a sword, the best missile called 'Varuṇāstra' causing sleep and destruction, the missile called 'Pāśupata', the scope of which was never resisted.

109. Hiraṇyakaśipu discharged these divine weapons at Narasiṁha, as one would throw an oblation into fire.

110. The best of the demons covered the lion (i.e. Narasiṁha) with missiles as the sun covers the Himālaya mountain with his rays in the summer.

111-113. That ocean of the army of the demons, rising with the fire of anger, inundated everything with darts and barbed missiles, swords, maces, and pestles, with missiles like vajra and aśani, with mallets and snares, stones, mortars and rocks, with

blazing śataghnīs[1], and very fearful staffs, as the ocean did the Maināka mountain.

114-115. Those demons, who had held nooses in their hands, who were comparable to Indra, whose velocity was like that of the thunderbolt, who had raised their hands and had stood up everywhere, whose bodies were full of (i.e. adorned with) golden strings, whose mouth-cavities were full of (i.e. having) very sharp fangs, stood there like young ones of serpents with their heads (raised). They, with throbbing lustre, horned bodies, and silken garments, appeared like swans.

116-117a. The demon produced illusory fire, urged by wind. Indra, of thousand eyes, and very lustrous, quenched the fire with a great (i.e. heavy) shower of water from (i.e. discharged through) clouds.

117b-118a. When that illusion was repulsed (by Indra) in the battle, the demon produced sharp (i.e. pitchy) darkness, looking terrible, on all sides.

118b-120a. When the world was screened with darkness, and when the demons had taken the weapons, he, surrounded by his own lustre, (looked) like the sun, that had risen. In the battle the demons saw three frowns on his eye-brows (that were knit) as Gaṅgā flowing in three directions (appears) on the forehead (of Śiva).

120b-121a. Then when all the illusions were repulsed, the demons—the sons of Diti—being dejected, sought the refuge of Hiraṇyakaśipu.

121b-122a. Then as it were burning with lustre he blazed with anger. When the lord of the demons was angry (like that), the world became full of darkness.

122b-124a. The seven agitated Maruts—Āvaha, Pravaha, the wind Vivaha, Paravaha, Saṁvaha, the very mighty Udvaha and the majestic Parivaha—moved in the sky and (thus) indicated the fear of imminent calamity.

124b-125a. Those planets which appear at the time of the

1. Śataghnī—A kind of weapon used as a missile, supposed by some to be a sort of rocket, but described by others as a huge stone studded with iron spikes and four tālas in length.

end (i.e. destruction) of the world, being delighted moved in the sky as they liked.

125b-126a. O you, who curb your enemy, the Moon moved in the sky with planets and constellations even though it was not the time of their conjunction.

126b-127. In the sky the Sun became lustreless. A black headless trunk at that time was seen in the sky. The Sun generated blackness (i.e. darkness) and the fire produced smokiness.

128. The lord, being in the sky was constantly surrounded. Seven Suns, resembling smoke came up in the sky.

129. The planets remained on the top of the Moon in the sky. The planets Venus and Jupiter remained to the left and right (sides of the Moon).

130-132. Saturn with his red form, appeared like Mars. The fearful planets moving in the sky, (as it were) uniting at the time of the end of a yuga, together slowly mounted the tops. The Moon, the dispeller of darkness, along with (i.e. accompanied by) planets and constellations did not greet Rohiṇī for the destruction of (i.e. because he wanted to destroy) the mobile and the immobile. The Moon, seized by Rāhu, was struck by meteors.

133. The blazing meteors moved on the Moon as they liked. The god, the lord of gods also showered blood.

134. From the sky, a meteor of the form of lightning fell down, with a great sound. All trees had flowers and fruits out of the season.

135. All the creepers said to be the destroyers of the demons bore fruit. Fruit grew on fruit and a flower on another flower.

136-138. All the figures of gods, foreboding great fear, appeared and disappeared, laughed and wept, cried gravely, appeared smoky and blazed. When that fight among the animals was imminent, domesticated beasts and birds mixed with the wild ones cried ferociously; and rivers, with their water (rendered) turbid, flowed in the opposite direction.

139-141a. Quarters, full of particles of blood, did not shine. The trees fit to be worshipped, were not at all worshipped; they

were struck, broken and bent by the velocity of the wind. And also the shadows of people did not change though the Sun, at the time of the end of the worlds, went to the west.

141b-142. At that time, for the destruction of demons and the victory of gods, wine entered the store-room and the armoury situated on the upper chamber (of the mansion) of Hiraṇyakaśipu.

143-144a. Various fearful portents indicating terrible things were seen. These and others of terrible nature, foreboding a fight causing the destruction of the lord of demons, appeared there.

144b-145. When the earth was shaken by the magnanimous lord of the demons, mountains and groups of serpents of unlimited prowess, and discharging fire from their mouths full of flames of poison, fell down.

146-148a. Serpents, having four, five or seven hoods, Vāsuki, Takṣaka, Karkoṭaka, Dhanañjaya, Elāmukha, Kāliya and the powerful Mahāpadma, Śuddhāṅga with a thousand hoods and the lord Hematāladhvaja, Śeṣa, the great serpent Ananta (ordinarily) unshakeable, trembled.

148b-149a. The seven watery fissures of the earth (i.e. the seven oceans) trembled on all sides, being shaken by the anger of the lord of demons.

149b-151a. The beings moving in Pātāla, and having lustre of various kinds, (though ordinarily) unshakeable, trembled, when Pātāla suddenly got disturbed. Then the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu, angry and biting his lips, laid his hand on the earth like the ancient Boar.

151b-155a. The rivers Gaṅgā or Bhāgīrathī, Kauśikī, Sarayū, Yamunā, Kāverī, Kriṣṇaveṇī, Tuṅgabhadrā flowing speedily, the river Godāvarī, Carmaṇvatī, Sindhu the lord of big and (small) rivers, confluence (of rivers) with its water resembling rubies, Narmadā of a pious flow, the river Vetravatī, Gomatī crowded with herds of cattle, Pūrvā Sarasvatī, Mahākālamahī, and Tamasā carrying flowers were agitated.

155b-158a. The Jambūdvīpa, possessed of jewels and adorned by all jewels, Suvarṇapuṭaka adorned with golden mines, the great river Lauhitya, the mountain adorned with gold, the city of Kośakāras (those who make scubbards), Kaśa, the mine

of silver, the country of Magadha with big towns, the fearful Puṇḍra (country), (the countries viz.) Srughna, Malla, Videha, Mālava, Kāśī and Kosala were disturbed.

158b-159a. The abode of Vainateya (i.e. Garuḍa), which resembled the shape of the peak of Kailāsa and which had been fashioned by Viśvakarman, was shaken by the lord of the demons.

159b-164. The great ocean called Lauhitya which had jewelled water and which was very fierce, the great mountain Udaya which was a hundred Yojanas in height, had golden tracts on it, which was beautiful and was resorted to by the rows of clouds, which was looking bright with golden trees like the sun, with blossomed trees of Sāla, Tāla, Tamāla and Karṇikāra, the Ayomukha mountain, well-known and beautified all round with minerals, the auspicious Malaya mountain, fragrant due to the Tamāla-thickets, the Surāṣṭras, the Bālhīkas, the Śūdras, the Ābhīras, the Bhojas, the Pāṇḍyas, the Vaṅgas, the Kaliṅgas, the Tāmraliptakas, the Pauṇḍras, Śubhras, Vāmacūḍas, Keralas, and gods and the hosts of the celestial nymphs were disturbed by that demon.

165-166. The demon shook Agastya's residence, which was in olden days put up by Agastya, which was charming and was crowded with the hosts of Siddhas and Cāraṇas, which had various kinds of beautiful birds, and which had trees having flowers, which was resorted to by the hosts of nymphs on account of its golden turrets.

167. The lustrous and lovely Puṣpitaka mountain, the resting place of the moon and the sun, rose after cutting off the ocean.

168. It shone, as it were touching the sky with its great peaks, resembling the moon and the sun and covered with the water of the ocean. (All these were disturbed by the demon.)

169. The mountain Vidyutvān, beautiful and a hundred yojanas long, on which best mountain, masses of lighting fell (was agitated by the demon).

170-171. The beautiful mountain Ṛṣabha occupied by ṛṣabhas (bulls), the lustrous Kuñjara mountain, the auspicious residence of Agastya, the inacessible city of serpents viz. Mālatī,

known to be pure, the (city) Bhogavatī was shaken by the lord of demons.

172-174. The mountain Mahāsena, the mountain Pāriyātra, the great mountain Cakravān, and the Vārāha mountain, the auspicious, golden city Prāgjyotiṣa, where the wicked demon Naraka resided, the best mountain Megha, (giving out) deep sounds like clouds, and, O King, sixty thousand mountains (were shaken by the demon).

175. The great mountain Meru, appearing like the young (morning) sun, whose caves were always resorted to by Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and Gandharvas (was disturbed by the demon).

176. The Mahāsena mountain, containing gold, the mountain Meghasakha (were shaken by the demon). The best of mountains viz. Kailāsa was also shaken by the lord of demons.

177. He also agitated the Mānasa lake of (i.e. resorted to by) the anchorites, which was covered with golden lotuses and which was crowded with swans and ducks.

178-181. The greatest mountain Triśṛṅga (i.e. Trikūṭa), the excellent river Kumārī, even the Mandara mountain covered with the spray of cold water, the mountain Uśīrabīja, Bhadraprastha—the lord of mountains, the mountain Prajāpati, the mountain Puṣkara, Devābha mountain and Vālukāgiri, Krauñca mountain of the seven sages and the mountain Dhūmravarṇa—these and other mountain regions and countries, all rivers along with oceans were shaken by the demon.

182-184. Kapila, the son of the earth, and Vyāghravān were shaken by him; the sons of Niśā, moving in the sky, the residents of Pātāla, another terrible attendant named Megha and having a goad as his weapon, going up and having a fearful speed—all these were shaken (by the demon).

185-186a. Diti's son, gods' enemy, haughy Hiraṇyakaśipu, with a mace and a spike in his hand, making a deep sound like a cloud, and speedy like Indra, ran to Nṛsiṁha. Then he was torn asunder with sharp, great nails by the lion (i.e. Nṛsiṁha) with (the utterance of) Om, and was killed in battle.

186b-188a. As a result of the destruction of Diti's son, the earth, the time, the moon, the sky, the planets including

the Sun, all the quarters, rivers, mountains, great oceans became composed. Then the gods and the sages—the treasures of penance—being delighted, praised the ancient, first god, with divine names:

188b-189a. "O god, gods and men knowing the higher and lower, will worship this Narasiṁha form of you."

Brahmā said:

189b-193a. You are Brahmā, Rudra, and Indra, O best of gods. You are the author, the destroyer and the eternal source of the worlds. They call you the highest attainment, the highest being, the greatest secret and the best oblation. They call you the most ancient one; they call you the greatest truth, the greatest penance, the highest pure (form), the best path, the greatest sacrifice, the best oblation, the first, the greatest and the ancient one. They call you the best body, the highest Brahman, the highest yoga and the best speech. They call you the greatest secret, the best recourse, the first, the greatest and the ancient one.

193b-197. Speaking thus, the lord, the grandsire of all the worlds, having praised god Nārāyaṇa went to the Brahma-world. Then the lord Hari (i.e. Nārāyaṇa) went to the northern shore of the milky ocean, when the musical instruments were sounding and the celestial damsels were dancing. Then the very brilliant lord, placed the Narasiṁha form (there), took up his ancient form and he, having Garuḍa as his banner, and his nature unmanifested, left (the place) in a bright vehicle having eight wheels, (and) went to his own abode.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

Purificatory Rites of a Brāhmaṇa

Śrī Bhiṣma said:

1. You have told (me) in detail the greatness of Narasiṁha; in the same way (please) narrate (to me) the greatness of the fearful, Bhava (i.e. Śiva).

Pulastya said:

2-4a. Listen also to the excellent deed of that god of gods. There was a demon Andhaka by name, who resembled a heap of collyrium, who had great penance (to his credit), and who could not be killed by gods. Once he saw the lord Mahādeva, sporting with Pārvatī, and proceeded to take her away.

4b-6a. 'I shall today carry away this respectable lady. In her absence I shall die. This beautiful lady in the three worlds will be my eternal wife. Her face has lips like the limba-fruit; her face is more (i.e. very) charming. If she will not be my wife, what is the use of life?'

6b-7a. Thinking like this, and having counselled with his ministers, and having gathered his army, he said to his general:

7b-8. "Get me my victorious chariot, destroying the gods. I shall conquer all gods led by Viṣṇu and Rudra. I shall carry away the Mountain's daughter (i.e. Pārvatī). She has captivated my mind."

9. His minister told him about the murder, done by gods including Indra, of Kanaka who was attached to other's wives.

10-11a. Then with his mind overpowered with anger (he said): "I shall kill the gods including Śiva." Having killed that demon (Kanaka), Indra being afraid of the demon Andhaka seeking Śiva's refuge went to Kailāsa, the abode of Śaṅkara.[1]

11b-12a. Seeing and saluting the lord of gods, with the half (i.e. crescent) moon as his crest, Indra, the thousand-eyed god, who was frightened, respectfully said (to Śiva):

12b-14a. "O god, grant me fearlessness (i.e. remove the cause of my fear); I am afraid of the demon Andhaka. Today I killed his son in a battle. So, till the great demon, causing fear to me, does not know that his son is killed, quickly kill him there only.

14b-15a. The cruel demon snatches away other's wives through lust; O best of gods, by all means he should be killed by you."

15b-16a. Hearing the words of Indra, Śiva, the protector, then granted him freedom from fear (saying): "Do not fear".

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1. Between 10a and 10 b a line or two seem to be missing.

16b. Śakra, being granted freedom from fear came to Kuśasthalī from Kailāsa.

17-21a. The lord (i.e. Śiva) was surrounded by a host of spirits for killing Andhaka. Taking up a universal form of a great body and very fearful like a terrible serpent with blazing serpents running about and as it were burning the sky with the matted hair (bright) due to the lustre of the gems on the hoods (of the serpents), like the destructive fire at the time of deluge burning (the world) with excessive lustre, he took up the weapons in the form of thousands of serpents with their mouths marked with sprout-like fangs, bright like the digit of the moon on the second day of the month, resembling the interior of Pātāla, making a terrible sound, full of many ornaments and decorations and making a fearful sound in the battle.

21b-23a. The fearful lord, destroyer of the demons, putting on (around his loins) lion's hide, and tiger's hide as the upper garment, and an extensive elephant-hide, full of (i.e. resounding with) the swarms of bees—having taken such a form, causing fear to the demon, the lord came down to the earth.

23b-24a. The demon Andha also, hearing that his son was killed in the battle, being overcome with the emotion of anger, caused the musical instruments sounded at war time to be sounded.

24b-25a. Having collected (his army), he carefully reached with a great army consisting of chariots and elephants, the place where gods had stood.

25b-26a. Those gods, seeing the demons, greatly eager to wage a big battle, had lost (the chance of) the preservation of their bodies and (so) sought the refuge of Śiva.

26b-27a. Having said to those gods, 'Do not fear', the three-eyed god, took the trident and angrily stood there.

27b-29a. The angry Andhaka destroyed hundreds of crores of gods with arrows. The Pināka-holder, discharging the flames with burning embers, of fire, surrounded Andhaka, remaining in his chariot, with arrows.

29b-31a. The lord of demons, relaxed and with his weapons abandoned, called all the demons and started fighting. His army was devastated in the battle in many ways with various weapons, by brave gods who had sought alliance with Śiva.

31b-33. The demon Andhaka seeing his army devastated by gods, and seeing himself obstructed by Śiva with a crore of arrows, and with his body afflicted, just mustered courage and snatching the Pināka of Rudra struk him (with it). Being struck with Pināka, Rudra went down to (i.e. fell on) the earth.

34. When the lord fell down on the earth, the three worlds trembled. The oceans left (i.e. crossed) their boundaries and the mountains their peaks.

35-36. The disjoined constellations being (thus) separated went in various directions. When the lord of gods fell on the earth, the angry Andhaka again struck the serpent with a mace; and thus striking him caused him to fall on the ground. The lord of serpents left Śiva and ran somewhere else.

37-38. In a short while, the lord regained consciousness and rose. He took a hatchet (but) did not see (i.e. find) the demon at all. Having created the dark illusion the demon skilled in a hundred illusions (hid himself). Deluded by it Śiva (did not know) where the demon had gone.

39-40a. Śiva was afraid as to what the wicked one would do. When the gods were covered with the darkness, and were perplexed, they with their minds confused, spoke to Śiva on account of the importance of the mission.

40b-42a. In the meanwhile, the Sun, settled in the form of lustre, rose, rendering the quarters free from darkness, in the form of a man. When the Sun thus became manifest, and the darkness disappeared, gods with their faces having blooming eyes, became delighted.

42b-43. All the radiant gods, and the attendants led by Kārttikeya, praised with various hymns the matchless Sun, in human form, pervading the world, and superior to Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

44-46a. Seeing that lord of gods of a very bright (form), resembling glossy coral and red lead and tawny, and favourably inclined to salutation, he, the three-eyed (god) Hara, filling the three worlds with lustre, and touching the ground with his five limbs, and with abstract meditation, looked at him with affectionate eyes and spoke with loving and profound voice:

46b-48. "This alone is the deity that does not disappoint

the beings afflicted by the demon's illusion and having their hearts eager to see him. This god, this lord alone, emancipating beings from the entire mundane existence, acts as the helmsman.

49. I salute that lord Bhāskara, by devoutly worshipping which deity, various beings and gods have always become fit for final bliss.

50. The Sun, having pervaded the intermediate and the ten quarters with the masses of his rays, acting as crowns and bright like flowers, shines on the peak of the eastern mountain.

51. (O you lord,) your body is always adorable by Brahmā, Indra, Rudra, Maruts, Viṣṇu Agni, Ocean and the hosts of best sages adept in course of procedure and desiring salvation, having besmeared their bodies with divine unguent (white) like days.

52. Those who, having no abodes, eulogise you in others' house, with Vedic hymns decorated with groups of beautiful words, have their hands stretched out, on the earth.

53. O lord of gods, even those men, whose bodies are afflicted with a cutaneous eruption, leprosy or ulcer, or those having their skins decayed, or having bad nails, or have lost their hair, after having saluted your feet, instantly have figures of men of sixteen years old (i.e. young).

54-55. The groups of the singers of *sāmans*, the hosts of the *bahṛcas*, the *adhwaryu* priests, know you to be the cause of the sacrifice; those who know what should be done know you alone to be 'Ārya'; also the serpents and the dead ancestors (look upon you) as omni-fragrant; O sun, the Upaniṣads look upon you as Māyā; also these gods and mortals, Gandharvas and Kinnaras with the multitudes of *cāraṇas* wait upon you; and O lord, you take up that particular form.

56. Those who do not worship you who deserve to be worshipped, being tormented by your lustre, being naked and without wealth, with their throats and bellies emaciated with hunger, wander to others' houses for alms with potsherds in their hands.

57-59. You free them from the mundane existence, who

worship your charming form like the faces of the charming group of the high-born chaste women, who have the skirts of their garments hanging from the end of their foreheads, with the faces charming like the moon and having the ends of arched and handsome golden garments (the bodies)—who talk sweetly and indistinctly in their houses, and make sounds with the tinklings of the anklets.

60. You alone are Brahmā, you are Hari, you are Vāyu, you are Agni, you are Rudra, you are Yama, you are Varuṇa, you are the lord of gods, you are Soma (the moon), you are wind, you are the earth, you are the ruler, you are the sacrifice, you are the lord of wealth (Kubera), you are unvanquished.

61. Your seven horses, not being let on the earth in the battle, crossing speedily, traverse fully this endless sky, and it is not at all fatiguing to them.

62-63. The devotees, engaged in the path of meditation only and having meditated upon your fourth position (i.e. of the Supreme Spirit) with concentration, being free from diseases and being fearless, have waited for a long time, upon your form bright like a heap of fire and the abode of penance—the eternal Brahmā who is without a beginning or an end, who is without birth etc., and who is free from diseases, who is great and ancient, who is free from the fear of old age and death, who is cared for by the attendants having rough indications of their feelings, who is pure, and who is highly regarded by the followers of the Vedānta, having waited upon whom for a long time, the devotees have gone to heaven.

64-66[1]. O Sun, O you whose lotus-like couple of feet was rubbed by the group of gods and demons with their heads, O you of a spotlss and fine form, O you lord of beings, O you of an immutable nature, O you loud laughter of the sky, O you Savitṛ, O you the only lamp of the world, O you abode of the hymns from the Ṛgveda, the Sāmaveda and of the Yajus-formulae, O you cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction, O you regent of the quarter, O you eternal lord of the ascetics, O you cause of the moon, O you fearful like a heron,

1. The verb seems to be missing.

O you giver of good things, (satisfy) the desires of me who am drowned in every existence, as you remove old age, death, grief and disease."

67-68a. He who recites this hymn of the Sun in the morning, in the evening or at midday, gets residence in the same heaven with him, and always obtains the (fruits) of (the three goals of human life viz.) Dharma, Artha and Kāma, and whatever is placed in (i.e. desired by) his mind from the Sun.

68b-71a. "My salutation to you, O lord of lords of gods, to you who grant fearlessness to your devotees, O you saluted by all gods, my salutation to you. O you of sharp rays, my salutation to you; O you the eye of the world, I salute you. O Prabhākara, I salute you. O Bhānu, lord of the world, be victorious. O you lord of the world, I am harassed by this chief of the demons. O Divākara, what should I do? How can I kill him?'.

Sūrya said:

71b. Conquer the most sinful (demon), adept in a hundred tricks with your trident. O you lord of gods, killing Andhaka with your trident, be victorious.

72b-74. Taking the trident cast away by Hara's lustre, Andhaka, the sinner, struck (Śiva) with it. In that fight, Rudra also, harassed by Andhaka, himself discharged his very sharp arrow which was (called) 'Pāśupata', by bending his bow (viz. Pināka) with his two arms.

75. From Andhaka's blood oozing from the split (i.e. the wound made by) Rudra's arrow, hundreds and thousands of Andhakas sprang up.

76. When they were being pierced, other fearful Andhakas sprang up from their blood, and they occupied the entire world.

77. Then the god of gods (i.e. Śiva) having seen that deceitful Andhaka, created the Mothers to drink his blood.

78-81. (They were) Māheśvarī and Brāhmī, Śaurī and Bāḍavī, Sauparṇī and Vāyavyā, Śaṁkhinī and Taittirī, Saurī, Saumyā, Śivadūtī, Cāmuṇḍā and Vāruṇī, Vārāhī, Nārasiṁhī,

Vaiṣṇavī and Vibhāvarī, Śatānandā, Bhagānandā, Pichilā, Bhagamālinī, Bālā, Atibalā, Raktā, Surabhi, Mukhamaṇḍitā, Mātṛnandā, Sunandā, and Biḍānī and Śakunī, and Revatī, Mahāpuṇyā and Śikhipaṭṭikā also.

82-84a. Then the destroyer of Tripura (i.e. Śiva) pierced the demon with his trident. The Mothers then drank the blood that flowed out. O king, the bloodless demon then became dry; but the demon, though transfixed and held by the very powerful Rudra for a thousand divine years, did not die.

84b-85. O you of a good vow, the demon then devoutly praised Śambhu: "O Śambhu, O destroyer of the worldly existence, my salutation to you. O best among gods, I salute you, be pleased. You are the earth, the water, the fire, the wind, the sky, the sun, the moon, the sacrificer—you have these eight forms, you are a great creator of the mundane existence.

86. Bāṇa, having pleased you with many musical instruments, became the lord in his city protected by himself. The lord of demons (i.e. Rāvaṇa), having balanced the mountain with his arms, and with his form tormented by your foot, praised you.

87-88. He became the lord of all hosts of demons and got, a very strong son, who bound (even) Indra. O you (god), who remove the fear of the worldly existence, O you very generous (god), O you causing happiness to me, O you the power of all the gods, O you who have conquered the Maruts, O you perfect in giving what is desired, O you best among the firm, O lord, you always give the desired object to that man who devoutly keeps in his heart your lotus-like feet.

89. Formerly, the best sages got their desires fulfilled after (i.e. by) respectfully worshipping you i.e. Hara, in the form of phallus. Remaining in the hollow of a tree, live your life by reflecting upon him who is of the nature of the author of the worldly existence, and of the form of this expanse (of the universe).

90. One who comes to your feet becomes one who has obtained all desired things by thinking about your feet, O lord. O you who love your devotees, I, who am ignorant, do not know (how) to praise you.

91a. I who have gone to the battle (-field), should be pitied by your good and divine mind."

91b-93a. Thus praised with respect (by the demon), Śiva gave him the position of his attendant and named him 'Bhṛṅgīriṭi'.[1] O king, I have thus narrated to you the greatness of Hara, who removes (the affliction due to) the worldly existence. It is called the hindrance to difficulties and gives happiness to those who are intent upon (reaching) him.

Bhiṣma said:

93b-94. O you best of brāhmaṇas, tell me all about man's (obtaining) godhead, happines, (getting a) kingdom, wealth, success, victory, enjoyment, (good) health, (long) life, knowledge, wealth, a son, kinsmen, and auspicious (things),

Pulastya said:

95. A brāhmaṇa endowed with these virtues always becomes prosperous on the earth. Such a divine brāhmaṇa becomes fit for a sacrifice (i.e. worship) in the three worlds age after age of the world.

96. Gods, having worshipped brāhmaṇas, enjoy the inexhaustible heaven. Kings (by worshipping brāhmaṇas) protect the earth and people (obtain) wealth, happiness and auspicious (things).

97. In the world there is none (else) like a brāhmaṇa. He is the deity even of gods. He is actually of the form of piety; he is very much the giver of bliss.

98. He is the respectable preceptor of people, he is a sacred place, and an innocent person. Formerly, he, the good abode of gods, was created by Brahmā.

99. Formerly Nārada asked the grandsire about the same thing: 'O Brahman, having worshipped which god, would Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu) be favourable?'

Brahmā said:

100. Viṣṇu favours him, whom brāhmaṇas favour;

1. Bhṛṅgiriṭi—One of the two of Śiva's attendants.

therefore one who waits upon a brāhmaṇa obtains (i.e. reaches) the highest Brahman.

101. Viṣṇu always lives in the bodies of brāhmaṇas and nowhere else; therefore by the worship of a brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu is instantly pleased.

102. He, who would always worship brāhmaṇas, with presents, respect and adoration etc. has duly performed a hundred sacrifices, in which presents to brāhmaṇas are liked by them.

103. The mouth of a brāhmaṇa is a field, without a barren spot and without thorns. One should sow all seeds (there). That is an all-time agriculture.

104. That gift which is given after having approached (a brāhmaṇa) is delightful. There is an end (even) to an ocean; but there is no end to charity.

105. Those (who) do not even mentally hurt a brāhmaṇa who has committed even a heinous crime, have a conciliatory mind, a condition difficult to be obtained even by gods.

106. He, to whose house a learned (brāhmaṇa), having come, does not go (back) disappointed, has all his sins destroyed and obtains the inexhaustible heaven.

107. Know that wealth to be inexhaustible which one would give to a worthy brāhmaṇa at a proper time, for it stands (by him) in every existence.

108. He is not reduced to poverty, he neither falls ill nor is he timid. Having worshipped brāhmaṇas, one would obtain a wife agreeable to one's mind.

109. Having performed bold acts, one should give (gifts) to brāhmaṇas on the *parvan* days[1]. That giving is said to be meritorious, and (leads to) fearlessness and gain.

110. That hand which is hurt while rubbing the soles of the feet of a brāhmaṇa, does graceful deeds; any other hand (just) does deeds.

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1. Parvan—The days of the four changes of the moon viz. the eighth and fourteenth day of each half month and the days of the full and new moon.

111. Those who are purified by the dust-particles of a brāhmaṇa's feet or by a drop of water (sprinkled by) him, are always free (from the bondage of the worldly existence and), go to heaven.

112. The courtyards of houses, which are purified by the dust-particles of the feet of brāhmaṇas are like sacred places and are recommended for the performance of sacrifices.

113. Formerly the sinless brāhmaṇa was the first to spring up from Brahmā's mouth. The Vedas, the causes of the creation and maintenance (of the world) arose from there only.

114. Therefore, certainly for the worship of (i.e. to be done by) all the people and for (the performance of) all sacrifices, the Vedas were placed in the mouth of the brāhmaṇa by the (first) man (i.e. Brahmā).

115-116. In a ritual performed in honour of the dead ancestors, in a marriage, sacrifices, at propitiatory rites, expiatory rites excellent brāhmaṇas (should) always (be honoured). Certainly gods enjoy oblations, demons and departed spirits etc. enjoy offerings, dead ancestors enjoy oblations through the mouth of a brāhmaṇa (i.e. when a brāhmaṇa enjoys these).

117. A gift, a sacrifice, and an offering, which one offers to gods and deceased ancestors at sacrifices, are fruitless without (i.e. unless they are offered to) a brāhmaṇa.

118. (If a brāhmaṇa is not present at these rites) the demons, departed spirits, daityas and evil spirits enjoy (the offerings); therefore one should get these rites performed through brāhmaṇas after inviting them.

119. If the present is made to a worthy brāhmaṇa at a proper time, a proper place it is a lakh crore times meritorious. Having seen a brāhmaṇa, a man should salute him with devotion.

120-121a. The man would live long as a result of the words '(Enjoy) a long life' uttered by him (i.e. the brāhmaṇa). By not saluting a brāhmaṇa, by hating him, by not having faith in him, men become short-lived, their prosperity comes to an end, and they are reduced to a bad plight.

121b-122a. There is no doubt that one lives long, enhances

one's fame, one's knowledge and wealth increase and one becomes most prominent by honouring brāhmaṇas.

122b-123a. Those houses which are not muddy with the water (used) for (washing) the feet of a brāhmaṇa, where there is no sound of the recital of the Vedas, which are without the exclamations of Svāhā, Svadhā or Svasti[1], are like crematories.

Nārada said:

123b-124a. Which brāhmaṇa is adorable? Which is not adorable? Tell (me) the characteristics of a brāhmaṇa, and also of a preceptor.

Brahmā said:

124b-125a. A learned brāhmaṇa, endowed with good conduct, is always adorable. He is virtuous, free from blemishes and is like a sacred place and sinless.

Nārada said:

125b-126a. O father, who is a learned brāhmaṇa? Is he born in a good or a bad family? Does he do good or bad actions? Which brāhmaṇa is adorable on the earth?'

Brahmā said:

126b-127a. (Even) If a man is born in the family of a good learned brāhmaṇa, he is not to be worshipped if he is inactive (i.e. does not perform sacred rites); (but if he performs good acts and even if) he is (born) in a family with a low-caste wife (i.e. even if his mother is of a low caste) he is adorable like Vyāsa, and Vibhāṇḍaka.

127b-128a. Viśvāmitra born in the family of kṣatriyas is equal to me; so also is Vasiṣṭha, the son of a prostitute, and brāhmaṇas who are prophets.

128b-129. Therefore, O son, listen to the characteristics of good, learned brāhmaṇas who are like the sacred places on the earth to destroy all sins. One should be (i.e. is) known as a

1. Svāhā—An exclamation used in offering ablations to gods. Svadhā—An exclamation used in offering oblations to the manes.

'brāhmaṇa' by birth, but is called a 'dvija' due to (one's having undergone) purificatory rites.

130. A man is 'vipra' because of his learning. Three are the characteristics of a 'śrotriya': being purified by learning, sacred hymns and Vedas.

131-133. A brāhmaṇa who has become pure by bathing at a sacred place etc. is said to be most adorable; so also is he who is always devoted to Nārāyaṇa and has a pure heart, who has curbed his senses, who has controlled his anger, to whom all men are equal, who is devoted to his preceptor, deity and guest, who is engaged in serving his parents, whose mind is never interested in the wife of another man, who always narrates the Purāṇas, who is the child of a man expounding dharma.

134. Seeing him (i.e. such a man) only, (gives) the fruit due to a horse-sacrifice etc. One reaches a good condition when one talks with him as (one would reach a good condition like bliss) by bathing in the Ganges.

135-136. By various vows and daily bath and worship of brāhmaṇas he is purified; and is kind to friend and foe, and is equal to (i.e. looks equally upon) all persons; who (i.e. he) does not snatch other's wealth, or even (a blade of) grass in the forest; he is free from lust and anger, and is not conquered) (i. e. overpowered) by senses.

137a. He does not even mentally catch hold of another's wife who has come to his house.

Nārada said:

137b-138a. What are the characteristics of Gāyatrī? What is the merit of her (its) letters? Tell me clearly about her womb, feet and family.

Brahmā said:

138b-139. Gāyatrī's metre is gāyatrī; her deity is surely the Sun; her complexion is fair; her face is fire; her seer is Viśvāmitra. She is mounted upon Brahmā's head, and her foot is situated in Viṣṇu's heart.

140. She is employed at the thread ceremony; she is born

in the family of Sāṁkhyāyana; she should be known to have the three worlds as her feet; she remains in the womb of the earth.

141-142. He who assigns the twentyfour letters to the various parts of the body beginning with the feet and ending with the head, obtains (i.e. goes to) Brahmā's world. Knowing the deity (to be present) in every letter he would obtain (i.e. go to) the same heaven as that of Viṣṇu. I shall tell you another definite characteristic of Gāyatrī.

143-144. A brāhmaṇa, remaining in water, should mutter twelve or eighteen letters beginning with Agni and ending with the sky. Freed from a crore of minor sins, and also great sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa they go to my abode.

145. Om! the speech of Agni, placed in the man with Yajurveda, drink Soma; Svāhā.

146a. (One should mutter) the hymn of Viṣṇu, the great hymn and that of Maheśvara, and also, O son, of deities like Devī, Sūrya and Gaṇeśa.

146b-147. In whosoever's family he is born, he becomes meritorious on account of those qualities; a brāhmaṇa is actually Brahmā; he should be carefully worshipped. One should give (him) presents on every parvan.

148-150. The giver receives an inexhaustible (treasure) for hundreds of crores of existences. A brāhmaṇa who is engrossed in his studies, who recites and reads out to others and tells others (about) dharma and also (about) good conduct in the world and śruti and Smṛti, and also the Purāṇic and religious Texts, is, after having recited or read out (i.e. on account of his having recited or read out these texts), adorable like Viṣṇu among brāhmaṇas on the earth by men and gods.

151. A man having worshipped him gets the inexhaustible fruit of that sinless one (and) goes to the abode of Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu).

152. If a brāhmaṇa some time commits a sin, he is not stained with sins, as the (rays of the) sun and fire remaining in the house of a Cāṇḍāla.

153. There is no sin (committed by) brāhmaṇas in acting as priests or teaching, or accepting gifts from bad (persons); (for) brāhmaṇas are like fire and the sun.

154. Well-settled in prāṇāyāma[1] (restraining the breath) they destroy those blemishes and sins as the wind destroys (i.e. shatters) a cloud in the sky.

155-157a. He, who mutters the Gāyatrī hymn endowed with prāṇāyāma, and having deities united with every letter of it, assigns (its various parts) to the various parts (of the body)[2], becomes free from all sins committed even during crores of existences, and reaching the position of Brahman, goes beyond Prakṛti. Therefore, O Nārada, mutter the Gāyatrī with prāṇāyāma.

Nārada said:

157b-158a. O Brahman, how are prāṇāyāmas to be exercised for the deity connected with each syllable? Tell me, in due order, about their assignment to various parts (of the body).

Brahmā said:

158b-160a. Apāna[3] remains at the anus and prāṇa[4] in the heart of a man. So having contracted the anus he should get it (i.e. apāna) united with prāṇa. Then, O son, doing the kumbhaka[5] exercise with pūraka[6], and thus practising the prāṇāyāma (exercises), a brāhmaṇa should mutter the Gāyatrī[7] (hymn).

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1. Prāṇāyāma—Name of the three 'breath-exercises' performed during sandhyā—Pūraka, Recaka and Kumbheka.
2. Nyāsa—Mental appropriation or assignment of various parts of the body to tutelary deities.
3. Apāna—That of the five vital airs which goes down and out at the anus.
4. Prāṇa—Breath.
5. Kumbhaka—Stopping the breath by shutting the mouth and closing the nostrils with the fingers of the right hand.
6. Pūraka—Closing the right nostril with the forefinger and drawing up air through the left, and then closing the left nostril and drawing up air through the right nostril.
(The third is Recaka, which is expelling the breath out of one of the nostrils.)
7. The mantra occurs at 185 and 186. It means: Let us think about that excellent lustre of (god) Savitṛ, who would urge (i.e. urges) our minds.

160b-161a. When a man mutters with this (threefold exercise) his heap of major sins perishes. (If) he recites it once only, his minor sins are destroyed.

161b-163a. That man, who, knowing the sound of each syllable, assigns it to (the various parts of) the body, reaches Brahmanhood; we are unable to tell (its) fruit. O son, listen to the deity of (i.e. connected with) each letter, which I tell (now) and muttering which a brāhmaṇa does not suck the breasts of his mother again (i.e. a brāhmaṇa is not reborn).

163b-169. The first letter should be known to belong to Agni; the second one to Vāyu; the third one belongs to the deity viz. the Sun; the fourth one to the Sky; the fifth one to the deity Yama; the sixth one is said to belong to Varuṇa; the seventh one to Bṛhaspati; they know the eighth one to belong to Prajanya; the ninth one to Indra; the tenth one should be known to belong to Gandharvas; know the eleventh to belong to Pūṣan; the twelfth is said to belong to Mitra; the thirteenth should belong to Tvaṣṭṛ; the fourteenth to Vasus; the fifteenth one is said to belong to Maruts and the sixteenth to Soma; the seventeenth to Aṅgiras; and the next one (i.e. eighteenth) to Viśvedevās; the nineteenth to Aśvins and the twentieth to Prajāpati; the twentyfirst letter should be known to be full of all gods; the twentysecond should be known to belong to Rudra; the next one should be known to belong to Brahmā; the twentyfourth to Viṣṇu; these are the deities of the letters.

170. Reflecting on these deities, one would get the same heaven as they live in. He would know the deities and the speech would (also) be known to him.

171-172. Being free from all sins, he would go to the position of Brahman. A wise man should first assign (the various letters of) Gāyatrī to the twentyfour parts in his body beginning with the feet and ending with the head. The wise devotee should assign the syllable 'tat' to the great toe of the foot.

173-178. He should assign the letter 'sa' to the region of the ankle; he should assign the letter 'vi' to the shanks; (he should assign the letter) 'tu' to the knee and 'va' to the region of the thighs; he should assign the letter 're' to the

privity; (he should assign the letter) 'ni' to the scrotum; (he should assign the letter) 'bha' to the navel; having assigned the letter 'go' to the belly, he should assign the letter 'de' to the breasts; having assigned the letter 'va' to the heart, and the letter 'sya' to the region of the hands, (and also) having assigned the letter 'dhī' to the mouth, he should assign the letter 'ma' to the palate; and (having assigned) the letter 'hi' to the tip of the nose, he should assign the letter 'dhī' to the eyes; (he should assign the letter) 'yo' in between the eye-brows and the letter 'yo' to the forehead; he should assign the letter 'naḥ' to the forepart of the face; the letter 'pra' to the right part; the letter 'co' to the hindmost part and the letter 'da' to the left part of the face; having assigned the letter 'yāt' to the head, he occupying all (the parts of the body), is well-settled.

179. He, the religious-minded great devotee, a very wise man, of the nature of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, having assigned these (letters) would go to the final liberation.

180-181. Listen again correctly to the assignments to be done at the time of the evening (prayer). Having assigned 'Oṁ bhūḥ' to the heart, he should assign 'Oṁ bhuvaḥ' to the head. (He should assign) 'Oṁ svaḥ' to the lock of hair on the crown of the head; he should assign 'tat savitur vareṇyam' to the body; 'bhargo devasya dhīmahi' to the eyes; he should assign 'Oṁ dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt' to the hands.

182. (While reciting the hymn) 'Oṁ āpojyotīrasomṛtam[1] brahma bhūrbhuvaḥsvaroṁ', he, being purified from sin by merely touching water would go to Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu).

183. Having muttered Sāvitrī three times at the time of the evening (prayer) with Kumbhaka, with Vyāhṛtis[2] and twelve oṁkāras as 'Oṁ bhūḥ, Oṁ bhuvaḥ, Oṁ svaḥ, Oṁ mahaḥ, Oṁ janaḥ, Oṁ tapaḥ, Oṁ satyam; Oṁ tat saviturvareṇyaṁ bhargo devasya dhīmahi, dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt' (i.e. we reflect upon that excellent lustre of god Savitṛ who would urge our

1. Āpojyoti....Nārāyaṇa is said to be water, light, cause of immortality, Brahma, Bhūḥ and Svar.

2. Vyāhṛti—a mystic word uttered by every brāhmaṇa in performing his daily Sandhyā—adoration. They are supposed to be three or seven as given here.

minds) ; 'Oṁ āpo jyotīrasomṛtaṁ brahma bhūrbhuvaḥsvaroṁ' and having muttered the Sāvitrī (-hymn) of twentyfour letters at the time of the Sun-worship, he becomes superior with great learning, (and) obtains Brahmanhood.

184. O son, now listen carefully to Gāyatrī, having six limbs, knowing which a brāhmaṇa goes to the highest position of Brahman.

185. 'Oṁ tat savitur...'.

186. Now (follow) the characteristics of the five heads of Gāyatrī: 'Oṁ bhūḥ, Oṁ bhuvaḥ, Oṁ svaḥ, Oṁ mahaḥ, Oṁ janaḥ, Oṁ tapaḥ, Oṁ satyaṁ.' 'Oṁ tatsavitur vareṇiyam bhargo devasya dhīmahi, dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt'.

187. Having muttered Gāyatrī with Vyāhṛtis he should again assign (the letters of) Gāyatrī (to the various parts of the body). Being free from all sins he would go to the same heaven as of Viṣṇu.

188. (He should assign the letters) 'Oṁ bhūḥ' to the two feet; 'Oṁ bhuvaḥ' to the two knees; 'Oṁ svaḥ' to the waist; 'Oṁ mahaḥ' to the navel; he should assign (the letters) 'Oṁ satyam' to the forehead; 'Oṁ tat savitur vareṇiyam...' to the lock of hair on the crown of the head.

189. A brāhmaṇa who does not know this, is a mean brāhmaṇa; his sin is not exhausted; he would become (sinful) by accepting many presents (i.e. his sin due to accepting various gifts is not removed).

190. He who knows this Gāyatrī endowed with all the mystical letters forming the essential part of the (Gāyatrī-) hymn, knows the four Vedas, has the knowledge of meditation and of the three muttered prayers.

191. He who does not hear (Gāyatrī), is (even) beyond (i. e. inferior to) a Śūdra. To such an impure brāhmaṇa the presents made at the time of a Śrāddha should not be given.

192-193a. His bath is useless; everything about him would be fruitless. Like a pure flower at an impure place all his learning, wealth, birth (as a brāhmaṇa) are fruitless, since brāhmaṇahood is the cause (of all these).

193b. Formerly I compared the four Vedas and Gāyatrī.

194-195a. Gāyatrī is said to be superior to the Vedas, and

the giver of final bliss. If Gāyatrī (-hymn is recited) ten times it destroys the sin committed from birth, (if it is recited) a hundred times it destroys the sin of the previous existence; and (if is is recited) a thousand times it destroys the sin committed in every existence in the three yugas.

195b-196a. He who mutters the Gāyatrī (-hymn) in the evening and in the morning on (i.e. by counting the beads of) a rosary, undoubtedly gets the fruit of (the recitation of) the four Vedas.

196b-197a. The sin committed during a crore of existences, of a brāhmaṇa who everyday mutters the Gāyatrī (-hymn) thrice a day for one year, perishes.

197b. Gāyatrī, merely by its utterance, purifies one from a heap of sins.

198-200. An excellent brāhmaṇa obtains heaven and salvation by muttering it everyday. He who everyday recites the hymns addressed to Vāsudeva, and salutes the feet of Hara, would go to (i.e. obtain) salvation. One reciting the hymns of Vāsudeva and excellent stories about him, does not have even an iota of the mud (of sin) in his body. By plunging into the Vedas and (other) branches of learning, he gets the fruit of bathing in three streams.

201. One who recites the religious texts would get the fruit of a crore of sacrifices. Thus, O best brāhmaṇa, I am not able to describe the virtues of a brāhmaṇa.

202-203a. Who is having the universal body? It is Hari only in an embodied form, due to whose curse there is destruction, and due to the granting of boons by whom, all kinds of prosperity come to a person.

203b. Due to the favour of a brāhmaṇa, a pious man goes to Brahmanhood.

204. 'My salutation to the deity belonging to Brahman, to the benefactor of cows and brāhmaṇas and of the world, to Kṛṣṇa and Govinda.'

205. Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) favours the man who always worships Hari with this sacred text, and he would go to the same world as that of Viṣṇu.

206. The sin of him, committed during existence after

existence, who would listen to this account of a religious nature, perishes.

207-208. He, who recites it or reads it to others or explains it to people, is not reborn and obtains inexhaustible heaven (i.e. lives eternally in heaven). Here (i.e. in this world), he would obtain wealth, grains, royal enjoyments and sound health, and also a good son and auspicious fame and in heaven he enjoys like a god.

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

The Birth of Garuḍa

Nārada said:

1-2a. Due to your favour I have understood who the most meritorious Brāhmaṇa is (i.e. I have understood the characteristics of the most meritorious brāhmaṇa). O best of gods, if you desire (i.e. have) affection for me, quickly tell me, so that I shall understand, O lord of gods, (the characteristics of) a mean brāhmaṇa by his acts.

Brahmā said:

2b-4a. That is a mean brāhmaṇa, who has fallen from the ten kinds of baths, and from presenting libations of water[1] to the manes of the deceased ancestors; also one who has abandoned the (offering of) prayers and restraint; one who has fallen from worship of gods and from vows, and from learning the Vedas; and from truth, purity etc.; and from the knowledge of abstract meditation and offering oblations into fire.

4b-6. The great sages have recommended five (kinds of) baths for brāhmaṇas: Āgneya, Vāruṇa, Brāhma, Vāyavya and Divya. Āgneya is said to be a bath with ashes (i.e. besmearing the body with ashes); Vāruṇa is said to be a bath with

1. Tarpaṇa—Presenting libations of water to the manes of the deceased ancestors.

water; Brāhma is said to be a bath accompanied by the hymn 'Āpohiṣṭha'; Vāyavya is said to be a bath of sun-dust; the divine bath is said to be with the rain during sun-shine.

7-8. One taking bath with these with (the recital of) sacred hymns would obtain (the fruit of a bath) at the sacred places. It is said in the Smṛti texts that the water in contact with a tulasī-leaf, and the water flowing from Śāligrāma, and that water which is touched by the horns of cows, and that water with which the feet of a brāhmaṇa are washed is purer than that which is purified by prominent preceptors.

9. A wise man obtains that fruit with these baths which (fruit) he gets by giving (gifts), (visiting) sacred places, devotional acts, vows and sacrifices.

10-11. A man who everyday avoids offering libations to the manes of the dead ancestors is a killer of them and goes to hell; he who avoids the daily prayers is a killer of brāhmaṇas (and goes to hell); and the meanest brāhmaṇa is he who is free from (i.e. who neglects) sacred hymns, vows, and is devoid of the virtues accruing from Vedic learning and avoids sacrifices and presents.

12. These five are mean brāhmaṇas: one bargaining for money (i.e. the fees to be paid to a priest) at a sacrifice; one subsisting upon the offerings made to an idol[1]; a bad astrologer[2]; one conducting religious ceremonies for all classes[3]; and one always dallying with others' wives.

13. Also those brāhmaṇas who have not undergone purificatory rites to the accompaniment of sacred hymns, who are without purity and restraint, who eat aimlessly, and who are wicked are most mean.

14. Those brāhmaṇas who are given to stealing, who are ignorant, who are without (i.e. who do not observe) all rules of dharma, and who always go astray are the meanest.

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1. Devalaka—A low brāhmaṇa who subsists upon the offerings made to a deity.

2. Nākṣatra—One who subsists on predictions based on movements of planets etc.

3. Grāmayājaka—A priest who conducts the religious ceremonies for all classes and is consequently considered as a degraded brāhmaṇa.

15. All those brāhmaṇas who do not perform rites like śrāddha, who do not serve their preceptors, who do not recite sacred hymns, and who violate the boundaries (of good behaviour) are the meanest.

16. All these wicked ones should not be talked to, and all of them go to hell; they are impure; are of a bad conduct, and should not be at all honoured.

17-19. Those brāhmaṇas, who subsist on a sword, who work as menials, who are engaged in driving bulls, who work as artisans, who work as usurers, who deal in children, who indulge in sorcery, who resort to śūdras, who are ungrateful, and who kill their preceptors—all these are said to be mean; and those other brāhmaṇas who discard (good) conduct, who are heretics, who condemn righteousness and various kinds of gods, who hate brāhmaṇas (are mean).

20-21. Yet a brāhmaṇa is never to be killed; because, O best of brāhmaṇas, a man becomes a brāhmaṇa-cide by killing him. A brāhmaṇa who has fallen into the castes of śūdras, mlecchas and cāṇḍālas due to (desire for) food or sex, should never be killed.

22. The brāhmaṇahood (of a brāhmaṇa) perishes by having sex with women of all castes and by eating all things that are forbidden; (but such a brāhmaṇa) again becomes a brāhmaṇa as a result of his religious merit.

Nārada said:

23. O you grandsire of all the worlds, what position does a man, who, having done such bad deeds, practises merit, go to?

Brahmā said:

24. He who, even after having committed all kinds of sins, restrains his senses, is free from all sins, and again deserves brāhmaṇahood.

25. O son, listen to an old, charming and wonderful story: The son of a certain brāhmaṇa became endowed with youth.

26. Then due to exuberance of youth and delusion as a result of deeds in the former (existence), he approached a cāṇḍālī, and instantly became dearer to her.

27-29. He generated sons and daughters on her; having given up (the members of) his own family, he lived in her house for a long time. He did not eat any prohibited food, nor did he drink wine. She (cāṇḍālī) always said to him: "(You do not eat prohibited food; at least) drink (some or) other (kind of) wine". He said to her: "O dear one, please do not talk (about) filthy things. I always get a vomitting sensation at the mention of it (i.e. wine))."

30-31. Once, being fatigued due to hunting he was asleep in the house by day. She took wine and with a smile put it into his mouth. Then from the brāhmaṇa's mouth fire blazed all around. That flame burnt the house with family and wealth.

32-33. Then the brāhmaṇa rose, saying 'alas !', and wept. After lamenting he started inquiring: 'Wherefrom did the fire rise? How is this fire in my house? (What is the cause of the fire in my house?). Then a voice in the (i.e. from the) sky said: "It is your (inherent) lustre (as a brāhmaṇa)."

34-35. When it (i.e. the account) was narrated as it had taken place, the brāhmaṇa was amazed. The lustre in the sky, having reflected over the matter, spoke again: "Your fine lustre has vanished; therefore, practise piety." Then the brāhmaṇa having gone to excellent sages, asked them about his well-being.

36-40. All the sages said to him: "Practise the pious acts of giving in charity". The sages said: "Brāhmaṇas are purified from all sins by restraints and vows. Observe the restraints laid down in the sacred texts for purifying yourself. Repeatedly observe quickly for removing your sins, divine vows like Cāndrāyaṇa[1] Kṛcchra, Taptakṛcchra, Prājāpatya. Go to the pure sacred place and worship Govinda. Soon your sins will completely perish. Due to the power of the holy places and of Govinda, your sins

1. Cāndrāyaṇa—A religious observance or expiatory penance regulated by the moon's waxing and waning. In it the daily quantity of food, which consists of fifteen mouthfuls at the full moon, is diminished by one mouthful everyday during the dark fortnight till it is reduced to zero at the new moon, and is increased in like manner during the bright fortnight.

Prājāpatya—A kind of fast or penance lasting twelve days, food being eaten during the first three days once in the morning, during the next three once in the evening, on the next three days only if given as alms, and a plenary fast being observed during the three remaining days.

will perish and you will obtain Brāhmaṇahood. O dear one, listen to an old account as we shall narrate it:

41-43. O son, formerly, the bird Garuḍa, the young one, desired food and as soon as he came out of the egg, he, being hungry, said to his mother: 'Give me food.' Then the mother seeing her son Garuḍa, very mighty and resembling a mountain, with a delighted mind said: 'O son, I am not at all able to pacify your hunger.

44-45. Your father, the religious-minded Kaśyapa, who is actually the grandsire of the world, practises penance on the shore of (the ocean called) Lauhitya. Go there and ask (i.e. tell) him what your desire is. By his instruction your hunger will be satiated.'

46. Then hearing the words of his mother, the very powerful Vainateya (i.e. Garuḍa), having the speed of the mind, reached his father's vicinity in a short while.

47-48. The bird, seeing his father, that best sage, blazing like fire, saluted him by bowing his head, and said: 'I the son of you, the magnanimous one, have come to you with a desire for food. O protector, O lord, I am oppressed with hunger.'

49. Then resorting to meditation, and knowing him to be Vinatā's son, the best sage, through affection for his son, said these words:

50-51. 'Hundreds of thousands of (most sinful) bhillas reside on the beach of the lord of rivers. Eat them up and be happy. These unconquerable crows at the holy places are destroying the holy places. Without being particular eat these bhillas excepting a brāhmaṇa.'

52-53. Thus addressed, the bird left, and ate them up. He even swallowed a brāhmaṇa as he did not know his (true) condition. That brāhmaṇa stuck fast to his throat. The best bird could neither vomit nor swallow him.

54. Going to his father he said: 'O father what is this (that has happened) to me? I cannot remove the being that has stuck to my throat.'

55. Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) him Kaśyapa said to him: 'O son, I had told you beforehand. You have not recognized this brāhmaṇa.'

56. Then the pious, wise sage, saying so, said to the brāhmaṇa: 'Come near me: I shall tell you what is beneficial to you.'

57-58. Then that brāhmaṇa said to the best sage, Kaśyapa: 'All these are always my friends; they are my relations; they are dear to me: (some of them) are my fathers-in-law, brothers-in-law, and my kinsmen; others are there with their children. With these I shall go even to an inauspicious hell.'

59. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, Kaśyapa, being amazed, said: 'You, who have been born in the family of brāhmaṇas, have fallen with the cāṇḍālas.

60. Your men (i.e. relatives) certainly live in a terrible hell. In no way they will have acquittal for a long time.

61. A man becomes happy only by giving up the sinful, wicked cāṇḍālas and by avoiding sins; not otherwise.

62. He, who (first) commits a terrible sin through ignorance or delusion and then practises righteousness, would go to an excellent place.

63. If a sinner practises righteousness and then again thinks of committing sins, he sinks as a person getting into a stone-boat sinks in the ocean.

64. He, who, having committed all (kinds of) sins, and (having collected) a heap of misfortunes, becomes appeased later, destroys those sins.'

65-66. Then the brāhmaṇa said to the very intelligent, best brāhmaṇa sage: 'If this bird will not release all my relatives, then, with this bird striking my vitals, I shall give up my life; otherwise let him free my relatives; this is the vow of me, who am determined.'

67. Then the sage, due to the fear of the murder of a brāhmaṇa said to Garuḍa: 'Vomit fully all these mlecchas along with the brāhmaṇa.'

68. Then the lord of lords, at the bidding of his father, quickly vomitted them in forests, in the vicinity of mountains and in (various) directions.

69. Then appeared the hair-less, beard-less yavanas, fond of food; also some who had small beards.

70. In the south-east appeared the sinful Nagnakas (i.e.

the naked); in the south (appeared) the Avācakas (i.e. who were dumb); they were fearful, were delighted in killing beings, were wicked and ate the (flesh of) cows.

71. In the south-west (appeared) the Kuvadas (i.e. who talked badly), who were sinners and who were ready to kill cows and brāhmaṇas; in the west (appeared) the Kharpas (i.e. cheats); in the east lived (i.e. appeared) the Dāruṇas (i.e. the terrible ones).

72. In the north-west (appeared) the full-bearded Turks, who ate the (flesh of) cows; they were mounted on the backs of horses and did not return (i.e. flee) from great battles.

73. In the north (appeared) the Mlecchas, living in the mountains. They were omnivorous and wicked and were, it is said, engaged in killing and binding (others).

74. In the north-east were the Nirayas living on trees. These Mlecchas, by the mere touch of whom one should enter water with all one's clothes on, who were terrible and held weapons in their hands, remained (i.e. appeared) in the (different) directions.

75-76. In the Kali-yuga, void of piety, and a bad time, people everywhere touch these (Mlecchas) through greed for wealth. The bird (i.e. Garuḍa) freed the Mlecchas and being oppressed by hunger, said again: 'O father, hunger is oppressing me more'.

77-78. Kaśyapa there said to Garuḍa who was melted with tenderness: In one region of the ocean, there are a big elephant and a tortoise desiring to kill (each other); they are immeasurable (i.e. of a very huge size) and are very energetic.

79-80. Those (two remaining) in the water, will, O son, quickly satiate your hunger'. Hearing the words of his father, he, very powerful, and of a great speed, went there, attacked the elephant and the tortoise and tearing them with his nails, flew into the sky with the speed of lightning after seizing them.

81-83. The Mandara and other mountains could not serve as a prop for him. Then the very mighty (Garuḍa) going with wind's speed for (a distance of) two lakh yojanas, dropped (himself with them) on a huge branch of a jambu-tree. Suddenly the branch gave way. The powerful (Garuḍa), fear-

ing the death of cows and brāhmaṇas, quickly supported that falling branch.

84-85a. Viṣṇu, taking up a human form, went to the charming and mighty (Garuḍa) who was moving fast holding the branch and said to him: 'O best of birds, who are you? Why are you moving in the sky, holding the huge branch and the huge elephant and tortoise?'

85b-86. Then the bird (i.e. Garuḍa) said to Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) in human form; 'O you of mighty arms, I am Garuḍa, having the form of a bird due to my deeds. I am the son of Kaśyapa, born from the womb of Vinatā.

87. See these great animals seized by me for eating them up. Neither the earth, nor the trees and mountains can support me.

88. Seeing the jambu-tree after (having flown for) many yojanas, I fell on its branch with these two to eat them up (after sitting on the branch).

89-90a. That branch suddenly broke. Holding the branch, I am wandering. O wise one, fear and dejection have entered me (i.e. my mind), as a result of the murder of crores of brāhmaṇas and cows.

90b-91. 'What should I do? How should I go? Who would put up with my speed?' When (Garuḍa) had said this, Hari then said to that best of birds: 'Mounting on my arm, you eat up these elephant and tortoise'.

Garuḍa said:

92-93. '(Even) the oceans and best mountains are not able to support me; then how can you hold (i.e. support) a strong being like me? Who else except Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) is able to hold (i.e. support) me? He alone is the man in the three worlds, who can put up with my force.'

Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) said:

94. 'A wise one should save his own affair first; do (i. e. get) your work (done) now; having done (i.e. having got done) your work you will certainly know me'.

95. Having seen that very mighty (Viṣṇu) and having

mentally reflected, the bird (i.e. Garuḍa), saying, 'Let it be so', jumped on his great arm.

96. When the lord of the birds fell upon his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) arm, it did not move. Remaining there, he dropped the branch on the abode of the mountains (i.e. the earth).

97. Just at the fall of the branch, the earth, with the mobile, the immobile and the forests, trembled. The oceans also trembled (i.e. were agitated).

98. Then he rashly ate up the two animals, the elephant and the tortoise. He was not satisfied. His hunger was not satiated.

99. Knowing (i.e. seeing) this Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) said to the lord of birds: 'Eat the flesh of my arm and be happy.'

100. When he said this, O son, he, through hunger, ate a lot of flesh of his arm; but there was no wound on his (arm).

101. Then the highly intelligent one said to Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) the lord of the mobile and immobile: 'Who are you? What proper thing dear to you should I do today?'

Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) said:

102a. 'Know me to be Nārāyaṇa, who has come here to do what is dear to you.'

102b-104. And for convincing him he showed him his own form. Seeing him who had put on a yellow garment, who was dark like a cloud, who had four arms, who was pleasing, who had held a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus, and who was the lord of gods, Garuḍa, saluting him by bowing his head (said to him): 'O best man (i.e. Viṣṇu), tell me what thing dear to you should I do?'

105. Viṣṇu, the lord of the lords of gods and very lustrous, said to him: 'O brave one, O friend, be my vehicle for all times'.

106-107a. To him the greatest among the birds said: 'O lord of gods, I am fortunate. O lord, O master, on having seen you my life is fruitful. Having requested my parents, I shall approach you.'

107b-108. Viṣṇu, being pleased, said this: 'Be ever young and immortal; you will not be killed by any being; your deeds

and lustre will be like mine. May you (have the power to) move at all places; may you certainly have all happiness.

109. May you obtain whatever you have in mind. You will easily obtain food desired by you and to your liking.

110. You will instantly deliver your mother from her calamity. (What I say will not be) otherwise.' Saying so Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) instantly disappeared there only.

111. Then Garuḍa also, having gone to his father, told him everything. Hearing that, and with his heart pleased, he (i.e. Kaśyapa) again said to his son (i.e. Garuḍa):

112. 'O greatest among birds, I am fortunate; so also is your auspicious mother. The wife and family of him whose son you are like this, are blessed.

113. He in whose family such an excellent male, devoted to Viṣṇu is born, will having emancipated a crore (of members of his) family go to the same heaven as of Viṣṇu.

114-115. He who worships Viṣṇu everyday, who meditates upon him, who sings (songs in his praise), who always mutters Viṣṇu's hymn, who recites his eulogy, who eats food offered to him, who fasts on the day of (i.e. auspicious to) Viṣṇu, is relieved after the destruction of all his sins—there is no doubt about it.

116. That best man in whose mind Viṣṇu resides, alone would always get Viṣṇu's servitude (i.e. would always become his humble devotee) by means of his religious merit.

117. Having collected good deeds (i.e. merit due to good deeds) for thousands of crores of existence, he would, due to the exhaustion of all his sins, be the servant of Viṣṇu.

118-119a. Such a man is fortunate in the world and would get the likeness of Viṣṇu. That man is the best with whom Viṣṇu, the immutable lord of the worlds, always worshipped by excellent gods, is well-pleased.

119b-120. Viṣṇu is not obtained (even) by gods with (i.e. after practising) austerities, and with many and various kinds of sacrifices; you are getting (i.e. you have obtained) him. Relieve your mother from the terrible calamity caused by her co-wife.

121-122. Having retaliated for your mother, you will go to

that lord of gods.'

Securing his father's order and having received a great boon from Viṣṇu, Garuḍa, being delighted, went to his mother and remained before her after having saluted her.

Vinatā said:

122b-123a. O son, you had your food today; you also met your father. Why (then) are you late? I am afflicted with anxiety.

123b-124a. Hearing these words of his mother, Garuḍa, laughing a little, told her the account. Having heard it she was amazed:

124b-126a. '(Though) a child how did you do that feat difficult to perform? I am blessed; my family is blessed since you became the friend of Viṣṇu. Seeing that (you have) obtained a great boon (from Viṣṇu) my mind is delighted. O you (my) son, by your valour you have emancipated both my families (i.e. of my father and of my husband).'

Suparṇa (i.e. Garuḍa) said:

126b-127a. O mother, tell me what I should do that is dear to you? Having done that mission (entrusted to me by you) I shall go to the vicinity of Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu).

127b-129a. Hearing this, that chaste Vinatā said to Garuḍa: 'I am suffering from a great calamity. Adopt a remedy against it. My sister is my co-wife. She has formerly purchased me. I have become her servant. Who will save me from it (i.e. her servitude)?

129b-130a. When her sons—the great serpents—had rendered (the Sun's) horse black by means of poison, she said to me that the horse would become black at dawn.

130b-131a. Then I said (i.e. to this I replied)—'This (horse) is always white in colour. Your words are untrue.' Then she made a solemn declaration.

131b-132. Then I swore at Kadrū, the mother of the serpents. At that time I said to her: 'If this horse of the Sun becomes black, then I shall be your servant.'

133-134. Then when her clever sons rendered the Sun's horse black, I became her servant. O you delighting the family, when I shall give her wealth as desired by her, I shall be free from her servitude.'

Garuḍa said:

135. O mother, ask her quickly; I shall retaliate. I shall eat up those serpents; this is my proper pledge.

136. Then that unhappy Vinatā said this to Kadrū: 'O you auspicious one, tell me what you desire, so that I shall be free from the difficulty.'

137. That wicked one said: 'Give me nectar'. Hearing these words, she became gloomy.

138. Then that miserable (Vinatā) slowly came to her son, and said to him: 'The sinful one asked for nectar; O son, what will you do (now)?'

139. Hearing these words, Garuḍa, getting excessively angry (said:) 'O mother, I shall bring nectar; do not be grieved'.

140. Saying so, he speedily went to his father. 'O sinless one, now I shall get nectar for my mother'.

141-143. That sage, after hearing these words uttered by him, said to the lord of birds: 'Above Satyaloka there is a city fashioned by Viśvakarman for the good of the worlds. It is beautiful with an assembly; it is inaccessible due to fire and ramparts; it is unassailable by demons and gods. Gods have fashioned there a mighty god for its protection. He, whom the hero sees, would be reduced to ashes.'

Suparṇa (i.e. Garuḍa) said:

144. O best of sages, I have obtained a boon from Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu); O father, I have no fear even from the host of demons or of gods.

145. Saying so, and taking the water of the ocean the bird having the speed of mind, entered the sky, and moved (up).

146. By the wind produced due to (the movement of) his wings much dust was raised; the heap of dust left (behind by him) did not come near him.

147. Having gone (to the city), the mighty one put out

the fire with the water in his beak. The god (the protector of the city), with his eyes full of dust, did not see him.

148-149a. The powerful one, killed the group of protectors and snatched the nectar. Indra, mounted upon Airāvata, going to the bird, bringing the nectar, said these words:

149b-150. 'Who are you, that having taken up the form of a bird, are forcibly snatching nectar? Doing what is not liked by all gods, how do you (still) have attachment for life? I shall take you to Yama's abode (by striking you) with arrows resembling fire.'

151. Hearing the words of Hari (i.e. Indra) the mighty (bird) angrily said: 'I shall carry (away) your nectar; show (me) your valour'.

152. Hearing this, the mighty-armed (Indra) struck (him) with sharp arrows, as a cloud would strike the peak of mountain Meru with the shower of water.

153. Garuḍa, with his nails like the thunderbolt, pierced the elephant (i.e. Airāvata), and also Mātali (the charioteer of Indra), (Indra's) chariot, (his) disc, and the advancing gods.

154. That Mātali of great arms was afflicted; (and also) the best elephant. Then all the hosts of gods were made to turn away their faces with the wind produced by his wings.

155. Then angry (Indra), desiring to win, struck him with his thunderbolt; (but) the great bird was not disturbed by the fall of the thunderbolt.

156. Noticing that his thunderbolt was ineffective Indra became afraid. Withdrawing from the battle then, he disappeared there only.

157. Moving speedily, he came down to the earth. The best of gods (i.e. Indra again) said to (Garuḍa) in front of the entire host of gods:

Śakra (i.e. Indra) said:

158-159. If you now give the nectar to the mother of serpents, she will certainly make all serpents immortal. Your pledge will be null and void; (and) you will not get the fruit of your life. Therefore, O sinless one, with your consent I shall take it away.

Garuḍa said:

160. O Indra, you will take away the nectar at that time when it will be known in all the worlds that that unhappy mother of me is free from servitude.

161. Saying so, the very powerful (Garuḍa), having gone to his mother, said to her: 'O mother, I have brought the nectar. Give it to her only.'

162. With her heart blooming (with joy), and seeing her son with the nectar, she called her (i.e. Kadrū), and having given it to her, then became free from servitude.

163. Seeing that grass, wood, beings, beasts and reptiles, as well as gods with great sages were amazed.

164-165a. Having freed his mother (from bondage) Garuḍa was well (-disposed). In the meanwhile, Indra suddenly took away nectar and put poison there (i.e. in its place) without being noticed by her (i.e. Kadrū).

165b-166. Kadrū, with her heart pleased, hastily called her sons, and put the poison, having the characteristics of (i.e. resembling) nectar, into their mouths.

166b-167a. The mother (i.e. Kadrū) said to her sons: 'Let these divine drops always remain in the mouths (of the members) of your family.' They were happy.

167b-169. Great sages, gods, Siddhas, Gandharvas and human beings said: 'O mother, let (these drops) be in (your) family by (i.e. as) our favour.' Gods, with Siddhas and sages, dismissed by the serpents, gladly went home. The serpents were happy. In the meanwhile, Garuḍa forcibly ate up the serpents.

170-171. The remaining serpents ran and remained in various directions, mountains and forests, oceans, the nether worlds, holes and hollows of trees, and lonely bowers. The serpents are always his (Garuḍa's) food, created by the creator.

172. He (i.e. Garuḍa) having eaten the serpents, and having worshipped the gods, went to the immutable Hari (i.e. (Viṣṇu)

173. He, who reads or listens to this auspicious account of Garuḍa, will be free from all sins and honoured in heaven."

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

Importance of Bull (and Cow)

Brahmā said:

1-3a. O brāhmaṇic sage (Nārada), and hereafter, that brāhmaṇa who had fallen among the cāṇḍālas, lamented in various ways and went to sage Kaśyapa. Having gone to him, he said: "O best sage, tell me words beneficial to me (i.e. Instruct me in such a way that I would fare well in life). O greatest sage, act in such a way that I would be free from sin."

The (sage) of great lustre, smiling a little said:

Kaśyapa said:

3b-4. After having seen the Mlecchas you yourself have become calm. Fasting on the day sacred to Hari, always remember Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) by muttering the Gāyatrī (hymn), (other) hymns, and by vows like Cāṇḍrāyaṇa.[1]

5. Day and night meditate upon Śaṅkara, and salute that lord. By means of a bath at a sacred place and by means of (reciting) hymns, you will see end of the mud (of sin).

6. Then O brāhmaṇa, destroying your sins by means of vows with more virtue, you will get (back) your brāhmaṇahood and salvation as a result of the destruction of sins.

7. Hearing the words of the sage, he then became satisfied. Having done various deeds of merit, he again obtained brāhmaṇahood.

8-9. Then having practised a severe penance he obtained heaven after a long time. All sin of a virtuous person perishes day by day; (but) the merit of a man of bad conduct perishes like collyrium. A brāhmaṇa miserable due to bad conduct, would go to (i.e. obtain) godhead by (good) conduct.

10. Then a brāhmaṇa (even) with his life at the point of departing, practises (good) deeds. So always do good deed mentally and physically.

11-12. By the advice of Kaśyapa, that brāhmaṇa became disciplined; and again conducting himself well, and having

1. Cāndrāyaṇa—see note on 47.37 above.

practised penance, he went to heaven. A brāhmaṇa of a bad conduct is doomed and condemned in heaven; but conducting himself well he is honoured.

Nārada said:

13. People get a good position (like salvation) after having worshipped best brāhmaṇas. O lord, what position does one get by troubling brāhmaṇas?

Brahmā said:

14. That man, who does not devoutly and according to his capacity worship great-souled brāhmaṇas whose bodies are tormented by hunger, goes to hell.

15. He, who, having made (a brāhmaṇa) scream by using harsh (words), dismisses him angrily, goes to the painful and terrible hell like Mahāraurava.

16. Returning from there he is born in the lowest species, like the insects. Then he becomes a diseased, poor person oppressed by hunger.

17-18a Therefore one should not insult a brāhmaṇa who being oppressed with hunger, has come to his house. He, who says, 'I shall not give' to gods, fire and brāhmaṇas, having gone through a hundred of animal-births, becomes (i.e. is born as) a cāṇḍāla.

18b-19a. He who kicks a brāhmaṇa, or a cow or his preceptor, certainly lives in the Raurava[1] hell; for him there is no acquittal.

19b-20. If through merit he gets (a human) birth (i.e. is born as a human being), he would be crippled. He becomes very wretched, is dejected and oppressed by grief. Getting three births like this, he may then get acquittal.

21. That man too who strikes a brāhmaṇa with fists, or with blows, with elbows or open hands remains till the end of the Kalpa in the burning Raurava hell.

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1. *Manu* (4.88-90) gives the names of the following twentyone hells: Tāmisra, Andhatāmisra, Mahāraurava, Raurava, Kālasūtra, Mahānaraka, Saṁjīvana, Mahāvīci, Tapana, Sampratāpana, Saṁhāta, Sakākola, Kuḍmala, Pratimūrtika, Lohaśaṅku, Ṛjīṣa, Panthā, Śālmali, Vaitaraṇi, Asipatravana, Lohadāraka. According to him, he, who accepts gifts from a king who does not rule properly, falls into these hells one by one.

22. Then he getting the birth (of) a cruel and violent dog, is after that born in the low castes as a poor man, suffering from pain in the belly.

23-24a. The man who raises his foot (to kick a brāhmaṇa) has śilīpada (i.e. elephantiasis) on his foot. Such a man becomes lame, or short-legged or has his foot amputated; or his limbs tremble due to paralysis.

24b-25. He, who, through anger, strikes his mother, father, a brāhmaṇa who has just returned from his preceptor's house or an ascetic or a group of preceptors would live in the Kumbhīpāka hell for a long time; and having lived there, would thereafter be born in the species of worms.

26-27. He, who would talk hostile or harsh words to brāhmaṇas, would definitely have eight kinds of leprosy on his body, O son. They are: itch, cutaneous eruption[1], leprosy with circular spots, types of leprosy called Śukti and Sidhmaka, Kālakuṣṭha, Śukla, and the very terrible progressive leprosy.

28. Then after use of drugs, merit runs away due to sin; and due to want of merit he would die as a line on water (disappears).

29. Among these (various kinds of leprosy) only three are said to be major (forms of) leprosy: Kālakuṣṭha, Śukla and the very terrible Taruṇa (i.e. progressive).

30. These three appear on the body of great sinners only due to the presence of great sins or due to contagion (with lepers).

31. People contract (this) disease by contagion or contact. A wise man should avoid (the lepers) from a distance; (and) should bathe after having touched (i.e. if he touches) them.

32. A man should bathe after having touched (i.e. if he touches) a fallen man, or a leper, or a cāṇḍāla eating the flesh of cows, or a dog, or a woman in her menses, or a bhilla.

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1. Maṇḍala—a kind of cutaneous eruption or leprosy with circular spots.

Vicarcikā—itch, scab.

Dadrū—a cutaneous eruption—a kind of leprosy.

Śukti—hemorrhoids.

Sidhmaka—one of the eighteen kinds of leprosy.

33. The various kinds of leprosy settle on the body, here or in the next world, according to the sin (committed by a person). There is no doubt about it.

34. He who snatches a brāhmaṇa's wealth—his livelihood earned justly—gets unfailing hell (i.e. certainly goes to hell), and is not reborn (i.e. permanently lives in hell).

35. Having seen or touched a wicked man, who is intent upon finding the weak points of brāhmaṇas, a man should enter water (i.e. should bathe) with his clothes on.

36. (If) a brāhmaṇa's wealth (deposited with one) in confidence is enjoyed by one, it would burn one's family upto the seventh (generation). A man who enjoys it after having snatched it by overpowering a brāhmaṇa burns ten preceding and ten succeeding (generations).

37. It is not poison that is called poison; but it is a brāhmaṇa's wealth that is called poison. Poison kills one man only; but a brāhmaṇa's wealth kills his sons and grandsons (also).

38. A man, who through ignorance cohabits with his mother or a brāhmaṇa woman or his preceptor's wife, falls into the terrible Raurava (hell) and finds rebirth difficult.

39-40a. His manes fall into the (hells called) Kumbhīpāka, Tapana, Avīci, Kālasūtra, Mahāraurava and Raurava; and they (i.e. great sages) have never granted acquittal from these.

40b-41a. He who takes away the life of a brāhmaṇa (goes to hell and) is never reborn (i.e. permanently stays in hell). Thousands of his men (i.e. relatives) fall into the Raurava hell.

Nārada said:

41b-42a. Please tell me if the sin for the murder of all brāhmaṇas is the same or why some sin becomes fearful.

Brahmā said:

42b-43a. O son, listen to the fearful sin; that is said to be a sin, which a brāhmaṇacide obtains by killing a brāhmaṇa and which is to be told hereafter.

43b-44. The sin that a man would get due to having killed a learned, restrained brāhmaṇa, who is endowed with (the

knowledge of) the Vedas, is equal to the sin that he would have by killing lakhs of crores of thousands of brāhmaṇas. It would be tenfold of this by killing (i.e. if a man kills a brāhmaṇa who is) a Viṣṇu's devotee.

45. Causing the members of his family to fall he does not get rebirth (i.e. lives in hell permanently). There is no end to (the sin accrued by) the killing of (a brāhmaṇa) well-versed in three Vedas.

46. There is no end to the sin of a man who kills a brāhmaṇa who is learned, whose conduct is good and who is purified by sacred hymns and (bathes at) sacred places.

47. That man, who sees a brāhmaṇa who ends his life on account of an injury, would be the killer of a brāhmaṇa.

48. That man, on account of whom, a brāhmaṇa is harassed with harsh words or behaviour or is beaten up is called the killer of a brāhmaṇa.

49. Here (i.e. in this world) that killing would be the killing of all the sages, ascetics, gods, the knowers of Brahman of (various) countries and kings.

50-52. So a man who gets (i.e. commits the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa is roasted (in a hell) with (his) dead ancestors. A man should certainly honour a brāhmaṇa fasting himself unto death; and if he, free from sins, casts, his life for that man, he is smeared with (the sin of) terrible murders and not he whom he would tell about committing suicide, climbing up a tree or living by hollows of trees[1]. He who would commit suicide would be the killer of a brāhmaṇa in his (own) family.

53. He who causes abortion or kills a child or his sick preceptor, is himself the killer of a brāhmaṇa, and not he whom he mentions.

54. That mean brāhmaṇa, who kills a brāhmaṇa with his family, alone gets the sin and not he whom he mentions.

55. The sin of a Śūdra, who accomplishes his object by killing a Brāhmaṇa does not become otherwise (i.e. does not lessen) since the Brāhmaṇa is innocent.

56. O best of brāhmaṇas, the killer, who kills a desperado (*ātatāyin*) instantly appearing, is not smeared (i.e. tainted) with sins.

1. This and many other verses here are not properly worded.

57. A man may kill in battle a brāhmaṇa desperado, desiring to kill, even though the desperado is a master of Vedānta. By (doing) that (act) he does not become the killer of a brāhmaṇa.

58. These six are desperados: One who sets fire, one who administers poison, one who snatches (anothers' wealth), one who kills a person who is asleep, one who usurps another's field or one who kidnaps another's wife.

59. These four (also) are desperados: a wicked man, one who undertakes to kill a king, one who is intent on killing one's forefathers, a king who is a follower of another king.

60. If a brāhmaṇa is not killed instantly it is not proper (to strike) to kill him again. By killing (i.e. by striking him again to kill) him a man definitely obtains sin due to his knowledge (that the brāhmaṇa was not instantly killed).

61. In the world there is none else, who, being the preceptor of the world, is fit for being worshipped. There is no greater sin than the sin which one gets by killing him.

62. He is fit to be worshipped like a deity by the hosts of gods and demons and by men. It is certain that there is none else who is equal to a brāhmaṇa.

Nārada said:

63. O best of gods, tell me accurately, following which profession a sinless brāhmaṇa should live.

64-65. That alms which is got without asking for is said to be commendable. Living by gleaning grains is better than that; it is the best of all kinds of livelihood, resorting to which the best sages go to the position of Brahman. A brāhmaṇa visiting a sacrifice should accept the fees offered as a remnant of (i e. offered at the end of) the sacrifice.

66. Brāhmaṇas should get money by reciting (Vedic texts) to others and by acting as priests at sacrifices. Reciting (Vedic texts to others), reciting them to themselves and averting evil by means of reciting sacred texts—this is the way of the life of brāhmaṇas.

67. Accepting presents is a respectable way of life. Those who maintain themselves by the study of religious texts are

blessed; so also are those who live by (eating the fruits of) trees.

68-69. Those who live on the products of trees and creepers are blessed; so also are those who live on the crop (growing by the side) of roads. Killing for food is a sin. For its alleviation one should give excellent fresh grains to brāhmaṇas. Otherwise, here i.e. in the case of the murder of a being, there is the shortening of one's life.

70. Therefore one should give profusely to the manes, deities and brāhmaṇas. In the absence (of a brāhmaṇa's profession), the profession of a kṣatriya is followed by brāhmaṇas.

71-72a. A brāhmaṇa should fight in righteous battles (and thus) should practise the auspicious vow of a hero. The wealth which a brāhmaṇa gets from the king by following that profession (of a warrior), is said to be pure (when spent) in giving presents at sacrifices in honour of manes (i.e. at śrāddhas) etc.

72b-74a. An innocent brāhmaṇa should always study archery along with the Vedas. He should fully (use) the missile called Śakti, a spear, a mace, a sword, and an iron bar; he should everywhere fight by mounting a horse, or an elephant or by using war-tricks, or fight by mounting upon a chariot or standing on ground.

74b-75. How can that religious merit be obtained by the expounders of Veda, (which merit) is certainly obtained by the brave men by protecting brāhmaṇas, gods, heaven, women, ascetics, good men and women, preceptors and kings?

76-77a. Having exhausted all his sins, he obtains heaven permanently. The brāhmaṇas who fall (i.e. are killed) in a battle (while fighting) face to face, go to the highest place, inaccessible to the expounders of Veda.

77b-79. Now listen to the proper description of a righteous war. They (who fight justly) fight face to face, do not attack a coward, do not pursue the enemy who is vanquished, or who does not have a weapon, or who flees (from the battlefield), or who does not fight, who is afraid, who has fallen or who is sinless, who is a bad śūdra, who is pleased with praise, or who has sought shelter or who has surrendered in a battle.

80-81. Those of a bad conduct, who, desiring victory kill

(such a person) go to hell. This is the kṣatriya way of life and is praised by people of good conduct, resorting to which all best kṣatriyas go to heaven. The death of a kṣatriya (while fighting) face to face in a just war is auspicious.

82-83. He who is pure here, is also free from all sins, and dwells in heaven which is adorned with jewels, which has golden pillars, the ground of which is adorned with jewels, which is full of desired things, which is decorated with divine cloth.

84-87. In front of it stand the desire-yielding trees giving everything. It is adorned with wells, tanks, etc. and gardens. Divine damsels endowed with youth wait upon him. Hosts of the celestial nymphs always joyfully dance before him. Gandharvas sing songs and gods praise him. Thus, in due course a man would become a sovereign emperor; he would all alone enjoy all pleasures, would be free from diseases, and would have Cupid's body (i.e. would be very handsome). His wives would have excellent beauty and would always be endowed with youth.

88. His sons would be righteous, fair, rich and liked by parents. Thus good kṣatriyas enjoy (these pleasures) in due order for seven births.

89-91a. The warriors (fighting) unjustly dwell in hell for a long time. In this way the kṣatriya mode of life is practised by brāhmaṇas, vaiśyas, śūdras, by the low-born and by other mleccha-castes. All warriors of all castes (including) brāhmaṇas, who always fight justly, also go to the highest place.

91b-93. That brāhmaṇa, the best one, who is not brave, who is timid and does not have (the knowledge of wielding) missiles and weapons, should follow the vaiśya way in a difficulty. Others may also follow the vaiśya way, or practise trade. A brāhmaṇa should practise agriculture or trade, but should not give up his duties as a brāhmaṇa. A brāhmaṇa will be meeting with a sad plight by telling false things and exaggerating on account of (i.e. for profit in) trade.

94-96. A brāhmaṇa, by giving up wet money (i.e. dakṣiṇā) gets an auspicious (place). Making his livelihood from that (i.e. trade), he should by all means give it (i.e. wealth gained by practising trade) to a brāhmaṇa. A brāhmaṇa

should duly offer (oblations) at a śrāddha and into fire. He should not indulge in falsehood in balance (i.e. while weighing things), for balance (i.e. weighing correctly) is settled in (i.e. leads to) righteousness. Practising fraud in weighing he (i.e. one who practises fraud in weighing) goes to hell. In the case of those things also which are not weighed, he should avoid falsehood.

97-98. Thus one should not practise falsehood[1], because falsehood produces sin. There is no greater merit than truth, (and) there is no greater sin than falsehood. Therefore in all acts truth alone is important. (If) the merit of a thousand horse-sacrifices and truth are weighed (together), truth is superior to a thousand horse-sacrifices.

99-100. He, who, in all his acts, speaks the truth and avoids falsehood, crosses (i.e. overcomes) difficulties and eternally obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven. A brāhmaṇa should practise trade, (but) should certainly avoid falsehood.

101-105. He should deposit the profit into (i.e. with) sacred places, and should himself eat the remaining (i.e. enjoy himself with what remains). It is thousandfold more meritorious than troubling the body. In the act of earning (i.e. for earning) money men, through greed for wealth, enter dangerous water, a forest and a jungle resorted to by wild beasts, a mountain, or an inaccessible mountain-cave, and also the house—a fearful abode—of mlecchas. Abandoning their sons and wives, the greedy go away (from their residences). Others carry burdens on their shoulders, or in a boat or on a wheel (i.e. a carriage); others (earn money) by killing (others) or by (using) slings, (thus suffering from) great agony, and always at the cost of their life. O son, hoarding money is dearer to men than their own life.

106. He, who, having carefully and justly earned money by (practising) these (vocations), gives it to the manes, deities and brāhmaṇas, gets eternal (happiness).

107-108. These two are great sins in trading, fraudulent purchase and sale. A wise man should make money by avoiding

1. Cf. Mahābhārata I.69.24a.

these two sins. He obtains eternal (happiness) and is not smeared (i.e. tainted) with the trader's sins.

109. A brāhmaṇa engaged in doing virtuous acts, may (also) practise agriculture. He should drive four bulls for half the (part of a) day.

110. In the absence of four (he should employ) three. He should give them rest. He should graze them on uncut grass in a a place free from thieves and tigers.

111-112. He should give (the bulls) an abode as desired (i.e. agreeable), and should himself gratify them. For a bull he should get prepared a cowpen free from trouble, and always free from cowdung, cow urine and leavings of food eaten.[1] He should not put filth in the cowpen which is the abode of all gods.

113. A wise man should get fashioned a cowpen like his own couch. He should make it completely free from cold air and dust.

114. He should look upon the bull as his own life, and the bull's body similar to his own. Pleasure and pain are possible in the bull's body as in his own body.

115-116. He, who practises agriculture in this manner, would not be smeared with the sins involved in driving bulls; he would be wealthy. He, who would trouble a weak bull or a sick one, and also a very young or a very old one, would kill (i.e. commit the sin of killing) a bull.

117. There is no doubt that he, who drives an uneven pair —a weak one and a strong one—commits the sin equal to that of (i.e. equal to that obtained by) killing a bull.

118. He who drives a bull without (feeding him with) grass, or he who prevents a bull who is eating (grass, from doing so), or keeps away through folly grass or water, commits a sin equal to that (of having killed a bull).

119. Driving a plough on a saṁkrānti[2] day or a full-moon day, or a new-moon day, brings in sin to one which is (equal to that brought in by) the murder of a myriad (bulls).

120. The man, who, on these days, worships (a bull) with

1. vighasa—leavings of food eaten.
2. Pasage esp. of the sun from one zodiacal sign into another.

various kinds of sandals, collyriums, flowers and oils goes to (i.e. lives in) heaven eternally.

121-122. He who everyday gives a handful of grass to a bull, has all his sins destroyed and he obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven eternally. As a brāhmaṇa is, so is a bull; the fruit of the worship of both is the same. On thinking (it is clear that) a brāhmaṇa is the chief among men, and a bull among beasts.

Nārada said:

123. O innocent one, you had told me that a brāhmaṇa was born from the mouth of Brahmā.[1] O lord, O creator, how is he then equal to bulls (i.e. a bull)? I have certainly a doubt.

Brahmā said:

124-125. Listen to the fact about brāhmaṇas and bulls. Formerly men brought about the unity (between the two) by offering the funeral rice-ball to them. Formerly a great lustrous projection sprang up from the mouth of Brahmā. It became divided into four parts: Vedas, Agni (i.e. fire), Bull and Brāhmaṇa.

126. From the lustre the Veda rose first, and also Agni. Then Brāhmaṇa and Bull separately sprang up.

127. At that time, I first fashioned together the four Vedas for the stability of all the people and worlds everywhere.

128. Agni, and also the brāhmaṇa should enjoy the oblations (meant) for gods. Know that clarified butter is a product of the cow. Therefore they are begotten (from the same source).

129. If these four more important ones are not there in the worlds, then the entire world and the immobile and the mobile are doomed.

130. The worlds always supported by these, remain in their natural condition. Natural condition is the nature of brahman. (So) they are said to be of the nature of Brahman.

131. Therefore a bull should be worshipped even by gods and demons. He, the noble one, is born as the mine of excellences in all acts.

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1. Vipro Brahmamukhe...The famous Puruṣasūkta tells the same thing.

132. He is actually of the form of all gods. He feels compassion for all beings. I have formerly only made (i.e. laid down) his work with reference to nourishing.

133. Therefore only I have given him a very auspicious boon. "It is certain that only in (i.e. after) one birth you will attain salvation."

134. All bulls that die here only will come to my abode. There will not be even an iota of sin on their bodies.

135. A cow is a goddess, (while) the bulls are gods; the first goddess has three powers. The rise of the sacrifices is certainly due to his favour.

136. All (the products) of cows, viz. urine, dung, milk, curd, ghee, which are pure, purify the entire world.

137. Sin does not remain in the body on eating (or drinking) these. Therefore the religious people always eat (or drink) ghee, curd and milk.

138. The product of cows is the best of all things, is desirable and is most auspicious. He, in whose mouth there is no food (containing the product of a cow), has a stinking figure.

139. Food eaten is (effective) for five nights; milk for a month, curd for twenty nights; and ghee for a month.

140. Evil spirits eat the meal of him (i.e. while he is eating), who eats his meals continuously for one month without using the products of cow.

141. That merit done (i.e. collected) by eating the best and purest food, moistened with hot rice is crore-fold.

142-143a. All acts done after having eaten even other food, which is made fit for oblations by the sacred precepts, would be a lakh times more effective than the fruit one would get from whatever is vegetarian food.

143b-144a. Therefore a bull alone is recommended for all acts in every yuga. In all desired objects he always is the giver of the (fruit of) pious acts, love of worldly prosperity and sensual enjoyments and salvation.

Nārada said:

144b-145a. O lord of all worlds, tell me, so that I follow correctly: In (the performance of) which acts or by (following) which procedure great merit is known to follow?

Brahmā said:

145b-146. Having gone round once, a man should salute the wealth in the form of kine. Being free from all sins he obtains heaven for ever. As the preceptor of gods is adorable or as Viṣṇu is adorable (so is a bull).

147-148. Indra went round him seven times in grandeur. Listen to the religious merit of him, who, observing a fast, and having got up at day-break, takes a pot with water (and moves) among bulls, and sprinkles the water on the buli's horns and then receives it on his head.

149-150a. The bath taken at the places known to be sacred and thronged by Siddhas and Cāraṇas and resorted to by great sages, is equal to the sprinkling done with the water from a cow's horn.

150b-151a. That mortal, who, having got up in the morning, would touch a cow, ghee, honey, mustard and priyaṅgu (i.e. saffron) gets free from sin.

151b-153. 'Cows are the givers of ghee and milk; they are the source of ghee; ghee is their product; they are the rivers of ghee, and the eddies of ghee. Let them always remain in my house. Ghee (remains) in all my limbs, ghee resides in my mind. Cows are always in front of me and behind me. Cows are (present) in all (my) limbs; I live among cows.'

154. All the sin of him, who, (every) morning and evening, having sipped water, recites this sacred hymn, perishes; and he is adored in heaven.

155. As is the bull, so is a brāhmaṇa; as is a brāhmaṇa, so is Hari, so is the Ganges; these are not said to be non-bulls.

156. Bulls are the kinsmen of men; men are the kinsmen of bulls. That house in which there is no bull is without kinsmen.

157. The Vedas with their six limbs and the *pada* and *krama*, reside in the mouth of cow. On the horns Hari and Keśava always stay together.

158. In the belly lives Skanda; and Brahmā always remains in the head. Śaṅkara lives in the forehead and Indra on the tip of the horn.

159-164a. The deities, Aśvins, live in the ears; the Moon and the Sun live in the eyes. God Garuḍa lives in the teeth,

and Sarasvatī in the tongue. All the sacred places remain in the anus, and the Ganges in the urine. The sages live in the pores of the skin, and Yama lives in the backside of the face. Kubera and Varuṇa have resorted to the right side; the lustrous and very powerful Yakṣas reside in the left side. Gandharvas reside in the centre of the face, and the serpents on the tip of the nose. The celestial nymphs have resorted to the hind parts of the hoofs. The all-auspicious Lakṣmī resides in the cow-dung and cow-urine. Those who move in the sky reside on the tips of the feet; Prajāpati lives in the bellowing sound. The full four oceans reside in the udders of the cows.

164b-166a. A mortal who everyday bathes and touches a cow, gets relieved from all major sins. He who holds by (i.e. on) his head the dust raised by the hoofs of the cows, has (indeed) bathed in all the sacred places and is free from all sins.

Nārada said:

166b-167a. O best of preceptors, O Brahman, if you like, (please) tell me which fruit is obtained by presenting which (kind of) cow out of the cows of ten colours.

Brahmā said:

167b-168a. By giving a white cow to a brāhmaṇa, a man becomes wealthy. He always lives in a palace, and enjoying pleasure, becomes happy.

168b. A grey cow (i.e. presenting a grey cow) relieves (a man) from sins in (this) wilderness of the mundane existence and (takes him to) heaven.

169. The gift of a tawny cow (gives) an inexhaustible (fruit). By giving a black cow, a man does not sink. A yellowish white cow is difficult to get in the world. A yellowish cow delights the family.

170. A cow (i.e. the gift of a cow) with red eyes (is recommended) for (a man) who desires handsomeness. A black cow (i.e. the gift of a black cow) (is recommended) for (a man) who desires wealth. By presenting only a tawny cow a man is free from all sins.

171-173a. All the sin, such as committed in childhood, youth or old age, or by words, deeds, or conceived by mind,

and the sin due to cohabitation with one with whom it is prohibited, or the sin of treachery towards a friend, and also (the sin due to) fraud in measuring or weighing, or falsehood with reference to a girl or a cow, of him, who presents a tawny cow, perishes.

173b-175a. A cow should be looked upon as the earth, having a big river extending over ten yojanas, and having large banks, with water-elephants in the water-forest—the extended ocean of water—as long as she does not release her embryo (i.e. does not bring forth a calf)—as long as the two feet and the face of the calf have not come out.

175b-177. A man should give a tawny cow with golden horns, endowed (decorated) with a piece of cloth and with all ornaments, with a reddish back, silver hoofs and bell-metal udders, adorned with sandal and flowers and with all ornaments, to a brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas. All his sins perish, and he does not fall from the world (i.e. heaven) of Viṣṇu.

178. When she is being milked drops (of milk) fall on the earth. (From them) excellent gardens with many flowers, are produced.

179. Those who give cows (to brāhmaṇas) go there, where there are desire-yielding trees, where the rivers have thick milk, and where there are golden palaces also.

180. Brahmā has said that the fruit is the same (to him) who gives ten cows or one bull.

181. He should give one (bull) with ten (cows); the fruit of giving thousand is hundred (-fold). O Nārada, the fruit is to be carefully understood accordingly.

182. The ancestors of that son, who releases a bull on the earth dedicating it to those manes, are honoured in Viṣṇu's world (i.e. heaven) as desired (by them).

183. Four weaned female calves for one bull are released. O son, this is the old rule everywhere.

184. Men enjoy heaven for thousands of years i.e. for as many years as there are hairs on (the bodies of) them.

185. That water which a bull tosscs up with his tail would be (i.e. would serve as) nectar to the manes for a thousand years.

186. The ground or the clod that he tears—and also the mud (trodden by him) is Svadhā for the manes having a crore-fold effect.

187. If a man's father is alive, (but) his mother is dead, a cow marked with sandal is given for her (going to the) heaven (i.e. the gift of such a cow takes the mother to heaven).

188. Such a giver pays off the debt of the manes. He gets (i.e. lives in) heaven eternally and is honoured like Indra.

189. A young milch cow, endowed with all (good) characteristics, and regularly bringing forth (calves) is auspicious and is said to be the earth.

190. The gift of him accompanied by a sacred hymn has the same fruit as the gift of the earth. (Such) a man, resembling Indra emancipates a hundred (members) of his family.

191. If the cow or her calf dies after a man steals a cow, he would remain in a well full of worms till the destruction of the beings (i.e. till deluge).

192. Having killed cows (i.e. he who kills cows) is cooked with manes in the terrible Raurava hell; the retridution lasts till that time.

193. A breaker of a bull or one who yokes (to a vehicle) or ties a bull set at liberty, will eternally get (i.e. go to) hell, birth after birth.

194. He who recites to others this most auspicious account even once, has all his sins perished, and enjoys with gods.

195. He who listens to this great (account), which is most auspicious, gets, at that moment only, free from sins committed during seven births.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

Good Conduct

Nārada said:

1. By what conduct, does the brāhmaṇic lustre of a brāhmaṇa increase and by what conduct does that lustre perish?

Brahmā said:

2. The best brāhmaṇa should get up from his bed when there is still a portion of the night (i.e. early morning), and should certainly remember the meritorious gods.

3-8. (He should recite the hymns: I salute) 'Govinda, Mādhava, Kṛṣṇa, Hari, Dāmodara, Nārāyaṇa, Jagannātha, the unborn lord; (I salute) Sarasvatī, Mahālakṣmī, Sāvitrī, the mother of the Vedas, Brahmā, Bhāskara (i.e. the Sun), Candra (i.e. the Moon), the regents of the quarters and planets, Śaṅkara, Śiva, Śaṃbhu, Īśvara and Maheśvara, Gaṇeśa, Skanda, Gaurī and auspicious Bhāgīrathī'. (He should also recite the verses:) 'King Nala of an auspicious fame, Janāradana of an auspicious fame, Vaidehī (i.e. Sītā) of an auspicious fame and Yudhiṣṭhira of an auspicious fame.' 'These seven viz. Aśvatthāman, Bali, Vyāsa, Hanumat and Bibhīṣaṇa, Kṛpa and Paraśurāma are long-lived (i.e. deathless)'. A man, who, having got up in the morning, daily remembers these, is free from the sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc. There is no doubt about this.

9. Merely by uttering (these names) once, a man would get the fruit of all sacrifices. He obtains the fruit of the gift of hundred thousands of cows.

10. Then he should evacuate his bowels and urinate in a pure place. This he should do facing the south at night and the north by day.

11. After that he should clean his teeth with straws or sticks of udumbara etc. Then a brāhmaṇa should engage himself in the performance of the morning prayer.

12. A brāhmaṇa should duly meditate upon red-complexioned Sarasvatī in the forenoon, white-complexioned Sarasvatī in the mid-day and dark one in the evening.

13. Then he should carefully bathe according to his understanding. Having washed his body he should then smear it with clay.

14-15. He who desires purity should apply clay to the region of the head, the forehead, the nose, the heart, the eyebrows, the arms, the side(s), the navel, the knees, the two feet. He should apply one (layer) on the genital organ, three (layers) at the anus, and ten on the left hand; he should give seven layers on both (the hands).

16-17. All the sin of that man who smears clay on his body with the recital of the sacred hymn: 'O clay, you who are trodden by horses, chariots, and Viṣṇu; O Earth, remove my sin collected formerly', perishes and he becomes pure.

18-19. Then a wise man should bathe, after (the recital of) a Vedic (hymn), in a big river, a small river, a well, a lotus-pool, or a lake or a sea or a bank, and after that he should duly bathe with (water contained in) water jars for the destruction of all sins.

20. Bath in the morning is very meritorious, and destroys all sins. A brāhmaṇa who everyday takes it, is honoured in Viṣṇu's world.

21-22. That water which is near (the place where one has taken his bath and offered) his morning prayer, upto a distance of four daṇḍas (i.e. sixteen hastas) is nectar and serves the manes. Then from two ghaṭikās to one watch (i.e. three hours), it is like honey and increases the joy of the manes.

23. After that for a watch and a half, the water is said to be milky. Upto a distance of four daṇḍas it is mixed with milk.

24. After this (time the water remains just water for three watches). Then (in the fourth watch) it is said to be bloody (and remains so) till the sun sets.

25. That water offered, after bath, in the fourth watch is received by demons only, and is without pleasure (i.e. gives no joy to the manes).

26. Formerly only I created water for the attainment of everything; and Yakṣas alone are foremost in its protection.

27. The manes that have gone to the other world do not

receive it. It is difficult for them to get except through the mortals (related to them).

28. Therefore libations of water should be offered by the disciples, sons, grandsons, daughters' sons, relatives, devoted to the dead ancestors.

Nārada said:

29. O lord of gods, tell me clearly the deity of water and the rite of offering oblations of water, so that I can understand it.

Brahmā said:

30. Viṣṇu is praised in all the worlds as the deity of water. Viṣṇu would do good to him who is purified by water.

31. A man drinking but a mouthful of water would become purified. Especially the water (that has come) in contact with kuśa (i.e. darbha) is superior to nectar.

32. Darbha, the abode of all gods, was formerly created by me. Brahmā remains at the root of kuśa, Keśava is at its centre.

33-34a. Know Śaṅkara to be residing at the tip of kuśa. These (deities) have settled themselves in kuśa. If a pure man with a kuśa in his hand recites a eulogy or a hymn, it is said to be a hundred-fold effective. It is said to be a thousand times (effective) at a sacred place.

34b-35. Kuśas are said to be (of) seven (types) : kuśa, kāśa (grass), dūrvā, barley-leaves, paddy-leaves, Eleusine Indica,[1] and lotuses. They are pure in that order. (Thus) the kuśas are settled in the world.

36. All that bath (which is taken) without (reciting) a hymn is useless. By contact with sesamum it becomes sweeter than nectar.

37. Therefore, a wise man should always offer libations of water (mixed) with sesamum to the manes. By just ten sesamum seeds, the manes are exceedingly pleased.

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1. Balbaja—Eleusine Indica, a species of coarse grass not eaten by cows.

38a. Gods do not desire prolixity for fear of stopping the burning power of fire.

38b-39. He, who, after having bathed, offers libations of water mixed with sesamum to the manes, or by letting loose a dark bull (in their honour), or offers them water with sesamum on the new moon day, or gives light (i.e. lights lamps in their honour) in the rainy season, is free from the debt (he owes) to the manes.

40. He, who offers sesamum to the manes on the new moon day throughout a year, obtains the position of Vināyaka, and is honoured by all gods.

41-42. He who pleases (i.e. offers oblations) to the host of his manes with sesamum on yuga days[1] etc.—it is said that such offerings on the new moon day are a hundred-fold effective—or in an ayana or on a viṣuva or on a full moon or a new moon day is honoured in heaven.

43-44a. And by pleasing (i.e. offering oblations to) the manes on Manvantara[2] days or other auspicious days or on a solar or lunar eclipse day at sacred places like Gayā etc., he goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

44b-45. Therefore, finding an auspicious day a man should please (i.e. offer oblations to) the host of his manes. A wise man, being composed, having first gratified (i.e. offered oblations to) gods would then be entitled to offering oblations to the manes.

46. He should offer (water) with one hand at the time of a śrāddha and taking food; (but) should offer it with both hands at the time of tarpaṇa (i.e. offering oblation of water etc.). This is an ancient rule.

47. Being pure and facing the south he should offer libations to the manes and (should) utter the words 'Be pleased', and mention his name and family.

48-49a. That offering, which one, through delusion, makes with non-black sesamum to the host of one's manes, or that

1. Yugādyā—the anniversary of a yuga or the age of the world.

2. Manvantara—Name of various festivals: of the tenth day of the light half of Āṣāḍha, of the eighth in the dark half of the same month, and of the third in the light half of Bhādrapada.

offering which one makes by offering water on the ground, himself remaining in water, is offered in vain. It does not reach anyone.

49b-50a. That water, which a man, remaining on ground, offers into water, does not reach the manes. It is useless.

50b-51a. O sinless one, he who, having wet clothes on, offers water (of libation) into water, has his manes and gods always pleased (with him).

51b-52a. The wise say that a garment washed by washermen is impure. A garment washed with (one's) own hands becomes pure again.

52b-53a. (By offering water with wet clothes on one's person) the manes certainly become ten times more pleased than when, he, having a dry garment on his body, offers libation to the manes on a pure ground.

53b-54a. He, who bathes, offers his prayers and offers oblations on a rock, an iron vessel or a copper vessel has each of these a hundred-fold effective.

54b-55a. All (the offering) of him, who, having put a silver ring round the fore-finger, offers libations to his manes, becomes a hundred thousand times effective; not otherwise.

55b-56a. In the same way, if a wise man, putting a golden ring on his ring finger, gratifies (offers libations to) the host of his manes, that is a lakh of crores times effective.

56b-57a. Holding a Khaḍgaka in the right hand, between the thumb and the forefinger, and a gem round the ring finger —that gives the inexhaustible fruit of the ten cavity-fuls of water (offered to gods etc.).

57b-58. Gods, with hosts of manes, having taken up an aerial form, thirsty and longing for water, follow a man going for his bath. When he squeezes his garment, they go back disappointed.

59-60a. Therefore, a man should not squeeze his garment without (i.e. before) having offered libations to the manes. All the sacred places, numbering three crores and a half, i.e. as many as there are hairs on a human body, fail him. Therefore, he should not squeeze his garment (before offering libations).

60b-61a. Gods drink the water (offered) on their heads, the manes through beards, Gandharvas through eyes, and all (other) beings from below these (i.e. through their mouths).

61b-62. Merely by bathing, gods, hosts of manes, all Gandharvas and beings are pleased. No sin remains as a result of bath. That man who bathes everyday is best among men.

63. Freed from all sins, he is honoured in heaven. Till bath and offering of oblations (are over) gods are known to be great sages.

64. A wise man should worship gods after this (i.e. offering oblations). No danger befalls him who worships Gaṇeśa.

65. He should worship the Sun for good health, should worship Viṣṇu for righteousness and salvation, Śiva and Caṇḍikā for the satisfaction of (all) desires.

66. Having worshipped the gods, he should make an offering to Viśvedevāḥ. After that he should perform the rite of making an offering into the fire, perform the (daily) sacrifice and gratify brāhmaṇas.

67-68a. He will then go to heaven of gods full of (all) goodness; he will stop his going and coming (i.e. will have no rebirth), (he will have his) desires (satisfied), will obtain release, happiness and heaven. Therefore, with all care, he should perform the daily rites.

Nārada said:

68b-69a. O father, O omniscient one, why is it that gods do not receive (i.e. are not offered the libations of) water with the hosts of manes as do human beings?

Brahmā said:

69b-70. Formerly, I created water—nectar full of all gods For its protection (I created) demons and Yakṣas having bows. On my words they kill a mane or a god, but not a human being.

71-72a. Beasts, birds and insects are settled (by me) in the mortal world. Gods born as mortals, and also human beings, after having everyday gratified the preceptor, are settled in heaven.

72b-74a. He, who does not bathe eats feces; one who does not mutter his prayers eats pus and blood. By not gratifying the manes daily, a man becomes the killer of his ancestors. Not worshipping the gods also involves the sin equal to that of killing a brāhmaṇa. A sinner who does not offer his (morning or evening) prayer afflicts the Sun also.

Nārada said:

74b-75a. Tell me about the order of the proper discharge of duties of a brāhmaṇa. Tell me also about the entire conduct of other (castes).

Brahmā said:

75b-76. A man gets (long) life due to good conduct; he obtains happiness due to good conduct. He gets heaven and salvation due to good conduct. Good conduct destroys inauspiciousness. A man of bad conduct is condemned in the world.

77-78a. He is always unhappy, suffers from diseases and lives a short life. A man certainly lives in hell due to bad conduct. A man obtains (i.e. goes to) the highest world as a result of good conduct. Listen properly to (the description of good) conduct.

78b-82a. A man should always smear his house with cow-dung. Then he should wash the wooden seat, vessels, slabs (with water). He should cleanse the bell-metal vessels with ash; copper-vessels are cleansed with acid. Vessels made of stone are cleansed with oil. A garment of cotton is brushed with cow's hair. Vessels of gold and silver become clean with water only. Iron-pots are cleansed with fire by burning them. Impure ground is cleansed by digging it, or burning it, or smearing it or washing it or by the rain-fall.

82b-83a. I have formerly said that cleansing of objects made of metals or water-pots or all objects made of stone, are cleansed with ashes and clay.

83b-84. Bed, wife, child, garment, sacred thread, water-pot of one's own only are pure and never of others. One should not eat with only one garment on one's person, nor should one bathe with only one garment on one's body.

85. One should never put on the bathing-garment of anyone else. One should dress one's hair and clean one's teeth in the morning only.

86. One should daily salute one's preceptors (and elderly persons). One should have one's meal with the five parts of one's body, viz. (two) hands, (two) feet, and one's mouth wet, (i.e. one should eat after washing one's hands, feet and mouth).

87. He who eats with these five parts wet (i.e. after having washed them), lives for a hundred years. He should not deliberately disobey the order of his deities, his preceptor, an initiated householder or his teacher.

88-89a. He should not deliberately pass over the shadow of an initiated brāhmaṇa. He should go round, keeping to his right, the herd of cows, a deity, a brāhmaṇa, ghee, honey, a place where four roads meet, and also well known trees.

89b-90a. He should not pass between a cow and a brāhmaṇa, between fire and a brāhmaṇa, between two brāhmaṇas, and between husband and wife. Such a man, though living in heaven, would surely fall.

90b-91a. With remnants of food on his hand (i.e. without washing his hands and mouth after eating) he should not touch fire, a brāhmaṇa, a deity or a preceptor, and also his own head, a tree with flowers or a fig tree; (this is) unrighteous.

91b-92a. Without washing his hands and mouth after eating, he should not look at the three luminous bodies, viz. the sun, the moon, and all the stars.

92b-93a. Without washing his hands and mouth after eating, he should not see a brāhmaṇa, a preceptor, a deity, a king, an excellent ascetic, a contemplative saint doing acts pertaining to gods (i.e. worshipping gods), and a brāhmaṇa preaching dharmas (duties).

93b-94. One should not evacuate one's bowels at the bank of a river or on sea-shore, at the root of a fig tree, in a garden or a flower-garden, and in water.

95. A wise man should never get shaved in the house of a brāhmaṇa, a cow-pen or a charming royal road or on Tuesday.

96. He should not allow dirt to settle on his teeth, on the

nails or mouth (i.e. he should always keep his teeth, nails or mouth clean). He should not besmear his body with oil on Sundays and Tuesdays.

97-98a. He should not play upon a musical instrument by putting it on his own body; he should not occupy the same seat as that of his preceptor. He should not snatch the wealth of a learned brāhmaṇa, or of a deity or of his preceptor also; and also of a king, ascetics, a lame or a blind person, a woman.

98b-99a. He should give passage to a brāhmaṇa, cows and kings, to a sick person, to one who is tormented (i.e. bent down) with a load, to a pregnant woman and to a weak person.

99b-103a. He should not argue with a king or a brāhmaṇa or a physician. He should avoid from a distance a brāhmaṇa, his preceptor's wife, and also a fallen person, a leper, a cāṇḍāla eating cow's flesh; he should also avoid from a distance an expelled person, an ignorant person, a wicked woman, a woman of bad conduct, a woman who causes scandal, one doing bad deeds, a vicious one, one always liking (i.e. indulging in) quarrelling, a wanton woman, one having a redundant limb, a shameless woman, one going astray, one who is a spendthrift, and one of an improper conduct.

103b-104. A wise man should never salute his preceptor's wife during her menstruation. He should not touch her; having touched (i.e. if he touches her) he becomes pure after (having taken) a bath. He should always avoid sporting with her.

105. He should hear the words of his preceptor's wife (i.e. should remain within the distance where he can hear her, but) should not see (i.e. gaze upon) her. He should not at all look at (i.e. gaze upon) or touch the wife of his son or brother or his young daughter, or the wife of his preceptor.

106-107a. He should always avoid chatting with them or knitting of the eyebrows, and also quarrel or shameless talk.

107b-108a. He should never tread upon husk, charcoal, bones or ashes, and also seeds of cotton-plants, remains of an offering to a deity, wood meant for a funeral pile, or the funeral pile of a respectable person.

108b-109a. He should not eat dry, stinking and filthy fish, also the food which is left over by others, or prepared for others.

109b-110a. He should not, even for a moment, move with a bad person. A wise man should not remain under the shadow of a lamp, or under a bibhītaka tree.

110b-111a. He should not, even for a moment, talk with the untouchables, the fallen and the angry. Having done (i.e. if he does) so, he would go to (the hell called) Raurava.

111b-112a. He should not salute his paternal and maternal uncles who are younger than he, but (when they arrive) he should get up, offer a seat to them and stand before them with the palms of his hands joined in reverence.

112b-114a. He who is completely conversant with (good manners) should not salute a person who has smeared himself with oil, or who has not washed his hands etc. after having taken food, or whose clothes are wet, or who is sick or frightened or carrying (a load), or one who is engaged in a sacrifice, or one who is spoiled, or one who is sporting with women or children or one who is having (i.e. carrying) flowers and darbhas.

114b-115. He should not sip water (i.e. should not commence a sacred rite) with his head or ears covered, or while remaining in water, or with the lock of hair on his head untied, or without adoring (i.e. washing) his feet, or facing the the south, or without wearing the sacred thread, without a garment on his body or with the hem of his lower garment untucked.

116-119. He who has only one garment on his body is not purified even after sipping water. First he should touch his mouth with the three middle fingers (i.e. the ring-finger, the middle finger and the forefinger); then he should touch his nose with the thumb and the forefinger; he should (then) touch his eyes with the thumb and the ring finger. He should touch his ears with the little finger and the thumb; he should touch his navel with the thumb only. He should keep the palm of his hand on his heart (i.e. touch his chest with the palm of his hand) and should touch his head with all his fingers. Having touched his arms with the tip of his hand, a man would become pure. Thus sipping the water a man becomes pure.

120-122a. Being free from all sins he obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven eternally. May Prāṇa, pleased by the triangle of the fingers, Vyāna and Apāna by mudrā[1], Samāna by all the fingers, Udāna by fingers except the forefinger, and also Nāga[2], Kūrma, Kṛkara, Devadatta and Dhanañjaya, to whom oblations are offered on the ground, being pleased, delight him (who offers the oblations).

122b-124. He should not sleep with wet feet, nor should he eat with dry feet (i.e. without washing his feet). He should not sleep or eat in the dark. He should not brush his teeth while facing the west or the south. He should not sleep keeping his head towards the north or the west. By sleeping like that his life is cut short, and such a man becomes the killer of a brāhmaṇa (i.e. commits the sin of killing a brāhmaṇa).

125. Therefore he should not sleep like that. Sleeping by keeping one's head towards the east or south is recommended. He (who sleeps) with his face (i.e. head) towards the east enjoys (long) life; he who sleeps with his face (i.e. head) towards the south enjoys fame.

126. One (performing rites) with one's face towards the west enjoys wealth; one with one's face towards the north enjoys glory; a man with his face towards the east gets (long) life; he who faces the south (while performing rites) gets the condition of a dead body (i.e. dies).

127-128a. If he faces the direction of Varuṇa (i.e. the west), he falls ill, and if he faces north he gets (long) life and wealth. Gods eat once only, men eat twice, spirits and demons eat thrice and those who feed on dead bodies eat four times (a day).

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1. Mudrā—Particular positions or intertwinings of fingers; they are twentyfour in number and are commonly practised in religious worship; they are supposed to possess an occult meaning and magical efficacy.

2. Nāga—One of the five airs of human body; it is expelled by eructation.

Kūrma—One of the outer winds of the body, causing the closing of the eyes.

Kṛkara—One of the five vital airs; it assists digestion.

Devadatta—One of the five vital airs; it is exhausted in yawning.

Dhanañjaya—Vital air supposed to nourish the body.

128b-129a. The oblation to gods is fleshless, and that of men consists of fish and flesh. Others, that are undressed, eat foul-smelling, stale and spoiled food.

129b-130a. Those (good men) whether they stay in heaven or in this mortal world, have four (good things): praiseworthy gifts, sweet words, worshipping deities and gratifying brāhmaṇas.

130b-131a. Niggardliness, censuring one's own people, dressing in tattered garments and devotion to mean men, excessive anger, using bitter words—these are the characteristics of a man who has (just) come from a hell.

131b-132a. Words soft like butter, mind tender with compassion—these are the visible signs of those who are born from righteous seeds (i.e. born in righteous families).

132b-133a. Heart void of compassion, and words harsh like (the sound produced by) a saw—these are the visible signs of those who are born from evil seeds (i.e. born in sinful families).

133b-134. A man who recites or listens to (the account of) good conduct etc., gets the fruit of his good conduct etc. and being purified from sins, (lives) in heaven (wherefrom he) does not fall.

CHAPTER FIFTY

The Account of the Five

Bhīṣma said:

1. O brāhmaṇa, tell me if you so desire (about) that which would give a greater religious merit, which is always liked in the world, and which was done by (our) ancient ancestors.

Pulastya said:

2. Once all the brāhmaṇas, the disciples of Vyāsa, having respectfully saluted him, asked him about righteousness as you have asked me (now).

The brāhmaṇas said:

3-5. Tell (us), which are the best of all pious deeds, and most meritorious in the whole world, by doing which men enjoy heaven eternally. Tell (us) about one sacrifice, which is performed without trouble, which is pure, and which could be done (easily) by the mortals of high and low castes. O Brahman-be well pleased towards us and tell us by doing which, ever (deed) a man becomes adorable to the gods in heaven.

Vyāsa said:

6. About this I shall first narrate the Pañcākhyāna (i.e. the account of the five); listen to it first. (Even) having done (i.e. if a man does) one of these five, he would obtain salvation, heaven and glory.

7. Adoration of the parents, adoration of the husband, equality (of mind) towards all people, not behaving treacherously with one's friends, and devotion to Viṣṇu—these are the five great sacrifices.

8. O brāhmaṇas, that righteousness (i.e. religious merit) which a man would earn by adoration of his parents cannot be earned even by performing hundreds of sacrifices or by going on pilgrimages to sacred places on the earth.

9. A father (a mother) is righteousness, a father (a mother) is heaven, a father (a mother) is a great penance; when the father is pleased, all deities are pleased.

10. He whose parents are pleased by his service to them and his virtue, has bathed in the Ganges everyday.

11-12a. A mother is full of (i.e. has the merit of) all sacred places; a father is full of gods (i.e. has all gods unite in him). He who goes round his mother and father keeping them to his right, has (indeed) gone round the earth with the seven islands.

12b-13a. He whose knees, hands and head, when saluting the parents, touch the ground, obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven eternally.

13b-14a. As long as the marks of the dust of their feet have clung to his head (and other) parts (of the body) their son is purified.

14b-15a. The sins, earned (i.e. committed) during hundreds of crores of existences of that son who drinks (i.e. sips) the water of (i.e. flowing from) the lotus-like feet of his parents, perish.

15b-16a. He is blessed in the human world, he is purified from all sins. (Such) a man obtains the status of Vināyaka in (i.e. after) one existence only.

16b-17a. That meanest man who offends his parents by (using bad) words, would live in hell till the submersion of the beings (i.e. till the end of the world).

17b-18a. That meanest son, who eats without honouring his parents, lives in the well of insects and hell till the end of Kalpa (i.e. till the end of the world).

18b-19. Abandoning (i.e. he who abandons) his parent that is sick, old, or distressed for want of livelihood, defective in eyes or ears, he would go to (the hell called) Raurava. He is even born among the lowest the castes, the cāṇḍālas.

20-21a. All his religious merit would be exhausted by not feeding his parents (i.e. if he does not feed his parents). A son, who does not revere his parents, though resorting (i.e. he resorts) to sacred places and gods, does not obtain their fruit (i.e. the fruit of resorting to sacred places and gods), and remains like an insect on the earth.

21b-22a. I (shall) tell you an ancient account. O brāhmaṇas, listen to it carefully, by listening to which (i.e. it), you will not be again deluded on the earth.

22b-24a. Formerly there was a brāhmaṇa, known by the name Narottama. Disregarding his own parents he went to resort to the sacred places. Then the bath-garments of that brāhmaṇa, visiting all the sacred places, everyday got dried in the sky (i.e. they remained without any support in the sky and were dried).

24b-25. Pride entered the mind of that brāhmaṇa: "There is none else like me who has done meritorious deeds and who has great fame." When he said (i.e. he was saying) this, a crane evacuated on his face.

26. Incited by anger, the brāhmaṇa cursed the crane; and the crane, with its body reduced to ashes, fell on the ground.

27. At (i.e. seeing) the murder, fear and great confusion entered (the mind of) the great brāhmaṇa. Then due to the brāhmaṇa's sin, his garment did not go (i.e. remain unsupported) in the sky.

28-29a. He instantly became dejected. Then (a voice) in (i.e. from) the sky said to him: "O brāhmaṇa, go to the cāṇḍāla, Mūka (by name), who is very righteous. There you will know (i.e. learn about) your duty, and his words will be beneficial to you."

29b-32. Hearing the words (that came) from the sky, he went to Mūka's house. He saw him (i.e. Mūka) attending upon his parents, (doing) all (pieces) of work (for them), giving them hot water at the cold time (of the day), (giving them) oil, warmth, tāmbūla,[1] and cotton garment, giving them, as usual, food, sweets and (their) share of milk, causing to be given to them a fragrant garland of jasmine flowers and also other various objects that could be enjoyed.

33. In the hot (part of the day) he always fanned his parents. Having thus always served them, he used to eat.

34-37a. He removed their fatigue and their distress. Due to these acts of righteousness, Viṣṇu lived in his house for a long time. It (i.e. the house) remained in the atmosphere without supporting pillars; and (he saw) the lord of the three worlds, who had taken the form of a brāhmaṇa, who was handsome, like whom there was none else, who was the highest being, who was full of lustre, who was very energetic and who adorned his house. Seeing him, the brāhmaṇa was amazed, and said to Mūka:

The brāhmaṇa said:

37b-38a. (Please) come near me. I desire (to learn) fully about my eternal good in (all) the worlds. (Please) tell it.

Mūka said:

38b-39. I am attending upon my parents; how can I come near you? Having attended upon them I shall do your job. (Please) remain at my door, I shall offer you hospitality.

1. Tāmbūla—The leaf of the piper-betel, which together with the arecanut, catechu, is chewed after meals.

40. When the cāṇḍāla spoke like this, the brāhmaṇa then got angry (and said): "Ignoring me—a brāhmaṇa—is your own work (of attending upon your parents) more important for you?"

Mūka said:

41-43. O brāhmaṇa, why do you in vain become angry? I am not that crane to you (i.e. you cannot take me to be the crane whom you cursed). Your anger is effective on the crane; but not at all here (i.e. in my case). Your garment now does not get dried in the sky and does not remain there (without support). Having heard the words (that came) from the sky you have come to my house. (Please) stay, stay, I shall speak to you; otherwise (please) go to that chaste lady. O best of brāhmaṇas, seeing her your desired object will come about.

44. Then lord Viṣṇu, who had taken the form of a brāhmaṇa moved out of his house, and said to the brāhmaṇa: "I am going to her house."

45. Having thought (for a while), the best of brāhmaṇas walked with him. The brāhmaṇa, being amazed, asked thus to Viṣṇu, who was going (to the house of the chaste lady):

46. "O brāhmaṇa, how is it that you always gladly stay in the cāṇḍāla's house, frequented by women?"

Hari said:

47. Now (i.e. still) your mind has not certainly been purified. Having seen that chaste lady and others, you will certainly know me.

The brāhmaṇa said:

48. O dear one, who is that chaste lady, and what is her great learning? O brāhmaṇa, tell me the reason for which I am going there (with you).

Hari said:

49. (River) Gaṅgā is the best of (all) rivers. A chaste woman is the best among women. A king is the best (man) among men, and Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) is the best of (all) gods.

50. That chaste women, who is always interested in the good of her husband, would emancipate a hundred men from each of the two families (i.e. that of her husband and that of her father).

51. She enjoys heaven till the (final) destruction of beings (i.e. till the final destruction of the world). Or her husband will be a sovereign emperor fallen from heaven.

52-53a. Being his wife she then enjoys happiness. There is no doubt that he and she again and again get the kingdom of heaven. Having obtained a hundred such births, she would ultimately, certainly obtain salvation.

The brāhmaṇa said:

53b-54a. Who can be a chaste woman? What are her characteristics? O best of brāhmaṇas, tell me (that), so that I shall correctly understand it.

Hari said:

54b-55a. She, who will adore her husband with love hundred times more than that of a son, and will look upon her husband with fear hundred times more than that of a son, and will look upon her husband with fear hundred times greater than that with which a king is looked upon, is a chaste woman.

55b-56a. In (performing) duty, she is (like)a maid-servant; in (giving) sexual pleasure she is(like a prostitute); in (serving) a meal she is (like) a mother; she is a counsellor to her husband in his difficulties. Such is a chaste woman.

56b-57a. That woman is loyal to her husband (i.e. is a chaste woman), who never disobeys her husband by speech, body or deeds, and who eats after her husband has eaten.

57b-58a. She always carefully attends upon her husband on every bed that he sleeps upon.

58b-59a. Such a strong-minded woman never entertains jealousy, or lightness of spirit. She is a loyal wife who looks equally upon honour and dishonour.

59b-60a. That wife, who, being a good one, having seen a well-dressed man—her brother, father or son—looks upon him as a stranger, is a faithful wife.

60b-62a. O best of brāhmaṇas, go to that chaste woman, and tell her what your desire is. He has eight wives; that one, of an excellent complexion, endowed with beauty and youth, possessed of compassion, and glorious, remains among them. She is known by the name Śubhā; go to her and ask her (what is) beneficial to you.

62b-63. Saying so, the lord disappeared there only. The brāhmaṇa, seeing his (i.e. the lord's) vanishing like this, got amazed. He, having gone to the good woman's house, inquired about the faithful wife.

64-65. Having heard the words of the guest, the good woman came hastily out of the house, and seeing him there she stood at the door. Seeing her, the best brāhmaṇa said (these) words with joy: "Please tell me what is beneficial to me, as you alone have known it."

The faithful wife (i.e. Śubhā) said:

66. Now I have to attend upon my husband. We (faithful wives) have no freedom. I shall do your job later. Today accept my hospitality.

The brāhmaṇa said:

67. There is no (feeling of) hunger or thirst in my body (i.e. I am neither hungry nor thirsty); nor am I tired today. O auspicious lady, tell me about my desired object; otherwise I shall curse you.

68. Then she too said too him: "O best brāhmaṇa, I am not that crane. O brāhmaṇa, go to that righteous trader; ask him what is beneficial to you."

69. Saying so, that illustrious woman entered her house. There the brāhmaṇa saw that brāhmaṇa as (i.e. whom) he had seen in the house of the cāṇḍāla.

70. Having thought (for some time), and being amazed, the brāhmaṇa went with him. He saw the brāhmaṇa staying there with his mind pleased.

71-72. He too, seeing the brāhmaṇa and the chaste woman said: "She told me the account of what took place in another region. How does the cāṇḍāla know that account? And how

does that chaste woman know it? O sir, therefore I am amazed. What is this great wonder."

Hari spoke:

73-74a. The creators of all know the reason, which made you wonder, because of their great religious merit and righteous conduct. O sage, now tell me what she told you.

The brāhmaṇa said:

74b. She advised me to ask the trader about righteousness.

Hari said:

75. O best sage, come (with me), I am going to him.

While going, he asked Hari: "Where does the merchant live?"

Hari said:

76. Where there is a great crowd of people, and much money is involved in a good sale, there that merchant is (to be found), doing sale and purchase.

77-78. From his door only, people take and give barley (grains), drink, oil, a heap of food, and all stock. O best man, he has never given up truth and told a lie even at the cost of his life; therefore, he is called a righteous trader.

79-80. When he had said like this, he saw the man having dirt and mud (on his body), having pointed and unclean teeth, and selling many liquids. He was talking various words concerning things and money, and was surrounded all round by various men and women.

81. With sweet words he asked him: "How (do you happen to come here)? Tell me the full description of piety. I have come to you (for that)."

The trader said:

82-84. O brāhmaṇa, as long as people stand near me, I shall not find ease (i.e. leisure) till the first watch of the night. To seek advice you (should) go to the mine of piety. There you will know everything about the sin due to the crane's death (brought about by you) and about your garment being dried

in the sky. Go to the good man Adrohaka; and by his advice your desire will be satisfied.

85-86a. Speaking thus to him, the trader did (i.e. carried on) sale and purchase. "O dear one, like that (i.e. as you say), I shall go to the good man—Adrohaka. (But) as advised by the trader, I do not know his residence."

Hari said:

86b. Come on, with you I shall go to his house.

87a. On the way, the brāhmaṇa said to Hari, who was going (with him):

The brāhmaṇa said:

87b-89a. The trader does not take a bath; he does not make offerings to gods and manes; his entire body is smeared with dirt; his garment also is bad (i.e. dirty). How does he know my account that took place in another region? Therefore, I am amazed; O dear one, tell (explain to) me all the cause (of this).

Hari said:

89b-90. He has conquered the three worlds by means of truth and equanimity. Due to that manes and gods with the hosts of sages are pleased. Therefore, the righteous one knows the past, the future and the present.

91. There is no greater (deed of) piety than truth; there is no greater sin than falsehood, for a man who is especially a man of equanimity and is sinless.

92. All the sins of him, whose mind looks equally upon a foe, a friend or a neutral person, perish, and he would be absorbed in Viṣṇu.

93-95a. He who always behaves like this, would emancipate a crore of (the members of) his family. All these, viz. truth, restraint, tranquility, fortitude, firmness, absence of greed, of wonder and of laziness are well-settled in him. Therefore, he, knowing the ways of the world, knows fully what is going on in the world of gods and that of the human beings. Hari dwells in his body.

95b-96a. In truth and straightforwardness there is no equal to him in the world. He is actually composed of righteousness, and he has sustained the world.

The brāhmaṇa said:

96b. Due to your favour I have understood the cause of the trader's (greatness). If you so desire tell me the account of Adrohaka.

Hari said:

97-98. Formerly a prince had a noble wife. She was in the prime of youth, and was like Cupid's wife or like Śacī, the wife of Indra. That beautiful woman was like his own life to him, and her name was Sundarī.

99. All of a sudden the king required him to go for (some) work.

100. He thought to himself: 'Where shall I keep (this my wife) greater (even) than my own life, so that she will certainly be protected (from danger)?' Thinking life this, he suddenly came to his house (i.e. the house of Adrohaka).

101-102. He spoke to him words like that. Hearing them, he was amazed. (He said to the prince:) "I am not your father, or brother, or relative. Nor do I belong to the family of her father or mother. Nor am I your friend. O son, how (then) will you be at ease by her remaining in my house?"

103. In the meanwhile he uttered words befitting (the occasion): "In the world there is none like you who knows Dharma and who has conquered his senses."

104. He said to him who knew everything: "Please do not talk (something that is) censurable. Which man is capable of protecting a wife (i.e. a woman) that fascinates (by her beauty) the three worlds?"

The prince said:

105. Knowing (about your greatness) on the earth, I have approached you. Let her stay in your house. I am going home.

106. When he said like this, he (i.e. Adrohaka) again said: "How can the protection of a woman be effected in this very beautiful city, full of libidinous men?"

107a. He (i.e. the prince) again said to him: "(Please) protect her. I am going."

107b-110a. Due to the difficulty as regards the prescribed course of conduct, the gentleman said to the prince: "I am doing an improper deed. One's own bondage is proper and beneficial. Such a (beautiful) wife will always remain in my house. O lord, tell me what you desire in the case of the protection of that which could not be protected. Do what is agreeable (to you). If you look upon (me) as your deity, she will sleep near me with my wife on my bed; (if you agree), let her stay, otherwise let her go."

110b-111a. Having thought for a moment, the prince again said to him. "This is well said, O dear one; do as you like."

111b-112a. Then he said to his wife: "Do whatever good or bad as he tells you. That will not be your fault, (as you are doing it) at my command."

112b-113. Speaking thus, he left by the order of the king, his father. Then, at night, he (i.e. Adrohaka) did as he had said. The righteous one everyday slept between the two women.

114-116. But in the case of his own wife his mind desired sex; (but) due to her contact (i.e. the contact of the body of the prince's wife), he (did not have such feeling and) looked upon her as (his own) daughter. He looked upon her breasts touching his back as a child would look upon his mother's breasts (i.e. as a child feels on having the touch of his mother's breasts, so he felt when his back was touched by her breasts). Again and again her breasts touched his back.

117. Everyday he looked upon her as a child would look upon his mother. Then his contact with women ceased (he did not have union with his own wife also).

118. Then when half a year (passed) like this, her husband came (back) to the city. He inquired with people about him, about her conduct and about what was said (about them).

119-120a. Some, though young, being extremely amazed, spoke well about Adrohaka. Some said: "You handed her (over to him); he sleeps with her. How can there be satisfaction, when a man and a woman come in contact with each other?"

120b-121. That young man who longs for her would not talk (i.e. say anything even though) he is asked about her. Due to the strength of his religious merit, he heard the rumours (spread) by people. He had an auspicious thought to get himself free from the public scandal.

122-123. He himself brought pieces of wood, and prepared a great fire. O dear, the valorous prince meanwhile came to his house and saw him and the woman (i.e. his own wife)—the woman's face was blooming, and the man was extremely dejected.

124. Knowing the intention of the two, the prince uttered (these) words: "Why do you not talk to me, your friend, who has come after a long time?"

125-126. That righteous trader, without losing his sense, said to the prince: "I think that deed, difficult to do, which I did for your good, has been in vain due to the public scandal. Today I shall enter fire; let men and gods witness (it)."

127-128. Saying so, the magnanimous one entered fire. The fire did not burn the flower on the mass of hair of him, who entered it, nor did the fire burn his body, or garment or hair. All the gods in heaven joyfully said: "Well done, well done !"

129-130a. From all sides showers of flower fell on his head. Various kinds of (spots of) leprosy appeared on the faces of those who had said bad words about the two.

130b-131a. Gods, having come there, gladly dragged him from the fire and worshipped him with flowers; sages also were amazed.

131b-132a. The highly lustrous one was thus honoured by all excellent sages and various men at that time. He too honoured all.

132b-133. He was named Sajjanādrohaka, by gods, demons and men. Earth, purified by the dust-particles of his feet, became full of corn; and gods also said to him (i.e. the prince): "Take (back) your wife.

134. Like him there was no man; nor anyone will be born like him; nor is there at present any man on the earth who is not conquered (i.e. affected) by (sexual) desire and greed.

135. This (sexual) desire is quite unconquerable for all—gods, demons, men, goblins, beasts, birds and insects.

136-137. It is always generated in beings through desire, greed and anger. (Sexual) desire binds (one) to the mundane existence. Very rarely a desireless person (like him) is (to be found). Everything is conquered by him—the fourteen worlds (are conquered by him). Vāsudeva (i.e. Viṣṇu) has gladly remained in his heart.

138. Men, who touch him or see him like this, are free from all sins, become faultless, and obtain inexhaustible heaven (i.e. live in heaven eternally)."

139. Saying so, gods gladly went to heaven in aeroplanes. Men, being pleased, went (home), and the couple also went to their residence.

140. He has a divine eye, and he sees (i.e. could see) gods; he very easily understood what happened in the three worlds.

141. Then on the road, the brāhmaṇa accompanied by Viṣṇu saw him. Gladly he asked (i.e. said to) him: "Tell me the motive of Dharma which is beneficial."

Sajjanādroha said:

142-143. O brāhmaṇa, O you who know Dharma, go to the best man, the devotee of Viṣṇu. Seeing him, your desired object will now come about; you will know as far as the death of the crane and (your) garment being dried up (in the sky) are concerned, and (you will have fulfilled) whatever other desire is (i.e. you have) in your mind.

144-145. Hearing these words, they two came to the devotee of Viṣṇu. He gladly went with that brāhmaṇa, who was Viṣṇu. He saw, standing before him, a man, who was pure, blazing, fully endowed with all (good) characteristics, and shining with his own lustre.

146. That virtuous brāhmaṇa said to the (devotee) who was dear to Hari, and who was engrossed in meditation: "Tell us whatever has taken place; for I have come to you from a far off place."

The devotee of Viṣṇu spoke:

147. The best of gods, the lord of the enemies of demons is pleased with you. O brāhmaṇa, having seen you now, my mind is as it were pleased.

148-149a. You will get incomparable prosperity; your desire will be satisfied. (Only) after having seen god Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), the best among gods, who is residing in my house, your garment will always be dried up in the sky; not otherwise.

149b-150a. Thus addressed by Viṣṇu's devotee, he again spoke to him: "Where does that Viṣṇu stay (in your house)? Favour me and show him to me today."

Viṣṇu's devotee said:

150b-151a. Having entered this beautiful temple, and having seen that lord, you will be free from the bondage of birth (and death) as a result of the eradication of your sins.

151b-152a. Having heard those words of him (i.e. of the devotee), he entered the house and saw that brāhmaṇa (who had accompanied him, and who was none other than) Viṣṇu, resting on a lotus-bed.

152b-154. Having saluted him by (bowing) his head, he joyfully clasped his feet. (He said:) "O lord of gods, be pleased; formerly I did not know you. O lord, I am your servant in this world and the next. O Madhusūdana, I have experienced your favour. If you favour me, I would like to see your (divine) form."

Viṣṇu said:

155-156. O brāhmaṇa, I always have affection for you. I have appeared before the pious ones due to my affection for them. Those who are meritorious obtain heaven eternally by seeing, touching, meditating upon, narrating and talking about (the deity).

157-158. By constant contact all the sins would perish. (Such a man) having enjoyed unending happiness, merges in me. Having bathed (i.e. he who bathes) at holy places, and having seen (i.e. he who sees) me everywhere, having seen (i.e. visited) (i.e. he who visits) the countries of the meritorious people, he dwells in me.

159. O you best among men, he, having always narrated (i.e. he who narrates) a meritorious story in front of the people becomes merged in my body.

160. Having fasted (i.e. by fasting) on my day (i.e. on the day sacred to me), and having listened (i.e. by listening) to my account, and having kept (i.e. by keeping) awake at night, he becomes absorbed in me.

161. He who makes great sound by means of dancing, songs and musical instruments, and who recollects my name, becomes absorbed in me, O greatest brāhmaṇa.

162. My devotee is a holy place. He (i.e. Viṣṇu) remained in the sky and spoke to you to destroy the sin which you committed when you killed the crane:

163-166. "Go to the great-souled Mūka, the excellent holy place for the meritorious. O dear, by seeing Mūka, all great men are seen. Having seen and talked to them, and with affection for my contact, you have come to my house. That one, knowing piety, whose sin perishes after a thousand crores of births, sees me; and by that (i.e. by seeing me) he is pleased. O child, O innocent one, you saw (i.e. you could see) me because of my favour only; therefore take (from me) a boon which you have in your mind."

The brāhmaṇa said:

167. O lord, let our minds be fixed on you by all means. O lord of all the worlds, let us not like anything else except you.

Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu) said:

168-169. O innocent one, since such a thought always rises in your mind, therefore you will obtain in my body enjoyments like me (i.e. as I have); but O innocent one, your parents have not received worship from you. Having worshipped your parents, you will then come to (i.e. become one with) my body.

170. Due to the air of their sighs, and due to their great anger your penance again (and again) perishes; therefore, O brāhmaṇa, worship them daily.

171. I, or Brahmā or Śaṅkara cannot stop the (son from falling into) hell, on whom the anger of the parents falls (i.e. with whom the parents are angry).

172. Therefore, go to your parents, and carefully worship them. Then by their favour only, you (will) go to my position.

173. When (Viṣṇu) said this, the best brāhmaṇa said to the lord of the world: "O lord, O Acyuta, if you are pleased with me, (please) show me your (original) form."

174-175. Then the powerful Brahmaṇya (i.e. Viṣṇu), with his heart pleased, and out of love for the brāhmaṇa, showed his own form to the brāhmaṇa. The brāhmaṇa, saluting, (by prostrating himself) like a staff on the ground, Acyuta, the lord, holding a conch, a disc, a mace, a lotus, the cause of the entire world, filling the world with lustre, spoke to him again:

176-178. "Today my life is fruitful; today my eyes have become auspicious; today my hands are praiseworthy; O lord of the world, today I am blessed. Today my ancestors will go to the eternal world of Brahmā. O Janārdana, by your favour my relatives will be delighted today. Now all my desires have been fulfilled.

179. But (still) O lord, I wonder how the wise ones like Mūka very much know my account (i.e. what happened to me) that took place in another country.

180-181. A very handsome brāhmaṇa lived in the interior of his house; also in the house of the chaste lady, and above the head of the merchant, and also you lived in the Viṣṇu-temple of Mitrādrohaka. O brāhmaṇa, (please) explain it by (showing) favour to me."

The lord spoke:

182-184a. Mūka was always devoted to his parents; the chaste lady was always good; the trader spoke the truth and he was equal to all people; Adroha conquered his greed and desire; the Vaiṣṇava is said to be my devotee. I am pleased with the virtues of these (persons), (therefore) I gladly stay in their houses with Sarasvatī and Lakṣmī, O best brāhmaṇa.

The brāhmaṇa said:

184b-185. Those who know the ways of the world say (i.e. have said) in the smṛtis, purāṇas, sacred texts and Vedas that men become very sinful due to their contact with great sinners; how (then) do you stay in (their) houses?

The lord said:

186. Mūka is the doer of (i.e. does) all good things in the world. Even though he follows the livelihood of a cāṇḍāla, gods know him to be a brāhmaṇa.

187. As far as meritorious deeds are concerned, there is none like Mūka in (all) the worlds. He is always devoted to his parents. He has conquered the three worlds.

188. I, along with the hosts of gods, am pleased with his devotion to them (i.e. his parents). I remain in his house in the form of a brāhmaṇa, and (I also remain) in the sky.

189-190. O you who know Dharma, I always remain in the house of the chaste lady, in the residence of the merchant, in the abode of Adrohaka, and also in the house of the devotee of Viṣṇu; even for a short while, I do not forsake (them). Those other sinful people do not always see me.

191-192. Because of your religious merit and my favour, you have seen me. The cāṇḍāla, devoted to his parents, attained godhead. Therefore I gladly stay with him in his house. O son of a brāhmaṇa, I again and again talk to him.

193. I, the creator, live in his mind alone. He knows your account, so also the chaste lady and others.

194. I shall tell you their account in due order. Listen to it. Listening to it a mortal is completely free from the bondage of birth (and death).

195. There is no holier place than the father and the mother even among the gods of gods. He, who has worshipped his parents, is the best man.

196. The fruit of (obeying) the parents' order is the same as that of (obeying) the order of a deity or a preceptor. By adoring the parents a man goes to heaven; by harming (them) he goes to the Raurava (hell).

197. Such a man stays in my heart; I too remain in his heart. There is no difference between us. He is equal to me here (i.e. in this world) and in the next world.

198-199. In my charming city, in front of me, he enjoys inexhaustible enjoyments along with his relatives, and in the end dwells in me. Therefore, O best man, that Mūka knows the news in the three worlds. Why then should you be thus amazed?

The brāhmaṇa spoke:

200. What should be done, O lord of the world, if a man even after having realised the importance of worship to parents, does not do it, through delusion or ignorance?

The lord said:

201. He, who has shown devotion to (i.e. worshipped) his parents, for a day, or a month, or a fortnight, or half a fortnight or for a year, would go to my abode.

202. Having rendered his mind ill (i.e. if he worships the parents with evil thoughts in his mind) he would certainly go to hell. The worship of parents done earlier would be as good as not done (i.e. would be rendered useless).

203-204a. A man would get the fruit of devotion to (i.e. worship of) parents by offering a bull. Whatever, vegeterian or non-vegetarian food, garments or products of cows, is given to one's kinsmen has a lakhfold fruit.

204b-205. That intelligent son who has offered a śrāddha with all his wealth, remembers his (previous) births, and would obtain the fruit of the devotion to (i.e. worship of) his parents. In all the three worlds there is no greater sacrifice than a śrāddha.

206. Whatever is given here (i.e. at a śrāddha) obtains (i.e. brings) inexhaustible (fruit). Know that whatever is offered to others is myriad (times effective, while) what is offered to the kinsmen, is a lakh times (effective).

207-210. Offering a piṇḍa is a crore times effective; offering it to a brāhmaṇa is said to have an endless (fruit). He, who offers a piṇḍa of food into the water of the Ganges, at Gayā, at Prayāga, at Puṣkara, at Vārāṇasī, into the Siddhakuṇḍa, or at the confluence of the Ganges and the ocean, will certainly obtain salvation; and his parents, as the fruit of their existence, obtain eternal heaven (i.e. live in heaven eternally). He, who especially offers water mixed with sesamum into the Ganges, finds the way to salvation; then how much more (would he get) by offering a piṇḍa? A śrāddha offered on the bank of a river is a thousandfold effective (while the one offered) at the bank of a big river is a myriad times more effective.

211-213. Due to its contact with a common fruit a śrāddha would be a hundred times effective. He who offers a śrāddha on the new moon day, on the anniversary day of a Yuga[1], or either on the day of the lunar or the solar eclipse, gets an eternal world (i.e. lives eternally in a world like heaven). His parents also are pleased for a myriad years, after having given their son a blessing and an unending happiness. Therefore a son should gladly perform the pārvaṇa[2] (śrāddha) on a parvan day.

214. Performing this sacrifice in honour of the parents, he is free from the bondage of birth (and death). That śrāddha which is offered everyday is called nitya-śrāddha.

215-217a. He who gets it performed with faith gets an eternal world (i.e. lives eternally in a world like heaven). Also having performed a kāmya (i.e. optional) śrāddha according to the proper rite in the dark half of the month, he gets his desire or whatever he entertains in his mind satisfied. In the fifth fortnight, making the day of the full moon of Āṣāḍha[3] as the limit, he should perform a śrāddha, (not considering) whether the Sun has gone to the Virgo.

217b-218a. Those sixteen days, when the Sun has gone to the Virgo, are comparable with sacrifices accomplished with (the payment of) excellent fees.

218b. This optional śrāddha is very meritorious—auspiciousness comes from it.

219. In the absence (of having performed a śrāddha when the Sun is in Virgo), he should perform it in the dark half of the month or the like when the Sun is in Libra. When the new moon day occurs when the Sun is in Scorpio, the manes become disappointed.

220. After having given a very terrible curse, they again go to their own abodes. It is said that as a result of the curse of the manes, the son loses everything.

221-222a. Men get, in existence after existence, all these, viz. wealth, sons, glory, desired things, things that are likedand

1. Yugādyā—See note on 49.41.

2. Pārvaṇa—The general ceremony of offering oblations to all the manes at a parvan (for parvan, see note on 46.109).

3. Āṣāḍhi—Day of full moon in the month of Āṣāḍha.

(long life), as a result of a boon from the parents. So he should not forsake a mane.

222b-223a. A brāhmaṇa, having performed (i.e. who performs) the Nāndīmukha śrāddha[1] at the commencement of a marriage (-rite), a vow or a sacrifice, gets inexhaustible merit, and his family increases.

223b-224a. That man who behaves contrary to this, goes to hell. His family perishes, and he is unhappy as long as he lives.

224b-225. Then (i.e. at the time of marriage-rite etc.) he should first worship Gaṇeśa, Śambhu's son. Then he should worship the sixteen Mātṛs and after that the host of manes, beginning with the great grandfather, at the time of all Nāndīmukha śrāddhas.

226. The wise one should place (i.e. seat) all the brāhmaṇas facing the east. To them he should utter the words 'salutation (to you)'; on other occasions, he should employ the utterance 'svadhā'.

227. A man by offering water with piṇḍas (to the manes) at the time of the solar eclipse gets heaven (i.e. lives in heaven) eternally, and it nourishes the manes.

228. There (i.e. at the time of solar eclipse) a man should take a bath. A man, who does not offer water with piṇḍas to his manes according to his capacity, becomes a cāṇḍāla.

229. When the Moon is eclipsed by Rāhu (i.e. at the time of the lunar eclipse), all the presents made are equal to the present of land; all brāhmaṇas are like Vyāsa; all water is like (that of) the Ganges.

230. (A present made at the time) of the lunar eclipse, is said to be a lakh times effective, and that made at the time of the solar eclipse is ten lakh times effective. (The present made at the time) of the lunar eclipse into the water of the Ganges is a crore times effective; and (that made at the time) of the solar eclipse (into the water of the Ganges) is ten crores times effective.

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1. Nāndīmukha—A śrāddha ceremony performed in memory of the manes, preliminary to any festive occasion such as marriage etc.

231. The fruit of a dip in the Ganges when the Moon is eclipsed by Rāhu (i.e. at the time of the lunar eclipse) is the same as the fruit of a good gift of a lakh of cows.

232. He who plunges into (i.e. bathes in) the Ganges at the time of the lunar or the solar eclipse, has (in fact) taken bath at all holy places; why does he (i.e. should he) roam over the earth?

233-234. The eclipse of the Sun on a Sunday or of the Moon on a Monday is called Cūḍāmaṇi; a bath on this occasion is said (to give) unending fruit. That man, who having fasted on these occasions, gives water with piṇḍas at an ancient holy place, is settled in the Satyaloka.

The brāhmaṇa said:

235-236. You have said that a śrāddha offered to a mane is a great sacrifice. O father, what should a son do in old age? O god, please tell me carefully by doing what a wise son obtains the highest good in many existences (i.e. existence after existence).

The lord said:

237. In youth the father is said to be the son, in old age the son is said to be the father due to being required to be looked after, and not on account of his worshipping (his father).

238. A man should worship his father like a deity, and should love him like a son; he should not, even mentally, disobey his words.

239. That son, who gives succor to his sick father, gets eternal heaven (i.e. lives eternally in heaven), and is always honoured by gods.

240. The son, who sees the signs of death of a dying father, and worships him, would be equal to gods.

241. Listen to the characteristics—which I shall (now) describe—of the wise son, who gives (i.e. takes) his father (to) heaven by fasting only.

242. The merit of fasting would be equal to that of thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya-sacrifices; the virtue (of the father and the son) is like that of (bathing) at a crore of holy places.

243. The best man, who dies in the water of the Ganges, would never drink (again) the milk of his mother (i.e. would not be reborn) and would get salvation.

244. He, who happens to cast his life at Vārāṇasī, enjoys the desired fruit, and lives in my body.

245. The man who dies at the (seven sacred places along the bank of) Brahmaputrā, follows the same (good) course as is followed by contemplating sages who practise perpetual celibacy.

246. He, who especially dies after having duly resorted to the north bank of Lohita, becomes equal to me.

247. O best brāhmaṇa, he who dies at the holy place called Urvaśīkeśa (on the bank) of the same Brahmaputrā, and is born (again), obtains everything, and is not tainted with sins.

248. The body of him, who dies in the house, is bound as long as the knot (of falsehood) remains in the house.

249. Every year one by one they are dropped. There is no escape from the bondage, even when the relatives and sons are watching.

250. He, who dies on a mountain, in a jungle or an inaccessible place where there is no water, gets a bad condition after death, and is again born as an insect.

251. He, whose funeral rites take place the next day, lives in (the hell called) Kumbhīpāka, for sixty thousand years.

252. He, who, without washing his hands or cleansing his mouth after eating food, touches an untouchable, or one who is fallen, lives, after death, in hell for a long time, and is born among the Mlecchas.

253. And he is born in many species of beings like the insects. Therefore he should not think that merit or sin has long lasting effect.

254. He obtains that (good) condition which men i.e. all mortals obtain after death as a result of their religious merit and meritorious deeds.

255. He, who, recollecting the names of Viṣṇu, dies at a sacred place, is purified from his sin, goes to heaven and is not tainted with sins.

256. A strong son, who carries the dead body of his father, undoubtedly gets the fruit of a horse-sacrifice.

257. A son should put fire into the father's mouth first (when the dead body is put) on the funeral pile, according to the rite purified by sacred hymns; then he should cremate him.

258. (He should say:) 'I cremate all the limbs of him; I cremate him who is possessed of greed and delusion, and who is covered with (i.e. full of) sin and merit. Let him go to divine worlds.'

259. Even the son should, after having cremated (the father's dead body), pass over to the collection of the ashes (of the burnt corpse). When the tenth day comes he should abandon wet garment.

260. Having cut off the red garment, he should throw it into fire or water. Then the wise man should perform the śrāddha on the eleventh day.

261-262. For the nourishment of the dead person's body he should feed one brāhmaṇa. He should give presents duly, and also a garment, a seat and sandals; (or should give) land etc. or an elephant or a horse etc. equal to (the price of) all the material. He should also present a black cow for getting free from all sins.

263. A śrāddha offered on the fourth day, after three fortnights, six months and a year and twelve monthly śrāddhas—these are the sixteen śrāddhas.

264. He who does not perform these with faith and according to his capacity, certainly becomes a goblin even if hundreds of śrāddhas are offered (in his honour).

265. He should for one year give a water-jar, or food with flesh—eternal and perishable—and in their absence should pass a month suffering patiently.

266. The wise, best brāhmaṇa, should, when a year has passed, perform a sapiṇḍīkaraṇa[1] śrāddha, according to the

1. Sapiṇḍa—A kinsman connected by the offering of the funeral rice-ball to the manes of the relatives upto the seventh generation (see Manu 5-60).

procedure (followed) at the pārvaṇa śrāddha.

267. The period of defilement caused by the death of one's father is one year; caused by the death of one's mother is six months only; and the period of defilement caused by the death of one's wife is three months; and half of it (is the period of defilement caused by the death) of one's son or brother.

268. The defilement caused by the death of sapiṇḍas lasts as long as he (i.e. the dead body) remains in the house. O son, I am (now) telling you what is prohibited for a son; listen.

269-270. He should observe celibacy, should have good conduct, and should not at all approach his wife. The time after seven ghaṭikās and prior to nine ghaṭikās should be known as Kutapa.[1] Whatever is given to the manes during this period is inexhaustible. Three are pure at a śrāddha: daughter's son, Kutapa and sesamum.

271-273a. Three are recommended here (i.e. at a śrāddha): truth, absence of anger and absence of haste. After having performed a śrāddha, he should avoid evening prayer, others' food, having a meal again (i.e. at night), copulation, giving and accepting gifts. A wise man should avoid a hundred prohibited things after having performed a śrāddha. Then only it (i.e. śrāddha) is properly performed (i.e. has its effect); this is what Brahmā himself has said.

273b-274. O son, listen to the old account of many (persons which) I am telling (now). They performed a śrāddha after having killed their preceptor's cow and (yet) went to heaven. By merely narrating their account, a śrāddha becomes inexhaustible (i.e. gives an inexhaustible fruit).

275-277a. The seven brāhmaṇa disciples of Vasiṣṭha, who practised good vows, desired and took, when the śrāddha of their manes approached, the dear sacrificial cow of their pre-

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Sapiṇḍikaraṇa—The performance of a particular śrāddha in honour of the deceased sapiṇḍas. It is performed at the end of one full year after the death of a relative, but now usually performed on the twelfth day after death as part of the funeral obsequies.

1. Kutapa—The eighth muhūrta or portion from the last daṇḍa of the second watch to the first of the third or about noon; an eligible time for the performance of śrāddhas.

ceptor; gladly the seven brothers took her home for her products; killing that cow at a sacrifice, they reflected, and, gave the flesh of the cow to a brāhmaṇa and served the rest to brāhmaṇas.

277b-278a. After having finished the rites in honour of the manes, those brāhmaṇas, having taken the calf with them, gave it to their preceptor (and said to him): "A tiger ate up the cow."

278b-279a. Then he (i.e. the teacher) knowing by the power of his penance the reason of their (having told a lie), cursed his disciples: "You will become cāṇḍāla."

279b-281a. The brāhmaṇas remained there trembling and with the palms of their hands joined. They, who gave cow's flesh at a rite in honour of manes, and who thus had done thousands of prohibited things and great sins at the rites in honour of manes, were purified from the sins and went to heaven, O sinless one.

281b-282a. (They said to Vasiṣṭha:) "O lord, we have heard manifold things of the past. O you well-versed in religion, (please) forgive us and end the curse."

Vaisiṣṭha said:

282b-283. The curse is in proportion to your sin, and not by the consideration of dharma. Being born in castes like a cāṇḍāla, you will remember your former account. Your knowledge will not lapse, and your (power of) recollection also will not lapse.

284-285a. Having crossed the sinful birth, you will go to (i.e. attain) liberation. Then having cast their life, the brāhmaṇas, as a result of their preceptor's curse, were born as cāṇḍālas, but (still) were endowed with knowledge.

285b-286. However, remembering that former existence (of a brāhmaṇa), they did not drink the milk (i.e. did not suck their mothers' breasts). They died, and were born as deer; again they (died and) were born as cakravākas in a forest. Then they were born as white swans at the holy place of Mānasa and then as brāhmaṇas.

287-288a. Then, the magnanimous ones, being on the point

of death, died due to dejection. At that time there was a great king known as Dharmaketu. With his wives and paraphernalia he went to that holy place to bathe (there).

288b-289a. Then three swans, thinking, through delusion, of kingdom, enjoyment, women and food, departed to another world (i.e. died).

289b-290a. Others, thinking 'knowing Veda and Vedāṅgas we shall attain salvation', departed to another world (i.e. died).

290b-291. Three of them became kings and four excellent brāhmaṇas. At Kurukṣetra, they knew, by the power of their penance, Vedas and Vedāṅgas and the news from this and the other world.

292. Three of them were born in a royal family as kings deluded with conceit. Due to the lapse of their knowledge, they neither knew anything about the next world, nor about what was beneficial or otherwise to them.

293. Those brāhmaṇas, prompted by uncertainty, called their servant, and said to him: "Seeing our poverty go to the kings and quickly give them (this) letter."

294-295. (The letter read as:) "Those seven hunters in the Daśārṇa country were born as deer on the Kālañjara mountain. (They were again born) as Cakravāka in the Śaradvīpa, (and then) as swans in the Mānasa lake. They too are born as brāhmaṇas, who have mastered the Vedas, in Kurukṣetra. They are going on a long journey; why are you depressed?"

296. The servant took the letter, and showed it to the kings. The kings, having seen (i.e. read) the letter, abandoned their kingdom, and went to the brāhmaṇas.

297. Hearing their words (i.e. voice) the brāhmaṇas whose wealth was penance, went to them; and soon with them they went to (i.e. obtained) salvation.

298. Inexhaustible food and drink wait upon (i.e. are ready for) the manes of him, who on the occasion of a śrāddha, listens to this (account of) the seven hunters etc.

The brāhmaṇa said:

299. O Keśava, how can the rite (in honour) of the manes

of a poor brāhmaṇa, who is an ascetic, or who dwells in a forest or who is a householder, be accomplished?

The lord said:

300. If he performs the rites (in honour) of the manes by obtaining grass and wood and by asking for a cowrie, it (the fruit) is a lakhfold more.

301. All the sins of that man who performs the śrāddha (in honour) of his manes by not doing a hundred prohibited things, perish; and he goes to heaven.

302. A man, who in the absence of all (the requisite things for a śrāddha) gives, on the death-anniversary of his dead ancestor, grass to a cow, obtains the fruit of offering piṇḍas and more also.

303. Formerly, in the Vairāṭa country, an extremely wretched man wept. He wept because of having nothing with him when the death anniversary of his dead ancestor had approached.

304-305. Having wept for a pretty long time, he asked a wise brāhmaṇa: "O brāhmaṇa, today is the death anniversary of my deceased ancestor. Which (thing) being done would be beneficial? O you best among those who know the Vedas, I do not have wealth as much as (even) a cowrie. Advise me in such a way that I shall remain on the proper course of conduct."

The brāhmaṇa said:

306. O son, quickly go now at this time called Kutapa. Quickly give grass directed towards your manes, to a cow.

307. Then according to his advice, he took a bundle of grass, and became glad after having given it to a cow to nourish his dead ancestors.

308. By the power of this virtuous act he went to the abode of gods; and having enjoyed (in) the heaven, was (again) born in the family of the rich.

309. That wealthy man, due to his former merit, gave a piṇḍa in honour of his father, at the rite in honour of the dead ancestors, with (i.e. by spending) all his belongings and wealth.

310-311. Then after repeated performances (like this) for (i.e. during) one existence, he went to Viṣṇu's abode. Having enjoyed unending happiness there, he became (i.e. was born as) a sovereign emperor; since there is no greater merit than (what is obtained) from a rite in honour of the dead ancestors, therefore a man, free from jealousy, should carefully perform it according to his capacity.

312-313. A man who first reads this series of religious account of (various) persons, obtains the opportunity of bathing in the Ganges in every world. All the heap of sins committed in existence after existence perishes after having recited or read (this account even) once.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

The Story of a Faithful Wife

Nārottama said:

1. Of the thirty-three gods and others the lord is the author. He is the one who snatches them away, who protects them, is their father and originator.

2. Whatever fatigue we give to our speech (i.e. however hard we try to describe), we are not fit to describe him. Yet I have a kind of curiosity or thirst and hunger.

3-4a. The dear one should speak when something about what is done is asked. O lord, how does the loyal, chaste wife know the past? (Please) tell me fully as to what her power was.

The lord spoke:

4b-5a. O dear, I have told you (all this) before; yet O brāhmaṇa, you again have curiosity (to hear it). I shall tell you all that you have in your mind (to know).

5b-6a. A devoted, faithful, loyal wife is the (very) life of her husband. She is adorable even for gods and for sages expounding the Vedas.

6b-7a. There will be no great secrecy in honouring that woman who is the wife of a husband and who is regarded as most adorable in the world.

7b-8. O dear, formerly there was a very beautiful city in Madhyadeśa. In it (lived) a brāhmaṇa, chaste lady, named Sevyā. Due to the adverse effect of his former deeds, her husband became a leper (i.e. contracted leprosy).

9. She was always engaged in serving her husband with (pus) trickling from his wounds. She very much satisfied whatever desire of him she could satisfy according to her capacity.

10-11. She would always worship him like a deity, and free from jealousy would love him. Once, he saw an extremely beautiful prostitute, who was going along the road, and through folly became overpowered by the passion of love. Having heaved a very deep sigh, he became dejected.

12-14a. Hearing it, the good lady came out of her house and asked her husband: O lord, whence are you dejected? O lord, whence this (deep) sigh? Tell me what is dear to you—that should be or should not be done. I shall do whatever is dear to you; you alone are my dear lord. Tell me what you desire, O lord, I shall accomplish it according to my capacity."

14b-16a. When she had said this, he said to her: "O dear one, why do you talk in vain? Neither you nor I am able (to get what I want). It is not proper to talk fruitlessly. You are not entitled to asking (i.e. please do not ask) since my desire through folly, due to longing after the beautiful woman, is like that of a dwarf, who, remaining on the ground, desires (to pluck) the fruit of a tall tree. I am talking something that is difficult to accomplish for a couple and that is irrelevant."

The faithful wife said:

16b-19a. I shall be able to accomplish the object (only) after knowing what is going on in your mind. O lord, give me an order as to what is to be done. When I shall be able to accomplish your object difficult to accomplish, then only I will have great good in this and in the next world.

19b. Thus addressed, he was extremely pleased, and said these words.

20-21a. "It is certain that a person asks for a sinful thing because of his practice of doing such things. My mind is burning after having seen that perfectly beautiful prostitute of wholly spotless limbs going on this way.

21b-23a. If, through your favour, I get that one who is in the prime of youth, then my existence will be fruitful; O good lady, do what is good to me. If that beautiful woman does not come to me, who am a leper, a distressed person, stinking with the odour of pus, having fresh wounds, then it is proper for me to die."

23b-24a. Having heard the words uttered by him, the good lady said: "O lord, I shall do (everything) according to my capacity; be steady."

24b-26. Having mentally reflected, she, at the end of night, in the early morning, took cowdung and a broom, and gladly went. Having reached the prostitute's house, and having cleansed the courtyard she gladly gave (i.e. besmeared with) cowdung to the street and the wall(s). She hurriedly returned home through the fear of being seen by people.

27-29a. In this manner the good lady acted for three days. Then the prostitute also asked her male and female servants: "Who has done (these) good things in the courtyard? Though I did not tell (i.e. order anyone), who has decorated the streets, quadrangles and walls with lovely (drawings etc.)?"

29b-30a. They, having consulted one another, replied to the prostitute: "O good lady, we have not done this work; we have not done the cleansing."

30b-31a. She was amazed and (kept on) thinking. When the night was over, she saw her (i.e. the chaste wife) having again come over there.

31b-34a. Having seen that great good lady—a loyal wife—she clasped her feet, and said: "(Please) forgive me. O you loyal wife, you are as it were darting for the destruction of these—viz. (my) life, body, wealth, glory, (my) aims and (my) fame. O good lady, whatever you ask for—viz. gold, gems, jewels or garments or any other desired object—I shall certainly always give it to you."

34b-35. Then the good lady said to her: "I have nothing to do with wealth. I have some other piece of work (to be done) by

you. I shall tell it if you will do it. Then I will have delight in my heart, (thinking) 'Now you have done everything.' "

The prostitute said:

36. O you loyal wife, I shall truly (i.e. surely) do (what you tell me); (please) speak out quickly. O mother, protect me, quickly tell me my mission.

37. Due to bashfulness she spoke out humble words that were dear to her (i.e. the chaste lady); the prostitute, having thought for a while, said with patience:

38. "I shall be very unhappy in the company of the leper, stinking with pus. I shall do it (i.e. give him company) for a day, if he comes to my house."

The faithful wife said:

39. O beautiful lady, tonight I shall come to your house, and will take (back) to my house, my husband, who will have enjoyed what he wants to enjoy.

The prostitute said:

40-41. O loyal wife, O illustrious lady, quickly go (back) to your house; let your husband come to my house at midnight. I have many lovers—kings and (others) like them. One of them always stays in my house.

42. Today I shall keep the house free (from) them for your fear (i.e. lest you may fear). Let your husband come, and having met me, let him go (back).

43-44. Having heard this, that good lady went home, and informed her husband: "O lord your mission (i.e. the mission you entrusted to me) is successful. She tells you to go to her house tonight. She has many masters; (so) there is no time (i.e. opportunity) for you (i.e. she cannot remain in your company for a long time)."

The brāhmaṇa said:

45. How shall I go to her house? I cannot walk. Knowing this how can I have patience? How can the work to be done be accomplished?

The faithful wife said:

46. Putting you on my back I shall take you to her house; and after (your) work is done, I shall bring you back along the same path.

The brāhmaṇa said:

47. O auspicious one, by your doing this, all I want will be done, since what you have done is unbearable for even ladies.

48-49. In the beautiful city, there was always ample wealth in the house of a rich man. The citizens and the king heard that at that time (i.e. during that night) it was stolen. Hearing about it the king called all the officers keeping watch at night, and angrily said to them: "If you desire to live, then today hand over the thief to me."

50. Receiving the king's order, they, agitated with the desire to capture the thief, forcibly arrested the thief by the king's order.

51-52. Māṇḍavya, the excellent sage, having great lustre and resembling fire, best among the contemplating sages, remained in abstract meditation at the root of a tree in a dense forest in the outskirts of the city. With wind having entered the tubular organ[1] of his body, he did not cognise anything.

53. Seeing that great sage, resembling Brahman, and remaining (in abstract meditation), the wicked ones (said:) "This is a thief; the rogue, of a wonderful form, lives in the forest."

54. Saying so the sinful ones bound the best sage. He did not say (anything to) nor did he see those very terrible men.

55. Then the king said this: "I have (now) secured the thief. On the path at the gate in the vicinity (of the city) inflict a severe punishment on him."

56. The sage Māṇḍavya was fixed to the stake there on the road. They inserted the stake into the anus upto (i.e. the stake went through his body) the head.

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1 Nāḍī—tubular organ of the body.

57. Due to his having restrained his senses, he, whose body was pierced through at the stake, was not conscious of the pain. Others also punished him as they liked.

58. In the meanwhile, the loyal wife took her husband on her back and went (to the prostitute's house) in the pitchy darkness.

59. Due to the contact of the leper, the stinking odour came (to the sage). Due to the contact of the leper, the abstract meditation of the sage was verily disturbed.

Māṇḍavya spoke:

60. May he, who caused me affliction, causing pain to my body, be consumed to ashes before the sun rises.

61. He, who was thus addressed by Māṇḍavya, fell on the ground. Then the loyal wife said: "Certainly the sun[1] shall not rise."

62. Then taking him to the house, for three days she remained in the house, and supported her husband lying on a beautiful bed.

63-64. Having cursed him (i.e. the chaste lady's husband), the sage went to the desired country. When, for three days the sun did not rise, gods, seeing all the three worlds including the mobile and the immobile distressed, led by Indra, went to the grandsire.

65. The gods reported the matter to the Lotus-born (god Brahmā). "We do not know the cause (of this). You (please) do whatever is proper for us."

Brahmā said:

66. Due to what has happened to the chaste lady and to sage Māṇḍavya, the sun is not rising.

67. O Brāhmaṇa, then the gods led by Brahmā, quickly went to the earth, to the leper, in the aeroplanes.

68. Due to the brightness of the aeroplanes, and the rays of (i.e. shooting from the bodies of) the sages, in the interior of the houses and not elsewhere it appeared as it were a hundred suns (had arisen).

1. Bradhna=the sun. The words Sūra (in v. 69) and Khaga (in v. 76) have the same meaning.

69. "Oh I am doomed ! How is it that the sun has come to (i.e. his rays have reached) my house?" She saw the gods with the aeroplanes resembling swans.

70-71. In the meanwhile, Brahmā said to that loyal wife: "How do you like it since all gods, brāhmaṇas and cows (are about to) die? O mother, give up your anger towards sun-rise."

The faithful wife said:

72-73. Surpassing all people my husband alone is my lord; but due to the curse of the sage he will die when the sun rises; for this reason only I cursed the sun. (I have not done so) through anger, delusion, greed, or desire of carnal gratification or hatred.

Brahmā said:

74. There will be good to the three worlds by the death of one. Thereby (i.e. by saving the worlds), O mother, you will earn more merit.

75. The chaste lady there said to Brahmā in front of the gods: "I do not really like any good by abandoning my husband."

Brahmā said:

76-78. O good lady, when the sun rises, and your husband is consumed to ashes and when the three worlds are composed, I shall do good to you. From the ashes a man, resembling the god of love in lustre, will be born. He, your husband, will be endowed with all qualities and you will always be like Rati. Your couple will be honoured in heaven, as Hari is worshipped by gods and as Lakṣmī is honoured (by them). Therefore (please) do as I tell you.

The faithful wife said:

79. O Brahman, which worlds shall I, a widow on the death of my husband condemned by people, and with my customary practices foiled and having become unrighteous, go to?

Brahmā said:

80. So you are not at fault. Your husband is not dead yet. Due to our words the leper will become (handsome like) the god of love.

81. When the creator was speaking like this, she having reflected for a moment, said: "All right." Then the sun rose.

82-83. Afflicted by the sage's curse he was turned into ashes. From the ashes the brāhmaṇa, oppressed by (passion of) love, came out. Having seen him, all the citizens were amazed, the hosts of gods were delighted, and the people became more composed.

84. That good lady went to heaven along with her husband in an aeroplane that was like the sun in colour and that had come from heaven.

85. Thus, since the chaste lady is auspicious and like me, therefore she knows the account of the past, future and present.

86. The sin of him, committed in existence after existence, who recites to others this excellent, meritorious account, perishes.

87. He obtains inexhaustible heaven (i.e. lives eternally in heaven), and is united with gods. O good brāhmaṇa, a brāhmaṇa gets (mastery over) the Veda in every existence.

88. He who listens to it (just) once, becomes purified, and is freed from the stream of sins. He obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven, and fallen from heaven, becomes a rich man.

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

On Women's Conduct

The brāhmaṇa said:

1. O Viṣṇu, how was there (i.e. for what reason was there) a wound of the stake on the body of Māṇḍavya (i.e. why was he fixed on the stake)? How (i.e. for what reason) leprosy spread on the body of the husband of the loyal wife?

Hari said:

2. As a child, Māṇḍavya inadvertently put (i.e. inserted) a straw into the abdomen of a cricket, and abandoned her through folly.

3. That brāhmaṇa, who was ignorant of dharma, due to that blemish, experienced a poignant pain day and night.

4. But being engaged in abstract meditation he did not feel (the agony) caused by the stake. Due to his great practice in deep meditation, the sage did not experience the full poignancy.

5. O best brāhmaṇa, due to the brāhmaṇa leper's having harmed a brāhmaṇa, and due to his not having restrained his senses, there was leprosy, stinking with pus on his body.

6. O brāhmaṇa, formerly he had offered four young girls and also three daughters to brāhmaṇas, therefore he (obtained) that chaste (woman as his) wife.

7. Due to her only, he would be equal to me. Why should you be amazed ? Know that the previous karma (is the cause).

The brāhmaṇa said:

8. He, whose wife is unruly and wicked, will not certainly get heaven; since, O lord, her life is like this, good of all is desired.

Hari said:

9. There are certain unruly and wicked wives of a man who gives everything. Among them the man should not think about her who cannot be protected.

10. To women none is dear; nor is there anyone that is not dear to them. Like cows looking for newer and newer grass they look for newer and newer lover.

11. A woman certainly resorts to a man who is poor, ugly, or who is not virtuous or who does not come from a good family or who is a servant.

12. A young married woman after leaving her husband, who is endowed with virtues, who belongs to a good family, who is very rich, who is handsome, and adept in sex would resort to a mean man.

13. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the dialogue between Umā and Nārada, by (listening to) which you would fully know the various actions of women.

14-15. O brāhmaṇa, the sage Nārada was naturally inquisitive about everything. Thinking to himself, he went to the excellent mountain Kailāsa, in the Himālaya, which was (Śiva's) dwelling connected with the legend of Nandi. The magnanimous sage, having saluted Pārvatī, asked her:

16. "O goddess, I am eager to know about the ill acts of women. You are connected with the occupation of young married women.

17. You truly know the heart of all women. Therefore, please tell everything to me, who am humble and ignorant."

The goddess said:

18. In this existence (as women) which is fit to be united with, whether it is appropriate or not, the heart of women is undoubtedly always fixed upon men.

19. O Nārada, it is true, (quite) true, that the vulva of women becomes moistened on seeing a well-dressed man, whether he is her brother or son.

20. When there is no place, no moment or no suitor (available), then (only) the chastity of women happens to be there.

21. A woman is like a pot of ghee; a man is like a burning charcoal. Therefore one should not keep ghee and fire at one place.

22. O son, as the driver of an elephant brings him under control with a goad or a mallet, (exactly) in the same way the protector of women (brings them under control).

23. Her father protects her in her childhood; her husband protects her in her youth; her sons protect her in her old age. A woman never deserves freedom.

24. So due to her freedom and her own desire, a beautiful clever woman, sought after by a man, would act according to her urge.

25. As cooked food, in the absence of protection, is controlled by (i.e. eaten by) dogs and crows, in the same way, a young woman would become corrupt due to freedom.

26. Again, the family would be spoiled due to her contact. He who is born from the seed of another man (than his own father) is of a mixed caste.

27. Commixture of castes is caused by paramours. The sinner (who commits it) would certainly live in hell. All (such sinners) are born as insects on the earth.

28. Then O son of a brāhmaṇa, such a man is taken to (i.e. born in) a Mleccha family. Since due to a corrupt wife the family would perish, therefore a man should not have a corrupt wife.

29. That mean man who even after knowing the fault of women, endures it, would remain in the fearful Raurava (hell) with his dead ancestors.

30. Some woman causes the family to fall, some emancipates the family. Therefore, making all efforts, a wise man should marry a woman born in a good family.

31. A woman is impartial to both the families (i.e. that of her father and that of her husband), and brings them together. A good woman emancipates the families (i.e. members of both the families), (while) a wicked one causes them to fall.

32. They say that in the mundane existence, heaven, (good of) the family, blemish, success or failure, son, daughter, friend depend upon woman.

33. Therefore a wise man should marry one or the other for raising progeny. She is the abode of many blemishes.

34. The husband, who approaches his wife during menses, becomes the killer of a brāhmaṇa or of an embryo, and goes to hell.

35. He, a sinner, who, through delusion dislikes and deserts a chaste wife, commits that sin which (he would have committed) by killing her, and having experienced the fruits of that (sin), he would go to hell.

36. By kidnapping a woman, a man (i.e. the man who kidnaps) would go to (i.e. would be born in) the family of a cāṇḍāla. In the same way a man becomes fallen by abandoning his wife.

37. Such a man would, placing his wife on his shoulder, live for a long time in Yama's city. Her feces and urine would always fall on his head.

38. Thus for thousands of years the wicked one carries (on his shoulders) the burden (of his wife). Again he would go to (i.e. live in) Raurava for as many years as there are hairs on the body.

39. He again descends (i.e. is born) among the insects, and then goes to (i.e. obtains) the existence of man. Then due to former blemish, he obtains (i.e. is involved in) quarrel and (suffers from) grief.

40-41a. Having thus obtained three births, a man is free from sin. His wife, suffering in hell for that much period, and being born as a female crow and a female fox, and having eaten the filth of leavings of food, would become a widow in the human world.

41b-43a. And a man, a practised deceiver, who would approach (i.e. cohabit with) a cāṇḍāla woman or a Mleccha woman or a Pulkasa woman, having suffered there (i.e. in the hell) twice, thrice or four times that period (is reborn), and having cohabited with his mother, his preceptor's wife, a brāhmaṇa woman, a queen or someone else who is the wife of a superior person, is not born again (i.e. eternally lives in hell only).

43b-44. There is no requital after having cohabited with (i.e. for one who cohabits with) his sister, his son's wife, sister or daughter-in-law, his paternal uncle's wife, the sister of his father or mother or any other woman (than his own wife).

45-46a. He would be the killer of a brāhmaṇa, would be blind and dull of speech. Being deaf in ears he falls, and there is no atonement (for the sin of him also) who has uttered very obscene words about women as a class.

The brāhmaṇa said:

46b-47a. O lord, having done such bad deeds, how is liberation (possible) (for such a man)? (Please) tell it to me. I really want to hear (about it).

The lord said:

47b-48a. Having gone to (i.e. cohabited with) them (i.e. one, who cohabits with these women), dies after embracing a

doll of heated iron, and then being pure, goes to the other world.

48b-49a. All the sin of that man, who leaves the householder's stage and becomes intent on me and always remembers Govinda, perishes.

49b-52a. (Even if) he has committed a myriad of brāhmaṇacides by approaching (i.e. cohabitting with) his preceptor's wife, or has committed a hundred lakh of sins by drinking spirituous liquor distilled from rice etc. or has kept gold etc. with him for a long time after having snatched it—all these and other great sins of such a man perish as cotton or hay perishes (is burnt) after having come in contact with fire. Therefore, a man would be purified after having recollected my name i.e. Govinda.

52b-53a. That man, who lives in the householder's stage (i.e. as a householder) and having worshipped him (i.e. who loudly recites Govinda's name and worships him), is free from sin.

53b-55. That man obtains fruit equal to the fruit obtained by giving away a crore of cows on a solar eclipse day at the bank of the Ganges—or that which is a thousand times more—by reciting the name of Govinda, and he would eternally live in my city. Such a man becomes a sovereign king after having lived in (my) house according to his desire.

56-57. A man having listened to my story (narrated) in a Purāṇa, becomes equal to me. Having narrated the Purāṇa (to others) he would obtain intimate union with me. Therefore one should always carefully listen to and cause (others) to listen to a Purāṇa—the store of dharma; (i.e. should recite it to others). Such a man would go to (i.e. be united with) Viṣṇu's body.

58. O son of a brāhmaṇa, listen to another thing also, which I shall narrate fully, as to what would happen (i.e. what is to be done) according to the circumstances when a sin with reference to a woman is committed.

59. A man should, on an auspicious day, present a jar of water—giving great fruit—along with the gift of all seeds to a brāhmaṇa. That moment only he is purified forthwith.

60. He should give the seeds of all grains etc., to a brāh-

maṇa at the (proper) time. Having destroyed all his sins, he obtains heaven eternally.

61-62a. O brāhmaṇa sage, I shall tell you about the strong virtue of a chaste woman. Her family becomes pure; and prosperity always prevails (in her family). Both the families obtain heaven, and also her husband and she herself (go to heaven).

62b. O brāhmaṇa, the virtue of a faithful, devoted wife has been forgotten (to be told) to you who have been asking (about it).

63-64a. I shall again tell what is beneficial to the worlds and auspicious as regards the women. Those meritorious women, having got up early go, after the chaste lady, to my position, as a result of their religious merit.

64b-66a. (The vow) is recommended for six months, or an year or more. The chaste woman, as long as she is pure, would go to heaven. The woman, who follows her husband, takes him, who is a drunkard, the killer of a brāhmaṇa, or full of all sins, to heaven from the mud (of sin).

66b-67a. He shines like the god of love, and she is charming like Rati. In the world only, she experiences unending pleasure.

67b-68a. She, who, on the death of her lord at a distant place, after having got his insignia, dies through her prowess as a chaste woman, emancipates her husband from sin.

68b-69a. If the chaste woman, when her husband is dead in another country, takes the insignia of her husband, she would go to heaven after having lain (i.e. if she lies) on (the pile of funeral) fire.

69b-70a. A brāhmaṇa woman who follows her dead husband, would not take herself and her husband to heaven, as a result of killing herself.

70b-71a. By the command of Brahmā, a brāhmaṇa woman should not die (by going to the cremation ground) with (the dead body of) her husband. She, becomes a killer of herself, (by thus dying with her husband. So she should not die like this), but (should) become a recluse.

Narottama said:

71b-72a. Of all the castes, a brāhmaṇa is recommended to

be praiseworthy. What is meritorious here for an eminent brāhmaṇa, and what is its opposite (i.e. sinful)?

The lord said:

72b-74a. A rash act is never proper for a brāhmaṇa woman. A man (who lures her to do such an act) is a killer of a brāhmaṇa. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you which vow a brāhmaṇa woman should observe; please listen properly.

74b-75a. She should never eat flesh brought from a market. (Then) she would obtain the fruit of the performance of thousands of horse-sacrifices, at the end of the year.

75b-77a. Worship of the desired deity is the best vow (in honour) of Hari. Without jealousy she should also offer water and piṇḍa to her husband. The chaste woman will be suddenly united with her husband in the heaven of Viṣṇu; (and will live with him there) for crores of thousands of ages and crores of hundreds of ages.

77b-79a. From there the brāhmaṇa woman will come out, after having received a great vow. She would emancipate thousands and hundreds (of members) of both the families (i.e. her father's family and her husband's family). Therefore, relatives, sons, brothers etc. should never curb (her) and should not make her lose her vow.

79b-82. A widow should not observe the vow when Viṣṇu's day occurs. The unfortunate one again becomes a widow existence after existence. She who eats fish and flesh, goes to hell (i.e. lives in hell) for a long time, due to the wrong performance of the vows, and certainly becomes a bitch. That wicked widow, who cohabits (with a man) is the destroyer of the family, and having sufferel (i.e. lived) in hells, she becomes (i.e. is born) as a female vulture for ten births. Then becoming (i.e. being born as) a female jackal she would be born as a human being.

83a. Similarly she who becomes a widow in her childhood becomes a maid (if she errs in the performance of vows).

The brāhmaṇa said:

83b-84a. Tell me (about) the fruit (that one would get) by offering (one's) daughter (to a proper bridegroom) and also

tell me the fruit (that one gets) by (offering) a maid. O lord, tell me about the (proper) procedure about this, if you favour me.

The lord said:

84b-85a. Listen to the fruit (which one would get) by (offering one's) daughter (to a bridegroom), who is endowed with (good) form (i.e. who is handsome), who is endowed with virtues, who hails from a good family, who is youthful, who is wealthy.

85b-86a. He, who gives his daughter united (i.e. decorated) with all ornaments, has (indeed) given the entire earth, with mountains, forests and jungles.

86b-87a. The giver would certainly get the fruit of offering his daughter (decorated with) half (the number of) ornaments. The fruit of offering a daughter without ornaments would be a quarter (of the fruit mentioned above).

87b-88a. A man who receives the price for his daughter goes to hell. The ignorant man, after having sold his daughter (i.e. who accepts the price for his daughter), never comes back from hell.

88b-89a. He, who, through greed, offers his daughter to a man who is not suitable (for her), goes to the Raurava hell and (then) is born as a cāṇḍāla.

89b-90a. Therefore a wise man never takes from his son-in-law the price for his daughter. What he willingly gives is inexhaustible for him (i.e. gives him an inexhaustible fruit).

90b-91a. All that land, a cow, gold, wealth, garments, corn which he gives to his son-in-law and the presents made to his daughter at the time of her marriage becomes (i.e. leads to an) inexhaustible (fruit).

91b-92a. O child, whatever presents are given to the bride at her marriage by those who belong to her family or by those who belong to other families (than her own family) become inexhaustible.

92b-93a. The donor does (i.e. should) not remember the gift, nor does (i.e. should) the recipient ask for it. Both (who remember what he gives, and who asks for a present) go to hell like a pot the rope of which is cut off.

93b-94a. So a good man should give presents to a bride at her marriage. By not giving such a present one goes to hell and becomes (i.e. is born as) a maid-servant.

94b-95a. A daughter is not given in marriage to anyone of these six types of men, viz. one who lives very near, one who lives far away, one who is extremely opulent, one who is very poor, who does not have a high descent, or who is a fool.

95b-96a. Similarly a daughter is not given to a very old man, or to him who is very miserable or to him who lives in (another) country, to him who becomes very angry or to him who is not content.

96b. A man, giving (i.e. who gives) his daughter to (anyone of) these obtains (i.e. goes to) hell.

97a. (A man, who gives his daughter to an unsuitable man) through greed, through being honoured or who exchanges the bride (at the time of marriage), goes to hell.

97b-98a. By offering a dear, young, beautiful woman (i.e. a maiden) along with ornaments and bed, to (one of) the sages, a man would obtain unending fruit.

98b-99a. The fruit of a young virgin and a girl eight years old is the same. One should be given to a suitor, the other one to a brāhmaṇa.

99b-100. A wise man, without troubling himself, should offer a purchased daughter to god. Till the end of the Kalpa he would get (i.e. live in) heaven, and would be a king or a very rich man on the earth; and in every birth he would get a very beautiful, fine wife.

101-103. The sin of that man, who everyday listens to this excellent auspicious account, perishes and he masters all sacred works. He would get eternal heaven (i.e. would eternally live in heaven), and would become dear to women. A kṣatriya becomes victorious and certainly a king also. Listening to it removes sins committed in birth after birth. In the same way, an excellent woman receives good fortune (i.e. the auspicious state of wife-hood).

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Non-Covetousness of a Śūdra

The brāhmaṇa said:

1. O lord, if you favour me, (please) tell me fully about the life and matchless prowess of the trader.

The lord said:

2. A man should give (presents) with truthfulness, without greed, and without jealousy. (It may be said) that he would thus always well-accomplish a hundred sacrifices, in which sumptuous fees are given.

3. Due to truth (alone), the sun rises; also the wind blows; the ocean would (i.e. does) not cross its boundary nor would (i.e. does) the Tortoise avert (sustaining) the earth.

4. Due to truth (alone) the worlds stand (undisturbed), and also all mountains. That being, who swerves from truth, becomes a denizen of the nether world.

5. He, who always sticks to speaking the truth, and is always engaged in (doing) truthful deeds, having physically gone to heaven, would become one with Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu).

6. All the sages reached me by truthfulness, and (then) final beatitude. By truthfulness (alone) king Yudhiṣṭhira physically went to heaven.

7. Having conquered the entire host of his enemies, he righteously protected the world. He also performed the difficult Rājasūya sacrifice.

8-10a. (A king) should always feed eighty-four thousand brāhmaṇas in (i.e. serving the food in) golden plates and utensils, and having fed them (like this), he should dismiss them after giving the utensils to them. He should give the brāhmaṇas wealth other than that which is liked by them. Then seeing that the host of brāhmaṇas is not poor (i.e. is rich with the gifts) he should dismiss it.

10b-c. In the same way, a king, being free from jealousy, should everyday, truthfully feed sixteen thousand snātakas.[1]

1. Snātaka—One who has bathed i.e. performed ablutions, i.e. a brāhmaṇa, who, after performing the ceremonial lustrations required on his

11. They have beforehand stayed in his house with a desire for his victory. He has indeed conquered the entire world due to his showing favour for their life.

12. Due to truthfulness, Bali, the demon-king, will become Indra. I again and again stay in the house of him, who dwells in Pātāla.

13. I eternally stay in the heart of him, who does meritorious deeds; and (so) I had bound him (i.e. Bali to Pātāla) after freeing him from his existence as a demon.

14-15a. I give lower position, (or) godhead, (or) the position of Indra. Due to his truthfulness, king Hariścandra became settled in the Satyaloka, with his pure body and along with his vehicles and paraphernalia.

15b-16a. Many kings, and also others who were siddhas and great sages, who were wise and ascetics became settled in the Satya(-loka).

16b. Therefore a man, who is devoted to truth, is capable of crossing the mundane existence.

17. The magnanimous trader was well-settled in true speech (i.e. spoke the truth). As far as speaking the truth is concerned, there is none else like him in the world.

18. If a thousand horse-sacrifices and truth are weighed together, truth is superior to a thousand horse-sacrifices.

19-20a. Everything would be accomplished by means of truth; a truthful man cannot be overcome. That cow Bahulā went to heaven through speaking the truth. Having put together the entire people, she would not be reborn.

20b-21. So also he always observes (but) never tells a lie. He is very clever in purchasing or selling costly or cheap things. Especially for a witness telling the truth is commendable.

22-23a. Witnesses, having told the truth (i.e. who have told the truth), have gone to the inexhaustible heaven (i.e.

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finishing his studentship as a brahmacārin under a religious teacher, returns home and begins the second stage of his life as a gṛhastha. There are three kinds of Snātakas: (1) Vidyāśnātaka (as above); (2) Vratasnātaka—one who has completed the vows such as fasting, continence etc. without the Vedas; (3) Ubhayavratasnātaka—who has both the qualifications of Vidyāsnātaka and Vratasnātaka.

have eternally lived in heaven). If an eloquent speaker speaks the truth after having gone to an assembly, he goes to Brahmā's abode (a destination) difficult (to be reached) by other sacrifices.

23b-24a. He, who speaks the truth in an assembly, would obtain the fruit of (the performance of) a horse-sacrifice. He having told a lie (i.e. who tells a lie) through greed or hatred, goes to Raurava hell.

24b-25a. The trader who witnesses everything, and who is brave among people, would become a god in heaven especially due to his having given up greed.

25b-26. A certain glorious śūdra was never greedy. He often subsisted on vegetables or gleanings of corn with great difficulty. He put on a tattered garment and always had two pots in his hand.

27-28. Always being free from greed, he did not accept others' belongings (i.e. did not accept anything from others). To know him (i.e. to test him), I took a pair of garments, and stood (waiting) with respect (for him), having kept it down the bank of a river. Having seen (i.e. though he saw) that pair of garments, he did not think (i.e. desire) to have it.

29-30. Knowing it as belonging to someone else, he patiently went home. Then, thinking that the pair of garments was insignificant, I dropped an udumbara fruit containing gold on the river-bank.

31-32. He saw that wonderful (fruit) on his way. 'It may be useful, but appears to be artificial. And if now I take it, my greedlessness has surely gone. It is hard to protect it; and it is a place of ego (i.e. would make me egoistic).

33. Where there is greed, there is acquisition; greed proceeds from acquisition. Hell is eternally to be reached by a person who is seized by greed (i.e. a person seized by greed eternally dwells in hell).

34-37a. If worthless wealth remains in our house, my wife and sons would indulge in extravagance. Due to extravagance desire springs up; due to excitement confusion of mind arises; due to confusion there are delusion and pride and then anger and greed. Due to the exuberance of these penance will perish;

(and) when penance has exhausted, sins deluding the mind proceed; and bound by those chains, he never gets freedom'.

37b-38. Thinking (like) this, the śūdra abandoned it, and went home. Gods, being happy, gladly said: 'Well (done), well (done).' Taking the form of a naked mendicant, I went to his house.

39-40. Having gone there, I talked about the past action in accordance with his destiny. Then due to (my being in) the vicinity and due to the restlessness of the people, his wife came (out), and asked about the factor that led to his luck. I then quickly told her whatever struck my mind.

41-43a. I mildly told her the cause of the noise that was in (i.e. that had occurred to) my mind. "O you illustrious one, today your husband, like an ignorant man, forsook what was given by fate; here (i.e. in this world), wealth will not come again (once it is ignored). As long as he lives, he will experience ill luck. O mother, go to your vacant house, and ask him about that (udumbara-fruit) which he did not take."

43b-45a. Having heard those auspicious words, she approached her husband and spoke to him. Having heard the bad news, he was amazed. Having thought (for a while), with her he came to me. He mildly said to (i.e. requested) me: "O mendicant, you (please) explain it."

The mendicant said:

45b-46a. How, O son, how did you, in contempt, ignore like a blade of grass, (the fruit) which you saw, and which for a long time was pure? So, O son, fortune is never without thorns (i.e. difficulties).

46b-47. Matchless prosperity or bravery withers. You will see (that you have caused) great grief to your relatives from their birth to their death; and you will certainly have the same course as the dead always have.

48. Therefore, quickly take it, and enjoy prosperity without any difficulty, and also matchless, excellent wealth and bravery causing wonder to the people.

The śūdra said:

49. I do not long for wealth; wealth is a trap in the

mundane existence. A man who has fallen (i.e. has gone astray) in getting it, would not attain salvation.

50. (Please) listen to the defect due to wealth in this and the next world. (A man who has wealth has) fear from a thief, from (his) kinsmen, from kings and robbers also.

51-52. All mortals—(all) hosts of beasts or fish—are always longing for killing. Then how can wealth always give happiness to them who have it? Wealth ends one's life and causes sins. It is a dear abode to death and others and a great primary cause of adversity.

The mendicant said:

53. He, who has wealth, has friends; he, who has wealth, has relatives; (his) family (is noble); he (alone) has good character, wisdom, handsomeness, enjoyments, success and happiness.

54. How can he, who is without money, and who is forsaken by his sons and wife, have friends? How can such wretched people have good deeds in (their) life?

55. Good deeds like sacrifice etc. are helpful. Giving (gifts) is a staircase (leading) to heaven. This is not possible in the case of a person having no money.

56. Preserving and performing vows, listening amply to (accounts about) dharma etc., offering sacrifices (i.e. śrāddhas) to manes, (visiting) sacred places are not possible for a man having no wealth.

57. Similarly, remedy for a disease, wholesome diet, collection of medicines, protection, fight with and victory over enemies are certainly not possible for such a man.

58. The livelihood of women during their life is had by wealth only; and also good or bad deeds of the past, future and present (times) are possible (by means of wealth alone).

59. Therefore, he, who has ample wealth, can have enjoyments as he likes. By giving (wealth) you will soon obtain heaven from (i.e. after going from) here (i.e. this world).

The śūdra said:

60-61. Every vow is (performed) if there is absence of desire (i.e. absence of desire is a vow in itself). Living at a

sacred place is due to absence of anger (i.e. absence of anger is residence at a sacred place). Kindness is like muttering prayers; and contentment is pure wealth. Harmlessness is the greatest achievement; and living by gleaning corn is excellent. Eating vegetarian food or fasting is like (drinking) nectar, O you, who torment your enemies.

62. Contentment is my great enjoyment; and a cowrie is my great gift To me the wife of another man is like my mother, and wealth of others is like a clod.

63. Others' wives are like serpents; all this is my sacrifice. Therefore, O you mine of virtues, I do (i.e. did) not take it. (I am telling you) the truth, and truth (only).

64a. It is better to keep away from mud and not to touch it than wash the hands after touching it.

64b-65. When, O best man, he spoke like this, shower of flowers thrown by all gods fell on his head and body. The gods beat the drums, and the hosts of the celestial damsels danced.

66-67. The chief of Gandharvas sang (songs in his praise), and an aeroplane came down from heaven. The hosts of gods there said: "Get into this aeroplane. Reaching Satyaloka, enjoy pleasures like the great Indra. O you righteous one, there would be no counting of the time for which you will enjoy."

68-69. When the gods had spoken like this, the śūdra said (these) words: "How can this mendicant have (such) knowledge, (such) action, and (such) speech? Is he Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), or Hara (i.e. Śiva), or Brahmā, or Indra or Bṛhaspati, or Dharma himself that has come here to deceive me?"

70. When (the śūdra) had spoken like this, the mendicant said (these) words with a smile: "I am Viṣṇu; I have come here to know about your righteousness.

71-72a. O great sage, go, along with your family, to heaven, by this aeroplane. O you highly intelligent one, by my favour, you will always be youthful; and will have endless good fortune".

72b-73a. Surrounded by all their relatives, they endowed with divine ornaments and adorned with divine garments, suddenly went to heaven.

73b. Thus, O best among excellent brāhmaṇas, by giving up greed they went to heaven.

74. Similraly, that trader is intelligent and is established in true righteousness, by which (i.e. due to this) he knows that account which took place in (some) other country.

75. There is none else like the trader, who is well established in heaven. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, you too, go similarly to heaven.

76. The sin committed in existence after existence of that mortal (i.e. man), who, well-settled in all his duties, listens to this account, perishes in a moment.

77. O brāhmaṇa, even by reciting it only once, before people, a man would get the fruit of all sacrifices and would be honoured (even) by gods.

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

The Rape of Ahalyā

The lord said:

1. (I have) told (you) about Adrohaka's greatness, unbearable to the people. Having resisted (the temptation of cohabiting with) a woman occupying the same bed, he conquered everything.

2. He made convenient (i.e. easy) what was difficult to be accomplished by the wise, and by the celibate sages, and which was difficult for gods, demons and men.

3. Which man, but Adrohaka, is capable of conquering the sexual desire, which is naturally difficult (to overcome)? O brāhmaṇa, he (i.e. Adrohaka) alone is a man who has conquered everything.

4-5a. Sureśa (i.e. Indra) had vaginal marks (on his body) because of having outraged Ahalyā only. Then again, due to the favour of Goddess (Indrākṣī), he, became well-known as Sahasrākṣa (one having a thousand eyes). This is known in the entire mobile and immobile world.

The brāhmaṇa said:

5b-7a. O lord, how did the god of gods outrage Ahalyā? How did he, the lord of gods, after having the vaginal marks (on his body) become Sahasrākṣa (i.e. having a thousand eyes on his body) ? How did the lord of gods whose body was bright like the sun, become one whose body had vaginal marks on it? I desire to hear accurately how (this) weakness of the god became notorious.

The lord said:

7b-8a. Formerly, the large-minded lord of the worlds, the Creator, gladly gave his mind-born daughter to Gautama in the presence of the regents of the quarters.

8b-9a. Since then in the hearts of the regents of the quarters, with their minds overcome with the passion of love, and in the heart of the lord of Śacī (i.e. Indra) fascination for her has remained like a dart.

9b-10a. 'This (young girl) who is a gem (among women) and who is well-dressed and of an excellent complexion, is given to a brāhmaṇa, by disregarding the regents of quarters. What shall I do now?'

10b-11. Thinking like this, (Indra) again saw her excellent form when she was in youth, through Māyā (magical power). Thinking again, he went to the place of Gautama.

12. Listen from me (i.e. as I tell you) what happened after he had gone there. That(sage)Gautama once went for a bath to Puṣkara.

13. The chaste wife was engrossed in cleansing the house and (arranging) household things. She was intent upon preparing the offering to the deities and (the lord of) dwelling.

14-16. She (kept ready) the fuel for the sacrificial rite, and collected things for (her husband's) daily rites. In the meanwhile, Indra assumed the form of the great sage and gladly entered the (sage's) hut. The chaste and loyal wife, seeing her husband became active to collect things with faith at the chamber (where the images) of the deities (were placed). Then Indra, who had taken up the sage's form, and who was excited, said to her:

17. "I am overcome with the passion of love; give me a kiss etc." In the meanwhile (i.e. at that time), she bashfully said (these) words:

18-19a. "O lord, please do not ask me to give up the acts etc. (being done) for the deities. O sage, O you who know dharma, (please) do not ask me to give up the acts (being done by me) for the deities and the like. You know the entire purpose of pious deeds. This desire at this time, now, is not proper."

19b-22a. Then he, who seeing her all-beautiful form was overpowered by the passion of love (said to her:) "O darling, enough (of such words); (please) do not talk (like this). A dart has come up in my heart. That woman is a loyal, faithful and devoted wife, who always does what should and should not be done in accordance with what the husband says. She who disobeys his order, especially at (i.e. for) coitus, has her religious merit lost, and she meets with misfortune."

22b-23a. She said: "O sage, things required for the worship of gods are (kept ready). Other daily pieces of work are also done. Why do you want to make a change in them?"

23b-24. He said to the chaste woman there: "Give me an embrace etc., by giving up the fear in your mind, as I had given them to you." Thus speaking to her, he embraced her, and did what he had desired.

25-26a. In the meanwhile, O brāhmaṇa, the sage, after he had started his meditation, understood the sinful deed of Indra. Quickly he went (back) and stood at the region of the door.

26b-27. Indra, seeing the sage, entered a cat's body; and walked in the manner of the wind (i.e. fast). The sage said to (i.e. asked) him there: "Who are you, who have taken up a cat's form?"

28. Due to fear, Indra stood with palms of his hands joined, before the sage. Seeing Indra before him, the best sage became angry.

29-31a. (The sage said:) "Since for amorous pleasure, you have done such a fraudulent and rash act, therefore, there will be a thousand vaginas on the limbs (of your body). O you most sinful one, your genital organ shall fall here (only). O fool, get

(away) from my presence to the heavenly abode of gods: Best sages, men, and Siddhas with serpents (will) see you."

31b-32a. Speaking thus (to Indra), that greatest sage asked that loyal, devoted wife, who was weeping. (He said:) "What a terrible deed you have met with now?"

32b-33a. She, thus addressed, and frightened and trembling, said to her husband: "O lord, (please) forgive me (for) the deed which I did through ignorance."

The sage said:

33b-34. You have been approached by a stranger (i.e. a stranger has cohabited with you). You are, (therefore) impure and sinful. You will remain all alone for a long time pervaded (only) with bones, but without flesh and nails. Let men and women see you (in that condition).

35-37. She, who was afflicted, said to him: "(Please) bring about the end of the curse". When she spoke thus, the sage Gautama, who was overwhelmed with pity, and also overpowered with anger, said (these) words: "When Daśaratha's son Rāma, (the incarnation of) Viṣṇu, will come to the forest with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa and seeing you remaining on the path, afflicted, dry and bodiless (i.e. just a skeleton), he, laughing, will say in the presence of Vasiṣṭha:

38. 'Why is this form dry, of the form of bones and (like) a dead body? I have, O brāhmaṇa, never before seen such a form (a like of which) does not exist in the world.'

39-40. Then Vasiṣṭha will tell the old account as it had taken place to the illustrious Rāma, i.e. Viṣṇu, who would take up a human form. Hearing the words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma, well-versed in the code of conduct will say: 'She is absolutely faultless. It is the fault of Indra.'

41. When Rāma will speak thus, you[1] will give up your censured form, and taking up a divine form, you will come (back) to my house."

1. The story of Ahalyā, slightly differs from its popular version based on the Rāmāyaṇa account, where, as a result of Gautama's curse, she turns into a stone. The goddess Indrākṣī again (v. 44) does not appear in the Rāmāyaṇa.

42-43. Gautama, having thus cursed her, went to a forest to practise penance. Then she, of an extremely dry form, lay on the path like that (i.e. as was said by Gautama). And as a result of Rāma's words, she came back to Gautama. Gautama too dwells with her in heaven today.

44. Indra too, being ashamed, remained in water for a long time. Remaining in water, he eulogized the goddess called Indrākṣī.

45. The goddess delighted by his eulogy, and being very much pleased, went and said to him: "Take a boon from me."

46-47a. Then Indra, the conqueror of enemies' cities, said to her: "O goddess, due to your favour, I may give up the ugly form caused by the sage's curse, and may, as before, get (back) the kingdom of gods."

47b-50a. To him the goddess said: "O lord of gods, to destroy that blemish caused by the sage's curse, gods like Brahmā alone are capable, I am not able (to do so). But I shall find out such an idea as you will (i.e. your sores will) not be noticed by people. You will have a thousand eyes which will have a thousand (forms resembling) vulva; (and) being famous as 'Thousand-eyed' you will rule well over (your) kingdom; and due to my boon your penis will be like a goat's scrotum."

50b. Saying so, the mother of the world vanished there only. Indra, adored by best gods, still lives in heaven. O best brāhmaṇa, such was Indra's condition due to lust.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

The Birth of Lauhitya

The lord said:

1-2. I shall tell you another (account) of a man overpowered by the passion of love. Formerly on the bank of Bhāgīrathī, there lived a brāhmaṇa, an ascetic of the highest

order, who instructed thousands of brāhmaṇas, who gave peace (of mind to others), who was ekadaṇḍadhara,[1] and like a tortoise living on the earth.

3. When he was sitting all alone in a secluded temple, he suddenly came across a young beautiful woman going to another's house from her husband's house in the evening.

4-6. Seeing her, the great brāhmaṇa, being afflicted with fear caused by the passion of love, put her in the interior of his house (i.e. the temple) and passed the night. Having made the bolt (of the door) tight, she did not at all allow him to come from (i.e. through) the door. He, who was (reduced to) such (a condition), remained in meditation, and thinking about that beautiful woman, lamented.

7-8a. Thinking 'what business have I at the door?', he said to her: "O dear one, allow me to come in (i.e. entrance. If you do so), your husband will be under your thumb, and, O dear one, he will be dear to you."

8b-9a. Then she said to that old brāhmaṇa, who was lustful, "O father, these words are unbecoming to you. O lord, (please) do not utter them."

9b-10a. Then the illustrious (brāhmaṇa) said: "I have ample wealth. O auspicious lady, I shall give it to you. (Please) open the door."

10b-11a. Again she said to the brāhmaṇa: "You are my spiritual father. Do not approach me, who am your daughter; and also do not approach another man's wife, O you pious one."

11b-12a. Thinking well in his mind, he proceeded to go into the house through a hole after having opened it with his hands.

12b-13a. While he was (thus) going (into the house), his head entered (and got stuck up) into a very narrow passage. It would not come out (i.e. he could not take it out), and then he died.

13b-14. At the dawn the guards and servants[2] came (there). Seeing that wonderful dead body (i.e. dead body causing

1. Ekadaṇḍadhara—It is a class of ascetics or beggars. They are also called Haṃsa.
2. Kaṅkirāḥ—seems to be a misprint for Kiṅkarāḥ.

wonder), they, being amazed, said to her: "O beautiful woman tell us how his death has come about."

15a. Having told (them) the account she came to the desired region.

15b-16a. Such is the power of the passion of love. It is difficult to resist for all beings—gods, demons or men.

16b-18a. The grandsire of all the worlds, after seeing Amoghā, ejaculated. From that is said to be the rise of Lauhitya. It purifies all people. It is full of all sacred places; resorting to which a man goes to the healthy world of Brahmā.

The brāhmaṇa said:

18b-19a. How did Brahmā have (this) infatuation? Who is that beautiful lady Amoghā? I also desire to know correctly about the rise of the best sacred place.

The lord said:

19b-20. There was a well-known sage, Śantanu by name, who was honoured by gods and whose lustre was like that of the lotus-born one (i.e. Brahmā). (His) beautiful and youthful (wife) was known as Amoghā.

21. Once Brahmā went to her house to meet her husband (Śantanu). At that time, the best sage (i.e. Śantanu) had gone to the forest for (collecting) flowers etc.

22. Having seen the best of gods, she (i.e. Amoghā) gave him a respectful offering and water for washing his feet and things like that. Having saluted him (from) a distance, she entered the house.

23. Seeing that woman of a spotless body, the Creator was overpowered with the passion of love. The Creator, having composed himself, thought about her who was before him.

24. The semen of the supreme soul, Brahmā, fell on the bedstead. Then Brahmā, being afflicted and distressed, quickly left.

25. Then the sage came home, and saw (Brahmā's) semen on the seat. He asked the beautiful woman (his wife): "Who had come here?"

26-27a. Then Amoghā said (i.e. replied) to him: "O lord, Brahmā had come here. To (allow him to) wait for you I had given this seat. By means of penance you can know the reason (why his) semen (was deposited) here."

27b-29a. Then that brāhmaṇa understood it by means of meditation. "O good woman, please preserve by my order the very important semen of Brahmā. A son, who alone will purify all the worlds, will be born (to you). Our desire which is all-auspicious will (now) be fulfilled."

29b-30a. Then the chaste, illustrious woman, obeying his order, drank, for the birth of a son, the semen of Brahmā, the supreme soul.

30b-32. A terrible foetus throbbing like an eddy, was produced. She could not at all bear it; so she then spoke to Śantanu: "O lord, I am not now able to bear the foetus. O you, who know the dharma, what should I do now? Even my life has become unsteady. O illustrious one, tell me where I shall (i.e. should) drop the foetus."

33-34. Obeying the husband's order, she dropped the foetus at Yugandhara. (There) water (arose), which had all piety settled in it. In it a pure man, with a crown and with his body covered over with a blue garment and a necklace of jewels, (stood) difficult to look at like the constellation of stars.

35. Then hosts of gods scattered (i.e. threw) a shower of flowers from heaven. (This sacred place) that came up was known as the king of all sacred places.

36-37. Then was born, the well known (Paraśu-) Rāma in Bhṛgu's family. Having killed the kṣatriyas, who had come to fight (with me) with their armies and vehicles, and who had killed my ancestors, and who were afraid (of me), I was fully covered with mud. A terrible (sin) like that of killing a brāhmaṇa had come up in my house (i.e. family).

38-41. My axe, full of mud, though washed, did not become clean. Then there was (heard) a voice in the sky: "Rāma, do what I say. All the sins committed by you will perish at that sacred place where your axe will be clean. O you, who cut off the pride (of the kṣatriyas), stay there for the well-being of all people. Quickly go to all very big (i.e. important) sacred places.

Know that sacred place among the places (to be great) at which your axe will be clean. That (sacred place) is said to be a giver of salvation."

42-43. Hearing that (Paraśurāma), the son of Jamadagni, went to (various) sacred places. (He went to) Gaṅgā, the white Sarasvatī, Kāverī, to Śarayū. (He) also (went to) Godāvarī, Yamunā, Kadrū and Vasudā, and also to auspicious Gaurī, the giver of merit, who had formerly settled there.

44-46. The axe of him, the wise one, who was going like wind (visiting various sacred places), (though) washed in all sacred places, did not become clean. That (incarnation of) Viṣṇu went to an inaccessible mountain-cave, a great forest, a mountain, and to the sacred place (on) the inaccessible mountain-peak. By (doing) that his axe did not become clean. Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma), the conqueror of enemies, then became dejected.

47. The hero was very much worried. (The divine voice) again spoke to him in the same way:

48. "O lord of gods, there is a sacred place in a cave in the eastern direction."

49. The best among men, having heard that, went and saw the holy pool, to the south, where (i.e. in the water of which) there was an eddy, which was bright and which removed sins. (His) axe became clean merely by the touch of its water.

50. Then Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma) with great joy bathed (there). Pure thought was produced (in the mind) of him whose mind was pure and who was sinless.

51-53a. That Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma), having lived (there) for a long time and having propitiated it, speedily reached the city from (i.e. after leaving) that mountain. Making it famous, he then went to the sea. It is said that this best sacred place has been fashioned by the grandsire himself, and that it gives happiness, is pure all round, and gives (i.e. shows) the path to salvation.

53b-54. Know thus that the power of the passion of love is irresistible and unbearable. The greatest (i.e. worst) sin is produced from the passion of love, and the greatest virtue is

produced from an act of piety. That Lauhitya, was the son born from Virañci (i.e. Brahmā).

55-57. He was born on the wife of Śantanu i.e. from the womb of Amoghā. Brahmā overcame his passion of love; so also due to the absence of jealousy of Śantanu and the chastity of her (i.e. of Amoghā), it became the excellent sacred place. He, who everyday recites this auspicious and meritorious account, or would listen to it with joy, goes to the path of salvation.

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

The Account of the Five

The lord said:

1-2. Formerly, Śarva (i.e. Śaṅkara), having seen youthful and beautiful women of Gandharvas, Kinnaras and human beings, and with his mind set on them, pretended to be intent on practising penance, and with a spell dragged them far away into the sky.

3. Then the great lord, the conqueror of the god of love, having fashioned a very delightful cottage, sported (there) with them.

4. In the meanwhile, Gaurī's mind became excited. By means of meditation she saw the lord of the world, sporting with women.

5-7. Knowing his intention she became angry. Then taking the form of Kṣemaṅkarī[1], she entered (the sky), and saw, far away in a lonely region of the sky, Hara (i.e. Śiva), whose lustre was like that of the god of love, who was in the midst of beautiful women, who, the best man, was bright, who, having again and again embraced the women, was sporting with them, who was kissing them excessively, and who was tormented by the passion of love.

1. Kṣemaṅkarī—the epithet is self-explanatory: 'One who brings about well-being.'

8-10. Seeing this, Kṣemaṅkarī, came down there in front of them. Śarva (i.e. Śaṅkara), annoyed with shame, remained with his face turned away (from Umā). Dragging them (by seizing) their hair, she angrily kicked them by her foot. All the women reached (i.e. fell on) the ground, and suddenly their faces were disfigured. With their bodies scorched by Umā's, curse they came under the sway of Mlecchas.

11. Those women, widows or with their husbands alive are known as Cāṇḍāla. Even now they would experience the curse given by Umā.

12. Then Umā, having divided her form into a hundred ways, got united with the lord. O brāhmaṇa, thus always know the power of the passion of love.

13-14a. Then after a long time he went with her to the temple on Kailāsa. Therefore, those men, who, on seeing Kṣemaṅkarī, greet her, have wealth, prosperity and grandeur here (i.e. in this world) and in the next world.

14b-15a. (They should pray to her as:) "O you, whose body is reddish with saffron, O you, whose face is fair like the kunda-flower and the moon, O you goddess, who give all auspicious things, O you who bestow happiness, my salutation to you."

15b. She has similarity with a female meditating sage even though she faces (the devotee) or has her face turned away (from him).

16. He who, on seeing her, does not salute her is defeated in war. One becomes successful in palaces and in (acquiring) knowledge by saluting her.

17. Such is the greatness of the passion of love, that even Bhava (i.e. Śiva) was deluded. Due to his forbearance he became the lord of the gods and the demons.

18-21. In the world there was none and will be none like him. By him, remaining on the bed in the form of the ground after having abandoned a charming woman seated on his lap, are obtained the worlds difficult to be obtained by gods and demons. Thus is the chief among the followers of Viṣṇu, who is worshipped by the hosts of gods and demons, and who gives us before he eats, and himself eats what remains (after being

given). When thus a long time passed happily due to his steadiness in practice, he gladly offered his wife (even) before union with her, when he saw me. Having made a twelve-year resolution he assigned the first enjoyment to me.

22. Therefore, to protect his house, I always remain in his house. In the same way he always longs for the natural taste of the fruits of the earth.

23-24. Therefore I described him as the (best) devotee of the other (i.e. all) devotees of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, he has very much done that which formerly my devotees and gods following my path had not done. Therefore I have given (him) the name 'All-in-all of the Vaiṣṇavas'.

25. I remain in his house; (even) for a short while I do not go away (from it). Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, I am easily accessible to those who are my devotees.

26-27a. Today (only) I give them my position, the natural cause. O brāhmaṇa, therefore, gentility, sleep, food etc. of us two are the same. So also, O brāhmaṇa, see our unity and intimacy. (There is) no difference (between us).

27b-29a. Then Mūka and others, who desired to go to heaven and who were meritorious, reached well, with their wives and paraphernalia, lord Hari. Even the house-lizards in the vicinity of his house, and also various insects and gods followed them.

Vyāsa said:

29b-32a. In the meanwhile, gods, Siddhas and great sages showered flowers and cried: 'Well (done), well (done).' Divine trumpets were sounded in the aeroplanes and forests; and (gods) getting into their respective chariots went to Hari's city along the path. Seeing that wonder, the brāhmaṇa said to Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu): "O killer of Madhu, O lord of gods, advise me."

The lord said:

32b-34. O child, go to your parents, whose minds are distressed with grief. After having carefully propitiated them, you will soon come to my residence. (Even) in the abode of gods (i.e. heaven), deities like the father and the mother, who always protected their child's censurable body, along with its

fault of ignorance and who always nourished and helped its growth, are not (to be found).

35-36a. Like them none else is there in the three worlds along with the mobile and the immobile. Then all the hosts of gods, full of joy, praising Viṣṇu, went along with the five to the abode of Viṣṇu.

36b-39. (They went to his) charming city, which was (well-)set, which was fashioned by Viśvakarman, which was rich with gems and full of all desired things, which was endowed with the desire-yielding trees etc., which was having golden houses, which was variegated with all (kinds of) gems, which had staircases of diamonds and cat's-eye gems, and which was endowed with gold etc.,[1] which was full of songs and sounds of musical instruments, and of all inaccessible places, which was full of the notes of the cuckoo, which was resorted to by Siddhas and Gandharvas, which was full of good men endowed with fine forms, and which was at it were moving in the sky.

40-41. Remaining there (for some time) all went from there, from the place above all the worlds. The brāhmaṇa too went to his parents; having carefully propitiated, he soon went to Viṣṇu along with (the members of) his family. I have narrated this meritorious account of the five to you.

42-45. He who recites or listens to it does not meet with misfortune in this world. He is never tainted with the sin of the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc. By being absorbed in (this) account of the five, a man gets the same fruit as he would get by the gift of a crore of cows. He gets the same fruit by listening to it which one gets by everyday bathing at Puṣkara or in the Ganges. It would quickly destroy bad dreams and would give sound health. It gives good health along with wealth; therefore it should be listened to.

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1. Svarṇaditoya etc. is not very clear.

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

In Praise of (Digging a) Tank etc.

The brāhmaṇas said:

1. O best sage, tell us, if you favour us, (how) fame and dharma (can be accomplished) in the worlds, and (tell us about) all the excellent things (in the three worlds).

Vyāsa said:

2. He, in whose dug up (portion of) forest, cows are satisfied (by grazing) for a month, or seven days, is purified and is honoured by all gods.

3. Listen to all the fruit that is here (i.e. in this world obtained) by offering water, especially at a pool purified by (the performance of) a sacrificial rite.

4. It is brought about year after year and kalpa after kalpa. By giving (gifts) a man obtains heaven; and one who offers water becomes the giver of everything on the earth.

5. A man enjoys heaven for as many years as (number of) drops that are produced on the tank (etc.) dug up (by him), when the cloud is showering (drops of rain).

6. A man becomes pleased by (drinking) water and (enjoying) cooked food etc. Life cannot be sustained without food.

7. Gratification of the manes, purity, form, removing bad smell—all this, the seed that is obtained (and that will lead one to heaven), is settled in (the gift of) water.

8. Washing the clothes, making the utensils shine—all this is to be done with that (i.e. water) only. Therefore water is pure only.

9. Therefore with all one's capacity and all one's wealth a man should get fashioned, making all efforts, a well, a tank or a pool.

10. Therefore, upon him, who gives (i.e. constructs) a water-tank in a place, where there is no water, (the charitable act) would day by day bestow heaven (where he would stay) for a kalpa.

11. That brāhmaṇa, fallen from heaven, becomes a master of the Vedas; and the religious-minded brāhmaṇa, the kinsman of the world, would go to heaven after having practised penance.

12. Thus he gets eight births, and (the fruit) of one of them is said to be inexhaustible. Such a man, (if) born in a kṣatriya-family, would become a sovereign emperor.

13. (If born as) a vaiśya (he) would obtain inexhaustible wealth very much liked by him in birth after birth. Others like śūdras and low born men again and again go to heaven.

14. Whoever digs a tank of the measure of four cubits, the tank always helps him to stay in heaven for a kalpa after a year.

15-16. If (the measure) is double, (one) should know that the merit is double, and if it is fourfold, (the merit) would be huhdredfold. He, who gives (i.e. constructs) a tank of the measure of twenty cubits, would obtain (i.e. go to) Viṣṇu's abode, and also divine enjoyments. Afterwards, he is born as a king or would be a wealthy man or an orator.

17. It is laid down that (by doing) like this twofold, threefold or fourfold enjoyment (is obtained). If the tank is extensive, know that the enjoyment would be profuse; if its measure is a thousand cubits he does not fall from heaven.

18-19. If it is two thousand, a man becomes honoured by gods. And as many men as there are beings in his house or in the region, forever become his servants going after him for as many (years) as the beings would live.

20-21. Pleasures enjoyed without a parent are like a forest (resorted to after one's) wealth is exhausted. Birds, a pig, a female buffalo, a female elephant, an adviser and a doer—these six lead (one) to heaven. The divine hundred of birds would bestow heaven.

22. A hog would bestow it for a thousand years, and a female buffalo for a myriad years. A lakh is said to be the fruit of a female elephant after one has resorted to a divine form.

23a. For the adviser it is a crore years and eternal for a doer.

23b-24. Formerly, a wealthy man, having faith in Śiva constructed a tank for obliging (i.e. helping) all beings by

(spending) a myriad (i.e. very large) amount and at the cost of his life and capacity.

25. It is said that after some time he became poor. Some wealthy man desiring (to buy the tank) was ready to pay him its price.

26-27. Having reflected, the wealthy man said: "Listen now to (my) words. For this (tank) I shall pay you a myriad dīnāras. You have already obtained the religious merit by (the construction of) the tank. If you think to get (money by selling it), I am ready to own it (i.e. to buy it) by offering the price according to my capacity."

28-31. When he said this, he (i.e. the owner of the tank) said to him: "Again everyday the fruit is ten thousand (times more). The meritorious (alone) know (what) merit (is). In this waterless region I constructed an auspicious tank. All do acts like bathing and drinking of its water as they like. From it I, who have a myriad (dīnāras), desire an eternal fruit. These words of (i.e. uttered by) me are true. Test me justly."

32-34a. But through jealousy he said to him: " O father, listen to my words. Instead of giving these ten thousand dīnāras to you, I shall bring (i.e. buy) stones (with that amount). I shall throw them into your tank; let them, according to the circumstances, sink into it. If the stones come up and float (on the surface), then my wealth will perish; otherwise the tank will be legally mine."

34b. He (i.e. the owner) said: "All right." He took the myriad (of dīnāras) and went home.

35-38a. In the presence of witness, he dropped stones into the great tank; this was seen by men, gods and demons. Then with Dharma as the witness, it was weighed in the balance of dharma. Even for a day, the offer of a myriad of dīnāras and the water of the tank were not equal. The mind of the wealthy man was sad due to his mission having failed. The next day the heap of stones came up and remained like an island on (the surface of) the water.

38b-39. Then there arose a loud cry of the people. Hearing that wonderful cry (of the people), both of them gladly came

there. Seeing that hill (i.e. that heap of stones) he gave a myriad (dīnāras).

40. Then the owner of the tank threw away the heap. He (obtained) the merit from the tank that had disappeared (due to stones being thrown into it) by the son (i.e. the purchaser).

41-42. He too went to heaven, and was happy in every birth. Digging a tank has an inexhaustible fruit for the family, hosts of mothers, kings, friends, those who oblige, orphans, ascetics and especially for brāhmaṇas.

43-44a. Having constructed a tank, a man gets heaven eternally. Therefore, O brāhmaṇas, there is no doubt that he who constructs a tank etc. according to his capacity has all his sins destroyed and would go to (i.e. obtain) the auspicious salvation.

44b-47. That religious man who would cause people to hear (i.e. recite to them) this very excellent meritorious account gets the fruit of the entire gift of a tank. A man having heard (i.e. who listens to this account) on a solar eclipse day at the excellent bank of the Ganges, would get the fruit of the gift of a crore of cows. He is not reduced to poverty nor does he have grief or a group of diseases. He does not experience disrespect or great grief.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

In Praise of Planting Trees etc.

Vyāsa said:

1. I shall (now) tell you what the fruit of (planting) trees is. O illustrious ones, listen to it. And also listen to the fruit derived from planting (trees) singly.

2. It is not possible to know or to narrate the meritorious fruit earned by that man who plants auspicious trees all round.

3. The fruit that a man would get by planting trees near water is a lakh crore times more than the fruit that he would get by planting them somewhere else.

4. He who plants it on the bank of a lake gets unending fruit. We say that hundredfold more is the fruit (that one gets) by planting meritorious trees.

5. A man does not obtain that fruit even by hundreds of sacrifices which he gets by planting an Aśvattha (fig) tree on the bank of a pond.

6. The leaves (of the fig tree) falling in the water (of the pond) on the parvan[1] days are like the rice balls offered to the manes and bear inexhaustible fruit.

7. The fruit (of the fig tree) are eatens by birds freely and like the food eaten by Brāhmaṇas (at a śrāddha) they give inexhaustible merit.

8. The fruit that one obtains by planting a fig tree fit to be eaten (exceeds) not only the fruit of performing a hundred sacrifices, but even of having a hundred sons.

9. In the hot (season) cows, deities, brāhmaṇas receive shadow (from the tree). Eternal heaven is had by the hosts of the manes of the planter (i.e. the manes of the man who plants the holy fig tree live in heaven eternally).

10. Due to the holy fig tree being eternal there cannot be any difficulty that would befall the planter. Therefore, making all efforts a man should plant this holy fig tree.

11. By planting one tree a man is not abandoned (i.e. does not fall) from heaven. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇas, plant (this) great tree.

12-13. He who, the large-hearted one, plants trees like the holy fig tree near the charming vicinity of (reservoirs of) water, at the place where drinks are bought and sold, on the path or (near) a tank, goes to the lovely heaven after planting them. O brāhmaṇas, I shall now tell you what merit (a man gets) by worshipping the holy fig tree.

14. He who touches the holy fig tree after his bath is free from all sins. He who without bathing touches it gets the fruit due from a bath.

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1. Parvan—The days of the four changes of the moon, i.e. the eighth and fourteenth day of each half month, and the days of the full and new moon.

15-16. By seeing it (i.e. when it is seen) it destroys sin; it gives wealth by (i.e. on) touching it. Long life would be (obtained) by going round it while keeping it to one's right. (A man should recite the hymn;) 'O holy fig tree, I always salute you. I always salute the holy fig tree[1] whose leaves are shaking, in whom Viṣṇu always resides, and who is fit (to be saluted).'

17. By offering (i.e. he who offers) to the holy fig tree oblations, water, an offering of eatables, flowers, incense, and lamp, one is not abandoned (i.e. does not fall) from heaven.

18. Remember that worship of the holy fig tree gives eternal wealth, prosperity and fame along with sons, as well as success and honour.

19. All that muttering (of hymns) done, all that offering made, all the hymns of praise sung, all mystical diagrams used as amulets and all sacred prayers etc. recited at the root of the holy fig tree is said to give the fruit which is crore times greater.

20. Who in the world would not worship it at whose root resides Viṣṇu, in whose middle part stays Śiva, and at whose top lives Brahmā?

21. The fruit that one gets by observing silence, bathing and saluting the holy fig tree on a Monday or a new moon day is the same as is had by making a gift of a thousand cows.

22. By going round it, while keeping it to the right, the fruit that is obtained is (the same as obtained by giving away) a myriad of cows. By going many times round it while keeping it to one's right the fruit is a lakh crore times greater; therefore one should always go round it while keeping it to one's right.

23. Whatever, fruits, roots, water etc., is offered there (i.e. at its root), gives an eternal fruit in many births.

24-25a. Oh ! there is no other form of Viṣṇu on the earth like this tree-form, viz. the holy fig tree. As in the world a brāhmaṇa is adorable or cows and deities are adorable, so is the god in the form of the holy fig tree most adorable.

25b-26a. When it is planted, preserved, touched and wor-

1. Bodhisattva, like Caladdala, is one of the names of the holy fig tree.

shipped, it always gives in (that) order, wealth, sons, heaven and salvation.

26b-27a. A man who makes cut in the body of the holy fig tree is born in the cāṇḍāla and other (castes) after having suffered (i.e. lived in) a hell for a kalpa.

27b-28a. By cutting its roots he is never reborn (i.e. eternally lives in hell). Men stand (by) him in (the hell called) Raurava of a fearful sight.

28b-29a. That fruit which is (obtained) by planting (just) one holy fig tree is also obtained by planting three trees (i.e. plants) of campaka and arka (i.e. the sun plant).

29b-30. The fruit of planting eight bilva trees, seven nyagrodha trees and ten nimba trees is the same. O brāhmaṇas, I have told you the fruit obtained by planting each one of (these) trees.

31. He, a religious-minded man, who, knowing this, prepares an artificial forest (i.e. plants trees) goes to (i.e. lives in) heaven for crores of thousands and crores of hundreds of kalpas.

32-33a. (He gets the same fruit) by (planting) a thousand mango trees. Or he enjoys double or triple fruit or that which is smaller or greater (than that); and after having enjoyed it he would be made a king or a good lord.

33b-35. Enjoyable heaven, happy, lucky, auspicious kingdom, good health endowed with heroism come from (the construction of) a garden, the fruit (of the trees) of which are eaten by thousands of beings, birds, insects, or moths etc. that resort to them, or beings resorting to their shadows and other persons equalling that number.

36-38a. Hundreds of venerable deities become his servants. All the trees possessing vitality are of the form of deities. They should be worshipped as the manes (are worshipped), and should be served (as the manes are), and water and piṇḍas should be offered (as they are offered to the manes). In every birth on the earth, they are born as his handsome and very modest sons.

38b. (In his house) auspicious and meritorious rites are always (performed). Thus the beings sticking to the mango tree become the lords of the attendants of Śiva.

39. All the trees like emblic myrobalan, yellow myrobalan and others producing pungent, bitter and sour (fruits), become pure due to (their being planted in) a garden, give fruits, and always give auspicious things.

40-43. Those who give (i.e. plant) trees go to that place where there are golden palaces adorned with all (kinds of) jewels, where there are aeroplanes resembling the wind (in speed), where the trees are full of gold and always give everything and give pleasure in all seasons, where the maidens resembling celestial nymphs are intent upon singing and dancing, where there are tanks and other pools and also rivers having mud in the form of milk and decked with pure stones, having foam of milk, and endowed with the (objects of) six tastes.

44-45. He gets the same enjoyment in heaven as on the earth, and again (the same) on the earth; and again due to the old habit he constructs a tank or a garden. Doing such meritorious deeds the man becomes the lord of heaven and of human beings. A man who is incapable (of constructing a tank) gets the fruit of constructing a tank by erecting a place to distribute water to travellers.

46. Here (i.e. in this world) the quality of a place to distribute water to the travellers greatly removes all sins; it gives all enjoyments, is pure, is steady and gives (i.e. leads to) heaven and salvation.

47-49a. I shall narrate to you the characteristic(s) of a place to distribute water to the public, which enhances one's fame. A man, who gives fragrant substances like agallochum, water, betel-nut with camphor, seat and tāmbūla, after having erected temporary hall at a place where there is no water and which is mixed with the sounds (of people i.e. which is a crowded place) where many travellers come in summer, rainy season and even in autumn, does not fall from heaven.

49b-51a. If this is done for three years, the fruit (obtained) would be like that of (the construction of) a tank. He does not fall even from heaven, and is honoured even by gods. He who gives (water) at such a temporary hall for a month during summer when there is no (i.e. when there is scarcity of) water, would live in heaven for a kalpa, and fallen from heaven, is honoured (on the earth).

51b. Those who give (water to travellers at such) temporary halls stay there where the givers of (i.e. those who construct) tanks live.

52. Otherwise (i.e. if the erection of such a hall is not possible), one should offer an auspicious 'dharmaghaṭa'[1] for the destruction of(one's) sins. This should be known as a meritorious dharmaghaṭa which is of the nature of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

53. (One should pray to the ghaṭa as:) 'May my desires be fulfilled due to your favour.' One should also give a māṣa[2] of gold with the jar as dakṣiṇā.

54-56. Thus (i.e. if this is done) for three years only, one would get the fruit of offering (water at) a temporary hall. He, who would recite or make others hear (i.e. recite to others) the fruit got from (the construction of) a tank etc. would evidently be free from sins, and would get beatitude by its favour. He who recites this auspicious meritorious account among (i.e. to) people, lives in heaven for thousands of crores of kalpas.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

In Praise of Rudrākṣa

Vyāsa spoke:

1. Hereafter I shall narrate (to you) the extremely auspicious fruit, leading to fame, of constructing a bridge, as told by Brahmā (himself).

2. A man having constructed (i.e. who constructs) a bridge having many pillars in a forest or a muddy place difficult to cross, is purified and would attain godhead.

3. If (the breadth of the bridge) is of the measure of a vitasti[3], he would obtain (i.e. live in) heaven for a hundred

1. Dharmaghaṭa—A jar of fragrant water offered daily (to a brāhmaṇa) in the month of Vaiśākha.
2. Māṣa— A particular weight o gold.
3. Vitasti—A measure of length equal to twelve aṅgulas (being the distance between the extended thumb and the little finger).

divine years. If the bridge is done according to this calculation, he is not abandoned (i.e. does not fall) from heaven.

4-5. Sometimes due to his (previous) sin, he is born on the earth (after falling) from heaven. Then he, the venerable and rich one, free from diseases and worries, is not abandoned (i.e. does not fall) from heaven, after having constructed a causeway etc. in a muddy place. All his sins perish day by day.

6. The fruit of constructing bridges and causeways is said to be the same. A wise man always constructs these by spending money and even at the cost of his life.

7-8a. Listen to an account that took place in olden days and that is approved by old men: A certain thief proceeded to steal in a very (hot) summer. Having prepared a causeway in a forest and having crossed it he went to steal.

8b-9. Having stolen wealth of a householder he went to his own house. There people went along the way; and all were definitely pleased by that path.

10. On the path and in the pool difficult to cross, the gośira was a great saviour. That causeway prepared by him in the forest lasted for the period of a Cāndrāyaṇa.

11-14. Then on the death of the thief as ordained by Citragupta,[1] he had nothing to his credit as the fruit of religious merit. He had not performed any rite in honour of the manes; he had not taken bath at a sacred place; he had not worshipped brāhmaṇas; he had not given any gift; he had not honoured elderly people; he did not have knowledge; he did not do auspicious things beneficial to others. He did not do (any of these things even) mentally; then how could he do them in action (i.e. physically)? He did rash acts like stealing, molesting others' wives; he told lies and scandals about beings and censured good people. He had committed a hundred thousand (sins) like these; similarly he had also stolen cows.

15. There (i.e. in the world of Yama) Yama whose lustre was like the destructive fire at the end of the world, said: "O brave ones, take him to (i.e. let him have) the fruit i.e. hell, and let him not be born again (i.e. let him eternally live in hell)."

1. Citragupta—One of the beings in Yama's world recording the vices and virtues of mortals.

16-17a. In the meanwhile Citragupta who sympathised (with the thief), said: "O lord, he has to his credit the religious merit of having constructed a causeway. (Please) pardon (him) now. As a result of his religious merit let him be a king on the earth for twelve years."

17b-19a. Then Yama said to him: "O wicked one, go to the mortal world. For twelve years enjoy the kingdom without difficulty. You are freed because you put up a causeway on the path. Again after coming here, you will get (the punishment of) not being born again (i.e. living eternally in hell)."

19b-20. Then he (i.e. the thief), oppressed with grief, joined (in respect) the palms of his hands, and said to the god: "O (king) Yama, O lord, please take pity on me who am helpless. With love I shall know (i.e. remember) it."

21. Then Yama said to him: "All right, (let it be) like this. Go from here. You, who will be very miserable, will remember your account due to my favour."

22-24a. In the meanwhile he was released by (Yama's) servant. On the earth he was born in a mean (family of a) weaver. Due to former bad acts he experienced grief all his life. In that country, when he experienced great grief for twentyone years, the king (of that country) being oppressed by his deeds, died.

24b-25. In the meanwhile the ministers having talked to good counsellors, and with (devising) many tests, wandered over the earth. In the presence of all (people) they suddenly and firmly chose him (to be the king).

26-28. Then they (i.e. the ministers) consecrated him as the king without jealousy. He took up the kingdom as a result of Yama's boon. He then did the work of constructing bridges of stone and earth. He constructed bridges and causeways on impassable places and water. He also dug wells, constructed tanks and lakes, put up places for distribution of water to travellers, and gardens. He planted trees. He performed various sacrifices and did meritorious deeds like giving gifts.

29-30. Remembering his former deeds he did meritorious deeds of many kinds and performed various vows for the

destruction of his sins. By gratifying (with oblations) gods, brāhmaṇas and preceptors, he was purified from his sins and went to the abode of the wise Yama.

31-32. He (i.e. Yama) seeing him occupying the vehicle (that took him to Yama's abode), had his eyes red with anger. He with the palms of his hands joined in respect said: "O Dharma, protect me." Citragupta said (these) words to Yama: "Let him, having become purified by his deeds and thoughts, go to Viṣṇu's heaven."

33. He hearing those (words), and knowing the cause, and with his mind being pleased, smiled and spoke again: "Go to Viṣṇu's abode."

34. (Then there) came from heaven an aeroplane variegated in colour. Getting into it he went to heaven, return from which is difficult.

35. Therefore, he who has formerly given (i.e. constructed) a bridge (even) of the measure of a cubit, goes after (enjoying) a kingdom to the great heaven.

36-37. In the same way, he who gives a pasture for cattle does not fall from heaven. He certainly gets the same state as one who gives a cow (to a brāhmaṇa). He, the very wise one, who has given a pasture of the measure of a vyāma[1] for cattle would certainly get (i.e. go to) the desirable heaven; what is the use of profusely talking other things?

38-39a. He who with a motive gives a pasture of cattle and offers meals to brāhmaṇas everyday, has his merit more than hundredfold. Therefore, a man giving a pasture of cattle does not fall from heaven.

39b-40a. Twentyone members of the family of that man who cuts an auspicious tree or takes off a pasture for cattle, are baked in (the hells) like Raurava.

40b-41. The powerful protector of the village (i.e. the village chief) on knowing (such a misdeed) should punish one who harms a pasture for cattle. The happiness of the man who cuts off auspicious trees, especially who harms a pasture for

1. Vyāma—A measure of length equal to the space between the tips of the fingers of either hand when the arms are extended.

cattle, lies in his being punished. Therefore, he (i.e. the village chief) should punish him.

42-45a. A man who constructs a mansion having three or five stories, well decorated, and endowed with good pitchers, for the image of Viṣṇu, (is absorbed by Viṣṇu). He, the best man, who gives (i.e. constructs) an image of his desired deity, especially of Viṣṇu, of earth or stones, full of wealth, very beautiful with heavenlike ground, with the installation of the image properly accomplished, surrounded by servants, becomes absorbed in Viṣṇu after having constructed it.

45b-46. Similarly, the fruit that a man gets by fashioning the idol of Viṣṇu etc. and by constructing a charming temple, is not obtained even by a thousand sacrifices, gifts, and vows etc. on the earth.

47-49a. He would live for thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of kalpa in a place full of gems and all wealth, (and would move) in a car (most) beautiful in all worlds and moving according to (his) desire. Fallen from heaven, he would be a sovereign emperor with his passions controlled, after having constructed a mansion over the image of Śiva.

49b-50. The same as is said about the image of Viṣṇu, should be known to take place in the case of the image of Śiva. The illustrious one has enjoyment, which gives great happiness to his mind, with a host of charming women, and gets full happiness in heaven.

51-52. On the earth he becomes a king or a very wealthy man (and enjoys) inexhaustible pleasures. The man, who fashions and instals Śiva's image of charming marks or fine form, would live in heaven for a crore of kalpas. When fallen from heaven, he would become a king or a wealthy man or the most respected man.

53. A man who fashions a chamber for the images of the goddess would obtain godhead, (and would live) in the heaven of the goddess, the cause of all pleasures.

54-56. He very much becomes identified with Viṣṇu and obtains pure happiness in a palace decorated with jewels, with its floor variegated with gems, full of enjoyments with women, free from fear because of its being connected with the goddess,

full of dancing and singing, charming, giving delight to all senses, endowed with jewelled drums and rhythm, with all maid-servants moving (here and there), clean, charming because of its giving pleasure, and looking beautiful due to gems.

57-58. Similarly, a man (who constructs) an excellent mansion for the image of the goddess, goes to (i.e. lives in) heaven for a million crores of kalpas. Fallen from heaven, he, greatly devoted to the goddess, becomes a king. Thus for a thousand births he would be (born as) Cupid on the earth.

59. An affectionate man (i.e. a man with love for god) who constructs a mansion for Gaṇapati or a goddess, is honoured by gods and is born in heaven.

60. Similarly in the city of the goddess he becomes a king and enjoys pleasures. He is always free from difficulties in all his undertakings like the lord of Gaṇas.

61. His order is not disobeyed among (i.e. by) gods, demons and men. In the same way the best man obtains a fruit in the mansion constructed for the Sun (i.e. the best man obtains the same fruit by constructing a temple in honour of the Sun).

62. He is healthy, his mind is pleased, and his lustre is like Cupid. He grants boons in all the worlds. As is the Sun, so is he.

63. A man, who constructs a mansion of stones on (i.e. for) the image of the Sun, would become a lord on the earth, after having enjoyed heaven for a hundred crores of kalpas.

64. I shall narrate for the good of men (how) the individual worship of all deities beginning with Viṣṇu (should be performed) separately.

65. He who would offer a lamp of ghee day and night for a month, is honoured by best of gods for a myriad of divine years.

66. Similarly a man who on the earth would offer a bath of ghee to an image (everyday) for a month, would obtain (divine life) for thousands of crores of kalpas.

67. The fruit of an oil-lamp or any other (lamp) is half (of this). By offering water (i.e. bathing the deity's image with water daily) for a month one would obtain godhead.

68. By offering incense (he would become) a Gandharva; (the fruit) is double, when sandal is offered. Ample fruit would be (obtained) by offering the essence of musk and agallochum.

69. By offering a garland or flowers a man would become the lord of gods. By offering cotton cloth (to a brāhmaṇa) in (the) cold (season) one is free from all grief.

70-71. He would obtain (happiness) in (many) births. Having given (a piece of) cloth creating a cool sensation in the summer (to a brāhmaṇa) he never sinks. He who gives according to his capacity (a piece of) cloth of the measure of four cubits with lovely resin and very beautiful and shoes for the feet, does not fall from heaven.

72. A man, by giving (i.e. who gives) gold according to his capacity (to a brāhmaṇa) would be honoured in heaven. He would be handsome (and live) in a region as large as ten yojanas.

73. He would get tenfold (of this fruit) by giving gold with jewels (to a brāhmaṇa) and (by giving) costly diamonds, lapis lazuli, emeralds and rubies.

74. By giving (these) according to the established procedure to an image or to a successful brāhmaṇa he would become the king of a territory as extensive as a hundred yojanas.

75. Similarly, even if he is born on the earth, he delights all people. By giving fragrant substances he becomes a handsome orator.

76. A man has his throat red and (voice sweet like) nectar by offering a betel-nut (to a brāhmaṇa). By offering an excellent maidservant (to a brāhmaṇa) a man would live in heaven for a kalpa.

77. A man is born as a lord of wealth by giving a maidservant (to a brāhmaṇa). In the same way he would have many servants in the heaven by offering (i.e. if he offers) many servants (to a brāhmaṇa).

78-79. For (many) births he gets inexhaustible prosperity on the earth. By giving all kinds of musical instruments he becomes virtuous and is liked by people; he would become the lord of the Gandharvas by his knowledge of sciences, dancing

and singing; in heaven he is endowed with female and male servants, with wealth and with excellent women.

80. Similarly by offering a cow (to a brāhmaṇa) he would live in heaven for that much period. By offering (i.e. pouring) milk on the (deity's) image a man would live in heaven for a kalpa.

81. Double (the fruit of this is obtained) by bathing (the image) with curd, and (the fruit is) more than hundredfold (if he bathes the image) with ghee. He would become the king of the earth by offering food having the six flavours[1] (to a brāhmaṇa).

82. Similarly by offering rice boiled in milk he would become the best among sages on the earth. By offering with pleasure the food to be eaten during certain holidays (to a brāhmaṇa), he becomes the master of the meaning of Vedic sciences.

83. He would become a celibate observer of vows by giving vegetarian food (to a brāhmaṇa). By offering honey and jaggery and salt (to a brāhmaṇa) he would obtain grandeur.

84-85. By offering (i.e. if he offers) sugar etc. (to a brāhmaṇa) his handsomeness is sung (i.e. praised) in all worlds. By worshipping deities and phalluses of Śiva according to (proper) procedure he becomes the lord of heaven (first) and (then) of the worlds in succession. Gods remain disposed (to people) for their good.

86. The best, wise man, having gone (only) once round Śiva's phalluses, goes to (i.e. lives in) heaven for a full hundred divine years.

87. In the same order by salutations to the Self-born, the man, being honoured by people, would go to heaven. Therefore, everyday he should do it (i.e. should salute the Self-born god).

88. The man, who snatches away the wealth of god in the form of an image, having reached Raurava, would become an insect due to (that) snatching (of wealth).

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1. Ṣaḍrasas=the six flavours. They are pungent (kaṭu), salt (lavaṇa), sour (amla), sweet (madhura), bitter (tikta) and astringent (kaṣāva.)

89. He who takes (the materials of) worship meant for the image of Viṣṇu, never returns, with a thousand crores (members) of his family from hell (i.e. with the members he eternally lives in hell).

90. He who has taken (i.e. borrowed) water, flowers etc., or money for (keeping) a lamp, or anything else (from someone), and afterwards does not give it (back) through greed, would eternally go to (i.e. live in) hell.

91. Having kidnapped the maidservant (in the temple) of an image a man does not return from hell. A man affected by lust might even approach his mother; (but) should never approach a female servant (in the temple) of Śiva.

92. A man having approached a female servant (in the temple) of Śiva, and having stolen money (from the temple) of Śiva, and also by eating or taking food or water (from that temple) would meet with distress.

93-94. Therefore, the brāhmaṇa who is (called) Devala,[1] does not return from hell. Even the wickedness of the prostitutes is beneficial (i.e. preferable); for, a man after having touched a prostitute becomes pure after having bathed. The unclean prostitute meets with distress due to resorting to many men.

95. A devout prostitute always engaged in worshipping deities, being loyal and pure, eternally goes to (i.e. lives in) heaven.

96. He who looks upon a courtesan, who is always near, like his mother, enjoys all pleasures like gods in the worlds of gods.

97. As Viṣṇu is adorable to gods, demons and men, so he, the solitary purifier of beings, is respectable in the entire world.

98. He, who is always the servant of deities and very eager in (performing) deeds for deities, being the lord of the world, is honoured in the world of gods.

99. By fashioning the images of these (deities) and constructing a pavilion he obtains heaven according to his capacity. Listen to the ascertainment of time:

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1. Devala—A low brāhmana who subsists upon the offerings made to an idol.

100. He who constructs the pavilion with grass (lives in heaven) for a (divine) year. He who does it with reed stalks (lives in heaven) for a hundred years. He who constructs it with any other wood (lives in heaven) for a myriad years. He who constructs it with the khadira wood (lives in heaven) for a lakh years.

101. He who constructs the temple with strong stones carefully put together lives in heaven for crores and crores of years. Therefore a wise man should with all efforts cause a pavilion to be constructed.

102. A man on stealing objects in a pavilion would meet with distress for as much period as he who constructs a pavilion would live in heaven.

103-104. The fruit that a man gets by constructing a house for a brāhmaṇa is double the fruit that he gets by constructing a pavilion (for the images) of deities at an attractive place crowded with people at a place where things are bought and sold, at a shelter for the travellers, and at a confluence of a small and a big river.

105. A man by getting constructed a charming house for a learned brāhmaṇa who is helpless and especially who is poor, does not fall from heaven.

106. He who would daily listen to this meritorious and excellent account would eternally obtain (i.e. live in) heaven and would get the fruit of (constructing) a palace etc.

107. Having recited this to the wealthy, the rich and the meritorious, or having recited it to himself, a man does not fall from heaven.

108. The brāhmaṇa who recites it to gods, servants and female servants, and in the temples, always goes along the path to salvation.

109. By reciting this before kings, the rich, the wealthy, the virtuous, he obtains salvation. One would get the same fruit by listening to it.

The brāhmaṇas said:

110-111. O best of brāhmaṇas, such a great and meritorious person is one among many. He is easy to find, and is ador-

able to men and the sages and those who practise penance, to the four castes and four stages of human life, to sinful and meritorious persons, to virtuous and vicious people and also to persons belonging to a (high) caste or a low caste.

Vyāsa said:

112. Of all beings, he who possesses a rudrākṣa is excellent, by seeing which a heap of the sins of people vanishes.

113-114. By touching it one obtains heaven, and by wearing it (on one's person) one becomes Rudra. He who wears it on the head or the arm becomes equal to the lord in the world and at the sacrifice and moves (i.e. can move) everywhere on the earth. That region where such a brāhmaṇa lives would be meritorious.

115-116. A man seeing or touching it would be purified from sins. All the meritorious deeds that a man does, such as muttering, presenting libations to the manes, giving gifts, bath, worship and going round keeping the deity to his right, are inexhaustible. O brāhmaṇas, the rudrākṣa berry is a great sacred place among the sacred places.

117-118. By wearing it a man becomes purified from his sin and is extremely meritorious. That muttering, that undertaking, that gift, that hymn, that spell, that worship of deities, made (or recited) after taking an auspicious rosary (of rudrākṣas) having the central bead—all that becomes inexhaustible and the sin would perish.

119. We (i.e. I) shall tell you the characteristics of a rosary; O best brāhmaṇas, listen. Knowing its characteristics, obtain (i.e. follow) Śiva's path.

120. A man should avoid in the following order: a rudrākṣa without a mouth, or one pierced by an insect, or one with the image on it broken, or one with the berries sticking to one another, for a rosary.

121. That rosary which is strung by oneself with its beads loose or close to one another (is recommended). A rosary strung by a śūdra etc. is impure. One should avoid it from distance.

122. The berry (of the rudrākṣa) should touch the middle

finger. Then in the proper order one should mutter, moving one's hand, and again and again touching the central bead of the rosary.

123. One should count the number of the mantras (sacred word/name/formula) that are muttered. If they are not counted, they are fruitless. One should mutter (the names) of all gods with (i.e. by counting the beads of) one's own rosary.

124-125. (If he after) being pure (mutters the mantras) in all sacred places the merit would be a crorefold. He would obtain endless fruit if he mutters a mantra in honour of the image of Viṣṇu or Śiva, or Gaṇapati or the Sun, on a pure ground, or at the pure root of a tree, in a cowpen, or in a house at a crossway.

126. He, who mutters the hymn (in honour) of a goddess, in a vacant house, or before a corpse, or in a cremation ground, or at a place where four roads meet, has quick success, (since) he becomes efficient.

127. Every hymn—a Vedic one, or a Paurāṇic one, or one from the scriptures—gives the desired and agreeable object, if muttered with a rosary of rudrākṣas.

128. A man should hold on his head pure water flowing from the rudrākṣas; he is freed from all sins; his religious merit is inexhaustible.

129. A man who holds on his body an immortal rudrākṣa berry, would become the best among the gods.

The brāhmaṇas said:

130. Wherefrom is the rudrākṣa produced? For what reason has it become (i.e. is it regarded) pure? Why has it become stable on the earth? Who has brought it into usage?

Vyāsa said:

131-132. O brāhmaṇas, formerly in the Kṛtayuga a demon named Tripura having killed the gods and after the destruction of all the worlds, remained firm in a city in the intermediate region between the heaven and the earth due to the boon of Brahmā. Lord Śiva heard the terrible representation of (i.e. made by) the gods.

133. Then he strung his bow with an arrow resembling death and holding it killed the demon who was seen (by him) with (his) divine eye.

134. Fallen from heaven like a great meteor he dropped on the earth. Drops of perspiration fell down from (the body of) Rudra (i.e. Śiva), who was tired with exertion.

135. There, on the earth, a great rudrākṣaka was produced from the drops of (Śiva's) perspiration[1]. The beings do not know its fruit for it is very secret.

136. Then, Skanda, saluting the great lord, god of gods, with (i.e. by bowing down) his head on the ground, said (these) words.

137. "O lord, I want to know correctly the fruit of rudrākṣa at (the time of) muttering (a mantra), or the fruit of wearing it on one's person, or of seeing or touching it."

The lord spoke:

138. A man obtains a lakhfold merit by seeing it, a crore-fold merit by touching it, and ten crores of merit by wearing it (on his body).

139. By muttering (hymns with the help of a rudrākṣa rosary) for thousands of lakhs of crores and hundreds of lakhs of crores (times) one gets religious merit. No doubt should be raised here.

140. A man who is abandoned or who is engaged in impious acts or who is full of all sins, becomes free from all sins by wearing a rudrākṣa (on his body).

141. Even if a beast of prey taking a rudrākṣa in his throat dies, it too obtains Rudrahood; then what about human beings etc.?

142. Even if a man who does not engage himself in meditation holds a rudrākṣa (on his body), he becomes free from all sins, and obtains the highest position.

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1. 'Aśrubindu' in the text appears to be a mistake for 'svedabindu'.

Kārtikeya said:

143-144. There are rudrākṣas having one mouth, two mouths, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine mouths, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen and fourteen mouths, and are said to be Śiva himself.

145-146a. Tell me about their deities and deities of their mouths. O lord of the world, (tell me) also as to which merit they possess. If you favour me, tell properly (about this).

The lord said:

146b-148. The rudrākṣa of one mouth is virtually Śiva; it removes (the sin of) brāhmaṇacide. Therefore one should wear it (on one's person) for the destruction of all (one's) sins. He would go to Śiva's heaven and rejoice with Śiva. O Kārtikeya, a man would obtain a rudrākṣa of one mouth due to great religious merit and due to Śiva's favour and would also obtain (i.e. go to) Kailāsa.

149-150a. A rudrākṣa of two mouths is (Viṣṇu), the god of gods. A man who wears a rudrākṣa with two mouths, has all his secret sins, like killing a cow, destroyed, and then obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven eternally on account of wearing a rudrākṣa with two mouths.

150b-152a. The one with three mouths is Fire himself; the sin earned in the (past) births of him on whom it remains (i.e. who wears it on his person), is burnt as fire burns fuel. The sin that a man has obtained (i.e. committed) by killing a woman or a brāhmaṇa and also by killing many (beings)—all that perishes that moment only.

152b-156a. A wise man obtains that fruit which is obtained by worshipping Fire, or by rites of (honouring) Fire, or by offering the oblation of ghee; and also obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven. He, who wears (a rudrākṣa of three mouths on his body), is like Brahmā on the earth. It would burn all (the sins due to) wicked deeds collected in birth after birth. There would be no disease in his belly; he would not be sick. He is never defeated, and his house is not burnt by fire. These and all other (fruits) are (obtained) and destructive weapons also

are warded off. Nothing that is inauspicious happens due to wearing of a rudrākṣa of three mouths (i.e. when a rudrākṣa of three mouths is worn on one's person).

156b-159. A rudrākṣa with four mouths is Brahmā himself; a brāhmaṇa on whose body it remains (i.e. is worn), would become adept in all branches of knowledge and best among those who know (the meaning of) the Vedas; he would know all the essential principles of religion and worldly prosperity and would be proficient in traditional law and in the Purāṇas. By wearing a rudrākṣa with four mouths the sin of homicide or (living) in houses with many beings quickly burns. Śiva is always pleased and he would be the lord of beings. Similarly he is born as the lord and the man is not at all afraid.

160-163a. With the five mouths these gods have resorted to Vāmadeva (i.e. Śiva). Therefore on the earth the five-mouthed one is most important. This one is of the nature of Rudra's son. Therefore a wise man should wear it. As long as the period of thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas he would be honoured by gods and demons before Śiva. He would be a sovereign emperor on the earth and in Śiva's temple would have the lustre of Śarva (i.e. Śiva). Therefore, with all effort one should wear a rudrākṣa having five mouths.

163b-169a. There is no doubt that he who wears on his right arm a six-mouthed rudrākṣa i.e. Kārtikeya is free from such sins as brāhmaṇacide etc. One who is brave like Skanda does not get defeated even when the end of the world is imminent; he is the mine of virtues on the earth. He becomes Kumāra (i.e. Kārtikeya), the son of Pārvatī and Śiva. A brāhmaṇa is honoured by a king; a kṣatriya gets victory; the castes like vaiśya and śūdra always are full of (i.e. always have) prosperity; and to such a man only Pārvatī, the giver of boons, is easily available like his mother. Then by the strength of his own arms only a man becomes all-lustrous. In a council or in a king's palace or in an assembly such a wise man becomes an orator. He does not become a coward, nor does he

meet with ruin. All these and other good things (are possible) because of his wearing a six-mouthed (rudrākṣa).

169b-174. The seven-mouthed one is Ananta, the king of serpents and the General of a great army. In every mouth of this rudrākṣa serpents have settled. (They are:) Ananta, Karkaṭa, and Puṇḍarīka, and also Takṣaka, Viṣolbaṇa and Kārīṣa and the seventh is Śaṅkhacūḍa. These very powerful serpents live in the seven mouths. Merely by wearing this on one's body (i.e. if this is worn on one's body), poison does not spread over the body; and like the lord of the serpents Śiva is also very much pleased. Due to his being pleased all sins due to brāhmaṇacide, drinking liquor, stealing etc. and violating one's teacher's wife, perish day by day. All the sin that a man obtains (i.e. has committed) perishes that moment only. He would certainly obtain god-like pleasures in the three worlds.

175-180a. The eight-mouthed (rudrākṣa), the General of an army, is actually god Vināyaka himself. Hear from me what merit one gets by wearing such a rudrākṣa only. For birth after birth he would not be (born) a fool, or a patient, and would not be deprived of intelligence. There would never be any difficulty in his undertaking. He will have adeptness in his writings and skill in great undertakings. He fully destroys all his sins like cheating in money (-transactions), in weighing, or due to all (kinds of) tricks, or due to his touching his preceptor's wife with his penis (i.e. copulating with her) or touching her with his belly or his hand. Having eternally enjoyed heaven, and being free, he gets a high position. All these merits are due to wearing an eight-mouthed rudrākṣa.

180b-183a. The nine-mouthed one is called Bhairava. He, who wears this tawny rudrākṣa, granter of salvation, on his arm, would become equal to me in power. He who commits the murders of thousands of lakhs of crores, quickly burns (i.e. destroys the sin due to) them all by wearing a rudrākṣa with nine mouths. In heaven he is always honoured like Indra by gods. He is Gaṇeśa staying in an excellent abode like Śiva.

183b. By wearing (i.e. if a man wears a rudrākṣa) having ten mouths, serpents perish.

184-186. O boy, the eleven Rudras are said to reside in

the eleventh mouth (i.e. in the rudrākṣa with eleven mouths). A man should always wear it on the topknot. Hear (about) its meritorious fruit. A man quickly obtains by wearing a rudrākṣa with eleven mouths the fruit of (the performance of) thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of crores of sacrifices, and the fruit of having duly presented a hundred thousand cows (to a brāhmaṇa). In the world he is like Hara and is not reborn.

187-191a. Āditya (i.e. the Sun) well-settled in the twelve mouths is always pleased with him who puts a rudrākṣa with twelve mouths round his neck. He quickly obtains the fruit which one gets by a cow-sacrifice or a human sacrifice, and deadly weapons are warded off. To him there is no fear from fire; no disease comes to him; he enjoys the acquisition of wealth and happiness; he is rich and never (experiences) poverty. Even if he has killed or has caused to kill elephants, horses, men, cats, rats or rabbits, or tigers, wild boars, foxes etc., he gets free (from the sin of having killed them) by wearing a rudrākṣa with twelve mouths; there is no doubt about this.

191b-194. If a man gets a rudrākṣa having thirteen mouths i.e. Rudra, he should know that it is most auspicious and fulfils all (his) desires. O Kārtikeya, he endowed with good luck accomplishes the nectar-like elixir, alchemy and the impression of the feet[1] of a deity or a holy person. A man is free from all sins by wearing a rudrākṣa with thirteen mouths, after having (i.e. even if he has) killed his mother, father, sister, brother or preceptor. Like the great god (Śiva) he eternally obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven.

195-196. O boy, if a man always wears on his head or arm, a rudrākṣa with fourteen mouths, the mass of Śiva's power, he is always honoured and approached by gods due to the greatness of his religious merit. What, again, is the use of speaking or describing too much?

1. Mention of Pādukā in the text is rather confusing.

Kārtikeya said:

197. O lord, I desire to hear; (therefore) tell me with the recital of which sacred hymn the assigment or wearing of the rudrākṣas with different numbers of mouths is done according to the proper procedure.

The lord spoke:

198-199. O Kārtikeya, hear correctly about the assignment and wearing of rudrākṣas of different numbers of mouths. The merits (already) told are had without the recital of a sacred hymn. The merits and the importance of the man who on the earth wears it to the accompaniment of a sacred hymn, cannot be told.

200. Now the sacred hymns are indicated: 'Om Rudra ekavaktrasya; Om khaṃ dvivaktrasya; Om ambuṃ trivaktrasya; Om hrīṃ[1] caturvaktrasya; Om hrāṃ pañcavaktrasya; Om hrūṃ ṣaḍvaktrasya; Om hraḥ saptavaktrasya; Om kaṃ aṣṭavaktrasya; Om jūṃ navavaktrasya; Om akṣaṃ daśavaktrasya; Om śrīṃ ekādaśavaktrasya; Om hrīṃ dvādaśavaktrasya; Om kṣoṃ trayodaśavaktrasya; Om nrāṃ caturdaśavaktrasya.' Thus the sacred hymns should be assigned in due order. A man who, wearing a rosary (of rudrākṣas) on his head or chest, walks, obtains, at every step the fruit (of the performance) of a horse-sacrifice; not otherwise.

201. A man becomes equal to me by wearing rudrākṣas of all mouths (i.e. by wearing rudrākṣas having any number of mouths). Therefore, O son, with all effort, wear a rudrākṣa.

202. A man, who, wearing a rudrākṣa, dies on the earth, goes to my charming city, (and) is honoured by all gods.

203. O boy, formerly in Maru country when a trader was going for trading he was harassed (i.e. haunted) by a female spirit under a tree.

204. She danced there; a brāhmaṇa saw her (and said to her:) "Who are you? You are helpless; you are covered over with a tattered garment."

205-206a. She then told the brāhmaṇa: "I have heard from a messenger of gods; O brāhmaṇa, this charming man

1. Hrīṃ, Hrāṃ etc.—These are mystic syllables.

will now certainly meet with death due to the fall of the thunderbolt (on his body) ; and he will be my husband."

206b-209a. In the meanwhile, the thunderbolt fell from heaven on his head; and he fell on the ground on half the portion of a rudrākṣa. Then, O son, an aeroplane quickly flew from my city. Then the fortunate man, got into it and remained there for a long time. Having obtained my portion he will be a rich and wealthy man on the earth. O son, thus a man who dies on a piece of a rudrākṣa, obtains a good position (i.e. goes to heaven).

209b. I am unable to describe the fruit of wearing a rudrākṣa with the knowledge (of its importance).

210. He who dies with a rosary of rudrākṣas or with (just) one rudrākṣa (on his body), would become the follower of Śiva, Śakti, Gaṇapati, or the Sun.

211. He who recites it to himself, or to others, causes others to listen to it or himself listens to it, is free from all sins, and would obtain heaven in (due) order.

CHAPTER SIXTY

In Praise of Tulasi

Skanda said:

1. I am asking about (the importance of) the fruit of another tree also. O lord of the world, tell me about it for the good of all the worlds.

The lord said:

2. The dhātrī[1] fruit is very pure and is well-known in all the worlds, by planting which (i.e. it) a man or a woman is free from the bondage of birth.

1. Dhātrī—Āmalaka tree; Emblic Myrobalan.

3. This fruit of Vāsudeva is pure, is pleasing and auspicious. Merely by eating it a man is free from all sins.

4. (Long) life would be (obtained) by eating it; religious merit would be accumulated by drinking (the juice of) it; misfortune would be destroyed by (taking) a bath (after applying its tenacious paste to one's body); and one would get all prosperity.

5. O Mahāsena (i.e. Kārtikeya), evil spirits, demons and goblins do not go (i.e. haunt) that house where dhātrī (tree) always stands.

6-7 Not the Ganges, not Gayā, neither Kāśī nor Puṣkara (is able to remove all sins of men); it is dhātrī only (that removes all sins). All the sins of him who bathes (after applying the tenacious paste of dhātrī to his body) when the day sacred to Viṣṇu has approached (i.e. on the day sacred to Viṣṇu), on the eleventh day of each of the two fortnights, perish, and he is honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven.

8. The fruit of dhātrī should always be used in food or at bath; it should certainly be used to the satisfaction of Viṣṇu (i.e. to satisfy Viṣṇu), or at the time of just bathing on a day sacred to Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu).

9-10. When a man breaks his fast of the eleventh day of each fortnight (by) just touching dhātrī, when the feast is ready and then eating (other food), then, O Kārtikeya, he is free from the sins committed during seven births just by observing one fast. There is no doubt about this.

11. He obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven eternally and is absorbed into viṣṇu. Therefore, with all effort, observe the dhātrī vow.

12. O Kārtikeya, he whose hair is always well-tinged with dhātri juice, would never again suck his mother's breasts (i.e. would never be reborn).

13. By seeing or touching dhātrī or even by uttering its name, Viṣṇu, the granter of boons, being pleased, is well disposed to him.

14. Viṣṇu dwells there, and also Brahmā; Lakṣmī also is steady in that house where there is the fruit of dhātrī; therefore a man should plant it in his house.

15. Misfortune perishes (from) that place where dhātrī stands. All gods are pleased; and being glad do not leave (him even) for a moment.

16. Viṣṇu would be pleased with him who offers a rich offering of eatables[1] along with a dhātri fruit to a deity; and not by hundreds of other sacrifices.

17. He, who, after bathing with (i.e. after applying) the juice of the dhātrī fruit (to his body), worships Viṣṇu, gets the desired fruit, or obtains whatever he has in his mind.

18. In the same way, the best man, having remembered the distinctive mark (of the deity) and having worshipped it with a dhātrī fruit, gets the fruit of a hundred thousand (coins of) gold.

19. O Skanda, the man who is engaged in serving dhātrī, gets the same position as the learned or the meditating sages have.

20. That position, which is had by resorting to or visiting sacred places or by observing various vows is obtained by men by means of serving dhātrī well.

21. He gets the love of all gods, goddesses and of my attendants also. (All these) the granters of boons, are well-disposed to him when he bathes with (i.e. after applying the paste of) the fruit of dhātrī or after worshipping it.

22. By properly worshipping the dhātrī fruit, those planets that are wicked, and the fierce demons and goblins, do not become (i.e. cease to be) wicked.

23. O son, except (in the worship of) the Sun, the āmalakī fruit is recommended in all sacrifices and rites and in the worship of every god.

24. Therefore, O son, one should avoid from a distance (i.e. keep away from) the dhātrī fruits on a Sunday and especially on the seventh day (of a fortnight).

25. Everything—life, wealth and wife—of him who bathes with (the paste of) the fruit of dhātrī or eats it on a Sunday, perishes.

26. One should also certainly avoid from a distance (i.e. keep away from) dhātrī on a Saṃkrānti, a Thursday, the sixth-

1 Naivedya—An offering of eatables presented to a deity or idol.

day, the first day, the ninth day of every fortnight and on the new-moon day.

27. That dead man (i.e. the dead body of a man) in whose nose, ear or mouth or hair of the head a dhātrī fruit is (placed), goes to the abode of Viṣṇu.

28. A dead man, merely by contact with a dhātrī fruit goes to Viṣṇu's abode. All his sins perish; and he goes to heaven in a chariot.

29. The religious man who bathes after besmearing his body with the juice of a dhātrī fruit, obtains the fruit of a horse-sacrifice at every step.

30. Merely on seeing it all the most sinful beings, wicked and fierce planets run away.

31-36. O Skanda, formerly a pulkasa[1] went to a forest for hunting; after having killed the flocks of beasts and birds he was oppressed with thirst and hunger. Seeing in front of him an āmalakī tree full of large fruits he at once climbed it and ate the best fruit. Then through (ill) luck he fell on the ground from the top of the tree. Due to the pain of the deep wound he then died. Then all the very powerful hosts of evil spirits and the hosts of demons and ghosts and Yama's servants could not comfortably carry or see that dead cāṇḍāla. Saying, 'this is mine' they started fighting among themselves. They could not even seize one another. Then after having reflected they went to the groups of sages.

The evil spirits said:

37-43a. O wise sages, why were we or the servants of Yama not able to see the sinful cāṇḍāla? All those viz. who, with their faces turned away from battle, die after being overthrown by the determined ones, who have sunk due to rash acts, who are timid, who are oppressed by a destructive weapon, fire or wood, or those men who are killed by lions, tigers or by aquatic animals, also the evil spirits living in water or on ground or fallen from trees and mountains, or those who are killed by beasts and birds or who have died in prisons or due to poison,

1. Pulkasa—Name of a degraded mixed caste, the offspring of a niṣāda by a śūdra woman.

those who have died by committing suicide, or those who have missed the rites like śrāddha, or those who have died due to secret acts, also rogues and haters of preceptors, brāhmaṇas and kings, heretics, followers of the left-hand Śākta ritual,[1] those who were cruel, who have administered poison, who were false witnesses, who have eaten impure food—are to be eaten by the evil spirits. There is no doubt about this. We, who have been saying 'this is mine', are not able to carry that (cāṇḍāla). Why and due to whose prowess is he difficult to look at like the sun?

The sages said:

43b-44. O evil spirits, he has eaten a ripe āmalakī fruit. Many fruits due to it are going along with him (i.e. he has earned great religious merit which now accompanies him). For that reason only he has certainly become difficult to look at.

45-46a. The life-principle of him who has fallen from the top of a tree would not leave him due to affection (for the body). He and also others who commit sinful deeds would go to heaven, not due to the movement of the Sun, but only after being purified by eating a dhātrī (fruit).

The evil spirits said:

46b. We are asking you through ignorance. We are not at all censurers.

47-48a. O best sages, tell us quickly what is in your mind, till an aeroplane does not come here from Viṣṇu's world, and till the brāhmaṇas do not loudly recite whatever is designed by them like the Vedic hymns.

48b-51a. We are not able to remain even for a moment at that place where the Vedas, various sacred hymns, Purāṇas and Smṛtis are loudly recited. We do not remain (present) in front of places of sacrifices, offerings, mutterings, and of the worship of deities. Therefore (please) tell us the account. O brāhmaṇas, doing which (deeds) do men obtain the birth of (i.e. are born as) evil spirits? We desire to hear about it correctly. How (i.e. why) is the body deformed?

1. Kaulika—A follower of the left-hand Śākta ritual.

The brāhmaṇas said:

51b-52. The false witnesses and those who died after killing or binding (someone) being troubled by the distresses like cold, wind, heat and especially by hunger and thirst, and also oppressed by other troubles, (becoming) evil spirits, have gone to hell.

53. Those evil spirits who sought the weakpoints of others and also who destroyed the work of brāhmaṇas and their preceptors, become evil spirits not to be born again (i.e. they eternally live as evil spirits).

54. That man who strikes the giver of gifts to the best brāhmaṇa, resorts for a long time to the state of an evil spirit and never returns from hell.

55. Those fools who oppress or drive their own or another's cow, are born as evil spirits on the earth as a result of their deeds.

56. Those truthful men who fail to keep their promise and also those men who have violated their vow and have eaten the lotus-petals, are born as evil spirits on the earth as a result of their deeds.

57. Those who sell their own pure, chaste, innocent daughter or that of their paternal or maternal uncle, are born as evil spirits on the earth.

58a. These and many others are born as evil spirits due to their deeds.

The evil spirits said:

58b-59a. O brāhmaṇas, (please) tell us quickly for our good that which is beneficial to all the worlds, viz. how (i.e. for which reason) or by (performing) which deed men do not become evil spirits.

The brāhmaṇas said:

59b-60a. The wise man who bathes in the water of a sacred place or salutes a great idol (of a deity) is not born as an evil spirit.

60b-61a. Men after having fasted on the eleventh day (of a fortnight) and having worshipped Viṣṇu (i.e. those men who

fast on the eleventh day of a fortnight and worship Viṣṇu) especially on the twelfth day (of that fortnight), do not become evil spirits.

61b-62a. Those (men) who are attached to the worship of deities with the Vedic hymns and eulogies and sacred hymns, do not become evil spirits.

62b-63a. A man after having heard, recited to others or to himself (i.e. who recites to others or to himself) divine passages from the Purāṇas agreeing with religious precepts, does not become an evil spirit.

63b-64a. Similarly, men purified by various vows and by wearing rudrākṣas or lotuses, after muttering (i.e. who mutter sacred names of a deity) on (i.e. by counting the beads of) a rudrākṣa rosary, do not become evil spirits.

64b-65a. Those who after having daily bathed (i.e. who bathe) with the juice of (i.e. after besmearing their body with paste of) dhātrī fruit, are attached to eating (i.e. eat) it, have thereby worshipped Viṣṇu well and (so) do not become evil spirits.

The evil spirits said:

65b-67. Those who are well-versed in the Purāṇas know that religious merit is obtained by seeing (i.e. meeting) the good. So (now) we have met (i.e. have been lucky to meet) you. (Please) do whatever is good for us, so that all of us will be free from this state of evil spirits. O wise ones, we have submitted ourselves to you; (please) instruct us in the performance of a vow.

68a. Then all the kind, best brāhmaṇas said to them: "Quickly eat the dhātrī fruits for obtaining release."

The evil spirits said:

68b-69a. O brāhmaṇas, we cannot stand the sight of the dhātrī trees. How then shall we be able to eat their fruits?

The brāhmaṇas said:

69b-70a. Because we are telling it, the auspicious eating of the dhātrī fruits will fructify in (the form of) reaching the other world. Therefore deserve yourselves to go to heaven.

70b-71a. Then having obtained a boon from them, the evil spirits climbed up the dhātrī tree, obtained the fruits and sportively ate them.

71b-72. Then having got into a big, very beautiful chariot that had quickly come from the abode of gods, the cāṇḍāla evil spirits went to heaven, very difficult to obtain by means of vows of sons and sacrifices.

Skanda said:

73. The evil spirits obtained religious merit and went to heaven merely after eating the dhātrī (fruits). (Then) how (is it that) men etc. who eat them do not go to heaven?

The lord said:

74-76. Due to their former loss of knowledge, they do not understand what is beneficial to them and what is not. The evil spirits, being deluded, look upon leavings of food or (food etc.) touched by dogs, and also phlegm, urine or excrement as excellent, and always eat them, and also the excrement, urine or substances vomited by cocks. The evil spirits always eat the food of him who has not given up muttering (sacred hymns) during the period of mourning or of impurity caused by a child-birth in the family.

77. The evil spirits live there (i.e. in the house) of him, whose wife is hard to be subdued, is void of purity and restraint, is expelled by the elders and is wicked.

78-79. Those who are not eminent due to being born in (certain) families, who are without power and energy, who are deaf, weak, and poor are born as evil spirits due to their deeds. Even for a moment they do not enjoy prosperity as they are extremely connected with unhappiness. Therefore they have deformed figures and are void of all pleasures.

80. The evil spirits are naked, troubled with diseases, rough and dirty. They are always afflicted with these or other miseries.

81-82a. It may be that due to the ripening of that Karma (i.e. those actions) they are born like these. Those who are busy in censuring their father, mother, preceptors or deities,

and also those who are heretics, who are followers of the left-hand Śākta ritual or are sinful, are born as evil spirits.

82b-83a. Those, who have committed suicide by putting a noose round their neck, or by water (i.e. by throwing themselves into water), or with weapons or by (drinking) poisons, become evil spirits in this world, or are born in (the castes) like cāṇḍāla.

83b-85a. Those, who are low-born, fallen, or who have died of a sinful disease, and those who are killed by the low-born ones in a battle, are certainly (born as) evil spirits on the earth. Those who are full of (i.e. who have committed) great sins[1], who are excluded in marriages (i.e. are not married), who are rash due to bravery, are born as evil spirits as a result of their deeds.

85b-89a. Those, who have committed high treason, or who have thought of being treacherous to their parents, or who are void of meditation and study and also of vows, and worship of gods etc., are without (i.e. those who do not recite) prayers, those who do not bathe or those who are interested in approaching their preceptor's wife, those who keep company with vicious, low-born women, or those who have died due to severe fasts, who have died while staying in a mlecchа country, those impure ones who are endowed with (i.e. speak) the language of the mlecchas, those who derive their livelihood from the mlecchas, those who imitate the mlecchas, those who live on a woman's wealth, those who do not protect women, are born as evil spirits. There is no doubt about this.

89b-90a. Those, who abandon (i.e. dismiss without entertaining) a brāhmaṇa—an auspicious guest due to his religious merit—who is fatigued, whose body is tormented due to hunger and who has come to their house, are born as evil spirits.

90b-91a. Those, who sell cows to mlecchas and to those who eat (the flesh of) cows, rather live in the world of the evil spirits and are not reborn (i.e. live there eternally).

91b-92. Those who are internally impure and the dead

1. Mahāpātaka—Great sins. These are five: kiling a brāhmaṇa; drinking wine or liquor; theft; cohabitation with the wife of one's teacher; keeping company with one who commits any one of these four sins.

beasts are born as evil spirits. Those who are void of any sacraments like rites after birth etc. are born and die as evil spirits and goblins (again and again) for a long time.

93. By every sacrament like a bath, morning, noon and evening prayers, worship of gods, and Vedic words and words about sacrifices being born as an evil spirit is avoided.

94-95a. Those, who are without (i.e. who do not undergo) any sacrament, are sinful; such evil spirits are not born again (i.e. live as evil spirits eternally). Those, who cause (or allow) people) to throw the leavings of food and utensils used for eating food, filthy things (like urine, excrement) of the body into sacred places, become evil spirits. There is no doubt about this.

95b-97a. Those, who have not gratified brāhmaṇas, manes and preceptors by making offerings and honouring them, are very much born as evil spirits due to their deeds. Those women who, having forsaken their husbands, live with other men, live for a long time in the world of the evil spirits, and are born in low castes.

97b-98a. Also those, who, being deluded by (enjoyments) of senses, deceive their husbands, those who eat savory food are sinful, and live for a long time on the earth as evil spirits.

98b-99a. Those, who eat excrement and (drink) urine, those who are intent upon using up the wealth of a brāhmaṇa or those who eat prohibited food become evil spirits and are not born again (i.e. eternally live as evil beings).

99b-100a. Those who forcibly snatch the things of others and do not give them (back), and those who insult guests are born as evil spirits living in hell.

100b-101a. Therefore, having eaten (i.e. one who eats) the āmalakī fruit, and having bathed (i.e. one who bathes) with its juice (i.e. after applying the paste of the āmalakī fruits to the body), one is free from all sins, and is honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven.

101b. Therefore, with all efforts serve the auspicious āmalakī.

102-103. He, who would, everyday listen to this auspicious meritorious account, has all his sins purified and is honoured in Viṣṇu's world. Those, who are well-versed in the Purāṇas,

know that he who would narrate this account especially to Viṣṇu's devotees, is absorbed in Viṣṇu.

Skanda said:

104. O lord, I have understood the two kinds of the very pure fruit of tree. Now I desire to hear about the leaves and flowers that easily give (i.e. lead to) liberation.

The lord said:

105. Of all leaves and flowers the auspicious Tulasī, which grants (i.e. satisfies) all desires, which belongs to and is very much liked by Viṣṇu, is the best.

106. Tulasī gives enjoyments and liberation, is the chief, greatest in all worlds and auspicious, resorting to which the best sages have eternally gone to heaven.

107. She (i.e. the Tulasī plant) was formerly planted by Viṣṇu for the good of all the worlds. The leaf and flower of Tulasī are valued in all good works.

108. As Lakṣmī is dear to Viṣṇu or as I am dear (to him), in the same way this goddess Tulasī is (dear to him); a fourth one is not to be obtained.

109-110a. One Tulasī leaf gives a hundred(coins of) gold. Without Tulasī leaves, Viṣṇu, the demon-killer, is not pleased. He is not pleased with other flowers and leaves and applications of sandal etc.

110b-111a. He, who, with the hope of final beatitude, has worshipped Hari with this (i.e. a Tulasī leaf), has indeed given (gifts), offered oblations, obtained knowledge and performed sacrifices or observed vows etc.

111b-113. I think that by Viṣṇu's worship with Tulasī leaf brightness, happiness, fame, wealth, (noble) family, (good) character, (good) wife, (good) son, (good) daughter, wealth, kingdom, health, knowledge and special knowledge, Vedas, Vedāṅgas, science, Purāṇas, sacred texts, are in his hand birth after birth.

114. As Gaṅgā of a charming form grants liberation in heaven, or as Bhāgīrathī is auspicious, so is auspicious Tulasī.

115. What is the use the water of Ganges and what is the

use of resorting to Puṣkara? He gets delight with water mixed with Tulasī leaf only.

116. That intelligent man, to whom Viṣṇu is favourable in every birth, has faith in worshipping Viṣṇu with Tulasī (leaves).

117. O Skanda, it is not possible to narrate the fruit of merit of him who would worship Viṣṇu with the sprouts and leaves of Tulasī.

118. There is the proximity of Viṣṇu, where there is Tulasī grove. Brahmā also (lives) there, and also Lakṣmī with all the hosts of gods.

119. Therefore a man should always worship that deity (which is) in proximity. All those panegyrics and hymns etc. become eternal (when recited in the proximity of Tulasī).

120. All the evil spirits, goblins, ghosts of brāhmaṇas, ghosts, demons etc. always run away (from) there.

121. The mothers like Alakṣmī, Nāśnī, Ghūrṇā, Ḍākinī[1], get frightened after seeing the Tulasī leaf.

122. There (and then) only all sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, sinful diseases due to sins, committed through bad advice, perish.

123. He, who has planted a grove of Tulasī for Viṣṇu on the earth, has duly performed a hundred sacrifice in which dakṣiṇā (fee paid to brāhmaṇas) is dear.

124. By putting Tulasī on Viṣṇu-idols, and also on Śālagrāma stones[2], one would be absorbed with Viṣṇu.

125. The men (i.e. relatives) of the wise man who would plant a Tulasī plant for Viṣṇu on the earth, are happy; he goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

126. He, who, after having worshipped Viṣṇu, puts the remaining of the Tulasī leaf on his own head, is purified and would go to heaven.

127. In the Kaliyuga Tulasī burns one's sin, and gives one (i.e. takes one to) heaven and salvation on (i.e. by) worshipping it, narrating (its account), meditating upon it, planting it and putting its (leaves etc.) (on one's person).

1. Ḍākinī—A female imp attending Kālī (feeding on human flesh).
2. Śālagrāma—Name of a sacred stone worshipped by the Vaiṣṇavas and supposed to be pervaded by Viṣṇu. It is a black stone which contains a fossil, ammonite and is chiefly found near the Śālagrāma village on the Gaṇḍakī river.

128-129. He who teaches about it, and himself practises it, goes to the highest place, viz. Viṣṇu's abode. That which pleases Viṣṇu is dearer to me.

130. O Skanda, the leaf (of Tulasī) is equal to all gods and goddesses in śrāddhas and sacrifices.

131. Therefore serve Tulasī with all effort. He, who has served Tulasī, has served everyone like his preceptor, a brāhmaṇa or a sacred place.

132-133a. Therefore, O Skanda, serve (the Tulasī). He who would cast his life while keeping Tulasī on the tuft of hair on his head, is free from a stream of sins and goes to the happy heaven.

133b-134a. That (high) position which the wise obtain by means of sacrifices like Rājasūya, vows and various restraints is obtained by those who serve Tulasī.

134b-135. A man obtains the position of Viṣṇu by worshipping Viṣṇu just with one leaf; what is the use of (giving) the minute details of the sacred precepts?

136. He, who has worshipped Viṣṇu with a crore of soft Tulasī leaves, would not drink the milk of his mother (i.e. would not suck his mother's breasts, i.e. would not be born).

137. A man should enliven thousands of men, by worshipping Viṣṇu everyday with delicate Tulasī leaves. O child, I have told you the main qualities of Tulasī.

138. I am unable to describe all the qualities even with (i.e. even after spending) a long time. He who would daily listen to this account—the collection of religious merit, is free from the sin committed in the previous birth, and from the bondage of birth.

139. One would get the fruit of agniṣṭoma by reciting it even once.

140. Such a man does not contract diseases, nor does he have ignorance, O son. He always gets success; he is never defeated.

141-142. The wealth of him, in whose house there is a writing (i.e. the written account), thrives. Mental agonies, evil spirits, griefs, or insult do not remain, even for a moment, at that place where there is such a written account.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Glorification of Tulasī

The brāhmaṇas said:

1. We have heard from you the greatness of the Tulasī blossom, auspicious to Viṣṇu. We (now) desire to hear the auspicious hymn of praise composed in her (i.e. Tulasī's) honour.

Vyāsa said:

2-4. O brāhmaṇas, I shall tell you that Purāṇa (i.e. old account) which I narrated in the Skanda Purāṇa, for (obtaining) liberation. All the disciples of the sage Śatānanda who had fulfilled their vows, having saluted their preceptor asked him what was helpful to religious merit, O brāhmaṇas. (They said to Śatānanda:) "O lord, O best of brāhmaṇas, we desired to hear from you the glorification of Tulasī, which you had formerly heard from the mouth of Brahmā."

Śatānanda said:

5-7. He who killed (i.e. destroyed) the pride of the demons is pleased and there is inexhaustible religious merit. How is it that, that Tulasī, by the mere sight of which one gets (the merit of) the gift of a crore of cows, is not worshipped and revered by people? In this world those men, in whose house there exists, in this Kali age, Tulasī for the daily (worship) of the Śālagrāma stone, are lucky.

8. Those tender hands which gather Tulasī leaves and those that plant (the plant of) Tulasī for Viṣṇu, are lucky on the earth in the Kali age.

9. What would even angry Yama, with his servants, do (to him) who has worshipped, with the Tulasī leaf the lord of gods, the destroyer of misery.

10-11. What does a man accomplish by the fruits of undertaking pilgrimages to sacred places etc.? In the Kali age, Tulasī burns (a man's) sin, when used at the time of bathing, giving gifts, meditation, eating, worshipping Viṣṇu, narrating (the account of) and planting Tulasī.

12-13. "O Tulasī., you are born immortal; O you, who are always dear to Viṣṇu, I am looking out for you for Viṣṇu; O you virtuous one, be a granter of boons. O you of a pure form, do that by which I shall daily worship Viṣṇu with (leaves etc.) produced from your body; O you, who destroy the dirt (i.e. the sin) in the Kali age."

14. That worship of Viṣṇu, which a man does after collecting Tulasī leaves, with (the recital of) this sacred prayer is a lakh crore times meritorious.

15-33. "O supreme goddess, the best gods sing your glory. Sages, Siddhas, Gandharvas and the lord of serpents[1] himself in Pātāla[2], except Viṣṇu do not understand your glory and the measure of your qualities even after hundreds of crores of kalpas. You came up from the joy of Viṣṇu at the time of the exertion of the churning of the milky ocean. Since formerly Viṣṇu held Tulasī on his head, you became pure (due to your) having fully reached i.e. touched the limbs of Viṣṇu; I salute you, Tulasī. Since I worship with your offshoots, therefore make me void of difficulties (i.e. remove all my difficulties) (so that) I shall reach the highest position. You were planted on the Gomatī bank and were looked after by Kṛṣṇa himself. Viṣṇu himself moving in Vṛndāvana, served Tulasī for the good of the world and of the Gopīs (i.e. the cowherdesses), for the progress of Gokula (i.e. the village where Kṛṣṇa was brought up) and for Kaṃsa's death. O you who are dear to the world, formerly, at the behest of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma planted you on the bank of Sarayū for killing the demons. You are planted for the progress in penance; I bow to you, Tulasī: The daughter of Janaka (i.e. Sītā), when she was separated from Vāsudeva (i.e. Rāma), meditated upon you in the Aśoka garden (in Laṅkā), and was united with her dear one (i.e. Rāma). Formerly, Pārvatī planted you on the Himālaya, for increasing (the merit of) her penance, in order to secure Śaṅkara (as her husband). O you, who delight (others), you were waited upon by all the wives of gods and Kinnaras for the destruction of evil dreams. My salutation to

1. Nāgarāja—An epithet of Śeṣa.

2. Pātāla—The last of the seven regions or worlds under the earth, said to be peopled by Nāgas.

you. The manes themselves served the auspicious Tulasī in Dharmāraṇya and Gayā. Rāma, desiring his good, planted Tulasī in the Daṇḍaka forest; Lakṣmaṇa waited upon her; and Sītā devoutly protected her. As Gaṅgā, pervading the three worlds, is glorified in the sacred texts, so also Tulasī is seen (to be glorified) in (the world of) the mobile and immobile. The lord of the monkeys (i.e. Sugrīva), while living on the Ṛṣyamūka (mountain) served Tulasī for destroying Vālin, and for being united with Tārā (i.e. the wife of Vālin). Having saluted goddess Tulasī, Hanūmān acrossed the sea and came back delighted, after having carried out his mission. Putting on (the leaf etc. of) Tulasī, a man being free from his sins goes (to Viṣṇu's heaven), or else, O best of sages, he removes (i.e. is free from the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. He who would have on his head the water trickling from a lotus-leaf, has (by that) obtained a bath in Ganges and it gives fruit equal (to the gift of) ten cows. O goddess Tulasī, O best among the deities, O you dear to Viṣṇu, O you who have sprung up from (i.e. due to) the churning of the milky ocean, be pleased; I salute you."

34. Viṣṇu pardons thirtytwo faults of him who, keeping awake on the twelfth day (of the fortnight) would recite the hymn of praise of Tulasī.

35. By the recital of the hymn of praise of Tulasī, all the sin committed during youth, childhood, adolescent stage, (and) old age, perishes.

36. The lord of gods is pleased; and being pleased he gives prosperity; he destroys (the man's) enemy and grants him happiness and knowledge.

37. Even by merely (uttering) the name of Tulasī, gods give (a person) his desired object. The lord gives salvation even to censurable persons.

38. Tulasī, pleased by (her) praise, gives happiness and prosperity. Know that even a sinner who is on the path of Yama, easily goes up (to salvation).

39-40. He in whose house the hymn of praise of Tulasī is kept in a written form, has nothing inauspicious and certainly gets every auspicious (thing); and he has every propitious object

and has nothing that is unpropitious. He always has abundant supply of food, and has ample wealth and corn.

41-43. He has firm devotion for Viṣṇu, and does not get separated from the devotees of Viṣṇu. He lives free from diseases (i.e. lives a healthy life) and has no mind for irreligious conduct. He, who would recite the praise of Tulasī on the twelfth day of a fortnight by keeping awake, gets by reciting the praise of Tulasī, the fruit which (is obtained) by (visiting) thousands of crores of sacred places.

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

In Praise of the Gaṅgā

The brāhmaṇas said:

1-3 By a (sacred) bath, all sins, great sins, and also other sins certainly perish. Instruct us about it. Instruct us (as to how) a man, being purified from sin, obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven like Indra, and does not lose his existence as god. He (gets) all enjoyments here; and after death becomes the best god in heaven. It is said that the staircase to heaven is (obtained by) those whose sins due to Kali have perished.

Vyāsa said:

4. O brāhmaṇas, of women and men, who are born in ordinary (families) and who think of getting a good position (in heaven), Gaṅgā removes the sin merely by their looking at her (stream).

5-6. Sin perishes just by remembering Gaṅgā. Very heinous sins (perish) by the recital (of her name). Great sin (perishes) by her sight. Hosts of great sins are exhausted by daily bath in the Gaṅgā, and by drinking (her water) daily and by daily offering oblations to the manes into her (stream).

7. As cotton or hay is burnt is a moment by fire, so the sin of men would be burnt (i.e. would perish) in a moment by the touch of the water of Gaṅgā.

8. A man, by having a bath in Gaṅgā, obtains inexhaustible heaven (i.e. lives in heaven eternally) and obtains Viṣṇu. He could obtain fame, kingdom, religious merit, heaven and best position (i.e. final beatitude) in the end.

9. Listen to the fruit, viz. the religious merit of him who duly offers with (proper) utterances, piṇḍa to the manes.

10-11. He is honoured in heaven for a thousand years by just (offering) food; for double that period by offering sesamum. O brāhmaṇas, know that by means of offering a fruit to be offered, and by (performing) the rite in whch products of a cow are used, there is no end to heaven (i.e. he eternally lives in heaven). Thus by daily offering piṇḍas a hundred sacrifices would be (said to be performed).

12. The manes living in hell become blessed, and those who are living among the mortals are endowed with wealth and sons and are blessed with happiness and honour.

13. Those mortals who have gone to the nether world, and those who are insects on the earth, among the inert group of birds etc., become wealthy or kings.

14-15. Then those to whom (oblation of) water and piṇḍas along with (proper) material are offered into the water of Gaṅgā, on her banks, by their sons, grandsons, members of their families, sons of their daughters, sons-in-law, sons of their sisters, by those who love them, by their friends, and by those who are dear to them and who are not, have heaven eternally (i.e. live in heaven eternally).

16. Those hundreds and thousands of mortals born in the father's or mother's family and remaining above the piṇḍas become happy.

17. His beings (i.e. relatives) living in heaven, or in the lower region or in between (the heaven and the earth) always desire the good Gaṅgā. Let them go to the divine river.

18. The men (i.e. relatives) of him who alone (i.e. just) goes to Gaṅgā are purified. This is the great religious merit that he (himself) crosses and makes others cross (the mundane existence).

19. Even the Four-faced one (i.e. Brahmā) is not able to narrate all the qualities of Gaṅgā. Therefore, O brāhmaṇas, I shall just tell (you) a few qualities of Gaṅgā.

20. Sages, Siddhas, Gandharvas, and other best gods, became unfallen from (i.e. lived eternally in) heaven after having practised penance on the bank of Gaṅgā.

21. (Living) in jewelled houses, and having divine bodies and moving in chariots according to their own desire, they do not even now return (to the earth).

22-23. After having practised penance on the bank of Gaṅgā, they obtain prosperity there, where there are auspicious golden mansions, standing above all worlds, full of desired objects and where there are charming women and flowering trees like Pārijāta and the desire-yielding trees.

24. That (highest) position which is (obtained) by means of many austerities and sacrifices and various kinds of vows and ample gifts is obtained by them who wait upon Gaṅgā.

25-27. Sons (may) abandon a father who is born of a paramour, or who is fallen, or who is wicked or who is of a low caste, or who has killed his preceptor, or who is full of treachery or all sin; or wives or groups of friends or other relatives (may) abandon their dear (one); but Gaṅgā would never abandon them. At a mother holds her child to her bosom and cleans him of dirt and excrement, so Gaṅgā would wash the dirt of them. They become very famous and are honoured with enjoyments and ornaments.

28. The auspicious Gaṅgā, who is devoutly seen by men, emancipates a lakh (of members) of their families from the worldly existence.

29. Gaṅgā, the remover of affliction, emancipates from the ocean of the worldly existence, both the families (i.e. of their father and of their mother) of those men by whom she is remembered, meditatad upon, well-praised and well-pleased.

30-31a. A man would emancipate a crore (of the members) of his family by bathing (i.e. if he bathes) in the auspicious Gaṅgā on the Saṃkrānti[1] days and Vyatīpāta days, and at the time of the lunar and the solar eclipses.

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1. Saṃktānti—The passage of the Sun from one zodiacal sign into another. Vyatīpāta—Any great portentous calamity, or a portent foreboding a great calamity.

31b-32a. Those mortals who cast their bodies with Viṣṇu in their hearts, by day in the bright fortnight during Uttarāyaṇa[1], are blessed.

32b-33a. He who would die in the auspicious water of Bhāgīrathī according to this procedure, goes to heaven not to be reborn.

33b. He who daily goes to Gaṇgā, follows all gods.

34-35a. Since Viṣṇu is full of all gods, and since Gaṅgā is full of Viṣṇu, (therefore), by offering piṇḍas and water with sesamum to the manes, those (i.e. the manes) who live in hell go to heaven, and those who stay in heaven obtain salvation.

35b-36a. Gaṅgā alone is the greatest recourse to every man who has molested another's wife or has damaged another's property and who hates others.

36b-37a. There is no other recourse like Gaṅgā for a man who is destitute of (the knowledge of) Vedas and sacred books, who is given to censuring his preceptor, and who is without (i.e. who does not follow) the conventional conduct.

37b-41. When there is Gaṅgā, which gives a man (i.e. takes a man to) heaven and salvation, when she is worshipped easily and gracefully, what is the use of performing various kinds of rich sacrifices or of practising austerities very difficult to practise? What is the use of always having great restraints and yogic practices curbing (the functions) of the mind? Gaṅgā, who grants enjoyments and salvation, who easily gives final beatitude, is remaining in front (of men). She destroys men's sin (accumulated) in a group (i.e. a series) of many existences. A man instantly gets religious merit merely by a bath in Gaṅgā. A man gets, by daily having a bath in Gaṅgā, that fruit which he gets by giving a thousand cows on a solar eclipse day at Prabhāsa[2]. By seeing her (stream) a man removes his sin, and by touching her (water) he obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven.

42-45a. Gaṅgā, plunged into (i.e. if one bathes in her water) even by chance, gives salvation. The fickleness of all senses due to imagination and cruelty disappear by the sight of

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1. Uttarāyaṇa—The period or time of the summer solstice.
2. Prabhāsa—Name of a well-known place of pilgrimage near Dvārakā.

Gaṅgā. Merely by her sight, greed for another's wealth, lust for another's wife and liking for the conduct prescribed for someone else, disappear; and there proceeds satisfaction due to what a man gets by chance while following the course of conduct prescribed for him; and by a dip in Gaṅgā, equanimity (of mind) towards all beings would be (possible).

45b-46. That man who happily lives by resorting to Gaṅgā, is liberated while living[1] here (i.e. in this world) only, and is the best of all. For him there is nothing (left) to be done who would remain by resorting to Gaṅgā.

47-48. Such a man is blessed, is liberated and is liberated while living. Sacrifice (performed) in Gaṅgā (i.e. sacrificial offerings cast into the water of Gaṅgā), gifts offered into Gaṅgā, muttering (of prayers done) in Gaṅgā, śrāddha (offered) in Gaṅgā, and worship of deities done (while standing) in (the water of) Gaṅgā would always be crores and crores of times meritorious. Sin committed at any other place perishes on the bank of Gaṅgā.

49-50a. A sin committed on the bank of Gaṅgā is destroyed by means of (i.e. after having) a bath in Gaṅgā. A man having bathed (i.e. who bathes) in Gaṅgā on the day of his natal star and in union with Gaṅgā would emancipate his family.

50b-51a. If a man would (even) once praise Gaṅgā as he always respectfully praises a rich man, he would be a recipient of heaven (i.e. would live in heaven).

51b-53a. Even he, who without faith, recites the epithets of Gaṅgā, by remaining in her water, becomes a recipient of heaven. Gaṅgā emancipates, on the earth, men who reflect upon her; she emancipates the Nāgas in (the region) below (the earth); (and) she emanipates gods in heaven. (Therefore) Gaṅgā is declared to be Tripathagā.[2]

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1. Jīvanmukta—'Liberated while living'; a man, who, being purified by the true knowledge of the Supreme Spirit is free from the future birth and all ceremonial rites while yet living.

2. Tripathagā—Having three paths, i.e. flowing in heaven, on the earth and the lower region.

53b-56a. A man who dies in Gaṅgā, deliberately or undeliberately, obtains heaven and salvation. The position (like going to heaven) which a meditating sage or a wise man remaining (only) in the sattva quality obtains, is obtained by a man who casts his body in Gaṅgā. (Between a man) who would purify his body by a thousand Cāndrāyaṇa (vows), and (a man) who would drink, as much as he likes, the water of Gaṅgā, he (i.e. the latter) is superior.

56b-58a. The power of the sacred places, and especially of gods and also of Vedas (would last) as long as a man does not reach Gaṅgā. Vāyu has said, there are three crores and a half of sacred places in heaven, on the earth and in the intermediate region between the heaven and the earth.

58b-60a. "O Gaṅgā, they (all) are (situated) in you. O Gaṅgā, you who have risen from the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu, O you flowing in three courses, O you, who are known as having meritorious water, (please) remove my sins. You have risen from Viṣṇu's feet. You belong to Viṣṇu. You are honoured by Viṣṇu. Therefore, protect me from the sin committed from birth upto death. O great goddess, O Bhāgīrathī, O you full of religious merit, purify me with faith, with your immortal rich power."

60b-62a. He, who would bathe in the water of Gaṅgā while reciting these three excellent verses is free from sin committed during crores of existences; there is no doubt about it.

62b-63a. I shall tell you the basic mantra of Gaṅgā as narrated by Śiva. A man, uttering it (even) once, settles in Viṣṇu's body.

63b. This is the mantra: "Om, repeated salutations to Gaṅgā, of a universal form and belonging to Viṣṇu."

64. A man, who holds with his head (i.e. puts on his head) the clay of the bank of Gaṅgā, is free from all sins, even without bathing in Gaṅgā.

65. (Even) if he (just) touches the breeze thrown off by the wave of Gaṅgā, he is free from a fierce sin, and obtains eternal heaven (i.e. lives eternally in heaven).

66. As long as a bone of a man remains in the water of Gaṅgā, he is honoured for a thousand years in heaven.

67. A man, by casting (i.e. who casts) the bones of his parents, his helpless relatives or even of his preceptor, does not fall from heaven.

68. The man, who would carry the piece of the bone of his parents to Gaṅgā, obtains, at every step, the fruit of a horse-sacrifice.

69. Blessed are the inhabitants of the country, the beasts, the birds, the insects, the immobile and mobile objects and others, that have resorted to the bank of Gaṅgā.

70. O best brāhmaṇas, those men who die within a distance of two miles from Gaṅgā become gods, and others become (i.e. are born as) human beings on the earth.

71. If a man, while going for a bath in Gaṅgā, dies on the way, he obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven, and would obtain the fruit of a bath in Gaṅgā.

72. Insects, moths, grasshoppers that die on being struck by the feet of those going (to Gaṅgā), go to the water of Gaṅgā.

73. O brāhmaṇas, those men, who describe Gaṅgā to a man, obtain great religious merit, viz. the fruit of the bath in Gaṅgā.

74. Those, who, with their minds confounded by the heretics, censure Gaṅgā, go to a terrible hell, return from which is difficult.

75. If a man in a miserable condition remembers Gaṅgā, he obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven. What is the use of speaking so many other (i.e. irrelevant) words?

76. He, who would utter the word 'Gaṅgā' 'Gaṅgā' even from a distance of hundreds of yojanas (from Gaṅgā), is free from all sins, and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

77. Those men, who have not gone to Gaṅgā, become blind, crippled, or are incapacitated through miscarriage and are born in vain in this worldly existence.

78-79. The knowledge of those mean men, who, resembling the dull, do not glorify Gaṅgā, of those mad and deluded ones who do not instruct others, of those vicious, fallen and mean men who do not recite the merits of Gaṅgā, is fruitless, O brāhmaṇas.

80. Those wise men who make others recite (the virtues of Gaṅgā) with faith, and those who recite it with faith, go to heaven and emancipate their manes and preceptors.

81-83a. He, who, according to his monetary capacity, gives provender to him, who goes to Gaṅgā, would get (the merit of) the bath in Gaṅgā. He who (thus) goes with (i.e. after taking) food (i.e. provender) from someone else, gets the fruit of one who takes the bath; the person who prompts (i.e. encourages) him, gets double the fruit. He, who, willingly or unwillingly, through being prompted or for serving someone else, goes to Gaṅgā, would go to the abode of gods (i.e. heaven).

The brāhmaṇas said:

83b-84a. O Vyāsa, we have heard the very pure account of Gaṅgā from you. Wherefrom has Gaṅgā (risen)? How is her appearance? Why is she so purifying?

Vyāsa said:

84b-85a. Listen, today I (shall) tell you an old auspicious story, hearing which the best man obtains the path to salvation.

85b-89a. Formerly, the best sage Nārada, having gone to Brahmā's world, and having saluted pure Brahmā, asked him, the purifier of the three worlds: "O father, what have you created on the earth, approved of by Śiva and Viṣṇu, which is desirable, for the good of all the worlds? Which goddess or deity, the best of all (have you created) reaching whom, gods, demons, men, serpents, birds, and beings generated by sweat, trees and other plants, all certainly attain what is auspicious and complete good, O Brahman?"

Brahmā spoke:

89b-90a. Formerly (while) creating the world, I said to Māyā (i.e. my divine power) of the form of primordial matter: "You be the first of all the worlds. From you I shall create (the world)",

90b-92a. Hearing this, she, the superior one, divided herself into seven (parts): Gāyatrī, Vāk (i.e. speech), Svarlakṣmī

(wealth of heaven), giving wealth to all, Goddess of knowledge, Umā, the female ascetic, Śaktibīja (i.e. the source of power), Varṇikā and Dharmadravā. These seven are said to be (the parts).

92b-93. The Vedas have Gāyatrī as their source; the entire world has come up from the Veda. These, viz. Svasti, Svāhā, Svadhā[1], Dīkṣā (i.e. initiation) are said to have sprung up from Gāyatrī. A man should always pronounce Gāyatrī with the Mātṛkās etc.

94. Gods, after having received Svadhā (i.e. oblations made to the manes), at a sacrifice, would become ageless and immortal. Then they dropped (i.e. would drop) nectar on the earth.

95. Then the earth has (i.e. becomes full of) crops and is extremely auspicious due to herbs. Men became happier with fruits, roots, liquids and foods.

96-97. Bhāratī had settled in the mouth and mind of all people. Similarly she gives instruction with regard to proper conduct in all sacred books; (she causes) knowledge, feuds, grief, infatuation and its absence, (whatever is) auspicious and inauspicious. It is said that without her the entire world loses its essential nature.

98. In the three worlds the collection of garments and ornaments is due to her; and also happiness and kingdom. Therefore she is dear to Viṣṇu.

99. Due to Umā there is knowledge, that constantly destroys (selfish) motives in the worlds. She should be known to be the mother (i.e. source) of knowledge, and occupying half the body of Śiva.

100-103. Varṇikā is a fierce power, infatuating all the worlds; she is also the cause of the fixity and destruction of the worlds. This goddess formerly killed the two demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha. She also killed the terrible Ruru, well-known in all the worlds. She killed Mahiṣāsura (i.e. the demon Mahiṣa),

1. Svasti, Svāhā and Svadhā—are exclamations used on different occasions. Svasti denotes the expression of well-being. Svāhā and Svadhā are respectively used at the time of making offering to gods and manes. They also denote the offerings made to gods and manes.

the only conqueror of all the gods. The goddess easily killed all the greatest evil spirits and demons. Thus having always killed the armies of the demons, she protected and delighted all the three worlds.

104-108. She of the form of Dharmadrava has settled in all moral conduct. Having observed her to be great, I held her in a water-pot. She has risen from the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu; she is held on his head by Śiva. She is united with us three, viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Dharmadravā is known to be of the form of water in the water-pot, and has risen from the sacrifices of Bali. Formerly the powerful Viṣṇu outwitted Bali, the best among the mighty, by means of a trick. Then by (planting) two feet only he occupied the entire earth, then the foot (planted) in the sky tore asunder the universe and stood before me. With the water in the water-pot I worshipped the foot.

109-111. Having washed the foot (i.e. when the foot was thus washed) it was full of water; and from it water fell on the Hemakūṭa. She (i.e. Gaṅgā) having reached Śiva from the peak (i.e. after flowing down from the peak), and remaining in the matted hair, flows (from there). Then Bhagīratha himself propitiated Śiva, and brought the best elephant (i.e. Airāvata) to the earth; worshipped him daily with austerities. The best elephant (i.e. Airāvata) with his three tusks, forcibly made a (triple) hole into the mountain, by tearing it asunder. Therefore because (she flowed through) the three holes, she is known in the world as having three streams.

112. Due to her contact with Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva she is purified and purifies the worlds. By reaching (i.e. resorting to) that deity a man would get the fruit of all moral conduct.

113. That highest position which would be (obtained) by serving Gaṅgā would not be (obtained) by those who are intent upon recital of (sacred hymns) or upon the performance of sacrifices or with all sacred hymns, rites, or worship of gods.

114. There is no greater means for accomplishing religious merit than this. Therefore, O Nārada, go to her for getting the religious merit (obtainable) in the three worlds.

115. Due to the contact of the bones of Sagara's sons with the water of Gaṅgā, they went to heaven along with their

manes and also with those who were born before and after them.

116. Then Nārada, the best sage, hearing (the account) from Brahmā's mouth, practised penance at Gaṅgādvāra, and became like Brahmā.

117. Gaṅgā is accessible everywhere; (but) she is not (so easily) accessible at the three places, viz. Gaṅgādvāra, Prayāga and her confluence with the ocean.

118. (By staying there) for three nights, (or even) for one night a man gets the highest position (i.e. salvation). Therefore, by all means, a man should think of instant salvation.

119. Therefore, O you, who are conversant with moral conduct, go to that auspicious Gaṅgā there, and within a short time you (will) go to heaven and attain salvation.

120. Especially in the Kaliyuga Gaṅgā is the giver of salvation to men. Weak beings can have endless religious merit due to expiation (practised on the bank of Gaṅgā).

121. Then the brāhmaṇas, having heard the auspicious words from Vyāsa, and being delighted, went along the path of salvation after having practised penance in (the water of) Gaṅgā.

122. A man who would listen to this excellent auspicious account, crosses the entire flood (i.e. heap) of misery, and would obtain the fruit of bathing in (the water of) Gaṅgā.

123-125. He would get the fruit of (having performed) all sacrifices by uttering (the name of Gaṅgā) just once. He who gives gifts, (mutters) prayers, (has) meditation, (recites) eulogy (of Gaṅgā) or hymns (in her honour), or worships deities there only (i.e. at the bank of Gaṅgā), would obtain unending fruit. Therefore, men should perform muttering (of sacred names), rites etc. there (i.e. at the bank of Gaṅgā) only. The fruit (of this) is said to be unending, and is obtained in many births.

CHAPTER SIXTYTHREE

A Hymn to Gaṇapati

Pulastya said:

1-3. O Bhīṣma, in the meanwhile, Sañjaya, a great sage, and a disciple of Vyāsa, having saluted his preceptor asked him formerly: "(Please) tell (me) the means of worshipping gods and the well-defined order in which they should be worshipped. Which god is most adorable in the beginning? Who should be worshipped in between (the first and the best)? Who should be worshipped last in everyday worship? Whose power is what (i.e. what is the power of each one)? O brāhmaṇa, worshipping whom, what fruit would a man obtain?"

Vyāsa said:

4. For removing obstacles of (one's way to) the next world, a man should first worship Gaṇeśa in this world. He obtains the status of Vināyaka, since he is the son of Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī).

5. Formerly Pārvatī gave birth to these two sons from Śiva, viz. Skanda and Gaṇapati. The two gods sustain all the worlds, and are brave.

6-7. Seeing the two, the daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain (i.e. Pārvatī) said (to them): "O sons, this modaka is given by gods, who were full of joy. It is known as Mahā-buddhi (highly intelligent), and is fashioned with nectar. I shall tell about its merit; be attentive and listen.

8-9. Merely by smelling it, a man would certainly obtain immortality. He knows the meaning and essence of all sacred books; he becomes conversant with the use of weapons and missiles; he becomes adept in all sciences; he becomes a writer, a painter; the very intelligent one knows the essence of the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit and worldly knowledge; he becomes ominscient; there is no doubt about this.

10. O sons, being superior to Virtue, he would obtain a hundred accomplishments. This is approved by your father also (to whom) I am handing (you) over."

11-13. The very wise Skanda, hearing these words from his mother's mouth, instantly visited all the sacred places situated on the earth, after having mounted his peacock; the very intelligent Lambodara (i.e. Gaṇeśa), (however), having bathed in a moment, and after having gone round his parents keeping them to his right, and being delighted, stood before his parents themselves. Like that Skanda also stood before them, saying (to Pārvatī): "Give it (i.e. the modaka) to me."

14-15. Looking at them, Pārvatī, being amazed, then said: "A man by means of bathing at all sacred places, saluting all gods, performing all (kinds of) sacrifices, (observing) vows, (reciting) sacred hymns, by means of deep and abstract meditation and other restraints, does not get even one-sixteenth of the religious merit of him who has worshipped his parents.

16. Therefore he also is hundred times better than a hundred sons. Therefore, I give Gaṇeśa this modaka made by gods.

17. For this reason only, he will receive worship first in sacrifices, (in recital) of Vedas and sacred texts and hymns of praise, and also in everyday worships (of deities)."

18-19. Along with Pārvatī, Śiva also granted him a great boon: "May the gods be pleased with his worship at the commencement (of a rite etc.). Let the penance (in honour) of all gods and manes everywhere be (commenced) when the lord of Gaṇas (i.e. Gaṇeśa) is worshipped first."

20. Therefore, a brāhmaṇa should (first) worship Gaṇeśa in all sacrifices; they (i.e. the sacrifices then) have crores and crores (times) religious merit—these are the words of the god (i.e. Śiva) and the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī).

21. Then, the god and the goddess (i.e. Śiva and Pārvatī) gladly gave all their excellence and merit (to Gaṇeśa) and made him the chief of the Gaṇas before all the gods.

22. Therefore by worshipping Gaṇeśa in all big sacrifices, (recital of) hymns of praise and everyday worship, a man would get prosperity.

23. Knowing thus, all the gods worshipped him with a desire to obtain the desired (object) and certainly for (going to) heaven and (obtaining) salvation.

24. (A man would be free from all sins) if he, eating at

night (only), would, on the fourth day (of every fortnight), worship god Gaṇeśa's idol or symbol or picture.

25-26. (He should recite the following hymn:) "O Lord of Gaṇas, O you, who put an end to all difficulties, O you, who give delight to Umā, O you, wise one, my salutation to you. Protect me from the ocean of the mundane existence. O lord, O you who delight Śiva, O you who grant (the power to practise) deep and abstract meditation, you the lord of (i.e. who overcome) obstacles, my salutation to you. Always be pleased with me."

27. A man, who, having fasted, would joyfully worship Gaṇeśa, becomes free from all sins, and is honoured in heaven.

28. I shall tell you the hymn containing his twelve names (in honour) of him. The mantra is: "Om, salutation to Gaṇapati."

29-31. He, who, after getting up in the morning recites these twelve names of him, viz. Gaṇapati, Vighnarāja, Lambatuṇḍa, Gajānana, Dvaimatura, Heramba, Ekadanta, Gaṇādhipa, Vināyaka, Cārukarṇa, Paśupāla (and) Bhavātmaja", would have the entire universe under his control and would never meet with any difficulty. Great evil spirits become calm; he is not troubled by diseases; being free from all sins, he eternally obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven.

CHAPTER SIXTYFOUR

Auother Hymn to Gaṇapati

Vyāsa said:

1. I shall again tell you another hymn of praise in honour of Gaṇeśa, which gives success in all undertakings; which is sacred, and which gives every desired fruit:

2-3. "I salute the chief of the Gaṇas, who has one tusk, whose body is big, who resembles heated gold, who has a large belly, and large eyes, who has put on the muñja (girdle), and

the skin of the black antelope, and has the sacred thread of serpents, who has, on his head, the digit of the young moon.

4-5a. I salute the lord of the Gaṇas. I salute the chief of the Gaṇas, who removes and is (himself) free from all obstacles, who, mounting upon the best mouse, desired to fight in the great war between the gods and the demons, and who possesses mighty arms.

5b-6a. I salute the chief of the Gaṇas, who delights the heart of Pārvatī, who is surrounded by Mātṛkās, to whom devotion is dear, and who is furious with passion.

6b-7a. I salute the chief of the Gaṇas, whose body looks lovely on account of variegated jewels, who has ornaments in the form of bright garlands; (I salute) the god who possesses any form that he likes.

7b-8a. I salute the chief of the Gaṇas, who has an elephant's face, who is the best among gods, and who is adorned with charming ears. I salute the lord of Gaṇas, who holds a noose and a goad.

8b-9a. I salute the chief of the Gaṇas, who is always being praised by Yakṣas, Kinnaras, Gandharvas, Siddhas and Vidyādharas, and who has a large body."

9b-10a. A man, who would devoutly recite this auspicious hymn of eight verses in praise of Gaṇeśa, obtains all (kinds of) prosperity, and is honoured in Rudra's heaven.

10b-11. (Such) a man does not suffer loss of possession in seven births. A man who recites this daily becomes a great king. By reciting and listening to this greatly meritorious hymn of praise to Gaṇeśa, he brings the three worlds under his control.

CHAPTER SIXTYFIVE

The Slaying of Kālakeya

Vyāsa said:

1. He, who would worship the lord of the Gaṇas in the Nāndimukha[1], has everyone under his control, and his merit becomes inexhaustible.

2. A man obtains all (kinds of) prosperity in all sacrifices by means of (the recital of) the hymns 'Gaṇānām tvā' and would obtain heaven and salvation.

3. A wise man should draw the figure of Gaṅeśa on a clay idol, or in a picture (carved out) of stone or on the wood of the door, or in a pot.

4-5. A wise man, who, after having installed the idol of Gaṇeśa, even in any other place which would always be visible, would worship Gaṇeśa according to his capacity, fully gets his desired objects fulfilled. He has no difficulty and he would bring the three worlds under his control.

6. A student obtains knowledge from the Vedas and sacred texts, and also other knowledge (like that) of the fine arts, which is successful and which would give (i.e. lead) him (to) heaven.

7. A man longing for wealth, gets ample wealth and a good charming daughter, grandeur that is lawfully obtained, and a son giving (taking) the members of the family (to) salvation.

8. He is never troubled by diseases, or planets or evil spirits, horned animals, demons, lightning or robbers in a forest.

9. The king is not angry with him; plague does not occur in his house; he does not feel the dearth (of anything); he does not suffer from weakness after (i.e. due to his) having worshipped Gaṇeśa.

10. "(My) salutation to the chief of the Gaṇas, who re-

1. Nāndīmukha—A śrāddha ceremony performed in memory of manes, preliminary to any festive occasion such as marriage etc.

moves all difficulties, who was worshipped even by gods for accomplishing their desired objects."

11-12. The sacred formula is : "Om, salutation to Gaṇapati." He, who would worship the protector of the Gaṇas, with flowers dear to Viṣṇu, and other fragrant flowers, with modakas, fruits, roots and other seasonal things, with curds and milk, pleasing musical instruments, and with incense and (other) fragrant (objects) obtains success in all undertakings.

13. He who especially offers money and materials of worship dear to him and cloth on his (i.e. Gaṇeśa's) idol, has it (as reward) a lakh times.

14. In the proximity of the east, in the country of Bhāratavarṣa, on the southern bank of the Lauhitya (river), Vināyaka (i.e. Gaṇeśa remains) in the form of an idol.

15. For bringing about peace to all worlds, and removing obstacles he has stayed (there) by the order of Śiva and Pārvatī and with the consent of gods.

16. (A man) who has mastered the meaning of Vedas and sacred books, having worshipped that deity according to his capacity with collection of materials, becomes (identical with) Vināyaka.

17. A man having gone (i.e. who goes) round (Gaṇeśa's idol even) once, having seen (i.e. who sees) or having touched (i.e. who touches) his idol, obtains heaven eternally, and is always honoured by gods.

18. There is Śambhu Vināyaka for leading those who have been in contact with the mlecchas, who are good ascetics and for (granting) sons to all the people.

19. He, who, having bathed in the Lauhitya (river), would touch (the idol of) Gaṇeśa, becomes free from sins committed during seven births; there is no doubt about this.

20. (A woman) would not suffer from widowhood, one would not be reduced to poverty, nor would one have grief or jealousy for birth after birth after having reached Gaṇeśa.

21. There is no doubt that a man would repeatedly get success, enjoyments, fame and power by worshipping Gaṇeśa.

22. All desired objects perish by not worshipping him. All gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are pleased (if one performs his worship).

23-30. When Indra had not worshipped the bountiful Gaṇeśa, he was conquered by Hiraṇyākṣa in the battle with great demons led by Hiraṇyākṣa. Then, in the olden days, the gods remained powerless for a hundred years; and in the war between the gods and the demons, the gods were defeated. Then the gods told (this) to Śiva, the god of gods: "O sir, our kingdom has been conquered by the demons; our sacrifices are lost." In the meanwhile, Śiva said (these) words to the gods: "By Umā, who was pleased, and by me a boon is granted to Gaṇeśa; 'May gods attain great success by worshipping you. A man, who, through delusion, disregards (you), during great festival, would not attain success and would be defeated in a battle.' In the great sacrifice, you did not through disrespect and delusion, worship Gaṇeśa; therefore you have been defeated. Go quickly; offer an auspicious worship to the great Gaṇeśa, O you, who are conversant with the moral law, you will soon meet with success."

31. Then, having heard from Śiva's mouth, beneficial and wholesome words, the gods became glad, and all of them stood before Gaṇeśa.

The gods said:

32. O lord of the Gaṇas, O only guardian of all gods, O granter of heaven and enjoyments, our salutation to you; O Heramba, we bow to you with love.

33. O Heramba, we bow to you, who give (i.e. bring about) victory in all wars, who give success in all undertakings, who have great divine power and whose body is great.

34. We bow to Heramba, having one tusk, a prolonged mouth (i.e. a trunk), the highly intelligent god of great sages, gods and Indra.

35a. Forgive us (our fault viz.) that we did not formerly worship you at the sacrifice.

35b-37. Having heard the words of the gods, Gaṇeśa said (these) words: "O gods, choose from me the boon of your liking." Then all gods like Indra, led by Bṛhaspati, said to Gaṇeśa: "Let victory be ours (i.e. Let us be victorious)." Hearing the words of the gods, Gaṇeśa said (these) words:

38-40. "O best gods, all right; may you have victory quickly." Then all the hosts of gods, with their minds full of joy, worshipped Gaṇeśa with sandal, ornaments, divine incense fine garments, flowers like Pārijāta growing in (the) Nandana (garden), and other divine and attractive flowers. The lord of Gaṇas, worshipped by gods, said to the best gods:

41. "O gods, go to Viṣṇu, having a wonderful courage. Then, O gods, he will bring about your desired object."

42. Then they, getting into their own respective chariots, went to the immutable Viṣṇu. The hosts of gods, having saluted him, who had put on a yellow garment (i.e. Viṣṇu), joyfully said to him:

43. "O great-souled Viṣṇu, having gone to Gaṇeśa, and having worshipped him, we have today come to you."

44. Having heard these words of the gods, the imperishable Viṣṇu, spoke precisely: "I shall kill the preeminent demons."

45. Having heard the nectar in the form of (these) words the gods being pleased and full of great joy worshipped him with the desired materials.

46-47. Viṣṇu again said to the gods led by Indra: "Collecting your own army, be ready without any distress. I shall vanquish the wicked ones as well as their army on all sides. Gathering the group of missiles, you remain fearless."

48. All the best gods, having divine missiles, after having heard the words of Viṣṇu, got into (their) aeroplanes, and left.

49. The words of gods, uttered with joy, were heard by the spies of the demons. They reported the same to the very mighty Hiraṇyākṣa, (their) king.

50. The very powerful lord of the demons, having heard the words (as reported by his spies) got angry. The angry one called his ministers and said to them:

51-56. "Now all the wicked-minded gods like Indra, desiring to have Viṣṇu (as their leader), told everything to Śiva: 'How shall we get victory, when the army of the demons is so fierce?' Śiva said these words: 'O gods, worship Gaṇeśa. By worshipping him you will (be able to) conquer the demons.' Then the hosts of gods, who were delighted, worshipped the

chief of the Gaṇas. The lord of the Gaṇas, being pleased, granted them a great (but) cruel boon: 'Today you will conquer all demons.' Then the gods, being (very) joyful, and desiring to kill us, told this to Viṣṇu. Having heard (the words) 'all right', from Viṣṇu, the fearless gods, seated in (their) chariots, and with weapons in their hands, stood (ready) for fighting with me. He who has whatever capacity to vanquish the gods should (now) speak out fully."

57-59. Then, hearing the words of the king, Madhu said (these) words: "O king, I shall conquer Viṣṇu. Give me an assistant. When god Viṣṇu is conquered, all gods will certainly be frightened. Therefore, Viṣṇu, the conquerer of the enemies' cities, will be our portion (i.e. we shall vanquish him). O king, we, with Dhundhu, Sunda, and the very mighty Kālakeya as assistants, will conquer Viṣṇu."

60. In the entire army of the demons (these) four (viz. Madhu, Dhundhu, Sunda and Kālakeya) were very brave heroes resembling Death and had mastered the science of (employing) all weapons.

61. Bala then said (these) words: "I shall vanquish that Viṣṇu due to whom victory (of gods) is coming about. O king, this is my strong pledge."

62. The two brothers, Namuci and Muci, proud of their might, said to the king: "We too, the mighty ones will conquer (the gods) with force."

63. Jambha said these words: "I shall conquer Indra and (other gods) led by Indra. There is no doubt about it. O demons, give up your worry."

64a. And Tripura said (these) words: "I shall conquer Vināyaka."

64b-65a. Then, the mighty general Maya, the destroyer of gods, said: "With (the help of) the demons I shall (conquer) Kubera and all Hiraṇyakas."

65b-67a. In the meanwhile, the best sage Nārada went and said to Hiraṇyākṣa: "I have come as a messenger of Viṣṇu. By our (i.e. my) words (i.e. order) abandon your kingdom, if

you have interest in your life. Otherwise fight with me and go to the nether world."

67b-69a. Then angrily he spoke these words to the best sage Nārada: "O brāhmaṇa, you are not to be killed. Quickly go (away) from my presence. See in front of you (i.e. under your very nose) the disaster and destruction of the gods. O brāhmaṇa, (see that) Viṣṇu, Śiva and others will, in a moment, meet with death."

69b-70a. Saying so the lord of demons said to the General of his army: "Making the entire army ready, quickly bring all the chariots."

70b-71a. Hearing the words of the king of demons the General of the army suddenly summoned the army. (The soldiers) getting frightened, came (there) quickly.

71b-72. The army (consisted of) thousands of crores (of soldiers) and of akṣauhiṇīs[1]. Each one of the brave soldiers had large vehicles, wonderful chariots, and elephants, camels and donkeys also.

73-74. Mounting on lions, tigers and buffaloes they proceeded. They filled the quarters with all musical instruments and many frightening roars like lions. The sea-coast, mountains, earth, and all the worlds were frightened. The oceans also were agitated.

75-76. Drums beaten by all gods gave out sounds. All the people and the residents of the three worlds were frightened by various other musical instruments of a deep sound (after they were) filled with air. Their desires were frustrated. They went to wage the great, fierce, bright war.

77. In the war they struck one another with iron bars, nooses, lances, swords, sticks, hatchets and sharp fierce arrows.

78-80. All the quarters were full with the weapons and missiles hurled in various ways. Their fight took place in big houses, on the ground, on mountains, in water, in temples, in the sky, on tops of mountains and on their peaks, in thickets, and in a great forest. Missiles in hundreds and thousands fell

1. Akṣauhiṇi—A large army consisting of 21870 chariots, as many elephants, 65610 horses, and 108350 foot-soldiers.

on the armies as the water of showers from clouds like Puṣkala[1] would fall in streams.

81. Some fell on the ground with their bodies pierced with arrows. Others (fell on the ground with their bodies struck with) missiles like śakti, pestles and lances and hatchets.

82. The brave, dauntless warriors, fighting justly in the war for their lord, fell (just) before their enemies (i.e. they did not run away from the battle-field) and went to the abodes of gods.

83. Others, who were timid and sinful, and who struck those running away from the battle-field, and who fought unjustly went to Yama's abode.

84. The gods mounted upon elephants and on horses struck the enemies. Those brave (soldiers) desiring to fight and occupying chariots struck those (enemies) who had occupied chariots, and the foot-soldiers struck the foot-soldiers (in the enemy's army).

85-89a. They were glad, were full of energy, were most dutiful and full of power. The arms of some were cut off. The hair, heads and garments of some whose heads were broken with pestles, fell on the ground. (Some) very mighty (soldiers), with their waists pierced and broken, fell on the ground. The brave ones, decorated with divine ornaments, whose bodies received cuts and were pierced due to the falls of swords and with fierce hatchets, fell on the ground. The region became bright with heroes, elephants, horses, chariots, fallen ornaments, banners and flags.

89b-92a. At that time the whole earth with mountains, forests and groves was flooded with blood, during the war between the gods and the demons. The collection of materials there was eaten by many goblins. Demons and wolves drank ample blood. So also other hosts (of demons etc.) and of jackals and vultures gladly drank blood mixed with water.

92b-93. In the meanwhile, the learned Bṛhaspati, honoured by gods, muttered for gods, the lore that brings the dead back to life, which removed troubles, which was a divine and very powerful lore of Brahmā.

1. Puṣkala—An epithet of a class of clouds said to be the cause of drought or famine.

94. Then Dhanvantari, the physician of gods, gladly moved on the battle-field with the speed of mind (carrying) medicines with him and employing them.

95. Then the gods that were dead in the great war, again came back to life, were without any wound, endowed with power, and again fought very much.

96. Thus, a hundred thousand haughty (fighters of the) army of the demons, with their necks cut off with arrows fell down due to the merit (of the gods).

97. Then Siddhas, Cāraṇas, sages, semi-divine beings and hosts of celestial nymphs greeted (the gods) with cries of victory.

98a. Gandharvas sang songs and great sages praised (the gods).

98b-100. Then the very mighty and powerful foremost demon, the General of the demon-king, Kālakeya by name, seated in a chariot took his bow there (i.e. in the chariot) only, and the very mighty one killed groups of gods and made them dance on the ground. At that time the sky was screened with a continuous flow (i.e. volley) of arrows.

101. Arrows in thousands of crores fell on the army (of the gods). Then gods, not returning (i.e. not fleeing) from the battle fell (there).

102. All the Siddhas and Gandharvas ejected blood. Gods injured by the arrows dropped on the ground.

103. Certain prominent and very mighty gods who (had participated) in the war, pierced with hundreds and thousands and myriads of arrows fell on the ground.

104. All gods who remained in the chariots were vexed. Being tormented by the arrows they could not stand before (the demons).

105. He (i.e. Kālakeya) plunged into the (gods') army, as an elephant would plunge into a lake. Gods were hurt by his arrows strong like the thunderbolt and fire.

106-107. They could not stand in the battle-field, and then went to Indra. A god, known as Citraratha, best among the soldiers, and an archer, went to fight, after having got into a chariot; and he said (these) words to the great demon, the General (of the demons') army:

108-109. "Since, O you very brave (demon), you, full of joy, are killing the army of the gods, you deserve to be praised; you are brave and are liked by gods. You have now executed a mission dear to Hiraṇyākṣa; and now (pierced) by my arrows go to Yama's abode."

110-112a. Then Kālakeya smiled and said (these) words: "Formerly I have easily vanquished the entire host of gods. Now also (I shall) easily (conquer) the (gods') army that is standing (before me) in the battle. O best of gods, if you love death, then by (piercing you) with these sharp arrows, I shall take you to Yama's abode."

112b. Saying these words, he, who was extremely angry, struck (i.e. discharged) an arrow (at Citraratha).

113-114a. The hero (i.e. Citraratha) cut it off in the sky (itself, i.e. before it struck him), with three arrows. Angrily he again quickly employed arrows in the battle, and with dexterity killed many demons.

114b-115a. Then, in the battle, the best among archers speedily struck each other on the ground with sharp arrows resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world.

115b-116. That fight between the god and the demon was (fought) much justly. Sages, gods and divine serpents desiring to see (that fight) went there. Thus hundreds of thousands of arrows were directed (by them towards each other).

117-118. The two heroes shone (there) to conquer each other in the battle. Then the angry and very lustrous lord of the Gandharvas (i.e. Citraratha) pierced (Kālakeya) in his forehead with three arrows, in his chest with five arrows, in his belly and navel with seven arrows, and in his abdomen with five arrows.

119. The demon struck down with the arrows became confused and depressed in spirits. With his bow loosened, he, the powerful one, regained consciousness after a long time.

120. The god pierced the best demon, named Madhu, with three arrows. He cut off his bow (even) while the demon-king was observing it (i.e. under his very nose).

121. The best among gods, the powerful one (i.e. Citraratha) pierced (the body of) the demon-lion (i.e. the brave demon) with thousands of arrows, bright like god of death.

122. The lord of the Daityas, the demon, with his heart depressed, profusely bleeding, agitated and struck by many arrows, took up a spear.

123. He (i.e. Citraratha) struck and overthrew the horses of him who had (held) the spear in his hand, with four arrows, and his charioteer with three (arrows).

124. Then, remaining on the ground, he (i.e. Kālakeya) struck the best of the Gandharvas (with) the spear. The powerful Citraratha cut off the spear with three arrows.

125. The mighty (demon), seeing his spear destroyed, and resembling a serpent bereft of his hood, took up a mallet and rushed at the god.

126-127. Citraratha hastily cut off, with an arrow with a crescent-shaped head[1], the head from the body of the lord of demons who approached him. He dropped on the ground, and the earth quaked. Then all the hosts of demons, with their faces turned away, fled.

CHAPTER SIXTYSIX

The Slaying of Kāleya

Vyāsa said:

1. Seeing his brother killed, the demon Kāleya, holding an arrow with a bow rushed at Citraratha.

2-3a. Jayanta, the very mighty son of Indra, seeing the demon like death at the end of the world, rushing (at Citraratha), stopped him; and the best and very powerful god (i.e. Jayanta) said to the demons:

3b-5. "The truth supported by Dharma and certainly beneficial in the two (i.e. this and the next) worlds is: He, who strikes (a rival warrior) who is afflicted with the pain due to a wound caused by the stroke of a weapon, who is depressed in spirits, who is fighting with another (warrior), who is broken or

1. Ardhacandra—An arrow with a crescent-shaped head.

thrown away (i.e. defeated), is childish. After having enjoyed (i.e. lived in) the Raurava (hell) he becomes the slave of him (whom he strikes). Therefore, do not fight with him (i.e. Citraratha). Follow the rules of a just war."

6. Kāleya, mad with anger, said (these) words to Jayanta: "Having killed him who killed my brother, I shall now kill you."

7. Then Jayanta, the best among gods, struck, with sharp arrows, the greatest demon, resembling fire at the end of the world.

8-9. The demon too cut them off with three arrows, and struck him. Like a river rising from a mountain and receiving a series of showers, the two very mighty ones did not become weak or discouraged. The two, desiring to conquer each other, did not get pleasure.

10-11. Then he (i.e. Jayanta) cut off the demon's bow with an arrow. With five arrows he caused the charioteer to fall on the ground. He also struck down the four horses (of the demon's chariot) with eight sharp arrows. He too, took the (missile called) śakti, and struck Jayanta (with it).

12-13. (After having) hurt him with a mace, and struck him down along with the fender[1] and the pole of his chariot, he, roared like a lion quickly going down (i.e. jumping on) the ground; he stood there with a mace in his hand. As the sound of the fall of the thunderbolt would be unbearable to the worlds, so the sound of the repeated strokes with their maces (was unbearable).

14-15. In this way their mace-fight lasted for fourteen years. When their maces were broken, both remained in the sky with swords and armours. At that time, gods and great divine serpents were amazed on seeing the wonderful and thrilling fight of the two foot-soldiers.

16-17. After some time their armours were cut off due to the strokes of the swords. The two, very much disposed to fighting, fought with swords. Jayanta, of a fearful valour, seized the hair of his (i.e. the demon's) head.

1. Varūtha—A fender with which a chariot is provided as a defence against collision with the Kūbara—the pole of a carriage to which the yoke is fixed.

18-19. Having cut off his head with the stroke of his sword, he knocked him down on the ground. Then all the gods rejoiced with (i.e. the demon's) head and uttered the cry of victory. The hosts of demons, that were shattered, fled in all directions.

CHAPTER SIXTYSEVEN

The Slaying of Bala and Namuci

Vyāsa said:

1. Hearing this (i.e. these words), the very mighty Hiraṇyākṣa, the lord of the demons, with his eyes very red with anger, directed the demons (thus):

2. "With a desire to kill the gods I shall myself go to fight (with them, so that) they will not come and will not fight; let them not come this way."

3. Hearing these words, the rest of the chiefs of the hosts of demons, all very skilled in using lances and nooses, went to fight (with the gods).

4. They were hundred times more than the former army. Desiring to fight they frequently rose to the sky.

5-6a. Then the Rudras[1] with the Sādhyas, all the Vasus, Skanda, and the lord of the Gaṇas (i.e. Gaṇeśa), led by Viṣṇu and Indra—all these, being delighted and eager to fight, went to fight.

6b-7. In the meanwhile, the war that took place between the gods and the demons which was full of (i.e. in which) various weapons and missiles (were used) like a grove with frost, was such the like of which did not take place before, was not heard of, and was fearful to all the worlds.

8-9. The war appeared to screen the earth, heaven, (other) shelters like the sky (etc.). The (rival warriors) struck each

1. Rudra—Name of a group of gods, eleven in number, supposed to be inferior manifestations of Śiva or Śaṅkara, who is said to be the head of that group.

other with the (missiles called) śakti, pestles, lances, with volleys of arrows, with fearful strokes of swords, and with discs and hatchets in the sky and on the ground.

10-11. With other various kinds of weapons also they struck each other. There was a destruction of a terrible nature on the earth and in the sky due to weapons, arrows, bleeding and (also done by) herons, crows and foxes. As the clouds shower pestle-like streams, in the same way gods and demons showered blood oozing (from their wounds).

12-15. Some fell, some swooned, some tumbled, some laughed, some gave out piteous cries, and some repeatedly roared like lions. The arms of some were cut off; the legs of (some) others were cut off; others with their sides, abdomens cut off lay in hundreds on the ground. Crores of thousands of elephants, horses and demons fell variously on the ground in the stream of blood. So there was an ocean of blood on the ground.

16. From there inauspicious rivers (i.e. streams of blood) flew there. They had grass and wood, missiles like śaktis and heaps of wood in them.

17. There were mallets, pestles, lances, crocodiles, flags, fish, tortoises with (only) skin (left).

18. They were (i.e. their flow was) checked by arrows etc., and by many great camels. They were having the moss in the form of hair and chowries.

19-21. There was (formed) a great ocean of blood due to many other beings falling therein. At that time the entire earth with mountains, forests and thickets was having the stream of blood, was very terrible, and caused fear to all people. Due to the fall of (the missile called) śakti caused by Kārtikeya, the demons went to Yama's abode. Suppressed by the great axe, by fire, by arrows with fire-flames and by Varuṇa's noose they (i.e. the demons) plunged into Yama's abode.

22-26. The demons, who were struck down by the sons, grandsons, and ministers (of Kartikeya etc.) with the showers of arrows and śaktis, (the demons who were struck down) by the planets, winds, Yakṣas, Gandharvas, Kinnaras and by the intelligent Kubera with his mace, and with the multitudes of

clouds, thunderbolts and snow discharged by the moon, dropped down on the ground due to the terrible poisons of the snakes. They (i.e. the demons) knocked down in thousands of crores by other gods, all fell lifeless to the ground. Casting their bodies some went to heaven and some to Yama's abode. Some due to the working of their merit or sin went to the nether world.

27. In the meanwhile, the great sages recited the Vedas; (they said:) "May it be well with the brāhmaṇas, cows, women and ascetics."

28-29a. When, now, all the other beings are fighting, the rest of the demons, troubled by gods, resorted to mountains; the cowards, afraid of fighting, went into all the directions.

29b-31a. When the army of the demons was broken (i.e. defeated), a very mighty (demon) named Bala, restrained and troubled the gods with arrows. Many gods, who were proud of their power, being tormented by his arrows fell down on the ground, and some were defeated in the battle.

31b-32a. Seeing his great, fierce act, frightening the worlds, sages praised it (while) the remaining gods were crying.

32b-33. Then the angry Indra, the subduer of enemies, possessing great lustre, struck his (i.e. Bala's) army and him, the best among the powerful, with volleys of arrows. He, the angry and powerful one, hastily struck Indra in the same way in the battle.

34-36. The two, very mighty ones (i.e. Bala and Indra), with their bodies moistened with blood spreading forth, (appeared) like the blossomed Kiṃśuka trees in the spring. The best demon (i.e. Bala) pierced (the body of) Indra (i.e. threw at him) by thousands of discs, lances and pestles in the battle. Moving to and fro the mighty king of gods easily cut off those lances and pestles.

37. Then that demon of great lustre quickly struck, with (the missile called) śakti, Indra, who was mounted upon an elephant, between his breasts.

38. Struck with it, Indra trembled on the elephant. Regaining consciousness, Indra, in a moment, pierced the mighty demon.

39. With an arrow he cut off the hands and the bow of him (i.e. of Bala) who was seated in a chariot. The killer of soldiers cut off his hand, shield and flag with an arrow.

40-41. With four sharp arrows he pierced his four horses. That moment only he cut off the charioteer's head with one arrow. He, with his arrow cut off, his chariot destroyed and with his horses and charioteer killed, fell unconscious on the ground, and died in a short time.

42. Then the angry, great demon, Namuci, who destroyed the pride of the gods, took a mace and suddenly struck (Indra's) great elephant.

43. The great thrilling sound (of the fall of the mace) certainly resembled the sound produced by the fall of the thunderbolt on the peak of the Meru mountain.

44. The elephant, tormented by the stroke and being alarmed, with his body moistened with blood, and afflicted by agony, went away with his face turned away.

45. Many (demons) in hundreds and thousands rushed at Indra. He cut them off with crescent-shaped arrows and arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads.

46. The best gods were troubled by the illusory creatures of (i.e. created by) him. Some fell on the ground; some lay on the chariot.

47. Seeing his great deed, Viṣṇu then cut off with his discus those arrows that had turned into creatures and that had stuck to the bodies (of the gods).

48. Then Viṣṇu struck him down on the ground with three arrows. The demon who had fallen on the ground became unconscious, and again tumbled.

49. He took up a terrible hammer and was ready to strike Indra. Then Indra killed the great demon with his thunderbolt.

50-51. With his chest wounded the very mighty (demon) fell on the ground. The gods, the Siddhas and the great sages (said:) 'Well (done), well (done)', and with many showers of flowers honoured Indra at that time. Then all the hosts of demons, being frightened, fled away. The Gandharvas sang songs, the groups of celestial nymphs danced.

CHAPTER SIXTYEIGHT

The Slaying of Muci

Vyāsa said:

1-2a. Seeing Bala and his elder brother Namuci killed (by Indra), Muci then said (these) words (to Indra:) "You have killed my eldest brother; I shall now invisibly take you with my arrows to the abode of the son of Bhāskara (i.e. Yama)."

2b-4a. To him, the very lustrous Indra, revered by all gods, said: "You will now certainly follow the path of death of (i.e. traversed by) your brother. You desire to fight with me as the locusts, through folly, suddenly enter fire without realising its heat."

4b-6a. He struck Indra, who was speaking thus, with three arrows. Indra, the conqueror of the enemies' cities, cut them off with three arrows. Then he struck Indra with ten arrows, and Airāvaṇa with five. Having pierced Mātali (Indra's charioteer) with seven (arrows) he roared loudly.

6b-9. Then the demon of great might and valour angrily brandished an iron mace at Indra. Then Indra dexterously struck him with his thunderbolt. Due to the fall of the thunderbolt, he fell down dead. Due to the fall of the demon the earth trembled. The gods danced and the demons ran away.

CHAPTER SIXTYNINE

The Slaying of Tāreya

Vyāsa said:

1. Tāreya, possessed of power and resembling Indra in valour, struck, with arrows, Skanda, who had killed his father in the war.

2. Then Skanda of mighty arms and equal to Viṣṇu in valour cut off and broke those arrows.

3. The demon suddenly screened Skanda with arrows.

Then Skanda, without getting perturbed, cut them off with (his) arrows.

4. Tāreya struck Skanda with fire-like arrows at the peak of fight. He (also) hurled an arrow resembling the thunderbolt.

5. Kārtikeya warded it off with a fire-like arrow. The demon then discharged at him a fierce missile.

6. He dispelled it with an arrow that he struck at it. Then the demon hurled a very fearful missile of a terrible form at Kārtikeya.

7. Then thousands of crores of mountains, trees, lions and serpents in the form of arrows rushed at the son of Pārvatī (i.e. Kārtikeya).

8. Having cut them off Skanda pierced the best of the demons from his feet to his head (i.e. top to toe) with arrows resembling fire and the sun.

9. Arrows, with their feathered parts made of gold, stuck in a very large measure, to the body of the lord of demons. They shone (on his body) as pieces of gold shine on a black mountain.[1]

10. Then from his body profuse blood flowed out, as in the spring the Śamī tree puts forth flowers profusely.

11-13a. The horses under (i.e. which carried) the chariot, lay clinging to the ground. Then the great angry demon holding a fierce and terrible lance resembling death at the end of the world, hurled it (at Kārtikeya). The son of Pārvatī too burnt it in a moment in the battle by discharging a lance presided over by Paśupati.

13b-14. Then the demon again hurled a (missile called) śakti given (to him) by Brahmā. Kārtikeya struck back a lance powerful like a hundred mallets. Then missiles resembling the thunderbolt struck each other even in the sky.

15-16. The missiles of the two who were brave, fell down on the ground. As the stream of (water from) clouds suddenly strikes a mountain, so the lord of demons struck Kārtikeya with arrows like fire-flames.

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1. Kṛṣṇaśiloccaya—or Kṛṣṇaparvata, is an epithet of the Raivataka mountain.

17. Then cutting them off and also his arrow the mighty-armed Kārtikeya also cut off the mighty head of his charioteer with an arrow with a crescent-shaped head. Then with many arrows he struck down on the ground his horses.

18. On the (battle-) field he, taking a pestle (in his hand) speedily rushed at Kārtikeya; (and) with that the chief of demons struck Kārtikeya, whose vehicle is the peacock.

19-20a. Then the peacock swooned, and trembled repeatedly. Then Kārtikeya again struck the best of the demons and with his sword cut off with force that very fearful pestle.

20b-22a. Taking a (missile called) śakti Tāreya struck Kārtikeya. He too, discharged an unfailing śakti, which killed the wicked. Then that śakti (capable of) bringing about the end of the world, struck (Tāreya) who resembled the staff of Yama, and again went (back) to Kārtikeya.

22b-23. Causing the earth to tremble he (i.e. Tāreya) fell down on the ground. Kārtikeya was worshipped by all gods with flowers, incense etc.

CHAPTER SEVENTY

Devāntaka, Durdharṣa & Durmukha Slain

Vyāsa said:

1-5a. Then the demon Devāntaka roared to fight. He, biting his lips, fought with Yama. Having gone (to the battle-field) he said the words condemned by all people: "O wicked one, through folly, you do not know the supreme dharma in its proper order. By using one's sin and merit, it is the master that curbs or favours one. I am created by the Creator (i.e. Brahmā). I shall correct you, since, you, heading towards death, do not know the dharma. Disease, old age, or a slave—none of these is (the cause of) death. A person who is engaged in work, but who has deviated from dharma, becomes unhappy day and night."

5b-6. He struck, with three arrows, powerful like death, god Yama, who was very mighty, whose only witness was dharma, and who was thus addressed by him; but with three other arrows the righteous one cut them off.

7. Then in the battle he (i.e. Devāntaka) powerfully struck Yama with many arrows, lustrous like the fire at the end of the world. He cut off (these) arrows with (his) arrows.

8. In the meanwhile (i.e. at that time) the two, who possessed great power and valour, who were angry, and who desired to conquer each other struck each other in the battle.

9-11. That very terrible fight between the two continued day and night. Then, the wrathful, best demon, who was possessed of pride and was powerful, angrily hit Yama with a (missile called) śakti. Then Yama quickly took up the same śakti and with it powerfully struck (the demon) between his breasts. His entire body was distressed, and blood was coming (out) of his body.

12. Then the very lustrous and angry Yama held a very terrible unfailing staff and hit it on the body of that demon.

13. Yama, filled with anger, reduced the warrior, along with his horses, his chariot, his charioteer, his collection of missiles, to ashes.

14. Then, when that demon dropped like that, a demon, named Durdharṣa, with a lance in his hand, rushed at Yama to kill him.

15. Yama, with a śakti in his hand and extremely fearless, afflicted him, who approached him with a spike in his hand and who resembled the submarine fire, in the battle.

16-18a. That demon, seeing Yama, struck him with a lance only. Then Yama discharged a śakti in the battle. Suddenly burning the lance (thrown by the demon), which resembled a fiery iron-spear, it pierced the chest of the demon and went down to the ground. With his body shattered by the śakti, he fell down with his chariot.

18b-19a. Then another demon named Durmukha, who was very mighty, who had stretched his bow and who had held a sword and a shield, seated in his chariot only, went (i.e. rushed at) Yama.

19b-21. Seeing Yama, he struck him with many arrows in the battle. That god, jumping from the chariot, cut off his head with the ear-rings, and suddenly made him drop on the ground. The army of the ḍemons, that escaped being killed, ran in the ten directions.

CHAPTER SEVENTYONE

The Second Namuci Slain

Vyāsa said:

1. Then another angry Namuci, seated in his chariot, struck the gods with arrows resembling serpents.

2. So in the war the gods, Siddhas. Kinnaras and snakes could not tolerate the force of the arrows from all sides.

3. Having got into the chariot to which (the horse) Uccaiḥśravas[1] was yoked, and which was driven by Mātali, Indra went to that very powerful demon.

4. Seeing Indra with his attendants in the war, the best of the demons then said to Indra:

5-6. "By killing an ordinary god there is no glory, nor it is pleasing. O Indra, there is no sufficient gain, nor victory. So everything will be everlasting when you are killed here. In heaven I shall obtain the kingdom of gods and happiness fit to be enjoyed."

7-8 Indra, of great lustre and conqueror of the enemies' cities, said to him: "Bravery merely by (uttering) words (i.e. merely in words) is easily available everywhere. O meanest demon, if you have great valour, show your power in the battle. I shall take you to the house of the Sun's son (i.e. of Yama)."

9. Hearing this, the greatest demon, possessing great lustre, got angry. He hit the best god with five sharp arrows.

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1. Uccaiḥśravā—Name of Indra's horse, produced at the churning of the ocean. It is regarded as the prototype and king of horses.

10. Indra quickly cut them off with five sharp-edged arrows. The very mighty two desiring (to acquire) kingdom fought with each other.

11. They (rushed at) each other with great speed, and (each one) cut off (the other's) arrows with his own arrows. They also (hit) each other's bodies with arrows resembling a thunderbolt.

12-13a. The two greatly performed a very unprecedented feat in battle. Seeing their very rare dexterity, taking aim with the arrow, holding and despatching (a missile) gods and hosts of demons became amazed.

13b-15a. In the meanwhile the demon let loose illusions. There hundreds of arrows moved from all sides. Powerful Indra, again, with anger quickly raised his bow and hit him with arrows on all his limbs, burning them.

15b-16. Then with more than eight thousand arrows, they pierced and hit each other. They saw there in the battle, the sky compact with arrows.

17-18a. Many (hit) with the strokes of swords dropped down in thousands on the ground. The cruel Namuci demonstrated his illusory missile in the war which went on for a long time.

18b-20a. He created a dense darkness in the three worlds. Gods and hosts of demons could not see one another. In that dense darkness difficult to cross, no ray was seen issuing forth from the planets like the Sun, the Moon and the heavenly fires.

20b-21. In that battle, all gods and Indra also were quickly shattered with the demon's arrows (i.e. of the arrows discharged by the demon) resembling flames of fire. With their bodies pierced with the arrows (discharged by the demon) they fell on the ground.

22-23a. Other brave (gods) were defeated and went (i.e. ran) into the ten directions. Knowing his trick, Viṣṇu, who was worshipped by all gods, discharged a mild weapon, lustrous like a hundrd suns, in the sky.

23b-25. Seeing that it was retarded, he hit on the chest of the demon with a śakti having many bells. Full of agony he dropped down. Having regained consciousness after a long time,

the demon, who was filled with anger, went speedily to the best of gods and seized Airāvata[1]. Angrily he very much frightened Indra's elephant.

26. Seizing the elephant with Indra (on its back) he dropped him on the ground. Then Indra, who had gone to (i.e. fallen on) the ground was depressed for a moment.

27-28. The lord of the demons jumped and remained between the tusks of the elephant. To kill him, Indra cut off, with his sword, the head of the chief of the demon-troops, and caused him to fall on the ground. All gods were very much delighted, and Gandharvas sang charming music. Sages, who were pleased. praised the best god.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTWO

The Slaying of Madhu

Vyāsa said:

1-2. In the war, Madhu, the destroyer of the gods, mounted on a divine chariot, having a bow in his hand and with troops and full of great anger, went to Viṣṇu in front of the hosts of gods, and said (these) harsh words to him, the immutable lord:

3-5a. "O Nārāyaṇa, how do you not know here the laws of war? Using a foul means to kill (the demons) unjustly, you will not shine. Due to this sin, and due to not doing (proper) activity, gods would perish. I shall have another creation. Here I shall just kill you with the hosts of gods."

5b-9. Speaking thus, and taking a bow he struck the lord with arrows. Viṣṇu cut them off with arrows, powerful like the thunderbolt; and then struck Madhu with many arrows (sent) into all his limbs. The demon got himself screened with illusion. The best gods, and those Rudras and others who were brave, and other gods possessing strength, and goddesses of various kinds endowed with weapons and vehicles, generals, chiefs of

1. Airāvata—Name of Indra's elephant.

Gaṇas, gods like the chief of the worlds, Śiva and Viṣṇu, others like the planets—all together fought with him. Due to Madhu's trickery all gods fled away at that time.

10. (Struck) with showers of swords and śaktis in front of and behind them, the gods being hurt by weapons suddenly fell on the ground.

11. In the meanwhile, Viṣṇu, taking his (disc known as) Sudarśana[1], killed in the battle, the demons (who had) through illusion (turned themselves into) gods.

12. He cut off their heads in thousands; the lord of gods struck down the demons (who had taken up) the forms of gods.

13-14a. In the same way, the lord caused the demons to flee away from the battle (-field). Seeing him all sages and gods were amazed. Gods and hosts of sages spoke (i.e. whispered) into one another's ear:

14b-15a. "This Viṣṇu, the immutable lord, is always the only protector of gods. This god, witnessing everything, is the conqueror of the demons in every yuga."

15b-16. How does he (i.e. Madhu) kill all the gods? Here the end of the world[2] is taking place. In the meanwhile, at a distance Madhu employed his illusion. Taking the form of Hara (Śiva), he said to the immutable Viṣṇu:

17-18. "O sinner, today what merit, fame, glory and (other) excellence (will) you (get) by killing the gods all round in the presence of the demons? Due to your great madness you do not know your own (individuals) and others. Therefore, (hitting you) with sharp arrows I shall take you to Yama's abode."

19. Saying so he struck Viṣṇu with fierce arrows in the battle. But Viṣṇu cut them off, (and) said (these) words:

20-21a. "O heroic demon, I know you to be brave Madhu in the lovely form of Hara, and doing an impious act and employing trickery. Having struck you down in the battle, I shall give (i.e. send) you to a fruitless world."

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1. Sudarśana—A circular weapon of Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa.

2. Kalpānta—Destruction of the world. Kalpa—a day of Brahmā or one thousand yugas, a period of four thousand three hundred and twenty millions of years of mortals, measuring the duration of the world.

21b-22. In the meanwhile he hit, with sharp arrows, the bull-bannered Śiva, having matted hair and seated upon a bull in the battle. At that time the fight between the god and the demon was great.

23-26. They pierced each other (with arrows) and there met one another. The immutable Viṣṇu cut off his bow with sharp horse-shoe-shaped arrows. Then he struck down the horse in the form of the bull. The demon, with a lance in his hand, rushed at the lord of the world. Then whirling the lance he struck the highest lord. With three arrows he (i.e. the lord) cut off the lance resembling the fire at the end of the world. Then the cruel, large-armed Madhu, who was greatly deceitful, took up the form of the goddess and having mounted upon a lion, went to Viṣṇu.

27-28a. He struck Viṣṇu with various kinds of arrows and said (these) words to him: "O best of gods, you have killed my lord in the battle. I shall kill you and the two sons Kārtikeya and Gaṇeśa."

28b-29a. With many arrows he (i.e. the lord) struck the demon, who was speaking thus. Bleeding, he fell down dead on the ground.

29b-30. Seeing his parents struck, the very powerful Kārtikeya bound by illusion, took up a śakti and went to fight with Viṣṇu. Then the creator (i.e. Brahmā) said these words to Kārtikeya who was harassed by delusion:

31. "See, your parents, observing the worlds, are moving in the intermediate region between the heaven and the earth, and are witnessing the war from a distance."

32-33a. Seeing that he has heard this, he vanished there only. Then the very proud brothers Dhundhu and Sundhu fell upon Garuḍa to kill Viṣṇu in the battle.

33b-34. Viṣṇu with his Nandaka sword cut off Dhundhu with a sword in his hand and Sundhu with a mace; and with his mace killed another (demon). The two, being wounded, dropped on the ground.

35-37. Then Madhu, screened with darkness, quickly disappeared. Through his illusion he dropped a hundred mountains on (the body of) Viṣṇu. Then in the battle, getting into the darkness, he cut off the mountains, and angrily cut off

his head with his (disc called) Sudarśana. Then gods like Brahmā and Śiva made him known as 'Madhusūdana' in the worlds.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTHREE

The Slaying of Vṛtra

Vyāsa said:

1. Then, Vṛtra, of great lustre and most distinguished of the demons, mounted upon an elephant, ran to Viṣṇu rich in (i.e. seated upon) an elephant.

2. In the great war, he, seated upon an elephant, pierced Vṛtra, coming to him, (piercing him) in all his limbs, with arrows like the destructive fire at the end of the world.

3-5. Then Vṛtra hit with an arrow the head of Indra. Due to that the mighty one shook. Then calming himself, and raising his bow, the powerful one showered with the shower of arrows (i.e. showered arrows) on the body of the demon. The very powerful one having cut them off, hit Indra, the lord of all gods, with arrows resembling serpents.

6-8. Thus with thousands of arrows they struck each other. The arrows in the battle of the two archers were of the same quality, were quick like the speed of mind, were strong like mountains, resembled the submarine fire in touch, and were moving in the sky and pierced (i.e. were capable of piercing) the spokes of the thunderbolt.

9-12. Thus, in this manner the battle lasted for days and nights. Indra struck the elephant (of the demon) with his own lance. Throwing (himself) on the ground, he quickly went to his chariot. Remaining in the chariot, he, with a śakti, quickly struck hard (the elephant called) Airāvaṇa of that lord (of gods), as (Indra would strike) a great mountain with the thunderbolt. That great elephant, with Indra (on his back), though (he was) trembling, looked splendid. Then Indra,

taking a śakti, pierced (with it) the demon in his chest; (then) he (i.e. the demon) fell on the chariot.

13-14. Regaining consciousness in a moment, and roaring, he struck Indra in the battle with an arrow. He (i.e. Indra) then swooned. Regaining consciousness, Indra struck him with hundreds of arrows. Struck with arrows resembling Indra's thunderbolt he was full of agony.

15-17. Then Vṛtra discharged a great lance on (the body of) the lord of gods. With (i.e. against) the demon's missile of (i.e. granted by) Śiva, Indra let loose the Vaiṣṇava missile. The missiles of the two resembling mass of fire, struck each other in the sky and discharged sparks of fire. Due to the touch of the sparks of fire the warriors of both the armies could not remain comfortably, as moths cannot stand in (front of) fire.

18. Being burnt, the warriors (in the army) of the gods and demons fell on the ground and ran into all directions. The battle (-field) became vacant then.

19. Seeing that his missile was retarded, the demon, filled with anger, discharged at Indra a missile made of a group of mountains.

20. In the battle, Indra cut off (that) group of mountains with volleys of arrows. The demon sent a Śaiva missile at the very mighty Indra.

21-22a. Crores of thousands chief beings, lions, demons, bears, wolves, tigers, great elephants, serpents—such and other creatures ran to the lord of gods.

22b-23a. Indra, the killer of the heroes of his enemy, cut them off, even before they reached him, with arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads, with crescent-shaped arrows, with lances and (other) arrows.

23b-24a. Then Vṛtra of mighty arms and brave, raised his bow and struck Indra with thousands of arrows resembling the thunderbolt.

24b-25a. Indra cut them off and also cut off his bow with arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads. That moment (only) he struck down on the ground his charioteer and his horses.

25b-26a. The best demon, having worshipped a thorny mace, struck it on the head of (Indra's) elephant. Due to swoon (caused by the stroke) the elephant dropped on the ground.

26b-27. The lord of all gods came to the ground with his mace. Then repeatedly a mace-fight took place between the two. There verily was the sound produced by the strokes of the maces of the two who were striking (each other).

28-29. Again and again they turned round and round. They (gave) very fearful strokes below and above and on (each other's) sides. Thus the fight between the two which caused fear to the visible and invisible worlds took place. Seeing (the fight) hosts of gods, Siddhas and demons were amazed.

30-31a. The two fighting heroes were in peril of death. Heroes among gods and demons were not at all able to see it. Śiva, Brahmā and others remained in the sky to see that wonder.

31b-33a. Due to 'hum' sound of (i.e. produced by) them and due to the sound produced by the strokes of their maces, a sound went up and up; surely such a sound is produced by the thunderbolt (only). When their maces were broken, their hands remained folded (into fists). Thus after half a watch their weapons fell down.

33b-35a. In the meanwhile, the two heroes, holding swords and shields, moved in the battle to fight against each other. Their swords, bodies and shields shone like lightning and meteors. The two were looked at with speed and wonder by all the worlds.

35b-37a. The multi-coloured shields of the two were cut off. Thus a fearful and great fight took place between the two. It was full of circular movements, use of disc and bow and dexterity. The fight between Vṛtra and Indra is like the fight of Vṛtra and Vāsava (only).

37b-40. In the battle, Indra, after jumping, rooted out Vṛtra's hair, and quickly and suddenly cut off his head. Cry of victory of (i.e. raised by) gods was there on all sides. Gods, with

their hearts expanded (i.e. rejoicing), worshipped Indra. The drums of gods were sounded, the bands of celestial nymphs danced. The Gandharvas sang songs; and the sages praised (Indra). The demons were afraid, and giving up their arms, ran in (various) directions.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFOUR

The Slaying of Tripura's Son

Vyāsa said:

1. The son of Tripura mounted upon a chariot to which four horses were yoked and which resembled the sun in lustre and said (these) words to the lord of the Gaṇas (i.e. Gaṇeśa):

2. "O lord of the Gaṇas, since your father killed my father, therefore, I shall today take your father to Yama's abode (i.e. shall kill him) with arrows."

3-6a. Then Gaṇeśa said to that son of Tripura: "Formerly your wicked father did a great sinful deed, detrimental to the gods. My father heard it. Knowing about your wicked father engaged in a sinful act, my father, with (i.e. using his) strength, killed him with an arrow. He has been emancipated from sin and delusion and is sent to Yama's abode. O demon, here, in a moment, I shall send you along the same path."

6b-7a. (The demon) struck with ten arrows resembling the fire at the end of the world, the lord of Gaṇas who spoke thus, and who was very intelligent among the gods.

7b-8. Then (Gaṇeśa) hit with force the demon with thousands of arrows, with arrows like the staff of Yama, with arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads, with heron-feathered arrows, and very sharp arrows resembling the fire of the thunderbolt.

9-10a. The pot-bellied (god, i.e. Gaṇeśa) adored by gods also cut off his arrows. He again struck him with force with arrows resembling a thunderbolt. With his entire body hurt with arrows, he fell down on the ground in a swoon.

10b-11. Then (the demons) Bhadra, Saubhadra, Bhīṣaṇa and Nirjarāntaka, taking their maces rushed at Gaṇeśa. They struck the lord of the Gaṇas simultaneously with the strokes of their maces.

12-14. Smartly he rendered useless the strokes of their maces and with his axe he hit Bhadraka on his head. Then he first struck down Nirjarāntaka with a sword. Heramba (i.e. Gaṇeśa) having struck down the four heads of the (demons') troops who resembled great mountains, also struck down other enemies.

15-16. Then the best demon, Tripura's son, regained consciousness, mounted upon his own chariot and struck the best god (i.e. Gaṇeśa) with crescent-shaped arrows, with arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads and with spears. The virtuous one cut them off, and again struck him with arrows.

17-18. With four arrows he struck down his horses, with one arrow he struck down his charioteer, and with arrows he struck down on the grounds the chiefs of the troops. The son of Tripura quickly went to another chariot and pierced the lord of the Gaṇas with arrows resembling the thunderbolt.

19-20. With his body moistened with blood, the son of Śiva (i.e. Gaṇeśa) whose terrible power was like that of Yama, and who was very angry, pierced him on his forehead with three arrows, between his breasts with seven arrows, on the region of his navel with four (arrows), and on the top of his penis with five (arrows).

21. With his entire body injured, the demon being extremely depressed (i.e. who fainted) fell on the chariot in the battle.

22. Then his wise charioteer took him away from the battle(-field). The brave Gaṇeśa, worshipped by the gods, never attacked one who had turned away from the battle.

23. (Tripura's son) regaining consciousness after a long time, said (these) words to his charioteer: "O charioteer, go (with me) to that timid Gaṇeśa, Śiva's son (remaining) in the battle-field".

24-25. Then the charioteer uttered these true, wholesome and soft words: "Who is able to bear the arrows of Śiva's son

in the battle? Therefore, O son of Prabhā, I brought you, who had fainted. Realizing this, you may now do what is proper."

26-27a. In the meanwhile the king had employed the best one i.e. Kavi (i.e. Śukra). The elephant regained consciousness with the employment of medicines etc. He made him hundred times more powerful and indicated (the means to) victory.

27b-29. Having first given him water consecrated with sacred hymns, he checked (i.e. healed) the wounds on his body. The elephant just with his tusks broke (i.e. would break) a great mountain. In the battle, that elephant, very difficult to vanquish, struck down hundreds of thousands of troops and their guardians. The demon, seated on his back, hit and struck down on the ground principal lords of gods with arrows resembling the fire at the end of the world.

30. Then gods of great might, fell down with their bodies covered with streams of blood after being struck with his arrows resembling the staff of Yama.

31. Whichever way the demon with (i.e. seated on) the elephant went, there he put up a terrible volley of (i.e. discharged his terrible) arrows.

32-34. Some (gods) were struck down by the elephant, others by the rider. By whirling them speedily certain gods were tormented. So (also) the chiefs of the hosts of gods, not at all afraid of fighting, struck him with his elephant with various weapons and missiles and many arrows. But those very mighty gods could not subdue that elephant.

35-36a. The elephant with his tusks and Tripura's son with his arrows quickly struck them down. Those gods who did not fall on the ground with their bodies split, being frightened, and afflicted with pain, sought the shelter of Gaṇeśa, who was fit to protect (them).

36b-39a. Seeing the havoc among gods, the brave Gaṇeśa struck him along with his elephant with arrows resembling the fire of the thunderbolt. He, along with his elephant whose speed was checked by an arrow, rose (to fight). Then the two (i.e. Gaṇeśa and Tripura's son) broke down each other with arrows only. Both the principal warriors, the god and the

demon, roaring and desiring to conquer each other had their entire bodies covered with blood.

39b-40. Then the elephant pierced the rat (the vehicle of Gaṇeśa) with his own tusks. The elephant (also) was attacked by the rat. Then there was a terrible battle between them. A wonderful fight with (i.e. among) the four (jointly) and separately, below and above, ensued.

41. The fight was noisy, fierce, and caused fear to all the worlds, in which fighting tusks with teeth and arrows with best arrows (took place).

42-43. In the war between gods and demons it was a terrible battle. The rat pierced the great, very mighty elephant. Seated on the backbone, (Gaṇeśa) again skilfully struck with his axe the mouth, chest and shoulder of the demon.

44-45. With his elephant he, vomitting blood, fell down on the ground. Sages and gods, saying, 'Well (done), well (done)', praised (Gaṇeśa). Here in the battle other (gods) struck the demons with infallible missiles, till the war giving victory (to one) of the two armies was not over.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFIVE

The Hymn of Victory at the End of War between Gods and Demons

Vyāsa said:

1. Having heard (those) words from (i.e. uttered by) the great god, all gods led by Indra, rushed, from all sides, to the hosts of the demons.

2. (There) came the great demon, Kumbha by name, who very much struck the king of the Yakṣas (i.e. Kubera) with a mace.

3. The lord of the Guhyakas (i.e. Kubera) hit him very strongly with the strokes of (his) mace. Then there was a fierce war between the two.

4-5. There was in the battle a great arrangement (of the soldiers) like a wheel, where the one that came forward was seized and killed. The attack was very fierce. A boring tool was used. The lord of wealth (i.e. Kubera) fought a great battle with him, and in the end struck the tool on the chest of that Kumbha.

6-7a. Then Kumbha, with his fangs broken, fell down on the ground. Then the very powerful Jambha, remaining in his chariot only struck the horse of Indra, and also Airāvaṇa with volleys of arrows.

7b-9. Indra struck the best demon with his thunderbolt only. Wet with blood he fell dead on the ground. Then with the (missile called) śakti, he pierced the four important chiefs—Araṇya, Sughora, Aghora and Ghora. Kārtikeya cleverly struck down each one of them.

10-11. (Indra's son) Jayanta subdued, with volleys of arrows, Saurabha, and also Samhrāda with a śakti in his hand, and Yamadaṇḍa and Narāntaka. Having hit them he struck them down, reducing their bodies to ashes. With the stroke of his sword, Kāla struck down Bābhrava.

12-14a. Mṛtyu, with śakti struck Aśva and Nigṛṇa in the battle. These very powerful seven—Bhadrabāhu, Mahābāhu, Sugandha, Gandha, Bhaurika, Vallika, and Bhīma — the leaders of the army, being burnt by Agni, fell down dead, with their bodies burnt in the battle, on the ground.

14b. Very courageous, brave, very powerful (demons) causing fear (even) to the brave, fell down on the ground, being bound by the noose of the noble Varuṇa.

15-17. The five demons named Turu, Tumburu, Durmedha, Sādhaka and Asādhaka were struck down by the mass of the Sun's rays. In the battle, Vāyu struck with his arrows demons led by the six viz. Krūra, Krauñca, Raṇa, Īsāna, Moda and Sammoda. Nairṛta with a mace struck down Bhīma on the ground.

18. Hundreds of demons, facing the gods, being killed in war, being frightened, fell in the battle struck by the lances of the Rudras.

19-20. Hundreds of mighty demons were struck in the

battle with the strokes of the arrows discharged by the Vasus, brave and encircled with rays, with hails from the clouds, and with very terrible strokes of the thunderbolt. Thousands (of demons) fell due to the strokes of the mace of Kubera.

21. The best of the demons were pierced with the thunderbolt of Indra. Similarly, struck with the śakti of Kārtikeya, innumerable (demons) fell down on the ground.

22. The principal (demons) fell (being hit) with the stroke of Gaṇeśa's axe. Due to the disc released from Viṣṇu's hand of a severe act, heads of important demons fell on the ground.

23-24. Śamana (i.e. Yama) with (the strokes of) his deadly staff struck down crores of thousands of demons. Kāla struck down the demons with (the strokes of) his śakti. Varuṇa in the same way, struck down others.

25. With the stroke of Takṣakas etc. and the Moon's chill Khara mounted on a horse was struck; and the noose (of Varuṇa) in the same way struck the elephants.

26. Then he destroyed the demons' elephant (by striking) with an iron beam on his temple. Thus with skill he struck down the horses and the elephants.

27-28a. Thus the very mighty Siddhas, Gandharvas and the celestial nymphs, and other deities along with the mothers and the chiefs of the Gaṇas, struck down the very fearful and destructive demons.

28b-29a. The gods struck down the demon with arrows, with strokes of swords, with spears, śaktis, hatchets, sticks, iron-beams and lances.

29b-31. When the demons were thus being destroyed, the very brave chief of the demons, their king, Hiraṇyākṣa, came there seated in a chariot which resembled the Sun's chariot, which was decorated with all jewels with which a chariot is decorated, which was made of gold, which was divine, which was adorned with bells and chowries, which was filled with banners and flags, which was beautiful and which was like Indra's chariot.

32-33a. He, who was invincible to the gods and the demons, struck with volleys of arrows the armies and the hero

struck down on the ground hundreds of thousands of elephants and chariots with horses.

33b-35. Thus the lord of the demons moving among all the hosts of gods sent down volleys of arrows resembling death. As an elephant shakes the lotus-pond, he gradually shook the armies of gods in the war. Due to the sharp falls and lion-like roars of the lord of demons (the gods) repeatedly and rapidly fell down on the ground.

36-40. He struck (Indra's son) Jayanta with ten arrows, Remanta with five, and Indra with fifteen arrows; (he struck) Citraratha with twenty arrows, Guha with twenty-five, Heramb (i.e. Gaṇeśa) with three, and Yama with forty arrows. In the same way he hit Kāla and Mṛtyu with both hands. He struck (Kubera) the lord of the Guhyakas and Vāyu with ten arrows each. With six and seven arrows he struck Rudras separately, He struck all the Vasus, Siddhas, Gandharvas and serpents with ten, eighteen arrows and the (other) gods with six arrows in the war.

41. The powerful gods, being distressed and frightened due to the stream of his vigour, his great power and due to the sight of his quick dexterity, were unable to retaliate.

42. The gods struck in the battle with arrows resembling the trident of Śiva and cutting the vitals, swooned and fell on the ground.

43-44a. (Even) the chief gods could not stand before him. Then the gods (thus) fully shaken and beaten (by Hiraṇyākṣa) went, along with Indra, to Viṣṇu the protector, to seek his succor.

44b-45a. In the meantime, Viṣṇu said to Garuḍa, the lord of the birds: "Now go, in front of (i.e. face) the demon in the battle."

45b-47a. He then immediately went speedily to destroy the demon. Having struck the chariot (of Viṣṇu) with arrows he checked his speed and then going in front of his chariot he said to the immutable Viṣṇu: "Having today killed you along with (other) gods, I shall fashion another creation."

47b-48a. Then Viṣṇu said these words to the roaring, superior demon: "O sinful one, if you are able to compete (with me), then (first) be settled in the battle."

48b-49. Then he struck Viṣṇu with hundreds of arrows. Without being ruffled, he cut (those) arrows resembling the staff of Yama. Again he (i.e. the demon) discharged thousands of arrows at him.

50. Having cut them off with arrows, Viṣṇu struck him with arrows, looking unavoidable due to their great weight and (resembling) the submarine fire in touch.

51-52a. The best demon was struck by Viṣṇu, with thousands of golden arrows that were piercing, sharp, moving in the sky, having the speed of the mind—as the missiles of Keśava were very quick—resembling cotton and hay.

52b-53. The angry, very strong, Hiraṇyākṣa, being distressed due to (his missiles) being interrupted, took, in the battle, a mountain and hit Viṣṇu (with) it. (But) Viṣṇu easily pounded it with (his) mace.

54. Thus he dropped a thousand mountains, but Viṣṇu the enemy of the demons, with the same dexterity, crushed them.

55. Again the best demon, with his mind full of anger, putting up thousands of arms, showered Viṣṇu with many very sharp arrows, śaktis, spears and axes etc.

56. The best god (i.e. Viṣṇu) cut those very missiles with very fierce, blazing arrows, causing fear to the demons.

57-59. He pierced him (i.e. Hiraṇyākṣa) on all his limbs with arrows resembling Śiva's trident. In the battle (which the lord of demons and the immutable Viṣṇu fought) the demon, being distressed, quickly ran and dropped an all-powerful, excellent, fierce śakti resembling the tongue of death, and having eight bells, on the large chest of Viṣṇu.

60. (With that) the best god (i.e. Viṣṇu) looked charming like a compact cloud accompanied by lightning. Then the demons, saying 'Well (done)' cried 'Be victorious.'

61. Then (Viṣṇu), the enemy of the demons, discharged his disc at the demons' army. Having cut off their heads, it came back to Viṣṇu (again).

62. He struck down the demon with the stroke of a śakti in the battle. Regaining consciousness after a long time, he struck Viṣṇu with a fiery arrow.

63. The angry Viṣṇu discharged the Kubera missile. Then he (i.e. Hiraṇyākṣa) discharged, in the battle, at Viṣṇu, the illusory missile, which was demonish and very fierce.

64. He, the brave one, also struck Viṣṇu with lions, tigers, buffaloes, and poisonous serpents.

65. Then Viṣṇu cut off, with his arrows, the streams of weapons and missiles (discharged by Hiraṇyākṣa) in the battle, and struck him with a spear.

66-67a. That moment only, he with his body wet with blood, dragged him and with three arrows the lord of the gods cut off his spear.

67b-68a. Viṣṇu, with ten arrows, cut off the chariot's fender along with the flag and banner and the umbrella, and also the charioteer.

68b-70. When the chief demon's chariot was struck down, he, the powerful one, jumped to another chariot, got into it and brought it in front (of Viṣṇu). Then a very fierce and thrilling battle took place between Hiraṇyākṣa and Viṣṇu and the great battle caused wonder among people. Then a battle with an attack and a counter-attack took place between the two.

71. A hundred divine years passed uninterruptedly in the battle (i.e. the battle continued without a break for a hundred divine years). Then, the very powerful demon grew (in size) like Vāmana.

72. Angrily he seized, with his mouth, the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. Lifting the earth he entered the nether region.

73-74a. The remaining demons, fully pleased, entered that region after him. Then Viṣṇu, of a great lustre, knowing the great power of the demon, took the form of a boar to kill the demon.

74b-75. Taking up a hog's body (i.e. form) Viṣṇu quickly entered (the nether region) after him. Going to the root of the earth, and seeing it having gone to the nether region, he held the earth, the support of the people, on his two fangs.

76. When Viṣṇu was going, holding the earth, the lord of the demons came to him, hurting him boldly with (bad) words.

77. Viṣṇu, who had taken up the form of a hog, tolerated the bad words and angrily put the earth on a mountain in the water.

78-79a. Depositing his power into the earth, he made it steady. Then after that the demon-king who had stuck to it stood up, and full of great anger, struck Viṣṇu with a mace.

79b-80a. Viṣṇu (in the) hog (-form) avoided (the stroke of) the mace, as one, endowed with deep and abstract meditation, avoids death; and struck him (with his mace called) Kaumodakī.

80b-81. Then the very powerful Hiraṇyākṣa, full of anger, again struck the lord on his right arm, with a fist. Thus a great fight, in which the right and left hands were used, and the warriors were coming forward and going back, took place.

82-83a. They turned round, confused and imitated each other. Brahmā and other gods, remaining in the sky, watched the fight; and they said: "Well-being to the beings, gods and sages."

83b-84a. They said to Viṣṇu, the lord of gods who had taken up the form of a hog: "O god, do not play like a child. Kill him who is a source of trouble to the gods."

84b-87a. Then very lustrous Viṣṇu, who had taken up the form of an illusory hog, taking the consent of Brahmā and others threw the powerful disc, which resembled a thousand suns in lustre, which had a thousand spokes, which was very radiant, which was terrible and which was capable of killing the demon and which resembled the fire at the end of the world. That disc, released by Viṣṇu, reduced to ashes the very powerful Hiraṇyākṣa, when Brahmā and others were watching (i.e. in the presence of Brahmā and others).

87b-88. (Then) the disc came (back) to Viṣṇu. Then gods like Brahmā and others, and the regents of the quarters led by Indra seeing Viṣṇu's victory, arrived there, and praised him.

Gods said:

89. We salute Viṣṇu, who is the origin of the world, who is lhe lord of the gods and demons, who is the protector of the

worlds. We seek the shelter of him (i.e. Viṣṇu) from whose lotus-like navel, it is said, Brahmā was born.

90. Our salutation to you (O Viṣṇu) who had taken up the fish-form; our salutation to you, who had taken up the form of a tortoise; we salute you of the form of Nṛsiṃha; and also of the Vāmana-form.

91-92a. Our salutation to you who (in the incarnation as) Paraśurāma destroyed the kṣatriyas, and to Rāma, the destroyer of Rāvaṇa. Our salutation to (you) the killer of Pralamba; to Rāma; to Buddha; to the deluder of the demon; to the destroyer of mlecchas; to (the form) named Kalki; and (to you) who had taken up the form of a hog.

92b-93. In every yuga, you take up (different) forms for the good of the world and the destruction of the demons. Now you have killed the daring demon Hiraṇyākṣa, who easily conquered the important regents of the quarters led by Indra.

94. You have struck him down for the good of gods. O best of gods, be pleased. O god of gods, you, in the form of Brahmā, are the creator of this (whole world). You are the creator of this (whole) world.

95. You are also its protector. In every yuga, you also take up very lovely forms. Turning yourself into the destructive fire and (into the form of) Śiva, you yourself destroy the (whole) world at the time of (its) end.

96-97a. Therefore, you are the cause of the (whole) world; beyond you there is no life or absence of it. You alone are the past or the future or the present form called the mobile and immobile. The world does not shine forth without you.

97b-98. The form based on distinction between existence and non-existence or real and unreal depends upon you only. Therefore, O god, no one with an immature intellect, except the person devoted to your feet, is able to comprehend you (i.e. your true nature). Therefore, we are seeking the shelter of you, who are the protector.

Vyāsa said:

99-102. Then Viṣṇu, with his mind pleased, said to the gods: "Well-being to you, O gods, I am now pleased by this

hymn of praise. O gods, for him, who would devoutly and respectfully recite this hymn of praise of (my) victory, nothing is inaccessible in the three worlds. A man by narrating or listening to it obtains the fruit which is obtained by properly giving a hundred thousand cows. The daily narration of the account of the victory of the god of gods gives everything. There was no greater knowledge than this, nor will there be greater knowledge than this."

CHAPTER SEVENTYSIX

The Exposition of Merit

Sañjaya said:

1-2. O brāhmaṇa, I desire to hear correctly the condition of those demons who died in the war either while facing (the enemy) or while turning away from him. O preceptor, tell me whether these innumerable demons are there in the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile or have gone somewhere (else).

Vyāsa said:

3-5. Those excellent brave demons who died in the battle while facing (the enemy), obtained godhead and are eternally enjoying pleasures (in heaven) where there are golden palaces decorated with various jewels, where there are trees shining like gold and satisfying all desires, where there is an auspicious lake full of fragrant lotuses, waterlilies and white lotuses and other flowers, and also with the portions of curd, milk and ghee.

6. Being extremely handsome and always possessing fresh youth they rule there, and also on the earth.

7. Having thus obtained eight births, they become wealthy or heads or ministers with their bodies partly (seated) on the fore-quarters of elephants.

8. Those who turn away their faces in the battle, those who are cowardly and timid, and those who fight deceitfully, and those who hate gods and brāhmaṇas go to a fierce hell.

9. Those who strike another (i.e. the rival) soldier who is fallen, who has fainted, who is defeated, and the Mlecchas who use abusive language, go to hell.

10-11. They take away the deposits of others and actually turn away (from the battlefield). Mlecchas rob (people) at night in a wasted forest; they do rash acts; they are interested in eating everything; they are fools; and harm cows and brāhmaṇas. There are other Mlecchas who use abusive language, and are born as rogues.

12. Their language is Paiśācī, and there are no popular customs among them. They do not observe purity, do not practise penance, have no learning, nor do they offer oblations to their manes.

13-14. They do not give gifts, do not perform śrāddha etc.; they do not worship gods; they do not wait upon their parents or gods and ascetics, as a result of absence of (proper) knowledge. Therefore they do not (properly) clean (i.e. remove) the dirt from their bodies. They have a passion for their mother or sister or any other housewife.

15-16. They behave contrary to (the ways of) the world. Their behaviour is always unclean. The demons are born from the ejections of snakes and from (beings) living on mountains, and their religious merit is groundless. Those who hurt brāhmaṇas, women and children, meet with trouble after death.

17. These wicked ones who eat cows and who are delighted in eating prohibited things, go to (i.e. are born in) the species of insects, and become trees and ants.

18-19. These enemies of gods are not fit for (reciting) sacred hymns and (worshipping) deities. They look upon their elder brother as equal to them and as born with them. Their manners are rustic. They don whiskers. They are interested in eating corpses on the earth. If at all they perform a vow or a sacrifice it is (just) a rash act.

20. They are delighted in eating fish and flesh; they tell lies. They are always passionate, greedy and always full of anger and pride.

21. They are always interested in the excitement due to killing and binding someone. They are bad servants (or they have bad servants); they are pleased with bad people; they are delighted with foul smell.

22. They are not (interested) in gods, in wise men, in listening to religious (discourses), in (reciting) auspicious hymns of praise or sacred hymns, since they are undetermined in (religious) acts.

23. They (contract) many diseases and are full of anger. They have many types of dresses; on the earth these are the symbols of demons in the species of human beings.

24-25. They do not recognize the higher world, a preceptor and their own person or of someone else. They (simply) long for filling the womb (i.e. for copulation); they do not strive for a guest or elderly persons, or brāhmaṇas, and for a deity, for their son, family, friend or relative. They do not know (i.e. care for) giving a gift (even) in dream, and also food or clothes.

26. Since they preserve wealth they are Yakṣas in the form of men. Even at the time of the end of their life (i.e. when their life is endangered), they do not bestow wealth on the king.

27-30. Those Yakṣas remain in distress and carry burdens for others. Listen with concentrated mind to the characteristics, condemned by all people, of evil spirits, women and men, from me (i.e. as I tell you). They always are dirty and muddy, and without truth and purity. There are heaps of dirt on theit teeth, hair, clothes and bodies. They do not like to clean (even) once, their houses, seats, clothes etc. They do not see (i.e. enjoy) pleasures of (i.e. from) women, and quickly enter a forest. On the earth they are interested in eating residues of or left-over food and stinking (articles of food).

31. They like (to eat) food, to drink and to sleep in darkness. They are never calm, nor are their mouths pure.

32. These are said to be the characteristics of the evil spirits in hell. They do not know (what is) good or (what is) bad; also they do not know (who is) a friend, and (who is) an enemy, (what is) a virtue and (what is) a vice.

33. They do not, by their (very) nature, get inauspicious or auspicious places, an enemy, a friend and a neutral (one).

34. Those, who are regarded as (endowed with) intelligence, know them to be beasts living among men. Intentionally taking up many forms, they wander in vain on the earth.

35. They are men in the form of Yakṣas and are kept out of all (religious) rites. I shall tell (you) their divisions and characteristics (as seen) on the earth.

36-37. In accordance with their sins they are born in the mortal worlds. The wise call such a one, moving on a dirty ground and being polite (outwardly, but really) deceptive, a crow eating leavings of food etc. The (citizen of) Kukura is interested in eating what is prohibited and likes filthy (things).

38-39. He indulges in all secret (plans) and eats what ought and ought not to be eaten. On the earth they are born in the families of beast etc. They take dogs in their hands and eat food of (i.e. given by) the Mlecchas. They especially (eat the flesh) of pigs and other beasts fighting with their feet.

40-41a. They take delight in nourishing and eating inauspicious things condemnable due to filth. Due to their collecting a heap of wood and making fire on a mountain, they should always be known as Mlecchas, always causing fear to the kṣatriyas.

41b-43a. When people belonging to noble families give up right conduct and there is absence of purity, there are (born) Mlecchas and Dasyus. Other people are reduced to their condition due to their contact or due to eating their food or having copulation with their (i.e. the Mleccha) women.

43b-45a. (And) at that time all men are tormented by grief and diseases, have scarcity of food, they are confused and are always harassed by the king. At that time mortals, deprived of all (kinds of) purity are interested in falsehood. People do not listen to the Purāṇas and the sacred scriptures.

45b-46. They like wine and flesh; they are sinful; they eat everything and are very fierce. They are engaged in fearful practices and are always intent upon deception. The sons do not support their father, mother and preceptors also.

47-48a. The servants do not wait upon a virtuous master.

Certain women do not wait upon their husbands, their mothers-in-law or their (own) mothers. At that time, people are always in difficulty and there is a quarrel in every house.

48b-49. The kings are Mlecchas and are addicted to drinking, and also the ministers and the priests. Their offering is with (i.e. consists of) fish and flesh. They are heretics, as their charms are full of exertion. They are pre-eminent in sinews and good health.

50-53. By them—the wealthy and dull—the earth is pervaded. These foolish men, (living) in a forest or cities love one another, and they eat fish, flesh-food that is fit and that is not fit to be eaten. In the forest brāhmaṇas and others also eat things leading to sin, and even a devoted beast. All they are not reborn (i.e. live eternally in hell). All these men—the sinners—cause their manes to fall (into hell), and are certainly the evil spirits, demons and Guhyakas, who were gods before. These, pleased with modesty, are neither gods nor men.

Sañjaya said:

54. O lord, remove my doubt as to how these real (demons) realise their aim in human state (i.e. as human beings)?

Vyāsa said:

55. These goblins, demons and evil spirits born in the brāhmaṇa caste or other castes, do not give up their nature, (which they got) according to the sins that they had committed.

56. The demons who are born in the mortal world, are always eager to quarrel. The cheats, the wicked and the cruel (human beings) should be known as the demons on the earth.

57. Their gifts or worship of the deities always alarms the people on the earth. They obtain wealth in a cruel way and enjoy kingdom eternally.

58-59a. One might have victory, bravery etc., religious merit, and one's sin may perish. Thus someone obtains godhead in heaven with (i.e. by practising) severe penance on the earth, so also in heaven, in the world of the serpents and in Yama's abode.

59b-60. Having propitiated Viṣṇu (i.e. he worshipped Viṣṇu), Prahlāda was honoured by gods. Similarly the demon Andhaka praised Śiva and became a member of his assembly. The very mighty Bhṛṅgī became the chief of his (i.e. Śiva's) attendants only.

61. There are (the examples) of these and others. Bali will be Indra. O son, here or in the next world (the demons) always get a good position.

62. Certain best gods, born in the family of demons, cherish all their manes in hundreds and thousands.

63-65a. Even by one good, intelligent son the (entire) family is protected. Even one son, who is devoted to Viṣṇu, whose senses are curbed, who is religious-minded, and who is engaged in the worship of gods, would emancipate a crore of families. In the remaining Kaliyuga, when Dharma is perishing, (even) one religious-minded person protects in a country or in a city, the people (i.e. the citizens) or the family or (even) a village.

65b-66. There was (formerly) a great city of (i.e. inhabited by) brāhmaṇas, (and) named Medura. There (i.e. in that city) all the brāhmaṇas were always engaged in the prayer (offered thrice a day). They were interested in the recital of the Vedas, were wise, and honoured guests and brāhmaṇas.

67. They performed the rites like sacrifice, fire-rites, and observed vows. With determination they performed the six duties.[1] (Even) in a great difficulty they did not think of (committing) a sin.

68-69. The powerful ones practised the vow of the ancient sacrifice. Some time a learned brāhmaṇic sage, a householder, was fortunately offering ghee into fire to the accompaniment of sacred hymns. At that time he got an acute feeling to urinate.

70-71. Keeping his female servant to look after the fire, he went to urinate. But due to her inattention, the ghee was eaten by a dog. Then due to fear she filled the pot (of

1. Ṣaṭkarma -The six duties enjoined on a brāhmaṇa. They are: teaching, learning, performing sacrifices, acting as a priest at sacrifices, giving and receiving gifts.

ghee) with her own urine. Then the brāhmaṇa, not noticing it, quickly offered it into fire.

72-73. Then in a moment he noticed a wonder (taking place) in the fire. There was actually a heap of gold, lustrous like gold (itself). Taking it with joy the brāhmaṇa had contact with (i.e. committed) a sin. With amazement he asked the female servant: "O dear one, tell me how this (has taken place)."

74. O brāhmaṇa, she gladly told him (the account) as it had taken place. Then everyday, at a fixed time, it (i.e. the gold would proceed to him.

75-76a. In his house there was prosperity that amazed people. Then in his city all the bad people having heard that (account) from one another, did the (same) sinful act through greed.

76b-77a. Due to great greed great sin also enters one's heart. Then due to the sin (and) due to fear (of it) and (at same time) through its attraction there was confusion of mind.

77b-78a. Due to the mass of sins the city itself was burnt. All the women and the men became wicked due to the power of the sin.

78b-79. (Even) an old man was ignorant; a brāhmaṇa (living) in that village did not pay attention to that affair. His virtuous wife, full of great grief, and tormented with the calamity (facing the city) told him what was going on in the city.

The brāhmaṇa-lady said:

80. O lord, seeing you full of grief I am pained. Please move to another village.

81-84. Then he, who knew the defects, smiled and said (these) words (to her): "O you blessed one, the fool, who lives by giving up good conduct leading to the highest good, is not born again (i.e. lives eternally in hell). These brāhmaṇas of bad conduct, will, due to great sin and desiring (to commit) great sin, go with their wives and dependents, to hell carrying the sin with them. In the end they will again come to this worldly existence; (but) there is no end to their sin. I alone,

due to having well preserved my religious merit, will remain here."

85. Then she said to him: "People will laugh at these words of (i.e. uttered by) you. Please do not utter them in front or before anyone else."

The brāhmaṇa said:

86. O dear one, if I shall go from here, that moment only the city, with its wealth and inhabitants, will go down.

87. The brāhmaṇa, having spoken like this, and being greatly pleased, collected his wealth and with her quickly went to another boundary (i.e. went out of the town).

88. Remaining there, she saw that the city remained as it was before. The good lady said to her husband: "(See) the city does not perish."

89. The excellent brāhmaṇa, having reflected and being greatly amazed, said to her: "Is it that there remains some thing (i.e. have we left something) outside our house?"

90. Having thought, she said to her husband: "In the hurry I have not brought the shoes; they remain there (only); (now) what shall I put on?"

91. Speaking thus to her husband the chaste lady returned after taking them. From the vicinity of her husband she saw that the city was afflicted.

92. Then the castes like that of the brāhmaṇa, the wicked citizens, being afflicted, remained in a fearful hell, from where there was no return (to the mortal world).

93. They miserably went to Yama's city. There is no requital for them. That which is foul-smelling is said to be unholy and so should be avoided.

94. He, who takes delight in eating as before, commits sin even today. The wise men should know him to be a jackal, given to stealing and moving at night.

95-96. A childish man not knowing all acts and ignorant of all deeds, void of (i.e. not following) conventional practices, is just a beast, as are camels, mongooses and others. A mischievous man causes disgust to men of his caste and is a coward in battles.

97-99a. A man always liking leavings of food etc. is described to be a dog by the wise. A man who is always engaged in stealing, who always deceives many friends, fights at the time of sexual union, who is always fickle by nature, who is always inconstant about eating, and who loves forests, is said to be an ape or a monkey.

99b-100a. That man who is a betrayer and who causes fear among people by his talk and thoughts is said to be a serpent.

100b-101a. He who is strong and assertive and who is always immodest, who likes stinking flesh and who is given to enjoyment is declared to be a lion-like man.

101b. By his sound only others like wolves are frightened and distressed.

102. Those men who are prudent are known to be elephants etc. In this order one should know (the characteristics) among (i.e. of) men.

103. We (i.e. I) shall (now) explain the characteristics of gods, well-settled in the form of (i.e. as) human beings.

104. A man (of divine nature) is always engaged in worshipping brāhmaṇas, gods, guests, preceptors, good men and ascetics and in penance, also in codes of laws and in right courses (of action). He is given to forbearance, he has overcome his anger, he speaks the truth, and has curbed his senses.

105. He is kind and dear to people, he is handsome and has a sweet voice. He is an orator, he is good at all jobs, he is deligent and very strong.

106-108. He is literate and learned, and knows the essential nature of music and dance. He is delighted in what ought to be done with reference to spiritual knowledge, and the tunes of all strings, also in all oblations, in the products of a cow, in vegetarian (food); also in substances fragrant due to their contact with nice (things) and in fresh and very charming (things); also in fragrant flowers, in all missiles, weapons and ornaments; also is delighted in giving gifts at the time of the rites performed on the Parvans.

109. His time passes with (i.e. in) acts like bathing, giving

gifts, in (practising) vows, sacrifices and worship of gods and recitations. No day would be idle.

110-112. This alone is the eternal conduct of men. The best sages have declared man's conduct to be like that of gods. But god is superior due to energy, (while) man is timid. God is always serious, (while) man is always soft (-hearted). Due to mutual laudation they have love for one another; there would be never such love for the demons.

113. Between gods and men, demons and evil spirits there is always love; there are great pleasure, affection, and good auspicious deeds for one another. There is mutual love between gods and men, between demons and evil spirits, among evil spirits, and between beasts.

114. Crows and others show affection or displeasure towards members of their own species. One should know their characteristics.

115. Thus one should, due to special religious merit, know what is dear and what is not, what is merit and what is not, and also what is eminence and what is not in particular species.

116. On the earth human couples of different castes (i.e. the husband and wife not belonging to the same caste), are not happy. One would always love one's own species in liberation or even in hell.

117. Due to very great religious merit one would get a (long) life; those that perform (deeds) leading to religious merit, are good. The sinful ones, also men (like) the demons and others perish.

118-119. In the Kṛtayuga there are many gods; there are neither demons nor other species. In the Tretāyuga they are a quarter (of the total number), in the Dvāparayuga the number is one half; in the intervening period between (the Dvāpara and) the Kali, there is a mixture. There was the Bhāratīya war that took place between gods and others.

120. All those warriors and armies of Duryodhana were demons and others, as also Karṇa and others, on the earth.

121. Bhīṣma is the chief of the Vasus, and Droṇa is the lordly divine sage. Aśvatthāman is actually Śiva; Viṣṇu was born in the Nanda-family.

122. The five Indras were born as Pāṇḍavas, and Vidura was Dharma (i.e. virtue) himself. Gāndhārī, Draupadī and Kuntī are goddesses on the earth.

123. In the Kaliyuga there are gods and demons, and the rest are human beings. The evil spirits, eating corpses and beasts will be born.

124. Their maid is crooked, always in distress and young. Due to love for couples, she always tells them about (good) conduct.

125. All those demons and others who are always interested in all (kinds of) sins, in quarrels and unjust deeds, go to hell.

Vaiśampāyana said:

126-128. Due to the wrong inclination of the demons heaven has no godhead. How (can one have) pleasures, happiness, health and (how can one) store power? How (can one have) kingdom, (long) life, fame, desirable power that is liked; how would morality and knowledge come about; how a prosperous, permanent (i.e. long) life come about? How again, O lord, would the acts of charity, learning, sacrifice come about? You please tell (i.e. explain) this to me, your reliable disciple.

Vyāsa said:

129. Due to the rashness of the demons, penance will certainly be there. Also vows, sacrifice and the like and affection for one's own kinsman would be there.

130. He, the restrained one, who is free from bad qualities, and who knows the truth about morality and sacred books, would have (i.e. has) the characteristics of a god.

131. O brāhmaṇa, he who performs acts as enjoined in the Purāṇas and sacred texts, in heaven or here, and himself does meritorious deeds, is capable of emancipating the earth.

132. He, who, especially on seeing the devotee of Viṣṇu, pleases and honours him, is free from all sins, and is capable of emancipating the earth.

133. That brāhmaṇa, who is always engaged in the six duties (laid down for a brāhmaṇa) and in the performance of all (kinds of) sacrifices, who always likes religious accounts, is capable of emancipating the earth.

134. Those men, who are traitors, who are ungrateful and who fail in their vows, who hate brāhmaṇas and gods, destroy the earth.

135. Those, who are interested in (i.e. addicted to) drinking, who are sinful, who engage themselves in (i.e. are addicted to) gambling, who are heretics and speak vile language, destroy the earth.

136. Those who are void of (i.e. do not perform) good deeds, who are always (causing) fear, and are fearless, who cause alarm to those who interpret the smṛtis and the sacred texts, destroy the earth.

137. Those men, who give up their own way of life and adopt a meaner one, who are engaged in reviling the elders, who hate (others), destroy the earth.

138-139. Those who prohibit a donor (from giving gifts), those who incite (others) to (commit) sin, those who trouble the poor and many other men (like them), who commit sins, having caused the men (related to them) to fall (into hell) destroy the earth.

140. To him, who listens to this account, which is charming, which is the most secret, and which is extremely beneficial, there is no bad state, no misery, no misfortune and no indigence on the earth.

141. He will have no birth amongst demons etc.; he will enjoy eternal pleasure in heaven; he will not have untimely death; and will not be touched by sin.

142. He becomes the chief of people on the earth, the lord of gods in heaven, and having enjoyed heaven kalpa after kalpa, he goes along the path to salvation.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSEVEN

The Vow of Saptamī in Honour of the Sun

Vaiśampāyana said:

1-3a. O lord, O best of brāhmaṇas, who is the one that daily appears in the sky? Who is he? What is his power? Where is the lord of heat (i.e. the Sun) born? What function does he do, as he is very much full of rays? He is fit to be always worshipped by all gods, best sages, Siddhas, Cāraṇas, demons and evil spirits, as well as by human beings like brāhmaṇas and others.

Vyāsa said:

3b-4a. (He) is a great lustre of Brahman, and has come out from Brahman's body. Know him to be actually full of Brahman and the giver of (the fruits of the four goals of human life viz.) righteousness, enjoyment, worldly prosperity and salvation.

4b-5a. He is a heap made of spotless rays, is very hot and extremely unbearable. Seeing him, people, tormented by his hot rays, fled away.

5b-6a. Then the oceans, the best small and big rivers etc. became dry ; creatures and sick people died.

6b-7. Then gods like Indra and others approached Brahmā. They told him this thing and Brahmā said to the gods: "O gods, he, the lord, is the first creator of the rays of light (giving) vitality (and is born) from Brahman's body.

8-10. He is actually full of great activity and has the Moon in his body. In the three worlds all the human race, along with the mobile and the immobile, and the gods effecting divine (things), all the viviparous, oviparous beings, insects and plants are protected by these two. We (i.e. I) cannot at all describe the power of this Sun. He has protected, created and nourished the worlds.

11. No one resembles him on account of his protecting all. Seeing whom (i.e. him) at the dawn, heap of sins is destroyed.

12-14a. The men of the brāhmaṇa caste and others obtain salvation after (i.e. by) propitiating him. It is said that the

brāhmaṇas, who, knowing the Vedas, have their arms raised at the time of offering the three daily prayers, are very much honoured by gods. All brāhmaṇas, after having worshipped the goddess of the form of Sandhyā, remaining in his disc, obtain heaven and salvation.

14b-16. (Even) the leavings of food fallen on the ground are purified by his rays. One would obtain purity from sin by merely offering the three daily prayers. Those men, who, after seeing a cāṇḍāla, or a killer of cows, or a fallen person, or one suffering from leprosy or full of great sins or covered with (i.e. who has committed) minor sins, see the Sun, are purified (i.e. free) from a great sin[1].

17-19a. Merely by worshipping him one is free from all diseases. A man by worshipping the Sun never has blindness, poverty, misery or grief, here or in the next world. Gods like Viṣṇu, Śiva being invisible, are never seen in the world; they can be seen through meditation. This god is said to be one who is (always) seen."

The gods said:

19b-20. He may be pleased by propitiation; let there be waiting upon and worshippig him. (But) O Brahman, his very sight is like the fire at the time of the end of the world. All beings like men and others have been reduced to the state of death (i.e. are dead) on the earth.

21. Due to the power of his lustre, oceans and others have perished. (Even) we are unable to bear his (lustre), (then) how can other ordinary people bear it ?

22. Therefore, through your favour (i.e. do favour to us and) tell us the means by which people would devotedly worship the Sun.

23. Hearing (these) words of the gods, Brahmā went to the Sun. Having gone to him, he started praising him for the good of all the worlds.

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1. Mahāpātaka—The five great sins are: murder of a brāhmaṇa, drinking wine, stealing, having illicit relation with one's teacher's wife, and contact with those who commit these sins.

24. "O god, you are the untainted eye of all the world. You are actually of the form of Brahman. You are like the fire at the end of the world, who cannot be easily looked at.

25. You always remain in all gods; Vāyu is your friend; food etc. in the body is disgested due to you; and also one's life would be (i.e. is) certainly due to you.

26. The creation and destruction (of the world) are due to you, O god; you alone are the lord of the world. Without you all the people would not live (even) for a day.

27. You are the lord, the saviour, the protector, the father and the mother of all the worlds including the mobile and the immobile. The world is sustained due to your favour.

28. O lord, among all gods, there is none like you. Everywhere you are present, the world is sustained by you alone.

29. You create form and smell; the sweetness in liquids is due to you. Thus the Sun, the lord of the universe, is the cause of the stability of everything.

30. O lord, you alone are the pious cause of all the auspicious sacred places and of sacrifices; you are the witness of all, and the mine of virtues.

31. You are omniscient; you are the cause of everything; you take away (everything); you are the protector (of everything); you are always striving. You destroy darkness, sins and diseases; and you remove poverty and misery.

32. You are a great relative in the next and this world; you are omniscient and see everything. Except you there is none who helps all the worlds."

The Sun said:

33. O grandsire, O highly intelligent one, the lord of the universe, the cause of everything, O Brahman, quickly speak what best I can do for you.

Brahmā said:

34. You are a very hot lustre, very difficult to be borne by people. O lord of gods, act in such a way that it (i.e. your lustre) becomes mild.

The Sun said:

35. O lord, I have crores and crores of strong rays, which (would) destroy the worlds; they do not do anything liked by people. So using (some) instrument, cut them off.

36-37. Then at the words of the Sun, Brahmā quickly called Viśvakarman, and (he), having fashioned a lathe of diamond, cut off the Sun's rays resembling the fire at the time of universal destruction. With them only he fashioned Viṣṇu's disc (called) Sudarśana.

38-39. (He also fashioned) the infallible staff of Yama, and the trident of Śiva, and the excellent sword of Kāla and the (missile called) śakti causing great delight, and also the excellent weapon of Caṇḍikā, and a lovely lance. That Viśvakarman himself quickly fashioned these at the order of Brahmā.

40-41. He also sharpened the other remaining (portion of) the Sun. Then due to the absence of any other means of his birth he was born from Aditi's womb (as the son) of the sage Kaśyapa, and so was known as Āditya. He moves on the border of the universe and goes round Meru's peak.

42. So also high up (in the sky), away from the earth at a distance of a lakh yojanas, the planets like the Moon etc. being ordained by Brahmā, move there.

43. The Sun, of twelve forms, moves for twelve months. All know that the Saṃkrānti[1] is due to his transition.

44. We (i.e. I) shall, O sage, (now) tell (you) all the fruit that is (obtained by one) on these (Saṃkrānti days). (The Saṃkrānti days) on which the Sun enters the Dhanu, Mithuna, Mīna and Kanyā (signs of the zodiac) are (called) Ṣaḍaśīti.

45. (That Saṃkrānti day on which he enters) the Vṛṣabha, Vṛścika, Kumbha and Siṃha (signs) is known as Viṣṇupadī. Know that the offerings to manes, gifts and worship of deities (performed on) these (days) are eternal (i.e. give an eternal fruit).

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1. Saṃkrānti—The passage of the Sun from one zodiacal sign to another. When the Sun passes through Karka or Makara, it is Ayana-Saṅkrānti, and when it passes through Meṣa and Tulā, it is Viśva-Saṅkrānti.

46. The fruit of (such offerings etc. given) on a Ṣaḍaśīti is thousands of times greater. The fruit (of such offerings given) on a Viṣṇupadī has a lakh-fold fruit and of that (given on) an ayana is a crore-fold.

47. That gift given on a Viṣṇupadī is said to be inexhaustible. I say that it remains with the giver birth after birth.

48. The body does not suffer from cold by giving a piece of cloth in the cold (season). The fruit of giving gold equal to one's own weight and of giving a bed is inexhaustible.

49. He, who, humbly gives a fully furnished bed to a brāhmaṇa, the chief of all castes, would get the position of a king.

50. Similarly by giving gold, water on the bank of a river and by giving oil and tāmbūla one would be a king on the earth.

51. By solemnly saluting a brāhmaṇa, the wealthy person would get eternally (the fruit of the salutation).

52-53. By gratifying the manes at the dawn of the fifteenth day of the dark half of Māgha, one (lives) eternally (in heaven). One (should) also give a cow having golden horns, shining with jewels, having silver hoofs and having big udders made of bell-metal. By giving this (cow) to the best of brāhmaṇas (a man) would become a sovereign king.

54-55. By giving food and ornaments one would become a king—the lord of a province. He, who would give a spotted cow with all the (necessary) articles, becomes free from the sin earned (i.e. committed) during (the past) seven births and would remain eternally in heaven. By giving dainty food to a brāhmaṇa he obtains heaven eternally.

56. Prosperity does not abandon him, who gives grains, cloth, servants, an abode, a seat to the best brāhmaṇa.

57. Whatever small or large gift is given (on these) and the day of the anniversary of a yuga[1] etc. is inexhaustible in the next world.

58. The worship of a deity, a hymn of praise, listening to a religious discourse purifies a person from all sins and he is honoured in the heaven.

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1. Yugādyā—The anniversary of the first day of a Yuga.

59-60. The third day of the bright half of Māgha is known as Manvantarī. All the gifts given on that day are said to be inexhaustible, (and bring to him) wealth, pleasures, kingdom, and residence in heaven for (even in) the next kalpa. Therefore gifts, worship of the good gives an endless fruit in the next world.

61. The Manvantarā occurs in Māgha. (Similarly) the seventh day of the bright half of Māgha is said to be the most auspicious day. It is preserved by the Purāṇas (i.e. declared to be auspicious).

62. (This) seventh day of the bright half of Māgha is (called) Koṭibhāskara. Having fasted on this (auspicious day) a man is liberated; there is no doubt about it.

63. This seventh day of the bright half of Māgha is comparable to the solar-eclipse (day). Bathing at dawn on that day gives a great fruit.

64-65. (One should recite the following hymn:) 'The seventh day (of Māgha) should destroy my sin committed in the (previous) seven births and also my disease and misery. (This) seventh day is the mother of all beings. O you (Saptamī) belonging to the Sun[1], you have come up on the seventh day, my salutation to you, O goddess (living) in the disc of the Sun.'

66-67. By offering an arka-leaf, a fragrant flower, a badari-fruit, keeping all these in a copper vessel with rice, and also a sacred thread with red lead, and offering a very auspicious respectful offering, all the sin committed during the (previous) seven births, perishes.

68. Till (then) he is troubled by (residence in) hells and sinful and painful diseases. He should eat pure food[2] made with rice exposed to the Sun.

69. And he should avoid flour, ginger and fruits or roots used as vegetables, a bud, spoilt leaves, plantains, and ghee (prepared from the milk) of a she-goat.

70. It should be free from lice, perfumes. He should avoid bath with hot water. At the time of the vow (in honour) of the Sun he should avoid all (fruits) having few seeds.

1. Saptasapti—An epithet of the Sun.
2. Haviṣyānna—Food fit to be eaten during days of fast.

71. He, who is observing the vow, should not think of anything else except about righteousness. The vow (in honour) of the Sun is greatly meritorious, and is commended by the Purāṇas.

72 (A man who practises it) obtains eternally enjoyments like those of the Sun in the heaven for thousands and hundreds of crores of years.

73. (Enjoying in heaven) like this, and after the end of (his residence) in heaven he becomes a very prosperous king on the earth; (and) in the mortal world he again practises the vow (in honour) of the Sun due to his repeated practice (in) the former (births).

74. Then he himself obtains eternal happiness and enjoyments in the heaven; and he obtains (good) health and wealth due to the favour of the Sun.

75. That seventh day of the bright half of Māgha which falls on a Sunday is well known as Mahājayā; (the one falling on) any other (day) is known as Vijayā.

76. (The fruit of) Vijayā is a lakh crores, while that of a Mahājayā is endless. Even by (practising) one of these vows he is free from the bondage of birth (and death).

77. He who gives the best horse, gold, red cloth, grains out of love for the Sun, becomes the lord of heaven and earth in succession.

78-79. I shall tell you the difference among these. O brāhmaṇa, listen properly. He who gives an excellent horse adorned with best ornaments goes to (i.e. becomes the king of) the earth with (i.e. surrounded by) the seven seas and free from enemies.

80-81. The wise have laid down, as the present to a brāhmaṇa, sandal without a horse, but with a māṣa or two of gold adorned with (i.e. accompanied by) bulls; so also a pot decked with jewels and made of gold. Or by giving only gold he becomes a rich lord of the heaven.

82. He who gives red cloth and grains according to his capacity, becomes the lord of heaven and earth, and prosperity never forsakes him.

83. He becomes healthy, his mind is pleased, he conquers the evil beings and is valorous. As long as the Sun shines (i.e. eternally) he is honoured most.

84. He who practises the vow of the Māyāsaptamī as the twelfth in Māgha etc., enjoys desired fruit in this world, and is honoured by gods also.

85. A wise man, having duly practised the vow of Arkāṅga-saptamī (falling on a Sunday), becomes purified from sin, and having obtained the desired things in this world, would obtain salvation.

86. I shall tell (you) the distinctive mark (of this vow) and also the right (to be performed) in every month. Due to the propitiousness of this vow he is honoured by gods in heaven.

87. When the Uttarāyaṇa sets in, on a Sunday and on the male asterism in the bright half, one should receive the vow of Saptamī.

88. The wise say that Hasta, Maitra (i.e. Anurādhā), Puṣya, Śravas (i.e. Sravaṇa), Mṛga and Punarvasu are male asterisms.

89. It is said that one should eat only once on the fifth day, should eat only at night on the sixth day, should fast on the seventh day, and the fast would be broken on the eighth day.

90. He eats the tip of the Arka-tree, pure cowdung, good black pepper, water, fruit and root. At night he should eat, or should eat once a day according to the rules; or (should drink) milk or eat food anointed with ghee. These are told in order (to be the things which he should partake of). Doing (i.e. taking) them in this order and thus observing the vow of the Sun on the seventh day, he obtains the desired fruit.

91. Without touching them with his teeth, he should drink, with water, the tip of the Arka tree, a particular pair of small leaves from the branch of the Arka tree on the north-east of the village. He should also drink with water in a small quantity, without touching with his teeth, pure cowdung not fallen on the ground, holding it with the middle finger and the thumb. He should also drink with water and

without touching it with his teeth, an unbruised, old, big, dry, good black pepper. He should also drink water sacred to Viṣṇu, flowing from the roots of his fingers. Without touching it with his teeth, he should drink with water one of the fruits from among dates and coconuts. The food should be anointed with ghee and should be of the measure of a peacock's egg. The quantity of the ghee should be like that only.

92. When the Sun doubles his shadow, he should know it to be nakta. Nakta is eating at night.

93. He should first worship the deity with fruits, flowers etc. and sacred hymns. Then he should give gift of food according to the rules and proportion.

94. Then (follow) the meditation: He should meditate upon the Sun, especially at the time of worshipping him—the god—who is full of all (good) marks, who is adorned with all ornaments, who has two arms, whose complexion is red, who has held in his hand a red lotus, whose disc is lustrous, who remains in a large (quantity of) water, who is with his attendants, who is seated on a lotus, who is anointed with red sandal.

95-96. Then (he should recite) this sacred hymn: 'We make an offering to Bhāskara, possessing a thousand rays. We think of him. Let that Sun urge us on.'

97. This hymn is said to be very great (i.e. effective) and (when recited) on the seventh day brings victory. (He should worship the Sun) with Karavīra and Karañja flowers resembling the red saffron.

98-99. Then, particularly on the eighth day, the fast should be broken. The fast should be broken on the eighth day only and never on the ninth; (for) if the fast is broken on the ninth day he does not get the fruit of the vow. The fast should be broken in the afternoon, and (the food should be) without bitter, pungent or sour articles (of food).

100. He should carefully cleanse the rice, and avoid (blades of) grass or seeds etc. He should also avoid kidney-beans, beans, sesamum and ghee.

101. With devotion and according to his capacity he should feed the brāhmaṇas by giving them food with vegetarian sauces and drinks.

102-104. He should suitably distribute presents among the brāhmaṇas. He who observes this vow of Saptamī which gives unending fruit, which destroys all sins and increases wealth and (the number of) sons, and he, O best of brāhmaṇas, who, having observed it every month to please the Sun, devoutly breaks the fast, goes to the Sun's heaven. He would live in heaven for a crore of kalpas and then obtain the best position.

105. This alone, is the great secret told formerly by Śiva. By constantly listening to it, and by observing the vow, or by narrating it to the people, the fruit (that one gets) is the same.

CHAPTER SEVENTYEIGHT

The Pacification of the Sun

Vaiśampāyana said:

1. O revered sir, through your favour I have heard the purifying vow. I desire to hear another (vow) which is dear to the Sun.

Vyāsa said:

2. Skanda, saluting, with his head touching the ground, Śiva, seated comfortably on the Kailāsa-peak, said these words:

3. "I have heard in detail from you the vow called 'Arkāṅga'. O lord, I (now) desire to hear correctly about the fruit of the day etc."

The lord said:

4. A man who observes (this) vow should offer a respectful oblation with red flowers on Sunday. By eating only at night food fit to be eaten during days of fast, he is not deprived of heaven.

5. The highest lord, along with his attendants, is pleased with him, who performs all auspicious rites on the seventh day (which falls) on a Sunday only.

6. (Even) by observing the vow once on the seventh day (falling) on a Sunday, he gets the status of a brave man, as long as the Sun is (i.e. shines) in the sky.

7. The vow performed on the seventh day (falling) on a Sunday satisfies all desires, is auspicious, (gives) prosperity, destroys diseases, gives (i.e. takes one to) heaven and salvation and is beneficial.

8. On the auspicious seventh day with (i.e. falling on) a Sunday and Saṃkrānti day, all the worship or vow would become inexhaustible.

9. On a bright Sunday (a man should) worship the chief of planets. He should keep him (i.e. draw his figure) in a circle with an unwashed point, setting it out with energy.

10. Having meditated upon him, having two arms, seated on a red lotus, of a charming neck, dressed in red garments, adorned with red ornaments, he should drop in the north-eastern direction the flower held in both his hands, after having smelt it.

11. (He should recite the sacred hymn:) 'We make an offering to Āditya; we meditate upon Bhāskara. May Bhānu impel us.'

12-13. Then he should do the anointment according to the rite told by his preceptor. At the end of (i.e. after) anointment, (he should present) incense; after the incense (he should present) the lamp; after the lamp (he should make) an offering of eatables; then he should present water. Then he should mutter sacred hymns, do mudrās,[1] and salute (the deity).

14. The first mudrā is añjali, the other one is known as dhenukā. He who would worship the Sun would be absorbed into the Sun.

15. Due to the favour of that Sun, the (Brahmā's) skull clinging to my hand and the (sin due to) the murder of Brahman dropped on the bank (of the Ganges) at Vārāṇasī.

16. There is no greater deity than the Sun in the three worlds. Due to his favour I was absolved of the terrible sin.

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1. Mudrā—Name of certain positions of the fingers practised in devotion or religious worship.

Skanda said:

17. O lord, having heard (these) words from you I am amazed. There is no other deity like you. How (did you commit the sin of) the murder of Brahman?

18. (For) you are the chief among the wise; you are given to abstract meditation; you are the enjoyer, the imperishable and the immutable one. You alone are great among the gods; you have filled (every) form, and are a great deity.

19. You are omniscient, the giver of boons and the lord of all beings. How then, O lord, is there the possibility of a bad act and especially of anger in your case?

Śiva said:

20. O son, we, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, getting separated in each yuga for the well-being of the worlds, do everything.

21. We have neither bondage nor salvation; we have nothing which ought to be done or which ought not to be done. But, for the protection of the worlds we move according to rules.

22. Every (form of ours) is great, removes obstacles and diseases, and accomplishes all objects.

23. This uncensured Sun, though one, divided himself into many (forms) due to difference in time. He shines month by month; and being one becomes (i.e. divides himself into) twelve (forms).

24-26. He is Mitra in the month of Mārgaśīrṣa. He is eternal Viṣṇu in the month of Pauṣa. He is Varuṇa in the month of Māgha; and he is Sūrya in the month of Phālguna. He would shine as Bhānu in the month of Caitra. He is called Tapana in Vaiśākha. He would shine as Indra in the month of Jyeṣṭha. He shines as Ravi in Āṣāḍha. He is Gabhasti in the month of Śrāvaṇa; similarly he is Yama in Bhādrapada. He is Hiraṇyaretas in Āśvina, and Divākara in Kārtika.

27. These are the twelve Ādityas said (to shine) in each month. They are of large forms, of great lustre and have the brilliance of the fire at the time of the end of the world.

28. He who recites this everyday, incurs no sin, nor does

he contract any disease; he does not suffer from poverty, nor from insult.

29. He obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven eternally; he gets, one by one, pleasures of heaven, kingdom and fame. I shall (now) tell the great sacred hymn, causing all happiness:

30-33. 'Om, (my) salutation to Āditya, having a thousand arms. (My) salutation to you, having lotus-like hands. (My) repeated salutation to Varuṇa. (My) salutation to Timirānāśa (i.e. the dispeller of darkness); (my) repeated salutations to Śrīsūrya. (My) salutation to Sahasrajihva (i.e. having a hundred tongues); (my) repeated salutation to Bhānu. You are Brahmā; you are Viṣṇu; you are Rudra. Salutation to you. You are the fire and the wind in all beings. Salutation to you. You are present in all beings. In this world of mobile and immobile there is nothing (that exists) without you. You are settled in all bodies.'

34-35. Repeating like this, he would obtain (i.e. satisfy), one by one, his desires like that for heavenly pleasures etc. Āditya, Bhāskara, Sūrya, Arka, Bhānu, Divākara, Suvarṇaretas, Mitra, Pūṣan and Tvaṣṭṛ—(these are) your ten (names). (The eleventh is) Svayambhū and the twelfth is said to be Timirāśa.

36. A man, who, after having purified himself, repeats these (twelve) names of the Sun, becomes free from all sins and diseases and gets the highest position.

37. I shall again tell (you something) else about the magnanimous Bhāskara, viz. the bodies called red, resembling blood (i.e. red), and like red led and tawny.

38-41a. O Skanda, listen to the principal names (of the Sun): Tapana, Tāpana, and Kartā, Hartā and Graheśvara; he is Lokasākṣī (i.e. observing the people in all the three worlds), Vyomādhipa (lord of the sky), Divākara, Agnigarbha, Mahāvipra, Svarga, Saptāśva-vāhana, Padmahasta, Tamobhedī, Ṛgveda, Yajus and Sāmaga. For him who would always devoutly remember Kālapriya, Puṇḍarīka, Mūlasthāna (the original place), sanctified by meditation, wherefrom can there be fear from disease?

41b-42a. O Skanda, listen carefully to (the sacred hymn) which removes sin and is auspicious. O you highly intelligent one, do not have the slightest doubt about Āditya.

42b-43. 'Om, salutation to Indra, salutation to Viṣṇu.' This should be repeated; a rite should be performed and so also the (three daily) prayers. This prayer pacifies everything, and removes all obstacles.

44. It would destroy all diseases like boils, small-pox etc., also jaundice etc., and those diseases which are terrible.

45-47. So also fever lasting for one day, three days or four days; so also leprosy, consumption, colic, and fever; so also stone in the bladder, strangury; so also (similar) other diseases. All those diseases like gout or diseases of the womb, so also great, serious, painful and tormenting diseases, disappear by the uttering of (the name of) Āditya.

48. 'O lord of gods, protect me from the diseases and fears due to the planets.' When (the names of) the Sun (are) recited all of them disappear.

49. I shall tell (you) the original sacred hymn of the magnanimous Sun, which fulfils all desires, which always gives enjoyments and salvation.

50. The sacred hymn is (like) this: 'Om Hrām, Hrīm, my salutation to the Sun.' Due to this sacred hymn, everything would certainly be obtained.

51-52a. Diseases never afflict him, nor would any undesirable (thing) come to him. A man, who takes the water from the sun-flower, gradually gets free from the disease by merely drinking it.

52b-53. (The sacred hymn) should not be given or told to those who are not devotees, who have no children or to the heretics and should be carefully recited. O son, the water from the sun-flower should be mixed with bitter oil and given for being smelt or for drinking.

54. (The man who uses it) is free from all diseases; and the original sacred hymn should be recited at the time of the daily prayer and at rites.

55. When it is recited, diseases and cruel planets perish (i.e. are ineffective). What is the use of many other sacred texts or very lengthy sacred hymns?

56. O child, this (hymn) is all-pacifying and brings about

all (desired) objects. It should not be given to an atheist, nor to one who censures gods and brāhmaṇas.

57-58. It should be given to him who is devoted to his preceptor; but should never be given to others. A man who, getting up in the morning, recites this, is free from all sins (even though) he has killed a cow or he is ungrateful. He, who would please the Sun, becomes one having good health, wealth, prosperity and success.

59-61a. There is no doubt about this. He, who would recite this hymn. once, twice or thrice everyday in the presence of (i.e. by attending upon) the Sun, would obtain the desired fruit. One desiring a daughter gets a daughter, one desiring knowledge gets it, and one desiring wealth gets wealth.

61b-63a. He who, of a pure conduct, would devoutly listen to it, is free from all sins and even goes to the Sun's heaven. If one would recite this sacred hymn at the time of the vow in honour of the Sun, or at the time of observing other vows and sacrifices, at auspicious and sacred places, it would be a crore times fruitful.

63b-65. To a brāhmaṇa who recites this in the presence of brāhmaṇas at the time of appeasing a planet, or at the time of meals or worship or meals served to brāhmaṇas, would have endless fruit. He, the very intelligent one, who recites or causes it to be recited in front of ascetics, brāhmaṇas or deities, is honoured in heaven.

CHAPTER SEVENTYNINE

The Story of Bhadreśvara

Vyāsa said:

1. In Madhya-deśa (lived) a supreme, sovereign king known as Bhadreśvara. He was pure due to many austerities and vows of many kinds.

2. He always worshipped the deities devoutly. White (spots of) leprosy appeared on his right hand.

3. Then (even) after being treated by physicians, the symptoms of the former (disease) were (still) noticed. Having invited principal brāhmaṇas and ministers he said (these) words (to them).

The king said:

4. O brāhmaṇas, there is a disease on my hand, which is unbearable and condemned by the people. Therefore I shall cast my body at a place which is an auspicious, great sacred place.

5-6a. O you heroes, O brāhmaṇas, who are conversant with religious merit, advise me who have no progeny, about my well-being here and in the next world, so that (I shall enjoy) welfare in the next world. So being, well-pleased, tell me, what you desire me to do.

The brāhmaṇas said:

6b-8a. When you, the intelligent and righteous one abandon this country the (whole) world and this kingdom are doomed. Therefore (please) do not speak (like this). We shall find out a remedy for it. O lord, propitiate the great god with sacred hymns (in honour) of the Sun.

The king said:

8b-10a. O best brāhmaṇas by which means should I please the Sun? O brāhmaṇas, due to this impure (disease viz.) leprosy, which is censured by people, I cannot present myself to the beings, and am condemned (by them). Why should I govern the kingdom? What would be (the fruit) of the propitiation?

The brāhmaṇas said:

10b-11a. By living here in your own kingdom, and by propitiating the Sun, you, being free from a terrible sin will obtain heaven and salvation.

11b-12a. Hearing this, the best king, having saluted the excellent brāhmaṇas, undertook the important propitiation of the Sun.

12b-14. Everyday he offered worship (to the Sun) with sacred hymns, offerings and anointments, with fruits of various

kinds, with respectful offerings, sacred rice grains, japā flowers, arka-leaves, and karavīra and karañjaka flowers, with red saffron and red lead, with flowers of the spring season, and leaves of fragrant plantain trees and their very charming fruits.

15. The king everyday offered respectful offering at the (root of the) audumbara tree to the Sun by facing him.

16-17a. His queens, concubines[1], all inmates of the harem, the guards with their wives, and the servants and others everyday offered respectful offering to the Sun.

17b-18a. They worshipped the Sun with hymns pacifying the Sun, with other very powerful hymns etc., and with original and other hymns.

18b-19a. They, being well-composed, observed the Sun's vow. The king gradually put on flesh and was free from the disease.

19b-20a. When the terrible disease was arrested, the king, controlling the entire world, observed the vow of worshipping (the Sun) at dawn.

20b-22a. In the same way, men, along with their wives, offered japā-flower, a banana, with bāṇa-flowers and leaves and other flowers, observed a fast (or) ate at night (only), and offered worship giving great merit and liked by all people, to the Sun.

22b-24a. In this way, Bhāskara (i.e. the Sun), worshipped by the three classes, became pleased, and having come to the king compassionately said (these) words to him: "For the good of all the citizens, ask, along with your followers, for a boon desired by you, which is in your mind."

The king said:

24b-25a. Since, O eye of all, you desire to grant a boon of my liking, let all of us have (residence in) heaven with you.

The Sun said:

25b-27. O magnanimous one, let your brāhmaṇa ministers and other brāhmaṇas, with their wives and attendants, all young

1. Bhogini—A woman, belonging to a king's harem, but not consecrated with him; a concubine of a king.

and pure (citizens) live, enjoying all pleasures with the divine trees, with fully equipped palaces (high) like trees, with ladies and excellent dances and songs, in my beautiful city.

28-29. After five kalpas[1] you will be the king in a Manu-age; and these your men, O king, and priests standing before you, and those men living in your country, will be learned and rich. Then obtaining a boon from me, you will easily obtain heaven.

30. Saying so the eye of the world vanished there only. Then king Bhadreśvara with the (inhabitants of his) city enjoyed in heaven.

31. There the yellow insects, along with their progeny etc. enjoyed great and wonderful pleasures on the divine tree.

32. In this way only, kings and brāhmaṇas of praiseworthy vows, and other castes like the kṣatriyas quickly went to the Sun's heaven.

33. Some desired wealth, others sons and wives, (others) desired happiness, heaven and sound health through the Sun's favour.

34. The man who, being pure, would recite this auspicious heap of merit, has all his sins destroyed, and is worshipped on the earth like Rudra.

35-37. He would be seeing everything, would be a granter of boons, and dear to Bhāskara (the Sun). A mortal, who is restrained, would obtain the desired fruit. He who daily listens (to the Sun's account) goes beyond all sins, and would be meritorious, rich and an orator in the Sun's assembly. This secret, very secret (vow) has been propagated by Bhāskara. It was narrated to Yama (by Bhāskara) and was narrated by Vyāsa on the earth.

1. Kalpa = A day of Brahmā = 1000 yugas = 432 million years of mortals.

CHAPTER EIGHTY

The Worship of the Moon

Vaiśampāyana said:

1. Due to your grace we have heard about the power of the lord of planets. O brāhmaṇa, (now) tell us about the means of (pacifying) the planets like the Sun etc.

2. Who are these Sun and others? How can they be pleased? How (can that which is) dear (to them be done)? (At which) time and (which) place is their sight auspicious or inauspicious?

Vyāsa said:

3. It is the planets etc. that experience the fruits of merit or sin. For the destruction (of the fruits) of the deeds of the world, they bring about what is auspicious and what is inauspicious.

4. The Sun should be known to be the destroyer of time among men and planets. He is powerful in curbing and favouring due to his sharpness and mildness.

5-6a. I (shall) tell (you) how he can be pleased as a planet. He who offers (oblations to him) with the sprouts (i.e. sticks of) udumbara and palāśa, by reciting the sacred original hymn: 'Ā Kṛṣṇena' for (his) pacification, (gets merit).

6b-7a. He should offer (the leaves) anointed with ghee for fulfilling his desire, for curing all diseases and for freedom from bondage due to a murder.

7b-9. With each sacred hymn he should offer (the oblation) a hundred times. He should present a white goat to a brāhmaṇa on a Sunday. He should feed the brāhmaṇas with lovely oblations (of food) intended for gods and manes, on the seventh or the fifteenth day of the bright fortnight. A sick person is free from his disease, and will not be troubled by the disease.

10-11a. In the universe, right from Brahman to a clump of grass, the Sun will be regarded as great, immortal being, (present) in the universe as well as in an atom till the deluge, due to his being the cause of the creation and maintenance (of the world).

11b-12a. He, who moves in the world, is present in the body of men at the time of the creation of life (in them). At the time of their death, he goes from the body with life (i.e. the vital breath).

12b-13a. In the head, the Moon, endowed with the sixteen digits is always (present). With his face bent down he always showers nectar into the body.

13b-14. Due to that the beings, having portions of these great beings, live. (The Moon) nourishes the crops on the earth and the immobile and the mobile. Due to these two i.e. the Sun and the Moon, the world is created and sustained.

15. Due to their propitiation auspicious and very valuable nourishment always follows. A pure person who obtains (their favour), would always accomplish all his undertakings.

16. The life of the mean man, who, through delusion, does not worship the Moon, diminishes, and he obtains (i.e. goes to) hell.

17. (A man should offer the following prayer to the Moon:) 'O spotless Moon, the prop of the digits, the gem on the head of Śiva, O lord of the world, my salutation to you on this second day.'

18. A man who, finding some other day (i.e. even on some other day than the second), offers a salutation to the Moon, would obtain the desired fruit.

19-20. (He should offer the following prayer:) 'O Moon, born from Atri's eyes[1], O you pleasing one, O you produced from the sea after its being churned, O you residing on Śiva's crest, my salutation to you. O you Moon of a divine form, the lord of the world, my salutation to you.' The wise ones know (this to be the sacred hymn to be recited) on a night of a bright or a dark half.

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1. Atrinetrodbhava—Atri, a celebrated sage and the author of many Vedic hymns, was one of the sons of Brahmā. While he was absorbed in meditation, the essence of Soma or the Moon trickled down from his eyes. The presiding deities of the quarters, at the command of Brahmā, gladly conceived the foetus, but could not bear it. So it shot out in the form of the Moon.

21. The sacred hymn to be recited is: 'Om hrām, hrīm, salutation to Soma.' It should be recited in the morning. He who would thus worship the Moon, or recite to others, or himself listen to (the account of Soma's worship), would be (living) in a nectar-like world birth after birth.

22. He, who, on this earth, praises or worships the Moon with (the recital of his) thousand names, obtains heaven eternally wherefrom rebirth is difficult.

23-24. Thus should be done the worship of Soma. Hearing the (account) without having jealousy for the rite, a wise man, putting the collection (of the materials for worship) in an auspicious brass vessel or a vessel of bell-metal full with curds and ghee—(putting) less or more according to his wealth even in a golden or silver vessel—should offer it to a brāhmaṇa having many sons.

25. His good fortune very much excels (even) nectar. Women and men never meet with misfortune.

26. (He should say:) 'I, desiring (good) form and good fortune, offer you the vessel full of curds. Give me good fortune and form residing in the vessel of bell metal.'

27-29. Without (any) prejudice a man should be given according to his capacity. Also new (piece of) cloth etc. should be given). For (obtaining) good form and fortune he should give food complete in all (respects) and a lovely tāmbūla, and garlands of flower etc. He, who thus makes a present to a brāhmaṇa in honour of the Moon, has a good form and good fortune in heaven or in the human world.

CHAPTER EIGHTYONE

The Birth of Bhauma and His Worship

Vaiśampāyana said:

1. I desire to hear correctly about the birth of Lohitāṅga (i.e. Mars), joy (due to it) among the people, his power, grandeur and lustre.

Vyāsa said:

2-4. Kujāta (lit. born of the Earth i.e. Mars) is a deity born from the portion of Hara and is the Earth's son. He is good and is endowed with vitality, is brave and powerful on the earth. The divine planet is sharp, cruel, of a reddish body and powerful. He is young, handsome, and he, the lord, is of the nature of a stroke of lightning. He has baked (i.e. tormented) the demons, the eaters of corpses and the enemies of gods and men, plants, beasts and birds according to his position (at their birth).

Vaiśampāyana said:

5-6. How was he born from Śiva? How was he born as the son of the Earth? How is this divine planet (so) cruel? I desire to know this. How can he always be propitiated in all the worlds? O preceptor, tell me, who have faith in you; (I want to hear it) from (your) mouth. There is no doubt about it.

Vyāsa said:

7. In the family of Hiraṇyākṣa, was born an intelligent demon, the destroyer of the gods, Andhaka by name and the king of the demons.

8. Due to Viṣṇu's boon only he became as valorous as Viṣṇu (himself). He himself vanquished one by one, all gods, enjoyers of sacrifices, like Indra and others.

9-10a. Then gods, having gone to Brahmā, said these words: "He has snatched away our kingdom, happiness and sacrifices. So please tell us the means of killing him; (please) do it."

10b-14a. Then Brahmā said (these words to the gods): "There is no means of his death, due to (his having obtained) a boon from Viṣṇu and due to his having drunk nectar. But I shall fashion Śraddhā (i.e. faith) accompanied by Kāma (i.e. desire) so that his status as a demon would be disgraced. Also Vicikitsā (i.e. Error) will surpass all women. His mind is not fixed except on Pārvatī (Goddess) Durgā. Then the lord of the world (i.e. Śiva), being angry, would deform him. Then giving up his demon-hood, he will be his attendant."

14b-15a. Saying so, the lord of the beings sent to him Śraddhā with Kāma, Vicikitsā (i.e. Error), Māyā (his magical power).

15b-16. Then, moving foolishly due to passion and intent upon finding a woman, he, due to (being influenced by) Error, did not notice (the difference between) his wife and other women. Then instigated by Māyā, he wandered in the three worlds.

17-18a. On the surface of the Himālaya, he saw an extremely beautiful gem of a woman (viz. Pārvatī). Seeing Pārvatī, the demon went under the influence of passion. Due to the loss of his understanding, he then desired to seize Durgā (i.e. Pārvatī).

18b-20a. Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) had taken the form of Koṭavī[1] (i.e. her naked form), and remained near the lord. He, the best demon, interested in seizing her being stupid due to passion and with his mind disturbed, did not give up (pursuing) Pārvatī, the mother.

20b-21. Then as a result of (her) meditation, her husband came there and met Pārvatī. Seeing him the lord of the demons went to his own abode. He made his soldiers ready and was eager to conquer Śiva.

22-23. He, the insensible one, (was), due to infatuation brought about by passion (eager) to take Pārvatī. Hearing this the gods, urged by Nandin, went to him, fought a fierce fight, fearful to the world. The preceptor of the demons brought back to life, the demons that died in the war.

24-26. All communicated this news (to Śiva) on Kailāsa. Then angrily Śiva said (these) words to Nandin: "O hero, at my behest, quickly go the abode of the demons, and in the assembly of the demon-king, and seizing forcibly that wicked Śukra[2] (the preceptor of the demons) with his hair, even when all the demons are watching, bring him, overcome with fear, to me in a moment".

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1. Koṭavi—An epithet of the goddess Durgā represented as naked.

2. Bhārgava—Name of Śukra, regent of planet Venus and preceptor of the Asuras.

27. Then that glorious lordly Nandin, urged by the lord of Pārvatī, seized that Śukra with his hair (and brought him) with force from the presence of the demons.

28. The demons struck him (i.e. Nandin) who was bringing Śukra, with weapons and arrows. They were not able to hurt the mighty Nandin.

29. Nandin, seizing him with his hair, and being glad, came with him in front of Śiva in the presence of gods.

30. Śiva, the lord, of a formidable form, and resembling death, angrily seized the preceptor of the demons, and swallowed him.

31. Then the angry and mighty lord of demons, surrounded by his entire army, ran there to Śiva with fierce weapons etc.

32. The angry gods and the Vidyādharas went (there) with great rage to fight with the demons.

33. In the meanwhile a terrible and fierce battle took place between the gods and demons which caused fear to all the worlds.

34. In the great war, the gods struck the demons with trusted weapons. The demons (also) struck the gods.

35. Desiring to conquer one another, they pierced (one another) with golden arrows resembling the thunderbolt and having jewels attached to their feathered parts.

36a. Their bodies and the sky shone very much with (those) lovely (arrows).

36b-37a. The best gods, the brave sons of Kaśyapa, struck with their stocks of unfailing missiles the demons and knocked them down.

37b-38a. In a moment all the gods destroyed with trusted weapons the great army of the demons that had pervaded the world and that was well covered over with power and weapons.

38b-39. The demon though raised for a long time, on (i.e. by) his trident, with great effort by Śiva himself did not perish. Then that Andhaka, of an humble mind, was made (by Śiva) his attendant named Bhṛṅgiriṭi, O brāhmaṇa.

40. Then speaking to the gods, Śiva vomitted Śukra. The foetus fell down on the ground, so he was known as Bhauma.

41. Śukra, having spoken to Śiva, gladly went to the demons. Thus Bhauma (i.e. Mars) is born as a portion of Śiva and from the Earth (also).

42. His worship should be done by those of pious vows on the fourth day (falling) on Tuesday, when his position at birth is not favourable, when he passes from one to another zodiacal sign, or has entered an undesirable zodiacial sign.

43-44a. Bhauma, with his figure drawn in a triangle or a circle, and being worshipped with red flowers and anointments, gives knowledge and wealth, sons, happiness and glory. What again do you want to hear?

Vyāsa said:

44b-46a. O disciples, I have told this religious account (of the vow) bringing about auspicious (fruits), hearing which a man is neither reborn nor does he die. It gives merit to the brāhmaṇas and should be practised by those who desire auspicious things. After being blessed go happily by my command.

Brahmā said:

46b-48. O son, having thus narrated, revered Vyāsa, the son of Satyavatī, giving his verdict about piety, left. O child, knowing the truth devoutly enjoy as you like by gladly singing (the glory of) Hari and advising people about right conduct and pleasing the lord of the worlds.

Pulastya said:

49. O king, Nārada, who was thus told, went to see the best sage Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) in the hermitage of Badarikā.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTWO

The Worship of the Planets

Bhiṣma said:

1. I have heard about the worship of the Sun, the Moon and that of Mars also. (Please) now tell (me) about the worship of Budha (i.e. Mercury), the son of Soma (i.e. the Moon).

Pulastya said:

2. Budha or Saumya, the son of Candra (i.e. the Moon) and born from the womb of Tārā should be known as a cruel planet, giving auspicious and inauspicious things to men.

3. The orb of Budha is said to be arrow-shaped. One should fashion the circle, the powders having colours like green gems.

4-5. There he should worship him with sandal etc., flowers and lovely incense. He should also make presents according to the rules when he is unfavourable at the time of birth or while passing to another zodiacal sign. He should also give camphor, kidney beans, green piece of cloth, gems, and gold according to his capacity to please Bodhana.

6. (He should recite the hymn:) 'O son of Soma (i.e. the Moon), O you very intelligent one, O you who have mastered Vedas and Vedāṅgas, O you who remain among the planets, be always pleased with me.'

7. O great king, thus praising Budha, and being absorbed in devotion to him, one would satisfy all one's desires by the favour of the son of Soma (Budha or Mercury).

8. The worship of Guru (i.e. Jupiter) is prescribed on a circle on a slab (drawn with) very lovely powders of yellow colour effected well, O king.

9. He should worship him with yellow, fragrant flowers, pieces of cloth and gold. When he is unfavourable at the time of (one's) birth or badly placed while passing to another zodiacal sign, a man should give gifts according to his capacity.

10. For the removal of evils he should give to a brāhmaṇa two-portioned grams, yellow garment, and gold and (the gem) puṣyarāga.

11. (He should recite the hymn:) 'O Bṛhaspati, O preceptor of gods, O you well-versed in all branches of knowledge be pleased with this present and now be soft towards me.'

12. O lord of kings, when this is done, Guru (i.e. Jupiter) becomes favourable (to the man). A man has all his desires fulfilled by worshipping Guru.

13. O king, I shall now tell you (the procedure of) the worship of Bhārgava (or Śukra, i.e. Venus), by following which all the desires of men are properly satisfied.

14. The circle (i.e. the figure) for Śukra is said to be five-angled fashioned duly by a very intelligent person with white powders.

15. A man, full of faith, should devoutly worship Śukra with white sandal, (white) flowers and pieces of white cloth.

16. The present of silver according to one's capacity is also recommended. If the planet is unfavourable at the time of one's birth or when passing from a zodiacal sign, one should present a white horse (to a brāhmaṇa).

17. Rice, white garment, silver, sandal, fragrant camphor should be given as gift to a brāhmaṇa.

18. (He should recite the hymn:) 'O son of Bhṛgu, O magnanimous one, O priest of the demons, O you worshipped by all demons, be pleased with this gift.'

19. Reciting this sacred hymn one should give the presents as mentioned. O you descendant of Kuru, Śukra is quickly pleased with him.

20-21a. For the worship of Śanaiścara (i.e. Saturn) one should draw a circle (i.e. figure) resembling a human figure, with black powders and there should devoutly worship (the planet) with black sandal, (black) flowers, pieces of cloth of that kind (i.e. of black colour).

21b-22. Iron and (other) gifts should be given, also oil cakes and sesamum. The present for Saturn being unfavourable is a black cow and a black garment. One should also give according to one's capacity gold and sapphire.

23. (One should recite the hymn:) 'O Sun's son, O

glorious one, O son of Chāyā[1], O you very mighty one, O you having a downward look, O Śani, be pleased by means of these presents made by me.'

24. He, who, having thus devoutly pleased Śani would give the presents to a brāhmaṇa, has Śani favourable to him if he was unfavourable at his birth and while passing to other zodiacal sign.

25. In the case of the worship of Rāhu, the colour (of the objects) should be the same as in the case of Śani. It is recommended that the circle should be like the shape of the Sun and the worship (-procedure) would be the same like that in the case of the Sun's son (i.e. Śani).

26. The presents (in honour) of Rāhu are said to be gomeda,[2] mustard, sesamum, black beans, a buffalo, and a goat.

27. (He should recite the hymn:) 'O son of Siṃhikā, O lord of demons, O you who torment the Moon and the Sun, O you of a good vow, be pleased with this present, O you glorious one.'

28. One should draw a very lovely, flag-shaped, circle (i.e. figure) (for the worship) of Ketu. O king, the procedure of his worship and the colour of the objects presented should be known to be like that of Śani and the like.

29-30a. The present for Ketu is said to be the seven (kinds of) grains and gold. O king, if this is done, the two (i.e. Rāhu and Ketu) would be favourable to men, and would give wealth, sons, happiness and good fortune.

30b-32. The sacred hymn for Ravi i.e. the Sun is 'Ā Kṛṣṇa.' For the Moon it is 'Imām devāḥ...' For Mars it is 'Agnimūrdha' for muttering and also for worship. The hymn for Budha (i.e.

---

1. Chāyāputra—Chāyā is the name of a wife of the Sun. She was but a shadow or likeness of Saṃjñā, the wife of the Sun. Saṃjñā on one occasion wished to go to her father's house and asked her husband's permission; but he did not grant it. Determined to carry out her purpose, she created, by means of her superhuman power, a woman exactly like herself, who was, as it were, her own shadow and was therefore called Chāyā. She bore to the Sun three children—Sāvarṇi, Śani and a daughter Tapati.

2. Gomeda—A gem brought from the Himālaya and Indus, described as of four different colours—white, pale-yellow, red and dark-blue.

Mercury) is 'Udbudhyasva...' and for Guru (i.e. Jupiter) is 'Bṛhaspate...'. For Śukra (i.e. Venus) it is 'Annāt pari...'; for Śani (i.e. Saturn) it is 'Śanno devī...'; for Rāhu it is 'Kayā naḥ...' and for Ketu it is said to be 'Ketum..'.

33-34a These hymns are intended at the time of worshipping or muttering prayers. O best among men, when this is done, all planets, always become favourable to men and give them ample wealth.

34b-35. O great king, I have in due order told you everything. Hearing it—the essence of the meaning of all scriptures—a man reaches the presence of god. This is pure, it is the treasure of glory, it would be very dear to the manes.

36-38a. It leads to immortality among gods; it gives religious merit (even) to sinful men. He who recites this (account) leading to glory, he who devoutly listens to this or sees the worship of the enemy of Madhu, Mura and Naraka, he who gives the idea (about this) to people, is honoured for one kalpa in the heaven of Indra by Brahmā, Śiva and other lords of gods. He who everyday listens to this auspicious practice of sages, is free from all sins and is honoured in heaven.

38b-39. The (wise) recommend penance in Kṛta (-yuga); they recommend knowledge in Tretā; they say sacrifice (is important) in Dvāpara; and they recommend giving gifts alone in Kaliyuga. Of all the gifts this one viz. making all beings fearless is the best.

40-41. There is no greater gift than it. The revered lord said that for a śūdra the most important (thing) is giving a gift. By giving a gift all his desires are satisfied, and (merit due to) penance arises for him; it is auspicious, sacred, (giving a long) life, and destroys all sins.

42-43a. Here old accounts are narrated; descriptions of sacred places and śrāddha are given. The man, who listens to or would recite it becomes rich. Being free from all sins, he would obtain (i.e. reach) Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī.

43b-45. O great king, I have narrated to you this Purāṇa which is auspicious and which destroys great sins. This is very much honoured by Brahmā, Arka (i.e. the Sun) and Rudra, and the wise say that it should be listended to. O prince, I have

narrated this Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa to you. It forms the beginning of the Purāṇa. This first or Pauṣkara Parvan (describes) the nine kinds of creation. A learned man who would recite this to brāhmaṇas or would listen to or recite this, would be happy in Brahmā's world for a full hundred crores of kalpas.

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THE
PADMA-PURĀṆA

PART III

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY
Dr. N.A. DESHPANDE

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

But he has neither the means nor the leisure to embark on that course. We have, therefore, planned to help him acquire knowledge by an easier course. We have started the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology in English Translation. Our goal is to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium of expression. The publication of the Purāṇas in English Translation is a step towards that goal.

PREFACE

This is the third part of the *Padma Purāṇa* translated into English and the 41st Volume of the *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* series. Herein are included Chapters 1-90 of Bhūmikhaṇḍa or the Section on the Earth which is the second of the seven sections into which the Purāṇa is divided.

The reader would naturally expect, as the name 'Bhūmikhaṇḍa' suggests, a description of the geography and history of the Earth in this section, but will actually find nothing like that. And this is true about all the sections. As a matter of fact, the names of the sections here as well as in the other Purāṇas are just arbitrary, having in the present shape no relevance to the contents. Perhaps in the remote past or originally they had a relevance but in the course of time their logical structure was lost and a lot of interpolation made them all alike dealing with similar topics irrespectively of the names assigned.

As usual, this part contains a number of well-known legends, especially those of Vena, Pṛthu and Yayāti, and also the oft-repeated myths of the slaying of the demons Bala and Vṛtra, Hiraṇyakaśipu and Hiraṇyākṣa, the birth of Maruts, the anecdotes of Ikṣvāku's hunting, Diti's wailing and the like.

The section begins with the story of Śivaśarman and his virtuous sons whose devotion to parents is put to severe test and finally established as constant and firm. The glorification of devotion to parents (*pitṛbhakti*) is again taken up in chapters 63 and 84 and parents are given as high a status as that of a sacred place of pilgrimage in chapter 62. One will find allegorical description of body and soul in chapters 7 and 8. In the story of Suvrata (Ch. 11) four kinds of sons are described followed in the subsequent chapters by the enumeration of the basic virtues and the post-mortem status and suffering of the virtuous and sinners respectively. The virtue of *dāna* (charity) is highly praised and treated of in detail along with a description of those who deserve it and the fruits of making gifts to Brāhmaṇas and other deserv-

ing persons (Chs. 38-40). The fruits of *nityadāna* (regular charity) and *naimittikadāna* (occasional charity) are described in detail separately.

Devotion to god Viṣṇu is a recurring theme of this section, though it is also said that all the gods of the Hindu Trinity—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, are equal. To propitiate Viṣṇu a number of vows are enjoined and the recitation of a hymn containing a hundred names of the god is recommended as giving salvation in chapter 87. Yayāti is mentioned as the greatest patron of the Vaiṣṇava faith. It was during his reign that Vaiṣṇavism enjoyed the greatest propularity.

Chapter 37 countains (unfortunately) an adverse reference to Jainism. There a heretic, who is none else but a follower of Jina, is described who is dead against the Vedic religion, who by his radical doctrines turns king Vena away from the practice of Dharma and makes him a sinner leading ultimately to his total ruin.

Acknowledgements

It is our pleasant duty to put on record our sincere thanks to Dr. R.N. Dandekar and the UNESCO authorities for their kind encouragement and valuable help which render this work more useful than it would otherwise have been. We are grateful to Dr. N.A. Deshpande for translating the text. We are also thankful to all those who have been helpful in our project.

—*Editor*

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ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)—Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, V—Verse, VV—Verses, Ftn—footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo.—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S. M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F. E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series, MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch.S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, MLBD, Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgitā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha)
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka, Com. by Mahidāsa
DB	*Devi Bhāgavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N. L. De, Oriental Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* by Hastings
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa*, ed. R. S. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P. V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇi*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradiya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣiya Prācina Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd.P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi. 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Śat.Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

II BHŪMIKHAṆḌA
(Section on the Earth)

CHAPTER ONE

The Story of Śivaśarman

Om, salutation to Śrī Gaṇeśa.

The sages said:

1-2. O glorious Sūta, O you who know the significance of the essence of everything, (please) listen to the terrible doubt, destroying understanding, that has occurred to us. Some describe in the Purāṇas that when Prahlāda was five years old he pleased Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu).

3. How did (the war) between gods and demons come about? How did the demon fight with Viṣṇu? He, killed by Viṣṇu, entered his body.

Sūta said:

4. This was formerly known (i.e. conceived) by Kaśyapa and was composed by the intelligent Vyāsa. It was formerly narrated by Brahmā himself before (i.e. to) the lord Vyāsa.

5. I shall, O brāhmaṇas, describe the same before (i.e. to) you. The cause of the doubt that arose was removed by Brahmā.

Vyāsa said:

6. O Sūta, O glorious one, listen to (the account) of the birth of Prahlāda as told in the Purāṇas and as heard (i.e. learnt) from other (sources).

7. As soon as Prahlāda, the greatest among the devotees of Viṣṇu and honoured by gods, was born, he resorted to the path of Viṣṇu, giving all happiness.

8. With his sons he went to the battle-field to fight with Viṣṇu. Being killed by Viṣṇu, he entered Viṣṇu's body.

9-10a. Listen to the birth of just this magnanimous one. The brave one, going with his sons to fight with Viṣṇu, entered Viṣṇu's lustre, which he obtained through his own lustre.

10b-11a. O glorious one, I shall narrate in brief the account of that hero—how that powerful one was born in the former Kalpa.

11b-12a. At the extreme point in the west of the ocean, there was a city by name Dvārakā. It was full of all magnificence and all prosperity.

12b-13a. There perpetually lived a divine (man) knowing abstract meditation, and the best among those who knew abstract meditation, known as Śivaśarman, who was well-versed in all Vedas and sacred texts.

13b. He had five sons who were well-versed in (all) branches of knowledge.

14. (They were:) Yajñaśarman, Vedaśarman, Dharmaśarman, the glorious Viṣṇuśarman, who knew their own duties.

15a. The fifth one was Somaśarman, who was greatly devoted to his father.

15b. The best brāhmaṇas knew no other duty than devotion to their father.

16a. The magnanimous ones (always) had thoughts about him (only).

16b-17a. Seeing their devotion, the intelligent, best brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman, thought: 'I shall extort (these) learned men.

17b-18a. They do not have that feeling in their mind which is found in the devotees of Viṣṇu. I shall, therefore, find it, and will do so thoughtfully.'

18b. Due to the favour of Viṣṇu, he had all superhuman faculties.

19-20a. O best of Brāhmaṇas, he conceived a fine idea to suggest to them (what their duty was). The best brāhmaṇa, the best among those who knew Brahman, knowing a remedy due to the lustre of his penance, adopted it.

20b-21a. Then Śivaśarman presented before them a trick. He showed their mother to be dead of a great fever.

21b-24a. They saw their dead mother, and said (these) words to their father: "O glorious one, she, who nourished us in her womb, has, casting her body, been dead. Having left (us), she has gone to heaven. O father, what can be said (by us)?" Śivaśarman, the excellent brāhmaṇa, called his eldest, most devoted son, Yajñaśarman and said to him.

Sivaśarman said:

24b-25a. With this very sharp and whetted weapon cut off her limbs and throw them here and there.

25b-27. The son did it as he had heard (i.e. received) his father's order. He came back, and again said (these) words to his father: "O father, I have done everything as I was ordered. Today (i.e. now) entrust to me some other work. O father, I shall do it all, (even though) it (enemy/thing) be difficult to subdue or procure".

28-30. Having ordered the glorious one, devoted to his father, the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Śivaśarman), thinking of the second son, called (him viz.) Vedaśarman (and said to him): "Go by my order; being stupefied by passion of love (i.e. sex) I cannot stand without a woman (by my side)." He presented, by means of his magical power, a woman full of all charm (before Vedaśarman). (He told him:) "O boy, determined for me, bring this woman to me."

31a. Thus told, he said: "I shall do what is very dear to you."

31b-33a. Having saluted his father, and having gone from there, he said to her: "O respectable lady, my father tormented by the arrow of love, seeks you. So be favourable to him who is old. O you beautiful lady, O you one whose all limbs are charming, resort to my father."

33b. Thus (i.e. these words) spoken by Vedaśarman were heard by the woman created by magic. The woman said:

34-35a. "I do not at all long for the company of your father who is afflicted with old age, whose mouth has malady due to phlegm, and who is now afflicted with diseases, who is feeble, who is sick and old.

35b-36. I desire to dally with you, I shall do what is very dear to you. (I desire to dally with you) who are adorned with good fortune like a (handsome) form, and with gems of virtues, who are endowed with divine characteristics, who possess a divine form and great prowess.

37. What will you do with (your) old father? O you who destroy the pride (of others), by enjoying my body you will obtain all things difficult to obtain.

38a. O brāhmaṇa, there is no doubt that I shall give you whatever you desire."

38b-41. Hearing these disagreeable and evil words,

Vedaśarman spoke:

O respectable lady, your words are unjust, improper and mixed with sin. Do not talk like this to me who am devoted to my father and who am innocent. O auspicious one, I have come to you and am soliciting you for my father. Do not talk something else; (please) resort to my father. O you respectable lady, O you beautiful one, there is no doubt that I shall give you everything in the three worlds, with the mobile and the immobile—even more than the kingdom of gods.

The woman said:

42. If, for the sake of your father, you are thus capable of giving me (anything), then show me, today only, the great gods with Indra.

43. Indeed you are able to give me now what is difficult to be obtained. O glorious one, show me what power you possess.

Vedaśarman said:

44. O respectable lady, see the power of my penance. The best gods, Indra and others, being invited by me, have come.

They said to Vedaśarman:

45. O best brāhmaṇa, what should we do?. O brāhmaṇa, we shall give you, whatever you ask for. There is no doubt about it.

Vedaśarman said:

46. If the gods are pleased with me and are inclined to favour me, then they should give (i.e. produce in) me pure devotion to the feet of my father only.

47. (Saying) "Let it be so", the gods left as they had come. (The woman) seeing (the gods had come) like that said to him: "I have seen the power of your penance.

48-49a. I have nothing to do with the gods; if you want to give me (what I want) and if you are taking me for your father,

then do that (which is) dear to me; O brāhmaṇa, cutting off your head with your own hand, give it to me."

Vedaśarman said:

49b-50a. Today I have become blessed; I have been free from the three debts.[1] O respectable lady, I shall give my head; O beautiful one, do take it.

50b-51a. Having cut off his own head with a whetted and sharp weapon, the best brāhmaṇa, gave it to her and laughed.

51b. She took it, covered with blood, and went to the sage.

The woman said:

52-53. O brāhmaṇa, your son, Vedaśarman, has sent this head; take it; he had himself cut off his own head. For you, he, devoted to his father, gave me his head. O best brāhmaṇa, enjoy me.

54-56a. The brothers (of Vedaśarman) saw the daring act of Vedaśarman. Their bodies trembled (and they said to) one another: "Our virtuous mother died with real intentness. This glorious, virtuous one died for the sake of (our) father. He is blessed, he has become fortunate (as) he has done an auspicious (deed) for (our) father."

56b-58. Thus the virtuous brothers talked (to one another). The brāhmaṇa heard these words full of devotion, and knowing that his son, Vedaśarman, had cut off his (own) head, said to Dharmaśarman: "Take this head".

1. *Ṛṇatraya*—Everyone that is born has three debts to pay off, viz. Devaṛṇa, Ṛṣiṛṇa, and Pitṛṛṇa. The first is paid off by performing sacrifices, the second by learning the Vedas and the third by begetting a son.

CHAPTER TWO

Life is Restored to Vedaśarman

Sūta said:

1-2a. Then taking it the virtuous one quickly left. By his devotion for his father, his austerities, and the power of his truthfulness and straightforwardness, Dharmaśarman attracted Dharma (i.e. Yama).

2b-3a. Attracted by the penance of that intelligent (Dharmaśarman), Dharma, who had come (there), said these words to Dharmaśarman:

3b-4a. "O Dharmaśarman, why did you invite me? I have come. Then tell me about your work. I (shall) do it. There is no doubt about it."

Dharmaśarman said:

4b-5a. If I have (properly) served the elders, if I have devotion and steady penance, then, O Dharma, let Vedaśarman be alive, due to that (and) due to my truthfulness.

Dharma said:

5b-6. O you of a good vow, as a result of your purity with restraint, truthfulness and penance, and due to your devotion to your father, your great-souled brother Vedaśarman, of mighty arms, will again obtain (i.e. come to) life.

7. O you highly intelligent one, I am pleased with this your penance and devotion to your father. Well-being to you; ask for a boon difficult to be obtained by those who know righteousness.

8. That Dharmaśarman thus heard those good words. He, of a great glory, said to the magnanimous Vaivasvata (i.e. Dharma or Yama):

9. "Give me steady devotion to the worship of my father's feet, and also liking for piousness and salvation, if you are well-pleased with me."

10a. Then Dharma said: "This will take place by my favour."

10b-11a. When these very significant words were uttered, the very wise Vedaśarman got up, as if he had slept; he said to Dharmaśarman:

11b. "O brother, where has that respectable woman gone? Where would be the father?"

12. He told him in brief how the father had appointed him. Knowing that, Dharmaśarman, who was delighted, said to him:

13. "O glorious one, O brother, be favourable to me today only with (my having restored your) head and life. Who else is there like you to me on the earth?"

14. Saying so to his brother he was eager to go to his father. He (i.e Vedaśarman) decided to go, with his brother Dharmaśarman, to their father.

15-17a. Both, delighted in their minds went to their father there (i.e. to the place where he was). Both stood close together. Then Dharmaśarman spoke to his father, the excellent and lustrous Śivaśarman: "O glorious one, due to my penance and life Vedaśarman has been brought (back). (Please) take him—your son."

17b-18a. Then Śivaśarman, knowing his devotion, was delighted; (but) he did not say anything to him, and thought.

18b-23. He (then) spoke to the very intelligent Viṣṇuśarman, who politely remained before him: "Child, do as I say. Today go to Indra's heaven and fetch nectar from there—the nectar that came up from the ocean and that destroys diseases. Now I desire to stay with this wife (of me). With good (intention) she desires me. Do that quickly so that I obtain her; otherwise she may go to other (man). Knowing me to be old this young beautiful woman might think lightly of me. O son, if you are devoted to me, do that by which I shall, in the company of this one dear to me, be faultless and free from disease."

24-25a. Hearing these words of his magnanimous father, Viṣṇuśarman then said to his father of a blazing lustre: "I shall do all this that pleases you most."

25b-27. Speaking thus, that pious, very intelligent Viṣṇuśarman saluted his father and went round him keeping him to his right, and due to great power, penance and restraint, went into the intermediate region between heaven and earth.

When the intelligent one was (thus) going, he went to Indra with the speed of a violent wind.

CHAPTER THREE

The Heroic Deed of Viṣṇuśarman

Sūta said:

1. Proceeding along that path, he entered the heaven. He was seen by the intelligent Indra, the lord of gods.

2-4a. Knowing his exertion, the king of gods put in an obstacle. He said to that (nymph) Menikā: "Go by my order; O you of beautiful waist, going quickly create an obstacle (in) his (way). Well-being to you. Do that to the son of that excellent brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman by which he would not come to my house." Hearing these words of him, Menikā started quickly.

Sūta said:

4b-6. She, who was endowed with beauty, and virtues like generosity, and adorned with all ornaments, sat on a swing in Indra's garden. That clever one with large and charming eyes, singing, in a sweet voice, like the notes of a lute, a song (was seated on the swing).

7-8. Knowing her intention of causing a great obstacle, and realising that, she, being sent by Indra, would not be favourable, the best brāhmaṇa went quickly. She saw him and asked him: "O you highly intelligent one, where are you going?"

9. Then Viṣṇuśarman spoke to that Menikā, who moved according to her will: "I am hurriedly going to Indra's heaven for my father".

10-11a. Menikā again spoke pleasing (words) to Viṣṇuśarman.

11b-12. "Being pierced with Cupid's arrows, I have today sought your shelter. O best brāhmaṇa, if you desire to protect piety, (please) protect me. When I, with my mind affected by passion of love, saw you, then only I was burnt by fire of Cupid.

I am bewildered, I am tormented by love. Please be disposed to favour me."

Viṣṇuśarman said:

13-15. O you of a beautiful face, the character of the lord of gods is known to me. I also know your character. O you auspicious one, I am not like this. O you lovely lady, other men like Viśvāmitra are deluded by your lustre and beauty; O you respectable lady, I am the son of Śivaśarman who has attained divine faculties through abstract meditation and is accomplished in penance. I have avoided the great blemishes like desire for sensual enjoyments right from the beginning.

16a. O you of large eyes, choose someone else; I am going to Indra's world.

16b-17. Saying so, the best brāhmaṇa went hurriedly. Menakā was unsuccessful. Being asked by god Indra she repeatedly scared him in many ways.

18. (All) those scares (put forward by her) were burnt as the heaps of hay are burnt by fire.

19. O excellent brāhmaṇas, all those terrible scares perished due to the lustre of that brāhmaṇa, devoted to his father.

20. That Indra again and again presented obstacles; the brāhmaṇa of great glory destroyed them by his lustre.

21. Thus by means of the lustre of his penance, the intelligent one destroyed all the obstacles created by even that magnanimous Indra.

22-25a. When those great, fearful obstacles disappeared, he, knowing that those obstacles (i.e. scares) which were fierce and of fearful forms, were brought about by Indra, the best brāhmaṇa Viṣṇuśarman of great lustre became angry. The glorious one, with his eyes red due to anger (said) about Indra: "Today I shall cause to fall down from his heaven Indra, who would create an obstacle to me engaged in my own duty. I shall punish him; he, who would strike, is struck.

25b. I shall thus make someone else as the guardian of gods."

26. Thus the best (brāhmaṇa) became ready to destroy Indra. Just then only Indra arrived there (and said:)

27-28. "O brāhmaṇa, O you very wise one, there is none else like you in penance, restraint, self-control, truth and purity. Due

to this your devotion to your father, I with (all other) deities have been won over (by you). O best one, (please) forgive all my fault.

29. Well-being to you, ask for a boon, I shall give it (even if) it is difficult." Then Viṣṇuśarman spoke to the king of gods who had come like that:

30. "O great Indra, the lustre of a brāhmaṇa is unbearable for gods and deities. O lord, it is (especially so) in the case of a brāhmaṇa who is devoted to his father.

31-32a. Destruction of the dignity of magnanimous brāhmaṇas should never be done. If the best brāhmaṇas are angered, they destroy Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Hara along with their sons and grandsons. There is no doubt about this.

32b-35. Had you not come today, then, I, with my eyes full of anger, would have given this best kingdom to some other person, magnanimous due to the prowess of his penance. Now that you have come, and desire to grant a boon, (then) O lord of gods, give me nectar and steady devotion to my father. O you killer of (your) enemies, if you are pleased, grant me such a boon." (Indra said:) "So I shall give you a pious boon with nectar."

36-38a. Speaking thus to the brāhmaṇa, Indra himself gave him nectar. He, with his heart pleased, gave it along with the pitcher. (He also said:) "O brāhmaṇa, may you always have unswerving devotion to your father." Speaking in this way, and having dismissed the brāhmaṇa, the thousand-eyed (Indra) became pleased on seeing the brāhmaṇa's lustre, very difficult to endure.

38b-42. Then Viṣṇuśarman, having gone to his father, said to him: "O father, I have brought from Indra, nectar, that destroys all maladies. O glorious one, with (i.e. by taking) it be healthy always. Today be greatly satisfied with (this) nectar." Hearing these great words of his son, Śivaśarman, with his mind full of love, having called all his sons, (said to them): "(My) sons, you are devoted to (me) your father, and you do what I tell you. Be pleased (my) sons, and ask for a boon difficult to be obtained on the earth." All listened to his words with approval.

43-45a. Having pondered, all of them said to their father: "Bring back to life that mother of us, who has gone to the dwelling

of Yama. May she, of a good vow, be healthy due to your favour. O father, may you be (our) father, and this one (our) mother, even in existence after existence, and may we be your meritorious sons."

Śivaśarman said:

45b-46a. Even today, your dead mother, affectionate to her sons, will come alive; there is no doubt about it.

46b-47a. When these auspicious words were uttered by the sage Śivaśarman, their mother arrived (there) and being delighted said (these) words:

47b-50a. "A brave son is born from one's womb for this purpose only. Men desire a good son, who would bring glory to his family and race. In the world, glorious, meritorious and pure and affectionate women everywhere desire a son of a pleasing body and bringing about merit. That woman, the very meritorious foetus after having gone into whose womb revolves there, and who would give birth to meritorious sons, is pleased.

50b-56a. How can a woman obtain, without merit, the best son, performing duties peculiar to his family, prop of the family and emancipating the father and the mother? I do not know due to which meritorious deeds (of mine) this very meritorious man, having piety as his power, righteous, and loving piety has become my husband, from whose semen I have obtained you as my sons, superior to him. This is the power of merit. You, my sons, are born as loving virtue and intensely devoted to your father. Oh, in the world even one good son is had by means of religious merit. (But see,) I got five great-hearted sons, who are sacrificers, who are righteous, and who have the prowess due to the lustre of penance." When they were thus repeatedly congratulated by their mother, they, being full of great joy, saluted their mother.

The sons said:

56b-58a. Due to great religious merit (only) a mother—a good mother or a good father is obtained. You are a virtuous mother, who became so due to our good fortune, and having reached whose womb we were nourished as a result of our great

virtue. In existence after existence you two should be our mother and father.

The father said:

58b-59a. O my sons, listen to a good boon, causing religious merit. When I am pleased, may my sons enjoy inexhaustible pleasures.

The sons said:

59b-60a. O father, if you are pleased, and desire to give a boon now, then send us to Goloka, the heaven of Viṣṇu, which is free from tormentation.

The father said:

60b-61a. By my favour, your penance, and this your devotion to (me) your father, go, with your sins perished, to Viṣṇu's heaven.

61b-64a. When the sage said good words, then (Viṣṇu) having the conch, disc and mace in his hands and mounted upon Garuḍa, came there; and repeatedly said this to Śivaśarman with his sons: "O brāhmaṇa, today you with your sons, have won me over by your devotion. With your four virtuous sons and this virtuous and very loving wife come (to me)".

Śivaśarman said:

64b-65. May these (four) sons of me go to the excellent heaven of Viṣṇu. I shall pass some time on the earth with my wife and this last, excellent son, Somaśarman.

66-67a. When the sage, who (always) spoke the truth, uttered these auspicious words, the lord of gods said to those good sons of Śivaśarman: "May they go to the world causing salvation and free from tormentation and destruction."

67b-71. When this was said (by the Lord), all the four brāhmaṇas of truthful hearts, in a moment only took up Viṣṇu's form. In complexion they resembled sapphires; they had held conch, disc and mace; were charming on account of all ornaments; had great prowess; were endowed with the beauty of necklaces and bracelets; they looked charming due to jewelled

necklaces; they resembled the sun's lustre and were covered with bright flames. They entered Viṣṇu's body when Śivaśarman was looking on (i.e. in Śivaśarman's presence). As lights go to another light, they became absorbed in Viṣṇu's form. The best brāhmaṇas, due to their devotion to their father, went to Viṣṇu's abode. I shall tell accurately the prowess of Somaśarman.

CHAPTER FOUR

Somaśarman's Devotion Put to Severe Test

Sūta said:

1. When they had gone to the Goloka of Viṣṇu, beyond darkness, the very wise Śivaśarman said to his youngest (son):

The brāhmaṇa said :

2-3. O very wise Somaśarman, you are very much devoted to (me) your father. Now protect this pitcher of nectar given by me. With this wife I shall go on a pilgrimage.

"O glorious one, let it be so. I shall protect the auspicious (pitcher)".

4. The intelligent one (i.e. Śivaśarman) having given the pitcher into the hands of the magnanimous one, continuously practised penance for ten years.

5. The righteous one (i.e. Somaśarman) carefully protected the pitcher day and night. Then that Śivaśarman of great fame again came back.

6. Using a trick the very wise one, becoming (i.e. turning himself into one) afflicted with leprosy, (making) his wife also like that, came, with his wife, to his son.

7-12a. The two had become lumps of flesh, as they were made so by his trick. They came near that violent (*ghora*?) brāhmaṇa Somaśarman. Somaśarman, of great glory, seeing them completely afflicted, was full of great compassion. With his neck bent through devotion, he saluted their feet (and said:) "I have never seen (persons) like you. (I have not seen anyone

else) endowed with penance, with hosts of virtues and great religious merit. What has happened to you? O best of brāhmaṇas, all deities, attracted by your lustre, getting your order, always behave like your servants. Tell me the cause, O best brāhmaṇa, by which this painful disease has appeared on your wretched body?

12b-15a. This my meritorious mother, who is a loyal wife and has great religions merit, desires (i.e. is capable) to create the three worlds due to her husband's favour. How does she suffer pain? Is there no fruit of penance? How is it that she, who is affectionate to the elders, and who serves her husband as a god, contracts an extremely painful disease like leprosy?"

Śivaśarman said:

15b-16a. O glorious one, do not be sorry; the fruit due to his deeds is enjoyed by a man who has (done) a good or a bad deed.

16b-17a. O glorious one, if you desire religious merit in this world, then clean both of us who are suffering from the disease, and nurse us.

17b-19a. Thus addressed with good words, Somaśarman of great glory (said:) "I shall nurse you both who are meritorious. O best of brāhmaṇas, what has one to do (i.e. what would one get) in this world, if one does not nurse one's elder today (i.e. at the present time) only?"

19b-28a. Speaking thus, he who was grieved due to their malady, cleansed the phlegm, urine and excrement of both of them. He washed their feet and shampooed their bodies. He himself bathed them and helped them to stand. The best and virtuous brāhmaṇa, Somaśarman, of great glory, placing them on his shoulders took them to sacred places. The virtuous (Somaśarman), conversant with the Vedas, bathed them according to sacred precepts with his own hands, and with (the recitation of) auspicious, excellent, sacred hymns, and made both of them offer oblations to the manes and worship to the deities everyday. He himself offered ghee for gods into fire and cooked excellent food. He then called both the respectable elders, well-pleased with him (for food). The brāhmaṇa (i.e. Somaśarman) everyday put them to sleep on a bed. Daily he gave them garments, flowers etc. He offered very fragrant tāmbūla to both of

them. The glorious Somaśarman everyday gave them roots, water, good eatables etc. Somaśarman, of great glory, daily gave them whatever they desired.

28b-29a. In this way he always pleased them. The very pious Somaśarman (everyday) worshipped his parents.

29b-34. Calling Somaśarman, his cruel father (Śivaśarman) always abused him with censurable and harsh words; and in the presence of the sages he everyday beat his son who did his duty and did meritorious deeds. (He said to him:) "O you, disgrace to the family, you have not done well to me (i.e. have not served me properly)." He condemned him with many harsh and painful words. That Śivaśarman who was always sick, beat him with the strokes of a stick. Even though Śivaśarman did (i.e. treated him) like this, he (i.e. Somaśarman) who was pious, was never angry with him. Always happy in mind, speech and the three kinds of deeds Somaśarman propitiated his father; similarly he also daily propitiated his mother, knowing which Śivaśarman considered his own behaviour.

35-46. (He thought:) 'Viṣṇuśarman brought nectar for me. That righteous one has religious merit and is always devoted to (me) his father.' When thus many days which can be counted in hundreds, passed, Śivaśarman too, seeing his devotion, thought: 'Formerly I had told by son named Yajña (i.e. Yajñaśarman): O son, throw here and there the pieces (of the dead body) of your mother. He obeyed my words (i.e. order), and did not show compassion for his mother. This grief of one who desires to give strokes on an inanimate body is smaller; but that son Vedaśarman did a bold act; but I think that this one is superior since he does not swerve (from duty) even for a moment. He may also again do a rash act. Again he has the prowess, along with truth, due to penance. Even in everyday attendance he appears excelling (others). So at the right time I have tested his penance. (This my) son will never perish because of his devotion and truthfulness. I showed the disease of leprosy on my body through illusion; (but) he does not have disgust for phlegm, urine or excrement. He, of a great glory, cleanses the sores with his own hand. The very intelligent one shampoos (our) feet and cleanses us (i.e. our bodies). He always puts up with unbearable words (uttered by) me. (Even though I) reproached and beat (him), he always

talks pleasing words. Thus my very intelligent son is unhappy. I think that he, who is troubled with many afflictions, is the ocean of maladies. I shall remove his unhappiness by the favour of Viṣṇu.'

47-53a. Thinking (thus) in his mind (i.e. to himself), the very intelligent Śivaśarman, again created the illusion and took away the water (i.e. the nectar) from the pitcher. Then afterwards, having called that Somaśarman, he said to him: "I had given (i.e. placed) in your hand nectar, that removes maladies. Give it to me quickly, so that I shall drink it. By (drinking) that I shall today be free from the disease due to the favour of Viṣṇuśarman." When the sage Śivaśarman uttered these words, Somaśarman hurriedly got up (and rushed to) the pitcher. Seeing it empty (that is) without nectar (he thought:) 'Which sinful person has done this deed? Who has thus harmed me?' Somaśarman was thus worried and very unhappy. 'If I tell this account before (i.e. to) my father, he—my father—tormented by the disease, will be angry.'

53b-55. For a long time the very intelligent Somaśarman thought (to himself): 'If I have truth and have served the elders or have practised penance with a sincre mind, or have observed the proper code of conduct by means of restraint, purity etc. then this pitcher will have nectar in it. There is no doubt about it.'

56. When the glorious one thought (like this) and saw, the pitcher was again full of nectar.

57. Seeing it, Somaśarman of a great glory, became joyful, and going to his father, saluting him, quickly fetching the pitcher (said to him):

58. "O father, please take this pitcher of water (i.e. nectar) that has come (i.e. is brought by me). O magnanimous one, drink it, and quickly be free from the disease."

59-60. Hearing these greatly meritorious and truthful and righteous and sweet words of (i.e. uttered by) his son, Śivaśarman was full of great joy and said these words:

CHAPTER FIVE

The Consecration of Indra

Śivaśarman said:

1. O good son, today I am pleased with your penance, restraint, purity, and with your service to the elders and your devotion and resolution.

2. I (shall) abandon this deformed body; obtain happiness from me.

Saying so to the son, he showed him that (former) body.

3. He saw both the elders (i.e. his parents), who became as they were before, who were bright, who were magnanimous and who resembled the orb of the sun.

4-5. He devoutly saluted the feet of both the noble ones. Then full of great joy, he, the best one, took his leave of his son, and due to Viṣṇu's favour, his own religious merit and the practice of abstract meditation, the pious one went, with his wife, to Viṣṇu.

6-8. That sage entered Viṣṇu's abode, a place difficult to be obtained. This place granting salvation is not obtained by means of other (kinds of) religious merit or penance, or by means of meditating upon Viṣṇu, or renunciation, or contemplation, or knowledge, or hymns of praise. Viṣṇu is not seen by means of gifts or pilgrimages. The highest place is seen (only) by resorting to concentration and knowledge, as the brāhmaṇa entered Viṣṇu's body by means of deep and abstract meditation.

Sūta said:

9-10. Then that very lustrous Somaśarman practised penance there. He also looked upon gold and ornaments like a stone or a clod of clay. The righteous one had controlled his diet, he had given up sleep. Giving up all objects of senses he resorted to solitude.

11-12a. He had taken to the posture suited to profound and abstract meditation, was desireless and had no possessions. Then the time of his death arrived. Demons came to that brāhmaṇa, Somaśarman.

12b-16. When the time of death of him who was living (like that) at the great sacred place, Śāligrāma, adding to the honour of sages arrived, some demons and goblins who knew thus (i.e. knew that his death was imminent), spoke. The great sound (of the words uttered by them) entered the cavity of the ears of Somaśarman, the best brāhmaṇa. Fear of the demons entered him, who had adhered to knowledge and meditation. Due to that meditation and the fear of the demons the life of the noble one quickly departed. Being full of the fear of the demons he died.

17-18. Therefore, he was born in the house of the demon (Hiraṇyakaśipu) as Hiraṇyakaśipu's son. In the war between gods and demons he was killed by Viṣṇu. The noble Prahlāda, while fighting well saw (the form of) Vāsudeva, endowed with the universal form.

19. Due to his former practice of abstract meditation, the noble one had the knowledge (of his former birth, so) he recollected all the former life of Śivaśarman:

20-22. "Formerly, I whose name was Somaśarman, entered the body of a demon. When shall I, due to my great religious merit, called knowledge, reach, from (i.e. casting) this body, the absolute, pious, excellent, abode granting salvation?" The noble Prahlāda, thought like this when he died formerly; O best of brāhmaṇas, listen. I have thus told you everything that removes (your) doubts.

Sūta said:

23-25a. When Prahlāda was killed in the battle by the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), the lord of gods, that beautiful woman, Kamalā, whose son was killed, wept. She was the mother of Prahlāda and the beloved (wife) of Hiraṇyakaśipu. Due to the grief caused by Prahlāda's death she, the loyal, glorious wife, (of Hiraṇyakaśipu), who was dear to him, lamented day and night.

25b. Nārada spoke to her, who was weeping day and night:

26-27a. "Do not grieve, O noble and meritorious one, for your son. Your son, the very intelligent one, who is killed by Viṣṇu, will come back endowed with his own (former) characteristics.

27b. He will again have his name as Prahlāda.

28-30a. He will be without the demonish thoughts, and will be endowed with godhead; he will be saluted by all gods and will enjoy the position of Indra, O good lady. O illustrious lady, always be happy with that son. (Please) do not reveal this good news to anyone. You should feign ignorance, and always keep this as a great secret."

30b. Saying so, the brāhmaṇa, the best sage, Nārada, left.

31-33. He (i.e. Prahlāda) got an excellent birth in the womb of Kamalā (i.e. Prahlāda was born as the son of Kamalā). He was named Prahlāda; the account of that illustrous one (will be narrated by me). O brāhmaṇas, when he was a child, he thought of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) only. Due to the favour of Narasiṁha (i.e. Viṣṇu) he would be the king of gods in heaven. After having obtained godhead, he would also get the position of Indra; he, the all-wise, will attain salvation—Viṣṇu's abode.

34. There are innumerable glorious individuals, there are many forms of creation. (So) the great-souled, wise ones should not commit errors.

35-36. O best brāhmaṇas, I have told you everything that you have asked. O glorious one (ones) you may ask anything else. I shall remove your doubt: (I shall tell you about) the victory of gods and the destruction of demons brought about by the lord of gods, and (about) how he re-established the three worlds.

The sages said:

37. Who got the position of Indra, which sustained the title of gods? O best of brāhmaṇas, tell (us) in detail, who gave (him) the position of Indra?

Sūta said:

38. I shall tell you in detail for which best merit the best one, the glorious one, obtained the position of Indra.

39-40. When all the demons were killed in the great war, and when the sinners were completely annihilated by the magnanimous Viṣṇu, gods along with gandharvas, nāgas, vidyādharas, spoke, with their palms foldedi n obeisance, to Mādhava (Viṣṇu):

41. "O venerable one, O lord of gods, O Hṛṣīkeśa, our salutations to you. We are going to tell you something respectfully; (please) understand all that.

42-43a. O Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu), make for (i.e. give) us a ruler, a protector, who is meritorious; (give us) a god, a king, viz. Indra, who is righteous and who would rule the worlds, and resorting to whom the beings in the three worlds would obtain happiness."

Vāsudeva (i.e. *Viṣṇu*) *said*:

43b. O you illustrious ones, the best brāhmaṇa, endowed with the Viṣṇuite lustre, lived in my heaven for a long time.

44-48a. O you best gods, the period of stay in my heaven of that brāhmaṇa, that magnanimous devotee of me, was over. Due to Viṣṇuite lustre in him the pious one will be your guardian; and he loves righteousness; he, the best pious brāhmaṇa, will be your king and supporter for protecting you. The large-hearted son of Aditi will be known as Suvrata. He, the very powerful and very brave one will be Indra.

Sūta said:

48b-49. In this way, the lord of gods, granted best boons to the gods; then all the victorious and best gods went with Viṣṇu to see their father, Kaśyapa, and their mother.

50. The magnanimous ones saluted both (the parents) seated comfortably. Full of great joy, and with the palms of their hands joined, they said:

51. "Due to your favour we have attained to godhead." Full of great joy, he (i.e. Kaśyapa) spoke (these) words to the gods:

Kaśyapa said:

52a-55a. You have always been following the virtuous path. Due to our favour and the power of penance, you have attained to the position of gods which is inexhaustible. To these I (now) give a boon: Full of great love you—gods, nāgas, gandharvas and great deities—will be immortal, will not be subject to old age,

will be imperishable, will have all your desires satisfied, and will be endowed with all perfections.

Viṣṇu said:

55b-56a. Well-being to you, O successful mother of gods; ask for a boon. I shall certainly give you whatever is desired by your mind.

Aditi spoke:

56b-59. O Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu), due to your favour I had become a mother. I obtained these sons that are immortal, ageless, eternal, and righteous and affectionate, O Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), (please) listen: O Govinda, you are one who fully satisfies all desires and gives prosperity. Remaining in my womb (you should be born as) my son, so that with you as my son I shall be delighted. O lord, thus satisfy my desire, leading to prosperity.

Vāsudeva said :

60-65. For the mission of gods, you should go to (i.e. take up) a human form. Then I shall surely remain in your womb. O goddess, when the twelfth yuga comes, I shall, for removing the burden of the earth, and for killing all the kṣatriyas, be (born as) your son, viz. (Paraśu) Rāma, Jamadagni's son, the best of brāhmaṇas and endowed with valour and lustre, and best among all those who wield weapons. Similarly, when the twentyseventh yuga called Tretā arrives, I shall be, O loyal wife, (born as) your son, named Rāma. O you of pious mind, when at the end of Dvāpara, the twentyeighth yuga arrives, I shall be undoubtedly (born as) your son, by name Vāsudeva (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), for the destruction of all demons and for removing the burden of the earth.

66a. O you auspicious one, now please do what I tell you.

66b-70a. O you goddess, who grant everything, having created an omniscient, handsome son, I shall give him the position of Indra, (so that) he too will be Indra.

Having heard thus that due to the favour of the lord of lords the son will be Indra, she was full of great joy. (She said:) "O magnanimous one, let it be so; I shall do as you tell me."

Then all the deities, free from fear and full of joy, went to their own abodes.

Sūta said:

70b-71. Having gone to Kaśyapa after she was in menstruation, the high-minded Aditi (said to him:) "O revered one, give me a son who will enjoy the position of Indra." The brāhmaṇa (i.e. Kaśyapa), having thought for a moment, said to the high-minded lady:

72-82a. "O illustrious one, let it be so. You will have a son, who will be the creator of the three worlds and also enjoyer of the sacrifices." Having put his hand on her head, the lustrous, best brāhmaṇa, who was endowed with truth and piety, practised penance. O best of brāhmaṇas, he (i.e. the son) would always live in the heaven of Viṣṇu. O best of brāhmaṇas, when his religious merit would be exhausted, be would, due to (the fruit of) his acts, fall from there; then he, of a great penance, would go to the womb of Aditi, with the desire to enjoy the position of Indra. Due to her truthful and meritorious deeds, and due to her religious merit and penance, the goddess conceived. Having gone to reside in a forest, she practised penance without laziness. A hundred divine years passed, when the mother of gods was (thus) practising penance. She practised penance difficult to be practised by gods and demons. She, bright with that penance and lustre, resembling the sun's lustre and (looking) like another sun, resorted to meditation and shone brightly. Then due to the lustre of her penance, she looked superior in her beauty (i.e. looked more beautiful). That goddess, Dakṣa's devout daughter, engrossed in penance and meditation, and feeding herself on air, shone more (i.e. looked more beautiful). All siddhas and sages, and gods of great prowess, closely intent (on looking after her), praised and protected the illustrious one.

82b-84. When a full hundred years were over, Viṣṇu came there. He said to that illustrious Aditi, endowed with penance: "O goddess, the foetus has fully developed; the time for delivery has come; the foetus is nourished by your penance and grown by your lustre. O you glorious one, today only you deliver the embryo."

85-89. Speaking thus, the lord of the gods went to his own

abode. When a very prosperous time arrived, the goddess delivered a son, who was lustrous, who was as it were another sun, who was pleasing, who was charming in all limbs, who was endowed with all (good) characteristics, who had four arms, whose body was huge, who was regent of a quarter, who was the lord of gods, who was covered with lustrous blazes, whose hands looked lovely on account of disc and lotus; who, the very intelligent one, shone with a face resembling the orb of the moon, who was very wise, who was adorned with the lustre of Viṣṇu, with other good characteristics and divine disposition, who was full of all (good) characteristics, whose face was like the moon, whose eyes resembled lotuses.

90-92a. The gods, the sages who had mastered the Vedas, gandharvas, nāgas, vidyādharas, the seven sages, of inferior and superior prowess, came there. Other virtuous, magnanimous sages, giving merit and auspiciousness, with their minds full of joy also came there.

92b-94. When that glorious one of great prowess was born, all revered gods, all mountains, ascetics, milky and other oceans, unsullied rivers, all those that were affectionate and other mobile and immobile objects came there. All lords of gods happily celebrated (the occasion) with auspicious rites.

95-102a. The hosts of the celestial nymphs danced and the gandharvas sang songs. Gods and sages who had mastered the Vedas praised the magnanimous son of Kaśyapa with Vedic hymns. When he of great prowess was born, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra and all the Vedas together with the Vedāṅgas and the Upāṅgas[1] came there. All the beings in the world that were endowed with religious merit came there only, when he of great prowess was born. With auspicious great festivals all of them performed sacred rites. The three gods led by Brahmā, as well as Kaśyapa and Bṛhaspati, of great prowess and full of joy and worshipping him, performed the naming ceremony of that magnanimous one. (They said:) "You will be known as Vasudatta; you are also (named) Vasuda; your names will be Ākhaṇḍala, and also

1. *Sāṅgopāṅgaiḥ*—With Aṅgas and Upāṅgas. The six Vedāṅgas are: (1) Śikṣā (Phonetics); (2) Kalpa (Rituals); (3) Vyākaraṇa (Grammar); (4) Nirukta (Etymology); (5) Chandas (Metrics); and (6) Jyotiṣa (Astronomy). The Upāṅgas are said to be: Purāṇa-nyāya-mīmāṁsā-dharma-śāstrāṇi.

Marutvān; you will also be known as Maghavan, Biḍaujas, and Pākaśāsani." (They said to Aditi:) "This your son will also be known as Śakra and Indra."

102b-105. All the deities, pleased and delighted in mind, gave these names to that magnanimous one only. The great gods took bath and performed the purificatory rites. Having called Viśvakarman, they gave that magnanimous one propitious and divine ornaments. All the gods of great prowess were thus glad when that glorious, magnanimous king of gods was born.

106-108. On an auspicious day, at an auspicious time, the magnanimous gods consecrated him with auspicious rites and established him as Indra. By the favour of the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) he obtained the position of Indra. That Vasudatta, the lustrous lord of gods, practised penance. He was endowed with brilliant lustre, and had held weapons like the thunderbolt, the noose, and the goads.

Sūta said :

109. Seeing the great, entire power of penance, Śukra uttered a verse : "In the worlds, there will be none else as much handsome as this one.

110. This other great magnanimous one has obtained this divine grandeur by Viṣṇu's favour.

111. None else, of a strong power due to penance will there be in the worlds, who can be compared with this one".

CHAPTER SIX

Diti's Wailing

Sūta said :

1-2. The other miserable wife of Kaśyapa, named Danu, being tormented by the grief due to the son (of Aditi) came to Diti's house. She was weeping, she who was reached by (i.e. was full of) great grief, saluted the two lotus-like feet of Diti. Diti advised her.

Diti said :

3. O glorious one, what is the cause of your weeping? Women are (said to be) 'Putriṇī (i.e. endowed with sons) (even though) they have (only) one son. O beautiful, auspicious one, you are the mother of even a hundred magnanimous sons like Śumbha.

4-7a. Tell me the reason why you are unhappy— (you) who have the two magnanimous and very mighty and valorous sons like king Hiraṇyakaśipu and the very mighty Hiraṇyākṣa. O friend, tell me why you are having this great grief. Tell me fully the reason for which you are weeping now.

7b. Having thus spoken to the queen (i.e. Danu), the high-minded (Diti) ceased speaking.

Danu said :

8-9. See, see, O magnanimous one, the desire of my co-wife (i.e. Aditi) has been fulfilled by the god of gods—the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu). As Viṣṇu had formerly granted a boon to Aditi, even now he has granted a great boon to her son.

10. This son is known to be born from Kaśyapa, and is the guardian of the three worlds. Snatching the position of Indra from your son, he has given it to him (i.e. to Aditi's son).

11-12a. (Now) Aditi, who is full of desires (i.e. whose desires are fulfilled) is exalting with happiness, (since) her younger son, Vasudatta, along with the gods, is enjoying Indra's position which is very difficult to be obtained.

Diti said :

12b-13. O you glorious one, tell me of which position my very intelligent son is deprived; O friend, (tell me) also how other demons and goblins are deprived of lustre. Tell me in detail the cause of this.

14a. Saying (these) words to her (i.e. to Danu), Diti, who was extremely unhappy, stopped speaking.

Danu said :

14b-16a. Gods and demons, being enraged, went to fight (i.e. fought). A great war, causing the destruction of the demons, took place. The gods and Viṣṇu struck down my sons in the war;

so also your sons (were struck down) by the god of gods, viz. the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu).

16b-20. As a lion would frighten with his own lustre (beings) that have gone to the forest, in the same way your sons and my sons were killed by him having the conch in his hand (i.e. by Viṣṇu). He destroyed, crushed, made to flee, and unnerved the army (of the demons) led by Kālanemi and unconquerable even for the gods and demons (together). As, in the forest fire would burn grass with its flames, so Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu) completely consumed all the hosts of demons. Many of my sons, O respectable lady, and many of your sons also died (in the war). As all the moths perish after reaching (i.e. coming in contact with) fire, similarly all the demons reaching (i.e. coming in contact with) Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), perished.

21a. Diti thus listened to this fearful account.

Diti said :

21b. O you good one, how do you tell me this, which is like the fall of the thunderbolt?

22-23a. Saying so, that respectable lady fell down in a swoon. She, who was very much oppressed by the grief due to her son, said : "Alas ! a misery has come about; it is very troublesome and tormenting."

23b-32a. Seeing her, the greatest sage said (these) auspicious words: "Well-being to you; do not weep; O you illustrious one, persons like you, who are energetic and free from greed and infatuation, do not grieve like this. O honorable lady, in this mundane existence, to whom do the sons belong? To whom do the good relatives belong? One has nothing to do with anyone (else). O dear one, listen to it all. You are the daughters of Dakṣa and are my beautiful wives. O auspicious one, I am your husband, who fulfils your desires. I bring you together; I am your guardian, and protector, also, O you of a beautiful face. Why did the cruel demons, not controlling themselves, entertain enmity (with the gods)? O you magnanimous one, your sons are destitute of truthfulness. Due to that fault (of them) and due to your morbid affection (for them), O auspicious one, they were killed by Vāsudeva (i.e. Kṛṣṇa, i.e. Viṣṇu) and were thrown down by the gods. Therefore do not entertain grief which destroys real

salvation. Grief would destroy (i.e. destroys) religious merit, and one perishes by the loss of religious merit. Therefore, O you of a beautiful face, give up the grief being of the nature of an obstacle. Due to the power of their own faults the demons died. The gods were (just) an apparent cause; they (i.e. the demons) were destroyed by their own deeds. Realising this, O you glorious one, be happy".

32b-33. Having thus spoken to his dear wife who was unhappy, the very intelligent, great contemplative saint, withdrew through dejection and stopped (speaking).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Account of the Body

Diti said :

1-2. O Lord, you have spoken all the truth; there is no doubt about it. Abandoning love for my husband, I entertained rivalry (with my co-wife), O brāhmaṇa. (Now) being tormented by pride, agony, humiliation and great grief, I shall, O best one, give up my life.

Kaśyapa said :

3-5. (Please) listen, I shall tell (i.e. explain) you in such a way that there will be (i.e. you will have) peace (of mind). O auspicious one, nobody is anybody's son, or mother or father. Nobody has a brother or a relative. None has kinsmen and friends. In the mundane existence such is the relation, affected by illusion and infatuation. O respectable lady, one is one's own mother, one's own relatives and kinsmen. One is oneself the eternal moral virtue.

6-8. O you honourable lady, a man becomes happy due to (good) conduct. He surely perishes due to bad conduct and sin. Due to this he even goes to (i.e. is born in) a wicked species; there is no doubt about this. A man, deluded by an untruthful act and a great sin, always remains as an enemy of (other) beings. Here

and there (i.e. everywhere) he has enemies; there is no doubt about this.

9. O you dear, auspicious and beautiful lady, when a man lives in a friendly way, he has friends everywhere.

10-11. O respectable lady, when the seed is concealed (underground) and is well-placed, the farmer gets the fruit exactly in accordance with it. Similarly your sons have vied with the good. Enjoy the fruit of that deed that has come to you.

12-13a. O illustrious one, your sons are destitute of penance and peace; due to that sin they have fallen from a great position. Realising this, be tranquil, and give up pain or pleasure.

13b-14a. To whom do the friends belong? To whom do relatives and friends belong? Beings live happily in accordance with their own deeds.

14b-15a. Due to their knowledge of the reality, the wise and the glorious do not think about another's interest. (To do so) is futile; there is no doubt about this.

15b-21a. The body is constituted of the five elements, and is just infirm because of the joints. O respectable lady, with a hope for happiness, it has befriended everything. Ātman (i.e. the soul) is greatly meritorious, omnipresent, and sees everything; he is virtuous, and grants all (kinds of) prosperity. Thus occupying everything, and being untinged, he, O respectable lady, moves all alone. While (thus) moving, he saw, in a secluded place, four meritorious best brāhmaṇas, (as it were) great power embodied. The fifth one was Wind, the friend of the former (four). Then the soul sought the help of Knowledge. The illustrious one, seeing them, said to Jñāna (Knowledge): "O Jñāna, see these five; they are consulting one another. Go to them and talk to them. Ask them: 'Who are you?' "

21b-22. Hearing those very significant words of that glorious one, Jñāna (Knowledge), propitiating him, said to him: "What have you to do with them? Tell me the truth (since) you are always pure."

Ātman (soul) said:

23-24. These five are glorious, handsome and high-minded. I shall go, meet them, and shall speak to them. O Jñāna (Knowledge), listen: I shall speak to these worthy ones, who have come

to the fifth one viz. Speed (i.e. Wind). O Knowledge, be (my) messenger; you are skilled in the act of a messenger.

Jñāna (Knowledge) said:

25-26. O soul, listen to my words, I am telling you the truth, and the truth (only). O dear one, O you of pure heart, you, desiring for the good, should never have the company of these five. O you very intelligent one, this Moha (i.e. Infatuation) is longing for your company.

Ātman (the soul) said :

27. Why do you, O Jñāna, avoid the company of these? O wise one, tell me the real reason of this.

Jñāna (Knowledge) said:

28. There will be great grief just due to their company. These five are the root of grief and cause affliction and tormentation.

Ātman said:

29. Let it be so; I shall do as you tell me.

That Ātman, (thus) speaking to Jñāna, associated himself with Dhyāna (Meditation).

Kaśyapa said:

30. Then all the five saw that Ātman. Having called Buddhi (Intellect) they said to her: "Be united with Ātman only.

31-32. O you auspicious one, act as the messenger between Ātman and us. O Buddhi, having gone to him say to him: 'The five elements,[1] the magnanimous ones, the supporters of the world and the auspicious ones desire your friendship.' You have to do this mission of ours. (Please) go from here." (*Buddhi said*:)

33. "Let it be so; O glorious ones, I shall carry out this best mission of you." Having thus spoken to them, she went to that Ātman, and said to him:

1. The five elements are: Earth, Water, Fire. Wind and Ether.

34-35. "O blessed one, I am Buddhi, I have approached you as a messenger from (i.e. of) the great (elements). Listen to their words (i.e. message). The five-natured (elements) desire your eternal friendship. Form friendship (with them), O you highly intelligent one, and abandon (i.e. keep) Dhyāna far away."

Dhyāna (Meditation said):

36. O Ātman, you should not have their company. Merely by their contact there will be great grief (i.e. great grief will befall you).

37. How would you do your duty, when you are forsaken by Jñāna and me? So, you should not at all associate yourself with them.

38. O mighty one, they will make you live in the womb; there is no other go. Without Jñāna and me, you will certainly go to Ajñāna (i.e. Ignorance).

39. Thus speaking to that highly intelligent Ātman, Dhyāna ceased to speak. Then, Ātman, who was determined (to form friendship with the five elements), spoke to Buddhi, who had come to him:

40. "The illustrious Jñāna and Dhyāna are my virtuous ministers. It is not proper to go to them. So, O Buddhi, what shall I do (now)?"

41. Hearing thus (i.e. these words), the glorious Buddhi told in the vicinity of (i.e. to) them (i.e. the five elements) the full narration of Jñāna and Dhyāna (i.e. told everything that Jñāna and Dhyāna had said).

42-43. Then all the five (elements) went to Ātman (and said to him):) "We constantly desire your friendship only. O you lord of the worlds, since you are pure, we have approached you. Thinking for yourself only (i.e. independently of Jñāna and Dhyāna), please give us a reply."

Ātman said:

44. All you five have come; (and) you seek my friendship. Tell before (i.e. to) me your merit and power.

Bhūmi (*the Earth*) *said*:

45. My firmness rooted in the bones is the basis of all operations, is connected with skin and flesh, and with nails and the hair on the body.

46. O you very wise one, my strength is in the body. That magnanimous odour passing through the nose is my servant.

Ākāśa (*Ether*) *said*:

47-48. I, Ether, have come. Listen; I shall tell you about the lustre, of the nature of the highest Brahman; space is without and within; I live in a vacant place. My ministers are the two ears; they are set up for hearing.

Vāyu (*Wind*) *said*:

49. I remain in five forms,[1] and in this way I perform auspicious and inauspicious things. My minister, remaining on the habitation of the skin, resorts to the quality of touch.

Tejas (*Fire*) *said*:

50-54a. Always remaining in the body, I digest (articles of food). I manifest all matter and non-matter, without and within. I send forth semen, marrow, saliva, and also blood remaining in the skin and joints. I remain in the body. The two eyes are my ministers that cause the perception of matter. Thus before (i.e. to) you I have narrated my function. Everyday I well nourish the body with nectar. Such is my operation in the dear city of the body. Know[2] the tongue to be my minister who very much enjoys the tastes.

Nāsikā (*Nose*) *said*:

54b-56. I give great nourishment to the body with fragrance. Casting off bad odour, I manifest (good) odour over the body. O you illustrious one, united with Buddhi, and displayed by her existence, I remain steady in this body for the mission of my master. Know odour to be my quality which proceeds in two ways.

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1. The five forms of Vāyu are: Prāṇa, Apāna, Vyāna, Udāna, Samāna.
2. Before this verse some such words as 'Āpaḥ ūcuḥ' are missing.

The two Ears said :

57-58. Remaining in our body (i.e. the body to which we belong), we hear words telling about what ought or ought not to be done, and also auspicious and inauspicious words, true and false words, pleasant and unpleasant words uttered by people. My (i.e. our) quality is sound, and there is no doubt that I (i.e. we) employ my (i.e. our) operation when the intellect would intensify me (i.e. us).

The Skin said:

59-62a. The five-formed wind is well-settled without and within the body. I feel the movement of these (five forms). I feel cold, hot, sun, rain, and throbbing of the wind. I feel every touch, every contact (with) phlegm etc. of men. My quality is touch alone. I am telling the truth. Thus I have told you about my function.

The two Eyes said :

62b-64a. O best one, when the Intellect urges, and not otherwise, we observe all proper and improper forms that exist in the world. We remain in the body, and form is our quality. Thus is the propriety of our function in the body, O you highly intelligent one.

The Tongue spoke:

64b-66a. O dear one, united with Buddhi, I spread the kinds of taste. I find out every (taste) like saline, sour, insipid or sweet. Always associated with this function, I remain (in the body). This Intellect is the leader of all the sense-organs.

66b-67a. O dear one, listen, thus these five sense-organs have come together; and they again and again narrated their respective functions.

67b-68. Then Intellect approached the very intelligent one and said to him: "When the body is without me, it perishes; not otherwise. Therefore, O you highly intelligent one (i.e. Ātman), carry on, after having resorted to flesh (i.e. body).

69-70a. Then Karma (Fate) came there and said this (i.e. these words) to Ātman: "O you very wise one, I am Karma, and have approached you. I send you along the path by which you go here (i.e. in the world)."

70b-72a. Having heard all that, Ātman said to them: "You are united with the five-natured ones and are indeed common to all. Why do you seek the friendship of the five-natured one? You may (please) tell before (i.e. to) me the entire reason."

The five-natured ones said:

72b-74a. Due to our contact the body is produced; O you of a high intelligence, you who follow a good vow, stay in that body. Due to your favour all of us (also) stay there. For this reason we always desire your friendship.

Ātman said:

74b-75a. O illustrious ones, let that, which is dear to you, be so. There is no doubt that I shall befriend you through affection.

75b-76a. The glorious and high-minded one, though warded off by the noble Jñāna and also by Dhyāna, sought their company.

76b-77a. Then the lord, being deluded by attachment and hatred, and associated with the five elements, became embodied.

77b-80a. When he (i.e. Ātman) goes to the womb (i.e. is conceived), he, fallen into the lubricious eddy, full of excrement and urine, along with them, with his body distressed, said to the five-natured ones. "O you five-natured ones, all of you listen to my words. Due to your contact, I, being deluded by great grief, have fallen into this lubricious, very terrible and fearful (eddy)."

The five-natured ones said :

80b-82a. O lord, remain there till the foetus is full (i.e. mature). Then, there is no doubt that, you will come out of it. You are our lord, settled in the region of the body. Thus you should rule; you will be enjoying pleasures.

82b-83. Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) them, Ātman, oppressed by grief, and desiring to go (away), became intent on running (away).

CHAPTER EIGHT

Account of the Soul

Kaśyapa said :

1. He, being afflicted day by day, became bewildered in the womb. The rightenous one, harassed by all kinds of suffering, was overcome with grief.

2. With his face turned down he remained in the womb. He was overcome with mental agonies and physical diseases; he was lamented over; he was senseless.

3a. He was full of great grief. Being (thus) tormented, he said to Jñāna:

Ātman said:

3b-4. O you very wise one, at that time I did not do what you told me (to do). In spite of being prevented by Dhyāna, I fell into the danger caused by delusion. Therefore, O you highly intelligent one, protect me from this very fearful stay in the womb.

Jñāna said :

5. O Ātman, you were prevented by me; but you did not do what I told (you). You were put in this calamity of (remaining in) the womb by the very cruel five-natured ones. Now go to Dhyāna; you will obtain pleasure from him (in it). There is no doubt that you will be free from the residence in the womb.

6-8a. Understanding (i.e. hearing) those words—the fact—from (i.e. spoken by) Jñāna, he, having called Dhyāna, said (to him): "Please listen to my words. O Dhyāna, I have sought your refuge. (Please) protect me always."

8b. "Let it be so, O you very wise one." Thus Dhyāna spoke to that highly intelligent one (i.e. Ātman).

9. Hearing these words, Ātman then approached Dhyāna. With Dhyāna, and free from delusion, he lived in the womb.

10-11. When Ātman went to Dhyāna, he forgot the fear caused by (remaining in) the womb. The Ātman accompanied by the two (i.e. Jñāna and Dhyāna) and dissociated from delusion (remained) thinking about his own happiness only. "As soon as

I go out of this (womb) I shall give up the body formed by the five-natured ones."

12-19. The lord, living in the womb, always thought like this. O you of a beautiful face, at the time of the delivery of the one related to Prajāpati the foetus is shaken by wind, and also by the strong breath of life. The vulva expands (only) twenty-four fingers; the foetus is (of the size of) twentyfive fingers; therefore he is troubled. O dear one, thus being troubled by swoon, he falls, with Jñāna and Dhyāna, on the ground, . He is separated from it by the divine wind related to Prajāpati. Merely by the touch of the ground, Jñāna and Dhyāna are forgotten. Ātman, confounded in the bondage of the worldly existence, remains there through love (for it). Filled with virtues and vices, and connected with great delusion, he everyday desires everything like eatables and drinks. Ātman thus being nourished with the five-natured ones is covered over with the sense-organs and all sinful objects of senses. O respectable lady, enticed by his relatives like his wife and others, day by day he becomes afflicted and agitated.

20-21a. This lord, Ātman, confounded by great delusion, (and thus) caught in the net of delusion, and being bound, as a fish is bound in a net by a fisherman, is unable to move.

21b-23. He is bound with strong bonds of the nets of infatuation. Deprived of Jñāna and Vijñāna, and struck by attachment and hatred, he is thus pervaded by the pervading universe. Being tormented by desire, and also by anger and bound by Prakṛti (i.e. the natural disposition) by means of his deeds, he became (i.e. becomes) greatly confounded.

Sūta said:

24-25. When Ātman was thus deluded and was occupied with all the wicked ones like greed, attachment, he was bound by the delusion of the form of the worldly existence like: 'This is (my) wife; this is (my) son; this is (my) friend; this is (my) house.'

26. He is then distressed by griefs like bereavement of the

son etc., and is also consumed by old age, physical diseases and mental agonies also.

27. Thus Ātman is tormented by very fearful misery and delusion; and is frustrated by pride, humiliation and many miseries.

28. O respectable lady, he is, in the same way, troubled by old age in various ways. Constantly lamented over and senseless he thinks of misery (only).

29. At night he sees dreams, and by day he is without vitality. O respectable lady, similarly, day by day, he is full of the imperfections of the limbs.

30. When he was wandering in the mundane existence, he saw Vairāgya (i.e. detachment), that was fearless, friendless, very tranquil and contented.

31-32. Then Ātman spoke to him, that was free from desire and anger: "Who are you (remaining) with a naked form? How is it that you are not ashamed of your friends? Moving in the place where there are groups (of the elements), women, old persons, young women and mothers, you, who are uncovered, are not afraid (i.e. are not ashamed)."

Vītarāga said :

33-34. Who would be seen naked here? I am never naked. Even though you are well-dressed, you are very much bound. O divine one, I am never naked. You who live under the sway of the objects of senses and are without (i.e. do not care for) any bounds of morality appear to be naked.

Ātman said:

35. O you of a good vow, tell me in detail what the bounds of morality are, if you know them definitely.

36-37a. The very wise, very intelligent Vītarāga said to him: "The mind resorts to great firmness in (times of) happiness and unhappiness. And (when) it is troubled by respective objects, it should be given up to them.

37b-38. I shall now explain to you the sense of shame, which fully enters the mind. I have nothing to do today; I am removed

from my position, I am naked—(when thus) one is absorbed in remorse, that is said to be the sense of shame.

39. Of whom should one be ashamed? There is never a second. The divine Puruṣa (Person) is just one. What would he destroy and of whom?

40-42. Now I shall explain to you the groups which you mentioned. As a potter would put a lump of clay on the wheel, and then would cause it to revolve with a string, and would, with a firm mind, manifest (i.e. fashion) them (i.e. the pots) as he desires, in the same way—and in no other way—the creator fashions various forms. Later, for one reason or another, they perish.

43. One should be ashamed of the eternal groups (of the elements) that always remain, for they do not rest (i.e. depend) on the earth.

44. They are: Ether, Wind, Fire, Earth and Water as the fifth. These groups, that are present everywhere, shine.

45. These five well-settled in the regions of the bodies of beings, are present everywhere. (Then) of whom should one be ashamed?

46-47a. O dear one, I shall now explain to you the nature of women. As in thousands of pots with (i.e. containing) water the one (and only) moon shines (i.e. is reflected), similarly you shine everywhere.

47b-54a. You, who are very magnanimous, and who, remain in thousands of beings, and in the mobile and the immobile, are deluded. Through the door (i.e. opening) of the vulva, which is sinful and full of illusion and delusion, and also through the breasts and buttocks and age, you shine. Here also is seen the increase in (the shape of) the heart and flesh. For the fall of the people the form of delusion is manifested. There is no woman that is mentioned by you. The creator ever fashions the creation for his diversion. The soul of the man like that of a woman remains everywhere. Those that are free from breasts (i.e. from sexual desire) are always liberated. Man is called Puruṣa (i.e. the soul) and woman is said to be Prakṛti (i.e. nature, original source of the material world). She sports with him and is never free. You, united with Prakṛti, are seen among Puruṣas

(i.e. men). Who causes shame (and) to whom? Knowing thus go happily.

54b-56. O beautiful lady, I shall explain to you the old woman who is always old. The skin on her body, O lady of a beautiful face, is worn out. She is full of white and grey Hair. She is feeble, miserable and is covered over with folds. Such a woman would not be old; but she is called old.

57-58a. I have narrated her characteristics. Now I shall tell (the characteristics of) a young woman. She, living near the soul, always grows richer in knowledge. She is called Sumati (i.e. good intention), and is both old and young. The woman is always settled in puruṣas (i.e. souls). One should be ashamed of her. I shall also tell (you something) else.

58b-62a. I shall explain to you the mother, whom you mentioned. She is Cetanā (i.e. consciousness) always living in the bodies of beings. She gives the highest knowledge, and (therefore) she is called Prajñā (i.e. discernment). Prajñā is called mother as she lives in all the worlds for the protection, nourishment and well-fare of beings. That one who is described as Sumati, is called mātā (i.e. mother).

62b-63. All the forms always leading to the gates of the mundane existence are these mothers. They cause great misery. I have explained to you the nature of the mother. What else should I tell you?"

Ātman said :

64. Who are you, that have come here, and are removing my tormentation? (Please) explain to me in detail your own nature.

Vitarāga said :

65-67a. Well-being to you; I am Vītarāga, from whom all desires, being frustrated, turn away; whom these vile deeds do not see due to their wickedness—this has no alternative; whom hope never approaches; due to whose fear anger, greed and infatuation have perished; and Viveka (i.e. discrimination) is my brother.

Ātman said :

67b-68a. Of what nature is this your brother named Viveka? Tell me his—your brother's characteristics and also of your own.

Vitarāga said :

68b-70a. I shall not narrate before (i.e. to) you his characteristics and form. O glorious one, I shall (just) call that brother (himself). O Viveka, my brother, listen to our speech (i.e. words). O you very glorious one, O you very intelligent one, (please) come out of affection for me.

Kaśyapa said :

70b-76. He, omniscient, omnipresent, pervading, devoted entirely to truth, the enemy of all errors, and lover of knowledge came (there) with his two wives, Śānti (Tranquility) and Kṣamā (Forbearance). Dhāraṇā (Retentive memory) and Dhī (understanding) are the two daughters of the same magnanimous one (Viveka). Yoga (Abstract meditation) in his eldest son, and Mokṣa (salvation) is his great preceptor. That Viveka, who is spotless, ego-less, desire-less, having no possession, with his mind pleased at all times, free from the pairs of opposites (like pleasure and pain) and hihgly intelligent one, came (there) adorned with all jewels. That Viveka, whose ministers were the very glorious and highly intelligent Dharma (Piety) and Satya (Truth) came (there), accompanied by Kṣamā and Śānti. He said to Vītrarāga: "Invited (by you) I have come. So, O brother, tell before (i.e. to) me the full reason resorting to (i.e. for) which you have invited me."

Vitarāga said :

77-79. This man, who is before (us) is restrained by great nooses, is deluded by Moha's arrows, and also by the bonds of the worldly existence. He pervades everything, and is the master of all, and also of me. He is seized by the five elements; and is bereft of Jñāna and Dhyāna. You who know facts should ask this Ātman.

Hearing the words of Vītarāga, Viveka spoke these words:

Viveka said :

80. O lord of the universe, you are carrying on happily, What pleasure did you yourself enjoy after coming to the worldly existence?

Ātman said :

81-86. O you highly intelligent one, I, void of knowledge, always experienced the great, unbearable and terrible grief of the residence in the womb. Being deprived of knowledge while in the body, I was born in many ways. When I was in childhood, O lord, I did undeserving deeds. As a youth I sported, and enjoyed my wife in many ways. When I reached old age I was tormented by the grief of (i.e. the bereavement of my) son etc. Due to the separation from my wife etc. I was burnt day and night. Everyday I was tormented by miseries of many kinds. O you highly intelligent one, I am not at all having any pleasure by day or at night. O you very intelligent one, what do (i.e. should) I, very much tormented by agonies, do (now)? Just tell me the means by which I shall get happiness. (Please) make me free from this great bond—this heap of the noose of the mundane existence.

Viveka said :

87-93. O you lord of the world, you are pure, you are free from the pairs (like pleasure and pain), and are free from sins. Go to this glorious Vītarāga, who gives happiness, whom you have undoubtedly seen naked and without any formality. He shows (the way to) happiness and destroys all distress.

Hearing thus (i.e. these words), the pure soul again went to Vītarāga. The melancholy one, sighing deeply, said to him (i.e. to Vītarāga): "(Please) listen to my words. Show me that way by (i.e. following) which I shall get happiness." "O very intelligent one, let it be so. I shall do as you tell me. Again go to Viveka; you have told me a pleasant news. He (i.e. Viveka) only will tell you the way to happiness." The lord, (thus) sent by virtuous Vītarāga, went (to Viveka); and spoke to the glorious, pure and best Viveka: "(Please), show me (the way to) happi-

ness. Sent by Vītarāga, I have sought your refuge. Protect me from the frightful worldly existence."

Viveka said :

94a. O you very wise one, go to Jñāna; he will explain everything to you.

94b-95. Ātman, thus told, went to the place where Jñāna stayed. (He said to Jñāna): "O Jñāna of great lustre and illumining all objects, I have sought your refuge; show me the way to happiness."

Jñāna said :

96-97. O lord of the worlds, I am your servant. O you of a good vow, you do not know (i.e. you have not recognised) me. Formerly Dhyāna and I had repeatedly warded you off. Due to your contact with the five-natured ones (i.e. the elements), you have met with a calamity. O you highly intelligent one, go to Dhyāna, he will grant you happiness.

98-105. Sent by Jñāna, Ātman remained after having resorted to Dhyāna. (He said to Dhyāna): "O Dhyāna, show me the happiness that is perfectly accomplished. Thus protect me who have sought your shelter." Dhyāna having heard these words spoken to him by Ātman, was delighted, and again said to that Ātman: "O dear one, well-determined in (doing) all deeds, by you and by Vītarāga and Viveka, I am never to be forsaken. Be endowed with Dhyāna, and observe yourself, by being self-possessed, firm, free from fear and doubt. You will go to (i.e. obtain) salvation by burning (i.e. destroying) your blemishes, as a lamp in a place sheltered from wind is firm and emits soot. Always remain in a secluded place; remain without food (or) with limited food. Be without the pairs of opposites (like pleasure and pain), without words, and firmly remaining on your seat. Reflecting, with a firm mind, on your self only you will reach that highest place of Viṣṇu, (which is also) my place."

CHAPTER NINE

Instructions to Diti

Kaśyapa said :

1-2. The intelligent Ātman, thus addressed by Dhyāna and others, desiring to give up the product of the five-natured ones, and finding out motives, abandoning his aimless body, which he did not notice when it fell down, went to them.

3. There is no connection between life and body that were brought up together. For what reason is there a relation with wealth, sons or wife?

4-13a. O you very dear one, realising thus, be calm; do not be weak-minded. He alone is the highest Brahman; he alone is eternal. This Ātman lives in demons and gods in his own nature. He is Brahmā; he is Rudra; he is the eternal Viṣṇu. He creates all things; he protects the beings. This (Ātman) Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), the pious one and of the nature of virtue withdraws (all). O you very dear one, he has created gods and demons. Gods are liberated due to their piety (while) your sons are wanting in piety. This virtue is Viṣṇu's body, preserved by all gods. O respectable lady, one (i.e. a man) should think about proper conduct and follow proper conduct only. The meritorious Viṣṇu always favours him. Gods always lived with piety, truth and penances. Those, with whom Viṣṇu is pleased, have practised virtue here (i.e. in this world). This proper conduct is the body of Viṣṇu and truth is his heart. Viṣṇu is pleased with him who always practises them. He, who would defile truth and piety would always have sin. The very powerful Viṣṇu would be angry with him and would destroy him. Viṣṇu's devotees, abiding by truth and penance practised piety. The virtuous one is pleased with them and protects them thus.

13b-14. Your sons, as well as the sons of Danu and Siṁhikā, who were wicked-hearted, and who lived by (i.e. committed) impiety and sins, were killed in battle by Viṣṇu, having the disc in his hand.

15-17. That Ātman whom I formerly described before (i.e. to) you only, is Viṣṇu (himself); there is no doubt about it. He is meritorious and is the guardian of all. He who lived comfortably

in the bodies of the demons, resorted to sin only. He, O respectable lady, the highly intelligent one, became angry, and killed the demons. Being within and without he struck down your sons. O respectable lady, they were struck down by him who had created them.

18-19a. You should not have any infatuation for them. Listen (to my words). He who lives sinfully, dies (i.e. perishes). Therefore, give up infatuation, and always practise piety.

Diti said :

19b-20. Let it be so, O glorious one; I shall do as you have told me.

She, who was afflicted, and who was addressed by the sage, gave up her sorrow, after having said these words.

CHAPTER TEN

The Practice of Penance by Demons

The sages said :

1-2. O you very intelligent one, what effort did all the demons, who were accompanied by Hiraṇyakaśipu and had fled from the battle, do? Tell us in detail their excellent account. O brāhmaṇa, we all now desire to hear it from you.

Sūta said :

3. All the demons who had fled from the battle, who had become powerless, prideless and distressed with grief, went to their father.

4-5a. Having devoutly saluted (their father) Kaśyapa, they then said to him:

The demons said :

O best brāhmaṇa, we demons are born from your semen, so also are gods.

5b-9. All we demons are strong, powerful and brave; we also are knowers of expedients; we are very courageous and full of exertion. We are many, and the gods are few. How is it that they are victorious and we, endowed with power and lustre, have fled from the great battle? What is the reason for that, O father? Each one of the demons has the strength of a thousand intoxicated elephants. The gods do not have (strength) like that; and yet in the great war victory is had by the gods. So (please) tell (the reason for) all this. Please remove (our) doubt.

Kaśyapa said :

10-12a. O all my sons, listen to the reason for the victory (of the gods)—due to which the gods became victorious in the battle. The father is the giver of the semen (i.e. the seed); and the mother is always the soil. She conceives, protects and nourishes (her son). What would a father do in the case of a son whose intentions are fearful?

12b-18. Here (the son's) fate is (i.e. his deeds are) important (i.e. responsible). This is what I think. Association with Karma is due to two things: sin and merit. Proper conduct can be practised by resorting to truth only. Truth endowed with penance and meditation leads to emancipation, O (my) sons. There is no doubt about this that (even) with power, (good) attendants and nobility of birth, sin always leads to a fall, O (my) sons. All that power (etc.) of him who is without religious merit is impaired. O (my) good sons, there are tall and dense trees on the mountains and inaccessible places, (but) by the force of the wind they fall down along with their roots. Similarly those who are without truth and piety go to Yama's abode. O (my) good sons, this is a common rule (applicable) to (all) beings. You have abandoned the truth associated with piety, due to which a being is emancipated here (i.e. in this) and the next world.

19-24. O (my) sons, you, who were destitute of truth, have resorted to impiety. Fallen from truth, piety and penance, you have fallen into the ocean of grief; and (i.e. on the other hand) the gods who are endowed with truth and virtue, and with penance, tranquility and restraint, have a great religious merit and are sinless. Victory is seen there where there are truth, piety, penance, religious merit and Viṣṇu Hṛṣīkeśa. Eternal Vāsudeva

i.e. Viṣṇu helps them (only). Therefore, gods endowed with truth and piety become victorious with (Viṣṇu as their) helper and also due to power and valour. O (my) sons, you are destitute of penance and truth. Those who are conversant with (laws of) morality, know that that man who has Viṣṇu as his helper, and who has penance and power is alone seen to get victory.

25. You are without piety and also deprived of penance and truth, and you had also formerly secured Indra's position by force.

26. O (my) very intelligent sons, Indra's position cannot be obtained without penance, piety and glory (and merely) with qualities of power and pride.

27-28. O sons, those getting Indra's position (without penance, piety etc.) fall from it. Therefore, O (my) sons, you (should) together practise penance without quarrel and endowed with knowledge and meditation. You should never entertain enmity with Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu).

29. O (my) sons, when you will be blessed like this; then (only) you will obtain highest success; there is no doubt about this.

30-31. Thus told by the noble Kaśyapa, the very vigorous demons, having listened to the words of their father, devoutly saluted Kaśyapa and rising hastily, gathered together and held thorough consultation among themselves.

32-34. Then king Hiraṇyakaśipu said to the demons: "We shall (now) practise penance difficult to practise (but) giving everything." At that time Hiraṇyākṣa said : "I shall practise terrible penance. Then with (my) power I shall seize (all) the three worlds. There is no doubt about this. Having vanquished in battle that wicked-hearted Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) and having killed all gods, I shall reach Indra's position."

Bali said :

35. O lords—the sons of Diti—it is not proper for you to act like this. That enmity which you have with Viṣṇu, is the cause of destruction.

36. Men obtain happiness by propitiating that Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu) with charity, religious merit, penance, and performance of sacrifices.

Hiraṇyakaśipu said :

37-38. Like this (i.e. as advised by Bali) I shall never propitiate Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu). The wise ones take it to be excelling death if one, by giving up one's nature, serves one's enemy. Neither I nor other demons will serve Viṣṇu.

39-43. Then Bali again said to that magnanimous grandfather (of him) : "This is what is observed in the codes of laws by sages knowing truth—an advice full of statesmanship—especially regarding an enemy. Knowing oneself to be inferior, and the enemy to be powerful one should go near the enemy and wait for the time (i.e. opportunity) for victory. Darkness always stays by resorting to the shadow of a lamp. Darkness knowing the oiliness of the wick of the lamp and the very powerful light, goes to it and increases. Similarly remaining screened, and showing love actually, O demons, you should form friendship with gods following piety.

44. O prudent king of kings, formerly sage Kaśyapa has given good advice; do your deeds in accordance with it."

45. Having heard those words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the powerful demon said : "O grandson, I shall not humiliate myself like this."

46-48a. Other kinsmen also said to him who was proficient in statesmanship : "What Bali said is meritorious and dear to the gods; what he said would increase Indra's pride and is fearful to the demons. All of us will just practise excellent penance. Having vanquished the gods with penance, we shall forcibly (regain) our position."

48b-50. Having thus conversed and having repudiated Bali at that time, the great demons entertaining great enmity with Viṣṇu in their heart, practised penance in mountaneous inaccessible places and (mountain-) peaks. Thus the demons had abandoned attachment, were well-determined, were free from desire and anger, remained without food and had overcome fatigue.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Story of Suvrata

The sages said :

1. You, the omniscient one, have narrated (to us the account of) the war between (the gods and) the demons. Now we desire to hear (the account) of the noble Suvrata.

2. Of whom was he—the very intelligent one—the son? In whose family was he born? What (kind of) penance did the brāhmaṇa have (i.e. practise)? How did he propitiate Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu)?

Sūta said :

3-4. O brāhmaṇas, I shall tell you the account of the noble Suvrata as I had heard it due to the power of my intelligence. I shall tell you, with Viṣṇu's favour, the divine, purifying account bringing the Viṣṇuite merit (to the narrator and the listener).

5-7. O illustrious ones, in the former Kalpa, the best brāhmaṇa, named Somaśarman was born in Kauśika's family at an excellent sacred place which removed sins and which was very meritorious, named Vāmana, on the bank of Revā. Being sonless and full of great grief, he was always oppressed by painful poverty. Day and night he thought about the means (to have) a son and wealth also.

8-12. Once his dear wife, Sumanā by name, and of a good vow, saw her husband full of worry and with his face hung down. The devout (woman), seeing her husband (like that) said to him: "Your mind is overpowered by innumerable worries. You are confounded by infatuation. O you very intelligent one, give up your worry (i.e. stop worrying). Tell me (about) your worry. Be composed and happy. There is no (other) distress like worry which parches up the body. He who lives by giving up his worries, enjoys happily. O Brāhmaṇa, tell me the cause of your worry." Hearing the words of his beloved (wife) Somaśarman said to her :

Somaśarman said :

13. Thoughts (are) due to desire, O good lady; and thinking is the cause of grief. I shall tell you all that. Having heard it, understand it accurately.

14. O you of a good vow, I do not know due to which sin I am poor and sonless. This is the cause of my grief.

Sumanā said :

15-16. Listen. What I say will remove all doubts; the advice (should be such as) shows the correct knowledge. Greed is the seed of sin, and delusion is its root. Falsehood is its trunk, and deceit is its well-expanded branch.

17-22. Religious hypocrisy and crookedness are its leaves; it is always flowered with wicked intellect. Deception is its fragrance, and ignorance is its fruit. The sinful cruel birds like dishonesty, heresy, theft, envy have resorted to the branch of deceit of the tree of delusion. Its good fruit is ignorance; and the juice of the fruit is unrighteousness. Nourished by the water of thirst (i.e. desire) faithlessness is its exudation, O dear one. The good juice of it viz. impiety is (felt to be) superior and becomes sweet, and the tree of greed has fruits of such a type only. That man who is happy after resorting to its shadow, who everyday eats its very ripe fruits, and who is nourished by the juice of fruits i.e. impiety, becomes pleased and proceeds towards a fall.

23-27. Therefore giving up worrying a man should not have greed. He should not at all worry about wealth, sons and wife. Even if he is a learned person he goes along the path of fools, O dear one (if he worries). Everyday a fool thinks: 'How can I get wealth? How can I get a good wife? How can I have sons?' Being deluded, he thinks like this day and night. (Just) for a moment he (is deluded and) finds great pleasure while worrying; again he comes to his senses and is oppressed by great grief. O brāhmaṇa, give up worry and delusion and act. O you highly intelligent one, nobody has (any) connection with anyone (else) in the worldly existence.

28. Friends, relatives, sons, fathers and mothers with servants, and wives come to have a (chance) relation with a man.

Somaśarman said :

29. In the same way, O good lady, tell (me) in detail what kind of relation is there, by which wealth, sons and other relatives become related.

Sumanā said :

30. Some are relations through debt; some are those who had taken away (other's) wealth; some are helpful; others are indifferent.

31-35. Sons, friends or wives are born (and are) of (these) four kinds. So also wife, father, mother, servants, relatives and friends are born on the earth in accordance with their connection with a person. The person, whose deposit was taken away by another person becomes the latter's virtuous and handsome son on the earth—(is born) in the house of him who has taken away his deposit; there is no doubt about this; because he had left after giving him terrible grief by taking away his deposit. O glorious one, the owner of the deposit becomes the good son of him who had taken away his deposit; he is virtuous, handsome, and is endowed with all good characteristics. Being (born) as his son, he everyday shows devotion to him.

36-38. He speaks sweetly, is attractive and healthy, and shows great love for him; producing excellent love in him by being born as his son and by means of his great qualities, he gives him the same terrible fatal grief by taking away his wealth as he had given him by taking away his deposit in a former existence. So also being short-lived, he dies (a premature death).

39-40a. Thus again and again he is born, gives grief, and dies. When he (i.e. the father) laments, 'Oh my son !' he (i.e. the son) just laughs. So who is whose son and who is the father?

40b-42. (The son says:) "The deposit that was helpful to me was taken away by him. Even by taking away the wealth my life did not formerly depart, even due to great, unbearable grief. Therefore, giving him grief and taking away excellent wealth I shall today go. Whose son am I, who am like this?

43. He is not my father, nor was he the son of anyone. To this wicked one only I have given the state of a goblin."

44-45. Speaking like this, he repeatedly laughs, and goes. Giving him very terrible grief, he goes along this way. O dear one, thus (persons) become the sons of them who had taken away their deposits. Everywhere in the mundane existence, (fathers) full of great grief are seen.

46. I shall later explain to you the son connected (with the father) through debt.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Dialogue between Somaśarman and Sumanā

Sumanā said :

1-3. (Now) hereafter I shall describe to you the son who is related through debt. He, from whom a man takes a loan dies—i.e. the creditor, being (i.e. is born as) the son or the brother or the father, or might be (born as) a friend (and) is always very cruel, O dear one. The cruel one of a rough form, does not notice the virtue (in others), and always utters harsh words among his relatives.

4-7. He always eats sweets and desired articles (of food) and enjoys pleasures. He is ever engaged in gambling and has a desire to steal. He forcibly enjoys the wealth which is in the house (i.e. wealth of the family) and gets angry if prevented (from doing so). Everyday he abuses his father and mother. He is a thief, causes fear and talks too much and harshly. Thus enjoying that wealth (of the family etc.) he lives happily. Being very cruel he makes money by means of birth-rites in childhood, and in many ways through various kinds of marriages.

8-10. Thus wealth is obtained by him and he gives it in this way also. (He thinks:) 'The house, field etc. are mine. There is no doubt about it.' Everyday he hits his father and mother with pestles by giving them many very fearful strokes. When his father or mother is dead, he who is very cruel becomes affectionless and rough. There is no doubt about it.

11. He never performs the Śrāddha-rites and never gives gifts. Sons of this type are born on the earth.

12-16a. O best of brāhmaṇas, I shall explain to you a hostile son. When he reaches childhood, he always behaves like an enemy (with his parents). Even while playing he would beat his father and mother; and after repeatedly beating them he laughs and departs. Again being fearful, he comes to his father and mother; and after repeatedly beating them he laughs and departs. Again being fearful, he comes to his father and mother. He is always angry; and again and again abuses (them). Thus he is always engaged in hostile acts. Having again beaten his father, and also his mother, the wicked one departs as a result of the former enmity.

16b-21. Now hereafter I shall describe the son from whom desired things can be obtained. As soon as he is born he does dear things to (i.e. pleases) his parents, and (delights them) by indulgence and sports in childhood; and immediately after he attains youth he does things liked by his mother and father. With devotion he pleases and delights them by means of affectionate words and conversation dear to them. When he comes to know about the demise of his parent, he weeps through affection (for the parent). Extremely grieved, he performs all rites like Śrāddha and offering piṇḍas. He also offers them maintenance. Conforming to (the repayment of) the three debts, he always feeds them. O you very intelligent one, O my dear husband, being their son he returns in this manner whatever would be (i.e. is) obtained from them.

22-24a. O dear one, now I shall describe to you (the son called) indifferent. He does not give and now receives; he is neither angry, nor pleased. O best of brāhmaṇas, an indifferent (son) does not give by making a sacrifice. I have told you everything—i.e. this mode of existence (of various types) of sons.

24b-35a. Like the son are the wife, the father, the mother and the kinsmen; so also are said to be the others (like) the servants, beasts and horses; so also elephants, buffaloes and attendants. All these are connected through debt. We have for that reason not taken a debt from anyone; so also in the former existence we have not made any deposit with anyone. O dear husband, we are not indebted to anyone. (Please) listen. We

have no hostility with anyone which is entertained in a previous existence. O my husband, O best brāhmaṇa, we have not given up anything. Realising this, be calm and give up (your) worry causing unhappiness. Whose are the sons, or whose is the dear wife? Whose are the relatives and friends? You have never snatched (anything) from anyone and have given nothing to anyone. Then how can wealth come to us? O my husband, do not have any doubt. O best brāhmaṇa, whatever wealth is to be obtained, it easily comes to the hand (of a person). A man preserves wealth with great care; but the departing one (i.e. the one that dies) departs (all alone); but the wealth remains just there. Realising this, give up your worry which is useless and be calm. Whose are the sons? Whose is the dear wife? Whose are the relatives and friends? O best brāhmaṇa, in this mundane existence, nobody belongs to none (else), since there is no connection (between the two). Men of wicked hearts and deluded with great infatuation (say:) 'This is my house; this is my son; the women are mine only.' O dear husband, this bond of the mundane existence is seen to be unreal.

35b-36a. Thus advised by his dear wife, the respectable lady, he again spoke to his dear wife Sumanā, who expounded knowledge.

Somaśarman said :

36b-38a. O good lady, you have spoken the truth, which has removed all (my) doubt. Still good men, really wise men become fascinated (with all these). O dear one, as I am anxious to have a son, I am also anxious to have wealth. I shall produce (i.e. have) a son by this or that means.

Sumanā said :

38b-43a. A man conquers the worlds with a son; a son emancipates the family. Due to a good son alone the father and the mother are (i.e. proved to be) living beings. One learned son is most precious. What is the use of having many worthless sons? The first (i.e. the good) one emancipates the family, (while) the others cause tormentation. I have previously only told (you) that others are (just) relations. Due to religious merit (only) a son is obtained; (similarly) due to religious merit (birth in a good)

family is obtained. A good embryo is obtained by religious merit; therefore practise religious merit. One that is born gets death (i.e. is sure to die); and one that dies gets birth. Due to meritorious acts a good birth (i.e. birth in a good family) is obtained, so also is obtained (peaceful) death; and O dear husband, he obtains happiness and wealth due to meritorious deeds.

Somaśarman said :

43b-44a. O dear one, tell me about the practice of good deeds, and also about the (various) existences. Of what nature is a man of meritorious deeds? (i.e. What are the characteristics of the man of meritorious deeds?) O good lady, tell (me) the characteristics of religious merit.

Sumanā said :

44b-45. I shall first explain to you (what) merit (is), as I have heard about it; and also (I shall explain to you) how a man or a woman behaves everyday, and how by means of meritorious deeds he or she obtains fame, dear sons and wealth.

46a. O dear husband, I shall tell you all the characteristics of merit.

46b-48. One should practise virtue which has these ten components viz. celibacy, truthfulness, performance of five sacrifices,[1] charity, restraint, forbearance, purity, harmlessness, good prowess and non-stealing, O dear one. Complete merit is produced as satisfaction (is produced) in the belly by mouthfuls (of food after they are swallowed).

49-50a. A righteous person creates Dharma by means of three kinds of acts. Dharma, with his heart pleased leads him to religious merit only. The wise one gets whatever he desires (even though it is) difficult to obtain.

1. Pañcamakha—The five daily sacrifices or acts of piety to be performed by a householder: (1) Brahmayajña i.e. teaching; (2) Pitṛyajña i.e. offering oblations to the manes; (3) Devayajña i.e. performing sacrificial rites; (4) Bhūtayajña i.e. an offering to all created beings; and (5) Nṛyajña i.e. honouring guests.

Somaśarman said :

50b. O you beautiful lady, what kind of form does Dharma have? What are the parts of his (body)? O my dear wife, kindly tell (it) to me; strong desire (to hear it) is produced (in me).

Sumanā said :

51-60. O best brāhmaṇa, in this world none has seen the form of Dharma. He, of a true nature and with his course seen by none, is not seen (even) by gods and demons. The brāhmaṇa Dattātreya, Anasūyā's son and born in Atri's family has always seen that great Dharma. The two noble ones (i.e. Dattātreya and Durvāsas) practising excellent penances, behaving righteously, shining with a more praiseworthy form than that of (even) Indra due to penance and prowess, remained for ten thousand years in a forest; the two of a charming appearance ate (i.e. lived on) wind or went without food. For ten thousand years they practised penance. Merit was observed in them who practised penance. O best brāhmaṇa, they both performed the (vow of) five fires till (i.e. during) that period (of ten thousand years). They practised it for all the three times and (during that period) did not eat food. Dattātreya and the sage (Durvāsas) remained in water during that period. The best sage Durvāsas was tormented by penance. The best sage got angry with Dharma. O noble one, when the best sage was (thus) angry, the intelligent Dharma came there in his own form along with Celibacy etc. and Austerities.

61-68. Truth in the form of a brāhmaṇa, also Celibacy, similarly Penance in the form of an excellent brāhmaṇa, and Restraint as an intelligent excellent brāhmaṇa, so also Control, and Charity in the form of a brāhmaṇa maintaining the sacred fire and offering oblations to it, came to (Durvāsas), the son of Atri. O best brāhmaṇa, all these having female forms, viz. Forbearance, Tranquility, Shame, Harmlessness, and Imagination, arrived there. So also Intellect, Wisdom, Faith, Retentive Faculty, Good Act, Tranquility, all the five Sacrifices, the holy Vedas with their limbs (i.e. the Vedāṅgas), were ready. The Consecration of Fire, the holy Horse-sacrifices and others, endowed with good forms and handsomeness, adorned with all (kinds of) ornaments, wearing divine flowers and garments, besmeared with

divine sandal, endowed with crowns and earrings and adorned with divine ornaments, bright and handsome, filled with lustrous flames (came there). Thus Dharma, accompanied by his retinue came there where the angry Durvāsas remained like death.

Dharma said :

69-70. O brāhmaṇa, why are you angry? You are endowed with penance. There is no doubt that anger would destroy virtue and penance. Anger destroys everything; therefore one should avoid anger. O best brāhmaṇa, be at ease; the fruit of penance is excellent.

Durvāsas said :

71-72a. Who are you that have come with these best brāhmaṇas? Seven beautiful and well-adorned women are standing (by you). O you highly intelligent one, tell me in detail (as to who you are etc.).

Dharma said :

72b-73. See, in front of you has come this Brahmacarya (i.e. Celibacy), in the form of a brāhmaṇa, endowed with all lustre, well-pleased, having a staff in his hand and holding a water-pot.

74-76. O best brāhmaṇa, see this other bright one viz. Satya (i.e. Truth), tawny (in complexion) and having reddish-brown eyes. Similarly, O you pious one, see this Tapas (i.e. Penance), lustrous like all gods, the one that you practised and resorting to all gods; it has come into your vicinity.

77-78. Similarly Dama (i.e. Self-restraint), that is lustrous and intent on being kind to all beings, and that always nourishes, has come.

79-80. O best brāhmaṇa, Niyama (i.e. Control) has come to you. He is wearing matted hair, is rough, tawny, very sharp, and a great master. With a sword in his hand, he is the destroyer of sins. He is tranquil, of a great merit, and always endowed with rites. Here in your vicinity (i.e. to you) has come Śauca, the brāhmaṇa, who is free, very bright, resembling crystal, holding a pitcher of water and a twig used as a toothbrush.

81. This Śuśrūṣā (i.e. Service), extremely chaste and very noble, adorned with the ornaments of truth, with her body charming with every ornament, has come.

82-86. O best brāhmaṇa, this Kṣamā (i.e. Forbearance), extremely wise, of a pleasing body, fair (in complexion), of a smiling face, with a lotus in her hand, a foster-mother, lotus-eyed, extremely beautiful, and endowed with divine ornaments has arrived. (This) Śānti (i.e. Tranquility) extremely peaceful, famous, endowed with many auspicious things, looking charming due to many divine jewels, adorned with divine ornaments, engaged in obliging others, full of many truths, of a limited speech, always incomparable, pleased, and with Kṣamā, adorned with all ornaments, having a lotus as her seat, beautiful, of a dark complexion, successful and noble, has come to you, O you highly intelligent one.

87-89a. This noble Ahiṁsā (i.e. Harmlessness) has come to you. Her complexion is like heated (i.e. bright) gold; she is looking graceful with red garments; she is well-pleased; she has a good counsel; and she is not looking here and there.

89b-94. See, O noble one, see, this Śraddhā, full of knowledge, of pious hands, devout, endowed with beauty due to pearls, spotless, and smiling charmingly, has come. O you very wise one, full of much intelligence and much knowledge, with her form strongly attached to good pleasures, well-settled, charming and auspicious, endowed with all desirable meditation, the victorious mother of the worlds, endowed with beauty on account of all ornaments, having plump buttocks and breasts, of a fair complexion, adorned with flowers and garments, is standing by you only. O you noble one, this Prajñā (i.e. Intellect) resembling a swan and the moon, having put on a pearl-necklace, adorned with all ornaments, well-pleased, high-minded, covered with a white garment, having a lotus as her couch, having books in her hands, always shining as she is seated on a lotus, has come to a fortunate person (i.e. to you).

95-98. O best brāhmaṇa, this Dayā (i.e. Pity) with her complexion like lac juice, always well-pleased, wearing a garland made of yellow flowers, having ornaments like necklaces and armlets, endowed with rings and bracelets, adorned with earrings has come near you. The respectable lady always shines with

a yellow garment. She is (simply) matchless in helping and nourishing the three worlds. She, whose character is always glorified has come.

99. This old, pious one is the wife of Thought, O you highly intelligent one. O best brāhmaṇa, she is my mother. O you of a good vow, I am your Dharma (i.e. Merit).

100a. Realising this, be calm and preserve me.

Durvāsas said :

100b-101a. If now Dharma has approached me, then tell me the reason for this (i.e. your arrival), O Dharma, what do (i.e. can) I do for you?

Dharma said :

101b-102a. O best brāhmaṇa, why are you angry? What wrong have they done? Tell me the reason, O Durvāsas, if you (so) desire.

Durvāsas said :

102b-104. O god, listen to the reason for which I am angry. I have purified my body with restraint, purity and sufferings. I have practised penance for a period of a lakh of years. You see me like this, (and yet) compassion is not produced in you. Therefore, I am angry with you, and today only I shall give you a curse.

105a. Having heard thus (i.e. these words) from (i.e. uttered by) him, the very intelligent (Dharma) said to him.

Dharma said :

105b-108a. O you very intelligent one, when I perish, the world will perish. O dear brāhmaṇa, I very much remove the root of grief. Then afterwards I give pleasure (to the man) if he does not give up truthfulness. One who depends upon (i.e. is after) happiness, is a sinner. Merit is gained with pain. (When) a being thus practising merit casts his life, I give him great happiness in the next world; there is no doubt about it.

Durvāsas said :

108b-110. Great grief is reached by him (in the next world) by whom pleasure is obtained (here); but one mortal gives it up, and somebody else enjoys it. Then who knows (what) happiness (is)? Nobody sees (i.e. knows) it definitely. I am not seeing (any) felicity; you have done an unjust thing. The body which does (certain things) does not enjoy that happiness.

111-113. Suffering is had by one body (while) happiness is enjoyed by another body. So who knows happiness, injustice or righteousness? One suffers, while someone else gets happiness. O Dharma, whatever a man enjoys is accompanied with felicity. By it alone he gets religious merit, and also (good) fruit. The (fruit of) pious rites done by one is enjoyed by another.

114-117a. All that is called happiness, whose characteristics are narrated in scriptures, and it is not otherwise. They suffer unhappiness with the same body with which they perform (bad acts). Therefore by this (behaviour) they do not enjoy in the next world also. Realising this, you who are righteous, should properly observe. How is it that happiness is not enjoyed (by a man) as the very sinful thieves suffer poignant grief with great difficulty with their bodies?

Dharma said :

117b-118. The sinful ones suffer pain with that body only with which they commit sins; for that is the fruit of a sin. The wise have observed in the law-books that Daṇḍa (i.e. punishment) is superior.

119a. You yourself (should) understand it in its essential characteristics according to these rules.

Durvāsas said :

119b-120a. O lord of virtue, listen, what, I think, (conforms to justice): I, being angry, will give you three curses; this cannot be otherwise.

Dharma said :

120b-122. O you highly intelligent one, since you are angry, (please) forgive me. If you are not (prepared) to forgive me, then,

O best brāhmaṇa, make me the son of a maid, also a king, and a Cāṇḍāla also, O great sage. O brāhmaṇa, be favourably disposed to me, who am always bowing to you.

Then the angry Durvāsas cursed Dharma.

Durvāsas said :

123. O Dharma, you today become a king, (then) the son of a maid, not otherwise; go to (i.e. be born in) the family of a Cāṇḍāla; O Dharma, go as you desire.

124. Thus giving three curses, the best brāhmaṇa left. It is said that formerly Dharma was seen in this connection also.

Somaśarman said :

125. How (i.e. in what form) was Dharma born when cursed by that noble (Durvāsas)? O you beautiful lady, if you know, (then) tell me (about) his form.

Sumanā said :

126-128. Being Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma was born in the family of the Bharatas. He was also born as Vidura, a maid's son. I (shall) also tell you something else. When King Hariścandra was tormented by Viśvāmitra, the very intelligent one became a Cāṇḍāla. Thus even the noble Dharma enjoyed the fruit of his actions due to Durvāsas' curse. I have told the truth to you.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Sumanā Explains Ten Basic Virtues

Somaśarman said :

1. O beautiful lady, tell me in detail the characteristics of Celibacy if you know them. Of what nature is Celibacy?

Sumanā said :

2. (He is a true celibate) who is always interested in truth; he the righteous one would (i.e. is) always be satisfied; and

being free from faults would approach (i.e. cohabit with) his own wife when she menstruates.

3-4a. He never gives up the good practices of his family. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you this (i.e. these characteristics) of a householder. I have indeed explained to you the celibacy of (i.e. as observed by) householders.

4b-6a. Now I shall explain to you the celibacy of (i.e. as observed by) the ascetics. Listen to me who am explaining it. He is always endowed with restraint and truthfulness; and is always afraid of sin. Avoiding (i.e. he avoids) union with his wife, he is settled in meditation and knowledge. I have (thus) told you the celibacy of the ascetics.

6b-9a. (Now) I shall just explain penance. Listen to me who am explaining it. Free from carnal desires and anger he should behave according to the (proper)rules. He remains full of exertion for obliging beings. I have thus explained penance. (Now) I shall speak about truthfulness in the same manner. He is called truthful, whose mind, on seeing other's wealth or wives, would (i.e. does) not have longing for them.

9b-16a. I shall just explain charity by means of which human beings live. He who desires his own happiness in this or in the next world, should make the great gift of food or (i.e.) of eternal happiness. Similarly at least a morsel should be given to one who is oppressed by hunger. There is no misgiving about it. When (food) is given (like this) it leads to great religious merit, and he ever obtains immortality. Everyday a man should give, as is possible according to his wealth, grass, a bed, words, very cool shadow of (i.e. shelter in his) house; so also he should give land, water, food, excellent pleasing words, a seat, words free from crookedness. He, who, for his own existence, daily does this, and honouring deities and manes, thus give gifts, is happy in this world and in the next world also. He, who, even being born as a human being, would make (every) day fruitful by means of giving gifts, study and (other) rites, is (just) a god; there is no doubt about this.

16b-18a. I shall explain to you restraint (*niyama*) —the excellent means of religious merit. (He is a restrained person) who is engaged in worshipping deities and brāhmaṇas, is always

full of restraint and is engaged in vows like giving gifts and other meritorious obligations. This is restraint that I have explained.

18b-20. O best of brāhmaṇa, I shall now explain the nature of forgiveness. (Please) listen. Hearing the loud cry of someone being beaten by someone else, he should not get angry, and should not beat (back) even if he is beaten. The pious one should be patient. He has no attachment. He gets great happiness here (i.e. in this world) and in the next world.

21-22a. I have thus explained forgiveness. Now I shall explain purity. He is pure, who is pure externally and internally, and is free from attachment. He lives with such practices as bath and sipping water.

22b-23. I have thus explained purity. Now I shall tell you about non-violence. One who knows should not (i.e. one should not deliberately) pull off even (a blade of) grass. He should be devoted to harmlessness; should look upon others as upon himself.

24-25a. I shall (now) explain tranquility. A man gets happiness through tranquility. He should observe tranquility, and should not at all give it up because of trouble. Giving up enmity with beings, he should thus make up his mind.

25b-26. Thus I have explained tranquility. Now I shall tell about non-stealing. A man should not snatch away other's wealth or should not kidnap other's wife, mentally, by words or physically (i.e. should not think or talk about or do these things). Thus he should make up his mind.

27-28a. O best brāhmaṇa, I shall just explain to you sense-control (dama). Being sensible and controlling himself, he should destroy the insolence of his senses and his mind susceptible to emotions by curbing them.

28b-32a. I shall explain to you service (śuśrūṣā) as is told in religious texts, and shall tell you about it as it is explained by former preceptors. By means of words, mind and body one should accomplish his preceptor's mission. That is said to be service where (i.e. by which) favour is produced. O best brāhmaṇa, I have explained to you Dharma (i.e. righteousness) in all its forms. O my husband, I shall tell you anything more that you desire to hear. A man who always lives in (i.e. practises) Dharma like this is never again born in this mundane existence.

32b. By means of (practising) Dharma he goes to heaven. I am telling you the truth, (and) the truth (only).

33-34a. Knowing thus, O you highly intelligent one, go to (i.e. practise) Dharma. O dear one, everything, that is difficult to be accomplished on earth is obtained by the favour of Dharma. (Please) do only what I tell you.

34b-35. Hearing the words of his wife, the very intelligent Somaśarman, again spoke to his wife, Sumanā, who explained Dharma.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Sumanā Describes the Death of the Virtuous

Somaśarman said :

1. O good lady, how do you do such an excellent and highly meritorious exposition of Dharma? From whom did you learn this?

Sumanā said :

2. O you very intelligent one, well-known Cyavana, well-versed in all (branches of) knowledge, and born in the family of the Bhārgavas was my father.

3-4. I was his dear daughter, dearer to him than his own life. Always playing, I used to go with him wherever he went—to sacred places, groves, assemblies of sages and temples of deities, O you of a good vow.

5-6. Very intelligent Vedaśarman, born in the family of Kauśika, a friend of my father, overcome by great grief and repeatedly brooding, while wandering by chance came (to my father).

7. My father said to the noble one who had come (to him): "O you of a good vow, I feel that you are tormented by grief. Tell me the cause by which you are (thus) afflicted."

8-10. Hearing these words of that magnanimous Cyavana, he i.e. Vedaśarman, of a good vow, told my father the cause of his entire grief, O you very wise one: "My very chaste wife, solely devoted to me—her husband—is sonless; I do not have any lineage. I have told you the cause, since I was asked about it by you."

11-12a. In the meantime, there came a divine seer having supernatural faculties. Both my father and that Vedaśarman got up and honoured him with devout offerings, food and sweet words; and both of them asked the secret, as you had asked me before.

12b-14. The pious one told both my father and his friend the means of Dharma, as I had told you before: "By (practising) Dharma (i.e. religious precepts), a son, wealth, corn, and also wives are obtained."

15. Then that Vedaśarman fully practised Dharma. From that (i.e. by practising that) Dharma, there was great happiness, along with a son, for him.

16. In consequence of that meeting (between the Siddha and the two friends) I am convinced as I told you about the very auspicious words, O my dear husband.

17. Always follow the practices laid down for a brāhmaṇa, as were heard from the great Siddha, and which would remove all (your) doubts.

Somaśarman said :

18. O my dear wife, tell me what kind of death or birth (does one have?). Tell me all about the nature of both.

Sumanā said :

19. I shall tell you how death comes to him who has practised Dharma by means of truthfulness, purity, forbearance, tranquility and religious merit (and by visits to) sacred places etc.

20-22. He does not contract any disease, nor is there any suffering in his body. He does not have to toil, he has no fatigue, perspiration, and he does not commit an error. Gandharvas, and brāhmaṇas, taking up divine forms and ready with Vedic texts, and conversant with the knowledge of singing, come to his side

(i.e. to him) and sing his matchless praise. He is composed, and seated on a seat is indeed engaged in the worship of deities.

23-30. He, very much devoted to religious practices, and a wise one, obtains a sacred place for bath. If a man remains in a fire-chamber, in a cowpen, in temples of deities, in a grove or a lake, or a place where there is the aśvattha tree, and also if he remains by resorting to (i.e. under) a palāśa or an undumbara tree or a bilva tree[1] also, and by resorting to (i.e. in) a stable of horses, or of elephants, or if he remains by resorting to (i.e. under) an aśoka three or a mango tree, also in the vicinity of brāhmaṇas, or (even) if he has gone to the abode of old age (i.e. even if he has become old), or after he resorts to (i.e. goes to) a battle-field and dies, these places where he dies are holy. The cause for this (i.e. such a death) is Dharma alone. Reaching (i.e. choosing) the sacred place called Gographa or Amarakaṇṭakā,[2] he, loving pious practices and of a pious conduct, also practices Dharma. When the best man resorts to death (i.e. when he dies), he sees his mother and his meritorious father; also, he sees his brother endowed with virtue, his kinsmen and friends. In the same way, he, being praised by bards, would not at all see his most sinful mother or father etc.

31-34. The Gandharvas sing songs and the panegyrists praise him with panegyrics; brāhmaṇas would honour him with the recitations of hymns and his mother would honour him with love; his father, the groups of his relatives would honour the pious and highly intelligent man. O lord, I have thus narrated to you the messengers and the holy places. He actually sees the messengers full of love (for him). That king of Dharma (i.e. Yama) would invite you, not in a dream or through troublesome delusion. O noble one, come (to that place) where that Dharma stands.

35-38. He (i.e. who practises Dharma) has no delusion, not error, no languor, no confusion of memory. There is no doubt that he remains with a pleased mind. Endowed with sacred and worldly knowledge, and remembering god Janārdana (i.e.

1. Brahmavṛkṣa—palāśa or udumbara tree. Śrīvṛkṣa—bilva tree, or aśvattha or the sacred fig-tree.

2. Amarakaṇṭaka—Name of that part of the Vindhya range, which is near the source of the river Narmadā.

Viṣṇu), he, with his mind thus pleased, goes with them. In his case, when he casts his body, unity (with the Supreme Spirit) takes place. Resorting to the tenth aperture[1] his soul goes (out of his body). A palanquin or a beautiful vehicle with swans yoked to it, or an aeroplane or an excellent horse or elephant comes (to carry him).

39-41. Then the pious and meritorious man, with an umbrella held over his head, being fanned with chowries and fans, and endowed with all pleasures, being praised with songs by singers and bards, and eulogised by learned brāhmaṇas—masters of the Vedas, and praised by the good, obtains the fruit in accordance with the efficacy of his charity.

42-43a. Happily he goes to the gardens and orchards. Mixed (i.e. surrounded) with celestial nymphs and endowed with auspicious things, and being praised by gods, he sees the lord of Dharma (i.e. Yama).

43b-47. Gods with Dharma go forward to (greet) him (and say:) "O magnanimous one, come, come (and) enjoy pleasures as you like." In this way he sees the very intelligent Dharma of a pleasing form; and due to the efficacy of his own religious merit he enjoys heaven itself. The pious one, after the exhaustion of his pleasures, is reborn. Due to his own religious merit he goes to (i.e. is born in) the family of a pious brāhmaṇa or a kṣatriya, or of a rich man, or of a very pious vaiśya, O you very intelligent one. There he rejoices with (i.e. due to) his pious acts and he again performs (deeds leading to) religious merit.

1. Daśamadvāra=Brahma-randhra.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Death of Sinners

Somaśarman said :

1. O good and beautiful lady, tell me, if you know it, in detail, what characteristics apper at the death of sinners.

Sumanā said :

2-4a. O my dear husband, listen; I shall tell you what I learnt from the Siddha about the death of the sinners and what its marks are. I (shall) also tell you about the place and actions of great sinners. A very wicked man reaches a region which is inauspicious due to its being impure on account of excretion and urine; and has a painful death.

4b-7a. That (wicked man) being afflicted, reaches the land of a cāṇḍāla, or a land roamed over by donkeys or resorts to a prostitute's house, and dies in a painful condition; (or) he dies after having gone to the house of a seller of spirituous liquors which is full of bones, skins and nails, and full of evils and blemishes. Having reached that (place) the wicked one surely dies; (or) having reached some other place with evil practices, he dies.

7b-12a. Now I shall tell you the movements of (Yama's) messengers, desiring (to take) him (to Yama's abode), and frightful, terrible, fearful, very dark and of large bellies, of tawny eyes, yellow and dark-blue, or very white and large-bellied, very tall, very dreadful, resembling dry flesh and marrow, of fearful fangs, fearful, having faces like those of lions and having serpents in their hands. O you very intelligent one, seeing them he trembles and is repeatedly afflicted. All the messengers make loud cries like those of jackals into his ears. Having tied him with nooses round his neck, waist and belly, and overcoming him knock him down. He repeatedly cries—'Ah', 'Ah'.

12b-15a. Now I shall tell the actions of the dying sinners who have taken away another's wealth, molested another's wife, not returned debt or wealth of others taken through greed, enjoyment and infatuation. All the (messengers) seize the neck

of the dying man who commits the great sin of accepting a gift from a bad person.

15b-16a. Whatever sins were formerly committed by that great sinner come to his throat; (this) does not (happen) in any other manner.

16b-21a. Due to obstruction caused by excessive phlegm they produce affliction. Due to servere pains his throat snorts. He weeps and trembles very much. He repeatedly remembers his mother, father, brother and wife. Being deluded by great sin he again forgets them. His life, full of many afflictions, does not depart. He falls, trembles and swoons again and again. The deluded one, thus full of suffering, experiences grief. O my dear husband, listen. His life going (out) with great grief and pain, resorts to his anus and pass out (through it).

21b-22. In this way a being, who is greatly deluded and who is full of greed and infatuation, is carried by Yama's messengers. I shall now tell you about the suffering.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Death & Post-mortem State of Sinners

Sumanā said :

1. That wicked man being burnt and struggling again and again is taken along a path full of a heap of charcoals.

2. Being tormented by the sun's rays, he is taken along that path on which the sun's heat is intense and which is heated by twelve suns.

3. The wicked-minded one is taken along the path, on mountains, inaccessible and shadow-less places, while he is very much tormented by hunger and thirst.

4-5. Being hit by the messengers (of Yama) with maces, swords and hatchets, and being beaten with whips and being censured by them, he is then taken along a cold path and is again served (tormented) by wind. Due to that (severe) cold he becomes afflicted. There is no doubt about it.

6-11a. Being dragged by (Yama's) messengers he is taken to many inaccessible places. In this way, the sinner, the wicked-minded man, who reviles gods and brāhmaṇas, and who commits all sins, is taken by Yama's servants. The wicked-hearted man sees Yama, king of Dharma, who resembles a heap of black collyrium, who is fierce, ruthless, fearful and with (i.e. surrounded by) fearful messengers, who is full of (i.e. who has with him) all diseases, who is accompanied by Citragupta, who is mounted upon a buffalo, who is very fierce due to his large teeth and is very fearful, O best brāhmaṇa. His face resembles death. The wicked-minded man sees Yama, who has worn a yellow garment, who has a mace in his hand, who is besmeared with red sandal, who has adorned himself with red flowers, and whose body is huge. He sees Yama like this.

11b-12. Seeing him approaching, Yama observes him who is outcast from all religions, who is wicked, most sinful and an enemy of the customary law. He would punish (i.e. he punishes) him with tortures and with wooden mallets.

13a. Till the end of the period of a thousand yugas he is parched with heat.

13b-14. Again and again he is roasted in hells of various kinds. The sinner goes to (i.e. is born in) a hellish species among crores of insects. Being miserable and senseless he is parched with heat in an impure (place).

15. Thus certainly does the wicked-hearted man die. Thus the wicked-minded man experiences the fruit of his association with sin.

16-19a. I shall (now) explain (to you) rebirth and the species to which he goes. Having obtained a hundred births as dogs he again experiences (the fruit of) sin. The wicked-hearted one becomes (i.e. is born as) a tiger, and goes to the species of (i.e. is born as) a donkey. Then he goes to the species of (i.e. is born as) a cat, pig or a serpent. He is repeatedly born in all the species of various kinds and in (those of) lower animals. He goes to (i.e. is born among) the sinful birds and in other great species. The sinner goes to the species of (i.e. is born as) cāṇḍāla, bhilla or (as a member of the barbarous tribe called) pulinda.

19b. I have (thus) told you everything about the birth of sinners.

20-21. O my dear husband, listen to the very fearful struggle of them (i.e. of the sinners) at the time of their death. I have told before (i.e. to) you (i.e. explained to you) the practice of sin and merit. O you who show respect to others, like this I shall tell you something else, if you ask.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Story of Somaśarman's Previous Birth

Somaśarman said :

1-2. O respectable lady, you have told (me) the excellent form of Dharma. O you noble one, O you of a good vow, tell me if you know how I would get a son endowed with all virtues. There is no doubt that good acts like charity (are fruitful) in this and the next world.

Sumanā said :

3. Go to Vasiṣṭha who knows (what) virtue (is). Request that great sage. From him you will (learn how to) obtain a son knowing piety and loving it.

Sūta said :

4. When she had said these words, Somaśarman, the best brāhmaṇa (said to her:) "O auspicious lady, I shall follow your words (i.e. advice). There is no doubt about it."

5-6. Speaking thus, the best brāhmaṇa, Somaśarman, quickly went to the omniscient, divine Vasiṣṭha, who was the best among those who practised penance, who lived on the bank of the Ganges in a hermitage, who was the best among the brāhmaṇas, who was full of the flames of lustre and was as it were another sun.

7. He repeatedly, devoutly, saluted the shining, noble, best brāhmaṇa, well-versed in the Vedas, in the manner of a staff (i.e. by prostrating himself before Vasiṣṭha).

8. The very lustrous, sinless son of Brahmā (i.e. Vasiṣṭha), said to him: "O you highly intelligent one, (please) sit comfortably on the auspicious seat."

9-10. Saying so, the best of the yogins again said to him, who was rich in penance: "O noble one, O dear one, is there all well in your house, with your sons, wife, servants, and fires used for sacred rites? Are you alright, and do you always practise virtue?"

11. Speaking thus, the very wise one (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) again said to Suśarman (i.e. Somaśarman): "O best brāhmaṇa, what work dear to you should I do for you ?"

12a. Speaking thus to the brāhmaṇa, Vasiṣṭha ceased (to speak).

12b-13. When that best, noble sage Vasiṣṭha spoke (like that), he (i.e. Somaśarman), spoke to noble Vasiṣṭha, the best among those who practise penance: "O revered sir, (please) listen to my words with a very much pleased mind.

14. O best among the sages, O best brāhmaṇa, if you want to do what I like, (then) remove the doubt expressed by my question.

15-17. O dear one, due to what sin (does) poverty (come to one) and how is it that one does not get happiness? This is my doubt. Tell me due to what sin (this happens). O brāhmaṇa, I am confused with great delusion. I was advised by my dear wife. I, who was eager, was sent to you by her. Then tell me all that which would remove all my doubts. (Please) relieve me from the bondage of the worldly existence."

Vasiṣṭha said :

18. Sons, friends, brother, and kinsmen and relatives are the five kinds of men, according to the difference (depending upon the relation).

19. (About) all of them Sumanā has already told you. O best brāhmaṇa, all those are bad sons, connected on account of debt.

20-24. I shall (now) tell you the auspicious characteristics of a son. That son whose mind is attached to merit, who is always engaged in religious conduct, who is endowed with purity and knowledge, who practises penance, who is best among speakers,

who is very steady in all his acts, who is devoted to Vedic studies, who knows (i.e. has studied) all sacred books, who honours gods and brāhmaṇas, who performs all (kinds of) sacrifices, who is a donor, who gives away (in charity without expecting any reward in return), who speaks agreeable words, who is always intent upon meditation on Viṣṇu, is tranquil, restrained and friendly, who is always devoted to his father and mother and affectionate to his kinsmen, who is a saviour of his family, who is learned, who supports his family—a son endowed with such virtues gives happiness.

25-26. Others connected by relation (as a son) cause grief and tormentation. What is the use of such a useless son? All such (sons) come into the worldly existence as sons and go out of it after causing great tormentation, O you best brāhmaṇa.

27. Again listen to all the wonderful account which I shall tell you about the religious merit which you did and (the practices) you maintained in the previous birth.

Vasiṣṭha continued :

28-31. O you very intelligent one, in the former birth you were a Śūdra, and none else. You were a farmer; you were ignorant; you had great greed; you had one wife; you always hated (others). You had many sons; you never gave away (anything in charity); you did not know religious conduct at all; you had never heard (what) truth (is). You had never given a gift; you had never listened to sacred texts; O you highly intelligent one, you had never undertaken a pilgrimage to a sacred place.

32. Thus, O brāhmaṇa, you practised agriculture repeatedly. O best brāhmaṇa, you again and again guarded animals, all cows, buffaloes and also horses. O best of brāhmaṇas, such deed(s) you did formerly (i.e. in your previous birth).

33. Similarly, through greed you collected much wealth; but you never spent it in a good way.

34. You never gave any present to a worthy person, or seeing a weak person you never showed him any compassion and never gave him money.

35. You also collected beasts like cows and buffaloes, and having sold them you hoarded ample wealth.

36a. (And also you hoarded ample wealth) by selling butter-milk, ghee, milk and curd.

36b-38. Being deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā, O brāhmaṇa, you, thinking of (i.e. taking advantage of) bad times, made food more costly here (only), O best brāhmaṇa. You, who were cruel, never made any present (to anyone). O brāhmaṇa, you never worshipped deities. When the parvan-days arrived, you never gave money to the brāhmaṇas.

39-40a. When the time for Śrāddha came, you never performed it with faith. Your virtuous wife (used to) say: "O you very intelligent one, the day has come. It is time for offering Śrāddha to (my) father-in-law, and to (my) mother-in-law also."

40b-42a. Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) her, you (used to) abandon and run away from your house. You never saw (i.e. cared for) the path of righteousness nor did you ever hear about it. Greed (was) your father, your brother. Greed (was) your kinsmen and relatives. Always forsaking religious conduct, you cherished greed alone.

42b. Therefore, being extremely oppressed by poverty, you became unhappy.

43-48. Everyday great greed increased in your mind, whenever in your house wealth increased. Being burnt by the fire of anxiety, you definitely used to think of wealth even when you used to sleep at night. When the day dawned, you were always pervaded by great delusions: 'When will there be a thousand, a lakh, a crore or one hundred millions or one thousand crores or a billion (coins) in my house?' Thus a thousand, a lakh, a crore, a hundred millions, a thousand crores, a billion (coins) were (collected by you); but (your) greed never went away leaving (i.e. from your) body. (On the contrary) it always increased. You never gave (in charity); you never offered oblations to fire, you never enjoyed (wealth); you dug the earth and deposited (the coins in it) without the knowledge of your sons. O brāhmaṇa, you also always adopted other means to get wealth.

49-51. Being intelligent you also asked people about other means of getting wealth. Asking (people) about spades, colly-

rium[1], explanation (of secret formulae) and minerology, and being fully deluded by greed, you wandered all alone. You always thought of sexual union, and about procedures giving superhuman powers. Always thinking about entering into fissures you asked (people about them).

52-54a. Due to the blazing of fire of greed, you were (reduced to a pitiable plight, always) saying 'Alas, Alas', and had become senseless. O best brāhmaṇa, you were thus infatuated; and had been subdued by destiny. When your wife and sons asked you about that wealth, you never told them (any) account of it, and abandoning life, you went to Yama.

54b-57. Thus I have told you all your former account. O brāhmaṇa, due to this deed (i.e. these deeds) you became indigent and poor. Viṣṇu is pleased with him in whose house, in his worldly existence, the sons are of good character, endowed with knowledge and always interested in truthfulness and in good conduct. He with whom Viṣṇu is pleased, endlessly enjoys in the world of mortals wealth, grains, wife, sons and grandsons. O brāhmaṇa, without Viṣṇu's favour he cannot obtain a wife, sons or a good birth or a good family. That is the highest position of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Account of Somaśarman's Birth in a Brāhmaṇa Family

Somaśarman said :

1-2. O sage, you told me about my sin in the former birth. O best brāhmaṇa, in what way was I forsaken by śūdrahood and did I obtain brāhmaṇahood? O you well-versed in spiritual and worldly knowledge, tell me all about it.

Vasiṣṭha said :

3. If you think (like listening to them) listen; I shall explain to you, O brāhmaṇa, what religious deeds you did in the former birth.

1. Añjana—seems to refer to the practice of putting a particular kind of collyrium into the eyes and then to see where wealth may be found. Vāda—seems to be a reference to the exposition of certain secret spells helping to obtain wealth.

4-6. A certain innocent, well-learned brāhmaṇa of a good conduct, religious-minded, and always solely devoted to Viṣṇu wandered over the earth for pilgrimages to sacred places. He, the very intelligent one, while (thus) wandering, came to your house. O best of brāhmaṇas, he requested you for a place to stay (i.e. for accommodation). You with your wife and sons gave it to him (saying:)

7-9a. "O brāhmaṇa, come, come happily (i.e. you are welcome) to my house." You repeatedly said these words to that brāhmaṇa, the devotee of Viṣṇu: "O you of a good vow, live here comfortably; this is your house. Today I am blessed; today I have visited a sacred place. Today I have obtained the fruit of a visit to a sacred place by seeing your two feet."

9b-12. (Then) you showed him the cowpen for his lodging. Having massaged his body you also shampooed his feet. You also washed them with water. You also bathed with the water with which his feet were washed. You thus forthwith gave ghee, curd, milk, food and buttermilk to that noble brāhmṇa. Thus with your wife and sons you pleased that very learned, noble brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu's devotee.

13-16. When it was the dawn of the auspicious and blissful day, on which fell (i.e. which was) the Ekādaśī (eleventh day) of the bright fortnight of Āṣāḍha (called) Pāpanaśinī (the destroyer of sins), which destroyed all sins, and on which day god Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu) goes to sleep (called) Yoga-nidrā, O brāhmaṇa, when that day came, all wise men having given up all domestic duties, became engrossed in meditating upon Viṣṇu. With songs and (playing upon) musical instruments they celebrated a great festival. All the brāhmaṇas praised (Viṣṇu) with (hymns from) the Vedas, and very auspicious hymns of praise.

17. When the great festival had come, the best brāhmaṇa stayed there on that day. He (also) fasted properly.

18. The brāhmaṇa recited the hymn to Ekādaśi. With your wife and sons you also listened to the excellent (account of) religious virtue.

19. When that very auspicious (account) was heard by your wife and sons they urged you: "Observe this vow in the company of this brāhmaṇa."

20-26a. Hearing those great (i.e. very important) words, giving all merit, you were determined (to observe it and so said:) "I shall observe this vow." Then going to the river with your wife and sons, you bathed in the river. O brāhmaṇa, with a pleased mind you worshipped Viṣṇu with all (kinds of) auspicious presents and with sandal, incense etc. You kept awake by dancing and singing songs during that night. In the company of that brāhmaṇa you again bathed in the river. Saluting Viṣṇu with devotion and bathing him again and again, you worshipped the lord of gods with auspicious (objects like) flowers, incense etc. and similarly gave a present to that noble brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, having devoutly saluted that brāhmaṇa, you gave him ample presents. Then you broke the fast, O brāhmaṇa, with your sons, wife etc. You sent him (away) with devotion and good feelings.

26b-30a. O best brāhmaṇa, you yourself observed the vow like this, due to the company of that brāhmaṇa, and due to the favour of Viṣṇu. You, endowed with a truthful conduct became (i.e. was born as) a brāhmaṇa. Due to the efficacy of that vow you obtained (i.e. were born in) a great family of brāhmaṇas, wise and of truthful conduct. To that noble brāhmaṇa, devoted to Viṣṇu, you gave well-cooked food with faith and truthfulness. Due to the efficacy of that food sweet food comes to you.

30b-33. O brāhmaṇa, in your previous birth you were deluded through folly, and your mind was pervaded with desire. (So) you collected money only. You did not give it to brāhmaṇas or to helpless persons, or to your wife, as you died through desire for a son (not being satisfied). (So) due to the effect of that sin, poverty, non-fulfilment of your desire, and loss of affection came to you. It is just the result of that sin that you were born sonless.

34-35. O brāhmaṇa, a family with good sons, wealth, grains, excellent wife, good birth or death, excellent enjoyments and happiness, kingdom, heaven and salvation, and all that is difficult to obtain (are obtained) through the favour of that magnanimous Viṣṇu.

36-38. Therefore, by worshipping that Govinda, Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, you will obtain that highest position i.e. the highest position of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, I have fully told you about having good sons, wealth, grains, excellent enjoyments and happi-

ness, and all the deeds that you did in your former birth. O blessed one, knowing thus be solely devoted to Viṣṇu.

39-41. The best brāhmaṇa of great prowess was (thus) advised by Brahmā's son (i.e. Vasiṣṭha). The noble one, being full of joy, having saluted Vasiṣṭha there, and having taken his leave of that brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) went home. Joyfully approaching his wife Sumanā, (he said to her:) "O auspicious lady, due to your favour that brāhmaṇa, Vasiṣṭha, told me all my former account and behaviour. Today only my delusion is destroyed. I shall just propitiate Viṣṇu and shall reach that highest position, viz. salvation."

42. Hearing those excellent, great, very auspicious words bringing about happiness, she, full of joy, said to her husband: "You are lucky (that) you are advised by that brāhmaṇa."

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Somaśarman's Eulogy of Viṣṇu

Sūta said :

1-3. The very intelligent, the best (brāhmaṇa) Somaśarman, having bathed, with (his wife) Sumanā, at the auspicious (sacred place called) Kapilāsaṅgama,[1] on the bank of Revā, causing great merit, he, the intelligent one, and of a good vow, having gratified (with oblations) gods and manes, practised penance there, with a very calm mind and with meditation, muttering with the hymn of twelve syllables (the name) of auspicious Viṣṇu—that Vāsudeva, the magnanimous god of gods.

4. Always being steady and without desire and anger he saw Viṣṇu (only) (while sitting) on a seat, or (lying) on a bed or (going) in a vehicle or in a dream.

1. Kapilāsaṅgama or Kapilā-tīrtha—Anyone bathing there and performing worship obtains a thousand brown cow. See Mahābhārata (critical edition published by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona) 3.81.38.

5. That virtuous, glorious Sumanā, devoted to her husband, served only her husband endowed with penance.

6-9. Various obstacles frightened him who was meditating. Great black serpents of strong poison came near that Somaśarman; and also were seen lions and tigers. They simply frightened him. Vampires, demons, imps, spirits of dead persons and also jackals showed him terrible fear, (capable of) destroying life. Very terrible lions of various kinds, with fearful fangs and cruel came there and roared very fiercely.

10-26. The best, virtuous sage, the intelligent (Somaśarman), disturbed by the growing great obstacles was not distracted from his meditation on Viṣṇu. (Though) the best brāhmaṇa Somaśarman was very much harassed by very high winds in the rainy season, cold, or heavy showers, he did not move away from meditation. A very fearful lion roaring (terribly) came there. Seeing him, and being frightened, the brāhmaṇa (Somaśarman) remembered god Viṣṇu, who resembled a sapphire, who had put on a yellow garment, who was having a great prowess, who held a conch and a disc and a mace and a lotus, who was shining with a necklace of big pearls resembling the moon in beauty and also with jewel (called) Kaustubha[1], whose chest shines with the divine mark (called) Śrīvatsa, whose body looked charming due to all ornaments, whose eyes resembled lotuses, whose face had a charming smile on it, and was very much pleased, who looked charming and shone with a jewelled necklace. He verily meditated upon (Viṣṇu:) "O Kṛṣṇa, affectionate to those who seek your shelter; my salutation (to you) the god of gods; what will fear do to me? I have sought the refuge of him, in whose belly remain the three worlds and the seven magnanimous ones. Where then is fear for me? I have sought the refuge of him, the destroyer of all fears, from whom all very powerful fears like Kṛtyā etc. proceed. I have sought the refuge of him, who is a great fear to all sins and demons, and who is the protector of Viṣṇu's (i.e. his) devotees. I have sought the refuge of him who is the refuge of all the eminent, magnanimous demons, the devotees of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. his devotees). I have sought the refuge of him, who being fearless destroys fears, and who

1. Kaustubha—Name of a celebrated gem obtained with 13 other jewels at the churning of the ocean and worn by Viṣṇu on his chest.

possessing knowledge, destroys sins, and who alone remains in the form of Indra. I have sought the refuge of him, who, being of the form of herbs, removes diseases, and who (himself) is pure and entirely full of bliss. I have sought the refuge of him, who, himself being fixed, would move the worlds, and being sinless is knowledge (itself); (then) what will fear do to me? He, Anāmaya (i.e. Viṣṇu) is the guardian of all good people; he, the universal soul, protects the universe. I have sought his refuge. I have sought the refuge of him who, in the form of a lion, shows great fear to me (standing) in front (of me). I salute that (Viṣṇu) in the form of Narasiṁha.

27-28. (In the form of) an intoxicated, huge elephant (he) has come. I have well sought the refuge of him, who has the face of an elephant, who is endowed with knowledge, who holds a noose and a goad, who has a black face like that of an elephant.

29. I have sought the refuge of (that Viṣṇu who in his) Boar[1] (form) killed Hiraṇyākṣa. I have taken shelter with that Vāmana, affectionate to those who seek his shelter.

30. All the short, dwarfish, hump-backed spirits of dead persons and imps etc., holding the form of death, frighten me.

31-38. I have taken shelter with the immortal. What will fear do to me? Viṣṇu is of Brahmā, he is the giver of Brahman (i.e. takes one to the supreme spirit), he is Brahmā, and is full of the knowledge of Brahman; I have taken shelter with him; what (then) will fear do to me? He who is fearless, who removes the fear of the world and himself causes fear, and is of the form of fear—I have taken shelter with him. What will fear do to me? I have sought the shelter of that Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) of the form of Dharma, who is the emancipator of all worlds and the destroyer of all sinners. I shall seek his refuge who takes up a wonderful form, foreign to gods, in a war. He is always my shelter. A terrible storm afflicts my body very much. I have taken shelter with him; he is always my refuge. I have sought the refuge of that god who torments in these forms viz. of very cold, heavy showers and heat. These, of the form of death have come here, and are disturbing me. I have always taken the shelter of these forms of Viṣṇu.

1. Varāha—the Boar-form of Viṣṇu.

39. I take the shelter with that Viṣṇu, the first Siddha and the lord of Siddhas, whom they call all-good, the highest lord, exclusively alone, full of knowledge and brilliant."

40. Thus everyday meditating upon and praising Viṣṇu, the destroyer of afflictions, he brought Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) into his heart through devotion.

41. Seeing the exertion and courage of that Somaśarman, Viṣṇu, being delighted, manifested himself before him and said:

42. "O very intelligent Somaśarman, listen with your wife. O best brāhmaṇa, I am Viṣṇu; O you of a good vow, ask for a boon."

43-47. (Thus) addressed by him, the best brāhmaṇa (i.e. Somaśarman) having opened both his eyes, saw that god, the lord of the universe, who was dark like a cloud, who was very glorious, whose body was charming due to all ornaments, who was endowed with all weapons, who was endowed with divine characteristics, whose eyes resembled lotuses, who was with (i.e. who was clad in) a yellow garment, who, the lord of gods, was shining, who was mounted upon Garuḍa, who had held a conch, a disc and a mace (in his hands), who was the great saviour of Brahmā and others, and also of this world, who was always beyond this universe, who was above (all) forms, who was the lord of the worlds. The very glorious brāhmaṇa, full of great joy, prostrated himself before him who was accompanied by Śrī (Lakṣmī or grandeur), who was shining, and had the lustre like that of a crore of suns.

48-57. With Sumanā, he joined the palms of his hands (i.e. saluted him) and said: "Victory to you; victory to you, Mādhava, who removes pride. Victory to you, who sleep on the body of the serpent (viz. Śeṣa). Victory to you, O Yajñāṅga, O lord of sacrifices. Victory to you, O eternal and omnipresent one. Victory to you, O lord of all, O eternal one, O you of the form of sacrifice; my salutation to you. Victory to you, O best among those who possess knowledge. Victory to you, O giver of everything; victory to you, O omniscient one, and cause of all. Victory to you, O lord of the original forms of souls; saltuation to you, O great soul. Victory to you, O giver of wisdom, O Prajñāṅga (i.e. having wisdom as one of his parts); victory to you, O giver of life. Victory to you, O destroyer of sins, the lord of merit.

Victory to you, O Viṣṇu, the controller of merit. Victory to you, O you of the form of knowledge; salutation to you, who can be comprehended by knowledge. Victory to you, O you having eyes like lotus-petals. Salutation to you, Padmanābha (from whose navel sprang the lotus). Victory to you, O Govinda, O Gopāla, victory to you, O holder of the disc; salutation to you whose forms are unmanifest and manifest. Victory to you, O you, whose body is charming due to your valour; victory to you, the leader of valour; victory to you, O you, who have Lakṣmī as a part of your sport. Salutation to you, full of the Vedas. Victory to you, O you whose body is charming due to your valour; victory to you, O you who give diligence; victory to (you) who put an end to all exertion, victory to (you, O Viṣṇu who are yourself) exertion. Victory to you who are capable of elevation, victory to you who had the three elevations (i.e. three steps). Salutation to you, who undertake exertion and who are Dharma.

58-59. Salutation to you, having a golden seed. Salutation to you who are lustre. Salutation to you, who are of the form of great brilliance, and who are full of all lustre. Salutation to you, who destroy the prowess of the demons, and who remove evil lustre. Salutation to you who (work) for the well-being of cows and brāhmaṇas, and to you, who are the highest soul.

60-71. Salutation to you, the enjoyer of the offerings and the carrier of the oblations to gods. Salutation to you, the carrier of the oblations to the manes and to you of the form of Svadhā. Repeated salutations to you, of the nature of Svāhā, to you, who are the sacrifice and who are the purifier. Salutation to you who hold the Śārṅga bow in your hand, to Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) the remover of sins. Salutation to you who direct the good and the bad, and who shine with wisdom. Salutations (to you), of the form of Vedas, and the purifier. Salutation to you of tawny hair, and the remover of all afflictions, to (you) the highest Keśava, and the sustainer of everything. Salutation to you who favours (all) and who are full of joy. My constant salutation to you, the eternal, pure one, the destroyer of suffering. My constant salutation to you, who are joy, who are pure and who are perfect; to you, whose feet are saluted by Rudra and who are saluted by Brahmā. Salutation to you, whose lotus-like feet are saluted by the lords of gods and demons. Repeated salutations to you who

are the highest lord, who are unconquered and whose heart is full of nectar. Salutation to you, whose abode is the milky ocean; to you to whom Lakṣmī is dear. Repeated salutations to you, who are Oṁkāra, are pure, and who are stable. Repeated salutations to you who are comprehensive and who pervade (everything), and you who destroy all calamities. Repeated salutations to you of the form of Vāmana, and to you, noble Nṛsiṁha. Salutation to you, divine Paraśurāma, who killed all the kṣatriyas. Salutation to you, who are omniscient, who are Matsya and Rāma. Salutation to you, who are Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and the destroyer of Mlecchas. Salutation to you, the brāhmaṇa (named) Kapila, and Hayagrīva. Salutation to you, of the nature of Vyāsa and to you who have every form."

72-75. Having thus praised Hṛṣīkeśa, he then said to that Janārdana: "O you purifier, Brahmā does not know you, the farthest limit of virtues; neither omniscient Rudra (i.e. Śiva), nor the thousand-eyed (Indra) is able to praise you. Who can describe you? O lord, of what kind (i.e. how limited) is my intellect? O Keśava, I have praised you, who are qualityless and having qualities. O you of a good vow, (please) forgive me for my words—bad words; I am your servant. O you purifier, O you lord of the words, (please) forgive me, birth after birth."

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Birth of Suvrata

Hari said :

1-2. O brāhmaṇa, I am pleased by this meritorious penance of yours, and also by your truthfulness; and I am also pleased by the holy hymn of praise. Choose a boon. O you illustrious one, I shall grant you the boon that you have (i.e. cherish) in your mind. I shall fulfil (i.e. satisfy) whatever desire you entertain.

Somaśarman said:

3. O Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), first, with a pleased mind, grant

me a boon much desired by me, if you have good (i.e. great) pity for me.

4. Getting birth after birth (i.e. in every existence) I shall be devoted to you. Show me the highest, stable place, giving (me) salvation.

5-8a. O Keśava, (give me) a son, who will emancipate his family, who will be endowed with divine characteristics, who will be always intensely devoted to Viṣṇu, who will sustain (i.e. continue) my family, who will know everything and grant everything, who will be endowed with the lustre of penance, who will always protect and honour gods, brāhmaṇas and (other) people, who will be pious, who will be a donor and will be mature in intellect due to knowledge. Give me such a son, (and) remove my poverty. May it be so certainly (lit. there is no doubt). I choose this boon.

Hari said:

8b-11. O best brāhmaṇa, may it be so. Undoubtedly it will take place. By my favour, may you have a good son, who would emancipate your family. You will enjoy divine and human boons here (i.e. in this world). Perceiving great, virtuous happiness due to your son, you will, O brāhmaṇa, not see (i.e. experience) unhappiness as long as you live. You will be a donor, an enjoyer and will appreciate merits. There is no doubt about this. You will meet with death at a sacred place (and) will obtain the highest position.

12. Thus having granted a boon to that brāhmaṇa dear to him, the lord vanished. He was seen as (though seen) in a dream.

13-21. Then that best brāhmaṇa Somaśarman, (accompanied) with (his wife) Sumanā, gave auspicious gifts at the great and purifying sacred place Amarakaṇṭaka, on the auspicious bank of Revā, giving merit. When a very long time of that Somaśarman passed (i.e. when he thus passed a long time), he bathed at the confluence of Kapilā and Revā and set out. In front of him the brāhmaṇa saw a white elephant, which was very bright, beautiful, divine, of a profuse ichor, and of charming (i.e. auspicious) marks, with his body looking beautiful on account of many ornaments, and endowed with great grace.

Both his temples shone with red lead and saffron. (He saw the elephant) whose ears were having blue lotuses on them, and which was having a banner and a staff. On the elephant was seated a divine, very bright man, who was endowed with divine marks, and who was adorned with all ornaments, who had put on divine flowers and who was besmeared with divine sandal. The best (brāhmaṇa, Samaśarman) saw him to be very pleasing like the moon, and endowed with an umbrella and chowries, and going, after having mounted the elephant (i.e. being carried by the elephant). (He saw the man) who was very auspiciously being praised by Siddhas, bards and Gandharvas. Seeing that beautiful, excellent elephant and the man with divine characteristics, Somaśarman, with his mind full of amazement, reflected :

22-27. 'Who is this, of a divine body and a good vow, going after having reached (i.e. along) the path?' When, thinking like this, Somaśarman came to his house, (he saw) the divine charming form entering (through) the door of his house. Full of great joy, the religious-minded, best brāhmaṇa, Somaśarman, quickly went to his house; but when he went upto the door of his house he did not see him, (but instead) the very intelligent one (saw) charming divine, fragrant flowers fallen in the courtyard (of his house). Seeing this courtyard besmeared with auspicious, fragrant sandal and saffron, and with dūrvā grass and sacred rice grains, he, thus amazed, and reflecting repeatedly, saw Sumanā with divine and auspicious excellence.

Somaśarmana said :

28. Who gave (you) these divine ornaments, (this) fortune in the form an excellent dress, and decoration (in the form) of garments and ornaments?

29. O good one, then, without any apprehension tell me the reason.

Thus speaking to his wife, the best brāhmaṇa ceased (speaking).

Sumanā said :

30-31. O my husband, listen. Someone best among the gods, mounted upon a white elephant, adorned with divine ornaments,

with his body smeared with divine sandal, endowed with divine wonders, had come. I do not know which deity he was (who was) served by brāhmaṇas and Gandharvas.

32-38a. He, who was being praised by gods, Gandharvas and bards, had come. With him were ladies who were endowed with auspicious forms, with beauty and excellent dresses, with charm due to all ornaments, and all with their desires satisfied. In front of them the illustrious man filled our quadrangle with gems and is (therefore) endowed with all charm. Then I was placed on an auspicious seat by brāhmaṇas. All of themgave me garments, ornaments and decorations. They all consecrated me with auspicious Vedic hymns and meritorious songs from the sacred texts, and they again disappeared. O best brāhmaṇa, all of them (being) around me, again said : "We shall always dwell in your house. O you auspicious one, always remain undefiled along with your husband." Speaking thus, they all left. Thus only (i.e. this much only is what) I saw.

38b-45a. The very intelligent one, having heard the account told by her, again reflected: 'What is this brought about by the lord?' Thus thinking the very wise Somaśarman engaged himself in the religious duties of a brāhmaṇa. That illustrious Sumanā observing a vow became pregnant from him. That respectable lady then looked more beautiful due to that embryo. She was endowed with the flame of lustre as she was having that bright son (in her womb). She, due to (the efficacy of) her penance, gave birth to a son resembling a god. At that time divine drums resounded in the sky. Great gods blew conches, Gandharvas sang charming songs; and indeed all the celestial nymphs danced at that time. Then the calm, best brāhmaṇa, Brahmā, having come there with gods, named him (i.e. the boy) Suvrata. Having named him, all the gods of great prowess left.

45b-57. When the gods had left, the best brāhmaṇa Somaśarman performed rites like the birth-rite (of the boy). When the illustrious son Suvrata, brought into existence by gods, was born, there was great prosperity in his house mixed with (i.e. full of) wealth and grains; and also (there were) elephants, buffaloes and cows, gold and jewels. The house of that Somaśarman shone as the house of Kubera shone with heaps of wealth.

The best brāhmaṇa performed rites like meditation (and other) auspicious deeds. The brāhmaṇa, full of many merits went on a pilgrimage. The intelligent one, endowed with knowledge and merit, gave there auspicious gifts. With great joy he celebrated the marriage of the son. The son's sons, virtuous and endowed with good signs, were born. They were endowed with truthfulness, righteousness and penance. Somaśarman performed all auspicious rites of (i.e. about) them; and the illustrious one was happy with their grandsons. He enjoyed all pleasures and was without (i.e. free from) old age and diseases. His body was as (if) he was twentyfive years old. That very wise Somaśarman was lustrous like the sun. That noble, respectable lady Sumanā also shone with pious and auspicious (things), with sons and grandsons, and with vows and restraints. With auspicious vows like (being very loyal to) the husband, the large-eyed one shone excellently. She was (so much) endowed with youth that she was as it were sixteen year old.

58-60. The magnanimous, righteous, very prosperous, charming and auspicious couple was delighted and full of joy. O best brāhmaṇas, thus was their behaviour full of auspicious practices. I shall now tell you the observance of the vows by Suvrata (and) how he (obtained bliss) by having propitiated Nārāyaṇa Anāmaya (i.e. Viṣṇu).

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Suvrata's Devotion to Viṣṇu

Sūta said :

1. Once that resplendent Vyāsa, being extremely amazed, asked Brahmā, the lord of the world, (about) the entire account of Savrata.

Vyāsa said :

2. O soul of the worlds, O you in whom the worlds are deposited, O god of gods, O great lord, I now desire to hear the life-account of Suvrata.

Brahmā said :

3. O you noble Pārāśarya (i.e. son of Parāśara), listen to the meritorious, excellent account, full of practice of penance, of the brāhmaṇa Suvrata.

4-8. The intelligent Suvrata reflected upon Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), even from his childhood, (since) he had seen (that) god Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa while (still) in the womb (of his mother). Due to his having performed (good) deeds (in the) former (birth), he always meditated upon Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu). He meditated and reflected upon that god Padmanābha, holding a conch and a disc and giving great merit, in (i.e. while he sang) songs, (did) study and recitations. Thus the best brāhmaṇa, the excellent boy, always reflecting upon Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) only, always played with children. The intelligent, pious one, loving merit, named the sons of him, the magnanimous one (i.e. his own sons), after Hari. The very intelligent one called his friend by Hari's name:

9-16. 'O Keśava, come, come along; O Mādhava come; O Cakradhṛk (i.e. the disc-holder i.e. Viṣṇu) come; O Puruṣottama, play with me only. O Madhusūdana, we shall go together only.' In this way the brāhmaṇa called (others) by the names of Hari, while playing, reciting, laughing, lying, singing or viewing (something), or in a vehicle, on a seat, while meditating, (reciting) sacred hymns, or comprehending or (doing) good acts. He saw Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) the lord of the world only; he talked to him only. He the very wise one, meditated upon (i.e. saw) that great lord, the ruler of the world viz. Keśava, Govinda, having lotus-like eyes, in grass, in wood, in a dry or wet (object), and also in the sky, on the ground, on mountains, in forests, in water, on dry land, in a stone or in beings. (Thus) Sumanā's son, that brāhmaṇa Suvrata, that religious-minded one, saw Nṛsiṁha (i.e. Viṣṇu) everywhere. Resorting to a child's sports he thus played everyday; and sang about Kṛṣṇa with songs with good musical modes, couched in sweet words, having beating times,[1] or *laya* (i.e. times in music), with charming notes of the gamut and melodies.

1. Rāga, tāla, laya etc. are terms used in music. Laya—Time in music. It is of three kinds: druta, madhya and vilambita. Mūrcchanā—The rising of sounds, an intonation, a duly regulated rise and fall of sounds, conducting the air and the harmony through the keys in a pleasing manner, changing the key or passing from one key to another.

Suvrata said :

17-24a. Those who know the Vedas always meditate upon him, who is the enemy of demons, in whose body (remains) the entire universe, who is the lord of reflective meditation, and who destroys all sins. I shall seek the shelter of (that) Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), who occupies all the worlds, and in whom all the worlds abide. I salute that highest lord free from all faults and I always salute his pair of feet. Those whose minds are purified by the (study of) Vedānta everyday recite (the hymns about) Nārāyaṇa, the treasure of virtues, and of unlimited power. I seek his shelter in order to cross the entire ocean of the worldly existence which is endless, fathomless and difficult to cross. O enemy of demons, protect this poor one viz. me (who am devoted to) the pure and large pair of the feet of him who is the royal swan in the Mānasa lake (i.e. the minds) of the best reflecting sages, who is pure and whose entire prowess always (continues). I meditate upon the god, the lord of the entire world, who is the moon (that has come) here only to destroy the darkness in the form of grief, who has led Dharma (i.e. piousness) for the protection of the world, who is endowed with truth, who, the lord of the worlds, is the chief of all the worlds. With charming songs and measuring the beatings of time I constantly mediditate upon Śrīraṅga (i.e. Viṣṇu), the lord of the world, destroyer of ignorance, comparable to the sun only, the root of joy, and full of all prowess. I sing with unique joy (the praise of) him who alone is full treasure of the portion of nectar, who is endowed with his senses of deep meditation and who has the true perspective. He always observes the mobile and immobile universe. The very sinful people do not at all see him to be here.

24b. He (i.e. Suvrata) always sought the shelter of that Keśava.

25. Beating the time with (the clappings of) the hands he sang songs (about) Kṛṣṇa and rejoiced with (other) children.

26. Thus, being a child, Suvrata, Sumanā's son, intent on meditating upon Viṣṇu, was engaged in sports.

27. His mother said to Suvrata of fine characteristics, (and) playing: "O my boy, have your meal; hunger might oppress you."

28. The wise Suvrata again said to his mother: "I am satisfied with the great nectar viz. the delight (derived) from the meditation upon Hari."

29-34a. When he got (i.e. sat) upon the seat (used while taking) meal he saw sweet food. (He reflected:) "This food is Viṣṇu (himself); the soul has resorted to this food. May that Viṣṇu who is (present here) in the form of the soul be gratified with this water in which he dwells due to his remaining in the milky ocean. May Keśava, satisfied with his own form be gratified with tāmbūla, sandal, fragrant substances and these charming flowers." When the religious-minded one went to bed, he would reflect upon Kṛṣṇa: "I have sought the refuge of that Kṛṣṇa who is endowed with the Yoganidrā (i.e. his sleep at the end of a yuga)." The brāhmaṇa (Suvrata) would reflect upon that Vāsudeva, while taking meal, while covering himself, on a seat or bed, and would prepare everything for him.

34b-37. When the religious-minded one attained youth, he gave up enjoyment of pleasures and was engaged in meditating upon Keśava on the excellent Vaidūrya mountain, where there is the symbol of Viṣṇu called Siddheśvara and destroyer of sins. He, reflecting upon the great lord called Maheśvara glorified by Brahmā (and situated) on the right bank of Narmadā, and having resorted to Siddheśvara, thought of (practising) penance.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

Dharmāṅgada Born as Suvrata

Vyāsa said :

1-3. O noble one, I shall put one question to you. Now speak (i.e. answer) it; you yourself had formerly said that Suvrata meditated upon lord Nārāyaṇa Anāmaya, due to former practice. In which caste was Suvrata born in his former birth? Now tell that to me (and also) how Hari was propitiated by him. O lord of gods, who is he that is full of merit?

Brahmā said :

4-13. In the auspicious city (called) Vaidiśa, full of all prosperity, (lived) a very lustrous, powerful king, the son of Ṛtadhavaja. His very intelligent son was well-known as Rukmabhūṣaṇa. His loyal wife was the glorious Sandhyāvatī. The king's son (i.e. Rukmabhūṣaṇa) having produced a son on her like himself, named him Dharmāṅgada. This (Dharmāṅgada), the most fortunate son of Rukmāṅgada, was endowed with all auspicious marks and was intensely devoted to his father; and he, for the happiness of his father, even gave his own head to Mohinī. Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu) was pleased by his Viṣṇuite way of life and devotion to his father; and took him physically to Viṣṇu's position. He, who knew all codes of conduct, who was a devotee of Viṣṇu, who was best of the Sātvatas, he—Dharmāṅgada, who was very wise, who was well-versed in judgement and knowledge, who was an ornament of piety, living there only gladly enjoyed all divine pleasures according to his desire. When a full thousand yugas were over, he who was piety (himself) and an ornament of piety, dropped from that position, and due to the favour of Viṣṇu, was born as the eldest and most fortunate and intelligent son of Somaśarman, increasing the delight of Sumanā, and named Suvrata. The intelligent one practised penance and was intent upon meditation on Viṣṇu.

14-18a. The best brāhmaṇa, having abandoned blemishes like desire and anger, having controlled the group of senses, continuously practised penance by concentrating his mind and uniting it with Viṣṇu, near Siddheśvara on the best mountain Vaidūrya. The lord of the world, holding a conch, a disc and a mace was well-pleased with the meditation of the noble one, who thus had remained in it for a hundred years. That Keśava, with Lakṣmī, granted him another boon: "O you pious Suvrata, O you best among the wise sages, well-being to you; choose a boon, I am Kṛṣṇa that have come to you."

18b-19. Having heard these excellent words of Viṣṇu, the intelligent one was full of great joy, and seeing god Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), he joining the palms of his hands, saluted him.

Suvrata said :

20. The ocean of mundane existence is full of the waves of

very great (i.e. poignant) griefs, and of the ripples of the heaps of follies. Through my vices and virtues I have reached it. O Janārdana, from it quickly take up me who am helpless.

21-28. When the great cloud of my deeds is thundering, it is raining, lightning is flashing; due to the heaps of my sins and coverings of the darkness of delusion, I do not have (i.e. I have lost my) sight. (So) O Madhusūdana, give your hand to me, who am helpless. This dense forest of the worldly existence is resorted to by (i.e. has) many trees of great grief, and by many lions of the form of follies. It is blazing with the lustre of the great fire of compassion. O Kṛṣṇa, protect me who am constantly being burnt. The tree of the worldly existence is extremely old and also high. It has the bulbous root of illusion and many branches of pity and many afflictions; it has the leaves of union with one's wife etc. It has borne fruit. O lord Murāri, protect me who climbed it and fell from it. O Kṛṣṇa, I am constantly burnt by the fires of griefs, with profuse (columns of) smoke in the form of various delusions, and with distresses like separation resembling death. Give me salvation. Always sprinkle me with water of knowledge, me—who have fallen in the great ditch covered with fearful darkness and called Saṁsāra (i.e. the worldly existence). O Kṛṣṇa, you show a great favour to me who am distressed and suffering from fear. Being disgusted with it, I have sought your refuge. Those, who with controlled minds and full of devotion, meditate upon you with their minds (full of) knowledge, obtain the (highest) position; since saluting the very auspicious pair of your feet the groups of Kinnaras and gods think of you (only). I do not talk to anyone else, I do not worship anyone else, I do not think about anyone else. I (just) continuously salute the pair of your lotus-like feet. O Kṛṣṇa, today satisfy my desire. Let the heap of my sins go far away. I am your slave, I am your servant in existence after existence. I constantly remember the pair of your lotus-like feet.

29-30a. If, O Kṛṣṇa, you are pleased, then grant me a good boon: O great god, with me take (also) my parents physically to your abode. There should be no hesitation about it.

Śrikṛṣṇa said :

30b. There is no doubt that this great affair of you will take place.

31-35. Hṛṣīkeśa was pleased with him and was very much delighted by his devotion. Free from tormentation and destruction the two viz. Sumanā and Somaśarman, went, along with Suvrata to Viṣṇu's heaven. O you very intelligent one, till a couple of yugas came (i.e. was over) the brāhmaṇa Suvrata enjoyed repeatedly divine worlds. And by the words (i.e. order) of that disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) the very intelligent one again came down to (i.e. was born in) the house of Kaśyapa for the mission of gods; and enjoys Indra's position due to Viṣṇu's favour. Well-known as Vasudatta, and saluted by all gods, he enjoys the position of Indra at present.

36. Thus I have told you the entire cause of the propriety of creation. I shall (even), tell (i.e. explain to) you anything else that you ask.

Vyāsa said :

37. The powerful and very intelligent Dharmāṅgada, the son of Rukmāṅgada, was Indra at the time of creation in the first Kṛtayuga.

38-39a. Then, O lord of gods, how is it that there is another Dharmāṅgada on the earth, and also another king (named) Rukmāṅgada, and how is it that this one is also the lord of gods (i.e. Indra)? This doubt has arisen (in my mind); please explain (i.e. remove) it.

Brahmā said :

39b-40a. Oh, I shall tell you that which will remove your doubt. O best brāhmaṇa, the sport of the god is for the creation.

40b-42. As days, fortnights, months, seasons, years and Manus pass (i.e. come and go) in the same way the yugas again and again pass. Then arrives the Kalpa; then, O very intelligent one, I myself go to Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) and the mobile and the immobile go to (i.e. merge into) me. (Then) he, whose nature is contemplation, again creates the universe as before.

43-44a. Again, I, the Vedas, the deities and brāhmaṇas, as well as all kings with their dispositions are born, O noble one. A wise man is not confused by this.

44b-47. As in the former Kalpa the magnanimous king Rukmāṅgada was born, in the same way this well-known

brāhmaṇa Dharmāṅgada is born (now). The very intelligent ones like Rāma, Yayāti, Nahuṣa,[1] and also the magnanimous Manu and others are born and die. Kings devoted to piety enjoy the position of Indra, as the hero Dharmāṅgada is now enjoying (that) great position. In the same way Vedas, gods, Purāṇas, preceded by Smṛtis (come and go)

48-49. O best brāhmaṇ, I have thus narrated to you Suvrata's entire account which is meritorious and which leads to good position. O noble one, I shall explain to you the invisible (one).

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Slaying of the Demon Bala

The sages said :

1-2. O you best among speakers, you have told us this wonderful, meritorious, excellent tale, bringing about glory, and destroying all sins. Please tell us the propriety of the creation.

1. Yayāti—Name of a celebrated king of the lunar race. He was the son o Nahuṣa. He married Śukra's daughter Devayānī, who was cursed by Kaca that she would marry a Kṣatriya. Śarmiṣṭhā, daughter of the king of Asuras was told by her father to be Devayānī's servant as a sort of recompense for her formerly having slapped and thus insulted Devayānī. Yayāti fell in love with Śarmiṣṭhā and secretly married her. Devayānī came to know about the marriage, and complained to her father of the conduct of Yayāti. Śukra cursed him that he would be prematurely old. Yayāti propitiated him and obtained from him permission to transfer his infirmity to anyone who would accept it. His youngest son Pūru agreed to take it. Yayāti enjoyed youth for a thousand years. With a strenuous effort he renounced his sensual life and restoring youth to Pūru, and appointing him as his successor, he left for a forest to lead a pious and meditating life.

Nahuṣa—He was Āyus' son, Purūravas' grandson, and Yayāti's father. He was a very wise and powerful king. For some time, he deputed Indra at latter's request. He made the Seven Sages to carry him in a palanquin to Indrāṇi's house, whose love, he thought, he would win. On his way, he insulted the Sages by ordering them to move on (*sarpa, sarpa*). One of the Sages cursed him to be a *sarpa* (serpent). He fell down on the earth and remained as a serpent, till he was freed by Yudhiṣṭhira from that condition.

O son of Sūta, tell us in detail, as to how the creation (took place) formerly.

Sūta said :

3-5. I shall tell in detail the cause of creation and destruction, merely by hearing which a man would become omniscient. Hiraṇyakaśipu occupied the three worlds. Having propitiated Brahmā by penance, he obtained a boon, difficult to obtain, and also immortality from that noble god. He, having pervaded gods and the worlds secured mastery (over all).

6-9. Then gods with Gandharvas, sages who had mastered the Vedas, and Nāgas, Kinnaras, Siddhas, Yakṣas and others, led by Brahmā, went to lord Nārāyaṇa, who was enjoying his sleep at the end of a Yuga in the Milky Ocean. With the palms of their hands joined, the gods awakened him with (i.e. by singing) hymns of praise. When the lord of the gods awoke, O you very wise one(s), they told him the account of that wicked one (i.e. Hiraṇyakaśipu). Having heard it, the lord of the world, resorting to the form of Nṛsiṁha, killed Hiraṇyakaśipu.

10-15. Then with the Boar-form he killed the very powerful Hiraṇyākṣa. He lifted up the auspicious Earth, and killed that demon at that time. He also killed other fierce-looking demons. When thus the great demons had perished, when the others i.e. Diti's sons had (also) perished, when the gods had attained great positions, when sacrifices and other religious rites had proceeded (i.e. were being performed), when all the worlds had well-settled, that Diti who was oppressed by grief, who was tormented by the bereavement of her sons, who cried 'alas, alas,', and had become senseless, devoutly saluted her husband Kaśyapa who resembled the sun, who was endowed with the lustre of penance, who was a donor and was magnanimous, and said to that very intelligent best brāhmaṇa:

16-20. "O revered sir, that god—the holder of the disc—has made me sonless. Gods have struck down all the sons of Diti (i.e. of me) and of Danu. O best sage, I am burnt by the fire of grief (due to the loss) of my sons. O lord, give me a son, who would delight (everyone), who would remove the lustre of all, who would be very powerful and charming in all limbs, who would be lustrous like the king of gods, who would be very

intelligent and omniscient, who would be learned and wise, who would be endowed with the lustre of penance, who would be strong and would have auspicious marks, who would be well-versed in the Vedas, who would be knowing (i.e. possessing knowledge), who would honour gods and brāhmaṇas, who would be the conqueror of all worlds, and, who would, O brāhmaṇa, give me joy, and who would, O lord, be endowed with all (good) characteristics."

21-23a. Having heard these excellent words of her, the noble Kaśyapa with his mind full of pity and pleased with her who was grieved, who was helpless and whose mind had become distressed, and having put his hand through great love for her, on her head, said to her: "O glorious one, a son, as desired by you, will be (born to you)."

23b-28. Having said so, he went to Meru, the best mountain. He of a great vow, all alone practised great penance (there). In the meanwhile, she conceived an excellent embryo. That high-minded Diti, knowing all rules of conduct, doing good deeds, remained with a pure heart for a period of hundred years. She gave birth to a son who was endowed with Brāhmaṇic lustre. Then Kaśyapa, full of great joy, came there; (and) the best and intelligent one named him. He called his son 'Bala', who, the great one, was like (i.e. true to) his name. Thus he named him, and performed his thread-ceremony. He said to him : "O (my) glorious son, practise celibacy."

29. (Bala said) : "O best brāhmaṇa, I shall just do as you tell me. O best one, with (i.e. practising) celibacy, I would study the Vedas."

30-31. Thus an entire century of years passed while he was practising penance. He, endowed with the lustre of penance, came to the presence of (i.e. came to) his mother. Diti, full of great joy saw the divine celibacy, full of the power of penance, of her magnanimous son.

32-35. She said to that son (of her) viz. Bala, who was magnanimous, who was possessed of penance, who was intelligent, who was great-souled, who was well-versed in judgement and knowledge : "O intelligent one, as long as you live, my sons like Hiraṇyakaśipu killed by him who holds a disc in his hand (i.e. by Viṣṇu), will live onward. O my boy, conclude the hostility

(i.e. take revenge), kill in battle (our) enemies—the gods." That Danu said to that very powerful Bala these words: "Son, first quickly kill Indra, the lord of gods. Then strike down gods, and after that (strike down) him, whose vehicle is Garuḍa (i.e. Viṣṇu)."

36. Having heard (the words) of the two (i.e. Diti and Danu), Aditi, who looked upon her husband as a god, and who was full of great grief, said to her son, Indra :

37-38a. "Diti's son, of a huge body, is increasing with brāhmaṇic lustre. For killing gods, he practised penance in (honour of) Śiva. Understand like this, O lord of gods, if you desire happiness here."

38b-39. Having thus heard those words of his mother, Indra, the lord of gods, was extremely worried due to uneasiness. Being tormented by great grief, he then thought:

40-45. 'How shall I kill this (Bala) who is polluting the piety of gods?' Thus the lord of gods decided to kill Bala. Once that Bala resorted (i.e. went) to the ocean to offer his daily prayers. He shone with a divine skin of an antelop and a piece of stick, and with spotless merit and that (i.e. undescribable) celibacy. Indra saw him seated upon the seat meant for daily prayers, near the ocean, muttering prayers and extremely tranquil. That Diti's son was hit (by Indra) with that divine thunderbolt. Seeing Bala fallen dead on the ground, the king of gods full of great joy was then delighted. The pious Indra, having thus struck down that demon, Diti's son, ruled happily.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

Vṛtra Duped

Sūta said :

1-2. Having heard that her very powerful son Bala was killed, Diti piteously wept saying: "Oh, I am facing a great misery." Having thus very piteously wept for a long time, the

miserable, glorious one went to Kaśyapa, her husband, and said to him :

3-4a. "Seeing your son who had gone to the ocean, the very sinful Indra, the lord of the host of gods, with his thunderbolt killed him having the characteristics of a brāhmaṇa and just practising *sandhyā* (i.e. the daily prayer)."

4b-5. Having heard thus, (Kaśyapa) Marīci's son got angry at that time, and was full of great anger, as it were, burnt with fire. The best brāhmaṇa plucked a hair from his matted hair, (and putting it into) pure fire (said:)

6-10a. "I shall create a son just for killing Indra." From that fire-pool, from the mouth of fire was produced a fierce figure, full of black collyrium (i.e. very dark), and tawny-eyed, with the interior of his mouth fearful on account of the fangs, causing fear to the worlds, capable of giving a big blow with the flat of his hand, holding a sword and a shield, bright with lustre of the entire body, resembling a large cloud and strong. He said to the brāhmaṇa viz. Kaśyapa: "Give me an order. O brāhmaṇa, tell me the purpose for which I was produced; I shall accomplish it through your favour, O you of a good vow."

Kaśyapa said :

10b-11. O you highly intelligent one, fulfil the desire of this Aditi (Diti?) and of me also. Kill the wicked Indra; and when that king of gods (i.e. Indra) is killed, enjoy Indra's position.

12-14. Thus ordered by that noble Kaśyapa, Vṛtra exerted to kill Indra. Endowed with valour, he practised archery. The thousand-eyed one (i.e. Indra), seeing the demon's strength, power and his lustre with courage befitting a kṣatriya, was afflicted by fear. He thought of a means to kill that wicked Vṛtra.

15-16. Having called the Seven Great Sages, the god of gods sent them to Vṛtra, the lord of demons: "O best sages, you may please go (to the place) where Vṛtra is staying, and bring about a treaty between them (i.e. the demons and me)."

17. Thus ordered and urged by that thousand-eyed (Indra) the Seven Sages then said to that demon Vṛtra:

18-21a. "Indra offers to make friendship (with you), O best demon; make that friendship." The Seven Sages, knowing the fact, said to the very powerful Vṛtra: "O best one, the very wise Indra desires your friendship. Then how is it that you do not do it (i.e. do not accept his offer)? O hero, enjoy happily half the position (i.e. kingdom) of Indra; let Indra have the (remaining) half. Giving up their enmity, let all demons and gods live happily."

Vṛtra said :

21b-23a. If the best lord of the gods really desires friendship, I (too) shall do (the same) by resorting to truth (i.e. truthfully); there is no doubt about this. O brāhmaṇas, if, by putting forward (i.e. by resorting to) dishonesty, Indra plays mischief, then what is the surety in this matter?

23b-24a. The sages said to Indra : "Give certainty about this. Tell us the truth if you desire friendship here (with Vṛtra)."

Indra said :

24b-25a. If I behave with you falsely and dishonestly, then I shall be stained with the sins of killing brāhmaṇas etc. There is no doubt about it.

25b-27a. The very powerful (brāhmaṇas) again spoke to Vṛtra, the lord of demons: "'I shall be stained with the sins of killing brāhmaṇas etc. There is no doubt about it.' Thus, O very wise one, Indra has said to you. O you very intelligent one, form friendship (with Indra), with this (i.e. taking those words to be the) surety."

Vṛtra said :

27b-28a. O best brāhmaṇas, on account of your respectable manner and this truthfulness of him, I shall likewise form friendship with him.

28b-33. The chief brāhmaṇas took Vṛtra into the vicinity of Indra. Seeing Vṛtra, ready for friendship, having arrived, the pious Indra got up from his seat, and taking the material of worship quickly, offered (the same) to Vṛtra: "O very wise one,

enjoy half of this great position of Indra. O best of demons, we two should stay happily." O best brāhmaṇa, having thus produced confidence through friendship of Vṛtra, the wicked-minded one always saw his weak point. Vṛtra too was always cautious. Indra also would think day and night (to find out his weak point). He did not find out the weak point of the noble Vṛtra.

34-43a. He thought of a stratagem to kill him. He sent Rambhā (after telling her:) "With this or that trick, delude the great demon. O auspicious one, do that to delude the great demon, so that by killing him I shall get happiness." (Rambhā resorted to Nandanavana—Indra's garden,) the garden which was auspicious, very divine, resorted to by pious trees, full of many trees with fruits, full of beasts and birds, looking beautiful all around with divine heavenly cars, always full of divine music of the Gandharvas and bees, full of auspicious, sweet and prolonged cooings of cuckoos everywhere, full of the notes of peacocks and the sounds of antelopes at every place, everywhere adorned with divine sandal trees and also with charming wells, pools and lakes full of water and lotuses in bloom; it looked beautiful with gods, Gandharvas, Siddhas and Kinnaras as well; also with divine sages and with an excellent garden. It was crowded with hosts of celestial nymphs; and with various curious and auspicious objects. It was thronged with golden palaces, and was everywhere adorned with staffs, umbrellas and chowries, and with pitchers and banners. It was full of the sounds (of the recitation) of the Vedas and with the sounds of songs.

43b-44a. Reaching the Nandana like this, that sportive Rambhā, smiling charmingly sported there with celestial nymphs.

Sūta said :

44b-51. Once that Vṛtra, dragged by death, went very joyfully with some demons, to that forest. The lord of gods and brāhmaṇas, looking for his weak point, moved unnoticed by the side of that noble one. That very wise Vṛtra, confiding (in Indra) in all matters, and knowing Indra to be a great friend, was not afraid of him. Moving (i.e. he moved) in the great auspicious forest. The forest was very charming and (full of) curious objects and crowded with bevies of women. That glorious and noble Rambhā, of large eyes, who had resorted to the cool and very

auspicious shade of a sandal-tree, was seated on a swing and was playing dice with her friends. She (also) sang a melodious song, infatuating the entire universe. Vṛtra, having come there, saw that Rambhā, with charming, large eyes with his mind full of sexual desire.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

The Killing of Demon Vṛtra

Sūta said :

1. (Vṛtra thought:) 'Who is this woman with charming eyes, singing in graceful modes? This attractive woman shines all round. She would delude people with full emotions.'

2-3. Seeing that Rambhā, of large eyes like lotuses, of plump breasts, with her body smeared with sandal, with her face resembling a lotus, (he thought) 'Is she the abode of my sexual desire or is she charming and attractive Rati? Sent here only by Cupid, I shall certainly approach her, who is full of emotion, endowed with good form, disposed to sex, and of an extremely good disposition.'

4. Thus the demon, very much distressed, full of great anxiety, deluded by sexual desire, prompted (like this) for a long time, went there quickly, and with his mind afflicted said to her, whose eyes were charming:

5. "O beautiful lady, whom do you belong to? By whom are you sent (here)? Tell me what your most auspicious name is. By your extremely lustrous beauty I am infatuated. O you young lady, come under my influence."

6-7. Thus addressed (by Vṛtra), the large-eyed one (said to him:) "O noble one, I am Rambhā; I have come to this excellent forest, Nandana, with my friends, to sport. But who are you? Why have you come to me?".

Vṛtra said :

8-10. Listen, I shall tell you who I am that have come here, O young lady. O you auspicious one, I am Kaśyapa's son, born

from fire. O you of a beautiful face, I am also the friend of Indra, the lord of gods. I am enjoying half the portion (i.e. the kingdom) of Indra. I am Vṛtra, O you respectable lady; how do you not recognise me, under whose control have come all the three worlds, O you of an excellent complexion?

11. O you beautiful lady, I have sought your shelter. Protect me from the (disturbance caused by)sexual desire. O you of large eyes, resort to me, who am, O dear one, distressed by sexual desire.

Rambhā said :

12. There is no doubt that today I shall submit myself to you; O hero, you should do whatever I tell you to do.

(He said:)

13a. "O you noble one, let it be so; I shall do all that (you will tell me to do)."

13b-14a. Having thus established a relation with her, the very powerful best demon enjoyed in that very meritorious forest.

14b-15. The great demon was very much stupefied by her singing, dancing, charming smile and sexual intercourse (with her). She said to that noble and best demon:

16a. "(Please) drink wine; (please) drink madhu-mādhavī (a kind of intoxicating drink)."

16b. He said to that Rambhā of large eyes and of a moon-like face:

17. "O good lady, I am a brāhmaṇa's son, who has mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. How shall I drink wine (an act) that is condemned?"

18-20. But that respectable lady Rambhā lovingly gave wine to him against his will. Due to civility for her he drank wine at that time. When he was extremely stupefied by the wine, and lost his senses, just then Indra struck him with his thunderbolt. Then that killer of Vṛtra (i.e. Indra) was tainted with such sins as killing a brāhmaṇa. Then the brāhmaṇas said: "O Indra, you have committed a sin.

21. That very powerful Vṛtra relied on (you) due to our words (i.e. because we told him). You have killed him through (falsifying that) reliance on you."

Indra said :

22-24. An enemy should always be killed by this or that means. You are angry because the wicked demon, the lord of even the three worlds, the killer of gods and brāhmaṇas, the enemy of sacrifices and righteousness is killed. Is it a sign of justice? O best brāhmaṇas, first think (properly), then you may be angry if you think my injustice (i.e. if you think I have done injustice).

25-26. The brāhmaṇas were thus addressed by Indra. The best ones were also admonished by all gods like Brahmā. When that demon, the enemy of righteousness was killed, they went to their respective abodes.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

The Origin of Maruts

Sūta said :

1-3. O best brāhmaṇas, that Diti, hearing that her son was killed, was afflicted with pain and tormented with grief due to (the death of) her son. She again said to that noble, best sage Kaśyapa: "O best brāhmaṇa, to kill that very wicked Indra, give me, O lord, a son having Brāhmaṇic lustre, strong and unbearable to all deities, if I am very dear to you, O my beloved husband."

Kaśyapa said :

4-5. Wicked god Indra, resorting to sinful ways, killed my very strong sons, Bala and Vṛtra. To kill him only, I shall give (you) one son. O you glorious one, be pure for one hundred years.

6-12. Speaking like this, that best meditating sage, put his hand on her head and he, with her only, went to a penance-grove (on) Meru. Always remaining pure, that respectable lady, living in the penance grove, practised penance for a son, O best brāhmaṇa. Then knowing about the assiduous effort of Diti, that

thousand-eyed god, O noble one, saw her weakness. The god of gods becoming (i.e. turning himself into a youth) twentyfive years old, and resembling a deity went, in the form of a brāhmaṇa, near her. The thousand-eyed righteous one saluted the mother, endowed with penance, and was (thus) addressed by her: "O best brāhmaṇa, who are you?" The thousand-eyed one (i.e. Indra) said to her: "O you beautiful, auspicious lady, I am your son, a brāhmaṇa, knowing the Vedas. I (also) know Dharma. I shall help (you) in your penance. There is no doubt about it." He served that respectable mother, endowed with penance.

13. She did not know him to be Indra, of wicked deeds, that had come there. She looked upon him as her lawful son, serving her everyday.

14-15. He would (first) shampoo the body of that respectable lady, and would then wash her feet. The virtuous one always gave Diti leaves, roots, bark-garments and the skin of an antelope. Pleased with his devotion, she, being delighted, said to him:

16. "O you blessed one, when a very meritorious son will be born (to me), and when Indra will be killed, you rule over the divine kingdom along with my son."

17-20. (Indra said:) "O you fortunate one, let it be so; it will be like that due to your favour." Indra desired to find her weak point only. For ninetynine years he kept on looking for her weak point. (Once) without washing her feet, Diti entered into (i.e. slept on) her bed. She put her head on the border of the bed. She, with her hair loose and being very much perturbed, (tried) to get sleep. Indra entered her side, and with his thunderbolt of a sharp edge, cut the embryo lying in the womb, into seven pieces; it wept.

21-25. O best brāhmaṇas, the very lustrous Indra again and again said to that large embryo, weeping due to being in Indra's hands, "Do not weep". Again Indra cut that embryo born of (i.e. conceived by) Diti into seven parts. That king of gods cut each (portion of the embryo) that was weeping. In this way the Maruts of great prowess were born. Since they were (thus) addressed by Indra (*mā rodiḥ*) they got this name. The Maruts, of great vigour and huge bodies, of sharp lustre and valour, were fortynine (in number). They were known as Maruts and attended on Indra only.

26-28.* They illumine the great host of all beings. Hari, the lord of beings, successively gave in (various) habitations, kingdoms (to kings) preceded by Pṛthu. That supreme spirit Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), who pervades everything, who is the lord of the world, who is triumphant with penance, who has great lustre is all alone the lord of the beings.

29-32. O best brāhmaṇa, to him who knows correctly, belongs merit, and this immobile and mobile world, this creation of beings. He has no fear of again being born here (i.e. in this world); then wherefrom can he have fear in the next world? That man, who devoutly listens to this meritorious, auspicious (account of) the creation that removes all sins, is free from all sins. He is blessed, he is meritorious and is endowed with truth. He, who listens to (this account of) creation, gets the highest position. With his heart cleared of all sins, he goes to Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Coronation of the Kings

Sūta said:

1-3a. That lord, Brahmā, the master of all worlds, having then consecrated on the entire kingdom (i.e. as the king of all the kingdom) that great lord, king Pṛthu, Vena's son, of large arms and a huge body, and resembling Indra, the lord of gods, and taking into account (other) kingdoms one by one, proceeded to give each one that kingdom, which he deserved.

3b-4. The highly intelligent one consecrated Soma (i.e. the Moon) as the king of the trees, brāhmaṇas, of planets and stars, of all pious acts, of religiously conducted sacrifices, of merits and of those of an auspicious lustre.

5-8a. O best brāhmaṇa, having consecrated Varuṇa (as the chief) among the waters and of places sacred to deities and of gems, and Vaiśravaṇa as the king of all other Yakṣas, the grandsire appointed Viṣṇu on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of

*The relevance of these lines is not clear. They seem to have been inserted in wrong place. (Ed.)

Ādityas, for the good of the people, O you very intelligent one. He appointed the capable Dakṣa, conversant with all religious practices, the chief of the attendants of the lord of the beings, as the chief of all auspicious objects.

8b-15. He appointed Prahrāda, knowing all religious practices, on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of the sons of Diti and Danu. He consecrated Yama, the son of Vivasvān, on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of the dead ancestors, and (appointed) Śiva, having the trident in his hand, (as the king) of the Yakṣas, demons, ghosts, goblins, reptiles, of all female meditating sages, of magnanimous vampires, and also of all skeletons and spirits, and of all kings. (He appointed) the great mountain Himālaya (as the king) of all mountains. The lord of gods appointed the auspicious ocean, the best sacred place of all, on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of rivers, lakes, small wells, of pools, and wells and other divine (sacred places). Then Brahmā, the lord of gods, consecrated Citraratha on the auspicious kingdom (i.e. as the king) of all the Gandharvas. Then the four-faced god (i.e. Brahmā) consecrated Vāsuki on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of the snakes (nāgas) of auspicious vigour and Takṣaka (as the king) of the serpents (sarpas).

16-18. In the same way, he consecrated Airāvaṇa on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of the elephants, and Uccaiḥśravas (as the king of) all the horses, and (Garuḍa) the son of Vinatā (as the king) of all the birds. He then appointed the lion on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of all the beasts. The lord of beings consecrated an excellent bull (as the chief) of the bulls. The grandsire (appointed) the Indian fig-tree (as the king) of trees.

19. In this way the grandsire Brahmā, the best one, having founded all the kingdoms, appointed the regents of the quarters.

20-27. The best one consecrated Sudhanvan, Vairāja's son, as the regent —as the king— in (i.e. of) the eastern quarter. He consecrated the noble Śaṅkhapada, son of Kardama Prajāpati, as the king of the southern quarter. Similarly Brahmā, the lord of beings, consecrated the son of Varuṇa Prajāpati, named Puṣkara, in (i.e. as the chief of) the western quarter. In (i.e. as the regent of) the northern quarter, Brahmā consecrated Nalakūbara. Thus he consecrated the very powerful regents of the quarters, by whom even now the earth with the seven islands and (many)

cities, is righteously protected according to (i.e. in) the regions (assigned to them). That illustrious Pṛthu also was consecrated as the king in accordance with the rites as seen (i.e. mentioned) in the Vedas and with all great sacrifices like the Rājasūya, in the pious period of Manu[1] called Cākṣuṣa, which has gone by, which had great splendour and which led to the good of gods and the righteous, O you illustrious one. Then he gave the kingdom to Vaisasvata Manu.

28-31. O best among the brāhmaṇas, if you desire to listen carefully, I shall also tell you the minute details about the magnanimous Pṛthu. This is the basis (*adhiṣṭhāna?*) (which is) said to be very meritorious. This (alone) is always determined (i.e. definitely told) in all the Purāṇas. That man, who, devoutly and with rapt attention, listens to this (account), which is meritorious, which leads to fame, gives long life, and an auspicious stay in heaven, which is blessed, pure, causing longevity, which bestows sons and prosperity, enjoys the fruit of (performing) the horse-sacrifice. There is no doubt about this.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

The Story of Pṛthu

The sages said:

1-7. O noble one, (please) tell us in detail (about) the birth of that magnanimous Pṛthu. We desire to hear it. (Tell us) how that noble king formerly milked this cow (i.e. the earth); how gods, manes, sages knowing the truth, demons, serpents, Yakṣas, trees and mountains, goblins and Gandharvas, brāhmaṇas doing auspicious acts, and how other magnanimous ones (did so). O you highly intelligent one, tell us especially how they held the pot of milk and the manner in which she was milked.

1. Manvantara—the period or age of Manu. This period comprises 4320000 human years or 1/14th day of Brahmā, the fourteen Manvantaras making up one whole day.

O Sūta's son, tell us why formerly the very meritorious and angry sages churned the hand even of that noble king Vena. This is a strange account which destroys all sins. We are desirous of hearing it; O noble one, (it is so interesting that) we are not at all content with (i.e. even though we hear) it.

Sūta said :

8-10a. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall tell you in detail about king Pṛthu's—Vena's son's—birth, power, his wife, also about the entire life of the intelligent (king). O noble and best brāhmaṇas, desire to hear it (i.e. listen to it).

10b-11. This account should not be narrated to one who is not a devotee, to one who is faithless, to a cheat, to a great fool, to one who is greatly deluded, to a bad disciple, to one who is void of faith, to one who is untruthful; do not narrate it to one who destroys everything.

12-13. He who recites it in a different way, goes to hell. You are full of devotion, and are intent upon behaving truthfully. In front of you (i.e. to you) I shall fully narrate the whole account that removes sins. O best brāhmaṇas, (please) listen.

14-17. O excellent brāhmaṇas, I shall tell you the secret, which leads (one) to heaven, to fame, which causes longevity, which is excellent, which is accepted by the Vedas and which is told by the sages. He, who, after saluting the brāhmaṇas, always narrates in detail this (account) of Pṛthu, the son of Vena, would never lament over what he has done and not done. The sin earned by him during seven births, perishes by just hearing it. A brāhmaṇa would know (the meaning of) the Vedas, a kṣatriya would be victorious, a vaiśya would be prosperous with wealth, and a śūdra would get happiness. One thus gets the fruit by reciting or listening to it.

18-26a. The biography of Pṛthu is pure and it removes sins. Formerly there was a Prajāpati, Aṅga by name, born in Atri's family and a lord resembling Atri. He preserved piety, was very intelligent and well-versed in the meaning of the Vedas and (other) branches of knowledge. His son was Vena, a lord of beings. Abandoning righteousness, he always proceeded (in all his acts). Mṛtyu had a highly virtuous daughter by name

Sunīthā. The noble Aṅga married that Sunīthā. On her he begot Vena, the destroyer of righteousness. Due to the blemishes of his maternal grandfather, Vena the son of the daughter of Kāla, gave up his own way of righteousness and became fondly attached to wickedness. Due to (sexual) desire, greed and infatuation he practised sin only. The lord of men gave up the virtuous practices as told in the Vedas, and being deluded by pride and jealousy, behaved sinfully. People at that time lived without Vedic studies. When he was the lord of the subjects, they were without the Vedic studies and Vaṣaṭkāra (i.e. they did not study the Vedas and did not offer oblations). Deities did not drink Soma that proceeded and was offered at sacrifices.

26b-30. The wicked one always said to the brāhmaṇas: "You should not study (the Vedas); you should not make offering into the fire. You should not give gifts; you should not perform sacrifices and should not make offerings into fire." When destruction was imminent, this was the declaration of that king. Again and again (he told): "Sacrifices are to be offered to me. I am the sacrificer as well as the sacrifice." (He) also (told them:) "Sacrifices should be offered to me; offerings should be made to me." Thus Vena always spoke. (He also said:) "I am the eternal Viṣṇu. I am Brahmā, I am Rudra, I am Indra. I am the wind. I am the enjoyer. I am the oblations offered to the deities and manes. There is no doubt about this."

31. Then all the very powerful sages, who got angry, got together and said to the king of a wicked mind:

The sages said :

32. The king is surely the lord of the earth (and) he always protects the subjects. The emperor is the image of righteousness, therefore he should protect it.

33. We are entering upon an initiation for a twelve-year sacrifice. Do not play a mischief with the sacrifice. Righteousness is the way of the good.

34. O great king, practise righteousness; practise truthfulness and merit. You have made an agreement that you would protect the subjects.

35. Vena, of a wicked mind, laughed and said this nonsensical thing to the sages, who were speaking like that:

Vena said :

36. Who else (but me) is the creator of Dharma (i.e. religious practices)? Whom else should I listen to? Who, on the earth, is like me in (point of) learning, power, penance or truth?

37. I am the source of all beings and especially of religious practices. You, who are confounded and ignorant do not know me.

38. If I desire, I would burn the earth or would inundate it with water. I would block up the heaven and the earth. There should be no discussion about this matter.

39-45a. O king, when they could not dissuade Vena from his infatuation and pride, the angry great sages, forcibly seized him with rage, and churned the left thigh of his, who was trembling with anger. The magnanimous ones saw (there a being) that was possessed of (=like) a heap of black collyrium, that was very short and strange, that had a long face and deformed eyes, that was bright due to an armour, that had a protruded belly and broad ears, that was very much frightened and that was a gamester. They then said to him, "sit down". Hearing those words of theirs, he, being distressed with fear, sat down. His race was settled in mountains and forests. (They are) the Niṣādas, the Kirātas, the Bhillas, the Nāhalakas, the Bhramaras, the Pulindas and those that belong to the other Mleccha species. From that part (i.e. left thigh) all those sinful ones were produced.

45b-52a. Then all the sages, with their minds pleased, (found) Vena, the best king, to be without a blemish. They churned the right hand of that magnanimous one only. When his hand was (thus) churned, sweat was produced. The sages again churned the right hand only. From that excellent hand a man was produced. He resembled twelve suns; the complexion of his body was like heated gold; he was covered with (i.e. he had put on) divine flowers; his body was shining due to divine ornaments; he had besmeared divine sandal on his body. He shone with a crown resembling the sun in colour (i.e. brilliance) and with a pair of ear-rings. His body was huge, his arms were large, he was matchless in form; the great lord had held a sword and arrows, a bow and had put on an armour. The highly intelligent one was endowed with all (auspicious) marks, and was decorated with all ornaments, and with a lustrous form and had a

good complexion. The son of Vena was (i.e. shone) on the earth as Indra in heaven.

52b-53. When that magnanimous one was born, gods and spotless sages celebrated a festival to (i.e. in honour of) the son of Vena. With his body he was evidently bright like fire.

54-55. When, holding the first Ājagava bow (i.e. Śiva's bow) which was excellent, and divine arrows and a very bright armour for protection, the magnanimous and noble hero Pṛthu, was born, all the beings were happy, O best brāhmaṇa.

56-59. To consecrate him (with their water), all the best brāhmaṇas proceeded to all sacred places and various auspicious (places of) water. O best brāhmaṇa, gods led by the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā), various beings, the immobile and the mobile consecrated that king, the great hero, the protector of the subjects, viz. Pṛthu. That son of Vena, noble and brave, being approached by the mobile and the immobile, by all gods and brāhmaṇas, was consecrated by them as the emperor of (all) kings.

60-63. His father had never pleased his subjects; (but) pleased by him, they were very happy. The term Rājan (i.e. king) came about (i.e. was coined) because of the hero's pleasing (his subjects). Due to the fear of that magnanimous one, the entire water of the ocean stood still when the great hero approached the ocean. Cutting off difficult passage, the mountains offered easy passage. All those mountains never insulted his flag. Crops grew in unploughed land, and everywhere cows gave milk as desired (by those who milked them).

64. Rain(-fall) was as (much as) desired. All brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and others performed Vedic sacrifices and celebrated great festivals.

65. When that king was ruling, all trees bore fruits as desired, there was no famine, no disease and no untimely death of men.

66. When that un-assailable, noble king of kings was ruling, all people, intent on following religious practices, lived happily.

67. At this time only, (i.e. from) the auspicious sacrifice of the grandsire, on a grand, pleasing day, Sūta was born of Sūti.

68. In (i.e. from) the same sacrifice the wise Māgadha was also born. By the great sages the two were invited there for praising Pṛthu.

69. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall narrate the characteristics of Sūta: He is endowed with a lock of hair on the crown of his head and a sacred thread; he is devoted to Vedic studies.

70-73. He knows the meaning of all the sacred books; he maintains the sacred fire; he is endowed with (i.e. he gives) gifts and study; he is intent upon Brāhmaṇic practices. He is always engaged in worshipping gods and brāhmaṇas. He is a sacrificer and would perform sacrifices to the accompaniment of Vedic hymns. He was always intent upon Brāhmaṇic practices and always had friendship with brāhmaṇas. Māgadha was born like this (but was) without studies. All those bandins and cāraṇas should be known to be (i.e. were) magnanimous and were without Brāhmaṇic practices, and predominated as bards.

74-78a. Both the skilful Sūta and Māgadha were created for eulogising; all the sages said to them: "Praise this king; and also the deeds worthy of him, and (narrate) also how the king is." The Bandin (i.e. the Sūta) and Māgadha said to all the sages: "We two shall please all the gods and sages with our deeds; but we do not know his deeds, and also his characteristics and his glory. O best brāhmaṇas, we do not know that deed of this magnanimous (king) with which (i.e. taking which into consideration) we would praise him. This best king, whose merits are not known (to us), would be praised with (i.e. with reference to) his future auspicious qualities."

78b-86. All the sages told (them) the deeds which that very glorious Pṛthu performed, (and also) all the divine virtues of that magnanimous one. (The sages said:) "He (will be) truthful, endowed with knowledge, intelligent and of well-known valour; he (will) always (be) brave, (will) appreciate merits, (will be) meritorious, truth-speaking, and the best performer of sacrifices. He (will) speak pleasing words, (will) speak the truth, (will) have grains and wealth, (will) know and appreciate (others') merits, (will) know what is right, and (will) love truth, (will) be omnipresent, omniscient, friendly to brāhmaṇas, knower of the Vedas, and very intelligent. He (will) be wise, (will) have a sweet voice, and (will) master the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He will support and protect (his) subjects; he (will) be victorious on the battle-field. The best king will perform sacrifices like the Rājasūya, and is the only one on the earth who is endowed with

all virtuous practices. The magnanimous one will possess these qualities." The two, viz. Sūta and Māgadha, were appointed by the sages to sing the praises of that magnanimous one with (reference to) the future qualities (i.e. qualities he will possess). O highly intelligent one, since then people are delighted with eulogies, and hereafter also the donors will be pleased with excellent praises.

87-93. Since then, O best brāhmaṇas, blessings are employed (i.e. included) in eulogies; and they (who sing praises) get excellent (i.e. abundant) wealth. The noble Pṛthu, out of graciousness, gave Sūta, Māgadha and Bandin, the prosperous and excellent country, viz. Tailaṅga, and also the Haihaya country. Having established a city named after himself on the bank of the Revā, he, performing sacrifices, formerly gave (gifts) to brāhmaṇas, O best brāhmaṇa. All the subjects, and also the sages of pure penance saw the best man, who was omniscient, gave all gifts, and whose strength lay in piousness. The meritorious ones said to one another: "He will give livelihood to gods and especially to us. He will protect the subjects and maintain them." O you very wise ones, it is said that formerly this earth became stable after the seed sown (in it) was eaten by the created beings for living.

94-98. Then the subjects ran to Pṛthu. Having heard (i.e. he heard) the words of the sages, 'Give us a good livelihood'. The Earth, having consumed all (kinds of) food, became very stable. The best king, seeing the very great fear of the subjects, and also by the word of the great sages, took his bow with an arrow, and the angry king speedily ran to the Earth. The Earth, through his fear, took up the form of an elephant, and concealing herself, moved through forests and inaccessible places. The very wise one did (i.e. could) not see (her in) the form of an elephant.

99-101. Then the king ran after her in the form of an elephant. Being struck by him with sharp arrows, she, taking up a lion's form, became wholly occupied in running. The king, observing that (Earth in a) lion's form, ran towards (i.e. after) her. That very wise one, who was extremely angry, and whose charming eyes were red due to anger, struck the Earth with whetted and sharp excellent arrows.

102. Struck with the arrows, she (i.e. the Earth) was

afflicted and alarmed. Taking up the form of a buffalo she became intent on fleeing.

103-120. The archer (i.e. Pṛthu), with an arrow in his hand, ran fast (after her). O you best brāhmaṇas, she became (i.e. turned herself into) a cow and verily went to heaven. She sought the shelter of Brahmā and of the noble Viṣṇu also. She did (i.e. could) not secure the refuge of gods like Rudra. Not getting a great (i.e. good) protection, she regarded Vena's son only (as her refuge). Afflicted with (the injury caused by) the stroke of the arrow, she came to his side (i.e. to him). With her hands joined in humble entreaty, she spoke (these) words to Pṛthu. She said to the king: "O king of kings, protect me, protect me. O magnanimous one, I am mother Earth, the support of all. O king, when I am killed, (all) the seven worlds are destroyed. I am always to be worshipped by the three worlds, with the palms of their hands joined in obeisance." She also said to the king: "O king, a woman is always exempt from death (i.e. is never to be killed). The best brāhmaṇas have considered killing a woman to be a great sin. The best brāhmaṇas have also considered killing a cow to be a great sin. O great king how will you support the subjects without me? O king, when I am stable, then (only) the mobile and immobile worlds become stable. These mobile and immobile worlds will perish without me. When I perish, the beings will perish. O king, how will you support your subjects without me? The people are steady on me, the world is supported by me. There is no doubt that when I perish all the beings will perish. If you desire bliss, then (please) do not destroy me. O lord of beings, O king, listen to my words. Undertakings become highly successful through efforts, O noble one. Properly consider that effort by which you will support (your) subjects. O you very wise great king, by destroying me, i.e. without me, how will you always support, maintain, nourish and hold in your possession these subjects? Control your anger. I shall be full of food and will support these subjects. As a woman I am not to be killed; (if you kill me) you will have to atone (for having killed me). They say that a female, even of the lower species, is not to be killed. Considering in this way, you should not give up your proper conduct." Thus the earth spoke many words

to the king: "O great king, give up this terrible wrath. O king of kings, if you are pleased then (only) I shall be happy."

121. Thus addressed by her, king Pṛthu, the lord of subjects and the son of Vena, said (these words) to the noble Earth, O best brāhmaṇas:

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

The Story of Pṛthu (Contd.)

Pṛthu said :

1-13a. If a very sinful one is killed, O you of sinful conduct, good people rich in merit live happily. Therefore one that is most sinful and of a wicked mind should be killed. Now you have suppressed all seeds by devouring them. Where will you go by being stable after having destroyed the beings? When a sinful one of a bad conduct is killed, the good live happily. Therefore sin should be destroyed; this is the truth; there is no doubt about it. That from which merit proceeds, should be carefully preserved. You have committed a great sin causing the destruction of the beings. He who for himself or for someone else kills one who torments the world, does not incur sin. O auspicious Earth, when many people become happy by a wicked one having been killed, there is neither a (major) sin nor a minor sin. There is no doubt that (i.e. certainly) I shall kill you. If, O Earth, for the good of this world (i.e. these beings), you do not act according to these meritorious and good words of (i.e. uttered by) me, I shall kill you with sharp arrows, if you are averse to my words. There is no doubt that I shall sustain, by means of my lustre and merit, the virtuous beings living in the three worlds. Accepting my meritorious rule, and obeying my order always rejuvenate these beings, O Earth. If, O you good one, you today obey this order of mine, then I shall be pleased with you, and will always protect you, and also other best kings (will protect you); there is no doubt about this.

13b-14a. That Earth, in the form of a cow, with her body adorned (i.e. covered) with arrows, said these (words) to the highly intelligent Pṛthu, Vena's son, who was the support of righteousness:

The Earth said :

14b-18. O great king, I shall carry out your order, full of truth and merit, for the well-being of the beings; there is no doubt about it. O best king, enterprises and meritorious undertakings become successful by means of exertion and resourcefulness. O king of kings, find out a means by which you would be upright. Support all the subjects in such a way that you make all of them prosperous. Your stone-like (i.e. hard) and sharp arrows have stuck to my body. O king, you yourself extract them. They very much prick me. Make me (turned into) such (a shape) that the water would remain on me.

Sūta said :

19-24. Extracting those big and stone(-like arrows)of various forms with the end of his bow, he made the Earth even. Since then, O best brāhmaṇas, those stones grew in size. The son of king Vena, with pleased mind, having extracted his arrows from her body, made even the ditches and the caves with the strokes of his arrows. Thus, he, prospering with merit, made even the entire Earth. Having made her even, and having thought repeatedly, the noble one made Svāyambhuva Manu as the first calf. O best ones, during the Manu-periods that had passed, the Earth had become uneven; and there was no path anywhere, O best brāhmaṇas, even and uneven portions were naturally there.

25-32a. When the first period of Cākṣuṣa Manu arrived, and when the first creation came up, and when the surface of the Earth was uneven, the boundries of villages, cities, towns, countries, and fields that were seized (*kṣetrapannānām?*) were not noticed. There was no agriculture, no trade and no cow-keeping. No one told lies; there was neither greed nor jealousy. It is said that nobody ever entertained pride or committed sin. O best brāhmaṇa, when the Vaivasvata period came, the beings were

born even before the birth of Vena's son. All these beings desired to have an abode. All the beings, through their merit, lived at some places on the ground, or on a mountain, or on the banks of rivers, or in bowers, or at all sacred places, or on the sea-beaches. Fruits, roots and honey was their food. O best brāhmaṇas, (they got) their food with great difficulty.

32b-43. Having seen the misery of the beings, the king Pṛthu, Vena's son, made Svāyambhuva Manu the calf. O you highly intelligent one, he used his own hand as the vessel. That Pṛthu, the tiger (i.e. the best) among men, then milked the Earth, (and) the milk (was) all the crops and all food of a good quality. Those beings satisfied by means of that auspicious food, resembling nectar, all gods and others (like) the manes. Those beings lived happily by the favour of that son of Vena. O best brāhmaṇas, all the virtuous beings, after offering food first to gods, then to brāhmaṇas and especially to guests, enjoyed food. Some offered oblations in sacrifices, and pleased Viṣṇu only, the lord of gods with the same food. The deities also were satisfied (with the food). Rain sent by Viṣṇu showered. By virtue of that great auspicious trees sprang up. All kinds of crops (grew when) Pṛthu, Vena's son, was the king. Due to that food even now all beings live. The sages also, coming together, milked this Earth. It was again milked by the very blessed sages and the truthful gods. Soma was the calf and the lord of gods himself was the milkman. Energy was the milk, resembling water, by which the gods live. All the beings live due to their truthfulness and merit. They follow truth and merit. (Thus) the Earth was milked by the sages.

44-49. Now I shall narrate how formerly the Earth was milked by the manes and who was made the calf. Making a silver pot and svadhā, with nectar, the milk, and making Yama the calf, Antaka (i.e. Yama) himself became the milkman. O best brāhmaṇas, then the snakes (Nāga) and serpents (Sarpa) milked (the Earth) and (made) Takṣaka the calf. Taking a vessel made of gourd (they collected) the milk i.e. the poison (in it). The valorous Dhṛtarāṣṭra was the milkman for the snakes. O best brāhmaṇas, the matchless serpents and snakes live by that. O best brāhmaṇas, the snakes and the fearful serpents also live by that very poignant poison of a fierce nature,

The fierce, huge-bodied and very powerful ones live by that only. They eat it, move with it; that is their power and valour.

50-59. O best brāhmaṇas, now I shall narrate to you as to how all the demons and the goblins milked the Earth, making, at that time, an iron-pot, and making the milk of the nature of illusion, useful for all purposes, resembling food and destroying all the enemies. The calf of the demons was that powerful Virocana. The priest was Dvimūrdhan, and the very mighty Madhu was the milkman. Due to that illusion, the very strong, very wise, huge-bodied and very lustrous and valorous demons thrive. That is their power; that is their manliness; the demons live by that. O best brāhmaṇas, even now they, of limited intellect, live with that illusion. That is their strength. In the same way the Yakṣas milked the good Earth, the support of all. O best brāhmaṇas, thus we have heard. Formerly the noble ones (milked the Earth) in the former kalpa (when) the milk was of the nature of obscurity (*antardhānamayam*?). The very intelligent Vaiśravaṇa was made the calf; and the milkman of her (i.e. the Earth) was the meritorious, wisest and best among the intelligent viz. Rajatanābha, father of the Yakṣa Maṇibhadra. He was omniscient; he knew all the ways of good conduct; he was the powerful son of the king of Yakṣas; he had eight arms, two heads, and had great lustre and had very great (i.e. severe) penance (to his credit). O best brāhmaṇas, the Yakṣas always stood by him.

60-82. This Earth was again milked by the very strong demons; in the same way she (was milked) by the eager goblins who had consumed water. A human skull—a vessel that came up from a dead body—and one made of iron (were the pots used by them). They of strong anger and valor wanted to enjoy (i.e. to have) good progeny. The very strong Rajatanābha was their milkman, the calf was (one) by name Sumālin, and blood was the milk. The demons, evil spirits, and powerful goblins, Yakṣas and fearful groups of ghosts live by that (milk). Gandharvas and the celestial nymphs, making the learned Citraratha the calf, milked the Earth again. They milked her (milk) full of the music of Gandharvas. O best brāhmaṇas, the very intelligent and most meritorious Gandharva, Suruci, was their milkman. The noble ones milked pure songs as the good milk at that time. The Gandharvas and others (i.e.) the celestial nymphs also live

by that. The auspicious mountains also milked this Earth. They (obtained as milk) various gems and herbs like nectar. The noble Himālaya (mountain) was made the calf. Meru was the milkman, and the pot was made from a big rock. All the very powerful mountains grew (strong) by (drinking) that milk. The great auspicious trees like Kalpa (i.e. the desire-yielding) tree again milked (the Earth). They had brought the pot made of Palāśa tree with its sprouts cut off and burnt. At that time Śāla, of a flowery body milked (the Earth) and Plakṣa was the calf. This (Earth) the supporter of all and the giver of everything was also milked by Guhyakas, Cāraṇas, Siddhas and groups of the Vidyādharas. Whatever the worlds desired with (i.e. by employing) particular vessels and calves, all that she just gave to them, (and) like this (she also gave) them milk with a good mind. This Earth is the supporter, the creator; she is the greatest. She is a cow yielding all desires and is adorned with the auspicious ones. She is the eldest, she is the prop. She is the creation and the beings. She is purifying, she gives merit, she is virtuous, she causes all the crops to grow, she is the supporter and the origin of all the mobile and the immobile. This (Earth) is great fortune, is learning, and is always full of everything. She yields (i.e. satisfies) all desires; she is a cow yielding milk; she causes all seeds to grow. This (Earth), the supporter of all the human race, is the mother (i.e. the origin) of all righteous deeds. She is the light and the form of even the five elements. She was bounded by the ocean and was known as *Medinī*. The entire Earth was submerged with (i.e. in) the marrow (*medas*) of Madhu and Kaiṭabha. Therefore she is called *Medinī* by the expounders of the Vedas. Then, O best ones, due to the arrival of Pṛthu, the wise son of Vena, she became his daughter, and is called *Pṛthivī*. O best brāhmaṇas, that king protected this Earth that is the support of villages and houses, and that is crowned with cities and towns, that has crops and mines, that is bulky and full of all crops, O brāhmaṇas. Thus this goddess Earth is full of all people; (her) prowess like this is mentioned in the Purāṇas.

83-91. The noble Pṛthu, Vena's son, was noted for all (good) deeds. He was like Viṣṇu, like Brahmā (or) like the ancient Rudra. The three gods deserve to be saluted by the expounders of the Vedas led by gods. The best king who is the

founder of the castes and the stages of life, and who supports all the worlds, deserves to be saluted by brāhmaṇas and sages. Also the first, valorous king Pṛthu, Vena's son, deserves to be saluted by noble kings, and by those desiring to be kings. (Pṛthu) who has given livelihood to kings deserves to be saluted by warriors who desire (to master) archery and who always desire victory. O best brāhmaṇas, in this way I have narrated to you the particular vessels, the special properties of calves and of the milkmen in particular. I have also properly told you the speciality of the milk as desired by the king. O best brāhmaṇas, he, who listens to the account of Pṛthu, Vena's son, which is blessed, which leads to glory and good health, which is meritorious and which destroys sins, has (the credit of) a daily bath in the Bhāgīrathī. He, with all his sins purified, goes to Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Sulobha and Śapharahā; Suśaṅkha and Sunithā

The sages said :

1-2. O brāhmaṇa, what was the course of conduct of that sinful Vena, whom you mentioned as behaving sinfully, and what fruit did he get ? O you wisest and very intelligent one, tell us in detail the account of that Vena (as it) formerly (took place).

Sūta said :

3-9a. I shall properly tell you the story of that Vena and also the very meritorious account of his noble son, as I have heard it before. When that magnanimous son, Pṛthu, was born, the king (Vena) became spotless and again became religious. All the major sins earned (i.e. committed) by mean persons vanish with their close contact with the sacred places. There is no doubt that merit alone is produced in the company of the good; and sin alone is produced in the company of sinners. Sin would spread around by talking with, seeing, touching, sitting and taking food with and by the company of sinners. In the same way merit alone

would spread in the company of the meritorious. The sinners are purified by their contact with great sacred place (only) and in no other way; and ultimately, with all their sins completely washed, they obtain a holy status.

The sages said :

9b-16a. O best brāhmaṇa, how do the sinners reach the highest attainment ? Tell that in detail; faith is produced (in us).

Sūta said :

There were very sinful hunters, slaves and fishermen, who remained in the water of Revā, Yamunā and Gaṅgā. By chance they knowingly or unknowingly bathed and sported in the water of the great river and obtained the highest position. Casting off their slavish life—the heap of sins—they went to the highest position. Due to their contact with the holy water they all crossed (the ocean of mundane existence). (This was) due to (their) contact with the great river, and not due to contact with other rivers, O best ones. By the contact of a highly meritorious person, and also by seeing and touching him, the sin of even the sinners perishes. No doubt should be raised about this. O brāhmaṇas, in this matter an account, destroying sins, is heard. I shall today tell you that (account) giving great merit.

16b-24a. In a great forest there was a deer-hunter named Sulobha. Greedy of tasting flesh, he everyday killed deer with (the help of) dogs, and with traps and snares. Once that very wicked one, holding a bow and arrows in his hand, being surrounded by dogs went to Vindhya-forest. He killed many beasts, deer and pigs that were frightened. A man, the killer (i.e. hunter) of śaphara (a kind of small glittering fish), resorting to the bank of Revā, and killing many śaphara, came out of the water. Then a female deer, afflicted with fear of that deer-hunter Lobha, and intent upon saving her life, distressed, frightened and with her mind unsettled, fleeing hurriedly, resorted (i.e. came) to the bank of Revā. She that was hurt by the stroke of an arrow, was attacked by dogs. Sulobha, the deer-hunter, pursued her with the speed of wind, and the female deer ran before him. The śaphara-killer, with an arrow in his hand and ready (to strike), bent his bow quickly and checked the female deer.

24b-30. Just then the hunter called Lobha came there with his dogs. "Do not kill her, she is my (game), she has come in the range of my hunt." Hearing (these) words of him (i.e. of Lobha), the wicked and very powerful fish-killer, greedy of flesh, discharged an arrow directed towards her. Struck by the deer-hunter with an arrow, the female deer who was (thus) struck with the two arrows of (i.e. discharged by) the two wicked ones, died there. (Trying) to run away in a hurry, she, being attacked by the dogs, fell from the peak into the Revā-pool that destroyed sins. The dogs also hurrying (to attack her) fell into the sacred pool. Overpowered with anger, the deer-hunter (i.e. Lobha) said to the fisherman: "O wicked one, this female deer is my (game); why did you strike her with arrows?" Then the fish-killer too said to the deer-hunter: "She is my (game); there is no doubt; why are you talking (like this), O proud one (i.e. proudly)."

31-35. Then the two lucky ones, fighting with each other through anger and greed, fell into the sacred water (of Revā). At that time the great parvan, giving a great religious merit and leading to an (excellent) position, viz. Amāvāsyā (i.e. the new-moon day) arrived. All of them, bereft of muttering prayers and meditation and of truthfulness fell (into the water) during the period of the parvan, O best one. On account of the bath of the holy place, the female deer, a dog and the hunter, being freed from all sins, attained the highest position (i.e. went to heaven). O best brāhmaṇa, due to the power of the sacred place and the company of the good, the sin of the sinners would be destroyed as fire would burn fuel.

Sūta said :

36-38. By the company of the noble sages, by talking with them, by seeing and touching them, by the company of the good, formerly the sin of king Vena perished. The sin of sinners perishes by the contact of very great merit (i.e. very meritorious persons). Sin alone would spread by the company of very great sinners. Vena was stained with the sin of his maternal grandfather.

The sages said:

39-44a. Tell us in detail what the fault of the maternal

grandfather was. He is death, he is Kāla (i.e. god of death) and is Yama and Dharma. He does not harm anyone. He is well-settled in his position. All mobile and immobile worlds, influenced by their own deeds, live and die due to their own deeds, and also enjoy due to their own deeds. On the ripening of their deeds, the sinners meet the fierce one. O Sūta, it is this very meritorious Yama, who, everyday would employ or punish (beings), according to their deeds, in all the hells. The pious-minded and righteous one employs (beings) in all very meritorious deeds. No fault of his is observed (in this). Due to what fault of Mṛtyu (i.e. Yama) was that sinful Vena born ?

Sūta said :

44b-56. That Mṛtyu remains in the form of Kāla (i.e. god of death) as the ruler of the wicked-minded. He reflects opon their deeds. He would destroy a person, who has (done) a wicked deed, with (i.e. as a result of) that deed. Knowing his sin this Yama takes him. A righteous soul, through his merit would obtain (i.e. go to) heaven. Mṛtyu alone, through his good messengers, unites all of them (with proper reward). He unites the blessed souls with great happiness, auspicious songs and gifts, and enjoyments. That Mṛtyu, being angry would frighten them only with various kinds of afflictions and distresses and beat them with terrible (clubs) of wood. O noble one, his function remains in (i.e. with reference to) the deeds, and that is due to one's greed of merit. A daughter by name Sunīthā was born to that magnanimous one. Always sporting and observing the deeds of her father, she advised him who observed the good and bad deeds of the subjects. That glorious daughter of him, Sunīthā by name, sporting and surrounded by (her) friends came to a forest. There she saw an excellent distinguished son of a Gandharva, by name Suśaṅkha, with all his body charming, practising penance, and meditating on Sarasvatī, for obtaining great competence in the science of music, in spite of (i.e. even though there was) a loud and confused sound of music. Everyday she created an obstruction in his (penance and meditation). Everyday Suśaṅkha, saying "Go, go (away)", pardoned her. Though thus sent away (i.e. asked to go away) she would still cause harm to him. (Thus)

told by him, she, too, getting angry, struck him, who remained in (i.e. practising) penance.

57-62. Then that Suśaṅkha angry and overcome with wrath said to her: "O wicked, sinful one, why did you obstruct (my penance)? Great people do not beat (back) a wicked person when beaten (by him). Though abused they do not get angry. This is the restraint (brought about) by righteousness. O wicked one, you struck me who am faultless and endowed with penance." Speaking this to that sinful Sunīthā, that pious one, ceased (to speak) and knowing her to be a female, kept himself away from anger. Then she, through sinful delusion and immaturity, spoke to that noble Suśaṅkha, who remained in (i.e. was practising) penance: "My father himself is the destroyer of the residents of the three worlds; he would always destroy the bad ones and would protect the truthful ones. There would be no fault on his part, he would behave very meritoriously."

63-66. Saying so, she went to her father and said to him: "O father, in the forest I struck a Gandharva's son, who was always practising penance in a secluded place and was free from desire and anger. He, the righteous one, endowed with anger and love said to me: 'One should not beat him who beats one, nor should one make him weep, who makes one weep.' Thus, O father, he spoke to me. Tell me the reason (for this)." O best brāhmaṇas, that righteous Mṛtyu, thus addressed, did not say anything to Sunīthā, in reply to (her) question.

67-71. She again came to the forest where that Suśaṅkha remained. Through wickedness she struck him, the best among those who practised penance, with the blows of her hands. O brāhmaṇas, the daughter of Mṛtyu beat Suśaṅkha. Then the highly lustrous one got angry and cursed her of a slender waist: "O wicked one, since you beat me, who am faultless and who remained in this forest, therefore I shall give (you) a curse. Listen, O wicked one, when, with your husband, you will lead the life of a housewife a son, full of evil conduct, censurer of gods and brāhmaṇas, engrossed in all sinful acts, will be (conceived) in your womb." Cursing like this, he too left, and resorted to penance only.

72-75. When that glorious one had left, Sunīthā went home. With her mind burning (with anger) she told her noble father as

(to how) she was then cursed by the son of a Gandharva. Mṛtyu listened to all that, and said: "Why did you harm him, who was practising penance and who was innocent? O (my) daughter, you have not done a proper thing in beating a truthful person." Saying so, the righteous Mṛtyu, reflecting upon what she had told him, became extremely pained.

Sūta said :

76-85. O brāhmaṇas, once the brāhmaṇa, the very lustrous and vigorous son of Atri went to the Nandana (garden); there he saw Indra, Pākaśāsana. He saw Indra, who was accompanied by hosts of celestial nymphs and Gandharvas and Kinnaras, who was (i.e. whose praise was) being sung by singers with seven very melodious notes, who was being fanned by beautiful women walking like swans with fragrant fans, and with chowries, who, the thousand-eyed one, shone with an umbrella (white) in colour like swans and (round) like the disc of the moon, who was adorned with all ornaments, who was engaged in sexual sports, who possessed an unlimited prowess. By his side he saw the blessed virtuous Paulomī, charming and auspicious, glorious with beauty, lustre and penance, shining with good fortune and chastity. With her that Indra enjoyed in the Nandana forest. Seeing his sport, the best brāhmaṇa Aṅga (thought): 'Lucky is the king of gods who is surrounded by such (beings). Oh, (great) is the power of his penance, due to which he has obtained such a great (i.e. high) position. When I shall have such a son, the great support of all the worlds, I shall obtain great happiness. There is no doubt about it.' Thus engaged in thinking he quickly came home.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

The Account of Suvrata

Sūta said :

1-5. Then Aṅga, the very lustrous one, seeing noble Indra's wealth, enjoyment of amorous pleasures and sports (thought:)

'How shall I have a son, endowed with piety, like Indra?' Aṅga, the best among the righteous, thinking like this, came to his own house. Bowing down and with his neck (i.e. head) bent down (in respect) he asked Atri, his father: "Who enjoys this high position of Indra by doing pious deeds? Of what merit is this the result ? What deed did he do? And of what kind was it? What kind of penance did he have (i.e. practise)? Whom did he propitiate formerly? O best among the truthful ones, tell me in detail (about) this."

Atri said :

6-8. Bravo ! O noble one, you are asking me like this (a good question). O child, listen to me, who will tell you the account of Indra. Formerly there was an intelligent, excellent brāhmaṇa by name Suvrata. He pleased Kṛṣṇa, Hṛṣīkeśa, with penance. He again reached the meritorious womb of Aditi through Kaśyapa; and through Viṣṇu's grace, he became the king of gods.

Aṅga said :

9. O you affectionate towards your sons, how shall I have a son like Indra? Tell me a means for that, O best among the wise.

Atri said :

10-17. O you highly intelligent one, listen to the entire account of that illustrious Suvrata, in brief—as to how that intelligent Suvrata formerly propitiated Hari. The lord of the world (i.e. Viṣṇu) having observed his sincerity, devotion and meditation, gave him a great position. That Indra, sustaining the three worlds, enjoys the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile, and the (high) position, through Viṣṇu's favour only. All this I have told you, so also Indra's acts. O best one, Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) is pleased with devotion and sincere meditation. Hari, pleased with devotion, being delighted, gives everything. Therefore, O (my) son, having propitiated Govinda, who gives everything, who is the cause of everything, who is omniscient, who knows everything, who is the best man among all, you will obtain from him whatever you desire. He is the giver of happiness, of the highest truth, of salvation, and is the lord of the worlds. Therefore, O son, go (and) propitiate him; you will obtain a son like Indra.

18-19. He, having heard the words uttered by that illustrious sage, which contained the highest truth, and having understood the import of these words, he, having saluted that eternal one, left (the place). That noble Aṅga, having taken his leave of his father, Brahmā's son, and resembling Brahmā, reached the peak of the Meru mountain, which was full of gold and gems.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

Aṅga Gets a Boon from Vāsudeva

Sūta said :

1-20. The best mountain (i.e. Meru), with its regions very bright with various gems and gold on all sides, shone like the Sun with his rays. All the meditating saints, seated on firm seats after resorting to very pleasing, cool, comfortable shades, meditated. At some places the sages practised penance; at some places Kinnaras sang (songs). Gandharvas, being delighted, (sang songs), beating time with their hands. Delightful songs were presented by them, who were engrossed in beating (and) measuring time in music, and with the seven musical notes; and with melody and closed fists. On that greatest mountain, Gandharvas, knowing the essential nature of songs, and being intent on singing, sang them, after having resorted to the shades of sandal-trees. The divine women danced there on the excellent mountain. The sound (of the recitation) of the Vedas, which destroyed sins, gave religious merit, which was divine, which bestowed great bliss, and which was very sweet, was heard on the best mountain. The excellent mountain shone with (trees like) sandal, Aśoka, Punnāga, Śāla, Tāla, and bunyan, resembling clouds. The lord of mountains shone at every place with Santānaka[1] trees, desire-yielding trees crowded with Ambhā (?) trees and well-blossomed divine trees. The mountain was full of many minerals and full of heaps of gems. It was full of many wonders and of various auspicious things. It was resorted to by groups of Vedas and was full of the groups of celestial nymphs. It

1. Santānaka—One of the five trees of Indra's paradise.

shone with sages, ascetics, Siddhas and Gandharvas. It looked beautiful with elephants resembling mountains and with the roars of lions. It was adorned with Śarabhas[1], with furious tigers and cunning beasts. Everywhere it looked charming with wells, pools and tanks containing spotless water and crowded with swans and ducks. It looked beautiful with golden, white and red lotuses. The lord of mountains looked charming with groups of rivers and streams having clear water, with Śāla and Tāla trees, and with crystal forms and elephants, and with slabs of stone which were extensive, golden, divine and which resembled the sun and fire. It was adorned with the mansions of deities, and palaces (resembling) excellent mountains, and with golden staffs resembling swans and the moon. It was also decorated with pitchers, chowries and palaces. It was also adorned with hosts of gods delighted by various excellences (of the mountain). That holy, best mountain Meru shone all round with many hosts of gods, Gandharvas and bards. That great river, which is very holy, which contains sacred water, which is rich with holy places, which is crowded with swans and lotuses, and which is resorted to by ascetics and hosts of sages, has risen from it.

21-31. Aṅgā, the great meritorious sage, the son of Atri, (went to) that best mountain having such excellences and auspicious on account of holy wonders. He entered a beautiful cave on the very sacred and secluded bank of the Gaṅgā. The intelligent one, free from desire and anger, sat there after having controlled all his senses, and meditated upon the pious Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa, the lord who removes all afflictions and who remained in his mind. He, being attentive, full of deep meditation and with his senses conquered (i.e. controlled) always saw Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) on a seat or bed or in a vehicle or in meditation. He saw Viṣṇu in the beings—mobile and immobile. That brāhmaṇa (saw Viṣṇu) in all wet, dry and other things. In this way a hundred years passed, while he was practising penance. Seeing the best brāhmaṇa (practising penance like this), the lord of the world, with the disc in his hand, always presented before him many very fearful dangers. With that lustre of the glorious god Nṛsiṁha, the pious and fearless (brāhmaṇa) burnt (himself) as

1. Śarabha—a fabulous animal said to have eight legs and to be stronger than a lion.

fire burns the fuel. The best brāhmaṇa Aṅga was getting emaciated by observances and restraints; yet by means of his own lustre he appeared shining like the sun and fire. The god appeared before him who was thus deeply engrossed in penances and was meditating upon Janārdana, and said to him, "O you who show respect, choose a boon." Seeing that Hṛṣīkeśa, Aṅga, who was highly delighted, with his mind pleased, and bowing down, praised him.

Aṅga said :

32-54. O you origin of beings, O you purifier, you are the refuge of all beings; O you lord of all beings, you are the soul of beings. My salutation to you who are full of merit. My salutation to you who are of the nature of merit, who are a mystery and are beyond all qualities; to you who are merit (itself), who are the cause of merit, who are endowed with merit and are of the nature of merit; to you who are the worldly life, the cause of the worldly life and who remove (i.e. free) your devotees from the worldly existence; to you from whom the worldly life has sprung up, to you who are a mystery, and the destroyer of the worldly life. Salutation to you, who are the sacrifice, who are of the form of sacrifices and the lord of sacrifice; who are connected with the sacrificial act and the holder of the conch. My repeated salutations to (you who are) gold, who hold a disc, to you who are truth, and are of true thoughts and are full of all truth. My salutation to you who are Dharma (i.e. Piety), the cause of Dharma and the cause of everything. My salutation to you whose body is Dharma, who are a great hero and who are the prop of righteousness. My salutation to you who are a meritorious and noble son and not a son; to you who destroy illusion and delusion and who bring about entire illusion. My repeated salutations to you who sustain illusion, who are embodied and formless. My salutation to you who take up all forms and are Śaṅkara (i.e. you who bring about blisses). My salutation to you, who are Brahman, of the nature of Brahman and identical with the highest Brahman; to you who are all lustre and possess lustre. My salutation to you who possess glory, who live in glory and sustain glory; to you who live in the ocean and are immortal. My salutation to you who are a great mineral, who are fierce and are

beyond great wisdom; to you who are not cruel, who are pure and the lord of sacred things. My salutations to you, the unlimited one, the complete one, and to the sinless one. Salutation to you who are the light of the sky and are of the form of a bird. Salutation to you who are the one to whom oblations are offered, who enjoys the oblations and who are of the form of oblations. Salutation to you who are Buddha (i.e. enlightened), who are a god, and you who are ever enlightened. Salutation to you, who are the oblation offered to the gods and to the manes; to you who are the utterance svadhā (used at the time of offering oblation to the manes) and svāhā (the utterance used at the time of offering oblation to the gods), to you who are pure, who are unmanifest and glorious. Salutation to you who are Vyāsa, Indra and of the nature of the Vasus; to you who are Vāsudeva, who are everything and to you who are of the form of fire; repeated salutations to you, who alone are Hari, Vāmana (i.e. Viṣṇu). Salutation to the god Nṛsiṁha and to you who maintain righteousness. My salutation to the cowherd Govinda and to the one-syllabled one. My salutation to you who are omni-syllabled and of the nature of the Supreme Soul. My salutation to you who are of the nature of the three principles or of the nature of the five elements; salutation to you who are (of the form of) the twentyfive principles and the support of the elements. Salutation to you who are Kṛṣna (i.e. Viṣṇu or dark), who are of the nature of Kṛṣna and are the lord of Lakṣmī. My salutation to you who are (charming) like a lotus-petal and are the highest bliss. My salutation to you who are the supporter of all and the destroyer of sins. My salutation to you who are the very great merit and you who practise truth. O eternal one, my repeated salutations to you who are immutable and a misty heap; to you having a lotus in (i.e. rising from) your navel; to you who are the great god. O Keśava, I salute your lotus-like feet. O you root of joy, O you dear to Lakṣmī, O Vāsudeva, O lord of all, O god, O Madhusūdana, make me your slave. O Keśava, I salute your feet. Be gracious to me in existence after existence, O you who give tranquility and who have a conch in your hand. Sprinkle me with water of knowledge, who am burnt by the heat of the fierce fire of the worldly existence and by many (kinds of) anguish and agony due to the deaths of sons etc. and of kinsmen; O lord Padmanābha, be a refuge to me.

55-58. Having heard this hymn of praise of (i.e. recited by) the noble Aṅga, Hṛṣīkeśa, shining with great lustre, and with the holy Kaustubha, marked with the Śrīvatsa, presented before Aṅga his own and very superior form having the conch, the disc and the mace in his hands, (and also) a lotus in his hand, and mounted upon Garuḍa, and with all limbs of his body beautified with a necklace, bracelets, and ear-rings, and looking great, divine and spotless, and charming due to the sylvan garland.

59-70a. Having thus manifested his own form, Hari, of the nature of all gods, said to that best noble sage, Aṅga : "O blessed brāhmaṇa, listen to (these) auspicious words." With a sound deep like (the thundering of) clouds, he spoke to the best brāhmaṇa : "I am pleased with this penance (practised by you). Choose an auspicious boon." He, full of great joy, again and again saluted the feet of Janārdana, who was shining, looking bright, who was the lord of people, who was of a universal form, who, the lord of Lakṣmī, was pleased, and said to him : "O you god of gods, O you holder of the conch, the disc and the mace, I am your slave. (If) you desire to grant me a boon, then give me a son born in my family (i.e. of my blood). Give me a son, the protector of all the people, and one full of all lustre shining like Indra in heaven. When you desire to grant me a boon, (then) (give me) a son, who is dear to all gods, who knows the Vedas, who is well-versed in the code of conduct, who is a donor, who is endowed with knowledge, and with the lustre of piety, who is the protector of the three worlds, who is Kṛṣṇa, who protects the truthful conduct, who is the best among the sacrificers, who is a unique hero, and who is the ornament of the three worlds, who is hospitable to brāhmaṇas, who knows the Vedas, whose promises are true, who has curbed his senses, who is unconquerable, who is the conqueror of all, whose lustre is like that of Viṣṇu, who is a devotee of Viṣṇu, who performs meritorious deeds, who is born due to merit, who has auspicious marks, who is tranquil, who is endowed with penance, who has mastered all branches of knowledge, who knows the Vedas, who is best among the meditating sages, and who is like you in point of virtues. Give me such a son."

Vāsudeva said :

70b-72. O you very intelligent one, you will have a son

endowed with all these qualities. He will support the family of Atri, and also this universe. He will also emancipate his father by means of his lustre, glory and merit; with his truthfulness he will emancipate his father (i.e. you) and his grandfather; you will reach my place, that is Viṣṇu's highest position.

73-75. The lord of gods, spoke like this to that Aṅga, O brāhmaṇa. (He said to him): "Marry the auspicious daughter of someone of virtuous power. Generate on her a son, who will be auspicious, bringing merit and dear (to you). O you very intelligent one, by my favour, he will be religious-minded, omniscient, knowing all, (that is) as desired by you." Thus giving (Aṅga) a boon Hari then vanished.

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

Sunīthā's Story

The sages said :

1. She (i.e. Sunīthā) was cursed by that Suśaṅkha, the noble son of a Gandharva. Due to his curse how did she become (i.e. what happened to her)? What deeds did she do?

2. O best brāhmaṇa, what kind of son did she obtain due to his curse? (Please) narrate to us in detail the account of Sunīthā also.

Sūta said :

3-14a. That Sunīthā, of a slender waist, who was cursed by him, being tormented by grief, went to her father's place. She disclosed her deeds to her father, Mṛtyu, the best among the truthful and the righteous ones. He spoke to Sunīthā, his daughter, who was cursed by that magnanimous one: "You committed a sin that destroys merit and lustre. O you noble one, why did you beat him, who was very tranquil? You did that which is contrary to (the ways of) all the world. Listen, what sin is committed by him who would kill him who is free from desire and wrath,

who is very tranquil, who loves piety, who is fully engrossed in the path of penance, and is settled in the highest Brahman. His son is born wicked, and gets (i.e. accumulates) much sin. There is no doubt that he who beats a person who beats him and makes him cry who is crying, suffers for his sin (i.e. of the other person). He (alone) is tranquil, he (alone) is one who has conquered (i.e. controlled) his mind, who does not beat him (i.e. the person) who beats him. O you (my) daughter, he who has beaten an innocent person, would (thus) later beat, through delusion and in sin, even an innocent man(?). He, the sinner, who, without any reason, causes anxiety to an innocent man or would later beat an innocent man through delusion or some sin, obtains the sin produced in the body of the innocent one. If the innocent person would beat the wicked-hearted person that beats him rashly after suddenly getting up, the sin of the sinner goes to the innocent person.

14b-19a. Therefore, one should not beat even a sinner. O (my) daughter, you have done, a very wicked deed. As you are today cursed by him, therefore practise meritorious deeds. Secure the company of the good, and behave (properly). O you (my) daughter, behave taking to profound abstract meditation and knowledge. The company of the good is greatly meritorious, and causes great bliss. O (my) daughter, note that merit, well-observed, of the company of the good. Highly intelligent sages, cleansed from within and without by touching, drinking and bathing in the water, obtain perfection. All these worlds—mobile and immobile—become pure (due to the company of the good).

19b-20. Water is calm, very cold, soft for the body, causing pleasure, clear, tasty, of a meritorious power, removing dirt; you should know that the saints are like that, and should wait upon them carefully.

21. As gold gives up its impurity by its contact with fire, similarly a man casts off his sin by the contact of the good.

22-24. The fire of truth would burn brightly only with the lustre of merit. A man whose lustre blazes with truth, who is very spotless due to knowledge and very hot due to meditation, cannot be touched by men born of sin. By the contact of the fire of truth, all (one's) sin perishes. Therefore, you should, by all means, have

contact with truth. Giving up your burden of sin, resort to merit in this way."

Sūta said :

25-26. In this way that Sunīthā, who was distressed, was advised by her father. Having saluted her father's feet, she went to a lonely forest. The devout one, giving up desire and anger and her childishness, and also abandoning tricks, malice and deceit, resorted to a secluded place.

27-28a. Her friends, endowed with grace, came there to sport. The large-eyed ones saw Sunīthā afflicted and meditating. Seeing her reflecting, they, full of anxiety, said to her:

28b-30. "O good one, full of anxiety why are you brooding? You, are causing anxiety and worry to us; tell us the cause (of your anxiety). Only one anxiety, entertained for piety (alone), is significant. The other kind of anxiety, viz. giving delight to the meditating sages in matters of piety is important. (I.e. the other kind of anxiety that is important is one which gives delight to the meditating sages in matters of piety.) (Any) other anxiety is worthless. One should not at all entertain it.

31-33. Anxiety withers the body; it destroys strength and lustre; it would destroy all happiness, and would show (i.e. bring about) loss of beauty. Anxiety would bring these, viz. thirst (i.e. desire), delusion and greed (to a person). Anxiety, when entertained, would produce sin day by day. Anxiety would show (i.e. bring about) bodily diseases, and would lead (one) to hell. Therefore, O beautiful one, behave by giving up anxiety.

34-35a. A man enjoys (or suffers) only what he has earned by means of his former deeds. A wise person should not mind them. Therefore give up your anxiety, and talk about happiness, unhappiness etc."

35b. Hearing those words of them, Sunīthā spoke these words.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

Sunīthā's Problem

Sūta said :

1-2a. She, the noble one, who was very much afflicted with grief, told her friends how she was formerly cursed by the magnanimous Suśaṅkha, and all that she did.

Sunīthā said :

2b-5. O friends, listen now; I shall tell you something else. Seeing my wealth of beauty and excellence in age (i. e. youth) and good qualities, my father became worried about me. The very glorious one desired to give me (in marriage) to (one of the) gods or sages. Holding me by the hand, he said these words to them all : "This is my young daughter, full of good qualities and having charming eyes. Well-being to you, I desire to give her (in marriage) to a virtuous and very magnanimous (god or sage)."

6-8. At that time gods and sages heard the words of Mṛtyu. Gods, led by Indra, spoke to him, who was (thus) speaking: "This your daughter is endowed with virtues, and is a great treasure of good character; but she is defiled by one fault, viz. the curse of (i.e. given by) the sage. On her will be born a son, from whose semen a man will be (born) who will be a great sinner and the destroyer of the virtuous family.

9-14. A pitcher that is seen to be full of the water of the Gaṅgā, becomes a pitcher (full) of liquor when polluted with a drop of liquor. Due to the sinful contact of a sinner, the family becomes sinful. If a drop of the sour gruel made from the fermentation of boiled rice would go to (i.e. would get mixed with) milk, it would later destroy (i.e. spoil) the milk and would present its own nature. In the same way a sinful son would destroy the family; there is no doubt about it. This your sinful (daughter) is (soiled) with this blemish. Give her to someone else. (Please) go." Thus was my father told by gods. My father, afflicted with the grief was abandoned even by the noble gods, Gandharvas and sages; and the good men also did not accept me. Thus formerly I have committed a sinful act.

15-16. Tormented by agony and grief I have just resorted to the forest. I shall practise penance only, and shall wither my body. You have well asked me the effect and the cause. The deed, following my anxiety, has also been disclosed to you.

17. Speaking thus, that Sunīthā, Mṛtyu's glorious daughter, afflicted with grief, ceased speaking; and then did not say anything.

The friends said :

18-27. O you noble one, give up the grief, destroying your body. There is a blemish in the family of an atheist. (Even) gods have resorted to (i.e. committed) sin. Formerly (even) that Brahmā told a lie in the presence of Viṣṇu. That Brahmā (though) abandoned by gods, became most adorable. O (you), look at the king of gods (i.e. Indra) who was engaged in killing a brāhmaṇa. The noble one enjoys, along with the gods (the kingdom of) the three worlds. Formerly he went to (i.e. cohabited with) Ahalyā, Gautama's wife. He, who was an adulterer, has become the lord (of gods). Hara (i.e. Śiva) committed a fierce deed like killing a brāhmaṇa. Even now he lives with the skull of Brahmā. Gods and sages who have mastered the Vedas salute that god. The Sun, full of (i.e. suffering from) leprosy would illuminate (i.e. illuminates) the three worlds. All the worlds, including the mobile and the immobile, and led by the gods, salute him. Kṛṣṇa enjoys (i.e. suffers from) the curse given formerly by Bhārgava. Candra (i.e. the Moon), who went to (i.e. copulated with) Guru's (i.e. Jupiter's) wife, has become emaciated due to that. There will be (born) a very lustrous, valorous, very intelligent son of Pāṇḍu, viz. Yudhiṣṭhira, the king of kings. For the murder of his teacher, he will tell a lie. Great sin resides in (i.e. is committed by) these great ones. There is no defect in anyone of them nor any stigma.

28-29. O you beautiful one, you are smeared with a small sin. O you of an excellent complexion, we shall oblige you. O you of charming eyes, O you auspicious one, we do not find the qualities which you possess anywhere else (i.e. in any other woman).

30-35a. O you auspicious one, the virtue of beauty is the first ornament of women. The second one is good character; and

the third one is truthfulness. The fourth one is honesty; the fifth one is piety itself. Then, O you beautiful one, sweetness is said to be the sixth one. O you young girl; internal and external purity of women is the seventh (ornament). Devotion to the father is the eighth (one). Service (to others) is the ninth one. Tolerance is said to be the tenth one, and love is the eleventh (one). O you of an excellent complexion, loyalty to husband is said to be the twelfth (one). O you young girl, you are adorned with those (ornaments); O you beautiful one, do not get frightened. We shall find out that remedy by which that highly meritorious one will be your husband; for, we are (living) for you only.

35b. The excellent friends said to her: "Do not indulge in a rash act."

Sūta said :

36. Sunīthā, who was thus addressed, again said to those friends: "Tell me the remedy by which (he) will be my husband."

37-41a. The excellent ladies of charming eyes, led by Rambhā, said to her: "You are endowed with beauty and sweetness; you would lead (your husband) to prosperity. You were frightened by a brāhmaṇa's curse. (Therefore) we have come here." They spoke to that Mṛtyu's daughter having large and charming eyes: "We shall give you, O good one, an incantation (having the power of) giving all good and alluring men knowing all tricks." Then these (ladies) gave her the powerful incantation giving happiness. (They said :) "Instantly allure him, whomsoever god (or other) you desire to allure , O good lady."

41b-46. That Sunīthā, being very happy when well-equipped with the incantation, thus wandered with her friends, and observed men. While wandering she went to Indra's paradise. (There) on the bank of the Gaṅgā, she then saw the brāhmaṇa, who was the ornament of the Atri-family, who was handsome, who was endowed with all (auspicious) marks, who resembled the sun in lustre, who was matchless in form in the world, who was, as it were, another god of love, who had god-like form, who was noble and fortunate, who bestowed bliss (on others), who had no match, who was magnanimous, who resembled Viṣṇu in lustre, who was a devotee of Viṣṇu, who destroyed all sins, whose valour was like that of Viṣṇu, and who was free from desire and anger.

47. Seeing him, who was handsome, the very form of penance, of a divine prowess, and who was tormenting himself (by austerities), she asked Rambhā, her good friend: "Who is this excellent, magnanimous one, remaining in heaven (i.e. possessing divine qualities)?"

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

Rambhā Helps by a Suggestion

Rambhā said :

1-6a. Brahmā was born from the Unmanifest one, and from him was born the lord of created beings, viz. the religious-minded Atri. O good lady, his son, viz. this Aṅga of a noble mind, came to Nandanavana. Seeing Indra's glory excellent with graceful lustre, he too longed for a position similar to that of Indra: 'If I would have such a son endowed with righteousness, (then) my existence, endowed with fame and glory, will be very blessed.' Then he propitiated Hṛṣīkeśa with austerities and restraints. When Hṛṣīkeśa was very much pleased, he asked for a boon : "O Madhusūdana, give me a son who resembles Indra, whose lustre and valour are like that of Viṣṇu, who is a devotee of Viṣṇu, and who destroys all sins."

6b. Then he gave (him) a son possessing all such (qualities).

7-12. Since then the best brāhmaṇa looked (for) an auspicious maiden. He saw you as you are beautiful in all limbs. O you beautiful lady, go to (i.e. accept) him; from him you will have a son, who will be righteous, who will be knowing pious ways of behaviour and whose lustre and valour will be like that of Viṣṇu. All this has been told to you, since you had asked me like (i.e. about) that. There is no doubt that this one will be a suitable groom for you. That curse of (i.e. given by) Suśaṅkha also will be ineffective. O good noble lady, when from him a son propagating righteous conduct will be born, you will be happy. I am telling you the truth, (and) the truth (only). A farmer, with great sincerity, sows the seed. O respectable lady, he enjoys (i.e.

reaps) the fruit as he sows the seed. It shall never be otherwise. It would all be just like that.

13-14. This noble one is devout and possesses merit and strength; a son born from his semen will be endowed with his wealth of virtues, will be very lustrous, will be best among all human beings, will be very fortunate, of a devout disposition, and will be conversant with the principles of deep and abstract meditation.

15. Hearing these words of Rambhā, uttered affectionately and bestowing well-being, Sunīthā entertained the notion : This is the truth, the entire truth.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

Sunīthā Gets Married and Vena is Born

Sunīthā said :

1-2a. O good lady, you have spoken the truth; I shall do like this. I shall allure the brāhmaṇa with this incantation, and not in any other way. Give me help so that I shall go to the meritorious one.

2b. Ramhbā, who was thus addressed by her, said to the high-minded one (i.e. Sunīthā):

3-5a. "O you beautiful young lady, tell me what kind of help I can give (you)." (Sunīthā said:) "O good lady, now go to him as my messenger." Thus she spoke to that Rambhā of charming eyes. That celestial nymph Rambhā promised (her) like this only: "I shall help you; give me instructions."

5b-13. Due to (her) good temperament, the beautiful lady, of large eyes and possessing beauty and youth, became of (i.e. took up) a divine form through a device. She was matchless in beauty in the world, and allured the three worlds. The charmingly smiling Rambhā, lovely in an all-elegant dress, was seated upon a swing on a very auspicious peak of Meru, which had lovely

caves, which was covered with many minerals, which was adorned with various gems, which was covered with divine trees, which looked lovely due to abundant flowers, which was covered (i.e. crowded) with hosts of gods, which was resorted to by Gandharvas and celestial nymphs, which was attractive, very charming, and full of the shadows of the sandal and the aśoka trees. The beautiful lady looked lovely with the dark-blue silken garment, and with a bodice, having the colour of a bandhūka-flower, O best brāhmaṇa. The young lady, with all her limbs beautiful, had her hands engaged in (playing upon) the lute, (properly) beating the time, and was singing an excellent, very melodious song, alluring the universe. The very beautiful young woman was surrounded by her friends; and Aṅga had resorted to meditation in an auspicious secluded cave. He, free from desire and anger, meditated upon Janārdana.

14-15a. The bright one (i.e. Aṅga), hearing that very melodious, sweet and very charming song, accompanied by beating time and (proper) measure, and attractive to all beings, swerved from his meditation, as he was fascinated by that enchanting song.

15b-17. With his mind swerving due to that fascination, looking repeatedly (at her) quickly got up from his seat, speedily went there; the very glorious one, seeing her seated on a swing, and with her hand full of the neck of the lute, laughing, singing well and with her face resembling the moon, was allured by the song and (her) beauty.

18-19. The best brāhmaṇa, the son of a sage, was struck with Cupid's arrows (i.e. was overpowered by passion) due to her beauty, and with his mind perturbed and disturbed, talked through infatuation, and recoiled repeatedly. That moment only he perspired, shivered and was distressed.

20. Then Aṅga, as it were being allured by great fascination, languid, and with his mind unsteady, trembling and being afflicted, came (there).

21. Seeing that Sunīthā, Mṛtyu's daughter, of large eyes, glorious and smiling charmingly, the noble one said to her:

22. "O you beautiful lady, who are you? To whom do you belong? Surrounded by (your) friends, for what mission have you come (here)? Who has sent you to the forest?

23. In (this) large forest, your beautiful body is shining everywhere. Tell me (all about it) today only; be gracious to me."

24. The great sage, pierced with the arrows of Cupid, and infatuated by her fascinating device, did not grasp her actions.

25. Hearing these great (i.e. significant) words of that very intelligent one, she (just) looked at the face of her friend, and did not say anything to that brāhmaṇa.

26. Sunīthā, with a sign, set on her friend, Rambhā. Then Rambhā respectfully said to the brāhmaṇa:

27. "This noble one is the daughter of the glorious Mṛtyu, known as Sunīthā, and adorned with the wealth of all (good) marks.

28. The young girl is looking for a groom, who is a treasure of penance, who is tranquil and restrained, who is very intelligent and well-versed in Vedic lore."

29-34. Having heard these very significant words, the great sage said to that Rambhā, the best among the celestial nymphs: "I have propitiated Viṣṇu, Hari, of the form of all gods. He has given me a boon (granting) a son, and giving all prosperity. For that, O good lady, and for having a son, I am everyday thinking of the daughter of someone of an auspicious power. And for ever I am really not finding a good bride. Let this daughter, of Mṛtyu, whose conduct is righteous, and who is beautiful take me (as her groom) here, if she desires a husband. There is no doubt that I shall give whatever this young girl asks for. For having union with her I say that I (shall) give (even) what cannot be given." (Rambhā said:) "O best brāhmaṇa, listen, what one thing you should just give."

Rambhā said :

35-37. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to the pledge which I (shall) tell now. She is never to be abandoned by you. She is your lawful wife. You have never to assume either a blemish or a merit of her; (and) for this, O best brāhmaṇa, show (us) actually (some) convincing proof. O best brāhmaṇa, give her your hand giving a convincing proof.

(He said) : "Let it be so. I have given my hand to her. There should be no doubt about it."

Sūta said :

38-45. Thus establishing a relation showing a convincing proof, he married Sunīthā by means of the Gāndharva (type of) marriage. Having given that Sunīthā (in marriage) Rambhā, with her mind delighted, took leave of her, and went to her own abode. The friends, with their minds very much delighted, went to their own abodes. When all the friends had (thus) left, Aṅga sported with his dear wife. Having generated on her a son possessing all (auspicious) marks, he named the son 'Vena'. Then that son of Sunīthā (viz. Vena), of a great lustre, grew. The intelligent one, having studied the branches of the Veda, along with archery, mastered all the lores. Vena, the son of Aṅga, abided by good manners. That Vena, the best among the brāhmaṇas, took to the behaviour of kṣatriyas. As Indra, endowed with all lustre, shines in heaven, the very intelligent one shone with his own might and valour.

46-50a. When following the period of Cākṣuṣa[1] Manu that of Vaivasvata arrived, the beings were sinking in the world without a protector of the beings (i.e. without a king). The sages, having penance as their wealth, and knowing the essence of righteousness, thought of a king knowing righteousness and well-versed in truth. They just saw Vena, prosperous and endowed with (auspicious) marks. The best brāhmaṇas consecrated him in the position of the lord of created beings. When that noble king (Vena), the son of Aṅga, was consecrated, all the lords of created beings went to a penance-grove. When they had left, Vena ruled over the kingdom.

Sūta said :

50b-57. That Sunīthā, seeing her son looking well after the entire kingdom, thought: 'Due to the prowess and the curse of that noble one, my glorious son will be the protector of righteousness.' Thinking like this, she was everyday afraid of her former sins. She would present (i.e. she presented) before her son the very meritorious essential requisites of Dharma. She would throw (i.e. she threw) light on such virtues as truthfulness etc. She said to her son like this: "O son, I am the daughter of Dharma; (and) your father knows the essence of piety; therefore, practise piety."

1. Cākṣuṣa is the sixth Manu and Vaivasvata is the seventh. Manvanatara is a period or age of a Manu. This period comprises 4, 320, 000 human years or 1/14th day of Brahmā, the fourteen Manvantaras making up one whole day.

Thus that good lady would always advise her son, Vena. He would obey (i.e. obeyed) the words, proper for (i.e. leading to the well-being of) his subjects. Thus on the globe Vena had become a king. The people lived happily. The subjects were pleased. Thus was the greatness of the kingdom of noble Vena. When the king was ruling, the ways of Dharma prevailed.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

A Heretic Meets Vena

The sages said :

1. (If) thus was the creation of the noble Vena, how is it that giving up righteous conduct he would be (i.e. became) (a man) of wicked mind?

Sūta said :

2. Sages endowed with spiritual and worldly knowledge, and knowing the truth, tell what is good and what is bad; that would never become otherwise in the world.

3. O brāhmaṇas, how can the curse, given by that noble Suśaṅkha, who was practising penance, not turn true?

4-8. I shall tell (you) all the sinful conduct of Vena. When he—a noble king knowing righteousness—was ruling, a man, having put on a guise, naked, of a huge body, with his head clean-shaved, of a great lustre, holding under his armpit a broom of peacock's feathers, and a ḍrinking-pot made of cocoa-nut in his hand reciting (texts containing) wrong doctrines, vilifying the Vedic religion, came (there). He quickly came to (the place) where Vena was (seated). The sinner entered the court of that Vena. Seeing him having arrived (there) Vena asked him a question:

9-11. "Who are you, taking up such a form, that have come into my court? Why have you come before me who am (seated) in the court? What (kind of) dress (do you have)? What is your

name? What is your faith? Tell me (all this). What is your Veda (i.e. which Veda do you follow)? What are your practices? What (kind of) penance (do you practise)? What abstract meditation (do you possess)? What (kind of) prowess (do you have)? What are the real characteristics of your faith? Tell me all that and the truth before me."

12a. Hearing those words of Vena the sinful man said these words.

The sinful man said :

12b-15. In vain you are ruling. You are a great fool, there is no doubt about it. I am all-in-all of Dharma (i.e. religious practices). I am most adored by gods. I am knowledge, I am truth, I am the eternal supporter. I am Dharma (i.e. religious practices), I am salvation, I am full of all gods. I have sprung from the body of Brahmā; I am faithful to my promise, and not otherwise. Know me to be the chief Jaina saint, having the body of true religion. The meditating sages, intent on (obtaining) knowledge, run to me only.

Vena said :

16. What kind of acts (do you do)? What is your doctrine? What are your practices? Tell (all this to me).

The sinful man said :

17-21. (That is my faith) where Arhats are the gods, and Nirgrantha is looked upon as the preceptor. Compassion is said to be the best way of life and in it is seen (to lie) salvation in (i.e. according to) this faith. There is no doubt about this. I shall (now) narrate the practices. (In this faith) there is no performance of sacrifices; there is no officiating at sacrifices; there is no recital of the Vedas; there is no offering of the three daily prayers; there is no penance; there is no charity; it is without (the exclamations viz.) svadhā and svāhā; there is no offering to gods or manes; there are no rites like sacrifices; there is no gratification of the manes; there is no (worship offered to a) guest; there is no offering to all the deities. The best worship is that of a Jaina mendicant, and the best meditation is that of an Arhat. This way

of life is seen in the Jaina faith. I have told you all this i.e. the characteristics of my faith.

Vena said :

22-23. (In your faith) the way of life as told in the Vedas is not seen, nor are rites like sacrifices seen; no oblations to manes, no śrāddha, no sacrifice offered to all gods, and also no charity and penance are seen. Where (then) are the characteristics of the pious way of life to be (seen)? Tell me what kind of the way of life based on compassion (you advocate).

The sinful one said :

24-32a. This body of (human) beings is nourished by the five elements. This soul is of the nature of air, so they have no association. Even as in the water there is a contact of the form of bubbles, in the same way there is a contact among the beings. The earthly state is (present) in the matter; water also remains there only; fire also is seen there; powerful wind is also seen in (these) three. The state of bubbles covering the space is then produced in water, where a very bright, excellent circle is produced. It is seen just for a moment, and just after a moment it is not seen. In the same way contact among beings is seen. At the time of death, the soul departs, and the five (elements in the body) go to (i.e. merge into) the five (gross elements). Moreover the mortals being confounded by ignorance behave with one another (foolishly). Through folly they perform śrāddha and offer oblations to the manes in the evening. O best king, where is the dead person (at that time)? Of what nature does he eat? (i.e. what is his state when he eats?). What is knowledge? What kind is the body (after death)? By whom is it seen? Tell us (all about it). (Only) the brāhmaṇas, being fed with sweet food go satisfied. To whom would the śrāddha be offered? The faith (due to which a śrāddha is offered) has no meaning.

32b-42. I shall tell you another fierce act (mentioned) in the Vedas. When a guest goes (i.e. arrives) to the house, a brāhmaṇa (kills and) cooks (the flesh of) a great bull; or O king of kings, he would feed the guest (with the flesh of) a goat. (They kill) a horse in a horse-sacrifice, and a bull in a bull-sacrifice; a man in a human sacrifice and goats in a Vājapeya sacrifice. O great

king, a great slaughter of many animals is done at a Rājasūya sacrifice. At a Puṇḍarīka sacrifice one would kill (i.e. one kills) an elephant, and at an elephant-sacrifice (they kill) an elephant. At the Sautrāmaṇī sacrifice a beast is seen to be fit for being sacrificed. Thus, O prince, listen how at rites of various forms killing of beasts of various species is laid down. What are the characteristics of gifts that are given? That food should be known as left-over, (where) sumptuous food is had, and (when) in a great sacrifice they kill those (beasts) that are extremely impure. What righteousness is seen there or what fruit is seen there where those who are learned in the Vedas have prescribed the killing of beasts? Due to that (i.e. the killing of beasts) merit perishes and the (so-called) religious merit does not give (i.e. lead to) salvation. That way of life which is without compassion is fruitless. There is no doubt that the right way of life lies there where lives of beings are protected. It is not the right way of life (or righteousness) where there are offerings to gods, manes, penance, truth, and rashness without compassion, O best king. The Vedas are not Vedas where compassion is not (prescribed).

43-52a. Even a cāṇḍāla or a śūdra, who, being intent upon the gift of kindness, would protect a life, is said to be a brāhmaṇa. But that cruel brāhmaṇa who is intent upon killing beasts, is very ruthless, sinful, hard-hearted and of a cruel mind. That Veda which is without knowledge, is said to be a Veda (only) by the rogues. Veda stands firmly there where there would be knowledge. O you very intelligent one, neither truth nor rite is seen in the merciless Vedas and Brāhmaṇas and also in the brāhmaṇas who follow the Vedas. O best king, the Vedas, void of truth are not Vedas and the brāhmaṇas who are not truthful (are not brāhmaṇas). There is no fruit of charity, so gifts also are not given. As are the characteristics of śrāddha, same are those of charity. Whatever is the faith of Jīva is the giver of enjoyment and salvation—that I shall tell you. First, one with his mind being tranquil, should show kindness. One should devoutly propitiate god Jina who (has pervaded) the mobile and immobile. With one's mind having pure thoughts, one should worship Jina alone. Salutation should be offered to that god, and not otherwise (i.e. not to anyone else). One should never salute the

feet of one's mother and father. Then what should be told about others, O best king?

Vena said :

52b-53. (They say) that these brāhmaṇas, preceptors and others, and also the rivers like Gaṅgā, are holy places giving great religious merit. Is that the truth? Tell me if you desire piety (to flourish) here.

The sinful man said :

54-60. O great king, from the sky the clouds shower water. Having floated in the water which has fallen everywhere on the ground and on the mountains, he would stand, and produce compassion everywhere. Rivers are but the streams of blemish. How have you heard (i.e. how is it told in the scriptures) that the holy places are (situated) in (i.e. on the banks of) them? O great king, ponds, lakes, seas, and mountains—the heaps of stones—support the earth. No sacred place can be situated in (or on) them. A cloud is the best (holy place) due to its (containing) water. If a bath (i.e. a dip in water) causes great religious merit, then why is it not (found) in the fish? If by bath purity is produced, then the fish are purified. It cannot be otherwise (i.e. it is quite certain). Sacred place and eternal Dharma (i.e. way of life) are to be found where Jina remains. Penance and all merit due to bath etc. is settled there. O lord of kings, Jina alone is full of everything. There is no other (Dharma) than that; that is the holiest place. This is the greatest gain. So always meditate on him; you will be very happy.

61. Censuring by (indicating) the sinful nature of the entire (Vedic) religion, the Vedas, and charity of the form of sacrifices, along with (i.e. causing) merit, the sinful one advised Aṅga's son in various ways.

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

The End of Vena's Reign

Sūta said :

1-2. Vena, thus advised by that very sinful Jina, and deluded by him, attained to a sinful attitude. Abandoning the Vedic faith and rites of a truthful conduct, he saluted the feet of that very wicked one.

3-5a. There was cessation of good sacrifices, and also of the Vedas. Religious practices full of holy scriptures (i.e. as told in the holy scriptures) did not proceed at that time. As a result of his (bad) rule, the world became full of all sins. When that king ruled, there were no sacrifices, no (recitations of) the Vedas, no excellent purport of the holy texts, no charity and no study, O brāhmaṇas.

5b-9. Thus there was the cessation of religious conduct, and great sin proceeded uninterruptedly. Though warded off by Aṅga, he very much acted otherwise. The wicked-minded one saluted neither the feet of his father nor of his mother. (He did) not (salute) the feet of any brāhmaṇa also. (He thought:) 'I alone am valorous.' Though warded off by his father and by his mother, the wicked-minded one did not perform auspicious, meritorious (acts) like giving gifts at a holy place. The very glorious one (lived) for a long time according to his own ideas. They all thought: 'For what reason has he become a sinner? The son of Aṅga Prajāpati is a bane to his family.'

10. The religious-minded (Aṅga) again asked the daughter of magnanimous Mṛtyu: "O dear one, tell me the truth: Due to whose fault is he born (like this)?"

Sunīthā said :

11-13. O you highly intelligent one, [the daughter (of Yama) formerly only told Aṅga her own account and her merit and faults: (She said:)] in my childhood I committed a sin towards the magnanimous Suśaṅkha. I have not done anything else. The angry one cursed me: "Your progeny would be wicked." Thus, I think, O glorious one, this (Vena) has become wicked due to that (curse of Suśaṅkha).

14-15. The very lustrous one, having heard this, went to a forest with her. When the glorious one went to a forest along with his wife, the Seven Sages then approached Vena. Calling him they thus spoke to (him) the son of Aṅga :

The Sages said :

16-17. O Vena, do not act rashly; you are the guardian of the subjects. You yourself have put all this world and the three worlds along with the mobile and the immobile on the righteous path, O glorious one. Give up evil deeds, and perform auspicious deeds.

18a. When they had spoken like this, Vena laughed and said :

Vena said :

18b-20a. I alone am the highest (form of) religion; I alone deserve to be worshipped; I am eternal; I am the supporter; I am the protector; I alone am the import of the Veda; I am religious; I am the ancient, very holy, Jaina religion. O brāhmaṇas, by means of your actions, resort to me, who am of the form of religion.

The Sages said :

20b-24. The three castes viz. brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas are twice-born.[1] This (i.e. the Veda) is an ancient sacred text meant for all the castes. The beings behave according to the Vedic practices; therefore they (continue to) live. You are born in the family of Brahman. (So) you are a brāhmaṇa only. Then you, who had performed valorous deeds, were made the king of the earth. O best king, brāhmaṇas live happily due to the religious merit of the king. They perish due to his sin. Therefore practise righteous deeds. O king, you honoured and practised righteous deeds; but (did) not (do) the deeds of (i.e. proper for) Tretā and Dvāpara-yuga.

25-30. When Kali (-yuga) sets in, all men, deluded by sins, will act after having resorted to the Jaina faith. Men will abandon Vedic practices, and will commit sins. There is no doubt that the

1. Dvijātayaḥ—Men of any of the first three castes of the Hindus.

Jaina faith is the root of sin. O best king, the fall of those men, who are heaps of sins, is brought about by this great delusion. Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu), the destroyer of all sins, will be (appearing) for their destruction and for nothing else. Taking the form of his liking he will restrain (them) from sins. When sins will have thus accumulated, he, the god will be (appearing) as Kalki[1] for the destruction of the Mlecchas; there is no doubt about it. Give up the behaviour of (i.e. proper for) Kali (-yuga) and resort to merit. Behave truthfully; become the guardian of your subjects.

Vena said :

31. I am the best among the wise; I have known everything here. He who behaves in a different way will certainly be punished.

32-37a. All the magnanimous sons of Brahman got angry with that wicked-hearted king who was talking too much. When the high-souled brāhmaṇas were angry, king Vena, through the fear of a curse from the brāhmaṇas, entered an ant-hill. Then the angry sages looked for Vena everywhere. Knowing that the king who had fled, was well-settled in an ant-hill, the brāhmaṇas, forcibly brought (out) the cruel and wicked (king). Seeing the sinner the sages were well-composed. Getting angry, they churned the left hand of the king. From it sprang up a very short, terrible barbarian, whose complexion was dark-blue, whose eyes were red, who had arrows in his hand, and held a bow (in his hands).

37b-41. He became the king, supporter and the protector of all sinful Niṣādas, especially of the Mlecchas. O highly intelligent one, seeing that sinful one, the sages also churned the right hand of that noble Vena. From it sprang up very intelligent and very powerful and noble king of kings, viz. Pṛthu, who milked the earth. By the power of his merit, and by the favour of that disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), Vena, having enjoyed the position of a sovereign emperor, went to Viṣṇu's heaven. That is the highest position of Viṣṇu.

1. Kalki—The tenth and last incarnation of Viṣṇu in his capacity of the destroyer of the wicked and liberator of the world from its enemies.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

On Gifts and Worthy Recipients of Gifts

The sages said :

1. O you best among the truthful ones, tell us in detail, how Vena casting off his sin went to heaven.

Sūta said :

2-6a. O best brāhmaṇa, by the contact of the merit of the sages, by their concurrence, the sin went out of his body as a result of the churning of his body. Then that Vena of a righteous mind obtained eternal knowledge. O brāhmaṇas, free from desire and anger, he practised penance for a full hundred years in the hermitage of the sage Tṛṇabindu, which destroyed sins, and (which was situated) on the right bank of Revā. O glorious ones, god (Viṣṇu), the holder of the conch, disc and mace, was pleased with the sinless king due to his severe penance. Being pleased with him, he said to him: "I am pleased. Choose an excellent boon."

Vena said :

6b-7. O god, if you are pleased with me, give me an excellent boon: I desire to go, by your power, with this body, and along with my father and mother, to your abode, to the highest abode of Viṣṇu, O god of gods.

Śrī Vāsudeva said :

8. O king, where has that great infatuation, by which you were deluded, gone? You were caused to fall on the path of darkness by greed united with infatuation.

Vena said :

9-10a. O lord, I was deluded by the sin which I had formerly committed. Therefore (please) emancipate me from this very fierce sin. Tell me through your grace what (i.e. which hymn) I should mutter or recite.

The lord said :

10b-15. Well, O blessed king, your sin has perished. By means of your penance you have become pure. So I shall tell you (what) merit (is). O dear, formerly Brahmā had asked me as (i.e. what) you have asked. I (shall) tell you all that I had told him. When once, Brahmā staying in the lotus sprung from (my) navel was engrossed in meditation, Viṣṇu (i.e. I) appeared before him for granting him a boon, O you of a good vow. Desiring a good state (i.e. salvation), he asked him about a hymn, of a great religious merit, destroying sin, and called Vāsudeva. O glorious one, he (i.e. I) taught him the hymn, best among all hymns, called Vāsudeva very much pleasing to Viṣṇu, and giving all happiness to men who always recited and muttered it.

Viṣṇu said :

16-19. This entire world is pervaded by me of an unmanifest form. Therefore sages devoted to Viṣṇu call me Viṣṇu (i.e. one who pervades). I should be respectfully known to be that Vāsudeva, in whom the beings live, and who lives in the beings. Since, at the end (of the world) the lord leads the beings to the unmanifest one, therefore, he (i.e. I) should be known, by those who seek his (i.e. my) refuge, by the name Saṅkarṣaṇa. With the desire 'Let me be many', I take up any form I intend (to take up). Therefore, I should be known as Pradyumna by those who desire (to have) sons.

20-25. In this world I am not restrained by anyone except the lords of all, viz. Hara and Keśava, by means of the prowess of deep and abstract meditation; therefore I have (the epithet) Aniruddha. To the world, I, possessing spiritual and material knowledge, am known as Viśva. Being awake and full of reflection, I am possessed of self-consciousness. Full of the movements of the world and possessed of sense-organs and form I am (called) Taijasa (i.e. bright); I am in the state of sleep when I am without understanding and action. When I am the presiding deity I move (everywhere) occupying all. I am supposed to be unconcerned with the world when I am in the state of deep sleep. As Turīya (i.e. in the fourth state) I am without any modification and void of properties. With my form reflected everywhere I am

unattached and (am just) like a witness. I am the individual soul still sticking to the worldly defilements; I am consciousness and joy; I am full of consciousness; and have the form of consciousness. I am eternal, immutable; I am of the form of Brahman; know me to be Brahman only.

The lord said :

26. Speaking so to Brahmā about his own form formerly, Viṣṇu vanished. He too knowing his universality, in a moment became self-possessed.

27. O king, you too are pure due to the birth of Pṛthu only. Still, O you of a good vow, propitiate the lord with this hymn.

28a. Viṣṇu, being pleased, said to him: "O you, who give respect to others, choose a boon."

Vena said :

28b-29a. O Viṣṇu, give me the best refuge; (please) protect me from the sin. I have sought your refuge. Tell (i.e. show) me the cause (i.e. way to) the best state (i.e. beatitude).

Viṣṇu said :

29b-39. O you blessed one, formerly only the noble Aṅga had propitiated me, (and) I had granted him a boon. O you illustrious one, O you best brāhmaṇa, O you prince, you will go to the best heaven of Viṣṇu by means of your own deeds. O noble one, just ask for a boon for yourself. O illustrious Vena, listen to the account that took place formerly. Formerly the glorious Suśaṅkha, getting angry, gave a curse to your mother, Sunīthā, in her childhood, O king. Then I, who had known (Aṅga's) mind, and who desired to emancipate you, gave a boon to Aṅga: 'You will have a good son.' O you who love virtues, having thus spoken to your father I will, having sprung up from your body, protect the world. I remain on the earth as Indra shines in heaven. The sacred text: 'Oneself is born as (one's) son', is true. So, O dear, you will get the highest position as a result of my boon. For getting the (best) position (i.e. salvation), O king, O hero, give a gift; I (am the one), who in the form of the sinful naked one, spoke to you, to cause you deviate from righteousness;

otherwise the words of Suśaṅkha would have become untrue. I myself am injunction and prohibition both. I am the one who gives the fruit (to one) according to one's deeds, who is beyond comprehension and who insists on virtues.

40-46a. (Giving) a gift is the highest, the best. It is the cause of everything. Therefore you give gifts. Merit proceeds from (giving) gifts. Sin perishes due to (the giving of) gifts; therefore, do give gifts. O best king, perform sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice. Give gifts of land etc. to brāhmaṇas. Due to (giving) good gifts enjoyment is obtained, glory is obtained; fame takes place (i.e. is obtained) due to good gifts and happiness is secured through good gifts. A man obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven by means of (giving) gifts, and there enjoys the fruit (of his gifts). When the time of the maturity of a good gift that is given through faith arrives, O best one, the man (i.e. the giver of gifts) would go to a sacred place—this is also the fruit of (his) religious merit. To him, who, keeping faith in me, gives a great gift to a worthy brāhmaṇa, I give everything and whatever he desires with (i.e. in) his mind.

Vena said :

46b-48a. Tell me about the (proper) time of (i.e. for giving) a gift. What are the characteristics of the (proper) time (for giving a gift)? Being gracious to me, O lord of the world, if you have compassion for me, tell me in detail the nature of a sacred place, and also the good (i.e. proper) characteristics of a worthy recipient, and the procedure of (giving) a gift.

Śrikṛṣṇa said :

48b-57. O king, O great lord, I shall tell you the time for regular and occasional charity and also for the optional one, and for making daily and occasional gifts which would lead to the fourth (goal of life, i.e. salvation). At the time of sunrise, sin perishes everywhere. Very fierce darkness destroys men. This sun, my portion, is thought to be the treasure of lustre by day. Sins, burnt by the lustre of him only, are reduced to ashes. O king, what can be said about that which increases the religious merit of him who even gives water to my rising portion (i.e. the

rising sun)? When an auspicious time comes, if a person, after having bathed and worshipped his parents and gods gives, according to his capacity and with his mind purified by faith, gifts of food, water, fruits, flowers, garments, tāmbūla, ornaments, gold, and gems etc., he has unending merit. O king, he, who would also offer water dedicated to me at midday and afternoon, has unending merit. Like this he regularly gives food, drink, sweets, ointment, sandal, flowers, camphor etc. along with garments and ornaments, (which) gives enjoyments and happiness. This is said to be the usual time (i.e. time for regular charity), auspicious for those who desire to give gifts or offer worship.

58-71a. Now I shall tell you about the excellent occasional (charity). There is no doubt that one should give gifts at all the three times. He, who desires his own well-being should not pass a day void (of gifts). O king due to the power of the time at which something is given, a man (becomes) very intelligent, full of great power, rich, virtuous, learned, wise and far-seeing. I keep the excellent man away from food for a fortnight, a month, or a day—that is, as long as he has not given food. One who has not given an excellent gift has eaten his own excrement. Being displeased (with such persons) I generate in their bodies a disease, which keeps off all enjoyments, which gives them great trouble, which is accompanied by weak digestion, and which causes fever and suffering. He who has not made a gift (of food) to Brahmins and deities, three times, and has himself eaten sweets, has committed a great sin. O great king, he should thus purify his body by a severe expiation, and also by fasts withering up the body. As a cobbler cleanses the hide in the bowl with exudations from trees and expands it, in the same way I certainly purify a sinner, by proper use of herbs, and also by means of astringent and bitter medicines; (thus I do) in the form of a physician, with hot water and heating, and in no other way; there is no doubt about it. Other people enjoy his excellent, auspicious enjoyments as desired(?) What can (even) a powerful man do if he has not given an excellent gift? I torment him through the form of a great sin. O king of kings, if the sinners, through selfishness, have not given the regular gifts with a mind purified with faith, then with terrible means I consume them.

Vāsudeva said :

71b-75. O best of men, I shall explain to you the occasional time (i.e. times for making occasional gifts) and the merit (obtained by giving such gifts); listen attentively and with a good mind. O king, when it is the new moon day or the full moon day or the Saṁkrānti day, or Vyatīpāta or when it is Vaidhṛti Ekādaśī, or when it is the full moon day in Māgha or Āṣāḍha, or Vaiśākha or Kārtika, or when the new moon day falls on Monday, or on the anniversary days of the Manu-age etc., when it is the day on which the elephant's shadow (falls towards the east), or it is a day called pitṛkṣaya—all these are explained (by me) to you, O best king.

76-83. I shall tell you the fruit of the gifts that are given on these (occasions). O best king, listen. To the man, who devoutly gives (a gift) intended for me to a brāhmaṇa, I give, without hesitation, a house, happiness, heaven and salvation and many (other things). There is no doubt about this, O great king. I shall (now) explain to you the optional time (i.e. time for optional charity) for giving a gift which is fruitful. The best sages have told about the auspicious time for all vows in honour of gods etc., and also for giving gifts. O king, I shall also tell you about the time leading to prosperity. Of all the sacrificial rites the nuptial one is the best; O king, so also the time when the rite of the birth of a son, his tonsure-ceremony or thread-ceremony is performed; so also the time of the installation of the palace-flag or of deities; so also that (of the fixing ceremony) of the site of wells, pools, lakes, houses, is called (the time) leading to prosperity, when the mothers are worshipped. At this time (a man) should give gifts which bring about all (kinds of) success. O best king, I have just told you the time leading to prosperity.

84-104. (Now) I shall tell you something else which removes affliction due to sin. When the time of death has come, a man, knowing (that this) death is (imminent), should give a gift, causing comfort on (his) way to Yama, O best man. O great king, I have told you the times called regular and occasional ones, and also those that lead to prosperity. I have (also) told you the time of death. I have told (you about) these times which give fruits of one's deeds. O king, (now) I shall tell you the

characteristics of a sacred place. Among excellent holy places this Gaṅgā shines. (Others that are) mentioned are the holy (rivers) Sarasvatī, Revā, Yamunā, Tāpī; and river Carmaṇvatī, (and also the rivers) Sarayū, Ghargharā, and Venā destroying all sins, Kāverī, Kapilā and the big (river) Viśvatāriṇī, (and also) Godāvarī and Tuṅgabhadrā, O king. (The river) Bhīmarathyā is declared always to cause fear to the sinners. Other excellent rivers are Devikā, Kṛṣṇagaṅgā etc. (For offering gifts) on auspicious occasions there are many holy places of (i.e. on the banks of) these (rivers). Rivers, whether (they flow) through a village or a forest, are purifying everywhere. At these places acts like bath, charity etc. should be performed. O best ones, when the name of a holy place (on the banks) of those (rivers) is not known, the utterance of the (my) name should be done by saying: 'This is Viṣṇu's holy place', O king. O prince, a devotee should utter (the name of) me at the sacred places and (while presenting gifts) to gods. He gets the fruit of his merit due to (the utterance of) my name. O best king, at the time of bathing at unknown excellent holy places, and (offering presents) to unknown deities, one should just utter my name. O best king, the Creator has made these rivers the mothers of the all-meritorious sacred places, and they are (to be found) everywhere on the globe. O king, a man should not take bath etc. here and there (i.e. anywhere). Due to the grace of the excellent holy places, one gets an inexhaustible fruit. The seven oceans only are of the nature of sacred places and are very meritorious. O king, the lakes like Mānasa etc. are declared to be like them only. Streams and ponds are also said to be of the nature of sacred places. There is no doubt about it. (There are) O great king, (certain) very small rivers. A sacred place is said to exist in them (i.e. on their banks), so also in all ditches excepting (temporary) wells. On the surface of the earth, mountains like Meru are also of the nature of holy places. A sacrificial place, a sacrifice well-put (i.e. performed) in a fire-chamber, and also the place where a śrāddha is offered, is pure like that. Similarly a temple, a sacrificial chamber, a chamber where Vedas are studied (is pure). In the houses a cow-pen, possessing merit, is (said to be) the best. A sacred place exists there, where the performer of a Soma-sacrifice would be (present) and also a grove where the meritori-

ous Aśvattha stands (is a sacred place). A sacred place exists there where there would be a palāśa or an udumbara tree or a bunyan tree; and also at a place where other sylvan marks (are present).

105-107a. These are said to be sacred places, and also father and mother; (the place) where a Purāṇa is being recited, or the one where (one's) preceptor resides (is also sacred). There is no doubt that that place where a good wife lives is a sacred place. The Place where a good son stays is a holy place—there is no doubt about it. These are said to be sacred places; and also a king's abode (is a sacred place).

Vena said :

107b-108a. O best god, O Mādhava, being gracious through compassion tell me the characteristics of a worthy person to whom a gift should be given.

Vāsudeva said :

108b-127. O very intelligent king, listen to the good (i.e. important) marks of a worthy recipient, to whom a gift should be given by the glorious ones purified by faith. A brāhmaṇa endowed with (i.e. born in) a good family, devoted to the study of the Vedas, tranquil, restrained, one having practised penance, especially pure, intelligent, wise, engrossed in the worship of deities, truthful, of a great religious merit, Viṣṇu's devotee, and learned, knowing religion, free from greediness, and avoided by heretics, is said to be a worthy recipient. O best man, O great king, other worthy recipients are these: sister's son—the best man, endowed with qualities like these; daughter's son; son-in-law having similar dispositions; also, O best man, a preceptor who is initiated. These are worthy recipients, fit for presenting gifts. One should avoid a brāhmaṇa who possessed conduct as laid down in the Vedas (yet) is not content. Also one should avoid a one-eyed or very dark-blue (brāhmaṇa), (a brāhmaṇa) who has black teeth, or has dark-blue or yellow teeth. O king, one should avoid a brāhmaṇa who has slaughtered a cow, who has very black teeth, who is a barbarian or is licentious or is short of a limb or has an extra one; also a lepor or one having bad nails,

or bad skin; also a bald-headed brāhmaṇa, O great king. One should not give a gift to a brāhmaṇa, even if he is like Brahmā, if his wife is engaged in imporper (acts). O you highly intelligent one, a gift should not be given to a brāhmaṇa who is conquered by (i.e. under the thumb of) his wife, and also to him who is a traitor to his own school of the Vedas (Śākhā). O king, a gift should not be given to a diseased brāhmaṇa, or who eats the dead (i.e. meat eater). A gift should not be given to (a brāhmaṇa who is) a thief even though he is like Atri. A gift should not be given to a brāhmaṇa who is not content. One should also avoid a brāhmaṇa (doing rites) relating to a dead body. A gift should not be given to (a brāhmaṇa who is) very obstinate, and especially to a brāhmaṇa who is dishonest. O lord of kings, a brāhmaṇa, following Vedic practices, but void of good conduct, would not be proper at (the offering of) a śrāddha, or (giving) a gift. Now I shall tell you about the gift which is fruitful and meritorious. Faith is produced by association with a holy place and worthy recipients and (practising charity at an auspicious) time. There is no religious merit like faith, there is no happiness like faith for beings in the worldly existence, O king. A man should remember me with faith, O best king; a king should give even a small gift into the hand of a worthy recipient. He obtains an unlimited fruit of such a gift (given) according to the proper procedure; he would be happy by my grace.

CHAPTER FORTY

The Fruit of Occasional Charity

Vena said :

1-2. O god, I have heard from you the fruit of regular charity. By your grace (i.e. be gracious and) carefully tell me that fruit which is the fruit of occasional charity. I am not getting great satisfaction; my faith prompts me to hear it.

Viṣṇu said :

3-8a. O best king, I shall explain to you (gifts given called) the occasional. Listen to the fruit of the gifts given to worthy recipients by a person with faith, on a great parvan day. O best king, he, the best man, who gives an elephant, a chariot or a horse (to a brāhmaṇa) becomes the best king, accompanied by servants, in a holy country, O great king; there is no doubt about this. The religious-minded, powerful and very intelligent one becomes a very lustrous king and is unconquered by all beings. O great king, he, who gives a gift of land or a cow when the great parvan (day) arrives, would become the lord of all enjoyments. One should give a gift to a very meritorious brāhmaṇa with great care.

8b-11a. I shall tell you the characteristics of great gifts which a man gives at a sacred place on a parvan (day) : he becomes a king. He who gives a secret gift (to a brāhmaṇa) at a holy place on a parvan (day), quickly has an imperishable attainment of treasures (i.e. obtains imperishable treasures). When a great parvan (day) comes, (a man should give) a great gift with a garment and gold to a brāhmaṇa at sacred places.

11b-29a. O king, I shall tell you (about) the auspicious fruit of that gift : (to him) many very virtuous sons, proficient in the Vedas, long-lived, having progeny, and endowed with glory and merit are born. Many (such sons) are born. O you very intelligent one, ample wealth (also comes to him). He gets happiness and religious merit. He becomes religious. When the great parvan (day) arrives, a (man), having gone to a holy place with great effort, should present a golden cow to a glorious brāhmaṇa. O you very intelligent one, I shall tell you about the religious merit of (i.e. obtained by giving) that gift. O great king, the giver of a tawny cow enjoys all pleasures. He lives there as long as Brahmā would live. O king of kings, I (shall) tell you about the fruit and enjoyment of (i.e. due to) the gift of a cow given after adorning her, furnishing her with gold and with garments, ornaments and decorations. Ample glory full of gifts and enjoyments is produced. It is said that such a man (i.e. he who gives gifts) becoming a master of knowledge, would become a devotee of Viṣṇu. He would reside in Viṣṇu's world as long as the earth

would remain. He, who, after going to a sacred place, would give an ornament to a brāhmaṇa, sports with Indra after having enjoyed many pleasures. He, who, endowed with faith, gives to the best brāhmaṇa, a deserving recipient, food along with land when a great parvan (day) arrives, having valour equal to that of Viṣṇu rejoices in Vaikuṇṭha. Giving (i.e. he who gives), according to his desire, gold along with garments to a brāhmaṇa for peace, he, resembling fire, would live happily in heaven. He should fill a big golden pitcher with ghee. He should adorn it with garments and garlands and cover it with (a) silver (lid). He should furnish it with a garland of flowers and make it adorned with a sacred thread. O highly intelligent one, worshipping it, consecrated with Vedic hymns, he should (then) worship it with sixteen pure articles of worship. Then well-adorning it, he should present it to a glorious brāhmaṇa. He should then give sixteen cows with bell-metal udders, along with garments; (he should) also (give) four (cows) and a gift (to a brāhmaṇa) along with gold. He should also give twelve cows adorned with garments, ornaments and decorations to a separated (living in a lonely place?) brāhmaṇa. There is no doubt about this. O prince, such and other gifts (should be given). Having properly found a sacred place and (the proper) time, and a brāhmaṇa's residence, he should give (gifts) with faith. That would lead to great religious merit. There is no doubt about it.

Viṣṇu said :

29b-46. A gift should be arranged (i.e. given) dedicating it to Viṣṇu. A man inspired by the feeling of love for that gift gets a fruit like that. There is no doubt about this. Now I shall explain good fortune. By giving the gift which proceeds (i.e. is given) in sacrifices etc., and even by having faith in (giving it), a man has increase in his intellect and does not get unhappiness, O best brāhmaṇa. The religious-minded one, while alive, enjoys pleasures properly. That donor, having obtained a divine position, enjoys pleasures of Indra. He takes his family to heaven for a thousand kalpas. I have thus explained (gifts) leading to good fortune. Now among the (gifts) I shall tell about (the gift to be given at the time of death). Knowing that the end of the body

(i.e. death) has come near, and being afflicted by old age, he should give a gift. He should not entertain (any) hope about any one. (He should not entertain thoughts like:) 'What will happen to my sons, other relatives and friends in my absence after my death?' A man deluded by infatuation for them, does not give anything. He, with his mind confused, dies; friends and relatives weep (for him). All of them, afflicted by grief and by false attachment, resolve (to give) gifts, and reflect upon salvation. When he is dead, and when the false attachment is over, they, of greedy minds, forget the gifts and never give them, O great king. The one, O great king, who is dead, is extremely unhappy on the path to (the abode of) Yama, is overcome with thirst and hunger, and afflicted by gifts. O best king, to whom do sons and grandsons belong? To whom does the wife belong? In this worldly existence none belongs to none (else). Therefore gifts are given. O best king, O you highly intelligent one, a wise man should himself give food, drink, tāmbūla, water, gold, a pair (of) garments, an umbrella, many water-vessels with water, varied vehicles and carriages, various kinds of perfumes and camphor. If he would desire (if he desires) much happiness he should give (to a brāhmaṇa) shoes that give comfort on the path to (the abode of) Yama. O great king, by (giving) these gifts a man goes happily along Yama's path.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

The Story of Sukalā

Vena said :

1. Tell me how the son (or) the wife (or) the father (or) the mother is a holy place. Tell me also in detail how one's preceptor is a holy place.

Śri Viṣṇu said :

2-8. There was a great city (named) Vārāṇasī along with (i.e. on the bank of) Gaṅgā. In it lived a vaiśya by name Kṛkala.

His wife, named Sukalā, was very chaste, devoted to her husband, always engaged in religious practices, and loyal to her husband. Her limbs were auspicious. She had a good son and she was charming and auspicious. She spoke the truth, she was always pure, she had a lovable form, and was dear to her husband. She, endowed with these qualities, was fortunate, and performed good deeds. The vaiśya (i.e. Kṛkala) was an excellent man; he knew various religious practices, was wise and virtuous. He was always intent upon listening to the Purāṇas and religious practices as told by the scriptures. With faith he set out, with the caravan of brāhmaṇas on a pilgrimage, meritorious and auspicious. He proceeded on the religious path (of the pilgrimage). The chaste wife (i.e. Sukalā), being stupefied by her love for her husband, said (these) words to her husband.

Sukalā said :

9-19a. O dear, I am your religiously wedded wife, and practise merit with you. Waiting (i.e. looking) for the path of (i.e. followed by) my husband, I propitiate the god i.e. my husband. O best brāhmaṇa, I shall never give up your proximity. Resorting to your shadow, I shall practise the excellent mode of behaviour called loyalty to my husband, which destroys the sins of women and gives them a good position. The woman, who would be solely devoted to her husband, is called meritorious. Except the husband, no other holy place befits young women, and no other holy place gives them heaven or salvation. O best one, a woman should look upon the right foot of her husband as Prayāga, and the left one as Puṣkara. Merit is produced by taking bath with the water (falling) from his feet. It is like taking a bath at Prayāga or Puṣkara. There is no doubt about it. The husband is full of all holy places. The husband is full of all religious merit. All that fruit—the religious merit, which an initiated man gets after the performance of sacrifices, is obtained by a wife through serving her husband. She obtains, through serving her husband that fruit which would accrue to one by having had pilgrimage to excellent holy places like Gayā. I am telling it in brief. Listen to me who am telling it. For them (i.e. for women) there is no other duty than serving the husband. Therefore, O dear one, I, helping you and giving you pleasure, shall, by

resorting to your shadow (i.e. by following you), come (with you). This will not be otherwise.

Viṣṇu said :

19b-29a. Kṛkala, having considered her beauty, character, virtue and devotion and having again and again given a thought to her delicacy (thought): 'If like this (i.e. as she says) I shall take her (with me) along the difficult path causing great grief, her beauty will wither due to being shaken by cold and heat. Her body, of an excellent complexion, is like the interior of a lotus. It will be dark due to the cold stormy gale. The path is rough and has (i.e. is full of) stones. Her feet are very delicate. She will meet with severe pain; therefore she is unable to go (i.e. I cannot take her). What will be her plight, when her body would be encompassed by hunger and thirst? This woman of a beautiful body is my support. (This) woman of a beautiful face is the abode of my pleasure. She is always dear to my life. She is always the abode of religious merit. When this young woman will perish, I shall (also certainly) perish in this world. This one is always my livelihood. She is the ruler of my life. I shall not take her to the forest (and) to the holy place. I shall (just) go all alone.' The glorious Kṛkala thought (like this) for a moment. O best king, she knew (i.e. read) the thought in his mind. The glorious one again said to her husband who had started: "O best one, listen, men should not leave (back) their innocent wives. O you highly intelligent one, this is the root of Dharma (duty, righteousness) of a man. Realising this, O illustrious one, now take me (with you)".

Viṣṇu said :

29b-32a. Having heard all those many words uttered by his beloved (wife), Kṛkala laughed and again said to her : "O dear one, the wife who is religiously obtained is not to be abandoned. O you of a beautiful face, he, who has abandoned his well-behaved and religious wife, has even given up the Dharma of ten constituents.[1] Therefore, well-being to you, O dear one, I shall never abandon you".

1. Daśāṅga Dharma—The ten constituents of Dharma as mentioned in the Vāmana Purāṇa (14.1-2) are: harmlessness, truthfulness, non-stealing, charity, forbearance, restraint, quiescence, not demeaning oneself, purity and penance.

Viṣṇu said :

32b-50a. Having thus spoken to her, and having repeatedly advised his wife, he went with the caravan without her knowledge. When thus that glorious Kṛkala had left, the lady of an auspicious face did not at all see her husband Kṛkala, of meritorious deeds, at the auspicious time of the worship of deities and at (other) auspicious time. Weeping, and very much afflicted, oppressed by grief and sorrow for her husband, she quickly got up and asked her friends. (She said to them:) "O you illustrious ones, have you seen that Kṛkala, the lord of my life? He has gone somewhere. You are my relatives. O you glorious ones, if you have seen that magnanimous, very intelligent, meritorious, omniscient, truthful and wise Kṛkala of me (i.e. my husband), (then) tell me." Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) her, they said to the very intelligent one: "O you auspicious one of a good vow, your husband Kṛkala has, on the occasion of a pilgrimage, visited a sacred place. Why do you weep? Having visited a great sacred place, he will come (back), O you beautiful one." That Sukalā of a charming speech, thus addressed by the intimate persons, again went home, O king. That devout Sukalā wept piteously in agony. (She said:) "Till my husband comes, I shall sleep on a bed on the ground. I shall not eat ghee, oil, curd and milk." She gave up (eating) salt, and also (chewing) tāmbūla. O king, she also gave up (eating) sweet (things) like jaggery etc. (She said:) "Till my husband returns I shall eat once a day or will not eat anything at all. There is no doubt about this." Thus she was full of grief; she wore a single braid of hair; she put on one bodice (only), and was unclean. She also remained with only one garment (on her person). She gave out sounds like 'hā hā', sighed, and was extremely afflicted. She was parched up by the fire of separation; her body (had become) black; and she became unclean. Thus being unhappy, very much emaciated, and perturbed, and weeping day and night, she did not get sleep at night. O king, broken (down) by grief, she (even) did not feel hungry. Then (her) friends came there, and asked Sukalā. (They said:) "O Sukalā, beautiful in all limbs, why are you weeping now? O you of a beautiful face, tell (us) the cause of your grief."

Sukalā said :

50b-56a. That my righteous husband has gone for (obtaining) religious merit. He is roaming over the earth for pilgrimage. That my lord has gone after leaving me who am faultless and sinless. I am a chaste woman of good behaviour, always meritorious and loyal to my husband. That (my) husband intent on getting (i.e. visiting) a sacred place, has left me and gone. Therefore, O friends, being extremely afflicted by separation (from him) I am grieving. When a very cruel husband (like mine) leaves his dear wife and goes (away), it is better (for the wife like me) to destroy my life (i.e. to commit suicide); it is better to eat poison; it is better to enter fire; it is better to destroy (my) body. O friends, It is better to end my life; but forsaking the husband is not better. I am unable to put up with the ever-terrible separation from him. O friends, I am always afflicted by that separation.

The friends said :

56b-60. Your lord, your husband, who has gone on a pilgrimage, will come (back). You are unnecessarily drying up your body, you are grieving in vain. O young lady, you are tormenting yourself to no purpose; you are uselessly giving up pleasures. Drink drinks, enjoy (the fruit of) what you yourself have given before. Whose is the husband? (i.e. to whom does the husband belong?) To whom do the sons, relatives and kinsmen belong? In this mundane existence nobody belongs to anybody else. One has connection with none else. (People) eat, enjoy. O young lady, that is (just) the fruit of the worldly existence. When a being is dead, who would enjoy or see its fruit? O young lady, what (people) drink, enjoy is the fruit (that is got) from the worldly existence.

Sukalā said :

61-83. Whatever you have said is not approved by the Vedas; but that woman, who, separated from her husband, always lives all alone, would be a sinful one. Good people do not honour her. In the Vedas she is always said to be with her husband. A relation is produced due to the power of religious merit.

In the scriptures the husband is always described as the sacred place for women. She should always invoke him by means of speech, body and deeds. Intent upon truthful thoughts, she should always mentally worship him. The side of the husband— (especially) his right side— is always a great holy place. When a woman, having resorted to him, lives in the house, she gets the fruit of the gifts which he gives and the merit (he collects) when he performs a sacrifice, and the fruit that he gets (by bathing) at Vārāṇasi in Gaṅgā, or at Puṣkara, or at Dvārakā or at Avanti, or Kedāra at (the temple of) Śiva; (and) not that woman who always performs sacrifices. O friends, such a fruit she never obtains. (By resorting to her husband) the woman of an excellent complexion always obtains a beautiful face, good fortune in the form of a son, bath, gifts, decorations, garments, ornaments, good fortune (in the form of her husband being alive), form, lustre, glory, fame and merit. There is no doubt that she gets all (this) through the grace of her husband. When a woman, when her husband is alive, practises another mode of life (than the one that is prescribed), (all that) becomes fruitless, and she is called an unchaste woman. On the globe (i.e. the earth) the youth, beauty and form of women is certainly said to be for the husband alone. A wife is said to be one who has good sons and good reputation. There is no doubt that when the husband is pleased in the existence, the wife is pleasing to the sight. If on the globe there would be a wife without (i.e. segregated from) her husband, how can she have happiness, beauty, glory, fame and sons on the earth? She experiences great misfortune and unhappiness in the worldly existence. She would always be sinful and would behave unpleasantly. When her husband is pleased with her, all the deities are pleased. When her husband is pleased, sages, gods and men are pleased (with her). The husband is the lord, the husband is the preceptor, the husband is the deity along with other deities. O prince, the husband is a holy place, and (is) sacred for the wives (i.e. the wife). He is also her sentiment of love, ornament, form, complexion and fragrance. She puts on an elegant dress, ornaments (etc.) except on the auspicious parvan days; she shines with elegant dresses and ornaments when her husband is (with her). Without the husband she is like milk in the mouth of a serpent. The glorious, charming

and auspicious wife practises good vow for her husband (only). If a woman puts on an elegant dress (etc.) when her husband is dead, all her beauty, complexion (etc.) is reduced to the form of a dead body. People call her a prostitute on the earth. Therefore, listen, that woman who desires great happiness on the earth, should never remain without her husband. The husband is described in the scriptures to be the highest Dharma of the wife. Therefore, a wife should not abandon that eternal Dharma. This, I know, to be the Dharma. How would (my) husband forsake (me)? In this connection, O friends, an ancient account is heard. It is the meritorious account of Sudevā, that (i.e. listening to which) destroys sins.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

Ikṣvāku Goes Ahunting

The friends said :

1. Who is that Sudevā about whom you talked? Tell us as to how she behaved. You have told (about her). Tell us the truth.

Sukalā said :

2-7a. The great, glorious king, Manu's son, Ikṣvāku by name, lived in Ayodhyā. He knew the rules of conduct; he was exclusively devoted to religious ends; he knew everything, and he honoured gods and brāhmaṇas; his wife was ever meritorious and devoted to her husband. With her he performed many sacrifices and (visited) various holy places. Sudevā, devoted to truthful conduct, was the daughter of Vedarāja, the brave and illustrious king of Kāśī. King Ikṣvāku married her. Sudevā was beautiful in all limbs, and was devoted to the vow of truth. With her, his beloved, the best king, the meritorious leader of people, enjoyed.

7b-17. Once that great king went with her to a forest. Having reached a forest (on the bank) of Gaṅgā, he always enjoyed hunting, (by) killing lions, boars, elephants and buffaloes. In front of him, who was (thus) sporting, a boar, adorned with (i.e. accompanied by) a large herd of boars and (his) sons and grandsons, arrived. His only beloved female hog remained by his side. With (other) boars and hogs she surrounded him only. The hog, seeing the king of kings who was difficult to conquer and who was engaged in hunting, remained very courageously with his wife and by his sons, grandsons, elders and young ones after having taken the shelter of a mountain. O great king, knowing the great slaughter of those beasts (in the forest), the hog said to his sons, grandsons and wife : "O darling, the very powerful and brave lord of Kosala, Manu's son, is enjoying hunting, and is destroying many beasts. There is no doubt that the great king, after seeing me, will come here. I have certainly no danger to my life from other hunters; (but) the king, seeing my form, will not forgive me. O dear one, there is no doubt that he, the very lustrous one, full of great joy, with arrows in his hand, holding a bow, accompanied by dogs and surrounded by hunters, will kill me."

The female hog said :

18-19. O dear one, whenever, in this great forest, you see many hunters equipped with many weapons, you give up your great courage, power and valour, and with your heart dejected through great fear, run away, along with these my sons and grandsons. (Now) seeing this lord of kings and the best of men, what will you do? O dear one, tell me the reason.

20-32. Hearing her words, the boar, the king of hogs, gave the (following) answer to her: "O dear one, listen why I am afraid of a great hunter and go away. Hearing the (sound of) hogs, the great hunters, who are sinful and cunning, commit evils in the inaccessible caves of the mountain. They all are always wicked, always conceive many sins, and are born in the families of sinners. I am scared of dying at their hands; (for) though I die (after being shot by them), I shall again go to a sinful (existence). O darling, scared of an untimely death, I shall go away to a mountain or a mountain-cave. This king, greater than the world, a king of the nature of Viṣṇu, has come.

O dear one, on the battlefield I shall fight with valour and bravery with the glorious one. If, by means of my own lustre I shall conquer the king, I shall enjoy incomparable fame on the earth. (If I am) killed in the battle by that best hero, I shall go to Viṣṇu's heaven. The lord of the earth will be highly satisfied with the flesh and marrow of my body. Due to him the deities of the good worlds will be gratified. This one, with the thunderbolt in his hand, has come. O beautiful one, when I meet with death at his hands, it will be a gain and excellent fame for me. Due to him I shall have glory on the earth and in the three worlds; (and) I (shall) go to Viṣṇu's world. I was not scared like this; I went agitated, (so) I went to the mountain-peaks. I went there as I was afraid of a sinful (hunter), O dear one; (and) on seeing (this king practising) piety, I have remained (here). I do not know my former sin, committed in another (i.e. former) existence, by the accumulation of which, I went to (i.e. was born in) the species of hogs. I shall (now) wash the former, terrible accumulation of sins with the water of hundreds of very sharp and whetted arrows. O you female hog, giving up your love for me, and taking with you our sons, grandsons, daughters and children in the family, go to the mountain, Give up your folly (i.e. foolish love) for me. This Viṣṇu has come. By his hand (i.e. killed by him) I shall go to that highest position of Viṣṇu. Fortune also has laid open the gates of heaven for me. I shall go to the best heaven."

Sukalā said :

33. O friends, having heard those words of the magnanimous hog, his beloved, with her heart sinking, then spoke.

The female hog said :

34-51. The herd, of which you are the lord, (shines) being adorned by sons, grandsons, friends, brothers and other kinsmen and relatives. The herd, adorned by you only, shines. O you glorious one, what will be the condition of this herd without you? O dear one, due to your power only these roaring boars, my young sons, roam on the mountain. Fearless on account of your lustre, they eat well the bulbs and roots. Due to your lustre,

they are not very much scared of lions and men in inaccessible places, forest-bowers, villages and cities and on this mountain, as they are protected by your lustre, O you very valorous one. Abandoned by you, all these young sons of me will be afflicted, confounded and senseless. All these young ones will never see (i.e. have) a happy course after going (from here). A beautiful woman does not at all look charming without her husband. (Even though she is) decorated with divine, golden ornaments, garments, food, clothes, father, mother, brothers and sisters, mother-in-law, father-in-law and others, she does not shine without her husband, as the night without the moon, (or) a family without a son (does not shine), (or) as a house without a lamp never shines. Similarly, O you, who cut off (i.e. remove) the pride (of your enemies), the herd does not at all shine without you. As a man does not shine without (good) behaviour, (or) an ascetic does not shine without knowledge, (or) as a king does not shine without (good) counsel, in the same way this (herd) does not shine (without you). As a boat full (of goods) does not (go on well) in an ocean without a fisherman, (or) as a caravan does not (shine) without its leader, similarly this (herd) does not (shine without you). As an army does not shine without a general, similarly this army of hogs (does not shine) without you, O you highly intelligent one. It will be helpless like a brāhmaṇa without (the study of) the Veda. Having entrusted the responsibility of the family to me you are going (to fight). Knowing that death is easy (i.e. would come easily) how are you having such a pledge? O dear lord, I shall not be able to sustain my life without you. O you highly intelligent one, with you alone I shall enjoy heaven, earth or even hell. I am telling you the truth and the truth only. O lord of the herd, we two—you and I—taking the sons and grandsons and the excellent herd (with us) shall go to an inaccessible place with a big cave. One goes to fight (only) after abandoning (i.e. being prepared to abandon) one's life. Tell me now what gain will there be in death (i.e. dying at the hands of the king)?

The boar said :

52-60a. You do not know the excellent way of life of the brave. Now listen to it. If a warrior desiring to fight with another warrior, goes to him (and says) : 'Fight with me, I have come

(here) to fight (with you)', (and if the man) does not give (i.e. is not ready to have) a fight with (that) other man through desire, greed or delusion, then, listen, O dear one, he would dwell in the Kumbhīpāka hell for a thousand yugas. There is no doubt that it is the highest duty of kṣatriyas to fight (when challenged to fight). If the fight fought by him after going to the battlefield is won by him, he enjoys great glory and fame. If he, extremely fearless due to his valour, is killed while fighting, he obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of the brave and enjoys divine pleasures. O dear one, listen, he would dwell in the world of the brave for twenty thousand years, and during that period he is honoured with the practices of gods. There is no doubt. Here comes the brave son of Manu, asking for a fight. I must certainly give it. The welcome guest asking for a fight, and of the form of the eternal Viṣṇu has arrived. O auspicious one, I must offer him a reception in the form of a fight.

The female hog said :

60b-61a. O dear one, how shall I (be able to) see your valour when you would fight with the magnanimous king ?

61b-66. Saying so, and hurriedly calling her dear sons, she said (to them) : "O sons, listen to my words. The welcome guest in the form of the eternal Viṣṇu asking for a fight, has come. I have to go where this (my lord) will go. As long as (this my) lord, your protector, remains here, you go away to the inaccessible opening of a mountain-cave. O (my) children, live there happily, avoiding skilful hunters. I must go there only where he (i.e. my lord) will go. This your eldest brother will protect the herd. All these (your) uncles will protect you. O my good sons, leaving me (here), go away, all of you."

The sons said :

67-68. This best mountain is full of many roots, fruits and much water. There is no fear for anyone. Life is happy. You have both, all of a sudden, uttered these, fearful (words). O mother, tell us the reason for all this.

The female hog said :

69-70. This very terrible king, of the form of Kāla (i.e. god

of death) has arrived. Longing for hunting, he sports in the forest by killing many beasts. He is the very powerful and unassailable son of Manu, named Ikṣvāku. O my good sons, this (god of) death will kill (you). My good sons, go away.

The sons said :

71-73. He, who goes (away) after abandoning his mother and father is wicked-hearted. He goes to a very terrible and fearful hell. He who, after drinking the holy milk of his mother, becomes shameless and spiritless, and goes (away) leaving his mother and father, goes to a pussy hell, stinking with the bad smell of insects. Therefore, we shall leave (our) father here only, but shall take our mother (with us).

74-75. In this way depression of spirits for the sake of Dharma and Artha (moral duty and worldly interest) overcame them. All of them full of power and lustre remained after having grouped themselves into an array. Full of daring courage and energy, and with valour, they, roaring and sporting, saw (there) the king's son.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

The Boar Gives a Tough Fight to Ikṣvāku

Sukalā said :

1-8. Thus those boars stood up for fighting. The hunters stood by the king standing before them. O best king, the great hog resorted to the mountain-peak. He stood after arranging his great herd in an array. The tawny, fat, plump-bodied, irresistible hog having large fangs and mouth, roared very fearfully, O king. The great king saw them resorting to the groves of śāla and tāla. Hearing those words of them the brave son of Manu (said): "Seize the brave hog, kill him who is proud of his strength." Thus the hero, the brave son of Manu, spoke to them. Then all the hunters, fascinated by the rapture of hunting became ready

and furnished with armours, and proceeded with the dogs. The great and very mighty king was full of great joy. Mounted upon a horse, he was ready with his army having four constituents. He came to the bank of Gaṅgā on the best mountain Meru, full of gems and minerals and adorned with various kinds of trees.

Sukalā said :

9-19. (He came to the mountain) which best mountain, having the heap of the rays of the sun, was very lofty and high, had reached the sky itself, was beautified by many elephants that moved (on it); which shone with pure drops of water, resembling pearls, (and caused by) waves and ripples on the banks, rising from the pure stream of the Gaṅgā due to the crowds of people. The best mountain with its white slabs of stone washed everywhere, was endowed with excellent beauty. Surrounded (i.e. covered) by gods, Cāraṇas, Kinnaras and Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Siddhas, bevies of celestial nymphs, sages, best elephants, Vidyādharas the mountain shone with (trees) like śrīkhaṇḍa, candana, sarala, śāla, tamāla, rudrākṣa, and desire-yielding trees giving divine powers. It was variegated with minerals of various kinds. It shone with aerial cars, variegated with various gems, with golden staffs and wives (i.e. women). It shone by the groves of coconut trees and divine betal-nut trees. It was adorned with flowers of divine white lotuses, bakula, and decorated with pieces of plantain trees, (also) with campaka-flowers. The mountain was decorated with reddish ketaka-flowers, and also the extensions of many creepers and with lotuses. It was adorned with beautiful flowers of many colours and with various trees. It was full of divine trees and crystal-slabs. It shone with the meditating saints, best meditating saints who had attained divine powers and who lived in its caves; and also with charming streams and many fountains. The mountain shone with the confluences bristling with the streams of rivers. The lord of mountains looked beautiful with deep lakes, small pools, having pure water and with peaks standing together. It was adorned with śarabhas, tigers and herds of deer. That lord of mountains always shone with highly intoxicated elephants, buffaloes and the ruru deer, and also with many divine substances.

20-22. Manu's son, the brave lord of Ayodhyā, (named)

Ikṣvāku, (was there) with his wife and the army having four constituents. In front (of him) the brave hunters and the fast dogs were going to the place where the brave, strong boar (remained) with his wife. He remained, after having resorted to the bank of Gaṅgā on the Meru-land, protected by many old and young hogs.

Sukalā said :

23-27. The delighted hog said to her very dear wife : "O dear one, see, the mighty lord of the Kośala country has come. The king is having the sport of hunting with me as the target. I shall just have the battle delighting gods and demons." Then the very lustrous king, the archer with arrows in his hands, who was delighted, said to (his wife) Sudevā, of a truthful behaviour : "O darling, see the very powerful, roaring hog, accompanied by his attendants and irresistible for the hunters. O dear one, today only I shall kill him with good, sharp arrows. The very brave one will come to me only to fight (with me)."

28-31. The pleasing, brave (king), speaking thus to his wife, said to the hunters : "O very brave ones, urge on the hog." The brave ones, having power, lustre and valour, and roaring, ran fast. All of them went to the hog with the speed of wind. The foresters pierced the hog of a brave form with volleys of sharp arrows and various weapons and missiles.

Sukalā said :

32-35. Arrows and javelins were discharged by the hunters; the arrows (discharged by them) showered on the mountain as clouds would shower on the earth. Struck by (hunters) giving strong strokes, the hog, the protector of the herd, who had gone to fight, was completely vanquished by hundred (of hunters). With his sons and grandsons he would destroy (i.e. he destroyed) his enemies. The hunters struck by his fang in the war fell down. Due to his speedy whirlings the hands and feet of a steady (person) dropped down. The hog saw the roar of (i.e. the roaring) hunter coming to him; and the lustre on his face was destroyed when struck with his fang. He went to the place where the king was. He (i.e. the king) did not want to fight. The lordly hog very much resisted and frightened the lord of the Ikṣvākus and was

angry. Delighted with fighting, he desired to fight with Ikṣvāku (king) in the forest.

36-43. The hog skilled in fighting again desired to fight (with Ikṣvāku). The angry hog, shaking the earth with the front part of his mouth, sharp teeth and claws, and proudly making the huṁkāra sound, struck the sinless king. O king, finding him to have the valour like that of Viṣṇu, the son of Manu was thrilled with joy. The divine king, seeing the valour of the boar regarded him like Yama. Thinking that he was the enemy of gods in the form of a hog, and seeing the very powerful and huge opposing army, he suddenly collected (his army) for the destruction of the boar. He sent elephants, speedy chariots and hunters holding arrows and swords along with (missiles called) bhuśuṇḍi and mallets and having nooses in their hands. They were delighted and aimed at him. The horses and elephants that had gone to him, though warded off, remained (there only). At places he was seen, at places he was not seen. At times he would show (i.e. cause) fear, at times he would crush the horses. The hog, invincible in the battle, and with his eyes red due to anger, crushed the brave soldiers and made an inviolable sound. The brave lord of Kośala, seeing that boar, fighting, unconquerable in war, of a huge body and giving out a sound (i.e. thundering) like the clouds, roared; moved on the battlefield; and the brave one illumined the heroes with his own lustre. The fangs in his (i.e. the hog's) mouth shone and flashed like lightning. The son of Manu saw the hog in that condition, and pierced him with sharp arrows, and each one of the rest was pierced by his relatives (i.e. fellow-warriors).

44. The king said : "O (my) armies (i.e. my soldiers), why should you, who are brave, not seize him through your prowess? (Just) fight there with him with (your) whetted and sharp arrows."

45-59. Hearing the words of that noble one who was angry, all the soldiers stood together to fight. Many thousands of warriors, struck in all directions, and pierced the hog in battle, who had remained on the battlefield. On the battlefield, he was pierced with volleys of arrows by certain huge excellent warriors. The mighty ones hit the hog difficult to conquer in battle with the strokes of discs and throws of bolts. Then the angry hog having

bravely cut off the nooses, remained in the battlefield. He went forth along with great boars. Then the brave hog, wet with the streams of blood, struck with his mouth and cut off the horses and elephants of the brave (soldiers). Angrily he struck the brave footsoldiers with the sharp fore-part of his fang. Being angry he struck the trunk of an elephant and being delighted, hit, with the nails of his toes, the warriors that were struck (down). Then all the hogs and hunters, with their eyes red with anger, resorting to fighting, fought with one another. The boars were killed by the hunters, and many hunters were killed by the boars. Being struck and red with blood, they dropped on the ground. The boars, giving up (i.e. at the cost of) their life, killed the hunters, and they fell on the battlefield. There the boars died and dogs gave up their life (i.e. died). Here and there, the hunters that were dead (i.e. that were killed), lay on the ground. The king, with the strokes of his sword, killed many boars. Some boars fled away; some were killed; some, being frightened, resorted to inaccessible places, bowers and interiors of caves, O best king. Some hunters, pierced by hogs with the tips of their fangs, and some, cut off into pieces, died and went to heaven. On all sides snares, nooses, traps and tubular organs of the body had fallen here and there. The hog, proud of his strength, remained only with his wife and five or seven grandsons (ready) to fight. The female hog again spoke to that hog, dear to her :"O dear one, with me and these children move (to a safe place)."

60-77a. The pleased hog said to his very dear wife, who was afflicted : "Broken (like this) where shall I go? (Now) there is no place (for me) on the earth. When I run away, the herd of boars will perish. A hog drinks water by (remaining) between two lions; (but) a lion does (i.e. can) not drink water by (remaining) between two hogs. Thus excellent power is observed in the species of boars. Therefore I shall kill (the enemies); when broken I shall go (away). O you glorious one, I know piety causing many auspicious results. When a man, who is fighting, flees, leaving the holy battlefield through greed or fear, he would be a sinner. There is no doubt about it. He (who) is delighted at seeing the array of sharp arms, dives into the divine river and goes to the other end of the holy place. He goes to Viṣṇu's world, and would, emancipate the men (of his family). When now that

(fight) has come by, how should I, being broken, go (away from it)? Listen to the fruit of him (i.e. which he gets), who, on seeing the battle, crowded with weapons, and giving delight to great heroes, is delighted and goes forth (to fight). For him a great (i.e. sacred) bath in Bhāgīrathī is had at every step. O dear one, (now) listen (to the description of him), who, fleeing from the battle through greed, goes home. He would manifest his mother's blemish, and is called a woman. O dear one, here (i.e. in a battle) are present sacrifices and holy places. Here (i.e. in a battle), gods of great prowess, sages, Siddhas and Cāraṇas witness (things creating) delight. All the three worlds are present there, where the heroes present themselves. The inhabitants of the three worlds watch him who has fled from the battle(-field), and curse and again and again laugh at the shameless sinner. King Dharma (i.e. Yama) would put him to pain (i.e. inflict pain upon him). There is no doubt about it. He, who faces (the enemy) and would drink blood from his own head (i.e. whose head would bleed while fighting), obtains the fruit of performing a horse-sacrifice and goes to Indra's heaven. There is no doubt that when the brave one conquers his enemies in a battle, he enjoys glory and many pleasures, O you beautiful one. When, unsupported (i.e. all alone) he, facing (his enemy), gives up his life, he would go to the highest place, and enjoys a divine maiden. Thus I know piety; how should I flee (from battle) and go (away)? There is no doubt that on the battle-field I shall fight with this courageous Ikṣvāku-king, the son of Manu. O you beautiful one, take these young ones with you, and go. Live happily."

77b-82. Hearing the words of him, she said : "I am bound by your bonds, called the sentiment of love, and which are the playthings of joy, O dear one. O you, who remove the pride (of others), with my sons I shall cast my life in front of you." Thus the two desiring the good of each other, and having well conversed with each other, decided to fight, and observed the enemies, (and) the very intelligent, brave Ikṣvāku, the lord of Kośala. As the cloud thunders in the sky in the rainy season, he roared along with his beloved and would challenge (i.e. challenged), with the tips of his hoofs, the excellent king. The noble one saw the roaring hog, endowed with valour. The courageous

king, with a horse's speed, moved forward facing him (i.e. the hog).

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

The Boar Dies Fighting

Sukalā said :

1-2. Seeing his own irresistible army completely vanquished by him (i.e. by the hog) who was difficult to be stopped, the king got angry with the cruel, unbearable hog. He, mounted upon a horse, and taking a bow and an arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world, speedily moved in front of him.

3-7. When the lord of the herd of boars saw the king, the killer of his enemies, mounted upon the back of a horse and endowed with excellent valour, he went forth to him on the battlefield. The best hog, when struck with a sharp arrow of (i.e. by) the king, went to the soles of the feet of the horse. With a quick mind (i.e. decision) he overstepped him with a very sharp speed. The horse was afflicted by the hog. The hog did not go to (i.e. fall on) the ground. The horse, with his movement checked, and struck on the face, fell down on the ground. Then the king just went to (i.e. got into) a small chariot. He roared with sounds of (i.e. befitting) the species of a hog. The hog, who was in the midst of the battlefield, was speedily struck with a mace by the Kośala-king seated in his chariot; and then giving up his body, he just went to the excellent abode of Viṣṇu.

8-11. When the lord of hogs after fighting with the king in the battle, fell on the ground after being struck (by the king), best gods showered excellent flowers on him. On him a great heap of flowers was accumulated and the fragrance was as it were of the Santānaka flowers. Gods, being fully pleased, showered on him sandal with saffron. Being pondered over by the king, O king, he became one having four hands. He had (on his person) divine garments. His form was divine, and with his lustre he shone as the sun (shines). When, he being greatly honoured by the king of gods and (other) gods, went to heaven in a divine car,

he, casting his former body here only, again became the lord of Gandharvas.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

The Female Hog Fights Back

Sukalā said :

1. Then all the hunters with nooses in their hands went to the female hog. Also the brave, fearful, terrible (dogs) came (to her).

2-8. Seeing her dear (husband) killed along with the family in the great war, the female hog took her four children (i.e. young ones) and remained (there). (She thought:) 'My husband got what he had thought (i.e. desired). He is honoured by sages and gods. The noble one has gone to heaven by means of (having performed) this act. I too shall go along the same path to heaven. The lord (i.e. my husband) waits (there for me).' Having well determined (like this) she thought about her sons: 'When my four sons, sustaining (i.e. continuing) our race live here, the noble, very brave hog also will have (the best position in heaven). By what means shall I protect my sons?' Thus being engrossed in thinking, and seeing the narrow passage on the mountain, she tried to find out an extensive (i.e. wide) path to go out. Having made up her mind about her sons, O great king, she said to those sons who were very much confused: "O sons, as long as I am (alive), go (away) quickly."

9-11. Out of them the eldest son (said): "How shall I with a strong desire to save my life go away abandoning my mother? How pitiable is my mother's good life? I shall retaliate my father's enmity. I shall overpower (my) enemies in the battle. He, who takes the three younger brothers to a mountain-cave by abandon-

ing the father and the mother, is of a sinful mind. He goes only to hell crowded with crores of worms."

12-15. She, very much afflicted, said to him: "O son, how shall I, the great sinner, go by abandoning you (here)? (i.e. I shall be a great sinner if I abandon you here.) Let my three (younger) sons (only) go away (from here)." (Then) the three younger sons only went into the interior of the forest. When they were just witnessing, the two (i.e. the mother and the eldest son) again and again, roaring due to their lustre and great strength, went to the battlefield.

16-18. Then the hunters, having the speed of wind, came (there). O king, the three (younger sons) were sent (by her) along the difficult path; and the two—the mother and the (eldest) son, remained there by blocking the path. Then the hunters, holding swords, arrows and bows came there and struck (them) with javelins, sharp discs and pestles. Keeping his mother at the back, the son fought with them. He struck some with his fang; he hit some with his mouth. He also struck with the tips of his hoofs. The brave ones fell in the battle. The hog fought in the battle. The noble king saw him.

19-23. Knowing that he was brave like his father, the very lustrous, brave son of Manu, with arrows in his hand went in front of him. Struck by the noble (Ikṣvāku) king with a sharp crescent-shaped arrow, and with his chest pierced, he fell on the ground (i.e. the hog fell dead on the ground). She became very insensible due to (the death of) her son; she herself went towards him. O king, some brave hunters, hit by her with the strokes of her mouth, fell on the ground, and some fled (away) and some died. Then the female hog causing to flee (that) great army with her fang, appeared as (if) a female destructive deity, causing great fear, had sprung up.

24-27a. Then the queen said to him who resembled the son of the lord of gods: "O king, she has killed your large army. Tell me the reason why you are ignoring her, O dear one. To her the great king said : "I shall not kill this female (hog). O dear one, the deities have indeed seen a great sin in killing a female. Therefore one should not kill a woman. Nor shall I send anyone (to kill her). O beautiful one, I am afraid of committing a sin by killing her."

27b-31. Speaking thus, the king, the lord of the earth, ceased (to speak). A hunter by name Jhārjhara saw that female hog, creating a havoc amidst them, and irresistible even to excellent warriors. He pierced her with a very speedy and sharp arrow. She, with the arrow stuck into her (body), and covered with blood, endowed with the majesty of valour and looking charming, was hurrying. She again struck that Jhārjhara even with her mouth. Struck with a sharp sword by that Jhārjhara who was falling, she was rent asunder. Panting (heavily) due to (exertion of) the fight, she fainted, and (though) alive on the ground, she was overpowered with great grief.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

The Story of Raṅgavidyādhara

Sukalā said :

1-3a. Seeing the female hog, who loved her sons, panting and fallen (on the ground), Sudevā, who was full of pity, went to her, who was afflicted, and having (first) sprinkled cold water over her face, she then sprinkled holy water over the entire body (who was) afflicted and resplendent with fighting. She (i.e. the female hog) spoke to her who was sprinkling.

3b-4. She spoke to the beloved (wife) of the king in a melodious human voice: "O respectable lady, may you be happy. When you sprinkled (holy water) over me, the heap of my sins left (me) by your contact and by my seeing you."

5-7. Hearing these great (i.e. significant) words (uttered) with a wonderful expression on her face (the queen said:) "I see a wonder, that you uttered words (like a human being). This one is born in the species of an animal, and clearly and elegantly speaks excellent Sanskrit with vowels and consonants (distinctly spoken) to me. She has done an excellent bold act with joy and (causing) amazement." Then the magnanimous (queen) who was there, said (these) words to her husband:

8. "O king, see, this extraordinary one who, though belon-

ging to a species of beasts, speaks great (i.e. excellent) Sanskrit, as a human being would speak."

9. Hearing that, the king, best of all the learned ones (said): "This (her speech) is wonderful and the expression on her face is (also) wonderful, which I have neither seen nor heard before."

10. Then the king spoke to that Sudevā, who was very dear to him : "O dear one, ask the auspicious one as to who she might be."

11-14. Hearing (these) words of the king, she (i.e. the queen) asked the female hog: "O good one, who are you? It is a great wonder that though born in a species of beasts you speak human language which is elegant and full of knowledge. Tell me your former acts. (Tell me) also about the noble warrior, your husband. What is the very valorous act that he did, due to which he has gone to heaven? Tell us all about you and your husband's former life." Saying so, the magnanimous beloved (wife) of the king ceased speaking.

The female hog said :

15-23a. O good lady, if you are asking about the life and former deeds of me and this noble one, I shall tell all that to you. This highly intelligent one is a Gandharva, skilled in singing. His name is Raṅgavidyādhara, and he is well-versed in all branches of knowledge. Pulastya, the very lustrous best sage, possessing brilliance, having resorted to the best mountain Meru having beautiful caves and streams, practised penance with a truthful mind. The Vidyādhara went there by his own will, O great lord. Resorting to that great mountain, he practised singing, which was accompanied by tunes and beating time, O you of a charming smile. Hearing his song, the mind of the sage was distracted from meditation. He said to that Gītavidyādhaa (or Raṅgavidyādhara), who was singing (there): "O learned one, by your very sweet, divine, holy song sung to beating time and measure, even gods are allured. This is not otherwise (i.e. it is quite true). O you of a good vow, due to your song, having (observed) the time in music, a sentiment and modulation, my mind has gone away (from) meditation. Therefore, leaving this place, (please) go to another spot."

Gītavidyādhara said :

23b-28a. Music is like spiritual knowledge; (then) why should I go to another place? I have never caused any unhappiness to anyone. I have always given happiness to people. All deities are pleased by means of this singing. O brāhmaṇa, even Śiva, delighted with the sound of a song, is brought (over here). Singing is said to be full of all emotions. Singing gives joy. All sentiments like that of love set up by singing, appear charming. The four excellent Vedas are elegant because of singing. All the deities are delighted because of singing, and not by anything else. You are censuring just that singing only, and are sending me away like this. O noble one, in this (in doing so) your injustice (i.e. injustice done by you) is noticed.

Pulastya said :

28b-35a. Today you have spoken the truth only. The meaning of a song gives much religious merit. O you very intelligent one, listen to my words; give up your pride. I am not condemning singing. I am honouring singing. It is not otherwise (i.e. I am not condemning it). The lores are fourteen[1]; together they bring about feelings. They bring success to beings through steady mind (i.e. if their minds are steady). By thinking about one (object only) penance and sacred hymns are highly successful. The great group of the organs of sense is, in my opinion, fickle. There is no doubt that leading the mind away from meditation, (i.e. even after the mind is taken away from meditation), it (again) very much takes the self to objects of sense. For this reason only, sages go to that place for the accomplishment of penance where there is no sound, no (beautiful) form or no young woman. This your singing is holy and gives great pleasure. We (i.e. I) would not look helplessly on it (since we are unable to prevent it), so, O hero, we (i.e. I) cannot remain in (this) forest. You (please) go to another place, or we (i.e. I) shall go.

Gītavidyādhara said :

35b-40. The noble one by whom is conquered the powerful group of the organs of sense is called a victor, a yogī, a brave one,

1. Vidyāḥ caturdaśa—The fourteen lores are: Four Vedas, six Aṅgas, Dharma, Mīmāṁsā, Tarka or Nyāya and the Purāṇas.

a sādhaka (one engaged in penance, spiritual practice). O you very intelligent one, he, who is not distracted from his meditation on hearing a sound or seeing a form, is a courageous (person) who accomplishes penance. Since you are void of lustre and conquered (i.e. overpowered) by organs of sense, you will not have the power to affront my singing even in heaven. All void of valour leave the forest. There is no doubt about it. O brāhmaṇa, this region of the forest is common to gods and all beings, it is as much mine as it is yours. There is no doubt about it. How (should) I go abandoning this excellent forest? You may go (or) you may stay. Whatever is to happen will not be otherwise.

41-44. After having heard these words of Gītavidyādhara, the intelligent sage thought : 'Doing what would merit accrue (to me).' Having forgiven him, the best brāhmaṇa went to another place. Always taking a posture suited to profound and abstract meditation, the righteous-minded (sage) practised penance, after giving up desire and anger, and also infatuation and greed. Thus Pulastya, the best meditating sage then remained like this, controlling all organs of sense along with his mind.

Sukalā said :

45-52. When that noble, best sage Pulastya left, that Gītavidyādhara also, ordained by destiny, thought : 'Due to my fear (i.e. fear caused by me) he is not to be seen for a long time. Where has he gone? Where does he live? What does he do and how does he do (it)?' Knowing that that son of Brahmā (i.e. Pulastya) was adorning (i.e. living in) a secluded (spot) in the forest, he (i.e. Gītavidyādhara), in the form of a hog, went to his excellent hermitage. O beautiful lady, having seen the eminent brāhmaṇa seated upon a seat, and obscured by lustrous flames, he disturbed him. With a wicked act he would certainly attack (i.e. he attacked) the brāhmaṇa with the tip of his mouth. O great king, he (i.e. Pulastya) knowing him to be a beast, pardoned him for his wicked act. He urinated before him, dropped his excrement before him, danced and sported before him, fell and again rose in front of him. O king, knowing him to be a beast, the sage let him go. When, once, he, again went (there) in the

same form, he laughed a loud laughter. He also wept there and sang melodiously.

53-54. O king, having (once) seen Gītavidyādhara like that, and having seen his acts, the meditating saint (thought): 'This might not be a hog.' He knew (i.e. recalled) his account: '(He) had disturbed me, but I had let him go taking him to be a beast. He is wicked and very cruel.'

55. The highly intelligent, best sage, realising that glorious one to be the meanest Gandharva, got angry and cursed him:

56. "Since, in the form of a hog you are disturbing me like this, therefore, O you great sinner, go to (i.e. be born in) the sinful species of a hog."

57-62. (Thus) cursed by that brāhmaṇa he went to god Indra; and O you beautiful lady, he, trembling, said to the glorious (god): "O thousand-eyed one, listen to my words. I have carried out your mission. That best sage, who was practising a severe penance, has been disturbed and agitated by me (rendering non-efficacious his penance). I have been cursed by that brāhmaṇa. My divine form is destroyed. O Śakra, protect me who am thus reduced to the existence of a beast." Knowing the account of that Gītavidyādhara, Indra went with him and said to the sage: "O you the best one of those born of a divine power, you who know divine faculties, grant favour, O lord. O best sage, pardon this (hog) and free him from your curse." Thus requested by Indra, the brāhmaṇa, with his mind pleased said:

Pulastya said:

63-65a. O lord of gods, on your word I should pardon (him). O great king, a very powerful son of Manu will be (born). (His name will be) Ikṣvāku; he will be righteous-minded, and a protector of all religions. When this (hog) will meet his death at his (i.e. Ikṣvāku's) hands, he will get (back) his own body. There is no doubt about this.

The female hog said:

65b. I have told you all this account of the hog. Now I shall also tell my (own account). With your husband, listen to it. (I shall)

also (tell you about) the terrible sin I had committed formerly (i.e. in my former existence).

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

The Story of Vasudatta and His Daughter Sudevā

Sukalā said :

1. Sudevā, whose entire body was beautiful, said to the female hog: "How is it that you, who are born in a species of beasts, speak Sanskrit?

2. Tell me wherefrom you had such great knowledge. O you auspicious one, how do you know the account of your husband and of yourself?"

The female hog said :

3-7. Due to my being a beast I was enveloped by delusion, O you of an excellent complexion; and struck with swords and arrows, I fell on the battlefield. I was overpowered by swoon, and was unconscious, O you of an excellent face. O beautiful lady, with your pious hand you sprinkled (water on me). When my body was sprinkled over with the holy water by your hand, swoon left me and disappeared. As the darkness disappears due to lustre (i.e. light), similarly, O auspicious one, my sin disappeared due to your having sprinkled (over my body). O you of a charming body, by your favour I obtained old knowledge (i.e. knowledge of previous existence). O you auspicious one, I realised that I shall reach a holy position.

8. Listen, I shall narrate my former account. O you auspicious one (I shall tell you) what great sin, I, a sinner, had (formerly) committed.

9-12. In the great country called Kaliṅga, there was a city by name Śrīpura, which was full of all accomplishments, and was inhabited by (the people of) the four castes. There lived a certain brāhmaṇa, known as Vasudatta, who was always engaged in the duties of a brāhmaṇa, and always devoted to truthful acts. He knew the Vedas; he was erudite; he was pure, virtuous and rich.

He was full of (i.e. he had ample) wealth and grains, and was adorned (blessed) with sons and grandsons. O you auspicious lady, I am his daughter adorned (blessed) with brothers and sisters, kinsmen, relatives, ornaments and decorations, O you of a beautiful face.

13-17. My very intelligent father named me Sudevā. O you highly intelligent one, I was always dear to my father. I was matchless in beauty; and like that (i.e. like me) there was none in the (whole) world. I, of a charming smile, was puffed up with the pride of my beauty and youth. I was a maiden very beautiful and adorned with all ornaments. Seeing me, all the people—all relatives of my class (i.e. caste) solicited me in marriage, O you of a beautiful face. I (i.e. my hand) was solicited by all brāhmaṇas; (but) my father did not give me (in marriage to any brāhmaṇa). O you glorious one, the highly intelligent one (i.e. my father) was deluded through his affection (for me). That my magnanimous father did not give me (to anyone in marriage).

18-21. Youth with (all its accompanying) feelings set upon me, O you young lady. Seeing my beauty like that, my mother, being greatly afflicted, said to my father: "Why do you not give (our) daughter (in marriage to a brāhmaṇa)? O glorious one, give this daughter (in marriage) to a good, magnanimous brāhmaṇa (for) she has (now) attained youth." The best and excellent brāhmaṇa, Vasudatta, said to (my) mother: "O you noble one, listen to my words. O you of an excellent complexion, I am deluded by great fascination for (our) daughter.

22-23. O auspicious one, listen, I shall give my daughter to that son-in-law, who would be a householder. This Sudevā is dear to me like my own life. There is no doubt about it." Thus my father Sudatta spoke (to my mother).

24-27a. (There was a brāhmaṇa, who was) virtuous, pure, born in the family of Kauśika, and was well-versed in all lores, and was endowed with the qualities of brāhmaṇas. Seeing him, who did not have father and mother, who was endowed with the study of the Vedas, and who was reciting (them) melodiously, and seeing the form of him, who had come to (our) door for alms, my very intelligent father said : "Who are you? Tell me now your name; (tell me about your) family, lineage, your practices."

27b-29. Hearing (my) father's words he said to Vasudatta (my father) : "I am born in the family of Kauśika. I have, mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. My name is Śivaśarman. I do not have father and mother (i.e. I am an orphan). I have four other brothers, who have mastered the Vedas. I have thus told you (about) my family, and about the practices of my family."

30-35. Thus everything was told to my father by Śivaśarman. O you blessed one, when an auspicious time, date and the star of the deity presiding over marriage arrived, I was given (in marriage) to that brāhmaṇa by my father. With that glorious one I stayed alone in my father's house. Being very much deluded by the great wealth of my father and mother and pride, I, a sinner, did not serve my husband. O you auspicious one, I never shampooed his body through love or affection or (pleased him) with (sweet) words. A sinner that I was, I always looked at (i.e. treated) him cruelly. O auspicious one, due to my contact with unchaste women, I reached their condition. I did no good to my mother, father, husband and brothers. I went here and there.

36-38. Seeing such wicked behaviour of me, my husband, through his love for his father-in-law (and mother-in-law) my very intelligent husband did not say anything to me. I, a great sinner, was however, warded off by (the members of) my family. All those (members of the family like) my father and mother, knowing the character and goodness of Śivaśarman, were afflicted by my sin (-ful acts).

39-46. Seeing my wicked acts, my husband went out of the house. He left the country and the village and went (away) from it. When my husband had gone, my father was full of anxiety, and was afflicted with grief as one would be afflicted with a disease. My mother said to her husband (i.e. my father) who was afflicted with grief: "What for is your worry, O my dear (husband)? Tell me your worry." "O pleasing one, the brāhmaṇa, (our) son-in-law, has abandoned (our) daughter and gone. This one is of a sinful conduct, merciless and performs sinful acts. The very intelligent Śivaśarman has been forsaken by this one (only). The highly intelligent brāhmaṇa, O dear one, due to his courtesy towards our entire family and me, does not say anything at all to Sudevā. He lives peacefully and the intelli-

gent, learned man does not condemn or censure Sudevā moving wantonly. This wicked Sudevā will destroy (our) family. O you housewife, leaving her, I (shall) go."

The brāhmaṇa's wife said :

47-65. O dear one, today you have understood the virtues and the vices of (our) daughter. She has now been spoiled because of your affection and love for her. One should fondle one's son till he is five years old. O dear one, one should always nourish him with the idea of training him (even) through affection also, by giving him bath, coverings, food, (other) eatables, drinks. There is no doubt about this. O dear one, one should urge the son in (i.e. to acquire) virtues and true learning. A father is always free from affection for the sake of teaching virtues (to his son). O dear one, affections take place (i.e. should be shown) in the protection and nourishment (of the son). (A father) should never describe his son as virtuous. Everyday he should censure him. He should always talk to him (with) sternness, and should afflict him with (harsh) words, so that the son, intent upon (acquiring) learning, will pursue true knowledge. Even through a device used to correct his pride, he leaves his sin far away. Perfection in learning and virtues is produced (in him). A mother should beat her daughter, and a mother-in-law should beat her daughter-in-law. A preceptor should beat his pupil. Thus they acquire perfection, not otherwise. A wife should flog her husband, a king should punish his minister. A soldier should beat his horse, and the elephant's driver should beat him. O lord, by means of being beaten and being protected, they are prepared with a thought for training. O lord, along with the good brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman, you yourself have foreover spoilt her. In the house she was made undisciplined (i.e. was not checked); therefore, O you highly intelligent one, she is spoilt. O dear one, listen to my words: The father should keep his daughter in his house till she becomes eight years old. He should not keep a strong (i.e. grown up) one. Both the parents get the (fruit of the) sin which a daughter, living in her father's house, commits. Therefore an able (i.e. a grown up) daughter is not kept in his house (by the father). She should get nourishment in the house of him to whom she is given. She, living there, should devoutly

win over her virtuous husband. The family becomes famous; the father lives happily. The husband suffers due to the sin which she, living there (i.e. in the husband's house) commits. Living there, she always prospers with sons and grandsons. O dear one, the father obtains fame due to the good qualities of his daughter. Therefore, O dear one, one should not keep in one's house one's daughter with her husband (i.e. a married daughter). O dear one, in this context there is an account that is so heard: O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you the account of the hero Ugrasena, the eldest Yadu, as it took place, when the great twenty-eighth Dvāpara yuga arrived. Listen to it with a concentrated mind.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

The Story of Padmāvati

The brāhmaṇa's wife said :

1. In the charming region of Māthura, in (the city of) Mathurā, lived the best Yādava king, the killer of his enemies, and well-known as Ugrasena.

2-7. The king knew the meaning and essentials of the whole religion; he knew the Vedas; he was learned and powerful; he was a donor, an enjoyer, an appreciator of virtues and a virtuous one. He, the intelligent one, ruled (over Māthura) and protected his subjects justly. Thus was that very lustrous and valorous Ugrasena. In the holy country of Vidarbha there lived a dignified (king named) Satyaketu. His glorious daughter, having eyes like lotuses and face like a lotus, and devoted to truthful behaviour, was Padmāvatī by name. That (Padmāvatī, the) daughter of the Vidarbha (-king) was endowed with feminine qualities and by means of her virtues based on truthfulness, she shone like another one born from the sea (i.e. like Lakṣmī). Ugrasena (the king) of the Māthura country married her, of beautiful eyes. O glorious one, with her the valorous one enjoyed himself happily. Being very much pleased with her qualities, he became happy with her (i.e. in her company).

8-9. The lord of the Māthura (country) was infatuated by her, due to her affection and love. The lucky Padmāvatī had become dearer to him than his own life. He did not eat without her, and sported with her (only). He did not at all enjoy any great pleasure without her.

10-12. O best brāhmaṇa, thus the best ones became affectionate towards each other, loved each other and gave great pleasure and joy to each other; and the glorious king of kings, Satyaketu, remembered his daughter Padmāvatī. Her mother (also) was very much afflicted. That king of Vidarbha (i.e. Satyaketu) respectfully sent his messengers to the brave king Ugrasena, O best brāhmaṇa.

13-18. The messenger said (these) words to the great king Ugrasena: "The brave lord of Vidarbha greeting you with devotion and affection, tells (i.e. informs) about his well-being, and inquires about your (well-being). O great king, Satyaketu has asked (i.e. requested) you like this : '(Please) send my daughter (to me) to see (so that I can see) her.' O lord, if you have regard for his love and affection, then send that glorious Padmāvatī, who delights you. O great king, he is very anxious and uneasy." Then, O best brāhmaṇa, having heard (these) words, the best and glorious king Ugrasena, due to love and affection for that magnanimous Satyaketu and through generosity, sent his dear wife Padmāvatī (to her father's —Satyaketu's— house).

19-27. That Padmāvatī, sent by him, was full of great joy, and went to her own former house. The charming and auspicious one saw (i.e. met the members of her) family led by her father. And she, devoted to truth, saluted her father's feet. O best brāhmaṇa, the great king, the lord of Vidarbha was full of great joy, when Padmāvatī had arrived (there). Greeted with presents and other respectful considerations, with garments, ornaments and decorations, Padmāvatī lived happily in her father's house. She lived with her friends without any apprehension. As before she at that time rejoiced in the chamber, tank and also in the palace. Having as it were become a young girl again, she stayed (there) without bashfulness. O brāhmaṇa, she always behaved without bashfulness with her friends. She, the glorious, loyal wife, full of great joy, knowing that the happiness obtained in the

father's house is difficult to be obtained in the father-in-laws's house, sported (there). Wondering longingly 'When (again) could there by enjoyment like this' the beautiful lady everyday longed for sport in the groves with her friends.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

Padmāvati Succumbs to Gobhila's Fraudulent Approach

The brāhmaṇa's wife said :

1-9a. O you glorious one, once on the best mountain she saw a beautiful grove, adorned with groups of plantain-trees, with the śāla trees, tāla trees, tamāla trees, coconut trees, with big betelnut trees, mātuliṅga (i.e. citron) trees, orange trees, and charming jambu trees, with auspicious campaka trees and pāṭala trees that had blossomed, and also with kuṭaka and bunyan trees; it was full of aśoka and bakula trees, and was adorned with various other kinds of trees. She saw that holy mountain with trees that had blossomed. Everywhere it appeared beautiful, as it was full of many kinds of minerals. She also saw an excellent lake full of holy water on all sides, shining with fully developed lotuses and other fragrant golden lotuses, with white lotuses and fully developed red lotuses, with blue lotuses, white lotuses and with water-fowls, with other aquatic birds, and was full of various minerals. The lake was white all round, and was full of groups of many kinds of birds. The mountain was graced everywhere by auspicious and sweet cooings of cuckoos and was everywhere agreeable due to the sounds (produced) by madhura trees. It looked lovely by the excellent humming of the bees.

9b-13. The princess saw the mountain like this, charming and excellent, and the lake beautiful all round. Padmāvatī, the daughter of the Vidarbha-king, while playing and engaged in sporting in water, and on the bank of the lake with her friends, saw that auspicious forest full of flowers everywhere, and laughed and sang sportively due to fickleness and powerful feminine nature. O brāhmaṇa, that beautful lady, thus sporting in that lake moved happily.

Viṣṇu said :

14-15. The best demon Gobhila, the servant of Kubera, endowed with all enjoyments, was going in a divine aeroplane along an aerial path (i.e. in the air). At the time he saw the fearless, broad-eyed daughter of the Vidarbha-king.

16. She, the best of all women, the dear wife of Ugrasena, matchless in beauty in the world, shone beautifully in all her limbs.

17-25. (He thought:) 'Might she be Rati, (the spouse) of Cupid, or (Lakṣmī) the dear (wife) of Hari, or goddess Pārvatī or Śacī (the wife of Indra). No other woman like her, the best among women, is seen on the globe. The beautiful woman shines with her beauty and arts as the beautiful full moon shines among the stars. This woman with a charming smile (shines) as a swan in lakes. Oh, how beautiful does her form appear ! Oh, what an amorous gesture ! Who is this charming woman having beautiful round breasts? To whom does she belong?' The demon Gobhila thought like this about (that) beautiful Padmāvatī. O brāhmaṇa, for a moment he thought as to who she was and to whom she belonged. With superior knowledge he knew that she was the daughter of the Vidarbha-king. There was no doubt about it (in his mind). She was the wife of Ugrasena, devoted to her husband. She stood by her own power, and was not easily attainable even by men. Ugrasena, who has sent this young lady to her father's house, is a great fool. He is unfortunate. How would the (king) of a fraudulent mind ever live without her? Or is the king impotent that he would leave (i.e. he has left) her?

26-28a. Seeing her he instantly became enamoured. 'This chaste lady is difficult to be secured even by men. How can I go (near her) and enjoy her? Lust afflicts me very much. If I shall go without enjoying her, then I shall die today only. There is no doubt about it; since lust is very powerful.'

28b-35. Being anxious like this, Gobhila observed mentally (i.e. thought to himself). Taking up an illusory form of king Ugrasena, the demon Gobhila fully became as the great Ugrasena was in point of gait, voice and language; and putting on garments and apparel (like Ugrasena) and being of the same age, and

putting on divine flowers and garments and having besmeared his body with divine sandal, and with his entire body (rendered) handsome as was the lord of Māthura, and thus being full of (i.e. exactly like) Ugrasena, and being equipped with great trickery and (fine) figure and handsomeness he remained on the top of the mountain, after having resorted to the shadow of an aśoka tree. Seated on a slab, the wicked-minded one with the neck of the lute (in his hand), was singing a melodious song, enchanting the universe. The wicked-minded one, enamoured of her beauty, sang a song equipped with the beating time, measure and execution, and adorned with the seven notes. O brāhmaṇa, he, seated on the mountain-top was full of great joy.

36. That beautiful Padmāvatī, who was in the midst of her friends, heard that melodious song, equipped with beating time, measure and the musical time.

37. 'Who is this pious one that is singing a song which gives great pleasure, which is full of fine execution and endowed with all ideas?'

38-42. The princess with curiosity went there with her friends and saw the mean demon Gobhila in the garb of the king, wearing divine flowers and garment and with his body besmeared with divine sandal, with all his limbs decorated with ornaments, seated on a spotless slab, resorting to (i.e. in) the shadow of an aśoka tree. The loyal wife Padmāvatī (thought): 'When did my glorious lord, the king of Māthura, and devoted to religious practices, come, after having left far behind his kingdom?' When she was thinking (like this), the sinful one called her hurriedly: "O my darling, come on." She was amazed and was doubtful as to how her lord had come (there).

43-46. She was ashamed, was afflicted, and then hung down her face (and thought:) 'I am sinful, of a bad conduct. I have turned fearless. There is no doubt that the glorious one will be just angry with me.' When she was thinking like this, that wicked one too hurriedly called her: "O my darling, come on, O dear one, O you of an excellent face (i.e. beautiful one), separated from you I cannot sustain my life; and life is very dear to me; I am longing for your love; I am greatly unable to leave you."

The brāhmaṇa's wife said :

47-48. Thus addressed, she, full of bashfulness, saw the handsome one. Then the demon Gobhila, having embraced that virtuous Padmāvatī, the daughter of Satyaketu, took her to a secluded place, and fully enjoyed her as he desired.

Sukalā said :

49-54. The beautiful one did not find the mark (known to her) on his testicle. Taking up her garment, she became afraid and afflicted. Angrily she spoke (these) words to that mean Gobhila: "Who are you of the form of a demon, who are acting wickedly and who are merciless?" O king, she, with her eyes full (of tears) due to grief, trembling, and oppressed with the burden of affliction was bent on cursing him: "O you wicked one, having come (here) in the guise of my husband, you have destroyed my excellent chastity—my best virtue. Having wailed melodiously, you have destroyed my existence. (Now) see my power; here (i.e. now) only I shall give you a very fearful curse." She, who desired to curse Gobhila, spoke like this.

CHAPTER FIFTY

Padmāvatī Is Grief-stricken

Sukalā said :

1-12. Hearing her words, Gobhila said (these) words: "Tell me the reason for which you desire to curse me. By what blemish am I defiled that you are ready to curse me? O auspicious one, I am a demon by name Gobhila, a warrior of Paulastya (i.e. Rāvaṇa). I act like a demon, I know excellent lore. I know the meaning of the Vedas and branches of knowledge, I am also skilled in arts. All this I know. (Now) listen about my demonish behaviour. I enjoy per force the wealth and the wives of others, and do so in no other way. Listen, we demons properly follow

the demonish ways and do so knowingly. I am telling you the truth (and) the truth (only). Everyday we observe the loopholes of brāhmaṇas. By (putting in) difficulties we destroy their penance; there is no doubt about this. Finding a loophole in the brāhmaṇas we destroy them, O respectable lady. There is no doubt about this. O you of a beautiful face, listen. We destroy a sacrifice in honour of gods, (other) sacrifices and religious rites. There is no doubt about this. There is no doubt that we live by keeping far away excellent brāhmaṇas, the god Lord Nārāyaṇa, and a chaste, illustrious lady of a good mind and devoted to her husband. O respectable lady, demons cannot bear the lustre of a good brāhmaṇa, of glorious Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), and of a lady loyal to her husband. The demons, the best evil spirits flee away due to the fear of a chaste lady, of Viṣṇu and of a good brāhmaṇa. I am roaming over the earth, according to the way of life of a demon. Why do you desire to curse me? What do you think my fault is?"

Padmāvati said :

13-14. You alone have destroyed my dharma (chastity) and good body. O sinner, I am a chaste, pitiable, and virtuous woman, loving my husband. I remained on my own (i.e. followed my own) course (of life). You have defiled me through deceit. Therefore, O wicked one, I shall certainly burn you too.

Gobhila said :

15-16. If you agree I shall explain to you the way of the life of even a brāhmaṇa, who has kept the sacred fire. O princess, listen. Offering oblation (to fire), he should not leave the fire-chamber. He alone is one who has kept the sacred fire and who offers sacrifice everyday.

17-18. O you of an excellent face, I shall also tell you about another (thing)—the way of life of a servant. O respectable lady, he is called a meritorious servant, who is always pure in mind, deeds and speech, who always obeys (his master) and remains behind and in front of him.

19-20. That virtuous, learned and eminent son, who protects his father and especially his mother by his mind (i.e. willingly),

by his body and his actions, has (the merit of) a bath in Bhāgīrathī everyday. He who does (i.e. behaves) in an opposite manner, is undoubtedly a sinner.

21-24a. I shall also narrate to you another excellent vow (in honour) of the husband. O you beautiful lady, listen. That lady alone, who everyday renders service to her husband by good words, mind (i.e. willingly) and actions, and she, who is pleased when her husband is pleased, she, who would not abandon her angry husband, she who does not find fault with him, and she who is contented (though) beaten (by him), and she who always stands in the forefront in all the deeds of her husband, is called a woman devoted to her husband.

24b-28. A father, though fallen, or full of many blemishes, or affected with leprosy or who is angry, is never to be abandoned on any account by his sons. Those sons (who) indeed serve their father or mother, go to the highest heaven. That is the highest place of Viṣṇu. The servants who in this way wait upon their masters go to the heaven of the lord through the grace of the master. A brāhmaṇa (who) does not abandon (keeping) fire, goes to Brahmā's heaven. A brāhmaṇa, who abandons (keeping) fire is called the husband of a śūdra woman. There is no doubt that a servant, by deserting his master, would be plotting against his master.

29. A brāhmaṇa should never give up (keeping) fire, a son should never abandon his father, and a servant should never desert his master. I am telling the truth (and) the truth (only).

30-34. Those who go away leaving (these), go to the ocean in the form of hell. If, O respectable lady, a woman desires her welfare here (i.e. in this world), she should never desert her husband who is fallen, diseased, languid, affected with leprosy, or who is void of (i.e. unable to do) all acts, and whose accumulation of wealth has been lost. A woman who would leave her husband and go and desire to work for someone else here (i.e. in this world), is looked upon as an unchaste woman and is fully excommunicated. People call that woman an unchaste one, who, through fickleness, enjoys pleasures and decorates herself when her husband has gone to (some other) village. Thus I know the dharma (which is) also approved by the Vedas and the sacred treatises.

35-45. There is no doubt that I shall tell you the entire reason about this, viz. as to why at the beginning the creator created demons, goblins and evil spirits. Brāhmaṇas, demons, fiends, goblins, have, O beautiful lady, studied all that is said about dharma. Demons know all (that), but do not practise it. Demons, void of knowledge, do (all acts) without the (proper) rite. Men abandoned by (i.e. not practising) rites go (i.e. act) unjustly. They (i.e. demons) are created for disciplining them (i.e. such men); and not for anything else. We discipline those mean men, who perform (various) acts without proper rites by severely punishing them. You have done a terrible and very cruel act. Why, abandoning your state of a housewife, did you come here? And with your own mouth (i.e. you yourself) are saying that you are a lady loyal to your husband! But that your loyalty to your husband is not seen through your action. Leaving the husband, why have you come here? Decorating yourself, putting on ornaments and (attractive) dress, and (thus) being shameless, you are staying here. O sinful one, tell me why, for what purpose, you have done (this). Being fearless and wanton, you are living in the mountain-forest. Listen, I have subdued you, a sinner, with a great (i.e. severe) punishment. Behaving impiously, you, a wicked woman, have abandoned your husband, and come (here). Where is your loyalty to your husband? Show that before (i.e. to) me. You are indeed an unchaste woman, who have deserted your husband. When a woman occupies a separate bed (i.e. does not occupy the same bed as her husband does), she is looked upon as unchaste.

46. Your husband is at a distance of a hundred yojanas. Where is your loyalty to your husband? You are behaving like an unchaste woman.

47-48a. O you shameless woman, O you cruel one, O you wicked one, facing me (i.e. to me) what (will) you say (now)? Where does your penance exist? Where is your lustre? Where is your power? Show me, today only, your power, valour and prowess.

Padmāvati said :

48b-52a. O you mean demon, listen. My father brought me here from my husband's house through affection. What sin is

there? I, who am devoted to my husband, have come (here) leaving my husband not through lust, or greed, or delusion or hostility (to him). You yourself, taking the guise of my husband, have deceived me. I went forth to you, taking you to be (the king of) Māthura. O you mean demon, (now) when I know you to be (a demon) using tricks, I shall reduce you to ashes just with one hum-sound.

Gobhila said :

52b-56a. Blind human beings do not (i.e. cannot) see. Now listen. How do you, bereft of the eye of dharma know me now? Listen; when a desire for (visiting) your father's house arose in you after you had stopped thinking about your husband, then, your eye of wisdom in your heart had evidently perished. (Now), with your eye of wisdom lost, how do you recognise me on the earth (i.e. here)? To which wife mother, father, brother, kinsmen and relatives belong? (i.e. none of them is related to her). In all (these) places (i.e. in the places of all these), the husband alone (remains); there is no doubt about this.

56b-58a. Saying so, and laughing loudly, the mean demon Gobhila (again spoke:) "O you unchaste woman, listen. Today I have no (cause of) fear from you. What would happen by means of your curse? You are unnecessarily trembling. Resorting to my house, enjoy pleasures as you like."

Padmāvati said :

58b-59. Go (away), O you of wicked acts. What are you, being shameless, talking? I have (always) lived as a chaste woman, devoted to my husband. O you great sinner, if you talk (shamelessly) like this, I shall burn you.

60-62. Saying so, she sat on the ground in a secluded place. Gobhila said to her who was afflicted with great grief; "O you beautiful one, I have deposited my germ into your womb. From it will spring up a son who will agitate the three worlds." Speaking like this, the demon Gobhila then left.

63. When that demon of wicked acts and sinful behaviour had gone, the princess, full of great grief, wept.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Padmāvatī Returns to Her Husband's Place

The wife of the brāhmaṇa said :

1-2. When that wicked-hearted Gobhila of a bad conduct had left, Padmāvatī, being full of great grief, wept. O best brāhmaṇa, hearing her weeping, all her beautiful friends asked the princess.

3-4. (They said:) "Well-being to you, why are you weeping? Tell us your story (i.e. what you did). Tell us where the great king, your (husband) the lord of Māthura, who had invited you by addressing you (as) 'O dear one' is". Weeping again, again she spoke with grief.

5-6. She told (them) everything that had taken place through error. They took her who was weeping and was extremely afflicted to her father's house. Then the damsels told (the account) in the presence of (i.e. to) her mother. Hearing that the queen (i.e. her mother) went to her husband's mansion.

7-10a. She told the account of her daughter to her husband. Hearing it, the king was extremely grieved. Giving her a vehicle, clothes etc. he sent her, along with attendants, to Mathurā. She went to the mansion of her dear (husband). The father and the mother concealed the blemish of their daughter, O best brāhmaṇa; but the righteous-minded Ugrasena, seeing Padmāvatī who had arrived, was glad, and again quickly said these words to her:

10b-11. "O you beautiful lady, I cannot live without you. You are very lustrous; O dear one, you are always dear to me due to your virtues, character, devotion, truth and qualities like devotion to your husband."

12. Ugrasena, the lord of men, the best king, speaking (like this) to dear wife Padmāvatī, enjoyed in her company.

13-16. The fierce foetus, causing fear to all the worlds, grew. Padmāvatī knew the cause of that foetus. Night and day she thought about it growing in her womb: 'What is the use of this one, destroyer of the worlds, being born? Now I have nothing to do with this wicked son.' Everywhere she enquired about a herb that would cause abortion. The lady, secured (i.e. tried to

secure) a great (i.e. effective) herb for abortion. Everyday she adopted many remedies for abortion.

17-21. The foetus, fearful to all the worlds, grew. Then the foetus said to his mother, Padmāvatī: "O mother, why do you trouble yourself by (using) the herbs everyday? (The span of) life increases due to religious merit, and life becomes short due to sin. (Beings) live or die according to the ripening of their deeds. Painful foetuses depart, while others, that are immature (i.e. not properly developed) die as soon as they are born on the earth. Some others are endowed with youth. All children, old men, young men, being under the sway of vital power, die and (i.e. or) live according to the ripening of their deeds. There is no doubt that medicinal herbs, formulae and deities are only a means.

22-24. You do not know me—what kind of (foetus) I am. Formerly you have seen and heard about the very powerful (demon) Kālanemi, who is a very mighty (demon) among the demons, causing fear to the three worlds. In the great war between gods and demons I was formerly killed by Viṣṇu. To finish enmity with (i.e. to take revenge on him, I have come to your womb. O mother, do not act rashly and do not exert yourself everyday."

25-31a. O best brāhmaṇa, speaking thus to his mother, he ceased (speaking). His mother then gave up her exertion, (but) became very much afflicted. When ten years had passed, he grew. Then he became very lustrous, and that Kaṁsa became very powerful, who harrassed the people, the residents of the three worlds; and who, killed by Vāsudeva, went to (i.e. obtained) salvation. There is no doubt about it. Thus O dear one, I have heard like this. Whatever will happen, will happen. I have told you what has been determined in all the Purāṇas. The daughter, who lives in her father's house, perishes. O dear one, a daughter should not have longing for staying in her father's house. Abandoning this wicked one, a great sinner, be composed. Great sin and terrible grief would be obtained (by us if we keep her here). O dear one, enjoy with me, that leads to felicity in the world.

The female hog said :

31b-41a. That best brāhmaṇa, hearing these words contain-

ing good advice, decided to forsake (his daughter). He then called me. He gave me everything like garments and decorations (and said to me). "O good one, listen. Due to your bad conduct, that best, intelligent brāhmaṇa went (away). O you wicked one, O you of a bad couduct in the family, go there where your husband is. There is no doubt about this (i.e. this cannot be otherwise); (or go to) the place which you like. Do as you are advised." O you glorious one, after my father had said like this, I, a shameless woman, abandoned by my father, mother and (other) members of the family, quickly went away, O you beautiful lady. O you good lady, I did (i.e. could) not secure a comfortable abode. People reproached me saying, '(Oh) this unchaste lady has arrived.' Void of the pride of my family, and wandering (here and there), I went from (my father's) country, to a holy Śiva-temple in Saurāṣṭra in the Gurjara-country. It was a city full of prosperity and known as Vanasthala. Listen, O queen, at that time I was very much oppressed by hunger. Taking a potsherd in my hand I started begging. Being extremely afflicted I entered the gates of householders. People saw my form and reproached it. They did not give me alms, (saying) 'this wicked one has come (here)'. I thus obtained proper food with difficulty, and was entirely oppressed with poverty.

41b-43. While wandering, I saw an excellent house, surrounded by a high rampart, with a chamber for (the recitation) of the Vedas, which was crowded with many brāhmaṇas; it was full of wealth and grains, and was adorned with male and female servants. I entered that beautiful house, affluent with glory.

44. That house which was auspicious all round was the house of that Śivaśarman only. Sudevā, afflicted with grief, said: "(Please) give (me) alms."

45-47. The best brāhmaṇa, Śivaśarman, heard the words: "Give (me) alms". That righteous-minded, very intelligent Śivaśarman, smiled and said to his beautiful wife Maṅgalā by name, who was of the nature of Lakṣmī: "O dear one, this enfeebled one has come to (our) door for alms. O auspicious and dear one, being full of great pity, call her and give her food. She has come to me after having recognised me."

48-50. Maṅgalā said to her dear husband: "I shall give her food dear to (i.e. liked by) her." Speaking like this to her

husband Maṅgalā, endowed with auspiciousness, again fed me, the weak one, with sweet food. That righteous-minded, great sage Śivaśarman said to me: "Who are you that have come here? To whom do you belong? On what mission do you roam everywhere over the earth. Tell me."

51-53. Having thus heard the words of my glorious husband, I, the sinner, recognised him by his voice. When I saw my husband, I hung down my face through shame. Maṅgalā, beautiful in all limbs, said to (our) husband: "Tell me who she is, (since) on seeing you she is ashamed. Please favour me and tell me who she might be."

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

Sudevā Goes to Heaven

Śivaśarman said :

1. O Maṅgalā, if you are now asking, then listen to (my) words. O you of an excellent face (i.e. O you beautiful one), know that for which you have asked (me).

2-5. O you of charming eyes, this miserable one who has now come in the form of a beggar, is the daughter of the brāhmaṇa Vasudatta. O good one, this one is Sudevā, my wife, always dear to me. Leaving her (father's) country for some reason, she has come (here). O you beautiful one, she is scorched by grief due to me and separation from me. Recognising me, she has come to you in the form of a beggar. Realising this, O good one, you, desiring what is very dear to me, should show her good hospitality. There is no doubt about it (i.e. you should certainly show her good hospitality).

(*The female hog said* :)

6-14. Maṅgalā, who looked upon her husband as a deity, and who herself was extremely auspicious, was full of great joy on just hearing the words of her husband. O you beautiful one, she made (arrangements for) my bath, clothes and food. O you

good one, I, devoted to my husband, was adorned by her, dear to her husband, with golden ornaments decked with jewels. O queen, I was graced by her with respect, bath and food. I was (also) respected by my husband. In my heart there was endless, very poignant grief, fully destroying my life. I observed her respect for me; in the same way (I noted) my affliction. I had terrible anxiety due to which my life departed (i.e. was about to depart). I, a sinner, committing bad acts never gave a good answer to this best brāhmaṇa. I did not wash his feet, nor did I shampoo his body, nor did I give the glorious one (company) in solitude. How shall I, of a wicked resolution, talk to him? Then at night I fell there into the ocean of grief. When I was thinking like this, my heart burst; then O beautiful lady, my life, leaving my body, departed.

15-27a. Then there came brave, fierce messengers of Yama who held maces, discs and swords. O you illustrious one, I was, bound by them with chains binding strongly. I, who was weeping and who was very much afflicted, was taken by them to Yama's city. Being beaten with mallets I was harassed along the difficult path. Being reproached by them I was ushered into the presence of Yama. The noble and angry Yama looked at me. I was thrown into a heap of ashes; I was thrown into a heap of hells. An iron figure of man was made; it was heated in fire, and it was hurled on my breast for having deceived my husband. I was very much tormented with various troubles; I was burnt with the fire in hell; I was thrown into an oval vessel and on mud and sand. I was cut with blades of swords and dragged by a machine used for raising water. The noble one hurled me on Kūṭaśālmali trees. I fell into pus, blood and feces, full of insects. O princess, the same magnanimous one thus threw me into all poignant hells full of trouble. I was torn up with saw, and was very much struck with darts. O princess, I was also hurled into other hells; I was thrown into hollows like wombs, and into a painful narrow passage. That lord of Dharma (i.e. Yama) threw me into hells. Reaching (i.e. being born in) the species of goats, I experienced very terrible pain. I went to (i.e. was born in) the species of jackals and again that of a bitch; (then) I was born as a hen, a cat and a rat.

27b-32a. Thus that Yama threw me into different species,

and I was troubled in all births. O princes, he himself made (i.e. created) me a female hog on the earth. O you glorious one, there are many kinds of holy places in your hand. O you of an excellent complexion, you yourself sprinkled that (holy) water on me. O queen, O beautiful lady, by your favour, my sin has vanished, O you of an excellent face, by the lustrous religious merit of you only. Knowledge is produced in me. Now emancipate me, who have fallen into the hell-like peril. When (i.e. if) O queen, you do not emancipate me, I shall again go (back) to a terrible hell. O you illustrious one, protect me who am experiencing grief. Due to sinful thoughts I suffered. I am wretched, I am without a shelter.

Sudevā said :

32b-33a. O auspicious one, now tell me what good deed I have done that would give rise to religious merit, by which I would emancipate you.

The female hog said :

33b-39a. This illustrious Ikṣvāku-king, the son of Manu, the very wise one, is Viṣṇu, and you are Lakṣmī, not otherwise (i.e. and none else). O you auspicious one, you are devoted to your husband; you are glorious; you are a loyal wife; you are always chaste; you are full of all holy places; you are dear; O queen, you are full of everything and are always full of all gods. You alone are a great loyal wife in the world; you who have day and night rendered service to your husband, are dear to the king. O beautiful one, if you (desire to) do what I like, give me your merit earned by the service to your husband, even for a day. You are my mother, you are my father, you are my eternal preceptor. I am sinful, of wicked acts, given to falsehood and without knowledge. O glorious one, emancipate me. I am afraid of being beaten by Yama.

Sukalā said :

39b-40a. Having heard like this, she saw the king and said to him: "O great king, what do (i.e. should) I do? What does this beast say?"

Ikṣvāku (king) said :

40b-41a. O auspicious one, with your merit emancipate this one who is unhappy, helpless and gone to (i.e. born in) a sinful species. It will be very righteous.

41b-47. That very charming and auspicious lady Sudevā, when addressed like this, said "O you beautiful lady, I have given you (my) merit for a year." When the queen uttered these words, just at that moment the hog became endowed with beauty and youth, adorned with a divine garland, got a divine body covered with lustrous flames, was rich with the beauty of all ornaments, and adorned with many jewels. She had a divine form, besmeared with divine sandal. The good one got into a divine aeroplane, and went into the higher region. She saluting the queen with her neck bowed down (in respect for the queen) then said: "O you magnanimous one, well-being to you; O beautiful lady, due to your favour, I, being free from sin, am going to the holiest and auspicious heaven." O best one, listen, having thus saluted her, Sudevā went to heaven. I have (thus) told you all this as told by Sukalā.

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Sukalā's Sickening Description of the Body

Sukalā said :

1-2a. Formerly, at that time I thus heard (about) the Dharma from the Purāṇas. How shall I, of a sinful resolve, enjoy pleasures without my husband? I cannot sustain my life with (i.e. in) my body without that husband.

Viṣṇu said :

2b-9. She thus narrated the excellent, great Dharma of the chastity of a wife; and those friends, excellent women, having heard the very meritorious Dharma for women, giving a great position (i.e. salvation) to women, praised that glorious Sukalā

devoted to virtue. O king, all brāhmaṇas, gods and all virtuous women call her to mind due to her prowess caused by love for her husband. Indra, the lord of gods, having given a great (i.e. serious) thought to the firmness of Sukalā, and he, the lord of gods, having well pondered over her great devotion (thought): 'I shall certainly shake her fortitude and her love for her husband.' The lord of gods hurriedly recalled to mind god Cupid. He, the fish-bannered (god), holding his flowery bow came there. The very powerful one was seen to be accompanied by his beloved Rati. Joining the palms of his hands, he said to the thousand-eyed (Indra): "O you lord, O you eminent one, O you who cut off the pride (of your enemies), why have you remembered me now? With all your heart give me an order today."

Indra said :

10-11a. This illustrious Sukalā is greatly devoted to her husband. O god of love, listen, give me an excellent help. Move away (swerve) this glorious Sukalā, auspicious due to religious merit, (from her devotion).

11b-20. Having heard those words of Indra, he said to him: "Let it be so, O thousand-eyed god; there is no doubt that I shall gladly help you." Cupid, of great lustre, and difficult to be conquered (even) by sages, having said so (spoke again:) "O god, I am capable of conquering gods, ascetics and best sages; then what to say of this woman, who has no strength in her body (i.e. who is weak)? O god, I always live in the limbs of women. (I live) in the foreheads, eyes, on the tips of their breasts, in their navels, waists, backs, buttocks, vaginal area, lips, teeth, middle parts (of their bodies); there is no doubt about this. I live everywhere; in their limbs and minor limbs. O god, a woman is my abode. I always live there. Living there, I slay all men; there is no doubt about this. A woman, weak by nature (and) tormented by my arrows, on seeing a handsome and virtuous (person like her) father, mother, or other kinsman or relative, and being struck with my arrows, is disturbed; there is no doubt about it. She does not even think of the consequence. O lord of gods, the vulva, and also the tips of the breasts of women, throb. They do not have patience. O lord of gods, I shall undoubtedly ruin Sukalā."

Indra said :

21-23. O mind-born (god), I shall become (i.e. turn myself into) a handsome, virtuous, wealthy man; and through curiosity I shall disturb this woman. O you dear to Rati, (I shall disturb her only through curiosity; and) not through longing for her, nor for frightening her, nor through cupidity, nor through infatuation, nor again through anger. (I am telling) the truth (and) the truth (only). How can I see her true devotion to her husband? Going from here I shall turn her (away from her vow). The cause for that would be the infatuation (caused) by you.

24-29. Having thus ordered the god of love, the king of gods brought about a change in himself (i.e. took up a different form), became handsome and virtuous, made his body graceful by ornaments, was endowed with all possessions and all pleasures and amusements, and possessed all generosity. He would show (i.e. he showed) his sportive movements, handsomeness, virtues and sincerity at the place where, O king, that respectable woman, the dear (wife) of Kṛkala, stayed. But she did not at all look at the man possessing the wealth of handsomeness. O king, Indra would (follow her to) see her wherever she went. The thousand-eyed god looked at her only with a longing mind and with all expressions of lustful acts. Wherever the woman went—into a crossway, along a path or to a holy place, the thousand-eyed (god) saw her.

30-32. The female messenger sent by Indra went to Sukalā; and having smiled she said to the glorious Sukalā: "O (great are) your truthfulness, courage, charm and forbearance. In the world there is no other beautiful woman resembling a form like that of this one. O auspicious one, who are you? Whose wife are you? He, whose virtuous wife you are, is blessed and meritorious on the earth."

33-37. Hearing her words the high-minded lady said (to her:) "(Kṛkala) the religious-minded one, lover of truth, was born in the vaiśya caste. I am telling you the truth: I am the dear wife of that intelligent and veracious Kṛkala. That my very intelligent, righteous-minded husband has gone on a pilgrimage. O glorious one, listen; three years have passed since he, my lord, left (for the pilgrimage). Since then I have been afflicted without

(i.e. due to separation from) the magnanimous one. Thus I have told you all this my account. Tell me who, that ask me ('who I am'), you are."

38-51a. Hearing the words of Sukalā, the messenger spoke again : "O good one, you are asking me like this. I shall tell you everything. O you of an excellent complexion, I have come to you for (i.e. on) some mission. Listen (as) I shall tell you; and having heard, know it accurately. O you of a beautiful face, your merciless husband has gone after abandoning you. What will you do with him, the sinful one, who does harm to his beloved, endowed with a good conduct? What, O you young lady, have you to do with him, who has gone (away) and is alive or dead? What will you do with him? You are thus grieving in vain. Why do you destroy your divine body, lustrous like gold? O you auspicious one, O you glorious one, a man does not get any pleasure except children's sports, when childhood is attained by him. In old age, unhappiness comes (to him), and old age completely destroys his body. O you beautiful lady, he gladly enjoys all pleasures in youth. As long as youth lasts, men enjoy all pleasures and enjoyments. A man enjoys as he likes. He enjoys pleasures as long as youth lasts. What will you do, O good lady, when youth has gone? O respectable lady, no occupation succeeds when old age comes (to him). An old man constantly thinks, (but) does not (i.e. cannot) easily do any job. O young lady, bridge is constructed after water has gone (i.e. flowed). In the same way, O auspicious lady, the body would be (useless) when youth has passed. Therefore, enjoy happily; and drink sweet wine. O you of charming eyes, these arrows of Cupid are burning your body. This handsome and virtuous man has come. O you of an excellent complexion, this best man, who knows everything, who is virtuous and wealthy, is ever full of love for you."

Sukalā said :

51b-60. The soul does not have childhood; in life there is no youth. He (i.e. the soul) does not have old age. He (has) accomplished (everything); he grants good divine attainments. He is immortal, unaging, pervading (everything), (has) well accomplished (everything), and is best among the omniscient

ones. Himself being desireless,[1] he fulfils desires, and lives in the world in the form of the soul. The formation of the body is seen to be like that of a house. As the body is (weak) due to old age, so is a house with a thread. One should effect it with the heaps of many sticks and collections of pieces of wood, with clay and water also. Besmeared with variegated (objects) by plasterers, a (piece of wood) becomes agreeable. A house first bound by a thread gets a form; and they themselves everyday maintain it by smearing it. The house constantly rocked by wind gets dirty. This is said to be the middle period of the house. It would lose its form, and the master of the house would smear it. The lord of the house, by his own desire, would make the house beautiful. O messenger, the youth of the house is said (to be like this). After a long time due to the heaps of sticks it becomes old. They lose their positions, and move to the tips of the roots. It does not (i.e. is not able to) stand the burden of the smearing, and stands (only) with a prop.

61-70a. O messenger, listen, this is said to be the old age of the house. The lord of the house, seeing the house falling, would leave it. To enter another house he goes away quickly. Like that are the childhood, youth and old age of men. In childhood, he, being of the form of a child, would act senselessly. He would even decorate his body with garments, ornaments and jewels, and also with smearings with sandal (-pastes), and others produced from tāmbūla etc. The body becomes young, and he becomes very handsome. He would nourish his exterior and interior with all juices. Being nourished like that he becomes strong. Due to the juices, fresh and excellent, increase in flesh takes place. O king, the limbs also become extended and corpulent. The minor limbs also take their own form due to the intake of juices also. The teeth, lips, breasts, arms, waist, back, both the hands and the soles of the feet (also) similarly develop. Due to these two (i.e. juices and flesh) the limbs develop. They become beautiful due to the juices and flesh. O messenger, due to these forms, a mortal becomes one dependent on juices. A mortal is called handsome in the world. Due to what would he be liked?

1. The analogy occurring in verses 53, 54, 55, 57 etc. is not sufficiently clear; also the description in vv. 94, 95, 101b etc. is not clear (Tr.).

70b-78. O messenger, this body is the store of feces and urine. The impure, shameless body always exudes (sweat). O you auspicious one, what is (the use of) describing its beauty? It is like a bubble on water. Till he is fifty years old, he remains strong. Then after that, day by day, he loses (his strength). His teeth become loose, and his mouth has a flow of saliva. He would not (i.e. is unable to) see with his eyes, and does not (i.e. cannot) hear with his ears. O messenger, he is not able to make any movement with his hands and feet. Being afflicted with old age, the body becomes unfit. The juice, dried up with the fire of old age, withers. O messenger, he becomes unfit. Who desires handsomeness? As an old house perishes—there is no doubt about it, in the same way the body becomes weak in old age. Everyday you are describing that beauty has come to me (i.e. I am beautiful). Due to what am I endowed with beauty? Who desires my beauty? Due to what (i.e. in what way) is the man for whom, O messenger, you have come to me—as one goes to an old house—powerful? On account of what are you praising (me)?

79-97. O messenger, now tell me, what did you see in my body? There is nothing here (i.e. in my body) which is short or extra as compared to his body. There is no doubt that as he is, so you are, so also I am. Who would not have beauty? On the earth there is no one (who is really) handsome. All heights end in a fall; O auspicious one, trees and mountains are devastated by time. Beings are like them (only), not otherwise. O messenger, the divine, pure soul, formless (and yet) having a form, is present everywhere, in all immobile and mobile objects. The pure one lives (everywhere) as one (and the same) water remains in (many) pots. On the destruction of the pots, it becomes one. You do not know (this). This soul also becomes just one on the destruction of bodies. I have always seen this form (only) of those who live in the world. Speak like this, after knowing him for whom you have come here. (Tell him:) you should show me something new about the body that is afflicted by a disease, and covered with cough, if you desire to enjoy me here. Blood drops from the body, and he is removed from his position. There is unsteadiness in all the joints of the body and remaining within he singly perishes and would give up his own form. Quickly the condition of feces takes place (i.e. food quickly turns into feces)

and (the body) would be (i.e. is full of) insects. He would then give up his own form painful like that. Listen, it later becomes full of bad odour due to insects. Then lice or worms are produced there; there is no doubt about this. The worm causes boils and terrible itch. The louse would produce disease, and would disturb the entire body. The itch scratched with the nail-tips is abated. Similarly hear about copulation (enjoyed) by them. There is no doubt that a mortal enjoys drinks and feasts on abundant supply of food. It is taken to the place of digestion by the breath (called) Prāṇa. O messenger, all that food taken to the place of digestion is covered there, and the wind (called Apāna) would make the fece fall (out of the body). The liquid which has become vigorous there, becomes red (blood). Being free from dirt and of a pure vigour it goes to Brahmā's place. Being dragged by the wind (called) Samāna, and taken by that very wind, he does not obtain a place. The semen remains unsteady. In the skulls of beings five (kinds of) insects live. Two of them live at the root of the ears, and (two) at the place of the eyes. Having the size of the small finger, they have red tails, O messenger. Having the (white) colour of butter, they have black tails. There is no doubt about this.

98-109. O good one, listen to their names being narrated by me: The two, named Piṅgalī and Śṛṅkhalī, remain at the root of the ears. The two Capala and Pippala remain on the tip of the nose. The two others, Śṛṅgalī and Jaṅgalī remain inside the eyes. There is no doubt that there are one hundred and fifty (varieties) of insects like that. All they remain at the border of the forehead and have the size of a mustard. All (these) carrying diseases deform (the body); there is no doubt about it. O messenger, listen, a pair of hair remains in his mouth. Know that the destruction of beings takes place just at that moment. There is no doubt about it. The vigour falls in the form of a fluid. There is no doubt about it. He drinks the vigour with his mouth, and by that becomes inebriated. It remains unsteady in the middle part of the palate. There remain (the two vessels of the body called) Iḍā and Piṅgalā and the artery called Suṣumnā. Due to the great power of it only, there is indeed the itch for sex in the cage formed by the net of arteries, in the case of all beings. O messenger, the organs of generation of the male and also of the female

throb. Then the male and the female, being inflamed with passion, unite. The body (of the male) is rubbed with the body (of the female). Due to coitus a momentary pleasure is produced. Then again a similar itch is (produced). Such a condition is indeed observed everywhere, O messenger. Go to your own place. There is nothing new about it. I have nothing new, nor do I do anything new. This is certain.

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Sukalā Gets Prepared For the Showdown

Viṣṇu said :

1-4. When the female messenger was thus addressed by that Sukalā she went (to Indra). Indra, having understood those significant and truthful words of her, well spoken in a brief manner, and having perceived her boldness, courage and knowledge (thought:) 'Who, (even) being a woman, would speak on the earth, words that are of the form of (i.e. endowed with) propriety and that are well-ordered and washed with the water of logic? This magnanimous one is pure and of a truthful nature. There is no doubt that she is capable of bearing the yoke (i.e. responsibility) of all the three worlds?'

5. Due to this Jiṣṇu (i.e. Indra) thought and said to Cupid: "With you I shall go to see that beloved (wife) of Kṛkala."

6-7. Cupid, proud of his power, replied to the thousand-eyed (Indra): "O lord of the gods, let us go (to the place) where the chaste lady is (staying). Having gone there, I shall destroy her self-respect, power, strength, courage, truthfulness and loyalty to her husband. Of what account is she (to me), O lord of gods?"

8-9. Having heard (these) words of Cupid, the thousand-eyed (Indra said:) "O Cupid, listen. Excessive talking is of no use. She is quite strong with true power. Due to religious rites she is quite firm. This Sukalā is inconquerable. Your valour is (of) no (use) there (i.e. against her)."

10-13. Hearing this, and getting angry, Cupid said to Indra:

"I have destroyed the power of sages and deities. Of what measure (i.e. how much) is her power (about which) you are telling me? You just see (i.e. in your very presence), I shall destroy the woman. As butter, on seeing (i.e. in the presence of) the lustre of fire, would melt, similarly I shall melt her with my form and lustre. Now certainly great mission has come up for me, who am going there. Why do you condemn my lustre (capable of) destroying the three worlds?"

Viṣṇu said :

14-17. Having heard the words of Cupid (Indra said:) "O Cupid, I know, (even) if you raise (i.e. augment) your courage, you cannot subdue her of a holy body, meritorious due to her virtue, and behaving piously. Going from here (with you) I shall observe your strong power." With the archer (i.e. Cupid) and with the female messenger Rati, he again went to that chaste lady, who of a great merit was (all) alone and attached to her husband's feet, as a meditative saint would place his heart (in meditation) and make it free from uncertainty. The glorious fish-bannered god (i.e. Cupid) made (i.e. took up) a form, extremely wonderful, endowed with an unlimited lustre, alluring the chaste lady, adorned with blue (garments) and full of objects of enjoyment. Also Indra (took up a similar form).

18-24. Seeing that great man, of many amorous sports and wandering like this, full of desires, the wife of the glorious Vaiśya did not highly think of him (who was) endowed with a handsome form and (was an) appreciator of merits. The nature of that chaste lady had become endowed with truth, as water going to a lotus-petal, gets the name 'pearl'. 'The female messenger, whom he had formerly sent, told (me) about this appreciator of merits. This one would show in various ways his sportive form and his nature. How far this very intelligent and mischievous lover, knowing my nature would live? (Now) my body is a vacuum, and is instantly free of movements and is as good as dead. The subjects of the village of the body, have, after performing the acts called good acts, fled away. Cupid has endowed him with charm, greater than, equal to or superior to my charm. I shall talk in a wonderful way to him, who longs for me, in such a

way that he, dancing with his own knowledge, powerful and endowed with joy, dies.'

25. Thinking like this, that great chaste lady, binding her firmly with the string of truth entered her own house to know his mind definitely.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

Indra Tries to Dissuade Kāma

Viṣṇu said :

1-3. Knowing her mind, the lord of gods said to Cupid standing before him: "O Cupid, she, who is well-equipped with the armour of meditation with truth as its soul, cannot be conquered by you. With a desire to conquer, and taking in her hand the bow called piety and an excellent arrow named knowledge, she has stood on the battlefield, like a hero proud of his valour, to fight (with you). (This is her) valour only. Now do (i.e. show) your valour. She is today capable of conquering you in the battle. What is going to happen should be thought just now.

4-5. Here only the glorious Śiva had formerly burnt you, who had opposed him. O Cupid, as a result of that evil (act of yours), you had become bodiless. (This is) just the truth. O Cupid, you had formerly obtained a horrible fruit in accordance with the deed you had performed. Certainly you will obtain a very contemptible birth (i.e. will be born in a very contemptible species). Here only you will be told (like this) along with this chaste lady.

6. Those wise men who, in the three worlds, entertain enmity with the magnanimous, have as its fruit, sin accompanied by misery and destroying their form.

7-14. O Cupid, having proclaimed ourselves to this chaste lady, and having urged her (to continue her pious acts), we shall go. Formerly due to my contact with a chaste lady I obtained a sinful, unbearable fruit. You know this account (that) I was cursed by that Gautama also. I became one having the scrotum

of a ram for ever, and you went away, leaving me there. The power of the lustre of chaste women is matchless. (Even) the creator or the sun (also) is not able to bear it. The curse formerly pronounced by the sage (-husband) of Anasūyā would (continue to) preserve this contemptible form (of you). (The chaste lady) having stopped the forcible, rising sun, very bright with lustre, stopped the curse of Kauṇḍinya pronounced by Nāṇḍavya. Atri's wife was truthful and chaste. She made the three gods her sons. O Cupid, have you not formerly heard that chaste women are always purified by sacred rites. Sāvitrī was the daughter of Dyumatsena. She brought back here only the life of Satyavān, Aśvapati's good son, from Yama. Chastity of women is thus well known. Who would touch the flame of fire? Or, who, except a fool, would, tying stones round his neck, (try to) cross the ocean with his hands? Or who would (try to) subdue a chaste woman who is free from attachment?" When Indra thus spoke words of prudence for instructing Cupid well, he, Cupid, having heard (these) words said to the lord of gods.

Cupid said :

15-18. By your order I have come (here). Having given up patience, goodheartedness and manliness, you are telling me about her (something), which lacks energy and is full of great fear. When I shall entertain bad thoughts, O lord of gods, my fame in the world will perish. Subdued by her people will describe me, who bring about marriages to be without self-respect. The hosts of gods, demons, sages, and saints with austerity will instantly laugh at me (saying:) 'This fearful Cupid is subdued by a woman.' Therefore, O lord of gods, I shall go with you and shall destroy her power, self-respect, lustre and fortitude. O Indra, why are you (then) afraid here (i.e. in this matter)?

19-23. Having thus addressed the lord of gods, and having held his bow and flowery arrow, he said to Rati, standing before him: "Acting deceitfully you should go the vaiśya's wife Sukalā, who is meritorious, who remains in (i.e. practices) truth, who knows piety and appreciates virtues. O darling, going from here do the work, helpful (to my mission), as told (by me). (Please) obey (me)." Having thus spoken to Rati, he again called Rati, standing near. (He said:) "Do this excellent job for me; subdue

her through great affection. (Act in such a way) that this beautiful woman would fall in love with Indra on seeing him. O friend, listen, by all means win her over with all miraculous powers; O friend, go quickly and effect an illusory grove, having the form of (i.e. resembling) Nandana-garden, full of flowers, abounding in fruits, and resounding with the cooings of the cuckoos and the hummings of the bees."

24-25. Having called the brave Elixir of Life, the very gratifying Flower-juice, endowed with sweet virtues, and sent him according to his wish along with Wind etc. engaged in their own duties and ordering the great army, infatuating three worlds, Cupid went with the lord of gods, to that great chaste lady, to allure (her).

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

Satya & Dharma Come to Sukalā's Help

Viṣṇu said :

1-11a. Cupid, with the lord of gods, started to go to Sukalā to bring about a genuine destruction of her. At that time Satya (i.e. Truth) said to Dharma: "See, O very intelligent Dharma Cupid's misdeed. I create (i.e. have created) a great place, an excellent house, of the nature of an abode, causing (i.e. giving) happiness, and called Satya (truth), Supriya (very dear) and Sudeva (with good deities), for the sake of you, the righteous and magnanimous one, and for my sake. This wicked Cupid, of a blundering mind, and of an inimical nature, would go to it and certainly destroy that excellent house of us. There is no doubt that a Brāhmaṇa with penance as his wealth as the husband, a very poius chaste woman, and a very truthful king, are, O Dharma, my abodes. There is no doubt about it. You would reside there where I am nourished with prosperity. Puṇya (i.e. Merit) comes there and sports with Śraddhā (i.e. Faith). Kṣamā (i.e. Forbearance) accompanied by Śānti (i.e. Tranquility) comes to my abode. Real Dama (i.e. Restraint), and Dayā (i.e.

Pity) and Sauhārda (i.e. Good-heartedness), Nirlobha (i.e. Absence of greed), along with Intelligence are there where I live. Śuci Svabhāva (i.e. Pure Nature) (stays) there only. These are my kinsmen. Non-stealing, Harmlessness, Endurance and Prosperity have come to my house. O king Dharma, listen to my blessedness. Service of preceptors and elderly persons, Viṣṇu accompanied by Lakṣmī, gods led by Agni, come to my house. Jñāna (i.e. Knowledge) accompanied by Brilliance, that would illumine the path to salvation (has come to my house).

11b-14. I always live with these in chaste women, religious persons, and in all good people that are of the form of my house. Along with you I just live with the family about which I told you. They, who are virtuous and of a good nature, have been made my abode by the Creator. O magnanimous one, I move comfortably and at will. The lord, the master of the three worlds, the three-eyed one, having the bull (viz. Nandi) as his vehicle, lives, with Śivā (i.e. Pārvatī), in his own form in my house.

15-20. This, then, is the essence of the worldly existence, of the form of a house, of a lordly nature—an abode called Śaṅkara. That is destroyed by Cupid. This Cupid formerly subdued, after having taken resort to (i.e. the help of) Menakā, the magnanimous Viśvāmitra, practising excellent penance. That wicked Cupid led the chaste, loyal Ahalyā, the dear, auspicious wife of Gautama away from great truth. All sages, knowing the genuine Dharma, many chaste women—all these my abodes were burnt by the fire of Cupid. He is irresistible, unbearable, (all-) pervasive, and very harsh to great truths. He is looking for me (saying:) 'Where does Truth stay?' Knowing me (i.e. finding out my abode) he, the archer, with arrows in his hands, comes; and the sinful one would destroy my house with fires.

21-25. All those having bits of sins, who are cruel, who have resorted to heretics, who are malevolent in mind, will enter the house of Satya. Subdued by the generals of the army who are untruthful and by that Chadman (i.e. Dishonesty), the sinner would ruin (and) strike (my) house with sinful weapons. The wicked, very powerful Cupid will strike me like this. Burnt by his lustre I shall be a non-entity. I desire (to have) a new house called the woman looking upon her husband as her king. This one, good and auspicious, is the dear (wife) of the meritorious

Kṛkala. This wicked (Cupid) is intent on burning that house called Sukalā.

26-30a. How is it that the mighty thousand-eyed (Indra) does not know (i.e. remember) his former account (i.e. what happened to him) on account of Cupid? He became one having the scrotum of a ram due to his attachment to Ahalyā. The lord of gods (i.e. Indra), who had remained there (i.e. in Gautama's hermitage), had perished on seeing the manliness of the sage and due to the outrage of a chaste woman, as a result of Cupid's fault. He suffered a terrible curse, and was full of great grief. This thousand-eyed (Indra), along with Cupid, is eager to strike this Sukalā, Kṛkala's dear wife practising meritorious acts. O Dharmarāja, O very intelligent one, act in such a way that this Cupid would not come (to her) with Indra. You are the best among the intelligent ones."

Dharmarāja said :

30b-33a. I shall lessen the lustre of Cupid and bring about his death. I have found out one remedy. You may (please) examine it now only. This very intelligent Prajñā moving in the form of a bird, may tell (i.e. announce), from the sky, the auspicious arrival of (Sukalā's) husband. She, due to the prowess of the omen, and with her mind steady, would certainly not be ruined by the wicked.

33b-35a. He (then) sent Prajña. She went to the house of Sukalā. Making a great sound she shone like one who had been seen (i.e. favoured) by gods. Then she was worshipped and honoured with incense, lights etc. Sukalā asked the brāhmaṇa: "What would she (i.e. does she) say to me?"

The brāhmaṇa said :

35b-36. The steady one announces the arrival of your husband, O blessed one. He will arrive within seven days. This will not be otherwise.

37. Hearing these very auspicious words, she at once became very glad. (She thought that) her virtuous, dear husband, knowing righteousness, had arrived.

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

The Trap Is Laid For Sukalā

Viṣṇu said :

1-3. Rati, taking up the form of a chaste lady, went to the house of the charming loyal wife. She (i.e. Sukalā) the bleśsed one, endowed with a truthful nature, respectfully spoke to her (i.e. Rati). Rati, the chaste lady, well-honoured with very auspicious words, smiled and spoke to Sukalā, words full of deceit, alluring all and containing a truthful topic: "(Please) listen, my husband, my lord, who is very strong, who appreciates virtues, who is wise and learned, who is endowed with greatness, who has a holy name, left me who am more (i.e. very) sinful and has gone away."

4-5. Sukalā, due to her feminine nature, after having heard all that she (i.e. Rati) said through agreeable words, took her to be of a very pure nature, and said to her: "O beautiful lady, why did your lord abandon your beautiful form and go away? Today tell me the truth about your good husband. You, endowed with meditation, who have come to my house, and being of the nature of my friend, are doing everything for me."

6-10. Rati said: "Listen to the real account of my lord. O dear one, I was always engaged (in giving him) what he desired, and thus appeased him. To carry out the auspicious words of my good lord, I did everything attentively. I am of an extremely good disposition, virtuous and worthy of him through my rendering service to him who is supreme for me in this world. This is the fruit of my former (deeds) which appears now only, and due to which my husband has thus gone away after abandoning me, who am luckless. O friend, I do not (i.e. cannot) sustain my life and my body. How do shameless women live well without their husbands? In the scriptures, a husband is described to be the beauty, decoration, good fortune, happiness and wealth, and not otherwise (i.e. and none else)."

11-14. She (i.e. Sukalā) having heard all that Rati said, and looking upon it as the truth, believed her talk. That magnanimous Sukalā, devoted to her husband, and confiding (in Rati), again spoke to her words describing her acts. She

told in brief all her former account. "Since the husband, intent upon gaining religious merit, has gone on a pilgrimage, our grief is very true, and so is our suffering, O you virtuous lady." Having (thus) cheered up the chaste lady, Rati advised her.

Sūta said :

15-22. Once that Rati said to Sukalā : "O friend, see the pleasing wood adorned by divine trees. There is a very auspicious sacred place, destroying sins. It looks charming due to the spreading out of many creepers, and good flowers. O you of an excellent face, we too should go (there)." Hearing that Sukalā entered, with Rati, that divine forest, resembling Indra's garden. It was having flowers of all seasons, and was resounding with calls of hundreds of cuckoos; it was full of the music of bees' sweet hummings; it was full of the auspicious sounds of propitious birds; it shone with trees like the sandal and with fragrances. It was full of all pleasures and with the spring-creeper and the spring season. It was put up to allure Sukalā. With her she (i.e. Rati) entered the wood, pleasing to all. She saw the auspicious (grove) giving pleasure (but) did not know the fraudulent intention (of Rati), when, O lord of men, she saw the divine wood with her (i.e. Rati).

23-26a. Shining with his divine form, Indra also went to that place. Cupid also came there along with that messenger. (Indra) being the lord of all enjoyments, and full of amorous sports, called Cupid and said to him: "This Sukalā has come. O glorious one, strike her standing before you and brought by Rati through trickery near you. If you have valour show it today. Do it certainly."

Cupid said :

26b-27a. O you thousand-eyed (Indra), show your charming form, endowed with amorous sport, so that I shall strike (her) with (my) five arrows.

Indra said :

27b-28a. O fool, where is your valour with which you afflict people? Now you desire to fight after taking my support.

Cupid said :

28b-36a. Formerly only that trident-holder, Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva), the god of gods has snatched away my form. My body does not exist. Listen, when I desire to strike a woman, I manifest my form by resorting to a male body. O thousand-eyed (Indra), I shall now execute the mission by resorting to (the body of) a man. When a lady is repeatedly thinking about the form of a man (i.e. about a man) not seen before, I excite the man by resorting to him. In the same way, I shall certainly excite this one of the form of a woman (i.e. I shall certainly excite this woman). There is no doubt about it. O lord of gods, I got the name 'Smara' as I was thought of. Seeing her I shall, (being) like that, resort to the (particular) colour, object or form. My lustre would repel what is to be repelled by means of its brightness, and by resorting to the form of a woman it would allure (even) a strong-minded man; and resorting to a man (-form) I shall secure this woman for you. O Indra, I am formless. I would resort to my (original) form (and) resorting to your body I shall secure her as desired (by you).

36b-38. Having thus addressed the lord of gods, Cupid too, who was the friend of the Spring Season and who had flowers as his weapons, having resorted to the body of that magnanimous (Indra), was eager, looking, with his eyes, at the target of his arrows—the chaste, very meritorious wife of Kṛkala—to strike her.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Sukalā Wins

Viṣṇu said :

1-2. Prompted by Rati, Sukalā, the beautiful wife of the vaiśya entered the beautiful grove. The chaste lady saw all the charming grove and then she asked her friend. (She said:) "O friend, to whom does this excellent, very meritorious, divine and

charming grove, which is furnished with all excellent pleasures, belong?" Sukalā joyfully asked her friend (Rati).

Kṛiḍā (i.e. Rati) said :

3. This grove is endowed with all divine qualities of well-known inherent properties and decorations of flowers and perfumes; it is full of flowers and desired fruits; see, it is of (i.e. it belongs to) Cupid.

4-12. Having heard these words, and full of great joy, and observing the great account of the wicked Cupid, she smelt the fragrance carried by wind. (In it) wind, endowed with fragrance, blew naturally, in such a way that his (i.e. Cupid's) arrow very easily entered her nose; but that (Sukalā) of an excellent face (i.e. beautiful) did not smell the fragrance of the flowers; nor did the very chaste lady enjoy the excellent pleasures. The delightful friend of Cupid, vanquished (by her), was ashamed, and having turned away his face, fell on the ground with bits of leaves. Juice, of an excellent brightness, and decorated with flowers and shoots, fell on the ground from ripe fruits. The flower-juice, of a melancholy nature, fallen from the fruits, was eaten (i.e. drunk) by bees, as a dead man (is eaten up) on the battle-field. Being (thus) eaten (i.e. drunk) by bee, it flew in a stream. It flew slowly only; the birds laughed at it. With many notes, full of joy, they happily roamed (in the grove). The birds happily remained on the mountain in the forest. He, who had resorted to a mean course, was vanquished by Sukalā.

13-14. Cupid's wife Rati, accompanied by Prīti, went to Sukalā, and, with a smile, said to her: "O auspicious one, well-being to you; welcome to you; enjoy happily; your spotless form, delightful to the eyes, is liked by the magnanimous Indra. When you desire (something), tell (me); I shall certainly bring it."

Sūta said :

15-19. Seeing and hearing the two ladies (viz. Rati and Prīti) talking, she said (these) good words: "My very intelligent husband has gone away, taking with him my pleasure. I am united with my husband at the place where he remains. My desire (remains) there, so also my love. This body is without a prop." Both Rati and Prīti, having heard what (Sukalā) said, were

ashamed. Being ashamed, they went to the place where the very mighty Kāma stood. They said to the great hero of a great might, who had drawn his bow, who had resorted to Indra's body (and therefore) who was visible to the eyes: "O you highly intelligent one, she is invincible. Give up (trying) your valour (against her). The magnanimous chaste lady always longs for her husband (only)."

Cupid said :

20. O respectable lady, if she looks at the form of this magnanimous Indra, then I shall certainly strike her.

21-24. Then that lord of gods, of a great form, who had put on a (different) garb, endowed with all pleasures, decorated with all ornaments, wearing divine flowers and garments, (with his body) smeared with divine sandal, and accompanied by that Rati, very sportively and quickly went to that place where the lady looking upon her husband as a deity (i.e. the lady loyal to her husband) stood. He spoke to the magnanimous Sukalā, behaving truthfully: "Formerly I had sent a messenger to you. Why, O auspicious one, do you not show regard for me, who have betaken myself to you?"

Sukalā said :

25-28a. Well-being to you. I am protected by the magnanimous sons of my husband, and by companions; so I am not at all alone. From whom (then) do I have fear? I am protected by brave men everywhere. I do not have much time to talk. I am engaged in my duty towards him. O you very intelligent one, why do you not feel ashamed of dallying with me while your eyes are trickling (i.e. while you are old). Who are you that have come here, and are not afraid even of death?

Indra said :

28b-29. I saw you having come into the grove; but you told me about the brave sons of your husband. How can I see them? Show them to me.

Sukalā said :

30-34. The pious-minded, magnanimous one, whose entire piety is firm, who is always devoted, who is powerful with love,

having established Truth as the chief of his own group (of allies), and placing him (to protect me) along with qualities known as Courage, Resolution, Fate and Intelligence, always protected me. Dharma thus always protects me with the pure qualities of restraint. See, Truth, along with Tranquility and Forbearance, has come to me. Knowledge, who is very powerful and very famous, will never desert me. I am bound with firm bonds of his qualities. He has just come to my vicinity. All (the qualities) like Truth etc. had been now made my protectors. All (qualities like) Piety, Gain and Restraint, Knowledge, Valour protect me only. Why do you solicit me against my will? Who are you, being fearless, that have come here with a female messenger? Truth, Piety, so also Merit and Knowledge etc. are very powerful and are the companions of my husband. They protect me in the house.

35-37. I am always having protection, and am solely devoted to Restraint and Tranquility. Even the lord of Śacī (i.e. Indra) himself is not able to win me over. Even if that powerful Cupid comes, I am always furnished with the armour of truth, and not by anything else. There is no doubt that his arrows would be futile. The great warriors like Dharma (i.e. Piety) etc. will kill you only.

38-39. Go away, run (away); now do not stand here. If you stay (here), though warded off, you will be reduced to ashes. I shall just burn you, as fire would burn wood, and in no other way, when you look at my form without (i.e. in the absence of) my husband.

40-43. Hearing (these words) (uttered by her) in the presence of even Cupid, the thousand-eyed god (i.e. Indra said:) "See her valour. Fight with your valour (with her)." O great king, all those, Indra and others, being afflicted with fear of the great curse, went to their respective places, as they had come. When all of them had gone, that Sukalā, devoted to her husband, and endowed with merit, came to her own house, thinking of her husband (only). That lady, looking upon her husband as her god, then came to her own house, endowed with merit, full of (the merit of) all sacred places and all sacrifices.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

Riligious Observances Without One's Wife Are Fruitless

Viṣṇu said :

1-2. Having finished (i.e. having visited) all sacred places, Kṛkala, full of great joy, started for his house along with the leader of the caravan. He always thought like this: 'My worldly existence is fruitful. My dead ancestors, when gratified will go to heaven; not otherwise.'

3-5a. Just then having bound his grandsires (Dharma) spoke to him: "You do not have excellent religious merit." (Dharma) of a divine form and of a huge body said (these) words to Kṛkala: "You do not have the fruit of (your visits to) holy places. In vain have you exerted. You alone are happy (i.e. you have not gratified your dead ancestors etc.); (therefore) you do not have excellent religious merit."

5b-7. Hearing like this, the vaiśya, viz. Kṛkala, was afflicted with pain. (He said to Dharma:) "Who are you that are talking like this? Why are my grandsires bound? Due to the effect of what fault (of mine are they bound)? (Please) tell me the reason of it. Why do I not have the fruit of (my visits to) the holy places? How is my pilgrimage not (fruitful)? If you know, then tell me everything clearly."

Dharma said :

8-19. The entire fruit of the religious merit of him, who, leaving (behind) his pure and most meritorious wife, goes (on a pilgrimage), becomes worthless, not otherwise. All the religious deeds of him, who, leaving (behind) even his wife who is devoted to a pious conduct, who is meritorious, who is engrossed in the vow of loyalty to her husband, who is virtuous, who loves merit, goes to (holy places to) perform religious rites, are done in vain. Not otherwise. In the house of him, whose meritorious and very chaste wife has qualities like being devoted to all (good) practices, being worthy, being intent upon accomplishing moral merit, being devoted to her husband, always loving knowledge gods of great prowess always stay; and his dead ancestors, living in his house, desire bliss. There (i.e. in his house) are present

auspicious rivers like the Ganges and Seas; (and) not at any other place. He, in whose house lives his chaste wife, entirely devoted to truth, has (the credit of having performed) sacrifices; cows and sages (live there), and at no other place. Due to the conduct of his wife all these sacred places and various religious merits (stay) there, and at no other place. The stage of householder is produced (i.e. is possible) due to the contact of a meritorious wife. Highest moral merit is (obtained) from the stage of a householder. There is no such stage on the earth. O vaiśya, the house of a householder is meritorious, is endowed with truth and religious merit, is full of all holy places and is attended by all gods. All beings live (only) after resorting to the stage of a householder. I do not see any other excellent stage (of life) like that. The man in whose house the sacred fire is maintained to the accompaniment of sacred hymns, all gods live, all old practices are followed, gifts are given (is blessed).

20-34. Similarly the house of him who is without a wife, becomes a forest. (In his house) sacrifices are not accomplished (i.e. performed) and various gifts (are not given). Any great vow of a man without a wife is not fruitful. So also no religious rites and no meritorious deeds (are fruitful). To accomplish religious merit there is no holy place like a wife. Listen to the way of the life of a householder. There is no other Dharma in the three worlds (like that of a householder). A man has a house where his wife lives, whether in villages or in a forest. She is the means of all moral merit. There is no holy place like a wife; there is no happiness like a wife. There is no religious merit for the emancipation and well-being (of the husband) like a wife. O you mean man, you go (i.e. you had gone) leaving (behind) your righteous and chaste wife. Leaving (i.e. when you leave) your house and proper course of conduct, where does the fruit of your moral merit remain? When (i.e. since), without her (i.e. in her absence), you offered a śrāddha, therefore, due to that fault only your grandsires are bound. You are a thief; these (grandsires) also are thieves who, being very greedy, enjoyed the food offered by you without her (i.e. in her absence). I shall tell you about the religious merit of a good son, who, full of faith, offers a śrāddha, with (i.e. in which) a piṇḍa (is) offered by his wife. As men are satisfied with drinking nectar, in the same way the dead ancestors are satisfied

with a śrāddha. I am telling you the truth and truth only. A wife is the owner of the stage of a householder. O fool, you have deceived her. You have committed a theft. These your manes, who ate without her (i.e. in her absence) are great thieves. The dead ancestors eat with a pleased mind the food resembling nectar which the (son's) wife prepares with her own hands. With that only they are gratified and become pleased. Therefore, the religious practices of a man do not succeed without his wife. There is no holy place like a wife giving men a good position (i.e. leading them to salvation). The religious practices carried on without (i.e. in the absence of) the wife would become fruitless.

CHAPTER SIXTY

Sukalā's Story Ends

Kṛkala said :

1. O Dharmarāja, now tell me in detail how I would have final beatitude and how my dead ancestors would be liberated.

Dharma said :

2-6. O you noble one, go home. She (i.e. your wife) is experiencing grief without you. Inform your wife, Sukalā practising piety, (of your arrival). Having gone home, offer śrāddha with her hands. Win over the best gods by remembering the holy places. You will have the salvation obtained through pilgrimages to holy places. He who desires to accomplish religious merit without his wife (i.e. all alone), loses (the fruit of) the stage of the householder and would wander alone in a forest. He is unsuccessful in the world, (and) the deities do not respect him. The sacrifices become successful (only) when the housewife remains in the house. All alone (i.e. without his wife) he is not able to accomplish (the fruit of) piety and worldly prosperity.

Viṣṇu said :

7-11a. Having thus spoken to the vaiśya, Dharma left as he had come. That religious-minded Kṛkala also proceeded to his

house. The intelligent one reached his house and saw that chaste wife (of him). The intelligent one reached his own abode along with the leader of the caravan. Seeing her husband, well-versed in Dharma, who had arrived, she performed very auspicious and meritorious (rites) on the arrival of her husband. The religious-minded one told her what Dharma did. The magnanimous one, having heard her husband's words causing delight, and having praised the words of Dharma, agreed with him.

Viṣṇu said:

11b-16a. Then that vaiśya Kṛkala remaining in the chamber of the (idol of the) deity (in his house) devotedly offered, with her, a śrāddha, giving great merit. The dead ancestors, gods, Gandharvas and sages came there in aeroplanes and praised the high-souled couple. I (i.e. *Viṣṇu*), also Brahmā and the great lord (i.e. Śiva) with the goddess (Pārvatī) and all (other) gods with Gandharvas arrived (there). I, Brahmā, and the great god (i.e. Śiva) with the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī), also all gods with Gandharvas, pleased with her truthfulness, said to the two who were well-versed in truth: "Well-being to you along with your wife. O you of a good vow, ask for a boon."

Kṛakala said :

16b-17a. O best gods, due to the association of the merit of which penance, have you come here to grant a boon to me with my wife?

Indra said :

17b-18a. This chaste, noble Sukalā is pleasing and auspicious. We were pleased with her truthfulness. We (therefore) desire to grant you a boon.

18b-23a. (Then) in brief they narrated her former account. Having heard of the magnanimity of her behaviour, the husband was delighted. With her the religious-minded one (i.e. Kṛkala) with his eyes full of joy saluted all the deities, and again and again said : "If now all the magnanimous, ancient three gods (i.e. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva) and other holy sages have favoured me and have come here, then I shall be devoted to gods like this (only) in existence after existence. Due to your grace let me

have liking for piety and truth; and afterwards, O gods of great prowess, if you are pleased, I desire to go to Viṣṇu's heaven with my wife and grandsires."

Gods said :

23b. O noble one, let it be so. Everything will take place (like this) only.

24-32. Then, O king, they showered flowers on the two (i.e. Kṛkala and Sukalā). Gandharvas, knowing the essential nature of music, sang a charming, melodious song, giving great religious merit; and the groups of the celestial nymphs danced. Then the gods with the Gandharvas, praising the chaste lady, went, after giving (Kṛkala) a boon, to their respective abodes, O best king. I have told you (how) a woman is (called) a sacred place. (Now) I shall tell you something else. I have narrated to you this entire, excellent, meritorious account. O king, a man who listens to it is free from all sins. A woman who devoutly listens to the excellent account of Sukalā, is never deserted by good fortune, truth, sons and grandsons. She is delighted with wealth and grains and would be happy with her husband. In existence after existence she would be a loyal wife, and not otherwise. A brāhmaṇa (who listens to the account) would become well-versed in the Vedas; (and) a kṣatriya would be victorious. There is no doubt that there would be wealth and grains in the house of a vaiśya. O king, a man knowing piety would become one of good conduct and happy. A śūdra gets happiness and prospers with sons and grandsons. There is great prosperity adorned with wealth and grains.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Pippala's Penance

Vena said :

1. You have described the holy place in the form of wife, the best of all holy places. Now tell about the sacred place in the form of dead ancestors, which is a great emancipater of sons.

Viṣṇu said :

2-7. In the great sacred region (called) Kurukṣetra (there lived) a brāhmaṇa named Kuṇḍala. That noble Kuṇḍala had a good son by name Sukarman. His parents were very old, knew religious practices, and were proficient in sacred precepts. Both the noble ones were afflicted with old age. He, who knew piety, and who was full of sincerity, devotedly and continuously served them night and day. He, intent on (following) all (good) practices, knowing piety and a lover of knowledge, learnt from that (i.e. his) father, many sacred treatises; and he himself massaged the bodies of the two. He also washed their feet, bathed and fed them with devotion and naturally became thoughtful about them. O best king, he (thus) served his mother and father.

Sūta said :

8-11. At the time he lived there was a brāhmaṇa, (a descendent) of the noble Kaśyapa, O best king. He, void of passion, free from jealousy, endowed with pity, charity and restraint, having subdued lust and anger, practised penance without eating food. The intelligent one, solely devoted to knowledge and tranquility, went to Daśāraṇya, and the high-souled one having controlled his senses performed penance (there). Due to the power of his penance, the beings, free from fighting (with one another) lived there, in that age, as it were remaining in one (and the same) womb.

12-28. Seeing that (severe) penance of him, the sages were amazed. (They said:) 'None else has practised penance as this one is doing.' So gods led by Indra, were highly amazed. (They said:) 'Oh what severe penance he is practising? How great is his tranquility and restraint over senses?' Being free from emotion and agitation, and enduring cold, wind and heat, he remained (there) like a mountain. The best brāhmaṇa, disinclined to pleasures of senses, patient at heart, did not hoard anything and did not hear the sound of anyone. Having taken up a position like that, he, with a concentrated mind, meditating upon Brahman, remained there with his lotus-like face full of joy. Resembling stone and wood, he remained motionless like a mountain. Very firm and loving piety he appeared like a post.

His body was afflicted with penance. He was full of faith, and was free from jealousy. (Practising penance) in this way, the intelligent one passed a thousand years. Many ants constructed on this body a huge ant-hill with a heap of clay, as his abode. In the interior of the ant-hill he remained motionless. In this way that brāhmaṇa (named) Pippala practised very great (i.e. severe) penance. The best brāhmaṇa (Pippala) was surrounded on all sides by black serpents. (The serpents) of a strong poison bit that brāhmaṇa of an intense penance. Poison (even) after reaching the vulnerable points of his body did not harm it. Due to the brāhmaṇa's lustre the serpents became peaceful. From his body rose many flames of blazing lustre. They appeared separately. O best man (i.e. O king), they were just like the more (i.e. very) hot (flames) of fire. As the sun, having entered the interior of clouds, shines with his rays, in the same way the brāhmaṇa remaining in the ant-hill shone with his lustre. O best king, angry serpents bit the brāhmaṇa with their teeth, but even after piercing his skin, they did (i.e. could) not cleave (his body), with the tips of their teeth. O lord of kings, in this way the noble sage passed a thousand years in practising penance. The period, attended by cold, rain and heat was thus passed by the noble Pippala who subdued the three times, O great king. In the same way the noble one also ate (i.e. lived on) air.

29-31. He passed three thousand years in practising penance. Then soon the gods showered flowers on his head. (They said to him:) "O you noble one, you know Brahman, you know piety, there is no doubt about it. You have become full of all knowledge (i.e. omniscient) due to your deeds. You will certainly get (i.e. fulfil) whatever desire you have. You, on your own, will have all your desires accomplished (i.e. satisfied)."

32-37. Hearing (these) great words, that large-hearted Pippala, with his neck (i.e. head) devoutly bent down, and full of great joy, spoke (these) words: "O best gods, do that by which this entire world would be under my control. May I be a Vidyādhara." O best king, speaking like this, the intelligent one ceased (to speak). The gods then said to the best brāhmaṇa: "Let it be so." O noble one, having given the boon to that magnanimous (Pippala) they left. When the gods had left, that

best brāhmaṇa Pippala was everyday devoted to sacred knowledge, and thought (as to how he would) control everything. O best king, since then Pippala, the best brāhmaṇa, obtained the status of a Vidyādhara, and was honoured as one moving according to his own desire.

38-41. In this way that brāhmaṇa Pippala attained the status of a Vidyādhara, and became well-versed in all branches of knowledge and the lord of gods. Once that Pippala of great lustre thought: 'I shall have everything under my control. I have been granted the best boon.' The best brāhmaṇa (Pippala) was eager to ascertain it. He would bring (i.e. brought) under control whatever he wanted to. When he thus became confident, he thought : 'In the world there is no other best brāhmaṇa like me.'

Sūta said :

42-46. O king, knowing the thought of that noble Pippala who was thinking like this, the crane which was on the bank of a lake said to Pippala in a melodious tone, charming and full of charity: "Why do you have this great pride? I do not think you have the power to bring everything under your control. This act of subjugating everything is recent (or is on this side). O Pippala, you, whose intellect is confounded, do not know what is ancient (or is on the other side). O brāhmaṇa, why do you in vain entertain pride when you have practised penance for three thousand years?

47-53a. That wise and very intelligent Sukarman, who was the son of Kuṇḍala had all the world under his control. Now listen. That intelligent one knew the recent (or on this side) and the ancient (or on the other side). O Pippala, listen, there is no one so very wise as he was. You are not like (that) Sukarman, the son of Kuṇḍala. He did not give gifts. He did not reflect on knowledge. He never performed acts like offering oblations or sacrifices. He never went on a pilgrimage, nor did he ever offer excellent service to fire for resorting to (i.e. obtaining) religious merit. He moved at will, he was ever a friend of (i.e. always loved) his father and mother. He was endowed with the knowledge of the Vedas, and was well-versed in the meaning of all branches of knowledge. You do not have that knowledge which

even that child (i.e. even as a child) Sukarman had. In vain you are proud."

Pippala said :

53b-60. Who are you in the form of a bird, that are thus censuring me? Why do you condemn my knowledge? Of what kind is the ancient knowledge? Explain that to me in detail. How do you have knowledge (i.e. How have you come to possess knowledge)? Now tell me the scope of the recent (or inferior) as well as of the ancient (or superior knowledge), in detail and accompanied by learning, O best bird; and (tell me) whether you are Brahmā, or Viṣṇu, or Rudra.

The crane spoke :

Your penance does not exist; (therefore) you will not have its fruit. Hear now about the penance which you have not practised. You do not have the virtue which the child of Kuṇḍala had. Nor do you have the knowledge (which he had). Nor have you known the (highest) place (as he knew). O best brāhmaṇa, having gone from here you ask (him) about my form. He, the religious-minded one, will explain to you all knowledge.

Viṣṇu said :

Having heard all that which the crane said, he speedily went to the great hermitage in Daśāraṇya.

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

Parents As Sacred Places of Pilgrimage

Viṣṇu said :

1-5. (Pippala) having gone to Kuṇḍala's hermitage, full of truthful practices, saw (there) noble Sukarman, greatly devoted to his father and mother, serving (them), possessing great prowess born of truth, of great form and lustre, having great

knowledge, engaged in serving his parents and seated at their feet, tranquil, endowed with great devotion and the great treasure of all knowledge. That high-souled Sukarman, the son of Kuṇḍala, seeing the very intelligent Pippala who had come to the door, quickly got up from his seat and honoured him, (and said to him): "O you glorious, very intelligent Vidyādhara, (please) come."

6-10. The very intelligent (Sukarman) gave him water for washing his feet and a respectful offering, (and said to him): "O you highly intelligent one, are you free from difficulties? Are you all right?" He also asked Pippala that had come (to him) about his well-being. (He said to Pippala:) "I shall explain to you all about your arrival (here) today. You practised penance for three thousand years. O glorious one, you thus practised penance, and obtained a boon from the gods. You secured the power of subjugation, and also (the power of) moving according to your desire. Due to that you have become arrogant, and are unnecessarily proud. Seeing all your movements, the noble crane told you my name and about my excellent knowledge."

Pippala said :

11. Who is that lord, that god, the crane who directed me (to come to you) and told me about all knowledge on the bank of a lake?

Sukarman said :

12-13a. Know that crane who talked to you on the bank of the lake to be the highest god Brahmā, of great knowledge. Speak (out) what else you want to ask. I shall explain it to you.

Viṣṇu said :

13b. O prince, that religious-minded Sukarman thus spoke (to Pippala).

Pippala said :

14. On the earth we have heard that the entire world is under your control. O brāhmaṇa, carefully show me the spectacle.

15-18a. "Today see the spectacle—the cause of controlling the uncontrolable." (Thus) spoke the religious-minded Sukarman to Pippala. Then for convincing (Pippala), Sukarman called to mind the gods. The Guardians of the Quarters like Indra, and also gods led by Agni and many Vidyādharas that were invited came (there). Then the gods led by Agni said to Sukarman : "O brāhmaṇa, tell us the reason for which you remembered us."

Sukarman said :

18b-20a. Here has come this Vidyādhara (named) Pippala. He asks me the reason of my controlling the uncontrolable. I have invited you for convincing this high-souled one. (Please) go to your respective abodes.

20b-24. Thus he spoke to the gods. Then the gods said to that very intelligent Sukarman: "Your seeing us will not be fruitless. Well-being to you. Ask for a boon which you like. We shall grant it. There is no doubt about it." Thus the best gods spoke to him. The best brāhmaṇa having devoutly saluted those gods requested them: "O best gods, grant me always a sincere and firm devotion to my mother and father. This is the best boon (I desire to have). May my father go to Viṣṇu's heaven; similarly, O lords of gods, may my mother (also) go to Viṣṇu's heaven. This is the best boon (I desire to have). I do not solicit any other boon."

The gods spoke :

25. O best brāhmaṇa, you are devoted to your father. O Sukarman, listen, due to your devotion we are always pleased with you.

26-28. O prince, having said like this, the gods went to heaven. Then he (i.e. Sukarman) presented before him (i.e. Pippala) all his grandeur. Pippala also saw that great wonder. The religious-minded (Sukarman) also said to Pippala, the son of Kuṇḍala. (Then Pippala said:) "This is a recent (or interior) form; what kind of form is the ancient (or superior) one? O best among the speakers, tell me about the prowess of both."

29-37. I shall tell you the mark of the ancient form, due to which the worlds, the mobile and the immobile (and gods) led by Indra are delighted. This lord of the world himself, who pervades the entire earth, is the master (of everything). No meditating saint has seen his form. The scriptures, as it were afraid to speak, speak (about him) like this: "He is without hands, feet and nose. He is without ears and mouth." (Yet) he sees all the acts performed by the residents of the three worlds. (Even though he is) without ears he hears their talk. (Thus) he gives good (i.e. proper) evidence (of his omnipresence). Even without any movement, he would go; he is seen everywhere. Even being handless, he can seize (things); (though) footless, he runs. O brāhmaṇa, he, pervading everything though footless, is seen everywhere. He, whom the best gods and sages knowing the truth, do no see, sees them all, stationed in truthful and untruthful positions; whom, the (all-) pervader, pure, the divine being granting divine faculties, the leader of all, Vyāsa, the great meditating saint, knowing piety and material prosperity and of a lustrous form, knows. Vyāsa himself knows him to be the sky, of one colour and endless. (Vyāsa alone knows) this spotless form determined by what is told in the scriptures.

38-49. Mārkaṇḍeya also knows that station. I shall explain to you the recent (form). Listen with a concentrated mind. When the soul of the beings withdraws (everything into himself), he goes all alone; resorting to a bed in the water (i.e. in the ocean) he remains on the seat of the hood of Śeṣa. Resorting to him Janārdana sleeps for a long time. The great meditating sage Mārkaṇḍeya, tormented by the darkness in the water, and desiring a place (for him), dejected due to wandering, saw, while wandering, (Viṣṇu) who was lying on the bed of Śeṣa, who resembled a crore of suns, who was adorned with divine ornaments, who wore divine flowers and garments, who is the lord of all the pervading objects, who was enjoying his sleep at the end of a yuga, who held the conch, the disc and the mace. O best brāhmaṇa, (he also saw) a noble lady, resembling a heap of black collyrium, with her face terrible on account of large teeth, and of a fearful form. The best sage was addressed by her: "O great sage, do not get frightened." There was a very large lotus-leaf, extending over five yojanas. The great goddess

put Mārkaṇḍeya on that leaf. (She said to him:) "Even though Keśava is asleep, you have no (cause for) fear here." The best of the meditating saints said to her: "O you beautiful lady, who are you? When this one is completely won over, you alone have grown." O brāhmaṇa, when thus asked by the sage, the goddess respectfully said: "I am the Vaiṣṇavi (i.e. belonging to Viṣṇu) power of this Keśava who is sleeping on the bed of the serpent. I am here called Kālarātri. O best brāhmaṇa, know me to be thus endowed with all (kinds of) illusion. In the Purāṇas I am described as the great illusion for (i.e. causing) infatuation of the world." O Pippala, speaking thus, that goddess vanished.

50-57a. When the goddess had gone, from his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) navel sprang up a lotus, shining like gold, while Mārkaṇḍeya was looking (at him). From him were born all the worlds, the immobile and the mobile, all the regents of the quarters like Indra, and gods led by Agni. O king, I have presented to you his recent (or inferior) form. This one of the recent (or inferior) form is without any support in his ancient (or superior form). When he would present his body then (only) all the recent (or inferior deities) like Brahmā and all worlds have bodies, O Pippala. All the regions that are there in the three worlds are recent. This soul of the beings is ancient. The meditating saints well see him, who is of the form of final beatitude, of the nature of Brahman—the highest place—, who is the universal soul, is pure and endowed with divine powers. O Vidyādhara, I have explained to you the entire nature of the ancient one. Tell me what more I (should) explain.

Pippala said :

57b-60a. O you of a good vow, how has this great knowledge risen in you? You know the recent (or inferior) as well as the ancient (or superior) station. The great knowledge of the three worlds abides in you. I (however) do not see (in you) great devotion to penance. Tell me the power of performing a sacrifice, of acting as a priest at a sacrifice, of (the visit to) a holy place, if you have done these. Due to what have you thus (obtained) all knowledge?

Sukarman said :

60b-78a. I do not at all know (what) penance (is). I have

not emaciated my body. I do not know performing a sacrifice, or acting as a priest at a sacrifice or going to holy places. I have not practised meditation, not attained the meritorious period as a result of good acts. One (thing) only I know clearly and well, (and that is) the worship of (my) father and (my) mother. With both my hands I myself everyday do the meritorious washing of the feet of my mother and father. Engaged in contemplation at three times everyday I massage their bodies, and bathe and feed them. With devotion I obtain the water with which the feet of those two only i.e. my mother and father are washed, and with great devotion I worship them. During that time a measureless gain comes to me. With my heart having pure thoughts I worship them thrice (a day). O Pippala, I am one who moves freely and comfortably. What is the use to me of any other penance or of emaciating my body? Now what good would acrue to me by good (i.e. meritorious) pilgrimages or by other (acts of) virtue? O brāhmaṇa, I have seen that to be the fruit of serving one's father, which is obtained by performing all sacrifices. Similarly serving the mother gives a good position (i.e. bliss) to the sons. It is the all-in-all and the essence of all acts in the three worlds. By serving his mother the son gets (i.e. goes to) a (good) world. Similarly great religious merit is produced due to the service to the father. There is no doubt that there (only lie) the Ganges, the holy place like Gayā, or like Puṣkara, where the father would live (i.e. lives) with the mother. By serving the father the son gets the merit of visiting these sacred places and other various holy and auspicious places. O brāhmaṇa, a good son obtains the fruit of charity and penance by serving his father (and mother). Any other customary observance leads to affliction. A son obtains excellent religious merit by serving his father (and mother), which is the all-in-all of his deeds in this and in the next world. Now listen to the auspicious merit when as a son he serves his elders—the mother and the father—when they are alive. Gods are pleased with him, and also the sages who love religious merit. Due to service of the father (and mother done) here (i.e. in this world) the three worlds are pleased. He, who everyday would wash (i.e. who washes) the feet of his mother and father, has everyday a bath in the Ganges.

78b-82. I shall (now) tell you about the religious merit of him who always devoutly feeds his father and mother with sweet food and drinks. The son gets that fruit which is got by performing the horse-sacrifice. He, who devoutly worships his elders (i.e. parents) with (i.e. by giving them) tāmbūla, coverings, drinks, eatables and pure food, would become omniscient, and would obtain glory and fame. A son, on seeing his mother or father, should talk to them with joy. They are the treasures,[1] that, being pleased, live in his house. They are the cows, that love the son and always give him happiness.

CHAPTER SIXTYTHREE

Merit Resulting from Service of Parents

Sukarman said :

1-6a. O best brāhmaṇa, the son properly gets (the religious merit of) a bath similar to the one in all the holy places when the drops of water, (falling from the bodies) of the mother and the father who have bathed, fall on the entire body of the son. I shall (now) tell you about the religious merit of the son who serves his father who is fallen, who is maimed, who is old, who is weak (in doing) all acts, who is ill, who is suffering from leprosy, and also his mother like that (i.e. in such a condition). There is no doubt that Viṣṇu has his mind pleased with him. He goes to Viṣṇu's heaven, unobtainable by (even) the meditating saints. That son of a sinful mind who abandons his parents who are maimed, helpless, old, or are suffering from a serious disease, obtains (i.e. goes to) a terrible hell, full of worms.

6b-22. I shall now tell you about the sin of (i.e. committed by) a son, who, when called by his old parents, does not go (to

1. Nidhayaḥ—Nidhis are the treasures of Kubera. They are nine: Mahāpadma, Padma, Śaṅkha, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Kunda, Nīla and Kharva.

them). There is no doubt that the fool becomes the eater of feces and a village-pig; and then again he is born as a dog for (the next) thousand existences. That son, who, without feeding his old mother and father living in his house, himself eats (i.e. eats alone), would eat (i.e. drink) urine, (and eat) feces for a thousand existences. The sinner would be (born) as a black serpent for two hundred existences. He, the sinner, who goes forward by neglecting his old mother or father, is born as a shark for crores of existences. That sinful son, who censures them with bitter words, would be (born as) a tiger and then would be born as a bear. That wicked-minded son who would not worship his mother or father would dwell in (the hell called) Kumbhīpāka for as long as a (period covered by) a thousand yugas. For a son there is no other holy place, that would emancipate him and would cause his well-being here and in the next world, like his mother or like his father. Therefore, O you very intelligent one, I worship the deity in the form of my father (and) the deity in the form of my mother. I have by that become a devotee devoted to all gods. Excellent knowledge is produced (in me) due to the grace of my mother and father. Which wise man does not worship his mother or father? O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of his having studied the Vedas, with the Aṅgas and the Upāṅgas, and along with scriptures and (other) branches of knowledge, who has not honoured his father? The Vedas are useless for him who has not honoured his mother. Also, O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of sacrifices, penance, (giving) gifts and worships (of deities)? (All this) becomes fruitless (in the case) of him, who, while living (as a householder) in his house, has not worshipped his mother and has not worshipped his father. This (i.e. honouring his parents) alone is the duty of a son; this (alone) is a holy place among (i.e. for) men. This alone is the final beatitude of a son; similarly (this alone) is the auspicious fruit of his existence. This (alone) is the sacrifice of (i.e. performed by) a son. There is no doubt about it.

23-29. Intent on worshipping the father (and the mother, a son) who everyday devoutly worships his father (and mother), has all that has been said before. He, who has worshipped his mother also, has undoubtedly obtained the fruit of giving gifts, or of (visiting) a holy place, or of (performing) a sacrifice. All

the acts giving merit, like sacrifices etc., are well accomplished by him who has everyday worshipped his father with good (i.e. great) devotion. For this only I have studied and learnt the science of religious merit. O Pippala, a son should always be intensely devoted to his father. Formerly, king Yadu obtained happiness when his father was pleased; (and) listen, how formerly when the father was angry, Ruru, a Paurava (king), obtained great sin on the earth, when cursed by his father. When I served these two (i.e. my parents) I got knowledge like this. By the grace of these I obtained an excellent fruit.

CHAPTER SIXTYFOUR

Mātali's Discourse on Old Age

Pippala said :

1-2. Tell me in detail, how, by the grace of his father, Yadu obtained happiness and enjoyed well. O son of Kuṇḍala, tell me also in detail how Ruru suffered as a result of his sin, O best brāhmaṇa.

Sukarman said :

3-11a. Listen, I shall tell you the account of the very meritorious Nahuṣa, and the noble Yayāti, (the account) which destroys sin. Nahuṣa, the lord of the earth sprang from (i.e. was born in) the Soma dynasty. He made many matchless gifts. He performed an excellent century of the horse-sacrifices (i.e. performed a hundred excellent horse-sacrifices). He also performed a hundred Vājapeya sacrifices and many kinds of (other) sacrifices. By the power of his religious merit he obtained (i.e. went to) Indra's world. He made his very intelligent son Yayāti, endowed with truthfulness, having piety as his valour, the protector of his subjects (i.e. the king). The king (Nahuṣa) went to (i.e. obtained) Indra's position. His son Yayāti, endowed with truthfulness, who (occupied) his place (i.e. the throne), would protect (i.e. protected) the subjects religiously. He himself would

look (i.e. looked) after his subjects and the respective duties. Having learnt about excellent duty, he, who knew righteousness got sacrifices performed. He did everything like performing sacrifices, (visiting) holy places, giving gifts (giving) religious merit. The intelligent son of the king (Nahuṣa) ruled truthfully for eighty thousand years in those days. The glorious Yayāti passed that much time (in truthfully ruling his subjects).

11b-15. He had four sons who were powerful and valorous like him. I shall tell (you) their names. Listen with a concentrated (i.e. attentive) mind. His eldest son was Ruru by name, who was very powerful. The second son was named Puru; the third one was Kuru; the fourth son of the king was Yadu by name, who was religious-minded. Thus the noble Yayāti had four sons. By means of their lustre and manliness, they resembled their father in valour. Thus Yayāti ruled his kingdom righteously. Great were his fame and glory in the three worlds.

Viṣṇu said :

16-18. Once the greatest brāhmaṇa, Nārada, the son of Brahmā, went to Indra's world to see Indra, O king. The thousand-eyed god (i.e. Indra) saw the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Nārada) who was omniscient, who was proficient in (all kinds of) knowledge, whose lustre was like fire, (when) he came there. With his neck bent in devotion (i.e. bowing in devotion), he seated the best sage, who was honoured with a respectful offering,[1] on an auspicious seat, and asked him:

Indra said :

19. Where have you come from today? For what purpose have you come here? O brāhmaṇa, O great sage, what very dear to you should I do today?

Nārada said :

20-21. O king of gods, O very intelligent one, I am pleased with all that you did devoutly and with what you said. I shall answer your questions. I have now safely come to your house

1. Madhuparka—a respectful offering made to a guest. Its usual ingredients are: Curds, ghee, water, honey and sugar.

from the earth. After having seen (Yayāti), the son of Nahuṣa, I have come to seek you.

Indra said :

22-23. Which king, being learned, wise, virtuous, and full of righteousness, always protects his subjects truthfully? On the earth, which is the king, who knows the Vedas, to whom the brāhmaṇas are dear, who is pious, who is conversant with the Vedas, who is a sacrificer, who is a donor, and who is a great devotee?

Nārada said :

24-30. With these qualities was endowed the powerful son of Nahuṣa, due to whose truthfulness and valour all people were well-settled. Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, is like you on the earth. As you are in the heaven, enhancing the prosperity (of your subjects), so he is on the earth enhancing the prosperity (of his subjects). O great king, that king Yayāti, superior to his father, performed a hundred horse-sacrifices, and also a hundred Vājapeya sacrifices. Devoutly he gave gifts in many forms like thousands of lakhs and hundreds of crores of cows. In the same way, he performed a crore of sacrifices, so also lakhs of sacrifices. He also gave gifts like grants of land to brāhmaṇas. He has protected Dharma in its full form. As you are ruling here in the heaven, so Yayāti, Nahuṣa's son, the best king, who was endowed with these qualities, truthfully ruled for eighty thousand years.

The intelligent Sukarman said :

31-47. The lord of gods, having heard like this from the best of sages, reflected, and was afraid of (his) protecting the Dharma. (He thought:) 'Formerly, by the power of hundred sacrifices, the brave Nahuṣa went to (i.e. obtained) my position of Indra, and became the king of gods. He fell from that as a result of Śacī's intelligence. This great king who is like his father in valour, will undoubtedly reach Indra's position. There is no doubt about it. With this or that means (i.e. by hook or crook) I shall bring the king to heaven.' The lord of gods, who was afraid of him, thought like this. Then the king of gods, O best king, due to the great fear of that king Yayāti, sent his messenger to bring him to

heaven. (He sent) Nahuṣa's aeroplane endowed with all pleasures, and his charioteer Mātali with the aeroplane. Mātali, who was sent by the lord of gods to bring the very intelligent (Yayāti) went there where (Yayāti), Nahuṣa's son, stayed. As Indra, shines in his assembly, in the same way Yayāti, the religious-minded (king), shone in his own assembly. The charioteer of the king of gods said to that magnanimous king, whose ornament was truth: "O king, listen to my words. I have now been sent to you by the king of gods. Do, with a good (i.e. devoted) mind, all that the king of gods tells. O lord, you should come to Indra's world; (do) not (do) otherwise (i.e. do come), after having entrusted your kingdom to your son, and after having performed the best and the last sacrifice (in your life). O son of Nahuṣa, the very lustrous king lives there. Purūravas, of a great power, the noble-minded Vipracitti (also live there). Śibi lives there, Manu, king Ikṣvāku, the intelligent (king) named Sagara, and your father Nahuṣa (live there). The grateful Ṛtavīrya, and the noble Śantanu, and Bharata, Yuvanāśva, also king Kārtavīrya, —(all these) kings, after having offered various sacrifices are rejoicing in heaven. Many other kings also, very much devoted to the performance of sacrifices, are all rejoicing as a result of their meritorious acts in heaven with Indra; and you again know all the Dharma and are well established in Dharma. (Therefore,) O king, rejoice with Śakra (i.e. Indra) in heaven."

Yayāti said :

48. What deeds have I done due to which this request is made to me by you and by Indra, the lord of gods? Tell me all that.

Mātali said :

49-52. Since, O king, you performed meritorious acts like giving gifts, and performed sacrifices for eighty thousand years, (therefore) due to (i.e. as a result of) your deeds, go to heaven, O lord of the earth. Make friendship with the lord of gods. Go to the abode of gods (i.e. heaven). O you highly intelligent one, leave your body having the five (elements) as its constituents, on the earth; and taking up a divine form, enjoy pleasures after your heart (i.e. as you like). O lord of men, pleasures in heaven

solicit (i.e. wait for) you in accordance with the sacrifices which are performed by you, or gifts which are given by you or penance which is practised by you, on the earth.

Yayāti said :

53. O Mātali, how should one go to the world obtained (according to one's deeds) by leaving the body with which good or bad deeds would be (i.e. are) accomplished on the earth?

Mātali said :

54-55. O king, men go to him due to divine (deeds) after leaving the body there (i.e. on the earth) only, where they have obtained this body of the nature of the five (elements). All other men also, who obtain merit or demerit, go down (i.e. to the hell) or up (i.e. to the heaven) after leaving the body (here).

Yayāti said :

56-60. O Mātali, having produced merit or demerit with the body of the nature of the five (elements), all other men do go up or down. What is the difference due to which one would leave (i.e. leaves) the body on the earth, O you who know moral virtue? (How do you say that) the body would fall (i.e. falls) as a result of (one's) sin or religious merit? In the mortal sphere, O charioteer, an example is directly seen. I, (therefore), do not see a greater difference between sinful or meritorious deeds. Why does a man, a mortal, leave the body with which he performs deeds like truthful behaviour? The soul and the body are both friends (of each other). The well-determined soul goes after leaving his friend viz. the body.

Mātali said :

61-65. O king, you have said the truth. He goes after leaving the body. There is (then) no connection of the soul with that body. Since this (body) of the nature of the five (elements) is always worn out in the joints, is troubled by old age, and always damaged by diseases, he (i.e. the soul) does not desire to stay here (i.e. in it). Being agitated and troubled, the soul leaving it (i.e. the body) departs. Due to truthfulness, acts of religious

merit, gifts, religious observance and restraints, sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice, (visits to) holy places, and self-control, and also due to good deeds of great religious merit old age is not at all undergone. (On the other hand,) O great king, it attacks the body by means of sins.

Yayāti said :

66. O best one, please tell me in detail, from what old age has sprung up and why it troubles the body.

Mātali said :

67-95. I shall describe to you the cause of old age; and why it has sprung up in the body, O you best king. The body of the nature of the five elements, is resorted to by the five objects of sense. O king, when the soul leaves the body, it (i.e. the body) is burnt. O king, when blazing with fire the body burns along with the fluids. From it smoke is produced, and from smoke clouds are produced. Water proceeds from the clouds; the earth becomes ready for water as a chaste woman in her menses implores water. From that odour is produced, and fluid is produced from odour, O best king. From the fluid food is produced, and semen is produced from food. There is no doubt about this. From semen body is produced; and body is surely ugly. As the earth (element) would produce odour and it moves on the earth through fluids, similarly the body would always move. It is everywhere the substratum of fluids. From it odour is produced and again fluid would be (produced) from odour. From it is produced great fire; O king, mark the analogy. As fire is produced from wood, and would illumine wood, in the same way in the body fire is produced from fluid. It moves there (in the body) and, O king, it always nourishes the body. As long as there is preponderence of fluid (in the body) the soul is tranquil. Fire moving (in the body) like that remains in the form of hunger. Being sharp it desires food with water; O king, it receives the gift—food and water also. The fire consumes blood and semen also like that; there is no doubt about it. Due to that there would be consumption destroying the entire body. O king, when there would be preponderence of fluid, the fire is put down. Being troubled by the fluid, it is produced in the form of fever. The

fire having arrested the neck, the back, the waist, the anus remains in all the joints. (Thus) the fire moves on in the body. Its preponderence always continues to exist, and nourishes the body on all sides. (When) the fluid is restrained it then becomes powerful. Being excessive due to power, it would move the vital parts of the body through the semen. Due to that lust is produced; and O king, it would become (i.e. becomes) of the nature of a dart. O king, it is called the fire of lust, which destroys strength. Due to addiction to coitus destruction (takes place) in the body. A being oppressed by the fire of lust would resort to a female. Due to addiction to sexual intercourse, the body which is made violent and emaciated by lust, would become void of lustre, and there is a loss of strength (in the body). The (already) weak body becomes (more) weak when urged on by fire. That fire would consume blood and semen in the body. Due to the consumption of semen and blood, the body becomes dispirited. A violent wind of a terrible form is produced; and then he would be pale, tormented with grief and of a vacant mind. He moves, having in his mind that woman whom he has seen or about whom he has heard. When the course of the mind (i.e. the mind) is greedy, there is no satisfaction in (i.e. of) the body. When the lustful man, ugly or handsome, becomes weak due to brooding and the loss of flesh and blood, there appears old age in the body (being) consumed by the fire of lust. Due to that, he being (more) lustful, becomes older and older day by day. As a usurer thinks of money, so he thinks of a woman in (i.e. for) coitus; so also, O lord of men, there is a loss of his lustre. From that a body is produced, and he perishes. Then undoubtedly fire in the form of old age is again produced; and then there is a terrible fever in the form of (i.e. of the nature of) consumption in the beings. All the immobile and the mobile ones being tormented by fever and by many other troubles, perish. All this I have told you; what else should I tell?

CHAPTER SIXTYFIVE

Mātali on Why the Body Is Left Behind

Yayāti said :

1. O Mātali, tell me the reason, why this body, the protector of Dharma, does not go to heaven with the soul.

Mātali said :

2-9. The five elements do not go together (with the soul); in the company of the soul, O king. All of them come together in the village of the body. All of them, afflicted by old age, go to their respective abodes. Since the earth is created with a preponderance of fluid, it being wet due to the fluids becomes soft, O king. It is pierced by ants and rats. Holes are formed into it, and also anthills with large interiors. In the same way inflammation of the glands of the neck and itch are produced in the body. O best of men, this body is also cleft by worms. Enlargements (of parts like the spleen), instantly troubling, are also produced in it. O son of Nahuṣa, this body is full of such defects. How will it go to heaven with the life, O lord of men? The earthly part is settled in the body for the vital air essential to digestion. The body does not come (i.e. go) to heaven. It remains here as the earth does. I have told you all this along with a heap of earthy blemishes.

CHAPTER SIXTYSIX

Mātali on the Universality of Suffering

Yayāti said :

1-2. O Mātali, listen, (we see that) the body falls due to sin and also due to religious merit. On the earth I do not see what difference religious merit makes. The body is produced again (just) as it fell before. Tell me in detail how the body is produced.

Mātali said :

3-16. In the case of the hellish beings, just in a moment, the (hellish) body is produced from the (five) elements due to impious acts only. In the same way, due to religious merit, a divine body (in the manner of that) of the gods is instantly produced from the essences of the elements. That body of the magnanimous ones, (which is produced) due to the mixture of the (fruits) of deeds should be known to be of four kinds according to the transformation of deeds. The immobile ones in the form of grass and bushes should be known as the ones born by sprouting up. Worms, insects and moths should be known to be born from the sweat of living beings. O king, all birds, serpents and crocodiles are oviparous. Human beings and quadrupeds should be known to be viviparous. When the earth is 'cooked' by heat, it is moistured by water and is scattered by wind (into loose particles). Then the seed approaches the soil in such a way that the seeds that are sown and are watered, become soft and attain the state of roots. From the root there is the rise of a shoot. From a shoot a leaf springs up. From a leaf a hollow stock comes up; from that a stem comes up; and from that the *prabhava* (power). From it would be (produced) *Kṣira* (the sap), and from the sap there is the rise of *tandula*(the gram?), from the gram come up the ripened *oṣadhayaḥ* (herbs). They are said to be seventeen—the best ones—beginning with barley and ending with rice. The herbs are rich with the wealth of fruits. The remaining ones are said to be trifling. These were first cleansed and cut and crushed by the sages with winnowing baskets, mortars and (other) vessels. With water in a pan and fire, they, which have six varieties, undergo alteration, have many tastes due to the combinations of their respective tastes. O king, they have six varieties like that which is consumed, eaten, drunk, licked, sucked and bitten (and eaten). They have six tastes like the sweet (taste) etc. That food which is eaten by living beings through (i.e. in the form of) balls and mouthfuls, settles all the vital airs in the stomach one by one.

17-18. That (vital) air divides into two the food that is consumed (but) not digested. Having got into the food and having separated the digested food into (i.e. having created in it) various properties, having put water above fire and that food

above the water, that (vital air) Prāṇa itself remains below the water and slowly blows the fire.

19-21. The fire being blown by the wind makes the water very hot. That food again, due to the contact of heat, is digested wholly. That (food) which is digested, becomes divided into two—the secretion is separated, and the liquid is separated. The useless divided into twelve (kinds of) impurity would go (i.e. goes) out of the body. (The outlets are:) ears, eyes, nose, tongue, teeth, lips, organ of generation, anus. (These) would pour out impurities (like) perspiration, faeces, urine. They are said to be twelve.

22-38. In the lotus of the heart, all around, the arteries are confined. (The vital air) Prāṇa places that subtle liquid into their openings; and then that prāṇa fills those arteries with that liquid. Those arteries wholly furnish that liquid to the body. Then that liquid remaining in the arteries is digested by the heat of the body. It is digested in two ways. Skin, flesh, bones, marrow, fat, blood are produced. Fine, soft, short hair and flesh are produced from blood; hair and sinews are produced from flesh. From the sinews are produced marrow and bones. Marrow of the flesh is due to bones. The healthy semen, of the nature of procreation is due to the strength of the marrow. These twelve are said to be the transformations of (i.e. brought about by) the satisfied one. Semen is its transformation, and the body is born from semen. When at the time favourable for conception defectless semen remains in the womb (of a woman), it, sent forth by that vital air, becomes one (i.e. united) with the blood of the woman. At the time of the emission of the semen, the soul, united with the organs of sense, and always being controlled by his own acts, enters the womb. The semen with the blood (of the woman) would be (turned into) a foetus in a day. Then within five nights bubbles would be formed in the foetus. It takes the form of flesh in the five forms; neck, head, shoulder (s), spine and belly; so also hands and feet, the two sides, waist, and (the other parts of) the body; the limbs are produced one by one within two months. After three months, hundreds of sharp joints are produced (i.e. formed). Fingers etc. are produced (i.e. are formed) one by one in four months. After five months mouth, nose and ears are produced (i.e. formed). Within six months, the row of teeth,

so also tongue and nails are formed, so also cavities in the ears are formed. So also are formed anus, penis, organ of generation and the male organ of generation. The joints which (are present) in the limbs, are formed within seven months. In the eighth month the head with the entire body with limbs and with each limb clearly separated is formed. He is complete and endowed with the five. Due to the power of the food of (i.e. eaten by) the mother and by the tastes of six kinds, fixed in the umbilical cord, it (i.e. the foetus) grows day by day.

39-48. Then the soul would have recollection in this entire body (i.e. when the entire body is formed). He is conscious of (former) happiness and unhappiness and sleep and dream seen before: 'I, who was dead, am born again, I, who was born, died. I saw (i.e. was born in) many existences in many ways. Now I am just born, and have received (i.e. undergone) sacraments. I shall hereafter perform righteous deeds, by which I shall not be born (i.e. conceived) in a womb.' While remaining in the womb, he just thinks: 'After I come out from the womb (i.e. after I am born) I shall study (i.e. obtain) highest knowledge that would cause the cessation of the worldly existence.' The soul, certainly very much troubled by the great affliction in the womb, lives (there) and would think (i.e. thinks) of the means to salvation. As one who has gone over an excellent (i.e. high) mountain, stays there unhappily, in the same way, the soul, afflicted by the outer skin of the embryo, remains (in the womb) with the body wet with the fluid in the womb. As someone, being put into an iron-vessel is baked by fire, in the same way (the soul) put into the vessel of womb is baked by the digestive fire in the stomach. Its parts are continuously pierced by needles resembling the colour of fire. The pain he suffers (due to these), would be (i.e. is) eightfold in the womb. There is no other abode anywhere else like the one in the womb. The souls have immense suffering and a very fierce danger.

49-66a. Thus is narrated the suffering in the womb of (i.e. experienced by) all beings—mobile and immobile—according to the wombs (in which they are confined). The bewildered soul that is being born has (to suffer) a crore-fold more pain due to being pressed by the thong of the womb than he has experienced in the womb. Very great affliction takes place in the case

of (i.e. is experienced by) (the soul) coming out of the womb, and being squeezed like a sugar-cane due to being pounded by destructive hammers, and by means of the air (passing out at the time) of delivery. He does not get any protection. As the sugar-canes being pressed by the machine become sapless, in the same way the body remaining in the womb is caused to fall (out of it) by the pressure of the thong. It has limbs; it is of a round shape; it is tied by the bonds of sinews. It is smeared with blood, flesh and marrow, and is the receptacle of substances like excrement and urine; it is covered with hair, down and nails; and it is the principal abode of diseases. It has one gate (in the form) of the mouth and is adorned with eight windows.[1] It has the (two) doors of the two lips, and is possessed of teeth, tongue and throat. It has the arteries and the stream of perspiration, and is overwhelmed with phlegm and bile. It is approached by old age and grief. It remains in the fire in the mouth of Death. It is overcome with lust and anger, and is pressed by winds; it is effected by desire for enjoyments; it is hidden, it is under the sway of attachment and hatred. Every limb, big and small, has a complexion; it is covered by the outer skin of the embryo; it comes out through the lonely and narrow passage of the womb. It is moistened with excretion, urine and blood; it is due to the six (kinds of) marrow. It should be known that there is collection of the bones in the skeleton numbering three hundred and a hundred more (i.e. four hundred). There are five hundred muscles. It is all around covered with small soft hair numbering three crores and half. The body is full of crores of these gross and subtle, visible and invisible, fleshy tubular organs from within. There is perspiration, and due to those it is eternally impure. The teeth were said to be thirty-two in number, and the nails are said to be twenty. It should be known that (the quantity of) bile (in the body) is one kuḍava; in the same way the quantity of phlegm is half an āḍhaka. (The quantity of) marrow is five palas; and the buttocks are half of it. The lump of flesh is five palas; fat is ten palas; thick blood is three palas; the quantity of marrow is four times that of the blood. Semen is half a kuḍava; and the power of men is half of it. It is said that

1. Gavākṣāṣṭaka—The eight apertures of the human body are: the two ears, the two eyes, the two nostrils, organ of excretion and organ of generation (the ninth is the mouth).

one thousand palas of flesh (exist in) a corporeal frame. It should be known that the quantity of blood is a hundred palas, and there is no (definite) measure (of the quantity) of faeces and urine.

66b-83a. Thus, O king, there always is the residence of the soul (in the body). The impure body is (the residence) of the soul, which is produced by the bondage of (his) deeds. The body is produced due to the combination of the semen (of the male) and the blood (of the female). It is always united with faeces and urine; therefore it is said to be impure, like an externally pure pot full of faeces from within. This body would be (i.e. is) impure even though it is cleansed by voiding of excrement. This body is impure because the very pure five products of the cow[1] and offering quickly become impure after reaching it. Agreeable and fragrant food and drinks quickly become impure on reaching it (i.e. on being consumed). Which other object is more impure than it (i.e. the body)? O men, do you not see that everyday the foul-smelling excrement, the companion of (i.e. living in) the body, goes out of it? Then how can its support be pure? Like a charcoal being rubbed, the body, though cleansed with the five products of the cow or with water containing darbhas, never becomes pure. How can that body, from which the streams of phlegm and urine flow everyday, as streams (of water) from a mountain, be cleansed? There is not a single part which is pure in the body, the receptacle of all impurity, except (the soul). Even though the hand is cleansed with clay and water, by day or at night, it can never be pure. (And yet) the men are not free from attachment. Though this body is carefully decorated with excellent incenses etc., yet, like the dog's tail that is bent, it does not give up its nature. Wool that is naturally black can never become white; similarly the body, though cleansed, does not become pure. This world, smelling its own bad odour, and seeing its excrement, does not get detached, though (by doing this) he (i.e. a man) troubles his nose. Oh! see the greatness of attachment, which has deluded the world? Smelling, seeing his own foul things, man has not lost interest in the body. What other cause for detachment can be pointed out to a man, who does not

1. Pañcagavya—The five products of the cow taken collectively: milk, curds, clarified butter or ghee, urine and cowdung.

become detached by the odour of his body? The entire world is pure, but the body is highly impure, by the touch of the dirty parts of which even a pure (object) would become impure. The cleansing of the body is said to be (i.e. recommended) for removing the application of sandal paste. When both (the sandal and the dirt) are removed, (a man) becomes pure by the purification of his thoughts.

83b-93a. This mortal, foul-smelling body, impure in thoughts, does not become pure with all the water of the Ganges and with besmearing the body with a large quantity of clay. The wicked heart is not purified by baths at holy places and austerities. The body of a man, whose mind is impure, does not become pure even though washed at a holy place or even after entering fire. There is neither heaven for him, nor hell (also). (The) best thing is burning the body. Purification of mind is the greatest purification, and is the main thing in all acts. A beloved (wife) is embraced with one thought, a daughter with another. The attitude varies even in the case of things that are not separate. A chaste woman would think about her son in one way, and about her husband in another way. In this way, O magnanimous one, the (variety) of nature is explained, since even though embraced by his wife, he should not make her void of thoughts. A man would not eat various kinds of food, so also fragrant tasty things, without interest. Therefore thought (or interest) is the cause everywhere (i.e. in all one's dealings). With effort purify your mind; what is the use of other external purifications? The soul, pure due to pure thoughts, obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven and salvation. The smearing with the excrement and urine of ignorance and attachment would perish (i.e. be removed) by means of purifiers (like) the spotless water of knowledge and the clay of detachment. Thus they know this body to be impure by its (very) nature. One should know it to be worthless and useless, like the essence of a plantain-tree.

93b-102a. He, who, knowing the body to be full of blemishes like this, becomes relaxed, crosses the worldly existence, and remains with (i.e. has) a firm conviction. Thus the affliction due to birth is said to be very painful. That sense which the human being has, due to the fault of ignorance, and due to various kinds of deeds, perishes when he is born. Feverish heat is produced

in the case of human beings, when a human being is afflicted by being painfully pressed by the thong of the womb, and by the fearful external air due to his contact with delusion. Due to that feverish heat great delusion is caused. Then in the case of the deluded one, loss of memory takes place quickly. In the case of that being, attachment is produced during that existence only, due to the loss of his memory and due to his former deeds. The world (i.e. people) being attached and deluded, proceeds (proceed) to do what ought not to be done. They do not know themselves, nor do they know the highest deity. They do not listen to the (advice relating to) highest good, nor, though having eyes, do they see, like a person, tumbling at every step, even though walking slowly along an even path. Though they have intelligence, and though they are advised by the wise, they do not realise (the truth). Due to that a man going after (i.e. led by) greed is afflicted in the worldly existence.

102b-128. In the absence of a text (about the description of the soul's existence in) the womb, Śiva has propounded a sacred text to tell the affliction of (the soul's existence in) it (and) leading to salvation. It is a great wonder that even when a man has known that (text propounded by) Śiva, he does not accomplish what is good for himself. Since the sense-organs and intellect are not (properly) developed, there is great affliction even in childhood. The blessed (child), though desiring to speak or to act, is not able to do so. Cutting of teeth is very painful, and there is affliction also due to unsteadiness, wind, various child-diseases and planets harming children. With his body surrounded (i.e. overcome) by thirst and hunger, (the child) sometimes stays (at one place and sometimes) moves. A child would indulge in eating excretion, urine etc, due to ignorance. The child suffers pain due to his ears being pierced, due to being beaten by the mother and the father, due to learning the letters (i.e. the alphabet) and due to punishment (given by) teachers and others. How can there be happiness in youth, (to a young man) the functions of whose organs of sense are deluded, who is troubled with the disease of lust and who is always afflicted with diseases? Due to jealousy there is great affliction. Affliction is caused by delusion. The attachment in an angry (young man) leads to unhappiness only. Troubled with the fire of passion he does not

get sleep at night. How can there be happiness even by day due to the anxiety to get money? The drops of semen of a man with his body prostrated (over the bodies) of women, do not lead to happiness like drops due to (i.e. of) perspiration. They know that the pleasure obtained from (union with) women is the same as (obtained by one) being struck (i.e. bitten) by insects, or as of a helpless lepor due to the trouble caused by the fire of scratching. It should be known that the pleasure in (i.e. obtained from) women is like that which one feels due to anxiety about getting money; it is not at all different. The same is the pang of a mortal; without that joy is had by one's mind. Then it goes from one to another to whom it had gone before. Ultimately it is the same; it does not change. Who else is more insensible than one who, seeing his dear one that is thus affected by old age, or that is sick, or his own extraordinary child troubled by old age, is not detached? A being, though overcome with old age, is treated with contempt due to his weakness by his wicked servants. An old man is not able to achieve (the four goals viz.) righteousness, worldly prosperity, sensual enjoyments and salvation. Therefore while young one should practise piety. Inequality (i.e. disturbance) in wind, bile and phlegm etc. is called a disease. This body is (so) called due to the congregation of wind etc. Therefore one should know that this body of the soul is full of diseases. In addition to (diseases caused by) wind etc. the human being meets with many kinds of afflictions due to the diseases of the body. They can be known by oneself. What else should I tell? In this body remain one hundred one (kinds of) death. Among them one is united with Kāla (i.e. god of death). Others are adventitious. Those that are said to be adventitious, are alleviated by means of medicines, muttering of sacred hymns, sacrifices and gifts; but death brought about by Kāla cannot be stopped. Untimely death might not occur by eating poison, (yet) a man would not eat it without fear, for he is afraid of an untimely death. For human beings there are various gates (leading) to death like many diseases; so also animals like serpents; poisons and employment of magical spells for malevolent purposes. Even the physician of gods[1] himself cannot cure a man who is afflicted

1. Dhanvantari—Name of the physician of the gods said to have been produced at the churning of the ocean with a cup of nectar in his hand.

by all diseases and whose death is imminent. This cannot be otherwise. No medicine, no penance, no charity, not the mother, no relatives can protect a man who is afflicted with Kāla (i.e. death). With (the help of) the magnanimous souls, who are equipped with medicines supposed to prolong life and prevent old age, and with penance and muttering of sacred hymns, he would only have intermediate (temporary) peace; he would (certainly) meet with death.

129-151a. He, who dies, is born in the species of insects due to his acts; he sees (i.e. meets with) death as a result of (i.e. which is a) change of the body. That is said to be death. It is not a real (i.e. total) destruction. In this world there is no analogy for the grief which a being has in death when he has entered great darkness (i.e. hell) and when his vitals are being cut off. Being extremely afflicted, he/she cries 'O father, O mother, O husband'. The world is swallowed by death as a frog is by a serpent. He is abandoned by kinsmen and is surrounded by his dear ones. Rolling on a bedstead and heaving deep and hot sighs, he, with his mouth parched, again and again faints. Being in a swoon, he throws his hands and feet here and there. From (i.e. when he is on) the bedstead he desires (to go to) the ground, and from (i.e. when he is on) the ground he again desires (to go to) the bedstead. He is helpless, is ashamed, is smeared with excretion and urine; he asks for water; his throat, lips and palate are dry; thinking about his wealth (as) 'to whom will it belong when I die?', being taken by the messengers of Yama and being dragged by the noose of (the god of) death, he dies, when (the relatives etc.) are watching. His throat makes a sound. Like a caterpillar the soul would enter (i.e. goes to) one after another body. He obtains the next body; he abandons the previous one. For the discriminating people, death is more painful than supplication. The grief in (i.e. due to) death is momentary, while in (i.e. due to) supplication it is unending. Viṣṇu, the lord of the worlds, became a dwarf through supplication. Who is greater than he who does not become mean (through supplication)? I have now understood this as to when one becomes superior to death. One should not repeatedly solicit another (man). Thirst (i.e. desire) is the cause of meanness. There is grief in the beginning, there is also grief in the middle; at the end there is terrible

grief, due to nature (i.e. this is natural). Thus there is a series of griefs for beings. A man should not lament over these griefs for beings, which are present and which have gone by. Due to (even) that (i.e. these griefs) (a man) is not detached from existence. There is a great grief due to excessive eating; then there is grief due to eating less. While eating the throat breaks; (so) wherefrom is there pleasure from eating? Hunger is said to be the greatest disease of all the diseases. It is temporarily alleviated due to the application of soothing medicines. The pang of the disease of hunger is acute, and it cuts off the entire strength (of a man). Overpowered by that a man dies as he would die of other diseases. What delight is there in its relish that lingers on the tip of the tongue? In a moment—in half of that time—it reaches the throat and returns. Thus for those who are tormented by the disease of hunger food is said to be (working) like a medicine. Wise men should not look upon it as actually leading to pleasure. In the case of him also, who, without (doing) any work, lies like a dead body, and whose mind is impelled by ignorance, wherefrom can there be pleasure? Wherefrom can there be happiness in the case of him whose mind is affected in (i.e. while performing) deeds, though he has knowledge? Beings though content, are troubled due to optional (deeds) by exertion in agriculture, trade, service, animal husbandry etc. and by (passing) urine and excretion in the morning, and by hunger and thirst in the noon, and by sleep at night.

151b-163. There is grief in earning money; there is grief in preserving what is earned. There is grief when wealth perishes; there is grief in spending it. Wherefrom (i.e. how) can there be happiness from wealth? As there is fear from death in the case of (i.e. to) men, similarly there is always fear to the wealthy persons from thieves, water, fire, their kinsmen, and even from the king. A wealthy person is everywhere eaten up (i.e. robbed) as flesh is eaten by birds in the sky, by wild beasts on the earth, and by fish in water. Wealth deludes a man in prosperity, keeps him away (from joy) in calamity, is painful when it is earned. (Then) when does it bring happiness? First (consider) a wealthy person; he is (always) sad; then (consider) one who is free from desire for all objects. Between the two, I think the wealthy person is unhappy, and the one, whose mind is detached, is happy. Due

to heat there is suffering in the spring and summer seasons; in the rainy season there is suffering due to (stormy) wind, heat and showers. Thus wherefrom (can one get) happiness? There is suffering in the (so-called) glory of marriage; again there is suffering in pregnancy. There is suffering due to the difficulty in delivery, and also due to the acts like those of excretion etc. (In the same way) there is suffering due to the son suffering from diseases of teeth and eyes. (Then one says:) 'Alas! What shall I do (now)? My cows have perished; my husband has broken down; my wife has run away. These guests, indicating fear, have come to my house. My wife has a young child. Who will do the cooking? What kind of bridegroom will be (obtained) by my daughter at the time of her marriage?' How can there be happiness to householders who are overcome by this anxiety? The knowledge, (good) character, all virtues of a man distressed by the anxiety of the family, perish along with his body, like water put in an unbaked jar. Wherefrom can there be pleasure in (i.e. from) a kingdom due to (i.e. as there is) anxiety of peace and war? There is fear even from the son (to a king); (then) what kind of happiness is there?

164-173. Generally all beings have fear from (members of) their own species, as dogs have fear from one another, as all of them desire to have the same object. There is no king on the earth, who, having abandoned everything, has entered a forest and remained there happy and fearless. The brave son (viz. Paraśu-rāma) of the sage (viz. Jamadagni) knocked down on the ground the thousand arms of the famous Kārtavīrya in a battle. Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, destroyed the matchless, rising valour of the very magnanimous son of the sage (viz. Jamadagni). The glory of Rāma (i.e. Balarāma) was destroyed, with his splendour, by Jarāsandha. The glory of Jarāsandha was destroyed by Bhīma, and his glory too by (Hanumān) the son of Wind. Hanumān too, being tossed by the Sun, fell on the ground. The glorious Arjuna killed all the demons—the Nivātakavacas—who were proud of their strength. He (too) was vanquished by the cowherds. At times even the sun, full of glowing heat is screened by clouds. A cloud is tossed by wind, and the power of wind is vanquished by the mountains. The mountains are burnt by fire, and that fire is extinguished by water. That water is dried up by

the suns; (and) all those suns, along with water and the three worlds, perish on (i.e. at the end of) Brahmā's day. Brahmā too, at the end of the period of two Parārdhas, is withdrawn along with the gods, by Śiva, the highest lord.

174-198a. Thus, in this worldly existence, there is no best power, excepting the highest soul, the immutable lord of the world. Realising that everything has a superior (object), one should avoid great pride. When the world is like this, who is a god, or who is even a learned man? There is no one (in the world) who is omniscient, or who is a total fool? A man is learned there (i.e. in a particular field) to that extent to which he knows it. By deep thinking, (it is found that) the power (of men) everywhere is similar. Someone has power in some field due to excess of wealth. Gods were vanquished by demons, and they were again (i.e. in their turn) vanquished by gods. Thus the beings in the world are dependent on one another through good fortune, success and defeat. Thus (even) for kings a pair of garments and water and food of the measure of a prastha, a vehicle, a bed and a seat (are enough). All the rest just leads to misery. He can even have a bedstead on the seventh floor; (but) there is the painful glory (of being consecrated by the water) from a thousand pitchers of water. In the early morning there is the sound of the musical instruments along with (that of) the citizens. There is just that pride in (i.e. due to) a kingdom, viz. 'This (musical instrument) is being beaten in my house.' All ornaments are (but) a burden; all anointing is dirt (only); all songs are (just) a prattle; dancing is (nothing but) the movement of a mad person. This (is the fruit) due to the enjoyments (obtained from) a kingdom. On reflection (one would see): 'wherefrom (i.e. how) is happiness (obtained?)'. Kings have anxiety about war (with one another) or due to the desire of conquering one another. Mostly great kings like Nahuṣa have fallen after reaching heaven due to the pride of wealth. Who gets happiness from wealth? Even in heaven, how can there be happiness when gods have observed the bright glory of other (gods) which remains more prominently in one than in another? When the foundation (of all ill acts) is cut off, men enjoy the fruit of their merit in heaven. Here the very terrible blemish is that no other

act is performed. As a tree, with its roots cut off, falls on the ground after (a few) days, similarly the residents of heaven fall down due to the exhaustion of their religious merit. All of a sudden calamity befalls those who strongly desire happiness through the boats of enjoyment of pleasures etc. There is misery for the gods in heaven. Thus on reflection (it is seen) that even in heaven gods do not have happiness. When the objects of senses are not obtained, there is the exhaustion of the acts that lead to enjoyment in heaven. In the fires of hell there is a great affliction to the beings, due to various terrible objects produced from speech, mind and body. There is a severe cutting with axes; and the chopping off of the bark-garments. There is the fall of leaves, branches and fruits (caused) by terrible wind. There is suffering among the immobile species due to being uprooted by rivers, elephants and by other beings, and also by wild fire, snow and dryness. There is a terrible pain in (i.e. due to) the anger of snakes and serpents. In the world the wicked are killed, and are bound down with fetters. Repeatedly there are sudden birth and death in the case of insects and also (in the case of those) belonging to the class of reptiles. Thus there are many kinds of miseries. The beasts end themselves and are beaten with sticks. They are troubled due to their noses being pierced and are beaten with a whip. They are fettered with canes, wood, goad etc. Service causes affliction to the mind; the young etc. are troubled. Due to separation from their herds, and their eyes being tied (i.e. covered), beasts have thus many kinds of afflictions. Sharks and birds have a great affliction due to rain, cold and heat.

198b-210. Thus there are many kinds of afflictions for bodies. For men there is a great affliction while living in the womb, and also great affliction of (i.e. during) birth. Ignorance is a great affliction of childhood; in adolescence there is (the affliction of) the punishment by a teacher. There is affliction in youth due to lust and attachment, and due to jealousy; and also due to agriculture, trade, service etc., and acts like protection of the cattle. In old age (there is affliction) due to aging and diseases. There is great affliction in (i.e. at the time of) death; still greater (is the affliction) in solicitation. There is a great fear from the king, fire, strokes by clouds (like lightning), thieves

and enemies. There is again a great fear in earning and preserving money and its destruction and spending. Miserliness, jealousy, and arrogance are greatly fearful results of the excess of wealth (i.e. when there is excessive wealth). There is a tendency for doing misdeeds. These are always the afflictions of the wealthy. (There are afflictions like) servitude, usury, slavery, dependence on others, connection with the desirable and undesirable, and many kinds of unions. (There are calamities like) famine, misfortune, folly, poverty, enjoying lower or higher (position), (going) to hell, and being overpowered by the king. There is affliction due to mutual subjugation. There is a great fear from one another; there is a great wrath towards one another; and a king has (to suffer) affliction from (other) kings. Here (i.e. in this world) the objects are transient, (so also) of a human being whose desires are satisfied. (There is affliction) due to the cutting of the vitals of one another, and due to the squeezing of the hands of one another. The greedy ones due to sin (indulge in) consuming one another. Since the mobile and the immobile (beings) beginning with (denizens of) hell and ending with human beings, are afraid of such and other afflictions, therefore a wise man should abandon everything. As when a burden is shifted from one shoulder to another it is regarded as rest, similarly in this world one grief is alleviated by another. The boats of enjoyment always excel one another.

211-225. Misery has settled with gods in the heaven due to the exhaustion of their religious merit. Due to the exhaustion of religious merit there is birth (i.e. a soul is born) in many species. Even in the world of gods there are said to be diseases of various forms. The head of Sacrifice was cut off; and it was rejoined by the Aśvins. Due to that defect the Sacrifice always has (i.e. suffers from) the disease of the head. The Sun has (i.e. suffers from) leprosy and Varuṇa has (i.e. suffers from) dropsy. Pūṣan has defect in his teeth, and Indra has (i.e. suffers from) stiffness of arms. Soma is known to have been suffering from a very severe disease of consumption. Even Dakṣa, the lord of created beings, suffers from acute fever. In every Kalpa even great gods perish. Even Brahmā becomes unstable after a period of two parārdhas. Brahmā again longed for his granddaughter, the daughter of Dakṣa. The lord angrily cursed goddess Jayā,

who knew deep, abstract meditation. The defects of the nature of (i.e. due to) lust and anger remain there, where the two remain. (Thus) all miseries are stable. There is no doubt about it. The fire consumes everything shattered by birth and death. (Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu) murdered a woman, was lustful, and acted as a charioteer in the Pāṇḍava army. Rudra burnt the three cities (of Maya), and destroyed Dakṣa's sacrifice. The birth of Skanda is from the semen from (i.e. discharged during) sports in thousand ways. Thus all the three gods possess the faults like attachment. The lord superior to these is tranquil, perfect and giver of salvation. Thus the entire world lives on the excellence of one (over) another. One should go to (i.e. have) disgust, knowing that (the world) is full of miseries. From disgust there would arise detachment, and knowledge springs from detachment. Through knowledge one would get that highest propitious knowledge (and) salvation. He then is happy with his mind at ease (since he is) freed from all miseries. He who is omniscient, and perfect is called (a) free (soul).

Mātali said :

I have told you all that you had asked about. The discrimination between merit and demerit is due to omniscience. You should go to Indra's heaven at his bidding.

CHAPTER SIXTYSEVEN

Mātali on Three Kinds of Sin

Yayāti said :

1-2. O you charioteer of Indra, due to my good luck I have been able to see you. This gives me immense merit. Even in the mortal world human beings commit a terrible sin. O Mātali, now tell me about the ripening of their actions.

Mātali said :

3-12. Listen, I shall tell (you) the characteristics of a sinful

behaviour. In this world great knowledge is produced when (things) are heard. People condemn the Vedas and censure brāhmaṇic practices. Those who are learned should also know what great sin is. He who causes harm to all the good persons (has committed) a major sin. It would go (i.e. its effect would be nullified only) by expiation. People give up the customs peculiar to their own family and practise those of others. Those who know what should be done (i.e. what is proper) have described this to be a major sin. Reviling one's mother and father, beating one's sisters, and abusing one's father's sister is certainly a sin. The dead ancestors of him, who, when the time for offering a śrāddha has come, proceeds (to offer the śrāddha and) feeds someone else through lust or anger or fear, ignoring his son-in-law living at a distance of five kośas, his daughter's son, his own sister and her son, do not enjoy (the oblations offered by him), nor do the gods enjoy (the offerings made to them). This sin, committed by him, is equal to patricide. When the time for giving gifts has come, and when a brāhmaṇa (-group) has come, he avoids giving gifts to many, and gives them (only) to a few. That a gift is given to one, and no gift is given to another, is also a terrible sin, and is said to destroy (the merit acquired from) gifts.

13-23a. That is not a distinctive mark of a gift which is given (to someone else) ignoring his own brāhmaṇas employed by the patron. O king, a (patron) should well nourish, with all means and good gifts, that brāhmaṇa of a religious conduct who has resorted to him. He should not consider whether he is a foolish or a learned brāhmaṇa. A brāhmaṇa is always to be fed. He should always worship a learned brāhmaṇa endowed with all religious merit, who has come to him, after honouring him with good gifts. There is no doubt that the gifts which he would give to some other brāhmaṇa by ignoring that (learned brāhmaṇa) or the offerings that he would make, would be fruitless. On all auspicious occasions a brāhmaṇa, a kṣatriya, a vaiśya and a śūdra as the fourth should worship a brāhmaṇa that has sought their shelter—whether he is a fool or a learned brāhmaṇa. Listen (I will tell you) the meritorious fruit of it. He obtains the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. O king, what is the reason for which (i.e. there is no reason why) he should not get done what is

possible? If another brāhmaṇa comes at that time when the śrāddha-rite is going on, he should then honour both the brāhmaṇas by giving them food, shelter, tāmbūla and presents. (If he does this) his dead ancestors are pleased. One should always give gifts and make presents to (a brāhmaṇa) who has eaten at a śrāddha. The sin of that performer of a śrāddha who does not give gifts would be equal to that due to the killing of a cow. Therefore, O best king, these two should be honoured with faith. Or if he is poor he should honour one (of the two).

23b-30. Thus men belonging to the three castes such as brāhmaṇa etc. should perform a śrāddha on the day of a great calamity, or when the astronomical division of time called vaidhṛti has come, or on a new-moon day, or a day between two sunrises in the next half. O great king, he should employ priests officiating at sacrifices. In the same way he should always employ brāhmaṇas for offering a śrāddha. A wise man should never employ an unknown brāhmaṇa. He should invite that brāhmaṇa whose family up to the third (previous) generation from him is known and whose conduct is known, O king. He should consider the conduct of a brāhmaṇa whose family is not known. When the śrāddha-offering is to be made, it may not be known whether a brāhmaṇa is pure or foolish, or is one who has mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. A śrāddha-offering ought to be done; so he should invite a brāhmaṇa (for that); O best king, first hospitable reception should be given (to him). If a sinful (host) does otherwise he certainly goes to hell. Therefore a brāhmaṇa should be engaged at a presentation of gifts or a śrāddha on the parvan-days.

31-33. At the time of presentation of gifts or a śrāddha, he should engage a brāhmaṇa after examining him. In his house the dead ancestors do not eat without a brāhmaṇa. They go away after cursing (him who offers the śrāddha) from a śrāddha (performed) without a brāhmaṇa. He (who offers such a śrāddha) is a great sinner even if he resembles Brahmā. O king, he who lives by abandoning the performance (of rites) to the dead ancestors, should be known to be a great sinner to be excommunicated.

34-39. Those who give up auspicious practices relating to Viṣṇu and giving (i.e. bringing) enjoyments, and who condemn

the brāhmaṇic way of conduct should be known as men of increasing sins. Those, who give up auspicious practices (or practices relating to Śiva), who hate the devotees of Śiva, who, the sinners, abuse Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), who always hate Brahmā (or brāhmaṇas), who condemn the (religious) practices, are the greatest sinners. I shall now tell (you) about the religious merit of those who worship the first, venerable, the highest knowledge, the meritorious Bhāgavata and (other Purāṇas like) Viṣṇu, Harivaṁśa, Matsya or Padma. He (i.e. such a person) has actually worshipped god Viṣṇu. Therefore one should worship the knowledge, contained in the Viṣṇu (Purāṇa), (and) dear to Viṣṇu. O king, there is always (kept) a book (i.e. a copy) of the Viṣṇu (Purāṇa). When it is worshipped, Lakṣmī's lord (i.e. Viṣṇu) is worshipped.

40-58. Those who, without worshipping (the Purāṇa containing) knowledge about Hari, sing or write, or without knowing it, present it, or listen to or recite it, or sell it through greed and devotion to bad (i.e. wrong) knowledge, or place it, as they will, at places that are not purified, or one who would declare it explicitly in accordance with (i.e. helping) his welfare, or he who, being capable, commits mistakes after having studied it, or he who being impure explains or listens to it at an impure place (all these condemn knowledge). This, in brief, is said to be the condemnation of knowledge. I (shall now) tell (you) about the sin of him who, the sinful one, desires to learn sacred texts without worshipping his preceptor, who does not render service (to his preceptor and) deliberately disobeys him, (and who) does not approve of the words (of the preceptor), does not respond to him, ignores when (some) work of the preceptor is to be done, (and he, who) abandons his preceptor who is afflicted and weak, or is proceeding to a foreign country or has been humiliated by adversaries or while he is reciting a Purāṇa. Till (the period during which) fourteen Indras have ruled, he would live in (the hell called) Kumbhīpāka. Also one who, of a sinful mind, ignores his preceptor reading the Purāṇa, has (committed) a terrible sin, giving (i.e. taking him to) hell. Also the sin (of him) who condemns his wife, sons and friends is as great as (that of) the condemnation of one's preceptor. One who kills a brāhmaṇa, one who steals gold, one who drinks liquor,

one who violates his teacher's bed (i.e. his teacher's wife)—all these are great sinners; so also the one who joins (i.e. abets) them. He, who very much cuts the vitals especially of a brāhmaṇa through anger, hatred or greed, is declared to be the killer of a brāhmaṇa. O king, he also is the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who, having invited a poor, soliciting brāhmaṇa, says 'no' (i.e. refuses to give any gift) to him. He is declared to be killer of a brāhmaṇa, who, due to the pride of his own knowledge, renders lustreless (i.e. humiliates) a neutral brāhmaṇa in an assembly. He is said to be the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who elevates himself by means of pretended virtues, and who opposes his preceptor. They call him to be the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who creates an obstacle to them, who, with their bodies tormented by hunger and thirst, seek food or meal. He also is said to be the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who, a wicked one, is intent upon finding out the weak points of all the people, who causes torture and is cruel. They call him the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who would snatch back the land, though destroyed, in course of time, which was formerly given to a deity, a brāhmaṇa, or cows. That sin of taking away the wealth of a brāhmaṇa obtained as (i.e. which was put as) a deposit should be known to be as great as that of killing a brāhmaṇa.

59-66. He who gives up making an oblation to the fire in the rite of the five daily sacrifices; he who stands as a false witness against his mother, father and preceptor (is, a great sinner). (This sin and) eating what is not dear to Śiva's devotees and what ought not to be eaten, also killing innocent beasts in the forest, and setting fire to a cow-pen, a city or a village—all these are terrible sins equal to the sin (involved) in drinking liquor. Taking away all the possessions of a poor man, kidnapping another's wife, snatching elephants and horses, or cows, land, silver, garments, herbs and minerals, sandal, aloe wood, camphor, musk, woven silk, or taking away the deposits (made) by others is said to be like the stealing of gold. Not giving (in marriage) his marriageable daughter to a befitting groom, having an illicit connection with the wife of his son or friend or his own sister, fearful violating of a maiden, attachment to a śūdra-woman, cohabiting with a woman of the same caste is said to be like violating one's teacher's bed (i.e. teacher's wife). Those sins, which have been enumerated as sins, resemble major sins.

67-70. When a brāhmaṇa having promised money to a brāhmaṇa does not give it and forgets about it—that is equal to a minor sin. (Some other minor sins are:) snatching the wealth of a brāhmaṇa, crossing one's limit, too much pride, too much anger, hypocrisy, ingratitude, lust for someone other (than one's own wife), miserliness, wickedness, jealousy, sexual intercourse with the wife of someone else, violating a chaste maiden. The elder brother before whom his younger brother gets married, the younger brother married before the elder brother, the girl whom he marries (are sinners). (It is a sin) to offer a girl to them, or to act as a priest at sacrifices performed by them. (Other sins are:)

71-80. Abandoning one's son, friend, wife, also one's master when he is reduced to poverty, and one's wife and good people and ascetics; killing a cow, a kṣatriya, a vaiśya, a woman or a śūdra; destruction of a Śiva-temple, trees, and lovely groves. (He) who causes even a small damage to hermitages or harms the group of servents there, or the beasts (living there), or the grains or wild crops, or steals ploughs, corn or beasts, or acts as a priest at a sacrifice of those who do not deserve to perform a sacrifice (is a sinner). The sale of (the merit due to) a sacrifice, of a grove or a lake, one's wife and children, of (the merit of) pilgrimage, fasts, vows and (other) pious acts (is a sin). (They are sinners) who live by the wealth of women and he who lives for a large part on the affluence of a woman (are sinners). O prince, he who would sell off his own faith, and he who would praise unrighteousness, he who mentions the faults of others, he who observes the weak points of others, he who longs for other's wealth, he who (passionately) gazes on another's wife—all these should be looked upon as resembling the killers of cows. (He is a sinner) who condemns all sacred texts, who snatches a cow, who sells the beasts, who tells lies or listens to the lies (uttered) by others; (he is a sinner) who plots against his master, or preceptor, who is deceitful, who is fickle or wicked. (He is a sinner) who eats (alone) leaving his hungry wife, sons, friends, children, old people, weak and afflicted persons, and also servants, guests and relatives.

81-87a. Those who eat savory (food) and do not give it to him who desires it should be known as ones cooking separately

(for themselves only) and such a person is condemned by the teachers of the Vedas. Those who take up restrictions and (later), with their organs of sense not conquered, give them up, and also those who have given up the life of a recluse, and those who are in the company of drunkards, and those who do not protect a cow that is afflicted with consumption or with thirst and hunger, are the killers of cows and are said to be hellish beings. Those who are engrossed (in committing) all (kinds of) sins, those who destroy the (grazing) field of the quadrupeds, or he who would beat (i.e. beats) saints, brāhmaṇas, preceptors or a cow, and also those who beat a faultless woman settled in a good position (i.e. behaving properly), and he, who, with his entire body bound with laziness, sleeps again and again; those who do not feed the weak or who do not look for the missing ones, or who trouble (the bullocks) by (putting) large burdens on them or drive them (even) when they are wounded areinvolved in (i.e. have committed) all (kinds of) sins. So also those who eat together (i.e. from the same plate).

87b-95a. Those men, who do not protect a cow with her limbs broken, and afflicted with wounds and (other) diseases and with hunger, are said to be hellish beings. Those men, who, the most sinful ones, strike the scrotum of bulls (i.e. castrate them), and also who harm cow's calves are beings living in a great (i.e. very painful) hell. Those (men) also, who do not honour a guest who has come to them with hope, and who is oppressed with hunger and exertion, go to hell. Those fools who do not show pity for a helpless, or maimed, or poor or young, or old or very much afflicted person, go to the ocean of (i.e. in the form of) hell. One who keeps goats, one who keeps buffaloes, one who is the husband of a śūdra or a barren woman, or a śūdra behaving like (i.e. following the profession of) a brāhmaṇa or a kṣatriya, also architects, artisans, physicians and devalakas,[1] and those who make their servants work hard, go to hell. He, who, having transgressed what is prescribed, would charge arbitrarily (more) tax, also he who would inflict punishment without a (proper) cause, would be roasted in hells. That king

1. Devalaka—A low brāhmaṇa who subsists upon the offerings made to an idol.

whose subjects are harassed by officials receiving bribes, by thieves in his kingdom, is roasted in hells.

95b-103a. There is no doubt that those brāhmaṇas who accept (gifts) from a king of a bad conduct also go to fearful hells. The king has (committed) that sin which is (committed) by men cohabiting with others' wives or by thieves. Being favoured by a king who does not protect, is fearful. That king, who, without thinking (properly), behaves with a person, who is not a thief, as (he would behave) with a thief, or who behaves with a thief, as he would behave with one who is not a thief, would also go to hell. Men (go to hell, who) through greed, snatch such objects as ghee, oil, food, drink, honey, flesh, wine or (any other) spirituous liquor, jaggery, sugarcane, vegetables, curd, roots and fruits, grass, wood, flowers, leaves, vessels of bell-metal, shoes, umbrella, bracelet, palanquin, soft seat, copper, lead, tin, bell-metal, or conch etc. that has come up from water, musical instrument like a flute, domestic utensils, (garments made of) wool, cotton or silken garments, objects belonging to the place of assembly or temples, or cotton or fine garments. He, who would snatch these and other objects, even in a small quantity, would quickly go to hell.

103b-114. There is no doubt that a man who snatches other's possession even of the measure of a mustard (i.e. even the smallest possession), goes to hell. There is no doubt that a man who takes away a small or a big object of another person, loved by the latter, goes to hell. Due to these and other sins, a man, immediately after his departure, would get (back) his former form or his body to be struck (by Yama's servants). The embodied ones go to Yama's world by the order of Yama. They are very much pained when they are being taken by the very fierce messengers of Yama. Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) is said to be the punisher, due to various sorts of severe corporcal punishments meted out by him, to gods, lower animals and men who are governed by unrighteousness. A preceptor is the punisher through expiations (i.e. who makes them undergo expiations) of those who are endowed with decent behaviour but have soiled themselves through an error. Yama is not seen by them (i.e. their cases are not decided by Yama). A king is said to be the ruler of those who violate others' wives, who are thieves and who do

their transactions unjustly; and Dharmarāja is the ruler of those who have hidden themselves. Therefore, one should undergo expiation for the sin that one has committed. There is no destruction of (the acts whose fruits) one has not enjoyed (or suffered) even after crores of kalpas. For him, who himself commits a sin, or causes (someone else) to commit it, or approves of it, by means of body, mind or speech, the fruit is going down (to hell). In this way, the three kinds of sin have been explained (by me) in brief. Different courses (followed by) men committing sins are narrated. O king, I have told you in minute detail, the fruit of righteousness. O best of men, tell me, what else I should explain to you. I have told you about the fruit of unrighteousness. I (shall) tell you about the fruit of righteousness also.

115. Thus Mātali spoke to the king loved by all. The magnanimous one thus spoke on the topic of righteousness.

CHAPTER SIXTYEIGHT

The Fruit of Righteous Deeds

Yayāti said :

1. O charioteer, O lord, I have heard everything about the fruit of unrighteousness. Tell me also about the fruit of righteousness. I have a curiosity to hear it.

Mātali said :

2-12. These four kinds of all the embodied ones, being helpless, go to Yama's world which causes fear and which is terrible, due to their sins. All beings, that remain in the womb, that are born, and children, young men, middle-aged men, old men, men, women and eunuchs have to go (to Yama's world). There the auspicious or inauspicious fruit (of the deeds) of human beings is decided by all like impartial and omniscient Citragupta and others. There are no beings (in the world) that do not go to Yama's abode. (The fruit of) the deed done (by a

being) has to be enjoyed as decided by them. Those men, who do auspicious deeds, who have soft hearts, who are endowed with pity, go to Yama's abode along a pleasing path. A man who would give (i.e. who gives) shoes, wood or sandals to brāhmaṇas, happily goes to Yama's abode in a great aeroplane. By giving umbrellas (as gifts to brāhmaṇa) human beings go (to Yama's abode). By giving a palanquin (as a gift to a brāhmaṇa) one would happily go (to Yama's abode) along a path in the sky. Those who give garments (as gifts to brāhmaṇas), go, wearing divine garments (to Yama's abode). By giving a palanquin (as a gift to a brāhmaṇa) one would happily go (to Yama's abode) in an aeroplane. By giving a comfortable seat (to a brāhmaṇa) (human beings) happily go to Yama's abode. One who has constructed groves would go happily (enjoying) very cool shadows. Those who give gardens (with trees full of) flowers go to Yama's abode in the Puṣpaka aeroplane. He, who builds a temple, or a hermitage for ascetics, or pavilions for the helpless, playfully goes, due to (having constructed) best dwellings (to Yama's abode). So also he, who worships deities, fire, preceptors, brāhmaṇas, and his father and mother, (playfully goes to Yama's abode).

13-17. All that, even though little, which is given with faith to helpless, virtuous brāhmaṇas obtains (i.e. secures for him) all the desired objects. The saints say that in the world gifts (should be given) at a śrāddha. It should be realized that whatever—even of the measure of that which remains on the tip of a hair—is given with faith (gives good fruit); I always rely upon the four recipients (at a śrāddha). Therefore (if) one always has faith, the fruit of faith would be (obtained) by him. O king, he, who gives dwellings to the virtuous (but) helpless brāhmaṇas, goes to the abode of the grandsire, which satisfies all his desires. O king, he who has given with faith, (something even) of the size of a cowrie to a brāhmaṇa, would be a divine guest, enhancing the glory of gods. Therefore, those, who have faith, should give (i.e. human beings should give with faith). There is certainly (obtained) the fruit of that.

CHAPTER SIXTYNINE

Righteous Acts Enjoined by Śiva (Śivadharmas)

Mātali said :

1-4. Acts of righteousness have been told by Śiva (in) the excellent scriptures of the Śiva cult. Due to the difference in the manner of performance of acts they should be known to be many. The ancient acts as (told) by Śiva are free from blemishes like harming (others), are without suffering and exertion, are beneficial to all beings, are pure, involve little effort and give great fruit. They have many branches, but resort to (i.e. are supported by) the root (in the form) of Śiva. They have good flowers like knowledge and meditation. Since they sustain Śiva and are supported by the sayings of Śiva, they that help (human beings) to cross the ocean of the worldly existence, are known to be acts (liked) by Śiva.

5. Thus the ten, viz. harmlessness, forbearance, truth, sense of shame, faith, control of senses, charity, sacrifice, penance and gifts, are the means of (acquiring) righteousness.

6. The acts which are laid down by Śiva, and which have obtained identity with Śiva, when performed singly or collectively result in one course only.

7-11a. As the earth is said to be a common place for all beings, in the same way the city of Śiva is (said be a common place) for all the devotees of Śiva. As here (i.e. on the earth) enjoyments for all beings are said to be abundant, in the same way they are said to be many in Śiva's city, due to the pre-eminence of various (kinds) of religious merit. As even the good or bad fruit (of their acts) is enjoyed by all human beings, the fruit of the acts (enjoined) by Śiva is religious merit. One gets excellent, good enjoyments in Śiva's city, especially according to his faith, in accordance with his religious merit. He gets an (excellent) place, his undisturbed enjoyments are comparable to final beatitude.

11b-13. Therefore, to win great enjoyments one should do great meritorious acts. There would be (i.e. he would have) supremacy (i.e. control) over his own enjoyments, which alone is

honoured by best gods as superior to everything. Some men engrossed in the pursuit of knowledge become free there only. Others intent on enjoying pleasures again come back to the mundane existence.

14. Therefore, he who desires salvation should give up attachment to enjoyments. He, being detached, and with his mind and heart tranquil, would obtain the knowledge of Śiva.

15-17a. To them also, who have set their heart on the lord (i.e. Śiva), and who perform sacrifices through devotion to him, the lord gives positions according to their nature. To them also who, with their sins destroyed, worship Rudra (even) once, the lord gives enjoyments in the worlds of goblins. All beings die (as a result of being) tormented by the burden of grief.

17b-22a. He who gives food is said to be the giver of religious merit, the giver of life and the giver of everything. Therefore, by giving food, one would get the fruit of giving everything. He who gives food (would obtain) all the gems, enjoyments, women and vehicles that there are in the three worlds, and would get the entire fruit (of giving food) here (i.e. in this world) and in the next world. There is no doubt that half of the collection of the (deeds of) religious merit which one who is nourished by the food and drink of a giver has, goes to the giver of the food, and half to the one (i.e. the receiver of the food and drink) doing the meritorious acts. The body is a great means of piety, material welfare and salvation. It is maintained by means of food and drink. Therefore it is the means of (obtaining) everything. Food is actually the creator, it is Viṣṇu himself, Śiva himself. Therefore, a gift like that of food was never there, nor will ever be there.

22b-24a. Water is said to be the life of all the three worlds. Water is purifying, divine, pure and is the elixir for all. Especially in the world of the departed spirits these eight gifts are commended: food, drink, horse, cow, garment, bed, thread and seat.

24b-26a. Since due to (these) special gifts a man happily goes to the city of Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), therefore one should perform acts of charity. O prince, those again who do cruel deeds and are bereft of (i.e. have not given) gifts, experience terrible grief in hell.

26b-33a. Similarly the givers of gifts enjoy pleasures (in heaven). Happiness would be (coming) to them whose minds

are engrossed in doing the deeds enjoined on them. That city is full of innumerable, excellent, divine aeroplanes, fulfilling all desires, and serving beings. That is called Rudra's heaven; it is bright like the lustre of a thousand moons, or lustrous like the sun. It is endowed with all excellences. The city is said to belong to all Śiva-devotees, and also to the mobile and the immobile who die in the place sacred to Rudra. Even he who worships Śiva even for a day, goes to Śiva's place. What to speak of him who worships him many times! The followers and devotees of Viṣṇu, intent on meditating on Viṣṇu, also go to Vaikuṇṭha in the vicinity of the god who holds the disc. He, the righteous-minded one, who talks about (i.e. praises) Brahmā, goes to Brahmā's world. The doer of acts of religious merit goes to a holy world.

33b-39. Therefore, one, who has knowledge and a devoted mind, should oneself create in one's heart devotion for the lord (i.e. Śiva) or for Viṣṇu, O great king. With full consideration and taking into account the weak point of (one's) disposition, one would, in this way, through the grace of Viṣṇu, and in accordance with one's deeds, obtain a position suitable to one's disposition. Thus is said to be the great and excellent city of Śiva; it is said to be returning the human beings, intent on performing their deeds, to the world. Above the city of Śiva excellent heaven of Viṣṇu should be known (to exist). All men intent upon meditating on Viṣṇu, go (to it). Brāhmaṇas, best men of excellent character go to Brahmā's heaven. All the sacrificers, knowing the first principle, go to that city. Similarly, kṣatriyas who fight, go to Indra's heaven; and others who perform acts of religious merit, go to meritorious worlds.

CHAPTER SEVENTY

Sinners in Hell

Mātali said :

1. I shall (now) tell (you) about the very poignant and very terrible torture caused by Yama (which) all the cruel, sinful killers of brāhmaṇas experience.

2-10. Sometimes the sinful ones are roasted with the fire of dry cow-dung; sometimes they are eaten up by fierce lions, wolves, tigers, gad-flies and worms. Sometimes (they are eaten up) by great leeches, or by huge cobras, and by terrible flies or sometimes by serpents with strong poison. (Sometimes they are eaten up) by great intoxicated and torturing herds of elephants, (or) by great bulls with sharp horns, scratching the path, and by buffaloes with big horns harming the bodies of the wicked, and by fierce female goblins and by terrible demons. Mounted on a great balance and being tormented by very terrible diseases and being burnt in a wild fire, they go (to Yama). They are very speedily shaken by very violent wind, and are shattered all round by the shower of great (slabs of) stone, and by the terrible falls of meteors having a sound like that of thunderbolt. Being struck by the shower of burning charcoal they go (to Yama). Being filled (i.e. covered) with a great shower of dust, they go to Yama. Men who are sinful experience terrible pain. Thus, the most sinful ones, who commit sins, experience, due to their particular sin, hell, full of many tortures.

11. I have thus explained to you all the difference between merit and demerit. What other excellent branch of religious knowledge shall I explain to you?

CHAPTER SEVENTYONE

Identity of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva

Yayāti said :

1-2. The faith of me, to whom you have excellently explained everything about merit and demerit, has been all the more stimulated by it. Tell me the number said to be that of the gods staying in the (various) worlds (i.e. tell me about their position in the various worlds), O Mātali, and also (tell me that) by whose contact with religious merit and by whom it (i.e. that position) is reached.

Mātali said :

3-9. I shall explain to you the position of gods' worlds endowed with (obtained by?) deep abstract meditation (*yoga-yuktam*), and attained by penance, and giving pleasures and enjoyments. I shall (also) separately explain to you the capacity of merit; and also (describe) in (proper) sequence the nature of the worlds above. There the earthly power of the goblins is eight times. Therefore the power of the men who have recently gone (to Yama's world) is said to be equal to that. That of the demons is sixteen-fold, and like that is that of the kings. Thus whatever is left of the lustre of the family is complete. Gandharvas have (power) from the wind; that of the Yakṣas is said to be full. That of Indra is (derived from) the five elements, and it is forty times great. That of Soma is mental and divine, and that of the lord of the universe is (derived from) the five elements. That of the lords of the created beings has the properties of the moon and has egoism as an additional quality. That of Brahmā is sixtyfour-fold and the power of knowledge is excellent. The pre-eminent ritual of Viṣṇu is the power of Brahmā's position.

10-18a. In the divine city of Śiva there is affluence capable of satisfying all desires. The infinite supremacy of Śiva is great and self-eminent. It is without beginning, middle or end; its true characteristic is pure; it illumines everything; it is subtle; it has no match; it is higher than the highest; it is quite full, has the garb of the world; it abandons the noose for the souls. A man enjoys the pleasure belonging to the place which he has reached; and due to the grace of the lord, the aeroplane would be in accordance with it; various forms of the stars are seen; there are crores of these; to the meritorious twentyeight become bright (i.e. manifest). Those, who at times salute the lord, through association, curiosity or greed obtain that aeroplane. He who, through recital of (the lord's) name occasionally salutes Śiva, does not perish. These are thus the ways of rites pertaining to Śiva. Even through internal act (i.e. mentally) men (may salute the lord) through devotion for him. Those men who occasionally remember Śiva, would get incomparable happiness; what to say of those who are intensely devoted to him?

18b-26. With their minds gone to (i.e. set upon) him

through meditation, men reflected on Viṣṇu. They go to the highest place. That is the highest position of Viṣṇu. O king, the form of Śiva and that of Viṣṇu are identical. There is no difference between the glorious two, who are of the same form. (One can) salute Śiva of the form of Viṣṇu, and Viṣṇu of the form of Śiva. Viṣṇu is the heart of Śiva, and Śiva is the heart of Viṣṇu. The three gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are (just) one form. There is no distinction among the three, only the qualitative differences are narrated. O king, you are a devotee of Śiva, so also you are a follower of Viṣṇu. Therefore the three gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara are pleased with you. O you of a good vow, they—the givers of boons—are very much pleased with your deeds. O you, who remove the pride (of your enemies), I have come in your vicinity (i.e. to you) by the order of Indra. (First) go to the position of Indra, then to that of Brahmā, and then to that of Śiva. Go to Viṣṇu's position, free from tormentation and destruction. (Go to these places) in divine aeroplane, going everywhere. Being of a divine form, and getting into the Puṣpaka, moving comfortably, enjoy divine, charming pleasures.

Sukarman said :

27. Mātali, having thus spoken to king Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, who knew the essence of religion, O best brāhmaṇa, became silent.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTWO

Yayāti's Reluctance to Part with the Body

Pippala said :

1-2. O you highly intelligent one, tell me in detail, what the king, the son of Nahuṣa said on hearing the words of Mātali. O wise one, this is an all-meritorious story which destroys sins. I desire to hear it. I am not at all being satisfied.

Sukarman said :

3. Yayāti, the best king, the greatest among those who practised piety, said to the messenger Mātali, Indra's charioteer, who had come (to him):

Yayāti said :

4-7. O messenger, I shall not abandon my body. There is no doubt that I shall not go to heaven without (this) earthly body. Though you have thus narrated the great blemishes of the body, and though you have already described all its merits and demerits, yet I shall not abandon my body, and I shall not come to heaven. Going to Indra, the lord of gods, tell him like this: "O you very intelligent one, a man does not obtain perfection by means of the soul alone or with only the body. This is the mundane (existence).

8-14a. Body cannot remain without life (i.e. the soul), nor can the soul remain without the body. O Indra, they have friendship (i.e. they are mutual friends). I shall not destroy the body due to whose grace the soul obtains exclusive happiness and other pleasures according to his mind (i.e. as he desires)." O messenger of gods, knowing the enjoyments in heaven to be like this, I do not want them. O Mātali, due to blemishes painful and very sinful disease are (contracted). Old age is due to a defect. Observe my body endowed with religious merit and sixteen years old. Since my birth my body has gone to (i.e. lasted for) half a century. Still there is freshness of my body (still my body is fresh). (This) period (i.e. life) of me has passed excellently. As the body of a youth of sixteen years looks handsome, in the same way my body endowed with power and valour looks.

14b-16. I do not have fatigue, I do not have failure, I do not have exhaustion; nor do I have (i.e. suffer from) diseases or old age. O Mātali, my body also thrives with enthusiasm for piety; for, in olden days, the medicine—the divine, great medicine, the elixir, all full of nectar is prepared for the destruction of sins and diseases. My body is purified by that; (therefore) it is free from blemishes.

17-24. O messenger, I am always doing (i.e. taking) the elixir, viz. the meditation on Viṣṇu and the excellent utterance

of his name. By that all my diseases and blemishes like sins have been destroyed, when, in this worldly existence, there is the great (i.e. effective) medicine like the name of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). Human beings suffering from sinful disease die (since) the very foolish ones do not drink the elixir of the name of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). O Mātali, my body is healthy due to that meditation, knowledge, worship, truthfulness, and religious merit caused by giving gifts. Diseases and sufferings torment him whose accomplishment is sins. There is no doubt that beings die here (i.e. in this world) due to sufferings. Therefore men, resorting to merit and truthfulness, should perform religious acts. The body is made of the five elements, and is worn out by the veins and joints. As an ornament is (fashioned) by a goldsmith with borax, so a human being is put together. In it always shine a great fire, a moving humour of the body, which is (made) of a hundred pieces. O brāhmaṇa, he who joins (these pieces) is intelligent.

25-30a. O Pippala, all these pieces (of the body) of the nature of the five elements and worn out by a hundred joints, are held together by the divine name of Viṣṇu and good fortune. The body is like a metal. The body becomes new by offering worship to Viṣṇu, meditation and restraint, truthfulness and charity. O Mātali, listen, the blemishes of the body—the diseases—perish. There is external and internal purity, and there is no foul smell. Then, O charioteer, due to the grace of the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), (the body) would be pure. I shall not go to heaven. I shall fashion heaven here (only). I shall make the earth of the nature of heaven by means of (my) penance, devotion, my own religious acts, and the grace of the disc-holder. Realising this, you (may please) go and tell Indra.

Sukarman said :

30b-32. Then, that charioteer, having heard the words of the king and having congratulated him with blessing, took the king's leave, and went (to heaven). He told everything to the noble Indra. Indra, having heard (the message) of the magnanimous Yayāti, thought as to how to bring Yayāti to heaven.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTHREE

The Efficacy of Viṣṇu's Name

Pippala said :

1. When that illustrious messenger had left (for heaven), what did that religious-minded Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, do?

Sukarman said :

2-7. When that messenger of the best god (i.e. Indra) had left, the son of king (Nahuṣa) thought (to himself). Having immediately called his excellent messengers, he instructed them with words of propriety: "The excellent messengers should go to an excellent city, to all regions and islands in the world. They should carry out my words (i.e. order) which is full of virtue. May people go along the good path of Viṣṇu, by means of devotional and very meritorious (acts), meditations resembling nectar, knowledge, sacrifices and austerities. Abandoning the worldly objects of sense, may they worship Viṣṇu alone with sacrifices and gifts. May they see only the enemy of the demons and of the nature of the soul everywhere—at dry places, wet and immobile places, in the clouds, on the earth, in mobile and immobile (objects) and even in their own bodies. With hospitality and rites in honour of their dead ancestors may they offer gifts dedicating them to that god. May they offer sacrifices to that best god Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu); you (i.e. they) will soon be free from blemishes. That shameless man who through greed or folly would not obey these words of me right now, would certainly be punished like a vile thief."

8. Having heard the words of the king, the messengers, with their minds delighted, (moved over) the entire earth, and made the order given by the king known among all the subjects.

9-16. "O mortals, brāhmaṇas and others, the king has brought on the earth the very meritorious nectar. Drink that meritorious (nectar) called Vaiṣṇava, free from blemishes and of a desirable effect. The king has already brought (to the earth) the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name Śrī Keśava, which removes suffering, which is desirable, which is

of the form of joy, and which itself is the highest truth. May people drink it. The good king has already brought (to the earth) the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name of him, holding a sword in his hand, called Madhusūdana, the abode of Lakṣmī, and the meritorious lord of the gods. May people drink it. The good king has already brought (to the earth) nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name Śrī Padmanābha, of lotus-like eyes, the prop of the worlds, and the great lord. May the people drink it. The good king has already brought the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of (Viṣṇu's) name, which destroys sins, which removes diseases, which gives joy, which destroys the dānavas and daityas (i.e. the demons). May people drink it. The good king has already brought the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name Viṣṇu of the nature of sacrificial requisites, with a disc in his hand, the mine of religious merit, and of infinite happiness. May people drink it. The king has already brought the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name of Viṣṇu, the abode of everything, pure, the end (of everything), named Rāma, the pleasing, and the enemy of Mura. May people drink it. The good king has already brought the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name of (Viṣṇu), of the form of the sun, the destroyer of darkness, the destroyer of the bond of the lotuses in the form of minds. May people drink it.

17. He, the noble one, Viṣṇu's devotee, having restrained himself, studies (i.e. recites) this truthful, very meritorious nectar of (Viṣṇu's) name, goes to salvation. There is no (other) agent (than it)."

CHAPTER SEVENTYFOUR

Popularity of Viṣṇu Cult during Yayāti's Rule

Sukarman said :

1-2. All the messengers said (i.e. proclaimed) in the islands, regions and cities: "O people, listen to the command of the king. With all their glory may they worship Viṣṇu. May people with

(devoted) minds desiring merit, reflect on Viṣṇu, by means of many gifts, sacrifices, austerities, and sacrificial rites." Such is the order of that king.

3-5. The people heard all these meritorious (words) thus well-proclaimed on the earth (by the messengers). Since then only the human beings sacrificed (in honour of) Viṣṇu, reflected on him, sang (in praise of) him, and muttered (prayers to him). All human beings, giving up the blemishes due to their bodies, minds and speech, by means of vows, fasts, restraints and gifts, and with their hearts gone to (i.e. set upon) him, worship that Śrī Keśava, Śrī Vāsudeva, the abode of Lakṣmī, and the habitation of the worlds, with well-recited, very meritorious and nectar-like hymns taught by the Vedas and with eulogies.

6-11. Thus prevails the order of that king on the globe. All those people are victorious due to their devotion to Viṣṇu. Those who are well-versed in knowledge, and who meditate and reflect on him and who are intent on worshipping him, adore Viṣṇu with (i.e. by reciting his) names and their deeds. As long as the globe lasts and the sun shines all human beings were (i.e. would continue to be) the followers of Bhagavān (Viṣṇu). Then the human beings, due to the power of meditation on Viṣṇu, due to his worship and (recital of) his eulogy and (his) names, became free from mental agonies and physical diseases. O brāhmaṇa, due to the grace of the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) all the devotees of Viṣṇu became free from grief, became meritorious and had penance as their wealth. They were free from diseases, were without blemishes or wrath; they were endowed with all (kinds of) splendour, and free from all maladies.

12-27. Due to the grace of that god, all men at that time became immortal, ageless and all were endowed with wealth and grains. The mortals were adorned with sons and grandsons by the favour of Viṣṇu. O you noble one, in the (regions near) the doors of their houses only there always were meritorious desire-yielding trees, which yielded the fruits of all their desires, and also all-desire-yielding cows, which satisfied all desires. By the favour of Viṣṇu only all men became immortal, were adorned with sons and grandsons and were free from all blemishes. They were endowed with good fortune and with merit and auspiciousness. They were very meritorious, were endowed with charity and

were intent on knowledge and meditation. When that king Yayāti, who knew what was right, was ruling, there was no famine, no disease, and no premature death among human beings. All men were the devotees of Viṣṇu, all were intent upon (observing) the vow of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. They meditated on him, were devoted to him, and had their hearts set on him. O best brāhmaṇa, their divine and auspicious houses were furnished with white banners and with conches, and had their flags marked with maces and were marked with discs. The houses marked with lotuses and with the walls well-painted with good pictures resembled divine cars. O best ones, everywhere—near the doors of the houses and at holy places there were divine thickets of trees and auspicious grassy spots. O best brāhmaṇa, due to Tulasī and temples of Viṣṇu the auspicious and divine houses of (human) beings always shone. Everywhere meritorious devotion to Viṣṇu was seen to a great extent. O friend, O best brāhmaṇa, there on the earth the sounds of conches due to sounds (produced) by mutual crashing and destroying sin were heard. O best brāhmaṇa, through devotion for Viṣṇu women had drawn (the pictures of) conches, svastikas, lotuses on the doors of houses; and with music, songs, good words, regulated rise or fall of sounds through the musical scale people intent upon the meditation of Viṣṇu sing (in praise of) Viṣṇu.

28-29. They talk affectionately about Hari, Murāri, others about Keśava, Ajita, Mādhava,. They mutter the names of Viṣṇu, the refuge, (like) the lotus-eyed Govinda, the lord of Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī), Kṛṣṇa and Rāma, and worship with muttering (his names). Those great devotees of Viṣṇu, engaged in meditation on him salute him by fully prostrating themselves before him.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFIVE

Yayāti's Subjects became Deathless by the Grace of Viṣṇu

Sukarman said :

1-6. All men, children, old people, unmarried girls always uttered names (i.e. recited the various names of Viṣṇu like) Viṣṇu,

Kṛṣṇa, Hari, Rāma, Mukunda, Madhusūdana, Nārāyaṇa of the form of Viṣṇu, Narasiṁha, Acyuta, Keśava, Padmanābha, Vāsudeva, Vāmana, Varāha, Kamaṭha, Matsya, Hṛṣīkeśa, Surādhipa, Viśveśa, Viśvarūpa, Ananta, Anagha, Śuci, Puruṣa, Puṣkarākṣa, Śrīdhara, Śrīpati, Hari, Śrīnivāsa, Pītavāsa (i.e. clad in a yellow garment), Mādhava, Mokṣada (i.e. giver of salvation) and Prabhu. Women, engaged in domestic work always profusely sang (i.e. recited the names of) Hari, Mādhava, (so also when they were seated) on a seat, (when they were lying) in bed, (while they were going) in a vehicle and in meditation. Similarly children (while) playing saluted Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu).

7-16. Day and night they uttered the very sweet name of Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, everywhere the utterance (of the name) of Viṣṇu was heard. Human beings lived on the earth (only) through the power of Viṣṇu. Discs (of Viṣṇu) shone as the (reflections of the) discs of the sun shine on the tops of the pitchers of palaces and temples. That condition which was seen in Vaikuṇṭha was seen on the earth. That noble king, Nahuṣa's son Yayāti, performed (acts of) merit, and made the earth resemble Viṣṇu's heaven. The appearance of both the worlds (being similar) the earth had become one (with Viṣṇu's heaven). No difference between the earth and Viṣṇu's heaven was noticed. As the devotees of Viṣṇu uttered the names of Viṣṇu in Vaikuṇṭha, like that (i.e. in the same way) men uttered Viṣṇu's names on the earth. O brāhmaṇa, identity between the two worlds was noticed. There was no fear from old age and diseases. People were free from death. On the earth greater grandeur of charity and enjoyment was seen. O best one, men happily enjoyed greater pleasure of (i.e. from) sons and grandsons. All the human beings—Viṣṇu's devotees—were always free from all diseases due to the gift of Viṣṇu's grace (which they received) and his instruction.

17-20a. The king brought about the grandeur of heaven on the earth. O best king, the years were of the extent of twentyfive (i.e. were very long). All men were free from diseases and were intent upon (getting) knowledge and meditation. All men were solely absorbed in (performing) sacrifices, and (giving) gifts, and all were kind. They were engaged in obliging (others);

those meritorious men, repositories of fame, were blessed. O brāhmaṇa, all men were solely devoted to religion and were solely absorbed in meditation. Instructed by that king, they became devoted to Viṣṇu on the earth.

Viṣṇu said :

20b-28a. O best king, listen to the account of that king. That son of Nahuṣa was always absorbed in all (deeds of) merit and a devotee of Viṣṇu. In this way he passed a lakh of years on the earth. His body endowed with maturity, appeared to be twenty-five years old by means of his (handsome) form. Those men (i.e. his subjects), having resorted to (i.e. living on) the earth, do not at all go to Yama. O king, all people free from attachment and hatred, bereft of the noose of suffering, happy on account of the merit (obtained) by (giving) gifts, and solely devoted to all religious deeds, always expanded (i.e. their number grew) with regard to progeny also. As the dūrvā (grass) and the bunyan trees spread on the earth, in the same way all those men expanded (i.e. grew in number) by means of sons and grandsons. Those men, free from the blemish of death, lived long. All (those) men with strong bodies, free from old age and diseases and (therefore) happy, were seen to be twentyfive years old (i.e. very young) on the earth. All were devoted to good conduct and absorbed in meditation on Viṣṇu.

28b-34a. Thus all mortals—all human beings—had become solely devoted to (giving) gifts and enjoyments, due to the grace of that disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu). O best man, no human being was heard to be dead. They did not see (i.e. meet with) grief, nor did they go to (i.e. have) blemish. O best of men, due to the favour of that disc-holder, the nature of the world had become just like that which was the nature of heaven. The messengers of Yama, beaten by Viṣṇu's messengers, disappeared. All of them, weeping with one another, went to Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). The messengers told (Yama) all that the king (i.e. Yayāti) had done. (They said to Yama): "O Sun's son, due to (giving of) gifts and enjoyment the earth has become deathless. O god, Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, did it. That meritorious devotee of Viṣṇu, demonstrated the nature of heaven (on the earth)."

34b-35. At that time Dharmarāja heard all this. Then Dharmarāja, having heard in detail the activities of the king, considered the entire fact.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSIX

Dharmarāja Rendered Jobless

Sukarman said :

1-4a. The son of the Sun (i.e. Yama) went with all his messengers to heaven to see there Indra, surrounded by groups of gods. Then that king of gods (i.e. Indra) saw Dharmarāja in his assembly. Quickly getting up he presented excellent respectful offering to him, and asked him (the reason for) his arrival (saying:) "Tell me (why you have come)." Hearing the weighty words uttered by the king of gods, Dharmarāja narrated (to him) all the great account of Yayāti.

Dharmarāja said :

4b-11. O lord of gods, listen what for I have come. I will here only (i.e. just now) tell (you) why I have come. The noble son of Nahuṣa, the devotee of Viṣṇu, has made all human beings that live on the earth the devotees of Viṣṇu. He has made the nature of the mortal world like that of Vaikuṇṭha. Human beings have become immortal and free from old age and diseases. They just do not commit a sin, nor do they tell a lie. They are free from lust and wrath, and are without greed and delusion. The noble ones are given to charity and all of them are devoted to religion. With all good works they worship sound Nārāyaṇa. Due to (the practice of) that Vaiṣṇava religion all men on the earth are healthy, free from grief, and all have a steady youth. O god, as the Dūrvā (grass) and the bunyan trees spread on the earth, in the same way they have expanded (i.e. grown in number) due to their sons, grandsons and great-grandsons. With their sons and great-grandsons they have gone from one dynasty to another (i.e. have started various dynasties).

12-15a. Thus that son of Nahuṣa has made the entire mortal world the devotee of Viṣṇu and free from old age and death. Being free from (i.e. having no) function I have (as though) become deprived of my position. I have thus told you everything that puts an end to my job. Knowing thus, O thousand-eyed (Indra), do what is beneficial to this world. I have told you all this as I was asked by you. For this reason, O Indra, I have come into your proximity (i.e. to you).

Indra said :

15b-18a. O great Dharmarāja, formerly only I had sent my messenger (i.e. Mātali) for coming over of that noble one (i.e. to bring here that noble Yayāti). Even my messenger spoke to him. (But Yayāti said to him:) "I do not desire the pleasures in heaven. I shall not (at all) come to heaven. I shall make the entire globe of the nature of heaven." Thus the king told (my messenger). He is protecting his subjects. Due to the power of his righteousness I always remain imperiled.

Dharma said :

18b-19a. O illustrious lord of gods, if you desire what is dear to me, then bring that good king (to heaven) by any means.

19b-22a. O king, having heard these words of that Dharmarāja, the intelligent lord of gods considered everything from a factual point of view. God Indra of a noble mind, having called Cupid and Gandharvas, brought Cuckoo and Rati. (He told them:) "Do that by which the king will come (here). Ordered by me you should go to the earth. (There should be) no hesitation (about it)."

Kāma (i.e. Cupid) said :

22b-23a. There is no doubt that I shall do what is agreeable and favourable to you. See me and the king standing (opposite each other) in a battle.

23b-24. Saying, 'All right', all went there where that king, Nahuṣa's son, was. O brāhmaṇa, all of them, Kāma and others,

in the form of actors (i.e. having disguised themselves) greeted the king with blessings and related their good drama (i.e. with good acting spoke to him).

25-33. Having heard those words of them, the intelligent lord of the earth, Yayāti, arranged a divine assembly, with very learned men. The king, proficient in sacred and profane knowledge, himself came (there). That king, the son of Nahuṣa, saw that drama. (He saw) the life of Vāmana, also his birth as a brāhmaṇa. At that time Jarā (i.e. old age), in the form of a woman matchless in beauty in the world, sang an excellent, melodious, song, O king. Due to the charm of her singing and due to her graceful laughter (i.e. smile), and on account of her sweet words, and due to the device, manner and divine behaviour of Cupid he was deluded. Cupid had a form as that of Bali, or of the row of Vindhya or of Vāmana, formerly. Cupid himself became the principal actor and the stage manager, and Spring was his assistant. That Rati, whose husband was delighted, put on the apparel of the chief actress. In that dance-performance she moved in the retiring room. The very intelligent Cuckoo excited the king. As the glorious king saw the excellent dance and listened to the excellent music he was deluded by (these) presented by the chief actress (i.e. Rati).

CHAPTER SEVENTYSEVEN

Yayāti Yields to Passion

Sukarman said :

1-5. The king of kings was allured by the charm of Cupid's music and his charming smile and his appearance as an actor, O Pippala. Having urinated and evacuated his bowels, the king, Nahuṣa's son, sat on his seat without having washed his feet. Having reached (i.e. seized) that opportunity, Jarā (i.e. old age) moved on to the king. Cupid also accomplished the act, beneficial to Indra, O best king. When the drama was over, and they had

left, the religious-minded king was overcome with old age, had his mind attached to lust, was allured by the delusion (caused) by Cupid, was perturbed, had his organs weakened; the virtuous (king) was very much stupefied, and was driven away by objects of sense.

6-11a. Once the king eager for the vice of hunting (i.e. eager to go ahunting) went (to a forest). Being under the influence of infatuation and attachment, he sported in the forest. When the glorious king was sporting with interest a matchless deer with four horns came (there). O king, its entire body was beautiful, its hair was of golden appearance, its body was well spotted with gemlike brightness; it was beautiful and attractive. The archer (i.e. the king) with an arrow in his hand, ran (to it) with speed. The intelligent (king) thought that some demon had come (there). The deer too drew the king away. He went (after it) with the speed of a chariot, and suffered from exhaustion. While he was watching, the deer vanished.

11b-20. There he saw a wonderful forest, resembling Indra's garden; it was crowded with beautiful trees, and looked splendid with the five elements, with big sacred sandal trees and with charming groups of plantain trees, with (the trees like) Bakula, Aśoka, Punnāga, Nālikera (i.e. the cocoa-nut trees), Tinduka, Pūgiphala (betel-nut trees), date-trees, lotuses and Saptaparṇa trees, blossomed Karṇikāra (trees), and various trees that always had fruit, so also with Ketaka and Pāṭala. While seeing (these) the great king saw an excellent lake. It was full of holy water; it was extensive (spreading) over five yojanas; it was crowded with swans and ducks; it was resounding with aquatic birds; it was also delightful with lotuses; it looked charming with red lotuses, and was decorated with golden lotuses; it looked extremely charming due to white lotuses; it was everywhere resounding with intoxicated bees also. Thus he saw the lake endowed with all excellences. It was five yojanas broad and ten yojanas long. The lake was auspicious on all sides; and was adorned with divine objects. Fatigued by the speed of the chariot and tormented by weariness he sat in the shade of a mango tree on its bank.

21-26a. Having bathed in it, and having drunk (i.e. he drank) its cold water scented with fragrance of lotuses, resembling nectar, and removing all exhaustion. The king seated in the

shade of the tree, somehow heard the sound of a song being sung (by someone). The sound was heard as (would be the sound of) the song which a divine woman would sing. The great king, who loved music, became extremely thoughtful. When the noble one was thus anxious and thought for a moment, a woman, with plump hips and breasts arrived in the forest, when the king was looking on. She, whose body looked beautiful with all ornaments, and having the wealth of good character and (auspicious) marks, came to the forest and stood before the king.

26b-32a. To her the king said: "Who are you? To whom do you belong? Why have you come here? Tell me the reason for it." O Pippala, that woman of an excellent face, when thus asked at that time by him, did not give either a good or a bad reply to the king. That woman, with the neck of the lute in her hand, laughed, and quickly went (away). The great king was then filled with great wonder: 'When talked to by me, she is not giving a reply.' Again that king Yayāti thought: '(This) four horns which I had seen. I think that is the truth. This must truly be a deceitful form of (i.e. taken up by) demons.' O brāhmaṇa, the king Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, thought (like this) for a moment.

32b-38a. When the king was thinking like this; the woman, laughing at the prince, vanished in the forest. In the meanwhile, he again heard the song, which was melodious, very divine, and accompanied with intonation and a regulated rise and fall of sounds through the musical scale. The king went to that place (from) where the great sound of the song was coming. In the water was an excellent lotus having a thousand petals. On it was an excellent woman, who was endowed with (good) character, beauty and virtues. She was possessing divine marks; she was adorned with divine ornaments; she shone with divine objects; her hand was engaged in holding the neck of a lute. She was singing a melodious song, accompanied with beating and measuring time and pause. With the power of that song she allured the mobile and the immobile, and also gods, groups of sages, all demons, Gandharvas and Kinnaras.

38b-42a. Seeing that (woman) of broad eyes and having beauty and lustre (he thought) in the mobile and the immobile world there is no other woman like her. Formerly, great Cupid, the actor, had got into the body of the king; he manifested him-

self at that time. As fire, having come in contact with ghee sends forth rays of light (i.e. is bright), so Cupid (i.e. passion) manifested himself, after having (i.e. after the king had) seen her. His mind was overpowered by Cupid (i.e. passion) on seeing that woman of charming eyes. (He thought:) 'I have never (before) seen such a young woman, alluring the world.'

42b-43. Thinking for a moment, the king had his mind attached to passion. Due to separation from her, the king, being burnt by the fire of passion and tormented by the fever of passion, longed for her.

44-46. (He thought:) 'How will she be mine? How will she have love (for me)? My life will be fruitful when this young girl having her face like a lotus and having lotus-like eyes embraces me, or if she is obtained by me.' Having thought like this that virtuous king Yayāti said to that beautiful woman: "O auspicious one, who are you? To whom do you belong?" That woman who was seen before is again seen (by me).

47-52a. The righteous one asked her: "Who is this (woman) by your side? O auspicious one, tell (me) everything. I am the son of Nahuṣa. O good one, I am born in the lunar dynasty and am the lord of the seven islands. O respectable lady, my name is Yayāti; I am well-known in the three worlds. My heart thus entertains a desire for union with you. O good lady, unite with me, do what is very dear (to me). O good lady, there is no doubt that I shall give you whatever you desire. O you of an excellent complexion, I am struck with invincible passion. Therefore, protect me, who am extremely helpless, and who have sought your shelter. For (i.e. in exchange for) the union with you I shall give my kingdom, the entire earth or even my body. All these three worlds are yours."

52b-55a. Having heard the words of that king, that woman with a lotus-like face said to her friend (named) Viśālā: "Tell the king that has come (here), my name, the place of my birth, (the names of) my father and mother, O you good lady. Also tell him about my love (for him)." Understanding her desire, Viśālā with sweet words then spoke to the king: "O prince, listen."

Viśālā said :

55b-71a. This Cupid was formerly burnt by Śambhu (i.e.

Śiva), the god of gods. That Rati, deprived of her husband, wept melodiously due to grief. O best king, at that time that Rati lived in this lake. O king of kings, then gods, having heard, like this, her melodious wailing attended by grief, had great compassion (on her). They spoke (these) words to Śaṅkara: "O great god, revive the mind-born (Cupid) again. O glorious one, of what nature will she be (i.e. what will be the plight of her) who is helpless, being deprived of her husband? Due to your affection for us (i.e. since you love us, please) make her united with Cupid." Hearing those words (Śiva) said: "I shall revive Cupid. This mind-born one (i.e. Cupid), having five arrows, even though without a body, will again be the friend of Spring. There is no doubt about it. He will live with a divine body; (and) not otherwise (i.e. not with any other body)." That fish-bannered god (i.e. Cupid), became alive due to the grace of the great god (i.e. Śiva). O best man, having thus approved of the desire of the respectable lady (i.e. Rati), with blessings (Śiva said:) "O Cupid, go and always thrive with your beloved." Thus (the god) of great lustre, the cause of the sustenance and destruction (of the world) said (to Cupid). Cupid again came to the lake where unhappy Rati remained. O king this is (that lake called) Kāmasaras (i.e. belonging to Cupid) where Rati is well-settled. She was overcome with grief when noble Cupid was burnt (by Śiva). From Rati's wrath sprang up a fire of a fearful form. He too, very much scorched Rati, who fainted. O best man, she, deprived of her husband, shed tears. From her eyes tears fell into the water. From them arose great grief destroying all happiness. O best king, after (that) Jarā (i.e. old age) came into being from the tears. From them the dull-headed destroyer, viz. Separation sprang up. Both the terrible Grief and Torture also then sprang up. From them was generated Delusion—terrible and destroying happiness. O great king, from Grief the Fever of Passion and Error originated. The distressed Wailing, Insanity and Death, destroying everything, arose from her tears.

71b-79. O great king, by Rati's side all assuming the body of torment and, all having the virtues of good feelings, originated incarnate. O king, then someone said: "This (is) Cupid (that) has come." Seeing Cupid that had come (there) she (i.e. Rati) was filled with great joy. Tears fell from her eyes . O great king,

in the water beings quickly originated. O best man, at that time (a lady) named Love sprang up, so also Renown and Shame. O best king, from them (i.e. from the tears) rose great Joy and the other one, viz. Peace. Two auspicious daughters giving pleasures and enjoyments sprang up. O king, there was a great combination of diversion, sport and devotion of mind. O king, due to joy tears fell from Rati's left eye into water. From them sprang up a good lotus. O best man, from that good lotus came up this beautiful lady, the daughter of Rati, Aśrubindumatī by name. Through love for her, I, always pleased and virtuous, ever remain near her, giving her pleasure, due to my being her friend. My name is known as (i.e. I am known by the name) Viśālā. O king, I am Varuṇa's daughter.

80-81a. Being always affectionate to her, I remain near her through love for her. I have thus told you all her (account) and mine also. O lord of kings, this beautiful one, desiring a husband, practised penance.

The king said :

81b-83a. O auspicious one, I have understood everything that you have told me; listen, let this beautiful daughter of Rati choose me. I shall give this young lady all that she desires. O auspicious lady, do that by which she will be under my influence.

Viśālā said :

83b-88. I shall tell you her resolve. Listen to it, O king. She desires as her groom a man, who is endowed with youth; who is omniscient; who has the characteristics of a brave man; who resembles the lord of gods; who possesses righteous conduct; who is brilliant; very bright, a donor, and the best among sacrificers; who knows (i.e. appreciates) virtues and devotion to religion; who possesses righteousness and good conduct; who is like Indra in the world; who is intent on religious practices through (performing) great sacrifices; who is endowed with all grandeur; who is as it were another Viṣṇu; who is always very much liked by gods, and is very dear to brāhmaṇas; who is friendly to brāhmaṇas; who knows the truth of the Vedas; whose valour is known in the three worlds. She desires such a groom as

is endowed with these qualities and is honoured in the three worlds, is very intelligent and very dear and handsome.

Yayāti said :

89. Know me, who have come here, to be endowed with these qualities. There is no doubt that the Creator has created (in me) a husband worthy of her.

Viśālā said :

90. O king, I know that in the three worlds you are rich with religious merit. The qualities which I have mentioned before exist in you.

91. Only due to one blemish she does not think highly of you. This doubt has arisen in me. (Otherwise) O king, you are full of Viṣṇu.

Yayāti said :

92. Tell me the great blemish which this one, beautiful in all limbs, does not really prize. Be well disposed to favour me.

Viśālā said :

93. O lord of the world why (i.e. how) do you not know your own blemish? Your body is covered with old age. Due to this (blemish) she does not prize you.

94. Hearing these great (important) and disagreeable words, the lord of the world, the king, overcome with great grief, again said:

95. "O auspicious lady, this blemish of old age in my body is not due to anybody's contact. I do not know (how) this old age has occurred to my body.

96. O auspicious one, whatever thing difficult to obtain in the world she desires, I am willing to give it to her. Choose the best boon."

Viśālā said :

97-100. When you would be free from old age, then she would be your very beloved (wife). This is certain, O king; I am

telling (you) the truth (and) the truth (only). Youth would prevail over his body who passes on his old age to his son, (or) brother, (or) servant after taking youth from him and giving him his old age. Due to good taste a happy agreement takes place between the two. He, O king, has the same fruit as the merit of him who offers himself through pity. There is no doubt about it.

101-103. He would have great religious merit when the merit obtained through difficulty is given to someone else. The fruit of merit is (thus) obtained. Therefore, O king, give (your old age) to your son, and after having obtained (youth) from him, come back with (i.e. after having got) handsomeness. Do (so) then, O king, when you desire to enjoy (her).

Thus, speaking to the king, that Viśālā ceased (speaking).

Sukarman said :

104a. Having heard like this, the best king then spoke to Viśālā.

The king said :

104b-106. O noble one, let it be so; I shall do your words (i.e. do as you have told me).

That stupid lord of the earth, Yayāti, overcome with passion, having gone home, and having called his sons Turu, Pūru, Kuru and Yadu, loving the father, said (these) words (to them): "Upon my order, O sons, bring happiness (to me)."

The sons said :

107-108. The words (i.e. the order) of the father—whether good or bad—have (has) to be executed by the sons. O father, speak out quickly, and know that it (i.e. the order) is carried out. There is no doubt.

Having heard these words of the sons, the lord of the earth, with his mind overcome with joy, again spoke to them.

CHAPTER SEVENTYEIGHT

Pūru Gives His Youth to Yayāti

Yayāti said :

1-4. O my noble sons, the wise one among you should take this my old age which is giving me pain, and should give his own youth and excellent form (to me); (so that) I shall behave as I like. Today my very fickle mind is inflamed, and is attached to a woman. As fire whirls round the water in a pot, similarly, O (my) sons, my mind is very much shaken by the fire of passion. O (my) sons, one (of you) should take this my old age which is giving me pain, and should give (me) his youth; (so that) I shall behave according to my will.

5-6. He, the best son, who passes on his youth to me, will enjoy my kingdom, and will wield my bow (and carry on) my line. He will have happiness, ample wealth, riches and grains. He will have many children and glory and fame.

The sons said :

7. O king, you are a king who are devoted to religion. You are guarding your subjects truthfully. Due to what has this idea, naturally fickle, arisen in you?

The king said :

8-10. Formerly dancers, superior dancers, came to my city. Due to them such delusion has arisen in me, when Cupid had allured me. My body is covered with old age; and my mind was overcome with Cupid (i.e. passion). O best sons, I was smit and overcome by passion. I saw a beautiful maiden of a divine form. O sons, I spoke to her; but the good one did not say anything.

11-13. Her charming and clever friend is Viśālā by name. She spoke good words to me, giving me joy: "When you would be free from old age, the very dear one will be yours." I accepted (i.e. agreed to) these words spoken by her, and (then) came home. To get rid of my old age, I have thus told you that (she had told me). O good sons, realizing thus, you should do (what gives) me pleasure.

Turu said :

14-18. By the favour of the father and the mother, body is obtained by sons. O king, with the (help of the) body religious acts are done by a wise man. A son should especially serve his father. Yet, O king, this is not the time for me to give my youth (to you). O king, men should enjoy the pleasures of senses in youth. Now it is not properly the time for you (to enjoy these pleasures). (You say) O father, that pleasure would be enjoyed by you after you give your ripe old age to your sons; but (then) you would not have (that much) life (i.e. you would not live that long). Therefore, O great king, I shall not do your words (i.e. do as you say).

In this way the eldest son, Turu, spoke to him at that time.

19. Hearing those words of Turu, the king became angry. The pious one, with his eyes red with anger, cursed Turu.

20-26 "O you of a wicked heart, you have disobeyed this order of mine. Therefore, be a sinful person outcast by all religions. You will be without the lock of hair on the crown of the head; you will be deprived of the sacred texts; you will be without all manners. There is no doubt about this. You will be the killer of brāhmaṇas; you will be ruined by gods; you will be a drunkard; you will be without truthfulness; you will do fierce deeds; you will be the meanest man. You will be addicted to drinking; you will be hungry, sinful and a killer of cows. Your skin will be bad; you will have the hem of your lower garment untucked; you will hate brāhmaṇas; you will be deformed. You will be an adulterer; you will be very fierce; you will be very lustful; you will eat everything; you will always be wicked. You will have sexual intercourse with a woman of your own kin; you will destroy all religious practices; you will be without sacred knowledge; and you will suffer from leprosy. Your sons and grandsons also will destroy all holy objects, will be barbarians, and will be very much spoilt like this (i.e. in the same way)."

27. Having thus cursed Turu very badly, he spoke to (his other) son, Yadu: "Take on (my) old age now, and enjoy the kingdom free from any source of vexation."

28a. Joining the palms of his hands, Yadu said to the king:

Yadu said :

28b-30. O father, I am unable to bear the burden of (your) old age; (please) be kind to (i.e. excuse) me. There are five causes of old age: frigidity, journey, bad food, aged woman, and disinclination of the mind. O king, I am not able (to put up with) the misery in my youth (i.e. while I am young). Who is able to hold (up old age)? Now (please) excuse me.

31-32. O son of a brāhmaṇa, the angry great king cursed Yadu: "Your lineage shall never deserve a kingdom. It will be without power, lustre, forbearance, and will be deprived of the practices of kṣatriyas (since you have) turned (your) back upon my order. There is no uncertainty about it."

Yadu said :

33. O great king, I am faultless; why have you now cursed me? (Please) favour the poor one (i.e. me). Be pleased to favour me.

The king said :

34. O son, (when) the great god will take birth with his portion in your family, then your family will be purified.

Yadu said :

35. O great king, you have cursed me, your son, who am faultless; If you have compassion for me, (please) favour me.

The king said :

36. He who is the eldest son should remove the misery of the father. He well enjoys the inheritance of the kingdom, and he would bear the burden (of the kingdom).

37-38a. You have not done (your) duty, (therefore) you are certainly not fit to be talked to. You have destroyed (i.e. disobeyed) the order of me who (can) strike with a great (i.e. heavy) punishment. Therefore you cannot be favoured, do as you please.

Yadu said :

38b-42a. O king, since you have destroyed my kingdom, form and family, therefore, I, the chief of your family, will be wicked. In your family will be (born) kṣatriyas of various forms. There is no doubt that very fierce and very mighty (beings) will enjoy their villages, good regions, their women, and whatever gems they will have. From my family (will) be born Turuṣkas of the form of barbarians—those who were destroyed and who were cursed by you with very fierce curses.

O best king, the angry Yadu thus spoke to the king (Yayāti).

42b-45. Then the angry great king again cursed (Yadu) thus: "Listen, know all that will be born in your family will ruin my subjects. As long as the moon, the sun, the earth, the constellations and the stars (last) the mlecchas will be roasted in the Kumbhīpāka and the Raurava (hells)." Then seeing the young Kuru playing, and possessed of good marks, the king did not call that son (of him) a prince. Knowing Kuru to be a child, the king left him then.

46-47a. Then the lord of the world (i.e. Yayāti) called Pūru, the meritorious son of Śarmiṣṭhā, and said to him: "Take my old age and enjoy my extremely good kingdom, with the sources of nuisance eradicated, (and) given by me (to you)."

Pūru said :

47b-49a. The lord (if you) should enjoy the kingdom as was enjoyed by your father, I shall obey your order. O king, give me your old age in exchange for my youth. Today only appearing handsome, enjoy, with your mind attached to objects of sense, pleasures and good deeds.

49b-54a. O noble one, sport with her as long as you desire. O father, as long as I live I shall keep up old age.

Thus addressed by that Pūru, the lord of the world, with his heart full of great joy, said again to his son: "O child, since you did not disobey my order, (on the contrary) obeyed it, therefore I shall give you much happiness. O you very intelligent one, since you took my old age, and gave me your own youth, therefore you enjoy the kingdom given by me." O king, that good

Pūru, thus addressed by that king, gave him his youth and took old age from him.

54b-60a. When, O dear one, the exchange of the ages of the father and the son was effected, Pūru appeared to be older than the king in all his limbs. The king reached youth, (and looked like a man) sixteen years old, and possessing great charm (looked) as it were he was another Cupid. The great king gave that noble Pūru everything—(his) bow, kingdom, umbrella, fan, seat, and elephant, (so also) his entire treasure, country, army, chowrie and also the chariot. That Nahuṣa's righteous son, attached to passion, thinking of that maiden, went with quick steps, to that lake known as Kāma, and resembling an ocean, where Aśrubindumatī (stayed). Seeing that eminent maiden of large eyes and having beautiful and plump breasts, the great king, with his mind attracted by Cupid, said to Viśālā:

The king said :

60b-62a. O you noble and eminent one of charming eyes, I have, O auspicious one, given up my old age, and am (now) endowed with youth. Becoming a young man, I have come (here). Let her be mine now. There is no doubt that I shall give her whatever she desires.

Viśālā said :

62b-63a. When (now) you have come after having abandoned the wicked old age, (yet) you are still covered by one blemish. (Therefore) she does not prize you.

The king said :

63b-64. If you definitely know my blemish then tell it (to me). I shall certainly abandon that blemish of an inferior nature.

CHAPTER SEVENTYNINE

Youthful Yayāti Enjoys with Aśrubindumatī

Viśālā said:

1-2. There (i.e. in that king) only, whose wife is Śarmiṣṭhā and whose wife is beautiful Devayānī, good fortune is seen. This cannot be false, O king; then O glorious king, how are you fascinated by (the beauty of) this maiden's body* since you are known as a husband having two wives?

3-4a. Like sandal, O king, you are with serpents (around) you. O king, as a great sandal-tree is surrounded by serpents, so you are surrounded by serpents called co-wives.

4b-6a. It is better to enter fire, it is better to fall from (mountain) top, but not good to have the dear husband, possessing handsomeness and lustre, (but) with co-wives—with the poison in the form of co-wives. Therefore she does not prize you, an ocean of mertis, as her lover.

The king said:

6b-7a. O beautiful lady, I have nothing to do with Devayānī, nor with Śarmiṣṭhā; for this purpose see my treasure full of righteousness.

Aśrubindumatī said:

7b-9a. O king, I shall be the enjoyer of your kingdom and your body. O king you will certainly (have to) do whatever I shall tell you to do. For this purposes, O you who love piety, give me your hand endowed with many virtues and having auspicious marks.

The King said:

9b-11a. O you of an excellent complexion, I shall not have any other wife than you. O you beautiful lady, O you lady of charming body, enjoy my entire kingdom with its wealth, so

*The existing reading कार्यवशो does not give any sense. It should better be replaced by कायवशो which we have translated here. (Ed.)

also the whole earth and my body. (In proof of this) I have offered this my hand to you. O good lady, I (shall) do whatever you (will) tell (me).

Aśrubindumati said:

11b. Just with this (promise), O noble one, I shall be your wife.

12-16a. Hearing this, Yayāti, the lord of the earth, the king of kings, with his eyes full of joy, married by the Gāndharva way that auspicious daughter of Cupid. The noble son of king (Nahuṣa) enjoyed with her, on sea-beaches, in forests and parks. The king, lord of kings, youthfully sported with her on mountains and in beautiful rivers. In this way, O best king, that noble king Yayāti passed twenty thousand (years) in sporting with her.

Viṣṇu said :

16b-17a. O very intelligent one, through the fraudulent act of Cupid, that great king Yayāti was thus allured by her for the benefit of Indra at that time.

Sukarman said:

17b-19. O Pippala, that lord of the earth, Yayāti, stupefied by Cupid's daughter by means of her alluring passion and charming union, was not aware of day or night. Once that daughter of Cupid of charming eyes said to that stupefied, submissive, obedient king Yayāti, who had bowed down:

Aśrubindumati said :

20. O dear one, a desire is produced (in me); so satisfy (that) desire of me: perform the best sacrifice, viz. Aśvamedha, O lord of the earth.

The king said :

21-24a. O glorious one, let it be so; I shall do what you very much like.

He invited his eldest son, who had no desire to enjoy the kingdom. (The son), when called, came there with his neck (i.e. head) bent with devotion, and joining the palms of

his hands, saluted (Yayāti) at that time. With his neck (i.e. head) bent, he also saluted her feet. "O King, give me an order since I, who was called, have come. O noble one, what should I do? I am your servant who has bowed to you."

The king said :

24b-29. O son, inviting brāhmaṇas, meritorious priests officiating at sacrifices, and kings, make preparations for a horse-sacrifice.

Thus addressed, that very lustrous and highly religious Pūru did everything in full as told by the glorious one. With the daughter of Cupid he took proper initiation (i.e. got himself consecrated for the sacrifice). Yayāti, the lord of the earth, gave various gifts to brāhmaṇas at the place of the sacrifice, so also endless, profuse gifts especially to the poor, O great king; and at the end of the sacrifice he said to that beautiful lady : "O young lady, tell me what else dear to you I should do. O beautiful lady, I shall do all that which is attainable and not attainable."

Sukarman said :

30-37. Thus addressed by the king, she spoke in reply "O king, a desire is produced in me; O innocent one, do (i.e. satisfy) it. O great king, I desire to see the very pleasing heaven of Indra, of Brahmā, so also of Śiva and of Viṣṇu. O noble one, show (these) to me, if I am very dear to you." Thus addressed by her, the king said to her who was very dear to him : "O you beautiful one, well, well, you are just saying pious things. O you beautiful lady, I think what you said due to feminine nature, fickleness and curiosity, is unattainable, O noble one. That is attainable by means of pious gifts, sacrifice, and austerities; what you told cannot be attained by any other means, O beautiful lady. You have just said something that is unattainable as it is mixed up (i.e. connected with) religious merit. I have not as yet seen or heard about a very meritorious man who has gone to heaven with his (human) body from the mortal world. Therefore, O you beautiful lady, what you said is unattainable for me. I shall do something else. O dear one tell me that."

The respectable lady said :

38-40. O king, it is certainly not attainable for other human beings; but it is attainable for you; I am telling the truth (and) truth only. O king, in the mortal world there is no other human being like you in (practising) penance, in fame, in doing valourous acts, (giving) gifts and (performing) sacrifices. Everything—the power of a kṣatriya, fire of energy—is established in you. Therefore, O son of Nahuṣa, this (thing) dear to me should be done (by you).

CHAPTER EIGHTY

Yadu Refuses to Kill His Mothers

Pippala said :

1-2. O best brāhmaṇa, when the king (Yayāti) married the daughter of Cupid, what did his two former, very auspicious, wives, viz. the noble Devayānī and Śarmiṣṭhā, the daughter of Vṛṣaparvan do? Tell me the entire account of the two.

Sukarman said :

3-9a. When that king took home Cupid's daughter, that high-minded Devayānī very much entered into rivalry (with her). "For her he, with his mind overcome with anger, cursed two of his sons (viz. Turu and Yadu)." The renowned one, having called Śarmiṣṭhā, said these words to her. Śarmiṣṭhā and Devayānī vied with her in beauty, lustre, charity, truthfulness and holy vows. Then Kāma's daughter knew their wickedness. Just then only she told everything to the king, O brāhmaṇa. Then the great king, getting angry, called Yadu and said to him : "Go and kill Śarmiṣṭhā and also (Devayānī) the daughter of Śukra. O son, if you care for felicity then do what is very dear to me." Having heard those words of his father, Yadu then replied to his father, the lord of kings :

9b-14. "O proud father, I shall not kill these two mothers, free from guilt. Those well-versed in the Vedas have declared a great sin in killing one's mother. Therefore, O great king, I shall not kill these two mothers. O great king, (even) if a mother or a sister or a daughter is stained with a hundred blemishes she should never be killed by sons or brothers. Knowing this, O great king, I shall never kill (these) two mothers." Hearing, at that time, the words of Yadu, the king became angry. Yayāti, the lord of the earth, then cursed his son: "Since you have disobeyed (my) order, you, resembling a sinner, polluted by my curse, enjoy a portion of your mother".

15-19. Speaking thus to his son Yadu, that lord of the earth, Yayāti, that great king of great glory, having cursed his son, and without being solely devoted to Viṣṇu, enjoyed pleasures with her. That Aśrubindumatī of charming eyes and beautiful in all limbs, enjoyed with him all lovely enjoyments as liked by her. Thus that noble Yayāti passed his time. All other subjects were without any loss or without old age; all people were solely devoted to the meditation of glorious Viṣṇu. O noble Pippala, all people were happy and served the good by means of penance, truthfulness and meditation on Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER EIGHTYONE

Destiny is Irresistible

Sukarman said :

1-3. This very intelligent Indra, always afraid of the noble Yayāti, seeing his valour and many meritorious acts like (giving) gifts, sent the celestial nymph Menakā to act as a messenger. (He said to her:) "O good and illustrious one, go and tell (i.e. convey) my order. Going from here tell Cupid's daughter the words (i.e. the order) of (me), the lord of gods: 'Bring the king here by any means (i.e. somehow).' "

4. Hearing this, that Menakā sent (by Indra) went there; and told her all that the lord of gods had said.

5-8. Having thus told her that Menakā, directed by her (i.e. Cupid's daughter) went (back to Indra). When Menakā had left, that high-minded, glorious daughter of Rati reminded the king of the lawful agreement: "O King, with a truthful speech, you formerly brought me (here); in the meantime you gave me your hand, and brought me to your residence. O king, you must do here (i.e. now) only what I tell you. O hero, you have not done what I told you; I shall abandon you and go (back) to my father's house."

The king said :

9. O good one, I shall certainly do what you have told me. O respectable lady, leaving (i.e. not telling) what is unattainable, tell me what is attainable.

Aśrubindumati said :

10-19a. For this purpose, O lord of the earth, I choose you in marriage, knowing that you are having all (auspicious) marks and endowed with all virtues, and knowing that you would accomplish everything, support everything, practise all good usages and create (i.e. perform) religious rites, and would obtain all the three worlds, and knowing that you are matchless in the three worlds. I know you to be a devotee and the best among the followers of Viṣṇu. With this hope I formerly took you for my husband. He who has the grace of Viṣṇu would move everywhere. O lord of kings, here is nothing that cannot be accomplished (by you) in three worlds—mobile or immobile; for you of a good vow (everything) is (attainable) in all the worlds. Due to Viṣṇu's grace only you can freely move in the sky. Having come to the world of mortals, O lord of the earth, you have made people free from old age, grey hair and death. You yourself have devised many desire-yielding trees near all the doors of the houses of men, O king. To the houses of men you yourself have sent sages and have always firmly settled the desire-yielding cows in their houses, O king. You have made men happy by (satisfying) all their desires. In a house a thousand nobly born people are seen.

19b-26a. Thus you have increased the human race. In spite of Yama's opposition and that of Indra too, O king, you made

the mortal world free from diseases and sins. O great king, by means of your prowess and self-respect you have shown the earth to have the form of heaven. There is no other king like you. No man is born or will be born like you. I know you to be the illuminator of the entire religion. Therefore I took you as my husband; giving up joke, O lord of kings, speak the truth before me. O king, if you have truth and piety then speak the truth. "I do not move in divine worlds, nor can I freely move in the sky". When, giving up truth, (you say like this), you will never go to heaven; your words will be certainly false; and all good things done formerly will be reduced to ashes.

The king said :

26b-29. O good lady, you spoke the truth, there is nothing like unattainable for me. Due to the good grace of the lord of the world everything is attainable for me. O respectable lady, listen to the reason for which I am not going to heaven. They will not allow deities to go to the mortal world; as a result all the human beings—my subjects—will be having death when abandoned by me; there is no doubt about this, O you beautiful lady. I do not desire to go to heaven; I have told you the truth, O you beautiful lady.

The respectable lady said :

30. O king, having seen the worlds, you will again come (back). Today fulfil my matchless strong desire.

The king said :

31-40. I shall certainly do all that you have said.

That very lustrous king Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, having (thus) observed and thus spoken to his beloved then thought : 'A fish though moving in the water, is bound (i.e. caught) in a net. A deer even having the speed like that of the wind is bound. A bird sees a prey even though it is at a distance of a thousand yojanas. Being deluded by destiny it does not see the noose sticking to its neck. Destiny brings about good and bad things. Destiny destroys honour. Destiny brings about humiliation by remaining

wheresoever (it pleases). It makes a man a donor or a suitor. Destiny holds everything —all immobile and other beings (living) in heaven or on the earth. Destiny alone is this world. It is without origin and death and is the greatest cause of the world. Destiny ripens the worlds as the fruit laid on a tree. Hymns, penance, charity, friends or relatives are not able to protect a man oppressed by destiny. It is not possible to overcome the three nooses of destiny: marriage, birth and death—when and where one would have these, and with whom or through whom. As the clouds in the sky are moved by the wind, so the world is moved by destiny united with (the fruits of) the deeds (of beings).

Sukarman said :

41-67. But the destiny, which, united with Karman (the deeds), is adored by men, would (only) urge Karman (the fruits of the deeds), and does not create it. In the human (world), calamities, misfortunes, serpents and diseases, move (in accordance with) their being decided by (one's) deeds. All those that are the causes and means of happiness, being mixed with merit, are united with (the fruits of) deeds. They would not see (i.e. would not care for what is) auspicious and (what is) inauspicious. (Obscure!) relatives united with (the fruits of) deeds may exchange them*; but (the fruits of) deeds (alone) urge men on to happiness and unhappiness in this world. As gold or silver has its nature fixed, similarly a being is bound in accordance with his deeds. These five are produced (i.e. decided) when a man is just in (his mother's) womb: his life (i.e. longevity), deeds, wealth, learning and death. As an agent (potter) fashions from a lifeless lump whatever he wants to fashion, in the same way deeds performed before follow the doer. One becomes a god, or a man, or a beast, or a bird, or a lower animal, or an immobile object, according to one's deeds. He always enjoys in accordance with that only which is accomplished by himself—unhappiness results from one's own deeds; happiness results from one's own deeds. Obtaining the bed of womb, he enjoys the fruit of his deeds of the previous body (i.e. done in the previous existence). On the earth men never (i.e. can never) give up the fruits of their deeds. They

*कर्मदायदिवानोके is most probably a corrupt reading. (Ed.)

are not able to change them by means of their power or intelligence. They enjoy meritorious deeds, pains and pleasures. Reaching (i.e. due to) a cause, a man is always bound by the bonds of his deeds. As from among thousands of cows a calf finds out its mother, similarly the fruit of the auspicious or inauspicious deeds —which is not destroyed except by 'enjoyment (or suffering)— follows its agent. Who can change the fruit of a deed done in a former life? (The fruit of) the deed follows him also who runs very fast. The (fruit of) the deed of a former life, as it was done, sleeps with him who sleeps. It stands by him who stands, and follows him who goes. The (fruit of the) deed of him who acts, acts; it follows him like his shadow. As shade and light are always mutually connected, similarly a deed and its agent are well related. Planets, diseases, poisonous snakes, demonesses[1] and demons trouble a man who is first oppressed by his own deeds. He who is to enjoy happiness or (suffer) unhappiness at a place is bound there by a rope, is forcibly carried away by fate. In giving happiness or unhappiness, destiny alone is the master of beings. O wise one, a deed is conceived in one way by (a person) keeping awake or sleeping, and destiny destroys it (by giving it) another turn. It protects that which should be protected (i.e. which it wants to protect) from weapons, fire, poisons or difficulties. Truly that which cannot be protected, is protected by destiny in this way. That which is destroyed by destiny can never be protected. As seeds that are sown in earth and riches remain (dormant) and (then) grow (active), in the same way deeds remain (intact) in the soul and (then) become active. As due to the exhaustion of oil the flame goes out, so due to the exhaustion of (the fruits of) deeds a being goes to destruction (i.e. departs) from his body; since those who know the truth declare that death is due to the exhaustion (of the fruits) of (one's) deeds. Various beings and diseases are the cause of his death. 'Thus it is ripening of the deeds of my former existence. It is not otherwise. It has (now) certainly come (to me) in the form of this lady; there is no doubt about it. Actors, dancers and bards had to come to my house; due to their contact, old age

1. Sākini—a kind of female being, attendant on Durgā supposed to be a demoness or fairy.

has resorted to my body. I think everything is done by (i.e. due to) one's deeds (in a former existence), since it has (now) definitely sprung up.

68a. Therefore deeds are the main (factor); efforts are useless.

68b-74. Formerly the king of gods had sent the best messenger by name Mātali, for (taking) me (to heaven). I did not do his words (i.e. what he told me). I now see the ripening of those deeds.' He (Yayāti) was thus full of anxiety, and was overcome with great affliction. (He thought:) 'If with pleasure I do not do what she says, then both my truthfulness and piety would go (i.e. perish); there is no doubt about it. Whatever was decided in accordance with my deeds has come; (what is predestined) will certainly take place. Destiny is difficult to overcome.' Yayāti, the lord of the earth, was thus absorbed in thought. He sought the refuge of Kṛṣṇa, Hari, the remover of distress, by meditating upon him, saluting him, and praising him (as): 'O you to whom Lakṣmī is dear, protect me who have sought your refuge.'

CHAPTER EIGHTYTWO

Yayāti Takes Back His Old Age

Sukarman said :

1-8. When the king was thus absorbed in thinking, that beautiful daughter of Rati said : "O you very intelligent king, what do you think just now? There is no doubt that mostly women are fickle. I am not leading you away through fickleness. I am not making use of a fraudulent expedient today, O best king, (by speaking) as other greedy women speak, something that cannot be done, through greed and delusion. A strong desire to see all the worlds is produced in my heart. Seeing deities is meritorious, and is very difficult to be had even by good men. Say to me, O king, that you will cause (i.e. help) me to see the deities. Like another ordinary man, afraid of a great misery and

fallen into the ditch of delusion, you are thinking if there would be a great sin due to my company now. Give up your anxiety; you should not go to heaven. I shall never do that which gives you pain."

9-11. The king, thus addressed (by her), said to that beautiful woman : "O respectable lady, now listen to what I have thought out. I see (here) insult, and not the (satisfying of) my mind. O beloved, when I go to the heaven, my subjects will be helpless. The wicked-minded Yama will trouble my subjects with diseases. O beautiful one, I shall go to heaven with you."

12-26. Having thus spoken to her and having called his best son Pūru, possessing old age and of a great intelligence (he said to him:) "Come on, O you who know all the customary observances, you certainly know your duty. O you religious-minded one, you have preserved piety by my order. O son, give me (my) old age back, and take back (your) youth. Protect this kingdom of mine along with the treasure, army and vehicles. Enjoy the earth full of gems, along with villages, forests and cities given (to you) by me. O sinless one, you should do the protection of the subjects which is meritorious; on the authority of the sacred texts you should always punish the wicked and protect the good. O glorious one, you should protect the brāhmaṇas by your deeds devoutly and according to the rules, since they are worthy of respect in the three worlds. Every fifth or seventh day inspect the treasure and meet the learned. You should always honour your army by favouring them and giving them wealth and food. Always use your spies as your eyes, and always be engaged in charity. Always be restrained in your consultation, since it is always to be guarded by very wise men. O son, always control yourself; do not go ahunting. Do not trust anybody—women, treasure or your great army. Always collect worthy persons and all arts. Worship Viṣṇu with sacrifices, and always be virtuous. Everyday crush the sources of nuisance among the subjects. Everyday give your subjects all that is desired by them. Give happiness to the subjects, support the subjects, O son. Have (sexual union with a woman) in your own family (only); do not have it with someone else's wife. Do not think ill about other's wealth; always follow your forefathers. Always ponder over the Vedas and the sacred texts; O child, be engaged in the study

of (the science of handling) weapons. O child, always be contented, and be devoted to your own bed (i.e. wife). Always study elephants, horses and chariots."

27-28. Having thus instructed his son, having congratulated him with blessings, having put him (on the throne) with his own hand, he gave his weapon into his hand. Then Yayāti, the lord of the earth, having taken (back) from (Pūru) his old age, gave him (his youth) and desired to go to heaven.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTHREE

Yayāti Visits the Divine Worlds

Sukarman said :

1-5a. Having called all the subjects from all parts (of the world), the lord of the earth, full of great joy, said : "O best ones my subjects—brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras, along with this lady I am going to Indra's heaven, Brahmā's heaven, Rudra's heaven and then to Viṣṇu's heaven, destroying all sins and causing salvation. There is no doubt about it. With (your) families (you) should stay happily on the earth. O people, I have appointed this glorious and wise Pūru as your guardian and king with the sceptre."

5b-13. Thus addressed, all those subjects said to the king : "O best king, in (i.e. from) all the Vedas and Purāṇas we hear about Dharma; but nobody has seen, as we saw, Dharma, like the one (i.e. you) born in Nahuṣa's great house, in the lunar dynasty, of ten constituents, loving truth, possessing hands, feet and face, propagating all (good) practices, endowed with spiritual and material knowledge, and a great treasure of religious merit, the mine of virtues and proficient in truth, O great king. Truthful and highly lustrous people practise great virtues. That Dharma we have seen in you, of a desirable form (or handsome like Cupid), satisfying (our) desires and so truth-speaking. Even with the three kinds of acts (i.e. of body, mind and speech) we are unable

to abandon you. We shall happily and agreeably go wherever you go. There is no doubt that we shall be in hell where you will stay (i.e. if you live in a hell). O very great king, without you, what is the use of a wife, or enjoyments, or life? We have nothing to do with that (i.e. wife etc.). O lord of kings, we shall go with you only; this will not be otherwise."

14-26a. Hearing these words of the subjects, the lord of the earth, full of great joy said to the subjects : "O you all very meritorious people, come along with me." With Cupid's daughter the king got into the chariot. (That) Yayāti, Nahuṣa's son, shone like Indra, the lord of gods, with the chariot having the colour of swans and resembling the orb of the moon; he was free from distress (as he was) being fanned by chowries and fans; he also shone with that lucky, auspicious and great banner. He was praised by sages, bards and singers, so also by his subjects. Then all his subjects approached the lord of men in vehicles; and they proceeded to heaven with (i.e. having mounted on) elephants and horses (and having got into) chariots. They were brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras and other common people. All they were followers of Viṣṇu and were absorbed in the meditation on Viṣṇu. Their banners were white and adorned with golden staffs. All were marked with conches and discs and were having staffs and flags. The banners urged by wind shone among the crowds of the subjects. All (the subjects) had put on divine garlands, and were adorned with Tulasī-leaves. Their bodies were smeared with divine sandal, and with (the paste of) divine black ale wood. They were adorned with divine garments and were decorated with divine ornaments. All those handsome people followed the king. All the subjects—the people numbering thousands, hundreds of lakhs and crores, and very large numbers like arva, kharva (i.e. 10,000,000,000) went (with the king). All of them, followers of Viṣṇu, doing meritorious acts, absorbed in the meditation of Viṣṇu, and in muttering (sacred names) and in charity (went) with the king.

Sukarman said :

26b-30a. Full of great joy all of them proceeded (with the king), O great king, having installed his son Pūru on his throne,

that Yayāti, the lord of the earth, went to Viṣṇu's world. Due to his lustre, religious merit and piety all those people proceeded to the best heaven of Viṣṇu. Then along with the king of gods, gods with the Gandharvas, Kinnaras and bards came facing them (to greet them), honouring that very lord of kings, O best king.

Indra said :

30b. O great king, welcome to you. Enter my house.
31a. Enjoy here all divine pleasures as you like.

The king said :

31b-40a. O you thousand-eyed, very wise god, I am saluting your lotus-like couple of feet. I (shall) then go to Brahmā's heaven.

Being praised by the gods, he went to Brahmā's heaven. The very lustrous Brahmā along with excellent sages offered him hospitable reception with water for washing his feet and with respectful offering and excellent seats; (and) said to him : "By the power of your deeds go to Viṣṇu's heaven." Thus addressed by the Creator he went to Śiva's house. Śiva, along with Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) offered hospitable reception to that very king, and said these words to the king : "O lord of kings, you are the devotee of Kṛṣṇa, you are also very dear to me; therefore, O Yayāti, lord of kings, live in my house. Enjoy all pleasures difficult to be obtained by human beings. O lord of kings, there is certainly no difference between Viṣṇu and me. There is no doubt that he who has the form of Viṣṇu is Śiva, and O king, he who is Rudra (i.e. Śiva) is the ancient Viṣṇu. There is no difference between the two. Therefore only I speak (like this). I do give a place (in my abode) to a meritorious devotee of Viṣṇu. Therefore, O innocent great king, you should stay here."

40b-43a. Thus addressed by Śiva, Yayāti, dear to Viṣṇu, and with his neck (i.e. head) bent down in devotion, saluted Śiva, the lord of gods, (and said to him :) "O great god, whatever you have said is proper. There is no difference between you two. It is one form divided into two. I desire to go (to the heaven) of Viṣṇu; I salute your feet." "O great king, let it be so; go to the heaven of Viṣṇu."

43b-65a. (Thus) instructed by Śiva also, the lord of the earth, with Viṣṇu's very meritorious devotees, dear to Viṣṇu dancing before him—the king—, proceeded (towards Viṣṇu's heaven). He, accompanied by the conch-sounds destroying great sins, and very many roars of lions, many (other) sounds, being worshipped by good bards, (his praise) being sung in melodious tones by public readers skilled in scriptures, moved (on). Gandharvas, eagerly engaged in singing, sang before him. He was being praised by sages along with hosts of gods that had joined them. That son of Nahuṣa was being served by beautiful celestial damsels. That great king, being praised by meritorious and auspicious Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Siddhas, bards, Sādhyas, Vidyādharas, Maruts and Vasus, so also Rudra and groups of Ādityas, and by the Guardians and Lords of quarters, and by all the three worlds all around, saw the matchless and trouble-free heaven of Viṣṇu. O king, that excellent and best city shone with golden, heavenly cars, full of all beauty, with hundred-storied mansions shining with halls white like swans, the *kunda* (flowers) or the moon, and resembling the Meru and Mandāra mountains which with their tops touched the heaven and the sky, and with bright, golden pitchers (on their tops). It shone with the splendour of lustre like the sky with multitudes of stars; with flames of blazing lustre it, as it were, looked with eyes. O lord of kings, that Śiva's heaven, invited, with many jewels, as it were, with teeth showing while laughing, and under the pretext of the flag with tossing foliage, the meritorious devotees of Viṣṇu, dear to Viṣṇu. It was well adorned everywhere with charming tops of banners tossed by wind, and with golden staffs and bells. It shone with gates and watch-towers looking (bright) like the sun's lustre, with beautiful round windows, rows of lattices and windows with the lustres of the broad ways, and golden ramparts, with arches, good banners and many very auspicious sounds, with the tops of pitchers, mirror-like discs resembling in lustre the sun's orb, with great splendour, with hundreds of private chambers resembling water-less clouds, crowded with staffs and umbrellas and pitchers, with chambers like clouds in the rainy season, and the earth looked, with (so many) pitchers, like the sky with stars. The city of Viṣṇu looked beautiful with the mass of staffs and banners with lustre like the multitude of stars, of the form

of crystal objects, looking like a conch or the moon, with crowds of golden palaces and (palaces) made of many metals, with divine cars numbering ten millions and thousands of hundreds of crores; and with all enjoyments. Those men, devotees of Viṣṇu, of righteous deeds and with all their sins washed away live, through his grace, in those houses, which are fully meritorious, divine and rich in all pleasures.

65b-75. The house of Viṣṇu was adorned with excellent (objects) like these. It was everywhere crowded with many kinds of trees, graced with sandal trees, having all desired fruits. It shone with wells, ponds and lakes beautified with cranes, so also with lakes, crowded with swans and ducks, beautified with white lotuses, (other) lotuses, big white lotuses, (other kinds of) lotuses and blue lotuses, and (others) having the colour of (i.e. resembling) golden lotuses. Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu's heaven) was rich with all beauty, was adorned with divine parks, was full of divine charm and was graced by the devotees of Viṣṇu. The king saw (this) Vaikuṇṭha, the matchless place of salvation. Yayāti, Nahuṣa's son, entered that beautiful city, crowded with hosts of gods and free from any morbid heat. He saw that Viṣṇu, destroyer of all sufferings, free from any damage, shining with divine cars, resplendent with all ornaments, clad in a yellow garment, marked with Śrīvatsa, and very lustrous, mounted on Garuḍa accompanied by Śrī, higher than the highest, —the highest god, the refuge of all the worlds, (who) shone with perfect detachment of the form of the highest joy, and was being served by great, very meritorious devotees of Viṣṇu.

76-79. The lord of the earth, with his wife, saluted Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) crowded with hosts of gods, waited upon by groups of Gandharvas and celestial nymphs , who was magnanimous and who removed all sufferings. All the men, devotees of Viṣṇu, who had gone with the king, saluted Viṣṇu, O you very intelligent one. O you highly intelligent one, they devoutly saluted his both feet. Viṣṇu said to the glorious king, who was blazing with lustre, and who was saluting him : "O you of a good vow, I am pleased with you. O lord of kings, ask for a boon which you have in your mind; I shall certainly grant it to you. You are my devotee, O you very intelligent one."

The king said :

80. O Madhusūdana, O lord of gods, if you are pleased, then, O lord of the worlds, always grant me your servitude (i.e. make me your servant).

Viṣṇu said :

81-83. O glorious one, let it be so; you are undoubtedly my devotee; O great king, with this lady you may stay in my heaven.

That great king Yayāti, the lord of the earth, thus addressed, lived, through the grace of that god, in the excellent heaven of Viṣṇu, which was decorated.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFOUR

Glorification of Devotion to Parents

Sukarman said :

1-10. I have narrated to you this entire account, which removes sins, which emancipates sons, which is divine, and which gives great religious merit. The well-known deeds of Yayāti are actually seen in the world. Pūru obtained the great kingdom as it was brought into existence, and Turu was reduced to a bad plight, due (respectively) to the father's favour and anger. It emancipates sons, gives glory and wealth and grains. Both Turu and Yadu were under the influence of a curse. There is no other giver of desirable fruits like the father or the mother. A father may call his son through love, and a mother (may call him saying:) 'O son, O son.' Listen to its meritorious fruit. When a son, who is called by his mother, goes to her with affection, he would get the fruit of having bathed in the Ganges. A very glorious son, who would wash the feet (of his parents) enjoys, through their grace, the fruit of (having visited) all the sacred places; and by shampooing their bodies he would obtain the fruit of a

horse-sacrifice. In that son, who would nourish his father (and mother) with food, covering, and bath, merit equal to that obtained by the gift of the earth is produced. The Ganges is full of (the merit of) all sacred places. A mother is like that (only). There is no doubt about it. The ancient poets know that as the ocean is established as full of much merit, similarly is the father in this world.

Sukarman said :

11-19a. That son, who abandons or yells at his father or mother, undoubtedly goes to the hell called Raurava. That son, who, being a householder, does not support his old mother or father, goes to hell and would certainly meet with agony. For a wicked-minded and sinful son, who abuses his father (or mother), the ancient poets have never known any requital. O brāhmaṇa, knowing thus I am everyday worshipping devoutly and with my neck (i.e. head) bent my mother and father. My father, calling me, would tell me what ought and what ought not to be done. I do it with discrimination and according to my strength, O Pippala. Due to that I have obtained the highest knowledge giving me happiness. A man lives in the mundane existence due to the favour of these two (i.e. the parents). I know whatever men remaining on the earth do and when a householder proceeds to heaven. O Pippala, even while being here I know the movement of cruel persons. O best of the Vidyādharas, the three worlds have come under my sway. You should (please) worship Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu).

Viṣṇu said :

19b-21. Pippala, thus directed by him, having bowed down to the best brāhmaṇa, and also being ashamed, went to heaven in accordance with (the fruit of) his deeds. O king, that Sukarman of a religious mind, also served his father (and mother). I have thus told you everything pertaining to the holy place (in the form) of the father (and mother). O very intelligent Vena, tell me what else I should tell you.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFIVE

The Story of Cyavana : Kuñjal : Divyādevi

Vena said :

1-2. O venerable lord of gods, through your grace towards me, you have told me about the sacred place (in the form of) a wife, so also about the excellent holy place (in the form of) the father and (in the form) of the mother, giving great religious merit. Being gracious to me (now) tell me about the holy place (in the form) of the preceptor.

The Lord said :

3-10. O king, I shall tell you about the matchless holy place (in the form) of the preceptor, which is declared as the remover of all sins and the giver of happiness to the disciples, which being of the nature of ancient Dharma (i.e. religious merit) gives great virtue to the disciples, which is the highest sacred place, highest knowledge giving a visible fruit, (and) O lord of kings, by whose favour (the disciple) gets the fruit here (i.e. in this world) only; and O lord of kings, by the favour of the glorious preceptor he enjoys happiness and would obtain glory and fame in the next world. O prince, (by the preceptor's favour) the disciples actually see the three worlds along with the mobile and the immobile, so also the dealings and practices of the people. A disciple obtains wisdom and goes to salvation. As the sun illumines all the worlds, so the teacher enlightens his disciples and is the best refuge of them. O best king, the king Soma (i.e. the Moon) would shine at night only, and would keep a watch over the mobile and the immobile. O best king, a lamp would illumine a multitude (of objects) in the house, and would dispel the entire dense and impure darkness.

11-15a. O you very intelligent one, the preceptor, the light of the disciples, illumines a pupil, covered with the darkness of ignorance by means of the light of instruction. The sun shines by day, the moon at night, a lamp shines in the house, always dispelling darkness. The lamp shines at night in the house (and illumines it, but) the preceptor always enlightens the disciples. The preceptor would destroy all his darkness called ignorance.

Therefore, O lord of the earth, the preceptor is the highest holy place for the disciples. Realising this, a disciple should always worship the preceptor, full of merit, by means of three kinds of acts (i.e. bodily acts, mental acts and words).

15b-29. O brāhmaṇa, for this purpose (i.e. to illustrate this), an old account, removing all sins, is reported; it is told about the glorious Cyavana. The best sage Cyavana was born in the family of Bhārgava. O best king, once a thought arose in his (mind): 'When shall I be endowed with knowledge on the earth?' The best sage, longing for knowledge, would always think day and night. When he was thus reflecting, he had a thought: 'I shall go on a pilgrimage, giving the desired fruit.' Leaving his house and field and his wife, son and wealth, he roamed over the earth in course of a pilgrimage. O king, he went on a pilgrimage in the direction of the flow of the Ganges. Under the pretext of a pilgrimage (i.e. as a pilgrim), that lord of sages visited the holy places (on the banks) of Narmadā, Sarasvatī, and all (other) rivers like Godāvarī, and (on the shore) of the ocean and all other sacred places, so also places of deities and places having auspicious characteristics, O best king. The body of him, who was wandering over (i.e. visiting) best holy places, became pure (and lustrous) like the sun's lustre. Cyavana, with his mind purified by this act, shone with lustre. While wandering he (once) came to the best holy place on the right bank of Narmadā, called Amarakaṇṭaka. (There) he saw a great Phallus (of Śiva), giving happiness to all. Then he saluted, eulogised, and worshipped the great lord Siddhanātha, then he saw (i.e. visited) Jvāleśvara, then Amareśvara, Brahmeśa, Kapileśa and the best Mārkaṇḍeśa. Having thus finished his pilgrimage he then came to Oṃkāra. Having resorted to the cool shade of a bunyan tree, removing fatigue, the brāhmaṇa Cyavana, the son of Bhṛgu, remained there comfortably. There he then heard a note given out by a bird, which was full of divine speech and spiritual and worldly knowledge.

30-38. There was a parrot (on the tree) who lived there for a long time. His name was Kuñjala; he was religious-minded and had four sons and a wife. He had four sons who delighted their father (i.e. him). O lord of kings, I shall tell you their names: The eldest one was Ujjvala; the second was Samujjvala;

the third was Vijjvala, and the fourth was Kapiñjala. Thus, O very intelligent one, that meritorious parrot Kuñjala had four sons, who were very much devoted to their father and mother. Being disturbed and oppressed by hunger, they together roamed in the arbours of mountains and islands. O best king, they satiated the hunger in their bellies with agreeable fruits like nectar and with water sweet like nectar. The good sons gave a ripe juicy fruit to the couple (i.e. their parents), and carefully put (aside some) fruits (for them). Being contented, the glorious ones, full of devotion, procured food for their mother, (then) ate and recited. All of them engaged in sports, played and amused themselves there. Knowing (when it was) evening time they well (i.e. without fail) came to their father, after carefully having brought food for him (and their mother).

39-46a. When that noble brāhmaṇa Cyavana was watching all the (four) birds came to the very beautiful nest of their father. O you very intelligent one, they saluted both their father and mother. Having obtained food for the two (i.e. their parents), they stood by them. O king, all the best sons esteemed by their father and mother tenderly talked words full of love (to them). They also (fanned) with the cool wind from their wings their father and mother. O king, the two birds, having applauded with blessings, their good sons, nourished them. They too gave them very rich food resembling nectar. O best brāhmaṇa, the two just loved them (i.e. the sons) very much. The two, resorting to their own abode, with their minds pleased through happiness, drank pure water produced (i.e. procured) from crores of holy places, told a divine, very meritorious tale, destroying sins.

Viṣṇu said :

46b. The (eldest) son Ujjvala was (once) asked by his father Kuñjala:

47. "O my son, where had you gone today? What wonderful agreeable (event) did you see or hear there? Tell me that, my son."

48. Having heard the words of Kuñjala, his father, that Ujjvala, with his neck (i.e. head) bent down with devotion, replied:

49a. He saluted him with his head (bent down) and told him a pleasing story.

Ujjvala said :

49b-61. O you glorious one, O you very intelligent one, everyday I go to the Plakṣa island even with strenuous effort, for food. O great king, in the Plakṣa island there are many countries, mountains, rivers, parks, forests and lakes, so also villages and cities enjoyed by people. Those people are always contented, are endowed with charity, piety and muttering (of sacred hymns) and possess faith, and live happily. O great king, in the Plakṣa island lived Divodāsa, who was of a pious mind and was righteous. He had a matchless daughter, endowed with virtues and beauty, of a good character, charming and auspicious, known by the name Divyādevī and was incomparable in beauty on the earth. The father saw (i.e. noticed) her to be faring well with beauty and youth. She, the charming and auspicious one, was in the prime of youth. That Divodāsa, seeing his daughter Divyādevī, thought: 'To which noble, good groom should she be given?' (Then) the best king, having considered, thought of the king of Rūpadeśa, and the king invited him and the noble one gave his daughter to the intelligent Citrasena. O king, on the occasion of his marriage, when the right moment of the marriage came, Citrasena died due to fated time. The religious-minded king Divodāsa thought (to himself). The son of a king invited good brāhmaṇas and asked them: "At the time of her marriage Citrasena expired. Tell me what her fate will be."

The brāhmaṇas said :

62-66a. O king, the marriage of an unmarried daughter is seen to be performed according to the sacred injunctions. Her husband may die; if not, he will have union with her; (but) being stricken with great malady or physical disease he may abandon her and go; or he may become a recluse. This is what is seen in the religious works. Wise men get married their unmarried daughter(s). As long as she does not menstruate (i.e. does not attain puberty), another groom is enjoined for her. The father should certainly get her married according to the sacred injunc-

tions. Thus, O king, the wise men have stated the sacred rules. Get her married.

Thus told the best brāhmaṇas.

Ujjvala said :

66b-70. Virtuous Divodāsa, the great king, prompted by the words of the brāhmaṇas, made preparations for the (his daughter's) marriage, O king. O best brāhmaṇa, he gave away Divyādevī (in marriage) to that virtuous and glorious king, Rūpasena. At the (time of) the marriage the lord of the earth (i.e. Rūpasena) died. Whenever Divyādavī (was married) her husband, a king, invariably died when the proper time for marriage had arrived. O father, twentyone husbands died (like this) time after time. Then the king (Divodāsa) of a well-known valour became very unhappy.

71-76. Having thought (this) over, the lord of the earth, called his ministers, and having held consultations with them, decided (to arrange) a self-choice marriage (for her). The glorious one invited the kings of Plakṣadvīpa. Those kings, who were greatly devoted to religion, who were invited to the self-choice marriage, being deluded by her beauty and prompted by death, foolishly fought (among themselves) and died on the battlefield. Thus O father, there was the destruction of the noble kṣatriyas. Divyādevī, being very much afflicted with grief, went to a cave in the forest. That virtuous young maiden Divyādevi wept piteously. O father, thus I witnessed (this) wonderful sight there. Then, O father, tell me its cause in detail.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSIX

Divyādevi As Citrā in Her Former Birth

Kuñjala said :

1. O boy, I (shall) tell you all the acts of that Divyādevī. Listen to all that she did in the former birth as I am telling you.

2-7a. There was an auspicious city named Vārāṇasī, the destroyer of sins. In it lived a very intelligent man named Suvīra, who was born in the Vaiśya caste and who possessed wealth and grains. O you very intelligent one, his wife was Citrā by name, who was well known. She, abandoning the family-practices, behaved improperly. She did not care for her husband, (and) behaved wantonly. Bereft of piety and merit she would act (i.e. she acted) sinfully only. She always reviled her husband, and always loved quarrelling. She always stayed in the house of another (person), and wandered from house to house. She would observe (i.e. she observed) the weak points of others, and was always wicked to beings. She was very much given to condemning the good, and always laughed.

7b-9a. Knowing her to be of an improper conduct and very sinful, Vīra reproached her. O you very intelligent one, that pious, highly intelligent (Vīra) of truthful and religious thoughts, abandoned her and married another Vaiśya's daughter; and stayed with her righteously.

9b-14. That bold Citrā, expelled by him, roamed over the earth. She became associated with wicked and sinful men. She of a wicked determination, worked as a go-between. The sinful one split the houses (i.e. families) of the good. She would call a chaste woman and would induce her with evil words. She violated customary observances. With convincing (but) evil words that Citrā would present the wife (the wives) of good men to someone else. Thus Citrā certainly split a hundred houses. The very wicked one created quarrels between husbands and sons. The sinful one would stir the minds of men for (i.e. make them sexually disposed to) women. She set up a quarrel making Yama thrive.

15-20. Thus having split a hundred houses (i.e. families), she then died. O good son, she was punished by king Yama with a heavy penalty. The Sun's son (i.e. Yama) threw her into many hells (like Raurava). Citrā was roasted in Raurava. Various afflictions were shown (i.e. imposed on her). As a deed is done so it (i.e. its fruit) is enjoyed. Due to a wicked resolve that Citrā split a hundred houses. O best brāhmaṇa, she experienced the fruit of the respective deeds. Since she split a hundred houses, therefore she is experiencing grief. When the time of (her) marriage came, her destiny had become ripe. When the proper

time (for) her marriage came, her husband died. As she split a hundred houses, a hundred grooms died at the time of the self-choice marriage and twentyone (grooms died) at the time of (her proposed marriage).

21. As you asked me I have told you (the account) of, Divyādevī. I have told you all these—her former deeds.

Ujjvala said :

22. You first told me the former deeds of Divyādevī, so also the fierce sin called splitting the houses (that she committed).

23. Due to the prowess of which religious merit did that daughter of Divodāsa, the king of the Plakṣa island, obtain (a birth) in a great family?

24. This is my doubt, O father. Please tell it to me. How did the princess become (a woman) of such a sinful behaviour?

Kuñjala said :

25. I shall (now) tell you about all the pious acts of Citrā. O (my) son Ujjvala, listen to what Citrā did formerly.

26-30. A very wise Siddha (i.e. a man endowed with supernatural faculties), while wandering came to the door of Citrā's house. He wore tattered clothes, was without a (proper) garment, was a recluse, and had held a staff (in his hand). He had a small strip of cloth worn over his privities, had a pot in his hand and was (otherwise) naked. Having come to the door of Citrā's house, he remained there. He observed a vow of silence, was clean-shaved, had his mind and organs of sense conquered. He abstained from food, took a very small quantity, and knew the essence of everything. He was very much tired due to having been on a long journey, and his mind was distressed with heat; O good son, he was depressed with fatigue, and was overcome with thirst. Having come to the door of Citrā's house, he resorted to the shade (of a tree). The noble one, afflicted with fatigue, was seen by Citrā.

31-35. Citrā served that very noble one, by washing his feet and giving him an excellent seat. "Sir, be seated comfortably on a very soft seat. Eat excellent food to remove (i.e. satiate) your hunger. Being contented drink cold water as you like." Saying so, and doing like that (i.e. giving him food etc.), and worshipping

him like a deity, she, O son, massaged his body and removed his fatigue. The noble Siddha, thus addressed by her, ate (food) and drank (water), O best brāhmaṇa. The Siddha, who knew the essence of everything, thus pleased by her, was gratified, and he, the soul of entire piety, remained steady for a while. That great meditating saint went (away) according to his will, as he had come.

36-44. When that noble and glorious Siddha had left, Citrā met with death, being under the sway of (i.e. according to) her deeds. She was punished by Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) with very painful penalties. That Citrā reached hell causing a host of agonies. O great king, (there) she experienced misery for a thousand yugas. At the end of (i.e. after having) experienced (misery) she got the birth of (i.e. was born as) a human being. She had formerly worshipped the Siddha, the best among the meritorious. It is the ripening (i.e. the fruit) of her deeds that she came to (i.e. was born in) the house of Divodāsa, the great king, (and) in the family of meritorious Kṣatriyas. O best man, she got the name Divyādevī; and she had given good food and drink to the noble one. She enjoyed the meritorious consequence of the great righteous act of charity. She drank cold water, and ate dainty food. Enjoying divine pleasures, she lived in her father's house; and due to the power of this Siddha, she was born as a princess. O good son, due to the efficacy of her great sin of splitting the families, O king, that Divyādevī experienced widowhood.

45. I have thus told you all the deeds of Divyādevī. What else, which you ask me now, should I tell you?

Ujjvala said :

46-48. Tell me how she got free from grief and great affliction. What kind of young woman was she, who was afflicted with great grief? What kind of happiness did she have? What will be its consequence? O father, please remove this doubt of mine now. Tell me (about) the means by which she will obtain salvation. The noble one is all alone weeping in the great forest.

Viṣṇu said :

49-60. Having heard (those) great (i.e. important) words

of his son, and having thought for a moment, that very wise Kuñjala replied to his son: "O my noble son, listen; I am telling you the truth. Having reached (i.e. being born in) a sinful stock, due to my former deeds, and due to the contact with this tree, the knowledge of me, who was pious and noble, has now been lost in this existence of a lower animal, O son. I shall tell you about that instruction by which, and through the favour of Revā and grace of Viṣṇu, she has obtained knowledge and has reached salvation; being free from blemish, she will go to salvation, as gold becomes pure due to the contact with fire and gets (back) its own nature. O very intelligent one, due to the meditation on Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) and due to the muttering (of prayers), sacrifices and vows the sin of the sinners perishes. As an elephant would always give up his intoxication due to the fear of a lion, so the sin goes away due to the recitation of the names of Viṣṇu. As the serpents become poisonless due to the lustre of (Garuḍa) the son of Vinatā, so all sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa perish; and in no other way. They too go away due to the recitation of the names of Viṣṇu. When being steady, and free from lust and anger, she would mutter the hundred names, destroying heaps of sins, and when, having controlled all the organs of sense, would guard them through the knowledge of self, and when, having entered into his meditation, having become one with (i.e. having become sincerely devoted to) him, and being composed, she would mutter (the names of Viṣṇu) she would reach (i.e. obtain) highest knowledge and salvation. When she would be endowed with abstract meditation, and when she would set her heart upon him, she would be completely resting at his feet."

Ujjvala said :

61. O father, right now tell me about the great, highest knowledge; and after that the vow of meditation and the auspicious hundred names.

Kuñjala said :

62. I shall explain to you the highest knowledge, which nobody has perceived (i.e. acquired). O son, listen to (the description of) the perfect final emancipation, free from impurity.

Sūta said:

63-69a. O highly intelligent one, as a lamp in a place sheltered from wind, is steady (as it is) free from wind, burning brightly, (and) would destroy all darkness, in the same way the soul, free from blemishes, remains alone, free from desires, pure, and O son, he is never a friend or a foe. (He has) neither grief nor joy; (he has) neither greed nor jealousy. Being all alone, he is free from dejection, joy, happiness and unhappiness; so also free from all the objects of sense, (when) he would withdraw his organs of sense (from the objects). Then he has become absolute and salvation takes place (in his case). O lord of kings, a lamp, without any company (i.e. being solitary), and free from wind, would, through the contact of the movement of fire, dry up the oil due to the support of the wick. Then it emits soot, and on the top of the lamp a dark line of (i.e. due to) the oil is seen, O you very intelligent one. It itself draws oil and becomes spotless by means of the oil.

69b-72a. In the same way he (i.e. the soul) remains in the wick of the body and would draw the oil of the deeds; and would himself shine with lustre. Being free from anger etc. and winds called troubles, so also being desireless and steady he would glow with lustre. Remaining in his own place, he sees all the three worlds by means of his lustre.

72b-84. I have told (i.e. described to) you this (soul), of the nature of absolute knowledge. I shall (now) explain to you the meditation upon the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu); he is seen with the eye of knowledge, of the nature of absolute knowledge. Whom (i.e. him) the noble ones, intent upon (obtaining) the highest object (i.e. salvation), and having abstract meditation, and being watchful, see. His penance (i.e. penance practised to reach him) manifests everything. Being without hands and feet, he moves everywhere. O son, he captures (i.e. pervades) all the three worlds—mobile and immobile. O son, (even being) without nose and mouth, he smells and eats. He, the witness (to everything), the lord of the world, (even though) without ears, hears everything. (Though) without a form he is connected with forms and is under the sway of the group of five (organs of sense). Who (i.e. he) is the life of the entire world, and is worshipped by the

mobile and the immobile. O son, (though) tongue-less, he recites everything according to the Vedic texts. For him, who is without skin, touch of all objects is produced (i.e. he can touch everything). He is ever joyful, is detached, has one form (only), is independent, is without old age, without the feeling of mineness, just, possessing qualities, without the feeling of mineness, and pure. He is not under the control of anyone, (but) everything is under his control; he is the giver of everything and the best among the omniscient ones. He has no supporter; he, the eternal one, is full of everything. He who thus observes everything as full of meditation of the noble one, goes to the incorporeal, highest place, resembling nectar. I shall explain to you another meditation of this noble one. It is having a form, corporeal, formless and sound. O my son, he is called Vāsudeva since the entire matchless universe is occupied by him. His colour would be (i.e. is) that which is of the showering cloud. He, the lord of gods, resembles the sun's lustre and has four arms.

85-95. In his right hand shines a conch decorated with gold and jewels, and the disc resembling the sun's orb and a lotus are (held) in it. O boy, the mace Kaumodakī, destroying great demons, shines in the left hand of the illustrious one. A big lotus, rich with fragrance is (held) in his right hand. He, dear to Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī) always shines with weapons. (A man should meditate upon) Viṣṇu (whose) neck is like a conch, face is round, and eyes resemble lotus-leaves, who shines with teeth resembling jewels. His hair is (flowing) like treacle, and the lips have the form of a coral. O son, he having the eyes like lotuses, shines with a crown. Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) shines with a glorious form and great lustre and is marked with the Kaustubha gem. Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) shines with ear-rings resembling the sun's lustre and always shines with the auspicious mark of Śrīvatsa. Vijaya, the best among the victorious, shines with a body having armlets, bracelets, necklaces and pearls resembling stars. That Govinda also shines with a golden-coloured garment and with fingers with rings and gems. The creator of the worlds, the lord of the worlds (i.e. Viṣṇu), (shining with) all complete weapons and divine ornaments, is mounted upon Garuḍa. A man who thus meditates upon him with a concentrated mind is free from all sins, and goes to Viṣṇu's world.

96. I have thus told you everything about the meditation upon the lord of the world. I shall now tell you (about) the vow, destroying all sins.

CHAPTER EIGTHYSEVEN

'A Hundred Names of Viṣṇu'

Kuñjala said :

1-4. I shall explain to you the kinds of vows by which Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) is propitiated. O good son, there are many kinds of Ekādaśī: Jayā, Vijayā, and Jayantī, Pāpanāśinī, Trispṛśā, Vañjulī; the next is Tiladagdhā, then the other one is Akhaṇḍā, Cārakanyā, and Manorathā. There is (the vow of) Aśūnya-śayana (i.e. not sleeping on a bed), and there is the great vow of Janmāṣṭamī. There is no doubt that the sin of beings goes away due to these very auspicious vows. I am telling you the truth (and) the truth (only).

Kuñjala said :

5-9. I shall tell you about his hymn, destroying a heap of sins, called 'Suputra-śata', and giving salvation to men. I shall now only tell you about the hymn of that god Kṛṣṇa, which is excellent and is called 'Śatanāma'. O best son, listen to it. I shall tell you the sage of (i.e. the composer of), and the metre of the hundred names of Viṣṇu. I shall also tell you about the deity, purifying all sins, O glorious one. Brahmā is said to be the sage (i.e. the author) of the hundred names of Viṣṇu. Oṃkāra is declared to be the deity, and anuṣṭubh is (said to be) the metre. It leads to the acquisition (i.e. fulfilment) of all desires and is employed in (obtaining) salvation. Of this hymn of the hundred names of Viṣṇu, Brahmā is the sage, Viṣṇu the deity, anuṣṭubh the metre. It is used for the fulfilment of all desires and for the destruction of all sins.

10-24. "I salute Hṛṣīkeśa, Keśava, Madhusūdana, the killer of all demons, sound Nārāyaṇa, Jayanta, Vijaya, Kṛṣṇa, Ananta,

Vāmana, Viṣṇu, the auspicious lord of the universe, the prop of the universe, worshipped by gods, sinless, destroyer of sins, Narasiṃha and dear to Śrī, lord of Lakṣmī, Śrīdhara (possessing glory of Lakṣmī), giver of wealth, Śrīnivāsa (i.e. abode of Lakṣmi), and very prosperous, Śrī Rāma, Mādhava, Mokṣa (i.e. Salvation), of the nature of forgiveness, Janārdana, omniscient, knowing and giving everything, the leader of all, Hari, Murāri, Govinda, Padmanābha, the lord of beings, giver of joy, endowed with knowledge, giver of knowledge, master of knowledge; Acyuta, possessing power, the moon, holding a disc in his hand, higher and lower, the support of the yugas, the source of the world, of the nature of Brahman, the great lord, Mukunda, good (i.e. great) Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu), of one form, the lord of the world, glorious Vāsudeva, holy and dear to brāhmaṇas, loving and beneficial to the cows, sacrifice, constituent of the sacrifice, causing sacrifice to prosper, a good enjoyer of sacrifice, master of Vedas and Vedāṅgas; knower of the Vedas, of the form of the Vedas, abode of learning and lord of gods, the unmanifest one, a great Brahman, having a conch in his hand, the ancient man, lotus-eyed, (of the form of) Varāha (i.e. a boar), supporting the earth, Pradyumna, Kāmapāla, Vyāsa, Vyāla, and Maheśvara (i.e. the great lord), (full of) all pleasures (and) great pleasures, salvation and the highest lord, of the form of Yoga (i.e. abstract meditation), of great knowledge, giving salvation to the meditating saints and dear to them; the enemy of Mura, the protector of the world, the one having a lotus in his hand, and holding a mace, living in a cave, living everywhere, of an auspicious abode, and possessing large arms, lord of Vṛndā, of a huge body, purifier and destroyer of sins, lord of the gopīs (i.e. the cowherdesses), the friend of the cowherds, the protector of cows, the refuge of the herds of cattle, the highest soul, the highest lord, Kapila and having human activities, steady and eternal—I salute him with my mind, speech and bodily acts." He, doer of virtuous acts, who, even with (these) hundred names, praises, with a steady mind, Kṛṣṇa, (he) being purified by religious merit here (i.e. in this world), leaving (other) worlds, goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

25-27. A man should mutter with a concentrated mind, the very meritorious hundred names, cleansing all sins, and should meditate upon them with abstract contemplation. Such a man

would always obtain the fruit of having a bath in the Ganges with religious merit. Therefore a man should be very steady and mutter (these names) with a composed mind. A restrained man, being devoted, should mutter (these names) three times (a day). There is no doubt that for him there is (i.e. he gets) the fruit of (having performed) a hundred horse-sacrifices.

28-32a. I shall tell (you) about the religious merit of the man, who having fasted on the Ekādaśī day in front of Viṣṇu and (keeping) awake, would, mutter these names: The man obtains the fruit of Puṇḍarīka sacrifice (i.e. offered in honour of Viṣṇu). A man, who, remaining near Tulasī, would mentally mutter (these names) obtains the fruit of the Rājasūya sacrifice even after a year. One desiring happiness should mutter (these names) near the two (viz. at a place) where there is the Śālagrāma stone and the Dvārāvatī stone. A man (who does this) having enjoyed many pleasures and a hundred families would emancipate more than one along with him.

32b-39. He who would bathe (every morning) in Kārtika and would worship Viṣṇu, and also he, who, being purified, would recite the hymn (in honour of Viṣṇu) goes to (i.e. obtains) a superior position. The man, who bathes every morning in Māgha, having worshipped with devotion, Viṣṇu, the killer of (the demon) Madhu, and would meditate upon Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu), or would mutter (his names) or listens to them (being recited), and, giving up sinful (deeds) like drinking liquor, goes, without any difficulty, to Janārdana, O (my) son. The dead ancestors of the man, who at the time of a Śrāddha, would mutter the hymn (containing) the hundred names destroying sins, in front of the brāhmaṇas eating (food), become pleased, and being gratified obtain salvation. A brāhmaṇa who always mutters it, becomes learned in the Vedas; a kṣatriya, (who always mutters it) obtains (i.e. rules over) the earth; a vaiśya (who always mutters it) would enjoy wealth and prosperity; a śūdra (who always mutters it) enjoys happiness and obtains brāhmaṇahood after getting another (i.e. next) existence and obtains (mastery over) the Vedic lore. This hymn, giving happiness and salvation should always be muttered. There is no doubt that due to the grace of Viṣṇu a man would be equipped with everything.

CHAPTER EIGHTYEIGHT

Divyādevī Goes to Viṣṇu's Heaven

Kuñjala said :

1-4a. O good son, I have told you the vow, the hymn, the great knowledge and the meditation of Viṣṇu which destroy sins. When she (i.e. Divyādevī) would practise these auspicious four, she will go to Viṣṇu's world, difficult to be obtained even by gods. O child, going from here, teach the vow to Divyādevī. Tell (i.e. teach) her the king of vows called Aśūnya-śayana. Emanicipate the glorious princess from a great sin. You asked me (and therefore) I told (you about the vow) giving religious merit and destroying sins. O glorious one, go, (do) go.

Saying so, he ceased (to speak).

Śrī Viṣṇu said :

4b-10. That religious-minded and very intelligent Ujjvala, thus addressed by his father, having saluted the feet of his mother and father, quickly went to Plakṣadvīpa. He went to that mountain, auspicious on all sides, full of various minerals, and adorned with lofty peaks full of many kinds of jewels. O king, there were rivers with clean water flowing in many streams on that excellent mountain. O king, Kinnaras and Gandharvas sang there melodiously. It was crowded with the celestial nymphs; it was filled with hosts of gods; it was ringing with Siddhas and Cāraṇas; it was adorned with groups of sages. It was everywhere resounding with the notes of various birds.

11-13. The bright and quick-footed one thus reached that mountain. That woman also was weeping melodiously on that mountain. The wise one said (these) words to her who was again and again weeping. "O auspicious one, who are you? Why are you weeping now? Whom had you resorted to? Who has harmed you? Today only tell me the entire cause of your grief."

Divyādevī said :

14-18. O glorious one, it is properly the fruit of my deeds.

Being widowed I am staying here unhappily. O you illustrious one, who are you, afflicted by my grief?

O child, he, who had taken the form of a bird, having heard all that the princess had said, spoke enthusiastically, O child: "O glorious one, I am a bird, afflicted by your grief. I have taken the form of a bird, (but) I am neither a Siddha, nor a wise person. I saw you weeping here very loudly; therefore, O respectable lady, I am asking you. Tell me its cause, what happened in your father's house, and your own account."

19-24a. In brief and in proper order, she told everything that pained her. Having heard that, that large-hearted, great bird Ujjvala said to that Divyādevī who was very much pained: "At the time of your marriage your grooms died, the kṣatriyas also perished due to your self-choice marriage. O you lady of beautiful eyes, through compassion for you, my father told me the sinful deeds you had done in the other (i.e. former) existence. O you beautiful lady, strengthened by that blemish you are covered with that. Eat the fruit of the deeds you did in the previous birth. Be composed."

24b-27. That young humble lady, having heard those words of Ujjvala, replied to that magnanimous bird, who (thus) spoke (in human voice) in piteous words: "O bird, favour me. With (i.e. showing) grace, tell (me about) the atonement of that sin; also (tell me about) the expiation which will purify my sins, by which, being pure due to my sins washed, I shall go to a holy (place). Be gracious, and tell me about the expiation, O you glorious one."

Ujjvala said :

28-31. O you glorious one, for you only I asked my father. Then my father told (me) about the matchless expiation. O you illustrious one, you do that which would purify all your sins. Meditate upon Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu), mutter his hundred names. Be intent upon (obtaining) knowledge. Always practise the excellent, holy vow (called) 'Aśūnyaśayana' which destroys sins.

The religious-minded one explained to her knowledge, hymn, vow of and meditation upon the noble Viṣṇu, which reveals all knowledge.

Viṣṇu said :

32-35. Remaining in the solitary forest, she took it from him. She became free from all pairs of opposites and remained in penance. O great king, controlling her food, helpless and very much afflicted, free from lust and anger, and always controlling the group of the organs of sense and having abandoned great delusion, she practised the vow. When the fourth year came, the excellent lord Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) who was very much pleased came there with a desire to grant her a boon. The lord, the giver of boons, manifested his form to her.

Sūta said :

36-42a. She, joining the palms of her hands, trembling and helpless, spoke in a faltering tone, after saluting Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), the great lord, dark-green like a sapphire and a cloud, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, rich with charm due to all ornaments, having a lotus in his hand: "I am not at all able to stand your divine lustre. Be gracious and please tell me who you, of a divine form, are and what is the cause (of) your (coming over) here? With favour (i.e. favour me) and tell me everything, O highly intelligent one. Due to your lustre and gestures I know (i.e. I think) you are just a god. O lord of the world, I, who am ignorant, do not know your form and name. Are you Brahmā, or Viṣṇu or Śaṅkara himself?" Speaking like this, and bowing to him she fell (i.e. prostrated herself) on the ground like a staff. Viṣṇu spoke to that princess who had bent before him.

The lord said :

42b-46a. O you auspicious one, there is no difference among the three. O you beautiful lady, I am always worshipped by him who has worshipped Brahmā or Śaṅkara. No doubt should be raised about it. These two are not different from me. I always have these three forms. Those who worship me, worship well these two. I am god Viṣṇu, who has come here through pity for you and due to the hymn and this auspicious vow and your restraint. You have become free from blemishes. O you auspicious one, ask for a boon.

Divyādevī said :

46b-49a. O Viṣṇu, O Kṛṣṇa the remover of affliction, be victorious. I am saluting your couple of feet. O lord of gods, emancipate me. O you having the disc in your hand, you desire to grant me a boon. Be gracious to me. O you sinless one, give (i.e. create in) me devotion for the couple of your feet. O lord of the world, show (me) the sound path to salvation. If, O Janārdana, you are pleased, give me the status of your servant (i.e. make me your servant).

The Lord said :

49b-54. O you noble one, let it be so. Go, with your sins completely washed, to Viṣṇu's highest heaven, always difficult to be obtained (even) by meditating saints. Now, due to my grace, do go to the highest world.

When the magnanimous Viṣṇu uttered these words, Divyādevī became divine with her lustre resembling that of the sun. She, adorned with divine ornaments, with a divine garland, a divine necklace, went, when all the people were watching, to Viṣṇu's heaven, free from tormentation and destruction. The bird, full of joy, again came home. The best one told all that to his father.

CHAPTER EIGHTYNINE

The Miraculous Bath in the Water of Mānasa Lake

Viṣṇu said :

1-3a. Then Kuñjala said (these) words to his very bright son : "O son, tell me what you saw earlier. Tell me that. I am now very much pleased to listen to it." Thus ordering his son, that Kuñjala ceased speaking. The son, bending with modesty replied to the father:

Samujjvala said :

3b-14. O father, for your and my food, I go to Himālaya,

the best mountain, attended by hosts of gods. I saw a wonder there, not seen or heard of before. (I saw) a region crowded with groups of sages, adorned with celestial nymphs, rich in many beautiful things creating curiosity, auspicious, and endowed with auspicious things, attracting the mind with many curious things, full of many auspicious fruits. There, near the Mānasa (lake), O father, I saw a wonderful thing. A swan accompanied by many swans came there. In the same way, O glorious one, other black swans with white beaks and feet (also) came there. At other places their bodies were white (i.e. other parts of their bodies were white). They were black like that, and, O you very intelligent one, others were white. There were four females of formidable figures and fearful, fierce and cruel due to their fangs, with their hair erect and causing fear. Later they also came there to that Mānasa lake. O father, in front of me the black swans bathed in the Mānasa (lake). Others roamed around; they did not bathe there in the Mānasa (lake). Later the females also came there to that Mānasa (lake). O father, the women laughed loudly and fiercely. From that lake a swan of a huge body came out. Then three went out; they neglected the swan. Discussing with each other, they went along the aerial path. Those very fearful women wandered on all sides.

15-19a. All the birds, afflicted with great agonies, sat in the shades of trees on the auspicious peak of Vindhya. When they were well (i.e. minutely) watching there came a bhilla, holding a bow and with an arrow in his hand, after having harassed beasts. Resorting to a slab, he sat there happily. Then the female bhilla (the wife of that bhilla) came there carrying (i.e. with) food and water. She saw her husband endowed with superior marks of kings. Knowing (i.e. taking) her husband covered with lustre, full of divine lustre, like the sun remaining in the sky, to be someone else, she left him and went (i.e. started going).

The hunter said :

19b-22. O darling, come, come on, why do you not look at me? I, who am being tormented by hunger, am waiting for you.

Hearing his words, the female hunter came (there) quickly. Reaching the vicinity of her husband, she wondered : 'Who

this lustrous god may be that is calling me?' Then the female hunter said to her husband of a blazing lustre : "O hero, what have you to do here? Who are you, having divine marks?'

Sūta said :

23. The hunter, thus addressed by the female hunter said to his wife : "O dear one, I am your husband, and you are my wife.

24. How do you not recognise me? Why is there a doubt (in your mind)? One who is oppressed by hunger expects water and food."

The female hunter said :

25-29. My husband is a barbarian, of a dark complexion and has put on a black dress. Such is my husband who causes fear to all beings. Who are you of a divine body, who would call (i.e. who addressed) me 'O dear one'? This is my doubt; tell me the truth.

For convincing his wife he told her (about) his family, his (native) village, his sports, his distinguishing mark, his son, his daughter. That female hunter, with her heart pleased said to her husband : "Due to what has your body become like this? Why have you put on a white dress? Tell me (about it). I am wondering." Hearing these words, the hunter, who was thus asked by his wife, full of respect (for him), replied to her:

Sūta said :

30-35a. "O you of a good vow, there is a confluence on the northern bank of Narmadā. O you very dear one, I, who was fatigued, quickly went to this (place of) confluence. I bathed (there), drank water, and have (now) come (here). Since then my body is covered with lustre like this. I became (fully) clad, and my garment turned white." By the marks, figure, family, place she recognised her husband, and having realised the possibility of religious merit, she then said to him : "Show me the (place of) confluence (first). I shall afterwards give you food with drink."

35b-42a. Thus addressed by his wife, the hunter quickly went (there); he subsequently showed her the confluence, the destroyer of sins. "O noble one, the birds of quick steps flew, and with her went to that excellent confluence of Revā. While birds and I were watching, she gave a bath to her husband, and she herself took a bath. Both turned (to be persons) possessing divine bodies and endowed with divine beauty, clad in divine garments, and (smeared) with (divine) unguents, having divine garlands, and smeared with divine sandal, O best of birds. Having got into Viṣṇu's vehicle, the two, worshipped by sages and Gandharvas, and honoured by Viṣṇu's devotees, went to Viṣṇu's heaven. I saw the noble couple being praised, and going along the heavenly path. Seeing the excellent best holy place, the birds also warbled with clear notes due to joy.

42b-50. The four black swans, having bathed at the confluence destroying sins, and with their hearts purified, again became bright. Having bathed and drunk water they again went out. All those black females died just due to that bath. O father, crying and moving, trembling with grief they went to Yama's world. I saw them then. Then the swans flew and went to their abode. O father, I actually saw this, and told it to you. O father, please tell me what those females with black sides and huge bodies will be (turned into). Tell me about the geese with black legs and bills, who went out of the Mānasa (lake). Tell it to me, O father, what they will be (i.e. turn into). How again, had the (white) swans become black? How did they become white again (just) at that moment only? O father, why did those females die? Such a doubt has arisen in my mind. Being favourable to me, you, who are clear-sighted, please remove, today only, the doubt of me who am always humble."

51. Speaking thus to his father, Samujjvala (or Ujjvala) ceased speaking. Then that parrot, named Kuñjala, started speaking.

CHAPTER NINETY

The Powers of the Holy Places

Sūta said :

1. Having heard all that Samujjvala said, that pious Kuñjala said in reply :

Kuñjala said :

2-7. O dear one, I shall explain it to you. Listen with a steady (i.e. attentive) mind to the account removing all doubts and destroying sins. In the assembly of that noble god Indra a debate, producing curiosity, was going on. (At that time) Nārada hurriedly came to see Indra. Indra, having seen him, with lustre like that of the sun, who had arrived, became glad and the very intelligent one, with his mind humble through devotion, offered him material of worship and water for washing his feet. Joining the palms of his hands, he saluted him. Seating the best brāhmaṇa on an auspicious, soft seat, and bowing down, he, full of great reverence, asked him : "Tell me now the reason for your arrival today."

8-10a. Thus addressed by the lord of gods, the great sage said : "Having bathed in holy regions and sacred places with great faith, having worshipped deities and dead ancestors, having seen many holy places, I have come, from the earth, to see you, O Indra. I have already told all this which you had formerly asked me."

The Lord of gods said :

10b-12a. O sage, you have seen auspicious, holy places and good regions. By visiting which sacred place, would a killer of a brāhmaṇa be free from (the sin of) murdering a brāhmaṇa, (or) a drunkard, or a killer of a cow, or one stealing gold, (would be free from the sin), (or) O illustrious one, how would one be free from plotting against one's master? (Or) how would the killer of a woman be happy?

Nārada said :

12b-23. O lord of gods, I do not know the speciality, regarding the destruction of sin, of such holy places as Gaṅgā etc. O Indra, I know that all great holy places are very auspicious and divine. But I do not know properly their special properties and lack of them. O god, ascertain the power of the holy places of giving salvation.

Having heard those words of that magnanimous Nārada, Indra called the Holy Places residing on the earth. By his order, all the Holy Places—divine ones—came there in embodied forms. O you of a good vow, the divine ones had joined the palms of their hands; they were adorned with good ornaments; their garments were divine, glossy and bright. They had especially taken up the form of women and men. They resembled gold and sandal, and had put on divine forms. O lord of men, they shone with the colour of pearls. Some of them had the complexion of heated gold and some were tawny. Some in the assembly were white and very yellow and bright. Some of the embodied ones resembled lotuses; still others resembled the sun's lustre, (or) the lustre (i.e. flash) of lightning; others shone in the assembly like fire. O lord of men, they shone with the richness of all ornaments, with necklaces, bracelets, armlets, garlands and good sandal. They, (with their bodies) smeared with divine sandal, fragrant and great, and with water-pots in their hands came into the assembly.

24-37. Gaṅgā, Narmadā, the holy Candrabhāgā, Sarasvatī, Devikā, Bimbikā, Kubjā, Kuñjalā, the well-known Mañjulā, Rambhā, the extremely holy Bhānumatī, Sugharghara, Śoṇā, Sindhu, Sauvirā, Kāverī, so also Kapilā, and Kumudā, the holy Vedanadī, the very holy Maheśvarī and the well-known Carmaṇvatī, Lopā and Sukauśikī, Suhaṃsī, Haṃsapādā, Haṃsavegā and Manorathā, Suruthā, Svārunā, Veṇā, Bhadraveṇā, Supadminī, Nāharī, Sumarī, the holy Pulindikā, Hemā, Manorathā, Divyā, Candrikā, Vedasaṃkramā, Jvālā, Hutāśanī, Svāhā, Kālā and Kampiñjalā, Svadhā and Sukalā, Liṅgā, Gambhīrā, Bhīmavāhinī, Devadrīcī, Vīravāhā, Lakṣahomā, Aghāpahā, Pārāśarī, Hemagarbhā, Subhadrā, Vasuputrikā—these very holy rivers, rich with the beauty of all ornaments, with pitchers

in their hands, and well-honoured came there in embodied forms, O lord of men. Prayāga, Puṣkara, Arghadīrghā, Manorathā, the very holy Vārāṇasī, removing (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, Dvārāvatī, Prabhāsa, and Avantī and Nimiṣa and Caṇḍaka, Mahāratna and Maheśvara and Kaleśvara, Kaliñjara, Brahmakṣetra, Māthura, Mānavāhaka, Māyā, Kāntī and other many very holy and divine places—sixty-eight in number—so also hundreds of crores of all rivers, led by Godāvarī came there by his (i.e. Indra's) order. All regions, very holy and great holy places, possessing bodies and marks came to Indra, the lord of gods; came there, obeying his order. With their heads bent down, they all saluted the lord of gods.

Sūta said :

38-47. The great Holy Places said to the victorious lord of gods : "O god of gods, tell us why you have called us. O lord of gods, tell us all the reason; salutation to you." Hearing these words of them, the lord of gods said : "Which holy place is able to remove (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa? Which holy place is able to destroy the great sin called the murder of a cow, or the matchless sin called the murder of a woman or the great sin due to plotting against one's master or the elders, or drinking liquor, or due to the terrible (sin of) causing abortion. (Which holy place is able to destroy) the great sin, giving great trouble, due to plotting against the king, (or) against (one's) friend, or any other sin of treachery, (or) changing the deity, (or) means of livelihood of brāhmaṇas, (or) destroying the pasture-ground of cows, or burning a dwelling or setting ablaze a house? These sixteen are major sins, so also illicit intercourse. Which best holy place would be able to destroy sins (like the sin) due to deserting one's master, or due to running away from the battle-field? From amongst you which one would certainly be able (to destroy a sin) without expiation? When all gods and Nārada are watching (i.e. in the presence of all gods and Nārada) may all of you speak after having properly decided."

48. When the magnanimous king of gods spoke like this, the Holy Places, after having consulted their lord, spoke to Indra, present in the assembly.

The Holy Places said :

49-54. Listen, we shall tell (it). O lord of gods, salutation to you. All holy places destroy sins; but, O Lord of gods, we are not able to destroy the very fearful and strong sins which you mentioned. Prayāga, Puṣkara, the matchless Aghatīrtha, and, O noble one, Vārāṇasī—(each one of these) is able to destroy sins. To destroy major sins these four are of unlimited power; so also they have unlimited power to destroy minor sins. O lord of gods, the very powerful Puṣkara and others have been created by the Creator.

Having heard these words of the Holy Places, the lord of gods, full of great joy, then praised them.

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PADMA-PURĀṆA

PART IV

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY
Dr. N.A. DESHPANDE

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

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PREFACE

In this IV part of the *Padma Purāṇa* are included the remaining chapters, 91-125, of the second section, *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*, and the whole of the third section, *Svargakhaṇḍa*, having 62 chapters in all.

Our observation that the names of the sections have little relevance to the contents is further corroborated in this part. One may look, for example, at the contents of the *Svargakhaṇḍa*. The second chapter of it treats of creation and should logically go to the first section, *Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa*. Chapters 3-9 deal with the division of the earth into islands (*dvīpas*), their mountains, rivers, countries and their population etc., which are more appropriately the topics of *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*. Again, almost all of the remaining chapters of this section deal with the holy places of India, the merits acquired by visiting them, taking a bath, performing charities, offering *piṇḍas* to the manes and worship to gods, and the codes of conduct laid down for the various castes and stages of life as well as do's and don't's in respect of eating etc., which being very much 'earthly' matters logically belong to the *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*.

Some conflicting statements about the size and structure of the Purāṇa are also found in this part. For example, the *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*, chapter 125, says that the number of verses in the Purāṇa was 52000 in Tretā, 22000 in Dvāpara and 12000 in Kali, while the *Svargakhaṇḍa*, chapter 1, gives a static figure of 55000. And similar is the case with the sections of the Purāṇa. According to the *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*, chapter 125, the Purāṇa has five sections only, viz. *Sṛṣṭi*, *Bhūmi*, *Svarga*, *Pātāla* and *Uttara*, thus leaving *Brahma* and *Kriyāyoga*, whereas the *Svargakhaṇḍa*, Chapter 1, enumerates six sections, viz., *Ādi*, *Bhūmi*, *Brahma*, *Pātāla*, *Kriyā* and *Uttara*. In this latter list the names of *Sṛṣṭi* and *Svarga* (its own name!) are missing and an unfamiliar name '*Ādi*' appears. In the last chapter (62), however, the name for this section occurs as '*Ādi-*

svarga', which would imply that this, i.e. *Svargakhaṇḍa*, was the first section of the Purāṇa, thus refusing any locus standi to the *Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa*.

Now a few words about the contents. The reader will find some new and interesting anecdotes and stories here extolling holy places such as Puṣkara, showing the efficacy of a bath in the rivers Revā, Gaṅgā etc. or of Viṣṇu's name, and glorifying worship of some god, e.g. Viṣṇu or Śiva, or some virtuous conduct. Subāhu's story shows that a gift of food, especially to a brāhmaṇa, is the best charity, and is even superior to penance. The stories of Aśokasundarī (II. 102ff), of Kāmodā (II. 118ff) and of the five gandharva maidens (III. 22ff) have a good deal of dramatic interest. The story of Hemakuṇḍala and his two wicked sons (III. 30ff) shows the efficacy of the river Yamunā.

Pilgrimage to holy places is treated of in great detail. Next in importance is the code of conduct prescribed for the celebate student, the householder, the anchorite and the ascetic (III. 51ff). Do's and don't's in respect of eating etc. are minutely discussed. Giving shelter and food to brāhmaṇas is considered highly meritorious. Gift of a cow to a brāhmaṇa at Prayāga is supposed to liberate not only the donor but also his son, wife and servants. Worshipping brāhmaṇas is shown to be superior even to bathing at a holy place. Mother is spoken of as the most venerable person and maligning others the greatest sin for which there is no atonement. A brāhmaṇa not responding to salutation is condemned as a śūdra and one is advised not to salute him. Protection of even such insignificant insects as lice and bugs is prescribed.

Third in length is the description of the earth's geography which to a large extent seems to be a product of imagination rather than of a scientific survey, as is obvious from the highly exaggerated figures given therein. To take a few examples: The height of the Jambu tree which lends its name to the Jambudvīpa, is said to be one thousand and a hundred yojanas (1 yojana = 8/9 miles); the Mālyavat mountain measures fifty thousand yojanas; the span of human life in the Bhadrāśva country is said to be ten thousand years. The reader will find many more interesting descriptions here.

Acknowledgements

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—Editor

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GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P.V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇi*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradīya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣīya Prācīna Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd. P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Śat. Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

CHAPTER NINETYONE

Vidura, Candraśarman, Vedaśarman and Vañjula

Kuñjala said:

1-16a. Formerly when Indra was affected by (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa, he committed a great sin of having an illicit intercourse with Gautama's wife. He was abandoned by gods and brāhmaṇas. Indra, propless and shelterless, practised penance. At the end of his penance all deities, sages, yakṣas, kinnaras started a religious bath to honour the lord of gods. O best son, O noble one, having taken the lord of gods to the Mālavaka country they gave him a bath with (the water from) the pitchers filled with water. Then he was first taken to Vārāṇasī to give him a bath; then Indra (was taken) to Prayāga and then to Arghatīrtha. O best of brāhmaṇas, the noble one was given a bath by the magnanimous Puṣkara itself; he was also given a bath by all gods like Brahmā, by hosts of sages. Hallowed with Vedic hymns destroying all sins by sages, the lord of gods was given a bath by elephants, trees, serpents, snakes along with kinnaras. When that noble Indra was purified, his (sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa and (that of) illicit intercourse were gone. On the earth Indra's (sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa along with that terrible sin of illicit intercourse perished. Indra who was well-pleased granted a boon to the Holy Places: "Since, you, who, are pure, freed me from this very terrible sin, therefore, by my favour you will be holy and the lords of sacred places." Giving such a boon to them he gave a boon to (the) Mālava (country): "Since today you bore my dirt causing distress, therefore you will be adorned with food, drink, wealth and grains. There is no doubt about it. By my favour you will surely be very holy and free from bad times (like drought etc.)." After Indra, the lord of gods, had given him (i.e. the Mālava country) such a boon, all the Holy Places and also the Mālavaka country went to their respective places along with Indra.

Sūta said:

16b-17a. Since then the four, viz. Prayāga, Puṣkara, Vārāṇasī and Arghatīrtha obtained an excellent authority.

Kuñjala said:

17b-22. In the Pañcāla country there was a kṣatriya named Vidura. Due to folly he had formerly killed a brāhmaṇa. He, without the lock of hair on the crown of the head and without the sacred thread and without the (saffron-) mark (on his forehead) wandered for begging (saying): "I, the killer of a brāhmaṇa, have come. Give alms and food to the killer of a brāhmaṇa and a drunkard." Thus he formerly went to (different) houses and begged. Thus he came (to a spot) after having visited all the holy places. Yet, O best brāhmaṇa, (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa did not leave him. That sinful Vidura, full of agony and grief, and with his heart burning, resorted to the shade of a tree.

23-29a. Then, there lived in the Māgadha country a brāhmaṇa (named) Candraśarman; he was overcome with great delusion. He had killed his preceptor. The wicked one was deserted by his kinsmen and groups of relatives. He came there where Vidura stayed. He was without the lock of hair on the crown of his head and the sacred thread and the characteristic marks of a brāhmaṇa. Then he was asked by that wicked Vidura: "Who are you, unfortunate and of a distressed mind, that have come here? Why do you, bereft of the marks of a brāhmaṇa, roam over the earth ?" Thus addressed by Vidura, that mean brāhmaṇa Candraśarman told him everything that he had formerly done and the sin he had committed while staying in his preceptor's house. (He said:) "I, highly deluded and agitated with anger, formerly killed my preceptor. Therefore I am now tormented."

29b-32. Having told all (his) account, Candraśarman asked (Vidura), "Who are you of an extremely distressed mind, that have resorted to the shade of (this) tree?" Vidura narrated his sin in brief. Then there came a third twice-born, emaciated due to affliction, a heap of many sins, and named Vedaśarman. Both (Vidura and Candraśarman) asked him: "Who are you, a distressed figure? Why are you roaming over the earth? Tell (us) your true condition."

33-40. Then Vedaśarman told them all that he had done: "I had illicit intercourse; I was despised by all people and also by my kinsmen and relatives. I am polluted by that sin. (Therefore) I am wandering over the earth like this." Then (there came a

vaiśya named Vañjula, who was a drunkard. He was particularly a killer of cow. As before he was asked by (the other three). He narrated all the sin that he committed before. All the other (three) heard all that he told. Thus the four most sinful ones gathered at one place. None of them shared with one another food or coverings. O noble one, they (however) talked to one another. They did not occupy the same seat, nor did they sleep in the same bed. Thus full of grief they went to many holy places; but their terrible sins did not perish. The holy places do not have the power to destroy major sins. They, Vidura and others, went to Kālañjara mountain.

CHAPTER NINETYTWO

The Greatness of Revā

Kuñjala said:

1-3. Reaching Kālañjara (the four) very much afflicted, tormented by great sins, lamenting and senseless lived there; and there came a very glorious siddha. He asked them who were afflicted with great grief: "For what reason are you unhappy?" He the very wise one, and proficient in all (branches of) knowledge was told by them (the cause of their grief). The very meritorious one having known their great sin, showed compassion to them.

The siddha said:

4-36a. On the occasion of the new moon day falling on Monday, you four, impure with sins, should go to Prayāga, Puṣkara, Arghatīrtha, being the third, and Vārāṇasī, the fourth one. You will be free from sins when you will have bathed in the water of the Ganges. There is no doubt that you will attain purity.

All of them, instructed by him, carefully saluted him, (and) tormented by sins, quickly went from Kālañjara. The best twice-born ones—Vidura, Candraśarman, Vedśarman as the third, the drunkard and wicked-hearted vaiśya (named) Vañjulaka, having reached Vārāṇasī, O you best one, then to Prayāga, Puṣkara, and Arghatīrtha, when the new moon day fell on a Monday, went to the great city. When that auspicious day came they bathed in the water of the Ganges. Just by bathing (in the water of the Ganges) they became free from the sins like the murder of a cow. Those Holy Places, polluted with sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, of a preceptor, and of drinking liquor, roamed over the earth. O best brāhmaṇa, Puṣkara, Arghatīrtha, Prayāga—the destroyer of sins, and Vārāṇasī as the fourth, were polluted with sins. All became black, and roamed in the form of swans. The best brāhmaṇas bathed at all holy places. Their blackness that had come to them through sin would not leave (them, though), O king, they again and again bathed at very holy places. O best brāhmaṇa, whichever holy places they, in the form of swans, visited, all of them, being very much afflicted went with them. Women of the form of sins roamed around them. In the form of swans they went to sixtyeight very holy places. O great king, they (i.e. Vidura and others), with their minds full of sins, again came to the Mānasa (lake) alongwith the very Holy Places. O great king, there they bathed, but the major sin did not leave them. The Mānasa (lake), with its mind full of the sense of shame, and having taken the form of a swan, became black-bodied—whom you have seen before. Then they went to the northern bank of Revā which destroys sins. O best brāhmaṇa, they became free from sins just by (taking) a bath at the confluence of (Revā and Kubjā), which was resorted to by gods and siddhas. Having given up that (dark) complexion, they obtained merit. Whichever sacred place the swans had gone to, and had bathed at, women seeing them, laughed (at them); and the sin did not leave them at all, (but) by the fire in the form of the water of Kubjā even the greatest sin was reduced to ashes; and those women died. The sins of the murder of a brāhmaṇa, of a preceptor, that of drinking liquor and of illicit intercourse were reduced to ashes, destroyed by (the confluence of) Kubjā with Revā. Those that

died on the bank of the river, were, O noble one, gone. Know that swan to be Mānasa (lake) which accompanied the sixtyeight very holy places (moving) in the form of swans. Hear from me the names of the four black swans: Prayāga, Puṣkara, the excellent Arghatīrtha, and Vārāṇasī as the fourth one. All the four destroy sins. These four Holy Places, overcome with (the sin of) the murder of brāhmaṇas, went sadly to holy places, O you highly intelligent one. O son, the terrible sin of them, who were (thus) wandering, did not go away. They were indeed purified at the confluence of Kubjā (with Revā), and were freed from their sins. It is said that in front of Indra Prayāga became the king of all the meritorious holy places, (as he was) approved of by them. Let (other) holy places roar as long as the Revā is not seen as destroying sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Revā is greatly meritorious and very blessed at the conjunction with Meghanāda and the big confluence; Revā is not obtainable everywhere. She is difficult to be reached by men at Oṃkāra, Bhṛgukṣetra, and at her confluence with Narmadā and Kubjā, and by best gods at Māhiṣmatī. She is meritorious at her confluence with Viṭaṅkā, at Śrīkaṇṭha and Maṅgaleśvara. Revā, full of the merit of gods is not obtainable everywhere. A man is happy there, where (Revā) the mother of holy places, the great goddess and the destroyer of heaps of sins (flows) between the two banks. A man obtains the fruit of the horse-sacrifice by just one bath (in Revā).

36b-37. I have told you all this that you asked for, and that removes all sins, that is holy, giving salvation to those who listen to it.

Having spoken thus the very intelligent (Kuñjala) spoke to his third son.

CHAPTER NINETYTHREE

Vijvala Narrates His Experience

Kuñjala said:

1-2. O Vijvala, what thing not seen before and full of wonder did you, while wandering on the earth, see ? Tell me that, O you of a good vow. O best son, tell me which country did you go to with a strenuous effort for (obtaining) food; (tell me) what wonder you noticed.

Vijvala said:

3-6. On the surface of mountain Meru there is a forest by name Ānanda. It is abounding in divine trees, always full of fruits and flowers; it is crowded with groups of gods, and is attended by sages and siddhas, and also by beautiful celestial damsels, gandharvas, kinnaras and serpents; (it is full of) wells, ponds, lakes, rivers and streams. The holy forest Ānanda shines with divine objects, aeroplanes numbering in crores and resembling swans, kunda flowers and the moon. It is full of the mixed and sweet sounds of songs, and resounds with the thunders of clouds.

7-10. It is everywhere sweet due to the humming of bees. It is covered with sandal trees, mango trees and blossomed campaka trees. In this way that excellent Ānanda forest shines with many trees; and due to the notes of various birds it is full of a mixed sound. There I saw the very beautiful Ānanda forest like this. O father, a clean lake (i.e. lake with clean water) shines like an ocean (in the forest). It is full of auspicious water, and is crowded with auspicious aquatic animals, fragrant with lotuses and is full of swans and ducks.

11-12a. Thus in the centre of the forest there is a lake, adorned with crowds of gods and hosts of sages. It shines well with kinnaras, serpents, gandharvas and bards.

12b-26. O father, there I saw a wonder. It cannot be described. (A man) shone there with a divine aeroplane, shining with an umbrella, a staff and banners and full of all pleasures and with pitchers, O best one. O you of the best vow, he, the shining

one, was being praised by gandharvas, celestial nymphs and great sages. (None else) like him was seen; (he was) matchless in form in the world, with his entire body looking charming with ornaments, and round his neck a necklace made of big gems shone. I saw a beautiful lady standing near him. She was (adorned) with golden necklaces and with armlets and bracelets of pearls, and with divine garments and smearings of sandal. The man being praised and sung came there. The lady had the form of Rati, had fine hips, and plump buttocks and breasts. Due to the excellence of her form she was shining like that with ornaments. I saw these two, having the sweetness of form and beauty and endowed with all charm, coming there. The two noble ones—the man and the lady—having lotus-like eyes, got down from the aeroplane, came near the lake, and bathed there, O father. The couple having large weapons seized each other and like them the dead bodies of the two had fallen on the bank of the lake. The dead bodies were like the two—the man and the lady—of lotus-like eyes that were (seen) at Prabhāsa, even in form, O illustrious one. The dead body resembling a godly form, was like the man. The form of it was seen just like him. The other dead body had a form as was (that of) the wife. She then cut off the flesh from the female dead body and ate the (pieces of) flesh covered with blood. The man, being very eager, also ate the flesh of the dead body.

27-33a. The two, oppressed with hunger, ate the flesh of the two (dead bodies). They ate the flesh till they were satisfied. O father, then drinking the water in (i.e. of) the lake, the two became happy. Remaining there for some time they again went by the aeroplane. O father, I also saw there two other females. These two females were endowed with beauty and grace and had pleasing characteristics. When the two (i.e. the husband and the wife) were eating the flesh in the great forest, the two females laughed very loudly. When I was seeing (i.e. in my very presence) the two everyday ate the flesh after taking bath etc. O noble one, the other two females, having terrible forms, with their mouths fearful due to fangs, and very fierce said to them there only: "Give (us), give (us)."

33b-37a. Remaining in the vicinity of the forest I observed like this, O father. The two everyday cut off the flesh and ate it.

The bodies of the corpses (i.e. the dead bodies) again became complete. O father, everyday getting down like this, the two and the other (females) acted as I told (you) before, when I was seeing (i.e. in my presence). At that time, O father, I saw the wonder that took place (there). When O father, you asked me (if) I saw a wonder, I told you all that (I saw) which caused doubt.

37b-43. Through grace and with a pleasing heart tell me (about it). O best twice-born, who is that lotus-eyed one, of a divine form, who came with the lady in an aeroplane? And O noble one, who is that lady that ate that large (quantity of) flesh? Who is that (man) and who is that (lady) that came there and ate (the flesh)? Tell us (i.e. me), O father, about the other females that laughed at that time and said: "Give (us), give (us)". You tell me about these two very fearful females. O father, O you of a good vow, please remove this doubt of me.

Saying so the bird ceased (speaking). That (Kuñjala) thus asked by his third son Vijvala told him all account of Cyavana. So listen (to it).

CHAPTER NINETYFOUR

In Praise of Making Gift of Food

Kuñjala said:

1. O son, listen, I shall tell you the reason why the two became the eaters of their own flesh.

2-12a. There is no doubt that everywhere (i.e. for everything) auspicious or inauspicious act is the cause. O son, a man enjoys happiness due to a meritorious deed; and due to a sinful deed he suffers. A man should undertake a deed after having pondered over the subtle path by means of the eye of the knowledge of scriptures, and also after having repeatedly well thought over the coarse path of conduct with an accurate mind (i.e. thought), as,

O son, an artist, fashioning images, produces elegance (in them) by means of the lustre of the fire and flames all round. A metal, heated by fire would slowly turn into a liquid. O child, undoubtedly the kind of form produced is similar to the kind of food, perfect with taste, that is poured down. A deed is enjoyed in the same way as it is done. It is the deed that is the principal thing and that alone proceeds in the form of rain. O child there is no doubt that the farmer enjoys (i.e. reaps) the fruit as he sows the seed in the fields. (A man) enjoys in the same way as he performs a deed. Deed is the cause of his destruction. All of us are controlled by (the fruits of) our deeds. We are the heirs of our deeds and the kinsmen related to our deeds in the world. It is the deeds that prompt a man to pleasure or pain. As gold or silver is poured down (in a liquid form) as the form is (desired), in the same way a being is conceived in accordance with his former deeds.

12b-20. Of the fetus in the womb these five are seen: (span of) life, acts, wealth, learning and death. As the doer does (i.e. fashions different images from) a lump of clay, similarly acts that are performed grasp the doer. A being reached the state of a god or a human being or a beast or a bird or a lower animal or an immobile thing due to his acts only. He always enjoys in accordance with what is done by himself. He, having acquired the bed (in the form) of the womb enjoys pleasure or pain ordained by himself (and due to acts) in the former body (i.e. existence). Even by means of his intelligence or power the best of men is not able to change (the fruits of) the deeds (performed) in the former existence. (Beings) experience pains and pleasures (as a result) of their own deeds. He (i.e. a man) is compelled by self-prompted causes or reasons. As a calf finds his mother from among thousands of cows, in the same way (the fruits of) the deeds—good or bad—which do not perish otherwise than by being experienced follow the doer. Who can change the former deed that is binding ?

21-25a. The (fruit of one's) act runs after one who is running very fast, since the deed done formerly (inheres in the soul of the doer). It stands by one who stands, and follows one who goes (i.e. walks). The deed of one who performs (various acts), makes him act like a shadow. The being and his acts are like

the shadow and the sun which are always mutually well-connected. The objects of senses are diseases; old age etc. are diseases. They later trouble a man who is (already) oppressed by (his) former deeds. He who is to experience pain or pleasure (at a particular place) is always bound there as with a rope, and is forcibly carried (there) by destiny.

25b-30. They say that destiny gives pleasure or pain to beings. Fate is thought of in one way while a person is sleeping or awake (i.e. by a person who is sleeping or awake), and it presents itself in a different way, binds and desires to kill him. It well protects him from weapons, poison and calamities who deserves to be protected. As on the earth seeds, trees, clumps of trees and grass stand and multiply, in the same way the deeds (act) on the soul. As a lamp goes out when the oil (in it) is consumed, so the body of a being perishes with the destruction of the deeds. In the same way philosophers have said that death takes place after the destruction of the deeds. The various diseases of beings are said to be their causes. Therefore, deed is the principal (thing in the case) of beings.

31-34a. One enjoys (the fruit) of the deed which one does (i.e. has done) before. O child, I have told you the meaning of what you had seen and about which you asked me now. Now the two whose terrible deed you saw in the Ānanda forest, are enjoying each other. O child, I shall narrate their movements. Listen to me who am talking. O child, of the creations etc. this is the land of deeds (i.e. where deeds are performed) and other lands are meant for enjoyment. O very intelligent one, having gone into them one enjoys (the fruits of one's deeds).

Sūta said:

34b-37. In the Caula country (lived) a very wise king named Subāhu. He was handsome, virtuous (and) wise. There was none (else) like him. The king was Viṣṇu's devotee, he was highly intelligent and very dear to Viṣṇu's devotees. Meditating on Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) with three kinds of deeds (i.e. of body, mind and speech) he performed all sacrifice like the horse-sacrifice. His family priest was a brāhmaṇa by name Jaimini. He, having called that Subāhu, said these words to him:

38-41a. "O king, give gifts by which happiness is enjoyed. A

man after death goes beyond difficult worlds and crosses (difficulties). By means of gifts one gets happiness and eternal glory. In the world matchless fame is produced by (making) gifts. The doer (of pious deeds) would live in heaven as long as his fame lasts. Therefore, (giving) a gift is said to be difficult to do; it is not at all possible (to make) gifts. Therefore with all efforts men should always give (gifts)."

Subāhu said:

41b-42a. O best brāhmaṇa, tell me which of the two, (giving) gifts or penance, is very difficult to do and which (of the two) gives great fruit after death.

Jaimini said:

42b-46. There is nothing (else) more difficult to do than giving gifts. O king, it is actually seen by people. In the world, leaving (i.e. at the cost of) dear life people prompted by greed enter a sea or a forest for the sake of wealth. Others take to service (of others) which is (nothing but) a dog's life. Similarly some first (take to) farming which is full of harm and which is troublesome. O best among men, to give up that wealth, superior even to one's life, and earned with difficulty, is very difficult, especially that wealth, O great king, which is justly earned.

47-49a. There is no end to (the wealth) given with faith to a deserving recipient. Faith is the daughter of Dharma, a purifying goddess and an emancipator of all. She is Sāvitrī, the mother, and a boat to cross the ocean of the mundane existence. Religious merit is accomplished by means of faith and not with heaps of wealth. Indigent sages, having faith, have gone to heaven.

49b-61. O best king, there are many (kinds) of gifts. There is nothing superior to giving food which gives liberation to beings. Therefore, food, along with water, should be given, accompanied by sweet and pleasing words. There is nothing superior to giving food to a proper person with faith and proper rite for emancipation, well-being and happiness and wealth in this and the next world. A man enjoys the fruit of giving only food with a pure heart. He should give a morsel after a morsel, or a handful or of the measure of a prastha. There is no doubt

that the great fruit of that gift becomes inexhaustible. If a man, due to having nothing with him, cannot afford (to give) even a prastha or a handful, he should feed, with faith and devotion, a brāhmaṇa, after approaching him on a parvan-day. O lord of subjects, (by giving) the principal gift of food alone a man, in the next birth, well obtains food and enjoys food. Whatever is devoutly given by men in the former birth, is always enjoyed (by them) after well getting another existence. Those men (who) always give the gift of food to brāhmaṇas, enjoy sweet food and drink; they are (called) givers of food. The sages, who have mastered the Vedas call food as being life (itself), since it is undoubtedly sprung from nectar. He who has given food has given life. O great king, give the gift of food with (great) effort.

Having heard this (i.e. these words) of Jaimini, the king again asked that brāhmaṇa Jaimini, proficient in knowledge:

CHAPTER NINETYFIVE

Deeds Which Lead to Heaven

Subāhu said:

1. O best brāhmaṇa, now explain to me the merits of heaven. O greatest brāhmaṇa, I shall do all this naturally.

Jaimini said:

2-13a. There (i.e. in heaven) are various divine, meritorious, charming pleasure-gardens, full of all objects of desire and beautiful with trees satisfying all desires. (There are) everywhere aeroplanes attended by bevies of celestial nymphs. They are variegated; they move according to the desire (of the occupant); they are controlled (by the occupant). Their colour is like that of the young sun, and they have windows (decked) with pearls. They are white like the moon's orb, and have golden beds and seats. In them meritorious men, richly endowed with all objects of desires, and free from all griefs move as on earth. Non-be-

lievers do not go there. Those who have not conquered their senses do not (go there). Wicked, cruel, ungrateful and proud (people) do not (go) there. Men that are truthful, that remain in penance, that are brave, kind, forgiving, that perform sacrifices, and are given to giving gifts go there. There nobody suffers from a disease, old age; nobody meets with death; nobody suffers from cold or heat. Nobody has hunger, thirst or exhaustion. O king, there are many merits like these and others of heaven. Now listen to the defects that are there. The entire fruit of an auspicious deed is enjoyed there only. The great defect that is said to be (present) there is that much (activity) is not done (i.e. undertaken by the residents). Also there is dissatisfaction on seeing the bright glory of others. There is a sudden fall of them whose mind is full of happiness. The fruit of that deed which is done here is enjoyed there. O king, this is known to be the land of deeds and that the land of fruits.

Subāhu said:

13b-14a. O brāhmaṇa, you have narrated these great defects of heaven. Tell (me) about the worlds that are faultless and eternal.

Jaimini said:

14b-19. O king, there are defects right from the residence of Brahmā. Therefore the wise do not desire to obtain (i.e. to go to) heaven. Above the residence of Brahmā is the highest place of Viṣṇu. They know it to be an auspicious eternal light and as the highest Brahman. Foolish men, who are full of sensual desires, who are attacked (i.e. overcome) by religious hypocrisy, delusion, fear, treachery, anger and greed, do not go there. Good people who do not have the sense of mineness and egotism, who are free from the pairs of the opposite qualities (like pleasure and pain), whose senses are controlled, and who are engaged in profound meditation, go there. I have told you all this that you have asked me about.

Having thus heard the merits of heaven, Subāhu, the lord of the earth, asked the noble Jaimini, the best among speakers:

Subāhu said:

20-23a. O sage, I shall not go to heaven; I do not also desire (to go there). I shall not do that act by which there is a fall. O noble one, charity alone is (everything). Certainly when shall I not give? A man falls from it (i.e. heaven) because of (giving) gifts and desire for (their) fruits.

Having said so, that religious-minded Subāhu, the lord of the earth, (again spoke): "By means of profound meditation I shall worship that lord of gods (i.e. Viṣṇu), dear to Lakṣmī. I shall go to Viṣṇu's heaven which is free from tormentation and destruction."

Jaimini said:

23b-30a. O king, you have spoken the truth, which is full of all bliss. Kings are virtuous and they worship with great sacrifices. O prince, in sacrifices all (kinds of) gifts are given. In the sacrifices, they first give food, garments, tāmbūla, gold, and also give the gift of land and cows. Those best men go to Viṣṇu's world by means of good sacrifices. Kings are satisfied by (giving) gifts and are pleased. The noble devout ones always perform sacrifices, after having asked for good (i.e. sumptuous) alms and (after) having come to their own places. O king, (then) it (i.e. the food) is divided into parts for (distributing it) as alms. These (men) with penance as their wealth, O you very intelligent one, give one part to a brāhmaṇa, and one to those who are very near. Due to the gift of that food men enjoy (its) fruit. Free from hunger and thirst, they go to Viṣṇu's world.

30b-32. Therefore, O best king, you (should) also give the wealth earned justly. Having acquired knowledge from (having given) gifts, one will obtain perfection from (that) knowledge. That man who would listen to this meritorious and excellent account, will obtain all objects and all his sin melts away. Free from all sins, he goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

CHAPTER NINETYSIX

Good and Bad Deeds and the Fate of the Performer

Subāhu said :

1. Please tell me by (performing) which deeds men go to hell after death, (and) by (performing) which deeds they go to heaven after death.

Jaimini said :

2-5. Those brāhmaṇas who give up (leading) a brāhmaṇa's life and deluded by greed live on bad deeds go to hell. Atheists, those who have violated the norms of (good conduct), those who are intent upon (satisfying) sexual pleasures, religious hypocrites, and who are ungrateful go to hell. Men who do not give wealth to brāhmaṇas after having promised them, and also those who take away a brāhmaṇa's wealth go to hell. Wicked men, those who insult others, who tell lies and talk irrelevantly go to hell.

6. Those who snatch away the wealth of others, those who indicate others' faults and those who are adulterers go to hell.

7. Those who are always engaged in harming the life of beings and those who are engaged in reviling others go to hell.

8. Those who break good wells, lakes, places of water for travellers, or ponds go to hell.

9. Those who become averse to their wives, children, servants and guests and those who have abolished worship of dead ancestors and deities go to hell.

10. O king, those who censure the fourth stage in the life of a brāhmaṇa, or who censure the stages of life or who censure their friends go to hell.

11-13. Those who do not meditate upon Viṣṇu, the first (supreme) being, and the ruler and great lord of all the worlds; those who spoil the (principal sacrificial ceremonies like) Prayāja, or sacrifices or virgins or harm their friends or good people or the elders go to hell. Those who block the way with logs of wood or pegs or deserted stones go to hell.

14. Those who have no trust in all beings, who are always struck by desire of sensual enjoyments and are crooked towards all beings go to hell.

15-16. Those who prohibit brāhmaṇas who are badly off and who have come (to them) for food, those men who cut off a sacred place, (somebody's) livelihood or house, or affection or hope go to hell.

17-20a. O king of kings, those who make weapons, lances and bows, and those who sell (these) go to hell. Those fools who do not show pity for a helpless or a frightened or a miserable person or one afflicted with disease or an old man, those who first take up vows and later not controlling their senses violate them through fickleness go to hell. O king, I have thus told you about those who go to hell.

20b-23. (Now) learn from me about them who go to heaven. Those men who follow religion with the practice of truth, penance, forgiveness, charity or study go to heaven. Those high-minded ones who are engrossed in sacrifices and exclusively devoted to worshipping deities and those who approve of (these) go to heaven. The pure men who, exclusively devoted to Viṣṇu, recite and sing (hymns about) Viṣṇu in a pure place go to heaven.

24. Those men who respectfully always serve their mother and father and avoid sleeping by day go to heaven.

25. Those men who are averse to all (kinds of) harm, who have the company of the good, who are engaged in the well-being of all go to heaven.

26. Those men who are free from (all kinds of) greed and who help all, who give refuge to all go to heaven.

27. Those men who give respect to their elders by means of service and penance and who are averse to accepting (any gift) go to heaven.

28. Those men who clothe (i.e. give garments to) thousands, similarly those who give (in or) to thousands, and those who protect thousands go to heaven.

29. Those men who free beings from fear, sin, suffering, grief and who free (from poverty and disease) those who are emaciated due to poverty and disease go to heaven.

30. O you born in the family of Bharata, those wise men who

possess similarity with Brahman, who, though being young, have conquered their senses go to heaven.

31. O you descendant of Bharata, those men who give gold, cows and land, and food and garments also go to heaven.

32. Those men who are delighted when implored, and who talk agreeable (words) after having given (what is asked for), and those who have given up the fruit of what is given go to heaven.

33. Those men who themselves produce houses, grains and heroes and present them (to others) go to heaven, O hero.

34. Those men who never speak about the faults even of their enemies and (on the contrary) describe their virtues go to heaven.

35. Those men who are not distressed through jealousy on seeing the wealth of others, but are delighted and congratulate (them) go to heaven.

36. Those noble men who conform to the norms laid down in the Veda and the scriptures while engaged in work or abstaining from work go to heaven.

37. Those men, who do not speak disagreeable words to people, (but, on the contrary) speak agreeable words only go to heaven.

38. Those men who (even though) oppressed with hunger, thirst and fatigue share (their grains etc.) with others and make offerings to guests go to heaven.

39. Those men who construct reservoirs of water, wells, and water booths for travellers, houses and gardens go to heaven.

40. Those men who are truthful (i.e. behave truthfully) with liars, who are straightforward with the crooked, who are friendly even with their enemies go to heaven.

41. Those men who, being born in whatever family, have many sons, live for a hundred years, are kind and of a good behaviour go to heaven.

42. Those men who always make their days religiously productive and who always take up a vow go to heaven.

43. Those men who with their minds tranquil and control-

led look with equanimity upon a person shouting abuses or praising them go to heaven.

44. Those men who protect fear-stricken brāhmaṇas, women or pilgrims go to heaven.

45. Those men who offer balls of rice to their dead ancestors at obsequial ceremonies or śrāddhas performed on the Ganges or at the holy place of Puṣkara or especially at Gayā go to heaven.

46. Those men who are not under the sway of their senses, who remain controlled, who have given up greed, fear and anger go to heaven.

47. Those men who protect like their own sons, insects like lice, bugs or gadflies that prick the body go to heaven.

48. Those men (though) not knowing (the procedure) collect (wealth) according to the rule as told (in the scriptures) and who put up with all the pairs (of opposites) (like pleasure and pain) go to heaven.

49. Those pure and good men who do not dally with others' wives physically, mentally or in speech go to heaven.

50. Those men who do not perform prohibited deeds but do only those that are enjoined (in the scriptures) and who know their inherent power go to heaven.

51-52. O king, I have thus accurately told you everything as to how misfortune or good fortune is obtained by means of deeds. A man who behaves unpleasantly with others goes to a fierce, very terrible hell. For a man who always behaves agreeably, salvation, causing pleasure, is not far away.

CHAPTER NINETYSEVEN

Subāhu Eats His Own Flesh

Kuñjala said:

1. The king, having heard all the result of good and bad conduct as told by the sage at that time, said to the sage:

Subāhu said:

2. O best brāhmaṇa, that I (who am thus advised by you) will practise righteousness; I shall (do) meritorious (acts); O sage, I shall very much worship Vāsudeva (i.e. Viṣṇu), the source of the world.

3-6. The king would worship (i.e. worshipped) Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) by performing sacrifices and muttering prayers. He, having performed a sacrifice, and having practised penance, and being endowed with all desired objects gladly and quickly reached Viṣṇu's heaven (along with the queen). Having gone there he did not (i.e. could not) see the lord of gods in that great world. Great hunger arose in them, and great thirst proceeded (i.e. they felt extremely hungry and thirsty) which very much troubled their soul. The king too oppressed by hunger and thirst along with his wife and full of great grief did not see Viṣṇu.

Sūta said:

7-14. O best one, the king, along with his wife, was thus very much grieved, was perturbed and perplexed and was very much oppressed by hunger. That lord of the earth, speedily ran hither and thither. That king, with his entire body adorned with ornaments, decorated with garments and sandal (-paste applied to his body), with his body (looking) lovely on account of garlands of flowers, and with necklaces, earrings, and bracelets, and with his limbs (looking) elegant due to the lustre of jewels, moved. Thus, proceeding unhappily, being praised by bards, and full of sorrow and affliction he said (these) words to his wife: "O you very auspicious one, O you beautiful lady, being praised by the sages, I have, along with you, reached Viṣṇu's heaven in an aeroplane. Due to which act (of mine) great hunger springs (in me); and (even) after having reached Viṣṇu's world I have not seen (i.e. I have not been able to see) Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu). O good one, what (then) is the cause due to which I am not enjoying the great fruit (of my good deeds)? This unhappiness has arisen due to (my) own deeds." Having thus heard his words, she said to the king:

The wife said:

15-19a. O king, you have said the truth. There is no fruit

of good conduct, (though) the meritorious and noble brāhmaṇas declare in the Vedas, sacred texts and Purāṇas that a man merely by the utterance of the names of Viṣṇu, the holder of the good (i.e. powerful) disc, casts off his grief and affliction, and becomes free from all blemishes. You did propitiate the god, the holder of the conch, disc, and mace; but you did not give food to brāhmaṇas, as told by them. I understand that its fruit is that you have not seen (i.e. you could not see) Viṣṇu. O king, hunger is troubling me; thirst also would dry me up.

Kuñjala said:

19b-26a. Thus addressed by his wife, the king had his senses confounded due to anxiety. Then he saw a holy hermitage, which removed fatigue, which was crowded with divine trees, which looked beautiful with lakes, and with wells, pools and tanks full of holy water, which was crowded with swans and ducks and which looked charming with white lotuses. O son, the hermitage was splendid by the presence of philosopher-sages. (He saw) the hermitage, which was crowdel with divine trees and which looked beautiful with herds of deer. It was abounding in various flowers; it was full of agreeable fragrance; it was crowded with brāhmaṇas and siddhas; it was full of the disciples of sages; it was adorned with hosts of gods; it looked beautiful with throngs of the clusters of plantain trees having abundant fruits. It was full of many kinds of trees and was endowed with all desired objects; it was always beautiful with sandal (trees) having pleasing fragrance and with fruits.

26b-33. That king Subāhu entered with his wife that very meritorious forest satisfying desires, which was thus full of merit and had the characteristics of austerity. There was the best sage Vāmadeva, the best among the devotees of Viṣṇu, brightening all the directions like the sun, shining like the sun with very great lustre, sitting in a posture suited to profound and abstract meditation and covered with a cloth used at the time of profound and abstract meditation, and meditating upon Viṣṇu, the giver of enjoyments and salvation. Having seen that noble Vāmadeva, the best of the sages, he quickly went with his wife to him, and saluted him. Then Vāmadeva having seen the best king bent before him, having greeted the king accompanied by his

wife with blessings, seated the best Subāhu on an auspicious seat and the sage (thus) honoured the king that had arrived with his wife, with a seat etc., (honoured him) by giving him water for washing his feet and respectful offerings. Then the great devotee of Viṣṇu asked the king:

Vāmadeva said:

34-35a. O lord of kings, by means of my divine knowledge I know you to be knowing the Vaiṣṇava practices, to be a devotee of Viṣṇu and to be the best man, and to be the lord of Cola. You, the guileless one, have come here with your wife Tārkṣyā.

The king said :

35b-39a. I, the guileless one, have come here, and have reached the highest place of Viṣṇu. With great devotion I have propitiated Viṣṇu, the god of gods, the lord of the world, who is pleased with devotion. O father, why do I not see the lord of gods, the husband of Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī)? Hunger is troubling me, so also very poignant thirst (is troubling me), O father. Due to them we two (i.e. my wife and I) are not obtaining peace and are not at all having happiness. O best sage, this is the cause of my unhappiness. Do me a favour and be well disposed (and) tell me the cause (of this).

Vāmadeva said:

39b-51a. O lord of kings, you are always devoted to Śrīkṛṣṇa. With great devotion you have propitiated Viṣṇu by means of devoted service, by bathing (his idol) and by means of sandal, flowers etc. also. (But) you have not honoured the lord of the worlds with offerings of eatables and fruits. When you reached the tenth day (of the month, i.e. when the tenth day arrived) you have always done (this viz.) you have not given identical good food to brāhmaṇas. Having reached the eleventh day (i.e. when the eleventh day came), you did not take food. You did not give food to a brāhmaṇa, dedicating it to Viṣṇu. Food always remains in the form of nectar on the earth. Especially you have never made a present of food. O king, herbs are of various kinds. Listen to them: (They are) bitter, pungent, astringent, sweet, sour and saline; there are condiments like Asafoetida, and they are of

various forms, O king. All herbs causing nourishment have sprung up from nectar. Food alone, after consecrating it with Vedic hymns, and accompanied by herbal sauces is given with an intention of dedicating it to gods in the form of Viṣṇu and the manes in the form of Viṣṇu, into the hand of a brāhmaṇa. Then after giving it to the guests one should feed his attendants. After that he himself eats the food rrsembling nectar. O king, he has no grief after death, but has happiness. O king, brāhmaṇas are manes, and gods have the form of kṣatriyas. O king, as a farmer always carries on good agriculture, in the same way a man should do agriculture in the field of the mouth of a brāhmaṇa. He should cleave it with the plough of his innate disposition and with the weapon of faith.

51b-54. Similarly intellect and penance are always looked upon as the bulls. His truthfulness, knowledge and prowess are the controller and his pure soul is the whip. He should give it up with salutations into the great field in the form of a brāhmaṇa, O king, as a farmer, engaged in an assiduous effort in farming, cleaves, dirt, in the same way, one who desires (to reach) Viṣṇu should propitiate (him). Similarly with good, meritorious words he should please brāhmaṇas also.

55-60. O king, as a farmer desiring to sow (seeds) when the cloud showers would sow (seeds), in the same way on a parvan day or at a holy place (a present) is given to a brāhmaṇa who is pleased. O great king, as a farmer enjoys the fruit of the seed sown by him, similarly a giver enjoys the fruit (of the gift given by him). He always becomes satisfied after death (i.e. in the next world) and here (i.e. in this world) (by giving a gift and) not in any other way. Brāhmaṇas are manes and gods are of the nature of fields; there is no doubt about this. So when presents are offered to them in a sacrifice, they certainly give fruits of that nature. There is no doubt about this. O king, sweet things would not spring from bitter ones; in the same way bitter things would not be produced from the ones that are known as sweet. One gets the fruit as one sows the seed. He who does not sow (seeds in) the field, does not get its fruit.

61-65. Similarly, O king, brāhmaṇas, gods and manes of the nature of a field, present the fruit of what is given. There is no doubt about it. O king, enjoy (the fruit of) your good or bad

deeds in the same manner as you have done them. That cannot be otherwise. Formerly you never gave with a good mind (i.e. sincerely) sweet food and drink. You yourself enjoyed good purified eatables, food, articles of food that are sucked and drinks and (other) articles of food; but you never gave these (to brāhmaṇas etc.). You nourished your own body with food resembling nectar. O great king, since you did (this), therefore hunger has been produced (in you).

66-72a. O king, (one's) deeds are the cause of (one's) happiness and unhappiness, (so also) of one's birth and death. O illustrious one, enjoy the fruit of those deeds. Formerly also noble souls reached heaven due to their deeds. After the exhaustion of (the fruit of) the deeds according to their destiny, they have again gone to (i.e. born on) the earth. Nala, Bhagīratha, so also Viśvāmitra and Yudhiṣṭhira obtained (i.e. reached) heaven by means of their deeds according to their destiny. The former deeds are destined to bear fruit; and due to them one would get happiness or unhappiness. O king, which lord (even) is able to resist it? Therefore, O greatest king, you had the affliction due to hunger and thirst, even though you have come to heaven. Therefore, (it is presumed that) your deeds were bad. If, O best king, you desire to satisfy your hunger, then go and eat your own body lying in the Ānanda forest. This your great queen also seems to be very much emaciated due to hunger.

Subāhu said:

72b-74a. O glorious one, how long have I to do that act along with my wife? (Please) tell me that. When will the grace of (Viṣṇu) be perceived? O best sage, which religious merit would be obtained by giving which gift? O you highly intelligent one, tell me that if you are pleased now.

Vāmadeva said:

74b-87a. O you very intelligent one, great happiness is obtained by the gift of food (and) of water. Mortals enjoy heaven and are not at all harassed by their sins. When men might not have given gifts (during their life-time), all (men) give gifts at the time of death. (Therefore) right from the first (a man) should

give food with water. He who would offer (these) eight (kinds of) gifts (like) a good umbrella, shoes, a good vessel for (storing) water, land, pure gold, does not feel hungry or thirsty etc. in heaven. O king, by giving food hunger does not oppress (the giver, since) he is satisfied. His thirst is not acute, (since) he is fully satisfied. O king, the giver by giving the gifts of sandals and an umbrella obtains shade, and by giving shoes he obtains a vehicle, O best king. Thus I am telling something else. O noble one, by giving the gift of land he would obtain all his desired objects. O great king, by giving a cow one would always prosper with desires (i.e. desired objects). The man enjoying all pleasures would live in heaven. There is no doubt that the giver (of a cow) becomes satisfied by giving a cow. He is free from diseases, is endowed with pleasures, is content, and possesses wealth. Due to the gift of gold he becomes (a man) of good complexion; there is no doubt about it. A man would become rich, handsome, heroic, and enjoyer of gems. He who gives sesamum seeds when the time of death has come, becomes the lord of all enjoyments and goes to Viṣṇu's world. Thus by special gifts great happiness in obtained. O lord of kings, when you were alive, you did not give a cow (or) land (or) food and water to a brāhmaṇa. You did not give (any of these objects) even at the time of death. Therefore hunger has arisen in you.

87b-88a. Thus I have told you the cause that arose due to your deeds. As a deed is done so it (i.e. its fruit) is enjoyed.

Subāhu said:

88b-90a. O best sage, how will my hunger be satiated? My body, parched up with it is extremely afflicted. O best brāhmaṇa, tell us too about our hunger and about the atonement for our terrible deeds, so that I shall have peace.

Vāmadeva said:

90b-93a. O best king, there is no other atonement than eating (your own bodies). Relying on your own exertions you will enjoy all the fruit of these deeds. O king, from here you should go (there) where your body fell, so also of your wife. There is no doubt about it. O king, both of you, you and your wife, should

eat up your own inexhaustible body. There is no doubt about this.

The king said:

93b-94a. O noble one, advise me about the measure (i.e. the length of) time as to how long I, with my wife, have to eat (up our own bodies).

Vāmadeva said:

94b-95. When you will hear the great hymn (in honour) of Vāsudeva, destroying great sins, you will obtain meritorious salvation. O king, I have told you all this. Go and eat up (your own body).

96-113. Hearing (the words) like this, the king, along with his wife ate up the flesh of his own body. Everyday like that (i.e. as already told) the body again would become (i.e. became) full, O very intelligent one. O son, the king and the queen ate up (the flesh) of their (own bodies). As the king went on eating (his own) body, the two ladies laughed. I shall tell you about their temperament. With (Śraddhā) very chaste Prajñā laughed at the behaviour of the king. The imperishable Śraddhā (also) always laughed at him. Being urged by Prajñā, you did not give with reverence food to brāhmaṇas after dedicating it to Viṣṇu. In this way (the king) everyday ate up the flesh of his own body. His wife also ate up her own body with nectar-like taste. O you of a good vow, then at the end of a hundred years, he, remembering the great sage Vāmadeva, condemned himself. (He said to himself:) 'I never gave (food) to manes and deities and to brāhmaṇas. I did not give (food) to guests, especially to old ones. I did not, through pity, give (food) to the poor and the weak.' Thus condemning his deeds, he ate his own flesh. Then seeing Subāhu, along with his wife, eating (their) own flesh, the two ladies—Prājñā and Śraddhā laughed (at them). His pure soul laughed at the fruit of those deeds. (The soul said:) 'O you of a sinful heart, (even) due to my company and close contact, you did not give (gifts).' Prajñā also with the words, 'O king, where has the great folly, by which you were deluded, gone?' laughed (at him). (A man) is thrown into the ditch of darkness due to greed along with delusion. Having

fallen there, you threw me into a painful peril. O king, having left the path of giving gifts you went to the path of greed. Being very much afflicted by bunger eat along with your wife (the flesh of your own body).' Thus that Prajñā laughed at that Subāhu accompanied by his wife. O son, this is the reason of their laughing. When, O you very wise one, the king was eating (the flesh), the two, viz. hunger and thirst being pained always begged of him and said: 'Give (us), give (us the flesh).' The two asked the lord of kings for food mixed with milk (or water). I have told you all that you had asked me. O you very intelligent one, what else I shall (i.e. should) narrate to you?

Vijvala said:

114. O father, tell me that hymn called (the hymn in honour of) Vāsudeva, by (reciting) which the king would reach salvation—that highest place of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER NINETYEIGHT

The Vāsudeva Hymn

Sūta said:

1-7. When the glorious Vijvala uttered these auspicious words, Kuñjala, the best among speakers, told him the auspicious hymn. The hymn in honour of Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) is recited after meditating upon and saluting Hṛṣīkeśa, who destroys all sufferings and gives entire religious merit. The hymn is called (the hymn in honour of) Vāsudeva; it gives all virtue; it is the gate to salvation; it is possessed of happiness; it gives peace; it enhances nourishment; it gives all desired objects; it gives knowledge and increases knowledge. (Kuñjala) manifested to Vijvala the hymn of Vāsudeva. (The hymn) is called Vāsudeva (-hymn); it is boundless and increases nourishment. Vijvala, the best among birds, having learned it from his father, started to go there (and) asked (the permission of) his father. The religious minded (Kuñjala) said to his son Vijvala who had decided to go, who

had mastered knowledge and who was intent upon obliging (others).

Kuñjala said:

8-9. O son, listen, since I know the great sin of the king, go from here and recite it when Subāhu is overhearing. The more he will hear the excellent hymn the more he will be full of (i.e. he will have) knowledge of Vāsudeva, due to his (i.e. Vāsudeva's) grace. Undoubtedly I have spoken very well.

10-12. Taking leave of his father, Vijvala of a quick pace, flew and then reached the auspicious Ānanda-forest. Resorting to the shade of a tree, he, full of joy, sat (there). Having (formerly) seen the king who had come in an aeroplane (he thought to himself:) 'When will king Subāhu come with his wife? When shall I free him from the sin by means of this hymn ?'

13-14. Just then the aeroplane reached there adorned with a number of small bells, filled with the sound of bells accompanied by lute and flute, full of the sound of gandharvas and having celestial nymphs, rich in all desired objects but without food and water.

15-19. King Subāhu was seated in that plane with his wife. With his wife Sutārkṣyā, he got down from the aeroplane. When he took a sharp weapon and cut off the dead body, Vijvala called out to him: "O best among men, O you resembling gods, you are doing this act which (even) cruel men cannot do. O distinguished man, what is this adverse fate! Tell me the entire reason why you have commenced this evil, rash act, always condemned in the world and opposed to the Vedic practice."

20-24. Having heard these words of the noble Vijvala, the great king said (these) words to his wife: "O dear one, I, of evil acts, have been eating this for a hundred years. Nobody ever spoke like this as he is talking. O dear one, the heart of me who am being thus oppressed by hunger (has become) eager, and gone out; (now) there is peace in (my) heart. O you of a charming smile, when I have heard his words putting an end to my grief, great joy abides in my heart. Who is he? Can he be a gandharva or Indra? The words of sages would come true, since the sage formerly had said (like this)."

25-28a. Having heard these words of her dear (husband), the wife, who was devoted to her husband, then said to the king: "O Lord, you have spoken the truth. This is the greatest wonder. As you have (an idea) in your mind so do I have in my mind. Who is this who having taken up the form of a bird, asks (you) like a benefactor?" Having heard these words of his wife, the lord of the earth, joining the palms of his hands, said (these) words:

Subāhu said:

28b-31a. O you very intelligent lord, welcome to you who have taken up the form of a bird. Along with my wife I am, with (i.e. bowing) my head, saluting both your lotus-like feet. Let us have religious merit through your grace. Who are you that are in the form a bird, talking such good (words)? O best one, (the fruit of) whatever good or bad deed is done by the former body (in a former existence) is enjoyed here only.

31b-33a. Then he told him his account. He heard it (i.e. it was) as it was told by his father Kuñjala. "Tell me the account of you who are talking to me." Then the best bird said these words to Subāhu:

Vijvala said:

33b-36a. My father, Kuñjala by name, was born in the species of parrots. Among his sons, I am the third, Vijvala by name. O you of great arms, I am not a god, not a gandharva, nor am I a siddha. Everyday I am observing (your) very terrible deed. O great king, tell me now how long you will (continue to) do this deed full of violence?

Subāhu said:

36b-38a. When I shall hear the hymn called Vāsudeva-hymn which was formerly recited by the brāhmaṇas, then, O good man, I shall find my own course (to salvation). The sage, of a controlled mind, has said that then I shall be undoubtedly free from my sin.

Vijvala said:

38b-39. For you I asked my father. O best one, listen. I shall tell you the eternal (truth) that he told me: Om, of this hymn called Vāsudeva-hymn, Nārada is (the author); anuṣṭup is the metre. Oṃkāra is the (presiding) deity. I employ (myself) in repeating the prayers for the destruction of all sins and for accomplishing the four goals (of human life). The hymn is: "Om Namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya (My salutation to the holy Vāsudeva).

40-51. I salute Praṇava (i.e. the sacred syllable 'Om') that is purifying, very meritorious, that knows the Vedas, that is the abode of the Vedas, the support of learning, and of existence. I salute the highest Praṇava, which is without an abode, which has no form, which is very bright and very glorious, which is qualityless (yet) connected with qualities. I salute (the Praṇava) that is very lovely, very energetic, that destroys great delusion, that fills all the world, and is beyond qualities. He coming into existence, shines everywhere, and increases prosperity. I salute Śiva (or auspicious) Praṇava that is fearless and connected with mendicants. I salute Praṇava that is the singer of Gāyatrī and Sāman, the song and the one to whom songs are dear; and that enjoys the singing of gandharvas. I salute that Oṃkāra, that is the thought, that is of the form of the Vedas, that remains in the sacrifice and that is affectionate towards the devotees, and that is the origin of the entire world. I salute that Praṇava (in the form of) Hari, which, manifesting itself in the form of a boat, is the emancipator of all beings drowning in the ocean of the worldly existence. I salute that auspicious Praṇava (or Praṇava in the form of Śiva), which, living in many ways in the same form in all the worlds, is the abode in the form of salvation. I salute (that Praṇava) which is subtle (nay), subtler, pure, qualityless, the principal quality, which is free from unrefined states, and which is the abode of the Vedas (or of which Vedas are the abode). I salute that Oṃkāra which is always free from the losses of gods and demons and (is full of) contentment; and which is being meditated upon by gods and meditating saints. I salute Praṇava, the lord, which is (all-)pervading, which is omniscient, which is the highest pure knowledge, which is Śiva (or pure), which has auspicious qualities, and which is tranquil. I salute (that Praṇava),

having entered whose illusion, gods and demons like Brahmā, do not find the very pure gate of salvation.

52-78. (My) salutation to that very lustrous, pure, Vāsudeva, the bulb of joy, of pure intelligence, and the lord of the demi-gods. I always seek the refuge of the lord, who is shining with the Pāñcajanya (conch), with the Sudarśana (disc) lustrous like the sun and with (his) mace and lotus. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva who is concealed by the Vedas, who is possessed of qualities and is the support of qualities and of the movable and the immovable, whose lustre is like that of fire and the sun. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, the receptacle of hunger, pure and handsome, shining with joy and respect, reaching whom all the worlds (like those of) gods, live. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, bright and lustrous like the sun, who destroys with his own rays masses of darkness, who is always the object of worship. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, who shines everywhere (and) causes drying up with his sunlike lustres and gives water, and who is the internal air of living beings. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, who, the god of gods, sustains, according to his will, all worlds and all kins, and acts like a boat in helping (beings) to cross (the ocean of the mundane existence). I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, who, full of the worlds, is always present (in bodies) of the mobile and the immobile, and digests (food) with the mouth of Svāhā, and is the cause of the host of gods. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, the pleasant one and the giver of qualities in the world, who with all very good saps, nourishes, with pure lustre, foods. That (Vāsudeva), the cause of destruction, the refuge of all, full of everything and complete is present everywhere. He enjoys the objects of sense without the organs of sense. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva. He then sustains, with his own form, the mobile and immobile worlds—his own forms. He is utterly perfect, full of knowledge and very pure. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva. I seek the shelter of that Vāsudeva—the destroyer of the demons, the root (cause) of the destruction of misery, the tranquil, the highest, the huge one, full of power, reaching whom the gods become humble. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva (who is) happiness, the limit of happiness, the giver of happiness, the lord of gods, the ocean of knowledge, the protector of sages, the chief of gods, the prop of truth,

and practising the virtue of truth. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva (who is) of the form of the sacrificial requisites, who is of the nature of the highest truth, (who is) endowed with the cosmic power, the lord of Lakṣmī, (who is) fierce (yet) auspicious, (who) alone (is) knowledge, and (who is) the abode of the worlds. His bed is in the ocean. He sleeps on the huge hood of snake (i.e. Śeṣa). I everyday salute the holy couple of the lotus-like feet of that Vāsudeva. The two feet of the holy Vāsudeva are full of merit, confer happiness, are always being attended upon by the holy places, and they remove sins. I always salute the lotus-like feet of the holy Vāsudeva which resemble large red lotuses, have the good marks of lotuses, are fit for conquest, and are adorned with the prints of anklets. I always salute the holy feet of the holy Vāsudeva, which are always devoutly praised by gods, good siddhas, sages and lords of serpents. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, by bathing in the water of whose feet, sages, being purified and freed from sins and well-pleased, obtain salvation. There are always (present) holy places like the Ganges where the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu remains. Those with their bodies (stained) by fierce sins, sprinkled with the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, go to (i.e. obtain) salvation. I always salute the two feet of that highest lord only. Men obtain the fruit of the holy Vājapeya (sacrifice) on having properly eaten the offering of eatables (done in honour) of the noble (Viṣṇu), the holder of the great disc; and they become endowed with all (desired) objects. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa, the destroyer of hells, free from illusion, perfect and knowing (i.e. appreciating) virtues, by meditating upon whom men obtain a good course (i.e. salvation). With devotion I salute the good, excellent, sanctifying couple of the feet of him (i.e. Viṣṇu) who is saluted by hosts of sages, siddhas and bards, who is always worshipped by gods, who is the chief, first lord i.e. Brahmā in bringing about the creation of the universe, and who is the affectionate emancipator of him who has fallen into the great ocean of the worldly existence. I salute the extremely purifying couple of the lotus-like feet of the holy Vāmana (i.e. Viṣṇu) that removed, with the auspicious glances, the sin of Bali, and who was seen singing the Sāmans in the sacrificial hall by hosts of gods and who, the only lord of the three worlds and eager to sing Sāmanas (was

seen) by the groups of gods. I salute that lord Vāmana, shining in the group of brāhmaṇas at the head of the satrifice, adorned with Brahmanic glory, full of rays with bright divine lustre resembling a sapphire, and imploring for the good of gods, that good son of Vairocana (as:) 'Give me (the land covered by my) three steps.' I praise the matchless stride of the lord, the holder of the good disc, to see which (stride) in the orb of the sun, which covered the heaven in the interval between the setting of the moon and the sun, the groups of sages reached heaven, and became merged into his body—the big sheath of the universe."

CHAPTER NINETYNINE

God Viṣṇu Appears to Subāhu

Viṣṇu said:

1-5. The king, on hearing the hymn which was pure, very ancient, which removed sins, which was full of merit and auspicious, which was blessed, which contained good words, which was greatly fit to be muttered, became happy. His great thirst, along with his hunger, vanished. The lord of the earth became like a god. His wife also shone. Both of them, freed from the bondage of sin, became endowed with good form. That god, the holder of the auspicious conch, disc, lotus, mace and sword, surrounded by great gods, brāhmaṇas, great siddhas full of the devotion of Hari came to the king whose sins had vanished. The holy Nārada, Bhārgava, Vyāsa (came there). The son of Mṛkaṇḍa (also) came there. The sage Vālmīki, Viṣṇu's devotee, (so also) Vasiṣṭha, the son of Brahmā, came there. The illustrious Garga, full of devotion for Viṣṇu, Jābāli and Raibhya, so also Kaśyapa, (all) dear to Viṣṇu, and best among the followers of Viṣṇu, came there with Viṣṇu.

6-8a. They (who were) meritorious and very blessed, (who were) free from sins, (who were) full of devotion for the lotus-like feet of Hari, stood there, surrounding Hari, and praised the king in various ways. All gods led by Fire, so also Brahmā and

Hari* and very divine goddesses (came there). Good singers like the gandharva-king sang divinely, sweetly and charmingly. Sages praised him with very auspicious hymns from the Vedas and furnished with the most sublime truth.

8b-11. Seeing the lord, the king, god Viṣṇu spoke (these) charming words: "O king, ask for the desired boon; I shall grant it to you, since you have pleased me." The king, hearing the words of Viṣṇu, a blue lotus (in complexion), the destroyer of Mura, the lord holding the conch, disc, sword and mace, the highest lord accompanied by Lakṣmī and bright with gems, adorned with bracelets and necklaces, bright like the sun, well attended upon by gods, well adorned with ornaments like costly necklaces, (with his body) besmeared with very divine sandal (pastes), and talking in front of him, went down to the earth (i.e. prostrated before Viṣṇu) with great devotion.

12-16. The great king constantly saluted (Hari) with prostrations and with the words: "Victory to you. I am your slave, your servanta, always (standing) before you. I donot know either devotion or best manners. O Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), protect me, who have, along with my wife, sought your refuge. O Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu), those men who are always engrossed in meditation upon you, are blessed. From here they, being extremely pure, and uttering (your names) Bhava, Mādhava, go to Vaikuṇṭha. Those men who carry on their head the pure water coming out (i.e. flowing from) your lotus-like feet, have (certainly) bathed in the water coming from all holy places. They go to the good abode of Hari. I do not have deep and abstract meditation. I do not have knowledge. I do not have any exertion. Due to (my) contact with what (kind of) religious merit are you granting me a boon ?"

Hari said:

17-18. O king, there is no doubt that you are getting salvation because you heard from the pure and sinless Vijvala, the great sin-destroying (hymn) called Vāsudeva (-hymn). In my world enjoy divine pleasures according to your desire.

The king said:

19. O god, if I, a poor person, am to be granted a boon, then first give an excellent boon to Vijvala.

*Obviously a misprint. It should be Hara (god Śiva).

Hari said:

20-22. O king, Vijvala's father Kuñjala, adorned with knowledge, everyday recites the great hymn (in honour) of Vāsudeva. With his sons and wife, he will go to my abode. He always mutters this hymn; (so) I shall give him (its) fruit.

When these auspicious words were said (by Viṣṇu), the king spoke to Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu): "O Keśava, make this very auspicious hymn fruitful."

Hari said:

23-30. O great king, when, in the Kṛtayuga, men will praise (me with this hymn), they will undoubtedly go to (i.e. obtain) salvation (just) at that moment. O best king, those men who would mutter this hymn (in honour) of Viṣṇu, leading to salvation, for just three months in Tretāyuga, for six months in Dvāparayuga, and for a year in Kaliyuga, go to heaven. A brāhmaṇa who mutters it thrice or once (a day), gets whatever is desired by him. A kṣatriya, adorned with wealth and grains, gets victory. A viaiśya will be rich; a śūdra will be happy. He who relates this to a man of an inferior tribe, becomes free from sin. The hearer never sees (i.e. goes to) a terrible hell; and due to the grace of my hymn he will have accomplished everything. The manes of him who will recite it (i.e. get it recited) by brāhmaṇas at the time of a śrāddha, will go to Viṣṇu's heaven after being satisfied. A brāhmaṇa or a kṣatriya should mutter (this hymn) at the end of presenting libations to the manes of the dead ancestors. His manes, with their minds pleased, drink nectar.

31-36a. If a man devoutly mutters this at the time of offering oblations to gods in a sacrifice, no difficulties come up there (i.e. in the sacrifice), and he will accomplish everything. One should utter this hymn in a danger in a difficult place, or in danger from a fierce tiger, or when danger from thieves has come up. O great king, that (danger etc.) will be removed. There is no doubt about it. At other auspicious (times) or when a man has gone, to the gate of a royal palace he mutters (i.e. should mutter) the hymn called Vāsudeva (-hymn) for ten thousand times. Well-

bathed, free from anger and greed, with his mind controlled, a man should, with chastity, offer a sacrifice with sesamum-seeds, rice mixed with ghee of the measure of one-tenth (of them), after having worshipped Vāsudeva. Then men should offer a sacrifice to the hymn of praise.

36b. Like a good servant I never leave their side.

37-38a. When Kaliyuga has come (the recital) will give servitude to the hymn (i.e. the hymn will be a servant). It is (i.e.) should not be given to any one indiscriminately for fear of the) violation of (the sacredness of) the Vedas. He will be rich with all his desired objects here (i.e. in this world) only.

38b-42a. O king, listen, I have made this hymn fruitful. It was fashioned (i.e. composed) by Brahmā. Formerly it was muttered by Rudra. He was free from (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Indra also was free from sin. So also were gods, sages, guhyas (a class of demigods), siddhas, and the immortal vidyādharas. The serpent-demons propitiated the hymn, and obtained the complete attainment as desired by them. The donor, who will mutter my hymn, will be meritorious and blessed here (i.e. in this world). No doubt should be raised in this matter. O best king, come to my abode with your wife.

42b-45. Hari supported the king with his hand. There (at that time) drums (were) sounded; gandharvas sang lovely songs. Best celestial nymphs danced. All gods and sages showered flowers. They praised him with hymns. Then the king, along with his wife, went to Viṣṇu. That Vijvala, with his mind delighted, saw him being praised by hosts of gods and siddhas. He, of a great prowess, came there where his father and mother were.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED

Vena Asks to Hear More about Kuñjala

Viṣṇu said:

1-8a. (Vijvala's) father (Kuñjala) lived on a bunyan tree on the beautiful bank of Narmadā. Vijvala too came there, and the very intelligent, religious-minded one narrated to his father the greatness of the hymn called Vāsudeva (-hymn). With a very much pleased mind he told him as to how Viṣṇu came there and gave him (i.e., Subāhu) an auspicious boon. Kuñjala also, having heard the account of that king, was full of great joy, and having embraced his son said: "O child, by narrating the very auspicious (hymn) of Vāsudeva (to the king) you have done a meritorious deed and an obligation to the noble king." Having thus spoken to his god-like son, having congratulated him with blessings, and having repeatedly praised him, he remained on the beautiful bank of the river, while Cyavana was beholding. O great king, I have told you all this account of those devotees of Viṣṇu. What else should I tell you ?

Vena said:

8b-12a. You have given me, through the vessel of a conch, nectar to drink. Therefore, which mortal on the earth will not have a strong desire to drink it? The knowledge about Viṣṇu is always the best drink here (i.e. on the earth). I am not satisfied when it is thus being narrated by you. O lord of gods, my strong desire to hear it increases. Through grace (i.e. be graceful and) tell me about the activities of Kuñjala. What did the noble one say to his fourth son? Please tell that to me in great detail.

The lord said:

12b-14. Listen, I shall tell you Kuñjala's account, so also Cyavana's account full of great religious merit. O best of men, this meritorious account destroys sins. The man who devoutly listens to it, would get the fruit of (having performed) a thousand sacrifices.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ONE

Kapiñjala's Narration

Sūta said:

1-2. Viṣṇu, the god of gods, told the best king, the son of Aṅga, the very meritorious account that destroys sins. Listen, I shall narrate to you the meritorious account, and also the account of the noble Kuñjala.

Viṣṇu said:

3-4a. And the pious Kuñjala with joy called his fourth son Kapiñjala, and said to him: "O son, tell me what wonder you saw. O best son, to which (forest) did you go for your food from here? Tell me, O blessed one, what very meritorious (event) you have seen.

Kapiñjala said:

4b-24. O father, I shall narrate to you the wonder about which you have asked, which no one has seen or heard (before) and which I have not heard from any one. I shall tell it just now. O father, listen to it now. May all (my) brothers listen to it. O mother, you (too) listen to it now. The mountain Kailāsa is the best one. It is white like the moon. It is full of many minerals, and is adorned with various trees. O father, it is washed all round with the auspicious, pleasing water of the Ganges. O father, from which (i.e. from that mountain) thousands of divine rivers of various kinds have arisen. So also various kinds (of streams of) water (have arisen from it). On the great mountain there are thousands of lakes containing water. On the best mountain there are large rivers which are resorted to by swans and cranes, which give religious merit and which destroy sins. There are various thickets of trees full of flowers and fruits, and also full of various trees, green and auspicious. (The mountain) is full of the groups of kinnaras, and is crowded with the celestial nymphs. It is well-adorned with gandharvas, siddhas, bards and hosts of gods. It is possessed of the thickets of divine trees; is full of divine objects; it is very rich with the loveliness of divine fragrances. It is very

beautiful on account of the white slabs of crystal. O king, it is full of the sun's rays and possesses brilliance. Everywhere it is adorned with trees full of flowers like sandal trees of agreeable fragrance, bukula trees with blue flowers. It is pleasant due to the good (i.e. sweet) notes of divine birds. It is pleasant due to the humming of bees and multitudes of trees. That mountain, along with the forest, looks splendid by the notes of cuckoos. There is a Śiva-temple, crowded with crores of Śiva's attendants; with rays (the mountain) was white and was auspicious; it was having auspicious slabs of a heap of virtue. It was on all sides resounding with roaring lions, with buffaloes and elephants; so also with the loud trumpets of the quarter-elephants. It was crowded with various (kinds of) deer and with monkeys. In the caves it was resounding (i.e. its caves were resounding) with the loud notes of peacocks. It was adorned with caves, plasterings and ridges and summits. It was full of many streams. It shone with herbs. It was divine, of a divine merit, and full of auspicious sites. The great mountain, the heap of merit was resorted to by pulindas, bhillas and kolas. The lord of mountains shone with frightful peaks and with huts; pure, auspicious and meritorious pleasures and a great sound of the streams of the water of the Ganges spread about.

25-26a. There (i.e. on the mountain) is the abode of Śaṅkara. To (that) Kailāsa I had gone. There I saw a wonder which was never seen or heard of (before). O father, listen to all that will be said by me.

26b-30. From the auspicious, highly rising peak of the lord of mountains (like that of Meru), a snowy, milky and golden stream flows (down) on the ground; and O glorious one, this stream of the Ganges adorned with (i.e. flowing with) a thundering sound has speedily reached the peak of Kailāsa and has expanded there. There is a great pool of water (in the stream) of the Ganges of the measure of ten yojanas. It shines with much auspicious and pure water. It has received auspiciousness from all sides and greatly shines with large swans. (It is auspicious because of) auspicious, divine, sweet utterance of the sāmans. The swans coo there, and by that (cooing) the lake looks splendid.

31-46. O you very intelligent one, on its bank on a slab of stone was seated Himālaya's daughter (i.e. Pārvatī) with her hair

let loose, and endowed with the wealth of beauty. She, well-endowed with a divine form, virtuous, of divine characteristics, and adorned with divine ornaments shone on its bank. I do not know whether she was the daughter of the lord of mountains (i.e. Pārvatī) or the daughter of the great ocean (i.e. Lakṣmī) or was Brahmā's wife (viz. Sarasvatī) or was Svāhā (the wife of Agni) or she was the illustrious Indrāṇī (i.e. the wife of Indra) or Rohiṇī (the spouse of the Moon). O father, by all means such wealth of beauty is not observed (in the case) of other very divine young females. Such marks of beauty, qualities and character (that) were noticed in her, so also her body deluding the universe which I saw were not to be seen (even) in the celestial nymphs. That young girl, seated on a slab and full of grief, and (being) without many kinsmen, wept very melodiously. She shed many pearllike tears. The pure tears fell into the lake, O very intelligent ones. The drops (i.e. the tears), resembling pearls, fell into that great (mass of) water. From them arose lotuses which were charming and fragrant. O highly intelligent one, from the tears (that fell) from her eyes, lotuses were produced. Those innumerable (lotuses) floated in the water of the Ganges. The very pleasant ones speedily fell into the stream of the Ganges, well-resorted to by multitudes of swans. The stream of the Ganges has flowed out from that place. Reaching the top of Kailāsa, called Ratna and having pleasant caves, it is full of water and has extended over a couple of yojanas. It was crowded with groups of swans and full of aquatic birds. There are lotuses of many special colours in the pure stream resorted to by groups of sages. The lotuses which were produced from the tears in the morning were large and fragrant and floated in the pure stream of the Ganges full of water, which time and again resounded with the (notes of) beautiful swans and aquatic birds.

Sūta said:

47-53. O father, the great lord (Śiva called Ratneśvara), very venerable to gods and demons, always remains on that mountain called Ratna. O father, there I saw a sage full of religious merit, covered with a mass of matted hair, without any clothes and holding a staff. He was without any support, (lived) without food, was very weak due to penance, emaciated, (just) a bundle

of bones, and covered with skin only. The limbs of the noble one were powdered with ashes only. He, of a great penance, with an improper support and seated in devotion to Śiva would eat dry and withered leaves fallen (there). Bringing those fragrant lotuses from the water of the Ganges, he, the noble one, skilled in singing and dancing, would worship the god of gods, Ratneśvara (with them). The religious-minded one, coming to the temple and remaining at the door of the enemy of Tripura, sang and danced, and also wept melodiously.

54-57. O father, O best of speakers, this is the wonder that I saw. Through favour (i.e. being favourable to me) tell me the reason if you know it. O noble one, who is that girl? Why would (i.e. does) that man worship the great god (i.e. Śiva)? Tell me all that in detail, which is the cause of (my) doubt." The very intelligent Kuñjala, who was thus addressed by his son Kapiñjala, spoke to him, while the sage was listening.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWO

Aśokasundarī Is Born

Kuñjala said:

1-3. O child, now I shall explain to you all that you said: as to what their splendour originated from, O you best twice-born. Once the great goddess Pārvatī, the best among women, while sporting, said (these) words to the lord: "O great god, in my mind a great longing has sprung up. To me (please) show a grove that is best among groves."

Śrī Mahādeva said:

4. Let it be so, O great goddess. I shall show you the Nandana, crowded with gods and resorted to by brāhmaṇas and siddhas.

5-11a. Having thus spoken to that goddess, he, Mahādeva, was eager to go to Nandanavana itself with her and the atten-

dants. He, surrounded by crores of attendants, mounted his bull (i.e. Nandī) who was beautiful in all limbs, whose back was divine, who was endowed with ornaments, who was furnished with bells and garlands, who wore multitudes of small bells, who was well-decorated with chowries, silken threads and pearl-necklaces, who resembled a swan and the moon and who had pleasing characteristics. Nandī, Bhṛṅgī, Mahākāla, Skanda, Caṇḍa, Manohara, Vīrabhadra, Gaṇeśa, Puṣpadanta, Maṇiśvara, Atibala, Subala, Meghanāda, Ghaṭāvaha, Ghaṇṭākarṇa, Kālinda, Pulinda, Vīrabāhuka, Keśarīkiṅkara, Caṇḍahāsa, Prajāpatī—these and others like Sanaka, whose power was penance, (accompanied him).

11b-12. That Śiva was (thus) surrounded by attendants numbering crores. Mahādeva, accompanied by the attendants and the goddess entered Nandanavana only which was resorted to by gods and kinnaras.

13-36a. The lord of gods showed Pārvatī that beautiful Nandanavana which was rich with various trees, full of many flowers, which was charming, which was crowded with plantain-trees, and with campaka trees with flowers, with jasmine-creepers having abundant flowers, and full of a number of mālatī creepers, which always shone with branches full of flowers, and with excellent groves of pāṭala-trees, and with great sandal trees of pleasant fragrance. It was full of groves of devadāru trees, and crowded with tall trees, with sarala trees, coconut trees, also with betel-nut trees, with divine date-trees, bread-fruit trees, bent down with the loads of fruits, with trees exuding fragrance—thus it was full of big trees. It was well-adorned with saptaparṇa trees, resembling the lustre of fire. It was full of great rose-apple trees, nimba trees, and citron trees, with orange trees, sindhuvāra trees, priyāla trees, śāla trees and tinduka trees, udumbara trees, wood-apple trees, and was adorned with rose-apple trees. It was full of trees like mango, the king of fruits, Indian fig-trees resembling clouds, divine groves of dark-blue, also with groves of trees with unblown flowers. It was resorted to by (i.e. it contained) large tamāla trees resembling the sun. It was beautified by other trees all resembling dark-blue groves; it was adorned with very auspicious desire-yielding trees full of all desired fruits and giving auspicious fruits. It was full of sweet notes and cries of various

birds. It resounded with the auspicious cooings of cuckoos and with bees. It resounded with the notes of birds longing for honey. It was crowded with trees of many kinds and was full of many herds of deer. O son, that (piece of) land shines with various fragrant flowers fallen from trees it is; as it were worshipped with fragrant flowers. O son, there are very auspicious wells, pure with the fragrance of lotuses. They are full of water and are resorted to by swans and ducks. The great Nandana shines everywhere with lakes resembling seas and endowed with the fragrance of water, and with hosts of celestial nymphs. The lordly Nandana grove shines everywhere with halls, white pitchers, beautiful golden staffs, whitewashed palaces and with large hosts of kinnaras. That auspicious appearing Nandana shone everywhere with gandharvas, beautiful celestial nymphs, amusements of deities and with groups of sages and good meditating saints. Magnanimous Bhava (i.e. Śiva) of a great prowess along with that great goddess (Pārvatī) saw that glorious, auspicious Nandana, the abode of the meritorious, the mine of happiness and endowed with the quality of tranquility. In the Nandana grove also the beautiful desire-yielding tree endowed with desired flowers and fruits shone along with rays like masses of lustre of the sun. Seeing such lordly tree the goddess said to Śiva: "O lord, tell (me) the auspicious name of this all-meritorious tree". That Śiva, the great sun among all the luminaries around, said to the goddess:

Śiva said:

36b-39. The great position of this is known as auspicious; and Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) is the chief among gods. The divine river (i.e. the Ganges) is the chief among rivers. As the beautiful moon is the chief among those that are pleasant, as the earth is the chief among the elements, as the lord of elephants (i.e. Airāvata) is chief among elephants, as the ocean is the chief among reservoirs, as, O respectable lady, corn is the chief among herbs, as the Himālaya is the chief among the mountains, as metaphysical knowledge is the chief among lores, as the lord of men (i.e. a king) is the chief among all people, in the same way this lord of trees a welcome guest of all, is dear to the lord of gods.

Śrī Pārvatī said:

40-42. O Śambhu, tell me the auspicious and pure quality of this lord of trees.

Hearing the words of the goddess he told her everything about that good tree. (He said:) "This best tree called 'Kalpa-druma' gives to the very meritorious gods, those that resemble gods, and best gods, whatever they resolve. All auspicious objects are produced from this (tree). The very important gods, superior due to their penance, having obtained here only the very divine (object) full of gems, superior to life (even) which is difficult to get, enjoy it."

43-49. The goddess heard the wonderful words of Śiva. With his consent she mentally conceived a very virtuous and beautiful gem of a body. The Daughter of the Mountain obtained from that great tree a woman who was (so) lovely in all limbs, virtuous and beautiful that she, helping Cupid, had come to delude the universe. She was the treasure of sport; she was of the form of the accomplishment of happiness; she was endowed with everything; she was having large and lotus-like eyes; her face was lotus-like; her hands resembled lotuses; she was beautiful Lakṣmī; she was like a good figure of gold; like that her hair was clean and very bright in splendour, pleasantly bright, very curly and long, was very delicately tied and was covered with fragrant flowers. That young lady, with her hair tied, looked splendid with the firm knots of hair and excellent form. As on the boundary-line of the trees the line of the muktā-flowers shines, similarly on the parting line of her hair, a chaplet of pearls shone. At the root of the parting of hair of the very respectable lady there was a mark, like the bright preceptor of the demons (i.e. Venus) that had risen. On the brows were two lotuses. The lotus-like navel like that of a deer shone with its mass of lustre. The brilliance of the mark at the root of parting of hair displayed the wealth of her beauty in the good world; so also the pearls on her hair and forehead always spread out beauty.

50-52a. As the beautiful moon shines with lustre, so she of charming movements, shone. As the full moon, the mass of cool rays, shines with the canopy of the moonlight, in the same way

her face causing charm and celebrated in the universe, shone. Even the moon is having the spot, and losing the digits everyday, wanes; but her face, always joyful and spotless, is always full.

52b-54a. The lotus, having looked with disapproval at its own fragrance (and thinking)—'This lady with a lotus-like face and endowed with all virtues is fashioned with my properties'—did not then feel happy on seeing its own exuding fragrance. The wind (moving in) the world blew from her mouth. Being suddenly ashamed, it always remained in water after resorting to it.

54b-55. Some very intelligent people with their judgement restrained by their mind (i.e. after proper thought) said: 'O good Cupid, as the treasure of a king is full of the bits (i.e. gems) of the sea, in the same way, her mouth, looking charming with the bimba-like lower lip and with the charming smile, is looking charming with gem-like excellent teeth.'

56-64a. She had good eyebrows, her nose fine, her ears were adorned with jewels. Her cheeks having golden complexion, were possessed of brightness. The three lines existing on the neck shone very much. Here (i.e. on the neck) there were three lines with (i.e. respresenting) her good fortune, good character and love. Her breasts were hard, plump and resembled a round figure. They were pitchers of Cupid intended for sprinkling (water from). Her even shoulders looked very beautiful, and were in company of the heart. Her arms were good; they were round, soft, of a good complexion and possessed good marks. Her lotus-like hands were very even, had the colour of lotuses and were very cool. They were endowed with divine characteristics and possessed the marks of a lotus and swastika on them. Her fingers were straight, held lotuses and had nails. The nails were very sharp and were like drops of water. The complexion of her body resembled the interior of a lotus. Her (body) odour was like that of a lotus. The beautiful young lady looked splendid like Lakṣmī. The daughter of the tree was endowed with all good characteristics and was very beautiful. Her feet resembled red lotuses, were very soft, and very beautiful. The nails growing from the toes had the shape of the flashes (shooting) from gems.

64b-66. (Everything) as is laid down in the scientific works

(about beauty) was seen in her limbs. Her body looked beautiful due to all ornaments. She had put on a necklace, bracelets and anklets. She shone with the belt and girdle and with the sound of the (tinkling bells) of the girdle. The auspicious one attained great beauty by means of blue silken garment. She, endowed with qualities, (looked very beautiful) due to a divine and a very red bodice.

67. From the idea conceived by her, Pārvatī obtained an excellence—a great production. She obtained joy from the desire-yielding tree. She said (these) words to Śaṅkara:

68. "O god, I saw the tree as you had described it. As an object is conceived, so it is seen."

Sūta said:

69. Then that lady beautiful in all limbs came near their side (i.e. approached them) and with devotion saluted their lotus-like feet.

70. Then she spoke affectionate, pleasant and attractive words: "O lord, O mother, tell me the reason for which I was produced."

Śrī Devī (i.e. Pārvatī) said:

71-74. Through curiosity about the truth about the tree I conceived you. O good lady, the fruit, i.e. you, the wealth of beauty is instantly obtained. You are undoubtedly my daughter endowed with all good fortune. You will be known in the world as Aśokasundarī. Nahuṣa, lord of kings, well known in the lunar family, like god Indra, will be your husband.

The mountain's Daughter (viz. Pārvatī), thus gave her a boon and went with great joy, accompanied by Śaṅkara, to the Kailāsa mountain.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDERED THREE

Aśokasundarī Is Saved and Āyu Gets Boon

Kuñjala said:

1-2. At that time Aśokasundarī was born as the best woman. She, of a charming smile, skilled in singing and dancing and enjoying all pleasures along with the very beautiful daughters of gods sported in the excellent, meritorious Nandana endowed with all desired objects.

3-4. Vipracitti's son Huṇḍa, who was always violent, impetuous and very lustful entered Nandana. After seeing Aśokasundarī, endowed with all ornaments, he was, at her sight, piereed by the arrows of Cupid.

5. He, of a huge body said to her: "O auspicious one, who are you? To whom do you belong? For what reason have you come to this excellent Nandana (garden)?"

Aśokasundarī said:

6. Now listen. I am the daughter of the very meritorious Śiva. I am the sister of Kārtikeya and the Mountain's Daughter (i.e. Pārvatī) is my mother.

7. Due to childhood (i.e. being a child) I have playfully reached the Nandana grove. Who are you? Why are you asking me like this ?

Huṇḍa said:

8-11. I am Vipracitti's son, endowed with good qualities and characteristics. I am well-known as Huṇḍa, haughty due to might and power. O you of a beautiful face, even among the demons I am the best, and there is no other demon like me among gods, in human worlds or in other worlds (like that) of serpents in respect of penance, glory in the family, or wealth and pleasures. O you of large eyes, on seeing you I have been struck by the arrows of Cupid. I have sought your refuge. Be pleased to favour me. Be my dear wife, dear to me like my own life.

Aśokasundarī said:

12-20. Listen, I shall tell you the cause of all contacts

between well-born men and women; so listen, O Huṇḍa, it is the way of the world in this mundane existence that the husband of a woman would be suitable to her in respect of virtues. There is a reason why I shall not be your worthy wife. O lord of the demon-kings, listen with a subdued mind. When I was born from the lord of trees, I was thought of by Pārvatī, after properly grasping Śiva's mind. With the god's consent, the goddess also produced my husband. He will be (born) in the lunar dynasty. He will be very intelligent and religious-minded. He will be a conqueror, and will resemble Jiṣṇu of (i.e. Viṣṇu or Arjuna) in valour, and will be like fire in brilliance. He will be omniscient, veracious, and will resemble Kubera in (point of) charity. He will be a sacrificer, a lord of charity (i.e. a great donor), and will be like Cupid in handsomeness. He will be named Nahuṣa, will be righteous and a great treasure of virtues and good character. He is given to me by the goddess (Pārvatī) and the god (Śiva). My husband will be famous. From him I shall obtain a handsome son, endowed with all good qualities. Due to the grace of Śiva, I shall obtain from him a son (named) Yayāti, resembling Indra and Viṣṇu, and dear to people in the world, and brave in battle.

21. O brave Huṇḍa, I am a loyal wife, and am especially the wife of someone else. Therefore, completely give up the wrong notion and go (away) from here.

22a. He just laughed and said (these) word to Aśokasundarī.

Huṇḍa said:

22b-30a. What you said (that) the goddess and the god (have given Nahuṣa as your husband) is not proper. That righteous one, named Nahuṣa will be (born) in the lunar dynasty. You are senior in age, so he who is younger is not fit (to be your husband). A younger woman is commended (to be the wife), and not a younger man (to be the husband). O good lady, when will that man be your husband? Freshness and youth will certainly perish. O you of an excellent complexion, beautiful women always become dear to men on the strength of their youth. O you of a beautiful face, youth is the great capital of women. Supported by it they enjoy pleasure and objects as desired by

them. O good lady, when will that son of Āyu come to you? Listen to me. Youth exists just (for) today. It will be useless (later). Listen, he will have to pass through conditions like living in the womb, childhood and adolescence. When will he be endowed with the splendour of youth and be fit for you? O you of large eyes, with the splendour of youth, drink an intoxicating drink. Enjoy happily with me.

30b-38. Hearing the words of Huṇḍa, Śiva's daughter, full of fright, again spoke to that lord of demons: "When the twentieth yuga called Dvāpara will come, the righteous Bala (i.e. Balarāma), the incrarnation of Śeṣa and son of Vasudeva, will take the divine daughter of Revata as his wife. O illustrious one, she is already born in the best yuga called Kṛta. She is older than he by the measure of three yugas. That Revatī has become dear to Bala (rāma) like his own life. When the future Dvāpara (yuga) will come, she will be born here. Formerly she was born as Māyāvatī, an excellent daughter of a gandharva. The best demon Śambara kidnapped and confined her. In that yuga, the best hero Pradyumna, the son of Mādhava, the lord of Yādavas, is declared to be her husband. He will be her husband. This future (event) is seen by ancient illustrious and noble (sages) like Vyāsa. Such are the words uttered about me by the goddess, the mother of the world, and the daughter of Himālaya, at that time, O demon.

39-42. And you, covetous through greed and passion are talking (words) which are wicked, full of sin, and without (i.e. not supported by) the Vedas and religious treatises. Whatever, good or bad is firmly ordained in the case of a person according to his former deeds, takes place in his case. If the words (that are) in the mouth of gods and brāhmaṇas come out and are true, they shall never be otherwise. This is ordained due to my destiny, and that of that Nahuṣa. Having thought of the union (of us two) like this only the goddess and Śiva also said (like that).

43-44. Realising this, be calm and give up the wrong notion haunting your mind. O demon, you shall certainly not be able to lead away my mind. I am a loyal wife, firm in mind; who can lead me away? I shall burn you with a great curse. O great demon, go from here."

45-48. Hearing these words of her, the mighty demon Huṇḍa thought in his mind (i.e. to himself): 'How would this one be my wife?' Thinking like this, the deceitful Huṇḍa vanished. Then leaving her and speedily going out from that place, the next day he came there fashioning illusion full of sin. O my son, the demon having taken up a divine, illusive form of a woman, became of the form of (i.e. turned himself into) a lady through illusion. That very beautiful young lady took up an illusory form. Engaged in laughing and sports she went to that place, where Śiva's daughter (i.e. Aśokasundarī) stayed.

49-50. As if affectionate (towards her) she said (these) words to Aśokasundarī: "O you blessed one, who are you? To whom do you belong? O young lady, why do you stay in the penance-grove and practise the penance drying up your passion? Tell me, O very fortunate one, for what reason (you are practising the penance) very difficult to practice."

51-53. Hearing those auspicious words uttered by the demon of an illusory form who had concealed his original form and who had a longing (for her), that lady, who was very much afflicted, quickly told him the account of her creation as it had formerly taken place, and also all the reason for (taking up) the penance. (She) also (told him about) the harassment done by that wicked demon. She did not recognize his illusory form, and (so) through affection she told him (everything).

Huṇḍa said:

54-57a. O respectable lady, you are a loyal wife, you are engaged in good vows. Your character and behaviour are good, your actions are pious, and you are a very chaste lady. O good lady, I am a loyal wife, and am devoted to my husband. I, a great chaste woman, am practising penance for my husband. That wicked Huṇḍa also killed my husband. For his destruction I am practising great (i.e. severe) penance. Come to my holy hermitage. I stay on the bank of the Ganges.

57b-62. That daughter of Śiva was addressed by her (i.e, Huṇḍa) with other charming and convincing words, and Huṇḍa, through friendly feeling, deluded her. Deluded through folly she was very speedily attracted by him. He brought her to his divine,

matchless and very beautiful house. O son, on the peak of Meru there is an excellent city, known as Vaidūrya, full of all good qualities, very auspicious and named Kāñcana. The entire city of the demon was thronged with tall palaces, with pitchers, staffs and chowries. It was full of dark-blue groves resembling clouds, and full of various trees, also with wells, pools and lakes and with rivers and reservoirs. It shone with great jewels and with ramparts furnished with gold, and rich in objects satisfying all desires.

63. That Aśokasundarī then saw that beautiful city. "O friend, rell me to which deity this place belongs."

64-65a. He said: "It belongs to that lord of demons whom you have seen before. It is the place of that demon. O illustrious one, I am that best demon. O you of an excellent complexion, through illusion (i.e. by deceiving you) I have brought you (here).

65b-67. (Thus) speaking to her he took her to his golden palace, full of many mansions, and resembling the peak of Kailāsa. He, oppressed by passion, seated that beautiful lady on a swing, took up his original form, and then the lord of the demons, afflicted by the arrows of Cupid, joined the palms of his hands, and said (these) words to her:

68-70. "O good lady, there is no doubt that I shall give you whatever you desire. Resort to me who, being oppressed by passion, am attached to you, O you of large eyes.

The respectable lady (i.e. Aśokasundarī) said:

O lord of demons, you cannot at all lead me astray. Do not even entertain in your mind the delusion about me that has come (to you). I am difficult to be secured by mean demons who are great sinners. There is no doubt about this. Do not talk (like this) again and again.

71-72a. That goddess, born after (i.e. younger sister of) Skanda, endowed with penance, burning with great rage, desiring to destroy that demon, and throbbing like the tongue of Death again spoke to that mean demon:

72b-79a. "O sinner, you have done a fierce deed for (i.e. leading to) the destruction of yourself, for (i.e. bringing about) the

destruction of your family and these your kinsmen. You have brought a burning, bright flame of fire to your house. As an inauspicious, deceitful bird, risen with all (kinds of) misery, brings about the destruction of the house of one whose house it enters, as that bird would desire the destruction of (the man's) kinsmen, all wealth and family also and (then) enter (the man's) house, in the same way, I, desiring your destruction, have come to your house. Undoubtedly I shall now destroy everything belonging to you—your wealth, grain, family, life, sons and grandsons etc. O demon, since you brought me who was practising a great (i.e. severe) penance, and who, longing for a husband, was desiring (to marry) Āyu's son, Nahuṣa, my husband will destroy you.

79b-88. Formerly (only) the god had (fore) seen this remedy in my case. This popular verse, (which) the wise sing, is true. It is actually observed in the world; the wicked-minded do not realize it. There is no dout that one who is to experience pain, pleasure etc. from one does experience it from that very person. You will go to (man). With one's finger-tip one touches a very sharp, fine-edged, good sword. Now know (that touching) me like that would cause anger (in me). Who, being rash and going to a lion who is angry and roaring loudly, would clip the hair from his face? He, who longs for death, desires to enjoy me, who am of a truthful conduct, restrained and remaining in (i.e. practising) penance. He, now, since he is prompted by Death, desires to seize the gem of a black, living cobra; and you, deluded by Death, are sent by Death, O fool. Therefore such wicked thought is produced (in your mind). Do you not realise it? Except the son of Āyu, who looks (i.e. would look at me)? Any other (man than Āyu's son) will die by looking at my form."

89-92. She, who was a chaste lady, who was grieved, who was disturbed with distress, who was controlled, and was observing a religious vow, spoke like this and went to the bank of the Ganges. "Formerly, I, who had practised a severe penance with a desire for (obtaining) a groom, will again, desiring your destruction, practise a hard penance. I shall then go to my husband, when I shall see you, killed by the magnanimous

Nahuṣa with sharp arrows like thunderbolt and resembling serpents, (and see you) the sinner, fallen on the battlefield, with your hair loose, and with blood (oozing from your body)."

93-94. Having made such a great vow for the destruction of Huṇḍa, that firm daughter of Śiva resorted to the excellent bank of the Ganges. As bright, burning flame of fire, full of brilliance would burn the great worlds, the daughter of the lord of gods, burning with rage, practised, on the bank of Ganges, a penance difficult to practise.

Kuñjala said;

95-96. O noble one, having thus spoken, Śiva's daughter, having bathed in the water of the Ganges, went to her own city, called Kāñcana. That young Aśokasundarī, of a slim body, and endowed with truthfulness, practised penance to bring about the death of Huṇḍa.

97-98. Huṇḍa also, with his heart burnt by the curse became afflicted, and, being very much tormented by the fire of words, thought. Having called his minister named Kampana, he said to him. He told him the important news of her curse:

99-100. "I have been cursed by Aśokasundarī, the good daughter of Śiva: 'You will die at the hands of my husband, Nahuṣa.' That child is not (as yet) born; but Āyu's wife is carrying. Act in such a way that the curse would be false."

Kampana said:

101-104. Having kidnapped the wife of Āyu bring her (here). In this way your enemy will not be born. Or, with strong (medicines) cause her abortion. In this way also your enemy will not be born. Mark the time of the birth of that wicked Nahuṣa. Having carried him away, bring him (here) and kill him of a sinful mind.

Having thus held consultation with that Kampana, the demon (Huṇḍa) exerted himself to destroy Nahuṣa.

Viṣṇu said:

105-108. The glorious, righteous son of Aila, named Āyu,

the ornament of the Soma family, the best king and the sovereign emperor knowing all practices, engaged in the vow of truthfulness, resembling Indra and Viṣṇu, ruled under one umbrella (i.e. ruled as the universal sovereign) by means of penance, glory, might, charity, sacrifices, meritorious acts and restraint on the earth. The king (Āyu) did not have a son. So he was unhappy. The righteous one thought: 'How can a son be born to me (i.e. How can I have a son)?'

109. Āyu, the lord of the earth, entertained such a thought. Being composed, he made a great effort for getting a son.

110-113. Atri's son Dattātreya, the high-souled brāhmaṇa, the great sage, with his eyes red due to (having drunk) spirituous liquor, was sporting with a woman. The virtuous one, intoxicated by wine, having seated a young, auspicious woman, best of all women, on his lap, sang, danced and heavily drank liquor. The best among the great meditating saints, the best sage, (who was) without a sacred thread, (and) with his body smeared with sandal and aloe wood paste, shone with divine garlands of flowers and appendages of pearl-necklaces.

114-118. The king, having gone to his hermitage, and seeing the best brāhmaṇa and being well-composed saluted him with his head (bent down), and falling prostrate before him. That pious son of Atri having seen that best king who had come before him with devotion, resorted to meditation. O best one, the king passed a hundred years like this. Having called him who was steady and calm and greatly devoted, he said these (words): "O king, why do you torment yourself? I am void of brāhmaṇic practices. I never had brāhmaṇahood. I am greedy of wine and flesh, and always attached to women. I do not have power to give a boon. (Please) serve (some) other brāhmaṇa."

Āyu said:

119-123. O glorious one, there is no other best brāhmaṇa like you, who grants all desired objects and are the greatest lord in the three worlds. O you illustrious one, you are Viṣṇu, the Garuḍa-bannered one, the highest lord, (born) in the family of Atri in the form of a brāhmaṇa. O chief of the lords of gods, O highest lord, I salute you. O you who are affectionate to those

who submit themselves to you, I have sought your refuge. O Hṛṣīkeśa, emancipate me. You stay (i.e. take pleasure in) causing illusion. I know you to be one who knows the beings living in the universe, who is the chief of the universe, who is the lord of the world and the killer of (the demon) Madhu. O Govinda, O you of a universal form, protect me only. My salutation to you.

Kuñjala said:

124-128. When a long time of many days passed, Dattātreya, in an intoxicated condition, said to the best king: "Do as I tell you. Give me wine in a cup; and the meal of flesh that is got cooked." Hearing those words of him, that Āyu, the lord of the earth, being eager, speedily got wine in a cup, and quickly cut off well-cooked flesh with his hand, and, O best one, the best king gave these to Dattātreya. That best sage became happy in mind. Seeing (Āyu's) devotion, prowess and great service to the preceptor, he spoke to that humble Āyu, the lord of kings:

129. "Well-being to you, O king, ask for a boon that is difficult to be obtained on the earth. I shall now give you everything that you desire."

The king said:

130-135. O best sage, through pity for me you are truly granting (me) a boon. Give me a son endowed with virtues, omniscient, possessed of good qualities, having the might of gods, and unconquerable by gods and demons, kṣatriyas, giants, fierce demons and kinnaras. (He should be) devoted to gods and brāhmaṇas, and (he should) especially look after his subjects. (He should be) sacrificer, lord of charity (i.e. the best donor), brave, affectionate to those who seek his refuge, a donor, an enjoyer, magnanimous and learned in Vedas and sacred treatises, skilled in Dhanurveda (i.e. archery), and well-versed in sacred precepts. His intellect (should be) unbeaten; he (should be) brave and undefeated in battles. He should possess such qualities, be handsome and one from whom the race would come forth. O illustrious one, give me (such) a son sustaining my family, if you, through grace, want to give me another boon, O lord.

Dattātreya said:

136-138. Let it be so, O glorious one. You will have a son, in your mansion, who will be meritorious, will perpetuate your race and show compassion to all living beings. He will be endowed with these virtues, and with a portion of Viṣṇu. He, the lord of men, will be a sovereign emperor, comparable to Indra.

Having thus given him a boon, the great meditating saint gave the king an excellent fruit and said to him: "Give this to your wife." Saying so, and dismissing that Āyu, who had bent before him, after having congratulated him with blessings, he disappeared."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOUR

Indumati's Dream

Kuñjala said:

1-4. When that illustrious great sage Dattātreya had left, that great king Āyu came (back) to his own city. Being delighted, he entered Indumatī's house endowed with glory, rich with all desired objects and resembling Indra's house. O best brāhmaṇa, like Indra in heaven, the intelligent one ruled with Indumatī, the daughter of Svarbhānu, over his kingdom. By the words of Dattātreya, that queen Indumatī conceived a child endowed with divine lustre as a result of eating the fruit.

5-14. O illustrious one, Indumatī saw, at night accompanied by day (i.e. in the early morning), an excellent dream giving many auspicious objects. (She saw in the dream) a man, who was a brāhmaṇa, resembling the sun, endowed with necklace of pearls, and adorned with a white garment, entering her house. A garland fashioned with white flowers shone round his neck. His body looked charming with all ornaments, and was besmeared with divine sandal (-paste). He had four hands, he had a conch in his hand, and held a mace, a disc and a sword. He, of a great lustre, adorned with divine ornaments, shone with an umbrella,

resembling the orb of the moon, which was held (over him). He appeared handsome with a necklace, bracelets, armlets and anklets. He (also) shone with ear-rings resembling the orb of the moon. A very wise man like this came (there). Having called Indumatī, he repeatedly bathed the beautiful lady with milk, with (i.e. from) a conch full of milk and having the colour like that of the moon and decked with gems and gold. He threw (i.e. put) into her mouth a white, beautiful snake, covered with a thousand hoods, endowed with a gem and full of bright flames. On her neck he also put a pearl. That very glorious lord of gods then gave a lotus into Indumatī's hand and went to his own place.

15. Like this she saw a great dream and the best son. The illustrious one narrated it to Āyu, the lord of kings.

16-17a. Having heard it, the great king thought again. Then having called his preceptor Śaunaka, the very glorious, omniscient and best among the learned, narrated the best dream to him.

The king said :

17b-18a. O illustrious one, O best brāhmaṇa, today, (late) in the night, my wife saw (in a dream) a brāhmaṇa entering the house. What is the meaning of this dream ?

Śaunaka said :

18b-23. Formerly intelligent Dattātreya gave you a boon; and directed (you to give) a very effective fruit to the queen for (obtaining) a son. What have you done with the fruit, O king ? To whom have you given it ?

Having heard the words uttered by the king, viz. "I have given it to my good wife," the very intelligent, best brāhmaṇa Śaunaka said: "There is no doubt that, due to Dattātreya's grace, the best son, possessed of a portion of Viṣṇu will be born in your house. O king, I have told you this meaning of the dream. A son of a divine power, and resembling Indra and Viṣṇu will be born (in your house). Your son will be the soul of all good practices and will perpetuate the lunar dynasty. He will be proficient in the science of archery and the (Ṛg-) Veda (etc.)".

24. Having spoken thus to the king, Śaunaka went home. The king, with his wife, was full of great joy.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIVE

Nahuṣa is Born

Kuñjala said :

1-3a. With her friends she went to Nandana garden to sport (there). There she heard significant words, not wholesome to her father, of the bards and siddhas talking delightfully, viz. 'In the house of Āyu, the best son, of great might, resembling Viṣṇu in valour will be born; he will kill Huṇḍa'.

3b-4. Having heard such significant, unwholesome, painful words, she went (to her father) and told the painful words to her father in brief.

5-14. She narrated them to her father. The father, hearing them, was amazed. He remembered the curse of Aśokasundarī, given by her formerly. For this that Aśokasundarī practised penance. That demon who is wicked, who is dragged by Death, who is sinful, looking out for a flaw, always exerted to destroy the embryo of Indumatī. O noble one, when he saw the queen endowed with beauty and generosity, possessed of divine lustre, protected by Viṣṇu's lustre, having divine brilliance and resembling the sun's orb, he always remained by her side to watch her. From a distance the wicked demon showed her many spells and very fearful terrors and scares. She, endowed with the lustre of the child in the womb, was (thus) protected by Viṣṇu's lustre. Never again fear arose in her mind. The demon became ineffectual, and his exertion was useless. The desired object of the wicked Huṇḍa never came about. A hundred years thus passed while he was watching. That daughter of Svarbhānu gave birth to a son. At night only a son was born to her, O best son. Like the sun in the sky he very much shone with brilliance.

Sūta said :

15-18a. There was a very wicked maid in the lying-in-chamber. She was of a wicked behaviour and talked very inauspicious words. Knowing everything about her the mean demon Huṇḍa entered her body and then got into the house of Āyu. When the multitude of men, very much deluded by sleep, was asleep, he kidnapped that son, resembling a child of a god, and

went out. The mean demon reached his own city called Kāñcana.

18b-20. Having called his wife Vipulā, he said (these) words to her : "Kill this very sinful child, my enemy. Then hand it over to the cook for (cooking) a meal. Get it carefully cooked in many kinds and varieties. Later I shall undoubtedly eat it from the hand of (i.e. served by) the cook."

21-22. Having heard (these) words of her husband, Vipulā was wonderstruck. 'Why does my very rough husband become so cruel ? Whose boy, endowed with all good marks, and resembling a god's child, should he, bereft of forgiveness and full of cruelty, eat, and for what reason ?'

23-24. She, full of pity, thought like this, she again asked her husband, "Why do you (want to) eat the boy ? Why do you become so much angry and shameless ? O lord of demons, tell me in truth the entire motive."

25-27. That wicked Huṇḍa told her in brief his own fault, the account, and (about) the curse of Aśokasundarī. She understood the full motive of the demon. 'This boy must be killed, otherwise my husband will die'. Thinking like this, Vipulā, overcome with anger, called her female-attendant Mekalā, and said to her :

28-33. "Mekalā, today kill this very wicked child in the kitchen; (and) hand it over to the cook, (to cook it) for the meal of Huṇḍa". Mekalā took the child, and calling the cook, said to him : "Obey the order of the king. Today cook this child." The noble cook heard like this and taking the child in his hand became ready, raising a weapon (to kill the child). This child, the son of Āyu, was protected by the lustre of Dattātreya, the god of gods. He again and again laughed. Seeing him laughing the cook was full of compassion. The female attendant also was full of pity and said to the cook : "O you very intelligent cook, do not at all kill this child. In whose good family is he, endowed with divine marks, born ?'

The cook said :

34-42a. O you good one, you have spoken the truth, full of pity. Whose is this child, endowed with royal marks ? Why will that wicked-minded, mean demon, Huṇḍa eat him ? He, who

has protected his family by means of good deeds in calamities, would live even in difficult (circumstances). This cannot be otherwise. He who is assisted by his deeds would undoubtedly live even if he is carried by the force (of the stream) of a great river or even if he has been in fire. Therefore, deeds united with piety and merit are performed. Due to that men having a long life, call it happiness. (One's) deed is one's savior and guardian. It protects and is awake. It always gives salvation and an occasion for friendship. There is no doubt that a deed always protects him only, who does a propitious deed connected with charity and merit, accompanied by agreeable words, and full of obligation. Urged by his own deed he goes to (i.e. is born in) another stock. What can a father do or what can a mother or other kinsmen and relatives do ? They cannot protect him who is struck down by his deed.

Sūta said ;

42b-48a. By that deed only, by which the son of Āyu was protected, the cook, being under the influence of fate, became full of pity. Urged by his deed that female attendant also became like that. Both of them protected Āyu's son of good marks. That female servant of meritorious deeds took him from that house to Vasiṣṭha's holy hermitage that night only. Placing the excellent child (there), she then went (back) to her house. Having killed a black antelope the cook cooked (its) flesh. The lord of demons, Huṇḍa, after eating deemed the curse of Aśokasundarī to be fruitless. That lord of demons, Huṇḍa, was then full of great joy.

Kuñjala said :

48b-54. When it was the bright morning, the best religious-minded sage, Vasiṣṭha, went out of the door of his hut made of leaves, and seeing the whole, beautiful child, endowed with divine marks, like the full moon, and of charming eyes,

Vasiṣṭha said :

All you sages should come and see the child. Whose (child) is it? Who brought it to the courtyard at my door at night ?

The sages may see the child, resembling a child of a god or of a gandharva, and resembling crores of Cupids.

All those best brāhmaṇas full of great curiosity and delighted, saw that son of that noble Āyu. That pious Vasiṣṭha, seeing the son of the noble Āyu, knew through his (supernatural) knowledge, the boy to be the son of the magnanimous Āyu, and endowed with (good) conduct and also knew the account of that wicked and evil-minded Huṇḍa.

55-60a. When that best brāhmaṇa, Brahmā's son, picked up the boy with his hands through pity (for him), gods showered flowers on the boy. Gandharvas and kinnaras sang charmingly and melodiously. Sages praised that king's son with Vedic hymns. Seeing him, Vasiṣṭha granted him a boon at that time. "Your name will be famous in the world as Nahuṣa. Due to your childlike feelings, you were not destroyed by him. Therefore your name will be Nahuṣa, and you will be honoured[1] by gods." The best brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vaṣiṣṭha) performed the ceremony at his birth, and taught him vows, charity and sent him away as a pupil to the teacher.

60b-64. Having fully studied as a student the Vedas with the six limbs and with the pada and krama[2] (ways of reciting them), having studied all the sacred books from Vasiṣṭha, the best brāhmaṇa, archery with its secrets, and (the use of) divine weapons and missiles, along with the manner in which they are held and released, and the excellences like various branches of knowledge, science of logic, politics that handsome and devoted son of Āyu thus became fully accomplished. Due to the grace of Vasiṣṭha, he became the holder of (i.e. skilful in using) a bow and arrows.

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1. Huṣita—The word is not clar.
2. Padakrama—*Pada* is the detachment of the Vedic words from one another and *Krama* is the particular manner of reciting Vedic text.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIX

Indumatī's Lamentations on the Loss of Her Child

Kuñjala said :

1-2. The glorious wife of Āyu, Svarbhānu's daughter of an excellent complexion, not seeing that excellent, matchless child, resembling a god, wept, making a loud wailing : "Who has taken away may son of excellent marks, endowed with good characteristics.

3-4. I had obtained the son by penance, charity, sacrifices, and vows difficult to practise, and with hard efforts. Who has kidnapped the son given to me by the magnanimous, pious Dattātraya, (after) being pleased." (Thus) she wept piteously.

5-9. "O son, O child, O dear child, O habitation of virtues, where are you ? Who has taken you away? Talk to me. You are undoubtedly the ornament of the entire lunar dynasty. Who has taken you away, you united with my life ? Who has today kidnapped my son, full of divine, good marks of a king and having lotus-like eyes ? What shall I do ? Where shall I go ? I distinctly know the deed I did in the previous existence: I (must) have repudiated a deposit; therefore my son is kidnapped. Or did I, a sinner, cheat someone in the former existence ? I am suffering a calamity due to that deed only, and not otherwise (i.e. not due to anything else).

10. I had become the snatcher of a gem. (Therefore) the gem in the form of my divine son, the mine of matchless virtues, is snatched away by destiny.

11. Or did I argue with a brāhmaṇa ? (And) is it the fruit, attended by the great grief for my son, of that act, that I have undoubtedly got ?

12. Or did I obstruct a child in my previous existence? Am I getting such a fruit of that sinful deed?

13. Or did I not give the food before the rite of the offering of food to all gods accompanied by the (seven) sacred utterances, to one who had asked for it ?"

14-15. Thus, O noble one, Svarbhānu's daughter Indumatī full of tenderness due to grief, being perturbed and heaving sighs like a cow bereft of her calf, fainted.

16. That king Āyu (also) was full of great grief and sorrow. Hearing that the boy was kidnapped the king gave up courage.

17. 'There is certainly no fruit of penance, nor is there the fruit of giving gifts, since my son has been thus kidnapped.

18-19. Through grace, Dattātreya formerly gave me a boon (in the form) of an unconquerable son, endowed with success and all virtues. How is that grant of boon impeded ?' Engrossed in thought like these, the king who was distressed, wept very much.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVEN

Nārada Assures of Nahuṣa's Return

Kuñjala said :

1-2. Then that Nārada came from heaven to king Āyu. Having come he said to him : "O king, why are you bewailing? O great king, O very intelligent one, knowing that the kidnapping of your son is beneficial to gods and others, do not bewail.

3-4. Being omniscient, virtuous, and equipped with all worldly knowledge, and full of (i.e. endowed with) all arts, your son wilt come (back). O great king, he who has taken away the boy, having virtues like those of a god, to his house, has certainly taken Death.

5. He, of a great valour and might, will bring about his end. O king, along with Śiva's daughter he will come to you.

6. Due to his own lustre the son will be like Indra and Viṣṇu. Due to his righteous acts he will enjoy the position of Indra."

7. Speaking like this to king Āyu that best divine sage suddenly left as the king with his servants was seeing.

8. When that holy Nārada, resembling a god, had gone, Āyu came to that queen and told her all that (Nārada had said).

9-15. (He said :) "O queen, due to Viṣṇu's grace, Dattātreya gave you, the auspicious one, a son, (like) the best god. O

you of an excellent face (i.e. O you beautiful one), my virtuous son will again come back, taking (with him) the head of that one who has kidnapped him. Nārada told (me) like this. O good one, do not grieve; and give up this great delusion of your mind which destroys the (fruit of the) good works that ought to be done." Hearing the words of her husband, queen Indumatī, was full of joy (due) to the (assurance of the) coming of her son. 'It shall be as is told by the divine sage. Dattātreya has given me the son, who will be ageless and immortal. There is no doubt about it. It appears to me like this about him.' Thinking like this, she saluted the best brāhmaṇa. "My salutation to that noble son of Atri, the giver of great prosperity, by whose grace I obtained a very wise, very virtuous and very meritorious son."

16. Speaking like this, that respectable lady, who was very much afflicted, knowing that son Nahuṣa would come back, ceased (speaking).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHT

Vasiṣṭha's Instruction to Nahuṣa

Kuñjala said :

1. Brahmā's son Vasiṣṭha, of great lustre and the best among the speakers, called that Nahuṣa and spoke these words (to him).

2. "Quickly go to the forest, and bring many sylvan products." Hearing the words of the sage, Nahuṣa came (i.e. went) to the forest.

3-4. There that mighty Nahuṣa heard some good (i.e. agreeable) account : "This is that pious and mighty Nahuṣa, the very wise son of Āyu, separated from his mother (right) from his childhood. Due to a great (i.e. painful) separation from him, the wife of Āyu is weeping.

5. Aśokasundarī practised a very difficult penance. When will that virtuous queen Indumatī see her son named Nahuṣa,

conversant with the practice of righteosuness, and formerly kidnapped by the demons ?

6-7. For the sake of Āyu's son the excellent, young daughter of Śiva i.e. Aśokasundarī practised, all alone, penance. When will she be united with this one (i.e. Nahuṣa) ?"

8-13. That pious Nahuṣa, full of doubt, heard such worldly words uttered by bards in the sky. Having takens ylvan products, having gone to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage, having presented the sylvan products to pious Vasiṣṭha, and having joined the palms of his hands and with his neck devoutly bent down, he said to that wise Vasiṣṭha, the best among the ascetics : "Revered sir, listen to the words formerly uttered by a spy : 'This is Āyu's son, named Nahuṣa, who has been separated from his mother, Indumatī, by the very troublesome demons. That young daughter of Śiva practised very difficult penance for (obtaining) this wise Nahuṣa (as her husband).' O preceptor, I heard all this that they talked.

14-16a. Who is that pious Āyu ? Who is that virtuous Indumatī ? Who is that Aśokasundarī ? Who is called Nahuṣa? This is a doubt in my mind. You please dispel it. (Nahuṣa seems to be) some other very wise person. Where is that Nahuṣa? Tell me all that, O father and other things also (if any)."

Vasiṣṭha said:

16b-18a. That pious Āyu is a king, the mighty ruler of the earth. His wife is Indumatī, of a truthful nature and famous. On her, you, a son, abode of virtues and ornament of the lunar dynasty, were begotton by Āyu, the king of kings.

18b-22a. Śiva's beautiful, amiable daughter, adorned with virtues and form, and of a charming smile, by name Aśokasundarī, all alone practised penance in a penance-grove to obtain him (as her husband). The creator has fittingly and definitely fashioned you as her husband. She practised profound meditation after resorting to the bank of the Ganges. Huṇḍa, the lord of demons, seeing that chaste, lovely lady with lotus-like eyes, and bright with penance, and endowed with beauty, generosity and virtues, all alone, was very much tormented by Cupid's arrows.

22b-26a. Going near her, he said to her : "Be my wife." Hearing these words of him, that devout lady said to him : "O Huṇḍa, do not do a rash act; do not talk like this again and again. O hero, you cannot get me, especially (when I am) someone else's wife. Destiny has formerly fashioned for me (i.e. as my husband) Āyu's son named Nahuṣa. There is no doubt that that very lustrous, intelligent Nahuṣa, a divine gift, will be (my husband). If you do otherwise (i.e. other than what I tell you), I shall give you a curse by which you will be reduced to ashes."

26b-33a. Hearing these words of her, he, very much tormented by Cupid's arrows, cunningly kidnapped her and took her to his own house. Having come to know about it she cursed that mean demon, O glorious one : "You will die at the hands of Nahuṣa." When you were not born (i.e. before your birth) she was born, as you are (now) telling. O hero, you are that son of Āyu, who was kidnapped by the sinful Huṇḍa, who was protected by the cook, and was sent to my hermitage through the female attendant. O child, I have again told you what the bards and kinnaras had made (you) hear (i.e. described) in the forest on seeing you. Kill that mean demon Huṇḍa, the doer of evil things; and wipe off the tears (of your mother who is) shedding them from her eyes. From here go to the bank of the Ganges and (you will) see the very mighty one (there). Having killed the lord of the demons, bring (her) from his gaol. Be the husband of her who is (known as) Aśokasuṇḍarī.

33b-35. I have told you all this—the origin of this question.

Speaking (thus) to Nahuṣa, the very intelligent brāhmaṇa ceased (speaking). Having heard all that wonderful (account) told by that sage, the son of Āyu, thinking and desiring to kill him, became angry.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINE

Vidvara, a Kinnara, Dispels Aśokasundarī's Apprehensions

Kuñjala said:

1-4. Having saluted, having propitiated and having taken the leave of Vasiṣṭha he, an archer, with arrows in his hand, went out (to the forest). Having well cooked the flesh of a black antelope that child, the good, virtuous, handsome son of Āyu, resembling a god, and endowed with godly qualities, was cleverly protected by her (i.e. that female attendant). With that meat which was well cooked, well dressed, boiled and tasty, the cook very gladly fed that wicked (demon) after talking to him. The demon ate that tasty and sweet meat. He was full of joy also. He went to Aśokasundarī.

5-6. With his mind overcome with passion he quickly said to her : "O auspicious one, your husband, Āyu's son, has been eaten up by me. O you of a charming body, resort to me only, and enjoy pleasures as desired by you. What will you do with that human being that is (already) dead?"

7-8a. Having heard (these words) the helpless daughter of Śiva replied : "The ageless and faultless husband is given to me by deities. Even the magnanimous gods have not perceived his death."

8b-10a. Hearing these words of (i.e. spoken by) her, that demon of wicked deeds, repeatedly laughing, said to her : "O beautiful lady, today only I ate up the flesh of the wicked Nahuṣa, Āyu's son, as soon as he was born."

10b-12. She, having heard these words, became extremely and fearfully angry. She who (always) stood by truth, and was purified by penance said : "With my mind restrained, I have practised penance. Āyu's son shall truly live long. O you of wicked deeds, if you desire to live, go from here. Otherwise, I will again curse you."

13-15. These (words addressed) by her to the king were heard by the cook. (He said :) "O great king, leave her, and resort to someone else." The wicked-hearted demon, Huṇḍa, directed by him quickly went out to his own wife. He did not at

all know the thing which the female attendant and the cook had done. He told the whole account to his wife.

Sūta said :

16-22a. That helpless Aśokasundarī, thinking about her dear lover and tormented by grief and sorrow, became emaciated due to that great (i.e. severe) penance. Repeatedly she thought: 'What would the demons, who know the means, not cleverly do by various means, and by exertion ? The best demons always live in various states of being. By the application of illusory methods I was formerly kidnapped by the demon. Like that the son of Āyu might have been killed. Thinking that luckily he might have been unharmed, he would even observe with great effort whether he has or has not perished. Is the exertion superior ? Or is the fruit of deeds superior ? How would an object, that is to be, perish ? Thence the Veda stands firmly. The speciality is conceived by gods. How will it be otherwise ?'

22b-24. The noble one again and again thought like this. (At that time) a kinnara named Vidvara, belonging to a great family, having a large body, having half human body (but) without wings, having two hands, and a flute in one hand, adorned with necklaces and bracelets, with his body besmeared with divine sandal (-paste), came (there) with his wife.

25-37. He said to that unhappy daughter of Śiva : "O respectable lady, what are you thinking about ? Know me, who have come here, to be Vidvara, a kinnara and Viṣṇu's devotee, sent by best gods. You need not at all be sorry about Nahuṣa. That sinful Huṇḍa has done every act to kill that intelligent (Nahuṣa); and O auspicious one, he has kidnapped Āyu's son (i.e. Nahuṣa); but he has been protected by the gods by various means. O you auspicious one of large eyes, Huṇḍa thinks like this : 'I have kidnapped Āyu's son and have eaten him up.' That mean demon left after having told you (like this). That your very glorious husband will live due to the ripening of his own deeds and merit earned in his former existence. O glorious one, the wicked, very sinful killers, contaminating others' lustre, everyday show forth to destroy the glory of those to destroy whose life produced due to the strength of their merit earned by themselves (in the former existence), they desire. By many means like poison and

weapons they then desire to kill the meritorious person protected by means of meritorious deeds. O glorious one, the great sinners like Huṇḍa harass, with many kinds of delusions and obstructions, full of power, the meritorious one, who is well-protected by the employment of (i.e. because of his having done) good deeds and religious merit. O auspicious one, means—like amulets, spells, charms, weapons, fire, poison, binding—become useless. (Deities) protect the magnanimous one who is (already) well protected by divine merit. The doers of (charms etc.) are reduced to ashes, (while), he, the meritorious one, remains (unharmed).

38-47. O auspicious one, all deities are the protectors of Āyu's son. He is the store of religious merit and the treasure of penance. Therefore the brave Nahuṣa, the best among the mighty, is protected by means of that truthfulness, panance, merit, controls and restraints. Do not have agonizing pain; give up your groundless sorrow. The religious-minded one is living in a forest even without his mother and father. He lives alone in a forest, (is) looked after by ascetics. He knows the philosophy of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas and has mastered archery. O you of a beautiful (i.e. slender) waist, as the moon shines with his digits and lustre, he is shining with his arts. He, the killer of his brave enemies, the killer of his foes and dear to gods, shines by means of his lores, great religious merit, penance and glory also. He will have you after killing Huṇḍa, the lord of demons. The great devotee will be the sole ruler of the earth along with you, as Indra is in heaven. O auspicious one, from him you will obtain a good son, resembling Indra, knowing Dharma, eagerly engaged in protecting his subjects, named Yayāti; also a hundred daughters endowed with beauty, generosity and (other) virtues, due to whose merit you will go to Indra's heaven. O you respectable lady, Nahuṣa of a virtuous valour will enjoy Indra's position.

48-54. Your son will be religious-minded Yayāti, the great king, protector of the subjects and very kind to all beings. He will have four sons of great prowess, endowed with strength and valour and masters of archery : The first will be Turu, the second will be Puru, the third will be Uru, and the fourth will be brave Yadu. Like this, the sons will be very brave, lustrous, very

powerful, noble, and endowed with full lustre. Yadu's sons will be brave, valourous like lions. Well-being to you. Now listen to their names when I am telling them to you : Bhoja, Bhīmaka and Andhaka and Kuñjara also. (The fifth one) will be Vṛṣṇi by name, religious-minded and prop of truth. The sixth will be Śrutasena, and the seventh will be Śrutadhara. (The eighth will be) Kāladamṣṭra, very powerful, mighty and conqueror of (even) Death in a battle.

55-60. O you of an excellent face, Yadu's sons called Yādavas will be very brave. They will have thousands of sons and grandsons. O respectable lady, such will be the dynasty of Nahuṣa. Thus giving up sorrow, proceed happily. O you of an auspicious face, having killed the demon Huṇḍa, your very wise husband will come (to you) and will marry you. Hot tears due to grief fall from the eyes of Indumatī. He, the remover of the pride (of the haughty), will wipe them. Having made his father happy he will protect his subjects. O auspicious one, I have told you all this that the gods had said. Giving up your grief and sorrow, carry on happily."

Aśokasundarī said :

61. If he is ordained to be my husband by the deities when will he come ? O you who know Dharma, tell me the truth; increase my happiness.

Vidvara said :

62. O beautiful lady, listen. You will soon see your husband.

Speaking like this, the gandharva (? kinnara) went to the abode of gods.

63. Aśokasundarī, the daughter of Śiva, giving up desires, anger and greed, practised penance there only.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TEN

Nahuṣa Gets Divine Weapons from Gods

Kuñjala said:

1-3. Having taken leave of all the sages and of Vasiṣṭha, the best of the ascetics, Nahuṣa being eager desired to go to the demon. Then all the sages like Vasiṣṭha, with penance as their treasure, congratulated the very mighty son of Āyu with blessing. All the deities in the sky joyfully beat drums and showered flowers on Nahuṣa's head.

4-5. Then the thousand-eyed god (i.e. Indra) came there with gods and gave him weapons and missiles resembling the sun's lustre. O best twice-born, the best king took those divine missiles from the god, and due to that he became one of a divine form.

6. Then all the deities said to Indra: "O lord of gods, give a chariot to this Nahuṣa."

7-9a. Knowing the view of the gods, Indra, having called his charioteer, Mātali, ordered him, O twice-born: "O you very wise one, go to him, and carry him—the son of Āyu, ready to fight, in the chariot with the flag;" and he said to Indra: "I shall carry out your order".

9b-11. Speaking thus, he quickly went to Āyu's son, ready to fight. He told the king the words of the king of gods: "O you who know Dharma, 'be victorious in the battle by means of this chariot.' O lord of kings, thus, Indra has told you. Kill in the battle the demon Huṇḍa of a wicked heart."

12-13. Hearing (these words) the lord of kings, with horripilation due to joy (said:) "By the grace of the lord of gods, of the magnanimous Vasiṣṭha I shall kill in the battle the demon of a wicked heart, who deceived gods and especially me."

14-20. When Nahuṣa uttered these great words, the god holding a conch, a disc and a mace himself came there. Drawing out from (his own) disc a great disc resembling the sun's orb, blazing with burning lustre, with round spokes and bringing auspiciousness, the god gave it to Nahuṣa with great joy. Śiva gave him a very sharp lance endowed with lustre. With that excellent lance, he, ready to fight, shone like another lord Śiva,

the killer of Tripura. Brahmā gave him (the missile called) Brahmāstra. Varuṇa (gave him) an excellent noose, resembling the moon's lustre and a conch with an auspicious sound. Indra (gave him) the thunderbolt and (a kind of missile called) Śakti. Vāyu (gave him) a bow with arrows. Vahni (i.e. Fire) gave the magnanimous one, the fire-missile. (Thus) the divine weapons and missiles of various kinds were given by gods to that great-souled king of great glory.

Kuñjala said:

21-25. Then Āyu's son, the hero honoured by gods and greeted by sages knowing the true nature of Brahman with blessings, got into the chariot that was divine, lustrous, decked with gems, making a big sound due to the bells, and full of small bells. With that divine chariot the prince shone like the sun by means of his lustre on the divine path. Blazing like him with his lustre, he rushed quickly and speedily, with that magnanimous charioteer Mātali, towards the heads of the demons, like Vāyu that moves constantly, to the place where that sinful demon stood with his army.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ELEVEN

Nahuṣa Enters Mahodaya, the City of Huṇḍa

Kuñjala said:

1-5. When that brave Nahuṣa, comparable to the lord of gods, was going out to fight (with Huṇḍa), all women out of curiosity and with (i.e. singing) auspicious songs went there. The excellent women of gods, and kinnarīs, (all) eager through curiosity sang melodiously, O best one. Also the gandharva women endowed with beauty and ornaments went there where the king stood, through curiosity. The city of that wicked Huṇḍa was Mahodaya by name; it was everywhere adorned with divine groves (like) Nandana. It looked pleasant with houses having

seven apartments and with pitchers. The best city shone with great staffs with banners. The best city shone with (mansions) shaped like the peaks of Kailāsa, lofty, reaching the sky, divine and endowed with all glory.

6-10a. It was adorned with thickets of trees, groves, divine lakes resembling oceans and full of water and charming with lotuses and red lotuses. It shone with ramparts, great jewels and hundreds of upper stories and with moats full of clear water. It also shone with other great jewels and elephants and horses. It was crowded with good women and men of great brilliance. That (city) Mahodaya shone with many divine grandeurs.

10b-15. Nahuṣa, the great hero and best among kings, saw the city and a divine grove adorned with divine trees in the outskirts. The great hero entered it as a god enters the Nandana grove. The virtuous lord of kings entered the grove on the bank of a river in chariot along with that Mātali. Those divine, beautiful women came there. Gandharvas, the knowers of the essentials of music, extolled the best king with songs. All the (bards like the) sūtas and māgadhas praised the best king, Āyu's son, shining like the sun. Nahuṣa heard the sweet song repeated (i. e. sung) by the kinnaras.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWELVE

Aśokasnudarī has a Glimpse of Nahuṣa

Kuñjala said:

1-4. Hearing that song sung by the celestial women and being affected by the songs and their introductory stanzas, that beautiful daughter of Śiva, pondering, quickly getting up from her seat, and being full of great enthusiasm, possessed of penance and devotion, and seeing the prince who resembled a god, whose lustre was like that of a divine form, whose body was besmeared with divine sandal (-paste), who was adorned with divine garlands, who was graced with divine ornaments and garments, who was bright like the sun, who was having divine marks, (thought:)

5-7. 'Can he be a god, or a very wise gandharva? May he be the son of a nāga (snake) or a vidyādhara? How can he be born among the yakṣas, (when) I do not observe (such a form) even among gods? Even Indra might have been born as this hero (as is seen) from this ease (of him). May he be Śiva or is this Cupid? Or is he Kubera, Pulastya's son, and my father's friend?'

8. When she, the most beautiful and virtuous one was thinking like this, Rambhā, having come there with her great friends, smiled and said to her:

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN

Rambhā Acts as Aśokasundarī's Messenger

Rambhā said:

1. O auspicious one, abandoning the penance, what are you looking at? By pondering over a man your penance would perish.

Aśokasundarī said:

2-5. My mind was completely absorbed in penance. Gods, demons or serpents could not lead me away (from it). (But) O you glorious one, on seeing this one my mind becomes very uneasy. Going to him I desire to dally with him. It has become thus (i.e. so much) eager. O you beautiful one, such a change was (there) in my mind. Therefore, tell me its cause, if you know it well. The magnanimous gods have created me as the wife of Āyu's son. Why is my mind eagar to dally (with this man)?

Rambhā said:

6-11. O you glorious one, O you beautiful one, the ancient soul, Brahmā himself, of the form of knowledge lives in all embodied forms. Though he is bound by the organs of sense functioning to assist him, and full of the nooses of delusion, yet he is always perfect. He, (when bound by sense-organs) does not at all

know the Nature—the portion of the highest and the worldly knowledge: (yet) O beautiful one, this pure righteous soul knows (it). Though you, seeing this very intelligent one, have mental anguish, he abandons sin and runs to truth only. This son of Āyu is your husband. This is the truth. There is no doubt about it. (A lady like you) would entertain doubt by seeing any other man of sinful characteristics. Such is the ordinance, bound by the noose of truth which the gods have made that the son of Āyu will be her (i.e. your) husband.

12-16a. Like this was heard by the soul, O beautiful lady. Knowing the truth of its substance, he remained (there). It does not recognise that your husband has come. Knowing this your chief soul today only runs (after him). The soul knows everything. The soul is the ancient god. This is just that brave Nahuṣa, the lord of heroes. Therefore your heart goes to him; it desires a contact with the truth. Knowing that Āyu's son (will be your husband), it does not at all go to anyone else, O good lady.

16b-19. I have thus told you all that is perpetually in your mind. Killing the very fierce, mean demon Huṇḍa in a battle, he will take you to his own place—Āyu's excellent house. The best hero was kidnapped by the demon; (but) survived because of his religious merit. The best hero was separated from his relatives from his childhood. In the great forest he grew without his mother or father. Now with you only he shall go to his father's house.

20. Having heard these words of Rambhā, the daughter of Śiva full of great joy, said to (Rambhā) born from the ocean:

21-24. "This certainly is my very brave husband of a truthful nature. My mind, very much perturbed due to being full of grief, runs (to him). There is no other god like the mind that knows (things) definitely. O you of a charming smile, I really saw a fine picture—a man of divine characteristics and resembling Cupid. O friend, as my mind runs (after him) on seeing him, it does not run to any other man, O good lady. It does not think highly of any other man. We two shall go to him. Let our friends go home."

25. Knowing her to be eager to go to Nahuṣa, that Rambhā spoke like this and started going.

26a. Then that Rambhā said to her: "O respectable lady, why do you not go (with me)?"

Sūta said:

26b-28a. Reaching well with her friend Rambhā, Nahuṣa with marks of a hero, she sent her dear friend to his vicinity (i.e. to him): "O you illustrious one, go to Nahuṣa of a godly form, and tell him the account, and that I have come for him."

Rambhā said:

28b-29. O you (my) friend of a good vow, I shall do this which is very dear to you.

Saying so Rambhā went to prince Nahuṣa holding a bow and arrows, and as it were another Indra.

30-36a. Rambhā went to him and told him the excellent words of her friend: "O you glorious son of Āyu, I am Rambhā who has come to you. I have been sent by that daughter of Śiva, O hero. For you the lord of gods, the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī), the god have created this excellent and best gem of a woman in the form of your wife, difficult to be obtained in the worlds. This gem is difficult to be obtained by best men, gods along with Indra, devotees, gandharvas, serpents, siddhas and bards of meritorious marks. For you, it has come of its own accord. This gem of a woman is perfect and created with merit, O you very wise one. (It's) name is Aśokasundarī, who remained in penance for (obtaining) you. She practised very severe penance. She always longs for you. Realising this, O illustrious one, honour her who adores you. That beautiful lady does not at all solicit any other man than you."

36b-44. Nahuṣa heard and understood what she said; and replied: "O Rambhā, listen to my words. I know all that you have said before (i.e. to me). Formerly the noble Vasiṣṭha had told me. I know everything—her excellent penance (also). O auspicious one, listen to the reason by which there will be happiness (for both of us). 'Without killing the demon Huṇḍa I shall not go to the excellent lady. I know all this account and also that you are created for me, and that you have practised penance. There is no doubt that destiny has made you my wife. Resolving for (getting) me as your husband, you practised penance. From there the very wicked one took you, following restraints, away. That mean demon separated me, who was a child, from my father and

mother, (kidnapping me) from the lying-in-chamber, O respectable lady. Therefore I shall kill that Huṇḍa, the mean demon. Then I shall take you to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage.' Well-being to you, O Rambhā, tell like this to her who has done what is dear to me."

45-48. Thus dismissed by him, Rambhā again quickly came (back) so Aśokasundarī and told her all his (good words) in brief, O best dvija. That Aśokasundarī, understanding the good words of that great hero Nahuṣa, was full of joy. Then she stayed there with her good friend, Rambhā. (She said:) "I shall ever see what kind of valour my husband has."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOURTEEN

The Fight between Nahuṣa and Huṇḍa Starts

Kuñjala said :

1-3. Then all the demons, Huṇḍa's attendants, told Huṇḍa, the lord of demons, the good words—the conversation—between Nahuṣa and Rambhā as they had heard them. Having heard them, he got angry and said (these) words to his messenger : "O hero, go and know that man who converses with that daughter of Śiva."

4-8. Hearing the order of his master the demon left quickly. In a solitary place he said these words to Nahuṣa : "You stand round with a chariot along with horses and the charioteer, and with a bow and divine arrows, and you are fearful in an assembly. To whom to you belong ? By whom are you sent, and for what purpose ? Tell clearly to me all that this Rambhā and the other (one i.e.) Śiva's daughter told you today. How is it that you are not afraid of Huṇḍa, the destroyer of gods ? If you desire to live, tell me all this. Leave quickly, do not remain (here). The lord of the demons is difficult to put up with."

Nahuṣa said :

9. Know me to be the son of that powerful lord Āyu, who

is the king of the earth, (and know me) to be the destroyer of all demons, worshipper of gods and brāhmaṇas, and well known by the name Nahuṣa. O demon, in my childhood I was kidnapped by Huṇḍa, your master.

10-14. This daughter of Śiva also was formerly kidnapped by (that) demon. She practised severe penance for the death of Huṇḍa. (Tell Huṇḍa :) "O wicked one, I, who was taken away (when I was) a child from the lying-in chamber, and was handed over to the female attendant and the cook by you, the wicked-minded one, have today come to kill (you) the wicked demon Huṇḍa of sinful acts. I shall also take to Yama's abode other fearful demons." Tell the demon (Huṇḍa) like this : "O most sinful one, know me to be like this."

15-19a. That wicked-minded (messenger) having heard all those words of (i.e. spoken by) the magnanimous Huṇḍa, narrated them to Huṇḍa, after going to him. Having heard them from his mouth (i.e. as told by the messenger), the lord of the demons (i.e. Huṇḍa) got angry. (He thought :) 'Why was he not killed by the wicked cook and the female attendant ? Now he, a disease, that was ignored by me, has augmented. Now I shall kill in a battle this wicked son of Āyu along with this daughter of Śiva with these arrows sharpened on a grindstone.' Thinking like this, he said (these) words to his charioteer : "Make ready the chariot (yoked) with excellent and lucky horses."

19b-21a. Calling the chief of the army he, who was over-anxious, said to him : "Make my army ready; make ready the brave snakes, and horses with the riders, and the soldiers with the umbrellas and chowries. Quickly make ready today my army with (all) its four constituents."

21b-24a. Hearing the words of that Huṇḍa, the swift and very intelligent chief of the army did everything according to the proper procedure. He (i.e. Huṇḍa) surrounded by the complete army went to the battlefield to (fight) with the active hero Nahuṣa, wielding a bow and arrows, (seated) in Indra's chariot, best among the warriors, ready (to fight) on the battlefield, difficult to be obtained by (i.e. unassailable to) gods and demons. Gods of great prowess seated in their aeroplanes in the sky saw him full of bright flames, and as it were another sun.

Sūta said :

24b-30. Then all the demons showered him with excellent arrows. In the battle they fought with the magnanimous Nahuṣa by means of swords, nooses, large lances, (missile called) śakti and battle-axes. They were excited, and roared like clouds on a mountain. Seeing their heroism, the brave son of Āyu stretched his bow resembling Indra's weapon, with the twang of its string. O brāhmaṇas, Nahuṣa also made the sound of his great bow like the bursting (sound) of the thunderbolt. Due to that loud sound the demons trembled. They were dejected in mind and had their spirits broken in the great war.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN

Huṇḍa is Killed in the Battle

Kuñjala said :

1. Then that great soul, holding a bow, ready to fight and shining in the battle, like Death that was angry and desired to destroy the worlds, desired to kill the great demons.

2-3. He killed the demons with a number of mighty weapons resembling the sun's lustre and very bright. As the wind uproots trees, he killed the demons. As the wind shakes the divine mass of clouds, the king destroyed the intoxicated demons with very sharp excellent arrows.

4. All the demons could not (stand) the shower of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) the magnanimous one. Some died, some fled, some escaped from the great war.

Sūta said :

5. Seeing the prince of a great lustre, very intelligent, and destroyer of great demons, the wicked-minded Huṇḍa became angry.

6. Going (near him) he stood there after saying these words: "Stop, stop, O son of Āyu, I shall today take you to Yama."

Nahuṣa said :

7. I am standing in the battlefield. See, I have come to kill you. I shall kill you, a wicked-minded demon.

8-9 Speaking thus, he, taking a bow and arrows like the flames of fire, shone in the battle with an umbrella being held (over his head). He said these words to Mātali, the charioteer of Indra: "Today you drive my chariot in front of Huṇḍa."

10-12. Thus addressed by the hero, the quick-footed Mātali drove the horses having the speed of a strong wind. Then the horses jumped as swans would fly in the sky. Reaching the sky with the chariot having a flag and with an umbrella having the moon's colour, the son of Āyu shone in the battle with lustre and valour as the sun shines (in the sky).

13-18a. Huṇḍa too, even when he remained in the chariot, shone with his own lustre, was equipped with all weapons and remained in a hero's vow. O you very wise one, at that time the battle between the two heroes caused amazement to the gods, was fierce and caused fear. At that time Huṇḍa struck the king between his two strong arms with well-whetted, sharp, excellent arrows with heron's feathers attached to them and with darts. When pierced on his large forehead with five arrows he got angry. The king wounded with arrows shone more at that time, like the rising ruddy sun with clusters of rays. With the golden arrows stuck into his body and with his body smeared with blood, the king shone like the sun in the sky in the morning.

18b-20. Seeing his valour, he said (these) words to the demon : "O demon, wait, wait for a moment; (just) see my dexterity." Thus speaking to the demon in the battle, he struck him with ten arrows. He struck him on the face, on the forehead. Due to that the very mighty (demon) fainted and fell down on the chariot, when gods from heaven were seeing.

21-24. Gods and bards and siddhas gave out cry of victory with joy. (They cried :) "Victory, victory, to you, O lord of kings;" (and) they blew conches repeatedly. That tumultuous noise made by the gods entered the cavities of the ears of Huṇḍa who had fainted. Hearing it, he took his bow and an arrow like a snake, and saying, "Wait, wait, I am not dead though you have

struck me in the battle", he endowed with quickness, struck Nahuṣa with twentyone arrows.

25-27. The demon pierced Nahuṣa with one arrow into his fist, with four sharp arrows between his arms; (pierced) his great horses with four sharp arrows, his umbrella with one arrow; (pierced) Mātali with five sharp arrows, the interior of the chariot with seven sharp arrows and the staff of the flag with three sharp arrows. Seeing the wicked one's seizing and aiming and discharging (the arrow) and his quickness, the deities were amazed.

28. Seeing his valour, the king (said to) the best demon : "You are brave, you are learned, you are wise, and are clever in fighting."

29. Speaking thus to the demon, the king, of sharp valour, stretched his bow, and pierced him with ten arrows.

30-33a. With three arrows he cut off the flag and it fell on the ground. With four arrows he knocked down his horses. The king of sharp valour cut off his umbrella; and with ten arrows sent his charioteer to Yama's abode. Having cut off his armour with ten arrows, he splithim. He pierced the lord of demons in all his limbs with thirty arrows. With his horses killed, he became chariotless.

33b-38. The archer, with arrows in his hand, and showering (Nahuṣa) with sharp arrows, ran to him. That demon holding a sword and a shield, ran to the king. The king cut off the sword of Huṇḍa, who was (thus) running (to the king). The king cut off his shield with sharp arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads. Then that wicked-minded Huṇḍa, seeing around, took a mallet and he of sharp valour, quickly discharged it. The king then saw it coming with the speed of the thunderbolt, and by his valour he caused to fall down that mallet making a sound, with ten sharp arrows and with sharp horse-shoe-shaped arrows. Seeing the mallet, fallen in ten pieces on the ground, he raised his mace and ran to the king.

39-43. With a sharp-edged sword he cut off his arm, which fell down on the ground, with the mace, armlets and bracelets. Then, making a great sound like the bursting of the thunderbolt, and with his body smeared with blood and running in the great battle, he, full of great anger, desired to destroy the king. He,

the irresistible one, came near the king. The demon, struck on his chest by Nahuṣa with a missile called Śakti, suddenly fell on the ground like a mountain struck with the thunderbolt. When that demon fell on the ground, other demons went (i.e. fled) away. Some entered inaccessible places, some resorted to the other world.

44-45. When the magnanimous Nahuṣa had killed that great sinner, gods, gandharvas, siddhas and cāraṇas became very joyful. When the great demon was killed in the great war, all gods became very joyful; (and) Āyu's son (i.e. Nahuṣa) having obtained her, of a divine form and thriving with penance, became glad.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN

Nahuṣa Marries Aśokasundarī

Kuñjala said :

1-3. That devout Aśokasundarī, auspicious and joyful, reaching, along with Rambhā, the powerful Nahuṣa, said to him : "I am your legal devout wife, as ordained by the gods. O hero, if you desire merit here (i.e. in this world, then please) marry me. Always thinking of you, I remained in penance. O best king, by virtue of my merit I have obtained you."

Nahuṣa said :

4-5a. If you, O good lady, are directed to be my wife, and for that you remained in penance, then after a short time, in accordance with the words of my preceptor, I shall be your husband. O you beautiful lady, we two shall go with this Rambhā.

5b-8. He, of a great glory, putting her and the beautiful Rambhā in his chariot, quickly went with the two in that excellent chariot to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage. He, of a great lustre and full of great joy, saw the brāhmaṇa (Vasiṣṭha) in the hermitage and with her (i.e. Aśokasundarī) saluted him. He narrated everything

to that magnanimous Vasiṣṭha as to how the battle took place on the battlefield and how that mean demon was killed by him.

9-12. Vasiṣṭha too, hearing about the activities of Nahuṣa, was full of great joy, and having congratulated him with blessings, the best sage got them married on an auspicious day when the auspicious moment had arrived in the presence of brāhmaṇas and fire. After congratulating the couple with blessings he sent them (telling Nahuṣa), "O you very intelligent one, go quickly and see your mother and father. Seeing you, let that your mother and your father grow with joy as the ocean grows on a full moon or a new moon day."

13-14. Thus (saying) the sage, the son of Brahmā, sent the hero (to his parents). He, of a quickpace, after saluting that best brāhmaṇa, went with Mātali in that excellent chariot to see his father and mother also.

Sūta said :

15. At that time the deities sent a celestial nymph by name Menikā. Āyu's wife (Indumatī) fell, due to great grief, into the ocean of sorrow.

16-18. To that illustrious queen Indumatī, she (i.e. Menikā) said : "O you fortunate one, give up your sorrow; see your son, with your daughter-in-law, (your son) who has come, endowed with a hero's glory, to the assembly after having killed the sinful demon who had kidnapped your son (i.e. Nahuṣa himself)." Menikā narrated to that Indumatī the good account of what Nahuṣa had done in the battle.

19-20. Having heard the words of Menikā, she, who was full of great joy, said in a faltering voice : "O friend, you are telling the truth. You have said to me what is very dear and like nectar and encouraging to my mind. I should give you my life etc. and even everything that I possess."

21-22. Having thus spoken to her (i.e. Menikā), she said these (words) to the king : "O great king, this excellent celestial nymph tells me that your very brave son has come now." Speaking thus to her husband, she, who was very much delighted, ceased speaking.

23-28. Hearing her words, the lord of kings said to his wife : "O you glorious one, formerly sage Nārada had told me :

'O king, you should never be worried about your son. Your son will come after having very bravely killed that demon.' The words which the sage had uttered formerly have come true. O queen, how will his words be otherwise (i.e. untrue) ? Dattātreya, the best among sages, is actually a god. Formerly, O queen, you and I served him by means of penance. He has given (us) this gem of a son, having Viṣṇu's portion. He shall always kill a great wicked-minded demon. Dattātreya has given me the best and very powerful son who is Viṣṇu's portion, and killer of all demons, and will look after his subjects."

29-31. Speaking thus to queen Indumatī, the king celebrated with great festivity his son's arrival. Being full of great joy he again remembered Viṣṇu, endowed with everything, accompanied by groups of gods, of the form of joy, the only highest object, the remover of pain, giving happiness and the great giver of salvation to good followers of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

Nahuṣa's Consecration

Kuñjala said:

1-10. Nahuṣa with his wife and Rambhā came in that excellent, divine chariot of Indra to the city called Nāga which was endowed with all beauty, divine auspicious objects, which was adorned with mansions, which possessed golden portals, which was beautified with banners, and with the sounds of many musical instruments, and with panegyrists and bards. It was also adorned with auspicious men resembling gods in form, with women of divine forms and with elephants, horses and chariots. It was full of many auspicious sounds and sounds (of the recitation) of the Vedas, the sounds of music and musical instruments, and of flutes and lutes. He entered the best city full of all (kinds) of beauty. The hero honoured with the auspicious Veda recitation by brāhmaṇas saw his father and very meritorious mother. Being full of great joy, he saluted his

father's feet. That beautiful Aśokasundarī devoutly saluted the feet of both of them again and again. That Rambhā also saluted them and expressed her affection (for them). The prince having saluted his father and having talked to him inquired about the health of his mother and father. With horripilation due to joy the illustrious one (i.e. Āyu) spoke thus :

Āyu said :

11-12. On seeing you, O son, today only all (my) ailments have disappeared; both (my) grief and sorrow have gone (away); the world is delighted with great satisfaction. When you of a great prowess were born, I became blessed. Emancipating your race you have also emancipated me.

Indumatī said :

13-14. O illustrious one, as when the full moon and the new moon (day) arrives, the great ocean, seeing the lustre of the moon increases, similarly I have grown (with joy) on seeing you. I am glorified; I am very glad; I am full of joy. O you, destroyer of the pride (of your enemies), O you very wise one, on seeing you I have become blessed.

15-16. Then that auspicious queen Indumatī, having spoken like this to that son, embraced that excellent son, having smelt him on his head, as a cow smells her calf, and having greeted that son of the form of Nahuṣa, honoured him with blessings.

Sūta said :

17-19. Then that very glorious son narrated to his mother, the auspicious queen Indumatī, the account of his being kidnapped, the birth and acquisition of his wife, his battle with Huṇḍa, and the destruction of Huṇḍa. He himself told in brief all that account giving delight, to his mother and father.

20-24. The mother and father, having heard about the valour and exertion of their son, were full of great joy and their hearts were full (of delight). Taking his bow and (seated) in Indra's chariot, Nahuṣa conquered the earth spreading over the seven islands along with towns. He presented the earth, full of wealth, to his father. Always giving joy to his father by means

of good acts, he made his father perform sacrifices like Rājasūya. Āyu's son made his parents rich by means of great sacrifices, gifts, vows, restraints and curbs, glory, meritorious and very prosperous sacrifices.

25-30. Then the gods having come to the excellent city called Nāga consecrated the noble Nahuṣa, the destroyer of heroes. The sages possessing great faculties and king Āyu consecrated him on his throne with Śiva's daughter. The very glorious and pious king Āyu, united with his wife, went with his own body to heaven, well honoured by gods and siddhas. Leaving the place of Indra he again went to Brahmā's world. Then well-honoured by sages and gods he went to Śiva's heaven. Due to his own deeds and the great lustre of his son the great king went to Viṣṇu's heaven, and the king lived (there) due to his religious merit. O illustrious one, men should produce such excellent merit by (performing) meritorious acts like this, not by other acts causing grief.

31-33. I have told you all the account of that king, as to how that pious Nahuṣa became the emancipator of his father, the supporter of the entire family, and very learned. O my son Kapiñjala, tell me what other things I shall tell you. The man who listens to such pious, pure account, endowed with glory, of Āyu's son, enjoys pleasures and obtains the place of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN

The Story of Kāmoda

Kapiñjala said :

1-6. O father, a beautiful lady was formerly weeping at the mouth of the Ganges. From her eyes tears fell into the great water. They sank into the Ganges and became lotuses. (These) flowers were of a divine nature, great, and fragrant. O father, O illustrious one, why did the pure tears fall from her beautiful eyes into the water of the Ganges ? A bearded man, having but

bones and skin left (on his body) and clothed in a long strip of cloth, collected those fragrant lotuses. Taking those divine (lotuses) of golden colour, he would worship Śiva with them. O you very intelligent one, tell me who that lady is and who that man is. Why does he lament after having worshipped Śiva ? If I am dear to you tell all this to me.

Kuñjala said :

7. O child, listen. I shall tell you the account of happenings relating to gods. (I shall also tell you) the account of the noble Viṣṇu that destroys all sins.

8-9. That Vihuṇḍa, the well-known son of that very mighty Huṇḍa who was killed by Nahuṣa in the battle, practised penance, after hearing that his father (i.e. Huṇḍa) along with his ministers and retinue was killed by the brave and mighty Nahuṣa, Āyu's son.

10-13a. Ready to kill the gods he angrily practised penance. All gods knew the valour of the wicked one which was augmented by means of penance, and knew him to be irresistible in the battle. (They said :) "Vihuṇḍa, the son of Huṇḍa, is out to destroy the three worlds." (Vihuṇḍa thought :) 'I shall wreak revenge for my father and shall kill human beings and gods.' The sinful one, a source of vexation to gods and brāhmaṇas, got ready and started doing harm, and harassed the beings.

13b-15a. Gods scorched by his lustre only and led by Indra, sought the shelter of the noble Viṣṇu, the god of gods; and they said to the god of gods, the lord of the world, and the holder of a conch, a disc and a mace : "Always protect us from the great fear due to Vihuṇḍa."

Śrī Viṣṇu said :

15b-19a. May all deities and great gods prosper with great happiness. I shall destroy the most sinful Vihuṇḍa, the source of vexation to the gods.

Speaking thus to those gods the very glorious Viṣṇu produced illusion and himself remained in the Nandana (grove). He took up an illusory form of a female endowed with merits. Viṣṇu's Māyā is glorious and deludes the entire universe.

Viṣṇu's Māyā took up a matchless form having a good figure and beauty to kill Vihuṇḍa.

Kuñjala said :

19b-24a. To kill the gods he went up the divine path. Then the lord of the demons saw the Illusion in the Nandana grove. The demon deluded by her with his heart rent by Cupid's arrows did not realise that the excellent woman was of the form of Death and his destruction. Seeing her shining like gold and shining with the wealth of beauty, Vihuṇḍa longed for her and he, the sinner, said to that excellent lady: "Who are you ? To whom do you belong? O you beautiful lady, O you who torture my heart, give me company. O you beautiful lady, by your company protect me, protect me. O you chief of deities, O you illustrious one, I shall give you all that, difficult to be obtained by gods and demons, which you ask for."

Māyā (Illusion) said:

24b-27a. O demon, if you have a desire to enjoy me, give me a present. Worship Śiva with seven crores of divine, fragrant flowers grown on Kāmoda, and difficult to be obtained (even) by gods. O noble one, put around my neck the garland made of those flowers. Give me this present. Then I shall be a very dear wife of you.

Vihuṇḍa said :

27b-31a. O respectable lady, I shall do so. I shall give you the present asked for (by you).

Overpowered by love the lord of demons wandered through groves that were auspicious and divine; but he did not find the tree called Kāmoda. He himself went everywhere and asked (people) about the tree. Distinguished people told him that there was no tree called Kāmoda. Thus asking (people) the wicked-souled one being very much tormented by the arrows of Cupid, went to Śukra, and with his neck bent down through devotion asked him (about the tree). (He said) : "Tell me about the charming tree called Kāmoda and full of flowers."

Śukra said:

31b-37a. O demon, there is no tree (called) Kāmoda. (However) there is a lady (named Kāmodā). When delighted by some incident she laughs, then, O demon, from her laughter are produced fragrant, excellent flowers. These divine flowers are of Kāmodā. There is no doubt about it. They are charming yellow flowers and have fragrance. Śiva fulfils the great desire of him who worships Śiva even with one flower (of Kāmodā). O demon, from her weeping also similar large (but) reddish flowers are undoubtedly produced. O demon, they have no fragrance. One should not touch them.

Hearing these words uttered by Śukra, he said : "O you son of Bhṛgu, where is that Kāmodā ?"

Śukra said:

37b-41. In the very auspicious Gaṅgādvāra, the destroyer of great sins, the city named Kāmoda is fashioned by the architect of gods. In that city called Kāmoda, lives a lady graced with divine possessions; she also shines with ornaments, and is well-honoured by all gods. You should go there only, and should worship that excellent celestial nymph. O demon, with some auspicious means, make her laugh.

Speaking thus to the demon, that lord of meditating sages, Śukra, possessing great lustre, ceased (speaking), and became engaged in his own work.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETEEN

The Birth of Kāmodā

Kapiñjala said:

1-4. O father, from her laughter are produced very charming, divinely fragrant flowers, difficult to be obtained (even) by gods and demons; but, O you very intelligent one, why do all

deities long for them? Śiva is pleased when he is well-worshipped with the flowers (produced) from her laughter. Tell me in detail as to what merit the flower possesses. Who would be (i.e. is) that Kāmodā? Whose daughter is that excellent lady? (Tell me how) from her laughter good flowers are produced. Tell me about the merit. Tell me in detail her complete story.

Kuñjala said:

5-16. Formerly gods and great demons formed a great friendship and eager for (obtaining) nectar, they churned the milky ocean. Due to the churning done by the gods and demons four maiden-gems (came out), whom Varuṇa first pointed out and again Soma also. Then the nectar-containing pitcher was pointed out. The ancient group of the four maidens desired the well-being of the gods. The first one was Sulakṣmī by name. The second was Vāruṇī. (The third) was known as Jyeṣṭhā. The other one was called Kāmodā. Among them the excellent and best one was produced first. Therefore, O very intelligent one, she is known as Jyeṣṭhā, and is always worshipped in the world. Vāruṇī is of the form of a drink, and has come up from the foam of water. The one called Kāmodā, has come up from the ripple of the nectar. King Soma (i.e. the Moon) and Lakṣmī similarly sprang from the nectar. Soma became the ornament of the three worlds and dear to Śiva. Similarly Vāruṇī became the remover of death and disease among the gods. Jyeṣṭhā gave great merit to people desiring well-being. The goddess Kāmodā, giver of merit, sprang from the nectar. In the future she will have the form of a tree for the love of Viṣṇu. She will always delight Viṣṇu. She, the auspicious one, will be certainly (known) by the name Tulasī. There is no doubt that the lord of the world (i.e. Viṣṇu) will dally with her. Kṛṣṇa regards the obligations of him who takes (just) one Tulasī-leaf and offers it to Kṛṣṇa, who thinking, 'What should I give him?' becomes dear to him.

17-23. Thus this one named Kāmodā, formerly sprang up from the ocean. When the goddess, speaking in a faltering way due to joy laughs, charming, fragrant flowers fall from her mouth. He who, a diligent one, takes fresh, good flowers and would worship Śiva, Brahmā and Viṣṇu (with them), has gods pleased with him, and they give him whatever he desires. When

she, grieved due to some misery, weaps, tears are produced in her eyes and they fall from them. O glorious one, they are also (turned into) charming, large flowers (but) without fragrance. He who worships Śiva with them, has sorrow and tormentation. There is no doubt about this. There is no doubt that gods give misery to that wicked-minded one who (even) once worships gods with such flowers. I have told you this excellent account of Kāmodā.

24-26. Then Kṛṣṇa thought after seeing the valour and cruelty of Vihuṇḍa, the exertion and violence of the sinner, and sent Nārada (to him telling Nārada): "Delude this irresistible one." Hearing the words of that magnanimous Viṣṇu, Nārada went to that wicked lord of demons, who was going to Kāmodā, and with a smile, said to him:

27-28. "O lord of demons, where are you, (so) eager, now going hurriedly and for what work? For whose work (are you going)? Who has prompted you?" Having saluted Nārada, the son of Brahmā, with the palms of his hands folded, he replied: "O best brāhmaṇa, I have set out for Kāmodā-flowers."

29-36. The pious one (i.e. Nārada) said to him: "What purpose will the flowers serve for you?" He again told the best brāhmaṇa the reason for his act. "In the region of the Nadana-grove, there is an excellent lady. On seeing her I am influenced by (the passion of) love. O best brāhmaṇa, she told me: 'With seven crores of flowers growing in Kāmodā, worship Śiva. Then I shall be your very dear wife. There is no doubt about this.' For that I am today proceeding to the city called Kāmodā. Listen, now I am longing for her, born from the ocean. I shall make her laugh with loud laughters delighting the mind. The illustrious one, being pleased will repeatedly laugh. Her faltering laughter will augment my undertaking, O brāhmaṇa. From that laughter divine flowers will fall (down). With them I shall properly worship (Śiva) the lord of Umā. Śiva, the lord, the controller of all beings and the creator of the world being pleased by that offering of worship will give me (its) fruit."

Nārada said ;

37-43. O demon, you should not go to that best city called Kāmodā. The very intelligent Viṣṇu, the destroyer of all demons

stays there. O demon, I shall tell you about the way by which the flowers called Kāmodā will fall into your hand. There is no doubt that the divine flowers will fall into the water of the Ganges. Being drifted by the divine water (of the Ganges) they will come (to you) immediately. You (please) take those very charming and large (flowers). Taking those flowers you accomplish what is desired by your mind.

That pious Nārada, having (thus) deluded that best demon, again thought to himself : 'Being grieved in what way will she shed tears ?' When Nārada was thinking like this, that moment an idea struck him, and he went to the city of Kāmodā.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTY

Nārada on Dreams

Kuñjala said :

1-4. Then Nārada saw the divine city called Kāmodā, which was crowded with gods and rich objects satisfying all desires. Reaching Kāmodā's house, the best brāhmaṇa (i.e. Nārada) entered it. Then he saw Kāmodā, possessing all desired objects. She honoured the brāhmaṇa with good words like 'Welcome (to you).' The best brāhmaṇa, seated on a divine seat asked her: "Are you living happliy, O good lady, sprung from Viṣṇu's lustre ?" Having greeted her with blessings he (also) asked her about her well-being.

Kāmodā said :

5. By your grace and Viṣṇu's grace, I am living happily. O you highly intelligent one, tell me the reason for which (you made me) answer (your) questions.

6-9. O best sage, a great delusion is produced in my body. It is greatly destroying my body, and is pervading all the worlds. Therefore sleep is generated (in my body) as it well abides in a mortal. O sage, I who was asleep saw a fearful dream. O best brāhmaṇa, someone having come before me said : "The unmani-

fest Viṣṇu will desire contact with the worldly existence. Since then I am occupied with grief, O you very intelligent one. Tell me the reason for that. You are best among those who possess knowledge.

Nārada said:

10. O good lady, dream (of four kinds), viz. gouty, bilious, due to excess of phlegm, and having a complicated derangement of the three bodily humours, is (seen) among human beings. There is no doubt about it.

11-15a. O beautiful lady, neither dream nor sleep exists among gods. The best dream is seen at the time of sunrise. A good (i.e. an auspicious) dream gives human beings the fruit of their religious merit. O you auspicious one, I shall tell you (about) another cause of dream. O you beautiful one, water shakes due to the rockings of great wind. From that mass of water small drops of water are split. O auspicious one, these pure drops of water fall out. They again disappear. Thus they become manifest and unmanifest. O beautiful lady, listen. The occurring of a dream is said to be like that.

15b-19. The (supreme) soul is pure, detached, and is free from love and hatred. After having excelled the objects consisting of the five elements, he remains quite steady. He shines among the twenty-six good elements. The pure soul is alone, eternal and is united with Prakṛti (i.e. the original source of the material world). When due to her modes of the nature of wind he moves from his place, another lustre resembling that of the soul is produced. The auspicious name 'inner soul' is given to it only. O auspicious one, as the drops of water are separate from it, in the same way the lustre of the soul is called the inner soul.

20-26. He is the earth, he is the wind, he is the ether, he is the water, he alone shines. These five great ones are fashioned formerly. They have come up from the lustre of the magnanimous soul, and they become united when they are associated with him. Due to the great fault of the natural temperament they destroy that body, and repeatedly desire another. This is their sport and pastime which is the cause of (their) connection with creation. The ripple of water is produced and disappears. It rises and again it disappears. There is no doubt that their (behaviour) is

like the illustration of the water. O respectable lady, the soul does not perish; fire or wind also does not perish. Earth and ether do not perish, nor does water perish. All the five come up and go away with the soul. O auspicious one, these soul etc. are of eternal nature.

27-43a. It is the body alone that would perish; it is an aggregate of them. He is miserable due to the blemishes of the objects of sense and love and hatred. There is no doubt about it. After the end of the body lives the (individual) soul that is similar to it. As like the spark of fire the soul shines, so the manifest and unmanifest comes to light—(or) is created. The pure soul is the highest Brahman, it is eternally awake; but the inner soul is bound by the great constituents of Prakṛti. When they are well-fed after having eaten food, the inner soul would be happy. Due to great happiness delusion is produced and due to it the mind errs. Then is produced sleep, which is of the nature of darkness (or ignorance) and increasing repose. When the sun would go along the path of Nādī (?) after having crossed Meru, then night would occur till the sun does not shine. The inner soul, when free from the darkness of the objects of sense, shines with the modes of the nature of the elements. The soul is seized by bodies of the former existences and nourished by the five elements. O you highly intelligent one, he goes to a high or a low position. The soul bound by faults is taken to the worldly existence. The individual soul protects the body, the middle one remains behind. The strong (vital air called) udāna throbs, and from that sound is produced. As a dry bellows when filled with air heaves, similary samudāna strongly breathes due to sound. Udāna would be powerful due to the prowess of the soul. The body thus deluded becomes almost dead. Then that very delusive sleep goes (i.e. spreads) over his limbs. It proceeds over the heart, neck, mouth, tip of the nose. Contracting his hands he would remain. The air named Udāna is produced in the circle of the navel due to the prowess of the soul. He is very strong and checks power. There is no doubt that as the holder of a wooden wedge remains when tied with a rope, similarly, the vital air is well-connected with the soul. O you of an auspicious face, the vital air is connected with the inner soul. Having knowledge and reddened the inner soul runs. Recollecting the abodes obtained in the

former existences, he runs there. Remaining there the very wise one enjoys as he likes.

43b-50. Thus the inner soul sees dreams of various kinds. He sees the excellent ones, opposite of them, (all) united with his acts. He sees mountains, great inaccessible places, and high and low places. Know that to be due to wind. I shall now tell you about (the dream) caused by phlegm. He sees water, a river, a lake and places of water. O respectable lady, he sees fire and ample, excellent gold. Know that (dream) to be caused by biliousness. I am telling you what will happen (when a dream is seen). When a dream is seen in the morning, something nice will take place. It is united with one's acts, and shows gain or loss, O beautiful lady. O you of an excellent complexion, I have told you about the period of a dream. That which will happen will happen in Viṣṇu's case also. For that you saw the dreem—you saw that bad dream.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYONE

The End of Vihuṇḍa

Kāmodā said :

1-3. He is said to be soul, whose limit or form (even) all deities do not know, and in which all this is merged; and the expansion of whose illusion is this worldly existence. Listen, O Nārada. For what reason does my lord, the master of the world go to the worldly existence ? A man, who is bound by sinful and even meritorious acts, moves to the worldly existence. O brāhmaṇa, tell (me) why Viṣṇu would go to worldly existence ?

Nārada said :

4. O respectable lady, listen, listen to what the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) did. In front of Bhṛgu he took a pledge : "I shall protect the sacrifice."

5-8. But at the words of Indra, Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) suddenly left the best sacrifice and went to fight with demons. When the god left the sacrifice and went (to fight with the demons),

then the best wicked-minded demons came and destroyed the entire sacrifice. That Bhṛgu, the best among the meditating saints, cursed him : "Censured by my curse, have ten existences. Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) will take the fruit of his own act." For that reason, O respectable lady, you saw the bad dream.

9-21. Saying so, that brāhmaṇa, Nārada, went to Brahmā's heaven. Due to the great misery of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) she was afflicted at that time. The young lady wept piteously and repeatedly (expressed her grief by) uttering words like 'alas'. O son, listen, she sat on the bank of the Ganges near the water; and due to grief she shed tears from her beautiful eyes. Those tears shed by her fell into the water of the Ganges; and her tears sank just into the water, and they again sprang up in the form of lotuses. Drifted in (the stream of) the water of the Ganges, they flowed. The best demon, deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā, saw them. Though told by the sage (viz. Nārada) he did not realize that they were due to grief. The demon being full of great joy, took them. That lord of demons, deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā, would worship (i.e. worshipped) Girijā's husband (i.e. Śiva) with those seven crores of blooming lotuses. Then the mother of the world got angry, and said (these) words to Śiva : "O you highly intelligent one, see the impious act of this demon. With his mind overpowered by the passion of love, he is taking the lotuses, sprung from grief, and gone to (i.e. found in) the water of the Ganges. With those flowers, sprung from grief and sorrow, and causing distress and tormentation, the wicked-minded one would worship (you). How would great felicity be possible for him ?" "He will succeed in the same manner as he would worship me. He is bereft of truth and meditation. He has set his mind on Kāmodā. He has been (a demon) of a bad behaviour. O goddess. kill him with your lustre." Hearing these words of the noble Śiva, (she said :) "O Śiva, by your order, I shall destroy him only."

22-29. Saying so, the goddess (Pārvatī) remained (there) desiring to kill that Vihuṇḍa. She thought of a means to kill him. Taking up an illusory form of a magnanimous brāhmaṇa, she would worship (i.e. worshipped) lord Śiva with good flowers of Pārijāta. That wicked demon, overpowered by passion of love,

very much afflicted, thinking about her, and his mind set upon her would come (there) and destroy that divine worship. The sinful demon, tormented by Cupid's arrows remembered that great Illusion of Viṣṇu, seen before. Merely by remembering her, he (tormented) by strong Cupid (i.e. feeling of love), and afflicted by the grief due to separation (from her), he wept again and again. Overpowered by Death, the wicked-minded one took those (lotuses) sprung from grief, came there, desiring to worship the great lord (Śiva). Having destroyed the worship offered by goddess (Pārvatī), he would worship (i.e. worshipped Śiva) with (the lotuses) sprung from grief, through great greed. Tears fell continuously from the eyes of the wicked one on the top of the Phallus.

30. The goddess (i.e. Pārvatī) with (i.e. who had taken up) the form of a brāhmaṇa said to him, O you very intelligent one : "Who are you that worship the god with your mind always full of grief.

31. Your tears, impure, due to grief, are falling on the head of the god. Tell me the meaning of this."

Vihuṇḍa said:

32-36a. Formerly I saw a lady, the wealth of all blissful things, endowed with all (good) marks, and a great abode of Cupid. Through attraction for her, being parched by Cupid, I became distressed. She said (to me) : "For union (with you) give me an excellant share (of your wealth). Worship the great lord with flowers springing from Kāmodā and difficult to be obtained. Throw round my neck the garland made of those flowers. Worship the great lord with flowers numbering seven crores." For her I am worshipping the lord who gives the fruit (of one's act) with the flowers of Kāmodā, difficult to be obtained by gods and demons."

Śrīdevī (i.e. Pārvatī) spoke :

36b-38a. Where is the devotion, where is the meditation, where is the knowledge of you, the wicked-minded one ? God has absolutely no connection with you. Tell me now as to how the excellent form of Kāmodā is. Where did you get the good flowers sprung from her laughter ?

Vihuṇḍa said :

38b-41a. I do not know devotion or meditation. I have never seen her. I have been everyday collecting them from the water of the Ganges. With those I worship Śiva alone. (This is what) I (have to) say. Magnanimous Śukra also told it to me. On his word I am everyday worshipping the lord of gods. I have now told you all that you asked me about.

Śrīdevī said :

41b-51. O wicked one, every morning you are worshipping the Phallus with flowers sprung from the weeping of Kāmodā due to grief. Obtain the fruit in the same way as you have worshipped the lord of lords with flowers. Having destroyed the divine worship you are worshipping (the lord) with flowers sprung from grief. This very terrible sin has arisen in your case. Therefore I will give you punishment. Enjoy the fruit of your deed!

Hearing her words he, dragged by Death, said to her : "O you wicked one, O you of a bad conduct, O you who are spoiling my undertaking, I shall undoubtedly kill you with this sword only." Speaking thus to the brāhmaṇa, he took the sharp sword and the wicked-minded demon, desiring to kill him, ran to him. That goddess, the spouse of the lord, who was in the form of a brāhmaṇa, got angry. Seeing Vihuṇḍa to have come to her seat, she sent out a 'hum' sound. Due to that 'hum' sound, the mean demon fell down unconscious, like a mountain struck with the thunderbolt by (Indra) taking many forms. When that demon, destroying all people, fell down, people obtained peace, free from all misery and tormentation. For this reason, O child, that beautiful lady, with her mind full of grief, is lamenting on the bank of the Ganges. I have told you all this that you had asked.

Viṣṇu said :

52. O king, speaking thus to his good son, very intelligent Kuñjala, the lord of birds, ceased (speaking). He did not say anything more.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYTWO

Dharmaśarman's Account

Viṣṇu said :

1-5. That righteous and very intelligent bird Kuñjala, having thus spoken to his sons, ceased speaking. He did not say anything to them. The best brāhmaṇa remaining under the bunyan tree said to that great parrot : "Who are you, explaining Dharma while remaining in the form of a bird? Are you a god, or a gandharva, or are you a vidyādhara? Due to whose curse did you obtain this very sinful birth in the form of a parrot? O parrot, due to what do you possess such knowledge which is beyond the reach of senses? Of what great religious merit or penance is it the fruit? O you very intelligent one, why are you staying here in this disguise? Tell me the origin: whether you are a siddha or a god."

Kuñjala said :

6-12. Oh! you have secured divine faculties; I know you, your excellent family and your name. (I know) your learning, and the power of your penance. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you everything as to why you are roaming over the earth. O you of a good vow, welcome to you. Sitting on an auspicious seat, resort to the cool shade. The origin of Brahmā is the Unmanifest one. From him Prajāpati was born. He the twice-born was Bhṛgu, endowed with virtues and a brāhmaṇa resembling Brahmā. His (son) was Bhārgava, who knew the essential nature of Dharma. In his family, you, Cyavana, are (born and) are famous in the world. O brāhmaṇa, I am not a god, I am not a gandharva, nor again I am a vidyādhara. O brāhmaṇa, listen to what I am going to say. A best brāhmaṇa was born in the family of Kaśyapa. He knew the sum and substance of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He explained all acts. He was well-known as a vidyādhara and was endowed with a (noble) family and character. O brāhmaṇa, he then shone (i.e. became famous) by his wealth, conduct and penance.

13. Three sons were born to that vidyādhara: Vasuśarman, Nāmaśarman and Dharmaśarman were the three (sons).

14. Of them I am the youngest, Dharmaśarman destitute of virtues. My brother Vasuśarman knew the meaning of the Vedas and sacred treatises.

15. He was well-endowed with conduct (i.e. was endowed with good conduct), and with excellences like learning. Nāmaśarman was very wise and like him (i.e. Vasuśarman) excelled in virtues.

16-17a. O you best one, listen, I alone was born a great fool. O brāhmaṇa, I never learnt the excellent purport of scriptures. Nor did I ever go to the excellent abode of a preceptor.

17b-18. Therefore, my father thought about me like this: 'The name of this son, viz. Dharmaśarman is meaningless. On the earth he is born neither as a learned one nor as a mine of virtues.'

19-24. Thinking like this, the pious one being very much afflicted, said to me : "O son, go to the preceptor's house (and) obtain the import of learning." Having heard these good words of my father, (I said to him :) "O father, I shall not go to the preceptor's house, which is very painful, where there is beating everyday, where there is knotting of the eyebrows etc. and where there is crying (daily); food is not seen there (even) by (doing) work; O best one, (please) listen. There is no sleep by day or at night; and there is no means of pleasure. Therefore, O father, it is full of grief. I shall not go to the preceptor's house. I shall not learn, I am eager to play. O father, by your favour, I shall eat, sleep and play happily and vigilantly day and night with children.

Knowing me to be a fool the pious one, being extremely grieved, said to me :

Vidyādhara said :

25-26. O son, do not act rashly. Exert yourself for (getting) knowledge. By means of learning happiness, glory, matchless fame, knowledge, heaven and salvation are obtained. Therefore, obtain learning (i.e. be learned). Knowledge is a source of unhappiness in the beginning, but later it gives happiness.

27-31. Therefore, O son, acquire knowledge, go to the preceptor's house.

I did not follow the words (of advice) of my father. Everyday I stayed here or there, and squandered money. O brāhmaṇa, people ridiculed and condemned me. I had then a sense of shame destroying life. O brāhmaṇa, I was ready to obtain knowledge. 'Which preceptor should I request ?' With this thought I was anxious and full of grief and sorrow. 'How shall I acquire learning ? How shall I have virtues ? How will heaven be possible for me ? How shall I achieve salvation ?' O brāhmaṇa, thinking like this, I reached old age.

32-39. Some time, I being grieved, sat in a temple. Impelled by my good fortune, a siddha came (there). He was without refuge (i.e. alone); he had overcome his hunger; was always joyful and desireless; O brāhmaṇa, he resorted to solitude; he possessed deep abstract meditation and had controlled his senses. He had been completely absorbed in the highest Brahman, and possessed knowledge, meditation and concentration of mind. O brāhmaṇa, I resorted to him who was of the form of knowledge and very intelligent. With a pure heart, and with devotion, I, having bowed my head, saluted the illustrious one and stood before him. I had become miserable and also luckless. O brāhmaṇa, he asked me : "Why are you suffering ? For what purpose are you experiencing misery like this ?" O best brāhmaṇa, that learned meditating saint thus spoke to me. I, a great fool, told him all my former account; (and asked him). "How can one be omniscient ? For this reason I am very unhappy. You are always my refuge." The illustrious one told me the entire means of knowledge.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYTHREE

Kuñjala's Story: A Preceptor Is a Holy Place

The siddha said:

1-16. Listen, I shall tell you the nature of knowledge. Knowledge has no body, no hands, no feet, and no eyes. It has no nose, no ears. Knowledge does not have the collection of bones. Who

indeed has seen knowledge ? What are its characteristic marks? It is without any form, it is eternal. The omniscient one knows everything. The sun illumines by day; the moon illumines at night; a lamp would illumine (i.e. illumines) the house. These remain in the world. O best one, listen, (I shall tell you) by what lustre is that place seen ? Fools, deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā do not obtain it. Knowledge remaining in the body is inflamed by concentration and is matchless. That (highest) place will be seen through that (knowledge) and not by means of the moon, the sun etc. Knowledge is without hands and feet. It is eyeless, and is without ears. It moves everywhere. It grasps and sees everything. O best brāhmaṇa, it smells everything; it does hear; there is no doubt about this. There is no lamp like knowledge for the destruction of all darkness (of ignorance). It is seen in the heaven, on the earth, in the nether world—at every place. Those of wicked minds are not conscious of the knowledge that remains in the body. I shall explain to you the place of knowledge, from which knowledge springs up. O brāhmaṇa, it has always been kept in the hearts of beings. He who always desires to burn with the fire of discrimination the great sensual pleasures like sex and great allurements, becoming full of all tranquility, would crush objects of senses. Then would knowledge be born manifesting the full truth. This knowledge has the first principle as its basis; it is spotless and it manifests everything. Therefore have tranquility which enhances all pleasures. Be equanimous towards your enemy and your friend; and always restrict your food and control your senses. You should not form friendship (with anyone); enmity should be cast at a distance. Being without attachment, being desireless, and having resorted to a solitary place, you will possess spiritual knowledge, explaining everything. O child, there is no doubt that by my grace you, remaining at one place, will know the account of what is taking place in the three worlds.

Kuñjala said:

17-19. O brāhmaṇa, that siddha showed me the nature of knowledge. I always remained within his words (i.e. obeyed him). I am pervaded by his existence. By the favour of that good preceptor, I, (even though) seated at one place, know everything

that takes place in the three worlds. I have told you my entire account. O best brāhmaṇa, tell me what else I should tell you.

Cyavana said:

20. How did you, the best among the learned, reach (i.e. get birth in) the species of parrots ? Tell me the reason of it that will dispel all my doubt.

Kuñjala said:

21-27. Sin is produced through contact, and also merit is produced through contact. Therefore an honest person should avoid a worthy (person) or the opposite of him. (Once) a sinful hunter had brought a young one of a parrot after catching it. He was eager to sell it. Seeing it to be beautiful and speaking agreeably and cleverly, a brāhmaṇa took (i.e. purchased) it, and affectionately gave it to me. O best brāhmaṇa, everyday I remained in intellectual meditation. Due to its child-like nature it perched on my hand out of curiosity. O you best brāhmaṇa, I, with my mind always set upon the parrot of the form of (i.e. like) my son, was infatuated by its impatient words. It too used to instruct me : "O father, father, (please) be seated; O glorious one, go for a bath; now worship the god." It would talk to me in such pleasant words. Due to the diversion caused by its words I forgot my excellent knowledge.

28-33. (Once) I went to a forest for (collecting) flowers and enjoying fruits. The bird was taken away by a cat to cause me (i.e. which caused me) grief. I heard from my well-behaved associates living in my company that the bird was killed by a cat and eaten by it only. (Thus) O brāhmaṇa, hearing that the bird talking agreeably was dead I was extremely afflicted with great grief and unhappiness. I was bewildered due to grief on this account and was very much pained. O best brāhmaṇa, I was caught in a great mesh of infatuation. With my mind moved by infatuation I cried: 'O Rāmacandra, O king of parrots, O lord of celebrity', O brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, now listen: then I became tormented with grief and separation due to my act.

34-38. I forgot the knowledge made clear to me by the siddha also. I, tormented with grief, remembered that parrot

speaking agreeably. O Bhārgava, crying like: 'O child, O child, who, except you, will now advise me with sentences, with well-formed words. O lord of birds, having pleased me with wonderful stories, and abandoned me in this solitary garden, where have you gone ? Tell me now by which fault I am stained.' Being perplexed I lamented with (i.e. uttering) such piteous words, and was very much tormented with grief.

39-42a. Due to that embarassment and deluded by affection for it I died. O best brāhmaṇa, I was born with that temperament and thought with which I died. I was put in the womb which caused knowledge and remembrance (in me). I remembered the former deed done by me—a sinner and a fool. (I thought:) 'What have I, whose spirit is not disciplined, to do ?' Being in the womb, I thought about it only.

42b-53. Due to that I obtained knowledge which was pure and which manifested everything (to me); and by the grace of that preceptor I got excellent knowledge. O brāhmaṇa, by the clean water of his words the dirt of my body—internal and external — was washed, and it was made pure. I obtained the birth of a bird as a parrot. O brāhmaṇa, when I, thinking of the parrot—thus conceiving thoughts about it (only), died, I was again born on the earth in the form of a parrot. Beings are born with that form, and are intent upon that, have those virtues, that appearance, about which thoughts occur to them at the time of their death. O best brāhmaṇa, O you very intelligent one, there is no doubt that due to the thought at the time of my death I obtained incomparable knowledge here (i.e. in my existence as a parrot). Therefore, I (am able) to see what has taken place and what will happen. There is no doubt that even though I am staying here I know the entire present due to my knowledge. O very wise and very intelligent one. O brāhmaṇa, for the emancipation of human beings moving in the mundane existence there is no holy place cutting the bonds (of karman) like a preceptor. O Bhārgava, listen; I have told you all this. O Brāhmaṇa, I have explained to you all that you had asked. The holy place (in the form) of a preceptor removes all external dirt from a place on the land or in water. The holy place in the form of a preceptor would

destroy sins committed in other (i.e. former) births. This moving holy place (in the form of a preceptor) is excellent.

Viṣṇu said :

54. O best king, that very intelligent parrot, having thus explained the truth to that noble Cyavana, ceased (speaking).

55. I have explained to you this excellent moving holy place (in the form of a preceptor). Well-being to you; ask for a boon that you have in your mind.

Vena said :

56-57a. I do not desire a kingdom; nor do I long for anything (else). O Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), with my body (intact) I desire to reach your body. If you desire to grant a boon I think (you should give me) this boon.

Viṣṇu said :

57b-62. O king, perform a horse sacrifice and Rājasūya sacrifice. O you very intelligent one, make presents of cows, land, gold, water and grains. By making presents a terrible sin like killing a brāhmaṇa perishes. There is no doubt that by making gifts all the four goals of human life are definitely accomplished. Therefore, O king, presents should be made dedicating them to me. I fulfil the intention of the person with which he gives (presents) dedicating them to me. Due to your having seen the sages and having come in contact with them, the heap of your sins has dropped down. There is no doubt that at the end of the sacrifice you will reach my body.

Speaking thus to that Vena Viṣṇu vanished.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYFOUR

Pṛthu's Righteous Rule

Sūta said :

1. When Viṣṇu disappeared, that very intelligent king Vena became anxious as to where the lord of gods had gone.

2-3a. Being full of great joy and having pondered the best king having called the greatest king with sweet words, then said to that magnanimous one with great joy.

3b-6. "O son, you my son have emancipated me from a great sin in the world. O Pṛthu, now you have made bright my dynasty. I ruined it with my faults; you have illumined it with your virtues. I shall perform a horse-sacrifice and shall give many presents. Due to your graciousness I shall today bodily go to Viṣṇu's heaven. O you best and very prosperous king, gather the necessaries (for the sacrifice). O you blessed one, invite brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas."

7. Thus was ordered Pṛthu by the noble Vena. The high-souled (Pṛthu) respectfully said to his father :

8. "O great king, rule over the kingdom; enjoy divine, human and righteous pleasures agreeable to you. Offer a sacrifice to Viṣṇu."

9-14. Speaking thus to his father, intent on knowledge, and saluting him, the lord of the earth (i.e. Pṛthu) carefully took his bow with arrows and ordered all his soldiers : "Proclaim (my order) on the earth: No sin should be committed through the deeds of three kinds. He who, having violated the order of king Vena, will commit a sin, will be killed. There is no doubt about this. Gifts should be given; and O all men, setting your mind on him and being free from jealousy, offer sacrifices to Viṣṇu." O brāhmaṇas, having given such an instruction Vena's son went to a penance-grove for (practising) penance. Giving up all faults and restraining his senses from their objects, he remained without food for a hundred years.

15. Being pleased with his penance, Brahmā said to Pṛthu: "Tell me the reason for which you are practising penance."

Pṛthu said:

16-20. My father Vena is very intelligent and glorious. Let Viṣṇu (himself) cut off the head of that person who in Vena's kingdom commits a sin. Let Hari himself punish him with his invisible disc. Let the heads of those who desire to commit sins mentally, through (physical) deeds or words, be snapped like a ripe fruit from a tree. Let Hari himself punish him with his invisible great disc. Listen, O lord of gods. I desire this boon only from you. If you, O lord of gods, desire to grant a boon, then do that by which my father is not stained by the sins of his subjects. O you four-faced (Brahmā), give (i.e. satisfy this) best desire; my salutation to you.

Brahmā said :

21-26. Let it be so, O glorious one; your father is absolved. He is guided by Viṣṇu and by you, his son, O Pṛthu.

Having thus told (i.e. given a boon to) Pṛthu, the lord left. Pṛthu came back and became (engaged) in royal duties. O best brāhmaṇas, nobody committed a sin in the kingdom of the son of Vena. The head of him who conceives a sin through the deeds of three kinds, is cut off as with disc (by Viṣṇu). Since then nobody committed a sin. Thus was the order of the magnanimous son of Vena. All people always behaved well. Being intent upon all religious duties they lived by giving gifts and food. By the grace of that king they thrived with all pleasures.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYFIVE

The Merit of Listening to or Reciting This Purāṇa

Sūta said :

1-4a. Having well received the order of Vena that very religious prince, Pṛthu, collected all auspicious necessaries (for the sacrifice). Having invited all brāhmaṇas born in various countries, king Vena performed a horse-sacrifice. He gave various

kinds of gifts to brāhmaṇas. The lord of the earth physically went to Viṣṇu's heaven. The religious-minded one eternally lives with Viṣṇu.

4b-12a. I have thus told you the entire account of that king, which terminates all sins and destroys all misery. That religious-minded king Pṛthu ruled the earth. The best king milked the earth with the three worlds. He pleased his subjects with virtuous and religious deeds. I have narrated to you the entire Bhūmikhaṇḍa. The first is the Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa and the second is Bhūmikhaṇḍa. I shall again tell you the greatness of Bhūmikhaṇḍa. The sin of the best man who (just) listens to one verse of this Khaṇḍa everyday, perishes. O best brāhmaṇas, listen to the religious merit of him who, the wise one, listens devoutly to a chapter (of this Khaṇḍa). He gets that fruit which is obtained by a gift of a thousand cows to brāhmaṇas on an auspicious parvan-day; and Viṣṇu is pleased with him. A man who everyday reads this Padma Purāṇa, will not meet with difficulties in the Kali Age.

Vyāsa said :

12b-13a. O you lotus-born one, why is it that very terrible dangers do not come to the meritorious man who listens to the Padma Purāṇa?

Brahmā said :

13b-28. That fruit, O dear one, which is said to be the fruit of a horse-sacrifice, is seen in (the recital of or listening to) the Padma Purāṇa. That auspicious sacrifice, viz. the horse-sacrifice does not at all exist in the Kali Age. That which is (the Padma) Purāṇa is indeed equal to the horse-sacrifice. Sinful men sticking on sinful ways do not enjoy that meritorious fruit of the horse-sacrifice which gives salvation. O best brāhmaṇa, in the Kali Age, men do not enjoy the merit of this meritorious Purāṇa called Padma like the merit of the horse-sacrifice. In the Kali Age sinful men have to go to the ocean of hell. Why will they (then) listen to the meritorious (Purāṇa), accomplishing the four goals (of human life). He, who has listened to this Purāṇa called Padma, has acquired the entire means of the four goals (of human life). Therefore, sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice have disappeared in the Kali Age, O highly intelligent one. They have,

with the Vedas, Vedāṅgas and their notes, gone to heaven. Great faith is produced (even) before in a pious man to listen (to the Padma Purāṇa) who, being endowed with goodness, having faith, and devoted to the lord, desires to listen to it with his sons and wife. No great danger would come to a man who listens (to it). But faithlessness is first produced in the reciter and the listener (who are impious). O best brāhmaṇa, even greed is produced in the listener. Great and terrible delusion caused by god Viṣṇu always ruins the listener. Polluters and revilers and sinners are coming up everyday. O Vyāsa, the good-minded one should realise: 'Oh ! A danger appears to have come up to me', (and) he should perform a sacrifice. With great sacred prayers (in honour) of Viṣṇu and hymns (addressed to) Viṣṇu, which give great merit, with the hymn '*Viṣṇorarāṭa* (from the Viṣṇusūkta), with the hymn '*Sahasrasīrṣā* (from the Puruṣasūkta), with the good hymn '*Indam Viṣṇu*', with the hymn '*Ā Brahma*', with the hymn sacred to Śiva—he should thus perform a sacrifice. So also with the Bṛhat Sāman hymn and with the hymn of twelve letters (viz. *Oṃ namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya*). He should perform the sacrifice with the hymn sacred to the particular deity to whom the sacrifice is offered.

29-35a. He should perform the sacrifice with more than eight sesamum seeds, (ladles of) ghee, and sacred wood-sticks of the palāśa (tree). O brāhmaṇa, he should also instal the (representations of) planets and worship them. There (i.e. in the sacrifice) he should worship (Gaṇeśa) the destroyer of calamities, and Śāradā—the chief goddess. He should also worship Jātaveda, Mahāmāyā Caṇḍikā, and the lord of the soil with sesamum seeds, rice and ghee and with the hymns (in honour) of those (deities). He should perform the sacrifice in this way. He should give presents to brāhmaṇas. He should give a gift along with a cow according to his capacity. Then calamities disappear and the Purāṇa would accomplish perfection. I shall tell you about the calamity of (i.e. which befalls) him who does not do like this : A disease giving great pain is produced in his body; grief due to (the death of) his wife or son takes place; so also his wealth is lost; undoubtedly he suffers from many severe diseases. He in whose house there is no wealth (to be given to brāhmaṇas) should observe a fast.

35b-41a. When Ekādaśī arrives properly, he should worship Viṣṇu with a devout mind in the sixteen ways of doing homage to a deity. According to his wealth he should then feed the brāhmaṇas. Then having offered it with a solemn vow and offerings to Viṣṇu, he should take food with relatives, sons and wife. Then he will attain perfection. Those who are devoted to Dharma should listen to the entire text of the Purāṇa. By (doing) that the four goals (of human life) are accomplished, not otherwise. Listen, O brāhmaṇa; in the Kṛta Age sinless men listened to the Purāṇa called Brahma, which consisted of one lakh and twenty-five thousand verses.

41b-49. When the Tretā Age arrived, men listened to the entire Purāṇa called Pādma, the number of verses in which was half a lakh and two thousand. Enjoying the fruit of the four goals, they would again reach Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, in the Dvāpara Age, the text called Padma is said to have twentytwo thousand verses narrated by Brahmā, the highest soul. In the Kali Age, men, devoted to Viṣṇu, will read the text called Padma, consisting of twelve thousand verses only. In all these four texts there is the same import and there is the same sentiment; the remaining (portion) is simply the expansion of the account. The twelve thousand (verses) will disappear, O best one, and, when Kali Age has arrived, the first (text) will again appear. Having listened to the Bhūmikhaṇḍa, a man is free from all sins, is free from all sorrows and gets rid of all diseases. Giving up all other (activities) like the muttering of the names (of a deity), giving gifts, and (studying) sacred texts, a man should carefully listen to (the Purāṇa) called Padma. The first is Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa, the second is Bhūmikhaṇḍa, the third is Svargakhaṇḍa, the fourth Pātāla, the fifth is Uttarakhaṇḍa, destroying all sins.

50. One who devoutly listens to the five Khaṇḍas in the serial order, obtains the fruit of the gift of a thousand cows.

51. O brāhmaṇas, with great luck, the five Khaṇḍas, are obtained (by a man). They are said to give salvation. This is true, (quite) true. There is no doubt about this.

III SVARGAKHAṆḌA

(Section on the Heavens)

CHAPTER ONE

Sūta Romaharṣaṇa Agrees to Narrate Padma Purāṇa

1. Om, salutation to (Gaṇeśa) the remover of obstacles. Salutation to the glorious one. I salute the lotus-like feet of Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu), which are always saluted by Indirā (i.e. Lakṣmī), which are called 'the best', which are fixed in the hearts of people, and which are the only, absolutely excellent abode of the great people.

2-6. Once all the sages resembling blazing fire, all the sages living on the Himālaya mountain and masters of the Vedas, knowing (events) of (all) the three times (viz. past, present and future), magnanimous ones, resorting to (i.e. doing) many meritorious (acts), those who lived on the Mahendra mountain, the Vindhya mountain, in the Arbuda forest, in the Puṣkara forest, on the Śrīśaila mountain, in Kurukṣetra, in Dharmāraṇya, in Daṇḍakāraṇya, Jambumārga, in Satya(-loka)—these and many other spotless sages came along with their disciples, as they were eager to see Śaunaka.

7-8a. The ascetics, having duly worshipped Śaunaka, and being well-honoured by him, sat, in due order, on beautiful seats meant for holy sages and offered by Śaunaka.

8b-12a. They told one another stories about Kṛṣṇa. At the end of (the narration of) the stories by the sages of pure hearts, there came the very bright, very lustrous Sūta, Vyāsa's disciple, named Romaharṣaṇa, and well-versed in the Purāṇas. He duly saluted them ; they also honoured him. The great, glorious sages, the ascetics, like Śaunaka, asked Romaharṣaṇa, Sūta, Vyāsa's disciple, who was properly and comfortably seated:

The sages said :

12b-15. O very intelligent Romaharṣaṇa of a good vow and well-versed in the legends of the past, formerly we have heard

from you stories from the Purāṇas. Now we, who are delighted, are engaged in (narrating) the story of Viṣṇu, since the devotion to Hari is the greatest Dharma of all men. (Please) narrate (to us) again the Purāṇa connected with the account of Viṣṇu. Any other story about Viṣṇu, O Śuta, is said to be like a crematory. That is a sacred text which in itself remains in the form of Viṣṇu's story.

16-18. Tell us the name of holy places giving merit. Wherefrom has this mobile and immobile world sprung? By whom is it looked after? In which (object) is it dissolved? Which places of pilgrimage are meritorious? Which mountains are venerable? Which rivers are very meritorious, auspicious and remover of the sins of men? O distinguished one, tell us all this in the proper order.

Sūta said:

19-21. Well, well, glorious ones, you have asked well, O ascetics. Having saluted that (Vedavyāsa) I shall narrate to you the very meritorious Purāṇa called Padma. I always salute that Vedavyāsa, Parāśara's son, who is the greatest man, who is the only source to be known by all, who is the support of learning, who gives great knowledge, who is to be known by the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, who is always tranquil, who is the object of his own intellect, who is great due to pure lustre, whose glory has spread. My salutation to that revered Vyāsa of unlimited lustre, by whose grace I shall narrate this story about Nārāyaṇa.

22-24. I shall narrate the very meritorious Purāṇa called Padma which contains fiftyfive thousand verses and has six khaṇḍas (i.e. sections). There (i.e. in that Purāṇa) the first one is the Ādikhaṇḍa. Then comes the Bhūmikhaṇḍa. After that is Brahmakhaṇḍa. Then follows the Pātāla Khaṇḍa. The next one is known as Kriyākhaṇḍa, and the last one is Uttarakhaṇḍa. This is the great, wonderful lotus, of which the world is full.

25. It is based on the account of that (lotus); therefore the wise call it 'Padma'. This Purāṇa is spotless and excellent, (describing) the greatness of Viṣṇu.

26-31. (It is the Purāṇa) which, formerly, Viṣṇu, the god of gods, narrated to Brahmā, which Brahmā told to Nārada, and

which Nārada narrated to my preceptor. Vyāsa taught me, very dear to him, all the Purāṇas with (treatises on) history, and collections (of verses). I shall narrate to you that Purāṇa, very difficult to obtain, hearing which a man is free from such sins as killing a brāhmaṇa. He who listens to it gets (the merit of) having bathed at all the holy places. It gives salvation just by listening to it with great faith and devotion. Even if a person listens to it without faith and devotion, he gets a heap of merit. Therefore make all efforts to make the Padma Purāṇa the (honourable) guest of your ears (i.e. make all efforts to listen to Padma Purāṇa). In (i.e. from) it I shall narrate the Ādikhaṇḍa which destroys all sins. The sages, who are here, should, along with their disciples, listen to it.

CHAPTER TWO

The Creation of the Elements, Prakṛti etc.

Sūta said :

1. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall first tell you about the first creation, by which the eternal lord, the highest soul, is known.

2-4. O best brāhmaṇas, in the creations there was nothing (left) after the universal destruction. There was only one lustre called Brahman, the cause of everything. It was the ocean of joy, it was pure, and that which those longing for salvation, desire. It was omniscient because it was of the form of knowledge; it was unlimited, immutable. It was indestructible, always very clear, fixed, great and pervasive.

5-16a. At the time of creation that modification of the form of knowledge merged in itself; it began to create. From it came up Pradhāna (also called Prakṛti). From it sprang Mahān. Mahān is of three kinds: Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa. As the seed is covered with the skin Mahān is covered with Pradhāna. From the principle of Mahān came up Ahaṁkāra of three kinds : Vaikārika, Taijasa and Bhutādi. As Mahān is covered by Pradhāna, so is Ahaṁkāra covered by Mahān. The Bhūtādi (i.e. Ahaṁkāra)

then produced the subtle element of sound. From that subtle element space having the characteristics of sound was produced. Ahaṁkāra covered the subtle element of sound and (the gross element of) ether. The subtle element of ether similarly produced the subtle element of touch. (Then) very strong Vāyu (air) came up; it is said to be having the characteristics of touch. The subtle element of space covered the subtle element of air. The air, bringing about a change, produced the subtle element of colour. Fire is produced from Vāyu; that is called the quality of colour. The subtle element of Vāyu (air) covered the subtle element of colour. Fire, bringing about a change, produced the subtle element of taste. Therefrom the subtle element of water came up. The subtle element of taste covered the subtle element of colour. The (subtle element of) water, effecting a change, produced the subtle element of smell. From that this earth, with more qualities than possessed by all (other) elements came up. Since it is an aggregate of that, therefore smell is said to be its quality.

16b-19. They are called subtle and primary elements because they remain (in that condition) in the respective (elements). The subtle elements are devoid of specific perceptible characters. The specific characters are later and are in accordance with the order. These (five) subtle elements are derived from the Tāmasa Ahaṁkāra. O superior sages rich in penance, I have told (you) in brief (about the creation). The ten organs of sense are said to be Taijasa (or Rājasa) and Vaikārika (or Sāttvika). The philosophers have enumerated the mind as the eleventh (organ) here (i.e. in addition to the ten). There are five organs of knowledge and five organs of action.

20-30. O you purifies of your families, I shall enumerate them and their functions. (The organs of knowledge are:) hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell. They become joined with intellect for getting perception like sound. (The organs of action are:) anus, sex organ, hands, feet, and mouth is said to be the fifth. Their functions are said to be : excretion, joy (due to sexual act), grasping, movement and speech (respectively). O brāhmaṇas, ether, air, fire, water and earth are united with successive qualities like sound etc. They have various kinds of strength; remaining separate i.e. without combining themselves,

they were unable to create beings. These beginning with Mahat and ending with specific characters, having all come together, being united with one another, resorting to one another, coming together, having the same target, and having complete union due to the direction of Puruṣa and being favoured by Pradhāna, produce the egg. O very wise ones, that egg always grew like a water-bubble from the elements. It, remaining in the water, grew, having risen from Prakṛti, and an excellent place of Viṣṇu in the form of Brahmā. In it the lord Viṣṇu, the master of the universe, and of an unmanifest form, remained after having taken the form of Brahmā. Of it, of the essence of Mahat, those generated by sweat were the egg, the mountains were the outer skin, and the oceans were the fluid in the womb. Oceans with mountains and islands, the group of the worlds with the luminaries, all (this) along with gods, demons and human beings—was (present) in that egg.

31-34. By the desire of Śrī Viṣṇu that golden egg turned into the lotus which rose from the navel of Viṣṇu having neither beginning nor end. The highest Viṣṇu having the Rajas quality, and taking the form of Brahmā, himself proceeds to create the world; and protects what is created as long as the duration of the kalpa (i.e. the day of Brahmā) lasts; he would annihilate it in the form of Narasiṁha or Rudra. The great soul of the form of Brahmā creates, (then) desires to protect the entire world by taking the form of Rāma etc. Then he became (i.e. becomes) Rudra to swallow it.

CHAPTER THREE

Various Mountains and Regions of the Earth

The sages said:

1-2. O best one, tell us fully the names of the rivers, mountains of the countries, and of those who have resorted to (i.e. are living on) the earth, O you who know the measures, the full measure of the earth, and about the forests also.

Sūta said:

3-10. O very wise one, the gross elements in the universe are five in all; and the wise say that they are equal. (They are:) earth, water, and air, fire and ether. All of them are attended with attributes. Earth is the chief of them. The sages knowing the essential nature (of things) have said that the attributes of earth are sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. O brāhmaṇas, four attributes are (found) in water. It does not have smell. Fire (or light) has three attributes: sound, touch and colour. Air has (two attributes, viz.) sound and touch. Ether has (the attribute of) sound only. O brāhmaṇas, in the five elements these five attributes (are found), and (depending) on them the creatures in all the worlds exist. There is homogeneity when they do not overcome one another; but when they, becoming uneven, enter one another, then the beings spring up (into life) with bodies. This is not otherwise. They are destroyed in order. They come into existence in order (i.e. they are destroyed in the same order as they come into existence). All of them are immeasurable. Their form is the lord (himself).

11-17. Wherever the creatures consisting of the five elements are seen running about, men speak about their measures with (the help of their) reason. One should not, however, (seek to) understand matters that are inconceivable by reason. O best sages, (now) I shall describe to you the island of (i.e. called) Sudarśana. O illustrious ones, this island is circular—has the form of a wheel. It is covered with river waters, and with mountains resembling oceans, also with cities of various sizes and delightful countries; it is full of trees endowed with flowers and fruits; is having grains and (other) wealth. It is surrounded on all sides by the salt ocean. As a man would see his own face in a mirror, in the same way the circular Sudarśana island can be seen (in the ocean). Two of its parts (appear) like a pippala tree and two like a large hare. On all its sides it is surrounded by all (kinds of) herbs. Other than this (portion) all else should be known to be water. I shall describe the rest in brief.

The sages said:

18-20a. O intelligent one, you have briefly and duly given

an exposition of it. You know the essential nature of all things. (Now) O Sūta, tell us (about it) in detail. (First) tell us about dimension of the space which looks like a hare. Then you will describe (the land resembling) the pippala (tree).

Thus asked by them Sūta said (these) words :

Sūta said :

20b-24. O very wise ones, these six jewelled mountains stretching (from) east (to west) have gone into the eastern and western oceans. (They are:) Himavat, Hemakūṭa, the best mountain Niṣadha; so also Nīla abounding in lapis lazuli, Śveta resembling the moon; and the mountain named Śṛṅgavat covered with all (kinds of) metals. O brāhmaṇas, these mountains are resorted to by siddhas and cāraṇas. The distance between them measures thousands of yojanas. There are many kingdoms. O best ones, they are called Varṣa. Beings of various species live in them at all places.

25-31a. This is (called) Bhāratavarṣa. Beyond it is Haimavat. The land beyond Hemakūṭa is called Harivarṣa. To the south of Nīla, and to the north of Niṣadha, there is a mountain called Mālyavat stretching from the east. Beyond Mālyavat there is the mountain Gandhamādana. Between the two (i.e. Mālyavat and Gandhamādana) there is the golden mountain Meru globular in shape. It is bright like the (young) morning sun, and like fire without smoke. It is eightyfour thousand yojanas high. O best brāhmaṇas, its depth (also) is eightyfour thousand yojanas. It stands covering the worlds lying above, below and in the horizontal direction. By its side these four islands are situated, O brāhmaṇas: Bhadrāśva, Ketumāla and Jambudvīpa, O best ones; so also Uttarakuru which is resorted to by men who have practised virtuous deeds.

31b-41a. The bird Sumukha, the son of Supārśva, on seeing the big birds of golden colour (on Meru) thought: 'I shall abandon this mountain Meru since the birds there have no difference among them like good, middling and bad ones.' The Sun, the best among the luminaries, constantly goes round it. So also the Moon with the constellations, and Vāyu go round it. O very wise ones, the mountain is endowed with divine flowers, it

is covered with all auspicious golden houses. On that mountain hosts of gods, gandharvas, deities and demons always sport, accompanied by the bevies of celestial nymphs. Brahmā, Śiva and Śakra, the lord of gods gather there, and perform various sacrifices with munificent gifts. (The gandharva) Tumbura, Nārada, (and the two gandharva brothers) Hāhā and Hūhū, having gone there, praise with various hymns the best (of the gods). Well-being to you; the seven high-souled sages and Kaśyapa, the lord of created beings always go there on a parvan-day (i.e. the full-moon day or the new-moon day). On the summit of that mountain only Uśanas or Kavi (i.e. Śukra) is honoured by the demons. It has jewels with gold; so also other jewelled mountains are (parts) of Meru. The lord Kubera gets the fourth part of it. Of that wealth he gives the sixteenth part to human beings.

41b-45a. Adjacent to this mountain is the Karṇikāra grove, which is divine, which is full of flowers of all seasons, which is charming and is elevated with a mass of rocks. There the revered lord Śiva himself, the cause of beings, surrounded by divine beings and accompanied by Umā, and wearing a garland of Karṇikāra flowers reaching his feet, and shining with his three eyes resembling three risen suns, sports. Truthful siddhas, practising severe penance and of good vows (alone can) see him. The great god cannot be seen by those of a wicked conduct.

45b-48. From the peak of the mountain, O best brāhmaṇas, flows, like a stream of milk, the pious, auspicious Ganges, also called Bhāgīrathī, of a universal form, immeasurable, flowing out with a fearful noise, resorted to by the most pious beings, (and falls) with a great speed into the charming lake of Candramas. She has produced that auspicious lake resembling an ocean. The bearer of Pināka (i.e. Śiva) held on his head for a hundred thousand years that Ganges which was incapable of being borne even by the mountains.

49-54. O best brāhmaṇas, Ketumāla is on the western side of Meru; (and) O brāhmaṇas, the country called Jambukhaṇḍa is there only. O best ones, there the span of human life is ten thousand years. The men are of golden complexion and the women resemble celestial nymphs. Human beings there are healthy, free from sorrow and always of cheerful minds. Men born there are of the brightness of heated gold. Kubera, the lord

of guhyakas, surrounded by groups of the celestial nymphs, rejoices with the demons on the peaks of Gandhamādana. By the side of Gandhamādana (there live) other (people) with their sin destroyed. They have a long span of life of eleven thousand years. O brāhmaṇas, the men there are dark in complexion, lustrous and very strong. All the women have the complexion of lotus and are very beautiful.

55-67a. Śveta has blue lotuses; beyond Śveta is the excellent country called Hairaṇyaka. (Beyond that) is Airāvata having several countries, O brāhmaṇas. O glorious ones, there are two countries, of the form of a bow on the south and the north. Ilāvṛtta is in the middle. (Thus) there are five divisions. Of these the succeeding country excels (preceding ones) in attributes like span of life, health, righteousness, desirable objects and material things. (In spite of differences) O best ones, beings in all these countries live together (amicably). O glorious ones, this earth is covered with mountains. The great Hemakūṭa is (also) the mountain called Kailāsa. There god Vaiśravaṇa (i.e. Kubera) rejoices with guhyakas. To the north of Kailāsa and near the Maināka mountain there is the very great, divine mountain called Maṇimaya having golden peaks. By its side there is a large, divine, bright, charming lake called Viṣṇusaras, with golden sands (on its banks), where Bhagīratha, having seen Gaṅgā, (also called) Bhāgīrathī, lived for many years. There are sacrificial pillars decked with gems, and lands full of gold. The very glorious thousand-eyed (god, i.e. Indra) performed sacrifices there, and attained perfection. The eternal creator, of a bright lustre, and the lord of beings, is worshipped there by (beings in) all the worlds. There (reside) Nara, Nārayaṇa, Brahmā, Manu and Sthāṇu (i.e. Śiva) as the fifth. The celestial (Gaṅgā) taking three paths, first appeared there after moving from Brahmā's heaven, and flowed in seven streams : Vaṭodakā, Sarasvatī, Pārvatī, Jambūnadī, Sītā, Gaṅgā and Sindhu as the seventh. She is inconceivable, has a divine appellation, and is endowed with prowess.

67b-71a. There, at the end of the yuga (i.e. at the time of creation), a thousand sacrifices are performed (by gods and sages). Sarasvatī (in her course) appears at places and disappears at (other) places. These seven (streams of) Gaṅgā are well-known

in the three worlds. Demons live on Himavat and guhyakas on Hemakūṭa. Serpents and snakes reside in Niṣadha; and Gokarṇa is a penance-grove. The mountain Śveta is said to be (the abode) of gods and demons. Gandharvas always live on Niṣadha, and the brāhmaṇic sages on Nīla. O glorious ones, Śṛṅgavān is (said to be) a place where gods move.

71b-75. O illustrious ones, these are the seven countries according to the division (of the world). Mobile and immobile creatures have encamped here. Prosperity of various kinds—both providential and human—of these (creatures) is seen (there). It cannot be enumerated. The graceful ones are to be believed. O brāhmaṇas, (I have told you) about the divine form of the hare about which you had asked me. I have also told you about the two countries lying adjacent to the country (having the form like that) of a hare in the south and in the north. They are (the hare's) ears. They are Karṇadvīpa and Kāśyapadvīpa. O Brāhmaṇas, the beautiful Malaya mountain has rocks of (as in) Karṇadvīpa. This other country looks like the hare's form.

CHAPTER FOUR

Uttarakuru, Bhadrāśva, Mālyuvat

The sages said:

1. O Sūta, O you very intelligent one, tell us in full (about the countries) to the north, west and east of Meru, so also about the Mālyavat mountain.

Sūta said:

2. O brāhmaṇas, on the south of Nīla, and the northern side of Meru there is the auspicious land called Uttarakuru, where siddhas have resided.

3. The trees there have sweet fruits and always have flowers and fruits. The flowers are very fragrant and the fruits are tasty.

4-5. O best brāhmaṇas, some trees there give all the fruits as desired by (one who approaches them). O best brāhmaṇas, there are other trees called kṣīrin (i.e. yielding milk). All they always ooze milk that resembles nectar. They also yield clothes and in their fruits are ornaments.

6. The entire land is full of gems and has fine golden sands, O you ascetics, and there are trees bearing no fruit (but) pleasant to touch in all seasons.

7. Men that are born there have dropped from the world of gods. They are born in pure, noble families, and are very handsome.

8-11. There twins (of opposite sexes) are born and women resemble the celestial nymphs (in beauty). They (i.e. the men and women) drink the nectar-like milk of those milk-yielding trees. The twins that are born there grow equally during the (proper) period. Both have similar beauty, virtues and dresses also. They are fit for one another like the cakravāka birds, O brāhmaṇas. Those people are healthy and always of a cheerful mind. O glorious one, they live for ten thousand and ten hundred years, and do not desert each other.

12. Birds called Bhāruḍa, having sharp beaks and great strength, carry them away when dead and throw them into valleys.

13. O brāhmaṇas, I have described to you in brief (the country called) Uttarakuru. I shall now duly describe to you the eastern side of Meru.

14. O ascetics, in the country called Bhadrāśva which is the chief (country), there is a grove (called) Bhadraśāla, where there are huge trees called kālāmra.

15-18. O glorious ones, the kālāmra trees always bear flowers and fruits and are auspicious. They are a yojana tall and are resorted to by siddhas and cāraṇas. The men there are white (in complexion), bright and very strong. The women have the complexion of lotuses, are beautiful and pleasant to look at. They have complexion like that of the moon, have four (principal) colours and their faces are like the full moon. Their bodies are cool like the moon and they areskilled in dancing and singing. O best brāhmaṇas, the span of life there is ten thousand years. They who drink the juice of kālāmra, always remain young.

19-21a. On the south of Nīla, on the north of Niṣadha there is a huge, ancient, Jambu tree. It is auspicious, and grants all desired objects. It is resorted to by siddhas and cāraṇas. The ancient country Jambudvīpa is so called after its name. (The height of the jambu tree) is a thousand and a hundred yojanas, O best brāhmaṇas.

21b-26. Similarly on the eastern peak of Mālyavat there are small mountains. O brāhmaṇas, Mālyavat measures fifty thousand yojanas. Men born there resemble gold (in their complexion). All of them have fallen from Brahmā's heaven and all expound the Vedas. They practise divine penance and live in perpetual celibacy. They enter the sun for protecting the beings. Sixty thousand and sixty hundred of them surround the sun, and go before Aruṇa. Being heated with the sun's heat for sixty thousand years they (ultimately) enter the moon's orb.

CHAPTER FIVE

Ramaṇaka, Hiraṇmaya, Airāvata

The sages said:

1. O best one, tell us duly the names of countries and mountains, so also (about) those that live on those mountains.

Sūta said:

2-4. On the south of Śveta and on the north of Niṣadha there is the country named Ramaṇaka. The men there are born in pure noble families, and all of them are handsome; and all the men that are born there are without enemies. O glorious ones, they being always cheerful, live for eleven thousand and five hundred years.

5-6a. On the south of Nīla and on the north of Niṣadha there is a country called Hiraṇmaya, where there is the river Hairaṇvatī, where, O very wise ones, lives this best bird, the king of birds (i.e. Garuḍa).

6b-8a. The brāhmaṇas there follow (i.e. perform) sacrifices, and the archers are handsome. O brāhmaṇas, the men there are very strong and always have cheerful hearts. O you great ascetics, they live for a span of twelve thousand and five hundred years.

8b-11a. O best brāhmaṇas, the mountain has only three sacred summits. One of them is full of jewels; (another) one, golden and wonderful; (still another) one is full of all gems and looks beautiful with mansions. There the respectable self-luminous lady Śaṇḍinī always lives. O best brāhmaṇas, beyond the Śṛṅgavat mountain, and on its north and near the ocean is the country called Airāvata.

11b-14a. The sun has no scope there; men do not decay. (Only) the moon with the stars covers it like a light. The men there are born with the splendour of lotuses, with the complexion of lotuses and with eyes resembling lotus-petals, and with the fragrance of lotuses. They are unfallen, of agreeable fragrance (possessed by their bodies); they do not eat food and have their senses controlled. O brāhmaṇas, all of them have fallen from the world of gods, and are without any blemish.

14b-15a. O best brāhmaṇas, those most religious men live a span of life of thirteen thousand years.

15b-19. So also to the north of the milky ocean lives the lord, Vaikuṇṭha, Viṣṇu, in a golden car. The car has eight wheels, has (celestial) beings on it and has the speed of mind. It has a colour like fire, is very effulgent, and is decorated with gold. O best brāhmaṇas, he is the lord of all creatures. He is the withdrawl and the expansion, so also he fashions and gets fashioned (i.e. he is the cause of the destruction and creation of) the earth, water, ether, air and fire. He is the sacrifice for all creatures and fire is his mouth.

CHAPTER SIX

Bhāratavarṣa : Its Rivers and Regions

The sages said:

1. Tell us about the auspicious Bhārata country which endows merit, (since) you are intelligent in our opinion.

Sūta said:

2-6. I shall now describe to you the excellent country Bhārata of the god dear to his friends, of Manu the son of Vivasvān, of Pṛthu, of the wise Vainya; also of the high-souled Ikṣvāku, of Yayāti, Ambarīṣa, Māndhātṛ and Nahuṣa; also of Mucakunda, Kuberośīnara, Ṛṣabha; also of Aila, and king Nṛga; of Kuśika, of the royal sage Gādhi the magnanimous one, also of Soma, and of the royal sage Dilīpa; also, O glorious ones, of other powerful kṣatriyas and is dear to all beings.

7-8a. Now I shall describe the country as I learnt about it, O brāhmaṇas. These seven are principal mountains; Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Śuktimān, and also Ṛkṣavān; so also Vindhya and Pāriyātra.

8b-9a. O brāhmaṇas, there are thousands of (other) mountains near them. They are not (so well)-known, (but) possess excellences and have many variegated peaks.

9b-27a. Other smaller mountains are known (to exsit) and they are inhabited by low tribes. Aryans and Mlecchas and many men of mixed (blood) drink (the water of) the pure rivers Gaṅgā, Sindhu, Sarasvatī; also (of) Godāvarī, Narmadā having profuse water, (of) the great river Śatadru, Candrabhāgā, (of) the great river Yamunā, (of) Dṛṣadvatī, Vitastā, and Vipāpā of pure sands; also (of) the river Vetravatī, Kṛṣṇaveṇī, (of) Irāvatī, Vitastā, Payoṣṇī and Devikā; also (of) Vedasmṛti, Vedasīrā, Tridivā, Sindhulākṛmi, Karīṣiṇī, Citravahā, and (of) the river Trisenā, also Gomatī, Dhūtapāpā, and (of) the great river Candanā, Kauśikī, the charming Tridivā, Nācitā, Rohitāraṇī, Rahasyā, Śatakumbhā, and Śarayū also, O best of brāhmaṇas; similarly (of) Carmaṇvatī, Vetravatī, Hastisomā, Diś; Śarāvatī, Payoṣṇī, Bhīmā; also Bhīmarathī, Kāverī, Culukā, and Ahitāpī, and also Śatamalā; and Nīvārā, Mahitā, also (of)

the river Suprayogā, Pavitrā, Kṛṣṇalā, Sindhu, Vājinī and Puramālinī, Pūrvābhirāmā, Vīrā and Bhīmā, also Mālāvatī, Palāśinī, Pāpaharā, Mahendrā, Paṭalāvatī, Kariṣiṇī, Masiknī, and (of) the great river Kuśacīrī, Marutā, Pravarā, Menā, Hemā; also Ghṛtavatī, Anāvatī, Anuṣṇā, and Savyā, O best brāhmaṇas; and Sadāvirā, Adhṛṣyā, and (of) the great river Kuśacīrā, Rathacitrā, Jyotirathā, Viśvāmitrā and Kapiñjalā, Candrāvahaphalī, and (of) the river Kucīrā, Vainadī, Piṅgalā, and (of) the great river Tuṅgavegā, Vidiśā, Kṛṣnaveṇā, and Tāmrā and Kapilā also; Dhenu, Sakāmā, Vedasvā, Havisrāvā, and Mahāpathā; also (of) Śiprā, Picchalā, and the river Bhāradvājī, Kaurṇikī, the river Śoṇā, Bāhudā and Candramā; Durgā, Antaḥśilā, and Brahmamedhyā and Dṛṣadvatī, Parokṣā and Rohī; also Jambūnadī; Sunāsā, Tamasā, Dāsī, Sāmānyā, Varaṇā, Asī, Nīlā, and Dhṛtikarī, and the great river Paṛṇāśā, Mānavī, Vṛṣabhā, Bhāsā, Brahmamedhya, Dṛṣadvatī.

27b-30. These and others are the many great rivers, O best brāhmaṇas. (Aryans and Mlecchas drink the water of) the always pure Kṛṣṇā, Mandagā, Mandavāhinī, Brāhmaṇī, Mahāgaurī, and Durgā also, O best ones; (and of) Citrotpalā, Citrarathā, Atulā and Rohiṇī; Mandākinī, Vaitaraṇī, and the great river Kokā, Śuktimatī, Anaṅgā, also Vṛṣasāhvayā; Lohityā, Karatoyā, also Vṛṣakātvayā; Kumārī and Ṛṣitulyā, and Mārīṣā and Sarasvatī; Mandākinī, Supuṇyā, and Sarvā, Gaṅgā, O best ones.

31-33a. All these are the mothers of the (whole) world. Like these there are hundreds and thousands of renowned rivers. O brāhmaṇas, I have thus described (to you) the rivers as I remembered them.

33b-65. Hereafter listen to the description of the countries when I am giving it. Among them are Kurupāñcāla, Śalva, Mādreya, Jāṅgala, Śūrasena, Pulinda, Baudha, and Māla also; Matsya, Kuśīla, Saugandhya, Kutsapa, Kāśi-kośala; Cedi, Matsya, Karuṣa, Bhoja, Sindhu and Pulindaka, and Uttama, Daśārṇa, Mekala with Utkala, Pañcāla, Kośala, Nikapṛṣṭha, Yugandhara, Bodha, Madra, Kaliṅga, Kāśā, Parakāśa, Jaṭhara and Kukura, also Daśārṇa, O extremely good ones; Kunti, Avanti, also Aparakunti, Gomanta, Mallaka, Puṇḍra, Vidarbha and Nṛpavāhika; the (South) and North Aśmaka, and the

smaller Goparāṣṭra, Adhirājya, Kuśaṭṭa, Mallarāṣṭra and Kerala ; Mālava, Upavāsya, Cakra, Vakra, Ālaya and Śaka; Videha, Magadha, Sadma, Malaja and also Vijaya; Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga and in the same way Yakṛllomāna; Malla, Sudeṣṇā, Prahlāda, Mahiṣa and also Śaśaka; Bālhika, Vāṭadhāna, Ābhīra, Kālatoyaka, Aparānta, Parānta and Paṅkala and Carmacaṇḍika, Aṭavīśekhara, and Merubhūta, O best ones; Upāvṛta, Anupāvṛta, Suraṣṭra and also Kekaya; Kuṭṭa, Aparānta, Māheya, Kakṣa, Samudra, Niṣkuṭa; O brāhmaṇas, Andha and the many hilly tribes, also the tribes residing in the mountains, Aṅga, Malada, Magadha, Mālava, Arghaṭa, Sattvatara, Prāvṛṣeya, and Bhārgava, O best brāhmaṇas; Puṇḍra, Bhārga, Kirāta and Sudeṣṇa and Bhāsura; Śaka, Niṣāda, Niṣadha, also Anārta and Naiṛta; Pūrṇala, Pūtimatsya, Kuntala and also Kuśaka ; Tarigraha, Śūrasena, Ījika, Kalpa and Kāraṇa ; Tilabhāga, Masāra, Madhumatta, Kakundaka, Kāśmīra, Sindhu, Sauvīra, Gāndhāra, and Darśaka ; Abhisāra, Kudruta, Saurila and Bālhīka, Darvī and Mālava, Darva, Vātaja and Amarathoraga; also, O brāhmaṇas, Balaraṭṭa, Sudāman, Sumallika, Bandha, Karīṣa and also Kulinda and Gandhika, Vanayu, Daśa, Pārśvaroman, Kuśabindu; Kāccha, Gopālakaccha, Jāṅgala, Kuruvarṇaka; Kirāta, Barbara, Siddha, Vaideha, Tāmraliptika, Auḍra, Mleccha with Sairindra, Pārvatīya (mountaineers), O best ones. O best sages, and other countries are on the south : Draviḍa, Kerala, Prācya, Mūṣika and Bālamūṣika; Karṇāṭaka, Māhiṣaka, Vikandha and Mūṣika also; Jhallika, Kuntala, also Sauhṛda, Anala and Kānana; also Kaukkuṭaka, Bola, Kokaṇa, Maṇivālaka; Samaṅga, Kanaka and Kuṅkura, Aṅgāra and Māriṣa; Dhvajinyutsavasaṁketa, Trivarga and Mālyaseni; Vyūḍhaka, Koraka, Proṣṭa, Saṅgavegadhara also; also Vindhya, Rulika, Pulinda with Balvala; Mālava, Malara also, and also Aparavartaka; Kulinda, Kālada, also Candaka and Kuraṭa; Muśala, Tanavāla, Satīrtha, Pūtisṛñjaya; Anidāya, Śivāṭa, and also Tapana and Sūtapa; and Ṛṣika and Vidarbha, Taṅgana and Aparataṅgaka; O best sages, the others at the north are Mlecchas; the Yavanas with Kāmbojas are terrible Mleccha tribes; Śakṛghṛhas, Kulaṭyas Hūṇas with Pārasikas, also Ramaṇas and others (like) Daśamālikas are other tribes. There are kṣatriya colonies and also the

families of vaiśyas and śūdras. (There are the tribes called) Śūra, Ābhīra, Darada, Kāśmīra with Paśu; also Khāṇḍīka, Tuṣāra, Padmaga, Girigahvara, Ādreya with Bharadvāja, also Stanapoṣaka; Droṣaka, Kaliṅga, and Kirāta tribes, (those) killing with javelins and Karabhañjaka. These and others are the countries which are on the eastern and northern sides; O brāhmaṇas, I described them by way of an illustration; so (I explained) the great fruit, according to their virtue and power, the three goals (of human life).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Span of Life in the Four Yugas

The sages said:

1-2. Tell us, in detail, of the measure (i.e. span) of life, strength, the auspicious and inauspicious, the future, past and present (of the residents) of Bhāratavarṣa, Himavat, and also Harivarṣa.

Sūta said:

3-8. There are four yugas in Bhāratavarṣa. The first yuga was Kṛta; then there was Tretāyuga, O brāhmaṇas. After that Dvāpara sets in; then comes Kali. The span of life, O best sages, was known to be four thousand years, in Kṛtayuga. O ascetics, similarly they know that the span of life in Tretāyuga is three thousand years. The span of life at present in Dvāpara is two thousand years; for that much period men live on the earth. However, in Tiṣya (i.e. Kali)-yuga, men die while in womb, and also they die as soon as they are born.

9-11. In Kṛtayuga, O brāhmaṇas, very strong, very powerful men, having the attribute of wisdom were born and begotten in hundreds and thousands. O brāhmaṇas, strong and handsome brāhmaṇas were born and begotten in Kṛtayuga. Ascetics with penance as their treasure were born and begotten endowed with great perseverence, high souls, pious and truthful

in speech. The kṣatriyas also are born handsome, able-bodied, of great valour, skilled in archery and brave in battles, and esteemed by the brave. In Tretāyuga, all the kṣatriyas were emperors.

12-15. In Dvāparayuga, however, all the castes were always born with great energy, power and desire to kill one another. Men born in Kaliyuga will possess little lustre, are said to be wrathful, greedy, untruthful. Human beings in Kaliyuga will have jealousy, pride, and also anger, deceit and malice, O brāhmaṇas; in the middle yuga, Dvāpara, a small portion remains. In qualities, Himavat is superior (to Bhāratavarṣa) and Harivarṣa is superior to that.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Śākadvīpa: Mountains, Rivers and Countries

The sages said:

1-3a. O best one, you have duly described (to us) Jambukhaṇḍa. Tell us correctly the extent of its dimensions. You who see the whole, tell us properly about the extent of the ocean, as well as about Śākadvīpa and the sacred Kuśadvīpa: also tell us properly about Śālmala and about Krauñca-dvīpa.

Sūta said:

3b-6. O brāhmaṇas, there are many islands which have covered the earth. I shall describe the seven islands: Listen, O best brāhmaṇas. The measure of the mountain Jambu is full eighteen thousand and six hundred yojanas. The extent of the salt sea is said to be double this. It is crowded with many countries, and is beautified with gems and corals. It is also adorned with mountains variegated with many minerals. Crowded with siddhas and cāraṇas, the ocean is circular in form.

7-10. O best ones, I shall now duly describe Śākadvīpa. O pious ones, today listen properly when I am describing it. O

best brāhmaṇas, it is twice the size of Jambudvīpa. O glorious ones, best sages, the milky ocean too which surrounds it is like that with its divisions. The communities there are righteous, and the men there never die. Then whence can there be dearth? The men there are endowed with the lustre of forgiveness. O best sages, I have duly told you this brief description of Śākadvīpa. O glorious ones, what else should I tell you?

The sages said:

11. O you righteous one, you have duly given us a brief description of Śākadvīpa. O very intelligent one, now describe it correctly and in detail.

Sūta said :

12-13a. Like that here also, O brāhmaṇas, there are seven mountains. They are jewelled mountains. Also there are oceans, rivers. I shall (now) tell their names; O righteous ones, you are asking about a very useful thing.

13b-18. The first mountain having gods, sages and gandharvas (as its residents) is called Meru. O glorious ones, (the other) mountain stretching towards the east is Malaya. From it clouds proceed in all directions and there they are generated. O sages, beyond it the large mountain is Jaladhāra. From it Indra always takes excellent water. O best brāhmaṇas, from that rain is produced in the rainy season. (Then there is) the high mountain Raivataka, where (i.e. over which) the constellation Revatī is eternally fixed in the firmament. The grandsire himself has made this arrangement. O best brāhmaṇas, on the north is the great mountain called Śyāma. It has the brightness of new clouds; it is high; is rich and has a bright body; due to it the people there are dark (yet) cheerful.

The sages said:

19. O Sūta, a great doubt has come to us (i. e. arisen in our mind): How have they entirely become dark?

Sūta said:

20-39. O very wise, best sages, in all the islands (men of) dark and fair complexion may be found; but since dark comp-

lexion (among people) prevailed, it is called Śyāma (i. e. dark) mountain. O best sages, next to this there is a large mountain Durgaśaila. Then there is the mountain Keśarin, from which breezes (fragrant) with saffron blow. The measure of (each of) them is twice (that of the one mentioned before). O best brāhmaṇas, the wise have said that there are seven countries in them (i.e. in the island). That of the great Meru is Mahākāśa; that of the giver of water (i.e. Malaya) is Kumudottara; O very wise ones, the country of Jaladhāra is known as Sukumāra; (the country) of Raivataka is (called) Kaumāra; and of Śyāma is (called) Maṇikāñcana. O best brāhmaṇas, in the centre of the island there is a great tree called Śāka having height and breadth which can be measured with that in the Jambudvīpa. Beings always go to it. The countries in it are holy, and Śiva is worshipped there. Siddhas, cāraṇas and deities go there. All the subjects there are pious; and the four castes, free from jealousy are engaged in their own duties. A thief is never seen there. The people there, O very wise ones, have a long life and, being free from old age and death, grow like rivers during the rainy season. The rivers there have holy water and the Ganges flows there in many streams. O brāhmaṇas, they are Sukumārī, Kumārī, Sītā, and Śitodakā, also Mahānadī, similarly the river Maṇijalā, and the river called Ikṣuvardhanikā, O best sages. From there proceed rivers having holy water and very beautiful, in hundreds of thousands, from where Indra showers. It is not possible (for me) to remember and recount their names. (All) these excellent rivers are holy. Then there are four holy countries well-known in the world: Mṛga, Maśaka Mānasa and Mallaka. Mṛga is mostly populated with brāhmaṇas who are engaged in their duties. In Maśaka live kṣatriyas who are pious and grant the desires (of supplicants). O glorious ones, in Mānasa live vaiśyas acting according to the rules of their caste. With all their desires satisfied, they are brave and settled in the ways of virtue and material gains. In Mallaka live śūdras, and (these) men behave righteously. O best brāhmaṇas, there is no king, no punishment, nor those who inflict punishment. Those men, knowing what is right, protect one another. This much only can be said about that island.

CHAPTER NINE

Śālmalika, Krauñca, Kuśa and Puṣkara Dvīpas and Their Mountains

Sūta said:

1. O illustrious ones, now listen to the account of the northern islands from me who am telling it.

2. There is an ocean having the water of clarified butter; another has the water of curds; then there is an ocean having the water of wine; and one more is an ocean of milk.

3. O best brāhmaṇas, these islands have double the size of one another (as they proceed northwards). O highly intelligent ones, there are also mountains surrounded by oceans.

4-6. In the middle island there is a large mountain (made of) minerals. In the western island there is the mountain Kṛṣṇa, that is the friend (i.e. favourite) of Nārāyaṇa, O brāhmaṇas. There Viṣṇu himself guards divine gems; and there, being pleased, he bestows happiness on creatures. In the centre of the country in the Śaradvīpa there is a clump of Kuśa (grass); O brāhmaṇas, the Śālmali (tree) is worshipped in the Śālmalika island.

7-9a. O best brāhmaṇas, on the Krauñca island is the Mahākrauñca mountain, which is a mine of heaps of gems. It is always adored by all the four castes. O brāhmaṇas, then there is the Gomanta mountain full of all minerals, where the glorious, lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu) always lives. The lord Nārāyaṇa, (also called) Hari is always in the company of those who have secured salvation.

9b-11. O best brāhmaṇas, in Kuśadvīpa is the mountain Sunāma (literally, of a good name) which is full of corals and is inaccessible. Another mountain, the golden mountain, is Dyutimān, O best of brāhmaṇas. The third is Kumuda mountain. The fourth mountain is called Puṣpavān, the fifth one is Kuśeśaya. The sixth is Harigiri. These six are the chief mountains.

12-14a. The distance between each of them becomes double (as we proceed from one to another). The first country is Audbhida; the second in Reṇumaṇḍala; the third one is Suratha, and the fourth one is known as Lambana. The fifth country is

Dhṛtimat, and the sixth country is Prabhākara. The seventh country is Kapila. These seven are in a straight line.

14b-16. O brāhmaṇas, in these gods and gandharvas and (other) creatures are cheerful and sport and enjoy. No man dies in these (divisions). O brāhmaṇas, there are no thieves there, nor the Mlecchа tribes. O best ones, the people there are almost white and delicate. O best brāhmaṇas, O very wise ones, I shall describe as I have heard about the remaining islands.

17-20a. O illustrious ones, in Krauñcadvīpa, there is a large mountain called Krauñca. Next to Krauñca is the (mountain) Vāmanaka; next to Vāmana (or Vāmanaka) is Andhakāraka; next to Andhakāra (or Andhakāraka) is the best mountain Maināka, O brāhmaṇas. Next to Maināka, O brāhmaṇas, is the best mountain Govinda. Beyond Govinda is the great mountain Puṇḍarīka. Next to Puṇḍarīka is said to be the (mountain called) Dundubhisvana. Towards the east the distance between any two of the mountains becomes double.

20b-24a. I shall tell you about the countries there. Listen to me who am describing them. The country of Krauñca (i.e. in which Krauñca is situated) is Kuśala; that of Vāmana is Manonuga; O ascetics, the country beyond Manonuga is Uṣṇa. Beyond Uṣṇa is Prāvaraka. Andhakāraka is next to Prāvara. Munideśa is said to be next to Adhakāraka country. Dundubhisvana is said to be next to Munideśa. It is crowded with siddhas and cāraṇas. The men there have almost a white complexion. These regions are said to be resorted to by gods and gandharvas.

24b-32a. In (the island of) Puṣkara there is a mountain called Puṣkara which is rich in gems and jewels. The lord of beings himself moves there. All gods and great sages always wait upon him. O best brāhmaṇas, they worship him with agreeable words. Various gems proceed uninterruptedly from Jambudvīpa. O best sages, due to celibacy, truthfulness and restraint of the brāhmaṇas the span of life and the quality of health of the people in those islands go on doubling (as one goes) on (towards the north). O best ones, I have described to you the countries in which only one religion exists. The lord, the creator himself, having raised the rod of punishment always protects these islands. O brāhmaṇas, he is the king, he is the final beatitude, he is the father and the grandfather. O best

brāhmaṇas, he protects the creatures along with the brāhmaṇas and the wise. O glorious ones, the beings here daily eat the food that is ready and that itself approaches them.

32b-41. Beyond that a region called Samā (Or, beyond that a great mountain, the habitation of people) is seen. It is symmetrical and is round on all sides. O best brāhmaṇas, the four quarter-elephants, dear to the world and with their cheeks and mouths in rut, live there. O best sages, O brāhmaṇas, (they are:) Vāmana, Airāvata, Añjana and Supratīka. I do not venture to count their measure. The proportion—breadthwise, lengthwise and heightwise—is ever incalculable. There winds blow irregularly from all directions. O best sages, the elephants take them. They draw them with the very lustrous trunks resembling lotuses. Then they always again quickly let them out in a hundred ways. O best brāhmaṇas, the winds (thus) let out by the breathing elephants come (down), and the creatures live (by them). I have described to you the world along with its creation as desired (by you). O best brāhmaṇas having heard this measure of the earth, which gives merit and is agreeable, a rich person gets emancipated, has his objects accomplished, and is liked by the good. His span of life, strength, glory and lustre increase. The (fore-)fathers and grandfathers of him, who, having taken a vow, listens to this when narrated on a parvan-day, are pleased.

CHAPTER TEN

Dialogue between Nārada and Yudhiṣṭhira

The sages said:

1-2. Having heard the measure and the position of the earth, so also (having heard) about the rivers from you, we have just drunk nectar. We have heard that there are holy places on the earth. Describe them to us and also how they are fruitful. O very wise one, we desire to hear about them in detail from you.

Sūta said:

3-4. O you ascetics, you have asked about an excellent, meritorious, great account. I shall narrate it to the best of my knowledge, suitably and as I have heard it. I shall tell you the ancient conversation of the celestial sage Nārada with Yudhiṣṭhira. O best brāhmaṇas, listen.

5. The Pāṇḍavas, the sons of Pāṇḍu, the illustrious great heroes, deprived of their kingdom, lived in the forest with Draupadī.

6. They saw the high-souled celestial sage Nārada, shining with brāhmaṇic lustre, and bright like blazing fire (who had come) there.

7. That celebrated descendant of Kuru, surrounded by those brothers (of him), shone with glowing splendour as Indra surrounded by gods in heaven.

8. As Sāvitrī did not abandon the gods, or as the sun's light does not leave Meru, Yājñasenī (i.e. Draupadī) did not, due to her piety, forsake the sons of Pṛthā (i.e. of Kuntī, i.e. the Pāṇḍavas).

9-10. That revered sage Nārada, having accepted the homage, consoled that son of Dharma (i.e. Yudhṣṭhira) with proper, well-formed and agreeable (words), and spoke to the noble Dharmarāja Yudhiṣṭhira: "O best among those who practise piety, what do you desire? What should I give you?"

11-14. Then king (Yudhiṣṭhira), the son of Dharma, having along with his brothers saluted Nārada, and with the palms of his hands joined, spoke to Nārada, resembling a god: "O you illustrious one, when you, revered by all the worlds, are pleased, then I think, (everything) is affected through your grace, O you of a good vow. O best sage, O sinless one, if you (are going to) favour me with my brothers, then (please) remove the doubt in my mind. O brāhmaṇa, (please) remove the doubt in my mind. O brāhmaṇa, (please) tell (us) fully about the fruit that he who, devoted to the holy places, goes round (over) the earth, gets."

Nārada said:

15-18. O king, listen attentively as to how formerly Dilīpa heard all this from Vasiṣṭha. In ancient times the best and very

lustrous king Dilīpa took up a religious vow and lived like a sage, O great king, at the auspicious, holy place Gaṅgādvāra on the bank of the Ganges resorted to by gods and gandharvas. He, of a great lustre, pleased (by offering oblations) his dead ancestors and gods. He also satisfied (by offering oblations) the sages with religious rites.

19-25. When the large-minded one was muttering (the names of a god) for some time, he saw the best sage Vasiṣṭha, resembling Śiva. When he saw that priest (of him) shining with glory, he was very much delighted and amazed. That best one among the righteous ones, took, according to the religious rites, the materials of worship on his head, and being pure and with his mind controlled, told his name to that best brāhmaṇic sage: "Well-being to you, I am Dilīpa, I am your servant, O you of a good vow. Just by seeing you I have become free from all sins." O great king Yudhiṣṭhira, that Dilīpa, controlled in speech, and best among men, speaking thus, folded the palms of his hands, and remained silent. Seeing that Dilīpa, the best king, emaciated due to his vow and muttering to himself, the sage was pleased.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Puṣkara, the Holiest of Holy Places

Vasiṣṭha said:

1. O you knowing what is right, O you illustrious one, I am fully pleased with you due to this your civility, restraint and truthfulness.

2. You who have such piety have emancipated your forefathers. Therefore, O son, you (are able to) see me; and O descendant of Manu, you are fit to be a sacrificer.

3. My affection for you increases; tell me today what I should do for you. O you sinless and best among men, I shall give you what you will ask for.

Dilīpa said:

4-7. O you who know the essence of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, O you who are adored by all the worlds, I (think my desire) is satisfied in that I have seen you the lord. O best among the pious ones, if I deserve to be favoured by you then I shall ask you about a doubt (lurking) in my mind. Please remove it. I desire, O revered sir, to hear (your explanation) about the doubt that I have about the piety of each of the holy places. You should tell me separately (about each holy place). O best brāhmaṇa, O brāhmaṇic sage, O you abode of penance, tell me what fruit he, who goes round the earth, obtains.

Vasiṣṭha said:

8-12. I shall tell you who are devoted to me among the sages. O dear one, listen with a concentrated mind, the fruit (that one) gets by (visiting) holy places. He whose hands, feet and mind are well-restrained, and has learning, penance, and glory gets the fruit of (visiting) a sacred place. He who keeps himself away from accepting (things from others), is contented, controlled and pure, and free from pride, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a sacred place. He who is sinless, who goes without food, does not accept food, has his senses controlled, and who is free from all blemishes obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a sacred place. O lord of kings, he, who never gets angry, who is given to truthfulness, who is of a firm vow, who looks upon (other) beings like himself, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place.

13-15. The sages have prescribed (certain) sacrifices even among (i.e. for) gods in due order. They have correctly and fully told about their fruit. O king, those sacrifices are not within the reach of the poor; (since) sacrifices require many implements and extensive preparations. They are within the reach of kings, or sometimes of rich people. They cannot (be performed) by groups of poor people independently (since they have) no means.

16-19. O king, listen to the rite which is within the reach even of poor people and which resembles (i.e. gives) the pious fruits of sacrifices. O best among the righteous, this, i.e. visiting the holy places, is pious and is the great secret of the sages,

and is superior even to (performing) sacrifices. A man, who visits a holy place without fasting for three nights, without giving gold and cows (to a brāhmaṇa) is born poor. A man does not obtain that fruit by performing sacrifices like Agniṣṭoma, where large gifts are given, which he obtains by a visit to a holy place.

20-35. A man would become like a god by reaching Puṣkara tīrtha which is a well-known holy place of the heaven, that (has come) to the earth and that is well-known. O king, there are ten thousand crores of holy places, which live by Puṣkara at all the three times of the day, O you descendant of the solar dynasty. O lord, Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Sādhyas with hosts of Maruts, also gandharvas and celestial nymphs are present there. There, O great king, gods, demons and brāhmaṇic sages have practised penance and have secured divine contact due to great religious merit, O brāhmaṇas, and got what they desired. O wise ones, the Puṣkaras purify all the sins. They are valued in heaven. O glorious one, the grandsire, very much pleased and liked by gods and demons always lived at this holy place. O illustrious one, gods with sages going before them, have attained great accomplishment, and become endowed with great religious merit. The wise say that he who, engaged in honouring his forefathers and gods, bathes there, gets merit which is tenfold of (i.e. got by performing) a horse-sacrifice. If, while resorting to the Puṣkara forest he feeds just one brāhmaṇa, he thereby goes to honoured people living in Brahmā's abode. O king, he who, with the palms of his hands joined, remembers Puṣkaras in the morning and evening, has bathed (i.e. has acquired the merit of having bathed) in all the holy places. All that sin of a woman or a man, (committed) from birth perishes by just going to Puṣkara. O king, as Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) is said to be the first among all the gods, similarly Puṣkara is said to be the first of the holy places. He, who, being restrained and pure, has lived at Puṣkara for twelve years, obtains (the fruit of) all sacrifices and goes to Brahmā's heaven. One who would practise (the vow of performing) Agnihotra for a hundred years, or would just live on one full moon day of Kārtika at Puṣkara, would have the same (merit). It is difficult to go to Puṣkara; it is difficult (to practise) penance at Puṣkara; it is difficult to give gifts at Puṣkara; it is

difficult to stay at Puṣkara. The three peaks are bright, and also the three streams, and the holy places like Puṣkara; we do not know the reason for that. One, being restrained, and controlled in food, having lived (i.e. who lives) for twelve years at Puṣkara, becomes free from all sins and would get the fruit of all sacrifices.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Visit to Some Holy Places and Its Merit

Vasiṣṭha said:

1-8. Turning round and moving to the right, he would approach the way to Jambu. Approaching the path of Jambu, adored by manes, gods and sages, he obtains (the fruit of) Aśvamedha and goes to Viṣṇu's world. A man going (from there) after having stayed there for five or six nights, does not meet with ill luck, but obtains best success. Returning from Jambumārga, he should go to Dulikāśrama. He does not meet with indigence and is honoured in heaven. O king, he who engaged in worshipping the forefathers and gods observes a fast for three nights after reaching the hermitage of Agastya, would obtain the fruit of (having performed) an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. By subsisting on vegetables or fruits he obtains the fruit of youthfulness; after reaching Kanyāśrama nourished with glory and revered by people, he is free from his sins the moment he enters it, since, O king, it is a meritorious and the best sacred grove. Being controlled and having limited food, he, after having worshipped his forefathers and deities, gets the fruit of a sacrifice full of (i.e. that satisfies) all desires. Having turned to the right, he would then go to Yayātipatana.

9-11. There he obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Being restrained and having controlled his diet, from here he should go to Mahākāla. After having bathed in Koṭitīrtha he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Then, O you righteous one, he should go to the holy place, the abode of the lord of Umā (i.e.

Pārvatī). It is known as Bhadravaṭa, and is well known in the three worlds. Having approached Śiva there he would obtain the fruit of (a present of) a thousand cows.

12-13. O best man, by Mahādeva's (i.e. Śiva's) grace he would obtain the leadership which is fruitful and without a rival. Having reached Narmadā, well-known in the three worlds, and having offered oblations to his forefathers and gods (there) he would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Greatness of Narmadā

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-3. O Nārada, I desire to hear again about the best, well-known holy place called Narmadā, that rends the mountains of sins, which Vasiṣṭha described to Dilīpa. (O Nārada,) describe it to me. O best brāhmaṇa, also (tell me about) the greatness of Narmadā as described by Vasiṣṭha. O Nārada, tell me how this very pious river, known as Narmadā, is famous everywhere.

Nārada said:

4-5. Narmadā is the best of rivers; she destroys all sins; she would liberate all beings—immobile and mobile. I have heard the greatness of Narmadā as told by Visiṣṭha. O great king, know (i.e. listen to) it; I (shall) tell you the whole (of it).

6-14. Gaṅgā is holy at Kanakhala; Sarasvatī at Kurukṣetra; (but) Narmadā is holy everywhere—whether in a village or a forest. The water of Sarasvatī purifies (a man) within three days; that of Yamunā within seven days; that of Gaṅgā instantly; but that of Narmadā just by looking at it. In the western part of Kaliṅga country on the Amarakaṇṭaka mountain Narmadā is beautiful, charming and holy in the three worlds. O great king, the sages, with penance as their wealth, having practised penance here, along with gods, demons and gandharvas, have attained great prosperity. O great king, a man, following a vow and with

his senses controlled, having bathed there and having fasted for a night would liberate a hundred families. If a man, after having bathed at Janeśvara duly offered a ball of rice (to his dead ancestors), they remain pleased till the universal destruction. All around the mountain is settled Rudrakoṭi. There is no doubt that the entire Rudrakoṭi would be pleased with him who bathes there with sandal, flowers and unctions. At the western end of the mountain the great lord himself (resides). Being chaste and controlling his senses, a man should bathe there, be purified and should perform the rite (in honour) of the dead ancestors as enjoined in the sacred texts.

15-20a. There only he should gratify his divine manes with water with sesamum seeds. O Pāṇḍava, his family upto the seventh descendant stays in heaven. Crowded by the host of celestial nymphs, surrounded by celestial women, smeared with divine sandal (-paste), and adorned with divine ornaments, he is honoured in the heaven for sixty thousand years. Then having fallen from heaven, he is born in a large family. He is born rich, disposed to making presents and righteous. He again remembers that holy place, (and) again goes to (i.e. visits) it. Having liberated a hundred (members of) his family, he goes to Rudra's heaven. The best river is said (to be flowing over) a hundred yojanas in her later (course). O best king, her breadth is two yojanas.

20b-22. Round the mountain Amarakaṇṭaka there are sixty crores and sixty thousand holy places. Being chaste and pure, having conquered his anger and senses, and turned away from all (kinds of) harm, and engaged in the well-being of all creatures, thus being full of good conduct, he should go round the deities.

23-25a. O king, listen attentively to the fruit of his religious merit. O Pāṇḍava, he would live for a hundred thousand years in heaven crowded with the hosts of celestial nymphs and waited upon by celestial women. Smeared with divine sandal (-paste), and decorated with divine ornaments, he sports in the world of gods and rejoices with deities.

25b-28a. Then the powerful one, having fallen from heaven, becomes a king. He obtains a house decorated with many gems, with pillars decked with gems, divine diamonds and lapis lazuli.

It has divine paintings, endowed with male and female servants; and its gate is disturbed (i.e. is noisy) with the trumpetings of elephants and neighings of horses, as is the gate of Indra's house.

28b-34a. He, the lord of great kings, glorious and dear to all women, having lived in the house, having sports and enjoyments, would live for a hundred years without (suffering from) any disease. He who dies, or enters fire or water or fasts at Amarakaṇṭaka, would have such enjoyments. His course has no return, as is that of a mountain into the sky. When the man has a fall, he becomes the lord of men. In each of his houses thousand of maidens and women wait (upon him), and wait for his directions. Born with divine enjoyments he sports for eternal time. Like the man on the Amarakaṇṭaka mountain, none else is born on the earth upto the ocean, O best of men.

34b-44. To the west of the mountain the holy place (that exists) should be known as Koṭitīrtha. There is Rudra known as Kāleśvara, well-known in the worlds. By offering balls (of rice) to him and by offering the Sandhyā-prayers, the manes become satisfied for ten years. To the south of Narmadā, there is a great river Kapilā. She is covered with sarala and arjuna trees. She is not far away. She is very holy, auspicious and is known in the three worlds. O Yudhiṣṭhira, there is a full (group of) a hundred crores of holy places. O king, it is so reported in the Purāṇas. All this has a crorefold merit. The trees on her bank that fall due to lapse of time, get the best course due to being connected with her water. The other one, O glorious one, is holy and removes poignant pain. A man, by bathing there on her bank becomes free from poignant pain in a moment. All hosts of gods with kinnaras and great serpents, yakṣas, demons, gandharvas and sages rich in penance have all gathered there on the Amarakaṇṭaka mountain. All those and the sages also resorted to Narmadā, (and) the holy (river) named Viśalyā that destroys all sins was produced by them. O king, a man, being chaste, and with his senses controlled, who, after fasting for a night, bathes there, would liberate a hundred (members of) his family.

45-49. O best king, Viśalyā is said to be reddish and is (thus) declared in the Purāṇas by the lord with a desire for the good of the worlds. O king, having bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of a hundred horse sacrifices. O lord of men, he

who observes a fast at that holy place, goes, with all his sins purified, to Indra's heaven. O lord of kings, I have heard in (i.e. learnt from) the Purāṇa that a man bathing anywhere in Narmadā obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Those who live on the northern bank, stay in Indra's heaven. O Yudhiṣṭhira, as Śaṅkara (himself) told me, the gifts (given at the bank of) and bath taken in Sarasvatī, Gaṅgā and Narmadā are equal in fruit.

50-54. He, who casts his life on the Amarakaṇṭaka mountain, is honoured for a full hundred crores of years in Indra's heaven. The water in (i.e. of) Narmadā is holy and is adorned with foam and ripples. It is pure, worth adoration. (A man bathing there) is free from all sins. Narmadā is all-holy; she removes the sin due to the murder of a brāhmaṇa; by fasting (on her bank) for a day and night a man is absolved of (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Thus, O son of Pāṇḍu, Narmadā is pleasing and holy. This great river purifies (all) in the three worlds at the very holy Vaṭeśvara and in the penance grove of Gaṅgādvāra. At all these places those that are afflicted and have fulfilled their vows (are liberated). At the confluence of Narmadā the merit is said to be tenfold.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Sages Pray to God Śiva for Protection from Demon Bāṇa

Nārada said:

1. The greatest river Narmadā, that is holy and most auspi-strands is divided into three (streams) by the glorious sages, longing for piety.

2. O Pāṇḍava, the (three) divisions are just like (the three strands of) a sacred thread. O lord of kings, a man bathing in (any of) them is free from all sins.

3. O son of Pāṇḍu, listen to me who am telling you about the origin of the sacred place Jaleśvara which is well-known in the three worlds.

4-5. Formerly all hosts of sages and all the groups of Maruts with Indra praised that magnanimous Maheśvara, the god of gods. Praising him, they reached (the place) where god Maheśvara stayed. The hosts of Maruts with Indra prayed to him: "O Virūpākṣa, we are distressed with fear. O lord, protect us."

The lord said:

6-7. O best sages, welcome to you. For what purpose have you come here ? What is (the cause of) your grief ? What is (the cause of) your tormentation ? Wherefrom has fear come (to you) ? O glorious ones, tell (it); I desire to know it.

Thus addressed by Rudra, they, of unlimited vows, told him:

The sages said:

8-11. There is a terrible, very powerful demon, proud of his strength, well-known by the name Bāṇa, whose divine city (called) Tripura, remaining in the sky moves by his lustre. O Virūpākṣa, we are afraid of him; we have sought your refuge only. Protect us from this great distress; you are our great shelter. O lord of gods, please do this favour to all (gods) so that gods, being very much pleased, (would) live happily, O Śaṅkara. O lord, do that by which they will be extremely happy.

The god (i.e. Śiva) said:

12. I shall do all this. Do not be dejected. In a very short time I shall do what makes you happy.

13-14. Having comforted all of them, and remaining on the bank of Narmadā, the lord of gods thought over (the way) to kill him, O Pāṇḍava. 'How, in what manner, should I kill Tripura ?' Thinking like this he remembered Nārada at that time. Just due to his remembering (Nārada), Nārada came to him.

Nārada said:

15. O Mahādeva, order me for what purpose I was remembered (by you). O god, tell me what mission I have to carry out.

The lord said:

16-18a. O Nārada, go there where the city Tripura of Bāṇa, the lord of Dānavas, stands. Go quickly and do that. The husbands are like deities and the wives are like celestial nymphs. Due to their lustre, O Brāhmaṇa, Tripura moves in the sky. Going there, O lord of brāhmaṇas, give them a different advice.

18b-19a. Hearing the words of the lord, the sage of quick steps entered the city to alienate the hearts of the women (from their husbands).

19b-22. The celestial city adorned with gems of many kinds, shone. It was a hundred yojanas broad, and was doubly long. There only he saw Bāṇa, who was proud of his strength, who was adorned with garlands, ear-rings, armlets and a crown, who was covered with necklaces and gems, and who was decorated with silver. His wives were rich with gems and men were adorned with (ornaments of) gold. The very mighty lord of the demons got up on seeing Nārada.

Bāṇa said:

23-24. The celestial sage himself has come to my house. O best brāhmaṇa, materials of worship and water for washing feet must properly be given. He has come after a long time. O brāhmaṇa, rest (on) this seat.

He thus honoured Nārada who had come there. His wife, the chief queen named Anaupamyā (spoke):

Anaupamyā said:

25. O revered sir, in the human world, by which vow or religious observance or gift or penance are gods pleased ?

Nārada said:

26-34. He who gives a cow made of sesamum to a brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas, has (indeed) given the earth of nine islands along with the oceans. For an eternal period he enjoys with aeroplanes resembling crores of suns and satisfying all desires and rules for a very long time. There are various kinds of trees : hog-plum, wood-apple, grove of plantain

trees; so also kadamba, campaka and aśoka. (So also there are the days like) the eighth, fourth, twelfth and both the Saṃkrānti day and Viṣuva day and the beginning of a day—all these are auspicious. Those women who fast (on these days), having acquired merit, undoubtedly live in heaven. The ascetic women, free from the Kali-age, free from all sins, and engaged in fasting, do not move (in the mundane existence). O you beautiful lady, having heard like this, do as you desire.

Hearing the words of Nārada, the queen said (these) words: "O best brāhmaṇa, show favour to me. Accept the grifts as desired (by you). (I shall give you) gold, gems, jewels, garments and ornaments. O brāhmaṇa, I shall also give you what is difficult (for you) to obtain. (Please) accept it, O best brāhmaṇa; may Viṣṇu and Śiva be pleased."

Nārada said:

35-37. O lady, give (it) to someone else—to a poor brāhmaṇa. I am endowed with a good character and have devotion.

O best of Bharatas, having thus taken away their hearts, and having advised all of them, he went (back) to his own place. With their hearts drawn away and therefore with their hearts gone elsewhere, a flaw came about in the city of that magnanimous Bāṇa.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Greatness of Amarakaṇṭaka

Nārada said:

1-7a. O son of Kuntī, listen to (me telling you) and understand what you ask me about. In the meanwhile Rudra remained on the bank of Narmadā. The place is called Hareśvara, and is well-known in the three worlds. At that place Mahādeva, thinking about Tripura's murder, (stayed,) making Mandara the

bow, making Vāsuki the bow-string, standing with his feet a span apart, making Viṣṇu the best arrow, putting fire in the fore ; Vāyu was put at the mouth ; (making) the four Vedas the horses, (he made) the chariot full of all gods. The two gods, Aśvins, were on the wheels ; the disc-holder himself was the axle ; Indra himself was at the end of the bow; Vaiśravaṇa remained on the arrow. Yama was on the right hand and the terrible Kāla on the left. Gandharvas, well-known in the worlds, were placed on the radius of the wheels. Of this best chariot Prajāpati Brahmā was the charioteer.

7b-9. The lord of gods, making a chariot like this full of all gods, remaining stable, waited there for a thousand years. When the three cities, moving in the sky, came together, he pierced them with an arrow. Rudra, at that time, discharged an arrow towards Tripura.

10-11a Women lost their lusture, and their strength decayed. Thousands of portents appeared in the city. To destroy Tripura he took up the form of Kāla (i. e. god of death).

11b-14a. Similarly wooden figures laughed loudly. The paintings closed and opened their eyes. (The citizens) saw themselves decorated with (i. e. clad in) red garments in a dream. They also saw unusual things foreboding calamity. People that were at that place (i.e. in the city) saw these portents. Their strength and their intellect were destroyed by Śiva's anger.

14b-24. A great (i.e. strong) wind, greatest among winds, and resembling the one at the end of a yuga and called Saṁvartaka was discharged and it troubled their heads. The trees there burnt, and summits fell down. Everything was disturbed and there were lamentations, and loss of consciousness. All the gardens were shattered and were quickly burning. With blazing flames he (i.e. Fire) burnt it all. Trees, parks, houses of various kinds (were burnt). The blazing fire spread into the ten directions. Then stones were hurled into each of the ten directions. The very fierce flames of the fires were burning in thousands. The entire city that was burning looked like kiṁśuka (a tree with red blossoms). The (columns of) smoke could not go from one house to another. The Tripura city, burnt by Śiva's anger, crying, very unhappy and blazing was burning in all directions. The tops of the palaces were shattered in thousands. Many palaces vari-

gated with many gems and beautiful houses were burnt in various ways by the blazing fire. (The flames) destroyed the groves of trees and places of worship as well. In all temples they blazed and burnt. (People) touched (i.e. burnt) by fire sank into despondency and lamented in various tones. There the heaps of charcoal appeared like mountain-peaks.

25-26a. They praised the god of gods: 'O lord, protect me.' The demons, who, harassed by fire, had embraced one another were burnt there in hundreds and thousands.

26b-27. The gardens in the city were parched by fire, and the large lakes crowded with swans and ducks, and with lotus plants and lotuses were being burnt. They, extending up to hundreds of yojanas, were covered with fresh lotuses.

28. Palaces, decorated with gems and resembling mountain-peaks (in height), fell down, being completely burnt by fire, like waterless clouds.

29-31. The fire impelled by Śiva's anger cruelly burnt young and old along with women, birds and horses. Many men that had slept (alone, or) had slept with their wives, or in a close embrace with their sons, were burnt by the enemy of Tripura. In that city blazing with fire women resembling celestial nymphs, being struck by the flames of fire, fell on the ground.

32-34. A young woman of broad eyes and adorned with a necklace, who was blinded by smoke, and afflicted by flames, awoke; and thinking about her son, she fell on the ground. Some (other woman), having golden complexion, adorned with sapphires, blinded by smoke, fell down on the ground. Another friend (of her) who had held her hand, was burnt with children.

35-38. Due to this another female of a celestial form was seen to be perplexed by insanity. Joining the palms of her hands and putting them on her head, she requested Fire: "If you desire (i.e. harbour) enmity towards men who have harmed you, why do you offend women—the cuckoos in the cage in the form of the house? O sinner, O cruel one, O shameless one, what makes you angry with females? You do not possess chivalry, you do not have a feeling of shame, you are without purity; rich in beauty and complexion of various kinds, they are available. Tell us: Have you not heard in the world that women are not to be killed?

39-45. But these have become virtues for you—oppressing women, O Fire, and not having compassion, sympathy or courtesy towards them. O Fire, even Mlecchas are kind to women, when they see them. You are worse than Mlecchas, you are irresistible and senseless. O Fire, these are your virtues (leading you) to destroy. O you wicked one, why do you drop (yourself) on these women? O wicked Fire, O cruel and shameless one, O you unfortunate one, O you hopeless one, O you cruel one, you (that are) wicked are burning children." In this way they lamented and talked in many voices. Others, bewildered due to the grief for their (dead) children, were angry, and cried. The cruel and angry Fire burnt (everything) like an enemy. There were flames in the lakes, water, and in wells also. (The women cried:) "O Mlecchа, by burning us, what condition will you reduce us to ?" When they were crying like this, Fire said (these) words:

Vaiśvānara said :

46-62. I am not destroying on my own. I only do what is ordered, and am not the one who can favour. Overcome with anger, I am here moving by chance.

Then that very lustrous Bāṇa seeing Tripura ablaze, and remaining on his seat, said to the god: "I am destroyed by gods. The weak and wicked ones (mis) informed the god. Without investigating properly, I am burnt by magnanimous Śiva. Except Maheśvara no other enemy is (able) to strike me." Taking the Phallus (called) Tribhuvaneśvara on his head, he got up. Leaving his friends, very beautiful gems, women of various kinds, and taking the Phallus on his head kept in the city, he praised Śiva, the god of gods, the lord of three worlds. "O Hara, if I have been tormented by you, you deserve to be killed. O Mahādeva, let my Phallus (i.e. which I am worshipping) not perish due to your grace. O Mahādeva, I have always worshipped it with great devotion. Even if I am to be killed by you, may my Phallus not perish. O Mahādeva, let me seize your feet. O Mahādeva, existence after existence, I am devoted to your feet." He (then) worshipped the highest god with the Toṭaka metre : "Om, Śiva, Śaṅkara, my salutation to Sarvakāra (i.e. who brings about everything). My salutation to Śiva, O Bhava, O Bhīma, O

Maheśa. O you destroyer of the body of Madana (i.e. Cupid), O you destroyer of Tripura, O you who crushed Andhaka, O you dear to women, O you who destroyed Kāma (i.e. Cupid), my salutations to you who are saluted by the hosts of gods and siddhas, and by (your) attendants having the faces of horse, monkey, lion, lord of elephants and having very short and very long faces. You were not vexed by the demons difficult to be found out; (on the contrary) you were saluted by many of them. O revered lord, you who like great devotion, O you stable one, O you who hold the digit of the moon (i.e. the crescent moon on your head), O god, I salute you. O Jaya, always give me hosts of sons and wives and wealth. With many, hundreds of bodies, I am tormented. You have today put me on the path of a great (i.e. fearful) hell. My sinful course is not turning away; he abandons me, pure due to pure deeds; (but) he takes pity on me; the direction is revolving; this delusion is rambling; he keeps off bad intentions." To him who, being controlled and of a pure mind, would recite this divine Toṭaka, Rudra would grant boons as he gave to Bāṇa. Hearing this very divine hymn lord Maheśvara was himself pleased with him at that time.

The lord said :

63-64a. O child, you should not be afraid. O demon, with your sons, grandsons, wives, and servants, remain in a golden (mansion). O Bāṇa, from today you will not be killed (i.e. will be immune from death) even by gods.

64b-66. O Pāṇḍava, the god of gods, again granted him a boon. Being fearless, indestructible and immutable he moved in the world. Then Rudra withdrew the seven-crested one, i.e., Fire. Magnanimous Śiva protected his third (city). By virtue of Rudra's lustre it always moves in the sky.

67-71a. Thus, Tripura burnt by the magnanimous Śiva fell on the ground blazing with rows of flames. He knocked down one on Śrīśaila near Tripura. He knocked the other one on Amarakaṇṭaka mountain. When Tripura was burnt, O king, Rudrakoṭi stood firm. The burning one was caused to fall there. Therefore, he is known as Jvāleśvara. His divine flame, going

upwards, went to heaven. There was then great lamentation among gods, demons and kinnaras. Rudra arrested that arrow in the best Maheśvara city.

71b-79a. O son of Pāṇḍu, he who, like this, would go to the mountain Amarakaṇṭaka, having well enjoyed the fourteen worlds for a thousand and thirty crore years and then having reached the earth, becomes a righteous king. There is no doubt that he enjoys as a sovereign emperor on the earth. O great king, this Amarakaṇṭaka is holy on all sides. The wise say that he who would go to Amarakaṇṭaka at the time of a lunar or solar eclipse, has tenfold (the merit) of a horse sacrifice. Seeing Maheśvara there, he obtains heaven. When the sun is eclipsed by Rāhu they will come together. That is the great merit of (performing) the Puṇḍarīka sacrifice. On Amarakaṇṭaka lives Jvāleśvara. Bathing there, men go to heaven. Those that die there, are not reborn. O great king, listen to the fruit which one gets by casting one's life at the lunar or solar eclipse at Jvāleśvara.

79b-82. Gods called Amara stay on Amarakaṇṭaka. (One who bathes) in the water on the slope of (Amarakaṇṭaka-) god Amareśvara, obtains (i.e. lives in) Rudra's heaven till deluge. Crores of gods, of good vows practise penance there. O king, the holy place Amarakaṇṭaka extends upto a yojana on all sides. A man, entertaining or not entertaining desire, having bathed in the holy water of Amarakaṇṭaka, would be freed from sins, and he goes to Rudra's worlds.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Kāverī Saṁgama Tīrtha

The sage said :

1-3. All those magnanimous multitudes of people with Yudhiṣṭhira as the chief, and the sages, the abodes of penance, asked Nārada: "O revered one, tell us for the good of the people and for our prosperity, the great truth about the confluence of Kāverī, that wicked men who are always engaged in sinful acti-

vities, become free from all sins and go to the highest place (on bathing there). We desire to know this. O revered one, please tell it."

Nārada said :

4-7. O you all led by Yudhiṣṭhira, listen together : Having performed a great sacrifice here, Kubera of truthful valour, became more than a sovereign emperor after reaching this place. O great king, he attained perfection. Listen to me who am telling it. Kubera, the lord of yakṣas and of truthful valour, having bathed at the place where Kāverī joins Narmadā well-known in the world, practised penance for a hundred divine years. Mahādeva, pleased with him, granted him an excellent boon : "O yakṣa, O you of a great energy, speak about the boon that you desire. Tell me freely about your wish, or whatever is in your mind."

Kubera said :

8. O lord of gods, if you are pleased with me, grant me the boon (by which) I would be the first lord of the yakṣas.

9. Hearing the words of Kubera, god Maheśvara was pleased. Saying, 'Let it be so', he disappeared there only.

10. That yakṣa too, who had obtained the boon, quickly went to the abode of yakṣas. He was honoured by all the lordly yakṣas, and was consecrated as the king.

11. Those men, who do not know that the confluence of Kāverī (with Narmadā) destroys all sins, are undoubtedly deceived.

12-17a. Therefore a man should make every effort to bathe there. Kāverī is very holy, and Narmadā is a great river. O best king, one should bathe there and worship Śiva. Having received the fruit of a horse sacrifice he is honoured in the world of Rudra. As Śaṅkara has told me, he who enters fire or observes a fast (at the confluence of Kāverī and Narmadā) is not reborn. Being waited upon by excellent women, he enjoys in heaven like Rudra for sixty thousand and sixty crore years. Remaining in Rudra's heaven he enjoys wherever he goes. Fallen due to the

exhaustion of his religious merit, he becomes a righteous, prosperous, religious, great king, born in a (noble) family.

17b-19. Having properly drunk water there, a man would obtain the fruit of the (vow called) Cāndrāyaṇa. Those men who drink the holy water (at the confluence), go to heaven. Men get the same fruit as they obtain (by bathing) in Gaṅgā and Yamunā by bathing at the confluence of Kāverī (with Narmadā). O lord of kings, the place of the confluence of Kāverī (with Narmadā) is holy, gives great fruit and destroys all sins.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Narmadā and the Holy Places on Her Northern Bank

Nārada said :

1-2. On the northern bank of Narmadā, there is an extensive holy place. It is known as Patreśvara, and is great and removes all sins. O king, having bathed there, a man rejoices with deities. Taking any form he likes, he sports for five thousand years.

3. Then a man should go to Garjana where Megha is present. By the power of that holy place, it has attained the name Indrajit.

4. Then he should go to (the holy place) Megharāva where there is the thundering of clouds. There the group Meghanāda has become prosperous due to boons.

5. Then O lord of kings, he should go to (the holy place) known as Brahmāvarta. O Yudhiṣṭhira, Brahmā is always present there.

6-7a. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is honoured in Brahmā's heaven. Then, being restrained, and controlled in diet, (he should go to) the holy place Aṅgāreśvara. Being absolved of all sins, he goes to Rudra's world.

7b-8a. Then, O lord, he should go to the excellent Kapilātīrtha. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of having given away a cow.

8b-9a. Then he should go to Kāñcītīrtha resorted to by the hosts of gods and sages. Having bathed there, O king, a man would obtain (i.e. go to) the heaven of cows.

9b-10a. O lord of kings, then he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kuṇḍaleśvara. Near there, Rudra lives with Umā.

10b. O lord of kings, one who bathes there, cannot be killed even by gods.

11. Then he should go to Pippaleśvara, which destroys all sins. O lord of kings, he is honoured in Rudra's heaven.

12. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the pure Vimaleśvara. There is the beautiful Devaśikhā, put down by the god.

13-17. Casting my life there I would obtain (i.e. go to) Rudra's heaven. Then a man should go to Puṣkariṇī, and should bathe there. By just bathing there he would obtain half of Indra's seat. Narmadā is the greatest among the rivers. She has flowed forth from Rudra's body. She would liberate all immobile and mobile beings. The magnanimous lord, the god superior to all other gods, told (this) to the groups of sages, and especially to us. This excellent river Narmadā was praised by sages with a desire for the well-being of the worlds. She came out of Rudra's body. She always removes all sins. She is saluted by all creatures.

18-20a. She is also extolled by gods, gandharvas and celestial nymphs: "Salutation to you, O (river) of holy water, O you going to the ocean. Salutation to you who was taken out by the sages from Śiva's body. Salutation to you who are chosen by Dharma, O you of an excellent face; salutation to you, O you who are saluted by the host of sages. Salutation to you who purify the pure; salutation to you who are well-worshipped by the entire world."

20b-22. He, who, with a pure mind daily recites this hymn, if a brāhmaṇa, obtains (mastery over) the Vedas; if a kṣatriya, would be victorious; if a vaiśya, would be profited; if a śūdra, would get a good position. One who desires food, would always have it just by remembering her. God Maheśvara himself always resorts to Narmadā. Therefore the river should be looked upon as holy and remover of sins.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

More Tīrthas on the Bank of Narmadā

Nārada said :

1-7. Since then Brahmā and others, as well as the sages rich in penance, being free from lust and anger, resort to Narmadā, O king. Seeing the trident of the lord fallen at that place on the earth, the magnanimous Śiva narrated its importance. It came to be known as the great, most meritorious holy place Śūlabheda. He, who, having bathed there, would worship the god (Śiva), would obtain the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows. O king, he, who would pass three nights there, and would worship Mahādeva, would not be reborn. Then a man should go to Maheśvara, (then) to the excellent Narmadeśvara. (Then he should visit) the very meritorious Ādityeśvara. Then on worshipping Mallikeśvara with ghee and honey, he obtains the fruit of his existence. Then he should see (i.e. visit) Varuṇeśvara, the excellent Nirajeśvara. He gets the fruit of (visiting) all the holy places by seeing (i.e. visiting) these five. O lord of kings, he should go to the place where the battle was fought.

8-11. Koṭitīrtha is well-known where the demons were fought (with), and where these demons, proud of their strength, were destroyed. Seizing their heads he killed them who had gathered there. They installed (the representation of) Maheśvara with the trident in his hand. The point was placed there, therefore (the place) is known as Koṭitīrtha. By seeing that holy place, a man would physically go to heaven. At that time, due to meanness, Indra restrained (a man) by means of the wedge of his bolt. Since then, people's going to heaven has been checked.

12-13. O Pāṇḍava, after having offered a coconut with ghee, at the end (of this rite), by all means he should, holding a lamp on his head, go round the (representation of the) god. He gets all his desires satisfied. When he dies, he obtains Rudrahood, and is not born again in this world. Having gone to heaven, then having ruled as a king, he goes to Indra's paradise.

14-18. Similarly, having waited upon Mahādeva, a man who just bathes there gets the fruit of all sacrifices. Then, O lord of kings, a man should go to the very beautiful holy place—the ex-

cellent Agastyeśvara—that removes the sins of men. O king, a man, having bathed there, is absolved (of the sin) of killing a brāhmaṇa. A man with his senses controlled remaining in profound meditation, should bathe the representation of the god with ghee (on) the fourteenth day of the dark half of Kārtika. He, with twentyone members (i.e. descendants) of his family, would never be deprived of lordly position. He should present cows, shoes, an umbrella, and a blanket, and also food to all brāhmaṇas. It would have a crorefold merit.

19-21. Then O lord of kings, a man should go to the excellent Ravistava. Having bathed (i.e. if a man bathes) there, he would get a throne (i.e. would be a king). On the right bank of Narmadā, the place holy to Indra (and called Śakratīrtha) is well-known. Having fasted there for a night, he should bathe. Having bathed there he should properly worship Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu). He gets the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. He goes to Viṣṇu's world.

22-23. Thence he should go to Ṛṣitīrtha, which removes all the sins of men. A man, by just bathing there, is honoured in Śiva's world. There only is the very beautiful holy place of (i.e. named after) Nārada. By just bathing there, a man would obtain the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows.

24-25. Then he should go to Devatīrtha, formerly fashioned by Brahmā. O king, having bathed there, a man is honoured in Brahmā's world. Then he should go to Amarakaṇṭaka, formerly established by gods. Having just bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of having given away a thousand cows.

26-27. Then he should go to Vāmaneśvara. Seeing Vāmanaka there, he is absolved of the sin of killing a brāhmaṇa. Thence a man should go to Ṛṣitīrtha, and certainly to Īśāneśa. Then having gone to (i.e. if he visits) Vaṭeśvara, he obtains the fruit of his existence.

28-29. Thence a man should go to Bhīmeśvara, which destroys all diseases. A man, O king, by just bathing there is free from all misery. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Varaṇeśvara. Having bathed there, a man is free from all misery, O king.

30-31. Then he should go to Somatīrtha and should see Candra. O king, then, being full of great devotion, having bath-

ed there, he, obtaining a celestial body just at that moment, enjoys like Śiva for a long time. He is honoured for sixty thousand years in Śiva's heaven.

32-36. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place of) Piṅgaleśvara. By fasting for a day and night (there) he would obtain the fruit of (having fasted for) three nights. O lord of kings, he who gives a tawny cow (to a brāhmaṇa) at that holy place, is honoured in Rudra's world for as many thousand years as there are hairs on his body and on the bodies of the members born in his family. O king, he who casts his life there, enjoys eternally as long as the moon and the sun will remain in the sky. Those men who, having resorted to the bank of Narmadā, die (there), go to heaven as the men of good deeds go.

37-41. Then on the day of Gaṅgāvataraṇa, he should go to Surabhikeśvara and (the holy place called) Nāraka and Koṭikeśvara. He is blessed; no doubt about it. Thence going to Nanditīrtha, he should bathe there. Lord of Nandi (i.e. Śiva) is pleased, and the man is honoured in Soma's heaven. Then he should go to Dīpeśvara, and the penance-grove (called) Vyāsatīrtha. Formerly the great river turned back from there, being afraid of Vyāsa. Then, when he uttered the sound 'hum', she went (i.e. flowed) towards the south. O king, he who circumambulates at the holy place, has Vyāsa pleased with him, and he gets the desired fruit. He who puts a thread round (the representation of) the god along with the altar, sports for eternal time; and he is as Rudra is (i.e. becomes Rudra-like).

42-47. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent sacred place (called) Eraṇḍī. Having bathed (there) at the confluence, he is absolved of all sins. Eraṇḍī is well-known in the three worlds (as) destroyer of sins. Or (on) the eighth of the bright fortnight in the month of Āśvina, a man having bathed, and being pure and intent upon fasting, should feed one brāhmaṇa, (thereby) a crore (of brāhmaṇas) are fed. Having bathed at the confluence at Eraṇḍī, and delighted in devotion, a man, having placed a pearl-oyster on his head, and having plunged into the water mixed with that of Narmadā, gets absolved of all sins. O king, he who would circumambulate at that holy place, goes round the earth consisting of seven islands.

48-51. Then having bathed at Suvarṇatilaka and having given gold (to a brāhmaṇa) he is honoured in Rudra's world with a golden mansion. Then fallen from heaven after (some) time, he becomes a powerful king. Thence, O lord, he should go to the confluence of the river Ikṣu. It is well-known in the three worlds. Śiva is present there. O king, having bathed a man would attain the status of the head of the attendants of Śiva. Thence he should go to Skandatīrtha which destroys all sins. Sin committed from birth goes away merely by bathing there.

52-57a. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Āṅgirasa, and should bathe there. He gets the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. He is honoured in Rudra's heaven. From there he should go to Lāṅgalatīrtha which destroys all sins. Having gone there, O lord of kings, he should bathe there. There is no doubt that (thereby) he becomes free from sins committed during seven existences. Hence he should go to Vaṭeśvara, the best of all holy places. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. From there, he should go to the great (holy place called) Saṅgameśvara which removes all sins. Having bathed there one gets a kingdom. There is no doubt about it. All that (merit) of the man who, after reaching Bhadratīrtha, gives gifts, would become a crorefold in effect by the power of that sacred place.

57b-58a. If a woman bathes there, she would become like Gaurī, and undoubtedly goes to Indra.

58b-62. Then he should go to Aṅgāreśvara, and should bathe there. A man, merely by bathing there, is honoured in Rudra's world. On the Aṅgārakī caturthī (i.e. caturthī falling on a Tuesday) he should bathe there. Being instructed by Viṣṇu, he rejoices eternally. Having bathed at Ayonisaṅgama, he should see the Yonimandira. Having gone to Pāṇḍaveśvara, he should bathe there. He cannot be killed by gods or demons, and rejoices eternally. Then going to Viṣṇu's heaven, he is full of sport and enjoyments. Having enjoyed great pleasures there, he is born as a king in the mortal world.

63. He should go to Kambotikeśvara and should bathe there. When the summer solstice arrives, whatever he would desire would take place.

64. Thence he should go to Candrabhāgā and bathe there. A man by just bathing there is honoured in Soma's world.

65-69a. Then, O king of kings, he should go to the holy place of Śakra (i.e. Indra), which is well-known, and is honoured by the king of gods. He should give gold as a gift. Or he who would give a bull of a dark colour, would live in Hara's city for as many thousand years as there are hairs on the body of the bull, and on the bodies of those that are born in his family. Then having fallen from heaven, he becomes a powerful king; and by the power of that holy place, he becomes, among thousands of mortals, the master of horses of white colour.

69b-74. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Brahmāvarta. Having bathed there, he should offer oblations to his divine manes by giving a piṇḍa according to the proper rites after having fasted for a night. When the Sun has entered Virgo, (this merit) would be stored eternally. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent holy place (called) Kapilātīrtha. O king, he, who, after bathing there, gives a tawny cow (to a brāhmaṇa), would get the fruit which would be got by giving the entire earth. Narmadeśvara is a great holy place. There has not been or will not be (other) holy place (like this). O king, having bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. (A man who has gone there) is born as a sovereign emperor on the earth; he is perfect with all (good) characteristics and free from all diseases.

75-80. On the northern bank of Narmadā, there is a very auspicious holy place (called) Ādityāyana; it is charming and is created by the lord. O lord of kings, the gift given there after having bathed there becomes inexhaustible by the power of that holy place. Those that are poor, or diseased, or those that have done wicked deeds, are absolved of all sins, and go to the Sun's world. On the seventh of the bright fortnight when the month of Māgha has come, he who, without food, and with his senses controlled, would live in the temple, never suffers from diseases, does not become blind or deaf. Being fortunate and endowed with handsomeness, he becomes dear to women. This holy place is said to be very holy by Mārkaṇḍeya. O lord of kings, those who do not go there are undoubtedly deceived.

81-85a. Thence he should go to Māseśvara, and should

bathe there. A man merely by bathing there, would obtain heaven. Remaining in all worlds, he rejoices as long as fourteen Indras rule. Then remaining in the penance-grove called Nāgeśvara which is nearby, and having bathed there, O lord of kings, and being pure and concentrated, he sports for eternal time with many Nāga damsels. He should go to Kubera's abode, where Kubera stays. Kāleśvara is a great holy place where Kubera was pleased. Bathing there, O lord of kings, he would obtain all wealth.

85b-88. Then he should go westward to the best abode of the Maruts. Having bathed there, O lord of kings, being pure and concentrated, the intelligent one should then give gold and food according to his capacity. He goes to Vāyu's world by the Puṣpaka aeroplane. O Yudhiṣṭhira, then in the month of Māgha he should go to my Tīrtha. On the fourteenth day of a dark fortnight he should bathe there. Then he should eat at night, and should not go to Yonisaṁkaṭa.

89-97a. Thence he should go to Ahalyātīrtha. After merely having bathed there, he rejoices with celestial nymphs. Ahalyā got liberated after having practised penance at the Parameśvara (tīrtha). When the thirteenth day of the bright half of Caitra has arrived, he should, on that day holy to god Cupid, worship Ahalyā. A man who is born anywhere (i.e. in any family), would be dear there. He would be dear to women, would be prosperous and like another god of love. Having reached Ayodhyā, (he should visit) the well-known Śakratīrtha. Having merely bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of (giving) a thousand cows. Thence he should go to Somatīrtha and just bathe there. A man who has just bathed there, is absolved of all sins. On (the day of) the planet Moon, O lord of kings, it would remove all sins. O king, Somatīrtha is well-known in the three worlds, and gives a great fruit. O lord of men, he, who observes there the Cāndrāyaṇa vow, goes, after his soul is purified from all sins, to Soma's heaven. He who dies at Somatīrtha by entering fire or in the water or by living without food, is not born in the mortal world.

97b-100. Thence he should go to Stambhatīrtha, and should bathe there. By merely bathing there, a man is honoured in Soma's heaven. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excel-

lent Viṣṇutīrtha. The excellent Viṣṇutīrtha is (also) well-known as Yodhanīpura. Vāsudeva fought with crores of demons there. There a holy place came up; and here (i.e. at this holy place) Viṣṇu would be pleased. By observing a fast day and night, he keeps off (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

101-104a. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Tāpaseśvara. It is known as Amohaka. There he should offer oblations to his manes. On the full moon or the new moon day he should offer a śrāddha according to the proper rite. Having bathed there, O king, he should offer piṇḍa to his manes. In it stand stones of the form of elephants. At that (holy place) he should offer piṇḍa—especially in (the month of) Vaiśākha. His manes remain pleased as long as the earth will remain.

104b-121. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Siddheśvara. Going there he should go near Gaṇapati. From there, he should go to the place where there is Janārdana (as a) liṅga. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is honoured in Viṣṇu's world. On the right bank of Narmadā there is a very auspicious holy place. This great Kāmadeva (i.e. god of love) practises penance there. For a thousand divine years he worships Śiva. During the time of his abstract meditation he was burnt by the magnanimous Śiva. On the day of the bright parvan (i.e. the full moon day) the fire resembled a white mountain. All those remaining with Cupid were burnt and they lived at Kusumeśvara. After a thousand divine years the great lord (Śiva) was pleased with them. Rudra, the giver of boons, was, along with Umā, pleased with them. All they remaining on the bank of Narmadā were liberated. By the power of that holy place they again attained godhead. 'O Mahādeva, let the holy place be excellent by your favour.' The holy place has extended up to half a yojana all around. A man, given to fasting, having bathed at that holy place is honoured in the form of Cupid in Rudra's heaven. Yama, Kāmadeva, Vaiśvānara and Vāyu who had formerly come there, practised penance there only. A man who within the limit of half a yojana from there, near Andhona, not far away from the holy place, bathes, gives gifts, (gives) food (to brāhmaṇas), offers piṇḍas, enters fire, or water, or fasts, is never reborn after dying there. The best man should bathe himself with the water

sacred to Tryambaka. The manes of him, who duly offers piṇḍas at the root of Andhona, remain pleased as long as the moon and the sun remain (in the sky). A man or a woman who bathes there when the sun enters the northern solstice, would, (being) pure, live in the abode (of Siddheśvara) (and) the man, would obtain, by worshipping Siddheśvara in the morning, that status of the good which cannot be obtained by (performing) great sacrifices; and during the time of his stay at the holy place, an ugly man becomes handsome. In the mortal world, he becomes the king (of the earth) upto the oceans. (If) he would not see Kṣetrapāla, and the mighty Daṇḍapāla his pilgrimage would be fruitless, (also) by not seeing (i.e. visiting) Karṇakuṇḍala.

122. Having learnt this fruit of (the visit to) sacred places, all the gods that had assembled there, showered flowers and praised Kusumeśvara.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Śuklatīrtha

Nārada said :

1-2a. Thence he should devoutly go to Bhārgaveśa where the demons were destroyed by god Viṣṇu with his huṁkāra sound. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is free from all sins.

2b-6. O son of Pāṇḍu, also listen to the (description of) Śuklatīrtha. Mārkaṇḍa, seeing god (Mahādeva) with Umā, who was seated on the peak of Himālaya which was charming, variegated with various minerals, which resembled the young sun and heated gold, which had the staircase of strong crystals, which had a slab of stone with a variegated strap, which was golden, which was divine and adorned with many lotuses, asked (Mahādeva) who was omniscient, who was the immutable lord, who favoured the worlds, who was surrounded by the hosts of attendants and by Skanda, Nandi, Mahākāla, and attendants like Vīrabhadra :

7. "O Mahādeva, god of gods, praised by (gods like) Indra and Kāma, I am afraid of the worldly existence. Tell me the means of happiness.

8. O you revered lord, the lord of what has been and what will be, O you great god, describe to me the greatest among the holy places, destroying all sins."

The lord said:

9-29a. O illustrious brāhmaṇa, well-versed in all branches of knowledge, go, surrounded by the groups of sages, and have a bath etc. The sages Manu, Atri, Yājñavalkya, Kaśyapa, and Aṅgiras, Āpastamba, Saṁvarta, Kātyāyana, Bṛhaspati, Nārada and Gautama, desiring to secure righteousness asked him. At Kanakhala Gaṅgā is holy; and also Prayāga, Puṣkara and Gayā (are holy places). When the Sun is swallowed by Rāhu (i.e. on a solar eclipse day) Kurukṣetra also is holy. By day or at night, Śuklatīrtha gives a great fruit. On seeing it, touching (i.e. having contact with) it, bathing there, meditating, practising penance, (or performing) a sacrifice, (or by) fasting Śuklatīrtha gives great fruit. Śuklatīrtha is very holy and is well situated on the river. A royal sage named Cāṇikya attained perfection there. This holy place that sprang up extends over a yojana. Śuklatīrtha is very holy; it destroys all sins. When seen from the top of a tree it removes (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. O best sage, I stay here with Umā. During the pure month of Vaiśākha, on the fourteenth day of the dark half, I go out from Kailāsa and stay there. Gods, kinnaras, gandharvas, siddhas, vidyādharas, my attendants, nāgas, and all gods gather here; and remaining in the sky they have aeroplanes satisfying all desires. O lord of kings, those who desiring piety, come to Śuklatīrtha, (have their sins washed) as a garment is made (i.e. washed) white by a washerman. The sin collected from birth melts away at Śuklatīrtha. Even if he dies within the limit of half a yojana (of this holy place) he is not reborn. O Mārkaṇḍa, best of the sages, giving gifts and bathing (at this holy place) give a great merit. A holy place superior to Śuklatīrtha was never there nor will be there. A man having committed sins during his youth, removes (i.e. is free from) them by observing a fast for a day and night at Śuklatīrtha. That perfection which is had by means of penance,

self-restraint, sacrifices, giving gifts and offering presents to deities, is not had even by (performing) hundreds of sacrifices. On the fourteenth day of the dark half of Kārtika a man should observe a fast and bathe (the image of) the lord with ghee. He, along with (members of his family) till the twentyfirst (descendant) will not fall from the divine position. Śuklatīrtha is a great holy place. It is resorted to by sages and siddhas. O king, having bathed (i.e. if he bathes) there, he is not reborn. Having bathed at Śuklatīrtha, he should worship Śiva. He should keep awake (during the night) by (resorting to) auspicious (things) like dancing, singing etc. In the morning he should bath in the Śuklatīrtha, and worship the deities. Being pure and devoted to Śiva's vow, he should then feed his preceptor according to his capacity; then he should take food; he should not be dishonest about wealth. Then after circumambulating he should gently approach the deity.

29b-36. Listen to the meritorious fruit that he who does like this, gets. Having got into a celestial car, being extolled by bevies of celestial nymphs and endowed with strength like that of Śiva, he lives till deluge. Listen to the meritorious fruit that a woman who gives pure gold (to a brāhmaṇa) at Śuklatīrha and would bathe Kumāra (i.e. Kārtikeya) with ghee and worship him—who does like this devoutly—obtains. As long as the fourteen Indras live in heaven he rejoices. He having fully restrained himself and composed, having bathed and observed a fast during the period of the sun's passage—north or south of the equator, on the fourteenth day, on a Saṁkrānti day or on (the day of) the equinox, should give gifts according to his capacity. (Thereby) Viṣṇu and Śiva would be pleased. By the efficacy of Śuklatīrtha all (this) becomes inexhaustible. Listen to the meritorious fruit which he who carries a helpless person, an indigent brāhmaṇa, or even one who is dependent, obtains. He is honoured in Śiva's heaven for as many thousand years as the number of hairs (on the bodies of the persons) that are born in his family.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Naraka, Kapilātīrtha, Ṛṣitīrtha, Gaṇeśvara, Bhṛgutīrtha, Somatīrtha etc.

Nārada said:

1-12. Then he should go to (the holy place called) Naraka. He should bathe there. Merely by bathing there a man does not see (i.e. go to) hell. O you son of Pāṇḍu, listen to the greatness of this holy place. O lord of kings, all the bones which he would drop there, are dissolved, and the man becomes handsome. O lord of kings, thence a man should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kapilātīrtha. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. The man, who, when the month of Jyeṣṭha has come and especially on the fourteenth day, observes a fast devoutly, gives a tawny cow, and burning a lamp with ghee, bathes Śiva with ghee, and offers a coconut along with ghee, and in the end goes round, and gives a tawny cow with a bell and (other) ornaments (to a brāhmaṇa), becomes like Śiva, and is not born again. When Tuesday has come, especially on the fourth day (falling on Tuesday), a man should devoutly bathe (the image of) Śiva and give food to brāhmaṇas. When the ninth or the new moon day falls on a Tuesday, he should carefully bathe (the image of) Śiva. (Thereby) he would be handsome and fortunate. He should bathe the Phallus with ghee and devoutly honour brāhmaṇas. Surrounded by thousands, he (going in) Puṣpaka aeroplane, obtains the position of Śiva. He would not come here (i.e. to this world) again. He rejoices for an eternal time, and he becomes like Rudra. When the most righteous one comes to the mortal world due to his contact with (the fruits of) his deeds, he becomes a king, and becomes handsome and strong.

13-14a. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Ṛṣitīrtha. There the sage Tṛṇabindu, burnt my curse, resided. By the efficacy of that holy place a brāhmaṇa becomes free from sins.

14b-16a. O lord of kings, thence a man should go to the excellent Gaṇeśvara. Merely by bathing there on the fourteenth day when the month of Śrāvaṇa has come (i.e. on the fourteenth

day of Śrāvaṇa) a man is honoured in Rudra's heaven. By offering oblations to the manes he becomes free from the three debts (to sages, gods and the manes).

16b-25. Near Gaṇeśvara there is the excellent (holy place called) Gaṅgāvadana. A man who would bathe there with some desire or without any desire would undoubtedly be free from sins committed from birth. He should always bathe there on a parvan day. Having offered oblations to the manes he becomes free from the three debts. That entire merit is had at Gaṅgārāhvarka confluence, which was seen at Prayāga by the magnanimous Śiva. To a place in its west, near it, not far away there is (the holy place) called Daśāśvamedhika, well-known in the three worlds. A man having fasted for a night on the new moon day in the month of Bhādrapada, and having bathed, would go to the place where Śiva (dwells). He should always bathe there on a parvan day. Having offered oblations to the manes he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. To the west of Daśāśvamedha, Bhṛgu, the best brāhmaṇa, worshipped the lord for a thousand divine years. He remained under an anthill; and to the right was the abode (of the lord). Umā and Śiva were amazed. Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī) asked the lord : "O great lord, who is dwelling here ? Tell me whether he is a god or a demon."

The lord said:

26. O dear one, the best brāhmaṇa named Bhṛgu, and best among the sages, remains in deep meditation and reflects upon me; he desires a boon.

27. On hearing this the goddess laughed and said to the lord: "The tuft of his hair has become like whirling smoke. Still you are not pleased. Therefore you are difficult to be propitiated. There is no doubt it."

God said :

28. O great goddess, you do not know; he behaves wrathfully. I shall show you the fact, and shall do what is dear to you.

29. Then the lord of gods brought to his mind his bull (i.e.

Nandi). Immediately on being remembered, the god's bull came there.

30. He spoke in a human voice: "O lord, order me." (The lord said:) "The brāhmaṇa is covered with anthill; knock him down on the ground."

31-32. He who was engrossed in abstract meditation, and who was reflecting (upon the lord) was knocked down by him. Then getting hot with anger in a moment, he raised his hand and said to the bull, "O bull, where will you talking like this go (now)? I shall today actually kill you—a wicked one."

33-45. Then the brāhmaṇa challenged the bull gone into the air. He saw him in the sky; O king, this was a very great wonder. Then, when Rudra laughed, the sage stood before him. Seeing his third eye, he fell on the ground through shame. Saluting the highest lord (by prostrating himself before him) like a staff, he extolled him. Having saluted the lord of beings and the origin of the mundane existence (he praised him:) "Afraid of the worldly life, O lord of the world, I beg of you of a divine form, a little welfare. O lord, which man is able to describe the multitudes of your qualities ? Perhaps Vāsuki, who has a thousand mouths may be able (to do so). O Śaṅkara, O lord of the earth, O revered one, forgive me; be gracious to me who am devoutly garrulous in your praise, and who have fallen at your feet. You are sattva, rajas and tamas. You (are the cause of) the maintenance, creation and destruction (of the world). O lord of the world, O master of the world, excepting you, there is no (other) deity. All this—self-control, vows, sacrifices, gifts, Vedic studies, efforts like determination—does not deserve (is not equal to) even the sixteen thousandth part of your devotion. The signs like the sword of the excellent elixir of life or going on foot by people, are clearly seen in the case of people who have bowed down to you in this existence. Even if a man salutes you fraudulently, you give Dharma to him, O you god of those who long for you. O lord, devotion has been produced to cut off the worldly existence and for liberation. O great lord, protect me who am taking delight in another's wife or wealth, who am tormented by insult and great grief, and who am scorched by false pride, who sported with the grandeur lasting for a moment, who am prone to cruel ways and who am fallen. Though the

direction is full of the groups of the helpless sense organs, like relatives, yet it is worthless. O Śaṅkara, why do you mock at me—a fool? O Mahādeva, remove my thirst (i.e. desire) quickly, give me wealth that would always remain in my heart; cut off the nooses of pride and delusion; liberate me."

46. This hymn named 'Karuṇābhyudaya' is divine and gives perfection. Śiva is pleased with him, as with Bhṛgu, who recites it devoutly.

The lord said:

47. O brāhmaṇa, I am pleased with you; ask for the boon desired by you.

The god along with Umā would give him a boon.

Bhṛgu said:

48. O lord of gods, if you are pleased with me, if a boon is to be given to me, then let there be Rudravedi (here). (Please) bring this about for me.

The lord said:

49-52a. O best of brāhmaṇas, there will be Krodhasthāna (i.e. place of anger). There will be no agreement between father and son.

Since then all gods like Brahmā, along with kinnaras, worship Bhṛgutīrtha, where Śiva was pleased. By seeing (i.e. visiting) that holy place a man is instantly free from sin. The creatures, helpless or independent, who die there, would undoubtedly go along the course of the very secret one (i.e. Brahman).

52b-57. This holy place is very extensive, and destroys all sins. Having bathed there men go to heaven; and those who die there, are not reborn. He should give sandals, an umbrella, food and gold and meal according to his capacity. It would be eternal. One should give according to his desire gifts on the day of the solar eclipse, and also bathe at the holy place—all this gives inexhaustible merit. Giving a bull on a lunar eclipse day or solar eclipse day is excellent. O king, foolish men, deluded by Viṣṇu's illusion do not know the divine Vṛṣatīrtha situated on (the bank

of) Narmadā. A man, who (even) once listens to the greatness of Bhṛgutīrtha, is free from all sins, and he goes to Rudra's world.

58-59a. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place) Gautameśvara. Having bathed there, O king, and absorbed in observing a fast, he is honoured in Brahmā's world (after going there) in a golden aeroplane.

59b-62. He would then go to Dhautapāpa, where the bull washed (his sins). O king, it is situated on (the bank of) Narmadā, and destroys all sins. A man, having bathed at that holy place, is absolved of (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. O great king, he who casts his life at that holy place, gets four hands and three eyes and becomes as powerful as Rudra. Valourous like Rudra, he would stay for a complete myriad of years (in Rudra's heaven). Having come to the earth after a long time, he would be a sovereign emperor.

63-67a. From there he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Eraṇḍitīrtha. O king, the man who just bathes there gets the same fruit as Mārkaṇḍeya told about Prayāga. In the month of Bhādrapada, and on the eighth of the bright half, a man should observe a fast for a night and should bathe there. He would not be troubled by the messengers of Yama, and he goes to Indra's heaven. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to that holy place where Viṣṇu dwells. It is known as Hiraṇyadvīpa and destroys all sins. O king, having bathed there, a man becomes rich and handsome.

67b-69. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the great (holy place called) Kanakhala. O king, at that holy place Garuḍa practised penance. It is well known in all the worlds. Yoginī (i.e. Durgā) dwells there. She plays with the meditating saints and dances with Śiva. O king, one who bathes there, is honoured in Rudra's world.

70. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Īśatīrtha. There is no doubt that Īśa became free there and went up.

71-72. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to that holy place where Viṣṇu, the inconceivable lord, having resorted to the form of a boar, dwells. A man having bathed at Varāhatīrtha, especially on the twelfth, obtains Viṣṇu's heaven, and does not go to hell.

73-76. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Somatīrtha. He should bathe there especially on the full moon day. Bali having saluted the lord, is pleased with him. In the atmosphere is seen the celestial city of Hariścandra. When Cakradhvaja (wheel-bannered one) returned, and Garuḍa-bannered one was asleep, the force of Narmadā's water resorted to Rurukaccha. Viṣṇu told Śaṅkara to stay there. Having bathed at Dvīpeśvara, a man would get great happiness.

77-82. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to (the holy place called) Rudrakanyā on the confluence. Merely by bathing there, a man would obtain the position of the goddess. Then he should go to Devatīrtha saluted by all gods. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he rejoices with deities. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to (the excellent holy place called) Śikhitīrtha. A gift given there becomes a crore times meritorious. On the new moon day in the dark half of the month he should bathe there. He should feed a brāhmaṇa. Thereby a crore (of brāhmaṇas) is fed. O lord of kings, at Bhṛgutīrtha a crore of holy places are settled. A man having no desire, or having a desire, should bathe there. He obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and rejoices with deities. The best sage Bhṛgu obtained perfection there. The magnanimous Śaṅkara descended there.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Vihageśvara, Narmadeśvara, Aśvatīrtha, Pitāmaha, Sāvitrītīrtha, Mānasa etc.

Nārada said:

1. O lord of kings, from there he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Vihageśvara.

2. O lord of kings, by seeing it, he is free from all sins. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Narmadeśvara. O king, having bathed there he is honoured in heaven.

3. From there a man should go to Aśvatīrtha and should bathe there. He becomes prosperous, handsome and happy.

4-5. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Pitāmaha, formerly fashioned by Brahmā. A man having bathed there should devoutly offer oblations to his dead ancestors. He should offer water mixed with sesamum and darbha. By the efficacy of that sacred place, everything becomes inexhaustible.

6-7. He, who, on reaching Sāvitrītīrtha, would bathe (there), is, after having shaken off all his sins, honoured in Brahmā's heaven. Just there is a beautiful and extremely auspicious sacred place. O king, having bathed there, a man is honoured in the world of manes.

8. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent holy place (called) Mānasa. O king, having bathed there, a man is honoured in Rudra's world.

9-10. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Kratutīrtha. It is well-known in all worlds and destroys all sins. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain all the desired objects like beasts, sons, wealth which he prays for.

11. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the well-known holy place called Tridaśadyoti.

12-13. There those daughters of sages of good vows practised penance (with the desire): 'May the immutable lord, the master, be our husband.' Mahādeva i.e. Hara, the highest lord, taking up a fierce form, of a deformed face and loathsome, came to that sacred place. There the maidens, O great king, (practised penance) for a boon.

14-15a. He who would go to Kanyārddhi, gives a daughter (i.e. gets the merit of giving a daughter in marriage). There O great king, is a well-known sacred place (named) Daśakanyā. Having bathed there he should worship the lord. (Thereby) he is free from all sins.

15b-16a. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the sacred place known as Svargabindu. Having bathed there, O king, a man never meets with misfortune.

16b-17a. From there he should go to Apsareśa, and should bathe there. Remaining in the world of Nāgas he sports and rejoices with celestial nymphs.

17b-31. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the ex-

cellent (sacred place called) Narakatīrtha. Having bathed there, he should go to Bhārabhūta. Having reached this holy place, which is a manifestation of Śiva, and having worshipped Virūpākṣa (i.e. Śiva) there, he is honoured in Rudra's heaven. The magnanimous man, bathing at the holy place Bhārabhūta, gets the position of Śiva, wherever he may be dead. The wise say that worshipping Śiva during the month of Kārtika is hundred times more meritorious than a horse sacrifice. He should fashion a hundred lamps, and should give them (to a brāhmaṇa) after filling them with ghee. He goes in aeroplanes resembling the thunderbolt (in strength) to the place where Śaṅkara stays. He, who would present a bull resembling a conch, or a kunda-flower, or the moon, goes to Rudra's world in a car to which bulls are yoked. O king, he who would give a vessel and also sweetened milk mixed with honey, and various eatables, and (he) who would feed (brāhmaṇas) according to his capacity, would, O lord of kings, have all that increased a crore-fold by the efficacy of that sacred place. Having sprinkled the water over (the image of Śiva) and having worshipped Śiva, he would not meet with misfortune by the efficacy of that sacred place. He, who, having reached this holy place, would cast his life, goes, with his soul absolved of all sins, to (the place) where Śiva (dwells). O king, he who enters water (i.e. bathes) at that holy place, goes to Rudra's heaven in a car to which swans are yoked. As long as the moon, the sun, the Himālayas, the great ocean, or the waters of the Ganges (will remain), he is honoured in heaven. O king, he who would observe a fast at that sacred place, is not required to live in the womb (i.e. is not reborn), O lord of kings. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Aṭavītīrtha. O king, a man having bathed there, would obtain half of Indra's seat.

32-34. Thence he should go to Śṛṅgatīrtha which destroys all sins. By merely bathing there he gets the position of Śiva. The confluence of Eraṇḍi and Narmadā is well-known. The holy place there is meritorious and destroys all sins. Being engaged in fasting and always intent upon (reaching) Brahman, he, having bathed there, is free from (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, O lord of kings.

35-42. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the conflu-

ence of Narmadā and the ocean (i.e. where Narmadā flows into the sea). It is well-known as Jamadagni; and Viṣṇu is settled there. Having performed many sacrifices there, Indra became the lord of gods. Having bathed there at the confluence of Narmadā and the ocean, O king, a man gets threefold fruit of a horse-sacrifice. The intimate union with the western ocean is (just) the opening of the gate to salvation. There gods with gandharvas, and sages, siddhas and cāraṇas, worship Vimaleśvara, the lord of gods, thrice (a day). With his soul free from all sins, he is honoured in Rudra's world. There was never a great sacred place like Vimaleśvara, nor will there be any great holy place like Vimaleśvara. Those who after fasting there, see Vimaleśvara, have their souls freed from all sins, and go to Rudra's heaven.

43-44. Then O lord of kings, a man should go to the Keśinītīrtha. He, intent on observing a fast, restrained and with his diet controlled, and fasting for a night is absolved (of the sin) of the murder of a brāhmaṇa by the efficacy of that holy place. (For him) who would see Sāgareśvara, the best holy place, or would remain within a distance of a yojana from it, Śiva is settled in the eddy. There is no doubt that when it is seen, all the holy places are seen. He, being free from all sins, goes there where Rudra dwells.

45-52. Ten crores of holy places exist within the distance between the confluence of Narmadā and Amarakaṇṭaka. O lord of kings, the walking about from the holy place—the pilgrimage, was resorted to by a crore of sages. The pilgrimages were undertaken by men who maintained the sacred fire, who were the divine portions and who had mastered all knowledge. Therefore, all the holy places give him a holy bath, who would devoutly recite and listen to it daily; and Narmadā would always be pleased with him. Rudra would be pleased with him, and so also the great sage Mārkaṇḍeya. A barren woman gets sons; an unfortunate woman (i.e. one who is disliked by her husband) becomes fortunate. A groom obtains a virgin; whosoever desires what, obtains it. No doubt should be raised about it. A brāhmaṇa gets (the knowledge of) the Vedas; a kṣatriya would be victorious; a vaiśya obtains grains, and a śūdra obtains felicity. A fool would obtain knowledge. A man who would

recite this three times a day would not see (i.e. go to) hell and would not go to (i.e. get) an ignominous birth.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The Story of Five Gandharva Maidens

Nārada said:

1-2. O king, I have thus described to you the excellent Narmadātīrtha. Formerly the fire of the drops of the water of Revā destroyed the excessive fear due to the curse of the daughters of gandharvas. A man is liberated by the touch of the drops of the water of Revā.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

3-6. O revered one, wherefrom did the many daughters get a curse? Whose children were they? What were their names and their ages? How did they get free from the fruit of the curse by the contact of the water? Where did they bathe? O lord, tell me all this. The greatness of the Narmadātīrtha would be surprising. It is said to destroy sins even by listening to it. He who utters the word 'Narmadā, Narmadā', gets eternal liberation as long as the moon and stars exist.

7-8. Formerly you told me the excellent importance of Revā. Still, O good one, tell me the story; also about the best livelihood that should be resorted to by the wise. Therefore, O best of brāhmaṇas, I am asking about the excellent importance of Revā. O lord, tell me the history, bright due to the deeds of the maidens.

Nārada said:

9. O best king, listen to the great story infused with righteousness. As the araṇi (i.e. the piece of wood used for kindling sacrificial fire) contains fire, similarly Dharma is produced by Brahmā.

10. (There was) a gandharva by name Śukasaṅgīti. His daughter was Pramohinī. Suśīlā was the daughter of Suśīla. Susvarā was the daughter of Svaravedin. Sutārā was Candrakānta's daughter and Candrikā was that of Suprabha.

11-18. O king, these were the execellent names of those celestial nymphs. All the five maidens were beautiful due to their being in the prime of youth. They always talked among themselves like sisters. They as it were came out of the moon like the bright moonlight. Their faces were (beautiful) like the moon; they had lovely hair; and were bright like moonlight. They (the damsels) were among gods as moonlight in white lotuses opening at moonrise. They were born with lumps of (i.e. excessive) beauty; they had celestial forms and were charming. The lotuses of their breasts were shooting forth; they looked like the ketakī plants in the spring. They were charming on account of the youth that had arisen like the foliage of a grove of creepers. They were yellowish like gold; their lustre was like gold; they were decorated with golden ornaments. They had put on the garlands of golden campaka (flowers). Their beautiful garments appeared golden. They were proficient in the musical scale, in various melodies, in beating in (playing on) musical instruments, in diversions, and in playing upon flute and lute, as well as in dance accompanied with singing and instrumental music and in the time in music like the middle one and the fast one; also in diversions like (drawing) pictures and arts.

19. The maidens that were like this were infatuated with excellent sports. Fondled by their parents all of them moved in Kubera's abode.

20-24. Once through curiosity, the five maidens—the celestial damsels—getting together in the spring season, collecting mandara flowers from grove after grove, went to the Acchoda lake to propitiate Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī). Taking excellent golden lotuses along with beautiful blue lotuses from that (lake), having bathed on the pavement of lapis lazuli and clear crystal, having put on their garments, they silently fashioned a golden image of Umā with golden and pearl ornaments on an altar. The young girls, having worshipped Gaurī, decorated with sandal (-paste), perfumes and saffron, with excellent lotuses etc. and with various presents, danced to the accompaniment of singing and instru-

mental music. Having resorted to singing with high notes, the fawn-eyed ones then sang, with natural voice and melodies, songs containing beautiful letters (i.e. words) and raised to a high pitch and made melodious by (various) modes.

25-36a. At that time, to the exellent holy place of the Acchoda came for a bath the eldest son of the sage, the abode of (the knowledge of) the Vedas, when the girls were delighted with the shower of emotions, and with their minds full of joy. The young man was (having) boundless handsomeness, had a charming face, and his eyes were large like blooming lotuses. His chest was broad, he had good (i.e. strong) arms, he was very handsome; his complexion was dark; he was like another Cupid. That celibate, with a good (i.e. a large) tuft of hair, shone with his staff as Cupid with his bow. The excellent one had covered himself with dear-skin, he had put on marks (on his body) and had a girdle of the muñja grass resembling gold round his waist. Seeing that brāhmaṇa on the bank of the lake, the girls, full of curiosity, were delighted (and said): "This one will be our guest." Ardently longing to see him they gave up singing and dancing, and were pierced by Cupid with his arrows, as female dear are pierced by a hunter. The five (maidens) were stupefied, confused and said (to one another): "See, see." They mistook the excellent youth for the god of love. Having repeatedly worshipped him with their eyes as with lotuses, the celestial nymphs began deliberation among themselves: "If this is god of love, (then) how can he be without (his spouse) Rati? Or is he the (twin) gods Aśvins, moving in pair? Is he a gandharva, or a kinnara, or a siddha taking up any form he likes? Or is he the son of a sage, or is he the best one among men? Or is he someone whom the Creator has created for us ? As a treasure is fashioned by (their) former deeds for the fortunate, in the same way, Gaurī, with her heart moistened by the billows of the water of compassion, has brought this excellent groom for us. I have chosen him, you have chosen him, similarly this one also has chosen him."

36b-44. O best king, when the five girls were talking like this, the intelligent one who had finished his mid-day rites there, thought: 'Doing what will be meritorious? Gādhi's son, Parāśara and others, and also Kaṇḍu, Devala and other brāhmaṇas, though strong due to their being meditating saints, were easily

deluded by women. It is (indeed) wonderful. The deer of whose mind does not fall when struck with the sharp arrows of the eyes (i.e. glances) of youthful women, shot from the creeper-like brows, by the archer viz. Cupid? As long as a man is not intoxicated by the spirituous liquors of the eyes (i.e. glances) of women, his moral sense dominates. There is in him the fear of the society; he is self-possessed; there is a consideration of the family; there is the strength of penance; men practice tranquility. Women with their charming amorous gestures delude and madden a passionate man. These (maidens are trying to) delude and madden me, who am intent upon guarding my righteousness by means of my own virtues. Passionate men, with their minds deluded, imagining charm (to be present) in the worthless and impure bodies of women, made of flesh, blood, feces and urine, enter (i.e. cohabit with) them. Wise sages of pure hearts have described women to be fearful. As long as these women do not approach me, I shall go home.'

45-47. By the time (i.e. before) the excellent maidens approached him, the brāhmaṇa vanished by the power of Viṣṇu. Seeing the wonderful act of that celibate, the devotee of Viṣṇu, who vanished by the power of magic, the maidens, O king, with their eyes frightened and themselves afraid like young female deer, moving their eyes looked into the ten vacant directions.

The maidens said:

48-58. Clearly he knows magic, or he knows (art of creating) illusion. Though seen (by us) he has (suddenly) vanished.

Thus they talked with one another. Just then only their hearts were pervaded by the fire of separation, as a very beautiful forest would be entirely pervaded by blazing wild fire. "O charming one, give up your magical skill. Present yourself to us quickly. It is not proper for you (to act) in the manner of a fly (falling into the food even) before a morsel (is eaten). Alas! Why were you shown to us? Why were you created by the Creator? We know, you, the cause of great tormentation to us, are self-created. Is it that your heart is cruel? Do you not entertain good intention towards us? O charming one, are you cruel? Are you stealing our minds? Do you not trust us? Are you

testing us? Are you not having affection for us? Are you skilled in deception? Do you possess the skilful knowledge of entering our hearts? But why do you not know the means of getting out? Why are you so much angry with us without our fault? Do you not realise the pain of others or their deception? O lord of our hearts, we are doomed by your disappearance. We shall not live without seeing you, but shall live only with the hope of seeing you. Quickly take us where you have gone. Creator, who has robbed (us) of your sight, has cut off the sprout of our joy. By all means present yourself to us. Take full pity on us. Good people do (wait to) see the end of anything."

59-61a. Crying like this, and waiting (there) for a long time, the maidens then, through fear of their parents, started to go home. Bound by the chains of his affection, and being very much distressed by separation (from him), they somehow mustered courage and went to their respective houses. Having come (home) all of them fell down near their mothers.

61b-74. The mothers asked them: "What is this? Why are you late?" "As we were playing with kinnarīs, we stayed together (with them) at the Acchoda lake; therefore we did not realise (how far) the day (had advanced). O mother(s), on our way we were exhausted; therefore our bodies have suffered. Due to some great confusion we are unable to speak." Speaking like this, the beautiful maidens, concealing the expression of their faces, talked with their mothers, and rolled on the jewelled floor. Some did not make their peacock, kept for pleasure, dance in joy. Others did not teach their parrot out of curiosity. Some other did not fondle her mongoose. Someone else, extremely confused, did not at all play with the cranes. They did not resort to (any) diversion, nor did they rejoice in their houses. They did not properly talk with their relatives, nor did they play on the lute. All the flowers of the desire-yielding tree were like fire to them. They did not drink the sweat honey having the fragrance of mandara flowers. The maidens had their eyes (i.e. eye-sight) fixed on the tips of their noses like female ascetics. They were continuously, but aimlessly, thinking. They had fixed their mind on that best man. For a moment they remained in a cave, covered with moonstones, with a stream (flowing) at its opening. For a moment they stayed at a window, and for a moment in the

house with artificial fountains. For a moment they prepared beds with the leaves of lotus-creepers (growing) in the lakes. They were fanned by their friends with the leaves of lotus-creepers. In this way the excellent maidens passed the night resembling a yuga. Somehow they sustained themselves. They were delirious as if they suffered from fever. In the morning, on seeing the gem of the sky (i.e. the sun), they thought that they were alive. Having informed their own mothers, they went to worship Gaurī. Having bathed according to the proper rite, and again naving worshipped the goddess with flowers and incense, they remained there singing.

75-81. In the meanwhile, that brāhmaṇa also came from his father's hermitage to that Acchoda lake to bathe (there). Seeing that celibate, the maidens were delighted, with their eyes expanded, as the white-lotus plants are joyful (i.e. bloom) on seeing the sun at the end of the night. Those young girls went near the celibate, and they put round him the nooses formed by joining their right and left hands. (They said to him:) "O dear one, yesterday you went (leaving us). Today you cannot go. You have been chosen by us. There can be no doubt about this." The brāhmaṇa who was (caught) in the noose of their arms and who was thus addressed, laughed and said: "You are saying auspicious, favourable words. But that would destroy the vow of me, who am still in the first stage of life (i.e. celibacy) and given to studies. I have not yet reached the other end (i.e. have not completed my studies) in my preceptor's house. Very wise men practise the way of life which is to be practised in a particular stage of life. Therefore, O maidens, I do not think marriage to be the (proper) way of life (for me)."

82-92. Having heard the words of the brāhmaṇa, the excellent maidens who were eager and who made sweet and indistinct sound like the cuckoos in the spring season, said to the brāhmaṇa: "Material welfare (*artha*) is (better) than piety (*dharma*); satisfaction of desires (*kāma*) is (superior) to material welfare. The rise of the fruit of happiness comes from the satisfaction of desires. In this way the wise who have firm convictions, describe it. That kāma (i.e. the satisfaction of desires) is standing before you due to your great righteousness. Resort to it with various enjoyments, since this ground is clean." Hearing these words of them he

spoke to them in serious words : "Your words are (i.e. what you say is) true; but (practising) my vow is essential. I shall go through the right of marriage (only) after I secure my preceptor's permission, not otherwise." Thus addressed, they again said to him : "O handsome one, you are evidently a fool. Excellent women, coming from good families, are a medicine made ready by the intelligence of Brahmā; they are a spell, a ready charm. O sage, they, when they have approached, should be properly; enjoyed by a wise man. If, fortunately a business becomes successful, the wise ones do not ignore it. Since indifference is not fruitful, therefore procrastination is not approved. Nectar should be taken even from poison; gold even from a filthy thing. Excellent knowledge should be obtained even from a mean person, and a gem of woman even from a bad family. (Only) fortunate men obtain maidens who are spotless due to being born in good families, whose hearts are wet with (i.e. full of) love, who talk sweetly, who choose their own grooms, who are beautiful and have a charming youth; and no other men (can obtain such maidens). How incongruous are we, the celestial beauties on one side and you, an ascetic boy on the other! I think the Creator alone is wise since he has done this impossible job (of bringing together two incongruous things). Therefore now you should accept us auspiciously by means of the Gāndharva type of marriage.[1] Otherwise we cannot live."

93-96. Hearing (these) words, the brāhmaṇa, the best among those who known Dharma, then said: "O you fawn-eyed maidens, how should men whose wealth is righteousness, give it up? The group of the four, viz. Dharma (i.e. piety), Artha (i.e. material welfare), Kāma (i.e. satisfaction of desires) and Mokṣa (i.e. liberation) is said to give fruit as (already) told. The opposite of this does not give fruit. Therefore, I who am observing a vow, shall not betake myself to a wife at a wrong time. He who does not know the time of an act (i.e. when the act should be done), does not get the fruit of that act. Since (now) my mind is attached to the consideration of Dharma, therefore, listen, O maidens, I do not desire marriage."

1. Gāndharva Vivāha : One of the eight forms of marriage. In this form marriage takes place between lovers without seeking prior approval of relatives.

97-103a. Knowing this intention of him, they looked at each other, and let free his hand from their hands. Then Pramohinī seized his feet. Suśīlā and Susvarā seized his arms. Sutārā embraced him and Candrikā kissed (him on) his face. Yet he was unperturbed. Resembling the fire of deluge, and very violent due to rage, the young celibate cursed them: "Since like devils you clung to me, therefore you will be (turned into) devils." "What is this sinful act done to an innocent one through folly? You have done what is disagreeable to one who wants to do good to you. Fie upon you who have put an end to righteousness! We have heard that the happiness of the man who seeks to hurt those who are attached devoted friends, comes to an end in both the worlds. Therefore, you too, due to our curse, quickly be (turned into) a goblin."

103b-108. Speaking like this, the young girls were sighing, being full of anger. Due to mutual agitation, O king, those maidens and that celibate—all of them turned into goblins in that lake. That male goblin and the famale goblins crying fearfully, exhausted the ripening of the deeds they had formerly done. O king, a good or bad deed done formerly gives fruit when its due time (has come) (and) the fruit is unavoidable even for gods like one's own shadow. At various places the fathers and mothers, and brothers also of those young girls cried. Fate is insurmountable. Hereafter the goblins, being extremely unhappy, wandered here and there for food and lived on the bank of the lake.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Sage Lomaśa Comes to the Help of the Goblins

Nārada said:

1-6. After a long time the magnanimous, best sage Lomaśa who wandered as he liked, came there. Seeing the brāhmaṇa all the goblins living in a group and being overpowered by hunger and desiring to eat him, ran to him. Being burnt by the sharp lustre of Lomaśa, unable to stand before him, they remained

away from him. Then, that brāhmaṇa, who had become a goblin as a result of his former deeds, seeing Lomaśa, saluted him by prostrating himself before him, and putting his folded palms on his head spoke true and pleasant words, O king:

7-12. "O brāhmaṇa, at the time of the rise of great fortune there would be (obtained) the company of the good. Between a man who at all times bathes at the sacred places like the Ganges etc. and the one who keeps company with the good the latter is superior. O brāhmaṇa, company of the great gives seen and unseen fruits, gives (i.e. takes one to) heaven, removes diseases and is said to remove (mental) darkness." Saying so, he told him his former wonderful account. "These are those gandharva-daughters, and I am that son of a brāhmaṇa, O sage. All of us were foolish cursing one another (and turning) into goblins. O best sage, before you we are standing with melancholy faces. By seeing you, we the fools, shall be liberated. Would the mass of darkness cling to the atmosphere when the sun rises?" Hearing these words, Lomaśa, of a great lustre, with his heart tender with compassion, said to the sage's son who was afflicted: "Let the memory of all of you rise suddenly by my favour. Let all of you remain in righteousness, so that your mutual curse would come to an end."

The goblin said:

13. O great sage, tell us (what) righteousness (is), so that we shall be free from sins. This is not the time for delay, since the fire of curse is fierce.

Lomaśa said:

14-27. Let (all the goblins) duly bathe in Revā with me. Revā will free you from the curse. There would be no other expiation. O brāhmaṇa, listen attentively. It is my firm opinion that the sin of men would certainly perish by bathing in Revā. Bath in Revā would burn, as fire burns a heap of cotton, all the sins committed in the (previous) seven existences and the present one also. O goblin, all that sin for which (the wise) do not see an atonement, perishes merely by bathing in Narmadā. Bath in Narmadā causes knowledge. Therefore she gives salvation. All the holy places of the Himālaya remove sins. This

one giving (i.e. taking one to) Indra's heaven is fashioned by the teachers of the Vedas. Revā is said to give the fruits of (i.e. to satisfy) all desires and is the giver of liberation. She destroys sins, she removes sins, she gives the fruits of (i.e. satisfies) all desires. A bath in Narmadā gives (i.e. takes one to) Viṣṇu's heaven and destroys sins. A bath in Yamunā would be excellent for (going to) the Sun's world. A bath in Sarasvatī destroys sin, and gives (i.e. leads one to) Brahmā's heaven. O goblin, (a bath in) Viśālā is said to give a great fruit, and is the wild fire to the fuel of sins and the remover of the act of being conceived in a womb. A bath in Narmadā is said to lead to Viṣṇu's heaven and to liberation. Out of the rivers Sarayū, Gaṇḍakī, Sindhu, Candrabhāgā, Kauśikī, Tāpī, Godāvarī, Bhīmā, Payoṣṇī, Kṛṣnaveṇī, Tuṅgabhadrā and others, Revā is reached (by a man) due to the meritorious deeds done in former existences. O sage's son, a bath there (i.e. in Revā) gives absence of rebirth. Gods, residing in heaven, always sing (i.e. say): "When shall we see Revā, bathing in which (river) men do not experience pangs of (living in) the womb, and remain near Viṣṇu?" Those men who, having many coatings of sins (i.e. who have committed many sins), everyday bathe here in the pure water of Revā, do not sink in hells due to their religious merit, (but) they well (i.e. comfortably) move in heaven like gods.

28. O goblin, formerly the creator weighed Revā against severe vows, acts of charity, penances, and sacrifices, and Revā, that accomplishes salvation quickly, was (i.e. proved) superior to them.

Nārada said:

29. Hearing those words of that Lomaśa, all the goblins quickly went with him to bathe in Revā.

30-34. Then fortunately breezes, giving (i.e. throwing) drops of water on the bodies of them who had come in contact with the stream (of Revā), arose on the bank of Revā. Due to the touch of the drops of the water of Revā, they were freed from their goblinhood. Being instantly endowed with divine bodies, they extolled Narmadā. Then, as told by Lomaśa, the brāhmaṇa happily married those daughters of gandharvas on the bank of Narmadā. Bathing there, drinking (the water of Narmadā)

and plunging into (Narmadā) they stayed there for a long time. Having worshipped Narmadā at this spot, they went to Viṣṇu's heaven. O king, I have thus told you the very auspicious account of Narmadā, which is highly meritorious and which removes sins merely by hearing it.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

Piṅgatīrtha, Narmadā, Dvārāvatī, Timi etc.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Now tell me about other holy places described by Vasiṣṭha, on hearing about which sins perish, O Nārada.

Nārada said :

2-6a. O king, now hear about the holy places described by Vasiṣṭha. A self-restrained man, with his senses controlled, obtains (the fruit of) the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice on reaching the southern sea and gets into an aeroplane. A restrained man, having controlled his diet, having reached Carmaṇvatī, and being allowed by Rantideva, would obtain the fruit of (having performed) the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. Then, O righteous one, he should go to Arbuda (i.e. mountain Abu), the son of Himālaya, where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, there was formerly a fissure in the earth. There is the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha, well-known in the three worlds. Having lived there for a night, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

6b-9. O king, a restrained man, having bathed at Piṅgatīrtha, would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a hundred tawny cows (to a brāhmaṇa). Thence he should go to (the holy place) called Prabhāsa which is well-known in the world, O pious one; there Fire himself is always present. O hero, Fire, with Wind as his charioteer, is the mouth of the deities. A man, being pure and having controlled his mind, gets on bathing there the fruit of the Agniṣṭoma[1] and the Atirātra (sacrifices).

1. Agniṣṭoma: Name of a protracted sacrificial rite extending over several days in spring and forming an essential part of the Jyotiṣṭoma sacrifice.
Atirātra : An optional part of Jyotiṣṭoma sacrifice.

10-12. Going from there to the confluence of Sarasvatī and the ocean, he, having obtained the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows, is honoured in heaven. O best among the Bharatas, always shining like fire by means of his lustre, he, with his mind controlled, should bathe in the holy place of the king of waters; and living there for three nights, he should offer oblations to the deities in the form of the manes. He shines like Soma, and obtains (the fruit of) a horse-sacrifice.

13-14a. O best among the Bharatas, O Yudhiṣṭhira, thence he should go to the sacred place called Varadāna where Durvāsas granted a boon to Viṣṇu. A man having bathed at Varadāna, gets the fruit of (having donated) a thousond cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

14b. Then being restrained and controlled in diet, he should go to Dvārāvatī.

15. A man having bathed at Piṇḍāraka would obtain much gold.

16-20. O you who restrain your enemies, at that holy place, O great king, even now coins marked with lotuses are seen. That is a wonder. O you descendant of Kuru, lotuses marked with tridents are seen. O best among the Bharatas, Mahādeva also dwells there. O you descendant of Bharata, having reached the confluence of the ocean and Sindhu, and having, with a controlled mind, bathed there, and offered oblations to manes, gods and sages, he obtains, shining with his own lustre, Varuṇa's heaven. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the wise say that having worshipped god Śaṅkukarṇeśvara, he gets ten times the merit obtained by (the performance of) a horse sacrifice.

21-25. Turning to the right, O best among the Bharatas, O best among the Kurus, he should go to the holy place, well known in the three worlds, named Timi which frees (one) from all sins and where gods like Śakra and others worship Maheśvara. A man having bathed there and having worshipped Rudra, surrounded by hosts of gods, is freed from the sins committed from his birth. O best among men, here is Timi, praised by all gods. O best among men, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having performed) a horse sacrifice. O very wise one, formerly Viṣṇu conquered there Diti's son and, O king, made it pure by killing the nuisance (i.e. demons) to gods.

26-28. Thence, O you pious one, he should go to Vasudhārā praised (by all); by just going there, he would obtain the fruit of (having performed) a horse sacrifice. A man having bathed there and with his mind controlled, should, O best among the Kurus, offer oblations to manes and gods. He is honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven. O best among the Bharatas there is also a great holy place of the Vasus. Having bathed there, and drunk (water from the place) a man is liked by the Vasus.

29. (Then there is) a holy place known as Sindhutama which destroys all sins. O best man, having bathed there (a man) would get much gold.

30-31. Being pure and with his mind controlled, he of good acts and free from passion, obtains (i.e. goes to) Brahmā's world, on reaching Brahmatuṅga. For the maidens the holy place of Śakra is resorted to by siddhas. Having bathed there, O best of men, he would obtain (i.e. go to) Indra's heaven.

32-33. There only is the holy place of (i.e. sacred to) Reṇukā. A brāhmaṇa having bathed there would be pure like the moon. Then, being restrained and having controlled his food he, after going to Pañcanada, obtains (i.e. performs) the five sacrifices which have been described in a sequence.

34-38. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the best place of (i.e. sacred to) Bhīma. Having bathed there a man does not go into a womb (i.e. is not reborn). He would be the son of a goddess. There is Kuṇḍalavigraha. (There) he would get the great fruit of (having donated) a hundred thousand cows. Having reached Girikuñja, well-known in the three worlds, and having saluted the Grandsire (there), he would obtain the fruit (of having given away) a thousand cows (to a brāhmaṇa). O righteous one, from there he should go to the excellent holy place (called) Vimala, where even now golden and silver fish are seen. O best of men, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having performed) a Vājapeya sacrifice; and with his soul purified of all sins he would get the highest position.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

Vitastā, Malada, Maṇimanta, Brahmavālaka etc.

Nārada said :

1-3. O descendant of Bharata, a man after having reached Vitastā, and after having offered oblations to the manes and deities, gets the fruit of (having performed) a Vājapeya sacrifice. In Kāśmīra itself is the abode of Nāga and also of Takṣaka known as Vitastā and removing all sins. A man having bathed there would indeed obtain the fruit of (having performed) a Vājapeya sacrifice. Being free from all sins, he would go to the highest position.

4-6. Thence he should go to Malada which is well-known in the three worlds. At the time of the last evening prayer, O king, he should after having duly bathed offer an oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled together[1] to fire according to his capacity. The wise say that offerings made to the manes is inexhaustible. An offering of the oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled together to Fire is superior to (the donation of) a thousand cows, or a hundred Rājasūya sacrifices or a thousand horse sacrifices.

7-8. Returning from there, O lord of kings, he should enter the abode of Rudra. Having gone to Mahādeva, he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. O king, a controlled and calm man having reached Maṇimanta and having stayed there for a night, would get the fruit of an Angiṣṭoma sacrifice.

9-11. Thence O best of kings, he should go to Devikā well-known in the world, where the progeny of brāhmaṇas is heard (to exist), O best of the Bharatas, and where Śiva's abode is known in the three worlds. A man having bathed at Devikā and having worshipped Maheśvara and having offered presents (to deities) according to his capacity, gets the fruit of a sacrifice rich in all desired objects.

12-14. There is Rudra's holy place called Kāmākhya liked by gods and sages. O descendant of Bharata, having bathed there a man quickly gets liberation. Then going to Yājana and also to Brahmavālaka and having bathed at Puṣpanyāsa, he would

1. Caru : An oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled for presentation to gods or manes.

not be worried about death. The pious Devikā liked by gods and sages is said to be half a yojana wide and five yojanas in length.

15-17a. Then O righteous one, he should, according to the order, go to Dīrghasatra where gods like Brahmā, siddhas, great sages, getting initiated and controlled in vows, resort to a prolonged sacrificial session. O lord of kings, O you who control your enemies, by just going there a man obtains the fruit of Rājasūya and horse sacrifice.

17b-20a. Then restrained and with his diet controlled he should go to Vinaśana, where Sarasvatī concealed under the slope of Meru goes (i.e. flows). She is seen at Camasa, Śivodbheda and at Nāgodbheda. He would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma sacrifice on bathing at Camasodbheda; a man having bathed at Śivodbheda would get the fruit of (having offered) a thousand cows. A man bathing at Nāgodbheda would obtain (i.e. go to) the world of Nāgas.

20b-24. Then O descendant of Bharata, O lord of kings, he should reach the excellent holy place Śaśayāna where Puṣkara is hidden in the form of a hare. They, O glorious one, O best of Bharatas, every year live there on the full moon day of Kārtika and bathe in Sarasvatī. O best among men, having bathed there he always shines like Śiva. O best among the Bharatas, he would obtain the fruit of (having offered) a thousand cows. O descendant of Kuru, having reached Kumārakoṭi and being controlled he engaged in worshipping gods, would bathe there. He obtains a myriad of cows and would liberate his own family.

25-31. Then being calm, O pious one, he should go to Rudrakoṭi, where, O great king, a crore sages were brought together. Overcome with rain they, desiring to see the god, (said:) "I shall see Śiva first, I shall see Śiva first." Thus, O king, the sages started, O descendant of Bharata. Then, O king, the lord of the meditating saints, having resorted to deep meditation, created, for pacifying the distress of the pure sages, a crore Rudras who stood before the sages. They separately (i.e. each one of them) thought: 'I have seen Śiva first.' Mahādeva was pleased due to the great devotion of the sages of strong lustre and gave them a boon: "From today righteousness in you will increase." O best among man, a man having bathed there at Rudrakoṭi and (thus

being) pure, obtains (the fruit of) Aśvamedha and would liberate his family.

32-34. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the confluence well-known in the world. He should worship the very meritorious Viṣṇu on (the bank of) Sarasvatī where gods like Brahmā, sages, siddhas and cāraṇas go on the fourteenth day of the bright half of Caitra. Having bathed there, O best of men, a man would obtain much gold. With his soul purified of all sins he goes to Śiva's heaven. He would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows if he dies there where the sacrificial sessions of the sages were accomplished.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

Kurukṣetra, Pāriplava, Śalvikinī, Koṭitīrtha etc.

Nārada said:

1-6. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to Kurukṣetra praised (by all). All creatures who have gone there have been freed from their sins. He, who always says "I shall go to Kurukṣetra, I shall stay at Kurukṣetra", is absolved of all sins. O king, a wise man should live there for a month, to which very meritorious (Brahmakṣetra) gods like Brahmā, brāhmaṇic sages, cāraṇas, gandharvas, celestial nymphs, yakṣas and pannagas go, O descendant of Bharata. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the sins of him who even mentally longs for Kurukṣetra, perish, and he goes to Brahmā's heaven. O you, who are perpetuating the Kuru family, a man going to Kurukṣetra with faith, obtains the fruit of Vājapeya and Aśvamedha sacrifices.

7. Then he (should go) to the very powerful doorkeeper Mattakarṇa, O king. Having just saluted him, he would get the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

8-9. Thence, O pious one, he should go the excellent place of Viṣṇu, where, O lord of kings, Viṣṇu is always present. Having bathed there and having seen Viṣṇu, the origin of the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

10-13a. Thence a man should go to the holy place (called) Pāriplava which is well-known in the three worlds. (By going there) he obtains (the fruit of) Āgniṣṭoma and Atirātra sacrifices. A man would obtain the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows by reaching (this) holy place on the earth. Thence O king, a man visiting holy places, should go to (the holy place) called Śālvikinī. Having bathed at Daśāśvamedhika he obtains the same fruit. Having reached Sarpanīvi, the best holy place of nāgas, he obtains (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice, and goes to the world of nāgas.

13b-15. Then O pious one, he should go to the doorkeeper Ataṛnaka. Having stayed there for a night, he would obtain the fruit (of donation) of a thousand cows. Then, being controlled and having his diet restrained, he, having gone to Pañcanada and having bathed at Koṭitīrtha, would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Having visited the Aśvinī-tīrtha, he is born handsome.

16-19. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the best sacred place Varāha where formerly Viṣṇu dwelt in the form of a boar. O best of men, having stayed there he would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the Soma-tīrtha at Ujjayinī. Having bathed (there), a man obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya (sacrifice). A man, having bathed at Ekahaṁsa, would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. Having reached Kṛtaśauca, the pilgrim would obtain (the fruit of) Puṇḍarīka, and would become one who has purified himself.

20-24a. Then he (should go) to the holy place called Muñjāvaṭa of the wise Mahādeva. Having lived there for a night he would obtain the position of the head of Śiva's attendants. Then, O great king, having bathed and gone to Jayā well-known in the world, he would obtain all desired objects. O best among Bharatas, that is a well-known gate to Kurukṣetra. The pilgrim turning to the right, and having returned, having bathed at Saṁsmṛta of the Puṣkaras, should worship the deities in the form of manes. (Paraśu-) Rāma, the noble son of Jamadagni, invoked them (here) only. O king, the man would have accomplished his object, and would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice.

24b-38a. O king, thence the pilgrim should go to Rāma-hrada where, O lord of kings, Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma), of a

blazing lustre having powerfully and speedily expelled the kṣatriyas, resorted to the five deep lakes after filling them with blood. This is what we have heard, O best among men. He offered oblations to his forefathers, and also his great grandsires. Then, O king, the forefathers, being pleased, said to Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma): "O Rāma, Bhārgava, we are highly pleased with you by your devotion to your forefathers and your valour. Well-being to you. Ask for a boon. O you highly intelligent one, what do you desire?" O lord of kings, that Rāma, best among speakers, who was thus addressed (by his forefathers), said, with the palms of his hands joined, (these) words to the forefathers who remained in the sky: "If you are pleased with me, if you favour me, then I desire the increase in my penance; and by your lustre I may be freed from the sin that I, overcome by anger, (committed by having) destroyed the kṣatriyas, and the lakes which have become sacred to me should be well-known on the earth." Hearing these good words of Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma), his forefathers, extremely pleased and full of great joy said to him: "Due especially to your devotion to your forefathers, may your penance increase again. You are freed from the sin that you, overcome by anger, killed the kṣatriyas. They were killed due to their own (mis-) deeds. The lakes will undoubtedly be the holy places (named) after you. The manes of him who, after bathing in these lakes, will offer oblations to his manes, will be pleased with him, and will grant him his desired object and eternal (residence) in heaven." O king, the manes of Paraśurāma, being pleased and having granted him such a boon and taking leave of Bhārgava, vanished there only. Thus the lakes are sacred to the noble Bhārgava i.e. Paraśurāma. A man of self-control and good vows, after bathing in the lakes of (i.e. sacred to) Paraśurāma, and worshipping him, would obtain much gold.

38b-40. Then, O you who perpetuate the Kuru family, a pilgrim, having reached Vaṁśamūla, would liberate his family by bathing at Vaṁśamūlaka. O best among Bharatas, having reached Kāyaśodhana, a man who has bathed there, obtains the purity of his body; there is no doubt about it. And with his body purified he goes to pious, excellent worlds.

41-44. O lord of kings, thence a man should go to the holy place rare in the three worlds, where formerly the mighty Viṣṇu

liberated people. O king, having reached (that) holy place (called) Lokoddhāra, well-known in the three worlds, and having bathed there, he liberates his own people. Having reached Śrītīrtha, he obtains excellent wealth. A man being restrained and calm, having reached Kapilātīrtha, and having bathed there and worshipped deities and manes, obtains the fruit of (having donated) a thousand tawny cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

45-46a. Going to Sūryatīrtha and with his mind controlled he should bathe there, and devoutly observing a fast he should worship (his) manes and deities. (By doing so) he obtains the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice and goes to the Sun's world.

46b-47a. A pilgrim who, after reaching Gavāṁtīrtha according to the (proper) order, bathes there, would obtain the fruit of (having presented) a thousand cows.

47b-49. O king, a pilgrim (then), after reaching Gaṅgātīrtha and bathing at the Kanyātīrtha, obtains excellent power. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the doorkeeper (called) Lavaṛṇaka. O king, having bathed there at the holy place (in the stream of) Sarasvatī as in that of the noble Indra, a man would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

50-55a. Then, O pious king, he should go to (the holy place called) Brahmāvarta. He having bathed at Brahmāvarta would obtain (i.e. go to) Brahmā's heaven. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Sutīrthaka where gods are always present with the manes. Engaged in worshipping manes and deities he should bathe there. (By doing so) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to the world of manes. Then, O best of Bharatas, going to another holy place in order and having bathed in the sacred places of Kāśīśvara, he, being free from all diseases, is honoured in Brahmā's world. O king, Mātṛtīrtha is just there, having bathed where his progeny increases (in number), and, O king, he would obtain a position in heaven.

55b-61a. Then being controlled and with his diet restrained, he should go to Śītavana. O great king, there is a great holy place which is difficult to be found elsewhere. By merely seeing it and by restraint, O king, he is purified. O descendant of Bharata, having offered his hair at that (holy place), he is purified. Then there is another holy place known as Snātalokārtiha. O

you best among men, O you best of the Bharatas, learned brāhmaṇas, highly devoted to it, having bathed there, obtain the best position (i.e. salvation). O best of Bharatas, at the holy place (called) Svarṇalomāpanayana, best brāhmaṇas cast off their hair after controlling their breath. Then, with their souls purified, O lord of kings, they go to the highest position (i.e. get salvation). O king, having bathed at Daśāśvamedhika (situated) at that holy place only, O tiger (i.e. best) among men, men with their souls purified go to the highest position (i.e. obtain salvation).

61b-67a. O lord of kings, he should go to (the holy place called) Mānuṣa, well known in the world. O king, there a black deer tormented by a hunter with arrows, plunged into that lake and obtained manhood. A man, being restrained and calm, having bathed at the holy place, has his soul purified from all sins, and is honoured in heaven. O king, to the east of (the holy place called) Mānuṣa, at a distance of a krośa (i.e. two miles) there is a well-known river called Āpagā, which is resorted to by siddhas. One who gives there the meal of Śyāmāka rice dedicating it to the deities and manes, obtains a great fruit of his piety. If (only) one brāhmaṇa is fed, a crore brāhmaṇas are fed. Having bathed there and worshipped the deities and also the manes, and having stayed there for a night, one would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

67b-71a. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the best place of Brahmā, known in the world as Brahmānusvara, O descendant of Bharata. O you best among the Bharatas, he who being pure and with his mind controlled, bathes there at the holy pools of the seven sages, and O lord of kings, at Kedāra and at the holy place of the noble Kapila, goes to Brahmā, and with his soul purified of all sins, goes to Brahmā's heaven. Having reached Kapiṣṭhala's (place called) Kedāra, difficult to reach, he, with his sins burnt by penance, acquires (the art of) becoming invisible.

71b-79a. Thence, O lord of kings, a man should go to (the holy place called) Sarvaka, well-known in the world. Having gone to the bull-bannered one (i.e. Śiva) on the fourteenth day of the dark half, he gets all his desired objects and goes to heaven. O descendant of Kuru, there are three crores of holy

places. At the pond there is Rudrakoṭi; in the lakes there is Samantaka. O best of Bharatas, there only is the holy place Ilāspada. Having bathed and worshipped deities and manes there, one does not meet with calamities and obtains the (fruit of) Vājapeya sacrifice. O king, having bathed at Kiṁdāna and also at Kiṁjapa, a man obtains immeasurable (fruit of) gifts and sacrifice. One having faith and his senses under control having bathed at Kalaśī, obtains the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. To the east of Saraka there is an auspicious place known as Rāmajanma, O greatest among Kurus, which is sacred to Nārada. O descendant of Bharata, one who having bathed there casts his life, being permitted by Nārada, obtains worlds difficult to obtain. One should enter (i.e. go to) Puṇḍarīka on the tenth of the bright half (of a month). Having bathed there, O king, he would obtain the fruit of Puṇḍarīka.

79b-85. Thence he should go to Triviṣṭapa, well-known in the three worlds. There is the auspicious river Vaitaraṇī which frees (a man) from sins. Having bathed there and worshipped (Śiva) holding the trident in his hand and having the bull as his banner, and (thus) with his soul purified from all sins, he would go to the highest position (i.e. salvation). Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Phalakivana. Gods have always resorted to that Phalikivana, and practised penance for many thousand years. One having bathed at Dṛṣatpāna and having offered oblations to the deities, obtains the fruit of Agniṣṭoma and Atirātra sacrifices. O lord of kings, having bathed at the place sacred to all gods, one obtains the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows. A man having bathed at (the holy place called) Pāṇikhyāta, and having offered oblations to the deities, obtains (the fruit of) Rājasūya, and also goes to the world of sages.

86-87. Thence, O pious one, one should go to (the holy place called) Miśraka which is well-known in the world. O lord of kings, we have heard that the noble Vyāsa has brought together the holy places at that place for brāhmaṇas. One who bathes at Miśraka has well bathed at all holy places.

88-95. Thence being controlled and having his food controlled he should go to Vyāsavana (the grove sacred to Vyāsa). Having bathed at Manojava one would obtain the fruit of (having

donated) a thousand cows. Having gone to Madhuvanī, the place of the goddess, one with purity (of mind) and self-control should worship the deities and the manes. Being allowed by the goddess he would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O descendant of Bharata, he who has bathed at the confluence of Kauśikī and Dṛṣadvatī and has his diet restrained, is absolved of all sins. Then there is the holy place called Vyāsasthalī where Vyāsa tormented by the grief due to (the death of) his son, had decided to end his life, and was again roused to action by gods, O lord of kings. Having gone (i.e. if a man goes) to that place, he would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O lord of men, having reached (the holy) lake of Ṛṇānta and having offered there sesamum of the measure of a prastha (to the manes) he would, after being freed from debts, get a great success. Having bathed at the Veditīrtha, a man would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O king, the two holy places Aha and Sudina are difficult to reach. A man having bathed at them would obtain (i.e., go to) the Sun's heaven.

96-106. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Mṛgadhūma, well-known in the three worlds. Having bathed there at Rudrapada and having worshipped the noble trident-holder (i.e., Śiva), a man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. A man having bathed at Koṭitīrtha would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. Then having gone to (the holy place called) Vāmanaka which is well-known in the three worlds, and there bathing and having properly worshipped Vāmana, one with his soul purified of all sins, would obtain Viṣṇu's heaven. A man having bathed at Kulampuna purifies his own family. Having gone to the pool of Pavana, the excellent holy place of the Maruts and having bathed there, a man is honoured in the world of Vāyu, O best of men. A man, having bathed at the pool of the immortal ones (i.e., gods), and having worshipped the lord of gods, is honoured in heaven due to the prowess of the gods. O lord of kings, having duly bathed at Śālisūrya of Śālihotra, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows, O best among men. O best among the Bharatas, there is a holy place on (the bank of) the Sarasvatī (called) Śrīkuñja. O king, a man having bathed there, would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma. Then having reached

(i.e., he should go to) Naimiṣakuñja, very difficult to reach. O lord of kings, it is said that sages of the Naimiṣa (forest) with penance as their wealth formerly set upon a pilgrimage and went to Kurukṣetra. Then an arbour was made on (the bank of) the Sarasvatī. It is a great place of the sages, which gives great joy. Having bathed in the arbour, a man would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Kanyātīrtha, Saptasārasvata, Pṛthūdaka, Sannihiti, etc.

Nārada said :

1-11. O you pious one, then a man should go to the excellent holy place (called) Kanyātīrtha. A man having bathed at Kanyātīrtha would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice). Thence, O best among men, a man should go to the excellent place of Brahmā. Having bathed there a man of a low caste obtains brāhmaṇahood; and a brāhmaṇa, with his soul purified, would go to the highest position. Thence, O best among men, a man should go to the excellent Somatīrtha. Having bathed there, O king, a man would obtain (i.e., go to) Soma's world. Thence, O king, he should go to the holy place (called) Saptasārasvata where (lived) Maṅkaṇaka, a siddha, a brāhmaṇic sage, famous in the world. O king, it is heard that formerly Maṅkaṇaka was injured on his hand by the tip of Kuśa (i.e., darbha). From it vegetable juice flowed. The brāhmaṇic sage of a great penance seeing that vegetable juice and being full of great joy and with his eyes dilated due to amazement, danced. Then, when he danced, all that was immovable and movable, both, being deluded by his lustre, danced. O king, gods like Brahmā, and also sages with penance as their wealth, requested Mahādeva (i.e., Śiva) for the sake of the sage, "O god, please act in such a way that this (sage) would not dance." Then the god seeing the sage dancing with his mind full of joy said, with a desire for the good of the deities, to the sage :

"O pious, great sage, why are you dancing ? O best sage, what is the cause of your joy today ?"

The sage said :

12-24a. O best brāhmaṇa, O brahman, do you not see that from this wound incurred by me, an ascetic following the righteous path, vegetable juice has flowed, seeing which, I, full of great joy, have been dancing ?

Laughing at the sage overwhelmed by emotion the god said: "O brāhmaṇa, I am not amazed. Look at me." O best among men, having said so, Mahādeva, at that time, struck his thumb with the tip of his finger, O sinless one. From his wound ashes resembling snow came out. O king, seeing it, the sage, being ashamed, fell at (Śiva's) feet. (The sage said :) "I do not think there is anything superior to god Rudra. O you trident-holder, you are the refuge of the world (consisting) of the gods and the demons. You have created this universe—the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. At the end of the yuga all enter you only. Even gods cannot know you. How (then) can I ? O you sinless one, in you are seen all gods like Indra. You always are the all-in-all and you fashion and get fashioned the worlds. Through your grace the gods, having no fear from anywhere, rejoice here." Having praised Mahādeva like this, the sage bowed (before him) and said: "O Mahādeva, by your favour my penance does not perish." Then the god, with his mind pleased, said to the brāhmaṇic sage: "O brāhmaṇa, by my grace may your penance grow thousandfold. O great sage, I shall stay with you in this hermitage. For those who have bathed at (the holy place called) Saptasārasvata, nothing will be difficult to be obtained in this or in the next world. They would go to the world of Sarasvatī. There is no doubt about this."

24b-31a. Having spoken like this Mahādeva disappeared there only. Thence (a man) should go to (the holy place called) Auśanasa well-known in the three worlds, where gods like Brahmā and sages with penance as their wealth (dwell), and where the revered Kārtikeya lived for doing good (to his devotees), O Bhārgava. (Then there is) the holy place called Kapālamocana which destroys all sins. O best of men, having bathed

there a man is freed from all sins. Thence he should go to Agnitīrtha. O best of Bharatas, having bathed there he obtains (i.e., goes to) Agni's world, and would liberate his family. O best among Bharatas, the tīrtha of (i.e., sacred to) Viśvāmitra is there only. O great king, having bathed there, he is born in a brāhmaṇa family. With a pure and controlled mind he should go to Brahmayoni. O best of men, having bathed there he goes to Brahmā's heaven and undoubtedly purifies his family up to the seventh (descendant).

31b-40. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the holy place well-known in the three worlds as Pṛthūdaka and said to be of (i.e., sacred to) Kārtikeya. Engaged in the worship of the deities and manes, he should bathe there. O descendant of Bharata, all the bad deeds done by a man or a woman knowingly or unknowingly through (limited) human intelligence, perish by just bathing there. He (or she) obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice and heaven also. Kurukṣetra is said to be holy. Sarasvatī is said to be (holier) than Kurukṣetra. The holy places are superior to Sarasvatī. Pṛthūdaka is superior to the holy places. He who intent upon muttering (the names of the lord) casts his body at Pṛthutīrtha, the best of all holy places, would not have birth and rebirth. It is sung (praised) by Sanatkumara and by the noble Vyāsa also, and also, O king, it is ordained by the Veda (that a man) should go to Pṛthūdaka. O best of men, there is no auspicious place better than Pṛthūdaka. It is sacred, pure and purifying. There is no doubt about this. Even sinful persons go to heaven after having bathed there, i.e., at Pṛthūdaka. Thus the wise say, O best of men. Just there is a holy place (called) Madhusrava, O best of Bharatas. O king, having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows.

41-47. Thence, O best among men, he should, according to the order, go to the place of (i.e., sacred to) the goddess, i.e. to the confluence of Sarasvatī and Aruṇā, which is well-known in the world. Having fasted (there) for three nights and having bathed (there), he is absolved of (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Also he sanctifies his family up to the seventh (member). There is no doubt about this. O you who perpetuate the Kuru-family, there only is a holy place called Avakīrṇa, which was formerly fashioned for the sake of brāhmaṇas by Darbhin. By (practising)

vows (and undergoing) thread ceremony, fasting, a twice-born undoubtedly becomes a brāhmaṇa endowed with (i.e., knowing) rites and hymns. It is an ancient observation that a brāhmaṇa who is without any rite or (sacred) hymns would become a brāhmaṇa who has observed vows. Darbhin also brought together the four oceans. O best of men, having bathed there, a man would not have (i.e., meet with) misfortune; and he obtains the fruits of (having donated) four thousand cows.

48-49. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the holy place (called) Śatasahasraka. (A holy place called) Sahasraka is there only. (These) two holy places are well-known in the world. A man having bathed at (these) two (holy places) would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. A gift (given here) or a fast (observed at these holy places) would be thousandfold (effective).

50-52a. From there, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (place called) Reṇukātīrtha. Engaged in worshipping manes and deities he should bathe there. With manes and deities he should bathe there. With his soul freed from all sins, he would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. With his anger subdued (i.e., not being excitable) and his senses controlled, he, having (i.e., he who has) bathed at (the holy place called) Vimocana, is completely free from sins born of receiving donations.

52b-58a. Thence, being chaste and with his senses controlled, he should go to Pañcavaṭa. Being endowed with great religious merit, he is honoured in heaven. Here, Sthāṇu (i.e., Śiva) the lord of the meditating saints having the bull for his banner, himself (resides). (Then) there is the holy place which is sacred to Varuṇa called Taijasa shining with its own lustre, where at that (i.e., old) time gods like Brahmā and others and sages with penance as their wealth, consecrated Guha (i.e., Kārtikeya) as the general (of the army of gods). O you perpetuating the Kuru family, to the east of Taijasa is Kurutīrtha. A chaste man who has controlled his senses, has his soul purified of all sins after bathing at Kurutīrtha. Being restrained and with his diet controlled he should thence go to Svargadvāra. He obtains (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice) and obtains (i.e., goes to) the world of Brahmā.

58b-62a. Thence, O lord of men, a pilgrim should go to the holy place (called) Anaraka. O king, having bathed there a man would not obtain (i.e., meet with) misfortune. Brahmā himself is always honoured there with gods. O best among men, with those whose origin is the highest Nārāyaṇa, he remains at the Rudravedī, O you who perpetuate the Kuru family. Having approached that goddess, he would not get (i.e., meet with) misfortune. Having gone to Mahādeva, the master of the world and the lord of Umā (who resides) there only, he is freed from all sins.

62b-68a. O you who subdue your enemies, the man having gone to Padmanābha Nārāyaṇa, shines, and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. O lord of men, a man who has simply bathed at the places holy to all deities, gets free from all his miseries and always shines like Śiva. Thence, O king, a pilgrim should go to Asthipura. Having reached (that) purifying holy place, he should offer oblations to the manes and deities. O descendant of Bharata, he obtains the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. There is the (holy place called) Gaṅgāhrada, the pool, O best among the Bharatas. In that pool there are three crores of holy places. O king, a man bathing there is honoured and goes to Brahmā's world. A man having bathed in the river and having worshipped the great god (i.e., Śiva), gets the highest position and would liberate his family also.

68b-69a. Thence he should go to Sthāṇuvaṭa, well-known in the three worlds. Having bathed there and having stayed there for a night, he would obtain (i.e., go to) Rudra's world.

69b-73a. Then he should go to the grove of badarīs, and then to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage, where a man having fasted for three nights, eats badarī (fruits). A man who eats badarī (fruits) for twelve years and he who fasts for three nights are on par, O king. Having reached Indramārga, O king, a pilgrim is honoured in Brahmā's heaven.

73b-76a. Thence, O lord of kings, a man should go to the holy place well-known in the three worlds, where there is the hermitage of Āditya (i.e., the Sun) who, the magnanimous one, is the mass of lustre. A man having bathed there and worshipped the Sun, goes to the Sun's heaven, and would also liberate his

family. O you who perpetuate the Kuru family, a man bathing at the Somatīrtha undoudtedly obtains (i.e., goes to) Soma's world.

76b-80a. O you pious one, O king, a man should thence go to the auspicious, holy place of Dadhīci, which is purifying and which is well-known in the world, where Sarasvatī, the treasure of penance, obtained perfection. Having bathed at that holy place, a man would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya sacrifice. There is no doubt that he also has a mind (to reach) goddess Sarasvatī. Being controlled and chaste and devoutly observing a fast he should go to Kanyāśrama, and having stayed there for three nights he would obtain a hundred daughters and he goes to Brahmā's world.

80b-85. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the holy place (called) Sannihiti where gods like Brahmā and sages having penance as their treasure, endowed with great merit, gather every month. Having bathed at Sannihiti when the sun is eclipsed by Rāhu (i.e., on the day of solar eclipse), he thereby gets (the fruit of) a hundred horse sacrifices and desired objects eternally. O lord of men, whichever holy places there are on the earth or in the sky, and also wells and brāhmaṇas and auspicious abodes, all those, O king, undoubtedly will come (i.e., come) on the new moon day in every month to Sannihiti, O best among men. (The holy place) is well-known on the earth as Sannihiti because of the presence of holy places (there). Having bathed and drunk (water) there, a man is honoured in heaven.

86-89a. (Now) listen to the meritorious fruit of the Śrāddha that a man performs on a new moon day or when the sun is eclipsed by Rāhu. A man who has just bathed there and who performs a śrāddha (there) obtains the fruit of a thousand horse sacrifices properly performed. There is no doubt that whatever bad deed of (i.e., is done by) a woman or a man, all that perishes merely by bathing (there). He goes to Brahmā's world in a car having lotus-like colour.

89b-91. Then with (the announcement of) his name he should (salute) Macakruka. O best of Bharatas, the pool of Gaṅgā is there only. O you pious one, a man being restrained and calm should bathe there. (Such) a man obtains the fruit of

Rājasūya and Aśvamedha (sacrifices). On the earth Naimiṣa is holy and Puṣkara in the sky.

92-96. In the three worlds Kurukṣetra is distinguished. Even the particles of dust greatly shaken by wind take even a sinful person to the best position (i.e., salvation). Those who live in Kurukṣetra on the northern (bank) of Sarasvatī and to the south of (the holy place called) Sarasvatī, live in heaven. Even by just uttering these words : "I shall go to kurukṣetra; I shall stay at Kurukṣetra", a man is honoured in heaven. O king, auspicious Kurukṣetra resorted to by brāhmaṇic sages, is at Brahmavedī. Those who live there, are not to be grieved over. The five on the boundary of Kurukṣetra—the distance between Taraṇḍa and Kāraṇḍaka, between the pools of (i.e., sacred to) Paraśurāma and Macakruka—are called the Uttaravedi of the Grandsire.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

Dharmatīrtha, Śākambharī, Rathāvartta, etc.

Nārada said :

1-3a. O pious one, thence he should go to the ancient (holy place called) Dharmatīrtha where formerly the illustrious Dharma practised excellent penance. He fashioned that holy place known by his name. O king, a religious and tranquil man having bathed there purifies his family up to the seventh (generation). There is no doubt about it.

3b-4. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kalāpavana. Having gone there with a great difficulty and being calm and having bathed there he obtains (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice) and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

5-10. Thence, O king, a man should go to Saugandhika grove where gods like Brahmā and sages with penance as their treasure, siddhas, cāraṇas, gandharvas, kinnaras with great serpents (dwell). As soon as he enters the grove, he is free from all sins. From there the very auspicious, excellent river, greatest

among the rivers, i.e., Sarasvatī is known as Plakṣādevī, O king. He should bathe there in the water flowing out from a hillock. Having worshipped the manes and deities there, he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. There is a holy place called Īśānādhyuṣita which is very difficult to reach. It is certain that the water that goes to it from the hillock is six times (more). O best of men, having bathed there, a man gets (the fruit of having donated) a thousand tawny cows and (of) a horse sacrifice. The ancient people have observed this.

11-13a. O best of men, having gone to Sugandhā, Śatakumbha, and Pañcayajña, a man is honoured in heaven, O descendent of Bharata. Then having reached the holy place Triśūlapatra, difficult to reach, he should bathe there and be engaged in worshipping manes and deities. There is no doubt that after casting his body he obtains the headship of the attendants of Śiva.

13b-18. Then he should go to Rājagṛha, the place of the goddess, which is very difficult to reach. She is known as Śākambharī, and is famous in the three worlds. O descendant of Bharata, for a thousand divine years she subsisted on vegetables. The sages, treasures of penance, and the devotees of that goddess, every month went there, O king. O descendant of Bharata, she welcomed them with (i.e., by offering them) vegetables. Therefore she is famous as Śākambharī. Having reached (the holy place of) Śākambharī, he being chaste and tranquil (should) stay there for three nights and being controlled and pure, should eat vegetables. O descendant of Bharata, by the desire of the goddess, the fruit of that is the same as that of duly eating vegetables for twelve years.

19-22. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Suvarṇākhya, well-known in the three worlds, where formerly Kṛṣṇa propitiated Rudra for his favour and obtained (from him) many boons difficult to be obtained even by gods; and, O descendant of Bharata, was thus told by Tripura's destroyer pleased with him: "O Kṛṣṇa, in the world you will be a dearer soul (i.e., people will love you more than their own soul) and undoubtedly the entire world will be your mouth." O lord of kings, having gone there and having worshipped the bull-bannered god, he

obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and the headship of Śiva's attendants.

23-26. Having stayed there for three nights, a man should go to Umāvatī from there. There is no doubt that he gets the objects desired by his mind. To the southern half of (the holy place of) the goddess, there is (the holy place called) Rathāvartta, O king. Having reached there, O pious one, a man having faith and with his senses controlled goes to the highest position (i.e., salvation) by the grace of Mahādeva. O best of the Bharatas, he should proceed after turning to the right to (the holy place called) Dharā which destroys all sins, O you highly intelligent one. O king, having bathed there, a man is never unhappy.

27-31a. Then, O best of men, having saluted the great mountain, he should go to Gaṅgādvāra, which is undoubtedly equal to the gate to heaven. Being calm he should bathe there at the Koṭitīrtha. (Thereby) he obtains (i.e. reaches) Puṇḍarīka, and would liberate his own family. Having stayed there for a night he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. At Saptagaṅga, Trigaṅga and Śakrāvartta he should duly offer oblations to deities and manes. (By doing this) he is honoured in the world of the meritorious. Then, a man having bathed at Kanakhala and having fasted for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to heaven.

31b-33. Then a pilgrim should go to (the holy place called) Kapilāvaṭa, O king. A man by staying there for a night obtains the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O best among the Kurus, (then there is) the holy place of the magnanimous Kapila, the king of Nāgas. O lord of kings, it is well-known in all the worlds. O king, a man should bathe there at the Nāgatīrtha. (Thereby) he obtains the fruit of (having given) a thousand tawny cows.

34. Thence a man should go to Lalitaka, the excellent holy place of Śantanu. O king, having bathed there a man would not meet with disaster.

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

Kālindītīrtha : Efficacy of Yamunā

Nārada said :

1-18. O lord of kings, then a man should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kālindītīrtha. O king, having bathed there one does not meet with misfortune. O best among men, one obtains that fruit (by bathing) in Yamunā which he gets (by bathing) at Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra, Brahmāvartta, Pṛthūdaka, Avimukta, Suvarṇākhya. Those in whose heart there is a great attachment for heavenly pleasures or who desire (long) life, good health, wealth, handsomeness, youth and virtues, should not give up the water of Yamunā. (These things can be had) especially by a bath in Yamunā, O best one. Those who are afraid of hell etc. and those who have a dread of poverty, should with all efforts take a bath in Yamunā. O Yudhiṣṭhira, except the water of Yamunā there is nothing else for (i.e., which is capable of) washing the mud of poverty, sins, misfortune. Deeds done without faith give half (i.e., a partial) fruit. But a bath in Yamunā gives the entire fruit. O king, he who with or without a desire bathes in the water of Yamunā, does not see (i.e., experience) miseries here (i.e., in this world) or in the next world. As the moon wanes and waxes in the two fortnights, in the same way by bathing in Yamunā sin perishes and religious merit increases. As in the ocean various gems are easily obtained, so (long) life, wealth, wife, riches are possible for (i.e. are obtained by) him. As the desire-yielding cow gives the desired object, or as the desire-yielding gem gives whatever is thought of, in the same way a bath in Yamunā gives all (the objects of) desire. In Kṛtayuga penance was great knowledge; in Tretāyuga sacrifice (was important); in Dvāparayuga and Kaliyuga giving (gifts) is (fruitful). (But) Yamunā is always auspicious. O king, for all the castes and for all the stages of life a bath in (the water) of Yamunā indeed showers piety in streams. In this country (called) Bhārata, especially (named) as the land of religious rites, the life of men not bathing in Yamunā is said to be fruitless. As on the new moon day there is no affluence in the orb of the moon in the sky, in the same way no act shines (i.e., is effective)

without a bath in Yamunā. Hari or Keśava (i.e., Viṣṇu) is not so much pleased by means of vows, gifts or penance as he is pleased by means of just a bath in Yamunā. There is no lustre like that of the sun. In the same way there is nothing like a bath in Yamunā. Equally potent are the sacrificial rites. For pleasing Vāsudeva, for removing all sins and for obtaining (i.e., going to) heaven men should bathe in Yamunā.

19-25. What is the use of protecting the very well nourished and strong body which is unstable without having a bath in Yamunā ? The body is a column of bones, a union of sinews, filled with flesh and blood, put together with skin and having a foul smell, full of urine and feces, pervaded with old age, grief and misery, a weak abode of diseases, the source of attachment, transitory, and the resort of all blemishes, having the affliction of the sin of other's obligations (*paropakārapāpārtiparadroha*?), deceiving others, and jealous of others; (it is) greedy, wicked, cruel, ungrateful and momentary also. It is pityless, difficult to be arrested, wicked and defiled by the disorder of the three humours of the body.[1] (It is) impure, tormenting, foul-smelling, and deluded by the three kinds of miseries.[2] It is by nature engaged in impiety; it is full of a hundred thirsts (i.e., desires); it remains at the door of hell in the form of passion, anger and great greed. It is full of worms, ordure, ashes etc., useful in the end (*pariṇāmaguṇāvaham*?). Such a body is useless without a bath in Yamunā.

26-33. Those who are without a bath in Yamunā are born to die only like the bubbles on water or mock eggs among birds. A brāhmaṇa not devoted to Viṣṇu is doomed; a śrāddha without the (offering of) piṇḍas is worthless; a kṣatriya not friendly with a brāhmaṇa is miserable; a family without good practices is condemned. Good conduct is doomed with (i.e., due to) hypocrisy. Penance is worthless due to anger. Unstable knowledge is worthless. Sacred knowledge is doomed due to negligence. A woman is ruined due to her devotion to (someone) else (but her husband). A celibate is ruined by a woman. A sacrifice is worth-

1. Doṣatraya : Disorder of the three humours of the body, viz. wind, bile, and phlegm.

2. Tāpatraya : The three kind of miseries which human beings have to suffer in this world, viz. Ādhyātmika (caused by the mind), Ādhibhautika (caused by animals), and Ādhidaivika (caused by fate).

less when the fire is not blazing. Devotion with deceit is worthless. A maiden having a dependent is doomed. Cooking for oneself (alone) is worthless. Dependence on śūdra's food is useless. The wealth of a miser is doomed. Learning without study is useless. Contradictory advice is lost. A sacred place (used for) livelihood is tormenting. A vow (used for) livelihood is tormenting. A vow (used for) living is worthless. False words are worthless; so also those that are full of slander. A deliberation going to six ears (i.e., to a third person) is doomed. Muttering (the names of a deity) without concentration is worthless. Giving gifts to a brāhmaṇa who is not learned is worthless. Atheists are doomed. All that is done for (obtaining) the other world without faith is worthless.

34-46. O king, as the life of the poor people is worthless in this world, in the same way their life is useless without a bath in Kālindī. All minor and major sins are reduced to ashes by taking a bath in Yamunā, O king. When a man has gone to Yamunā, all sins tremble. Best men, if they bathe in the water of Yamunā, shine like fires. As the moon is free from clouds, they are free from all sins. As fire burns the sacred fuel, in the same way a bath there would burn soft or harsh, small or big sin committed by speech, mind or physical acts. O best king, the sin committed through negligence or deliberately or unknowingly would perish just on bathing in Yamunā. The sinless ones go to heaven, and the greatest sinners become pure. No doubt should be raised about the bath in the water of Yamunā. O king, all are entitled to bathing here and to devotion to Viṣṇu. Goddess Yamunā always destroys the sins of all. This alone is a great hymn; this is a great penance. The excellent bath in Yamunā is a great expiation. Men have a mind to bathe in Kālindī (i.e., Yamunā) due to the practice in other (i.e., previous) existencies as, O king, cleverness in mataphysical knowledge is due to a life-long practice. The bath in Yamunā is efficacious in washing the smearing of the mud of the worldly existence. It is (most) purifying among the purifiers and is excellent. O king, those who have bathed there (i.e., in Yamunā) which gives (i.e., satisfies) all desires, enjoy auspicious pleasures resembling the planets like the sun and the moon. Yamunā, when in contact with (i.e.,

flowing by) Mathurā is said to be giving salvation. Kālindī (i.e., Yamunā) increases (a man's) religious merit.

47-51. At other places Yamunā is holy and removes great sins, (but) in contact with Mathurā the deity (i.e., Yamunā) gives (creates in one's mind) devotion for Viṣṇu. If a man full of devotion bathes in Kālindī, he lives near Viṣṇu for a crore of thousand kalpas. (Even) a man devoid of knowledge indeed attains salvation. His manes are pleased; and being pleased they live in heaven for hundreds of kalpas. O king, for men who drink the holy water of Yamunā what is the use of taking a thousand collections of the five products of a cow ? What is also the use of resorting to a crore of thousands of sacred places ? Giving (gifts) and (performing) a sacrifice there would become a crorefold effective.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Hemakuṇḍala and His Two Sons

Nārada said:

1-13. O king, now I shall tell you an old history (i.e., an account). In Kṛtayuga, in the excellent city of Niṣadha, there lived a merchant resembling Kubera and named Hemakuṇḍala. He was of a high descent, of good deeds, a worshipper of deities, brāhmaṇas and fire. He practised agriculture and trade and purchased and sold various (things). He was eagerly engaged in rearing cows, horses and buffaloes etc. He always sold milk, curds, buttermilk, cowdung, grass, wood, fruits, roots, salt, ginger, long pepper, grains, vegetables, oils, garments of various kinds, metals, sugar and molasses. By these and various other means the merchant always earned eight crores of (coins of) gold. Thus he who had great wealth became grey up to his ears. Then thinking in his mind about the transitoriness of the worldly existence, he did acts of piety with (i.e., by spending) the sixth part of that wealth. He fashioned the temple of Viṣṇu and also the abode of Śiva. He got dug a tank, big and resembling an ocean.

He also constructed many wells and lakes in many ways. According to his capacity he also put up the grove of (the trees like) vaṭa, aśvattha, mango, kaṅkola, jambu, nimba etc., and also a charming garden. He gave food and drink from sunrise to sunset. In all the four directions outside the city he set up stalls where travellers could drink water. That religious-minded one, always engaged in giving gifts, gave all (kinds of) presents that were well-known in the Purāṇas. He also underwent an expiation for the sins committed during his life (time). He was always engrossed in worshipping deities and guests.

14-27a. When he was living like this two sons were born to him, O king. Their names were well-known as Śrīkuṇḍala and Vikuṇḍala. Having put the responsibility of (managing the affairs of) the house on their heads (i.e., on their shoulders) he went to a forest for (practising) penance. Having propitiated there that great god, the lord who grants boons, he with his body afflicted with penance and with his mind always set upon Vāsudeva (i.e., Viṣṇu), reached Viṣṇu's heaven, reaching which a man does not regret. O king, both his sons were full of great pride, young, handsome, proud of their wealth. Their character was bad; they were addicted to bad habits; they did not observe religious rites; they did not obey the words of their mother and (other) elderly persons. They had gone astray; they were wicked; they refused (to recognize) their father's friends. They were engaged in (doing) impious acts; they were wicked; and cohabited with the wives of others. They were engaged in singing and instrumental music, had diversions like playing upon the lute and flute. They were in the company of hundreds of harlots. They sang (songs). (Thus) they then lived. They were surrounded by flatterers. They were skilful (in enjoying) with beautiful women. They put on good dresses; they wore charming garments; they were adorned with pleasing sandal (-paste). They put on fragrant garlands, and the marks of musk. They richly adorned themselves with various ornaments. They put on pearl-necklaces. Here and there they sported with hosts af elephants, horses and chariots. They indulged in drinking wine; they were infatuated by sexual union with the wives of others. They wasted their father's money. They gave (i.e., squandered) a lakh (of coins). Always intent upon enjoyment of pleasures they remained in their own house. In this way they used

that wealth by spending it in improper ways. They gave that wealth to unworthy recipients (like) harlots, rogues, actors, wrestlers, singers and bards, like seed sown in a saline land. They did not give it to worthy recipients, nor did they offer it into the mouth of a brāhmaṇa. They did not worship Viṣṇu, the sustainer of the creatures, destroying all sins.

27b-35. The wealth of both of them was soon exhausted. Then they became very unhappy and were reduced to great poverty. They were lamenting; they were perplexed; they were oppressed with hunger, affliction and grief. When they remained in home, there was nothing that they (could) eat. Due to want of wealth, they, not trusted by their kinsmen, relatives, servants and dependents in that city, were deserted. O king, then they started stealing (things) in that city. Afraid of the king and the people, they then went out of their city. Troubled by all they lived in a forest. The two fools always killed with sharp arrows rubbed with poison many birds, boars, deer and rohita (a species of deer), hares, porcupines, iguanas, and many other beasts of prey. The two very strong ones always enjoyed in the company of bhilas. O you subduer of your enemies, thus they ate fleshy food, forbidden food. Some time one reached a mountain; the other one went to a forest. The elder one was killed by a tiger; the younger one was bitten by a snake. Thus, O king, one day the most sinful ones died.

36-41. Then they were bound by the wicked messengers of Yama and were taken to Yama's abode. Going there, all the messengers spoke (about) both of them to Yama: "O Dharmarāja, these two men have been brought here by your order. Give orders to (us) your servants. (Please) be favourable (and tell us) what we should do." Having spoken to Citragupta, Yama then spoke to the messengers: "O brave ones, one should be taken to the hell and tortured. The other one should be placed in heaven where there are excellent enjoyments." Having heard that order of Yama, the prompt messengers threw the elder one into the terrible Raurava (hell), O king. A certain excellent messenger among them said (these) sweet words: "O Vikuṇḍala, come with me. I shall give you (i.e., lead you to) heaven. Enjoy (there) very divine pleasures which you have earned by means of your deeds."

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

Vikuṇḍala's Dialogue with the Devadūta

Nārada said:

1. Then he (i.e., Vikuṇḍala) pleased in his mind, entertaining a doubt in his heart, and very much amazed and thinking in his mind (i.e., to himself), asked the messenger on the way (to heaven): "For what reason am I having (this) fruit?"

Vikuṇḍala said:

2. O best messenger, I am asking you (to clarify) an important doubt. We two were born in the same family. Also we have done similar deeds.

3-4. We equally met with a miserable death, and also saw Yama in the same way. How is it that my elder brother who did the same deeds as I, was thrown in hell? And how did I obtain heaven? (Please) remove (this) doubt of mine. O divine messenger, I see no reason why I should be in heaven.

The divine messenger said:

5-9. Mother, father, son, wife, sister, brother are relative to one's birth and for the enjoyment (of the fruit) of his deeds. They are like a gathering of birds on the same tree. A man always attains the fruit of that act which he wilfully did. I am telling you the truth through affection (for you). Men get the good or bad (fruit of) the acts they have done at different times, O vaiśya. One performs acts and he (alone) obtains its fruit. O vaiśya, someone does not enjoy or suffer for the acts of someone else. Your brother fell into the hell due to his very fierce sins. O pious one, because of your piety you will obtain heaven eternally.

Vikuṇḍala said:

10-11. O messenger, from my childhood, my mind was interested in sinful deeds and not in pious deeds. I have committed wicked deeds in this existence. O divine messenger, I do not know my (i.e., if I have done) good deed. If you know the pious acts that I have done, then be kind and tell them to me.

The divine messenger said:

12-20a. O vaiśya, listen to the religious merit that you have earned. I know it all. You do not know it quite positively. There was a brāhmaṇa (named) Sumitra who was Harimitra's son and who had mastered the Vedas. His auspicious hermitage was on the right bank of Yamunā. O best of vaiśyas, in the forest you formed friendship with him; and due to his contact, you bathed for two Māgha months in the auspicious water of Yamunā which removes all sins. O lord of vaiśyas, by bathing for one month at that holy place named Pāpapraṇāśana which is well-known in the world, you were freed from all your sins. Due to the merit (collected by bathing) during the second month of Māgha you obtained heaven, O sinless one. Due to the efficacy of that religious merit always rejoice in the heaven. In the hells your brother (will suffer from) great tortures. He would be cut off with blades of swords; he would be rent with hammers; he would be pounded on slabs, and roasted in burning charcoals.

Hearing the words of the messenger and being afflicted by his brother's distress, he with his whole body covered with bristling hair and being miserable and endowed with modesty said sweet and clever words to the divine messenger:

20b-22. "O good one, friendship with the good even (over the distance) of seven steps gives good fruit. Realising (our) friendship, please oblige me. I, therefore, desire to hear (everything from you). I look upon you as omniscient. Be pleased and tell me by (doing) which deed men do not see Yama's world, and by (doing) which they go to hell."

The divine messenger said:

23-24. O vaiśya, you have asked well. Now your sins have perished. In pure hearts of men a thought for (obtaining) bliss, for final emancipation is produced. Though, due to my being in the service of someone else I have no time (to explain these things), yet through my affection for you I shall explain them according to my intellectual capacity.

25-29. Those (who) never harm others by (physical) deeds, by thought and speech, in whatever condition they may be, do not go to Yama's abode. Men who harm (other) creatures do

not go to heaven even by (i.e., in spite of) their (reciting) Vedas, (giving) gifts, (practising) austerities or (performing) sacrifices. Harmlessness is (a) great (form of) piety. Harmlessness alone is a great penance. Harmlessness is a great gift. This is what the sages always say. Those men who are kind look upon mosquitoes, creeping animals, gad-flies, lice and men as on themselves. These men do not (get roasted) in heated charcoals, are not (fixed) on iron-stakes, are not stupefied, are not (thrown into) the river of corpses, do not meet with misery (imposed) by Yama.

30-34. Those who kill beings moving in water or on the ground here (i.e., on the earth) for their livelihood, get bound by Yama's cord and come to a miserable state. There they eat dog's flesh, drink pus and blood, and bitten by insects with their mouths (turned) down sink in the mud of marrow. Eating one another they live there for many kalpas. Having gone to (i.e., been born in) the species of insects, they for a long time become immobile. Then the cruel ones go to (i.e., are born in) hundreds of species of birds. Then they are born blind, or squint-eyed, deformed or lame. They are born poor, or bereft of a limb and such men kill (other) creatures.

35-41. Therefore, O vaiśya, a pious man longing for happiness in both the worlds—this one and the other one—should not do it (i.e., harm others) by means of physical (deeds) or thoughts or by words. Those who harm creatures do not obtain happiness in both the worlds. Those who do not harm creatures are afraid of nothing. As rivers flowing in a crooked way or straight enter the ocean, similarly all pious acts thoroughly enter harmlessness. O best of vaiśyas, he who has granted fearlessness to beings, has bathed at all holy places and is prepared for a sacrifice. O vaiśya, those who in this world follow the injunctions of the sacred texts, mixing up what is pious and what is impious, do not go to Yama's abode. A celibate, a householder, a hermit and an ascetic engaged in their own duties—all they live in heaven. All men of all castes and stages of life, with their senses controlled and behaving as (already) told, go eternally to heaven.

42-52a. Those who are engaged in performing sacrifices, digging wells and performing other acts of charity, those who are engaged in (performing) the five sacrifices, and those who are always full of compassion, never see Yama's abode. Those

brāhmaṇas who have turned away from objects of sense, who are competent and are teachers of the Vedas, who are always engaged in worshipping fire, go to heaven. The Sun is the path (destination) of those whose faces are not sad, who are brave (though) surrounded by enemies, who die in battles. O vaiśya, those who cast their life while protecting a helpless woman, a brāhmaṇa who has sought their refuge, do not fall from heaven. O vaiśya, those who always protect the lame, the blind, the young, the old, the sick, the helpless and the poor, always rejoice in heaven. Those who, on seeing a cow plunged in mud or a brāhmaṇa sinking in disease, emancipate them, get the world of those who perform the horse sacrifice. Those (men) who give a morsel (of grass) to a cow, who always nurse cows, who do not mount upon a cow's back, live in heaven. Those men who have just made (i.e., dug) a ditch where (from) a cow (having drunk water) is free from thirst, go (straight) to heaven without even seeing Yama's world. Those brāhmaṇas who are always engaged in worshipping fire, deities, preceptors and brāhmaṇas, go to heaven. There is no end to piety (when) wells, tanks, lakes etc. (are constructed and) where animals living on land or in water drink (water) as they like. And even the wise describe him as one who is always intent upon giving gifts.

52b-59a. O best among vaiśyas, as the creatures drink profuse water, he (gets) eternal heaven (i.e., secures an eternal place in heaven) due to his belief in piety. Water is the (very) life of beings, and vitality depends upon water. Even those men who are sinners, are purified by taking a bath everyday. O vaiśya, a bath in the morning would remove external and internal impurity. A man, with his sins removed by bathing in the morning, would not go to hell. That man who eats without bathing is always an eater of filth. The manes and deities turn away from the man who does not bathe. A man without a bath is a sinner; a man without a bath is impure. A man who does not bathe suffers in hell and is born among male insects etc. Those again who bathe in a stream on a parvan day, never go to hell, nor are they born in mean species. Bad dreams and vicious thoughts always become fruitless in the case of men who purify themselves by taking a bath in the morning, O best among the vaiśyas.

59b-62. Men, by offering sesamum seeds or vessels full of sesamum seeds or sesamum seeds (of the measure) of a prastha, never go to the land of the lord of the dead (i.e., Yama). O Vikuṇḍala, having given land, gold, a cow and the sixteen (types of) gifts and having (as a result of these gifts) gone (to heaven), men do not return from heaven. A wise man, having bathed on auspicious days and on Vyatīpāta and Saṁkrama (days), and having given something (on these) days never sinks in disaster. Donors never tread on the fearful hellish path. In this world they are not born in a poor family.

63-68. A man who is truthful, who always observes a vow of silence, who speaks agreeably, who is not given to anger, who is of a good conduct, who does not talk much, who is free from jealousy, who is always full of generosity, who is always full of pity for beings, who always preserves (i.e., keeps to himself) the weak points of others, who talks (only) about the virtues of others, who even mentally does not snatch the wealth, even of the measure of a blade of grass, of others—all these, O best of vaiśyas, do not experience the agony of hell. A man who blames others and who is heretical, is worse than even sinners. He is cooked in the hell till the destruction of the beings (i.e., till the deluge). A man who speaks harsh words, should be looked upon as having come from hell. There is no doubt, O best among the vaiśyas, that such a man meets with misery. An ungrateful man does not have expiation by (visiting) holy places or (practising) austerities. The man suffers from a terrible agony in hell for a long time.

69-71. That man who having controlled his senses and diet bathes at the holy places which are there on the earth, does not go to Yama's abode. A man should not commit a sin at a holy place and should not earn his livelihood at a holy place. Acceptance of gifts at a holy place should be renounced (i.e., gifts should not be accepted at a holy place). So also giving up one's religion for the sake of material gain should be avoided at a holy place. A sin committed at a holy place, also gifts received at a holy place do not give enjoyment. All this does not give enjoyment at a holy place. Why should one go to hell (by doing these things at a holy place)?

72-77. A man who has once (only) bathed in Gaṅgā, and is purified by the water of Gaṅgā, does not go to hell, even though he has committed a heap of sins. We have heard that vows, gifts, penance, sacrifices and other pious acts are not equal to the bath with the drops of the water of Gaṅgā. O vaiśya, that mean man who says that Gaṅgā is like other holy places, goes to a great, terrible hell. The element of the water (of Gaṅgā) oozes piety; it has dropped from the feet of Viṣṇu. That water of Gaṅgā which is held by Śiva on his head, is Brahman itself which is qualityless and which is beyond Prakṛti. There is no doubt about this. What would equal it within the range of the universe? A man who would say 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā' even at a distance of hundreds of yojanas, does not go to hell. What can be equal to her? The act giving (i.e., taking one to) hell cannot be instantly burnt by any other (means than the water of Gaṅgā).

78. O vaiśya, that man who though fit to accept gift does not accept it, shines in the form of a star in the sky.

79 ab. Those who take out a cow from mud, who take care of the sick, and who die in a cattleshed, (become) stars in the sky.

79c-83. Those who are wholly devoted to prāṇāyāma (i.e., restraining their breath) during the mental recitation of the names of a deity, get their sins destroyed, even though they are sinners, by them (i.e., prāṇāyāmas) only, and do not see Yama's world. O vaiśya, the sixteen prāṇāyāmas evidently purify even the killer of a brāhmaṇa when practised day after day. Prāṇāyāma is equal to austerities that are practised or vows and restraints that are observed or to a thousand cows given as a gift. Prāṇāyāma is equal to (the fruit of) a drop of water taken on the tip of a Kuśa, which a man would drink month after month for a full hundred years. A man reduces to ashes within a moment all the sin which is great or small by means of prāṇāyāma.

84-86. O best of men, those excellent men who look upon another's wife as their mother, never go to (i.e., experience) agony of (i.e., given by) Yama. O vaiśya, he who does not enjoy another's wife even mentally, is with the two worlds (i.e., enjoys both of them). He has supported the earth. Therefore,

those who are endowed with piety, should give up enjoying another's wife. (Enjoying) another's wife leads to twentyone hells.[1]

87. O best of the vaiśyas, those in whose minds desire for (enjoying) other's wives does not arise go to the world of gods, and not to Yama.

88. He who is not conquered by anger, (even though) causes of anger are present, must be looked upon as one who has conquered heaven and as a wrathless man on the earth.

89-90. A son who adores his mother and father like deities (even) before they have reached old age does not go to Yama. O best of vaiśyas, men who adore their preceptor with greater devotion than their father, become guests (i.e., are honoured as guests) in Brahmā's world.

91-92. And here women are blessed who guard their character. By spoiling their character women go to the very terrible world of Yama. By avoiding the company of the wicked women should always preserve their character; for, O vaiśya, there is no doubt that by means of (the preservation of) their character women get (i.e., reach) the best heaven.

93. Misery is enjoined for him who performs a śūdra's domestic sacrifice and does what is prohibited; and he obtains a position in hell.

94-97. Those, who ponder over sacred texts, who are engrossed in Vedic studies, who narrate and recite Purāṇas, who expound the smṛtis (i.e., codes of law), who propound the laws of good conduct, who are adept in the Vedāntas (i.e., the Upaniṣads), have sustained this world. With their sins destroyed by the virtue of that particular study, all of them go to Brahmā's world where there is no delusion. Even Vedas adore him who gives knowledge arising out of the sacred Vedic texts to an ignorant person, and (who therefore) cuts off the bond of mundane existence.

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1. Narakān Ekaviṁśati—The twentyone hells according to the *Manusmṛti* (IV. 88-90) are as follows :

Tāmisra, Andhatāmisra, Mahāraurava, Raurava, Kālasūtra, Mahānaraka, Saṁjīvana, Mahāvīci, Tapana, Sampratāpana, Saṁhāta, Sakākola, Kuḍmala, Pratimūrtika, Lohaśaṅku, Ṛjīṣa, Panthāna, Śālmalī, Vaitaraṇī, Asipatravana, Lohadāraka.

98-119. O best vaiśya, listen to this wonderful secret which is approved by Dharmarāja and which gives nectar to all the worlds. The devotees of Viṣṇu do not see Yama or Yama's world or beings of a horrible appearance. I have told the truth, (and) the truth (only). The brother of Yamunā (i.e., Yama) has always and repeatedly told us: "You have to spare the devotees of Viṣṇu; they should not come within my power. Those beings who (even) once (or) occasionally remember Viṣṇu with all the heaps of their sins destroyed, go to the highest position of Viṣṇu. You should also always spare a man who adores Viṣṇu, even though he is of a bad conduct or a sinner who is devoted to good practices. You should also spare the man at whose house a devotee of Viṣṇu eats or those (men) who are in the company of a devotee of Viṣṇu, (since) their sins are destroyed due to his company." O vaiśya, the god holding the (chastising) rod, always instructs us like this. Therefore, the devotees of Viṣṇu never go to the capital city of Yama. O best among the vaiśyas, for crossing the ocean of hell there is no other means than devotion to Viṣṇu for the most sinful persons. O vaiśya, a man should not investigate an outcast who is a devotee of Viṣṇu. A devotee of Viṣṇu, even if he is an outcast, purifies the three worlds. Thus, for fully removing the dirt of sins men should repeat the virtues, acts and names of the lord, since, even the sinner Ajāmila crying 'O son Nārāyaṇa' while dying, obtained salvation. When men gladly worship Viṣṇu, all those (ancestors of them) who have sunk in hell for a long time and the two families (i.e., of the father and of the mother) go to heaven. O vaiśya, those who are servants of a Viṣṇu's devotee and who eat food from a Viṣṇu's devotee, go without being perplexed to the position of (the followers of Viṣṇu), the enjoyers of sacrifices. A man should with effort desire food from a Viṣṇu's devotee for purification from all sins. In its absence he should drink water. (Even) if a man muttering the hymn ('Govinda...') dies anywhere, he does not see Yama, nor do we see him. He should fully recite the hymn consisting of twelve syllables with the mudrās (i.e., particular positions of the fingers) with meditation, with (the name of) the sage, metre and deity, with (i.e., after) initiation and in the proper manner. On seeing the best men who mutter the best hymn consisting of eight syllables, a

killer of a brāhmaṇa would be purified and himself shines like Viṣṇu. Those men, being the possessors of conches and discs (i.e., resembling Viṣṇu), entering Brahma, live in the form of Viṣṇu in the heaven of Viṣṇu. Men having properly worshipped Viṣṇu (residing) in the heart, in the sun, in water or on the altar of the idol, reach Viṣṇu's position. Or, those who desire salvation, should always worship Viṣṇu in a śālagrāma (stone), a gem, or a disc made of steel particles; for, O vaiśya, it is the abode of Viṣṇu, which destroys all sins, which gives all religious merit and which gives salvation to all. He who would worship Viṣṇu on a disc made of the śālagrāma stone, has everyday performed a thousand Rājasūya sacrifices. The Vedāntas (i.e., the Upaniṣads) always look upon Viṣṇu, as Brahman, the Supreme Spirit. By worshipping the śālagrāma stone men would obtain his favour.

120-123. As the fire residing in a large wood shines at the place of sacrifice, in the same way the all-pervading Viṣṇu shines in the śālagrāma. O vaiśya, worshippers of śālagrāma, even though they are of a sinful conduct or are not entitled to (religious) rites, do not certainly go to Yama's abode. Viṣṇu does not as much rejoice with Lakṣmī or in his own city, as he always rejoices in the disc on the śālagrāma stone. He, who has worshipped Viṣṇu on the disc made of the śālagrāma stone, has performed agnihotra or given the earth with the ocean (as a gift).

124-146a. I shall tell you of the religious merit of him who has duly worshipped the twelve stones produced from śālagrāma rock. That (merit) which would be (obtained) by worshipping with golden lotuses twelve crores of Phalluses twelve times would be (obtained) in a day only (by worshipping a śālagrāma). He who would devoutly worship a hundred śālagrāma stones, would, after living with Viṣṇu, be born as a sovereign emperor here (i.e., on the earth). A mean man pervaded by passions, anger or greed also goes to Viṣṇu's heaven by worshipping a śālagrāma stone. The man who with joy would worship Viṣṇu in a śālagrāma stone, does not fall from heaven till deluge. O vaiśya, men obtain salvation (merely) by worshipping a śālagrāma stone without (visiting) holy places, without (giving) gifts, and without (performing) sacrifices or without (having

any) thought (about it). O vaiśya, the worshipper of a śālagrāma stone, even though he is a sinner, does not go to hell, is (not conceived) in a womb, is not born in a species of birds, or insects, and also he who, conversant with the rite of initiation, its procedure and hymn, would offer an oblation to the disc (does not go to hell). All rivers—Gaṅgā, Godāvarī and Revā which give salvation, abide in the water of śālagrāma. A man who being highly devoted worships in Kaliyuga a śālagrāma by means of various offerings of eatables, flowers, incense, lights, smearings, songs, musical instruments, hymns, rejoices in the company of Viṣṇu for a thousand crores of kalpas. That fruit which is seen (to be obtained) by worshipping and extolling crores of phalluses, is had (by the worship) of a śālagrāma (just) for a day. Men devoid of reasoning on worshipping a phallus made of śālagrāma stone (even) once, go to (i.e., obtain) salvation. Gods, deities, yakṣas and the fourteen worlds live there where Viṣṇu in the form of the śālagrāma stone lives. The manes of the man who has faith in the śālagrāma stone remain pleased in heaven for a hundred kalpas. What is the use of drinking thousand (times) the five products of cow for the men who every-day drink the water from a śālagrāma stone? So also what is the use of visiting thousands of crores of holy places, if a man would drink the auspicious water from the śālagrāma stone? Where there is a śālagrāma stone, there (within a distance of) three yojanas all gifts (given) and sacrifices (performed) would be a crorefold effective. A man devoted to Viṣṇu, who would drink water equal to (i.e., of the measure of) a drop from the śālagrāma stone, would never again drink mother's milk (i.e., would not be born). Even an insect which dies within the distance of a krośa in the vinicity of a śālagrāma goes to the excellent world of Viṣṇu. He who gives the excellent gift, viz. a disc of the śālagrāma stone, has given the globe along with mountains, groves and forests. A man who would beget money (by trading in) the śālagrāma stone, a seller (of the stone) and one who approves of (such sale), and he who takes delight in testing (the stone)—all these go to hell (and live there) till deluge. Therefore, O vaiśya, a man should avoid the purchase or sale of the disc.

146b-151a. O vaiśya, what is the use of prolixity? A man who is afraid of sins, should always do the mental recitation of

the name of Vāsudeva, i.e., Viṣṇu, which removes all sins. A man obtains that fruit by saluting Garuḍa-bannered (Viṣṇu), which he, with his senses controlled, obtains by practising severe penance in a forest. A man, even after having committed, (due to) being full of delusion, many sins, goes to Viṣṇu who removes all sins, (and) not to hell. By reciting the names of Viṣṇu a man obtains (the fruit of having visited) all those holy places and sacred abodes. Those devoted ones who resort to god Viṣṇu, the holder of the Śārṅga (bow), do not reside in the same world as Yama, and would not have a hell as their abode.

151b-152a. O vaiśya, one who is a devotee of Viṣṇu and who censures Śiva would not obtain (i.e., go to) Viṣṇu's heaven; he goes to a great hell.

152b-164. It is heard from Lomaśa that if a man by chance observes fast on the eleventh day of a month, he does not undergo agony (caused) by Yama. There is nothing else that is as purifying as this in the three worlds. Both the days (i.e., the two ekādaśī days) of Viṣṇu destroy sins. O best among vaiśyas, as long as a creature does not observe a fast on the day sacred to Viṣṇu, sins live in his body. Thousands of horse sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya (sacrifices) are not equal (even) to a sixteenth part of (the merit due to) a fast on the eleventh day. All that sin which men have committed with the eleven organs (of cognition and action), O vaiśya, perishes by (observing) the fast on the eleventh day. There is no other (vow bringing) merit like the (fast on) the ekādaśī (day). Even those who have observed (the ekādaśī-fast) under some pretext, do not go under the sway of the son of the Sun (i.e., Yama). It grants heaven and salvation; it gives good health. It gives a good wife; it gives sons that live (i.e., that do not die before the parents). O vaiśya, Gaṅgā, Gayā, Kāśī, Puṣkara or even any place sacred to Viṣṇu cannot be equated to the day of Viṣṇu (i.e., ekādaśī). Yamunā and Candrabhāgā are not equal to Viṣṇu's day (i.e., ekādaśī) by which the position of Viṣṇu is obtained without any effort. O vaiśya, by keeping awake during the night and observing a fast on Viṣṇu's day a man certainly emancipates ten ancestors of the father's family, ten of the mother's family and ten of the wife's (family). Those, who have given up attachment to the pairs (of opposites), who have made him (i.e., Viṣṇu) having the enemy of

serpents (i.e., Garuḍa) as his banner as their abode, who wear garlands, who have put on yellow garments, go to Viṣṇu's abode. A sinner who observes a fast in his childhood, youth or old age on the ekādaśī day, does not meet with a great misery, O best among vaiśyas.

165-167a. Men go to heaven by having observed a fast for three nights or having bathed at holy places or by having donated gold, sesamum seeds and cows. O vaiśya, those who do not bathe at the sacred places or who have not given (a gift of) gold or who have not practised penance are unhappy everywhere. I have told you in brief what piety is. I have defined hell (also).

167b-170. (A man should have) no malice towards any being by words, thoughts or physical acts. (He should) control (his) senses; (he should give) gifts; (he should) worship Viṣṇu; and should always properly follow the duties pertaining to the caste and stage of life. O vaiśya, a man who desires (to go to) heaven should never tell (anyone) about his penance and gifts. He should thus give according to his capacity and with a desire for his own well-being sandals, garments, food, leaves, roots, fruits and water. O vaiśya, even a poor man should make his day productive.

171-174. In this world and in the next one what is not given does not come (to help a man). The donors do not meet with the agonies (inflicted) by Yama. They have a long life and repeatedly become wealthy. What is the use of talking much in this matter? People meet with misery by wicked deeds. Men (engaged) in pious works everywhere and at all times go up to heaven. Therefore, (right) from childhood one should collect religious merit. Thus I have told you everything. What else do you desire to hear?

Vikuṇḍala said:

175-179 O gentle sir, having heard your words my mind is pleased. The water of Gaṅgā instantly removes sins. (So also) the words of the good remove sins instantly. To oblige (others), to talk agreeably is the natural virtue of the good. Who makes the moon, the orb of (i.e., containing) nectar, cold? O you divine messenger, then tell me through pity towards me who am asking you, how can my brother have instant acquital from hell ?

Hearing these words of (i.e., uttered by) him, the divine messenger, observing meditation for a moment, and being tied by the bond of friendship (with Vikuṇḍala) said: "O vaiśya, if you desire heaven for your brother, then give him all the religious merit that you have collected in your eighth existence."

Vikuṇḍala said:

180. What is that religious merit? How was it produced? Which was my former existence? O messenger, tell all that to me so that I shall quickly give (my religious merit to my brother.)

The dive messenger said:

181-189. O vaiśya, listen, I shall explain to you that merit with its cause. Formerly in the holy Madhuvana lived a sage named Śākuni. He was endowed with penance and learning, and was equal to Brahman in lustre. He begot nine sons like planets on (his wife) Revatī: Dhruva, Śīla, Budha, Tārā, and Jyotiṣmat, as the fifth. These maintained sacred fire and took delight in household duties. Nirmoha, Jitakāma, Dhyānakośa and Guṇādhika—these four sons of the brāhmaṇa were detached from the householder's life. Being free from all desires they took to the fourth stage of life. They lived in the same village. They all were detached and had no possessions. They were devoid of hopes, did not exert themselves, and looked equally upon a clod, a stone and gold. They covered themselves with anything; they ate whatever (they got). They received (food etc. only) in the evening; and they were greatly intent on meditating on Viṣṇu, They had overcome sleep; they had controlled their diet; they endured wind and cold. Looking upon the entire mobile and immobile world as Viṣṇu's form, they easily roamed over the earth. They remained quiet with (i.e., did not talk to) one another. The meditating saints did not perform any act for (personal) gain. They had achieved knowledge, had no doubt and were conversant with the modifications of thought (*cidvikāra*).

190-200a. Thus, these, oppressed by hunger and thirst came in the noon to the house of you, a brāhmaṇa, who were in your eighth existence staying with the members of your family like the son and the wife in Madhyadeśa. You saw them in the courtyard of your house when offerings were being made to all deities

(before meals). With faltering words, with tears in your eyes, with joy and confusion, you greeted them all by prostrating before them respectfully, by saluting their feet by (keeping your) head (on their feet) and joining (the palms of) your hands in obeisance and with sweet and agreeable words: "Today my existence is fruitful, so also my life is fruitful. Today Viṣṇu is pleased with me. Today I have secured a protector, and am purified. Today I am blessed, my house is blessed, members of my family are blessed today, my parents are blessed today, my cows, my learning, my wealth are blessed today, since I have seen your feet removing the three (kinds of) miseries, for seeing you is as fortunate as seeing Viṣṇu himself". Having thus adored them and having washed their feet (with water) you held that (water) on your head with great devotion, O best among the vaiśyas. O vaiśya, you held the water (used) for (washing their) feet on your head. Having worshipped them with sandal (-paste), flowers, sacred rice-grains, incense and lamps with devotion, you fed them with excellent food. The great ascetics were pleased and rested in your house at night meditating upon the highest Brahman which is regarded as the light of lights.

200b-206. O best vaiśya, I cannot describe (even) with a thousand mouths the religious merit which you secured by (your showing) hospitality to them. Among the beings creatures are superior; among creatures the intellectuals are superior. Among the intellectuals gods are superior. Among men brāhmaṇas are superior. Among brāhmaṇas the learned are superior; among the learned those of firm determination are superior. Among those superior are those who carry out their determinations into action. Among them superior are those who know Brahman. Therefore, they are to be very much adored, and so they are best in the three worlds. O best among the vaiśyas, their company destroys great sins. The knowers of Brahman taking rest in the house of a householder and pleased thereby destroy in a moment the sins collected from one's birth. A sage staying (in a householder's home) for a night completely burns the householder's sins accumulated upto his death. Give that religious merit to your brother, by which he will be liberated.

207-209. Hearing these words of the messenger, he quickly

gave his merit (to his brother). The brother too came out of hell with his mind pleased. Being honoured with a shower of flowers by gods they went to heaven. Well honoured by the two (brothers) the messenger went as he had come. The son of a vaiśya, having heard the messenger's words which enlightened the entire world, which were like the words of the Veda, having emancipated his brother by giving him the merit of his deeds, went with him to the excellent world of the lord of gods.

210. O king, he who would recite or hear this account, would, being free from grief, obtain the fruit of (presenting) a thousand cows.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

Sugandha, Arundhatīvaṭa, Sindhuprabhava etc.

Nārada said:

1-2, Thence, O best of kings, a man should go to Sugandha, well-known in the world. With his soul freed from all sins, he is honoured in Brahmā's world. O king, from there a pilgrim should go to Rudrāvarta. O king, a man having bathed there, is honoured in heaven.

3-4. O best of men, a man who has bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Sarasvatī obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to heaven. Having bathed at Karṇahrada there and having worshipped Śiva, he does not meet with misery and goes to heaven.

5-7a. Thence the pilgrim should in due succession go to Kubjā. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of having given) a thousand cows and goes to heaven. Thence, O king, a pilgrim should go to Arundhatīvaṭa. Having bathed at Samudraka and having fasted for three nights a man would obtain the fruit of (having presented) a thousand cows and goes to heaven.

7b-10a. Being controlled and calm, he should then go to Brahmāvarta. He obtains the (fruit of a) horse sacrifice, and goes to heaven. Having bathed in the water of Yamunā he should go

to (the holy place called) Yamunāprabhava. Having obtained the fruit of a horse sacrifice he is honoured in heaven. Having reached the sacred place called Darvīsaṁkramaṇa, well-known in the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to heaven.

10b-13a. Then having gone to (the holy place called) Sindhuprabhava, the source of Sindhu, resorted to by siddhas and gandharvas and having stayed there for five nights, he should give much gold. Then having reached (the holy place of) the goddess very difficult to reach a man obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would go to the position of Śukra. Having reached Ṛṣikulyā and Vasiṣṭha also, O descendent of Bharata, and having crossed Vasiṣṭha all the castes become (like) brāhmaṇas.

13b-14. A man having bathed at Ṛṣikulyā goes to the world of sages, if, O king, he, subsisting on vegetables, lives there for a month. Having reached Bhṛgutuṅga he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice.

15-17a. O hero, having gone to Pramokṣa he is free from all sins. A pious man having reached (this) holy place difficult to reach in (the months of) Kārtika and Mārgaśīrṣa obtains the fruit of Agniṣṭoma and Atirātra (sacrifices). Thence having reached Sandhyā and the excellent Vidyātīrtha he should bathe (there). He becomes a master of all lores.

17b-18a. Fasting once a day he should stay for a night at Mahāśrama which frees (a man) from all sins. He (thereby) lives in holy worlds.

18b-21. By living for a month at Mahālaya and by taking food once in three days he having himself crossed (the ocean of the mundane existence) emancipates the creatures—ten preceding and ten succeeding (members of his family). Having seen the very auspicious Maheśvara saluted by gods a man having got all his objects, should not at all grieve for death. He with his soul purified from all sins would obtain much gold. Then he should go to Vetasikā resorted to by the Grandsire. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would go the highest position.

22-23. Then having reached the holy place (called) Sundarikā resorted to by siddhas, he possesses handsomeness (i.e., becomes handsome). This has been observed by the ancients.

Then, being controlled and calm, he, having gone to Brāhmaṇikā, goes to Brahmā's world in a car having the colour of a lotus.

24-29. Thence he should go to Naimiṣa, the auspicious (place) resorted to by brāhmaṇas. Brahmā always resides there with hosts of gods. Half the sin of him who desires (to go to) Naimiṣa, perishes. A man on just entering it is freed from the entire sin. A wise man intent on (visiting) holy places, should stay there—at Naimiṣa—for a month. O descendant of Bharata, whichever holy places are there on the earth are (present) at Naimiṣa. Being restrained and with his diet controlled a man having bathed (i.e. who bathes) there obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya sacrifice, (and), O best among the Bharatas, purifies (the members of) his family up to the seventh (descendant). The wise say that he who wholly devoted to fasting would cast his life at Naimiṣa, would stay in heaven and rejoice there. O best of kings, Naimiṣa is always pure and holy.

30. A man, having gone to Gaṅgodbheda and having stayed there for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice) and would always be one with Brahman.

31. Having reached Sarasvatī he should offer oblations to the deities in the form of his manes. There is no doubt that he rejoices in the worlds of the Sārasvatas.

32. O king, thence a pilgrim should go to (the holy place called) Bāhudā. By staying there for a night he is honoured in heaven.

33a. The man obtains the fruit of a Devasatra sacrifice.

33b-34a. Thence he should go to the holy place (called) Rajanī surrounded by meritorious persons. Engaged in worshipping the manes and deities, he would obtain (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice).

34b-39a. Having reached (the holy place called) Vimalāśoka he shines like the moon. Having stayed there for a night he is honoured in heaven. Thence he should go to Gopratāra, an excellent holy place (on the bank) of Sarayū, where (-from) Rāma with his servants, army and vehicles, after having left his house, went to heaven due to the prowess of that holy place. Due to Rāma's favour and exertion, O king, a man bathing at

that holy place, viz. Gopratāra, has his soul purified of all sins and is honoured in heaven. O you descendant of Kuru, a man having bathed at Rāmatīrtha on (the bank of) Gomatī, obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and purifies his own family.

39b-40. Then, O best of Bharatas, there is a sacred place called Śatasāhasraka. Being restrained and with his diet controlled, a man, having bathed there, obtains the meritorious fruit (of giving away) a thousand cows, O best of Bharatas.

41-42a. Then a pious man should go to the excellent (holy place called) Ūrdhvasthāna. Having bathed at Koṭitīrtha and having worshipped Guha, O king, a man would obtain the fruit of (giving) a thousand cows, and becomes bright.

42b-44. Then having gone to Vārāṇasī and having worshipped the bull-bannered god (i.e. Śiva) and having bathed at Kapilāhrada, he would obtain the fruit of a Rājasūya (sacrifice). O lord of kings, having reached the Mārkaṇḍeya tīrtha difficult to reach, on the confluence of Gomatī and Gaṅgā, well-known in the world, he obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice and would emancipate his (own) family.

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

The Merits of Vārāṇasī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O sage, you have described in brief the importance of Vārāṇasī. (Please) tell it in detail. Then (only) my mind is (i.e. would be) pleased.

Nārada said:

2. Now I shall tell you the account based on the merits of Vārāṇasī, merely by hearing which a man is absolved of (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa.

3. Formerly, goddess (Pārvatī) having gone to the seat of the lord asked Mahādeva, the enemy of Tripura, on the peak of Meru:

The goddess said:

4-7. O Mahādeva, god of gods, remover of the affliction of your devotees, how can a man see you soon (i.e. in a short time)? O Śaṅkara, in the world (the path) of Sāṁkhya or Yoga or (of) meditation or Karmayoga laid down in the Vedas are full of great exertion; so also are other (means). Tell me this most secret knowledge which is practised by Indra and others and which destroys the fire of paṣsion, for the good of all beings, by which you, the revered one, who are (so) subtle, can be seen by human beings, the meditating saints with tranquil minds, and those who practise the path of duty.

The lord said:

8-26. I shall now tell you the knowledge which is properly explained by the great sages, which special knowledge is excluded by the ignorant and which should not be told. The city Vārāṇasī is my most secret holy place. It helps all the beings to cross the ocean of the worldly existence. O great goddess, the magnanimous ones observing great restraint live there devoutly practising my vow (i.e. a vow sacred to me). That holy place Avimukta is best among all holy places, is best among all abodes, is thy best knowledge among all (kinds of) knowledge. There are other holy places and sacred abodes situated in crematory and found in divine land. My abode is not at all connected with the world; it is in the Intermediate Space. Those that are not liberated see there; those that are liberated see mentally. This is a famous crematory well-known as Avimukta. O beautiful lady, being Kāla (the god of death) I destroy this world. O goddess, this place is dearer to me of all secrets. My devotees go there and enter me only. Whatever is given there, muttered there, offered or performed there, whichever penance is practised there, and also meditation, study or knowledge (gained) there becomes inexhaustible. All the sin of a man collected in the former thousands of births perishes when he enters Avimukta. Men—brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras, mixtures of castes, women, mlecchas, other mixed tribes of low birth, insects, ants, other beasts and birds, when they die at the proper time at Avimukta, O beautiful lady, are born in my auspicious city as having crescent moon on their

heads, three eyes, and having great bulls as their vehicles. No sinner who dies at Avimukta goes to hell. Being favoured by the lord all of them go to the highest position. A man thinking that salvation is difficult to obtain and realising that the mundane existence is extremely terrible, having broken his feet with stone, should live in Vārāṇasī. O goddess, the path liberating from the mundane existence one who dies here or there is difficult to be obtained even by penance. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, by my favour (everything) takes place duly. Those who are immature do not see as they are deluded by my illusory power. They again and again live in feces, urine and semen. A learned man, though smitten by hundreds of dangers, goes to the highest place, going where he is not unhappy. He goes to Śiva's abode free from birth, death and old age.

27-28. The position of those who desire salvation is the same as of those who do not die again, and reaching which, the learned think, one is blessed. The position that is obtained on (reaching salvation) is not obtained by gifts, penance, sacrifices or knowledge.

29-35. The wise know that Avimukta is a great medicine for the people of various castes or having no castes, the caṇḍālas that are condemned, with their bodies filled with blemishes and big sins. Avimukta is great knowledge; Avimukta is a great seat; Avimukta is a great fact; Avimukta is highly auspicious. I give them who, having firm dedication, live at Avimukta, that highest knowledge, that highest position. Prayāga, Naimiṣāraṇya, Śrīśaila, Mahābala, Kedāra, Bhadrakarṇa, Gayā and Puṣkara, also Kurukṣetra, Bhadrakoṭi, Narmadā, Mrātakeśvarī, Śālagrāma, Kubjāmra, the excellent Kokāmukha, Prabhāsa, Vijayeśāna, Gokarṇa and Bhadrakarṇa—these holy places are well-known in the three worlds. Men who die (here) do not go to the highest principle as those who die at Vārāṇasi.

36-56. If a man enters (i.e. bathes in) Gaṅgā, flowing in three streams, especially at Vārāṇasī, it would destroy the sin committed in hundreds of his former births. Gaṅgā is easy to reach at other places. Śrāddha, gifts, penance, muttering (of a deity's names), vows—all this is very difficult to be found at Vārāṇasī. A man living at Vārāṇasī would mutter (names of deities), would offer oblations, gives gifts everyday, worships

gods, always eats (i.e. subsists upon) air. Even if a man is a sinner or a rogue, he purifies the entire family on reaching Vārāṇasī. Those, who worship and extol Mahādeva at Vārāṇasī, are free from all sins and should be known as the lord of Śiva's attendants. At other places the highest place is reached only after a hundred births by means of the practice of yoga (i.e. deep meditation), knowledge or othar things. But O you wife of the lord of gods, those devotees who stay at Vārāṇasī, obtain the best salvation in one birth only. Where the path of yoga and the path of knowledge (are combined), salvation is obtained in one birth only. A man having reached Avimukta would not desire (to go to) any other penance-grove. Since I have not abandoned it, it is said to be Avimukta. That is the secret of secrets. This is said to be wisdom. O you beautiful one, that position which is got by those that are devoted to knowledge or ignorance, and are desirous of the highest joy, is obtained by him who dies at Avimukta. Vārāṇasī is more holy than all the places that are seen in the body of Avimukta where the lord Mahādeva himself explained for Avimukta the liberating Brahman. A man would obtain in Vārāṇasī, that which is said to be the higher principle Avimukta, in (just) one birth. As between the two eye-brows, as in the navel, in the heart or the head, in the sun, so Avimukta is well-established in Vārāṇasī. Vārāṇasī city is (situated) between Varaṇā and Asī. There only is well settled the principle of Avimukta. There was never, or there never will be a higher place than Vārāṇasī, where (live) god Nārāyaṇa, and Mahādeva, the lord in heaven. There gods with gandharvas, yakṣas, serpents and demons always worship him, (who is) the god of gods, the grandsire. O goddess, the great sinners, those who are greater sinners than they are, go to the highest position after having come to Vārāṇasī. Therefore, he who desires salvation, should, being restrained, stay at Vārāṇasī till death. Getting knowledge from Mahādeva he is liberated. But difficulties may come up in the case of one whose mind is smitten with sin. Therefore one should not commit a sin by body, mind or speech. O you of a good vow, this is the secret of gods and Purāṇas. Nobody truly knows (i.e. has) the knowledge about Avimukta.

Nārada said:

57-65. The god of gods told the entire (account) that destroys all sins to the deities and sages and the spiritual teachers that were listening. As Viṣṇu is the greatest among the gods, as Śiva is the greatest among lords, so is this place the best of all places. Those who have propitiated Rudra in a former birth, obtain (i.e. visit) the great holy place Avimukta, the abode of Śiva. Those whose mind is taken away due to having been born in Kali age, are not able to know that great place of the spiritual teacher. The sin of those who always remember and talk about this city, quickly perishes in this world and the next. God Śiva having time as his body would destroy all those sins which those who have taken an abode here commit. A man should come to (i.e. visit) this place resorted to by those who desire salvation; those who die would not be again born in the ocean of the mundane existence. Therefore by all efforts a man, whether he is a yogi or no yogi, whether a sinner or the most virtuous one, should live in Vārāṇasi. The thought about (visiting) Avimukta should not be changed even by the words of the people, or of the father, or of the preceptor.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

The Greatness of Kṛttivāseśvara

Nārada said:

1-14a. There is a pure auspicious Phallus called Oṁkāra, merely by remembering which a man is freed from all sins. This is superior knowledge, the excellent Pañcāyatana, which is always resorted to by sages in Vārāṇasī, and which liberates (men). There actually Mahādeva, Rudra, who gives liberation to creatures rejoices in the form of the five abodes. This knowledge relating to Paśupati (i.e. Śiva) is called Pañcāyatana. This is that pure Phallus, Oṁkāra, that stands there. The Phallus of the lord is of five forms: Śāntyatītā, Śānti, Aparāvarā Vīdyā (i.e.

higher and lower knowledge), Pratiṣṭhā and Nivṛtti. The Phallus that supports the five Liṅgas, Brahmā and others, and that is indicative of Oṁkāra, is called Pañcāyatana. A wise man should remember the immutable Liṅga, i.e. Pañcāyatana, of the lord. At the end of his body (i.e. when he dies) he enters the highest light, joy. There formerly gods, sages, siddhas, brāhmaṇic sages ultimately obtained the best position after having waited upon the lord. O lord of kings, on the auspicious bank of Matsyodarī there is the most secret place, of the size of gocarma (cow's hide), the excellent Oṁkāreśvara; there is the Liṅga called Kṛttivāseśvara, the excellent Madhyameśvara, and also Viśveśvara, Oṁkāra and Kandarpeśvara. O Yudhiṣṭhira, these are the secret Liṅgas in Vārāṇasī. Nobody here knows (i.e. experiences) destruction due to Śambhu's favour. O king, listen to the greatness of Kṛttivāseśvara. At that time formerly a demon having become an elephant came there near Śiva to kill the brāhmaṇas who were everyday worshipping Śiva. From the Liṅga of them Mahādeva, the three-eyed (god), affectionate towards his devotees, came there for the protection of his devotees.

14b-25. Śiva having with contempt killed the demon in the form of the elephant by means of his trident used his hide as his garment. Therefore, he is known as Kṛttivāseśvara. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the sages obtained a great superhuman power and with the same body obtained that highest position. Those who are called Vidyāvidyeśvara, Rudra, Śiva, have always resorted to the Liṅga (called) Kṛttivāseśvara. Men knowing that Kaliyuga is fearful and full of great impiety, do not forsake Kṛttivāsa; by doing so they are undoubtedly blessed. (At other places) liberation may or may not be obtained after a thousand existences; but at this Kṛttivāsa liberation is obtained after (just) one existence. They describe this place to be the abode of all siddhas, protected by Śambhu Mahādeva, the lord of gods. In every yuga brāhmaṇas that are controlled and are masters of deep meditation worship the magnanimous one and mutter the (hymn called) Śatarudriya. They constantly extol god Tryambaka, having the garment of (elephant-)hide. They meditate in their heart upon Śiva, Sthāṇu, who is in the heart of all. Siddhas, the brāhmaṇas who live at Vārāṇasi sing songs. Even by means

of one song salvation would take place in the case of those who resort to Kṛttivāsa. They obtain a birth very difficult to obtain, which is desired, in brāhmaṇa families. Being steady in meditation, the sages maditate upon Rudra, the great lord, in their hearts. The best sages, living in Vārāṇasī, propitiate the supreme lord. They perform sacrifices without any (selfish) aim; they praise Rudra; they salute Śambhu. "I salute Bhava, the abode of pure, deep meditation. I resort to the ancient Girīśa. I remember Rudra, settled in my heart; I know Mahādeva of many forms."

CHAPTFR THIRTYFIVE

Greatness of Kapardin

Nārada said:

1-2a. Now there is another excellent Liṅga, (called) Kapardīśvara. O king, having bathed there according to proper rites and offered oblations to manes, one is freed from all sins and obtains salvation and enjoyment.

2b-11. Then there is another holy place called Piśācamocana. There is the wonderful (form of) god that gives salvation and that removes all blemishes. A demon taking up a terrible form of a tiger went to the excellent Kapardīśvara to eat up a female deer. There she with her heart frightened again and again circumambulated (the deity). Running and extremely perpflexed she came under the sway of the tiger. That very strong tiger having torn her with sharp nails went to another place after having noticed the best sages. That young female deer almost dead looked in front of Kapardīśa, like a great flame, lustrous like the moon in the sky. (She appeared) to have three eyes, dark blue throat, and with her hair on the head marked with the moon, to have mounted upon a bull, and surrounded by men like her only. The (divine) beings roaming in the sky, showered upon her flowers on all sides. Being turned into one of the female chiefs of Śiva's attendants she vanished

just at that moment only. Seeing that great wonder the gods and others praised it. That is the Liṅga of Śiva called Kapardīśvara, the best one. By merely remembering, it a man gets quickly free from his sins. All blemishes like passion, anger, and difficulties of the residents of Vārāṇasī perish by worshipping Kapardīśvara.

12-14. Therefore one should always see the excellent Kapardīśvara, one should worship (the Phallus) with great care, and should extol (the lord) with Vedic hymns. There is no doubt that the meditating saints of tranquil minds who always meditate (upon the lord), attain perfection within six months. By worshipping this deity sins like killing a brāhmaṇa perish, since one who has bathed in the tank called Piśācamocana obtains peace.

15-24. Formerly, a brāhmaṇa ascetic of a severe vow and known as Śaṅkukarṇa worshipped Śiva at that holy place. He constantly muttered (the names of) Rudra of the form of Brahman. The meditating saint taking the vow devoutly worshipped there the lord by means of flowers, incense etc., hymns, salutation and circumambulations. Once he saw a hungry ghost with its body covered with bones and skin, sighing repeatedly, that had come there. Having seen him the best sage full of great pity said (to him): "Who are you? From what region have you come to this region?" The ghost oppressed by hunger, said (these) words to him: "In my former existence I was a brāhmaṇa having wealth and grains. I had sons and grandsons and was eager to maintain my family. I did not worship great deities, cows and guests. I never did any small or big (act of) religious merit. Once I saw the revered Viśveśvara having the lord of bulls as his vehicle, touched him, and saluted him. Then after a short time I died. (But) O sage, I did not see (i.e. go to) that very terrible house of Yama. Now, being overpowered by thirst I do not know what is beneficial or otherwise. O lord, if you see some means to emancipate me, (please) do it. Salutation to you. I have sought your refuge (now)."

25-28. Śaṅkukarṇa who was thus addressed by the ghost, said to him: "There is no person like you who has done the most meritorious deed, since you have formerly seen Śiva, the lord of the universe. You touched him and again saluted him. Who else in the world is like you? Due to the ripening of the

deed you have come to this region. Being calm, quickly cast off this vile body here only."

29-34. That ghost, thus addressed by that kind sage, remembered after making his mind tranquil, Kapardīśvara, the best, three-eyed god, and bathed there. Then, he having bathed there near the sage and endowed with divine ornaments died and was seen in an aeroplane resembling the sun and had his charming head marked with the moon. With Rudras living in heaven and being looked after by the meditating saints along with the unbounded Vālakhilyas,[1] he shines like the full god, the sun at the time of rising. Siddhas and hosts of gods praise him in the heaven. Charming celestial nymphs danced. Gandharvas, Vidyādharas and kinnaras etc. showered flowers mixed with water. Being praised by the groups of the best sages, having secured knowledge by the favour of the lord, he entered that best orb full of the three (gods) where Rudra shines. Seeing the ghost liberated the sage, being pleased in mind, thought about Rudra, the only wise one, saluted Agni, and praised that Kapardin.

Śaṅkukarṇa said:

35. I approach you, Kapardin, greater than the great, the protector, the only ancient man, the lord of deep meditation, the giver of desired objects, the sun, the fire, and the one mounted upon a tawny bull.

36-44. I seek the refuge of you, the essence of Brahman, placed in my heart, full of gold, possessing miraculous power, the beginning and the end (of the world), Rudra, staying in heaven, a great sage, of the nature of Brahman and pure, endowed with a thousand feet, eyes and heads of a thousand forms, and (remaining) beyond darkness. I salute the eternal Śambhu, the extreme limit of Brahman, the revered one, the lord, the lord of Hiraṇyagarbha, the three-eyed one, and also seek the refuge of (you), wherefrom the world has originated, and unto whom it will perish (i.e. merge), and by whom, i.e. Śiva,

1. Vālakhilyas—This is the name of a class of sages of the size of a thumb. Sixty thousand were produced from Brahmā's body and surround the chariot of the sun.

this entire (world) is pervaded. I salute you, who are without any characteristic mark, whose form cannot be seen, who are your own lord and of that of the soul, who are of a uniform nature, who are beyond Brahman, and who are the highest lord, other than whom nothing exists; whom the meditating saints who have become one with the highest soul. giving up meditation along with mystical letter forming the essential part of the hymn, after securing concentration see. I always bow to him who is beyond Brahman and of the highest form. I always salute him who is beyond Brahman, who has no qualification like a name, whose form cannot be seen. I seek your shelter, of the self-born one. I always salute your form which is beyond Brahman, which is not one, which, those engaged in Vedic recitals see to be without a body, to be without distinctions, to be one along with the knowledge of Brahman, from which Pradhāna (or Prakṛti) and the ancient Puruṣa obtain lustre, (which) the gods salute. I salute him, remaining in the lustre, the huge time, which is your form. I always seek the refuge of Guheśa; I approach the ancient Sthāṇu (i.e. Śiva), living on the mountain. I approach Śiva, Hari, (Śiva) having the moon on his head, the trident-holder. I seek your refuge.

45-47. Thus having praised the revered Kapardin, Śaṅkukarṇa also prostrated himself on the ground and uttered the highest (syllable) Om. At that moment only the great Phallus of Śiva appeared there. It was knowledge, joy, and very much like the fire having a crore of flames. Śaṅkukarṇa's soul was liberated. His pure soul moved everywhere. It merged into that pure Phallus. (Thus) a great wonder took place.

48-50. I have thus told you the secret and the greatness of Kapardin. Nobody knows it. Even a learned man is deluded through ignorance. He who would daily listen to this account that destroys sins, would with his soul being purified due to having abandoned sins, secure proximity with Rudra. He who being pure would always recite this hymn (called) Brahmapāra in the morning, noon and evening would secure the highest contemplation.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

The Greatness of Madhyameśa

Nārada said:

1-2a. O great king, at Vārāṇasī, there is the best (place called) Madhyameśa. At that place that great lord Mahādeva always rejoices with the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī) and is surrounded by the Rudras. Formerly the universal god Hṛṣīkeśa, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, lived there for a year (and was) always surrounded by devotees of Śiva.

2b-5a. With his entire body smeared with dust, and intent upon studying Rudra(-hymn), and observing the vow of the devotee of Śiva, Hari (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) worshipped Śiva. All those many disciples of him, intent upon celibacy, got knowledge from his mouth and saw Maheśvara.

5b-9a. That great revered lord Nīlalohita (i.e. Śiva), the giver of boons, directly gave an excellent boon to Kṛṣṇa. "Those devotees of meine who worship Govinda with proper rites, will have the knowledge belonging to Śiva, which is full of the world. Those who are devoted to me, should salute him, should worship him and should meditate upon him. There is no doubt that by my favour they will have no birth. The sin like killing a brāhmaṇa etc. of those who here see after bathing the lord of gods, the trident-holder, quickly perishes.

9b-10a. Those mortals who, though engaged in sinful acts, die here, also go to that highest place. No doubt should be raised in this matter.

10b-12. Those wise men who after bathing in Gaṅgā, after having worshipped the lord Mahādeva, Madhyameśvara, (obtain) knowledge, (practise) penance, and offer śrāddha and piṇḍa at this place are blessed. Each one of these rites that are performed, purifies (the members of his) family up to the seventh descendant. The fruit that a man gets here is tenfold of the fruit that he gets by bathing at Sannihati, when the Sun is eclipsed by Rāhu.

13. O great king, I have thus told you about the greatness of Madhyameśvara. He who listens to it with great devotion, goes to the highest position.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

Other Holy Places of Vārāṇasī

Nārada said:

1. O Yudhiṣṭhira, O great king, there are also other holy places situated in Vārāṇasī. Listen to (the description of) them.

2-9. The holy place superior to Prayāga (the place of the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā) is the auspicious Prayāga (a holy place at Vārāṇasī). Similarly there is a holy place called Viśvatīrtha, and also the excellent holy place Tālatīrtha. There is the holy place called Ākāśa, so also the excellent one called Ārṣabha (i.e. sacred to Ṛṣabha). There is the great holy place called Sunīla, and the excellent holy place called Gaurītīrtha. So also there is the holy place called Prājāpatya and there is the (holy place called) Svargadvāra. There is also the (holy place called) Jambukeśvara and the excellent Dharma. The Gayātīrtha is a great holy place, so also Mahānadī is a holy place. Nārāyaṇa is a great holy place and Vāyutīrtha is excellent. Jñānatīrtha is a great secret place, and Vārāhatīrtha is excellent. Yamatīrtha is auspicious; so also Sammūrtika is holy. O great king, there is the Agnitīrtha, and there is also the excellent holy place Kalaśeśvara. So also there are (the holy places called) Nāgatīrtha, Somatīrtha and Sūryatīrtha. Then there is the very secret (holy place) called Parvata; so also there is the excellent Maṇikarṇya. Ghaṭotkaca is the best holy place, so also there is the Śrītīrtha (sacred to) the Grandsire. Gaṅgātīrtha is (sacred) to the lord of gods. So also Yayātitīrtha is excellent. There is the sacred place holy to Kapila; so also there is (the holy place called) Someśa; so also there is (the holy place called) Brahmatīrtha.

10-12. When Brahmā had formerly come there to instal the ancient Liṅga, Viṣṇu installed that Liṅga of the lord at that time. Having bathed there and having come (to Viṣṇu), Brahmā said to Viṣṇu: "I had brought this Liṅga. Why did you instal it?" Viṣṇu said to him: "My devotion to Rudra is stronger than yours. Therefore I have installed the Liṅga. It will be named after you."

13. Similarly there is the holy place called Bhūteśvara, so

also there is Dharmasamudbhava. Then there is the auspicious Gandharvatīrtha, and there is the holy place called Vāhneya (i.e. sacred to Agni).

14-19. O Yudhiṣṭhira, there are holy places called Daurvāsika, Vyomatīrtha, Candratīrtha, Cintāṅgadeśvaratīrtha, and the auspicious Vidyādhareśvara. There are (also the holy places called) Kedāratīrtha, Ugra, and the excellent Kālañjara; so also Sārasvata, Prabhāsa, and the auspicious Rudrakarmahrada. There is the great holy place (called) Kokila, and there is the holy place called Mahālaya. So also there is the excellent holy place Hiraṇyagarbha. There is also the excellent holy place (called) Goprekṣa. Then there are the holy places (like) Upaśānta, Śiva, the excellent Vyāghreśvara, the great holy place Trilocana, so also Lokārka and Uttara. There is the holy place (called) Kapālamocana, destroying (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. (Then) there is the very holy place (called) Śukreśvara, so also there is the excellent Ānandapura. These are the holy places situated in Vārāṇasī. Even during crores of kalpas, it would not be possible to describe them in detail.

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

Gayā and Other Holy Places

Nārada said:

1. O lord, I have described to you in brief the greatness of Vārāṇasi, and the holy places (situated) in it. (Now) listen to (the description of) other holy places.

2-4. O descendant of Bharata, a man being restrained and calm, having gone to Gayā, obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice merely by going there. There is (a place) named Akṣayavaṭa known in the three worlds. O lord, oblations offered to the manes at that place become inexhaustible. Having bathed in the Mahānadī he should offer oblations to manes and deities. (By doing so) he would obtain (i.e. go to) the imperishable worlds and would liberate his family.

5-6. Then he should go to Brahmasaras served by (i.e. in) Brahmāraṇya. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) Puṇḍarīka (sacrifice) as the night obtains the dawn. Brahmā has raised (i.e. put up) the best sacrificial post in the lake. By circumambulating the sacrificial post he would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya sacrifice.

7-10. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to Dhenuka, well-known in the world. Living there even for a night and offering a sesamum-cow he with his soul purified of all sins, would certainly go to Soma's world. There is, O great king, even now the mark: A tawny cow alongwith her calf still roams over the mountain. The foot-prints of the cow with her calf are seen even now. Having bathed in (the water collected at) those foot-prints, O lord of kings, O best king, little sin that is (left) perishes, O descendant of Bharata.

11-12. Thence he should go to Gṛdhravaṭa, the place of the god, viz. the trident-holder (i.e. Śiva). He should bathe there and (apply) ashes after meeting (i.e. visiting) the bull-bannered god. A brāhmaṇa, thereby, would have observed a vow for twelve years. All the sin of other castes perishes.

13-18. Thence he should go to the high mountain resounding with music. O best among the Bharatas, the place sacred to Sāvitrī is seen there. A brāhmaṇa with a severe vow should offer the sandhyā(-prayer) there. By (doing) that he would have offered the sandhyā(-prayer) for twelve years. O best of Bharatas, Yonidvāra is there only. Having gone there a man is freed from the danger of (being conceived in) a womb. O king, a man who would live in Gayā for both the bright and dark fortnights (of a month), purifies his family up to the seventh (descendant). There is no doubt about this. Many sons would be desired by him (i.e. he would have many sons) even if he would go to Gayā all alone. He might perform a horse sacrifice or give a dark blue bull. Then O king, O lord of men, a pilgrim should go to Phalgu. (By doing so) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would reach (i.e. get) the highest well-being.

19-20a. Thence, being tranquil he should, O lord of kings, go to Dharmapṛṣṭha where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma (i.e. Righteousness) always lives. Having seen Dharma, he would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice.

20b-23. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent holy place of Brahmā. Having gone there and having been settled in a vow he should worship Brahmā. O descendant of Bharata, (thereby) he obtains the fruit of Rājasūya and horse sacrifices. Thence, O king, a pilgrim should go to Rājagṛha. Having bathed there he rejoices like Kakṣīvat.[1] The food is (there) regularly offered to Yakṣiṇī. The sacred Fire-Man formerly lived there. By the favour of Yakṣiṇī he is freed from (the sin) of killing a brāhmaṇa.

24-25. Thence he should go to Maṇināga. He would (thereby) obtain the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows. O king, the poison of the bite of a serpent does not affect him who enjoys the food regularly offered to Maṇināga. Having stayed there for a night he is freed from all sins.

26-29a. O king, thence he should go to the grove of Gautama, the brāhmaṇic sage. Having bathed in the pool of Ahalyā he would reach the highest position. Reaching Śrī, he gets excellent wealth. O pious one, there is a tank well-known in the three worlds. He should bathe there. (Thereby) he would obtain (the fruit of) a horse-sacrifice. The tank of the royal sage Janaka is honoured by gods. Having bathed there he would obtain Viṣṇu's heaven.

29b-30a. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Vināśana which frees (a man) from all sins. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Soma's world.

30b-36a. (Then) he should go to Gaṇḍakī produced from the water of all sacred places. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya sacrifice and goes to the Sun's world. Thence, O pious one, having entered the penance-grove of Dhruva he undoubtedly rejoices among guhyakas, O noble one. Having reached the river Karmadā resorted to by siddhas he obtains (the fruit of) Puṇḍarīka (sacrifice) and goes to Soma's world. Thence having reached the river Viśālā, well-known in the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice) and goes to heaven. Then O king, having reached Dhārā of (i.e. sacred to) Maheśvara he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and

1. Kakṣīvān—He was a famous sage and was credited with the authorship of a few Vedic hymns. He was the son of Uśij and Dīrghatamas.

would liberate his family. A pure man having reached the lake of the residents of heaven does not meet with a disaster and obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice).

36b-39. Then being restrained and calm he should go to (the sacred place called) Māheśapada. Having bathed at Māheśapada he would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice. O best among the Bharatas, there is a well-known, excellent sacred place taken away by the mighty Viṣṇu when, O lord of kings, it was being seized by a wicked demon Kūrmarūpa. O king, a man should bathe at that excellent holy place Tīrthakoṭi; (thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a Puṇḍarīka sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

40-46. Thence, O best of men, he should go to the best place of Nārāyaṇa, where, O descendant of Bharata, Viṣṇu always lives in the vicinity and where gods like Brahmā and others, sages with penance as their wealth, and also Ādityas, Vasus and Rudras wait upon Viṣṇu. The place of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu of wonderful deeds is known as Śālagrāma. Having gone to the imperishable Viṣṇu, the lord of the three worlds and the giver of boons, a man obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. O pious one, there is a pool freeing (a man) from all sins. In that pool all the four oceans are always present. Having bathed there, O lord of kings, a man would not meet with misery. Having gone to the everlasting, great god Viṣṇu, the giver of boons, he being free from debts, shines like Soma (i.e. the moon). Having approached Jātismara, he, pure and with his mind controlled, obtains the faculty of recollecting his former births after bathing there. There is no doubt about this.

47-48. Having gone to Vaṭeśvarapura and having worshipped Keśava (there) a man obtains (i.e. goes to) desired worlds by fasting there. There is no doubt about this. Thence, having gone to (the sacred place called) Vāmana, which destroys all sins and having worshipped Viṣṇu, he would not meet with a disaster.

49-50a. Having gone to Bharata's hermitage freeing (a man) from all sins he should there resort to Kauṣikī destroying great sins. A man (thereby) obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya sacrifice.

50b-59. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the excellent Campakāraṇya. Having stayed there for a night he would obtain the fruit of giving away a thousand cows. Then having reached the sacred place (called) Govinda liked by the best ones and having fasted there for a night, he would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice). O best among the Bharatas, having seen there the very lustrous lord of the world along with the goddess he would obtain (i.e. go to) the worlds of Mitra and Varuṇa. Having fasted there for three nights he would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice). Then, being controlled and with his diet controlled he having reached Kanyāvasatha obtains (i.e. goes to) the worlds of Manu Prajāpati, O best of the Bharatas. Sages of severe vows say that even the smallest gift which men give at Kanyāvasatha becomes inexhaustible. Having reached Niṣṭhā-vāsa, well-known in the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. O best among men, those men who give gifts at the confluence of Niṣṭhā, go to the good world of Brahmā. There is Vasiṣṭha's hermitage well-known in the three worlds. A man who bathes there obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice). Having reached Devakūṭa resorted to by hosts of divine sages he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would liberate his family.

60-73. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the lake of the sage Kauṣika, where Viśvāmitra, the son of Kauśika, obtained the highest welfare. O best among the Bharatas, the wise one should live for a month there, i.e. at Kauśikī. After a month he obtains the religious merit which is due to a horse sacrifice. He who would stay at Mahāhrada, the best among all holy places, does not meet with a disaster and would obtain much gold. Having (then) gone to Kumāra staying in Vīrāśrama he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Indra's world. O you who perpetuate the Kuru-family, having gone to the lake at Nandinī resorted to by gods he obtains that fruit which is due to a human sacrifice. Having bathed at Kālikā-saṅgama, the confluence of Kauśikī and Āruṇī, and having fasted there for three nights a wise man is freed from all sins. A wise man having reached Urvaśī-tīrtha and having bathed in Kumbhakarṇāśrama, is honoured in the world. Similarly, being restrained and calm he having bathed at Kokāmukha gets

the faculty of recollecting his former existence. This has been observed by the ancients. Reaching Sakṛt river a brāhmaṇa becomes blessed. With his soul freed from all sins he goes to heaven. Having reached Ṛṣabhadvīpa he should resort to Krauñcaniṣūdana. Having bathed at Sarasvatī he seated in an aeroplane shines. O great king, Audyānaka is a great holy place resorted to by sages. He should bathe there. (By doing so) he is freed from all sins. There is no doubt that a man reaching the holy Brahmatīrtha resorted to by brāhmaṇic sages obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya sacrifice. Then having reached Campā and having bathed in Bhāgīrathī and having reached Daṇḍārpaṇa he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. Thence a man should go to the auspicious Lāviḍhikā resorted to by the holy ones. (By that) he obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya sacrifice and seated in an aeroplane he is honoured.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

Savidyā Sandhyā, Lauhitya, Karatoyā, etc.

Nārada said:

1-2. Then having reached Savidyā Sandhyā, the excellent holy place and having bathed there a man becomes learned. There is no doubt about this. Having reached the holy place Lauhitya, made the chief holy place by Rāma in olden days, he would obtain much gold.

3. Having reached Karatoyā a man who fasts (there) for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice, and goes to Indra's world.

4. O lord of kings, the wise say that a man obtains ten times (the fruit of an Aśvamedha by fasting) at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean.

5. O descendant of Bharata, he who, after having reached the yonder island in Gaṅgā, bathes there and fasts for three nights would obtain all desired objects.

6-7. Then having gone to the river Vaitaraṇī which frees (a person) from sins and reaching Virāja tīrtha, he shines like the moon. (By bathing) at Prabhava he purifies his family and destroys all sin. Obtaining the fruit of (the gift of) a thousand cows he purifies his family.

8-9. A pure man living at the confluence of Śoṇa and Jyotirathī after offering oblations to manes and deities, would get the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. Having bathed at Vaṁśagulma at the source of Śoṇa and Narmadā he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice, O best among the Kurus.

10-11. A man having reached Ṛṣabhatīrtha in Kośala and having fasted there for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice. Reaching Kālatīrtha in Kośala a man should bathe (there). There is no doubt that he obtains the fruit eleven times greater than that of (giving away) a bull.

12-15. Having bathed at Puṣpavatī, a man who has fasted for three nights, would obtain the fruit (of giving away) a thousand cows and would liberate his family. Then, having with a restrained mind bathed at the Badarikātīrtha a man obtains long life and goes to heaven. Then reaching Mahendra resorted to by (Paraśurāma) the son of Jamadagni a man who bathes at Rāmatīrtha, obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. The field (i.e. place) of Mātaṅga is just there, O best of Bharatas. O king, having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows.

16-18. Having reached Śrīparvata he should bathe at the bank of the river. Thereby he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to the great welfare. On Śrīparvata Mahādeva of great lustre and highly delighted lived. So also Brahmā surrounded by gods (lived there). A pure man with his mind controlled obtains after bathing at the Devahrada (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and obtains great welfare.

19-20. Having gone to the Ṛṣabha mountain in the Bhāṇḍa (region) which is adored by gods he obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya and rejoices in heaven. Thence a man should go to Kāverī thronged by hosts of celestial nymphs. O king, having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows.

21-30a. He should, at that holy place of the ocean, bathe at

Kanyātīrtha. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is freed from all sins. Then, O lord of kings, having reached Gokarṇa in the sea, revered by people, where gods like Brahmā and others, all sages with penance as their wealth, goblins, yakṣas, ghosts, kinnaras with great serpents, siddhas, cāraṇas, gandharvas, human beings, snakes, rivers, oceans and mountains wait upon the lord of Umā, a man having fasted for three nights and having worshipped the lord (Śiva) obtains (the fruit of) ten horse sacrifices and the status of the chief of Śiva's attendants. Having fasted for twelve nights, a man is blessed. There only is the place of Gāyatrī well-known in three worlds. Having stayed there for three nights a man would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. This is confirmed by direct evidence of brāhmaṇas, O king. A twice-born, born of the mixture of castes by unlawful inter-marriage, who recites the Gāyatrī (-hymn) there, is furnished with a religious verse or a song(?), O king. Sāvitrī, however, goes away from a non-brāhmaṇa reciting (Gāyatrī-hymn). O brāhmaṇa-sage, having reached the tank at Saṁvarta, difficult to be reached, a man partakes of handsomeness (i.e. becomes handsome) and becomes fortunate.

30b-31a. Thence having reached Veṇā he should offer oblations to the manes and deities. A man (thereby) obtains an aeroplane to which peacocks and swans are yoked.

31b-33a. Thence having reached Godāvarī always resorted to by siddhas, he obtains (the fruit of) a Gavāmaya and goes to the world of Vāyu. Having bathed at the confluence of Veṇā he would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya. Having bathed at Varadāsaṅgama, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows.

33b-39. A man having reached Brahmasthūṇā, and having fasted (there) for three nights, would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows, and he goes to heaven. Being restrained and calm, he, having reached Kubjavana, and having fasted for three nights and bathed there, would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. Then having bathed (i.e. he should bathe) in Devahrada formed in the water of Kṛṣṇaveṇā, and also in Jyotirmātra tank, and in Kanyāśrama, where, having performed a hundred sacrifices, (Indra) the lord

of gods, went to heaven. By merely going there, a man would obtain (the fruit of) a hundred Agniṣṭoma sacrifices. Having bathed in the Sarvadevahrada, he would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. A man having bathed in the Jātimātrahrada has (the faculty of) recollecting his former births. Then he should go to the tank (in) the very auspicious Payoṣṇī, the best of rivers. A man engaged in worshipping his manes and deities (there), would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. O great king, having reached Daṇḍaka-forest he should bathe there.

40-42. (He should also bathe) after going to the hermitage of Śarabhaṅga, and also of the magnanimous Śuka. He does not meet with a disaster, and purifies his own family. Thence he should go to Sūryāraka, resorted to by Jamadagni. A man having bathed at Rāmatīrtha would obtain much gold. Being controlled and having restrained his diet, he, after having bathed at Saptagodāvarī, obtains great religious merit, and goes to heaven.

43-52. Thence, being restrained and having controlled his diet, a man should go to (the holy place called) Devapatha. He obtains that merit which is obtained by performing (the sacrifice named) Devasatra. Being a religious student and with his senses controlled, he should reach Tuṅgakāraṇya where formerly the eloquent one taught the sages the Vedas that were lost. The son of the sage Aṅgiras formerly sat on the upper garments of the great sages, O descendant of Bharata. Due to Oṁkāra that was properly and correctly pronounced, that which was repeated (-ly thought) by a sage stood before him. There, the sages, the gods, Varuṇa, Agni, Prajāpati, god Hari Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), Śiva, also the revered and very lustrous Brahmā, along with the gods appointed the very lustrous Bhṛgu to officiate as a priest at the sacrifice. Then the revered one settled all the sages according to the rite as observed by the gods and in the proper manner (in their proper positions). Gods and sages properly pleased by (their) portion of ghee went happily to the three worlds. O best king, the sin of a person—a woman or a man—who enters that forest, suddenly perishes. A wise man being controlled and with his diet restrained, should stay there for a month.

(Thereby) he would go to Brahmā's world and again purifies his family (also).

53-57a. Having reached Medhāvana, a man should offer oblations to manes and deities. (By doing so) he gets (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice), and also memory and intelligence. Having gone to Kālañjara there, he would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. O king, he should practice self-control on the Kālañjara mountain. The man is honoured in heaven. There is no doubt about it. Thence, O lord of people, having reached the river Mandākinī, that frees (people) from sins, on Citrakūṭa, the best of the mountains (he should bathe there). A man who bathes here and is engaged in worshipping manes and deities obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice, and goes to the best position (i.e. salvation).

57b-62a. O lord of kings, thence he should go to the excellent Guhasthāna, where god Mahāsena (i.e. Kārtikeya) is always present, O king. O best of men, a man attains perfection merely by going there. A man having bathed at Koṭitīrtha obtains the fruit of (presenting) a thousand cows. Turning right, a man should go to Yaśaḥsthāna. Having gone to Mahādeva, he shines like the moon. O best of the Bharatas, there is a well-known tank where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, the four oceans dwell. O lord of kings, a man having bathed and circumambulated there, and being restrained and purified would go to the best state (i.e. salvation).

62b-64a. O best of Kurus, thence he should go to the great Śṛṅgaverapura where formerly the very wise Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, crossed (the river). A man observing chastity and with his senses controlled, has his sins shaken off and obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya after bathing in Gaṅgā.

64b-100. Thence he should go to the place of the intelligent god. Having approached Mahādeva, and having worshipped him, and having circumambulated, O king, a man would become the chief of the attendants of Śiva. O lord of kings, a man should thence go to Prayāga which is extolled by the sages, where gods like Brahmā and others, the quarters with the lords of quarters, the regents of the quarters, siddhas, the devoted manes, sages led by Sanatkumāra, also nāgas, suparṇas, siddhas, celibates, rivers, oceans, gandharvas, celestial nymphs (stay),

and also the revered Viṣṇu led by Brahmā stays. There are three tanks. Among them (flows) Gaṅgā, honoured by the Holy Places and going beyond Prayāga. At that place, Yamunā, Sun's daughter, purifying the world, and well-known in the three worlds, has joined Gaṅgā. The buttocks of earth are said to be between Gaṅgā and Yamunā. The sages know Prayāga to be the end of the buttocks, i.e. the lap. Prayāga has Pratiṣṭhāna (so also) both Kambala and Aśvatara. Similarly the holy place Bhogavatī is the altar of Prajāpati. O Yudhiṣṭhira, there Vedas and sacrifices, being embodied, wait upon Prajāpati ; and the highly innocent sages and sovereigns offer sacrifices to gods, O king. O descendant of Bharata, there is nothing holier than that in the three worlds. O lord, Prayāga is superior to all holy places due to its glory. By hearing about that holy place, by mentioning its name, or by bowing (his) head (before it), a man is freed from all sins. He, of a severe vow, who bathes there at the confluence, obtains great religious merit of the Rājasūya and horse sacrifice. This is the place of sacrifices of the gods. The story about it (is) : O descendant of Bharata, whatever little is given there, becomes great. Even by the words of gods or of people, you should not disregard your thought of dying at Prayāga. There are ten thousand holy places, and others sixty crores in number, the presence of (all of) which is said to be here only, O descendant of Kuru. A man, who bathes at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, gets the same religious merit as accrues to one who has studied the four Vedas, or to those who speak the truth. Then there is the excellent holy place Bhogavatī of (i.e. sacred to) Vāsuki. He, who bathes there, would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice. There is the holy place (called) Haṁsaprapatana, well-known in the three worlds. There is also (the holy place called) Daśāśvamedhika on (the bank of) Gaṅgā, O descendant of Kuru. Here Gaṅgā has come down as at Kurukṣetra. A speciality is—at Kanakhala Prayāga becomes (a) great (holy place). If after doing a hundred bad deeds a man resorts to Gaṅgā, the water of Gaṅgā burns (i.e. removes) all those (sins) as fire burns fuel. The water of Gaṅgā burns (i.e. removes) all that as fire burns a heap of cotton. Every (holy place) is auspicious in Kṛtayuga ; Puṣkara is said to be so in Tretāyuga. Kurukṣetra is said

to be so in Dvāparayuga, and Gaṅgā in Kaliyuga. One should practice penance at Puṣkara and he should give a gift at Mahālaya. One should get onto (i.e. enter) fire at Malaya and anāśana(?)at Bhṛgutuṅga, and the water of Gaṅgā at Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra and the places in between (madhyageṣu ?). A creature (thus) instantly liberates seven preceding and seven succeeding (members of his family). Gaṅgā, by her (mere) mention purifies sins; by being seen gives merit; by bathing (in the stream) and drinking her water she purifies the family up to the seventh member. O king, as long as the bone of a man touches the water of Gaṅgā, the man is honoured in heaven. As (already) mentioned, having resorted to the auspicious places and holy places, a man, obtaining religious merit, becomes a resident of the other world. "There is no holy place like Gaṅgā, there is no god greater than Viṣṇu, there is none superior to brāhmaṇas." Thus spoke the Grandsire. That region, up to the limit of a yojana, where (i.e. through which) Gaṅgā flows, should be known as the region of siddhas (as) it has resorted to the bank of Gaṅgā. This is the truth in the minds of the twice-born and the good. A man should mutter (about) liberation into the ear of a viruous man or a follower. This is meritorious, this is pure, this leads to heaven, this gives happiness. This is the most holy, purifying, excellent way of life. This is the secret of the sages, which frees (a person) from all sins. Having studied in the midst of brāhmaṇas, he should secure purity. It is glorious, it leads to heaven, it is very meritorious, it puts an end to (one's) enemies, it is auspicious. The description of the multitude of holy places is the best producer of intelligence. A man having no son gets a son. A poor man would obtain wealth. A king conquers the earth. A vaiśya would obtain wealth. A śūdra obtains his desired objects, and a brāhmaṇa who recites (the Vedas) masters them. He who would daily listen to this meritorious (account of) the holy places, which is always pure, obtains the (faculty of) recollecting his former births and rejoices in heaven.

101-106. I have described the holy places that are accessible and that are inaccessible. With a desire to visit all the holy places a man should even go to them mentally. (Visits to) these were undertaken by Vasus, Sādhyas, Ādityas, Maruts, Aśvins,

sages like gods, desiring merit. O you descendant of Kuru, O you of a good vow, you too visit the holy places in this manner. Merit enhances by merit. The holy places are reached through piety and through the knowledge of the scriptures by the good people, whose senses are purified, and who follow the wise. A man who is not one who has not done (good) deeds, who is not foolish, who is not impure, who is not a thief, whose mind is not crooked (alone) bathes at the holy places, O descendant of Kuru. O dear one, you of a proper conduct, and always observing piety, have always gratified your manes and all paternal great-grandfathers, and all gods led by Brahmā and along with groups of sages.

Vasiṣṭha said:

107. You, O pious one, have always pleased (these) by means of your righteousness. On the earth you will obtain great, eternal fame like Dilīpa.

Nārada said:

108. Speaking thus and advising (Yudhiṣṭhira), the revered sage Vasiṣṭha, being pleased, disappeared there only with a pleased mind.

109-123. O best of the Kurus, by perceiving the truth of the sacred treatises and by the words of Vasiṣṭha, Dilīpa crossed the earth. O glorious one, the very meritorious pilgrimage, freeing one from all sins, is effective in (i.e. by visiting) Pratiṣṭhāna. He who wanders over the earth in this manner, enjoys after death the entire fruit of a hundred horse sacrifices. O king, you will obtain eight times the excellent merit which formerly king Dilīpa had secured, O son of Kuntī. Since you will lead the sages, you will have eightfold fruit. O descendant of Bharata, these sacred places are crowded with the hosts of demons. O descendant of Kuru, nobody except you can have an access (to these places). He who, getting up at daybreak, would recite this account of the divine sages, depending on all the holy places, is freed from all sins. The principal sages like Vālmīki and Kaśyapa, Ātreya and Kauṇḍinya, Viśvāmitra and Gautama, Asita and Devala, Mārkaṇḍeya and Gālava, also

Bharadvāja's disciple, sage Uddālaka, Śaunaka with his son, Vyāsa the best among the ascetics, the best sage Durvāsas, Jābāli of great penance—all these best sages, with penance as their wealth, deserve to be respected by you. O glorious one, with them go to these sacred places. You will obtain great fame like king Mahābhiṣa. O best among the Kurus, with your righteousness you shine like the pious Yayāti or like king Purūravas, like king Bhagīratha or like Rāma, who was well-known. As formerly (Indra), the killer of Vṛtra, and the king of gods, burnt (i.e. destroyed) all his enemies, and being free from distress, protected the three worlds, so you will protect your subjects after destroying your enemies. O lotus-eyed one, having obtained the earth secured by your good works, you will obtain fame like Kārtavīrya Arjuna.

Sūta said:

124-127. Having spoken like this, and having advised holy great king, the revered sage Nārada disappeared there only. The lord of the earth, Yudhiṣṭhira, of a good vow, respectfully visited along with the sages all the sacred places. O all sages, he who would recite or listen to the account about the pilgrimage told by me, becomes free from all sins. I have told you the entire fact. What more do you want to hear ? There is nothing that cannot be told by me about the sages of pious fame.

CHAPTER FORTY

Mārkaṇḍeya Recommends Pilgrimage to Prayāga

Sūta said:

1-5. O you of good vows, I have thus described the holy places, the bodies of Viṣṇu. A man becomes liberated by contact with any one of these. To hear about the holy places is blessed; to resort to the holy places is blessed. In Kaliyuga, there is no other means for destroying the heap of sins. He who

everyday says, 'I will stay at a holy place; I will bathe at a holy place', goes to the highest principle. By his merely talking about the holy places his sins perish. O you of best vows, the holy places resorted to by the blessed ones are indeed blessed. By resorting to the holy place only, Nārāyaṇa, the author of the world is worshipped. There is no higher place than the holy places.

6-11. Men should always without fail worship a brāhmaṇa, tulasī (-plant), aśvattha, collection of holy places, and the greatest lord Viṣṇu. O best sages, the seniors look upon worshipping the brāhmaṇas especially as superior to bathing at all the sacred places. Therefore, a wise man should everyday resort to the auspicious feet of a brāhmaṇa, which are full of all sacred places. They are superior to holy places. One should circumambulate aśvattha (tree), tulasī (plant) and cows. Obtaining the fruit of (visiting) all holy places he is honoured in Viṣṇu's world. Therefore, a man should destroy (the fruits of) his evil deeds by resorting to a holy place. Otherwise he goes to hell and becomes calm only after exhausting (the fruits of) his acts. Sinners live in hell. A meritorious person obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven. Therefore, a wise man should resort to an auspicious, holy place.

The sages said:

12-13. O you of a good vow, we have heard about the holy places along with their greatness. Now we desire to hear the distinguishing features of Prayāga. O Sūta, since you formerly described Prayāga in brief, (now) we desire to hear about it in detail. O Sūta, please describe it to us.

Sūta said:

14-30. O illustrious ones of good vows, you have well asked about Prayāga. I shall gladly give you a description of Prayāga, which was formerly narrated by Mārkaṇḍeya to the son of Pāṇḍu. When the Bhārata (war) was over, and Pṛthā's son (i.e. Yudhiṣṭhira) had obtained the kingdom, for some time, king Yudhiṣṭhira, Kuntī's son, was tormented by the grief (i.e. the bereavement) of his (cousin-) brothers, and thought again and

again: 'King Duryodhana was the lord of eleven divisions of the army. All those (Kauravas), having frequently tormented us, are dead. (We) the five Pāṇḍavas, having resorted to Vāsudeva (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), have survived. (How did we kill) Droṇa, Bhīṣma, very mighty Karṇa, and king Duryodhana with his brothers and sons? All the kings, thinking themselves to be brave, have been killed. What is the use of the pleasures or of life without the kingdom? Alas, (what a misery) !' Thinking likethis the king was distressed. Motionless and devoid of energy he remained with his face a little bent down. When the king regained consciousness, he repeatedly thought: 'Which course or vow should I practice? or which sacred place—bathing where a man goes to the world of Viṣṇu (should I resort to) by which I shall be free from the blemish due to the great sin (of killing my kinsmen)? How shall I ask Kṛṣṇa who got the great thing done? How shall I ask Dhṛtarāṣṭra whose hundred sons are killed? How shall I ask Vyāsa whose family has met with destruction?' In this way Dharma's son Yudhiṣṭhira was distressed. All the (other) Pāṇḍavas wept due to being distressed by the grief of their brother. The noble ones who had resorted to the Pāṇḍavas and who had gathered there also (wept). Kuntī, Draupadī and others that had gathered there, fell on the ground on all sides and wept. Mārkaṇḍa was at Vārāṇasī. He came to know that Yudhiṣṭhira was distressed, weeping and very unhappy. In a very short time Mārkaṇḍa of great penance reached Hastināpura, and stood at the gate of the royal palace. The doorkeeper too, having seen him, quickly reported (his arrival) to the king. "The sage Mārkaṇḍa, desiring to see you, stands at the gate." The son of Dharma (i.e. Yudhiṣṭhira) quickly came to the door, and eagerly said:

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

31-33a. Welcome to you, O you highly intelligent one. Welcome to you, O great sage. Today my existence is fruitful. Today my family is purified. O great sage, when you are seen today, my dead ancestors are gratified.

Having seated him on the throne, the noble Yudhiṣṭhira honoured that sage with (giving water for) washing his feet, for purifying himself, and by offering worship to him.

33b-34. Then Mārkaṇḍa said to him: "O lord, I am honoured by you. O king, tell me quickly why you hastened. Tell me why you are distressed."

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

35. O great sage, knowing what occurred to us for (securing) the kingdom the holy one has come here.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

36-38. O king, of mighty arms, hear. Where Dharma (i.e. righteousness) is well-settled there no sin is seen in the case of a wise man resorting to fighting on the battlefield, especially in the case of a kṣatriya (fighting) in accordance with his duty? Bearing this in mind, you should not think (that you have committed) a sin.

Then king Yudhiṣṭhira, saluting the sage by (bowing down) his head (said): "O sage, I am asking you who always (directly) see the three times. Tell me in brief (that) by which I shall be free from the blemish."

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

39-40. O illustrious king listen, since you ask me. Thus Sāṁkhya, Yoga, and the sacred places have been narrated; O lord, again the holy brāhmaṇas have formerly declared that going to Prayāga is best for men doing righteous deeds.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

The Greatness of Prayāga

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-2. O revered sir, I desire to hear how in the former kalpa men went there to Prayāga. What is the course of (i.e. for) the dead there? What is the fruit which those who bathe there get?

Tell me also the fruit which those who stay in Prayāga get. Tell me all this. I have great curiosity.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

3-22. O lord, O dear, I shall tell you what is desirable, and what is (its) fruit, which I heard while being told to brāhmaṇas and sages in olden days. From Prayāga, Pratiṣṭhāna, up to Dharmakī Vāsukī pool, there are the two nāgas. This is the region of (i.e. sacred to) Prajāpati, which is known in the three worlds. Having bathed here men go to heaven. Those that die here are not reborn. There gods like Brahmā, having come together protect (everything). There are many other holy places which destroy all sins. O king, it is not possible to describe them even by (spending) many hundred years. I shall give you the description of Prayāga in brief. Sixty thousand bows protect the Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā). The Sun with the seven horses always protects Yamunā. Indra himself particularly protects Prayāga. Viṣṇu, along with the gods, protects the highly esteemed region. Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva), with the trident in his hand, always protects that (famous) Vaṭa. The god protects the auspicious place which removes all sins. Men given to impiety do not go to that place. O king, all that sin—small or smaller—of a man who remembers Prayāga vanishes. A man, merely by seeing that holy place, or even by uttering its name, or even by taking clay from there, is free from sin. O lord of kings, there are five pools in (i.e. through) which Gaṅgā (flows). The sin of a man goes away the moment he enters Prayāga. A man who remembers Gaṅgā within a distance of thousands of yojanas, gets the highest position (i.e. salvation), even if he is a man of wicked deeds. By reciting (the name of Gaṅgā) a man is free from sins. By seeing (her) he sees (i.e. gets) happiness. By bathing in and drinking (the water of Gaṅgā) he purifies his family up to the seventh (descendant). A man who is truthful, who has conquered his anger, who has greatly resorted to harmlessness, who follows the proper course of conduct, who knows the truth, who is engaged in the well-being of cows and brāhmaṇas, is freed from sin after bathing in between (i.e. at the confluence of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā. He properly obtains many objects that he has thought of in his mind. Thence having gone to Prayāga, he

should live there with restraint for a month and should offer oblations to gods. (Thereby) he gets his desired objects and is everywhere born in a high family. God Maheśvara is always actually present where the illustrious goddess Yamunā, the daughter of the Sun, well-known in the three worlds, goes. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the auspicious Prayāga is difficult to be reached by human beings. O lord of kings, having bathed there, gods, demons, gandharvas, sages, siddhas and cāraṇas, are honoured in heaven.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

Importance of Giving a Cow at Prayāga

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-24. O king, hear again the greatness of Prayāga, going where, a man is freed from all sins. There is no doubt about it. Except Prayāga, there is absolutely no eternal place for the afflicted and the poor who are of a firm resolve. A man who having reached the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, would cast his life, goes in an aeroplane having the colour of heated gold and resembling the sun, (and) rejoices in heaven in the company of gandharvas and celestial nymphs. The best sages say that (such) a man obtains desired objects. He rejoices with all auspicious things, divine and full of gems, is accompanied by various flags and surrounded by excellent damsels. He when asleep is awakened by the sound of songs and musical instruments. As long as he does not call to mind (his earthly) existence (or life), he is honoured in heaven. Then deprived of heaven, having fallen from there due to the (fruit of) his deeds being exhausted, he is born in a rich family full of (i.e. accomplished with) gold and gems. He recollects that holy place, and merely by remembering it he goes there. The best sages say that a man, being in a region or in a forest or in a foreign country, or in his own house, who would cast his life (there) by just remembering

Prayāga, obtains (i.e. goes to) Brahmā's world, where the golden land is full of all desired objects, and to which world the seers and sages go. Due to the deeds done by him in this world a man rejoices along with the sages on the charming, auspicious bank of Mandākinī crowded with thousands of women. In heaven he is honoured by siddhas, cāraṇas, gandharvas and deities. Then fallen from heaven, he would be a lord in Jambudvīpa. Then repeatedly thinking about auspicious deeds, he undoubtedly becomes virtuous and endowed with wealth in this world. He who is well-settled in truthfulness by deeds, speech and mind, and gives gifts in between (the region of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā (gets liberation). He, who accepts gold, jewels, pearls or grains at his own rite or in honour of the manes, or in the worship of deities, has his visit to the holy places rendered fruitless as long as he gets the fruit of that (i.e. accepting gifts). Thus a man should not accept (gifts) at a holy place and a sanctuary. A twice-born should be careful about all omens. He who gives a tawny, red-coloured, golden-horned, silver-hoofed milch-cow with a piece of cloth round her neck (to a brāhmaṇa) at Prayāga (gets liberation). Having properly secured at Prayāga a learned, good, tranquil, pious brāhmaṇa, master of the Vedas, and wearing white garments, that cow should be given to him at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā. Costly garments, various jewels (should also be given). The man (who gives such a gift) is honoured in heaven for as many thousand years as there is hair on the limbs of the cow, O best one. The cow is born there where he is born. Due to that act he does not see (i.e. go to) horrible hell. Having reached Uttara Kuru, he rejoices for an inexhaustible period. (Instead of giving) hundreds and thousands of bulls he should give one milch-cow. One cow would liberate sons, wife and servants. Therefore, of all gifts, the gift of a cow is the best. In a terrible, insurmountable difficulty due to a horrible sin, a cow alone protects (a man). Therefore (a cow) should be given to a brāhmaṇa.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

The Fruit of Visiting Prayāga

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O sage, as you have narrated the greatness of Prayāga, I am undoubtedly being freed from sins.

2. O revered one, in what manner should people of religious resolve go (there)? O great sage, tell me about the rite which is declared (to be performed) at Prayāga.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

3-27. O dear, I shall tell you the entire sequence of the religious rites to be performed during the pilgrimage. O best of Kurus, I will tell you the fruit accruing to him who mounted upon a bull goes to Prayāga united with gods. Due to the anger of bull he lives in a terrible hell. From such a man his dead ancestors do not accept water (offered by him); but he who would bathe his sons and all children and would make them drink (water at the holy place) like himself and would cause gifts to be given to brāhmaṇas (is liberated). A man who, due to his desire for (showing off) his affluence or to delusion, would go (to a holy place) in a vehicle, his (visit to the) holy place is fruitless. Therefore, a man should avoid (going in) a vehicle. He who (in the region) between Gaṅgā and Yamunā, gives his daughter (in marriage) according to the Ārṣa form of marriage and according to his wealth, does not see (i.e. go to) a terrible hell due to that deed. Having gone to Uttara Kuru he rejoices for an inexhaustible period. He obtains sons and wife that are pious and endowed with righteousness. There he should give gifts in accordance with his wealth. There is no doubt that due to the fruit of (the visit to) the holy place only, he prospers. O lord of kings, he stays in heaven till deluge. He who having resorted to the root of the Vaṭa (tree), would cast his life, goes to Rudra's world after having crossed all (other) worlds. There the twelve suns resorting to Rudra shine. They completely burn the entire world. (Only) the root of the Vaṭa (tree), where, when the world is (but) one ocean, when the moon, the sun, and the wind have perished, Viṣṇu born again and again, sleeps, is not burnt. Gods, demons,

gandharvas, sages, siddhas, cāraṇas always resort to that holy place on the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā. O lord of kings, they go there. It is united with Prayāga. There gods like Brahmā, quarters and lords of quarters, regents of quarters, sādhyas, the manes liked by people, and also great sages led by Sanatkumāra, and other brāhmaṇic sages like Aṅgiras, also nāgas, siddhas, suparṇas, those moving in the sky, rivers, oceans, mountains, nāgas and also vidyādharas (stay). The revered Viṣṇu led by Prajāpati (i.e. Brahmā) also stays there. O best of kings, Prayāga well-known in the three worlds and (lying) between Gaṅgā and Yamunā is said to be the hip and the loin of the earth. O descendant of Bharata, there is nothing more sacred than it in the three worlds. By hearing (the description) of that holy place, even by mentioning its name, or securing the clay from that place, a man is freed from sins. He who, of a severe vow, bathes there at the confluence, obtains the same fruit as Rājasūya and Aśvamedha (sacrifices) (give). O dear one, even you should not change your mind to go to Prayāga even by (i.e. depending upon) the words of the Vedas, or of the people. O descendant of Kuru, the presence of ten thousand holy places and sixty crore others is here only. He who casts his life at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā follows the same course, as a wise man endowed with abstract meditation and born of good parents follows. O Yudhiṣṭhira, those who have not visited Prayāga, well-known in the three worlds, do not (really) live in the world. Thus seeing that holy place—the highest place—Prayāga, a man is free from all sins as the Moon is from Rāhu.

28-46a. On the right bank of Yamunā, there are the two Nāgas, Kambala and Aśvatara. By bathing there and drinking (water) there, a man is freed from all sins. Having gone to that (holy) place of the wise Mahādeva, a man liberates ten preceding and ten succeeding (generations). Having bathed there, the man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. He obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven till deluge. O descendant of Bharata, in the eastern side of Gaṅgā, in the ocean there is a pool (known as) Pratiṣṭhāna, well-known in the three worlds. If a chaste man, with his anger controlled, lives there for three nights, he is freed from all sins, and would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. To the north of Pratiṣṭhāna, and to the east of Bhāgīrathī, there is

the holy place (called) Haṁsaprapatana, well-known in the three worlds. O descendant of Bharata, a man, merely by bathing there, gets the fruit of a horse sacrifice. He is honoured in heaven as long as the moon and the sun (last). A man free from jealousy, who would offer oblations of water to his dead ancestors at the large sandy bank called Urvaśīpulina, white like swans, enjoys heaven with manes, O king, for sixty hundred years. There he is always worshipped by sages, gandharvas and kinnaras. Then having been deprived of heaven and having fallen from there due to the exhaustion of (the fruit of) his acts, he obtains a hundred maidens like Urvaśī. O king, he becomes an enjoyer (i.e. a master) of a hundred thousand cows. He is awakened by the sound of a girdle and anklets. Having enjoyed many pleasures, he gets (i.e. goes) to that holy place again. He who has the seat of the Kuśa grass, who is always restrained and has his senses controlled, would become master of pleasures by eating once a day for a month (at the holy place). He obtains a hundred women adorned with (ornaments of) gold. He would also be the great master of pleasures on the earth up to the ocean. He, the king, becomes the enjoyer of ten thousand villages. Possessing wealth and grains he is always a donor. Having enjoyed many pleasures he again remembers that holy place. A chaste man with his senses conquered and endowed with abstract meditation, having fasted at that charming Vaṭa, would obtain the knowledge of Brahman. He who having secured a holy bath, would cast his life, is honoured in heaven for a crore years. Then deprived of heaven, and dropped from there due to the exhaustion of (the fruit of) his acts, he is born as a handsome (child) in a family rich with gold, jewels and pearls.

46b-57. Thence he should go to Bhogavatī, to the north of Vāsukī. There is another great holy place called Daśāśvamedhaka. Having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. He becomes rich with wealth, handsome and diligent. By merely going there he would obtain that religious merit which is there in (i.e. which is obtained by the recital of) the four Vedas, which is the fruit in (i.e. obtained by) those who speak the truth, and the piety that exists in harmlessness. Gaṅgā is like Kurukṣetra wherever a bath is taken in her (stream). She has tenfold virtue of Kurukṣetra (at a place) where she is joined

by Sindhu. That place where the glorious Gaṅgā, having many sacred places and the wealth of penance (flows) should be known as a perfect (holy place). No doubt should be raised about it. She liberates the mortals on the earth, nāgas below, and she liberates gods in heaven. Therefore she is said to be Tripathagā (i.e. flowing in three streams). As long as the bones of a man remain in Gaṅgā, till that time—for thousands of years—he is honoured in heaven. She is the greatest holy place among places, and the best river among rivers. She gives salvation to all creatures, even to great sinners. Gaṅgā is easily accessible everywhere. She is inaccessible at three places: at Gaṅgādvāra, Prayāga and at the confluence of Gagṅā and the ocean. Those, who, having bathed there, go to heaven, are not reborn. There is no other recourse like Gaṅgā for all beings whose minds are smitten with sins and who desire a refuge. She who is the (most) pure of the pure (objects), the most auspicious of the auspicious (objects), has fallen from the head of Śiva, removes all sins, and is holy.

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

The Fruit of Bathing in the Confluence at Prayāga

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-20a. O king, hear again the greatness of Prayāga, having heard which a man is freed from all sins. There is no doubt about it. That (famous) Mānasa lake is on the left bank of Gaṅgā. Having fasted (there) for three nights a man would obtain all his desired objects. A man obtains that fruit when he remembers the holy place, which he would obtain by giving a cow, land, or gold. A man who, with or without a desire, dies in Gaṅgā, lives in heaven after death, and does not see (i.e. go to) hell. He is awakened by the music of that host of celestial nymphs from his sleep. He goes in an aeroplane to which swans and cranes are yoked. O lord of kings, he enjoys for many years—six thousand years. Then being deprived of

heaven and having fallen from there due to (the fruit of) his acts being exhausted, he is born in a family rich with gold, jewels and pearls. There are sixty thousand sixty hundred holy places. They go to the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā in the month of Māgha. That fruit which one gets by properly giving away a thousand cows is had by bathing for three days at Prayāga in the month of Māgha. He who would practise the vow of the five fires between (i.e. at the confluence of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā, is defectless in limbs, is free from diseases and has the five senses (intact). For as many thousand years as the number of pores of hair are there on his body, he is honoured in heaven. Then having fallen from heaven he would be the lord of Jambudvīpa. The man enjoying many pleasures resorts to that holy place. He who would enter water at the confluence well-known in the world, is freed from all sins as the Moon eclipsed by Rāhu (becomes free). He obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of Soma and rejoices with Soma. Being served by sages and gandharvas he obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven for sixty thousand sixty hundred years. Fallen (from there) he is born in an affluent family. The man who with his head down and feet up would drink (i.e. take in) the flame, is honoured for a hundred thousand years in heaven. Having fallen from there, O lord of kings, he becomes a performer of agnihotra. Having enjoyed many pleasures, the man resorts to that holy place. He who cuts off his body and offers (the pieces of) it to the birds (is honoured in heaven). Hear the fruit of him (i.e. which he gets), who (i.e. whose body) is enjoyed by birds. For a hundred thousand years he is honoured in the world of Soma. Then having fallen from heaven he becomes (i.e. is born as) a pious, virtuous, handsome, learned king, having a very lovable body. Having enjoyed many pleasures, he again resorts to that holy place.

20b-22. On the left bank of Yamunā, and to the south of Prayāga, there is said to be a very holy place (called) Ṛṇapramocana. Staying there for a night, he is free from all debts. He obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of the Sun, and would always be free from debt.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

Agnitīrtha, Virañjana, Svargatīrtha etc.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Having heard this description of Prayāga which you have given, my heart has become very pure. O revered Sir, tell me what kind of fruit (a man gets) by fasting.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

2-4. O king, O lord, listen to the fruit of fasting which a wise man who has faith, obtains. He becomes one who has no defect in any limb, is free from diseases, and endowed with (i.e. has his) five senses (intact). When he walks, at every step he gets the fruit of a horse sacrifice. O king, he liberates his ten predecessors and ten successors in the family. He is freed from all sins and would go to the highest position.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

5-6. O pious one, you are illustrious. O lord, (please) tell me (about) gifts. By small, but the best (gift) a man would obtain many virtues (i.e. much religious merit). In this world a man gets (an opportunity to perform) the horse sacrifice due to great religious merit. Please remove this doubt of mine. I have a great curiosity.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

7-10. O king, O great hero, listen to what formerly Brahmā told in the presence of (i.e. to) the sages, which I heard when it was being told. The region of Prayāga is five yojanas extensive. He who enters that region, has (performed) the horse sacrifice at every step. A man who would cast his life (there), liberates all the seven predecessors and fourteen successors of his. Knowing like this, O lord of kings, a man should be full of faith. Men who have no faith and whose hearts are smitten with sins, do not obtain (i.e. reach) the (holy) place Prayāga, fashioned by gods.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

11-12. How would they who through affection, or through greed for wealth have gone under the sway of lust, obtain the fruit of (visiting) a holy place, and how would they obtain religious merit ? O great sage, tell (me) what position will he who not knowing what ought and what ought not to be done, sells all (kinds of) wares, have at Prayāga.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

13-19. O king, listen to the great secret which destroys all sins. O lord of kings, it is told by the self-born god (i.e. Brahmā) that a man who with his senses controlled lives in Prayāga for a month, is freed from all sins. He, being pure and controlled, being harmless and endowed with faith, is freed from all sins, and would go to the highest position (i.e. salvation). Listen to the fruit that those who murder those who confide in them, get at Prayāga. He should bathe three times a day; he should eat what is obtained by begging. There is no doubt that after three months he is liberated from Prayāga. He who would go on a pilgrimage knowingly, being endowed with all desired objects, is honoured in heaven. He secures a place which is full of wealth and grains. Thus perfect with knowledge he enjoys pleasures. He has liberated (i.e. he liberates) his manes and great-grandfathers from hell. O you who know the essential principle, I have told you, who are again and again asking me piously, the ancient secret for your good.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

20. Today my existence is fruitful. Today my family is successful. Today, just by seeing you, I am pleased, I am favoured. O religious-minded one, merely by seeing you, I am freed from all sins.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

21. Fortunately your existence is fruitful. Fortunately you have liberated your family. By narrating (the description of a holy place etc.) religious merit enhances. Hearing it destroys sins.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

22. O great sage, tell me about the religious merit (obtained by bathing) in Yamunā. Tell me all this as you have seen and heard.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

23-26. (The place) where Yamunā, the illustrious goddess, the daughter of the Sun, and well-known in the three worlds, has come (is holy). Yamunā goes (i.e. flows) along the same course as Gaṅgā has flowed out. Merely by mentioning her (name) within (a distance of) thousands of yojanas she destroys sins. Having bathed in that Yamunā and having drunk (her water), (and) by mentioning (her name) a man obtains religious merit, and by seeing her he sees (i.e. gets) good fortune. When (a man) bathes (in her stream) and drinks (her water), she purifies the family up to the seventh (descendant). He who casts his life there, goes to the highest position (i.e. salvation).

27-32a. On the right bank of Yamunā, there is (a holy place) called Agnitīrtha. To the west is the holy place of Dharmarāja known as Haravara. Having bathed there men go to heaven. Those who die there are not reborn. Thus there are thousands of holy places on the right bank of Yamunā. I shall tell you (about those that are situated) on the left (bank). Of the magnanimous Āditya the holy place is Virañjana, where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, gods along with Indra, always offer the daily prayer. Gods and other wise men resort to that holy place. Having great faith take a bath at the holy place. There are many other holy places. All remove sins and are auspicious. Having bathed there men go to heaven. Those who die there, are not reborn.

32b-36. The fruits of both Gaṅgā and Yamunā are equal. Gaṅgā is worshipped everywhere merely by her being senior. Thus, O son of Kuntī, have a bath at Svargatīrtha. Just at that moment (when a man bathes there), the sin committed by him during his life, perishes. He who getting up at daybreak recites or listens to (the description of the holy place), is freed from all sins, and goes to heaven.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

More about Merits Derived from Pilgrimage

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-5. I have heard what Brahmā told and what gives religious merit, in the Purāṇa. There are thousands and hundreds and millions of holy places. All these are auspicious and pure and (are) said (to lead to) the highest position. Naimiṣa is meritorious on the earth and Puṣkara in the Intermediate Space; so also is Prayāga for the people, and Kurukṣetra also excels. How do you praise one (only) leaving all (others)? This is said to be unauthoritative, unbelievable and not good. How do you speak approvingly of divine and highest position, and pleasures as desired, and great merit through little yoga? Tell me about (i.e. remove) this doubt of mine according as you have seen and heard.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

6-14a. What is unbelievable should not be told. It may be actually seen by a man having faith (but) with his mind smitten with sin. One who has no faith, one who is impure, one who has given up auspicious practices—all these are sinners. Therefore I spoke (like) this. Listen to (the description of) the greatness of Prayāga, as seen and heard about (by me). There will be (i.e. it will contain) what is seen and not seen and any other possible facts, O king, which I formerly saw or heard about. One's application (or path) is honoured (only) after regarding the sacred texts as authoritative. There (i.e. while doing so) (if) someone else is afflicted, one should not have (recourse to) such a path. Men obtain (the right) path after thousands of births, since by a thousand applications men obtain the (right) path. He who gives all jewels to brāhmaṇas (obtains yoga), (for) by that gift given (to brāhmaṇas), men obtain application. All this happens in the case of him who dies at Prayāga, and not otherwise. I shall tell principally to them who have faith, O descendant of Bharata. Since it is seen in all beings, everywhere, Brahman is not something which can be described.

14b-18a. As Brahman is worshipped among all beings everywhere, in the same way Prayāga is worshipped by the wise in all the worlds. (It) is worshipped (like this). O Yudhiṣṭhira, this is the truth about the lord of holy places. Even Brahmā always remembers Prayāga, the best holy place. Having reached (this) lord of the holy places he does not desire anything else. Who, having obtained godhead, desires manhood? From this inference only, O Yudhiṣṭhira, you will know whether I have told you what is meritorious or non-meritorious.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

18b-19a. I have heard what you told. I am repeatedly amazed. How can it be attained by yoga and heaven by (one's) acts? He gets pleasures and (comes to) the earth as the fruit of (certain) acts. I am asking about those acts due to which he again gets (i.e. comes to) the earth.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

19b-26. O king, hear by which acts (he comes to) the earth. O king, such men as censure a cow, fire, brāhmaṇa, sacred texts, gold, water, women, mother, father, do not have an upward going. Thus spoke Prajāpati. Thus yoga is had. The (highest) place is very difficult to obtain. The men who commit sins go to terrible hell. Those who first take away an elephant, a horse, a cow, a bull, jewels, pearls, gold in the absence (of the owner), and later give gifts, do not go to heaven, where the donors enjoying pleasures (live). The mean ones united with (i.e. doing) such acts are roasted in hell. Thus O Yudhiṣṭhira, (I have told about) yoga, pious acts and a donor. Whether it is true or not, or whether its fruit is there or not, I shall offer the explanation, so that he can on his own obtain (them).

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

Prayāga Again

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-5. O king, hear again (about) the greatness of Prayāga. There are many holy places and other auspicious mountains like Naimiṣa, Puṣkara, Gotīrtha, Sindhusāgara, Kurukṣetra, Gayā, and Gaṅgāsāgara. The wise say that ten thousand holy places and thirty crore others are always situated at Prayāga. There are three fire-vessels, from which Gaṅgā, led by all (other) holy places has set out from Prayāga. The goddess (Yamunā), the daughter of the Sun is well-known in the three worlds. Gaṅgā causing people to enjoy, stays (here) with Yamunā.

6-11. Prayāga, said to be the hip of the earth, is in between (i.e. at the confluence of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā. The thirty and a half crores which Vāyu has proclaimed, do not deserve (i.e. are not equal to) even its sixteenth part. Whatever is in heaven, on the earth (or) in the atmosphere—all that is said to be Gaṅgā (only). Prayāga, Samādhisthāna, the two (nāgas) Kambala and Aśvatara, and the (holy place) which is (called) Bhogavatī, are the altar of Prajāpati. O Yudhiṣṭhira, gods and sacrifices are there in an embodied form. The sages having penance as their wealth, worship Prayāga. Gods and kings having much wealth, perform sacrifices (there). None is more auspicious than that in the three worlds, O descendant of Bharata. Due to its prowess, it is more powerful than all (other) holy places, O lord. There are ten thousand holy places and thirty crore other holy places.

12-20. The truth is, that place where the illustrious Gaṅgā is (flowing) is a penance-grove. That (region) which resorts to the bank of Gaṅgā, should be known as the land of siddhas. A man should whisper this into the ears of the twice-born, the good, his own son, friends, or the disciple who follows him. This is blessed, this leads to heaven, this should be practised, this is auspicious, this is meritorious, this is charming, this is holy, this is the best course of conduct. This is the secret of the sages, which destroys all sins. A brāhmaṇa, meditating on it and having remembered it would obtain purity. He who, always being pure

hears about this holy place everyday, obtains (the faculty) of remembering his former briths and rejoices in heaven. These holy places are reached by the good who follow the desires of the wise. O descendant of Kuru, bathe at the holy places. Do not have a crooked mind. Being asked by you, I have properly told it to you. All the manes and the great-grandsires that are liberated do not deserve (i.e. are not equal to) (even) the sixteenth part of Prayāga. Thus the (path of) knowledge and (that of) yoga and a holy place, O Yudhiṣṭhira, are secured after great trouble. Then they go to the highest position. People by remembering Prayāga go to heaven.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva Dwell in Prayāga

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O great sage, you have told me all this account of Prayāga. Similarly tell me everything so that it would liberate me.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

2-7. O king, listen, I shall explain: This whole world is said to be Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Īśāna, the immutable lord of the deities. Brahmā creates the creatures and whatever is immobile and mobile. The highest Viṣṇu protects them, the created beings, in the world. At the end of a kalpa Rudra destroys the entire world. He neither gives, nor does he accept, and never perishes. He who sees him (to be) the lord of all beings, (indeed) perceives. Now Brahmā is at the north of Pratiṣṭhāna. The highest lord being Maheśvara, remains at Vaṭa. The gods with gandharvas, siddhas and great sages always take care of the highest one. Those who are bent on doing sinful deeds and others (like them) who are (there), do not obtain the highest position.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

8. You have told me properly as to what is heard about them. For what reason, do these, dear to the world, remain (here)?

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

9-15. These viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva) live at Prayāga. I shall tell you the reason. Listen to the fact, O Yudhiṣṭhira. The region of Prayāga is five yojanas extensive. They, who remove sinful deeds, live (there) for protecting (the region). Even the slightest sin (committed) in that the (region) will cause (a man) to fall into hell. Thus, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, along with Śiva (live) at Prayāga. The seven islands, oceans, mountains, supported (by them) remain on the earth, till deluge, O Yudhiṣṭhira, all the other many (objects) that are (there) (in fact everything) beginning with the earth is fashioned by these three deities. This is a holy place of Prajāpati; and is well-known as Prayāga. O Yudhiṣṭhira, this Prayāga is meritorious and auspicious. Rule your kingdom, O lord of kings. Be with your brothers.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

Kṛṣṇa Recommends Pilgrimage to Prayāga

Sūta said:

1-3. All the Pāṇḍavas bent upon meritorious acts, along with their brothers, saluted the brāhmaṇas and offered oblations to their (dead) elders and deities. Kṛṣṇa also at that time came there in a moment. All the Pāṇḍavas together honoured that Mādhava (i.e. Kṛṣṇa). All the noble ones, along with Kṛṣṇa, consecrated Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma's son, on the kingdom (i.e. the throne).

4. In the meanwhile (i.e. at this time) only, the great-souled Mārkaṇḍeya, then saying: 'May it be well with you', came in a moment to the hermitage.

5. The pious Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma's son, too, along with his brothers, gave him a great gift.

6. He who, getting up at daybreak, recites or listens to this, is freed from all sins and he goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

Vāsudeva said:

7-17. Do my words (i.e. as I tell you). I am speaking out of affection for you. Being free from affliction at Prayāga, be always engaged in (performing) sacrifices. O lord of kings, O Yudhiṣṭhira, ever remembering Prayāga along with us, you yourself will obtain the eternal heaven. The man who goes to Prayāga, (and) who lives (there), with his soul being purified of all sins, goes to heaven. He who has turned away from accepting gifts, who is pleased, controlled and pure, who is free from self-conceit, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place. O lord of kings, so also he who does not get angry, who speaks the truth, and who has a firm resolve, who looks upon (other) beings as himself, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place. The sages, so also the gods have recommended sacrifices according to (proper) order. O king, a poor man cannot (afford) to have (i.e. to perform) a sacrifice. A sacrifice requires many implements, and many activities for its preparation are necessary. It is sometimes obtained (i.e. performed) by various rich or wealthy men. O king, it can be performed by rich, wise men. Then they are united with (i.e. attain) meritorious fruits of the sacrifice. O king, O best of the Bharatas, understand this great secret of the sages. Visiting holy places is meritorious. It is even superior to (the performance of) sacrifices. O best of men, ten crores of holy places, so also thirty crores of other (holy places) will go to (i.e. exist) in Gaṅgā in the month of Māgha. Enjoying the kingdom free from vexation, be comfortable, O great king. O lord of kings, you will, especially as a sacrificer, again see (me).

CHAPTER FIFTY

Viṣṇu's Name the Greatest Holy Place

The sages said:

1-3a. You have told (i.e. explained) all that was asked. Now also we (want to) ask one (thing only). O you very intelligent one, (please) tell it. O you who know everything, tell us what fruit a man would obtain by resorting to these holy places. So also tell us by doing which one act (the fruit of visiting) all (these holy places) is had; tell us if there is such an act.

Sūta said:

3b-4a. O illustrious ones, formerly, beginning with the brāhmaṇa (caste), the worldly and religious rites of various kinds for the castes were prescribed. Only one is superior.

4b-17a. There is no doubt that one who has devotion to Viṣṇu, has undoubtedly conquered (everything). Hari, the lord of the lord of all gods, should alone be propitiated. The goblin of sin would perish by means of the great sacred hymns in the form of the (various) names of Viṣṇu. There is no doubt that those with pure hearts, going round Viṣṇu even once, get (the fruit of) having bathed at all holy places. A man would obtain the fruit of (having visited) all holy places by seeing Viṣṇu's image. Muttering the excellent name of Viṣṇu a man would obtain (the fruit) of having muttered all sacred hymns. A man, having smelt tulasī, the grace of Viṣṇu, does not see, O best brāhmaṇas, the huge and terrible face of Yama. A man, having (but) once saluted Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) does not drink the mother's milk (i.e. is not reborn). I always repeatedly salute them whose mind is (fixed) in the feet of Viṣṇu. Even pulkasas, cāṇḍālas or other mlecha tribes, who serve the feet of Viṣṇu alone are fit to be saluted. Then what about meritorious and devoted brāhmaṇas and royal sages? Having put devotion unto (i.e. being devoted to) Viṣṇu, a man does not see (i.e. experience) confinement in the womb (i.e. is not reborn). O brāhmaṇas, a man who with high sounds (i.e. loudly) utters the name of Viṣṇu, purifies the world as does the water of Gaṅgā etc. There is no doubt that a

man is freed from sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa by seeing (the image of), touching (the feet of), reciting (the name of) and devotion (to Viṣṇu). Circumambulating (the idol of) Hari, and loudly uttering his names in a sweet and melodious voice accompanied with clapping of the hands, a man has struck the sin of murder of a brāhmaṇa etc. (off) his hands. A man becomes pure by just seeing him who having narrated his story, would listen to a narrative about him. Then, O best sages, how can there be the slightest doubt about his sins?

17b-39. O great sages, Viṣṇu's name is the best holy place of all the holy places. Those who have uttered the name of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) make the (entire) world a holy place. Therefore, O best sages, they consider nothing more meritorious than this. A man using (i.e. who uses) and holding (i.e. who holds) on his head the remains of an offering of flowers to Viṣṇu, would just become Viṣṇu, the destroyer of grief due to Yama. Undoubtedly Viṣṇu (alone) is to be worshipped and saluted. Those who look upon the great Viṣṇu and the unmanifest Maheśvara as identical, have no rebirth. Therefore, see and worship Viṣṇu only who has no beginning or end, who is the soul (of everything), and who is unmanifest. Those who look upon Viṣṇu and another deity as equal, go to terrible hells. Viṣṇu would not care for them. Viṣṇu, the lord, himself liberates a fool or a cāṇḍāla to whom Viṣṇu is dear. There is none greater than Viṣṇu, the wildfire for (i.e. burning) heaps of sins. A man even after having committed a terrible sin, is freed by the name of Viṣṇu. O you of good vows, god Viṣṇu, the father of the worlds, has put greater strength than himself into his name. Those who, on seeing lesser exertion with greater fruit in this dispute it (its efficacy), go to many hells. Therefore a man looking highly upon Viṣṇu's name, should be devoted to Hari. The lord would protect a worshipper from behind (i.e. secretly), and him who recites his name in the chest (i.e. from the front, i.e. openly). The name of Viṣṇu is a great destructive weapon like the thunderbolt in rending the mountain of sins. His feet are fruitful and move for that (only). The hands that worship him are alone said to be blessed. That head which bends before Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) is the best part of the body. That is (really) the tongue that extols Viṣṇu. That (alone) is the mind, which

follows his feet. That alone is the hair which bristles at the utterance of his name. Those (alone) are tears that are shed due to Viṣṇu's devotion. Oh, the people are very much duped by their blemishes, (since) they do not resort to (him) by merely uttering his names. Those men also who are sinful due to contact with women, and whose hair does not stand on end at the utterance (of the name) of Kṛṣṇa, are duped. Those are fools who are not pure in mind, and who are afflicted by the grief due to (the death of) their sons etc., weep with various wailings and not at the utterance of the words about Kṛṣṇa. Those who though having got a tongue do not mutter the name of Viṣṇu, easily fall even after having secured the staircase to salvation. Therefore, a man should carefully (please) Viṣṇu by means of worldly and religious rites. Viṣṇu propitiated with worldly and religious rites, is pleased, not otherwise. The worship of Viṣṇu is said to be a holier place than a holy place. A man obtains that fruit by serving Viṣṇu which he obtains by bathing at and drinking (the water from) all the holy places. Only blessed men worship Viṣṇu by means of worldly and religious rites. Therefore, O sages, worship Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), who is extremely auspicious.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Karmayoga or Rules of Conduct

The sages said:

1-3. How is that path of action (consisting of worldly and religious rites), propitiated by which Viṣṇu becomes pleased, O Sūta? O illustrious one, O best among speakers, tell that to us. (Tell us about that Karmayoga) by which those desirous of salvation can propitiate the revered lord. Tell us also about that path of action, that protects all the worlds and is the totality of dharma, and of an embodied form, O Sūta. With a desire to hear this the sages have settled in front of you.

Sūta said:

4. Vyāsa, Satyavatī's son was formerly asked in this way only by sages, resembling fire. Hear what Vyāsa said to them:

Vyāsa said:

5-17. Listen, all sages, the ancient path of action which will be told and which gives endless fruits to brāhmaṇas, which is wholly established by the sacred tradition, and which is demonstrated for the brāhmaṇas, which is meritorious, and which is practised by groups of sages. Being attentive, hear when I explain it. An excellent brāhmaṇa, after having the investiture with the sacred thread, should study the Vedas. In the eighth year from conception, or in the eighth year (from birth), (he should have the investiture with the sacred thread) according to the rules in his manual of teaching in ritual. He should have a staff, wear a girdle, have the sacred thread and the skin of the black antelope, should be holy, should eat begged food, should be well-disposed to his preceptor, should always look up at his preceptor's face (to receive orders from him). Formerly Brahmā fashioned the three-stranded sacred thread of cotton and a silken garment for the brāhmaṇas. A brāhmaṇa should always wear the sacred thread, and should always keep the lock of hair on the crown of the head tied. (By doing so) an act done otherwise (i.e. in a perverse way) becomes done properly. He should put on a reddish cotton garment which is not deformed, or an excellent white one made of wool. The upper garment is enjoined to be an auspicious hide of a black antelope. In its absence, the one made of (the skin of) an ox or of that (of the skin) of a ruru (deer) is laid down. Raising the right hand it is placed on the left (shoulder). He should always wear the sacred thread. When the sacred thread is put on (i.e. worn round) the neck it is (called) 'nivīta'. O brāhmaṇas, when the sacred thread is put on the right (shoulder) after raising the left hand, it is (called) 'prācīnavīta'. It is to be employed in (i.e. while performing) the rites (in honour) of the manes. He should always wear the sacred thread in a firechamber, in a cow-pen, in (i.e. while performing) a sacrifice, in (i.e. while practising) penance, while doing self-study, taking food and in the vicinity of brāhmaṇas, while

serving his preceptors (and elders), at the time of the daily prayers, and in the company of the good. This is an ancient rule.

18-24. The girdle of a brāhmaṇa should be made triple, of the muñja-grass and soft. In the absence of the muñja-grass, it is said (to be made of) kuśa-grass with one knot or three knots. A brāhmaṇa should hold a staff of bamboo or palāśa and it should be (high) upto his hair. Or the staff should be made of a tree fit for (being used in) a sacrifice, and should be soft and without a bruise. Being tranquil, a brāhmaṇa should offer the morning and evening prayers. By avoiding it, due to passion, greed, fear or infatuation, he would be (a) fallen (brāhmaṇa). Then, with a pleased mind he should perform the fire-rites in the morning and in the evening. After having bathed, he should offer oblations to gods, sages and the hosts of manes. He should worship the deities with flowers, leaves, barley and water. He should, being free from sluggishness, always be inclined to salute the elders religiously bowing down before them, (and saying,) 'I am so and so', for securing a (long) life and good health. The words 'Enjoy a long life', should be uttered by a brāhmaṇa, when he is saluted ; and at the end of his name the sound 'ā' should be pronounced, by protracting the penultimate letter.

25-29. A learned man should not salute a brāhmaṇa who does not answer (i.e. greet back). He is just like a śūdra. The feet of the preceptor should be touched by a person with (the arrangement of) the hands reversed: he should touch the (preceptor's) left foot with his left hand, and right (foot) with his right (hand). Being controlled, and having got worldly, Vedic or metaphysical knowledge, he should first salute him. He should not have borrowed water, flowers and samidhs (the sacred sticks of wood). Such and other things are not (to be used) for (i.e. at the time of) rites in honour of deities. A man should ask a brāhmaṇa about his welfare, a kṣatriya about his good health, a vaiśya about his happiness and a śūdra about his health. (While greeting a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya and śūdra, the words 'Kuśala, Anāmaya, Kṣema and Ārogya' should be respectively used).

30-35a. The preceptor, the father, the eldest brother, so also one who has protected him from a fear, the maternal uncle, the father-in-law, the maternal grandfather, the paternal

grandfather, one superior by caste, the paternal uncle are said to be respectable persons. The mother, the maternal grandmother, the (brothers and) sisters of the father and the mother, the mother-in-law, the paternal grandmother, the seniormost foster-mother are venerable ladies. O brāhmaṇas, these should be regarded as a group of the venerable ones from (the side of) the mother or the father. Through acts of the mind, speech and body he should obey them. Having seen his elders, he should stand up, saluting them with the palms of his hands joined. For his own sake he should not sit or discuss with them. For life's sake he should never talk hatefully with the elders. Even though excellent in other virtues, a man who hates his elders, falls down.

35b-40a. Out of these, five are to be specially respected: Out of these the first three are the greatest, and out of these (three) the mother is the most venerable. He who desires his welfare, should specially respect, with all efforts, even by casting his life, these five. As long as the father and the mother remain unchanged (in mind or attitude), a son should, giving up everything (else), be attached to them. If, by the good qualities of their son, the father and the mother are well pleased, then, the son would obtain all religious merits.

40b-45a. There is no (other) deity like the mother, and no (other) venerable person like the father. There can never be in their case doing good to them in return. He should always do what pleases them by means of deeds, thought and words. Without being permitted by them, he should not follow any other course of conduct except (in the case of rites having) liberation as their fruit or the obligatory and occasional (rites). The essence of piety is said to be giving an eternal fruit after death. Having properly propitiated the teacher, and allowed by him to go, a disciple enjoys the fruit of his learning after death, and enters heaven. He who slights his eldest brother who is like his father, goes, due to that blemish, to a terrible hell after death.

45b. A husband is (also) always to be respected as he is created as a man.

46-49a. In this world, a man attains greatness by serving his mother. He should stand up and salute the maternal and paternal uncles, fathers-in-law, priests and preceptors, and should

say (i.e. by declaring) 'I am so and so.' A man who is initiated should not be addressed by his name, even though he is younger. A man who is conversant with the rules of conduct should address him beginning with the words 'bho' and 'bhavat' (i.e. you). He should always be saluted, and honoured, by bowing their heads in respect, by brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and by those who desire prosperity.

49b-52a. A brāhmaṇa should never salute kṣatriyas etc. even though they are endowed with virtues like knowledge, (good) deeds, or even though they are highly learned. The scriptures say that a brāhmaṇa (alone) should invoke blessings for all (other) castes. A man of the same caste should salute other men of that caste. Fire is the most venerable to brāhmaṇas. A brāhmaṇa is the most venerable to (all) castes. To a woman the husband is the most venerable. A guest is everywhere the most honourable.

52b-55a. Learning, acts, age, relation and wealth as the fifth—these five are said to be respectable. The preceding one is superior to the succeeding. He who, out of the three castes, possesses (any) of them abundantly and strongly, deserves respect in this world. So also a śūdra who has reached the tenth (decade, i.e. who has crossed ninety). Way (i.e. side) should be given to a brāhmaṇa, a woman, a king and a blind man, an old man, one who is broken down with load, a sick man, and a weak man.

55b-66a. Being controlled and having everyday begged alms from the houses of eminent men, he should, with his speech controlled, eat it after informing the preceptor about it and after being allowed by him. An excellent brāhmaṇa, wearing a sacred thread, should beg food after addressing (the housewife) with the words 'bhavat' 'your ladyship' uttered first. A kṣatriya should beg alms with the words 'your ladyship' (uttered) in the middle of the (sentence), and a vaiśya with the words 'your ladyship' (uttered) in the end. He should first beg alms from his mother, or sister, or his mother's or his own sister, or from one who would not insult him. Begging alms in (i.e. from) the houses of people of his own caste or those of all castes except from the houses of those that are outcaste is prescribed. A celebate who is controlled, should receive alms from the houses of those that are

not bereft of Vedas and sacrifices and are praised in (i.e. for doing) their own acts. He should beg in (i.e. from) his preceptor's house but not from those of his own caste and relatives. If he does not get alms from other houses, he should avoid each former. If alms from these, already described, is not available, he should move in the entire village. Having been restrained, and with his speech controlled, and not looking into directions, he should, having collected the alms as desired, without any fraud, being restrained, with his speech controlled, eat it with a concentrated mind. He who follows a vow, should always live on alms, and should not (take food from) one (place only). The livelihood of him who lives on alms is like a fast. He should always respect his food and not revile it through pride. Seeing it he should be fully delighted, pleased and satisfied. Eating too much causes ill health, lack of (long) life and does not lead to heaven. It is not meritorious; it is hated by people. Therefore, he should avoid it.

66b-68. Facing the east or the sun, he should eat his food. It is an ancient rule that he should not eat food by facing the north. He who is (about) to eat should wash his hands and feet twice. Having sat in a pure place and having eaten the food there, he should twice wash (his hands etc.).

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

Rules for Sipping Water

Vyāsa said:

1-19. An excellent brāhmaṇa should again sip water having eaten, or drunk or slept, after walking in a street or having touched his lips after licking them, after putting on a garment, after having ejected semen, or urinated or cleared the bowels, after having told a lie, after spitting, at the beginning of study, after having (an attack of) asthma, so also after having crossed a place where many roads meet or a crematory, at the time of

both the prayers, even though he has already sipped water. Similarly he should sip water after talking with a cāṇḍāla or a mleccha, or with a woman, or a śūdra, or a person who has not washed his hands etc. after eating food, so also on seeing a man who has not washed his hands etc. and on seeing leavings of food, or on seeing tears being shed or bleeding, at the time of taking food, at the time of both the prayers after bathing, having drunk (water etc.), and having come after urination or clearing his bowels or should sip water once after having slept (and then got up), so also for other (similar reasons). On touching fire or cows, or a holy person, so also on being touched by women, he should sip water, so also after having touched a diseased person, grass or ground; so also (he should sip water) on touching his own hair, or on touching a garment that has fallen down. Always desiring purity, he should, with his head or neck covered, or with his hair and the lock of hair on the crown of his head loose, and being seated with his face towards the east or north, sip properly, water that is not hot, does not have hair in it and which is pure. Without washing his feet he would not be pure from (the impurity of having walked over) a path. A wise man should not sip water with shoes on, or while in a carriage or with his turban on; so also with the streams of rain-showers, while standing, or with water drawn out (of a well etc.), or with water made over with one hand and without wearing the sacred thread. So also (he should not sip water) while sitting on a seat; or with his knees outstretched, so also while talking, laughing, seeing (something) or lying on a bed. (He should not sip water) impaired with foam etc. or (water) that is dropped from the hands of a śūdra or an impure person or saline water. (While sipping water) he should not produce sound with his fingers, should not be distracted; (he should not sip water) which is polluted with colours and liquids; so also (the water) from crevices; so also that which is agitated with the hands, or with his shoulders stretched out. A brāhmaṇa is purified when the water reaches his heart, a kṣatriya becomes pure when it reaches his throat; a vaiśya, a woman and a śūdra are purified when it touches (their bodies) from within after it is drunk. The part of the hand situated on the line at the root of the thumb is called Brāhma. The part between the thumb and the fore-

finger is said to be the holy place of the manes. The part below the little is called Prājāpatya. The tip of a finger is said to be divine. The same is called Ārṣa ('of the sages'). The root is daiva or ārṣa, and the middle part is said to be Āgneya (of Agni). The same is sacred to Soma. Knowing this he is not confounded. A brāhmaṇa should always sip with the Brāhma holy place.

20-34a. Brāhmaṇas should offer sacrifices with the daiva and (offer oblations) to the manes with the paitrya (i.e. the portion between the thumb and the fore-finger). Then, being restrained, he should thrice offer water with the Brāhma (portion). Having washed with the root of the thumb he should touch the mouth. With the thumb and the ring-finger he should then touch both his eyes. He should (then) touch the two nostrils with the fore-finger and the thumb. He should touch the ears with the little finger and the thumb. With all of them he should touch the chest, the head and both the shoulders with his thumb. He should drink (i.e. sip) water thrice. By that the deities, viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are pleased. This is what we have heard. By wiping Gaṅgā and Yamunā are pleased. When the eyes are touched, the Moon and the Sun are pleased. When he would touch the two nostrils, Nāsatya and Dasra (i.e. the two Aśvins) are pleased. Similarly when the ears are touched, wind and fire are pleased. When the chest is touched all the deities are pleased. By touching the head, that Puruṣa (the highest lord) is pleased. He does not become impure with the water-drops clinging to his mouth; similarly in the case of water-drops clinging to the teeth, he would become pure by the touch of the tongue. There would be no impurity due to the drops which would touch his feet when he makes others sip water. They should be regarded like dust particles. Manu declared that in the case of Madhuparka, Soma, eating tāmbūla, or fruits, roots, sugarcane, there is no blemish. A man might have a thing in his hand, while moving for food or drink; having put that thing on the ground, and having sipped water he should sprinkle water over it. If after taking a golden object a brāhmaṇa would become impure, he should keep it on the ground; and after sipping water, should sprinkle (water over it). By not putting the object on the ground, by taking which he becomes impure, he would

(continue to) be impure (if he does not, after keeping it down, sip water). There would be an option in the case of garments etc. Having touched it he may sip water.

34b-47. If he urinates or clears his bowels, with an object in his hand, in a solitary forest, at night, or on a path full of thieves and tigers, he is not defiled. Putting his sacred thread on his right ear he should urinate or clear his bowels while facing the north during the day, and facing the south during the night. Having covered the ground with pieces of wood, leaves, clods or grass, and having covered his head, he should urinate or clear his bowels. He should not urinate or excrete in shade, a hollow, a river, a cow-pen, a sanctuary, water, on a road or ashes, so also fire and crematory. He should not urinate or excrete on cowdung, a piece of wood, a great tree, meadow, while standing without clothes, the region of a mountain, in an old temple, an anthill; so also into ditches with beings in them, or while going; so also on fire of chaff or pieces of broken jars, and on a high-way. So also (he should not urinate or excrete) in a field, a hole, a sacred place or a place where many roads meet, in a garden, near water, on a barren spot with saline soil, and in caves; (he should not urinate or excrete) with shoes or wooden sandals on, or with an umbrella or in the air; (he should not urinate or execrete) facing women, his preceptor, brāhmaṇas or cows, deities and temples or water, while looking at stars or with his back to them; so also by facing the sun, fire or the moon. Taking clay from a mound that would remove the smell, he should carefully purify himself with water that is drawn up. A brāhmaṇa should not take (i.e. use) the clay that is defiled or muddy or from the road or from a barren spot with saline soil, or that has remained after being used by someone else, or from a temple, or a well, a house or water. Then, he should always sip water as told before.

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Rules of Conduct for a Celibate Student

Vyāsa said :

1-22. Thus endowed with a staff etc. and with purity and (proper) conduct, when called he should study looking at the face of the preceptor. He should always have his hands raised (i.e. should be ready), and should be well-controlled having good conduct. When told by the teacher 'sit down', he should sit facing him. He should not lie, so also should be seated or be eating food, while listening to or talking (with his preceptor). So also he should not remain with his face turned away (from his preceptor). His bed or seat should always be near his teacher (but) downwards (i.e. at a low level). When within the range of the preceptor's sight, he should not sit on a seat as he likes. Even in the absence of his preceptor he should not utter his name. He should not imitate his gait, speech or movement. He should cover his ears, or go to another place from the place where the preceptor is being censured or blamed. Remaining away (i.e. from a distance) he should not honour him, so also when angry he should not honour him, nor when he is near a woman. Being seated he should not give a reply to him; nor should he sit near him. He should always bring for him a jar with water (in it), kuśas, flowers and sacrificial sticks. He should cleanse his body and apply unguents to it. He should never cross over the remains of (flowers etc. used by) him, his bed, wooden sandals or shoes, so also his seat or shadow. He should secure pieces of wood used as a toothbrush etc. and report to him whatever is obtained by him. Without asking him (i.e. his permission) he should not go anywhere, and should be devoted to his well-being and what is liked by him. In the presence of the preceptor he should always avoid yawning, laughing, covering his neck or cracking (the limbs of) his body. He should study at the proper time, when the preceptor is not depressed. He should sit on a seat lower than that of the preceptor or by his side, and with concentration (offer him) service. He should never remain (i.e. sit) on his seat or bed. He should run after the preceptor when he is running; should go (i.e. walk) after

when he is going. On kuśa seats or on a bull, a horse or a camel, so also on a slab or a plank or (while travelling) in boats, he should sit with (i.e. by) the preceptor. He should always control his senses, should control his mind, should be free from anger and pure. He should always use sweet and wholesome words. He should carefully avoid perfumes, flowers, drinks, (other) preparations, pearls, or harm to creatures, so also rubbing his body with unctuous substances, applying pigment to his body, or rubbing it, so also holding (i.e. using) an umbrella. (He should avoid) lust, greed, fear, sleep, singing or playing upon musical instruments, dancing, threatening, abuse, looking at or securing a woman, assaulting another person or wickedness. He should fetch a jar full of water, flowers, cowdung, clay, kuśas (for his preceptor). Everyday he should bring food and alms. Ghee, salt and all that is stale should be avoided. He should never witness dances, and should not long for (listening to) songs. He should not look at the sun, nor should he clean his teeth. Remaining in a lonely place with women is impure, so also talking with śūdras etc. He should not voluntarily take medicine or food left by his preceptor, so also should not excrete or bathe at his will.

23-34. He should never think of leaving his preceptor. If he leaves him through infatuation or greed, he would fall. He should never have malice against him from whom he would get worldly, Vedic or metaphysical knowledge. Manu has said that a preceptor, even though he is arrogant, he does not know what ought and what ought not to be done, he has gone astray, should not be abandoned. A man should behave towards his preceptor's preceptor as he behaves with his own preceptor. Having saluted and being allowed by the preceptor, he should salute his preceptors. Thus he should behave with his preceptor who gives him knowledge; so also with meditating saints, who prohibit him from unrighteous acts and who advise what is beneficial to him. It is excellent for him always to behave in the same way as he behaves with his preceptor, with the preceptor's sons, wife and kinsmen. A wise man should honour respectable persons (even though they are) young. The son of a teacher who teaches deserves respect like the teacher. He should not clean the limbs of the teacher's

son, should not bathe him, should not eat what is left by him, so also should not wash his feet. The preceptor's wife belonging to the same caste, should be honoured like the preceptor. The one not belonging to the same caste should be honoured by getting up (when she comes) and saluting her. He should not apply unguents to the body of the preceptor's wife, or give her bath, or clean the limbs of her body; so also he should not dress her hair. The young wife of the preceptor is not to be saluted by touching her feet. He should salute her (by putting his hands) on the ground, saying, 'I am so and so'.

35-39. Remembering the course of conduct of the good, he should honour his mother's sister, his maternal uncle's wife, his mother-in-law, his father's sister as (he would honour) his preceptor's wife. They are like his preceptor's wife to him. Everyday he should also kindly receive his brother's wife of the same caste. Women related to him through caste should be honoured by staying away from them. He should behave as he behaves with his mother, towards his father's sister, mother's sister, and his elder sister. (Yet) the mother is superior to them. A preceptor should teach the Vedas to a disciple who is thus endowed with good conduct, who is prudent and not deceitful; so also he should everyday teach him religious texts, Purāṇas and Vedāṅgas. A preceptor who does not teach the disciple who has stayed with him for a year, takes the sin of the disciple living with him.

40-44. These ten should be taught (by the preceptor) according to the rule : the son of his preceptor, one who serves him, one who gives him (some other) knowledge, one who is righteous, one who is pure, one who is capable, one who gives him food, one who gives him water and one who is good. These six of the brāhmaṇa-caste, viz. one who has learnt (the Vedas) by heart, one who is not deceitful, one who is very intelligent, one who takes to his teacher, one who is trustworthy, and dear should be taught according to the rule. To these and other brāhmaṇas gifts should be given duly. Having sipped water and being restrained, he should, facing the north, study. Having seized the feet of (i.e. having saluted) the preceptor and looking at his face, he should say : 'O (sir, please) teach me.' He should stop when (the teacher says :) 'Let there be a stop

(now).' Purifying himself and having the points (of the kuśas) turned towards the east, he should, with blades of kuśa grass, wait upon (a deity etc.). Purified by the three (kinds of) prāṇāyāma, he deserves (to pronounce) Oṁkāra.

45-49. O brāhmaṇas, at the beginning and the end (of a rite) a brāhmaṇa should duly honour Oṁkāra. Having first offered respectful offering with the palms of his hands joined, he should undertake instruction daily. The ancient Veda is the eye of all creatures. He should study it daily. Otherwise he loses his status as a brāhmaṇa. He should study the hymns from the Ṛgvda. He (thereby) offers an oblation of milk. When he offers oblations of desired objects to the deities, he pleases them along with gods. (If) he always studies the yajus-formulae, he pleases the deities with (an offering of) curd. (If) he studies sāmans everyday, he pleases the deities with (an offering of) ghee. If he studies (hymns from) the Atharvāṅgirasa (Veda) daily, he pleases the deities with honey. (If he studies) the Purāṇas, religious texts, he pleases the gods with the flesh (-like parts of fruits).

50-58. Resorting to the daily rites in the morning and the evening, after being controlled, he should, being calm, go to a forest and properly study (the) Gāyatrī (hymn). He should daily mutter the Gāyatrī (hymn). (Repeating it) a thousand (times) is best, a hundred (times (is) middle (i.e. next to it), and ten (times is) the lowest. It is called the sacrifice of muttering prayers. The lord (once) weighed Gāyatrī and the Vedas with a scale. The four Vedas were on one side, and Gāyatrī on the other (i.e. both weighed equally). Having first uttered Oṁkāra, then the vyāhṛtis,[1] he should, with concentration and faith, study (i.e. recite) the Gāyatrī (hymn). In the former kalpa, the three ancient, great vyāhṛtis, viz. Bhūr, Bhuvas and Svaḥ, destroying all inauspicious (things), sprang up. Pradhāna (or Prakṛti), Puruṣa, Kāla, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Śiva, the three (constituents of

1. Vyāhṛti—A mystic word uttered by every Brāhmaṇa in performing his daily sandhyā-adoration. These syllables are three : Bhūr, Bhuvas and Svar, usually repeated after 'Om' (See Manu. 2.76). According to some, they are seven.

the Prakṛti viz.) Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, are said to be the vyāhṛtis in succession. Oṁkāra is that highest Brahman, and Sāvitrī would be next to it. The hymn has a great propriety, and is said to be the essence of essences. He, who, being restrained, everyday studies this Gāyatrī, the mother of the Vedas, along with its meaning, goes to (i.e. gets) the highest position. Gāyatrī is the mother of the Vedas ; Gāyatrī purifies the worlds. There is nothing greater to be muttered than Gāyatrī. Knowing this one is liberated.

59-62. Commencement of reading the Veda is said (to take place) on the full moon day of Śrāvaṇa, or the full moon day of Āṣāḍha or of Bhādrapada, O best brāhmaṇas. A man, being controlled and calm, should study (the Vedas) at a pure spot for five months and a half, when the sun proceeds to the south. A brāhmaṇa should suspend the Vedic studies in Pauṣa. A brāhmaṇa should study the Vedas in the morning of the first day of the bright fortnight of the month. A man should study the Vedāṅgas and the Purāṇas in the dark fortnight of the month.

63-70a. One who studies (i.e. the student) and so also one who teaches, studying (the sacred texts) carefully, should always avoid these intermissions of study : When the wind blows audibly at night, when a mass of dust (moves) by day, when there is lightning, or when it rains with thundering, or when there is a surge of great meteors. Prajāpati has prescribed untimely intermission on these occasions. When fires break out, one should know that they have come up. (So also) one should know that there is suspension of study when clouds are seen out of season, when there is a hurricane, when the earth quakes, and when the luminaries are eclipsed. These should be looked upon as (times of) the suspension of study, even when it is the season of study. (So also) when fires break out, when there is lightning or thundering. If there is thundering, there would be suspension of study during the remaining night or day. There should certainly be suspension of study in the villages or cities. For those who desire skill in religion, there should always be suspension of study when there is stinking smell, when there is a corpse in the village, and in the presence of a cāṇḍāla, when someone is weeping; so also when it is the time of the cloud.

70b-72a. A learned brāhmaṇa should not even mentally

think of urinating or excreting in water or at midnight; or when he has not washed his hands etc. after taking food, or after eating at a śrāddha, or after having received the fees at a śrāddha or funeral rite performed for one definite individual[1]. He should not study the Vedas for three days during the mourning period of the king or impurity (due to eclipse caused) by Rāhu.

72b-85a. As long as he has partaken of food at one place and there is the presence of oiliness on the body of the learned brāhmaṇa, he should not study the Vedas. He should not study while lying or with his legs stretched or with a cloth girt round his legs and knees[2]; so also after having eaten flesh or the food at the śrāddha of a śūdra. Impurity for three nights is declared at the time of (fall of) mist, sound of an arrow, and at the time of both the twilights; so also on the new moon day and the fourteenth day; so also on the full moon day and the eighth day, for commencement or suspension of Vedic studies; so also the collection of three nights at the end of the season, beginning from the seventh day after the full moon. The wise have declared the collection of three days (7th, 8th and 9th) in the months of Pauṣa and Māgha and in the dark fortnights. A man should never study in the shadow of the ślaṣmātaka tree, so also of śālmali or madhūka; so also in the shadow of kovidāra and kapittha. When one who is his student-friend or co-student has expired, or his preceptor is dead, impurity is said to be there for three nights. These flaws are said to be (the occasions for) suspension of study for the brāhmaṇas. During them the demons harm (men). Therefore (a brāhmaṇa) should avoid them. There is no suspension of the obligatory rites or offering the sandhyā-prayers. During the collection of the three days (7th, 8th, 9th) etc., or when the wind is blowing, he should not study a ṛc, or a yājus or sāmans at the beginning of Vedic studies, or at the end of a sacrifice or in the middle of it. There is no suspension of studies of the Vedāṅgas, Itihāsa, Purāṇas, and other religious texts. One should avoid these. This in brief is

1. Ekoddiṣṭa—A Śrāddha or funeral rite performed for one definite individual deceased, not including other ancestors.

2. Avasakthikā—A cloth girt round the legs and knees (by a person), when sitting on his hams.

declared to be the course of conduct for a celibate (i.e. a religious student); it was formerly told by Brahmā to the sages who had purified their souls. A twice-born who, not studying the scriptures, strives for something else, is a fool. He is out of the Vedic fold and should not be talked to by twice-borns.

85b-90. A twice-born should not be satisfied merely by the recital of the Vedas. Merely ending his study with the recital of the Vedas, he sinks as a cow sinks in mud. He who duly studies (i.e. recites) the Veda, but does not reflect on its meaning, is a fool, almost a śūdra, and is not a worthy person. If he desires to stay permanently with the teacher, he should, being diligent, serve him till death. Going to the forest he should duly offer oblations into fire. In the same way, being devoted to Brahman and being calm, he should study everyday. Always being devoted, and engaged in eating begged food, he should always study the Gāyatrī, Śatarudriya and especially the Upaniṣads. About the Vedic knowledge this is an ancient statement which I have told you now and which the lord Svāyambhuva Manu, when asked by the best sages, told (them).

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Rules for the Householder

Vyāsa said:

1-8a. O brāhmaṇas, having studied one Veda, two Vedas or (the four) Vedas, along with the Vedāṅgas, and having understood their meaning, the best twice-born should perform the ceremony of bathing at the time of leaving his spiritual teacher. Having given money to his teacher, he should perform the ceremony of bathing at the time of leaving his teacher with the teacher's permission. Or if he has completed a vow, or has set his mind on the Supreme Soul or is capable, he deserves to perform the ceremony of bathing at the time of leaving his teacher (i.e.

should stop his studies). He should hold a staff of bamboo, wear an inner garment, so also an upper one, a sacred thread of two strands, and carry a pot with water, an umbrella, a clean turban, wooden sandals and shoes. He should also put on golden ear-rings and should not wear a red chaplet except of gold. He should always wear a white garment, should always use perfumes, and should be of a pleasing appearance. When he is affluent, he should not wear old garments. He should not wear a red or a thick garment, so also a garment and ear-rings worn by others. So also he should not use shoes, chaplets or (wooden) sandals (used by others); so also the sacred thread, ornament, darbhas, the skin of a black antelope (worn by others). He should not wear the sacred thread allowing it to hang down from the right shoulder, nor he should wear a garment untidily.

8b-12. He should duly secure a wife befitting him and auspicious, so also endowed with beauty and auspicious marks and free from family-blemishes; a brāhmaṇa should have a wife not born in his father's family, (but) born in the family of some other man, and endowed with good character and purity. Till a son is born, he should have intercourse with her during the period favourable for conception. He should carefully avoid (intercourse on) prohibited days: the sixth, eighth, fifteenth, twelfth, and fourteenth. He should always be controlled; similarly he should establish the marriage-fire and should offer (oblations into) fire.

13-21. One who has returned from the house of his teacher should always devise these purifying (practices). Everyday he should carefully perform his rites enjoined by the Vedas. He who does not perform them falls into very fearful hells. Being controlled, he should study the Veda and should not neglect the great sacrifices. He should perform the domestic rites, and also the sandhyā (-prayer). He should form friendship with his equals and superiors; he should always go to a powerful person. He should go to the deities, and should maintain his wife. A wise man should not extol (his) righteous deeds, and should also not conceal a sin. Always being compassionate to all beings he should always bring about his welfare. He should always move, acting like a nobly born person in respect of place, speech and intellect, age, acts, wealth and learning. He should properly

resort to those practices that are enjoined by the Śrutis and Smṛtis and that are followed by the good. He should not desire anything else. He should go along that path of the good, along which his forefathers and paternal grandfather have gone. By going along that he does not get defiled. He should always be devoted to the study of the Vedas. He should always wear the sacred thread. He should speak the truth, control his anger, and should be free from greed and infatuation. The householder engaged in muttering the Gāyatrī (-hymn) and performing śrāddha is liberated.

22-24. He who is engaged in the well-being of his mother and father, who is engrossed in the good of brāhmaṇas, who is a donor, a sacrificer, a devotee of gods, is honoured in Brahmā's world. He should always pursue the three objects of worldly existence, should everyday worship the deities, and being controlled he should salute the gods. He should always give gifts, should be endowed with forgiveness and should be kind. Such a man is called a householder. A man is not a householder because of (his staying) in a house.

25-33a. The characteristics of a brāhmaṇa are: forgiveness, kindness, vijñāna (worldly knowledge), truthfulness, control, tranquility, knowledge about the eternality of the Supreme Spirit. An excellent brāhmaṇa should not especially err in these. Practising the code of conduct according to his capacity, he should avoid what is condemned. Shaking off the snare of delusion, securing excellent yoga, a householder is freed from bondage. No doubt should be raised here. Forgiveness is tolerating the faults of others due to anger and of the nature of ill conduct, violation (of rules), wrath, harm, bondage, killing. Not showing kindness (i.e. sympathy) in one's griefs, (but) showing kindness of heart in the griefs of others—this the sages call kindness. It is the means of religious merit. Having the knowledge of the fourteen branches of learning for (the good of) others should be known as worldly knowledge by which righteousness develops. By studying the branches of learning methodically wealth also is obtained. He should do righteous acts. This is called worldly knowledge. He conquers the world with truth; truth is that highest position, since the wise say that not erring towards the creatures is truth. Abstaining from (the enjoyments

of) the body is control. Tranquility is wisdom due to propitiousness.

33b-36. Metaphysical knowledge is (that of) the immutable one going where he does not grieve. That is declared to be knowledge by which that revered lord, god Viṣṇu is actually perceived. A learned brāhmaṇa who is devoted to Him, who looks upon Him as the highest, who is always free from anger and is pure, who is engaged in (performing the five) great sacrifices obtains that Excellent One. He should carefully protect his body which is the abode of (securing) piety. Men cannot know that highest Viṣṇu without the body.

37-40. A brāhmaṇa, being restrained, should engage (himself) in acts of piety, worldly gains, and love of sensual enjoyments. He should not mentally remember (i.e. think of) worldly gains or sensual enjoyments without (thinking of) piety. Even though he is sinking due to (acts of) righteousness, he should not practise unrighteous acts. Piety is the revered lord, and the (only) resort for all creatures. He should do what is good to (other) beings. He should never think of doing an act of deceiving others. He should not censure Veda and deities, and should not stay with them (who censure Veda and deities). That controlled and pure man who would recite this chapter on piety, or would teach or read out (to others), is honoured in Brahmā's heaven.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

Dont's for a Twice-born Householder

Vyāsa said:

1-8. (A man) should not harm any creature. He should never tell a lie. He should not speak what is not beneficial or what is not agreeable. He should never be a thief (i.e. should never steal). A creature that takes away (even a blade of) grass, or vegetable, or clay or even water, goes to hell. (Even) if he is poor, he should not accept (anything) from a king or a śūdra or

from one who is fallen or from anyone else. A wise man should (always) avoid censured persons. He should not always be a suppliant; he should not implore the same person again. Doing this the suppliant takes away the life of the wicked one. He, especially an excellent twice-born, should not take away the wealth of deities; even in difficulties he should never snatch away the wealth of a brāhmaṇa. Poison is not called poison. The wealth of a brāhmaṇa is called poison. He should also carefully avoid (taking away) the wealth of deities. Prajāpati Manu has said that (taking) flowers, vegetables, water, wood, roots, fruits, grass which are not offered, is not stealing. A twice-born should take flowers in the act of worshipping deities. He should not always take them from one person only, and without his permission.

9-12. A wise man should openly take away grass, wood, fruits and flowers. This they say is (done for having) religious merit. Otherwise he would be fallen. O brāhmaṇas, a handful of sesamum-seeds, kidney-beans, barley etc. should be taken by those who are hungry while on journey, not otherwise for righteousness etc. This is the correctness of conduct. One should not practise a vow under the pretext of righteousness, after having committed a sin. A twice-born, covering his sins by means of a vow, and deceiving women and śūdras, is condemned after death and here (i.e. in this world) also by the teachers of the Veda. That vow which is fraudulently practised, goes to the demons.

13-21a. He who is not a brāhmaṇa ascetic, but goes about in the guise of a brāhmaṇa ascetic, would snatch the sin of that ascetic, and is born in an animal species. He who begs, has (illegitimate) intercourse with or company of or talks with (women), always falls. Therefore, he should carefully avoid this. He should not plot against deities and preceptors. Plotting against a preceptor is crores of crore times worse than plotting against gods. Scandal and atheism are a crore times worse than that. By means of cows, deities, brāhmaṇas, agriculture, service of a king, those families which are bereft of righteousness lose their status of (good) families. Families also lose their status of (good) families due to bad thoughts, omission of essential ceremonies, and by not studying the Veda, so also by offending

a brāhmaṇa. A family quickly perishes due to falsehood, adultery, eating what is prohibited, and practising what is not enjoined for the family. The family also quickly perishes due to giving (presents) to brāhmaṇas who are not learned, to śūdras and to those who are bereft of the course of conduct that is enjoined. A man should not stay in a village chosen by irreligious people or full of diseases. He should not live in the kingdom of śūdras, or in one that is crowded by heretics.

21b-25a. A twice-born should not live in any other country than the auspicious one between Himālaya and Vindhya and the eastern and the western seas. Or a twice-born should live where a black deer always moves naturally, or where auspicious and well-known rivers (flow), avoiding (the distance of) half a krośa from the bank of the river. Except at an auspicious place he should not stay, nor also near the village of śūdras. He should not stay with the fallen, cāṇḍālas, pulkasas, fools, the arrogant, and others taking abodes with (i.e. depending upon) their wives.

25b-27. These eleven are said to be the faults present in the mixture (of castes): (using) one (and the same) bed or seat, (sitting for taking food in the same) line, (eating from the same) pot, mixing (one another's) food, performing sacrifice for or teaching (low caste people), intercourse or taking food along with (the low caste people), studying together as the tenth, and conducting a sacrifice along with them. Sin would pass on to men even by remaining in their proximity.

28-30a. Therefore with all efforts he should avoid (such) mixture. (The sin of) mixture does not take place in the case of those who, (though) sitting in the same line, do not touch one another and have made a demarcation (between themselves) with ashes. A line is separated by (these) six: fire, ashes, water, by making a mark, by means of a door or a pillar.

30b-35. He should not enter into fruitless enmity, so also discussion, or should not entertain wickedness; he should never report about a cow grazing in someone else's field. He should not remain with a traducer; he should not use stinging words for anyone. A wise man should not tell another person about the sun's halo or the rainbow, the daily religious rite performed by another person, the moon or gold. He should not have hostility

with many and with his relatives also. He should not do to others what is unpleasant to himself. He should not tell about the date (*tithi*) of a fortnight (*pakṣa*); he should not condemn the stars. The best twice-born should not talk to a woman in her menses or a person who is impure. He should not stop what is being given to deities and preceptors (and elders) and brāhmaṇas. He should not praise himself and he should avoid censuring others.

36-42a. He should carefully avoid censuring the Vedas and the deities. O best sages, no expiation for him is seen in the sacred texts, who censures gods, sages or Vedas. The man who would censure a preceptor, a deity, the Veda, a garment, a pillow is roasted in Raurava (hell) for a hundred crores of kalpas. He should keep mum when censure is going on; he should not give any reply. Covering his ears, he should go (away from that place) and should not see him (who censures). A wise man should avoid (discussing) the secrets of others, and also censuring others. He should never enter into a discussion with his own people. The best twice-born should not talk about the sin of sinners or the absence of it. The fault would be equal to the fault due to (not telling) the truth. He would be guilty due to falsehood. The tears of men maligned kill the sons and beasts of the maligner.

42b-75. The wise have observed atonement for killing a brāhmaṇa, drinking liquor, stealing, or cohabiting with one's preceptor's wife; but there is no atonement for the maligner. He should not, without any (proper) ground, see the sun or the moon while rising or setting, or (reflected) in water, or touched (i.e. screened) by clouds, or (appearing) in the middle (of the sky), or screened, or reflected in a mirror etc. He should never see a naked woman or man, urine or excretion, (or a man and woman) united in copulation. A wise man, while impure, should not see the planets like the sun and the moon. With his hands etc. not washed after having eaten food, or covering himself with a veil he should not talk to another person. He should not have contact with a dead body, nor should he see the face of his angry teacher. He should not see his reflection in oil or water, and his wife when she is taking food. He should not see an elephant free from chains, nor an intoxicated one. He should not

eat with his wife, nor should he see her while she is eating, or sneezing, or yawning, or seated comfortably on a seat. A wise man should not see his form (i.e. reflection) in water; and should never cross or stand by the auspicious or inauspicious. He should not offer advice, a dish of rice and peas mixed, milk or curds to a śūdra. A wise man should not give the remains of food, honey, ghee, and the hide of a black antelope and oblations. He should not also tell him a vow or rules of conduct. He should not be under the sway of anger, and should avoid hatred or passion. He should avoid greed, religious hypocrisy, wickedness, jealousy and censure, so also envy, pride, grief and infatuation. He should not inflict pain on anyone; but should beat his son or disciple. He should not serve inferior people, and should never have longing in his mind. He should not look down upon himself, and should carefully avoid low-spiritedness. A wise man should not disrespect a respectable person or himself through ignorance. He should not draw (lines) on the ground with his nails, nor should he sleep on (bare) ground. He should not talk about a river when in rivers, nor about mountains when he is (i.e. has climbed) on them. He should not abandon his co-traveller in an abode or at meals. He should not, being naked, plunge into water; so also he should not cross fire. He should not besmear his body with oil left after anointing his head. He should not play with serpentine weapons; he should not touch the apertures of, or the hair on the private parts of his body. He should not go with a person who is not respectable. He should not resort to wantonness in respect of his hands, feet, speech or eyes, also of the organs of generation or belly. He should not make a sound with the parts of his body or nails; he should not drink water from the cavity (made by joining his hands). He should never strike water with his feet or hands. He should not destroy roots and fruits with bricks. He should not learn the language of mlecchas; he should not drag the foot-stool. A wise man should not suddenly, and without any cause, split, crack, clip or write (with) nails or rub them together. He should not eat food (by keeping it) on his lap; he should not make any movement without any cause. He should not dance or sing or play upon musical instruments. He should not scratch his head with his hands joined. He should not please the deities with popular hymns or of the lord of speech (i.e. Bṛhaspati).

He should not play with dice; he should no run; the should not urinate or excrete in water. He should not sleep without washing his hands etc. after having taken food; he should not always bathe naked. He should not recite while going, nor should he touch his own head. He should not cut off his nails and hair with his teeth; he should not wake up a sleeping person. He should not resort to the morning sunshine; he should avoid the smoke of a dead body (being burnt). He should not sleep in a deserted house; he should not take his own shoes. He should not spit without any cause; he should not cross a river with his arms (i.e. by swimming). He should not wash his feet with one (or the other) foot. A wise man should not warm his feet with one (or the other) foot. A wise man should not warm his feet in fire, nor should he wash in a bell-metal (vessel). He should not open wide (his eyes before) a deity, brāhmaṇas, or a cow, or wind, fire, a king or the sun and the moon. While impure, he should never sleep, or drink, or study, or bathe, or take food or go out. He should always avoid sleeping, studying, bathing, smearing the body with perfumes, taking food or walking at both the twilights or at midday. A twice-born who has not washed his hands etc. after taking food should not touch with his hand a cow or a brāhmaṇa or fire; should not move his feet or should not touch the image of a deity. While impure, he should not touch fire, should not wait upon the deities or communicate with sages. He should not plunge into very deep water; he should not run without a cause. He should not drink water raising (the water pot) with his left hand or by (touching the water pot) with his mouth.

76-94. He should not cross (water) without bathing in it; he should not emit his semen into water. He should not cross an impure (object), an uncovered (object), a worthy object, blood, poisons, or a stream. He should not copulate in water. He should not cut the grove round a sanctuary; he should not spit into water. He should never stand on bones, potsherds, hair, thorns, chaff of grain, charcoal, or dry cow-dung. A wise man should not cross fire; he should never put it down. A wise man should not stir it with his foot or blow it with a winnowing basket. He should not climb up a tree, or being impure, think about (it). He should not throw fire into (another) fire, and should not put it

out with water. He should report the death of his friend to others. He should not use for selling (i.e. should not sell) what is not fit to be sold or what is spurious. A wise man, while impure, should not cause to burn brightly fire with the breath. He should not snatch the boundary line at an auspicious place, or a place of water. He should never break an appointment with a person that has come to him. He should not make beasts, tigers or birds fight among themselves. He should not trouble others by means of water, wind or heat. Causing (the preceptor) to do good things (for him), he should not later deceive his preceptor. For protection he should close tightly the doors of his house in the morning and evening. He should avoid using outside flowers, perfumes, taking food with his wife, or entry after fighting and disputing. A wise brāhmaṇa should not stand while eating, or talk or laugh. He should not touch his (sacred) fire with his own hand; he should not remain in water for a long time. He should not blow into fire with the wings (of a bird), nor with a winnowing basket or hand. He should kindle fire with the mouth. Fire was produced from the mouth. A wise man should not speak to another man's wife, nor should act as a priest at the sacrifice of him who does not deserve to perform it. A twice-born should not move alone, (but) should avoid a crowd. Never should he go to a temple by not turning to the right. He should not squeeze his garments, nor should he sleep in a temple. He should not travel all alone or with unrighteous persons, or with persons suffering from diseases or, with śūdras or with a fallen person, or without shoes, so also without (taking) water (with him). On the road, a twice-born should never cross an animal or funeral pyre. He should not censure meditating saints, siddhas, so also those who practise vows and ascetics. A wise man should not deliberately cross the shadow of a temple, (the images of) deities, sacrificers, brāhmaṇas and also of a cow. He should not allow his own shadow to be crossed by the fallen etc. and the diseased. He should never stand on the ashes of charcoal or hair etc. He should avoid the dust from a broom or the water for bath, for washing garments or from an earthen pot. A twice-born should not eat prohibited eatables and should not drink prohibited drinks.

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

Do's and Don't's in Eating

Vyāsa said:

1-3. A twice-born should not eat the food of a śūdra through infatuation or longing. He who eats it when it is not a time of distress, is reborn as a śūdra. That twice-born who eats the condemned food of a śūdra for six months, becomes a śūdra even when alive, and after death is born as a dog. O best sages, a man who dies with the food of a brāhmaṇa, or a kṣatriya or a vaiśya or a śūdra in his belly, would get his birth (i.e. would be born as a brāhmaṇa etc.).

4-15. He should avoid the six (kinds of) food: the food of a king, the food of a dancer, the food of a eunuch, the food of shoe-makers, the food prepared for a number of persons in common, the food of a courtesan. He should avoid the food of an oilman, a washerman, a thief, a distiller, so also the food of a singer, a blacksmith, and food (impure due to) a dead person. (He should avoid) the food of a potter or a painter, and of a usurer, or a fallen person, so also of the son of a remarried widow, of the bearer of an umbrella, so also of one who is cursed, so also of a goldsmith, an actor, a hunter, a barren woman and of one who is afflicted; so also (he should avoid) the food of a physician, an unchaste woman and a staff-bearer. (He should avoid) the food of a thief, an atheist, of one who censures deities, of a seller of water, and especially of a cāṇḍāla. (He should avoid) the food of him who is subdued by his wife, or of him whose (wife's) paramour lives in his house; so also (the food) of him who is abandoned, who is a miser, so also of him who eats the remains of the food (eaten by others). (He should avoid) the food of a sinner, the food prepared for a number of people living together, and also the food of a professional soldier. (He should avoid) the food of a frightened person, of a person who is weeping, and food which is inferior and wasted. (He should avoid) the food of him who hates brāhmaṇas (or the Vedas), who takes delight in (committing) sins, so also the food prepared for a śrāddha ceremony, or (for a rite in honour) of the dead, or food that is prepared without any need, so also food (that is impure)

due to a corpse or the food of an afflicted person. (He should avoid) the food of women having no children, so also of an ungrateful man; (he should) especially (avoid) the food of an artisan and also of a dealer in arms. (He should avoid) the food of him who is addicted to liquor, a bell-ringer, so also of physicians; the food of the offspring of a learned man, so also that of the younger brother who has married before his elder brother. (He should) especially (avoid) the food of a widow who is remarried, so also of the husband of a woman who is married twice. (He should avoid) the food that is despised, rejected and (that is prepared) through anger or doubt. He should not even eat his preceptor's food which is not purified. All the wicked deeds of a man are settled in his food.

16-19a. He who eats the food of him (i.e. of a man), eats his sin. A friend who is a half-caste man, or of a low family, a cowherd, a porter, a barber, should be given food among (i.e. along with) śūdras; so also the person who declares himself. A bard, a potter, a peasant should be fed with the śūdras by a wise man noticing (their) little merit. Rice boiled in milk, so also (food) cooked in oil, curds (or butter-milk), barley-meal, oil-cakes, and oil should be accepted by the twice-born from śūdras.

19b-24. (But) he should avoid egg-plant, stalks of lotuses, safflower, gold or silver, onion, garlic, sour gruel, a thick fluid substance; so also chatraka (a kind of mushroom), vidvarāha, greasy milk of a cow during the first seven days of calving, vilaya (a particular product of milk) and mushrooms. By eating the small red variety of garlic, blossoms of kiṁśuka, a gourd, so also udumbara, bottle-gourd, a twice-born becomes fallen. He should also avoid kṛsara, cakes of wheat flour, and milky cakes, flesh (of a beast) not killed at a sacrifice, so also food prepared for deities and oblations, sour gruel, citron fruit, so also fish not killed at a rite; so also he should carefully avoid kadamba-flowers, wood-apple, figs; so also oil-cakes with oil taken out, and the grains offered to gods.

25-29a. At night he should carefully avoid curds with sesamum. He should not eat butter-milk with milk; he should not use prohibited food. He should avoid food impaired by worms, by thoughts, and having contact with earth; he should always avoid food spoiled by worms and insects and (prepared) by a

friend with suffering. He should avoid food smelt by a dog, recooked food and food seen by a cāṇḍāla; so also smelt by a woman in her menses, by the fallen ones or by a cow. He should always avoid the food that is not (properly) collected, stale and scattered; so also food that is touched by crows and cocks and containing worms; so also the food that is smelt even by human beings and touched by a leper.

29b-31a. He should not accept food given by a woman during the menses, an unchaste or a diseased woman, or by one who has put on a dirty garment. He should also avoid (using) another person's garment. Manu has said that the milk of a cow with no calf or a she-goat with a kid not more than ten days old, or of a sheep or a cow who has just taken the bull is not fit for drinking.

31b-46. He should not eat (the flesh of) a crane, a swan, a gallinule, a sparrow, a parrot, so also an osprey, a patridge, a goose, a cuckoo, crows, wagtails, a hawk, a vulture, so also an owl, a ruddy goose, a vulture (or a cock), a pigeon, a dove, a ṭiṭṭibha bird, a domestic cock, a lion, a tiger, a cat, a dog, a pig, a fox, a monkey and a donkey. He should not eat (the flesh of) serpents, deer, peacocks, aquatic animals, land-going animals. This is a settled rule. O best ones, Prajāpati Manu has said that these animals with five claws may be always eaten: alligator, tortoise, hare, rhinoceros, porcupine. He may also eat fish with scales, and the flesh of (the deer called) ruru after having presented them to deities and brāhmaṇas, and not otherwise. O best brāhmaṇas, so also (the flesh of) a peacock, a patridge, a pigeon, a cātaka, rhinoceros, a crane, a swan. Thus said Prajāpati (Manu). These fish, viz. (the glittering fish) śapharī, siṁhatuṇḍa, paṭhīna and rohita are directed as fit to be eaten. With a desire (to retain the status) as a twice-born he should eat the flesh of these after it is sprinkled over; even if he is about to lose his life he should duly use it. He should not at all eat flesh. He who eats what remains, is not smeared (with sin). If he is weak, he should eat flesh as medicine, or by an order or for sacrificial purposes. He, who would give up flesh when invited at a śrāddha or a rite in honour of a deity, goes to (i.e. lives) in hell for as many years as the number of hair of the beast. The settled (rule) is that the twice-born should not give or drink or

touch or see liquor. Therefore with all efforts he should always avoid liquor. Having drunk it he falls from his rites and would be unfit to be talked to. As long as a twice-born eats and drinks what is prohibited for eating or drinking and does not cast them down, he does not become entitled (to respect etc.). Therefore, a twice-born should, with effort, always avoid articles prohibited for eating and drinking. If he does (persist in eating or drinking) them, he goes to Raurava (hell).

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

Acts of Charity Prescribed for a Householder

Vyāsa said :

1. I shall now explain to you the excellent merit of giving gifts, which was formerly told by Brahmā to the sages—the teachers of the Vedas.

2-30. The giving of proper objects with faith to a worthy recipient is designated as 'dāna' and gives the fruit of enjoyment and liberation. I take that to be 'datta' which is given with great faith to deserving persons. The rest he preserves for someone else. Dāna (giving gifts) is said to be of three kinds: obligatory, occasional, and optional. The fourth called vimala (i.e. pure) is said to be the best of all gifts. That gift which is everyday given to a brāhmaṇa who does not oblige and without desiring its fruit is said to be obligatory. That gift which is given into the hands of the learned for the appeasement of sin is said to be the excellent gift called 'occasional'. The sages who have thought about religious merit have called that gift which is given (for getting) a child, success, glory, happiness, as 'optional'. That gift which is given to those who know Vedas, to please the lord, and with a mind full of piety is pure and auspicious. Having secured a worthy recipient, he should, according to his capacity, resort to the merit due to gift. That worthy recipient whom he waits upon, protects him all round. That which is surplus in the food or garments of the family, should be given. If given otherwise, it

does not give the fruit of the gift. He should devoutly give (gifts) to a learned brāhmaṇa, one born in a noble family, one who is modest, one who is practising a vow, and one who is poor. He who devoutly gives land to a brāhmaṇa who has maintained the sacred fire, goes to the highest place, going where he does not grieve. He who gives land with sugarcanes (i.e. land where sugarcanes are growing), so also land with wheat (growing in it), to (a brāhmaṇa) learned in the Vedas, is not reborn. He who gives (a piece of) land, even of the measure of a cow's hide, to a poor brāhmaṇa, is freed from all sins. Here (i.e. in this world) there is no greater gift than the gift of land. Giving food is equal to that, and gift of knowledge (i.e. teaching) is superior to that. He who duly gives knowledge to a calm, pure, religious brāhmaṇa is honoured in Brahmā's heaven. A man should every-day give with devotion gold to a brahmacārī 'religious student'. Being freed from all sins, he would obtain the position of Brahman. By giving food to a householder a man obtains (its) fruit. Food alone should be given to him. By giving it the giver obtains the highest position. Observing a fast with his mind controlled, and being calm and pure, he should honour seven or five brāhmaṇas with black sesamum and especially with honey on the full moon day of Vaiśākha (saying), 'May Dharmarāja be pleased'; from the time he has this in mind, all the sin committed during his life time perishes in a moment. He who, having put sesamum seeds or gold, or honey or ghee on a hide of a black antelope, gives them to a brāhmaṇa, overcomes all sin. He who gives food with ghee, a jar with water to brāhmaṇas, especially on the full moon day of Vaiśākha, after having assigned it to Dharmarāja is freed from fear. He who pleases seven or five brāhmaṇas with water pots with gold and sesamum seeds, removes (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Being calm and fasting, wearing a white garment, a twice-born who gives on the twelfth day of the dark fortnight in the month of Māgha after offering sesamum seeds into fire, sesamum seeds only, to brāhmaṇas, overcomes all the sin that he has committed from his birth. When the new moon day arrives, he should give whatever little (he can) to a poor brāhmaṇa, dedicating it to Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, saying, 'May the ancient god Hṛṣīkeśa Viṣṇu be pleased.' That moment only his sin committed during the past seven births, perishes. He who would,

on the fourteenth day of the dark half, propitiate the trident-holder god (i.e. Śiva) through a brāhmaṇa, would not be re-born. Especially on the eighth day of the dark half, he having bathed and honoured a religious brāhmaṇa should, after washing his feet etc. duly give him his own wealth saying, 'May Śiva be pleased with me.'

31-43. Being freed from all sins, he obtains the highest position. Devoted twice-borns should worship Viṣṇu on the fourteenth day, or especially on the eighth day of the dark half, so also on the new moon day. He who observes a fast on the eleventh day, and would worship Viṣṇu through a brāhmaṇa, would go to the highest position. This day, the twelfth of the bright half, is called Vaiṣṇavī (i.e. sacred to Viṣṇu). On that day (a man) should carefully propitiate Viṣṇu. Whatever is given to a pure brāhmaṇa by dedicating it to lord Viṣṇu only, is said to have inexhaustible fruit. One who desires to propitiate a particular deity should honour brāhmaṇas. By that he would please that deity. Deities always dwell in the bodies of brāhmaṇas. Sometimes, when brāhmaṇas are not available, the deities are worshipped in their images etc. Desiring a fruit from them he should carefully worship the deities in images or especially in (i.e. represented by) brāhmaṇas everyday. He who desires power, should always worship Indra. He who longs for divine glory and knowledge, should worship Brahmā. He who desires good health (should worship) the Sun; he who longs for wealth, should worship Fire. He who desires success in undertakings, should worship Vināyaka. He who desires pleasures, should worship the Moon; he who longs for strength should worship the Wind. He who desires freedom from the worldly existence should carefully worship Viṣṇu. He who desires deep, abstract meditation, liberation and also divine knowledge, should carefully worship Śiva, the lord of gods. Those who desire great satisfaction worship Śiva and Viṣṇu. Giving water gives greater satisfaction than that.

44-55a. He who gives oil, gets desired progeny; the giver of a lamp gets excellent eye. The giver of land gets everything. One who gives gold gets long life. He who gives a house, obtains excellent houses; he who gives silver, gets excellent beauty. He, who gives a garment, lives in the same world as the Moon. The

giver of a horse gets an excellent vehicle. The giver of food gets the wealth desired by him; the giver of a cow obtains the world of Brahmā. The giver of a vehicle or a bed obtains a wife. He who grants fearlessness, obtains affluence. The giver of grains gets eternal happiness; he who gives (i.e. teaches) sacred text, reaches eternal Brahman. A man should give according to his capacity grains also to brāhmaṇas endowed with Vedic knowledge. After death he gets (i.e. goes to) heaven. By giving food to cows he is freed from all sins. By giving fuel a man has his fire kindled. He should always give fruits, roots, drinks and vegetables to brāhmaṇas. He should always be joyful. He who gives medicine, oil, food to a sick person for curing the disease, becomes free from diseases and happy and lives long. A man who gives an umbrella and sandals crosses the path that is sharp like a razor's edge leading to the hell Asipatravana and severe heat. He should give that, desiring that only eternally, to a virtuous person, which is most desired in the world and which is expected in the house. That which is given during the transition of one solstice to another, of the equinoctial point, at the time of the lunar or solar eclipses, or on a Saṁkrānti day etc., becomes inexhaustible. By giving (gifts) at sacred places like Prayāga, or at auspicious abodes, or at (the bank of) rivers and streams, he obtains inexhaustible (fruit).

55b-67. For beings there is no greater religious merit here than giving in charity. Therefore the twice-born should give (gifts) to a learned brāhmaṇa. In the same way he who desires his well-being, he who desires liberation, should give (gifts) to brāhmaṇas for (going to) heaven or for the destruction of his sins. He who, of an irreligious nature, would stop through folly, (gifts) being presented to brāhmaṇas, fire or gods, would go to the womb of an animal. A king should drive him, after forfeiting all his wealth, out of his country, who, having earned wealth, would not honour brāhmaṇas and gods. That brāhmaṇa who, at the time of famine, does not give food etc. to twice-born ones who are dying, stands condemned. (Brāhmaṇas) should not accept (gifts) from him and should not stay with him. The king should find out (facts about) him and drive him out of his country. He who later gives his wealth, the means of religious merit, to good people, is a greater sinner than those (mentioned) earlier, and

such a man is roasted in hell. O best brāhmaṇas, a man should give gifts to those brāhmaṇas who study the Vadas, are learned, have their senses controlled, are endowed with truthfulness and restraint. A man should feed a learned, religious brāhmaṇa, even though he has eaten (his meal), but not a fool, who does not behave properly (though he) has starved for ten days. He who, ignoring a learned brāhmaṇa who has approached him, gives (gifts to someone else), becomes sinful due to that act and burns his family to the seventh (descendant). If there is a brāhmaṇa who is superior in respect of good character or learning, he should exert to give him by bypassing (the brāhmaṇa that is) nearby. He who would accept what is honoured and would give just what is honoured—both these go to heaven; but (if the) reverse (is done) they go to hell.

68-78. A man knowing Dharma, should not give even water to an atheist, a sceptic, so also to all heretics and to one who does not know the Vedas. If a man who is not learned, would accept silver, gold, a cow, a horse, land, sesamum seeds, he is reduced to ashes like wood. An excellent brāhmaṇa should desire to get wealth from praiseworthy brāhmaṇas, even from kṣatriyas and vaiśyas, but never from śūdras. Seeking (i.e. he should seek) the contraction of his livelihood, (but) he should not long for enhancing his wealth. Attached to greed for wealth, he is deprived of his brāhmaṇahood. He would not obtain that position by studying all the Vedas and by fully accomplishing sacrifices, which he would obtain through contentment. He should not have a liking for accepting (gifts); he should not collect (a gift) from a śūdra. A brāhmaṇa who takes more (than necessary for) his maintenance, goes the downward path. He who is not contented, does not become fit for heaven. He afflicts people; he is like a thief. Desiring to emancipate his preceptor and servants he should gratify deities and guests, and should accept gifts from all (sources), but should never gratify himself. A householder who has thus controlled himself, and honours deities and guests, and who lives with a controlled mind, goes to that highest position. Entrusting his wife to his sons and going to the forest, the wise one, being neutral and composed should always move all alone. O best brāhmaṇas, I have told you this way of life of the householders. Knowing it one should follow it and make the

twice-born ones follow it. In this way he should, following the householder's way, continuously worship the only, eternal lord. Going beyond all births as creatures, he goes to the original cause and does not get another birth.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Code of Conduct for an Anchorite

Vyāsa said :

1-4. Having thus remained in the householder's stage during the second part of his life, he should, with his wife and (the sacred) fire, resort to the third stage of life. Or, having entrusted his wife to his sons, he should go to a forest after seeing the child of his child (i.e. the grandchild) and when his body has become infirm. He, observing a vow and being calm, should practise penance after having gone to a forest in the forenoon (of a day) in the bright half of a month in the auspicious uttarāyaṇa (i.e. the summer solstice). He should everyday fetch for his food pure roots and fruits. With that which is his food, he should please the manes and deities.

5-15. He should everyday please the guests, and after bath he should worship gods. Being calm and getting eight morsels of food from his house, he should eat them. He should have matted hair and should not cut off his nails and hair. He should always recite sacred texts and refrain from talking about anything else. He should maintain the sacred fire and perform the five sacrifices with the various things that are produced (there) or with vegetables or roots or fruits; he should be clothed in bark and being pure should bathe thrice (a day). He should be compassionate towards all beings and should avoid accepting (gifts). A twice-born should always perform the new moon and full moon sacrifices. He should perform the seasonal sacrifice and also offer an oblation of the first fruits at the end of the rainy season and perform the cāturmāsya sacrifices (performed every four months, i.e. at the beginning of Kārtika, Phālguna

and Āṣāḍha). In the summer solstice and the winter solstice he should, in the proper order, perform sacrifices with products of the spring and the autumn seasons brought by himself, and should separately offer puroḍāśas and carūs. Having offered more auspicious oblations to deities and manes, he should eat the remaining, saline in taste and prepared by himself. He should avoid liquor and flesh and mushrooms growing on the ground. He should not eat fragrant or young grass, no fruits of śleṣmātaka, no products of ploughed land nor that which is abandoned by others. Even when he is sick he should not eat flowers and fruits growing in villages. He should always wait upon fire with rites as laid down in the Vedas. He should not bear malice against any being; he should be free from the pairs of opposites; he should be fearless. He should not eat anything at night, and should engage himself in meditation at night.

16-26a. He should control his senses, curb his anger and should think over the true nature of Brahman. He should always observe celibacy and should not even resort to (i.e. cohabit with) his wife. That twice-born, who, after having gone to the forest copulates at his will with his wife, has his vow lost, and he has to atone for it. The foetus (i.e. the child) that is born there (i.e. due to this copulation) should not be touched by twice-borns. He is not entitled to (the study of) the Vedas; the same is (the rule applicable to the members born) in his family. Intent on muttering the Gāyatrī-hymn, he should always sleep on the (bare) ground. He should protect all creatures, and should always give gifts to the good. He should avoid censure, telling lies, sleep, idleness. He should maintain one (sacred) fire; should be without an abode; and should resort to the ground that is sprinkled with water. Being restrained, he should move with animals and live with them only. Being calm, he should sleep on a stone or sand. He should cleanse (i.e. finish his stock) instantly or within a month, or should have the stock lasting for six months or for a year. Having collected food according to his capacity by day, he should eat it at night. He should eat every fourth time or eighth time, or should avoid (food) according to the cāndrāyaṇa vow in the bright and the dark fortnights. He should eat boiled gruel of barley once in every fortnight. Or he should, conforming to the creed of an anchorite,

subsist on the natural flowers, roots and fruits which are withered. He should roam about on the ground or stand on the fore-parts of his feet for a day.

26b-36. He should divert himself with (various) places and seats, and should never give up calmness. He should observe the vow of the five fires[1] in summer; should expose himself to the rain in rainy season; should put on wet clothes in winter. He should gradually increase his penance. He should bathe three times a day and should gratify his manes and deities. He should stand on one leg only, or should always drink the sun's ray. Or he should move in the smoke of the five fires, or should move in the heat or drink Soma. In the bright half he should drink milk and in dark half cow-dung. Or he should eat withered leaves or should live by bodily mortification. He should always engage himself in practising abstract meditation, or should always recite the Rudra (-hymn). He should study the Atharvaśiras, and should be intent on studying the Upaniṣads. He should carefully observe the restraints and vows. He should use the hide of a black antelope; should have an upper garment and a white sacred thread. Having put on the fires, he should be intent on meditating on his soul. An ascetic, not keeping the fire, having no abode, should be intent on (getting) salvation. Moving among ascetic twice-borns or among householders or other twice-borns moving in the forest, he should beg alms. Or getting it from the village, he should, living in the forest, eat eight morsels. He should eat from a leaf-vessel or from his hand or from a piece (of a pot etc.). He should mutter various Upaniṣadic hymns for self-realization; he should mutter particular incantations, Gāyatrī-hymn and Rudrādhyāya also. He should set out on the great journey (death) and stop taking food. Or following the religious commandment of offering himself to Brahman, he should enter fire.

1. Pañcatapas—An ascetic who in summer practises penance sitting in the middle of four fires with the sun burning right over his head.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

Rules of Conduct for a Sannyāsī

Vyāsa said:

1. Having thus lived in the stage of an anchorite for the third part of his life, he should gradually pass into the fourth stage of life in renunciation.

2-5. Having established the fires in the soul a twice-born would be a recluse. When he, engaged in the practice of abstract meditation, calm, intent on getting the knowledge of Brahman, has detachment in his mind for all objects, then (only) he should think of renouncing (the world). If reverse is the case, then he would fall. Having accomplished the Prājāpatya sacrifice (by giving away his own property) and the fire-sacrifice, he, being restrained, having put on a white or red garment should resort to the stage of the ascetic. Some are ascetics (following the path) of knowledge; some are ascetics (engaged in the study) of the Vedas; others are ascetics (following the path) of action. (Thus ascetics are said to be of three kinds.)

6-20a. He, who is free from everything, who is free from the pairs (like pleasure and pain), who is fearless and who is well-settled in himself is called *jñāna-sannyāsī*. He, who would be desireless and possessionless and would study the Vedas only, and desires salvation and has his senses controlled is called *Veda-sannyāsī*. The twice-born who having had fire in his possession, is intent on dedicating himself to Brahman and on performing great sacrifices, should be known as *karma-sannyāsī*. Of these three, the *jñāna-sannyāsī* is regarded as superior. For him, the wise one, there is nothing to be done nor does he have any mark. Free from the feeling of mine-ness, being fearless, calm, free from the pairs, subsisting on leaves, wearing an old strip to cover his private parts, or remaining naked he is engaged in meditation. He, a celibate, with his diet controlled, should fetch his food from the village. Being indifferent and desireless he should remain taking delight in the supreme spirit. He should move in this world for happiness with the help of his own soul (i.e. all alone). He should not desire death, nor should he desire life. He should wait for

death only as a servant waits for (his master's order). He should not study; should not engage himself (in any pursuit); should never listen (to anything). A meditating saint, who thus looks upon knowledge as the highest thing is fit for absorption into Brahman. The wise one should have one garment (only) or a small strip to cover (his private parts); should be clean-shaven or should have a lock of hair on the crown of his head; should be tridaṇḍī and should have no possession; (or) should put on a red garment and always engage himself in deep meditation. He should live near a village, at the root of a tree or in a temple. He should be equal to his enemy or friend, so also (look equally upon) respect and insult. He should always subsist by begging, and should never eat from one place. For an ascetic who, through delusion or for some other reason, eats from one place only, no explation is seen in the religious texts. He should be detached from love or hatred; should look equally upon a clod or stone or gold; should abstrain from harming creatures, should observe the vow of silence and should be fully desireless. He should plant his foot kept pure by sight (i.e. watching that no impurity is contracted); should drink after it is filtered through a cloth; he should talk words that are purified by truth; and should behave in a way which is approved by his conscience.

20b-27a. Except in the rainy season a mendicant should not stay at one place (for a long time). Bathing everyday and being pure and virtuous, having a water-pot in his hand, he should always be engrossed in celibacy and be interested in living in a forest. If he is engaged in (reading) scriptures (leading to) salvation, is invested with the sacred thread, has his senses controlled, if he is free from religious hypocrisy and pride, and is free from censuring others and from wickedness, is endowed with the quality of the knowledge of the soul, he would obtain salvation. He should constantly meditate on the eternal deity called 'Om'. After having bathed and sipped water according to the proper rite and being pure, he, invested with the sacred thread, with his mind tranquil, with kuśas in his hand, with his red garment washed, with the hair (on his body) covered with ashes, should mutter hymns about the principal sacrifice or the presiding deity or the highest soul or whatever is said in the

Upaniṣads. Or the restrained ascetic, being a celibate, should live among his sons. He should everyday study the Vedas, (then) he goes to the highest position.

27b-31. These are his special vows : harmlessness, truth, non-stealing, celibacy, austerities, forgiveness, kindness, and contentment; or he should, having faith in the Upaniṣadic knowledge and being calm, and having bathed, should perform the five sacrifices everyday; and desiring alms, and being tranquil, should, from time to time, mutter the sacrificial hymns. He should everyday do sacred study, and should mutter the Gāyatrī-hymn at both the twilights. He should constantly meditate upon the absolute lord. He should always avoid food from one place, so also lust, wrath and possessions; he should wear one garment, or two garments; he should have a lock of hair on the crown of his head; he should be invested with a sacred thread; the wise man having the tridaṇḍa in his hand goes to that highest Brahman.

CHAPTER SIXTY

Restraints for a Sannyāsī

Vyāsa said:

1-15. Thus the livelihood of the sages who have controlled themselves and are in the (fourth) stage of life is said to be (had) by means of begging or fruits and roots. He should beg for one time only; he should not be attached to expansion (of begging). An ascetic attached to begging, becomes also attached to objects of senses. He should beg from seven houses. He should not move again (for alms) if he does not get it (during the first round). An ascetic should wait (for alms at a door) with his face hung down for the time required for milking a cow. Saying, 'Alms (please)', he, pure and controlled in speech, should remain silent. The man, having washed his hands and feet and sipped water according to proper rite, and having presented the food to the sun, facing the east, should eat it. Having offered oblations to

the five vital airs, he, being calm, should eat eight morsels. Having sipped water, he should meditate upon the highest lord, Brahma. Manu Prajāpati has mentioned four (kinds of) pots for an ascetic: pumpkin gourd, wooden, made of clay and of bamboo. Before the fall of night, at midnight, during the last part of the night, he should everyday meditate upon the lord with special hymns at the twilights, after bringing to the lotus of his heart the lord called Viśva, the source of everything, the soul of all creatures dwelling beyond the darkness, the prop of all, the unmanifest, the joy, the immutable light, the one beyond Prakṛti and Puruṣa, the ether, fire and the auspicious one, that essence of all beings, the god of the form of Brahman. At the end of Oṁkāra, and having offered himself into the highest soul, he should meditate upon the lord, the ruler, living in the midst of the sky. He, meditating upon the ancient Puruṣa Viṣṇu, the cause of all objects and the only receptacle of joy, would be free from bondage. Or he should meditate in the heart, (on) the primal nature, the only cause of all beings, the abode of the illusion of the world, the life of all beings, where the world merges. The subtle joy of Brahman which those desiring salvation obtain, in that is placed Brahman—absolute and having knowledge as its characteristic. Having thought over the endless, true lord he should remain controlled in speech.

16-28a. This is said to be the most secret knowledge for the ascetics. He who always remains in this obtains the contemplation of the Supreme Spirit. Therefore, he should always be intent upon (securing) knowledge, should be greatly devoted to metaphysical knowledge, should study the Brahmanic knowledge, by which he becomes free from bondage. Regarding his being separate from all (else), he should meditate upon the absolute joy, the immutable one and the knowledge which is beyond that. Beyond that, from whom the beings originate, and knowing whom a man is not born here (i.e. in this world), stands one, the lord, the ruler. The man's entering him is eternal, auspicious and unchanging. He that is away from this is the lord, the great god. For the violation of each of the vows laid down for the ascetics and other vows an expiation is enjoined. A man having through lust, gone to (i.e. cohabited with) a woman, should being

calm and pure practise the expiation called Kṛcchra-sāntapana,[1] along with the restraining of his breath. Then, with his mind controlled, the ascetic should practise bodily mortification; and then having again come back to the hermitage, he should behave carefully. Falsehood that is not against Dharma, is not harmful—so say the wise. Yet such a horrible attachment should not be indulged in. An ascetic desiring religious merit, should observe fast for a night, and practise the restraint of breath a hundred times after having told a lie. Even if he is in a great calamity he should not steal (a thing) from others. The Smṛti says that there is no worse sin than stealing. Doing harm to others, extreme avidity, solicitation destroy the knowledge of the soul. That which is (called) wealth, is the outward life. He, whose wealth a man snatches, takes away his life.

28b-40. The ascetic of a wicked mind, violating his (usual) mode of life, and fallen from his vow, being again depressed, should behave carefully. If an ascetic would cause harm accidentally, he should perform the expiation (called) Atikṛcchra[2] or Cāndrāyaṇa[3]. If through the weakness of his senses, he emits (semen) on seeing a woman, he should have the sixteen kinds of restraints of breath. The wise go through the restraint of breath a hundred times for three nights if there is an emission by day. The expiation called Prājāpatya[4] is enjoined for taking food from one (house only), (eating) honey and flesh at the first śrāddha and on actually cognizing salt (*pratyakṣalavaṇaḥ*). All the sin of him who is always given to meditation, perishes. Therefore, a man should meditate upon Viṣṇu and be engaged in meditating upon him. He the great god should be known—that

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1. Kṛcchra-sāntapana : Drinking the mixture of cow's urine, cowdung, milk, curd, ghee, water (flowing) from kuśa, and fastting the next day. (See Manu. 11.212)

2. Atikṛcchra : Eating one morsel for three days in the morning, three days in the evening, and eating whatever is obtained without begging for three days, and fasting for the remaining three days. (See Manu. 11.213)

3. Cāndrāyaṇa : Bathing thrice a day, reducing one morsel on each day of the dark fortnight, and increasing one morsel on each day of the bright fortnight. (See Manu. 11.217)

4. Prājāpatya : Eating for three days in the morning, three days in the evening, and three days without begging. (See Manu. 11.211)

is the highest light of Brahman, that has entered the indestructible and the immutable, and that is the inner soul, the highest Brahman. That alone is the indestructible, unchangeable, eternal, highest position. So he is worshipped and is called Mahādeva, in his abode called knowledge, the highest principle due to his contact with the soul. He does not recognize any other god than Mahādeva. He, who follows him—the soul—goes to the highest position. Those who regard themselves as different from the lord, do not realize that absolute highest Brahman, the indestructible principle. That god is Mahādeva. Knowing this, he is not bound. Therefore, an ascetic, with his mind restrained, engaged in (obtaining) knowledge and deep meditation, calm, and devoted to Mahādeva, should strive.

41-43. O brāhmaṇas, I have described to you the auspicious stage (i.e. the way of life) of the ascetics, which was formerly told by the lord, the sage, viz. the Grandsire. A man should not give this auspicious knowledge about the way of life of ascetics, told by the Self-born one, to him who is not his son, or disciple or a meditating sage. Thus is made the statement about the restraints of an ascetic, which would be the only cause of the joy of the best of gods. Those whose minds are set upon (the lord) are neither born nor do they perish.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Devotion to Viṣṇu the Best Way to Salvation

Sūta said:

1-2a. Thus Vyāsa of immeasurable lustre spoke to the brāhmaṇas. Having said this much, having cheered up all the sages, the revered Vyāsa, the son of Satyavatī, went as he had come.

2b-8a. I have told you the rules about the castes and the stages of life. Having done this only, a man becomes dear to Viṣṇu, not otherwise. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall tell you the

secret about it. Listen. O brāhmaṇas, the duties regarding castes and stages that were told now, are not equal even to the sixteenth part of the devotion to Viṣṇu in this world. In Kaliyuga only devotion to Hari is to be achieved. A man has to practise the duties in the other yuga. That religious man who keeping god Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu, Hṛṣīkeśa, invoked by many, the ancient one, the great and the tranquil one, in his heart worships him, has conquered (all) the three worlds. A brāhmaṇa, having drunk the nectar of the devotion to Viṣṇu, has overcome the bite of the serpent of Kali-age, the blemish, the Kālakūṭa (poison).

8b-13a. What is the use of muttering (the names of other deities) if men (just) utter the name of Viṣṇu? What is the use of (holy) baths for him who has held the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet on his head? What is the use of a sacrifice for him who has held the lotus-like feet of Hari in (i.e. to) his heart? What is the use of giving (gifts) for him, if he has narrated the deeds of Viṣṇu in an assembly? He who, having heard about the multitudes of Viṣṇu's virtues, would again and again be delighted, gets the same state as he whose mind is fixed on Kṛṣṇa and is delighted through profound meditation. Those that bring in obstacles in it are said to be talking heretic and fraudulent things; the women who are in their company also obstruct devotion to Viṣṇu. The command given by the eyes of women cannot be overruled even by gods. He who has overcome it, is called Viṣṇu's devotee in the world.

13b-20. Even sages longing for the acts of women, become mad. O brāhmaṇas, where can there be devotion for Viṣṇu for those who are fond of women? O brāhmaṇas, they are demonesses moving in the guise of beautiful women; for they constantly eat up the minds of men. As long as there is no movement of the fickle eyes of a woman an art or science is effective, knowledge proceeds, the intellect grasping all sacred texts is very pure, muttering is (possible), resorting to sacred places is done, the preceptor is served, there is a desire to cross (the mundane existence), awakening takes place, discrimination is possible, there is a liking for the company of the good, there is a desire for (listening to) the Purāṇas. (Otherwise) O brāhmaṇas, a man would fall; and all dharmas would disappear. In the case of those who are favoured

with a little (portion) of the honey of the lotuses in the form of Viṣṇu's feet, the casting of the fickle glances of women is not powerful. Those, O brāhmaṇas, who have birth after birth served Viṣṇu, have given gift to brāhmaṇas, have offered oblations into fire, have been detached from that (i.e. being allured by women).

21-36. What indeed is said to be the beauty of women, is described as the lustre of their ornaments and garments. Why is the beauty of women described to be without love and knowledge of self? For, it is indeed the body possessing pus, urine, feces, blood, skin, marrow, bones and fat. Thinking it to be different in this way, a man having touched it would be pure after having bathed. O brāhmaṇas, the body formed by those (i.e. bones, marrow etc.) is found beautiful by men. Oh, what a bad condition of people, which is brought about by (their) misfortune, that a man proceeds, knowing that one without breasts is a man and one (with breasts is) a woman! On (proper) thought, what is a man and what is a woman? Therefore, a good man should, by all means, avoid the company of a woman. Who, on the earth, obtains success after having met with a woman? A man should avoid contact with a woman and with one who keeps contact with her. It is seen that her company is actually Raurava. People are greedy due to ignorance; and for that reason they are duped by destiny. A man would be roasted in the vulva of a woman—a hellish pit. He would again find delight in that (hell) from which he has come to the earth! Men take delight in that from which everyday urine and semen rising from filth come out. Who then would be impure due to that? In this world there is great trouble there (i.e. in the union with a woman). Oh, the mockery (done by) destiny! Again and again a man takes delight there (i.e. in the union with a woman). Oh, the shamelessness of men! Therefore, a wise man should think over the many multitudes of the faults of women. Due to coitus there is a loss of strength; and sleep becomes very young (i.e. overpowering). Due to his knowledge snatched away by sleep a man becomes short-lived. Therefore, a wise man should, with effort, look upon a woman as his death, and the wise one should cause his mind to seek delight in the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. Which great fool, leaving the service of the feet of Viṣṇu that gives pleasure in this world and in the

next, would serve the feet of a woman? The service of the feet of Viṣṇu causes absence of rebirth, (while) serving a woman's vulva (i.e. cohabiting with a woman) brings about the danger of (re-) birth. He would repeatedly fall into the womb (i.e. would be reborn) as one who is cooked out of a machine. He would again long for her and that would be his mortification.

37-48a. With my hands raised I am speaking. Listen to my important words. Put your heart into Viṣṇu, and not into the vulva (i.e. a woman) causing torment. That man who lives by avoiding union with a woman, obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice at every step. There is no doubt that the lord of the world is pleased with him who through good luck has married a pious woman belonging to a noble family and avoids union with her after having produced a son on her. The pious ones declare that union with a woman is a bad union. When it is there, firm devotion to Viṣṇu comes never. Giving up all (others) attachments, he should entertain devotion to Viṣṇu. In my opinion devotion to Viṣṇu is difficult to get. There is no doubt that he who is devoted to Viṣṇu is happy. He should do that deed only which pleases Viṣṇu. When he is satisfied, the world is satisfied. When he is pleased, the world is pleased. The existence of human beings is declared to be fruitless without devotion to Viṣṇu. Which man would not serve that unmanifest Viṣṇu whom gods like Brahmā and Śiva worship for pleasing him? The mother of him who keeps the pair of the feet of Viṣṇu in his heart, is very fortunate; (so also) his father is very blessed. Those men who say, 'O Viṣṇu, venerable to the world, affectionate towards those who seek your refuge' do not go to hell. Brāhmaṇas are especially the actual forms of Viṣṇu. With those who worship them suitably, Viṣṇu is pleased.

48b-72a. Viṣṇu would move (i.e. moves) over this earth in the form of a brāhmaṇa. Without a brāhmaṇa no rite is ever successful. Those who have devoutly put the water (flowing) from the feet of a brāhmaṇa on their heads, have gratified their dead ancestors and have also liberated their own soul. That sweet thing which is put into the mouths of brāhmaṇas is actually given into the mouth of Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu himself enjoys it. Such people who worship Viṣṇu in his images etc. when he is actually seen in the form of a brāhmaṇa, are rare. That act (of

worshipping his image) is (to be done) when he (i.e. a brāhmaṇa) is not available. The earth is declared to be blessed due to its being the abode of brāhmaṇas. Whatever is offered into their hands, is offered into the hand of Viṣṇu. By salutation made to them wickedness disappears. By saluting a brāhmaṇa, a man is freed from sins like killing a brāhmaṇa. Therefore, good men should propitiate a brāhmaṇa after looking upon him as Viṣṇu. If something is given into the mouth of a hungry brāhmaṇa (by a men), he is sprinkled for crores of kalpas with streams of nectar after death (i.e. in heaven). The mouth of a brāhmaṇa is a great holy place which is not a barren spot with saline soil and which is without thorns. If something is sown there (by a man), he would obtain crore times the fruit. He who gives him (i.e. a brāhmaṇa) food of various kinds to please a brāhmaṇa (goes to) worlds full of great pleasures giving freedom till the end of crores of kalpas. He should, after honouring a brāhmaṇa, daily listen to a Purāṇa which is narrated by a brāhmaṇa and which is wild fire to (the forest of) sins. Of all the holy places, Purāṇa is said to be the best holy place, by hearing even a part of which Viṣṇu himself is pleased. As Viṣṇu taking up the form of the sun, moves for giving light to all the worlds, similarly for enlightening you Viṣṇu, in the form of a Purāṇa, moves among the beings. A Purāṇa is extremely sanctifying. Therefore, if one has a mind to generate (in himself) love for Viṣṇu, men should constantly listen to a Purāṇa, of the form of Viṣṇu. A tranquil devotee of Viṣṇu should listen to the narration of a Purāṇa, which is difficult to be had, which is spotless and which very much removes blemishes. A man should look upon it as the highest, since, O brāhmaṇas, having collected the significance of the Vedas, Viṣṇu, in the form of Vyāsa, created the Purāṇa. In the Purāṇa, piety is defined; and Keśava himself is piety. Therefore, when the Purāṇa is heard a man would become (one with) Viṣṇu. Hari (i.e. Viṣnu) himself is a brāhmaṇa and Purāṇa also is like that. Having the contact of these two a man would be Viṣṇu himself. So also he could destroy his sin by sprinkling the water of Gaṅgā (over himself). Viṣṇu, in the liquid form liberates the earth. If a devotee of Viṣṇu in desirous of singing songs of Viṣṇu, he should have the sprinkling of (i.e. bath in) the water of Gaṅgā, which is pure and which purifies

(all other objects). The goddess Gaṅgā is said to cause devotion to Viṣṇu on the earth. That Gaṅgā is of the nature of Viṣṇu, and is the cause of the expansion of the world. A man should have devotion without any motive to brāhmaṇas, Purāṇas, Gaṅgā, cows and pippala (tree) looking upon them as Viṣṇu. The wise ones have determined these to be actually of the nature of Viṣṇu.

72b-87a. Therefore, he who longs for devotion to Viṣṇu should honour these. The existence of men is said to be fruitless without devotion to Viṣṇu. Men resorting to the boat in the form of devotion to Viṣṇu cross (the ocean of worldly existence) which has the mass of the water in the form of the Kali-age, which is full of the alligators in the form of sins, which has the eddies in the form of indulgence in the objects of senses, which has abundant foam in the form of wrong knowledge, very severe on account of the great snakes in the form of wicked people, which is fearful and difficult to cross. Therefore, people should try to secure devotion to Viṣṇu. What pleasure does a creature obtain by enjoying in a false profession (when) he does not adhere to the playful account of Viṣṇu of wonderful sport? If the mind of men clings to the objects of senses, then they should listen to the wonderful stories about Viṣṇu which are mixed up with many (sensuous) objects. O brāhmaṇas, even if (they have fixed) their heart on (securing) salvation they should hear (stories about him). Even if they are casually heard, Viṣṇu would be pleased. Viṣṇu, affectionate to his devotees, though inactive, performed many acts for the well-being of his obedient devotees. He is not so (well) pleased by rites like a hundred Vājapeya sacrifices or a myriad Rājasūyas, as he is by devotion. Resort to the feet of Viṣṇu, which should be mentally resorted to, which were repeatedly resorted to by the good, and which are essential for crossing the ocean of mundane existence. O you wicked, cruel men, who are greedy for objects of senses, why do you yourself throw yourselves into Raurava (hell)? (The fall into hell) will come without resorting (i.e. if men do not resort) to the auspicious feet of Viṣṇu. If you desire to overcome your worries without any effort, then resort to the feet of Viṣṇu for not being reborn (i.e. to avoid rebirth). After thinking about where-

from a mortal has come and whereto he would go, an intelligent man should collect religious merit. (Even) if a man has risen after having fallen into many hells, and after having got bodies of the immobile gets manhood (i.e. gets birth as a man, yet) there (also) remaining in the womb (of the mother) is extremely painful.

87b-103. O Brāhmaṇas, if due to the inevitable consequence of his deeds a creature is born on the earth, he is afflicted by many blemishes like childhood. Having reached youth he is very much oppressed by poverty, or by a severe disease or by drought etc. also. A man would have indescribable trouble due to old age, or due to the mind's wandering here and there, or due to a disease. Then he would meet with death. Even in the mundane existence no greater grief than that is experienced. Then due to the inevitable result of his deeds a being is throubled in Yama's world. Experiencing severe tortures there, he is born again. A creature is born; he dies. He dies; he is again born. Such is the condition (of a man) when the feet of Viṣṇu are not worshipped (by him). Death without trouble or life without difficulty does not take place in the case of him who has not worshipped Viṣṇu. If there is wealth in the house what is the use of (just) preserving it? Would his wealth follow him when he is dragged by the messengers of Yama? Therefore, wealth given to brāhmaṇas after honouring them gives all pleasure. Giving (gifts) is a staircase leading to heaven; giving (gifts) destroys sins. Resorting devoutly to Viṣṇu increases great religious merit. If there is strength in a mortal he should not uselessly waste it. He should carefully dance and sing in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu. Whatever men possess, they should dedicate it to Viṣṇu. What is dedicated to Viṣṇu gives happiness; but what is dedicated to someone else gives misery. By means of his eyes a man should observe the image etc. of Viṣṇu only. With his ears he should day and night hear the meritorious names of Viṣṇu. With their tongue the wise ones should taste the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu. With their nose they should smell the tulasī-leaf (put) at the feet of Viṣṇu. Having touched with his skin Viṣṇu's devotee and having with his mind meditated upon his feet a man becomes blessed. No doubt should be raised about this. A wise man should set his mind upon him; similarly he should

have him in his heart. Men ultimately reach him only. No doubt should be raised about this. Which man would not resort to that beginningless and endless Viṣṇu who gives his own position if he is merely thought of in mind? A man should constantly fix his heart on Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet. To please him he should, according to his capacity, salute him, think about and take delight in him. He should think of his two feet. Such a man alone would get respect in the world.

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

The Merit of Reciting the Padma Purāṇa, Svargakhaṇḍa

Sūta said :

1-8a. Thus is the greatness of that highest lord Viṣṇu, taking up many forms, (Viṣṇu—) who is the cause of complete liberation in the world. One of the forms is the great *Padma* (*Purāṇa*). The *Brahma* (*Purāṇa*) is the head of Viṣṇu only. His heart is called *Padma*. The *Viṣṇu* (*Purāṇa*) is his right arm. The *Śaiva* (*Purāṇa*) is the left arm of the great lord. The *Bhāgavata* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his thighs. The *Nāradīya* (*Purāṇa*) is his navel. The *Mārkaṇḍeya* (*Purāṇa*) is his right foot; the *Agni* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be (his) left foot. The *Bhaviṣya* (*Purāṇa*) is the right knee of the magnanimous Viṣṇu only. The (Purāṇa) called *Brahmavaivarta* is said to be his left knee. The *Liṅga* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be the right ankle and the *Varāha* is the left ankle. The *Skanda Purāṇa* is the hair, and the *Vāmana* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his skin. The *Kūrma* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his back; the *Matsya* is said to his fat. The *Garuḍa* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his marrow; the *Brahmāṇḍa* is said to be his bone(s). Thus Viṣṇu was having the Purāṇas as parts of his body. *Padma* there (i.e. in the body) is the heart, having heard which a man obtains nectar (i.e. immortality).

8b-9. God Viṣṇu himself became (i.e. turned himself into) this *Padma Purana*, having taught one chapter of which a man is freed from all sins. There (i.e. of the *Padma Purāṇa*) this

Svargakhaṇḍa gives the fruit of the entire *Padma*. Having heard the *Svargakhaṇḍa* even those who are great sinners are freed from sins as the serpents are free from their skins.

10-18. A man who hears this first (or best) *Svargakhaṇḍa* gets the same fruit even if he is extremely wicked and expelled from all religions. As a man having bathed at Prayāga in the month of Māgha is free from sins, similarly he would be free from sins by hearing (the *Ādi Svargakhaṇḍa*). He who has heard, and made (others) hear this *Ādikhaṇḍa* has given gold (equal to his own) weight, and has given the entire earth. He has given a gift to a poor man of the debt which he incurred; he has repeatedly recited the thousands of the names of Viṣṇu; he has studied all the Vedas, and has similarly performed all rites; he has settled teachers by giving them livelihood. O brāhmaṇas, he has also granted fearlessness to the people that were frightened; he has sought the consent of the virtuous, wise and pious persons. He has given very cold (water) between (i.e. during the period between) the sign of Aries and the sign of Cancer; he has also cast his life for brāhmaṇas and cows; He, the wise one, has also performed other good deeds.

19-25. Having well studied (i.e. if he studies well) the *Svargakhaṇḍa,* he obtains many pleasures. He, who has slept well, is awakened by women in his harem, by means of good (i.e. sweet) sounds of small bells and with sweet words. He enjoys half of Indra's seat and would live for a long time in Indra's heaven. From there he would go to the Sun's abode and then to the world of the Moon. Then enjoying pleasures in the abode of the Seven Sages, he goes to Dhruva, thence to Brahmā's world, and obtains a lustrous body. Having secured knowledge there only, he goes to (i.e. obtains) salvation. The wise one would live with the good, and would bathe at a holy place. The man would talk pious words and would listen to holy texts. (Among them) *Padma* (i.e. the *Padma Purāṇa*) is a great holy text, and gives the fruit of all the Vedas. In it *Svargakhaṇḍa* gives great religious merit. O people, if you want to cross easily the waves of longings, then resort to Viṣṇu, salute Viṣṇu, the only excellent god; you will go to worlds of very pure pleasures. Listen and utter the incomparable name of Viṣṇu. Obtain your desired objects.

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THE
PADMA-PURĀṆA

PART V

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY
Dr. N.A. DESHPANDE

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

But he has neither the means nor the leisure to embark on that course. We have, therefore, planned to help him acquire knowledge by an easier course. We have started the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology in English Translation. Our goal is to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium of expression. The publication of the Purāṇas in English Translation is a step towards that goal.

PREFACE

This is Part V of the voluminous *Padma Purāṇa* and Volume 43 in the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology. It comprises the whole of section IV named *Brahmakhaṇḍa* (chapters 1-26) and part of Section V named *Pātālakhaṇḍa* (chapters 1-67).

Let us here give a brief outline of the contents of this part.

The *Brahmakhaṇḍa* deals mainly with various aspects of *Viṣṇu Bhakti* or devotion to god Viṣṇu. Out of its 26 chapters as many as 19 preach devotion to Viṣṇu directly in most and indirectly in a few, strengthening it with the help of short anecdotes and stories.

Devotion to Viṣṇu is recommended as the quickest and surest way to liberation in this Kali age. No pilgrimage, no bathing in Gaṅgā, in short, nothing else need be done by such a devotee. The characteristics of a devotee of Viṣṇu are described in vv. 21-32 of chapter 1. The story of a thief named Daṇḍaka shows how a solitary and insignificant act performed once destroyed even his gravest sins committed in the past, and the one of a pious brāhmaṇa Vaikuṇṭha and a rat shows how an accidental act of brightening the flame of a lamp burning in a Viṣṇu temple on the part of the rat liberated it.

Observing a fast on a *Jayantī* day is strongly advised. The merits thereof and awful results incurred by its non-observance are described in detail. Six meritorious *Jayantīs* are mentioned, *Kṛṣṇajanmāṣṭamī* and *Rādhāṣṭamī* being the two most prominent ones.

Ekādaśī is said to be Viṣṇu's day and importance of fasting on this day is greatly emphasized. Various means of winning the favour of god Viṣṇu are described in chapter 16.

Worship of Tulasī plant, offering its leaves to the deity, wearing a rosary of Tulasī wood round one's neck and a garland of Tulasī leaves are praised as highly efficacious in destroying one's sins and freeing oneself from the clutches of Yama's

messengers. Uttering Viṣṇu's name is regarded highly meritorious and leading to Vaikuṇṭha.

Some minor themes of this Section include deeds responsible for sonlessness, birth of a daughter, of a good son, and for stillbirth; churning of the ocean as initiated by a curse of sage Durvāsa who is reputed to become furious for very flimsy reasons; protection offered to a brāhmaṇa as highly meritorious, illustrated by the story of sage Viśvāmitra and how he averted a tragedy by offering himself as a victim in a *Naramedha* sacrifice in place of a brāhmaṇa boy; purificatory acts recommended for saving oneself from sins incurred by indulging in illicit intercourse and eating feces, drinking urine, sipping wine etc.; and importance of keeping a promise.

The *Pātālakhaṇḍa* devotes its first 68 chapters to the ever well-known *Rāmāyaṇa* story, out of which all but the last are included in this Part. This is a Vaiṣṇava theme par excellence, as Rāma was an incarnation of Viṣṇu born for the divine purpose of eliminating the demons headed by Rāvaṇa.

Most of these chapters from Eight onwards describe Rāma's Horse Sacrifice. Chapters 12-53 narrate a number of interesting episodes associated with the Horse's journey over the whole of the earth, including the various thrilling battles that Śatrughna's army had to fight to free the Horse from the rival kings who for some reason came to challenge the supremacy of Rāma. In chapter 54 the ascetic boy Lava binds the Horse, and chapters 60-66 describe the crushing defeat suffered by Śatrughna's army at the hands of the two ascetic brothers Kuśa and Lava.

Incidentally, chapters 55-59 describe the washerman's scandalous talk about Sītā heard and reported to Rāma by the spies and the consequent banishment of Sītā and birth of Kuśa and Lava in the hermitage of sage Vālmīki under his own loving care, who at an appropriate moment discloses the identity of the two sons of Sītā to Rāma who then owns them as his heirs. Sītā after a lot of persuasion returns to Rāma and the Horse Sacrifice is happily concluded even without the victim who miraculously gives up his equine form at Rāma's touch and assumes a divine form.

Acknowledgements

It is our pleasant duty to put on record our sincere thanks to Dr. R.N. Dandekar and the UNESCO authorities for their kind encouragement and valuable help which render this work more useful than it would otherwise have been. We are extremely grateful to Dr. N.A. Deshpande for translating the text. We are also thankful to all those who have been helpful in our project.

—Editor

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ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)—Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, V—Verse, VV—Verses, Ftn—footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo.—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S.M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F. E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series, MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch. S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, MLBD, Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgītā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha)
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka, Com. by Mahidāsa
DB	*Devī Bhāgavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N.L. De, Oriental Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* by Hastings
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa*, ed. R. S. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P.V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varaṇasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇi*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradīya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣīya Prācīna Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd. P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Śat. Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

IV BRAHMAKHAṆḌA

(Section on Brahman)

CHAPTER ONE

Who Are the Devotees of Viṣṇu?

Salutation to Śrī Vedavyāsa

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, now that the Kali age has arrived, tell me, by means of which acts a being would be liberated from that (mundane existence).

Sūta said:

2-4. Well (asked), well (asked), O best of sages, you are the best among the righteous people. You constantly desire the well-being of all people. O you devotee of Viṣṇu, listen to what Vyāsa, the omniscient brāhmaṇa, revered by all, said, when he was formerly asked by Jaimini. The best sage (Jaimini), having prostrated himself like a staff before preceptor Vyāsa, Satyavatī's son, who had mastered everything, asked him:

Jaimini said:

5. Tell me how even with little religious merit people will obtain salvation in the Kali age, since they are short-lived.

Vyāsa said :

6. O lord, O brāhmaṇa, due to the contact with the good there would be the listening to (i.e. a man would listen to) the sacred texts. Due to that there would be (i.e. arise) devotion to Viṣṇu. Knowledge (would follow) from that, and (best) position (i.e. liberation) from that (knowledge).

7. The account of Viṣṇu is not liked by the most sinful man on the earth. Such a brāhmaṇa should be known (i.e. looked upon) as the most sinful (man).

8-13. A devotee of Viṣṇu is delighted on hearing the account of Śrīkṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). He who describes it to be false should be known as the greatest (i.e. worst) among the sinners. O brāhmaṇa, the lord of the world does not leave that place where the account of Kṛṣṇa is (being narrated), and does not at any time go (anywhere else). For a man who would create an obstacle in the act of the narration of Viṣṇu's account, there is no escape from hell for a hundred period of Manu. For those who, having heard the account (as narrated) in the Purāṇas, censure or scoff at it, always have the very afflicting hells on their hands (i.e. waiting for them). The sin earned in the previous existences (of him) who desires to listen to the account of Śrīkṛṣṇa, perishes just at that moment only. I do not know what (best) position the man who would devoutly listen to Śrīkṛṣṇa's account will have on hearing it.

14-16. All such (blemishes) of the sinner as the sin due to the murder of a brāhmaṇa, untimely death, and also (the sin due to) drinking liquor, perish. The sin of that man who (first) having committed a sin later keeps (himself) away from it, would perish as the heap of cotton perishes (i.e. is burnt) by fire. O brāhmaṇa, Yama's servants do not come near the house of him in whose house there is the book (containing) the account of Śrīkṛṣṇa.

Jaimini said:

17. O preceptor, tell me, whom do they describe as the devotees of Viṣṇu. I have now a desire to know them and also (to know) their excellent greatness.

Vyāsa said:

18-20. O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of bathing at a holy place for that sinful man who devoutly sprinkles upon his head the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu? O brāhmaṇa, the sins like killing a brāhmaṇa, of him who would have the company of the good for a moment or half a moment, perish. In whichever family (even) one (member) is a devotee of Viṣṇu, the family (even) when full of sins (or sinners), attains salvation.

21-32. Those men (only) who are free from (doing) harm (to others), religious hypocrisy, lust and anger, and also those who are bereft of greed and infatuation, who are devoted to their

parents, should be known as the devotees of Viṣṇu, O brāhmaṇa. Those who are devoted to their parents, who are endowed with pity, who are engaged in the well-being of all creatures, who are free from jealousy, and who speak the truth should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu. Also those who are devoted to brāhmaṇas, who are impotent to the wives of others, who are engrossed in the vow of Ekādaśī should be known as the devotees of Viṣṇu. Wearing garlands of Tulasī(-leaves) those who sing the names of Viṣṇu, and who are sprinkled with the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, those also, on whose head or ears an excellent tulasī(-leaf) is usually seen, should be known as the devotees of Viṣṇu. Those who are free from the company of heretics, and free from hating brāhmaṇas, who would sprinkle (water) over the tulasī(-plant) should be known as Viṣṇu's devotees. Those men who worship Viṣṇu, also who worship him with tulasī(-leaves), who are engaged in offering their daughters (to worthy grooms), who honour their guests, who listen to the account of Viṣṇu, should be known as Viṣṇu's devotees, and also the man in whose house the śālagrāma stone would be well-established (is a devotee of Viṣṇu). Those men also, who cleanse the abode (i.e. the temple) of Viṣṇu, who perform rites in honour of the manes, who are full of pity towards the helpless, should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu. Those who look upon the wealth of others and of brāhmaṇas as poison, and those who eat the offering of eatables (after they are) presented to Viṣṇu should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu. And also those men who love Vedas and sacred texts, who protect the tulasī (-plants), who are engaged in practising the vow of Rādhāṣṭamī (or Janmāṣṭamī), and those who devoutly present a lamp before (the image of) Śrīkṛṣṇa, who do not censure others, should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu.

Sūta said:

33. Vyāsa who was asked by Jaimini, told him thus in the (proper) order. (Now) I am telling you what occasionally I heard from my preceptor, O brāhmaṇa.

34. Those best men who listen to the reading (of the account of Viṣṇu), are free from all sins, and go the highest position of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWO

The Importance of Besmearing the Floor of Viṣṇu's Temple

Sūta said:

1. O Śaunaka, listen. I shall tell you (about) the ancient way of life (from) the conversation between Vyāsa and Jaimini, which destroys the sins of the listeners.

Jaimini said:

2. O lord, O preceptor, tell me today by (doing) which acts does a sinful man go to the abode of the lord of the world.

Vyāsa said :

3. That man who besmears (the ground) in the temple of Viṣṇu, is freed from all sins, becomes tranquil and goes to the abode of Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu).

4-5. O Jaimini, listen, I shall tell you in brief about the religious merit of him who smears (i.e. sprinkles) with water (the ground) in the temple of the lord of the world. O best brāhmaṇa, he would live in the abode of Viṣṇu for as many thousands of kalpas as the dust particles are seen there.

6-14. Formerly there was a thief by name Daṇḍaka. He was a terror to the people. He snatched away the wealth of brāhmaṇas; he killed his friends; in the yuga called Dvāpara he told lies; he was cruel; he took delight in going to (i.e. having illicit connection with) others' wives. He ate the flesh of cows; he drank liquor; and kept company of heretics. He cut off (the means of) the livelihood of the brāhmaṇas; he usurped the deposits (kept with him); he killed those who sought his shelter; he ardently longed for the amorous movements of prostitutes. Once that foolish man went to the temple of Viṣṇu belonging to a

brāhmaṇa to steal the wealth of Viṣṇu. When he entered (the temple), he put his foot (dirty) with mud at low-levelled ground at the door of the temple. Just by that act the ground was free from slope. With joy he opened the panel of the door with two iron rods. He entered the temple of Viṣṇu adorned with an excellent canopy. It was having a jewelled golden lamp which had dispelled the great (i.e. thick) darkness. It was rich with the fragrance of many flowers; it was full of many vessels. It was filled with the fragrance of fragrant oil. The thief saw (the image of) Viṣṇu clad in a yellow garment sleeping (i.e. lying) with Rādhā on a very lovely bed.

15-22. Having saluted (i.e. when he saluted) the lord of Rādhā he became free from sins. 'Shall I take (away this wealth) or shall I not take away? (In) what (way) would it be (useful) to me? Since I am an all-time thief, I am unable to serve (the lord). The wealth would serve my purpose.' Thinking thus, he made up his mind to take it (away). Dropping on the ground the silken garment of the lord of Lakṣmī and keeping all the things in his hand, he, trembling, tied them (in the garment). O Jaimini, all those things of Viṣṇu, the master of illusory power (Māyā), fell down (on the ground) making a very fearful sound. Abandoning their sound sleep, and running, (saying) 'Oh! what is this?', many people came there. The thief, being frightened, left the things and (other) wealth (there only) and speedily fled somewhere. Being bitten by a black and most piosonous snake, he died and was freed from sins. By Yama's order his messengers with nooses and hammers in their hands and clad in skins and having fangs came (there) to take him (to Yama's abode). They tied him with leather straps and took him along a difficult path. Seeing him, Yama was angry, and asked his counsellor:

Yama said:

23. O wise Citragupta, tell me (about) the entire deed, sinful or virtuous, which he has done.

Citragupta said:

24-25. This fool has committed all the sins that the Creator has created on the earth. I have told the truth; but O lord of the

world, listen. He has also (done) some good deed. I think, O brother of Yamunā, that would destroy all his sins.

Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) said :

26-27. O minister, tell me what religious merit he has. Tell me the real truth. Hearing so, I shall put him where he would be fit.

Hearing the words of Yama, Citragupta, who was afraid, joined the palms of his hands, and spoke to his master, O brāhmaṇa:

Citragupta said :

28-29. This worst sinner among sinners had gone to steal the wealth of Viṣṇu. At the door of (the temple of) Viṣṇu, he threw the mud (clung) to his two feet. That floor was covered (with mud) and free from holes and pits. By the power of the religious merit his great sin has gone out (of him). He is fit for (staying in) Vaikuṇṭha. He is out (of the jurisdiction of) your punishment.

Vyāsa said :

30-31a. Hearing these words he (i.e. Yama) gave him a seat made of gold. He sat there; he was honoured by Yama. With his head (bent down) he saluted him, and politely said to him:

Yama said :

31b-33a. With the dust particles of your feet my abode is purified today. I am blessed, I am lucky, I am lucky; no doubt about it. O good one, now go to Viṣṇu's excellent abode which is full of many enjoyments and which keeps off birth and death.

Vyāsa said :

33b-37. Saying like this, that Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) placed him whose sins had gone (away), in a divine chariot which was made of gold and to which royal swans were yoked, and sent him to Viṣṇu's place which gives all pleasures. Thus he entered Vaikuṇṭha and lived there for a long time. O best brāhmaṇa, I do not know what will happen to them who do not devoutly besmear

the temple of Viṣṇu. The sin of him, earned during crores of existences, who would devoutly listen to this (account) or would attentively recite it, perishes. There is no doubt about it.

CHAPTER THREE

The Importance of Offering a Lamp to Viṣṇu

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, tell me the significance of (the month of) Kārtika. (Tell me) what the fruit of that vow is, and what the blemish of one who does not do it, is.

Sūta said:

2. On a former occasion, O best of sages, Jaimini asked (about) this to Vyāsa, Satyavatī's son. (Then) the sage (Vyāsa) commenced this narration:

Vyāsa said:

3-15. He who would give up sesamum-oil and copulation in the auspicious (month of) Kārtika, becomes free from sins committed during many (previous) existences and goes to Viṣṇu's abode. He, a fool, who does not give up (eating) fish and copulation in Kārtika, would certainly be (born as) a pig in every (subsequent) existence. A man who would worship Viṣṇu with the tulasī-leaves in Kārtika, obtains the fruit (of the performance) of a horse sacrifice for every leaf (that is offered to Viṣṇu). He who would worship Viṣṇu in Kārtika with the flowers of the muni-tree, obtains through Viṣṇu's grace salvation difficult to be obtained (even) by gods. The best man who eats the muni-vegetable in Kārtika, has all the sin committed during the year destroyed by (just) one vegetable (viz. muni). He who after offering to Viṣṇu eats the fruit of that (tree) in the month of Kārtika dear to Viṣṇu, (has all) his sin (committed) during crores of existences (destroyed). He who gives (an article of food), which is tasty and with ghee, to Viṣṇu, is freed from all sins and would

go to Viṣṇu's abode. A man, who offers even one lotus to Viṣṇu in Kārtika, in the end goes, free from all (his) sins, to Viṣṇu's position. He who would (everyday) bathe in the morning in (the month of) Kārtika dear to Viṣṇu, would obtain the fruit which (he would get) on bathing at all the sacred places. That brāhmaṇa, who would offer a lamp into water in Kārtika, is free from sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, and would go to the abode of Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, he who would offer a lamp even for a short time in Kārtika to please Viṣṇu, has Viṣṇu always pleased with him. Everyday the brāhmaṇa who would offer a lamp with ghee to Viṣṇu in his (own) house in Kārtika, obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. I (shall) tell you the special significance (of the offering) of a lamp. O best of brāhmaṇas, being attentive, listen to it (as I tell it) with its tradition.

16-26a. Formerly, in Tretāyuga there was a pure brāhmaṇa Vaikuṇṭha by name. A sinner got (himself) liberated by virtue of his company. Once that best brāhmaṇa, having offered a lamp with ghee before Viṣṇu in Kārtika, went home. A rat came there to eat that ghee. When he started eating it from the lamp, the lamp burnt more brightly. The rat too, out of fear of the fire speedidy ran (away); and all the sin of the rat perished due to the grace of Viṣṇu. The rat was bitten by a serpent, and it died. Then, by Yama's order (his) messengers with nooses and hammers in their hands came (there) to take him (to Yama's abode), and tied him with leather-bands. When they made up their mind to take (him to Yama's abode), Viṣṇu's messengers having four hands (each) holding conches, discs and maces and mounted upon Garuḍa came (there). (There was) in the sky an aeroplane also. It was auspicious, and royal swans were yoked to it. It was made of pure gold and through Viṣṇu's grace it moved according to the wish (of the occupant). Having cut off the nooses (with which the rat was tied), the messengers spoke to Yama's servants: "O fools, this is Viṣṇu's devotee. In vain you had tied him. O servants of Yama, go (back) if you desire to live." Having heard (these words) they trembled and asked with politeness: "Please tell us, due to what power of his merit you are taking this great sinner to the city of Viṣṇu".

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

26b-34a. The rat revived the lamp in front of Viṣṇu. Due to that act, O messengers (of Yama), we are taking it to Viṣṇu's abode. He who even without desiring (to do so), revives the lamp of (i.e. offered to) Viṣṇu, abandons his sin earned in crores of (previous) existences, and goes to Viṣṇu's abode. Nobody except Viṣṇu is able to describe the merit of him who would devoutly offer on days of (i.e. auspicious to) Viṣṇu, a lamp (to Viṣṇu). What is the use of performing a thousand horse sacrifices for him who would offer in his house a lamp full of ghee to Viṣṇu? (As he) who performs the horse sacrifice on a day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu goes to heaven, so also, he who offers a lamp (to Viṣṇu) in Kārtika, would go to Viṣṇu's abode.

Vyāsa said:

Hearing this, (Yama's) messengers went as they had come; (and) Viṣṇu's messengers, having put it in a chariot went to Viṣṇu's abode. He passed a hundred ages of Manu in Viṣṇu's proximity only. Then, through Viṣṇu's grace he was (born) as a princess in the mortal world; and with her sons and grandsons she enjoyed pleasures for a long time. From here (i.e. the mortal world) she again went to the world of cows due to her service to Viṣṇu.

Sūta said:

34b-35. A man who devoutly listens to this excellent importance of the lamp, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Importance of Fasting on the Jayantī Day

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, tell (me about) the importance of Jayantī (birth day anniversary). When is it celebrated by the people? You are a boat in the ocean of the mundane existence.

Sūta said:

2. O brāhmaṇa, O best sage, listen; since I am asked, I shall tell you. This was formerly asked by Nārada from Brahmā in heaven.

Nārada said:

3. O grandsire, tell me the significance of Jayantī (i.e. birth day anniversary), hearing which I shall go to that highest position of Viṣṇu.

Brahmā said:

4-8. O brāhmaṇa, listen attentively. I shall tell you. He (i.e. a man) goes to Viṣṇu's world by fasting on a Jayantī (day). Jayantī, O sage, burns, through remembering, narrating (the account of Viṣṇu), the sin earned during the (previous) seven existences. The more so in the case of the sin of one who observes a fast (on that day). The Janmāṣṭamī, the auspicious ninth day of the bright half in Caitra, the fourteenth day of the dark half of Māgha, the fourteenth day of the bright half of Caitra, the Durgāṣṭamī in Āśvina, the twelfth day of the bright half of Śrāvaṇa—these six are said to be very meritorious Jayantīs, causing auspiciousness. The Kṛṣṇajanmāṣṭamī (mentioned) first is well-known and destroys sins. It is equal to a crore of sacrifices and to myriads of holy places.

9-18. By fasting on a Jayantī-day, one gets the fruit that is obtained by him who gives a thousand cows everyday. By fasting on a Jayantī-day he obtains the same fruit as by (the gift of) a thousand bhāras of gold at the time of (the auspiciousness) of the planet sun. By fasting on a Jayantī-day he obtains the same fruit as by giving thousands of black antelope-hides and hundreds of sesamum-cows. By fasting on a Jayantī-day a man gets that fruit which he obtains by offering thousands of crores daughters (in marriage). A man gets that fruit by fasting on a Jayantī-day which he obtains by giving this earth with the oceans. By fasting on a Jayantī-day he obtains the fruit which he obtains by constructing a well, a pond etc. in a temple. By fasting on a Jayantī-day a man obtains the same fruit as he, being devoted, does by doing (service) to his mother, father and preceptor. That merit which is obtained by those who, of a truthful vow, have made

themselves blessed by resorting to a sacred place for the removal of a calamity, is obtained by fasting on a Jayantī-day. That religious merit which a man obtains by bathing in Gaṅgā or Narmadā, or in the water of Sarasvatī, is obtained by him by fasting on a Jayantī-day. By fasting on a Jayantī-day a man obtains that fruit which the performers of a śrāddha in honour of their dead ancestors on a new moon day, obtain.

Nārada said:

19a. O grandsire, tell me, who formerly observed (a fast on) the Jayantī-day ?

Brahmā said:

19b-26a. (The fast on) the Jayantī-day was formerly observed by Kārtavīrya, Karṇa, the intelligent Kumāra (i.e. Kārtikeya), by Sagara, Dilīpa—the descendant of Kakutstha, by Gautama, Gārgya, the intelligent son of Jamadagni (i.e. Paraśurāma); so also it was formerly observed by Vālmīki, and the good son of Draupadī. (The fast on) the eighth of the bright half of Bhādrapada gives the desired objects. The eighth day is said to be of special importance when in union with the sun. For pleasing the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), it should be observed every year. The sin earned in crores of existences vanishes in a short time. Having kept awake during the night, a man with his senses controlled, should devoutly worship (Viṣṇu) separately with sandal, flowers and offerings of food. O brāhmaṇa, the sin earned deliberately or without knowledge, of him who observes a fast on a Jayantī-day, perishes in half a watch, by the grace of the son of Devakī (i.e. Kṛṣṇa).

26b-37. There is no doubt that those mean men who eat when the day of Jayantī has arrived (i.e. on a Jayantī-day) suffer the sin produced in the three worlds. All the holy places like the ocean, all the places (which are) the abodes of the liberated, remain in all the parts of the house of him who observes the Jayantī-vow. All the holy places and deities live in the body of that man who devoutly observes (a fast on) the Jayantī-day, dear to Kṛṣṇa. O great sage, I have not seen in the Vedas or the Purāṇas a vow equal or superior to the vow of Kṛṣṇa-Rādhāṣṭamī. The man who does not devoutly observe

it, would be (born as) a cruel demon. O brāhmaṇa, that foolish man who eats (food) on a Jayantī-day as on the day (sacred) to Viṣṇu, obtains (i.e. goes to) a great hell. Due to his taking food on a Jayantī-day, one hundred and one preceding and succeeding (members of) his family would fall into a terrible hell. O best sage, what is the use of crores of vows, if a fast is observed when Jayantī would be (i. e. fall) on a Wednesday (when the Moon is) in unison with Rohiṇī ? (A fast on) a Jayantī-day observed according to the proper rule, destroys sin in the Kṛta-age, Tretā-age, Dvāpara-age and Kali-age. The sin earned from birth, of him who, keeping awake, causes to read aloud the Purāṇa of Viṣṇu, burns like a heap of cotton. The sin earned in a crore of existences, of the man who devoutly listens to the Purāṇa on a day (sacred) to Viṣṇu perishes at that moment only. On the day (sacred) to Viṣṇu a man should honour a suppliant, O sage. He liberates a crore (of the members) of his family and is honoured in Viṣṇu's world.

38-50. A man who does not observe a fast on a Jayantī-day and is averse to it, being bereft of all virtue, certainly goes to hell. A man should worship (Viṣṇu) with sandal, flowers, incense, and lamps full of ghee, and should give a present to a brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, that man who celebrates Jayantī in this manner, would, due to his devotion, liberate twentyone members of (his family). In his house there would be no misfortune, no widowhood, no quarrel, so also no opposition from his children. He never sees (i.e. experiences) loss of wealth. He who observes a fast on a Jayantī-day, obtains all the objects desired by him, and he goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. Those who fix their mind on observing the Jayantī-vow and are very much devoted to Viṣṇu, are blessed, are well-born, are wealthy and wise. Whatever sacred places, vows and restraints are there, they do not deserve (i.e. are not equal to) even the sixteenth part of the Jayantī-day. O child, he who with his wife observes (a fast on) the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī day in both the fortnights of Bhādrapada, reaches Viṣṇu's proximity. He who always observes the merit-giving vow, who observes a fast on a Jayantī-day, goes to Viṣṇu's Vaikuṇṭha. Jayantī, dear to Viṣṇu, quickly destroys the sin due to want of good conduct, (having) fallen (or been expelled) from the family, (being) deprived of fame, and

birth in a bad stock. He who observes a fast on a Jayantī, completely burns all sins comparable to Meru, and those like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. He who desires a son gets a son observing a fast on the Jayantī-day, who desires wealth obtains wealth, who desires salvation obtains salvation. Even Yama is afraid of those who greatly fix their mind on observing (a fast on) the Jayantī-day. They reach the highest position.

Sūta said:

51-53. Having (thus) told Nārada (about Jayantī), he (i.e. Brahmā) went as he had come. O sage, O brāhmaṇa, I have also told you what was asked by you. They too, who devoutly listen to the importance of Jayantī, go to the highest abode (after being) freed from all sins. O brāhmaṇa, similarly sinful men who see the reader of a Purāṇa and him who observes the Jayantī-vow, go to the highest place.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Deeds for Which One Becomes Sonless

Śaunaka said:

1. O you very intelligent one, tell me, due to which act (of a man) he becomes sonless (i.e. does not have a son), and due to (i.e. by doing) which (act) he would have a son.

Sūta said:

2. Formerly this was asked by the magnanimous Nārada from Brahmā. O best sage, listen to what he said (then).

Nārada said:

3-5. O grandsire, O very wise one, O you who have mastered all the truth, O you lotus-born, tell me by (i.e. doing) which deed a mortal would become sonless; due to what sin a woman would be barren. O you who are intent on the well-being of all

creatures, tell me, who am listening. Due to which deed a daugther is born, or an important son is born; due to what a child is stillborn. A woman bringing forth a stillborn child is extremely unhappy. O Brahman, tell me due to which religious merit a son would be born.

Brahmā said:

6-7. I shall tell you in brief. Listen to it attentively. You are asking about an amazing account. Listen (to it). It is said that a brāhmaṇa who would snatch away or would cause to snatch away (i.e. who has snatched away or has caused to snatch away) the means of subsistence of a brāhmaṇa, would be sonless.

8-9. That man who in this existence would devoutly listen to a Purāṇa, or would make a present of a land with a crop on it, or who would give a golden cow of many qualities and giving profuse milk along with a present, so also one who would give a golden image (of a deity to a brāhmaṇa), would certainly get a son.

10. That woman who would in her former birth deceitfully kill (i.e. who has deceitfully killed) the child of someone else, would certainly be sonless.

11-12. That woman who, endowed with devotion, would make a present of a golden image (of a deity), and would devoutly drink the water (flowing) from the feet of a brāhmaṇa, would listen to a Purāṇa, or would offer a large present (to a brāhmaṇa), would have many children, and would have her children alive. There is no doubt about this.

13-15. A man or a woman who would not take out a child drowning in water, would certainly be sonless in this world. He who would give a bull, a pumpkin gourd with gold and cloth or would observe the auspicious vow for having a child, or would offer (the image of) a fair virgin, or would listen to a Purāṇa destroying all sins, would have a son.

16-17. That man who in his previous existence would disappoint a guest or would angrily punish him (i.e. who has disappointed or angrily punished a guest), would certainly be sonless. A man should devoutly honour a brāhmaṇa and a guest. He should give food, water, and (should construct) an auspicious temple.

18. That woman or that man who would cause (i.e. who has caused) abortion in her or his previous existence would certainly have a stillborn child.

19. That woman who along with her husband, would observe (a fast on) the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, would have good sons and would be a favourite wife of her husband in every existence.

20-21. A man who would make wealth with cows, or a śūdra who, being infatuated, would kidnap a brāhmaṇa-woman, would be born impotent due to (that) act. O brāhmaṇa, a daughter is born due to (that) act. O brāhmaṇa, a daughter is born by the power of the religious merit (to him) who, having committed this sin, later performs (acts of) religious merit.

22-25. O brāhmaṇa, in Tretāyuga there was a king by name Śrīdhara. He was sonless (but) wealthy. His wife was Hemaprabhāvatī. He asked Vyāsa who knew all sacred texts, who desired the well-being of all people, and who had come to him: "O brāhmaṇa, how (is it that) I am sonless?" (Seated) on a seat made of gold etc. and offered by the king, he, having heard the polite words of the king, answered thus: The king and the queen, being delighted washed his feet, and drank the water (with which) his feet (were washed), and which destroyed all sins.

Vyāsa said:

26-29. O king, hear (about) what you have asked me, (also about) the deed due to which you are sonless. This your queen also is sonless and you observe the vow of having one wife (only). In your former existence, you, the moon, were known by the name Varatanu. Your wife of a fair body was known by the name Śaṅkarī. Once you were going along a path. Though you saw the son of a low (-caste person) drowning in water, you contemptuously went ahead. The son died. By the power of your great religious merit, you became king and queen. (But) as a result of that deed, you would (i.e. did) not have a son.

The king said:

30. O lord, due to which (act of) religious merit, would a son be born (to us)? For, the life of persons having no son is fruitless.

Vyāsa said:

31-32. Give a gift of a pumpkin gourd with gold, cloth and a bull. Observe vow for obtaining a child, give (the image) of a fair virgin, and also listen to a Purāṇa. Then a son, destroying all sins, will be born.

Brahmā said :

33-34. Hearing this, the king gave an excellent gift as told by Vyāsa, and with his sins destroyed listened to a Purāṇa. Then within a year a son honoured by all was born (to them). The king became a sovereign emperor, handsome and the chief of his family.

Sūta said :

35-38. He who having no son, would devoutly listen to this, and make excellent presents, gets a son. I have told (this to you) in brief. O brāhmaṇa, that woman who would devoutly honour a brāhmaṇa according to the rules laid down in the sacred texts, would always have good sons. (So also the man) who would devoutly put on the book (of the Purāṇa) gold, silver, cloth, garland of flowers and sandal—which destroy all sins (would get good sons). A cruel son would be born to the fool who in his former existence has killed a brāhmaṇa or a child, and would be a brāhmaṇa after seven existences.

CHAPTER SIX

Acts Leading to Vaikuṇṭha

Śaunaka said :

1. O Sūta, tell me who am listening, due to which (acts of) religious merit Vaikuṇṭha is obtained (by a man), for you are a boat in the ocean of the worldly existence.

Sūta said :

2-7. O best sage doing auspicious (things) for all, (you have

asked) well. I shall tell you in brief (the rite) destroying all sins. Listen, O best brāhmaṇa, hear about the merit of him who would give a house made of clay to a brāhmaṇa devoted to Viṣṇu. That brāhmaṇa, free from all sins, would always live in a palatial building in Viṣṇu's heaven. He is honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven. He who would present a palatial building to a brāhmaṇa devotee of Viṣṇu, would, on reaching Viṣṇu's abode, certainly be a resident of heaven. O brāhmaṇa, he, with a crore of (members of) his family ultimately goes to Viṣṇu's city, and staying in a palatial golden building, he would enjoy pleasures as he pleases. (Even) the Creator, the cause of all, is unable to measure the religious merit that one would get by causing a brāhmaṇa to settle well (in his life), O sage.

8. Dust particles are (i.e. can be) counted; drops of rains are (i.e. can be) counted; (but) the fruit (obtained) by settling well a brāhmaṇa (in his life) cannot be guaged even by the Creator.

9-23. O great sage, listen to what Brahmā, the Creator, the origin of the mundane existence, told Nārada, when he was formerly asked by him. O brāhmaṇa, formerly in Dvāpara age, there was a woman by name Cañcalāpāṅgī; she was very beautiful, her hair was excellent, her eyes were like that of a female deer, her waist was charming, and her smile was lovely. Once she went to another country. Full of all sins, and causing people to fall into hell due to her contact (like that) of liquor, she went to a temple. For a moment she sat there and ate a tāmbūla. Through curiosity she threw the remaining powder on the lowly part of a wall. Then desiring (to secure) a paramour, and to secure wealth (from him) she went to the city. The prostitute rashly made an appointment with some paramour. Being fascinated she went to the appointed place (in) the forest at night. The merchant (her paramour) did not come to the rendezvous. She expected (him) and thought to herself: 'How (is it) that my lover has not come? Has he been eaten up by serpents or tigers? How has he, beside himself due to passion, gone (elsewhere) leaving the place of appointment? Is he hankering after some other unknown woman?' O brāhmaṇa, thinking (like) this in her mind she through the fear of the fort-guard did not arrive into the city as the public road was covered with darkness. O brāhmaṇa, in the meanwhile a hungry tiger that took up any form that he liked, that was sent

by the god of death, came there and forcibly ate her up. Then the messengers of Yamunā's brother (i e. Yama), whose forms were fearful, whose bodies resembled mountain-peaks, came there to take her (to Yama's abode) due to her sinful deed. Their feet were crooked, their faces were crooked, their noses were projecting, and they had many jaws. O brāhmaṇa, taking leather straps and hammers the very frantic messengers tied up that licentious harlot with leather straps. The messengers of the magnanimous Viṣṇu who holds a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus, that were going along the path saw her. They resembled black clouds, their lotus-like faces were throbbing, they formed a group, their noses were charming, and they were adorned with divine ear-rings.

The messengers of Viṣṇu said :

24-27. Who are you of deformed forms, who appear like demons? Where are you going carrying this excellent (lady), the most beloved of Viṣṇu?

Hearing these words of them, they (i.e. Yama's messengers) went (away) quickly. Then those very powerful messengers of Viṣṇu, who were full of anger, struck the messengers of Yama, the lord of the world, with multitudes of weapons like the disc, having the brilliance of that of a crore of suns. All the warriors of Yama ran away, crying; and O brāhmaṇa, they who were frightened, narrated the entire account to Yama. Yama too, having heard that account, said to Citragupta:

Dharma (i.e. Yama) said :

28. O minister, due to which (act of) religious merit has the prostitute gone to (i.e. obtained) salvation? Tell all this according to its merit, to me who am asking (you).

Citragupta said :

29-32. From her birth she had earned very many sins; but, O lord of the world, hear if she might have some merit (to her credit). O lord of Dharma, once (this) prostitute, adorned with all ornaments, seeking wealth and looking for a paramour, went to a certain city. There (i.e. in that city) having remained in the temple, and having eaten a tāmbūla, she threw, out of curiosity, the remaining powder on a wall, By the power of that

merit the harlot with her sins gone (away), and free from your punishment, goes to Vaikuṇṭha.

Sūta said:

33-37. Hearing these words the messengers and Yama also set their mind on other work, O brāhmaṇa. That harlot also, mounted in a divine chariot yoked with royal swans and surrounded by Viṣṇu's servants, went to Viṣṇu's world. O brāhmaṇa, she by the order of Viṣṇu stayed along with a crore (members of) her family in a palatial building and enjoyed many pleasures. O best brāhmaṇa, I do not know (i.e. cannot judge) the merit of him who devoutly and carefully puts powder into Viṣṇu's temple (to beautify it). He who would devoutly recite (this) chapter or listen to it with respect, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Greatness of Rādhāṣṭamī

Śaunaka said:

1. O very wise one, O you very intelligent one, tell me due to which act a man goes to the world of cows from the ocean of the mundane existence which is difficult to cross and, O Sūta, about Rādhāṣṭamī and its excellent importance.

Sūta said:

2. O brāhmaṇa, O great sage, formerly Nārada had asked this from Brahmā. Listen, in brief, to what he had asked him.

Nārada said:

3-5. O grandsire, O very wise one, O best among those who know all the sacred texts, O dear one, tell me (about) Rādhājanmāṣṭamī. O lord, what is its religious fruit? Who observed it in olden days? O brahman, what would be the sin of those men who do not observe it? In what way is the vow to be observed?

When is it to be observed? Tell me (all) that from the beginning, from whom Rādhā was born.

Brahmā said:

6-12. O child, listen very attentively to (the description of the vow of) Rādhājanmāṣṭamī. I shall tell you in brief the entire (account). O Nārada, except Viṣṇu it is not possible (for anyone) to tell about its meritorious fruit. That sin like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, of them who have earned it through a crore of existences, perishes in a moment, (when) they devoutly observe it (i.e. the vow). The religious merit of Rādhājanmāṣṭamī is hundred times more than the fruit which a man obtains by observing (a fast on) a thousand Ekādaśī (days). The merit due to Rādhāṣṭamī observed (but) once, is hundred times more that the fruit obtained by giving gold equal to the Meru (mountain). People obtain that fruit from the Rādhāṣṭamī, which (merit) they obtain by giving a thousand virgins (in marriage). A man gets that fruit of the Aṣṭamī of the beloved of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Rādhāṣṭamī), which he would get by bathing in holy places like Gaṅgā. (Even) a sinner who observes this vow casually or devoutly, would along with a crore members of his family go to Viṣṇu's heaven.

13-20. O child, formerly in Kṛtayuga an excellent, very beautiful woman, having a beautiful (i.e. slender) waist, having eyes like those of a female deer, of a beautiful form, having lovely hair, lovely ears, was known by the name Līlāvatī. She had committed very grave sins. Once, she, hankering after wealth, went to another city moving out from her own city. There, in a beautiful temple, she saw many wise people intent on observing the Rādhāṣṭamī vow. They were worshipping devoutly the excellent image of Rādhā with sandal, flowers, incense, lamps, (pieces of) cloth and various kinds of fruits. Some sang, danced, recited the excellent hymn of praise. Some (others) joyfully played upon the lute and beat the drum. Seeing them like that, she, full of curiosity, went near them, and politely asked them: "O you religious-minded ones, what are you, full of joy, doing? O virtuous ones, tell me who am full of politeness (what you are doing)."

21-24. Those devotees, intent upon the observance of the

vow, and interested in obliging and doing good to others, started speaking.

Those who observed the Rādhā (-aṣṭamī) vow said: "Today that eighth day on which—i.e. on the eighth day of the bright fortnight—Rādhā was born, has arrived. We are observing it carefully. This (vow of) the Aṣṭamī which is observed (like this) quickly destroys men's sins like the sin due to the murder of a cow, or arising from stealing, or killing a brāhmaṇa, or which is due to carrying off the wife of another person, or due to (a man's) violating his teacher's bed (i.e. wife)."

25-42. Hearing their words, and repeatedly thinking (to herself), 'I shall observe (this vow) which destroys all sins' she observed that excellent vow there only along with those who were observing it. That pure woman died due to being hurt (i.e. bitten) by a serpent. Then (Yama's) messengers with nooses and hammers in their hands came there by Yama's order, and tied her in a very painful way. When they decided to take her to Yama's abode, messengers of Viṣṇu holding conches and maces came (there). (They had brought with them) an auspicious aeroplane made of gold, to which royal swans were yoked. Having quickly cut off (the nooses) with edges of their discs, they put that woman whose sin had gone (away), into the chariot. They took her to the charming city of Viṣṇu, called Goloka, where she stayed with Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā due to the propitiousness of the vow. O dear one, for him who, a fool, does not observe the vow of Rādhāṣṭamī, there is no acquittance from hell even for hundreds of crores of kalpas. Those women also who do not observe this vow which causes auspiciousness, which delights Rādhā and Viṣṇu, which destroys all sins, go to Yama's city in the end and fall into a hell for a long time. If per chance they get a birth on the earth, they certainly (become) widows. O child, once (this) earth was struck by the groups of the wicked. She, being extremely helpless, became a cow, and approached me. Weeping again and again, she told me (about) her grief. Hearing her words, I went to the proximity of Viṣṇu. I quickly narrated to Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) the intensity of her grief. He said (to me): "O brahman, with the gods go to the earth. Later I (shall) also go there with my attendants." Hearing that I, along with the gods, came to the earth. Then Kṛṣṇa, calling Rādhā (who was to him) greater than

his own life, said (these) words (to her); "O goddess, I am going to the earth to destroy the burden of the earth. You (also) go to the earth." Having heard those (words), Rādhā also then went to the earth. That Rādhikā sprang up by day on the sacrificial ground of Vṛṣabhānu on the day called Aṣṭamī in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada. When purified for the sacrifice, she, having a divine form, was seen (there). The king, delighted in mind, took her to his house and handed her over to his queen. She, too, nourished her.

43. Thus, O child, the words that I have told you are to be kept secret, to be kept secret, to be kept secret carefully.

Sūta said:

44. He who would devoutly listen to this (account of the vow) giving the fruit of the four goals (of human life), becomes free from all sins and ultimately goes to Viṣṇu's house.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Prelude to the Churning of Ocean

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, O preceptor, why was the ocean churned by the gods in ancient days? Curiosity is produced in my mind to hear it.

Sūta said:

2. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you in brief the reason for the churning of the ocean. Listen also to the account of the dialogue between Durvāsas and Indra.

3. Once, the brāhmaṇic sage Durvāsas who had practised great (i.e. severe) penance, who was very lustrous, who was born of a portion of the Lord, went to heaven to see Indra.

4-6a. At that time he saw Śacī's lord (i.e. Indra) mounted on the elephant (called Airāvata). Seeing a garland of Pārijāta (flowers) the great sage gave it to him (i.e. to Indra). O brāh-

maṇa, Indra, the lord of gods, taking that garland, and putting it on the head of the elephant went with his army to Nandana (garden). The elephant seizing that garland, cut it off and hurled it on the ground.

6b-7. The great sage, getting very angry, thus spoke to him: "Since, you being endowed with the glory of the three worlds, are thinking lightly (of me), there is no doubt that your glory of the three worlds would perish".

8-12. Then Indra quickly went to his city and then slept. The mother of the worlds saw (this) and disappeared. When she disappeared, the three worlds also disappeared. All (creatures) being hungry and thirsty constantly cried. The clouds did not shower (rain), and reservoirs of water went dry. All the trees were dried up and were bereft of fruits and flowers. All (gods) oppressed by hunger and thirst approached Brahmā. They told the grandsire about their distress and grief. Hearing the words of gods, the Creator, along with hosts of gods and sages like Bhṛgu, went to the milky ocean.

13-16. The Creator, muttering the eight-lettered hymn and meditating (on Viṣṇu), worshipped Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, on the northern shore of the milky ocean. Then Viṣṇu was pleased with all the gods, and the kind lord having mounted upon Garuḍa came there. (Gods) on seeing Viṣṇu who had worn a yellow garment, who had four arms, who had held a conch, a disc and a mace, who was the lord of the worlds, whose eyes resembled lotuses, who was a boat of (i.e. to cross) the ocean of mundane existence, who was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers, who had a curl of hair and the Kaustubha gem on his chest, had their eyes full of tears of joy, and praised with cries of victory and continuously saluted him.

The lord said:

17. O gods, choose a boon. Why have you come to me? I am the giver of boons. So speak (out). I (shall) give you (what you want). (This will not be) otherwise.

Gods said:

18-19a. O kind one, due to the brāhmaṇa's curse, the three worlds are bereft of wealth; O lord, with gods, demons and men

they are oppressed by hunger and thirst. Protect all these worlds. We have sought your refuge.

The lord said:

19b-23. O gods, Indirā (i.e. Lakṣmī), due to whose mere glance the world is endowed with glory, has vanished due to the curse of the brāhmaṇa (viz. Durvāsas). Then, O gods, all of you, along with the demons, having uprooted the golden mountain Mandara and making it, with the king of serpents going round it, the churning-rod, churn the milky ocean. O gods, from it Lakṣmī, the mother of the world will spring up. O glorious ones, there is no doubt that because of her you will be delighted. I myself, in the form of a tortoise, shall fully hold the (Mandara) mountain (on my back).

Saying so, that lord Viṣṇu disappeared. O brāhmaṇa, all the gods and demons went for churning the ocean.

CHAPTER NINE

The Churning Starts

Sūta said:

1. Then the hosts of gods with gandharvas and demons uprooted the Mandara mountain and put it into the ocean.

2-7a. Then the glorious, kind, ancient lord of the world supported on his back the bottom of the mountain. (Then the gods) putting Ananta (the lord of serpents) round it churned the milky ocean. When it was being churned on the Ekādaśī day, all of them ran away seeing the Kālakūṭa poison that had come up. Seeing them running away Śaṅkara said these (words): "O hosts of gods, hand over the poison to me. I shall quickly inactivate the great (i.e. severe) poison, viz. Kālakūṭa". Saying so, that lord of Pārvatī, meditating upon Viṣṇu in his heart and uttering the great hymn, took that fearful poison. By the power of the great hymn, that great (deadly) poison was digested.

7b-22. He who, being controlled, would devoutly mutter the three names, viz. Acyuta, Ananta, and Govinda, of Viṣṇu with Praṇava (i.e. Om) at the beginning and Om at the end, has no fear of taking poison, or from fire and also from death. Then gods with their minds delighted, churned the milky ocean. Then Alakṣmī (i.e. Evil Fortune), of a dark face and red eyes, having rough and tawny hair, and having an old body, sprang up. She, the eldest one, said to the gods: "What should I do?" The gods spoke to that goddess, the repository of misery: "O goddess, we are giving you a place in the homes of those men where quarrel takes place. O eldest one, accompanied by evil stay (there). Always remain, causing misery, in the houses of those men who speak cruel and false words and who the mean men, eat at dusk. O eldest one, there is no doubt that your stay will be there where there are skulls, hair, ashes, bones, and chaff fire. Always remain, causing grief and poverty in the houses of those mean men who eat without washing their feet. Stay, always giving grief, and with dissension, in the houses of those who clean their teeth with sand, salt or charcoal. O you eldest one, causing filth, your stay will be in the houses of those mean men who eat mushrooms and a left-over coconut. There is no doubt that you will stay in the houses of those men of sinful thoughts, who eat sesamum-flour, bottle-gourd, garlic, shoots of young plants, a species of kadamba (called kalambaka) and onions. O you inauspicious one, always stay there (i.e. in that house) which is bereft of sacrifices (offered to) preceptors and gods, and bereft of gifts to guests, and where the sound of (the recital of) the Vedas is absent. O you inauspicious one, always stay there, where there takes place quarrel between a husband and his wife, where no worship of the dead ancestors or gods takes place, and where there is (indulgence in) gambling. Causing sins and poverty, always stay in that place where there dwell men who are adulterers, who snatch away the wealth of others, and where brāhmaṇas, good men and old men are not honoured." Having thus directed that eldest of all, who liked (to set up) quarrels, the gods again together churned the ocean.

CHAPTER TEN

The Birth of Lakṣmī

Sūta said:

1-4. Then Airāvata sprang up (from the ocean), so also the horse Uccaiḥśravas. Then (sprang up) Dhanvantari, and the fragrant Pārijāta. So also there was the rise of the celestial nymphs. Then on the twelfth day in the morning, when the sun had risen, the great Lakṣmī, graced with all (auspicious) characteristics, sprang up. All the religious deities saw that great mother of all creatures having her abode in the heart of Viṣṇu, and were delighted. Then, the cool-rayed one (i.e. the Moon), the brother of Lakṣmī, sprang up with nectar. (So also) Tulasī, Viṣṇu's wife, purifying the world, came up.

5-6. Then they, with their desires fulfilled, put the mountain as it was before, and having together praised the mother, muttered the excellent Śrī-sūkta (i.e. hymn in honour of Lakṣmī). Then that goddess, who was pleased, said to all gods: "Well-being to you, O best gods, ask for a boon. I shall grant it."

The gods said:

7-8. O goddess Kamalā, O mother of all, O you who are dear to Viṣṇu, be pleased. Without you the world is a void. Protect our lives.

Thus addressed, that great Lakṣmī, dear to Viṣṇu, said: "Now I shall protect the lives of all creatures."

9-11. Then Viṣṇu, the kind lord of the world, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, suddenly appeared (there). Then the gods saluted the lord of the worlds and praised him. With the palms of their hands joined they spoke with a faltering voice: "O Viṣṇu, accept this Lakṣmī, the mother, your dear queen, who does not go away, for the good of the mundane existence." As long as he did not take the pledge (of marrying her) Lakṣmī said to Viṣṇu:

Lakṣmī said:

12. O Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), O lord, how do you

desire to marry me, the younger (sister), without marrying the elder sister, Alakṣmī? Does the younger sister get married when the elder remains unmarried?

Sūta said:

13-18. Having heard this, Viṣṇu, along with the gods, and according to the Vedic text, gave Alakṣmī to Uddālaka. Then the glorious Viṣṇu accepted Lakṣmī. Then all the hosts of gods again and again saluted him. Then they, superior in power, struck all the demons. All of them, crying, went into the ten directions. By the order of Viṣṇu the gods arranged a line in due order to eat (i.e. to drink) the nectar, and said to one another: "You give it, you give it, you give it." Thus they spoke. They said: "I can't, I can't, I can't." Then Viṣṇu stood up, and took up a feminine form and distributed the nectar with a golden vessel.

19-22. When Rāhu ate up (i.e. drank) the nectar, the Moon and the Sun said: "This is a demon, who has come here deceitfully." Then the lord of the world was angry, and struck him with the golden pot. His (i.e. Rāhu's) head dropped on the ground, and came to be known as Ketu. Then, Rāhu and Ketu, afflicted with fear quickly went (away) from there. Now (even) when that day arrives he fights with the Moon and the Sun. The son of Siṁhikā (i.e. Rāhu) would live (in them). That would be a moment difficult to secure. (At that time) all water is like (that of) Gaṅgā, and all brāhmaṇas are like Vyāsa.

23-25. He, who, (at that time) bathes at the Vyāsatīrtha, would obtain the fruit of the bath at Gaṅgā. The gifts given (at that time) would have an inexhaustible merit; and the sin earned (i.e. committed) during crores of existences would completely perish; what then is the use of crores of sacrifices? One who longs for knowledge, gets it. One who desires a son, gets one. One who desires salvation, obtains it. A spell would certainly become effective. Thus, O brāhmaṇa, I have told you (the account of) the churning of the ocean.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Importance of Observing a Vow in Honour of Lakṣmī

Śaunaka said:

1-3. Now I desire to hear, O you who were actually instructed by Veda Vyāsa, of the nature of Viṣṇu. O you who have no pride, O you who favour the world, tell me properly as to how (i.e. by doing what) a sinful and very miserable woman would be fortunate. By (doing) what would she be dear to her husband, would she be beautiful, and nectar to (his) eyes? O you, rich in penance, tell me by which (means) wealth is produced.

Sūta said:

4. O brāhmaṇa, if (you think) this is a meritorious account, difficult to be had, (then) listen. I shall tell it to you briefly and properly.

5-13. In the yuga called Dvāpara, there was a king by name Bhadraśravas. He was a resident of the Saurāṣṭra country and had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He had a wife by name Suratacandrikā. From her the king got seven attractive sons. Then a beautiful and truthful daughter, Śyāmābālā by name was born. She delighted her father. Once Śyāmābālā went joyfully with her friends to the ground under a nīpa tree, very difficult to be met with, in the golden sands to play with attractive gems (to be) concealed (and then to be discovered). In the meanwhile, O brāhmaṇa, Lakṣmī, rescuing people from the worldly existence and giving (i.e. teaching) them the right course and having taken the form of an old brāhmaṇa lady, herself came (there); and O brāhmaṇa, thinking in her mind (i.e. to herself), 'Barring the house of the king, the ruler of all the people, to the house of which mean people should I go now ?' she went to the king's abode which had golden walls and which was adorned with banners. Then having crossed the main gate, she said to the door-keeper: "O you of auspicious characteristics who are appointed at the door, leave it (and report to the queen). I am quickly going and seeing queen Suratacandrikā".

14. Hearing those words of her, uttered like the note of a

cuckoo, (the doorkeeper) holding a golden staff in her hand, was extremely delighted.

The doorkeeper said:

15. O old lady, what is your name? Who is your husband? How have you come (here)? What is your business in seeing (i.e. with) the queen? For what reason (do you want to see her)? What (is your intention), O brāhmaṇa lady? I have curiosity to hear it.

The old lady said:

16-18a. Listen, O you (queen's) employee, O you who hold a jewelled staff (i.e. you who are the doorkeeper) of the great king's wife, since you have curiosity for (i.e. to know) the reason for my arrival, I am (that) well-known (goddess) named Kamalā, and the lord of the worlds is known as the lord of my life. (My) city is Dvāravatī by name. O employee, the lord of my life lives in that (city). O you having a jewelled staff in your hand, listen with curiosity. I have come from there. Now, to you, I shall tell the reason for my arrival.

18b-26. Formerly (i.e. in a former existence), your queen, born in a vaiśya family, was unhappy. One day, O employee, that unhappy lady quarrelled with her husband, and then tormented by her husband, she, weeping repeatedly, immediately went out of the house. Hearing her weeping, I approached her. I asked her all (her) account, and was properly told. Then I taught her the excellent vow. On my having taught the vow to her, she gladly practised the vow. O you doorkeeper, due to its propitiousness she became happy. Once she, born in a vaiśya family, died with her husband. Then lord Dharmarāja, who brings about the destruction of all, sent his fearful servants to bring the two (to his abode). The fierce massengers came (there) by Yama's order. They, with iron hammers in their hands exerted to go to Yama's abode.

27-31. In the meanwhile, those messengers of Lakṣmī, who were Viṣṇu's devotees, and who had held conches, discs and maces, came (there) to take them (to her abode). Seeing them like that, Yama's messengers fled (away). (Then) the magnanimous, self-radiant messengers of Lakṣmī cut off the nooses and

having put them in a chariot to which royal swans were yoked, they all suddenly went along the aerial path to Lakṣmī's city. For so many thousands of kalpas the two lived in Lakṣmī's city, as many times the excellent vow was practised by the vaiśya lady. To enjoy the remaining religious merit, the two are now born in a royal family. O you doorkeeper, the two, proud of the royal glory, have forgotten the vow. Therefore, to advise her and you also about the vow I have come (here).

The doorkeeper said:

32-33a. O old lady, in what manner is the vow practised? Practised in which month is the vow the best? Which is the deity that is worshipped? O mother, tell properly this to me who am asking you.

Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī) said:

33b-43a. O employee (i.e. O doorkeeper), when the month of Kārtika has passed and the month of Mārgaśīrṣa has arrived, in that month, on a day called Thursday, in the morning, a woman surrounded by those who practise the vow, should worship Lakṣmī along with Nārāyaṇa. O you employee, she should propitiate Lakṣmī with sweets (mixed) with sweetened milk, and (articles of) food mixed with candied sugar, and then should pray like this: "O Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī), you who are worshipped by the worlds and you who are dear to Viṣṇu; as you are unshakingly (devoted) to Kṛṣṇa (i.e.Viṣṇu), in the same way remain (firmly) in me. O goddess Lakṣmī, you who rule (everything), O sinless one, give me shelter." Assuring Lakṣmī with many presents, she should please her. She should worship the goddess with great festivity by reciting sacred texts. O employee, then giving the remains of the articles of food to the deity, to the best brāhmaṇa, she should (distribute it among) herself, her husband, sons and other servants. O beautiful lady, listen to the speciality of the second Thursday: She should propitiate Lakṣmī with auspicious fried articles of wheat baked in earthen pots and variegated powders. She should devoutly (worship) Lakṣmī. On the third (Thursday) she should offer present of boiled rice mixed with candied sugar. On the fourth (Thursday) she should carefully and joyfully worship goddess

Lakṣmī with excellent śyāmāka and śāli (rice), O you having a jewelled staff in your hand. Then to please goddess Lakṣmī, she should please brāhmaṇas with (i.e. by giving them) money, cloth, ornaments, various articles of food and fruits.

The doorkeeper said:

43b-47a. O old lady, stay here only; informing the queen (of your arrival) I shall take you (to her). O best one, do not be angry.

Saying so, that beautiful lady went to the queen. O brāhmaṇa, that doorkeeper, having put her joined palms on her head told all that Lakṣmī had said from the beginning to the end to queen Suratacandrikā. Having heard the words of the doorkeeper queen Suratacandrikā went near the brāhmaṇa lady, and the beautiful lady proudly spoke to her.

The queen said:

47b-48a. O old brāhmaṇa lady, to advise what have you come here? Tell it to me quickly, as you please and giving up fear.

The brāhmaṇa lady said:

48b-50a. Seeing your immorality I desire to go quickly. O wicked one, what shall I tell you, since today, on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Lakṣmī, O you cāṇḍālā, you are not observing that vow very difficult to have? I have seen that. Now, O proud one, who will (live) in your house?

50b-52. Hearing these words of the brāhmaṇa lady, she (i.e. the queen) with her eyes red with anger struck the old brāhmaṇa lady. Then that old Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī) ran away crying. Then that girl Śyāmā, having penance as her wealth, who was playing, came near that brāhmaṇa lady on hearing her weeping.

Śyāmābālā said:

53-61. O old lady, tell me who caused you pain like this.

O best of brāhmaṇas, having heard her words, Kamalā, with

her voice faltering due to grief, told her the entire account. Śyāmābālā, having heard from her that vow extremely difficult to have, practised it, as told in the sacred texts, with faith and devotion. When the first three days (i.e. Thursdays) were over, and the fourth (Thursday) arrived, her marriage rite was accomplished by the grace of Lakṣmī. The son named Mālādhara, of king Śrīsiddheśvara, having royal lustre, took her and went home. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the wonder (that took place) when she had gone. O brāhmaṇa, it was not known who had taken away the very many rich articles that were there in the house of the queen. She sat without wealth, without ideas and without food and clothes; and to ask (her daughter) for something, she sent her husband with someone to her daughter's house. O brāhmaṇa, after some time he went with difficulty to the village of that Mālādhara, and reached the bank of a lake. Her maids had come there to take water from that (lake). Seeing him who was most unhappy, they, sympathising with him, said (to him).

The maids said:

62. Tell us all that—who you who have lost flesh and blood, whose body and hair are rough, are; wherefrom you have come.

The poor man said:

63-67. I am Śyāmābālā's father. I have come from Saurāṣṭra city. O maids, tell this to Śyāmābālā.

Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) him, they who were full of curiosity, laughed after looking at one another's face, and went to their city; and O brāhmaṇa, they told the entire account to Śyāmābālā. Hearing their words, she sent her servants. The beautiful lady gave her father flowers, oil, divine garments, sandal, betel-leaf and a horse. All the servants also went (to him) and having made him well-dressed, took him to Śyāmābālā's house, resembling a palace.

68-71. Then Śyāmābālā also carefully fed her father who was most unhappy, with food of śāli (i.e. boiled rice) with ghee. When four days had passed, she gave him money concealed in a vessel, and sent him (back), O you whose wealth is your pen-

ance. Then after entering his house, he found that the money that was there in the vessel (had turned into) a heap of charcoals, and being extremely unhappy he wept. He who had come (back) to his (own) house, went out of it to go to his daughter's house. She also went to the bank of that lake.

72-80. The chaste lady (i.e. Śyāmābālā) honoured her who was dearer to her than her own life, in the same way through affection for her mother. At this time Śyāmābālā thought of making her mother observe (the vow of) the excellent day of Lakṣmī. Her mother, having incurred the wrath of Lakṣmī, experienced poverty, and secretly ate what was left over by young ones of animals. Three days sacred to Lakṣmī passed, and on the fourth one she (i.e. Śyāmābālā) firmly made her observe (that vow). That queen Suratacandrikā came (back) to her city. She saw her house divine like that (i.e. as before) by the grace of Lakṣmī. O best of brāhmaṇas, Śyāmābālā on some occasion again went to the house of her mother with a desire to see her glory. Seeing Śyāmābālā from a distance, she became angry; and saying, "I shall not see her face", she remained hidden. Going into the interior of the house, and taking salt (from there), she (i.e. Śyāmābālā) quietly came to her house resorted to by Lakṣmī. The king, her lord, asked the chaste lady whose husband was her god: "O dear one, tell me what you have brought."

The wife said:

81-84. I have brought the essence of the kingdom; I shall show it to you at (the time of) the meal.

Saying so she cooked food without salt and gave food etc. to king Mālādhara. Then king Mālādhara eating the seasoned article without salt, became sad. Then she gave him (the salt) the essence of the kingdom. O brāhmaṇa, then the king's mind was pleased and he took his meal. And (repeatedly) saying, '(You are) blessed, (you are) blessed,' he praised the woman. One who does not observe this vow with great respect would become poor and luckless in existence after existence.

85-86. He who would listen to this with devotion, or would recite it attentively, would be freed from all sins, and would

obtain (i.e. go to) Lakṣmī's world. There is no doubt that for her who observes this vow without listening to its story, the fruit of the vow is lost.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Merit Earned by Protecting a Brāhmaṇa

Śaunaka said :

1. O Sūta, kindly tell (me) due to which other religious merit a man with his sins gone (away) goes to the place of Viṣṇu.

Sūta said :

2-5. That man, O best brāhmaṇa, who protects a brāhmaṇa with his (own) wealth or his (own) life, goes to Viṣṇu's world. Formerly, in the yuga called Dvāpara, there was a king (named) Dīnānātha who was sonless (but who was) a devotee of Viṣṇu and a sacrificer. Once that king politely asked Gālava: "O best sage, O ocean of compassion, tell me due to which religious merit a son is born. I shall practise it by your order. The life of those men who do not have a son is useless."

Gālava said:

6-7. O king, I shall tell you in brief the cause of a son's birth about which you have asked me. Listen attentively. O best king, perform the sacrifice called *Naramedha.* Then you will have progeny endowed with all (good) characteristics.

The king said:

8. O preceptor, O brāhmaṇa, tell me by bringing what kind of man I shall perform the great human sacrifice, the best among sacrifices

Gālava said:

9-22. If a man has a handsome body, a charming face and

is proficient in all sacred texts, then he is fit for sacrifice. He who is crippled, has a black complexion, is a fool, would not be fit (for sacrifice).

O brāhmaṇa, when Gālava spoke like this, that king, the lord of men, sent his messengers, telling them the words of Gālava; and giving much money he selected brāhmaṇas like Gālava who had mastered all Vedic texts. Then by the order of the king the messengers gladly went carefully from country to country, village to village and even to cities, O best brāhmaṇa. Not finding (such a man) anywhere they then went to a country (and the city) called Daśapura which, O brāhmaṇa, was crowded with virtuous brāhmaṇas; where seeing the women having lovely hair and eyes like those of the young ones of deer, men were infatuated, since the women were moon-faced. In that charming city was (i.e. lived) a brāhmaṇa named Kṛṣṇadvija with his three sons and his amiable wife. He was a devotee of Viṣṇu, always spoke agreeably and was engaged in worshipping Viṣṇu. He maintained the (sacred) fire, was devoted to his parents and was a benefactor of the devotees of Viṣṇu. Then the messengers of the king requested the best brāhmaṇa: "O best brāhmaṇa, say, 'give a son, give a son'. O best brāhmaṇa, the king does not have a son who would remove his affliction. For that (son) be initiated into the sacrifice called *Naramedha*. We shall take your son to offer him as a victim in that great sacrifice. O brāhmaṇa, carefully take a lakh of (coins of) gold (in exchange for your son). If, due to your fondness for your son, you would not give your son ungrudgingly, then we shall take him forcibly (because) we carry out the order of the king." Hearing the words of the messengers the brāhmaṇa and his wife were afflicted with grief and with their minds full of fear, they were, as it were dead. "What is the use of wealth, gold, life or house ?" The brāhmaṇa spoke these words to the royal officers.

The brāhmaṇa said:

23-27. O messengers, if you have certainly come to take (away) my son who removes the darkness of grief (in my life), then (please) listen to my words. Who living on the earth desires

to disobey the king's order ? But, leaving my son you (please) take me, an old brāhmaṇa (to the king).

Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the messengers, full of anger, forcibly left (coins of) gold in his house. When they angrily made up their mind to take away the son, the brāhmaṇa, weeping, and with the palms of his hands joined said: "O men, these words viz. 'leaving the eldest among my sons, take the other excellent one' do not come to my mouth (i.e. my tongue)."

28-30. Hearing the words of the brāhmaṇa, the messengers said to the brāhmaṇa's wife who was weeping: "O best one, give us the younger son." Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) them, the brāhmaṇa woman, being extremely grieved, fell on the ground as a plantain-tree falls on the ground due to (strong) wind. Taking up a hammer, she violently struck it on her head: "O messengers, I shall never give you my youngest son."

31-36. O brāhmaṇa, at this time the middle son of the brāhmaṇa, full of modesty and weeping, said to his parents: "Who would be the protector if the mother gives poison (to her son), or the father sells his son, or the king snatches away everything." Saying so, the son, saluting his parents with his head (bowed down), went with the speedy messengers of the king who was initiated. Then the brāhmaṇa and his wife, with their minds afflicted by the separation from their son, wept again and again and became blind. Then they (i.e. the messengers) on their way went to the hermitage of sage Viśvāmitra, which was full of (his) disciples and resorted to by young deer. The sage, seeing the royal officers, respectfully asked them: "O (men), who are you? Where had you gone? What is your profession?"

The king's messengers said:

37-40. O brāhmaṇa, listen attentively. A son is not born to the king. For (i.e. to obtain) that the king is initiated into the sacrifice called *Naramedha*. We are taking this brāhmaṇa-son (to be offered) as a victim in that (sacrifice).

Hearing these words of them, the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Viśvāmitra) became compassionate. 'Let even my life depart; (but) the boy

be happy. Those people who in this world cast their life like (a blade of) grass for a child, or a brāhmaṇa, or their master, obtain eternal worlds.'

41-44a. Thus thinking in his mind, the best brāhmaṇa said: "Leaving this brāhmaṇa-son to be offered as a victim in the sacrifice, (please) quickly take me. This is an excellent boy. Having obtained birth in this mundane existence, this child has not got any happiness. How (then) will he die (i.e. Why should he die)? O messengers, when he came from his house, his unlucky parents became unhappy. Indeed he has as it were gone to Yama's house." Having heard these words of him, the messengers said to the brāhmaṇa:

44b-48. "O wise brāhmaṇa, how shall we take an old man like you, without the order of king Dīnānātha?" Speaking thus the messengers then went to the city of the king. The sage also went to the city of the king. The sage also went to the sacrificial chamber with the host of the messengers. The messengers told the king the brāhmaṇa's gesture. He, hearing that, and with his mind full of doubt said to him: "If by performing this sacrifice without a victim I get a son, then you (may) take (back) this son of the brāhmaṇa."

The sage (Viśvāmitra) said:

49-62a. O king, when the sacrifice is performed, a mighty son will be born. Do not entertain a doubt about this. (Your) seeing (me) will not be fruitless.

Hearing these words of him (i.e. of Viśvāmitra), the king with joy performed the sacrifice with the 'complete oblation' with (the help of) all the sages. Then that best sage took the brāhmaṇa's son (with him) and went to the city named Daśapura; and having gone to his house the sage said (these) words: "O brāhmaṇa, you are staying at home." (The brāhmaṇa said): "O sage, I am staying as if I am dead. The king forcibly took (away) my son. What shall I do? O brāhmaṇa, when our son had gone, our eyes became blind due to weeping." O brāhmaṇa, when the best sage said, "See your son (and) take him (back)", the brāhmaṇa and his wife became glad. For the sake of the son, the two in a moment went out;

and due to perfection of the sage the eyes of the two quickly obtained light (i.e. power of seeing); and then on seeing the son the two drank for a long time the lotus-like face of the son with their bee-like eyes, and repeatedly saluted the sage, and O brāhmaṇa, the two i.e. the brāhmaṇa and his wife, who spoke agreeably, said these words: "O sage, you have indeed made to us a good present of our life." O brāhmaṇa, the sage, the ocean of kindness, having given them blessings, went to his own hermitage. Having the great seat of Viṣṇu at his hand, the magnanimous sage practised a great penance difficult to be obtained (i.e. practised) even by deities. O brāhmaṇa, when some time passed, the king obtained a son. He was handsome, proper for a king, and like the moon in the ocean. O brāhmaṇa, the king too, free from grief and with curiosity arisen in him enjoyed like a god wealth on the earth.

62b-64. He, who protects brāhmaṇas by giving his life and wealth, goes to Viṣṇu's abode, from which a return (to the mortal world) is difficult to have. Those who here (i.e. on the earth) recite or hear devoutly from a brāhmaṇa the story, or the account, or (even) one verse, go to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Importance of the Vow of Janmāṣṭamī

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, O you very wise one, tell me (about) Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī, and its excellent importance, (and) emancipate me from the great ocean (of the mundance existene).

Sūta said:

2-8. O brāhmaṇa, he who devoutly observes the (vow) Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī, ultimately goes to Viṣṇu's city along with a crore (members) of his family. O best brāhmaṇa, when Aṣṭamī falls on a Wednesday or Monday in conjunction with Rohiṇī, it gives salvation to a crore (members) of his family. Even if a great sinner observes (this) excellent vow, he is freed from all sins and

in the end goes to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, that mean man who does not observe (the vow of) Kṛṣṇajanmāṣṭamī, meets with misery here (i.e. in this world) and after death he would go to hell. That foolish woman who does not observe the vow of Kṛṣṇajanmāṣṭamī goes to a terrible hell year after year. That foolish man who eats (food) on the day of Janmāṣṭamī, attains to a great hell. I am telling (you) the truth and truth (only). Formerly Dilīpa asked the best sage Vasiṣṭha. Listen to that (conversation), destroying all sins, O you very intelligent one.

Dilīpa said :

9-10. O great sage, tell me, I desire to hear (about) the Aṣṭamī in the dark fortnight of the month of Bhādrapada on which Viṣṇu was born. How was the lord, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, born in (i.e. from) the womb of Devakī, to do what and for what purpose (was he born from her womb)?

Vaiṣṭha said :

11-21. O king, I shall (tell you). I shall tell you for what purpose the lord of the world left the heaven and was born on the earth. Formerly the Earth was oppressed by kings like Kaṁsa. She, struck by Kaṁsa's messenger who was proud of his office, cried again and again, went with her eyes rolling to that place where the chief of gods, the lord of Umā and the bull-bannered god remained to tell him: "O lord, I am struck by Kaṁsa". Tears flowed (down her cheeks); she had become pale and insulted. The great god, seeing her weeping, came, with his lower lip throbbing with anger to the house of the Creator. Having gone to Brahmā he asked him for the destruction of Kaṁsa. (He said to Brahmā:) "O Brahman, along with Viṣṇu, produce (i.e. find out) a means". Having heard those words of the lord (i.e. Śiva), Brahmā went to the milky ocean where Viṣṇu was lying asleep on the serpent. Mounting upon the back of a swan he (i.e. Brahmā) came to Viṣṇu. Having gone there, the Creator, the best among the speakers, joined by gods led by Hara (i.e. Śiva), praised him softly with words: "Salutation to the lotus-eyed one, Viṣṇu, the highest soul, the protector of the world. O you lord of Lakṣmī, salutation to you." Having heard this praise from

them, Viṣṇu said to all gods with saddened faces: "How (i.e. for what reason) have you come?"

Brahmā said :

22-26. O god, O lord of the world, listen, I (shall) tell you why we have come, O best of the gods, O cause of the worlds. King Kaṁsa has become arrogant due to the boon given by Śiva. He has become unconquerable. He has struck the Earth; has afflicted her with the blow of his hand. After a boon was granted to him he was deceived by a trick. (He had said:) "O Śiva, I should not meet with death except through my sister's son." Therefore, O god, having gone to Gokula, and obtained birth in (i.e. from) Devakī's womb, go yourself to kill that unconquerable Kaṁsa.

The god, sent forth by Brahmā, said to Śiva: "O lord of gods, hand over Pārvatī. Having remained for a year, she will go."

27-49. With Pārvatī as his protector the god holding a conch, a disc, and a mace, undertook his journey to Mathurā. The mace-holder there (i.e. at Mathurā) obtained birth in (i.e. from) the womb of Devakī. The lotus-eyed Pārvatī resorted to the womb of Yaśodā. Having rested in (Devakī's) womb for nine months and nine days, the lord of the world, the enemy of Kaṁsa and the son of Vasudeva, was born (on) the night when Rohiṇī was in conjunction (with the Moon), when clouds were thundering, of the day called Aṣṭamī, (falling) in the dark fortnight of the month of Bhādrapada. Yaśodā, the daughter of Virāṭa and the wife of Nanda, gave birth to a daughter. Ānakadundubhi (i.e. Vasudeva) seeing his son, having lotus-like navel, and eyes like lotus-petals, began to be joyful, when Devakī, trembling with the fear of the demon, viz. Kaṁsa said (to him): "O lord, go, and hand over the son to Vairāṭī (i.e. Yaśoda). Having given (our) son to Yaśodā, bring (here) her daughter." Hearing her words Vasudeva also was grieved. Placing the son on his side, he went to Yaśodā. On his way Yamunā was full of water, fearful, very long, having deep water and flooded. Seeing this, Vasudeva remained on the bank watching Yamunā and afflicted with grief he cried through anxiety: "What (shall) I do? Where (shall) I go? Even destiny has deceived me. Now, how shall I go to Yaśodā, to Nanda's

house?" At that time, Viṣṇu gladly deceived, by means of a trick, his father who watching Yamunā remained on her bank for a moment. He looked (at Yamunā) again. In a moment she became (i.e. her water was) as high as the knee. Happy on seeing her (like that) he rose and started going. The lord of the world resorted to his magical power and fell into the water from his side. Seeing the son fallen (into the water) he wailed loudly and was extremely grieved. That Creator again deceived him by adoptnig a great trick. (He cried): "O lord of the worlds, protect me. O best god, protect my son." Seeing his father crying, (Kṛṣṇa) the enemy of Kaṁsa, sported repeatedly in the water and with compassion again went to (i.e. clasped) the bosom of his father. Then with him the best of the the Yadus went to Nanda's abode. Having given the son to Yaśodā, he brought her daughter. Then having come to his abode, he handed over the daughter (of Yaśodā) to his wife (Devakī). The news that Devakī had delivered was received by the enemy of (Devakī's) son. Then his messengers set out to bring (either) the son (or) the daughter. Those messengers of Kaṁsa, having come (there), proceeded to take the daughter. Having dragged her forcibly from Devakī and Vasudeva, the messengers of Kaṁsa, seized her and gave her to the enemy of gods. That great unconquerable king having held her was frightened. Kaṁsa, the greatest among the demons, seeing her whose complexion was like pure gold, whose face was like the full moon, and whose eyes were like flashes of lightning, and who was smiling, ordered: "Take her and kill her (by dropping) her on a slab of stone." Receiving the order, the demons proceeded to destroy her. Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī) suddenly went to the sky.

Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī) said :

50. O king, listen, I shall tell you where your greatest enemy is. O greatest of the demons, your killer is hidden in Nanda's house.

Vasiṣṭha said :

51-57. Having spoken like this, the goddess went to her abode. Having heard the words of the goddess, king Kaṁsa was extremely pained. He said to his sister, Pūtanā: "You go to Nanda's house. Killing the son fraudulently, obtain many things

that you desire, which I shall give for killing my enemy. O you auspicious one, go very quickly." That demoness, having received (Kaṁsa's) order, went to Gokula. Taking up an illusory form of a beautiful lady, she entered Gokula. Holding poison in her breasts, she went to kill (Kṛṣṇa). Having entered unnoticed through the door of the cowherds' house, she went inside, took up the child, gave him her breast and obtained beatitude. Then having hurled (the demon) Śakaṭa, and having crushed Tṛṇāvarta and others, and having curbed Kāliya, he went to the city of Madhu (i.e. Mathurā). Having gone there he killed the cruel Kaṁsa and vanquished his wrestlers. O king, I have told you this vow of (i.e. to be observed on) the day of Viṣṇu's birth.

58-62a. On hearing it, the sins (of the person who hears it), perish. (Then) what will happen on observing it? A man or a woman who observes this vow of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, obtains unequalled wealth as (much as is) desired in this (very) existence. (The vow should) not be observed on the third or the sixth day joined with the previous day. For those who desire religious merit, Aṣṭamī is Ekādaśī; (they should) carefully avoid Aṣṭamī joined with Saptamī. Even without (the rise of) the constellation, Aṣṭamī, joined with Navamī should be observed (as a fast day) if the constellation has risen, and there is partial Aṣṭamī and full Navamī (then the vow should be observed). Aṣṭamī that is united with (i.e. has) Rohiṇī (risen) for a short time, should be (regarded as) complete.

62b-67. O king, what is the use of observing crores of vows if Aṣṭamī with Rohiṇī falls on a Wednesday or with the Moon (i.e. on a Monday). Such Aṣṭamī is obtained or not obtained even after hundreds of years when it falls on a Monday or Wednesday. Without (the rise of) the constellation (Rohiṇī) the vow of Aṣṭamī should not be observed when the Aṣṭamī is joined with Navamī. The vow of Aṣṭamī should be observed even on the seventh day, if it is joined with Rohiṇī. When the eighth day of Kṛṣṇa is (there) even for fortyeight seconds, for kāṣṭhā (i.e. one thirtieth part of a kalā, which is equal to fortyeight seconds) or for a period of fortyeight minutes on the ninth day, the vow of Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī should be observed. That Aṣṭamī is acceptable (i.e. the vow should be observed even) on the ninth day, but not on that eighth day which is united with the seventh day. What (then

should be told) about Wednesday and especially about Monday? What (should be told) about Aṣṭamī that is united with Navamī? It gives salvation to crores of the members of the family. If there is the connection with the seventh day, (even) by (the measure of time called) pala, then a man should avoid the vow of Aṣṭamī (on that day) like the pitcher of water full of the water of Gaṅgā coming in contact with a drop of liquor.

Dilīpa said :

68. O great sage, O lord, tell (me), who first observed (this vow). Who brought it to light? What is its religious merit? What is its fruit?

Vasiṣṭha said :

69-77. The great king Citrasena indulged in great sins and in illicit intercourse, and stole the gold of a brāhmaṇa. He was always delighted with (i.e. always drank) liquor and flesh(-eating). Thus he was full of sins, and always took delight in killing animals. He always conversed with cāṇḍālas and the fallen. The king who was like this thought of hunting. Knowing (that there was) a tiger in the forest and carefully surrounding it, he spoke these words to all his soldiers: "I alone shall kill it. If anyone else strikes him, he will be undoubtedly killed." The tiger came along the path of the king. The king, though ashamed, then went after the tiger. With much trouble and difficulty he became intent upon killing the tiger. In the evening he oppressed with hunger and thirst (remained) on the bank of Yamunā. That was the eighth day, united with Rohiṇī—the birth-day (of Kṛṣṇa). O king, cāṇḍāla-girls observed the vow in (i.e. on the bank of) Yamunā with many articles as presents, and very auspicious incense and lamps. Seeing the sandal, the flowers and (other) very charming articles like saffron, and food with many excellences, the kings' mind was perturbed.

The king said :

78a. For want of food my life shall certainly and instantly depart today.

The women said :

78b-85. O sinless king, on the day of Janmāṣṭamī of (i.e.

sacred to) Viṣṇu, you should not eat the hard flesh of a vulture, (of) a crow or of a cow, so also (you should not eat) food. There is no doubt (you have formerly) eaten it. What blemish would not come to the men who in this world eat (on the day of Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī)? For him who, when his vital airs remain in his body (i.e. while alive), has not observed (the vow of) Jayantī, and has not observed a fast (on that day), the punishment is (going to) Yama's abode. His manes do not accept whatever he has offered to them with proper rites. When food is taken on a Jayantī, all the manes are thrown (down).

Hearing this, O king, the king then observed that vow. Being delighted, he brought a few flowers, a little sandal, a small (piece of) cloth, observed the vow, and broke the fast at the end of the (Aṣṭamī) day. By the power of this vow Citrasena along with his dead ancestors got into a divine aeroplane and went to Viṣṇu's abode. Men obtain that fruit from the Aṣṭamī-vow which they get after going to Mathurā and seeing the lotus-like face of Kṛṣṇa. The poor obtain that fruit by observing the Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī-vow which they get by going to Dvārakā and seeing Viṣṇu, the lord of the universe.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Greatness of a Brāhmaṇa

Śaunaka said:

1. O you very wise one, O you ocean of compassion, kindly tell me the importance of a brāhmaṇa, the best of all the castes.

Sūta said:

2-8. O best brāhmaṇa, a brāhmaṇa is the preceptor of all the castes. He should be known to be the resort of all gods, and he is actually Viṣṇu, the lord. O best brāhmaṇa, the wealth etc. of him who devoutly salutes a brāhmaṇa, looking upon him as Viṣṇu, enhances. Viṣṇu would always desire to cut off

the head of him who, being proud, does not even casually salute a brāhmaṇa. Those of sinful minds, who hate a brāhmaṇa who has committed an offence, should be known to be hating Viṣṇu. They go to a terrible hell. Yama torments with a heated needle the eyes of him who would look angrily at a brāhmaṇa who has come to make a request. The messengers (i.e. servants) of Yama put (a piece of) heated iron into the mouth of the foolish mean man who threatens a brāhmaṇa. Kṛṣṇa himself along with gods eats in the house of those in whose house a brāhmaṇa with penance as his wealth eats.

9-13a. All the sins, like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, of that man who takes just a drop of water (flowing) from the foot of a brāhmaṇa, perish. I tell you the truth—the man who would devoutly wash the feet of a brāhmaṇa, is freed from all sins. That woman who has no sons or that woman whose child was stillborn, would (respectively) have a son, would have her child alive. Those holy places which exist in the world, those holy places which exist in an ocean, those holy places that exist in a sea, exist in the feet of a brāhmaṇa. He whose head is always sprinkled with the water from the feet of a brāhmaṇa, has (indeed) bathed at all the places (and) is free from all sins.

13b-20. O you Śaunaka, having penance as your wealth, listen, I shall tell you the greatness destroying all sins—the history, of the water (flowing) from the feet of a brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, formerly there was a śūdra named Bhīma who was engaged in the occupation of a vaiśya. Even in Dvāpara (yuga), he, a cruel man who killed a thousand brāhmaṇas, was satisfied with a vaiśya wife. That Bhīma had given up the conduct of a śūdra and had illegitimate connection with his preceptor's wife. How can I tell each one (of his sins)? The sins of the śūdra, viz. Bhīma, of a wicked mind, could not be counted. Once he went to a brāhmaṇa's house. He made up his mind to enter the brāhmaṇa's house and to take (away) his money. He remained near the outer gate (of the house) of the brāhmaṇa. He spoke piteous words to the brāhmaṇa, the treasure of penance: "O lord, listen to my words. I think you are kind. I am oppressed with hunger; give me food, (otherwise) my life will soon depart (i.e. I shall die soon)."

The brāhmaṇa said:

21-23. O you who are oppressed with hunger, listen to my words. There is nobody (in my house) to cook food. There is rice. Take it and eat it as (much) as you like. I do not have a father or a mother; I do not have a son or a brother; I do not have a wife or the brother of my mother (i.e. maternal uncle). Leaving me all of them are dead. O guest, being jobless and unlucky I am staying in the house (all) alone. Viṣṇu alone lives in my abode. I do not know anyone else but him.

Bhīma said:

24. O best brāhmaṇa, I too do not have any (relative). I am a śūdra by caste. I shall remain in your house always serving you.

Sūta said:

25-33. Hearing (those) words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the brāhmaṇa who was delighted, quickly cooked food and gave it to him, O ascetic. He too being delighted lived in the brāhmaṇa's house doing to the brāhmaṇa affectionate and good service. 'Today or tomorrow I shall kill him, I shall take away his money and make it mine. Certainly I shall take it (away).' Thinking and deciding like this, he did, by (bowing) his head, whatever work like washing his feet, the brāhmaṇa would tell (him to do); (thus) he was free from sins. The brāhmaṇa having sipped water, everyday put before him under some protext, the water flowing from his feet. Once a thief came there to take away money. At night having drawn out the panels (of the door) he entered the interior of the house. Seeing Bhīma (there), he came with a staff in his hand to strike him. The thief having broken his head, quickly ran away. Then Viṣṇu's soldiers, holding conches, discs, and maces came (there) to take Bhīma whose sins had gone. O brāhmaṇa, a divine chariot to which royal swans were yoked, also came there. Getting into it, he went to Viṣṇu's abode, not easily accessible. I have narrated this greatness of a brāhmaṇa. It destroys the sin of him who listens to it.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Importance of Ekādaśī

Śaunaka said:

1. O illustrious one, tell me the importance of Ekādaśī, and also what its fruit is and the sin (that accrues) to him who does not observe it.

Sūta said:

2-40. Now why should I tell the importance of (the vow of) Ekādaśī? The messengers of Yama, who cause fear to all beings, are frightened on hearing the name of Ekādaśī. There is no doubt about this. A man should observe a fast on the auspicious (day of) Ekādaśī which is the best of all vows, should keep awake and highly decorate Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, the man who worships Viṣṇu with Tulasī-leaves, obtains the fruit of a crore of sacrifices. That sin which is said to be due to illicit intercourse, perishes due to a fast on the (day of) Ekādaśī. O brāhmaṇa, he who would offer a lamp full of ghee (to Viṣṇu) on the Viṣṇu-day (i.e. Ekādaśī), in the end goes to Viṣṇu's place. "Do not bring to me these meritorious beings who observe a fast on (the day of) Viṣṇu's going to bed or his turning aside, and especially on the Prabodhinī (Ekādaśī)." Thus orders Yama to his messengers day and night. Ekādaśī is dear to the lord of the world (i.e. Viṣṇu) and enhances religious merit. Viṣṇu does burn the body (of a man) on (his) eating food on that (day). Fie upon the life, wealth, handsomeness and conduct of those, the most sinful ones, who eat food on (the day of) Ekādaśī! They are the eaters of feces. O best brāhmaṇa, on merely eating food on Ekādaśī(-day), many and various sins attend upon the eater. As a great sin would accrue by having coitus with women on the new moon day, in the same way sin would be there (i.e. would be committed by a man) on eating on an Ekādaśī (-day). Beings (i.e. men) become diseased, crippled, and suffer from cough, and congenital leprosy on eating food on that (day). They become (i.e. are born as) village-pigs and are reduced to poverty. O best brāhmaṇa, people are bound by the king on eating (i.e. if they eat) on that (day), O brāhmaṇa;

(all) the sins that are there in the worldly existence resort to food. There would be escape from hell of those who commit all sins (but) drink water (on that day only) through the order (of a superior person etc.). There is no escape (from hell) for those men who eat on Viṣṇu's day. Sin due to crores of brāhmaṇa-murders would accrue to those men for each kind of food that they eat. O men, listen, listen, I tell again, I tell again: On the day of Viṣṇu, (food) should not be eaten, food should not be eaten, food should not beeaten. That fruit is obtained by him who fasts on an (Ekādaśī-) day which is obtained by bathing in Gaṅgā etc. and at holy places or at the (time of) lunar or solar eclipse. He having worshipped (i.e. who worships) with lotus-garlands lord Viṣṇu after having properly broken the fast, does not have a place in mother's womb (i.e. is not reborn). O brāhmaṇa, he who makes a decoration in Viṣṇu's abode (i.e. temple) on an Ekādaśī(-day), gets the highest status and would stay in Viṣṇu's house. Those who having waited for the Ekādaśī-(day) observe a fast on that day, undoubtedly stay in Viṣṇu's city. There is no doubt that those whose minds are clung to the devotion of Viṣṇu, go to the highest place of Viṣṇu. Those too who have no longing for others' wealth and whose minds are contented, certainly have (i.e. go to) Viṣṇu's city. Those best men, who having encountered famine give food to creatures, undoubtedly get (i.e. go to) Viṣṇu's abode. Those, who cast their life for protecting cows, brāhmaṇas, (their) master, and a woman, certainly get (i.e. go to) Viṣṇu's city. Creatures (i.e. men) should never observe a fast on (an Ekādaśī day) joined with Daśamī (i.e. the tenth day). O best brāhmaṇa, it should be avoided like the proximity of a wicked man. Having fasted on that day, if the Ekādaśī-day is joined with Daśamī at the break of day, having fasted on that day, there would be Dvādaśī, and breaking of the fast would be on the thirteenth day. A devotee of Viṣṇu should not observe the Ekādaśī-vow on that day if the day-break is said to be the four ghaṭikās of the morning. This is the time of the bath for the ascetics, and is said to be like the water of Gaṅgā. If at the time of day-break Daśamī is seen (to continue), then on that day Ekādaśī destroying religious merit, worldly prosperity and sensual enjoyments, should not be observed. A wise man should avoid the Ekādaśī joined even a little with Daśamī,

as he would abandon a pitcher full of ghee spoiled by the contact of a drop of liquor. When there is the full Ekādaśī (i.e. it falls on the eleventh day) and again continues (in part) on the twelfth day also, then the latter should be observed by ascetics and a householder should observe a fast on the former day. When a part of Ekādaśī does not go beyond Dvādaśī, the merit there is of a hundred sacrifices; and the breaking of the fast (should be done) on the thirteenth day. If the Ekādaśī is omitted and is further united with Dvādaśī, then a man should fast for the entire twelfth day if he desires the highest place. If it is the entire Ekādaśī (day) and if it is there in the morning also, then, if Dvādaśī is after it (commencing on that day) all should observe the (fast of Ekādaśī) on the latter day. Those men whose mind clings to the Ekādaśī-vow, live in heaven and go to Viṣṇu's house. There is no greater means than Ekādaśī for (going to) the next world. He who, full of many sins, observes (a fast on) the day of Viṣṇu, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

41-42. That woman who along with her husband observes (a fast on) the day of Viṣṇu, gets good sons, is fortunate to have a (good) husband, and after death goes to Viṣṇu's abode. O best brāhmaṇa, the religious merit of him, who devoutly offers a lamp before (the image of) Viṣṇu on the day of Viṣṇu (i.e. Ekādaśī), cannot be measured (i.e. is immeasurable).

43-44. O brāhmaṇa, that woman who with her husband keeps awake on the day of Viṣṇu, would stay for a long time with her husband in the abode of Viṣṇu. The religious merit due to an object offered to Viṣṇu on his day is always inexhaustible.

45. Formerly there was (a man) named Vallabha in a city named Kāñcana. The lord of wealth had much wealth.

46-58a. O brāhmaṇa, his very beautiful wife was Hemaprabhā by name. The great characteristic of Kali, viz. being talkative, assaulted (i.e. overpowered) her. O you great ascetic, she would always quarrel with her husband. She would always censure her elders with mean words. She, the impure one, would always secretly eat from the cooking utensils and everyday would offer the remnants of the food to the elders. Her heart was always set on her paramour, (yet) she would say, 'I

am a chaste woman.' She always caused anxiety to her husband by her quarrels. Once seeing her who had come (to him), her husband censured her and struck her who was full of all sins. Full of anger, she went to a vacant house, and without anybody's knowledge slept and remained there and did not (drink and) eat water or food. Fortunately for her on that day of Viṣṇu (there was the festival of) Viṣṇu's turning upon other side[1]—the Ekādaśī-vow, destroying all sins. Then, when it dawned, Dvādaśī with the Śravaṇā (constellation) came. Then that woman with her mind full of anger, observed two fasts, and became pure; and O brāhmaṇa, on the day of the Jayantī, she died at night. By Yama's order, his fearful messengers with nooses and hammers in their hands came there to take her like that (to Yama's abode). When they decided after binding her to take her to Yama's abode, Viṣṇu's messengers holding conches, discs and maces came (there). Having cut off the noose, they put her, free from sins and (therefore) pure, into a divine chariot. Surrounded by them, she then went to Viṣṇu's auspicious house, not easily accessible (even) to gods.

58b-60. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you the importance of Viṣṇu's day. He who observes this vow even unwillingly goes to Viṣṇu's abode. A man who would go to Viṣṇu's temple on an Ekādaśī-day to offer him a lamp, obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice at every step. Those who listen to or read the Purāṇas on Viṣṇu's day, obtain, for every letter (listened to or read), the fruit due to the gift of a tawny cow (to a brāhmaṇa).

1. Pārśvaparivartana—Name of a festival on the eleventh day of the first half of Bhādrapada when Viṣṇu is supposed to turn upon the other side in his sleep.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

How to Win Favour of Viṣṇu

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, kindly tell (me) that due to which act the sins would perish and grace of Viṣṇu would follow.

Sūta said:

2-4. O Śaunaka, I shall tell you what destroys the sins of the listeners, by which Viṣṇu's grace, destroying sins, would take place. O sage, the sin of him, earned during crores of existences disappears, who, with devotion and in many ways, offers on a full moon day worship to the lord of the world, O sage. Certainly the favour of the lord of Śrī would come to him.

5. The sins of him who would devoutly give food to a brāhmaṇa on Dvādaśī, would perish like darkness at day-break.

6-14. Śrī Viṣṇu instantly loves the man who would bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with milk, sugar etc. on a Dvādaśī day, O brāhmaṇa. The giver who would offer a stone-like flower to Viṣṇu without any hymn, has a downfall. That man who would give a stone-like gift, a foolish brāhmaṇa, does not have religious merit. The foolish brāhmaṇa who, having no knowledge, accepts a gift like wasted fire at the time of deluge, through delusion, would, due to that, go to hell. O brāhmaṇa, the three, viz. a wooden elephant, or a deer drawn in a picture, or a brāhmaṇa having no knowledge, (simply) bear their names. As the water remaining on a path is purified by means of wind or the sun, in the same way the sin of him who devoutly sees the retinue (of a god), perishes. He who would devoutly offer on the full-moon day of the month of Āśvina parched grain with ghee and cowrie for playing to Viṣṇu goes, free from rebirth, to Viṣṇu's place. A man who through folly would not give to Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu is not pleased with him. He who would offer cowries to Viṣṇu on the full-moon day will certainly live in Hari's abode for as many days as the number of cowries (offered).

15-17. O best of brāhmaṇas, formerly in the city of Karavīra lived a cruel and fearful śūdra whose name was Kāladvija. Engaged in his own duty, he destroyed the business of his

master. Once (when) he died, the fearful messengers of Yama came to take him to Yama's abode. Having tied him, they took him (to Yama's abode). Seeing him, Yama asked his minister (Citragupta):

Yama said:

18. O wise minister Citragupta, tell me from the beginning the good or bad deeds of (i.e. done by) him.

Citragupta said:

19-20. This sinner is of a wicked conduct; he has destroyed the business of his master. He does not have religious merit even of the size of an atom. Let him be roasted in hell for a hundred ages of Manu, O king. Then let the cruel one be born in the species of serpents and let him continuously live in a cave.

Sūta said:

21-28. O brāhmaṇa, for that much period he fell into (and lived in) hell, and then, being very unhappy he was born in the species of serpents in a cave. Once, O brāhmaṇa, on the full moon day in the month of Āśvina he threw out from the hole fried grain and cowries. That fell before Viṣṇu. Kind Viṣṇu who removes unhappiness, himself quickly destroyed his sin. When the time for his death arrived, he died. O brāhmaṇa, many messengers of Yama came to take him (to Yama's abode). When after binding him they started taking him to Yama's abode, messengers of Viṣṇu, holding conches, discs and maces came (there). They cut off his nooses and quickly put him whose sins had perished, into a divine chariot. The messengers of Yama ran (away). Surrounded by them the serpent went to Viṣṇu's house. Being free from rebirth he remained before (i.e. near) Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, I certainly do not know what the religious merit of him who devoutly offers fried grain with ghee and cowries to Viṣṇu, would be.

29. O brāhmaṇa, the sins of him who devoutly listens to this chapter destroying sins, perish due to the grace of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Importance of Water Flowing from Viṣṇu's Feet

Śaunaka said :

1. O you ocean of compassion, O you very wise one, tell me from the beginning the greatness of the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, which destroys sins.

Sūta said :

2-11. The water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu destroys all sins and is auspicious. He who would carry (even) a drop of it, would obtain the fruit of (visiting) all the holy places. O brāhmaṇa, the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet destroys the sin of him who touches it; he does not meet with an untimely death and would obtain the fruit of a bath in Gaṅgā. O brāhmaṇa, there is no doubt that the sin in the body of the sinner who would drink the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu, would perish. That man who would devoutly carry on his head the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet along with a Tulasī-leaf in the end goes to Viṣṇu's abode. Men obtain that fruit by touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, which is obtained by giving (pieces of) gold resembling Meru. That fruit is surely obtained by offering water to Viṣṇu's feet and touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, which is obtained by (offering) thousands of crores of cows. The fruit that is obtained by touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, is crores of times greater than the fruit which is obtained by performing thousands of crores of sacrifices. O brāhmaṇa, the fruit (obtained) by touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet is greater than the fruit got by men by giving a crore of virgins (in marriage to worthy grooms). That fruit which a man obtains by giving a crore of elephants or by giving a crore of horses is obtained by a man by touching the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, a man would get a larger fruit by touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, than that which he would obtain by giving (the earth) with the seven islands along with crops (growing on it).

12. O brāhmaṇa, listen, I shall tell you in brief. (What is the

use of) telling more? By touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, a sinner goes to Viṣṇu's house.

Śaunaka said :

13. O Sūta, kindly tell me which creature formerly reached Viṣṇu's abode by touching and drinking the water flowing from Viṣṇu's feet.

Sūta said:

14-18. Formerly in Tretāyuga there was a sinful brāhmaṇa by name Sudarśana. O best brāhmaṇa, on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu he would always eat (food, i.e. would not observe a fast). He always censured the sacred texts and always condemned the vows. Except his own belly he did not recognise anything else. O brāhmaṇa, when once the time of his death arrived, he died. The messengers of Yama came (to his place), and binding him they took him to Yama's abode. Seeing him, the brother of Yamunā (i.e. Yama) angrily asked his minister: "O minister, tell (me) from the root (i.e. from the beginning) what his merit is and what his sin is. This brāhmaṇa seems to be a great sinner and a man of cruel acts".

Citragupta said :

19-21. Listen to his sins(s). He has no merit even of the size of an atom (to his credit). O lord, even on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, he always used to eat (food). O king, that mean man who would eat on the day of (i.e. sacred to) the lord of Kamalā (i.e. on the day sacred to viṣṇu), would eat feces and goes to a fearful hell. Give him a place in a hell for a hundred periods of Manu. Then he will be born in the stock of a śūdra.

Sūta said :

22-28. O brāhmaṇa, then, by Yama's order his terrible messengers threw him into feces (where he remained) for more than a hundred ages of Manu. Freed from there he became (i.e. was born as) a village-pig on the earth. For a long time he would remain in hell due to his having eaten food on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. Then, O brāhmaṇa, the time of his death arrived, and he died. He obtained a birth (i.e. was born) in the stock

of crow and always ate feces. O brāhmaṇa, one day this crow of a śabara drank the water, after the śabara's death, (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet and remaining (i.e. collected) at the door (of the temple) and being killed by a hunter, fell (dead) on the same day. He, the eater of offerings, got into a divine, auspicious chariot to which royal swans were yoked, and went to Viṣṇu's abode. (I have) told you the greatness of the water (flowing) from (Viṣṇu's) feet. The sin of a sinful man who listens to it, perishes.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Purificatory Acts for One Guilty of Illegitimate Intercourse

Śaunaka said :

1. O Sūta, tell me fully, with what can a man who having through delusion had illegitimate intercourse, be purified?

Sūta said :

2-8a. The best brāhmaṇa, who cohabits with a cāṇḍāla woman or an outcaste woman, should observe three fasts, then should observe the Prājāpatya vow, get clean-shaved with (even) the tuft of hair on the crown of his head (removed), and should give a couple of cows (to a brāhmaṇa). The brāhmaṇa becomes purified after giving proper present (to a brāhmaṇa). If a kṣatriya or a vaiśya cohabits with a cāṇḍālī, he should (observe) the Kṛcchra Prājāpatya (vow) and should give two pairs of cows to (a brāhmaṇa). O you ascetic, if a śūdra cohabits with an outcaste woman, he should give four pairs of cows (to a brāhmaṇa) and observe the Prājāpatya vow. If a man being infatuated, cohabits with his mother or sister or daughter, or his daughter-in-law, he should observe three Kṛcchra (-vows). Having observed three Cāndrāyaṇa (-vows), he should give three pairs of cows. Getting clean-shaved with (even) the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed), he should drink the mixture of the five products of a

cow. O ascetic, in this case he becomes purified even after making offerings into fire.

8b-10. O best brāhmaṇa, if a man through infatuation, cohabits with the wife (other than his mother) of his father, or his mother's sister, or his preceptor's wife, or his maternal uncle's wife, or his brother's wife born in the same family, he should observe a couple of Prājāpatya (-vows). O brāhmaṇa, he should observe three Cāndrāyaṇa-vows, (should give) five pairs of cows to brāhmaṇas and should give them a present. He is (by doing so) purified. There is no doubt about this.

11-14a. That fool who cohabits with a cow, should observe three fasts; there is no doubt that he is purified by giving a cow and food. He who cohabits with a prostitute, a female ass, a female pig or a monkey or a she-buffalow, should remain without eating in mud after having thrown himself there upto his neck. He is purified after three nights. He should observe fast for three nights after having got clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of his head (removed). Undoubtedly he is purified on remaining in water for a night.

14b-17a. O you ascetic, he who being infatuated by love, would cohabit with a brāhmaṇa-woman should observe three Prājāpatya (-vows) and three Cāndrāyaṇa (-vows). Similarly he should give three cows (to a brāhmaṇa). The brāhmaṇa woman should drink the mixture of the products of a cow for five nights, O brāhmaṇa. There is no doubt that by giving a pair of cows and a present (to a brāhmaṇa) she is purified. When a man cohabits with the wife of someone else he should observe (the vow of) Kṛcchra Sāntapana.

17b-24. A woman is like a bar. Therefore, he should avoid her. If a man (even) once cohabits with a woman out of his caste or a mean one, he should observe Prājāpatya Kṛcchra. There is no doubt that thereby he is purified. A woman is like a burning charcoal. A man is like ghee. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, he should never remain in her vicinity. O brāhmaṇa, that woman, the destroyer of the family, who conceives (due to cohabitation) with her paramour, should be altogether abandoned. There is no blemish in doing so. That woman who would, leaving her own relatives, go (away) from her house, is spoiled, has fallen from the family. One should have no contact with her again. That

woman who, being infatuated, cohabits with another man (who is not her husband), should observe the Prājāpatya Kṛcchra, and then should drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. Then she should give a pair of cows (to a brāhmaṇa). She is (thus) undoubtedly purified. When a childish brāhmaṇa woman, being deluded, cohabits with a stranger, she should be abandoned by (her) men. There is no blemish (in doing so). O brāhmaṇa, that brāhmaṇa who, being deluded by passion of love, would cohabit with a brāhmaṇa-woman, should give a cow and sesamum. Undoubtedly he is (thereby) purified.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Purificatory Acts for Other Sins

Sūta said:

1. O brāhmaṇa, listen, I shall tell you, how those who, through ignorance, have eaten feces (or drunk) urine or have sipped liquor, are purified.

2-4a. O sage, he should observe two Prājāpatya (-vows); he should go to a holy place. He should give a bull and eleven cows, and then should get himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed). Having gone to all crossways he should observe the Prājāpatya (-vow). Then he should give a pair of cows and drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. There is no doubt that he is purified after having fed brāhmaṇas.

4b-8. If a man eats the food of a cāṇḍāla or drinks his water knowingly or while in a difficulty, he should observe Kṛcchra Cāndrāyaṇa; (and) having got himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed), he should drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. One or two or three or four cows should be respectively given to brāhmaṇas if he eats the food of a cāṇḍāla or of (i.e. prepared by) a woman recently delivered or food which is not fit to be eaten or water which should not be drunk. If knowingly or while in difficulty he eats

the food left over by a śūdra, he should observe two Prājāpatya-vows and three Cāndrāyaṇa-vows. O brāhmaṇa, then he should give a couple of cows and drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. Then, after offering oblations into fire and having fed many brāhmaṇas, he would certainly be purified.

9. There is no doubt that if (a portion of) the food is eaten by rats, mongooses or cats it is purified, when it is sprinkled over with water mixed with sesamum and darbhas, O brāhmaṇa.

10-11. O brāhmaṇa, a man who eats an onion, garlic, a pot-herb, bottle-gourd, a small red variety of garlic and meat, should observe the Cāndrāyaṇa-vow. Due to his doing vile acts a śūdra loves liquor and meat. One should avoid from (i.e. keep at) a distance such a śūdra like a cāṇḍāla.

12. Those who are engaged in serving the twice-born who avoid liquor and meat, who are engaged in giving gifts and in their own duties, should be known to be best vṛṣalas.

13-17a. O brāhmaṇa, if a brāhmaṇa unknowingly eats (food) in a family where impurity is caused by child-birth or by death, he would be purified by reciting the Gāyatrī(-hymn) ten thousand times. O ascetic, a kṣatriya would be purified by reciting it thousands of times, and a cāṇḍāla by (taking) the mixtures of the five products of a cow. A man of a (higher) caste, who, even unknowingly, would drink ghee, or water of curd contained in a vessel of a low-caste man, should observe the Prājāpatya vow. He should give many gifts. By offering oblations into the fire according to the proper rite he is purified. For a śūdra there is no fast. He is purified just by giving gifts. Observing a fast day and night he should get himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed).

17b-19a. O brāhmaṇa, a man who is beaten by the low-caste ones with sticks etc. should observe (either) the Prājāpatya-vow or the Cāndrāyaṇa-vow. He should get himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed) and should drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. Then he should give a couple of cows and offer oblations of food etc. into fire.

19b-23. O brāhmaṇa, if a man takes liquor knowingly or casually in his house, he should be dropped from (i.e. driven out of) the family. A man who destroys cow's seed or cuts off shoots, or steals gold, should observe Kṛcchra and three Prājāpatya

-vows. Having got himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of his head (removed), he should also drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. In the same way he should thrice offer oblations into fire. O ascetic, food and water from him may be accepted. He should eat in the morning for three days without begging. For three days he should not eat. This is the Prājāpatya -vow.

24-29. O sage, he should drink cow's urine, cow-dung, (cow's) milk, curd, ghee and water mixed with kuśa for two days and should observe fast for a night. This is said to be Kṛcchra Sāntapana which removes all sins. He should eat one morsel for three days in the morning and in the evening without begging and should fast for three days. This vow is (called) Atikṛcchra. O brāhmaṇa, he should drink hot water, milk and ghee for three days. O sage, he should bathe once (a day). This is said to be Tapta-Kṛcchra. Not taking food for twelve days is known as Parāka Kṛcchra, which removes sin and is well-known. He should increase one morsel everyday in the bright half and reduce one morsel everyday during the dark half. He should not eat when the moon has waned (i.e. on the new-moon day). This is known as the Cāndrāyaṇa -vow. A brāhmaṇa should eat four morsels in the morning, four when the sun has set (i.e. in the evening). This is known as Śiśu-Cāndrāyaṇa.

30. A woman who destroys a pumpkin gourd, should drink the mixture of the five products of a cow for three days and should give five pumpkin gourds along with gold and garments (to a brāhmaṇa). (Then) O ascetic, water and food of (i.e. offered by) her may be accepted.

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Greatness of the Worship of Rādhā-Dāmodara

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, (tell me which) you said to be the (deeds of) merit, doing which, the frogs (men) in the blinding well due to darkness, will cross the ocean of mundane existence.

Sūta said:

2-10. That woman who, bathing (every) morning in Kārtika, being dear to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, being composed and devoutly worshipping Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, gives up eating meat etc. and is engaged in serving her husband, goes to Viṣṇu's place called *Goloka* which is very difficult to obtain (i.e. to reach). She who would offer incense and lamp to Rādhā and Dāmodara (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) in Kārtika, goes, with her sin abandoned (i.e. removed), to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, that woman who would offer a garment to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa would, for a long time, live in the abode to Śrī Viṣṇu. She who offers to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa fragrant flowers and garlands in the month of Kārtika, goes to Viṣṇu's abode. Also she who would offer sandal and make an offering like sugar to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, the merit of that woman who gives something to a brāhmaṇa in the month of Kārtika to please Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, becomes inexhaustible. O brāhmaṇa, that woman who devoutly worships Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the month of Kārtika goes (to Viṣṇu's abode); she would not live in hell for long, even if she was a widow in a previous existence or was not dear to her husband.

11-18. O brāhmaṇa, in olden days in the Tretāyuga there lived a śūdra named Śaṅkara in the Saurāṣṭra country. His wife was Kalipriyā by name. She always longed for a paramour, and looked upon her husband like (a blade of) grass (i.e. treated him disgracefully). 'This husband is not proper for me, my lord is some other man.' Thinking like this she always gave him food that was left over. The very foolish woman (drank) liquor and ate meat due to the company of mean people. The cruel

one always reproached her husband at her will. 'He is a rope (tied to my) feet; why did he not die? When he dies I shall enjoy at will.' O brāhmaṇa, thinking like this to her mind, she made an agreement with a paramour as: "We shall go to another country". O brāhmaṇa, at night she cut off the throat of her husband with a sword for the sake of her paramour, and went to the rendezvous. O brāhmaṇa, the paramour that had come there was eaten up by a tiger. Seeing it she wept and fell down in a swoon. Being composed after a long time the foolish woman wept piteously.

Kalipriyā said:

19. Having killed my own husband, I approached a stranger. Due to my (ill luck) a tiger has eaten up that lord of mine (also). What shall I do? Where shall I go? I am deceived by the Creator.

Sūta said:

20. O brāhmaṇa, then Kalipriyā came to her own house. Putting her mouth into that of her husband she wept.

Kalipriyā said:

21-22. O lord, what a very terrible deed have I done? Which world shall I go to? O lord, speak (at least) a few words. I, who am very much condmened, reproached you at will. O lord, you are not at all speaking. There is not a single sin that I have not committed.

Sūta said:

23-26. She saluted his feet, and went to another city. Having entered it, that woman saw many meritorious people, devotees of Viṣṇu, engaged in bathing in the Narmadā (river) in the morning in the month in Kārtika. Seeing there even women devoutly worshipping Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with the sounds of conches with great festivity, with sandal and flowers, incense and lamps, pieces of cloth and fruits of various kinds, with perfumes used to scent the breath, asked them modestly: "O ladies, (please) tell me, what is this that you are doing."

The ladies said:

27-33. O mother, in the morning in Kārtika, the best of all months, we offer the auspicious worship to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, which removes all sins. (Due to that worship) sin earned in a crore of existences is destroyed, and Viṣṇu's abode is reached.

Giving up (eating) flesh, she performed the worship on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, being free from blemish, she died on the full-moon-day. Yama's servants, full of anger, quickly came there to take her to Yama's abode and tied her (body) with leather straps. Then there came in an aeroplane made of gold Viṣṇu's messengers holding conches, discs, maces, lotuses and struck them with the edges of the discs (i.e. with sharp discs); the messengers of Yama ran away. She got into an aeroplane which was made of gold and to which royal swans were yoked. Surrounded by them, she went to Viṣṇu's abode. There she lived for a long time enjoying pleasures as she liked. O brāhmaṇa, she who would worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, goes, due to her sins having perished, to the charming world called *Goloka*.

34. The sin earned during a crore of existences of him who listens to this or the sin earned during a crore of existences of a woman who, being purified, listens to this, perishes.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Restrictions While Observing the Kārtika Vow

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, O sage, please tell me properly the rites and restrictions (to be observed) in the best month Kārtika.

Sūta said:

2-7. O best brāhmaṇa, a man, being pure, should (begin to) observe the vow of the Kārtika month on (i.e. from) the full moon of Āśvina (and should continue it) till the Udbodhinī (i.e.

the eleventh day of the bright fortnight of Kārtika). O brāhmaṇa, a man should excrete or pass urine by facing the north during the day time. He should observe silence (while excreting or passing urine); and O you omniscient one, he should excrete or pass urine by facing the south during the night. O brāhmaṇa, he who has undertaken the vow (of Kārtika) should not excrete or pass urine on a path, in water, in a cow-pen, in a crematory or an anthill. He should not excrete or pass urine at excellent places. Taking pure clay he should first wash his left hand with clay and water for cleansing it twenty times. He should apply it (i.e. the clay) once to his generative organ and five times to his anus, ten times to his left hand, and then ten times to both (his hands), and three times to (each of) his feet. Then he should cleanse his face and then resolve to bathe.

8-10a. Meditating on Dāmodara (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) in his mind, he should then recite this hymn: "O Janārdana, in (the month of) Kārtika I shall every morning have a bath that destroys sins, to please Kṛṣṇa with Rādhā. O Śrīkṛṣṇa, my salutation to Paṅkajanābha (i.e. Viṣṇu) lying in water; my salutation to you along with Rādhā. Accept the objects (I am offering and) be pleased with me."

10b-21a. Then he should bathe and put on the mark. If he, being without the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra[1] (i.e. upright lines made on the forehead), does any act, all that (i.e. the entire) act of him becomes fruitless. This is the truth that I am telling. That body of a human being which is without the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra should not be seen. If one sees it, one should look at the sun. Even a cāṇḍāla, on whose forehead white upright lines are made with clay, is of a pure soul. There is no doubt that he is venerable. There is no doubt that on the heads of those mean men who make the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra without a hollow, the foot of a dog is always (placed). O brāhmaṇa, having finished the rite spoken (i.e. laid down) for the morning, he should, according to his capacity,

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1. Ūrdhvapuṇḍra—Upright lines made on the forehead with some colouring substance. It is one of the five saṁskāras that a devotee of Vāsudeva was supposed to undergo. The other four are: Tapa (branding on the arm and other limbs), Name (Names of Vāsudeva), Mantra (a hymn), Yāga (worship of the images of Vāsudevao).

worship Tulasī that destroys sins. Then, O brāhmaṇa, having, with his mind concentrated, listened to Viṣṇu's account from a Purāṇa, he who observes the vow, should devoutly and duly worship him. O brāhmaṇa, a man should always avoid (using) the seat of another person, avoid food of others, so also the bed of another person, and another man's wife; (he should) especially (avoid these) in Kārtika. He who observes the vow (of the Kārtika month), should always avoid a jujube, beans, meat and honey, royal beans etc. in Kārtika. O brāhmaṇa, (he should also avoid) the citron fruit, meat, flower and stale food. Masurika (a kind of pulse) is declared among the grains; the milk of cows is said to be vegetarian; O brāhmaṇa, salt is produced from earth; the limb of an animal is meat. O best brāhmaṇa, he should use all fluids bought by a brāhmaṇa, water remaining in a small lake, practice celibacy in the fourth period, and eat food from a dish made of rows of leaves. He should avoid besmearing his body with oil.

21b-35. He who observes the Kārtika-vow, should avoid mushrooms, lotus-stalks, asafoetida, onions, leave of (a kind of herb called) pūtikā, garlic, radish, potherb, so also a gourd, wood-apple, egg-plant, a pumpkin gourd, eating from (a vessel of) bell metal, (food) cooked twice, the food prepared by a lying-in woman, fish, bed and a woman in her period, food prepared by two women and the company of women. O brāhmaṇa, a householder should always avoid the dhātrī-fruit on a Sunday. On (eating) a pumpkin gourd a man would lose his wealth; on (eating) a bṛhatī he would not remember Viṣṇu; on (eating) a cucumber there would be no prosperity; on (eating) a radish there would be a loss of strength. One becomes defamed on (eating) bilva; he is born in the stock of an animal on eating nimba; on eating a palm-fruit there is the loss of the body; there would be folly on (eating) a coconut; a gourd is like the flesh of a cow; on eating kalindaka (the sin) would be (equal to that of) killing a cow. Kidney-beans are said to cause sin. The pūtikā-herb is declared to be causing the murder of a brāhmaṇa. On (eating) the egg-plant one's son would be lost; on (eating) beans one would be ill for a long time. On (eating) meat there would be a great sin (incurred); he should avoid (these) on the first day etc. (of the month). A man should give

that food, which he would avoid, to a brāhmaṇa, and have it in his meal at the end of the vow. As elephants flee away on seeing a lion, the messengers of Yama run away on seeing a man who duly observes the Kārtika-vow. O brāhmaṇa, the vow of (in honour of) Viṣṇu is the best; even a hundred sacrifices are not equal to it. By performing a sacrifice he would go to heaven, (while) one who observes the Kārtika-vow would go to Viṣṇu's world. O brāhmaṇa, whatever bad deed a man has done through mind, speech or act, perishes in a moment on seeing him who observes the Kārtika vow. Even the four-faced Brahmā would not be able to narrate the religious merit of him who observes the Kārtika-vow as (already) told, observing which, O brāhmaṇa, all the sin would go (away) through the fear of him who performs the Kārtika-vow (saying to itself): 'Where shall I go? Where shall I stay?' O brāhmaṇa, a man should give according to his capacity food, garments etc. (to brāhmaṇas), and should also feed brāhmaṇas to please Viṣṇu. The observers of the vow should keep awake at night by dancing, singing etc. The sin of him who devoutly listens to this, perishes.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The Greatness of Tulasī

Śaunaka said:

1. O you omniscient one, kindly tell me, for the good of all creatures, the greatness of Tulasī which destroys the sins of those who listen to it.

Sūta said:

2-13. The servants of Yama do not come to his house in the vicinity of which there is a grove of Tulasī, due to the house having the nature of a holy place, O brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, the Tulasī-grove is auspicious and removes all sins. Those excellent

men who plant it do not see the Sun's son (i.e. Yama). O best brāhmaṇa, all the sin of him who plants it, nourishes it, attends upon it, looks at it and touches it, perishes. O brāhmaṇa, those high-souled ones who worship Viṣṇu with tender Tulasī-leaves do not go to Yama's abode. The best rivers like Gaṅgā, the best (gods) Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva, along with deities and holy places like Puṣkara, remain in a Tulasī-leaf. A sinner who, endowed with Tulasī-leaves, casts his life, goes to Viṣṇu's abode. I have told (you) the truth. The man who, besmeared with the clay of Tulasī (i.e. in which Tulasī is growing), casts his life, goes, though full of hundreds of sins, to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, sin does not touch the body of the man who would wear the sandal-like Tulasī-wood. He goes to the highest position. He, who, though impure and of bad conduct, wears the rosary of (the beads made of) Tulasī-wood round his neck, goes, due to his devotion, to Viṣṇu's house. That man on whose body is seen the rosary made of Dhātrī-fruits or (beads of) Tulasī-wood, is a devotee of Viṣṇu. He again who, putting round his neck the garland (of the leaves) of Tulasī, would worship Viṣṇu, obtains, for each flower, a myriad of cows.

14-19. Those men who, of wicked minds, are sceptics, and who do not wear the (Tulasī)-garland, being burnt by the fire of the wrath of Viṣṇu, do not return from hell. A man should not abandon a garland of Tulasī-(leaves), especially of the fruits of Dhātrī, which destroys great sins and gives religious merit, worldly prosperity and sensual enjoyments. A man lives in Viṣṇu's house for as many thousands of years as the hair (on his body) the Dhātrī-garland would touch. That man who after having offered the rosary of (the beads of) Tulasī-wood to Viṣṇu, devoutly wears it, has no sin at all. On seeing the rosary made of the beads of Tulasī-wood, the messengers of the king of the dead (i.e. king Yama) run away as a leaf shaken up by the wind. O best brāhmaṇa, the dead ancestors of him who offers them piṇḍas in the shadow of Dhātrī in the Tulasī-grove, are emancipated.

20-25. O brāhmaṇa, he who keeps the Dhātrī-fruit in his hand, on his head, round his neck or in his ears should be known as Viṣṇu himself. O brāhmaṇa, the sin earned during crores of existences of him who would worship Viṣṇu with the

leaves and fruits of Dhātrī, at once perishes. O brāhmaṇa, sacrifices, gods, sages and holy places always remain by resorting to the Dhātrī-tree in Kārtika. A man who collects a leaf of Dhātrī or a leaf of Tulasī on the twelfth day in Kārtika, would not go to hell full of torment. O brāhmaṇa, the sin, due to the contact of food of the man who eats food under the shadow of Dhātrī in Kārtika perishes for a year. O brāhmaṇa, a man should worship Viṣṇu in a Tulasī-grove and at the root of a Dhātrī in Kārtika; he certainly goes to Viṣṇu's world.

26-27. O best brāhmaṇa, if a sinner devoutly holds on his head the water remaining at the root of Tulasī, he goes to Viṣṇu's abode. He who would hold on his head the water flowing from a Tulasī-leaf, has bathed (i.e. has obtained the fruit of having bathed) at all sacred places, and in the end he goes to Viṣṇu's house.

28-41. O great sage, formerly in the Dvāpara age there was an excellent brāhmaṇa. Once, having bathed and having offered a sacrifice to Tulasī, he went home. He became like the sun in lustre, and like Mārtaṇḍa in religious merit. A glutton, a great sinner, oppressed with thirst, came there, and having drunk the water at the root of Tulasī, had his sins perished. A hunter named Asimardana, came quickly, and said: "The food is eaten." Having eaten it and shattered the food in the cooking vessel has he gone? He killed him. Yama's servants, angry and with nooses and hammers in their hands came by Yama's order to take him to Yama's abode. (When) they thought of binding and taking him, Viṣṇu's servants came (there). Then having cut off the leather-straps, they quickly put him in a charming chariot. They (i.e. Yama's servants) politely asked them: "O good ones, due to which religious merit of him are you taking him (to Viṣṇu's abode?)" They said: "Formerly he was a king. He has done many (acts of) religious merit. He kidnapped some beautiful woman. Due to this sin, the king went to Yama's abode. There you tortured him by Yama's order. Lying there he sported with a woman of a coppery red colour. Due to this sin the king went to Yama's abode. By Yama's order you tortured him there. He remained there. He embraced misery and suffered for a long time. In Yama's abode

he was sprinkled with streams of salt water. Then for the remaining part of his stay in hell, he was repeatedly born in sinful stocks, and suffered unhappiness as a result of his own deeds. After drinking the water at the root of Tulasī he goes (i.e. would go) to Viṣṇu's abode." Hearing these words of them the messengers (of Yama) went as they had come. The messengers of Viṣṇu went with him to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you Tulasī's abode.

42. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you Tulasī's importance which destroys sins. I do not know what would happen to them who serve (Tulasī) with devotion, O sage.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Importance of Viṣṇupañcaka

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, O sage, kindly tell me the importance of the remaining five days of Kārtika, which destroys sins.

Sūta said:

2-16. O Śaunaka, listen. I shall narrate (to you) the importance, which destroys sins, of the remaining five days of Kārtika. O best sage, of the five vows Viṣṇupañcaka (i.e. the vow observed for the remaining five days of Kārtika), is the best. He who, during that (period) worships Śrī Hari (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) with Rādhā, by means of sandal, flowers, incense, clothes and various kinds of fruits, goes, freed from all sins, to Viṣṇu's abode. Without doing the vow of Viṣṇupañcaka, a religious student, (or) a householder, (or) an anchorite, (or) an ascetic does not obtain the highest position. Viṣṇupañcaka removes all sins, is meritorious and well-known. He who would bathe during that (period), would obtain the fruit of (having bathed at) all holy places. He who, to propitiate Viṣṇu, devoutly offers a lamp full of ghee in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu, or near Tulasī, in

water, goes to Viṣṇu's abode. A sinner goes to Viṣṇu's abode. I have told the truth. A man should bathe with devotion (the image of) Viṣṇu with honey, milk, ghee etc. What would Viṣṇu being pleased not give to that good man? He should present excellent cooked food to the god of gods. (Even Brahmā) having four faces is not able to measure his religious merit. Being pure, he worships Viṣṇu on Ekādaśī day. Having secured cowdung he duly waits upon (the god) with the sacred hymns. He who observes the vow, should similarly again drink cow urine (reciting) the sacred hymns on the twelfth day. Similarly he should drink milk on the fourteenth day. Having got (these) for the purification of his sins, and having passed the four days, he should, on the fifth day, having bathed and duly worshipped Viṣṇu, devoutly feed brāhmaṇas and should give them presents. Then at night he should eat the mixture of the five products of a cow, which is well consecrated with sacred hymns. He who is unable to do this, should eat fruits, roots and food; O brāhmaṇa, he should offer an oblation according to the rite that is laid down. Lord Viṣṇu who is fit to be known, would himself honour him who would observe (the vow of) Pañcaka with Tulasī-leaves.

17-20. In olden days, in the Tretāyuga, there lived a śūdra, intent on leading the life of a villain, named Daṇḍakara, who always censured religious practices, who told lies, who hurt his friends, who had an ardent longing for anormous gestures of prostitutes, who snatched the wealth of brāhmaṇas, who was cruel, who was interested in another's wife, who killed those who sought his refuge, who kept the company of heretics, who ate cow's flesh, who drank liquor, who always defamed others, who was a traitor, who deprived his kinsmen of their means of livelihood, O brāhmaṇa. Observing him—the cruel one, intent on (committing) sins like that—the kinsmen, being angry, came to his house, O brāhmaṇa.

The kinsmen said:

21-26. O fool, O you of wicked conduct, you are destroying the glory in (i.e. of) our pure family, which was earned by (our) ancestors.

O brāhmaṇa, they who were thus angry, abandoned, out of respect for their family and through fear of bad name, that greatest (i.e. the worst) among sinners. Then, with all his glory lost, he went to a great forest. He would continuously practise the deeds of the villains along with them. O brāhmaṇa, when they were going along the path, they did not get anything to eat through fear. Being oppressed with hunger, they went to another place. Having entered (i.e. gone to) that place, seeing many excellent and meritorious brāhmaṇas who were seated at the root of a Dhātrī (tree) and who were the devotees of Viṣṇu, all the dasyus went (near him). That, Daṇḍakara also went near them, and saluted them.

Daṇḍakara said:

27. O best brāhmaṇas, I am oppressed with hunger. Surely my life will depart (now). Give me something to eat. I have sought your shelter.

28-33. Having heard his words, those (brāhmaṇas), who had a high regard for religious practices said: "How do you have a desire to eat (food) on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, during the Viṣṇupañcaka, well-known as the remover of sins? Tell (us) your particulars. (Tell us) now what your name is." He joyfully said: "O brāhmaṇas, I am (a śūdra) by name Daṇḍakara. I am full of all sins. How can I be emancipated?" They said (to him): "Observe the best vow (called) Viṣṇupañcaka." O brāhmaṇa, by the order of the brāhmaṇas he observed the (vow of) Viṣṇupañcaka. After death, he got into an excellent chariot, and having reached Viṣṇu's place and his form, he remained (there) free from birth. The sin earned during a crore of existences of him who would devoutly listen to this account destroying sins, perishes at that moment (only).

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

In Praise of Giving Gifts

Śaunaka said:

1. O sage, O best among the learned, O you who know the essential nature (of things), tell me in order the importance of vows.

Sūta said:

2-6. O best sage, giving (a piece of) land is regarded as the best gift. He who made that gift (has given) a gift having the fruit of all gifts. O best brāhmaṇa, he who would give a gift of land with a crop (growing in it) to a brāhmaṇa, enjoys happiness in Viṣṇu's heaven as long as (the regimes of) fourteen Indras (last). Then, O king, he, having obtained a birth on the earth, (becomes) a sovereign emperor. Having enjoyed the earth for a long time, he would go to the abode of Viṣṇu. He who gives land of the measure of a cow's hide to a brāhmaṇa, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's abode. The sages described that land to be of the measure of a cow's hide (*gocarmamātra*) where a hundred cows and a bull remain uncontrolled.

7-10. He who receives the land and he who gives it, both go to heaven. Wise brāhmaṇas should abandon (i.e. refuse) hundreds of other gifts and accept (the present of) land. That ignorant brāhmaṇa who, being deluded, rejects (the gift) of land, becomes extremely miserable in every existence. To him who, having secured land from some other source, would give it to a brāhmaṇa, the lord of the world gives the highest position. He who destroys the land given to himself or to someone else, goes, along with a crore members of his family to a very fearful hell, O brāhmaṇa.

11-12. O brāhmaṇa, for him who would snatch the land of a deity or a brāhmaṇa, an expiation is not seen for hundreds of crores of kalpas. The religious merit of that king who protects the land given (by him) to someone else would be a crore times greater than that of people.

13-17. A man giving a cow would obtain that merit which is obtained by giving the earth consisting of seven islands, O

brāhmaṇa. He, who gives a bull to a member of a poor family, is freed from all sins, and goes to Śiva's world. He who gives gold of the measure of a sesamum to a brāhmaṇa, goes, along with a crore members of his family, to the abode of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, he who would give silver to a good brāhmaṇa, obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of the Moon and he would always drink nectar there. O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives a coral, a pearl, a diamond or a gem (to a brāhmaṇa) goes to heaven.

18-25. A man would get a crore times more religious merit by giving a śālagrāma stone, than what he obtains by the gift of gold, jewels, or other valuable things equal to his own weight. The giver of a śālagrāma stone gets that religious merit which a man would get by giving the earth consisting of seven islands along with mountains, groves and forests. O brāhmaṇa, he who would give a śālagrāma stone to a brāhmaṇa, has given the fourteen worlds (to a brāhmaṇa). O best brāhmaṇa, he who makes a gift of gold, jewels or other valuable things equal to his own weight (to a brāhmaṇa), is not again born in (i.e. from) the womb of a mother. O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives (in marriage) his daughter that is adorned (with ornaments to a brāhmaṇa), would go to Brahmā's abode. He is not reborn. For a man who sells his daughter, there is no escape from hell; and for one who gives his daughter (in marriage according to the proper rites) there is no coming (back to earth) from heaven. He, who gives sandals or an umbrella to a brāhmaṇa, goes to Indra's city after death, and would live (there) for four kalpas. O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives a divine garment to a good brāhmaṇa, puts on a divine garment and would live in heaven for a long time.

26-27. O brāhmaṇa, he who would give an old cow or an old garment or a young girl in her menses, would go to hell. O brāhmaṇa, a man should not see the face of him who sells his daughter. Having seen (i.e. if he sees) it unknowingly, he should look at the sun.

28-58. O best brāhmaṇa, a man who gives (the gift of) fruits would go to heaven. There he would enjoy for thousands of kalpas the fruit (of his gift) like nectar. O brāhmaṇa, the man who gives vegetables (to a brāhmaṇa) goes to Śiva's abode; and (there) enjoys, with gods, rice boiled in milk for a couple of kalpas. He who gives ghee, he who gives curd, he who gives

milk, he who gives butter milk, goes to Viṣṇu's abode (and there) he drinks nectar. The man who gives sandal, who gives flowers goes to the abode of gods. Decorated with sandal and flowers, he would remain (there) for thousands of yugas. He who gives the gift of a bed—the best gift—to a brāhmaṇa, goes to Brahmā's abode, and sleeps (there) on a bed for a long time. The giver of a seat or the giver of a lamp, being free from all sins, would remain, surrounded by a row of burning lamps, on a seat in heaven. A man who would give betel-leaf, happily enjoys the entire earth. He sleeps, being clasped to the bosom by a divine lady, and eats tāmbūla. The best man who makes the gift of knowledge—the best gift—would, after death, live near Viṣṇu for three hundred yugas. O best brāhmaṇa, having obtained there knowledge difficult to be obtained, he, O brāhmaṇa, obtains salvation through Viṣṇu's grace. That best brāhmaṇa who would teach a helpless, miserable brāhmaṇa, goes, free from rebirth, to Śrī Viṣṇu's abode. One who would devoutly and with faith give (the gift of) a book would obtain, for every letter, the merit due to the gift of a crore of tawny cows. One who gives honey, who gives jaggery, goes to the Ikṣu-sāgara. One who gives salt, goes to the world of Varuṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, of all the gifts, the gift of food or water is declared to be the best by all sages knowing the truth. O best brāhmaṇa, he who has given food or water on the earth, has given all (kinds of) gifts, O best among brāhmaṇas. O brāhmaṇa, one who gives food is declared to be the giver (i.e. the saver) of life. Therefore, the giver of food gets the fruit of all (kinds of) gifts. As is food, so is water. The two are said to be equal. O best brāhmaṇa, food would not be prepared without water. O best brāhmaṇa, the two i.e. hunger and thirst are declared to be equal. Therefore, even the wise have declared food and water to be the best. O brāhmaṇa, those best men who make the gift of food on the earth, are freed from all sins, and go to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa ascetic, as many (sins of) brāhmaṇa murders, as the kinds of food a man gives on the earth, perish. O Śaunaka, the sins of those that give food abandon their bodies and go to the bodies of those that receive it. Therefore the wise do not accept the food of the most sinful one. The fools that accept it through delusion, become sinful. O best brāhmaṇa, one should make water remain on the ground

(after it flows from the palm of the brāhmaṇa to whom a gift is given). He (who offers a gift) is freed from all sins, and would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O best brāhmaṇa, wealth should be accumulated with effort. A man should spend the accumulated wealth in giving gifts. Those who through miserliness tinkle (i.e. only preserve) their wealth, are extremely unhappy. O sage, in the end, leaving the wealth, they go (i.e. die) wealthless. Those men who by repeatedly giving (gifts) become poor, should not be regarded as poor. They are great lords in the human world. O best brāhmaṇa that which is given to a cruel, relative-less (brāhmaṇa) who does not have proper restraint, does not stand by (the giver) in the other world. One who, when he has wealth, does not (either) enjoy it or give it (to others) should be known as poor, and would leave a sigh (of grief) after death. Those who see the truth have declared that giving gifts is superior even to austerities. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, one should give gifts. That giver who gives gifts (to persons of other castes) excluding a brāhmaṇa, goes to a terrible hell, which is fearful to all beings. The giver who does not remember the gift and the recipient who does not ask for it, both remain in hell as long as the moon and the sun last. O best brāhmaṇa, those sins like a brāhmaṇa's murder perish due to giving gifts. Therefore, one should give gifts.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

The Importance of Uttering Viṣṇu's Name

Śaunaka said:

1-4a. That man who devoutly listens to the account of Viṣṇu, which is the abode of glory, which removes all harms, which destroys all sins, which wards off all evil planets, which gives proximity with Viṣṇu, which gives the fruit of the four goals of human life, goes to Viṣṇu's abode in the end. The importance of the utterance of (Viṣṇu's) names is said to be very wonderful; merely by uttering it a man would go to the highest

position. Therefore, O Sūta, now tell me the manner of the utterance of (Viṣṇu's) names.

Sūta said:

4b-6. O Śaunaka, listen, I shall tell you the dialogue (between Sanatkumāra and Nārada), which would accomplish salvation. I shall tell you what formerly Nārada asked (Sanat)kumāra. Having heard various kinds of prescribed courses of conduct and their (various) mixtures Nārada, having joined the palms of his hands, once asked Sanatkumāra, of a tranquil mind, who was seated on the bank of the Yamunā:

Śrī Nārada said:

7. O you dear to the lord, tell me how there would be the destruction of the obstacles of dharma about which you had told (me) formerly.

Śrī Sanatkumāra said:

8-13. Listen, O Nārada, dear to Viṣṇu, and knowing the way to reach Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu). (I shall tell you) that which you asked, viz. the cause of freedom from the world which is beyond the darkness (of ignorance). O brāhmaṇa, even all those mean men who are destitute of (i.e. who do not practise) all (good) ways of behaviour, who are of a wicked mind, who are outcaste, who deceive the world, who are intent upon religious hypocrisy, pride, drinking liquor, and wickedness, who are sinful and cruel, who are interested in another man's wealth, wife or sons, become pure if they resort to the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. The name (of Viṣṇu), sure (to succeed) here, protects those sinful men who transgress even him who causes divinity, who, the kind one, the great one, gives salvation to the immobile and the mobile. A man who has done all sins, is freed if he resorts to Viṣṇu. If a contemptible, wicked biped would commit sin against Viṣṇu, and by chance resorts to his name, he is emancipated due to the name. A man falls down due to his sin against (Viṣṇu's) name which is the friend of all.

Śrī Nārada said:

14. O best brāhmaṇa, which are those sins against the

name of the lord, which, when done, impede men's acts and take them to a low status?

Śrī Sanatkumāra said

15-20. The censure of the good causes a great sin against the name (of Viṣṇu). How does (i.e. would) it tolerate the censure of those on account of whom it has become famous? He indeed does ill to the name of Viṣṇu, who, in this world, would regard all (things) about the auspicious Śrī Viṣṇu, as different from his own mind. He who does not disrespect his preceptor, who does not censure sacred texts, who does not look upon Viṣṇu's name as (merely) glorificatory, who does not have a wicked idea about (i.e. to look upon) name (as) sinful, has purification by means of restraints. Indifference to religious vows, sacrifice (for others), offering oblations, all good actions is also a fault. Not having faith, turning away one's face, not listening to advice is also a sin against the auspicious name. He, the mean man, who, even after hearing the greatness of (Viṣṇu's) name, remains without love for it, and is only intent upon 'I', 'mine' etc. (i.e. is selfish), has committed sin against the name (of Viṣṇu). O Nārada, Śiva, with grace, told the sages and me the great name of the lord, bringing happiness. It should always be carefully preserved. They who even knowing (the importance of name), do not suddenly avoid the ten sins against the name, are like children, who being angry, afflict their mother. Being free from sins, always mutter the name (of Viṣṇu). O divine sage, due to name only you will accomplish everything and not by any other means.

Śrī Nārada said:

21. O Sanatkumāra, how is it that those who like rash acts, who are bereft of discrimination and detachment, who are intent upon themselves as they love their own bodies, arise from (amongst) us?

Śrī Sanatkumāra said:

22-29. When somehow a sin or a blemish takes place against the name, the man should always recite the name and seek its refuge only. Names alone remove the sin of those having (i.e. who have committed) the sin against the names (of Viṣṇu), since

they alone, employed (i.e. recited) without rest (i.e. continuously) bring wealth. It is the name (alone) which being the characteristic mark, when remembered or heard, either in a pure form or with incorrect syllables, would protect a man, when it is recited without interruption. This alone is the truth. If it is resorted to hypocritically or for greed born of love for body or wealth, it would not quickly produce the fruit here, O brāhmaṇa. O Nārada, this great secret, which removes all inauspiciousness, and keeps off sins, was formerly heard (by me) from Śiva. O Nārada, even those who are intent on committing sins, but who know the names of Viṣṇu, would be liberated merely by reciting them. The entire greatness of the name (of Viṣṇu) is sung (i.e. narrated) in the Purāṇas. Therefore, O you who respect (others), please listen to a Purāṇa. O brother, Śiva, Viṣṇu himself with his followers would be pleased with him who has faith in listening to Purāṇas day after day. The fruit of him who listens with faith is double the fruit that accrues by bathing at the holy place Puṣkara or at Prayāga or at the confluence (of a holy river) with the ocean.

30-37. Those who attentively recite the Purāṇas or listen to them, obtain for every letter the fruit of giving a tawny cow. A man who is sonless obtains a son; he who desires wealth obtains it; he who longs for knowledge gets it; he who desires salvation secures it. Those who listen to the Purāṇas, having destroyed the mass of their sins earned during crores of existences, go to Viṣṇu's abode. O sage, a man should devoutly worship the brāhmaṇa who reads a Purāṇa, with (the gift of) a cow, land, gold, garments, sandal, flowers etc. O ascetic, he should joyfully give (the brāhmaṇa) a pot made of bell-metal, a water-vessel, so also an ear-ring or a ring made of gold, so also a seat, flowers and garlands. He should not do (i.e. show) wickedness in (giving) wealth (to the brāhmaṇa), since, in that case the gift would be without its fruit. O brāhmaṇa, a man should read a Purāṇa for the accomplishment of all objects. He who would devoutly give gold, silver, garments, flowers and garlands, sandal or a book, would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, Citragupta would respectfully write the names of those who would in this manner get the entire book (read).

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

The Importance of Keeping Promise

Śaunaka said :

1-2. O wise one, I desire to hear, (therefore) tell me fully what the religious merit there is in keeping a promise, and what the sin is in breaking it. O you ocean of compassion, (tell me) what would happen if one takes a false oath or a true one, and by one's offering one's right hand or favouring (someone).

Sūta said :

3-13. O best sage, listen, I am telling it from the beginning. You are the foremost among Viṣṇu's devotees and are engaged in the good of all people. O brāhmaṇa, the merit in (i.e. due to) keeping a promise is a crore times greater than the fruit which a man obtains by giving a hundred cows. There is no doubt that a fool by breaking his promise goes to a terrible hell and is roasted there for a hundred periods of Manu. Then due to his own deeds he obtains birth (i.e. is born) on the earth in the house of a poor person, and bereft of food and garments he is afflicted. One should take an oath truthfully in the vicinity of a deity, fire, or one's preceptor. Till that time the body is burnt; but the family of Viṣṇu is not lost (i.e. continues). O brāhmaṇa, what should I now say about a false oath? O brāhmaṇa, a man (lives) in hell for a hundred periods of Manu due to a false promise. O best sage, he who touches the flowers taken off after Viṣṇu's worship and takes a truthful oath (but does not keep it), is roasted, taking with him seven members (of his family), in hell for a long time. If by chance he gets a birth, then in every existence (he becomes) a leper. This would never happen due to truthful promise. What can be said about (what would happen) due to a false oath? The man who offer his right hand (to give a promise) and keeps it, would obtain Kṛṣṇa. I am telling the truth, (and) the truth (only). The dead ancestors of him who, having offered his hand (to make a promise), does not keep it, are tormented in hell; and undoubtedly the dead one (i.e. he, after death) goes to a terrible hell, and is emancipated by crores of men (of his family, i.e. after a very long time).

Śaunaka said :

14. O sage, tell me, I desire to listen respectfully (to the account of him) who obtained Kṛṣṇa by keeping the promise made by him with his right hand.

Sūta said :

15-18. Formerly in a city lived a śūdra named Vīravikrama. He ate much, was bulky, talked much and was very handsome. He was wealthy, he had sons, was polite, learned, and dear to all people. He always honoured brāhmaṇas and guests. O best brāhmaṇa, he was devoted to his father and always kept his promise. He kept his promise, protected his elders and waited upon Viṣṇu. Once a handsome, young, very intelligent cāṇḍāla, taking up the guise of a brāhmaṇa, came to his house deceptively (i.e. to deceive him).

The brāhmaṇa said :

19-23. O wise one, listen to my words. My auspicious wife is dead. What shall I do? Where shall I go? Kindly tell me today. What is the use of (other) gifts, (visits to) holy places, sacrifices or crores of vows for him who would marry (his daughter) to a brāhmaṇa?

Hearing these words, that Vīravikrama said to that brāhmaṇa: "O brāhmaṇa, listen to my words. I have a virgin daughter. If, O brāhmaṇa, you would desire, I shall give (her to you in marriage) according to the proper rite. Hold my right hand. I shall give her. (This shall) not (be) otherwise." Hearing there words of (i.e. uttered by) him, he held his hand; and the cāṇḍāla being pleased, said these words.

The brāhmaṇa said :

24. Making (i.e. fixing) an auspicious moment, give me your daughter endowed with auspicious (characteristics). The sacred texts have decided that delay would cause many hurdles.

Vīravikrama said :

25. O brāhmaṇa, I shall give you my daughter tomorrow.

This will not be otherwise. A man offering his right hand should not do (as) a mean man (would do).

Sūta said:

26-32. O brāhmaṇa, O sage, having called the brāhmaṇa (named) Kṛṣṇaśarman, his priest, he told him all (about) the agreement. "How do you give your daughter to a brāhmaṇa, (when) you desire to give her to a śūdra? Do not give her to an unknown person who does not belong to a good family." O ascetic, thus his relatives like his father etc. spoke to him. (They said): "O dear Vīravikrama, listen to our words. Men of our caste do not give their daughter(s) to a man whose family, country, race, so also wealth and character and age are not known." O best brāhmaṇa, he (i.e. Vīravikrama) said: "I have offered my right hand. Now I shall not at all be able to change (my words)." Speaking thus to them, he proceeded to offer his daughter to that brāhmaṇa. Seeing that all the kinsmen were very much amazed. O sage, hearing his truthful words, (Viṣṇu) holding a conch, a disc and a mace, mounted upon Garuḍa, suddenly came there.

The lord said:

33-34. Blessed is your family; blessed is your way of life; blessed are your mother and father; blessed is your truthful speech; blessed is your right hand; blessed is your deed; blessed is your existence. (A man like you) does not exist in the three worlds. With such a deed, O good man, you will emancipate your family.

Sūta said:

35-42 When Śrīkṛṣṇa was talking like this, an aeroplane made of gold, having attendants of Viṣṇu (in it), and Garuḍa-bannerded everywhere, came (there). The holder of a conch and a lotus (i.e. Viṣṇu) himself put all (the members of) his family with the cāṇḍāla and the priest into the chariot, O brāhmaṇa; and thus taking them all (with him) Viṣṇu went to his abode in Vaikuṇṭha. He remained there for a long time, enjoying rare pleasures. One who violates his words or his right hand (i.e. a promise), goes, to hell with his family. I speak the truth, the truth only. O brāh-

maṇa, his manes and deities should not accept the food and water of (i.e. offered by) him. O best brāhmaṇa, (king) Dharma leaves his house through fear and goes (elsewhere). The foolish man, who, giving (i.e. creating) hope, later disappoints (a person), would go taking along with him a crore of his own people (i.e. members of his family) to hell. (King) Dharma violates (i.e. destroys) his (prosperity) through a king, or fire or thieves, who violates (i.e. does not keep) his promise. He, having heard (i.e. who hears) this (khaṇḍa) subsequent to the Svarga (khaṇḍa), being liberated while alive in this world, would (after death) go to the excellent abode, named Kṛṣṇa, beyond heaven.

V PĀTĀLAKHAṆḌA

(Section on the Nether World)

CHAPTER ONE

Rāma Sees Nandigrāma from Puṣpaka

Salutation to Śrī Gaṇeśa. Salutation to the family-deity. Salutation to the lotus-like feet of the preceptor.

1. After having saluted Nārāyaṇa and Nara, the best man, (so also) goddess Sarasvatī and Vyāsa, a man should recite Jaya.

The sages said :

2. O you glorious one, we have heard from you the entire charming Svargakhaṇḍa. O you long-lived one, tell us now the account of Rāma.

Sūta said :

3. Once the excellent sage Vātsyāyana asked the lord of serpents, the prop of the earth (i.e. Śeṣa to tell him) this very virtuous tale.

Śrī Vātsyāyana said :

4-8. O Śeṣa, (I have heard) from you all stories like the creation and dissolution of the world. So also (you have told me about) the settled rule about the terrestrial world, the celestial sphere, and about the cycle of the luminaries, so also about the products like the principles e.g. Mahat, and separate primary substances. O sinless one, you also told me the accounts of many kings. There is the wonderful account of the kings born in the solar race. In it is the story of the deeds performed by Rāma, which destroys many great sins. From you I have heard in brief the account of the horse sacrifice of (i.e. performed by) that hero Rāma. Now I desire (to hear) it in detail, which being heard or

remembered, is said to destroy great sins to give the desired objects and to give joy to the heart of the devotee.

Śeṣa said :

9. O best brāhmaṇa, you whose mind longs like this for the honey of the two (lotus-like) feet of the hero in Raghu's family, are blessed.

10-15. All sages say that the company of the good is excellent. Since the story of Rāma would destroy sins, you have favoured me by reminding me of Rāma again. I am a mere (insignificant) gnat in the ocean of the story of Rāvaṇa's enemy (i.e. Rāma) whose feet are adorned with the lights of gems in the series of the crowns of gods and demons, being deluded by which even gods like Brahmā do not know them (properly)? Still, I shall tell you (the story) according to my capacity, (as) birds resorting to (i.e. depending upon) their own speed go (i.e. fly) into the very extensive sky. The story of Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) has the expanse of a hundred crore (verses). As men have minds, so do they speak. The chaste fame of Raghunātha will purify my mind as fire by its contact purifies gold.

Sūta said :

16-17. Thus speaking to the best sage, he with his eyes closed in meditation, perceived the auspicious, extraordinary account, through his intellect. With his voice indistinct, and his body horripilated due to great joy, he again told the spotless story of Daśaratha's son (i.e. Rāma).

Śeṣa said :

18-19. When (Rāvaṇa) the lord of Laṅkā who caused affliction to gods and demons, who snatched away the beauty of the moons in the form of the lotus-like faces of the host of the celestial nymphs, was killed, all gods—Indra and others—became happy. Being pleased they, bowing (before Rāma) like servants, praised him.

20-26. Having placed the righteous Bibhīṣaṇa (on the throne) in Laṅkā, Rāma resorted to (got into) the Puṣpaka (aeroplane)

with Sītā. He was at that time accompanied by Sugrīva, Hanūmat, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. Bibhīṣaṇa too, pining away in separation, followed them with his ministers. He (i.e. Rāma) seeing Laṅkā with its ramparts and portals broken in many ways, (so also seeing) Aśokavana, the place of (the stay of) Sītā, (seeing the śiṁśapā trees having flowers and buds, crowded with the demonesses who were (now) dead through the fear of Hanūmat, fainted. Seeing all (that) in this way, Rāma, the best of the Raghus, hearing the loud sounds of the kettledrums of gods, pleasant to the ears, and being honoured by the dances of the celestial nymphs (i.e. by the celestial damsels with their dances) along with gods like Brahmā (who had got) into their own aeroplanes, showing Sītā on the way the holy places with hermitages, and the sages, their sons and their chaste wives, went to the city (of Ayodhyā).

27-29. Rāma showed her all the places where he, the intelligent one, had formerly stayed with Lakṣmaṇa. Thus showing her (all the places on the way) Rāma saw his own city (i.e. Ayodhyā), and also near it Nandigrāma where king Bharata, with many signs of the grief due to the separation from his brother (i.e. Rāma), lived doing righteous deeds.

30-36. He lay (i.e. lived) in a cave, he practised celibacy, had (grown) matted hair and (put on) bark garments. His body had become slim, he was afflicted with grief, and was repeatedly telling stories about Rāma. He did not eat even barley-food, did not again and again drink water. Looking at the rising sun, he used to say: "O you eye of the worlds, the lord of gods, remove my great sin. For my sake, even Rāmacandra, venerable to the world, went to the forest. Waited upon by Sītā of a delicate body, he went to the forest. Oh! that Jānakī, that Sītā, who was pained on finding a stalk in her bed of flowers, who, the chaste one, never received the heat of the sun, roams for my sake from forest to forest. That Sītā who was never seen even by hosts of kings with their eyes is indeed being seen by the mountaineers. Oh! that Sīta, who did not desire to eat even when fed with sweet food, today longs for wild fruits."

37-41. Thus this Bharata, the great king dear to Rāma, every morning, everyday says after waiting upon the sun. That king (i.e. Bharata) who was being spoken to by his ministers

who were wise, who knew the right course, who were well-versed in sacred texts, and who had the same sorrows and joys as he had (i.e. who shared his sorrows and joys) said to them: "O ministers, why do you speek to me who am luckless and a mean man? For me my elder brother Rāma has gone to the forest and is sinking. O good ministers, by again and again respectfully remembering the feet of Rāmacandra, I, the unfortunate one, am purifying the sins of my mother. Sumitrā who gave birth to a hero (like Lakṣmaṇa), and who is dear to her husband, is extremely blessed (as) her son (Lakṣmaṇa) is everyday waiting upon the feet of Rāma."

42. Rāma saw that village, remaining in which, Bharata, affectionate towards his brother, was lamenting loudly.

CHAPTER TWO

Rāma Meets Bharata

Śeṣa said :

1-2. Then Rāma, with his heart being distressed by the eagerness to see him, repeatedly remembered his brother Bharata who was the foremost among the righteous persons; and removing the darkness with the moon-like lustre of his teeth that became visible, he said to the powerful Hanūmat, the son of Wind:

3-9. "O hero Hanūmat, hear my words which are impelled by my long-standing separation from my brother, and which are faltering and confused. O hero born from the body of Wind, go to that (my) brother whose body is emaciated due to separation from me and which he sustains forcibly (i.e. against his will). He puts on a bark-garment, he wears matted hair; being affected by separation from me, he would not even eat fruits. For him the wife of another person is like his mother, and gold is like a clod. My brother who knows the right way, would look upon his subjects as his own sons. Quickly sprinkle him whose body is burning with the flames of the fire of grief due to separation from me, with the shower of the water of the message of my arrival. Tell

him that Rāma has come with Sītā, is accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa, and the lords of monkeys like Sugrīva and demons with Bibhīṣaṇa and that he is comfortably seated on a seat in the Puṣpaka (aeroplane), so that my younger brother quickly becomes happy due to my arrival."

10-13. Having heard these words of the intelligent Raghuhero (i.e. Rāma), the obedient (Hanūmat) went to Nandigrāma, the abode of Bharata. Having gone to Nandigrāma, the intelligent one saw Bharata in the company of old ministers, afflicted with the separation from his brother (Rāma), and telling his old ministers the account of Rāmacandra; and full of the honey of the lotuses of his feet he saluted Bharata possessing the form of Dharma.

14-15. Seeing him who was fashioned with all portions of goodness only by the Creator, Bharata with the palms of his hands joined, quickly rose, and said: "Welcome to you; tell me about the safety of Rāma". The right hand of him who was speaking like this, throbbed. Grief went (away) from his heart, and his face was filled with tears of joy.

16-17. Seeing the king like that the lord of the monkeys spoke to him: "Know that Rāma, with Lakṣmaṇa, has reached the vicinity of the town." He, whose body was sprinkled over with the nectar of the message of Rāma's arrival, had flood of joy. I do not know whether he had a thousand faces.

18. He said (to Hanūmat): "I do not have what I could give to you. As long as I live, I am the servant of Rāma carrying out his order."

19-22. Vasiṣṭha too, taking the materials of worship, and the very much delighted old ministers, went to Rāma along the path shown by Hanūmat. From a distance (they) saw the delightful Rāma who had come there seated on a seat in the Puṣpaka (aeroplane) along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. Rāma also saw Bharata walking (to him) and having matted hair and having put on bark-garment with a small piece of cloth worn round his privities. He also saw his ministers whose dresses were similar to that of his brother (Bharata) and who had matted hair, and whose forms were emaciated due to being afflicted by daily penance.

23-28. Seeing the king (i.e. Bharata) like that, Rāma too thought (to himself): 'Oh! this son of the intelligent Daśaratha,

the king of kings, having matted hair and dressed in bark-garments is coming on foot to me. I, even when I was in the forest, did not experience so much grief as this one had due to separation from me. Oh! see Bharata, my brother, my companion dearer (to me) than (my) life, having heard that I have come in the vicinity, comes, accompanied by his old, very much delighted ministers and Vasiṣṭha, to see me.' The king (i.e. Rāma) honoured by Bibhīṣaṇa, Hanūmat and Lakṣmaṇa, and with his mind afflicted due to separation (from Bharata), and again and again saying, 'O (my) brother, O my brother', quickly got down from the (aerial) car, viz. the Puṣpaka (come down) from the wide firmament.

29-31. The intelligent Bharata, saw Rāma who was accompanied by gods, and who was afflicted due to his separation from his brother (i.e. Bharata himself), getting down from the (aerial) car. Shedding tears of joy, he saluted him like a staff (i.e. prostrated himself before Rāma). The chief of Raghus (i.e. Rāma) also, seeing him falling on the ground like a staff (i e. having prostrated himself), raised him, and full of joy and grief, held him by the arms (i.e embraced him). The hero, fond of seizing the lotus-like feet of Rāmacandra, and repeatedly weeping, did not get up, though strongly lifted (by Rāma).

Bharata said:

32-33. O great hero, O treasure of compassion, O Rāma, through kindness favour me who am of a bad conduct, who am wicked and sinful. O Rāma, just that foot (those feet) of yours which felt the touch of the hand(s) of Sītā to be harsh, wandered on my account in the forest.

34. Speaking like this, he, the dejected one, with his face full of tears again and again embraced (Rāma), and with the palms of his hands joined and his face full of joy stood before (Rāma).

35-36a. Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma), the abode of compassion, having embraced that younger brother (of him), having saluted the great principal ministers and having taken their leave, occupied with (his) brother Bharata a seat in the Puṣpaka.

36b-40. Bharata saw the praiseworthy Sītā, his brother's wife. He looked upon the daughter of Janaka, a chaste wife, like

Anasūyā, (the wife) of Atri, or like Lopāmudrā (the wife) of (Agastya) born from a pitcher, and saluted her. (He said to her): "O mother, forgive (me) the sin, which I, the ignorant one, committed. Ladies like you, devoted to their husbands, do good to all." The glorious Sītā also, respectfully looked at her brother-in-law, gave him blessings, and enquired after his health. All of them got into that aerial car in the wide firmament. In a moment (Rāma) saw his father's city (drawing) near.

CHAPTER THREE

Rāma Enters Ayodhyā

Śeṣa said:

1. Rāma, the intelligent hero, who, for a long time, desired to see the capital was delighted on seeing it where his own people lived.

2. Bharata too sent to the city his friend, minister Sumukha, to prepare the city for the festivity.

Bharata said:

3-12. The people should quickly celebrate the festival of Rāma's arrival. They should have gay pictures drawn in every house. The royal roads should be free from dust. They should be sprinkled over with liquid sandal. They should be furnished with abundant flowers. They should be crowded with delighted and rich people. All the big courtyards should be adorned with flags of various colours and painted. The fronts of the ridges of the thatched roofs should appear like the bow at the time of the arrival of the clouds (i.e. like the rainbow). The people should send forth agaru (sandal), seeing the smoke of which peacocks would dance sportively. They should paint with the minerals from mountains my elephants resembling mountains and well-controlled by the drivers. The horses having the speed of mind and painted should also look beautiful, seeing whose speed the heavenly horse gives up his pride. Beautiful virgins in thousands adorned with all ornaments and mounted

on elephants, should scatter pearls. The married brāhmaṇa-women with vessels in their hands containing dūrvā (grass) and turmeric (powder) should wave lights before Rāma, the great king. May Kauśalyā who is afflicted by the information about the union with her son, and who very much longs for seeing him, be delighted. The delighted people should make such arrangements giving beauty to the city on the arrival of Rāma.

Śeṣa said:

13-21. Hearing these words from (i.e. uttered by) him, Sumukha who was best among the counsellors, went to the city to have in it triumphal archs erected for the festive occasion. That minister named Sumukha, having gone to the city (viz. Ayodhyā), informed the people of the great festival (to be celebrated) on the arrival of Rāma. The people who had formerly given up their enjoyments and pleasures due to separation from him, were (now) very much delighted on hearing that Rāma had come (back) to the city. Pure brāhmaṇas, rich in (the knowledge of) the Vedas, with darbhas in their hands, and covered with bright upper garments, went to the lord of the Raghus. So also many excellent kṣatriyas who were the bravest, who had held bows and arrows, who were brave in battles went to him. Similarly vaiśyas who were wealthy, whose hands were adorned with signet-rings, who had put on white garments went to the lord of men (i.e. Rāma). Śūdras who were devoted to brāhmaṇas, who practised their own course of conduct, who followed the code of conduct (as laid down) in the Vedas also went to the lord of the city. So also people who followed (various) vocations, and who were attached to their own duties went, taking their own things (i.e. presents), to king Śrī Rāma. Thus, people full of flood of delight, and (taking) with (them) many wonderful objects, approached by the order of the king (Bharata) the lord of men (i.e. Rāma).

Śeṣa said:

22-30. Raghunātha also, surrounded by all deities seated in their own cars, entered the city in which attractive objects were arranged. The monkeys, leaping and going along the aerial path, and with their bodies beautified followed (the king) to the

best city. Rāma accompanied by Sītā and surrounded by his attendants quickly got down from the Puṣpaka, and got into a vehicle drawn by men. Then he entered Ayodhyā, in which triumphal archs were erected for the festive occasion, which was crowded with joyful and rich people, and which was fully adorned with gay objects. He looked very much pleased with the musical instruments like lutes (being played upon) and kettle-drums and other musical instruments being played upon and was praised by Sūtas, Māgadhas and other bards. Hearing the auspicious words, "Victory to Rāghava, to Rāma; victory to the ornament of the solar race; victory to the son of Daśaratha; may the lord of the world be victorious" uttered by the citizens who were delighted, and who looked graceful on account of horripilation produced on seeing Rāma, he entered (i.e. went to) the excellent path which was adorned with places where many roads meet, which was sprinkled over with sandal (mixed with) water, and which was furnished with flowers and leaves. At that time certain women in the city, desiring to see the form of Raghunātha, (and therefore) resorting to the holes of the latticed windows said (these words):

The women of the city said:

31-34. Oh! the bhilla-girls who in the forests drank with their lotus-like eyes the lotus-like face of Rāma, were lucky. They are very prosperous due to their good luck. See the blessed lotus-like face of Rāma having lotus-like eyes. See the blessed face, having lotus-like eyes, of Śrī Rāmadeva, the abode of bravery, which (face) gods like the Creator also saw. Oh! we are (indeed) very lucky. She this face which has a charming smile, which shines with a crown, which is extremely charming, which possesses lips the beauty of which has surpassed that of the bandhūka (flower), and which has a high nose.

Thus spoke those women, observing him with glances resembling lotus-petals. The lord of all, of a weak body, but delighted, entered his mother's house, which had great love (in store for him).

CHAPTER FOUR

Rāma's Consecration

Vātsyāyana said:

1-5. O great lord of the serpents, O lord capable of sustaining the burden of the earth, listen to one doubt of mine; and please explain (i.e. remove) it. Since the departure of Rāma to the forest she (Kauśalyā) lives with body but with a vacant mind. She is afflicted by separation from him; her body is emaciated; she is extremely unhappy. How indeed was she happy when she heard from Sumukha, the minister, that Rāma had come (back)? What happened (to her)? What were the marks (of her feelings)? What did she say to him who had brought the message of Rāmacandra? Remove this doubt of mine. Do me a favour and tell me who am listening, about the rich virtues of Raghunātha.

Śeṣa said:

6-7. Well asked, O you glorious one, O you who are in the forefront of best brāhmaṇas. Listen (now) attentively to it when I am actually telling it. She, having repeatedly drunk the nectar fallen from the lotus-like mouth of him (i.e. Sumukha), of (i.e. telling about) the arrival of Rāma, she became afflicted with her body becoming steady.

8-13a. She said: "Is it a dream of (i.e. seen by) me, a fool? Or do the words cause confusion? How can I, luckless that I am, see Rāma again? Due to having practised much penance I had obtained this my child—my son; but due to some sin of (i.e. committed by) me, he became separated from me. O good minister, is Rāma accompanied by Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa all right? Does he, moving in the forest, remember me, who am extremely pained?" Thus, she, who remembered Rāma, loudly wept. She fainted, and was not conscious of what belonged to her and what to others. Sumukha too, seeing (Rāma's) mother extremely unhappy fanned her with the ends of garments, and then she regained consciousness. Then he repeatedly spoke gentle and delightful words to the mother (of Rāma). He again made her happy by reminding her of the arrival of Raghunātha:

13b-19a. "O mother, know that Raghunātha with Lakṣmaṇa has come home. See Rāma with Sītā, and sprinkle them over with (i.e. give them) blessings." I do not know (i.e. I have not seen) such joy which she experienced on hearing the true words uttered by Sumukha. With her hair standing on end, she got up and reached (i.e. went to) the courtyard. With her body perturbed by joy, and shedding tears, she looked for Rāma. Just then Rāma, the lord of kings, and of a good conduct, and seated in a vehicle drawn by men, reached first the house of his mother Kaikeyī. Kaikeyī too, bent due to the burden of the sense of shame, did not say anything to Rāma standing in front of her. She was very much worried. Rāma, the banner of the solar dynasty, seeing his mother who was ashamed, said, consoling (i.e. to console) her, (these words) mixed with (i.e. full of) politeness:

Śrī Rāma said:

19b-21a. O mother, having gone to the forest, I did everything (as I was ordered to do). O mother, what should I do now by your order? I have done nothing despicable. Then, how (is it that) you are not looking at me? Greeting this Bharata and me with blessings, look at me.

21b-24a. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, O sinless one, she, with her face hung down, slowly said: "Rāma, go to your (own) house." And Rāma, the best among men, having heard (these) words of his mother, saluted her, and the treasure of compassion went to the house of Sumitrā. The large-hearted Sumitrā, seeing Rāma with her son (Lakṣmaṇa), said, with (i.e. giving him) blessings: "Live long, live long."

24b-28. Rāmabhadra too having saluted the feet of his mother, and having, full of joy, embraced her, again said (these) words to her: "O you conceiving a gem (like Lakṣmaṇa), no (other) brother of me has removed my grief as this intelligent one (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa) has done. Sītā who was kidnapped by Rāvaṇa, was got back by me—O mother, know all that to be the working of Lakṣmaṇa." Accepting with his head (i.e. by bowing down his head), the blessing given by Sumitrā, the wise one surrounded by the wise went to the house of his mother (i.e. Kauśalyā).

29-33. Hari (i.e. Rāma) seeing his mother delighted and longing to see him, quickly got down from the vehicle and seized her feet. His mother, eager to see him and with her mind confused, repeatedly embraced Rāma and was delighted. Horripilation due to joy appeared on her body and she faltered while speaking. Hot tears of joy trickled down up to her feet. Polite Rāma, seeing his mother bereft of the two large ear-rings and having her body without ornaments (worn) on the hands and feet and delighted to a certain degree on seeing him, having an emaciated frame, and experiencing grief, thought that it was not the time for grief and said to her:

Śrī Rāma said:

34-39. O mother,. I have not waited upon your feet for a long time. So forgive me who am unlucky for my fault. Those sons who are not eager to serve their mother and father should be looked upon as great insects born from semen, O mother. What should I do? I went to the Daṇḍaka forest by the order of my father. There too, due to your favourable glance, I crossed the ocean of grief. Rāvaṇa kidnapped Sītā, and took her to Laṅkā. By your favour I got her (back) after killing that lord of demons. This is Sītā my devoted wife who has fallen at your feet. Show regard for her who is timid, and who has set her heart on your feet.

Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, she greeted her daughter-in-law who had fallen at her feet, with blessings and said to that devoted wife (of Rāma). (Kauśalyā said):

40-44. "O beautiful lady, O Sītā, enjoy for a long time with your husband. Give birth to two sons. O you purifying one, purify your own family. Women like you, who are devoted to their husbands, and who experience pleasure and pain with their husbands, become unhappy. There is no truth in the three worlds. O daughter of Videha (i.e. Janaka), you who followed the couple of the lotus-like feet of Rāma to the great forest, have purified your family. What wonder is there that those men in whose house there are chaste wives desiring what is dear to their husbands, are like a hurricane to crores of enemies?" Say-

ing so to Rāma's wife of curved eyes she remained quiet, with her hair standing on end due to great joy.

45-48. Then Rāmacandra's brother Bharata gave (back) to the intelligent Rāma, the great kingdom given to him by their father. The delighted ministers, invited astrologers, knowing sacred hymns, and, with great respect, asked them about an auspicious time; and being eager they consecrated Rāma on the great kingdom on an auspicious time on a good day united with an auspicious constellation. The great king, the lord of kings, stood on a beautiful (piece of) tiger-hide, after drawing on it (the picture of) the earth with its seven islands.

49-54. From that day only the hearts of the good men became joyful; the hearts of the wicked, tormenting others, became weary. Women due to their devotion to their husbands, were greatly attached to them. O sage, men did not even mentally commit any sin. Demons, gods, so also serpents, yakṣas, asuras, and great snakes remained on the right path. All they held Rāma's order with their heads (i.e. respectfully obeyed Rāma's order). People engaged in obliging others. They were happy as they followed their own course of conduct laid down for their caste. Auspicious moments of days and nights were passed in (getting) knowledge and diversions. Even great wind did not carry away even the small garments of those who remained on the roads. There was (absolutely) no talk about thieves. The kind Rāma, treasure of compassion, gave wealth to suppliants. With his brothers he always praised the preceptors and deities.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Coming of Sage Agasti

Śeṣa said:

1. Then the gods, with their minds delighted due to (Rāma's) killing the lord of demons called Rāvaṇa, humbly praised Rāma, consecrated (as the king).

Gods said:

2-10. Victory to you, O son of Daśaratha, O you who remove the sufferings of gods; victory to you who burnt the race of the demons; victory to you, O god, destroying the enemy whose hands were engaged in seizing the bevies of excellent women. The eager poets describe your destroying the lord of demons. O lord of the worlds, at the time of the deluge you again easily swallow the group of the worlds. Victory to you who are free from the causes of birth, old age etc. O mighty one, emancipate (us). Victory to you who have taken birth in the ocean of the family of the righteous, O you ageless, immortal and the fixed one. By means of (reciting) the names of you, the greatest god, even those who have committed great sins are purified. What then if good, foremost brāhmaṇas have obtained the human existence with a good body? The pair of your feet, praised by Śiva and Brahmā gives abundant things that are desired. We mentally desire it which is well arranged in the heart with the marks like those of pure barley (grains) etc. O you having the loveliness that excels Madana's frame, if you do not grant fearlessness to the world, then how can, O you compassionate and purifying one, the hosts of gods be happy? You take birth on the earth whenever the demons trouble us, O lord, though you are unborn and immutable, though you are the greatest lord. You who are the self-adorned one and you who are praised by those who approve of virtues, quickly enter (i.e. go back to) your own place, after having filled the earth with your superhuman good deeds like nectar to the dead and destroying sins. May the beginningless one, the foremost one, who takes the form of a god, who has put on a necklace and a crown, who looks like Cupid, who has forcibly killed his enemies, whose lotus-like feet are served by Cupid's enemy (i.e. Śiva), be victorious.

11. Speaking like this, all the gods led by Brahmā and Indra and pleased with the destruction of (their) enemy, repeatedly saluted the chief of the Raghus (i.e. Rāma).

12. Being extremely pleased by the praise, the very glorious lord of the Raghus, seeing the gods with their necks bent down, said to them:

Śrī Rāma said:

13. O gods, choose from me some boon which is extremely difficult to obtain and which some eager god, demon or yakṣa has not obtained.

Gods said:

14-16a. O lord, from you we have obtained the best thing, since you have killed our enemy, viz. Rāvaṇa. Whenever a demon troubles us, you should in this way destroy (that) enemy.

Saying, 'All right', the hero Raghunandana (i.e. Rāma), spoke again.

Śrī Rāma said:

16b-20. O gods, carefully listen to my words. The man, who again and again recites in the morning and at night the wonderful hymn of me (i.e. in my honour) composed by you and couched with my virtues will never meet with an extremely terrible defeat from his enemy. He will not experience poverty and will not suffer from a disease or a defeat. By reciting (the hymn) devotion to the pair of my feet will be produced in the joyful hearts of men.

Speaking thus, the crest-jewel of kings (i.e. the best king) remained silent. All the gods who were delighted went to their respective worlds.

21-27. Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) also looked after his wise brothers like their father, and the lord of the world fondled the subjects like his own sons. When he was ruling, the people did not meet with an untimely death; in the houses there was no great discomfiture like a disease. The calamity of the season was not seen, so also there was no fear from enemies. The trees always bore fruits, and the earth yielded much grain. The life of people was blessed with sons, grandsons and attendants. Their depression was removed due to their wives' company. They were everyday eager to listen to the stories about the lotus-like feet of Rāma. They never employed their words in censuring others. Even artisans, apprehensive of a blow from the

hands of Rāma, never even mentally committed a sin. People, with their eyes becoming steady on seeing the face of Sītā's husband, were always full of compassion.

28-45. He (had) the kingdom to which there was no rival, which was prosperous and had (in it) powerful elephants (or horses). It was charming on account of delighted and thriving sages and with ornaments of gold. It was well-nourished by those who always did the pious things like performing sacrifices and digging wells and doing other acts of charity. It was always rich with crops, had good wealth and fields. Its regions were good; subjects were good; it was self-abiding; it had ample grass, and a large wealth of cows. It was all around adorned by rows of temples. In it were villages adorned with ample wealth and prosperity. The lands in it shone with artificial gardens having good flowers, with trees having very sweet fruits, and with lakes having good lotus-plants. In the country only the rivers were *sadambha* (i.e. containing good water); the people were not *sadambha* (i.e. were not proud). There were families of many castes, well-born but not poor. In it *vibhrama* (i.e. amorous movement) was (seen) in women, but *vibhrama* (i.e. an error) was never seen in (i.e. committed by) the learned. Only the rivers flowed in a crooked way (*kuṭilagāminyaḥ*) but the subjects were not wayward in sex. The nights (only) were dark in the dark fortnights; but men were not full of darkness (i.e. ignorance). Only women had *rajas* (i.e. menses), (but) people did not behave unrighteously. A man was neither *andha* (i.e. blind) due to wealth nor without rice (*āndhya*) in (i.e. while taking) his meal. Only a chariot took a wrong course and never a royal official. *Daṇḍa* (i.e. a handle) was to be seen in (i.e. attached to) an axe, a spade, a row of fans or an umbrella; but *daṇḍa* (i.e. punishment) was rarely due to a fault or disturbance. Except among the groups of those who played at dice, there was no repentence. Only the gamblers were seen with dice (*pāśa*) in their hands (and none else with nooses—*pāśa* in his hands). *Jāḍya* (i.e. frigidity) was seen in water only. The waists of women alone were weak. Only women were hard-hearted, and not men. There was the *kuṣṭha* (herb) only among medicines; but no *kuṣṭha* (i.e. leprosy) among men. A hole was seen in good gems; a pointed weapon was (seen only) in the hand of a

man fashioning images. Tremor was due (only) to good feelings, never due to the fear of someone. Fever was due to sexual passion; there was poverty (i.e. scarcity) of the wicked (only). There was no want of a thing for a lucky person due to his good deeds. Only elephants were wanton in a war, and waves in a lake. Loss of *dāna* (i.e. 1. ichor 2. gift) was (seen) only in the elephants. Only thorns were sharp. Going away from the *guṇa* (1. string 2. virtue) was (seen) only in arrows; a compact utterance with a peculiar arrangement of words was (seen) only in a book. Abandoning friendship was present only in the wicked, and not among the kinsmen. Fondling the loved subjects he looked after that country. Like Yama to a wicked person he established righteousness in the country. When the lord was thus righteously protecting the country—the earth, a thousand and eleven years passed.

46-50. He who perpetuated the Raghu-family, on hearing (words) of dishonour about Sītā, and his own censure from a mean washerman abandoned her. By one order of him, the king who was protecting the earth righteously, Sītā who was (up to that time) well-protected, was abandoned. When once the highly intelligent one was seated in his assembly, the great sage, the best sage born from a pitcher (i.e. sage Agasti) came (there). Taking a respectful offering he got up; and the great king accompanied by Vasiṣṭha and people, honoured him who had dried the ocean and who had arrived there with a welcome, and enquired after his health. Then the descendant of Raghu (i.e. Rāma) spoke to the sage who had seated comfortably and who had taken rest.

CHAPTER SIX

Agastya Begins Rāvaṇa's Story

Śeṣa said:

1. The intelligent Rāma, the lord of all worlds, thus said to the sage, the treasure of celibacy and penance and pleased with the welcome:

2-6. "O you illustrious one, O you born of a pitcher, O you treasure of penance, welcome to you. All of us, with the members of our family are purified (by your arrival). I hope, your respect for the Vedas and sacred texts continues. On the globe there is none that would obstruct your penance. O glorious one, Lopāmudrā is your virtuous wife due to whose conduct as a devoted wife everything becomes auspicious. O you best sage, O you glorious one, O you piety embodied, O you treasure of compassion, tell me what thing should I do for you who are greedless. Everything takes place due to your penance, and you can have many things through your own penance, and you can have many things through your own desire. Yet, O best sage, just favour me, and tell me (what I can do for you)".

Śeṣa said:

7. Thus addressed by the intelligent Rāma, the lord of people, the king of kings, he spoke to Rāma, the lord of the world with more polite words.

Agastya said:

8-10. O lord, O king of kings, O treasure of compassion, know that thinking that to see you is extremely difficult, I have come here. You killed the demon named Rāvaṇa who troubled the world. Luckily gods are happy today; luckily Bibhīṣaṇa has become the king. O Rāma, today on seeing you indeed my sin has gone (away). O best god, the vessel of my mind is full of joy.

11. Speaking thus, (Agastya) born from a pitcher, with his mind perturbed due to joy on seeing Rāma, quickly became quiet.

12-15. Rāma again asked that sage well-versed in knowledge: "You know everything everywhere about the past, present and future in the world. O sage, tell it all in great detail to me who am asking you. Who was that Rāvaṇa, who troubled the gods and whom I killed. What is that Kumbhakarṇa? What is his species? O great sage, is he a god, or a demon, or a friend, or a goblin? O you omniscient one, tell me all that. You know all that in detail. Therefore, favouring me, tell me all that."

16-29. Hearing these words from him, that treasure of penance (viz. Agastya), born from a pitcher, began telling all that

was asked by the king (Rāma) of the Raghu (family). "O king, Brahmā brought forth the creation. His son was Pulastya. From him was born Viśravas, conversant with the Vedic lore. He had two wives, who were of a chaste conduct. The name of one was Mandākinī, and the other one was known as Kaikasī. From the former (i.e. Mandākinī) Kubera, enjoyer of the pleasures of a regent of the quarters, was born; through Śiva's favour, he took his residence in Laṅkā. Three great sons were born to (Kaikasī) the daughter of Vidyunmālī: Rāvaṇa, Kumbhakarṇa, and the righteous Bibhīṣaṇa. O very intelligent one, due to being born from the womb of a demoness and due to being born at the evening time, the mind of the two was steeped in unrighteousness. Endowed with brilliance, he (i.e. Kubera), once, having got into the Puṣpaka aeroplane made of gold and having (i.e. adorned by) groups of small bells, and being praised by his attendants having many jewelled ornaments, went to see his parents. The son (i.e. Kubera), having come to his parents, and having for a long time fallen at their feet and being beside himself with joy and with his hair standing on end due to horripilation, said: "Today is a good day for me. There is the rise of the fruit of my great luck, since I saw your feet, seeing which gives great religious merit." Having praised them with such words of praise, he went to his own house. The parents also became delighted due to the son's affection (for them). Seeing him (i.e. Kubera), the intelligent Rāvaṇa, said to his mother: "Who is this man who having fallen upon my father's feet, has again gone (back)? Is he a god, or a yakṣa or an excellent man? He is the treasure of great luck. He is surrounded by his own attendants. Due to which penance has he obtained this aeroplane, which has the speed of the wind, and which is the best place of enjoyment having in it gardens and groves for sports etc.?"

Śeṣa said :

30-36. Hearing these words, his mother, displeased and overcome with anger, and with a slight change in her eyes said to her son: "O son, listen to my words full of great instruction. His birth, deeds etc. are superior due to his (good) thoughts and cleverness. He has taken birth (i.e. is born) from the womb of my co-wife, (and) has brightened the pure, great family of his

mother; but you, who are born from my womb, are an insect, are a sinner, and fill your own belly (only). Like a donkey who does not know (i.e. has no idea about) the load (on his back) nor its quality, you appear to be learned but enjoy lying and sitting; your existence is like one that is asleep, gone away, or fallen. By means of his penance he who pleased Śiva, has obtained residence in heaven, an aeroplane having the speed of the mind, and royal glory. His mother is very blessed, very lucky and very prosperous, whose son has obtained the position of the great due to his merits."

37. Having heard these words angrily uttered by his unhappy mother, the most wicked one (Rāvaṇa), entertaining anger for himself and determined to (practise) penance, again said (these) words.

Rāvaṇa said :

38-43. O mother, listen to my words full of pride. You, who have three sons like us, are one who conceive gems. Who is that insect of that Kubera? What (i.e. how insignificant) is his small penance? What (i.e. how insignificant) is Laṅkā? What (i.e. how insignificant) is his kingdom having (but) a few servants? O mother, full of compassion, listen to my pledge taken through determination, and never taken (before) by any one, O very lucky Kaikasī. If by practising difficult austerities pleasing Brahmā, and by always giving up food, water, sleep and sport, I do not bring under my control the entire world, then I would incur the sin due to harming the world of the manes.

Accompanied by Bibhīṣaṇa, Kumbhakarṇa too took the pledge with Rāvaṇa and saying the same went to a mountain-grove.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Elimination of Rāvaṇa by Viṣṇu

Agastya said :

1-6. Then the demon practised a severe penance for ten thousand years. Looking at the sun with his eyes, he remained with his feet upwards. Kumbhakarṇa also practised a very difficult penance. The righteous Bibhīṣaṇa also practised penance. Then the lord, the god of gods, the lord of beings, served by the crowns of the gods, demons, yakṣas and others, was pleased, and gave him a great kingdom, shining in the three worlds; he also made his body charming and waited upon by gods and demons. Then he always tormented Kubera having a religious mind. He took away his aeroplane, and forcibly (captured) the city of Laṅkā. He tormented the entire world; the gods also went to heaven. He killed brāhmaṇa families, and cut off the roots of the sages.

7-9. Then the gods who were grieved, came with Indra to Brahmā and the magnanimous ones prostrating themselves (before him) like staffs praised him. All the respectful gods praised (him) with proper words. Then, the lord, who was pleased, said: "What should I do?" Then in front of Brahmā the gods narrated the trouble from Rāvaṇa and their own defeat.

10-15. Thinking for a moment, Brahmā went to Kailāsa with the gods. The gods led by Indra and full of surprise remained by the side of that mountain and praised Śiva. (They said:) "Salutation to Bhava; salutation to you—Śarva; salutation to you-Nīlagrīva; salutation you—the gross, the subtle, and the multiformed one." Śiva, having heard the words uttered from the mouths of the gods, said to Nandin: "Bring the gods near me." In the mean while, gods invited by Nandin, entered the city and looked with wonder-struck eyes. Brahmā came forward and saw Śiva who did good to the world, who was served by crores of delighted attendants who were naked, deformed, crooked, dusty and hideous.

16-17. Remaining in the front the grandsire along with the gods saluted and said to the highest lord of gods: "See the condition of the residents of heaven. Take pity, O great god, O you

who are affectionate to those who seek your refuge. You (now) exert yourself to kill the wicked demon."

18-20. He (i.e. Śiva) too hearing their words full of dejection and sorrow came with all gods to the place of Viṣṇu. Along with gods, serpents and kinnaras all the sages praised him: "O Mādhava, victory to you. O lord of gods, victory to you. O you, who remove the afflictions of your devotees, victory to you. Look (at us), O great god. Look at your servants." In this way all gods led by Śiva loudly spoke.

21-28. Hearing what was said (by gods) Viṣṇu, the great lord of gods, seeing the grief of gods spoke as if pacifying their grief in a voice loud like (the thundering of) clouds, to the gods: "O gods led by Brahmā, Śiva and Indra, you should listen to (my) words intent on your good. I know the fear caused to you by Rāvaṇa. Today, taking an incarnation I shall destroy that. The city of Ayodhyā, an ornament to the earth, is protected by kings born in the solar family and doing good acts like (making) great gifts and (performing) sacrifices. It shines with silver regions. Daśaratha, the mighty king, who conquered the whole world, who is endowed with wealth (but) who is childless, now rules over the kingdom (and lives) in it. He, endowed with great power performed with a desire to have a son the sacrifice according to the rite through revered Ṛṣyaśṛṅga solicited for (performing) the sacrifice. Then, O gods, he first prayed to me through penance. I was born in four ways having the names Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna on his three wives. I shall fully eliminate Rāvaṇa along with his army and horses (or elephants). You should also by your own portions taking the form of bears and monkeys move on the entire earth."

29-36. Thus speaking in the heaven, he quickly ceased to speak. All the gods, having heard these great words, and with their hearts pleased, did what was told by the intelligent god of gods. They, taking the forms of bears and monkeys filled the earth with their portions. O great king, you yourself are that great god Viṣṇu, who destroys the misery of gods, and who has taken up a (human) form. O highly intelligent one, this Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna are (born) from your portion. So also is Rāvaṇa who troubles the gods created. Due to the continuity of former enmity he kidnapped Sītā, O king. You killed that demon born

in the stock of a brāhmaṇa demon. You overthrew that lord of demons, the son of Pulastya, who troubled the entire world. The whole earth has become happy. Today the brāhmaṇas have secured happiness and the ascetics have secured the power of (their) penance. All the holy places have (again) become auspicious, and all the sacrifices are well-established. O soul of the universe, O origin of the world, O best man, when you are the king, the entire world with gods, demons and men has become happy.

37. I have, according to my intellect (i.e. intellectual capacity) today told you everything—the birth and death (of Rāvaṇa) —as asked by you, O innocent one.

38. Hearing in this way the account about the family of the lord of demons, the great man of well-known prowess, the lord, the ruler, checking his tears trickling on his lotus-like face, fell on the ground in his assembly.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Agastya Advises Rāma to Perform a Horse-Sacrifice

Śeṣa said:

1-4. O best sage Vātsyāyana, well-versed in the Vedas, the story of the god of gods, the only protector of all righteous ways, destroys sins. Seeing Rāma (fallen) unconscious, Agastya, the treasure of penance, immediately wiped his tears slowly with his hand, and said: "O Rāma, revive quickly, why do you sink? You are the ancient Viṣṇu, the destroyer of the demons' family. Without you the world—the past, present, future, the immovable and the movable—does not go on. (Then) why have you fallen unconscious here?"

5-6. Hearing the words uttered by him who was born from a pitcher (i.e. by Agastya), the great king (Rāma), with his lovely face full of tears trickling on it, got up, and with his frame bending due to sense of shame, and averse to doing wrong to a brāhmaṇa, said very piteous, distinct words in detail.

Śrī Rāma said:

7-15. Oh! see the ignorance of me who am a fool and wicked-minded, that I, very eager through passion, killed (Rāvaṇa) born in a brāhmaṇa-family. (Though) I had the true knowledge of the Vedas and (other) sacred texts, I, void of intelligence and of a bad mind killed a brāhmaṇa, (destroyed) a brāhmaṇa-family. A brāhmaṇa never got a reproach in (i.e. from a member of) the Ikṣvāku family. (But) I, doing such a deed (as killing a brāhmaṇa like Rāvaṇa) have greatly stained it. Those brāhmaṇas who deserve worship by means of presents, honours and food, have been killed by me with strokes of volleys of arrows. Which worlds shall I go to? Even the unbearable (hell called) Kumbhīpāka (will be secured by me). There is no such sacred place as is capable of purifying me. There is no sacrifice, no penance, no gift, or no vow etc. that would purify and emancipate me who have wronged a brāhmaṇa. Those men who have angered a brāhmaṇa-family, go to hell, and after having reached hell repeatedly experience misery. For those who have the true knowledge of the castes and the stages of life, Vedas are the roots of religious practices. The brāhmaṇa-family is the root of all the prominent branches of the Vedas. What world shall I who through insolence cut off that root, obtain (i.e. go to)? What should be done today by which good would take place in my case?

Śeṣa said :

16. Agastya said these words to the lord of kings, the best among the Raghus, who had taken a human form through his divine power and who was very much weeping.

Agastya said :

17-23. O very wise, very intelligent king, do not be dejected. No (sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa would be earned by you, desiring the destruction of the wicked. You are the ancient man; you are actually the lord beyond Prakṛti. You are the author (of the world); you take it away; you are its protector; you are actually qualityless (but) possess qualities due to your desire, since by (merely) uttering your name, all, viz. the drinker of spirituous liquor, the killer of a brāhmaṇa, one who steals gold and one

who commits a sin, are quickly purified. O you very intelligent one, this respectable lady Sītā is a great lore, merely by remembering whom those that become free (from the mundane existence) obtain beatitude. Rāvaṇa also was not a (real) demon. He was your servant in Vaikuṇṭha. O you killer of demons, he obtained demonhood due to the curse of sages. You have favoured that brāhmaṇa (viz. Rāvaṇa) and have not killed him. Thinking like this do not again grieve over (the death of Rāvaṇa).

Hearing these words from him, Rāma, the conqueror of his enemies' cities, spoke sweet words, uttering stammering sounds.

Śrī Rāma said :

24-26. Sin is said to be of two kinds, viz. deliberate and non-deliberate. Deliberate is that which is done with an intention. The non-deliberate is that committed unintentionally. The deliberate sin is exhausted only after experiencing (the fruit of that sinful) deed. The other one would perish through remorse. This is declared by the scriptural injunctions. The words of the good cannot be properly regarded as removing the grief of me who have intentionally committed the extremely censurable killing of a brāhmaṇa.

27-28. Tell me a vow, a gift, a sacrifice, a (visit to a) holy place, or some great worship like that, which would burn my sin, and by which my spotless fame will purify the people who are defiled by sinful conduct and whose lustre is taken away due to the killing of a brāhmaṇa.

Śeṣa said :

29-36. That treasure of penance (i.e. Agastya) spoke these words to Rāma whose feet were illumined by the gems on the heads of the gods and demons that saluted him and who had spoken thus: "O Rāma, O great hero, O you who does favour to the worlds, listen to words which I (shall now) speak for removing (the sin due to) killing a brāhmaṇa. He who would perform a horse sacrifice, overcomes all that sin. Therefore, O soul of the universe, you perform that auspicious horse-sacrifice. You who are wise, who are endowed with great glory, who are having great power, who are the lord of the earth should perform that horse-

sacrifice which removes the sin of (i.e. due to) killing a brāhmaṇa, and which was performed by the great king Dilīpa, your ancestor. Indra, the best among men, having performed a hundred sacrifices, secured, in Amarāvatī, a position well waited upon by gods and demons. All these your ancestors—Manu and king Sagara, and king Marutta, so also (Yayāti) the son of Nahuṣa, performed (this) sacrifice and went to the (highest) place. Therefore, O lord of kings, perform (that sacrifice); you are fully capable (of performing it). Your brothers, the regents of quarters, are appreciative of it."

37. Having heard what the sage said, that fortunate Rāma, the best of the Raghus, afraid of having killed a brāhmaṇa, very much deciding to perform it, and (with his glory) sung by those who were conversant with past events, asked (Agastya) about the manner (in which it was performed).

CHAPTER NINE

Instructions in Religious Practices

Śrī Rāma said:

1. What kind of horse should be (used) there (i.e. in that sacrifice)? What is the manner in which he is to be honoured? How can it be performed? Which enemies are to be conquered in (i.e. while performing) that sacrifice?

Agastya said:

2-11. A horse that is having the colour of the water of Gaṇgā, that is auspicious in body, that is dark in ears (i.e. that has dark ears), that is red in face (i.e. that has a red face), that is yellow in the tail (i.e. that has a yellow tail), that has good characteristics, that has the speed of the mind, that can move everywhere, that resembles Uccaiḥśravas, that has auspicious marks is said (to be used) in a horse-sacrifice. Having worshipped the horse on the full-moonday of

Vaiśākha, having written (and having put) a note marked with one's name and power on his forehead, one should let him loose, carefully guarded by guards. The powerful guards should go wherever the horse to be sacrificed goes. The guards should forcibly bring him back from him who, with force, binds him due to his own heroism and power. The sacrificer should remain (practising) and should observe celibacy. Till two years pass while the man is observing the vow, the poor, the blind, and the helpless should be satisfied by (giving) them wealth etc. O venerable (Rāma), abundant food should be given, and much wealth (also) should be given. The intelligent one gives whatever (a suppliant) asks for. O you destroyer of your enemies, the sacrifice of him who does acts like this, when completed, destroys all sins. Therefore, you are able to perform it, to protect it and to honour it. O king, having had auspicious fame, purify other people.

Śrī Rāma said:

12. O best brāhmaṇa, now see my stable; see whether there are horses like that (i.e. as described by you), having auspicious marks.

13-19. Hearing these words, Agastya, the mine of compassion, got up and desiring to see the auspicious horses fit for the sacrifice, went with Rāma to the stable and saw there very strong horses of lovely bodies, and having the speed of the mind. While seeing them he wondered to himself as to whether they were the descendants of the king of horses that had come (down) to the earth, or were solidified mass of the fame of Raghu kings, or whether it was a great mass of nectar (that had come out) of the ocean. On one side there was an excellent row of horses with crimson bodies. At one place there were horses with dark ears and shining like musk. At one place there were horses having a golden splendour. At other place there were horses of blue colour. At one place (there were horses) surrounded by particular spotted horses. Seeing all of them, the sage, with his mind full of eagerness went to another place to see the horses fit for the sacrifice. There he saw hundreds of them having that colour and tied

(within the stable). Seeing them, the sage, with his body delighted (i.e. having marks of delight), was amazed.

20-21. Seeing at one place horses with dark ears, with their bodies resembling milk, with yellow tails, red faces, having auspicious marks, fully spotless, resembling the streams of pure water, graced with the speed of the mind, bright like the heaps of spotless fame, the sage who dried the ocean and whose eyes and face were bright due to joy, spoke on seeing the beautiful horses to the lord of Sītā (i.e. spoke to Rāma).

Agastya said:

22-24. O best of the Raghus, the eyes of me who am seeing your many auspicious horses fit for the horse-sacrifice, are not today getting satisfaction. O illustrious Rāmacandra saluted by gods and demons, O great king, perform a big horse-sacrifice. O you prosperous one, performing all groups of sacrifices like (Indra) the lord of gods, drying like god Sun the ocean of your enemies, and having conquered the war in which the chief of the hosts of enemies is killed, make this earth full of pleasures and enjoyments.

25-30. He with all his senses fully delighted by the utterance of these words collected all excellent requisites for the (horse-) sacrifice. Accompanied by the sage, the great king came to the bank of Sarayū. There he ploughed a large (portion of) land with golden ploughs. Having plentifully scratched (i.e. ploughed) the land of the measure of four yojanas, the king constructed temporary halls for the sacrifice. He (got) prepared a basin with a womb and a girdle, decked with many gems and endowed with all charm. The best sage Vasiṣṭha, having a great penance (to his credit), got all that done according to the rules as laid down in the Vedic texts. That sage (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) sent (his) disciples to the hermitages of best sages. They (i.e. the disciples) told them that the best Raghu (i.e. Rāma) was ready (to perform a sacrifice).

31-35. Then all the sages, best among those who practised penance, were invited. They, being extremely eager to see the highest lord (i.e. Rāma) came (there). Nārada, (a sage) named Asita, Parvata, the sage Kapila, Jātūkarṇya, Aṅgiras, Vyāsa,

Ārṣṭiṣeṇa, Atri, Āsuri, Hārīta, Yājñavalkya, Saṁvarta, and (the sage) named Śuka—these and other sages went to (attend) the excellent horse-sacrifice of Rāma. The king (the descendant of) Raghu, of a magnanimous mind, honoured all of them by rising and saluting them and by making respectful offerings and offering seats to them. He whose valour was generally known, gave them cows and gold. (He said to them): "Today it is my great luck that I have seen you."

Śeṣa said:

36. O brāhmaṇa, when (the hall) was crowded on the arrival of excellent sages, there was discussion about the way of life well in conformity with the castes and the stages of life.

Vātsyāyana said:

37. What kind of discussion about the way of life took place there? What wonders (i.e. wonderful things) did they tell? What did the good (sages), through compassion for all people, say (there)?

Śeṣa said:

38. Rāma, the great son of Daśaratha, having seen the sages gathered there, asked them about all the ways of life proper for the castes and the stages of life.

39. They, on being asked by Rāma explained the very meritorious ways of life. I shall properly tell them to you. Listen to them.

The sages said:

40-47. A brāhmaṇa should always perform sacrifices, should engage in study etc. Having studied the Vedas and being free from passion he should not enter upon the householder's stage. A brāhmaṇa should always avoid serving low people. Even when he is in a calamity he should never live by following a dog's life. To approach his wife (i.e. to have intercourse with her) after the period of menstruation is the proper course for a brāhmaṇa; it is good for women. Or merely by remembering them he would desire a child. Approaching (their wives) by day by men is regarded as cutting short (the span of) life. An intelli-

gent man should avoid (intercourse on) a śrāddha-day and all the parvan days. If he would cohabit with his wife through infatuation on these days he falls from the highest (position). That householder who has intercourse with (only) his wife after the period of menstruation, and who is devoted to his wife (alone) should always be known as a celibate. The period of menstruation lasts for sixteen days. Out of them four are extremely censured. Out of them (intercourse on) the even days causes the birth of a son and (on) the odd ones causes the birth of a daughter. He, being pure, and avoiding inauspicious (period of the) moon, so also (the constellations like) Maghā and Mūla, should cohabit with his wife, especially on (a night when) a male constellation (is predominant). She would give birth to a pure son who would help accomplish the (four) goals of human life.

48-62. The (gift of a) couple of cows that is spoken of in the Ārṣa form of marriage[1] is good. Even a small dowry for a girl causes a sin to the purchaser of the girl. Trade, serving a king, not studying the Vedas, a bad (i.e. improper) marriage, omission of the essential ceremonies of the Hindu religion, are causes of the downfall of the family. A householder (obtains) merit by giving food, water, fruits, roots and by giving a cow (to a brāhmaṇa) according to the proper rite. He, from whose house a guest goes unhonoured and disappointed, loses the merit that he has collected since his birth. A householder should eat the residue of the food after having given it to his manes, the deities and human beings. He who cooks for himself and fills his own belly only, eats sin (only). Sin enters oil on the sixth and the eighth days of the month, (while) it always remains in flesh. He should avoid a razor (i.e. shaving) and (coitus with) his wife on the fourteenth day and the new-moon day. He should not enjoy his wife when she is in her menses, and should not eat with her. (Only) with one garment (on his body) he should not eat, nor should he eat (by sitting) on a high seat. An excellent man, desiring lustre, should not see his wife while she is eating. A man should not blow into fire by his mouth; he should not see (his) wife when she is naked. He should not heat

1. Ārṣa Vivāha; A form of marriage derived from the ṛṣis; one of the eight forms of marriage in whtch the father of the bride receives one or two pairs of cows from the bridegroom.

his foot in fire; he should not put an impure thing into fire. He should not harm beings; he should not eat at both the twilights. He should not see a cow giving a suck (to her calf); he should not point out the rainbow (to others) by day or at night; he should not eat the fresh butter that has come up from curd. He should not salute his religiously wedded wife; at night he should eat till he is fully satisfied (i.e. till his belly is full). He should not love (i.e. take interest in) the union of song, dance or instrumental music; he should wash his feet in (a vessel of) bell-metal. He should not wear a garment or shoes worn by another person. He should not eat from a broken pot; nor should he eat polluted food. He should not lie with wet feet; with his hands and mouth uncleaned after having eaten food he should not go anywhere. He should not eat while lying down; with his hands and mouth uncleaned after having eaten food, he should not touch his head. He should not praise a human being, nor should he condemn himself. He should not salute him who has risen (in life) nor should he talk about the defects of others. Having thus resorted to the householder's stage, he should go to (i.e. take to) the hermit's stage of life with his wife or when the wife is dead; and then he should detach himself (from the worldly existence).

63. The great Rāma, desiring the welfare of the world, listened to these and other practices narrated by the sages at that time.

CHAPTER TEN

Rāma Appoints Śatrughna as the Protector of the Horse

Śeṣa said:

1-2. While Rāma was thus listening to religious duties (from sages) the spring season in which beginning of very great rites is made, set in. Seeing that season (had set in), the intelligent Vasiṣṭha, born from the pitcher, said to the great king Rāma, what was proper.

Vasiṣṭha said:

3-8. O Rāmacandra of mighty arms, for you the time when the horse fully honoured is let loose for the sacrifice, has come. Make preparations for it. Invite the best brāhmaṇas. May the lord worship the brāhmaṇas properly. May he give gifts that have come up to his mind (i.e. desired by him) to the helpless, blind and the miserable according to the proper rite after having worshipped and honoured them. Initiated along with the golden (image of your) wife, sleeping on the ground, being restrained, and avoiding excellent enjoyments, keeping the deer's horn on the waist, wearing a girdle, deer-hide, and a staff, you should make preparations for the (horse-sacrifice) with (all) the (required) things.

Hearing these significant and apt words of Vasiṣṭha, the intelligent (Rāma) spoke to Lakṣmaṇa words rich with various meanings.

Śrī Rāma said:

9. O Lakṣmaṇa, listen to my words (instructions); and having listened to them, quickly carry them out. Carefully bring a horse proper for the rite of the horse-sacrifice.

Śeṣa said:

10. Having heard the words of the lord of Raghus, Lakṣmaṇa, the conqueror of (his) enemies, said these words, describing (the horse) variously, to the commander-in-chief of the army.

Lakṣmaṇa said:

11-15. O hero, listen to these very sweet words of (i.e. uttered by) me; and having heard them, quickly carry them out according to the order of Rāma whose feet are rubbed by the crowns decorating the heads of the kings. Keep ready the army whose divisions are active due to the strength of the strong wind (generated) by the destroyer (of the universe), and having good chariots, elephants, foot-soldiers and good horsemen. Keep ready horses whose speed is like that of the wind, and whose plantings of their feet (i.e. steps) are charming like the rows of

ripples, and which are mounted upon by good horsemen, holding many weapons and striking the enemy's army. Observe the elephants resembling mountains, which are (mounted upon) by the brave riders having darts and lances in their hands and having missiles, which exude profuse rut, which are intoxicated and are full of (i.e. have on them) all weapons and missiles. Let the groups of the charioteers take my chariots shining with extensive, large wealth, being yoked with horses having the speed of the wind, reminding (one) of the destruction of various foes, and with their topmost parts full with weapons and missiles. Let hundreds of foot-soldiers, having best weapons in their hands, exerting themselves in protecting the horse fit for the horse sacrifice, come to me.

16-30. Having heard these words of that magnanimous Lakṣmaṇa, the commander-in-chief Kālajit by name, made the (horse) ready. The horse adorned with ten stars, endowed with the charm of fine down, having faultless pearls round his neck, so also a gem round the extensive neck, having spotless beauty on the face, and blackish brightness on the ears, and with the mass of his reins held (by the commander-in-chief) with his hand, shone (there). The horse, with his face shining with (strips resembling) the digits (of the moon), adorned with bright gems, and beautified with necklaces of pearls, went out. At that time the lordly horse decorated with a white umbrella, adorned with a white chowrie, with his body surrounded (i.e. covered) by great loveliness, went out. Soldiers in front, in the midst, and in the rear, served him, as formerly gods waited upon Viṣṇu who deserved to be honoured. Then having called the entire army, very much crowded with hosts of elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers, he issued orders to it. Then the noise produced by the army that had collected (there), was heard. Then in that excellent city there was (heard) the sound of the kettle-drums. Due to the great agreeable and sharp sound of the heroes the peaks of mountains trembled and palaces shook. O king, there was a big sound of the perplexed horses. The earth as it were, moved, when it sounded by the impact of the wheels of chariots. The earth was, all around, blocked up with the herds of elephants that were moving (along it). Dust

moved there, and it screened the people (there). The great army full of men, being impelled by the commander-in-chief named Kālajit, moved out, covering the sun with its umbrellas. The best foot-soldiers, causing the battle-flurry, and ready for Rāma's (horse-)sacrifice, joyfully set out. All those (soldiers) having fragrant unguent of musk applied to their bodies, with their heads adorned with pure garlands of flowers, with their bodies adorned with the decorations of crowns and bracelets, and impelled by the king, set out. In this way, the excellent soldiers, holding bows, holding nooses and holding swords, and of loud steps, went to the great king. Thus the horse, marked for the sacrifice, scratching the ground with his hoofs, jumping in the sky (i.e. in the air), slowly reached the (sacrificial) hall.

31-42a. With his mind highly pleased on seeing the horse that had come (there), Rāma moved Vasiṣṭha to perform the (necessary) rite. Vasiṣṭha called Rāma along with (the image of) his wife made of gold, and made him perform the rite that would remove (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Rāma, the conqueror of his enemies' cities, practising the vow of celibacy, and holding a deer-horn got done that rite (through the brāhmaṇas). For the performance of the sacrifice he commenced (constructing) a basis furnished with a hall. The intelligent sage Vasiṣṭha, the old preceptor of Rāma's family, who was conversant with the Vedic concepts, became the preceptor there (i.e. at that sacrifice). Agastya, the treasure of penance, acting as the Brahmā-priest, performed the duties of that priest. The sage Vālmīki was the Adhvaryu-priest, and (the sage) Kaṇva (acted as) the doorkeeper. There were eight gates (to the hall) which were auspicious with ornamental arches. O brāhmaṇa, at each gate two brāhmaṇas, knowing the sacred hymns (were placed). At the eastern gate (were posted) the two best sages named Devala and Asita. At the southern gate (stood) the two great treasures of penance, viz. Kaśyapa and Atri. At the western gate (were) the two best (sages) Jātūkarṇya and Jābāli. At the northern gate (remained) the two ascetics—the two sages—Dvita and Ekata. O brāhmaṇa, having thus made the arrangement at the gates, Vasiṣṭha, born from a pitcher, started worshipping the best horse. Women whose husbands were alive,

who were adorned with (beautiful) garments and ornaments, started worshipping the best horse with turmeric, sacred rice grains, sandal etc., O brāhmaṇa. Then after having worshipped him, they waved lights before him and offered incense of agaru. Then by the order of the brāhmaṇa (viz. Vasiṣṭha), the courtezans offered him wishes for prosperity.

42b-54. After having worshipped him like this, he tied a note, bright and fashioned of gold purified with fire, on his spotless forehead to which sandal was applied, which was very fragrant with saffron etc., and which was all beautiful. There (i.e. in the note) he wrote the bright valour and power of Daśaratha's son (Rāma): "The magnanimous Rāma, the crest-jewel of all heroes, the remover of the pride of the heroes of their power, and the descendant of Raghu, is the son of him who was the banner of the solar family, who was a great archer and a teacher initiating (pupils) in archery, and whom all gods along with demons saluted with (i.e. by bowing down) their heads having gems (on them). Rāma's mother is the one born from the womb of the wife of the king of Kośala. Rāma, his (i.e. Daśaratha's) son, who was the gem born from her womb, who is fearful to his enemies, who is well instructed by the brāhmaṇa (Vasiṣṭha), is performing a horse-sacrifice to remove the sin due to his having killed the best brāhmaṇa named Rāvaṇa. (For that sacrifice) he has let loose this excellent horse, best among horses and well-protected by the moats (in the form) of great army surrounding him. The protector of the horse is Rāma's brother, Śatrughna, who had killed (the demon named) Lavaṇa, and who is accompanied by the multitude of the army (consisting of) elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers. Those kings who, through the pride of their strength, have the jealous anger (as): 'We are great archers, we are brave, we are mighty', should capture with force the horse adorned with jewelled necklaces, having the speed of the mind, going at will, (capable of) moving everywhere, and very bright. From them Rāma's brother Śatrughna will easily free him with points of arrows (i.e. pointed arrows) whetted on grindstones and discharged from his bow." The greatest sage wrote such and other things (in the note) and then let loose the horse with his glory shining due to the power of the arms of Rāma, the treasure of

beauty, being extremely swift and having the speed of the wind, and having a special property of moving in the nether world and on the earth.

55-74. Rāma, the best among the wielders of weapons ordered Śatrughna: "Go after the horse moving freely for protecting him. O Śatrughna go along the path of the horse. May good fortune attend upon you. O you who torment your enemies, may your arms conquer the enemies. O brave one, those warriors who fight with you, should be warded off by you. On this great earth, you, united with your hosts of virtues, protect the horse. You should not kill those who are asleep, who have fled, who have lost their garments, who are very much frightened, who are polite, who have done good deeds, by doing which (i.e. when you do like this) they will approve of (your) deed. O Śatrughna, you who desire (to have) religious merit, should not kill those who are without (i.e. who have lost their) chariots, who are afflicted with fear, and who say (to you): 'We belong to you.' He who would kill him who is humble, who is mad, who is asleep, who is frustrated, who is affected by fear, and who says: 'I belong to you', goes to a mean position. You who are full of all virtues, should not long for others' wealth, or for other man's wife; do not show interest in a mean person. O you conqueror in a battle, do not first strike the old (i.e. do not strike the old before they strike you). Being endowed with compassion, do not violate (the rule of) worshipping the venerable. Salute a cow and a brāhmaṇa, and a devotee of Viṣṇu possessing righteousness. Wherever you go after saluting (these), you will obtain success. Viṣṇu is the lord of all, is the witness (observing everything), and possesses a body that occupies everything. O you of mighty arms, O you descendant of Raghu, they who belong to him (i.e. Viṣṇu), who move in his form, who remember Viṣṇu remaining in the hearts of all, should be regarded as having a form similar to that of Viṣṇu. Those devotees of Viṣṇu for whom there is none that belongs to them, none that is a stranger, and for whom the enemy is like a friend, purify a sinner in a moment. They, to whom the Bhāgavata (Purāṇa) is dear, to whom the brāhmaṇas are dear, are sent here (i.e. to this world) from Vaikuṇṭha for purifying the world. Even that cāṇḍāla in whose mouth there is

Viṣṇu's name, in whose heart there is the ancient Viṣṇu, and in whose belly there is the offering of eatables presented to Viṣṇu, is dear to Viṣṇu. Salute them that are here, to whom the Vedas are dear and not the happiness due to the worldly existence, and who are devoted to their own way of life. There is no difference between Śiva and Viṣṇu; so also between Śiva (or Viṣṇu) and Brahmā. I carry (on my body) the dust particles of their feet, which are pure and which destroy sins. Those men, for whom Pārvatī, Gaṅgā, Mahālakṣmī, do not exist separately, should, all of them, be looked upon as having come here (i.e. to this world) from heaven. He who, in order to please Viṣṇu, protects him who has sought his refuge, and gives respect and makes presents according to his capacity, should be known as the best devotee of Viṣṇu. He who is devoted to the pair of feet of him (the utterance of) whose name quickly burns the heaps of great sins, is the devotee of Viṣṇu. By saluting those whose senses are controlled, whose mind also thinks of Viṣṇu (only), a man should purify (himself) from birth to death. Abandoning another man's wife like a sword, be the ground of the ornament of victory and welfare. Thus following my command, you will obtain the highest position and a praiseworthy good contact (with the highest Lord)."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Aśvamedha Horse Is Let Loose

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Having thus ordered (Śatrughna), the glorious Rāma, the tormentor of his enemies, looked at the heroes and spoke to them with (i.e. using) good words: "Protecting from the rear my brother Śatrughna, protecting the horse, and obeying his orders, who would vanquish, with his multitudes of missiles, all the heroes that would come (to fight) the chief one (i.e. Śatrughna), let him spreading his very great fame on the earth take up the sword of (i.e. offered by) me."

4-9. When Rāma spoke like this, Puṣkala, the son of Bharata, took that sword from the lotus-like hand of the king of the Raghu-family. "O lord, O master, being ready, holding all weapons and missiles and a bow and arrows, I shall go, guarding everyday, Śatrughna's rear. Today the entire earth will be conquered due to your valour. O very intelligent Rāmacandra, these (soldiers) are (just) a means. By your grace I am capable of warding off the entire (army of) gods, demons and human beings, (if it) approaches (us) to fight (with us). The lord will know everything on seeing my valour. To protect Śatrughna from the rear, here I go." Praising Bharata's son, who was speaking like this, and approving of (his words), the lord Viṣṇu (i.e. Rāma) praised all the chief heroes among the monkeys, led by (Hanūmat) born from the Wind.

10-13. (He said): "O great hero Hanūmat, carefully listen to my words. Due to your favour I obtained this kingdom free from trouble. To bring about my union with Sītā, you crossed the ocean. O monkey, O lord of monkeys, I know all your adventures. Being, by my command, the guardian of my army, (please) go. You should protect Śatrughna, my brother, as (you protected) me. O you very intelligent one, you have to enlighten my brother Śatrughna whenever he has confusion of mind."

14-18. Hearing the great (i.e. important) words of the intelligent Rāmacandra, he accepted them with (i.e. by bowing) his head, and saluted him. Then the great king (i.e. Rāma) instructed Jāmbavanta, the lord of the monkeys, and the most lustrous among them, to serve Raghunātha (i.e. Śatrughna). (He said:) "(All of) you like Aṅgada, Gavaya, Mainda, so also the monkey Dadhimukha, Sugrīva—the king of the monkeys, the two monkeys viz. Śatavali and Akṣika, (so also) Nīla, Nala, having the mind's speed and a master born from the body of a monkey, should be ready. All of you, being adorned with elephants, good horses, with armours as ornaments made of gold, with helmets, should go quickly."

Śeṣa said:

19. Then having called the good minister Sumantra, Rāma, shining with strength and power said to him: "O chief of the

ministers, say, which men, capable of protecting the horse should be employed now?"

20-33. Hearing the words spoken by him (i.e. Rāma), he, the killer of the enemy's heroes said: "O Raghunātha, listen to (the names of) the nine powerful kings, who have assembled here, who are archers, who are very learned, who are proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, and who (therefore,) are capable of protecting the horse. (They are:) Pratāpāgrya, Nīlaratna, so also king Lakṣmīnidhi, Riputāpa, Ugrahaya, and king Śastravid also. This Nīlaratna is a distinguished person; Mahāvīra, Rathāgraṇī (are also there). He, the fearless one, would alone protect a lakh (of soldiers) and would fight with a lakh of soldiers. Let him go with (an army consisting of) ten akṣauhiṇīs furnished with armours, and with my arms raised (to bless him). This Pratāpāgrya is one who destroyed the pride of his enemy. Best among those who know (the employment of) all missiles, he discharges the arrows with (both) the right and the left hands. Let this Daṇḍabhṛt, who is young and who is ready to destroy the enemy, and who holds a bow, go with (the army consisting of) twenty akṣauhiṇīs for the protection of the horse. In the same way, let this best king Lakṣmīnidhi who, having propitiated Indra studied (the employment of) missiles, go (with Śatrughna). He knows the employment and discharge of the missiles like Brahmāstra, Pāśupatyāstra, Garuḍa, and the one called Nāga, (so also) Mayūra, Nakula, Raudra, Vaiṣṇava, the one called Megha, Vajra, the one named Parvata, so also the one called Vāyavya. Let him, the crown (i.e. the best) of the brave, a hurricane to all the enemies, go with (soldiers numbering) one lakh from the army. Today let also this Riputāpa go, who is the foremost among archers, skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, and a wild fire to the bamboos in the form of the enemies. Let him go with the army consisting of four divisions. Let these mighty kings hold on their heads (i.e. obey) the order of Śatrughna. This great king Ugrāśva also knows (the use of) weapons. Let all of them, quite ready, go as the protectors of your horse."

34-36. Having heard these words of the minister, he was delighted and ordered those soldiers mentioned by Sumantra. They, desiring to wage war for a long time, and maddened after it, were glad on receiving Raghunātha's (i.e. Rāma's) order.

Ready with armours etc., and with the movements of the weapons and missiles, they, impelled by Sītā's husband, went in the company of Śatrughna.

Śeṣa said:

37-46. Then, as told by the sage (Vasiṣṭha), Rāma honoured all the preceptors and sages (by giving them) presents as told (by Vasiṣṭha). To the preceptor Rāma gave an elephant sixty years old, a horse having the mind's speed and adorned with golden necklaces, a golden chariot which was adorned with gems and jewels, to which four horses were yoked, and which was furnished with all necessary equipment. (He also gave him) a lakh of gems, and pearls measuring a hundred tulās (each of which is equal to 100 palas), a thousand tulās of bright lustre of corals, a very rich village crowded with many kinds of people, producing various kinds of crops, having many temples. In the same way he gave (presents) to the Brahmā-priest and to the Adhvaryu-priest. The best of the Raghus, having given profuse gifts to the priests, saluted them. Being honoured, they (said) with various words and blessings: "O Rāmacandra, the descendant of Raghu, O great king, live long." The great one (i.e. Rāma) gave the gifts of maidens, of land, of elephants, so also of horses, of gold, of sesamum with pearls, of food, water, and the excellent gift of fearlessness, so also all the gifts of gems, to brāhmaṇas. Give, (again and again) give wealth; do not say 'No' to anyone. One should give food, one should give food endowed with all pleasures.

47-49. Thus the sacrifice, accompanied by presents, full of the brāhmaṇas and with all auspicious rites, of the intelligent Rāma, proceeded. Then the younger brother of Rāma (viz. Śatrughna) went to his mother, saluted her (and said to her): "O auspicious one, give me leave; I am going just for the protection of the horse. With your grace, I, having conquered the group of the enemies, shall come (back) endowed with charm and accompanied by great kings and the best horse (let loose for the sacrifice)."

The mother said:

50-54. O (my) son, O great hero, go; may your journey be happy. O you of a good mind, having conquered all the hosts of

your enemies come (back). Take care of Puṣkala, the best among those who know the course of conduct, the mighty son of your brother, (and) still a child, with (i.e. indulging in) sport. O son, if you come (back), with Puṣkala, and endowed with good fortune, I shall be glad. Otherwise I shall be unhappy.

He said to his mother who was speaking like this: "Remembering the pair of your feet, I shall have good fortune. O auspicious one, having taken care of Puṣkala like my own body, and doing (things) befitting my name, I shall come back happily."

55-58. Speaking thus, the hero went to see the great Rāma dressed for the sacrifice and seated with the best sages in the sacrificial hall. The intelligent hero endowed with all grace, said: "O Rāma, give me leave to protect the horse." Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) too hearing those words, said: "God bless you. Do not kill a child, a woman, a mad person or one without a weapon." Then Janaka's son and Sītā's brother Lakṣmīnidhi, having smiled and having slightly moved his eyes said to Rāma:

Lakṣmīnidhi said:

59-64. O mighty-armed Rāmacandra, devoted to all righteous ways, instruct Śatrughna in such a way that he would be extraordinary. Doing a deed which is befitting his family, and doing what his elder brother had done, he would go to the highest place endowed with lustre and power. O great king, you said: 'One should not belittle a brāhmaṇa;' (but) your father had killed a brāhmaṇa, greatly devoted to his father. You also performed a deed very much abhorred in the world, (since) you had certainly killed a woman who should not have been killed. (And) O great king, the great valourous deed, viz. cutting off the ears of the demoness (Śūrpaṇakhā), which was done by his elder brother (Lakṣmaṇa) was not done by any one else. By your instruction Śatrughna will do the same thing. If, O lord, he would do like that, it would be unbecoming to the family.

65-71. To him, who was speaking like this, Rāma skilled in all kinds of speech, smiled, and spoke with a voice deep like that of a cloud: "May the tranquil meditating saints hear, who look equally upon pleasure and pain and who know such things as how to cross fully this (ocean of) mundane existence which is difficult

to cross. Those who are brave, who are great archers, who are skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles (alone) know the calling of war, and not (people) like you. Those who torment others and those who go astray, should be killed by kings who desire the good of all the people." Hearing these words spoken by the subduer of enemies (i.e. by Rāma) all those members of the assembly smiled. (Then Vasiṣṭha) born from the pitcher, let loose the horse that was worshipped and well adorned. Uttering this hymn, and touching the horse with the tip of his hand, Vasiṣṭha, born from a pitcher, let loose the horse, with a desire for victory: "O horse, move sportively over the entire earth. Since you are let loose for the (horse-) sacrifice, come back quickly."

72-75. The horse, that was let loose, and that was surrounded by all warriors skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, went with the speed of wind towards the eastern direction. The entire army shaking the earth moved on. Even Śeṣa held the earth with his hood slightly bent. The quarters were all around bright. The earth was full of beauty. Breezes blew gently from behind Śatrughna. The right arm of Śatrughna who was ready for the march, throbbed indicating (something) auspicious and leading to victory.

76-83. Puṣkala (the son of Bharata) entered his charming house which was rich with white balconies, and which had a jewelled quadrangular open shed in the middle of its courtyard. There he saw his wife who was greatly devoted to her husband, who was delighted when he was partially seen and who was eager to see her husband. She was chewing piper-betal (mixed) with camphor with her mouth resembling a lotus. Her very beautiful nose was like a sharp blade (of a sword). There were fine bracelets (worn) on her arms resembling lotus-stalks. Her excellent breasts were like the kapittha fruits. Her round hips were charming due to the knot of the wearing garment. Her very delicate feet had (worn) anklets. She saw her good husband. Having embraced his dear wife, speaking in a faltering tone, and with her body filled with the embrace (pressing) her breasts, he said: "O auspicious lady, by Rāma's order I having a chariot and looking after the sacrificial horse, am going guarding the rear of Śatrughna. You should serve my mothers by gently rubbing their feet etc., eating (the food) left over by them and showing great regard for doing

(things told) by them. All the auspicious ladies, devoted to their husbands, like Lopāmudrā, should not be insulted by you, O timid one. They are adorned by the strength of their own penance."

CHAPTER TWELVE

Ahicchatrā City, King Sumada and Kāma

Śeṣa said :

1-14. She, smiling a little and looking at him with great love, spoke in a faltering voice to her husband who had spoken thus: "O lord, may you be victorious everywhere in battles (i.e. in every battle). You should obey Śatrughna's order in such a way that the horse would be protected. Always remember (this) your servant, always following your foot (steps). O lord, my mind never goes away from you to any other (person). O dear one, you should never think of me in a great battle. When I am (lurking) in your heart, victory in the battle is doubtful. O you lotus-eyed one, you should act in such a way that Urmilā and others will not laugh at me and clap their hands on seeing me (and say:) 'This is the wife of the great coward, running away in (i.e. from) the battle. When the cowards fight, where can there be an opportunity for the brave? O you of mighty arms, act, while protecting Rāma's horse, in such a way that the wives of my brothers-in-law will not loudly laugh (at me). You are everywhere a warrior first. The ones who are behind you, and the mighty enemies should be made deaf with the twang of your bow (-string). The enemy's army should be speedily confused with fear due to the dread of the sword in your raised hand. By conquering your enemies you should adorn this great family. O lord, O you of mighty arms, go; may you have good fortune here (i.e. in your undertaking). Quickly take this bow which is adorned with a great string (and with a great virtue), and hearing the roar of which the host of the enemies becomes greatly frightened. O hero, tie up these two quivers which are full with tips of arrows

(i.e. pointed arrows) capable of killing crores of enemies, so that happiness will take place. Put this armour on your body which is handsome like thunder-bolt and so is strong enough to remove darkness. O dear one, put on your crest (i.e. head) this beautiful helmet. Put on these two bright ear-rings decorated with jewels and gems."

15. Looking at the hero's daughter (i.e. brave lady) who spoke spotless words in this way, and looking at her body with his lotus-like eyes, he, the conqueror of enemies, capable of fighting, and extremely wise one, who had become extremely joyful, said:

Puşkala said :

16-18. O dear one, I shall do all that you tell me. O Kāntimatī, you will have the longed-for fame as the wife of a hero."

Saying so the mighty one took all (the things like) the excellent armour and helmet, the bow, the two quivers and the sword given by (his wife) Kāntimatī. Having put on all those (things), the great hero endowed with great charm, and skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, looked extremely handsome.

19-23a. That chaste wife Kāntimatī repeatedly waved lights in front of him who was endowed with the beauty of the missiles and weapons, adorned with a garland of (i.e. fit for) a hero and smeared with saffron, aguru (sandal), musk, sandal etc. and adorned up to his knees with garlands of various flowers. Having repeatedly waved lights before him and with tears trickling from her unsteady eyes, she embraced her husband. Having closely embraced her for a long time, he comforted her: "O Kāntimatī, wife of a hero, do not experience (grief due to) separation from me. O you beautiful and chaste lady, here I am near you."

23b-24. Speaking thus to his wife, he got into the excellent chariot. That lady (Kāntimatī), greatly devoted to her husband, looked with eyes, void of winking, at her best husband, who was going (away from her).

25-28. He (then) went to see his father and his mother beside herself with love. Going to the father and mother, he joyfully saluted them with his head (bent down). The mother, having embraced her son, put him on her lap; (and) shedding tears profusely, said to him: "May it be well with you!" He said to his

father Bharata: "The great Rāma is performing the (horse-) sacrifice. The magnanimous Lakṣmaṇa and you have to take care of him." Commanded with joyful words by his mother and father, he went to Śatrughna's army adorned with great heroes.

29-31. The best horse (let loose) for the great sacrifice of (Rāma), the ornament of (the) Raghu (-family), surrounded by the brave warriors occupying chariots, foot-soldiers, good horses and horsemen gladly moved (ahead). Endowed with all charm, he went to the Pāñcāla country, the Kuru country, Uttara-kuru, Daśārṇa and Śrī Viśāla countries. Everywhere hearing about the entire glory of Rāma, which brought about the protection of his devotees by killing the demon Rāvaṇa (he went ahead).

32-35a. Rāma who also commenced the rite like the horse-sacrifice, spread his fame in the world and protected the people from fear. The great excellent Śatrughna gave them necklaces, various gems, great wealth and dwellings. Rāma's excellent minister, bright and proficient in all branches of knowledge, Sumati by name, followed Śatrughna. The great hero went with him to many villages and countries.

35b-38. Due to Rāma's valour, nobody snatched the horse. Many lords of countries who were very mighty and brave, who were accompanied by elephants, horses, chariots, foot-soldiers—(i.e. the army with) four divisions—took with them much wealth along with pearls and rubies, and again and again saluted Śatrughna who had come for the protection of the earth. (They said to Śatrughna:) "O descendant of Raghu, all this—this kingdom, this wealth, along with my sons, beasts and relatives—belongs to Rāmacandra, and not to me."

39. Having heard these (words) uttered by them, Śatrughna, the killer of the enemy's warriors, having made them recognize his command there, went with them along the path.

40-52. O brāhmaṇa, in this way gradually Śatrughna along with the horse reached Ahicchatrā city which was crowded with various people, which was full of brāhmaṇas and the twice-born (i.e. kṣatriyas and vaiśyas), which was decorated with different gems, which was adorned with golden and crystal mansions and town-gates, where, in all mansions, were seen ladies who had lotus-like faces, who excelled Rambhā (in beauty), and who were endowed with grace; where the heroes, graceful with good con-

duct, enjoying all pleasures like the followers of Kubera, with bows in their hands, proficient in taking aim with an arrow, delighted (their) king named Sumada. The lord (i.e. Śatrughna), saw, from a distance, the city like this. In its vicinity was a park, endowed with loveliness. Śatrughna, the killer of his enemy's soldiers, saw (that park) which appeared beautiful with punnāga, nāgacampa, tilaka, devadāru, aśoka, pāṭala, cūta (i.e. mango), mandāra, kovidāraka, āmra, jambu, kadamba, priyāla, and panasa (trees); so also with śāla, tāla, tamāla, mallikā, jāti, yūthi, nīpa, kadamba, bakula, campaka, madana and other trees. The horse entered that (park) adorned with tamāla, tāla and other (trees). The hero (i.e. Śatrughna), whose lotus-like feet were served by archers, just went after him. There he saw a wonderfully constructed temple, which was adorned with sapphires, lapis lazuli and emeralds, which was fit to be enjoyed by gods, which resembled the peak of the Kailāsa (mountain), which was adorned with golden pillars, and which was the best among temples. Having seen that excellent temple, Rāma's brother asked Sumati, his minister, the best among speakers:

Śatrughna said:

53. O best minister, tell (me), what this is; of what deity it is the abode; which deity is worshipped here; and for what purpose the deity has stayed here, O sinless one.

54-59. Having heard this, the omniscient minister said: "O hero, listen attentively to the full and proper (account). Know this to be the great seat, giving happiness to all, of Kāmākṣā, by seeing whom, O lord of beings, everything is secured, (and) by praising and saluting whom gods and demons have obtained all (their) glory. She is the giver of (the four goods of human life, viz.) Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa; she is kind to her devotees. She, who was formerly implored by Sumada, the king of Ahicchatrā, and who removes the misery of her devotees, lives here and does everything (for her devotees). O Śatrughna, O you crest-jewel of all heroes, salute her. Having saluted her, you will quickly obtain the purity which is difficult to be got by gods and demons." Having heard those words of (i.e. uttered by) him, Śatrughna, the tormentor of his enemies, the best among men, ask-

ed (him) the entire account of men, asked (him) the entire account of Bhavānī.

Śatrughna said :

60-61. Who is (this) king Sumada? Which penance did he practise due to which the mother of all the worlds, that dwells here, is pleased? O great minister, tell me all that which is full of diverse things. O you very intelligent one, since you know it correctly, therefore tell it to me.

Sumati said :

62-70. (There is) the pure mountain Hemakūṭa which is adorned by all gods. There is a pure, holy place, very much frequented by hosts of sages. Sumada whose mother, father and subjects were killed by all his feudatory kings, his enemies, went to that (mountain) for (practising) penance. With his sight fixed on the tip of his nose, and remembering mentally the mother of the worlds, he, (standing) on one foot, meditated for three years. Eating dry leaves for three years, he practised very severe penance, very difficult to practise. For three years he plunged himself (i.e. remained)in water in the cold season. In summer he practised (the vow of) the five fires; and in rainy season he remained looking up to the clouds. The wise one, restraining the breath in his heart and remembering Bhavānī, did not look at anything (else) for three years. When the twelfth year passed, Indra, seeing his great penance, very much contemplated in his mind, and through fear, vied with him. He (then) ordered Cupid surrounded by his followers, properly accompanied by celestial nymphs, and eager for the victory of Brahmā, Indra etc.: "O Cupid, O friend, O you infatuating one, go and do what is agreeable to me. Act in such a way that there would be an obstacle in the penance of (i.e. being practised by) Sumada."

71. Hearing these important words of Indra, the lord (i.e. Kāma) himself, who was very proud of conquering everything, spoke, O descendant of Raghu:

Kāma said :

72-74. O lord, who is this Sumada? And how little is his penance? I disturb the penance of (even) Brahmā and others;

then what need I say of him? Formerly the Moon, completely disturbed by the power of my arrows, went to Tārā.[1] You too went to Ahalyā, and Viśvāmitra to Menakā. O lord of gods, when I, (your) servant, am (here), do not be worried. This I go to Sumada. O respectable one, look after the gods.

75-86. Having said so, god Cupid, accompanied by his friend Spring and groups of celestial nymphs went to Hemakūṭa mountain. There Spring quickly made all trees full of flowers and fruits and noisy with cuckoos and rows of bees. Very cool breezes, resorting to (i.e. coming from) the southern quarter, and full of (the fragrance of)the flowers of cloves (growing on) the bank of the Kṛtāmala river, were blowing. When the forest was like this, the celestial nymph named Rambhā, surrounded by her friends, came near Sumada. She who was proficient in playing upon many musical instruments like tabor, drum, and adorned with a (sweet) voice like that of a kinnara, started singing. Then on hearing her music, on seeing (that) charming Spring, and (on hearing) the charming notes of cuckoos, the wise king turned his eyes. Then seeing the king awakened (i.e. who had opened his eyes), Cupid, having flowers as his weapons, hastened, and, O innocent one, quickly made ready his bow from behind him. One celestial nymph with bud-like eyes shampooed the king's feet. Another nymph cast glances at him. Another one made (coquettish) gestures. Thus crowded by the celestial nymphs and with his mind afflicted by the passion of love, the intelligent one, the crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of those who have restrained their senses, thought: 'These are the excellent celestial nymphs, all sent by Indra, and creating an obstacle in my penance; they will do exactly (as they are ordered by Indra).' Thinking like this, he who was practising excellent penance, said to those excellent females: "Who are you? Where do you stay? What do you desire? A great miracle has taken place that you are seen. You who are difficult to be obtained by penance, have come (here) due to my penance."

1. Tārā—Name of the wife of Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of gods. She was on one occasion carried off by Soma (the Moon) who refused to deliver her up to her husband when demanded. A fierce contest then ensued and Brahmā had at last to compel Soma to restore her to her husband. Tārā gave birth to a son named Budha who became the ancestor of the Lunar race of kings.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Śatrughna Enters Ahicchatrā City

Śeṣa said:

1-8. Hearing these words of Sumada, the treasure of penance, the army of Cupid, i.e. the celestial nymphs like Rambhā, joyfully said to him: "O dear one, all of us, beautiful damsels, have come to you due to your austerities. Enjoy the wealth of our youth, and give up the fruit of your penance. This is the pleasing Ghṛtācī, having a body like campaka, and charming due to the fragrance of camphor. You may enjoy the nectar from her mouth. O illustrious one, O dear one, quickly enjoy her who has charming gestures, whose body is attractive, whose breasts are compact and large, who has come (to you) as a result of your severe penance; and give up all your unhappiness. Firmly embrace me who am adorned with priceless ornaments, whose breasts are graced with the garland of mandara flowers, and who am expert in thinking about many tales about sexual union. Drink the nectar coming out from my mouth; enjoy, having reached the peak of Sumeru resorted to by means of great religious merit, pleasures—the fruit of your good penance. Let Tilottamā adorned with youth and beauty, hold on your head two good chowries—removing heat—like two streams of Gaṅgā with a constant flow, O most handsome one. O you, listen to the charming account of Cupid; drink the nectar longed for by the hosts of gods etc.; O lord, having, along with excellent damsels, reached the garden called Nandana, amuse yourself (there)."

9-10. Hearing these words spoken by them, the very intelligent king thought: 'Wherefrom have they come? By means of my penance I have created these celestial damsels. (But) this has become an impediment. What should I do now?' The very intelligent king Sumada who was thus anxious, thinking in his mind (i.e. to himself), spoke to the celestial damsels:

11-14. "You remain in my mind in the form of the mother of the world. That whom I think of is also said to be of your form. The pleasures in heaven, which you described, are worthless and uncertain. My mistress, waited upon by me with devotion, will give me a boon. Due to her grace Brahmā reached Satyaloka

and became great. She who puts an end to the miseries of her devotees, will give me everything. What is (the use of) Nandana? What is (the use of) the mountain well-adorned with gold? What is the use of nectar which is obtained with very little religious merit and which has given unhappiness to demons?"

15-16. Hearing these words of the king, Cupid struck him with various arrows, but could do nothing to him. The beautiful (celestial) damsels were unable to disturb his mind through glances, sounds of their anklets, embraces and through looking at him.

17. Having gone, as they had come, to Indra, they said: "The king is firm-minded." Hearing that, Indra was frightened (thinking that) his undertaking was fruitless.

18-22. Then (goddess) Ambikā, having seen the king who had conquered his senses, settled at her lotus-like feet, was extremely pleased and appeared before him. She, the beautiful one, was seated on the back of a lion; the excellent one had held (in her hands) nooses and goads; the mother, purifying those who purify the world, had a bow and arrows (in her hands). The intelligent one (i.e. king Sumada), having seen the mother lustrous like crores of suns, and holding a bow, arrows and hooks, was delighted. Having many times saluted by (bending down) his head the mother obtained through devotion, smiling, and repeatedly touching his body with her hand, the very intelligent king, with the functions of his mind full of devotion and with his body adorned with horripilation, praised her with a faltering voice:

23-30. "O goddess, O great goddess, victory to you, who alone are waited upon by the hosts of devotees, and O innocent one, you whose pair of feet is worshipped by the lords of gods like Brahmā, Rudra. O mother, this (world consisting of) the mobile and the immobile, is put in motion by a portion of you. All that does not exist without you. O auspicious mother, I salute you. The earth is settled by you through the strength of your prop. (So) it, adorned with mountains, rivers, gardens, quarter-elephants, does not shake. (Due to you) the sun, heating the earth with his sharp rays, shines in the sky; through your power he takes the water existing on the earth, and releases it (in the form of rain). Let the fire remaining within and without

(you) cause happiness to the worlds due to your power, O great goddess, saluted by gods and demons. You are learning, you are the wonderful, divine power of Viṣṇu, who alone protects the world. O you fascinating one, through your own power you create this (world) and look after it. All gods obtain perfection from you and go to (i.e. secure) happiness. O you who bless (your devotees) with your grace, O you who are saluted (by them), O you, to whom your devotees are dear, look after me, protect me, O mother, who am your servant, and who am devoted to your feet, O you the ancestor of the great Puruṣa."

Śeṣa said:

31-33. The mother of the world, who was thus pleased, said to that devotee Sumada of an emaciated body: "Ask for an excellent boon." Hearing these words king Sumada who was extremely delighted, asked for his own kingdom which was (formerly) snatched away (from him) and the troublesome wicked persons in which were killed, and for inviolable devotion to the pair of feet of the great goddess, the devotion that would (cause) emancipation at the end of life and would help to cross the ocean of the mundane existence.

Kāmākṣā said:

34-44. O Sumada, get (back) your kingdom in which everywhere the troublesome persons were killed. Be one whose pair of the lotus-like feet is resorted to by gems of (i.e. excellent) women. O you called Sumada, may you not be defeated by your enemies. When Rāma, of great glory, will, after having killed Rāvaṇa, perform the horse-sacrifice, adorned with all requisites, and when his brother Śatrughna, the great hero and the killer of the enemies' soldiers will come here looking after the horse and surrounded by brave men, you will present to him your entire prosperous kingdom and wealth etc., will look after the horse, and will move everywhere on the earth along with your own warriors and pre-eminent archers, O you, very intelligent one. Then having saluted Rāma served by Brahmā, Indra and Śiva, you will obtain release difficult to be obtained by meditating saints having restraint as their means. I shall stay here till Rāma's

horse comes here. After that, having emancipated you, I shall go to the highest position.

Saying so, the goddess, served by gods and demons, disappeared. Sumada too, having killed his enemies, became the king in Ahicchatrā. This king, though capable and possessing army and horses (or elephants), will not snatch your horse, (as) he is well instructed by (the goddess), the wonderful power (of the lord). O you omniscient one, having heard that the best sacrificial horse has come near the city, and (that) you also (have approached the city), the king named Sumada will now give everything to you, the very intelligent one, whose feet are served by great kings, due to the valour of the great king Rāmacandra.

Śeṣa said:

45-48. The intelligent, mighty and very glorious (Śatrughna), having heard this account of Sumada, said: 'Good, good' and was delighted. The lord of Ahicchatrā, surrounded by all his attendants and waited upon by many kṣatriyas, was happily seated in his assembly. Brāhmaṇas learned in the Vedas, and wealthy and prosperous vaiśyas waited upon king Sumada endowed with charm. The just and excellent brāhmaṇas blessed the king, the only protector of all the people, with Vedic learning and diversion.

49-51. At this time, someone came (there) and said to the king: "O you lord, I do not know whose horse, with a note (on his head) is (i.e. has come) near (the city)." Hearing that, he quickly sent a superior servant (i.e. officer): "Ascertain as to who the king is whose horse (has come) near my city." The servant having gone there and having ascertained from the beginning, reported it to the king, waited upon by great kṣatriyas.

52-54. The wise king who was everyday thinking about Rāma's horse, having heard (that he had come) ordered all people: "All my people who possess wealth and grains, should put up ornamental arches on their houses in the city. Let thousands of beautiful maidens, adorned with all ornaments, and mounted upon elephants, go forth (to great) Śatrughna."

55-57. Having ordered all like this the king himself surrounded by his sons, grāndsons and queen went (to receive Śatru-

ghna). Śatrughna, accompanied by many very great ministers, good warriors, saw the brave king named Sumada.

58-61. Then the great king, having come (there) joyfully saluted Śatrughna who was accompanied by elephants, foot-soldiers, the tormentors of enemies, and accompanied by horsemen, and horses that were adorned with brave soldiers and who was accompanied by heroes. (He said to Śatrughna:) "I am blessed, I am satisfied, my body is honoured. Quickly accept this kingdom, adorned with great kings, and well filled (i.e. furnished) with great wealth like large rubies and pearls. O lord, I have been waiting for a long time for the arrival of the horse. Everything that Kāmākṣā had told before, has now come about just as (she had told). See my city, and make the men (i.e. its citizens) blessed. O you younger brother of Rāma, O you very intelligent one, purify our entire family."

62-67. Saying so, he mounted (Śatrughna) on an elephant very bright like the moon, also (put up) Puṣkala (on the elephant), and he himself also mounted (upon the elephant). At that time, the sound of musical instruments like the kettle-drums, impelled by the great king Sumada, pervaded (the atmosphere). Maidens, employed by the lord (i.e. Sumada), having come to the great lord of kings viz. Śatrughna whose feet were waited upon by Indra and others, felicitated him with the heaps of pearls which were (held by them) in their hands. Having slowly come into the city, he who was joyfully glorified by people, reached the house that was decorated with ornamental arches etc. King Śatrughna, accompanied by the gem of the horse, graced by heroes, and led by king (Sumada) reached the house. Having honoured Rāma's younger brother with materials of worship etc. (Sumada) offered everything to the intelligent Rāmacandra.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Cyavana Episode

Śeṣa said :

1. Then, the king, the best among men, longing to listen to the excellent account of Rāma, spoke to Śatrughna who was pleased with the reception.

Sumada said :

2-5. I hope Rāma who is the crest-jewel of the entire world, who has descended (on the earth) to protect his devotees, and who has favoured me, is happy. The people who with the cups of their eyes constantly drink the lotus in the form of Rāma's face and are delighted, are blessed in the city (of Ayodhyā). O you best among men, O you very intelligent one, my entire wealth and all my family, land etc. and my possessions are blessed. Formerly, Kāmākṣā, tender with kindness, showed favour to me. (She told me:) "With your family you will see the lotus-like face of Rāma."

6. When that hero, the best king Sumada spoke this, he told him all the exalted virtues of the lord of Raghus (i.e. Rāma).

7-11. Having stayed there for three nights, (Śatrughna) the younger brother of the lord of Raghus, and the highly intelligent one, decided to proceed further with the king. Then knowing that, Sumada, with the approval of the great king Śatrughna and of Puṣkala, quickly consecrated his son on the kingdom (i.e. consecrated his son as the king). The highly intelligent one gave garments, many jewels and various kinds of riches to the servants of Śatrughna. With his highly wise ministers, foot-soldiers, horses, elephants, good horses and crores of chariots he (i.e. Śatrughna) started to go (i.e. proceed). Śatrughna, having the valour of Raghunātha, then went smiling along the way with that Sumada, the holder of a bow (i.e. the archer).

12-15. The best horse after having reached the bank of Payoṣṇī went (further). All the warriors, the protectors of the horse, went after him. (Śatrughna) saw various hermitages of sages doing excellent penance. Everywhere he heard the excellent qualities of Raghunātha (being narrated by the sages). (The sages said:)

"Here goes the intelligent horse protected by Viṣṇu, so also repeatedly protected by monkeys devoted to Viṣṇu (i.e. Rāma), followed by excellent horses." The great lord (i.e. Śatrughna) hearing everywhere these words of (i.e. uttered by) the sages with feelings saturated with devotion (for Rāma), was pleased.

16-22. And he saw a holy hermitage crowded with people and (other) beings, removing by the sounds of Veda the entire inauspicious things (i.e. sins) of people that heard (the sounds of the Veda), purifying the entire atmosphere by means of the smoke of the perpetual domestic fire, and looking charming due to the sacrificial posts (put up) for the many sacrifices of (i.e. performed by) the excellent sages. There in that hermitage cows fit to be looked after, were looked after by a lion; in it the rats did not dig a hole through the fear of a cat; snakes constantly played with peacocks and mongooses. There (i.e. in the hermitage) elephants and lions, having become friends, always stay. The black antelopes (living) there showed interest in eating the rice growing wild, and being protected by groups of sages were not afraid of death. The cows there had udders like pitchers, and their bodies were like that of Nandinī (the daughter of the divine cow, Surabhi). They purified the earth with the dust raised by their feet (i.e. hoofs). Seeing the sages having sacred fuel fit for the religious rites in their lotus-like hands (Śatrughna said to) the all knowing minister of Rāma, viz. Sumati:

Śatrughna said :

23-25. O Sumati, of which sage is the place that appears before (us), that is resorted to by beings having no enmity (for one another), and is crowded with hosts of sages? I shall hear the account of the sages, and by means of their accounts and descriptions etc. I shall render my body pure.

Having heard this statement of the magnanimous Śatrughna, the minister of the intelligent Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) told him:

Sumati said :

26-29. Know this to be Cyavana's hermitage adorned by great ascetics, crowded with beings free from enmity and full of the wives of the sages; and he who is the great sage (viz. Cyavana)

obtained a portion of the oblation of the two physicians of gods (i.e. the Aśvins). He broke (down) the pride of Indra in the sacrifice of the Self-born (Brahmā). Nobody obtains the prowess of the great sage, rich with the power of penance and having the image of the Vedas.

(Śatrughna) Rāma's younger brother, having heard the things about the eminent Cyavana, asked everything including the breaking of Indra's pride (i.e. Indra's humiliation) etc.

Śatrughna said:

30. When did he receive the portion of the oblation of the two wonder-workers (i.e. the two Aśvins) in the rows of gods? What did the lord of gods do at the sacrifice performed by Brahmā?

Sumati said:

31-34. There was a famous sage named Bhṛgu in the family of Brahmā. Once in the evening he had gone (out) to collect sacred fuel. At that time a very strong demon, Damana (by name), came there and uttered these very fearful words: "Where is that so-called sage? Where is that innocent lady?" He, full of anger, repeatedly uttered these words. At that time, Fire, realising that danger was imminent from the demon, showed him the praiseworthy, pregnant wife of him (i.e. of Bhṛgu).

35-36. The demon snatched her who was crying like an osprey: "O Bhṛgu, protect me, O (my) lord, protect me; O (my) husband, O treasure of penance, protect me." The wicked one took her who was speaking like this and who was afflicted, and went out. He admonished that chaste (wife) of Bhṛgu with the strokes of (i.e. with abusive) words.

37-39. Then from her uterus the foetus of blazing eyes, afflicted with great fear, and as it were the fire born of (her) body, fell (out). He said: "O you of a wicked mind, do not go; be reduced to ashes quickly. Having touched the chaste lady, you will not obtain bliss." He, who was thus addressed, fell down with his body reduced to ashes. The mother, who was agitated, took the child and went to the hermitage (of her husband).

40-41. Bhṛgu, knowing all that was done by Fire, was full of

anger, and cursed (him): "O you who gave a suggestion to the wicked enemy, be one who consumes everything." Then Fire who was (thus) cursed, was afflicted with grief and seized his feet. (He said to Bhṛgu:) "O lord, ocean of compassion, O you highly intelligent one, (please) favour me. I told a lie through fear, and not through malice against (my) preceptor (i.e. you). Therefore, O you crest-jewel of piety, be kind to me."

42. Then (Bhṛgu) favoured him. (He said:) "You will consume everything, (yet will be) pure." Thus the ascetic, wet with (i.e. soft due to) compassion, spoke to him.

43-45. The brāhmaṇa (i.e. Bhṛgu) who was very auspicious, who was pure, having darbhas in his hands, performed, according to the rule, the ceremony performed at the birth of a child, of the son that had fallen from the uterus. All the sages called him 'Cyavana' on account of his having fallen (from the uterus). Gradually he grew like the moon of the first night (of the month, waxing) in the bright half of (the month).

46-48. Surrounded by all his disciples who were endowed with the power of penance, he went to Revā, the only purifier of the world, to practise penance. The great one, having gone there, practised penance for a myriad of years. On his shoulders grew the kiṁśuka (trees) adorned with anthills. The eager deer, having come (to him) scratched (their bodies) against his body. Enveloped (i.e. engaged) in irresistible penance, he was aware of nothing.

49-56. Sometime lord Manu got ready for a pilgrimage. He, surrounded by a great army, went to Revā. There, having bathed in the great river, having gratified the manes and the deities, he gave gifts to brāhmaṇas to please Viṣṇu. His beautiful daughter (adorned) with ornaments of heated gold and accompanied by (her) friends, moved here and there in the forest. There she saw an anthill adorned with a great tree. She (also) saw some lustre, free from twinkling and winking (i.e. steadfast). Having gone there, she pierced it with small sticks. Seeing blood flowing (from it), the king's daughter was sad and extremely unhappy. Covered with the sin, she told about it neither to her mother, nor to her father. She, afflicted with fear, grieved to herself. O king, the earth quacked, and a meteor fell from the sky. All the directions became smoky, and the sun was surrounded by a halo. Then the

king's horses perished, and many elephants died. Wealth, along with gems, perished; and there was feud among (the king's men) themselves.

57-59. Seeing that, the king (i.e. Manu) was afraid, and was slightly dejected. He asked his men. (He said:) "Somebody has wronged the sage?" Successively having come to know that act of his daughter, (and) being extremely unhappy, he went there with his army and horses. Having seen the treasure of penance endowed with great penance, he praised and pleased him (and said): "O best sage, be kind to me."

60-65. The best sage, having great penance, being pleased with him, said (to him): "Know that all that mischief is done by your daughter. O great king, your daughter burst (my) eyes. Profuse blood flew (out). (Though) aware of it, she did not say (anything) to you. Therefore, O great king, you should give her to me (i.e. in marriage) according to the proper rite. Then the calamity will cease. There is no doubt about it." Hearing that the king was grieved and gave his daughter, endowed with youth, beauty and good character, to the blind (sage). When the king gave the lotus-eyed daughter (in marriage to the sage), all the evil things caused by the sage's wrath, subsided. The king, grieved and full of compassion, having given his daughter to the sage, the treasure of penance, again went (back) to his city.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Cyavana's Penance and Enjoyments

Sumati said :

1-7. Then the sage went to his hermitage with Manu's daughter, his wife, endowed with yoga (abstraction), and with all sins destroyed was happy. That daughter of Manu, served, like her family-deity giving desired objects, her excellent husband who was blind, whose prowess was lost due to old age, and was excellent due to having intelligence like Viṣṇu. She who knew (his) internal thoughts, served her dear husband who was a trea-

sure of penance, and the charming one became very much delighted like Śacī (i.e. Indrāṇī) diligent in serving Indra. The beautiful, slim princess, endowed with all (good) characteristics, and subsisting on fruits, roots and water, served his feet. She was always eagerly engaged in obeying his words (i.e. orders) and in serving him, and engaged in the welfare of all beings she spent her time. Having given up (i.e. free from) desires, religious hypocrisy, hatred, greed, sin and pride, and always careful and diligent, she pleased Cyavana. O great king, having, in this way, served him for a thousand years with words and physical acts, she entertained a desire.

8-9. Once the two physicians of gods (i.e. the two Aśvins) came to the sage's hermitage. Having well honoured them with a good reception, she worshipped them. The two handsome (Aśvins), with their minds pleased due to the worship, respectful offering, and water for washing the feet, offered by the daughter of Śaryāti, affectionately said to the beautiful lady: "Ask for a boon".

10-16a. The princess (Sukanyā), the best among the intelligent, seeing the two physicians of gods pleased, made up her mind to ask for a boon. Knowing the intention of her husband, the princess said (to them): "O gods, if you are pleased then give (back) the sight of my husband." Having heard these charming words of Sukanyā, and having observed her chastity, the best among the physicians said: "If your husband will give us a portion of (the oblations offered to) gods, then we shall now make his eyes endowed with a clear sight." Cyavana too said "yes" (i.e. agreed to) giving a portion to the granters of the boon. Then the Aśvins, being delighted, said to (him), the best among those who practise penance: "Go down into this pond fashioned by siddhas." Thus told by the Aśvins, he who was seized by old age, and (on whose body) the veins had stretched, got into the pond; the Aśvins also got down into it.

16b-20. Three men, very handsome and dear to women, came up (from the pond). They had golden necklaces and ear-rings (on their bodies). Their forms were similar and they had put on excellent garments. Not (being able) to recognize her husband, the chaste lady surrendered herself to the Aśvins. Pointing out her husband to her, and being pleased with her chastity, they took

leave of the sage and went to heaven in an aeroplane. They had a hope of a portion being kept for them when a sacrifice was performed. After a long time, he, oppressed with passion of love, tenderly spoke, with words faltering due to love, to her who was lean and emaciated due to practising a vow.

21-24. "O beautiful young lady, I am today pleased with the great service done with exclusive devotion in your heart by you giving me respect. You did not look upon as praiseworthy (i.e. you did not care for) your body—that is very much loved by human beings—in wasting (i.e. when you wasted) it for my sake in serving me. Look, I shall give you all those favours which have been won by me, engaged in my own duty, and which are free from fear and grief, and which are agreeable due to your serving me at every step, from the Lord by means of my concentration, knowledge and abstract meditation. Then what about other objects created and falling from the stretched out eyebrow of the Lord of wide strides? You are endowed with supernatural powers; enjoy riches obtained by your righteousness, divine and difficult to be obtained by men due to displeasure of kings." Having looked at him, who was speaking like this, proficient in the lore of the entire wonderful power of women, she understood it; and with her face smiling and glittering due to her looking (at him) with a little bashfulness, she spoke in words perturbed due to respect and love.

Sukanyā said :

25-26. O best brāhmaṇa, O my lord, O mighty one, I know this is indeed achieved in the case of you, the lord of infallible wonderful power; I told you about the right time: Let there be coition with you, the great one; for chaste women a child is an excellence. Tell (me) in this case in accordance with the teaching (of the sacred texts), the act due to which you with a desire to enjoy me have been extremely emaciated. That would be accomplished. O you, being determined be kind to me, the bold one. Tell me what is proper about the abode of the lord.

Sumati said :

27-36. Desiring (to do what was) dear to his beloved, Cyavana resorted to abstract meditation; O king, then only he fashi-

oned an aeroplane going at the will (of the occupant). It yielded all desires; it was charming; it was endowed with all gems; it had the collection of all objects; it was furnished with jewelled pillars; it was endowed with divine beds; it was comfortable in all seasons; it was adorned with variegated pieces of silken cloth and banners; so also with garlands and variegated wreaths and with sweetly humming bees; it was bright with various kinds of garments of silk and fine garments; it was beautiful with mats put separately in each one of the residences one above the other, and also with beds, fans etc. It was adorned at various places with craft-works done there. It was furnished with a slab of great emeralds and altars of corals. It shone with the threshold of corals at the doors. It had adamant door-panels. It was resorted to by (i.e. it had) golden pitchers on the sapphire-tops. It was furnished with variegated canopies with necklaces hanging from walls fashioned with bright best rubies. It had the cooing (sound) of the groups of swans and pigeons, who having climbed up (the walls) again and again found them to be artificial. It had been properly furnished with sporting places, causing wonder to oneself.

37-54. He, who knew the hearts of all beings, said to her who was thus looking at the abode with a heart that was not very much pleased: "O timid one, after having dived into this pond, get into this aeroplane." She, whose eyes were like lotuses, who had worn a dusty garment, whose hair was tied into a braid, whose body was covered with dust and mud, whose breasts were variegated, gladly entered that auspicious pond of water. In the lake lived one hundred and ten damsels in a mansion. All of them were young. They, having the fragrance of lotuses, saw her. Seeing her, the damsels got up, and with the palms of their hands joined said: "We are your servants, order us what we should do." O you who respect (others), they having bathed that high-minded lady with a costly bath, gave her new, spotless silken garments, and excellent, bright and costly ornaments. They gave her food possessing all excellences and drink like nectar and spirituous liquor. Then (she saw) in a mirror herself with a wreath and with a spotless garment. The maidens performed an expiatory rite averting an evil with great reverence for her. Her form was adorned with a costly necklace,

and ornament for the neck; her form had an ornament on her breasts, bracelets and golden anklets that were jingling; she was adorned with a golden girdle, (decked) with many jewels, below her loins. Her brows were charming; her teeth were fine; her eyes with white loving glances, vied with the calyx of a lotus. Due to dark hair her face was bright. When she remembered her dear husband who was liked by the sages, she was there with the damsels where the lord of sages remained. (Seeing) herself in front of her husband and surrounded by a thousand damsels, and having heard about his knowledge of deep meditation, she was apprehensive. Then he, the devoted one and the killer of his enemies, put her who had taken a pure (i.e. a purifying) bath, who was freshly shining, who had her own (i.e. original, charming) form, whose charming breasts were covered, who was surrounded by a thousand vidyādharīs, and who had put on excellent garments, into the aeroplane. In that aeroplane, he, the very handsome one, with his greatness undiminished, accompanied by his dear wife, and with his body served by the vidyādharīs, shone like the moon in the sky, surrounded by stars, and with the multitudes of white lotuses blooming. He, the defender of those women and resembling Kubera, and praised by siddhas, enjoyed for a long time, in the troughs on the lord of the family-mountains, the place of the enjoyment of the eight guardians of quarters, charming with wind (i.e. the breezes), the friend of Cupid, and having charming sounds due to the falling into them of the celestial river. Pleased with the lady (i.e. Sukanyā) he enjoyed at (different places like) Vaiśrambhaka, the celestial garden Nandana, Puṣpabhadraka, Mānasa and Caitrarathya.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Horse Goes to Cyavana's Hermitage

Sumati said:

1-4. Thus sporting with her everywhere on the earth, he did not notice the years counted in hundreds that rolled by. Then

the brāhmaṇa, being aware of the lapse of his time, and realising that his excellent dear wife was full of (i.e. fully satisfied with) her desires (being satisfied), returned to his best hermitage which was situated on the bank of Payoṣṇī and which was crowded with foeless beings and people and resorted to by beasts. He, of an excellent penance, lived there with his disciples, endowed with (the knowledge of) the Vedas; and with his pair of feet being served (by his disciples etc.) everyday, he practised a great (i.e. severe) penance.

5-8. Then, sometime Śaryāti desired to perform a sacrifice in honour of deities. At that time he sent his servants to fetch Cyavana. Being invited by them, he, of a great penance went there along with Sukanyā, his religiously wedded wife, and greatly devoted to (proper) conduct. (The king) of a great fame, saw the best sage—a man with sun-like lustre—by the side of the sage's wife i.e. of his daughter. The king who did not give her blessings and whose mind was not very much pleased, said to his daughter who had saluted her father (i.e. him).

9-10. "What is this that you have desired to do? You who have abandoned your husband stricken by old age and are resorting to this paramour who is a wayfarer, have deceived the sage saluted by the world. How has your mind wrongly gone down (like this)? This is a family-bane to the child born in the family of the good. Since you, being shameless, are having a paramour, you are degrading the family of your father and of your husband to the lowest position."

11-14a. She, smiling a bright smile, said to her father who was speaking like this: "O father, this is your son-in-law, the son of Bhṛgu." She told her father everything about (Cyavana's) acquisition of youth and handsome form. The father, being amazed and very much pleased, embraced his daughter. A Soma sacrifice was got performed bythe wise one, and he took a cup of Soma. Cyavana, endowed with power, made the Aśvins, who did not (up to then) drink Soma, have a cup of Soma.

14b-22a. Indra, (seeing) the two deities, allowed to sit in the line (of those who were served Soma), (though they were) not fit to be in the line, by Cyavana, took his thunderbolt to kill the best brāhmaṇa (viz. Cyavana). The intelligent sage, seeing Indra, holding his bolt and ready to kill him, gave out a

'hum' sound, and stupefied the arm of Indra. All men saw there Indra, whose arm was stupefied and who like a snake controlled by a charm, was breathing with anger. Indra whose arm was stupefied, praised the sage, the treasure of penance, and giving with a fearless heart a portion (of Soma) to the Aśvins, told (him): "O lord, give an oblation to the Aśvins; O Sir, I shall not prevent it; paradon me, a great sin I have committed." Thus addressed, the sage, the treasure of kindness, quickly gave up his anger. O best of men, at that time Indra's arm became free. Seeing this, all men, with their minds full of curiosity, praised the brāhmaṇa's power, difficult to be obtained (even) by gods etc. Then the great king gave much wealth to brāhmaṇas. He, the tormentor of his enemies, had the bath of purification at the end of the sacrifice.

22b-24a. Since I was asked by you to tell the great rise of Cyavana, endowed with penance and deep meditation, I have told you all about it. Having saluted this (Cyavana), an embodiment of penance, and having received (from him) blessings for victory, send him, along with his wife to the charming sacrifice of Rāma.

Śeṣa said:

24b-30a. When he was talking like this, the horse, imprinting the earth with the marks of his hoofs, due to his wind-like speed, reached the hermitage. He, eating with his mouth the dūrvā-shoots, moved into the great hermitage. When the sages had, after fetching darbhas, gone to the river to bathe, Śatrughna, the tormentor of enemies and liked by heroes, reached the extremely beautiful hermitage of Cyavana. The brave one (i.e. Śatrughna), having gone into the hermitage, saw Cyavana, being the (very) embodiment of penance, near Sukanyā; and announcing his own name, saluted his feet: "I am Śatrughna, the brother of Rāma and the protector of the (sacrificial) horse. For the appeasement of great sins, I am saluting both of you."

30b-39. Hearing these words, the best of the sages said: "O Śatrughna, O best among the heroes, may you attain prosperity. You who are protecting the (horse of the) sacrifice, will attain great fame. O brāhmaṇas, note the wonder; even

that Rāma, by remembering whose name men having committed great sins and having had sexual intercourse with others' wives, destroy their sins and the free souls engaged in remembering whose name attain salvation, is performing the (horse-) sacrifice. Due to the touch of the dust rising from his lotus-like feet, the better-half of Gautama became at once one having an enamouring form. She (i.e. Ahalyā, Gautama's wife), full of love, by meditating upon that form of Rāma burnt all the heaps of her sins and became beautiful. By seeing his charming form in the battle (even) demons reached his changeless form. Those ascetics who are devoted to meditation, on meditating upon him have gone, being fully free from the fear of the mundane existence, to the highest position. Blessed I am that today I shall see Rāma's charming face, the corners of the eyes of whom resemble the cloud-water, which has a fine nose, beautiful eye-brows and which is well high. That is (really) the tongue that respectfully utters Rāma's name. The one other than this is like the tongue of a serpent.

40-46. Today I have obtained the merit of my penance; today my desires are fulfilled because I shall see Rāmacandra's face difficult (to be seen even) by Brahmā etc. I shall purify my body with the dust of his feet; I shall purify my tongue by means of very wonderful talk (with him)." With tears flowing and his words faltering he said "Go", when love for Rāma had increased by remembering Rāma's feet. In front of the sages, he, with his eyes full of tears said: "O Śrī Rāmacandra, O best among the Raghus, O you embodiment of righteousness, O you who take pity on your devotees, emancipate me from the worldly existence." Firm in his meditation he did not feel alien there, when he talked like this before the sages. Śatrughna said to the sage: "O lord, make very pure our best sacrifice by the dust of your feet. It is the great fortune of the lord of Raghus, that he, of mighty arms dwells in your heart". Thus addressed, and very much honoured by all people Cyavana, with his attendants and surrounded by all fires, and floating in the deep pool of joy, went there (near Śatrughna).

47. Seeing that devotee of Rāma, coming there on foot, Hanūmān, full of modesty, said these words to Śatrughna:

48. "O lord, if you tell me, I shall carry this very great and

extremely handsome devotee of Rāma, the best sage to your city."

49. Hearing these important words of the warrior-monkey, Śatrughna, ordered Hanūmat: "Go, take the sage (to the city)."

50. Hanūmān put the sage on his back, and, (moving) like Wind going everywhere, took the sage along with his family.

51-54. Seeing the sage, who had arrived (at Ayodhyā), Rāma, the best among the intelligent, being pleased and agitated through affection, offered him respectful offering and water for washing his feet etc. (Rāma said:) "Now I am blessed due to having seen you, the best sage. This sacrifice of me, which is equipped with all requisites has been purified." Hearing these words, the best sage Cyavana, extremely delighted, and with his body horripilated due to love, said: "O lord, O great king, the worshipping of fire by you, the knower of Veda, and the protector of the path of dharma, is but proper."

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Arrival of a Brāhmaṇa Ascetic

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Having seen the power of the penance of Cyavana, which was inconceivable, Śatrughna praised the brāhmaṇic penance which alone was adored in the world. (He said to himself:) 'Oh! see the perfection of abstract meditation in the best brāhmaṇa who just in a moment fashioned the aeroplane difficult to have. What a great disparity is there between the complete attainment of pleasure on the part of the sages of pure hearts and the desire for enjoyment on the part of human beings without the power of penance!'

4-7. Saying thus to himself, Śatrughna stayed in Cyavana's hermitage for a while, drank water and enjoyed comfort. The great horse, having the speed of wind, having drunk the water of (the river) Payoṣṇī having auspicious water, went along the way. Seeing the horse's exit, the soldiers went after him; some

with elephants, some with foot-soldiers, some with chariots and some with horses. Accompanied by the best minister Sumati, Śatrughna followed him in a chariot drawn by a horse.

8-14. The horse that was moving on, reached the city called Ratnātaṭa belonging to a king called Vimala and crowded with happy and rich people. Having heard from his servant that the excellent horse of Rāma along with all soldiers had reached the vicinity of the city, he, along with seventy elephants having the moon's colour, myriads of horses, and a thousand chariots bright like gold, went forth to (greet) Śatrughna. Having saluted Śatrughna, and all great warriors that had come there, and having offered him riches, treasure and wealth and his entire kingdom to him, he stood before him and said: "What (should) I do?" The great king too with his arms closely embraced him who had bowed down to his feet and having entrusted his kingdom to his son and surrounded by many archers, went with him. Having heard Rāma's name, pleasing to the ears, all of them saluted the horse and offered him riches and great wealth.

15-20. With great joy Śatrughna honoured the king; and then, along with his army went after the horse. When he was thus going, he saw on his way an excellent mountain, which was adorned with crystal, golden and silver tablelands, which resounded with water-streams, the land of which had various minerals, which was adorned with good minerals like red chalk and colour of lac, where siddha-damsels having no fear from anywhere sported with siddhas, where gandharvas, celestial nymphs and nāgas were sporting with pleasure. Seeing the mountain served by cool breezes (that had been) in contact with the ripples of Gaṅgā, and charmingly graced with the sound of lutes, swans and parrots, Śatrughna, with his mind full of amazement on having seen it, said this (i.e. these words) to Sumati:

21-22. "What is this best among the great mountains? It astonishes my mind. This wonderful (mountain) having excellent tablelands of abundant silver, shines on my way. What deities dwell here? Is it the sporting ground of gods that excites my mind with the heaps of riches?"

23-37a. Hearing these words, Sumati who had set his heart on the lotus-like feet of Rāma, the abode of virtues which will be mentioned, then said: "O king, this is the mountain (called)

Nīla, which shines in front (of us) with great beautiful peaks and crystal tops on all sides. Those mean men, those sinful men, engaged in adultery, who do not realise the hosts of virtues of Viṣṇu, do not see this mountain. So also those men who having controversies and doubt in their minds, do not care for the way of conduct well settled by the good arising from the śrutis and the smṛtis, those who sell indigo, and those who sell lac do not see this (mountain). A brāhmaṇa who drinks spirituous liquor and sells ghee etc., so also he who would not give (in marriage) his daughter endowed with beauty to a man of good character and belonging to good family (do not see this mountain). (Similarly) a man who censures his wife coming from a good family and having a good character, who himself eats sweet (dishes, but) does not give them to his kinsmen (does not see this mountain). (In the same way) a man who discriminates in (i.e. while serving) food meant for brāhmaṇas, and the wicked one who does not offer mixture of rice and peas or rice boiled in milk to a suppliant (do not see this mountain). Those who torment guests (already) tormented by the sun's heat etc. (do not see this mountain). O great king, those who enjoy in the atmosphere and who are traitors, so also those who are averse to Raghunātha do not see (this mountain). This beautiful, auspicious, best mountain, adorned by Puruṣottama purifies all of us by its sight. Here lives Puruṣottama whose feet are honoured by the crowns of gods, who deserves to be seen by the auspicious ones, who grants religious merit, whom the śrutis saying 'Not this, not this' (i.e. this is not Brahman, that is not Brahman . . .) do not know, the dust of whose feet is sought after by gods like Indra and is extremely difficult to be secured, whom the wise know by means of the perfect statements of the Upaniṣads—that Puruṣottama along with Śrī lives on this Nīla-mountain. O king, having climbed it, having worshipped it with merit etc., and having eaten the offering of eatables presented to it, one becomes four-handed.

37b-48a. In this regard also they mention this ancient account. O great king, listen to it which is full of all wonder: What happened to king Ratnagrīva along with his family? (How) he obtained four hands etc. difficult to be got (even) by gods and demons? O great king, there was a city named Kāñcī,

well known in the worlds. It was rich with great people and their attendants, and (had in it) army and horses (or elephants). In it lived best brāhmaṇas who were very much engaged in the six duties,[1] who were devoted to the welfare of all beings, and who hankered after devotion to Rāma. The kṣatriyas were fighters, and never fled away in a battle. They were averse to others' wives and to plotting maliciously against others. The vaiśyas conducted themselves well with lending money, agriculture and trade. They always took delight in (i.e. were greatly devoted to) the feet of Raghunātha. The śūdras passed their nights and days in serving brāhmaṇas etc. With the tips of their tongues they always uttered (the word) 'Rāma, Rāma'. No common man committed a sin (even) mentally. Charity, pity, restraint and truth always prevailed there. No sinless person even uttered words harming others. People did not show greed for the wealth of others, nor did they commit any sin. In this way, O great king, the subjects were looked after by Ratnagrīva. The king, free from greed, accepted only one sixth part[2] (of the income of each person), and nothing else (i.e. more). In this way, the king who righteously protected his subjects and enjoyed all pleasures, passed many years.

48b-58a. Once he said this (i.e. these words) to Viśālākṣī, his chaste and religiously wedded wife: "O Viśālākṣī, sons able to protect the subjects have been born (to us). I have many attendants free from distress. My elephants resemble mountains, and my horses are (swift) like the wind. I always have chariots yoked with great horses. Due to the grace of great Viṣṇu I have nothing wanting, but (still) there is one desire in my mind. O you extremely beautiful one, I have not as yet visited a great holy place capable of putting a stop to a stay in the womb (i.e. to birth) and adorned by Viṣṇu. I have become old with my body having wrinkles and grey hair. With reverence I shall resort to a charming holy place. That man who only fills his belly (i.e. eats to live) during his life and does not worship Viṣṇu, is said to be a bull. Therefore, O auspicious dear one,

1. Ṣaṭkarma—The six duties enjoined on a brāhmaṇa : 1. Reading (especially the Vedas), 2. Instructing, 3. Sacrifice. 4. Conducting a sacrifice, 5. Giving, 6. Receiving (gifts).

2. Ṣaṣṭhāṁśa—Cf. Manusmṛti, 7. 131ff.

with my family I shall go on a pilgrimage after having entrusted the entire responsibility of the kingdom to my son." Having resolved like this in the evening he, meditating upon Viṣṇu at night, saw a dream (and saw in it) a brāhmaṇa—an excellent ascetic. The great king, having got up in the morning and having offered the morning prayers etc., happily sat in the assembly with his ministers.

58b-65a. Just then he saw a brāhmaṇa ascetic of an emaciated body, wearing matted hair, bark-garments and a small piece of cloth worn over the privities and holding a staff in his hands, and with his body rendered auspicious due to visits to many holy places. The king of mighty arms, on seeing him, saluted him with (i.e. by bowing) his head. The king, with his mind pleased, offered him a respectful oblation and water for washing his feet. He asked (i.e. said to) the celebrated brāhmaṇa who had rested and was seated comfortably: "O lord, my bodily sin has today gone (away) due to having seen you. Great men go to the houses of the helpless ones through regard for them, to protect them. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, now tell me, an old man, as to which god would bring about the end of (living in) the womb (i.e. the end of birth and death), and which holy place would be capable of (doing so). (People like) you move everywhere, are the greatest, are devoted to concentration and meditation and have become spotless and meritorious due to having plunged (i.e. bathed) in all the sacred places. O you, who well know (about) all the holy places, favour me and tell me in detail, who am listening and having faith."

The brāhmaṇa said:

65b-82. O best king, I shall tell you what you asked me about visits to holy places. By the favour of which deity would womb i.e. birth be kept off? That Śrī Rāmacandra who destroys the mundane existence, should be resorted to. He, the lord alone, called Puruṣottama, should be worshipped. I have seen many (holy) cities destroying all sins. Ayodhyā, Sarayū, Tāpī, so also the excellent Haridvāra, Avanti, Vimalā, Kāñcī and Revā going (i.e. flowing) into the ocean; so also Gokarṇa, (the holy place) called Hāṭaka, destroying crores of murders; so also the great mountain called Mallika, giver of salvation to those men

who see it and where on the bodies the water would become dark or pure. I have seen this holy place which removes sin. I have seen Dvāravatī, which is resorted to by gods and demons, where flows the auspicious Gomatī, having Brahmanic water, where sleep is called absorption of the mind and death is said to be final liberation, and living where Kali would never be powerful. Where (i.e. there) the stones are marked with discs, and men also hold discs; beasts, insects, birds etc.—all have discs on their bodies; where the three-strided one (i.e. Viṣṇu), the only guardian of the worlds, would live (i.e. lives). Due to my great religious merit I saw that city. I saw Vārāṇasī which is made his abode by Viśvanātha and where they teach the hymn that emancipates (a person) and is called Brahman, having died where insects, moths, bees, beafts and others, and (even) gods, abandoning the pleasure due to the contact with their (i.e. as a result of their) deeds and overcoming grief go to Kailāsa. (Then there) is the holy place called Maṇikarṇi, in which the river flowing to the north cuts off the bondage of the mundane existence even of the sinners. All (of them) having matted hair, ear-rings, and adorned with serpents and excellent ones wearing the hide of an elephant live with their grief perished. There (the god) called Kālabhairava controls Yama. Lord Yama holding the (chastising) rod, does not talk about human beings. Kāśī, marked by (the presence of) Viśveśvara, was seen by me. O king, I also saw many holy places; but that great wonder which I saw on the mountain called Nīla, in the presence of Viṣṇu, was seen at no other place.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

A Miraculous Happening

The brāhmaṇa said:

1-10. O king, listen to the account (of the events) that took place on the mountain Nīla, believing which men go to the eternal Brahman. I who was wandering, went to that mountain

called Nīla, the courtyard of which is repeatedly washed by the water of the ocean. There, on the top of the mountain, I saw bhillas, holding bows, having four arms and with their fatigue removed by eating roots and fruits. Then immediately a great doubt arose in my mind: 'How (is it that) these men are having four arms and they are holding bows and arrows? Their forms appear to be (like those) who have conquered their souls and live in Vaikuṇṭha. How have they obtained what is difficult to be obtained even by Brahmā and others?' They, with their hands shining with conches, discs, maces, śārṅga (bows) and lotuses, and with their bodies covered with sylvan garlands, and resembling the devotees of Viṣṇu were near (me). With my mind full of doubt I asked them at that time, O king, (I said:) "Who are you? How have you obtained this condition of having four hands?" Then they laughed much and said to me: "This brāhmaṇa does not know the wonderful importance of piṇḍa." Hearing this, I said (to them): "What is piṇḍa? To whom is it given? Tell it to me. O you most religious ones, having bodies with four hands." Then having heard my words, the magnanimous ones told me the entire account of the acquisition of four hands etc.

The kirātas said:

11-17. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the account: A child from amongst us everyday sported, eating jambu fruits etc. Once while playing and being surrounded by children on all sides he climbed up a beautiful peak of the mountain (Nīla). (The boy said:) "There I saw a wonderful temple of a deity. It was decked with the gems like emeralds and had golden walls. Like the sun it tore off (i.e. dispelled) the line (i.e. mass) of darkness with its lustre. Seeing it I was amazed (and thought): 'What is this? Whose abode is this? Going (into it) I shall find out whether the abode belonged to the great ones.' Thinking like this, I, due to my great luck, went inside the house. There I saw the lord of gods, saluted by gods and demons, and shining with crowns, necklaces, armlets and neck ornaments etc., so also having extremely pure and charming ear-rings, and lotus-like feet with bees intoxicated with the fragrance of tulasī (-blossoms).

18-24. (I saw the lord) the rich image (of the lord) whose

feet were served by a conch, a disc, a mace, a bow, a lotus which were embodied, and who was well served by Nārada and others. (There) some sang, danced and laughed; they pleased the great, very wonderful lord who alone was saluted by the entire world." O sage, my child seeing Viṣṇu, went there. O king, gods, after having majestically offered worship with incense etc., having made an offering of eatables for the dear (lord) of Śrī, so also having waved the lights, went, expecting his grace through great respect for him, to their own abodes. Due to the great luck (of the boy,) he got a particle of boiled rice that had fallen there, and that was difficult to be got by Brahmadeva and other gods and men. The child ate it; then he saw the image; and the very handsome child had four arms. Then we repeatedby looked at the boy who had come home, who had got four arms and who had held a conch, a disc etc.

25-30. We asked him: "What is this wonder that has taken place?" Then the boy told us all the great wonder: "I had gone to the eastern peak (of the mountain). There I saw the lord of gods. There I found the charming particle of boiled rice from the offering made to the deity. Just due to eating it, I have now become four-armed, and am amazed." Having heard those words of the boy, we, who were at once amazed, also saw the god, very difficult to be obtained. We ate there food etc. full of all tastes. Then due to the lord's grace we became four-armed. O best among the Kurus, go and have a sight of the lord. O brāhmaṇa, eating the particle of boiled rice (from the offering) you (will) be four-armed. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you about the wonder, about which you had asked me.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Ratnagrīva Goes on a Pilgrimage to Puruṣottama

The brāhmaṇa said:

1-5. Having heard the highly amazing words of the bhillas and thinking that it was a great wonder, I was delighted. Having

bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean, with my body rendered auspicious, I climbed up the peak, variegated with gems and rubies. O great king, there I saw the god saluted by gods and others. I had become blessed by saluting him and by having eaten the food (from the offering). Due to having seen the lord Viṣṇu, I obtained the four-armed condition, marked with a conch, a disc etc. (and) did not enter a womb again (i.e. did not have rebirth). O king, you too quickly go to the mountain called Nīla, and make yourself blessed and free from the agony of remaining in the womb (i.e. being born).

6. Having heard these words of the intelligent best brāhmaṇa, he, with his body delighted, asked the sage, the manner in which the pilgrimage (was to be undertaken).

The king said:

7-8. O good one, O best brāhmaṇa, O sinless one, you have nicely described to me the greatness of the lord which destroys the sins of those who listen to it. Tell me the mode of the pilgrimage, along with (i.e. as told in) the scriptures. By which mode would men obtain the entire fruit?

The brāhmaṇa said:

9-16. O king listen, I shall tell you the auspicious mode of pilgrimage by means of which the god saluted by gods and demons, is obtained. Even if one's body is wrinkled (and) grey or one is endowed with youth, one should, realising death to be insurmountable, submit oneself to Hari. One should put one's heart into narration about him, listening about him, saluting and worshipping him, and not anywhere else like woman etc. Realising that everything is perishable and momentary and very painful, a man who somehow greatly worships Viṣṇu who is beyond birth and death, to whom devotion is dear, and who is infallible, (even) through anger, desire of carnal gratification, fear, hatred or greed, does not experience unhappiness. That Viṣṇu is reached through the sinless contact with the good. That which the good, with their attachment ceased and free from desire and greed, say, keeps one away from the worldly existence. Due to their grace men become free from unhappiness. At the holy places is found

a good man highly devoted to Rāmacandra, whose sight is the fire burning the heaps of men's sins.

17-18a. Therefore, a man, afraid of the mundane existence, should always visit the holy places, having holy water and adorned with the rows of good people. The holy places, properly visited, destroy sins.

18b-20. O best king, listen to the mode (of visiting them). First a man should create in himself detachment from his wife and (other) members of his family. Knowing (all) that to be unreal, he should mentally recollect Viṣṇu. Having gone from there to a distance of a krośa uttering (the name) 'Rāma, Rāma', he should, knowing the (proper) way, having bathed at the holy places, get himself shaved.

21-23. The sins of men visiting holy places, go (with them) resorting to their hair. Therefore, one should get shaved. Then a man, free from greed and having put on the dress proper for a holy place, should hold a staff, a knotless garment, a pitcher and a piece of deer-skin. A special fruit is obtained by those men who go there according to the proper mode. Therefore, with all efforts a man should go through the rite of pilgrimage.

24-30. He whose hands, feet, and mind are well controlled, and who has knowledge, penance and fame, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) the holy places. The very lucky man, saying with his tongue 'O Hari, O Kṛṣṇa, O Hari, O Kṛṣṇa, O you to whom your devotees are dear, O you lord of senses, O you fit to be resorted to, O revered one, O Viṣṇu, protect me from the many (births in) the worldly life,' and mentally recollecting Hari, should visit a holy place on foot. A man going in a vehicle would obtain equal fruit. A man (going to a holy place) with his shoes on would obtain one fourth fruit, and the fruit obtained by killing a cow by going in a vehicle (to which) bulls (are yoked). A usurer obtains one third of the fruit, and a man gets one eighth by serving (i.e. one who serves others gets one eighth part of the religious merit). A man going to a holy place reluctantly would obtain half the fruit. A man should visit holy places properly. His sins perish, especially by observing the (proper) rites. There he should salute the good men by resorting to their feet etc. By that devotion to Hari, Puruṣottama, is secured.

31-33. Thus I have told you in brief and not in detail, the

mode of visiting the holy places. Resorting to this mode go to Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu). Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu) being pleased (with you), O great king, will give (i.e. bring about) devotion to (i.e. in) you, so that in a moment there will be the end of the mundane existence. O best man, having heard the mode of visiting holy places, which destroys all sins, a man is freed from all severe sins.

Sumati said:

34-35. The great one, having heard these words, and with his mind agitated through curiosity to see that holy place, saluted his feet, and ordered his minister, an excellent counsellor. Desiring to visit the sacred place, he decided to take all persons with him. (He said to the minister:)

36-38. "O minister, at my behest, advise all the citizens: 'The best men, who live in my city, who obey my orders, should move with me out of my city to please (Viṣṇu) by seeing the lotus-like feet of (that) Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu); but those sinful men, of irreligious intentions, who, violating my words (i.e. my order) stay (back) in their houses, should be punished with Yama's (i.e. capital) punishment.

39-42a. What is the use of that host of sons or those relatives of bad conduct who have not seen with their eyes Puruṣottama who gives religious merit? The birth of them whose sons and grandsons have not sought the shelter of Viṣṇu, is like that of a herd of pigs eating excretion. O multitudes of my subjects, quickly salute that god who by merely his name (being uttered) is capable of purifying all.'" Such charming words strung together with the virtue of the lord (were uttered by him).

42b-45. His chief minister Uttama, having the true name (i.e. true to his name), was much delighted. Having put (the announcer) on an excellent elephant he proclaimed by means (of the sound) of the drum: "Since it is ordered by the king desiring to go on a pilgrimage, all people should quickly go with the king to the great mountain. They should see there (the lord) having the name Puruṣottama and destroying sins. They should make (i.e. look upon) the entire ocean of the worldly existence (just as) a small puddle."

46-54. The minister, whose fatigue was removed by medita-

tion upon the feet of Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) made such a wonderful proclamation as ordered by the king. Hearing it, all the subjects swimming in the fluid of joy, decided to emancipate themselves by seeing Puruṣottama. Brāhmaṇas, well-dressed and accompanied by their disciples, and giving a blessing rich with boons to the king, then moved out. Brave kṣatriyas holding bows, vaiśyas graceful due to sale of objects, śūdras with their bodies delighted due to crossing the worldly existence, washermen, lovely shoe-makers, kirātas, wall-builders, those who lived on a needle (i.e. tailors), those who dealt in tāmbūla, those who kept musical instruments, those who subsisted on dyeing, the sellers of oil and the sellers of garments, bards, panegyrists, heralds full of delight and narrating old accounts moved out by the king's order. Those who knew the sweet taste of food, those who amused (others) with words causing laughter, magicians, vidyādharas, those who were proficient in intelligence, praising the great king went out of the city.

55-60. The king too, having finished the rites like the morning prayer, brought (there) the brāhmaṇa, the best ascetic and extremely pure. By his order the king went out of the city. The king, followed by people, shone like the moon with stars. He went over just a krośa, and getting himself shaved, held a staff and a water-pot, and wore an auspicious (deer-)hide. He had put on an auspicious dress and was engrossed in meditation on Viṣṇu. He, of a great glory, had his mind free from passion and anger. At that time the musicians repeatedly beat large kettle-drums, large military drums, and played upon other musical instruments, (blew) conches, and (played upon) lutes. People saying, 'O lord of gods, O you who remove grief, O you who are known as Puruṣottama, show me your body', went out (of the city).

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Importance of Gaṇḍakī

Sumati said:

1-11. Then, when the king, accompanied by all people proceeded (to Nīlagiri), he, the great king, heard on the way the narration of Kṛṣṇa, of Govinda, sung by distinguished singers, the devotees of Viṣṇu: "Victory to you, O Mādhava, O you Puruṣottama, who are fit to protect." On his way he visited many holy places and saw their greatness. From the ascetic brāhmaṇa he heard about their greatness. The king, with his mind amused with diverse accounts of Viṣṇu, made the singers sing about Viṣṇu on every path (that he took). The great, intelligent king whose senses were restrained, gave gifts to the helpless, blind, poor, lame persons, as desired by them. Very much devoted to the meditation on Viṣṇu, he, making himself auspicious and free from passion by means of visiting many holy places, went (on the pilgrimage) with his own people. The king while going saw ahead the river which destroys sins, which contained stones marked with discs, which was pure like the sages' minds, which was adorned with many rows of the hosts of many sages, which looked beautiful with the cooings of birds like the cranes. Having seen it, he asked the ascetic, the best brāhmaṇa who knew piety and who was full of the special knowledge of the significance of many holy places: "O lord, what is this auspicious river, resorted to by hosts of sages and making my heart full of joy?" Hearing these words of the intelligent king of kings, the learned (brāhmaṇa) commenced narrating the excellent significance of the holy places.

The brāhmaṇa said:

12-22. O king, this is river Gaṇḍakī which is resorted to by gods and demons, which is overflowing with holy water, and which destroys heaps of sins. She would burn mental sin by means of her sight (i.e. when she is seen), would burn the sin committed by means of deeds by to her touch, and would burn the heap of sins committed through words by means of her water being drunk. Formerly the lord of the beings (i.e. Brahmā),

seeing all the beings to be sinful, produced this (river), the destroyer of many sins from the drops on his cheeks. Those men who, even though they have committed sins, touch this river having holy water and beautiful ripples, do not obtain a womb (i.e. are not reborn). The stones found in this river and adorned with the marks of disc, are actually great forms of the lord himself. A man who would everyday worship the stone with a disc (on it), would never enter the womb of a mother (i.e. would never be reborn). An intelligent man who would (like to) worship the excellent śālagrāma stone, must be of good conduct, and free from religious hypocrisy and greed. A man averse to the wife of someone else and to the wealth of others, should carefully worship the śālagrāma with the disc (on it). The disc born (i.e. found) in Dvārāvatī and the stone born (i.e. found) in Gaṇḍakī, destroy in a moment men's sins earned during a hundred existences. Even if a man would have committed a thousand sins, he would be purified by drinking the water of (i.e. flowing from) a śālagrāma. A brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya or śūdra householder, who is on the path of the Vedas (i.e. behaves according to the Vedic injunctions), would obtain salvation on worshipping a śālagrāma.

23-27. A woman should never worship a śālagrāma. If a woman who is a widow or whose husband is alive, who desires her well-being in heaven, touches through ignorance a śālagrāma, she would, even though she is endowed with good character and virtues, be deprived of her collection of religious merit and would quickly go to hell. The best brāhmaṇas say that flowers dropped from the hands of women on śālagrāma stones are more (powerful) than the fall of Indra's thunderbolt. The sandal offered to the lord by a woman would be like poison, a flower offered by her would be like Indra's thunderbolt, and offering of eatables made by a woman to the lord would resemble the deadly poison. Therefore, a woman should, by all means, avoid touching the (śālagrāma) stone. She who touches it, goes to (and lives in) the hell as long as fourteen Indras (rule).

28-38. Even a man of a sinful conduct or having (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder goes to the highest position on drinking the water of (i.e. flowing from) a śālagrāma stone. Tulasī, sandal, water, a conch, a bell, a disc, a (śālagrāma) stone, a

copper-pot and Viṣṇu's names are the nectar from (Viṣṇu's) feet. The tranquil sages, proficient in all sacred works, say that the nectar from (Viṣṇu's) feet (obtained) through these nine, burns the heaps of sins. O king, all the wonderful religious merit obtained by bathing at all places and by performing all (kinds of) sacrifices is present in each drop (of Gaṇḍakī). Within (a radius of) a yojana a crore of sacred places exist, where the śālagrāma stone is worshipped by best men. Even śālagrāma stones should be worshipped; not the double ones among the even ones. The uneven ones also should be worshipped; but not the triple among the uneven ones. (A śālagrāma with) a disc is (found) in Dvārāvatī, so also in Gaṇḍakī. Gaṅgā flows into the ocean where the two meet. The dry ones make man bereft of (long) life, prosperity and power. Therefore the glossy and of a charming form give prosperity. A man who desires a (long) life, so also a man longing for wealth (who) worships (them), obtains all (bliss) in the next world and in this world. O king, it is (only in the case) of a lucky person that he has Viṣṇu's auspicious name in his mouth, and the śālagrāma stone near him in his heart. (Even) at the time of the departing of the soul, he who has a sight of the śālagrāma stone even while relaxing, undoubtedly gets salvation.

39-44. Formerly the lord told the intelligent Ambarīṣa: "Brāhmaṇas, those who have renounced the worldly ties and smooth śālagrāma stones—these three are my forms taken by (the lord) that appear to destroy the sins of the sinners on the globe. Those sinners who (even) once censure the śālagrāma stone, are cooked in the Kumbhīpāka (hell) till deluge. The mother, the father, the groups of relatives of that foolish man who prohibits a man on the point of worshipping (a śālagrāma stone), rot in hell. He who tells (others), 'Offer the dearest worship to śālagrāma,' being blessed, quickly takes his ancestors to Vaikuṇṭha." In this case only the sages free from attachment and lust and anger tell an ancient (piece of) history:

45-54. Formerly in a country, void of piety, called Kīkaṭa, lived a man called Śabara, belonging to the pulkasa caste. He was always bent on killing beings; he again and again held his bow. He forcibly took away the life of those who desired to go on a pilgrimage. He killed many animals; he was always interes-

ted in others' wealth. He was always full of attachment etc. and of lust and anger. He who killed animals ceaselessly, roamed in a fearful forest. He was free in (i.e. he freely drew) the bow-string to which an arrow, to the tip of which poison was applied, was fixed. That hunter, dangerous to every being, and of a cruel mind, was once roaming. He did not realize that death had approached him. Yama's dark, fearful messengers, having red hair, long nails and long fangs, with nooses and mallets in their hands, holding iron chains and causing confusion, arrived (there). (They said to one another:) "(You may) fasten this sinner causing fear to every being. He never assisted any being even mentally (i.e. He never even thought of helping any being). He is always attached to others' wives, wealth, and is always given to cheating others." One said: "Therefore I shall draw out his big tongue." One said: "I shall take out his eyes" One said: "I shall cut off the hands of this sinner." Another said: "I shall cut off the ears of this wicked one."

55-61. Saying so, and gnawing their teeth, the furious messengers with weapons (in their hands) stood by the wicked one. Then one messenger took the form of a serpent and bit (him) on the foot. As soon as he was bitten, he was dead. Then those servants of Yama tied him with an iron chain, and angrily hit him with whips and struck him with mallets. (They said to him:) "O vicious one, O scoundrel, you never acted well even mentally. So we shall throw you in the Raurava hell. Fearful crows will angrily eat up your skin and flesh. (Right) from your birth you have not served Viṣṇu. You well maintained your wife and sons by cheating them. You never remembered Viṣṇu who removes sins. Therefore, by Yama's order we beating you very much shall take you (and put you on) an iron pike (or put you into) Kumbhīpāka and Raurava."

62-64a. When, after speaking thus, they desired to take him, a man, devoted to the feet of great Viṣṇu came there. That noble follower of Viṣṇu then saw the groups of the wicked (messengers of Yama) holding malicious weapons like nooses, mallets and staffs. They were ready to take (away) the pulkasa after having bound him with iron chains.

64b-70. They said (to one another): "Bind him, bind him, destroy him, tear him, break him, break him." Then that kind man,

very much devoted to Viṣṇu, having seen him, made his heart extremely compassionate towards him. (He thought to himself): 'Let this very wicked one not suffer affliction in my presence. Today only I shall free him from Yama's messengers.' Thinking thus and being full of pity for him the best sage took a śālagrāma stone and went near him. Putting the water (flowing) from his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) feet and mixed with Tulasī-leaf, he put it into his mouth and muttered the epithets of Rāma into his ear. That devotee of Viṣṇu put the Tulasī(-leaf) on his head and the (śālagrāma) stone of great Viṣṇu on his chest, and said: "Let Yama's messengers, very much given to torture, go. Let the touch of the śālagrāma stone burn the great sin."

71-78. When he spoke like this, the very wonderful attendants of Viṣṇu came to the proximity of him whose sin had gone (away) by the touch of the (śālagrāma) stone. They who had put on yellow garments, who were adorned with conches, discs, maces and lotuses, came (there) and freed him from the unassailable iron chain. Having freed that pulkasa man who had committed great sins, he said: "Why have you bound this Viṣṇu's devotee who has a respectable body? Whose orders do you who act unrighteously obey? Release this devotee of Viṣṇu. Why have you held him up?" Hearing these words, the servants of Yama said: "By Yama's order we are ready to take (away) this sinner. He has not, even mentally, helped any being. This one, having a vicious body, committing great sins like killing animals, has plundered many people going on a pilgrimage. He is always interested in others' wives, and has done the largest number of sins. Therefore, we have come to take (away) this sinful pulkasa. Why have you got him released through warriors that have suddenly arrived?"

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

79-86a. A touch of the śālagrāma stone burns (just) in a moment all that sin due to killing a brāhmaṇa and due to the murder of a crore of beings. As a particle of fire burns cotton, in the same way the name of Rāma, even if casually heard, burns sins. He, on whose head there is a Tulasī (-leaf), on whose chest there is the charming (śālagrāma) stone, and who has Rāma's name either in his mouth or ear, is released just then only.

Therefore, formerly he had held Tulasī(-leaf) on his head; he was made to hear Rāma's name, and he well held the (śālagrāma) stone on his head. By that the heap of his sins was burnt, and his body has become auspicious. He will go to the highest position which is very difficult to be obtained by sinners. Having for a myriad years enjoyed all charming pleasures there, he obtains birth in Bhārata, and having worshipped the lord of the world, he will obtain the highest place difficult to be obtained by gods and demons. The importance of the (śālagrāma) stone of (i.e. representing) Viṣṇu is not known. When seen, touched or worshipped, it removes all sins in a moment.

86b-92a. Saying so all the attendants of Viṣṇu ceased (speaking) gladly. Those servants of Yama told that wonderful (account) to the king. The devotee of Viṣṇu, solely devoted to Raghunātha, became delighted. He, being free from Yama's noose, will go to the highest position. At that time a beautiful, very wonderful aeroplane, decorated with a number of bells, came (there) from the world of gods. Having got into it, he went to heaven resorted to by very auspicious (souls). Having enjoyed many pleasures (there) he went to (i.e. was born on) the earth. Having obtained a birth in a good brāhmaṇa family in Kāśī, and having worshipped the lord of worlds he went to the highest position. He, due to the company of the good, touched the śālagrāma stone, got free from great affliction, and went to the highest place.

92b-93. O king, I have narrated to you the important account of Gaṇḍakī. Having listened to it, a man is freed from sins and obtains pleasures and salvation.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Puruṣottama Appears to the King in the Guise of an Ascetic

Sumati said :

1-3. The best king having heard this matchless importance of Gaṇḍakī looked upon himself as blessed. Having bathed and having gratified all his (dead) ancestors, the great one was delighted. Having, according to the words of the brāhmaṇa, worshipped the śālagrāma, the best king took there twentyfour śālagrāma (stones) and with affection worshipped them with such means of worship as sandal etc.

4-5. Then the king, having given gifts there, especially to the poor and the blind, started to go to the temple of Viṣṇu. Thus, in due order, he reached the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean. Having brought it within the range of his sight (i.e. having seen it), he joyfully asked the brāhmaṇa:

6. "O lord, tell me, how far is the great mountain called Nīla which is the abode of Viṣṇu and which is saluted by gods and demons."

7-10. Having, at that time, heard the important words of (i.e. uttered by) king Ratnagrīva, he (i.e. the brāhmaṇa), full of amazement, respectfully said to the king: "O king, this is the region of the mountain Nīla which is adored. Why is it giving great religious merit not seen by you (i.e. why can you not see it)?" Again and again he said: "This is the region of the Nīla mountain. How is this (i.e. how can this), the place of the residence of Viṣṇu, not seen, (not be seen) by you? Here I had bathed properly. Here I had seen the bhillas. Along this way only I had climbed up the mountain."

11-16. Hearing these words of him, the king was mentally afflicted. Making his mind eager to see the Nīla-mountain, the king said (to him): "Tell us the means by which I shall see Viṣṇu, and I shall see the Nīla (mountain)." Then hearing the words of king Ratnagrīva, the ascetic brāhmaṇa, amazed by the king, said (these) words: "O king, having bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean we should remain here as long as the Nīla (mountain) is not seen. The (praise of) the great god called Puruṣottama, and destroyer of sins, will be sung. He who has the

name 'Bhaktavatsala' (i.e. affectionate to his devotees) will quickly do favour. He, the crest-jewel of gods will not abandon (his) devotees. Many devotees have been protected by him. Therefore, O you very intelligent one, sing (the praise of) him."

17-19. Hearing these words, the king with his mind afflicted, bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean and observed a fast. "When Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu) will show favour by appearing (before me) I shall worship him and take food; otherwise I shall (follow) the vow of non-eating." Having made such a vow, he sang (songs praising) the multitude of virtues of Hari on the bank of the (confluence of) Gaṅgā and the ocean; and observed a fast.

The king said :

20-24. Victory to you who show compassion to the helpless; victory to you who remove misery, and who are called auspicious. Victory to you who destroy the suffering of your devotees; victory to you who have taken up a lovely form and who destroy the wicked. Seeing Ambarīṣa afflicted and with all his auspicious things destroyed due to the curse of a brāhmaṇa, you holding the Sudarśana disc in your hand protected him by living in his belly. He (i.e. Prahlāda) who was harassed by his father, the king of demons, was at once protected by you—when his father was seeing it having the form of Nṛsiṁha, by dropping spears, nooses, water and fire. Seeing the excellent lord of elephants whose foot had fallen into (i.e. was caught in) the mouth of an alligator and which was extremely afflicted, you, with your good heart wet with (i.e. full of) pity, mounted on Garuḍa. Then you abandoned (i.e. got down from) the bird (i.e. Garuḍa), took (your Sudarśana) disc; you whose speed causes a series of tremors in the sky are (i.e. were) sung (i.e. praised) by him (i.e. the elephant) with his life (i.e. sincerely). You liberated him from the alligator and instantly destroyed him (i.e. the alligator).

25-28. O lord, wherever your worshipper is oppressed, you take up a bodily form and protect your (worshipper) by means of your acts removing sins. O you who protect the helpless, O you whose feet are rubbed by the diamonds on the heads of the gods, O you to whom the devotees are dear, O you who burn crores of sins, O lord, grant me your vision. If this sinful person

has come to your mind (i.e. if you think about him) then, show (yourself to him). We are yours O you who are worshipped by gods and demons, your destroying the stream of sins is not forgotten by us. Those who utter your pure name, cross the entire ocean of sins. If I have remembered you, then, let me reach you, O you who remove all sins.

Sumati said:

29-31. Thus the king, singing the merits (of the lord) at night and by day also, did not have rest or comfort even for a moment. Singing (the lord's virtues), going (to his image), invoking (him), standing (by his image), he day and night said this: "O lord of grace, O Puruṣottama, show me your body." Thus the king passed five days on the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean. Then the lord of the senses, the ocean of favour, thought through compassion:

32. 'This king has become free from sins due to singing my (virtues). Let him see my greatness honoured by gods and demons.'

33-34. Then the mighty lord, thinking like this, and with his mind full of compassion, put on the apparel of an ascetic, went near the king. O great king, having gone there after putting on the apparel of an ascetic, he reached him through compassion for the devotee and the ascetic saw him.

35-42. The best king, saying, 'Salutation to Viṣṇu', saluted him. With his mind devoted to Viṣṇu, he worshipped him with respectful offerings, water for washing his feet and with a seat; (and) said: "Matchless is my luck that I have seen you. Hereafter Viṣṇu will appear before me." Hearing these words of him, the ascetic said to him: "O king, listen to what I say. By means of my knowledge, I know the past, the future, and the present. Therefore, I (shall) say something. Listen with a concentrated mind. Tomorrow, at noon, Viṣṇu difficult to be seen even by Brahmā, will appear to you. With five kinsmen of you you will reach the highest place. (Those who will reach the highest place are:) you, (your) minister, your wife, the ascetic brāhmaṇa and the good weaver named Karamba (living) in your city. With these five you will go (to Viṣṇu), saluted by Brahmā and lord of gods and honoured by gods, on this best mountain Nīla." Speaking

thus the ascetic disappeared, and was not seen anywhere. Hearing those (words of the ascetic) the king became glad and amazed.

The king said :

43. O lord, who is that ascetic that came and talked to me? He is not seen again. Where has he, giving delight to my mind, gone?

The ascetic said :

44-48. O king, due to great love for you, he, named Puruṣottama, the destroyer of all sins, with his heart attracted (by you) came (to you). Tomorrow at noon there will be (i.e. appear) a big mountain before you. Climbing it up and seeing Viṣṇu, you will be blessed.

With the torment in his heart destroyed by the flood of the nectar of these words, he obtained such (great) joy as even Brahmā did not know. At that time large kettle-drums were sounded. Lutes were played upon. Musical instruments were played upon. There was then great joy in the mind of the king of kings. Singing (the virtues of) Hari, stopping for a moment, laughing, chattering, talking, saluting, he obtained very great joy destroying all affliction.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The Greatness of Nīla Mountain

Sumati said :

1-5. Then having passed the entire day with (i.e. in) the recollection and narration (of the glory of) Viṣṇu, at night he slept on the bank of Gaṅgā, giving a large fruit. In a dream he saw himself having four arms and holding a conch, a disc, a mace, and a bow, dancing in front of Viṣṇu with gods like Śiva with their pleasing bodies, with missiles like a disc, a mace, a conch and a lotus etc., (so also) with the excellent attendants of Viṣṇu having good bodies. Having seen (Viṣṇu) the lord of Śrī, the

talk of the world, giving whatever is desired by the (devotees') mind, and called Puruṣottama, he was amazed and obtained very wonderful joy. The very intelligent one looked upon himself as worthy of his grace. In this way the best king saw the dream. When he got up in the morning he narrated the dream that he had seen to the brāhmaṇa.

6-7a. Having heard it the intelligent brāhmaṇa, who was amazed, told (the king): "O king, that Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), called Puruṣottama, will give you (a body resembling) his own body marked with a conch, disc etc."

7b-10. Hearing this, Ratnagrīva, of a magnanimous mind, caused to give gifts to the poor as was thought fit by his mind. Having bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean, having gratified his ancestors (with oblations), he, singing the multitude of the virtues of Viṣṇu, waited to have his vision. Then in the noon, large kettle-drums, high-sounding, were beaten by the strokes of the hands of gods in the sky. All of a sudden a shower of flowers fell on the head of the king.

11-13a. "O best king, you are fortunate; see (the mountain) Nīla which is within the range of your sight." When the king heard these words uttered by the god, that great moutain, called Nīla which was wonderful and had greater brilliance than that of a crore suns, came within the range of the sight of the king.

13b-16a. On all sides it was shining with silver and golden peaks. 'Is it fire that is burning? Is it another sun? Is it the mass of lightning, which has suddenly obtained a steady lustre?' (Such were the reactions of those who saw it.) The ascetic brāhmaṇa having seen the very beautiful peak of the mountain told the king: "This is the auspicious great mountain." Hearing it the best king saluted (the mountain) by (bowing) his head.

16b-18. (He said:) "I am lucky, I am contented (that) (the mountain) Nīla has come within the range of my sight." O best man, the minister, the king's wife, the weaver Karamba also became glad on seeing Nīla. Hearing the big sounds of the large kettle-drums made by gods, the five went up the mountain at the triumphant time.

19-27. On the highest peak, adorned with variegated trees, he saw a matchless temple built in gold. Coming there always Brahmā worships Viṣṇu. Seeing an excellent, pure temple of

Viṣṇu at the place where he made an offering of eatables giving pleasure to Viṣṇu, he, surrounded by the five followers, entered it. Seeing there (the lord) charming with four arms, waited upon by the fierce and very fierce Jaya and Vijaya etc. and shining on the golden throne variegated with big gems, the king with his wife and accompanied by his servants, saluted him. The great king having saluted the best god and the highest soul, bathed him to the accompaniment of hymns proper for the bath and mentioned in the Vedas. The king with a pleased mind offered him an oblation and water for washing his feet. Then the king besmeared the lord's image with sandal, and offered two good garments. He offered (to the image) incense, waved a light and offered to the lord's image an offering of eatables fully sweet and charming. Having saluted him, he praised him by a number of hymns according to his intellect, in which a number of his virtues were strung by the ascetic brāhmaṇa.

The king said :

28-36. Puruṣa is actually one. The lord is beyond Prakṛti. He is different from effect and cause, and is worshipped by the principles like Mahat. Brahmā clever in creation was born from the lotus in your navel. Similarly, Rudra, the destroyer, was born from your eye. Ordered by you, he does all the activities about the world. The world, immovable, has come up from you, the ancient one. Having entered the power of consciousness you make him aware. O lord of the world, you do not have a birth (i.e. origin), nor do you have an end. O mighty one, growth, decay and change do not at all exist in you. Yet, for protecting your devotees and for establishing dharma, you do the acts like birth, having befitting excellences. Taking the form of a fish, you killed demon Śaṅkha. O Brahman, O ancestor of the great Puruṣa, you protected the Vedas well. Śeṣa does not know your greatness, nor does the great goddess Sarasvatī know it; then what about people like me of bad thoughts, O great Viṣṇu? (Even) this great goddess Vāk (i.e. Sarasvatī) does not mentally obtain you (i.e. is unable to conceive you). Then, O lord, how shall I be able to praise you?

Having praised him like this, he repeatedly saluted him by

(bowing) his head. His voice was faltering and his body was horripilated due to joy.

37. Viṣṇu, whose mind was pleased by means of this eulogy, said (these) significant words to the king :

The lord said :

38-40. O king of great intelligence, I am highly delighted by your praise. O great king, know me to be beyond Prakṛti. Quickly eat the charming offering of eatables. (Then) having obtained four arms, you will go to the highest position. I shall also make my appearance, giving enjoyments and salvation, to that man who will praise with the gem of eulogy (with which you praised me).

41-47. Having heard these words uttered by the lord, the king, along with his four dependents, ate the offering of eatables (made to the lord). Then an aeroplane, which was adorned with a mass of bells, which was waited upon by celestial nymphs, and which was full of all pleasures, came (there). The pious king, seeing (Viṣṇu) named Puruṣottama, saluted his feet (as) he was made the recipient of his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) favour. When he (i.e. the lord) was observing, he, with his wife, getting into the aeroplane, went to the wonderful Vaikuṇṭha in heaven. The king's excellent minister, very much devoted to piety, knowing all modes of behaviour, and waited upon by a bevy of women, went with (the king) by the aeroplane. The ascetic brāhmaṇa who had bathed at all the holy places obtained four arms and went with gods going in an aeroplane. O great king, Karamba too obtained the vision (of the lord) due to his merit (collected) through singing and reached the abode of the god, difficult to be reached (even) by all gods.

48-52. All (the five) having four arms, and holding conches, discs, maces and lotuses went to the very wonderful world of Viṣṇu. All of them had the splendour of clouds, were pure, had shining lotuses in their hands. With their bodies adorned with necklaces, armlets and bracelets, they went to the heaven. Seeing the rows of their aeroplanes, the people and the subjects made the sound of large kettle-drums in such a way that it may be perceived (i.e. heard) by ears. Then there was a brāhmaṇa, who loved

the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. He, with his heart distressed by separation from them, went (after them), and became four-armed. The people, seeing that wonder, praised that great prosperity, and, having bathed in the water at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean, went (back) to the city.

53-60. (They exclaimed:) "Oh, the (great) fortune of king Ratnagrīva, of a good mind! With this body (of him, i.e. without casting his body), he went to the highest place of Viṣṇu." O king, this Nīla mountain is honoured by Viṣṇu (himself). On seeing it (men) certainly go to Vaikuṇṭha, the highest destination. He who listens to this greatness of Nīla, is (indeed) fortunate. (He and) he who narrates it to people, both would go to the highest place. Having heard this a bad dream perishes just by remembering (it); and in the end Viṣṇu grants him (help to) cross the mundane existence. He who stays at the Nīla (mountain) is Rāma, Viṣṇu (himself). Sītā is actually the great Lakṣmī, the cause of causes. He whose name is prescribed in (i.e. as) the expiation for the murder of a brāhmaṇa, will, after performing the horse-sacrifice, purify the worlds. Now your horse has reached the vicinity of the Nīla mountain. O you highly intelligent one, salute god Viṣṇu; thereby we shall be sinless and shall go to the highest position. By his favour many have crossed this ocean of worldly existence.

61-63. When he was talking like this, the horse, striking against the earth with the speed of the wind, reached the Nīla mountain. Then the king also, going after him, reached and bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean. He sang (the praise of) Viṣṇu. That destroyer of the enemies, having praised and saluted the lord of gods, saluted by gods and demons, regarded himself as having become blessed.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

Damana Fights with Pratāpāgrya

Śeṣa said:

1-4. The horse, having a chowrie (on his head), having the speed of mind, surrounded by a line of the heroes, bearing a note on his forehead, protected by the great hero Śatrughna, by king Lakṣmīnidhi, by Puṣkala, Ugravāha and Pratāpāgrya went to the city Cakrāṅkā protected by Subāhu. O lord, he was protected and followed by many crores of warriors. At that time his great (i.e. Subāhu's) son, Damana, who had gone ahunting, saw the horse with a note on his forehead and besmeared with sandal etc.

5-7. Seeing (the horse), he said to his servant: "Whose horse is seen by me? Why has he got a note on his head, so also a beautiful chowrie?" Hearing these words of the king, the servant then went from there to the place where the well-decorated horse with a note on his forehead stood. Having seized him, decorated with a jewelled necklace, by his hair (i.e. his mane) he took him in front of the king of the supporter of the Subāhu family.

8-12. He read the note having beautiful letters: "There was king Daśaratha, the powerful lord of Ayodhyā. Rāmabhadra, the crest-jewel of all the brave men, is his son. There is no other person having valour like his son. There is no other person having valour like him in archery on the earth. He has released his horse besmeared with sandal etc. Righteous Śatrughna, killer of the warriors of his enemy, is protecting him. Those (who think) 'We are brave warriors; we have bows in our hands' should forcibly seize the horse adorned with a jewelled necklace. Śatrughna, the crest-jewel of all heroes will free him. Otherwise let the archers bow down at his feet."

13-18. Knowing the import, the king's son said: "Rāma alone is an archer. We are not considered to be kṣatriyas! What is this great pride on the earth when my father is living on the earth? Let him obtain the fruit of his pride through the arrows discharged by me. Today let my sharp arrows really render Lakṣmaṇa like a blooming kiṁśuka tree with his body

covered with wounds; and let my arrows split the temples of his elephants. Let them see the hundreds of horses covered with streams of blood. Let the groups of (the female attendants of Durgā called) Yoginīs drink the blood from the heads of men. Let the female jackals be pleased with eating the dead bodies of my enemies. Let his good (i.e. brave) warriors observe the great power of me, discharging crores of arrows released from my bow."

19-20. Having spoken like this, that prominent son of the king, named Damana, sent him to his own city, and said to his general: "To ward off the host of enemies keep ready for me a limited army, O you very intelligent one." When the fierce one made the army ready and stood facing the battle, (just) then the followers of the horse came (there).

21-28. They who were repeatedly confounded, asked one another: "Where is the great king's horse, marked with a note on his forehead?" Just then, the hero Pratāpāgrya saw in front of him the army that was ready and that was resounding with the sounds (made) by the heroes. At that time some people said: "O king, (your) horse is taken (away) by this one (i.e. by Damana). Otherwise, how would he, followed by the army of heroes stand facing (you)?" Hearing these (words), Pratāpāgrya sent his servant (to Damana). Having gone there, he asked (him): "Where is the horse of king Rāma? Who has taken it? Where has he taken it? Does the fool not know Rāma, having made an offering to whom gods led by Indra have well bowed (before him). The large army of that righteous king, being angry, will fully destroy (him) if he does not salute him." Hearing (these words) spoken (by the servant), the mighty and wicked son of the king reproached with a mass of words.

29-32. (He said:) "I have brought the sacrificial horse adorned with such marks as the note etc. Those who are brave may free him by conquering me now with force." The servant, having heard those words, was full of anger, and he, laughing, went (back). He told the king as narrated properly (above). Hearing it, the very mighty Pratāpāgrya, with his eyes red due to anger, went to fight with the king's son, followed by great heroes. The mighty one went in a chariot made of gold, shining

with four horses, having a good (i.e. strong) pole to which the yoke was fixed, and filled with all (kinds of) missiles.

33-36. Accompanied by a great army, he made the twang of his bow. Again and again he laughed loudly, causing tears to be shed through anger. The horse-riders, elephant-riders, with their hands glittering with swords followed that Pratāpāgrya whose eyes were full of tears due to anger. The elephants, the foot-soldiers in crores, ready for the fight, desired for a long time the fight waged by the hero. Then having come to know that the enemy's army was ready, the king's son, the best among the heroes, and surrounded by a huge army, advanced.

37-45. The young (prince), having taken a sword and a bow, sportively went to fight as a lion (approaches) a herd of elephants. Then the warriors, skilled in the act of fighting, being very angry, and desiring to kill one another, said: "Cut (him) off; break (him)". The foot-soldiers (fought) with the group of foot-soldiers; the elephant-riders (fought) with the warriors (on elephants); those who had got into chariots (fought) with those who were in chariots; the horse-riders (fought) with those who were seated on horses. The elephants were cut off, and were divided into two. The horses also were split up into two. The earth was filled with many human heads. Then that very mighty Pratāpāgrya who was very angry, having seen the prince ready to destroy his army, said to his charioteer: "Take the horses (i.e. the chariot) to that place where that great warrior, that prince, is engaged in the destruction of my army." Then the brave prince whose feet were bowed by the jewels of the heads of the heroes, confronted Pratāpāgrya. Pratāpāgrya's charioteer took his horses to that place where the hero Damana, the crest-jewel of all the brave, stood. Standing in the chariot nourished (i.e. adorned) with gold, and holding a bow he went to the prince ready to fight, and challenged him:

46-50. "O prince, O child, you have tied up the best horse. You do not know the great king (Rāma) who is served by all best heroes, whose wonderful valour even the lord of the demons (i.e. Rāvaṇa) could not bear. Having taken his horse, you went to your house. Know me, your enemy, of the form of death, who have come to your city. O child, leave the horse, and play a child's game. Whose son are you? Wherefrom do you come?

How have you—a short-sighted one—seized the horse? O child, pity for you has arisen in me." Having heard this, Damana, of a large heart, smiled, and, looking down upon the power of Pratāpāgrya, said to him:

Damana said:

51-52. I tied the horse forcibly, and took him to my city. O you very powerful one, I shall not give (back the horse). With life (i.e. if you live) fight (with me). About what you told me that I am a child and I should go and play, (I say), O great king, see my play in the battle.

Śeṣa said:

53-60. Speaking like this he took up his bow with the string. He, born from one having strong arms, discharged a hundred arrows on the chest of Pratāpāgrya. Having fixed a hundred arrows on his bow, the valourous one blew a conch. Due to that sound of the conch, the timid were frightened. He struck at his chest with a hundred arrows. Dexterous Pratāpāgrya cut off the good (i.e. sharp) arrows. Seeing the arrows cut off, and getting angry, the powerful son of the king discharged sharp arrows having heron feathers (attached to them). Curved arrows, bearing their names, and beautiful with sharp edge and falling (down), were seen in the sky and on the ground. The arrows sticking to his arms and chest produced many fire-particles and burnt the army. It was a great (tragedy). The very angry Pratāpāgrya, saying 'Wait, wait', struck him on the head with arrows, ten in number. Those arrows stuck into the forehead of the prince. O sage, they shone there like ten branches of a tree.

61-67. The high-minded one was not afflicted by being struck by the arrows, like a seven-year old elephant struck by sticks. Having fixed three hundred auspicious arrows with their feathered parts decked with gold, and resembling the fire of Śiva, on his bow he discharged them. Those arrows pierced the chest of Pratāpāgrya and being besmeared with blood, he went down like those who are averse to the devotion of Rāma. Pratāpāgrya got very much angry, and discharging thousands of arrows quickly, deprived Subāhu's son of his chariot that

moment (only). With four (arrows) he killed his four horses; with two (arrows) cut down his flag. With one (arrow) he caused to fall down on the ground the charioteer's head from his body. Again with four (arrows) he struck the king's son. At that moment only he cut off with one (arrow) the bow along with its string. The large-minded one got into another chariot adorned with gems of horses and taking a bow in his hand he made it ready.

68-80. He said to Pratāpāgrya: "O good hero, you have shown a wonderful valour. Now see the superiority of my bow." Saying so, Damana took ten arrows; and with four (arrows) killed the four horses. With four he cut the chariot with its wheels into (pieces of the size of) sesamum (seeds). With one he pierced his chest, and with one he (pierced) his charioteer. Blowing his conch he roared and with the sound of the conch he honoured his deed (saying): "Well (done), O hero, O you of great power." Thus seeing the valour, Pratāpāgrya, with anger got into another chariot and went to fight with the prince. (He) said (to him:) "O hero, see my wonderful valour." Saying so he quickly discharged a volley of arrows with whetted joints. Everywhere, on (the bodies of) elephants and horses arrows were seen. Going into the space they occupied every place like the highest Brahman. The brave and great one, delighting his own hosts and making his enemies very much dejected, and (even) lose their life, quickly covering the prince with crores of sharp arrows, roared. The mighty and very powerful prince, seeing himself completely covered with masses of sharp arrows, got angry and he of an endless valour took up weapons; and he shaking the bow on his arms, and with his eyes red due to anger, discharging arrows, tearing the enemies, cut off all the missiles and weapons (of his enemy). Having destroyed that mass of weapons, the prince said to him: "O respectable one, if you are (really) brave, pardon me for this one stroke. O brave one, listen to my solemn declaration made by me through pride: "Let me have that sin, drowning me into the ocean of hell, of those arrogant ones, clever in disputation, who censure the Veda, if with this (one) stroke I would not knock you down from your chariot."

81-88. Speaking like this, he drew out from the quiver an excellent sharp arrow resembling death, full of a series of flames, and placed it on his bow. That arrow resembling in effulgence the destructive fire at the end of the world, and aimed at the chest (of Pratāpāgrya), was discharged by the excellent (son of the) king. It speedily reached him. Pratāpāgrya, seeing the arrow on the point of knocking him down fixed sharp arrows on his bow to cut off that arrow. That arrow cutting off all the arrows in the middle reached Pratāpāgrya's heart endowed with courage. The arrow stuck his chest and entered his heart. The king (thus) struck fell down on the ground. His charioteer, seeing him in a swoon and unconscious and fallen from the driving box on the ground, took him and carried him away from the battle (-field). There was a very loud wailing, the army was baffled and went where (their chief) named Śatrughna, surrounded by crores of brave men, stood. The king's son (i.e. Damana) having obtained victory after vanquishing Pratāpāgrya, waited for king Śatrughna.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

Puṣkala Defeats Damana

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Śatrughna who was overpowered with anger, was grinding his teeth, shaking his hands, repeatedly licking his lip with his tongue, again and again asked them: "Who has taken (away) my horse? Who has vanquished Pratāpāgrya, the crest-jewel of all the heroes?" Then the servants said: "Damana, Subāhu's son, and the killer of his enemies, conquered Pratāpāgrya and has taken aways the horse."

4-10. Hearing this, viz. that his enemy Damana had taken (away) the horse, he speedily came to (the spot) where the battle had taken place. There Śatrughna saw (his) elephants that were (once) haughty due to rut, with their cheeks torn and merging in the water (i.e. pool) of blood. That very angry, brave Śatru-

ghna saw his horses wounded and dead along with their riders. That killer of the enemies seeing his men, chariots and elephants completely vanquished was extremely angry as the ocean at the time of final deluge (is agitated). Seeing before him that pre-eminent Damana who had, after belittling his army, taken away the horse and had vanquished Pratāpāgrya, the king, with his eyes full of anger, said to his warriors: "Who is here (among the warriors) that would conquer Damana, wielding all (kinds of) weapons and missiles, and who, being fearless, will vanquish with a missile the brave prince skilled in fighting?"

11-17. Hearing these words, (Bharata's son) Puṣkala, the killer of (his) enemies, ready to conquer Damana, said these words: "O lord where is this Damanaka, and where is your unlimited army? (i.e. what a great disparity is there between the two?) Due to your valour I shall conquer (him); O highly intelligent one, here I go. When I the servant, remain (here) to fight (with the enemy), who will take (away) the horse? This valour of Raghunātha will do every act. O lord, listen to my solemn declaration which will give you joy. In the battle I shall conquer Damana skilled in fight. If I would not conquer Damana, let me incur that sin incurred by those who are deprived of the tasting of the honey from the lotuses in the form of the feet of Rāmacandra. I would have that sin which that son who (first) looking upon his mother's feet as a holy place (later) goes against her, if I do not conquer Damana. Today let the king's son (i.e. Damana), with his huge chest pierced by my arrow, adorn the earth by his lying (there) in the battle."

Śeṣa said:

18-24. Having heard this solemn declaration of Puṣkala, (Śatrughna) perpetuating the family of Raghu, was glad at heart; and the brilliant one ordered (him) to fight. Being ordered (by Śatrughna), he (i.e. Puṣkala) surrounded by a large army went there where the prince Damana, born in the family of the brave, stood. Knowing him to have come to the battlefield, the best among the heroes, surrounded by his army, went forth to him. The two seated in their chariots and looking graceful in them, encountered each other (and looked as if) Indra and a demon had come to the battlefield to fight. Puṣkala said to that very

mighty prince: "O prince Damana, know me to be the mighty son of Bharata, and to have come to fight (with you) with (i.e. after having made) a solemn declaration; and O best one, know me to be known by the name Puṣkala and having the sweet vow of always serving the feet of Raghunātha. O you very intelligent one, I shall conquer you by means of a multitude of weapons. Be ready (to fight with) me)."

25-28. Having heard these words, Damana, the killer of enemies, an orator, fearless and one whose valour was noticed, laughed and replied: "Know me to be Damana, Subāhu's son, with my sin removed due to my devotion to my father, and to have taken (away) the horse of king Śatrughna. Victory is brought about by destiny. He whom destiny adorns, will have it. Observe my might in the battle." Speaking in this way, he fixed an arrow on his bow, stretched it up to his ear, and discharged sharp arrows that took away his enemies' life.

29-31. The arrows, getting darkish, covered the sky where the brilliance of the sun's rays was put off by the shadow of the arrows. The line of arrows that had stuck to the wall-like temples of the elephants adorned (them) like variegated colours of minerals. Men, horses, elephants and chariots, struck by the volley of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) the king, were seen to have fallen there.

32-39. Puṣkala, the killer of the enemies, having seen his valour and having seen the battlefield covered with the shadow of arrows fixed an arrow accompanied with hymns sacred to Agni on his bow. Having sipped water according to the proper rite, he discharged the arrow. Then there on the battlefield fire appeared. Touching the sky with its flames it rose like the fire at the time of the deluge. Then his army was tormented and was frightened on the battlefield. Being oppressed by the flames of fire, it took to heels. The (crescent) moon-like umbrellas of the archers were burnt and appeared to have the lustre of silver. The enemies' horses, burnt at their (i.e. with their) manes (burnt), ran away. The chariots also, along with good drivers' seats, were burnt. Camels, carrying gems like rubies, and troubled by series of flames as in a crematory, ran (away). At some places elephants died; at some place riders of horses perished; at places footsoldiers with their bodies burnt by fire perished.

40-45. All the arrows discharged by the prince perished. They were reduced to ashes by the arrows (discharged with the accompaniment) of (hymns sacred to) fire. Then, Damana, knowing the use of all missiles, with his mind full of anger, took the missile called Varuṇa, when his army was (thus) burnt. He discharged the missile (to the accompaniment) of (hymns sacred to) Varuṇa to pacify the fire. It submerged all his army full of chariots and horses. The chariots of the enemies were seen to be submerged in the water. Elephants also were inundated. His own (elephants) had become calm. The fire that was discharged through the 'fire-missile' had died. His own army, oppressed by the flames of fire, became peaceful. The enemies trembled and made sounds by drawing in breath due to the cold water, and struck by shower of hail and troubled by wind.

46-52. Then seeing his own army troubled by flood of water, and shaken, agitated, fled and removed by the Varuṇa (missile), Bharata's son Puṣkala, with his eyes red due to great anger, fixed a great arrow, the 'wind-missile' on his bow. Then there was great (i.e. strong) wind propelled by the wind-missile. It speedily, destroyed the dense army that was present there. The serpents shaken by the wind struct one another. The horses also along with their riders struck one another. Men shaken up by the wind, had their hair loose, were lustreless, and were seen to be falling like vampires that had come to the earth. The prince, seeing that his army was overpowered by wind on all sides, fixed the 'mountain-missile' on his bow. Then mountains fell on the heads of those who were fighting. They covered the wind; and it did not stir anywhere.

53-60. Puṣkala fixed (the arrow) called Vajra on his bow. Those (enemies) cut off by Vajra in a moment became reduced to the size of sesamum-seeds. (That missile called) Vajra reducing mountains to particles, and with its shafts accompanied by a hymn, heavily fell, with a loud sound on the chest of the prince. He the strong hero, with his mind confounded and struck on the chest and heavily wounded was pained and was very much dejected. The prudent charioteer, seeing the prince dejected in mind, took him away from there to a distance of a krośa. Then the prince's warriors fled and ran away. Having gone to the city, they told (people there) about the prince being in a state of

dejection of mind. The righteous Puṣkala having thus secured victory in the battle and remembering the words of Rāma was not able to (i.e. did not) strike again. Then there was the loud sound of the large kettledrums. There was a huge cry of victory. Charming words like 'Well (done), Well (done)' proceeded there. Seeing Puṣkala victorious that Śatrughna was glad. Surrounded by ministers like Sumati, he praised (Puṣkala).

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

Subāhu Gets Ready with His Army in the Krauñca Array

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Then, seeing his warriors with their bodies covered with streams of blood, the king was not happy. He grieved; and asked them about the movements of his son (Damana): "Tell me his entire act. How did he take away the excellent horse? Tell me also how much army (the enemy has)? How many heroes came there to fight? How did my hero Damana, intent on fighting with the enemy's army, fight and someone, having conquered this invincible hero, destroyed him."

4-17. Having heard these words of the king, those servants of him, wearing garments wet with blood (oozing) from their bodies, said: "O king, having seen the horse adorned with marks like the note etc. I got it seized through pride and belittling the best of Raghus. Then the follower (i.e. the protector) of the horse, surrounded by a small army, came (there). And a fierce and thrilling fight took place with him. When your son, having, made him swoon with his own arrows, stood there, Śatrughna, surrounded by his large army came there. Then a great battle accompanied by (i.e. in which) weapons and missiles (were used), ensued. Your very mighty son became victorious many times. O king, now, having discharged a missile, the son of Śatrughna's brother has made your brave son swoon in the battle." Hearing these words, (the king) full of anger and grief had his body

covered (with bravery) like the ocean on the parvan-day. With his lips throbbing due to anger, (gnawing) his teeth with this teeth, licking his lips with his tongue, and emaciated due to grief, he said to his general: "Keep my army ready in the vicinity (of Śatrughna's army). I shall fight with Rāma's brave soldiers who have harmed my son. Today I shall, with sharp arrows, overthrow him who has troubled my son, (even) if the great lord will protect him. The general, having heard these words spoken by the king of mighty arms, did like that (i.e. as he was ordered), and himself became ready. He reported to the king that the army which consisted of four divisions, and resembled the army of Death, had killed crores of wicked people. Having heard the words of his general, Subāhu, the killer of his enemies, went out to that place where Śatrughna who had troubled his son, stayed. (He went there) with elephants intoxicated by rut, with horses having the speed of mind, with chariots full of all weapons and missiles and conquering the enemy.

18-26. At that time, due to the great weight of the army, the earth quaked. As the army was moving on, there was a great hustle and bustle. Seeing the king to have moved out in a chariot with its parts made of gold, Śatrughna's army, (capable of) striking all enemies, became ready. His brother Suketu, skilled in mace-fight, and full of (i.e. endowed with) all weapons and missiles quickly came there by a chariot. The king's son, Citrāṅga, skilled in all (types of) battle, quickly went in his own chariot to the furious army of Śatrughna. His younger brother known as Vicitra, skilled in various (modes of) fight and afflicted by his brother's grief, went in his golden chariot. Other brave warriors, skilled in the use of all weapons and missiles, being ordered by the king, went to the battle full of warriors. King Subāhu angrily came to the battlefield. He (there) saw his son in a swoon (due to being) hit by an arrow. Seeing his unconscious son named Damana lying in the driving box, the king again and again became grieved and fanned him with twigs. The brave hero, knowing (the use of) great missiles, sprinkled with water and touched by the king with a delicate hand, slowly regained consciousness.

27-30. He got up (and said:) "Where is my bow? Where has Puṣkala, after having got ready (to fight) and being hurt

by my arrow, gone after having left the battle?" Hearing these words uttered by his son Subāhu was extremely glad and embraced his own son. Damana with his body wounded by rows of missiles, on seeing his father, bowed his neck (i.e. head) and devoutly fell at his feet. The king skilled in (various) acts of fight put back his son into the chariot, and said to the general:

31-35. "Arrange the military array called Krauñca, invincible to the enemy, entering which I shall conquer the army of king Śatrughna." Hearing those words of king Subāhu, his general arranged the special type of military array called Krauñca, which the very mighty groups of enemy, holding hosts of weapons did not enter all of a sudden. At its mouth (i.e. entrance) Suketu stood; at the throat (a hero) called Citrāṅga remained; at the two sides stood two princes, and at the tail the king (himself) stood. In between his huge army looked splendid with its four divisions. Having made the Krauñca array, the general informed the king of having arranged it. The king, having seen his army that was ready (for the action), and the well-formed Krauñca-array, decided to fight with the warriors present in Śatrughna's army.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

A Fierce Fight Between Lakṣmīnidhi and Suketu

Śeṣa said:

1-2. Seeing that army like a cloud of a fearful size, and surrounded by many elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers, Śatrughna spoke thus to Sumati in serious words. Waited upon by learned men knowing many words and ideas.

Śatrughna said:

3-6. O Sumati, whose city has reached my best horse? I see this army resembling the ripples of an ocean. Whose army is this which is endowed with four divisions, is very joyful, and appears before (me) standing with eagerness to fight? Properly

tell all this to me who am asking you, knowing which I shall order my soldiers to take position for the fight.

Hearing these words, Sumati, of an auspicious mind, being pleased, said to Śatrughna, the tormentor of his enemies.

Sumati said:

7-11. O king, in the vicinity there is an auspicious city (called) Cakrāṅkā, in which there are sinless persons due to their devotion to Viṣṇu. This Subāhu, most familiar with the religious law, and the lord of that city, is present, surrounded by sons and grandsons, before you. He is always attached to his own wife and is averse to another man's wife. Viṣṇu's story revealing the highest object, dwells in his ears. The king does not take more than a sixth part of the wealth of another person (i.e. any person is his kingdom). He, the religious one, worships brāhmaṇas with the same devotion with which he worships Viṣṇu. Having the vow (of drinking) the honey from the lotuses of the feet of Viṣṇu, he is always engaged in serving him. He is devoted to his own duty; he is averse to another's way of life.

12-14a. The army of no other heroes is like his army. Hearing about the defeat of his son, he, being full of grief and endowed with his four-divisioned army, he is present (here) to fight. You also have these many heroes like Lakṣmīnidhi. With the host of their weapons, they will conquer the enemy. Order them who are well-disposed to you.

14b-21a. Hearing those words, Śatrughna said to his excellent heroes whose minds were full of great joy due to the battle having come near: "Subāhu's soldiers have today arranged the Krauñca array. His heroes have taken position at its opening and sides. Who, knowing (the use of) weapons, will break through it? He who has the power to break through it, or is eager for victory should take up this gauntlet from my lotus-like hand." Then the hero Lakṣmīnidhi took up (the gauntlet) to break the Krauñca(-array). He, surrounded by many heroes, knowing (the use of) all weapons and missiles, said (these) words: "O king, I shall go to break through the Krauñca(-array). Formerly, Bhārgava (i.e. Paraśurāma) broke

through the Krauñca(-mountain). (Now) I (shall do) like (him)." Then he said to another hero: "Who will go with him?" Then Puṣkala made up his mind to go after him. Riputāpa, Nalaratna, Ugrāśva, Vīramardana—all (these) went by Śatrughna's order to break through the Krauñca(-array).

21b-27a. Great Śatrughna, seated in a chariot, having all (kinds of) weapons, and surrounded by many soldiers, followed him. At that time the two oceans with big waves and ready to destroy the world appeared to be agitated. Then big kettle-drums from both armies were beaten. At every place were heard the war-drums and sounds of conches. The horses neighed and the elephants trumpeted very much. The best heroes gave out 'hum' sounds. The fellies of the chariot-wheels made a sound. There on the battlefield many angry warriors who were brave and very proud of the might of their arms were seen saying (to one another): "Cut (him off); break (him)." When both the armies of Śatrughna and his enemy were thus ready to fight, Lakṣmīnidhi said to Suketu who was at the opening (of the array):

Lakṣmīnidhi said:

27b-31a. Know me to be the son of Janaka, known as Lakṣmīnidhi, skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, and proficient in fighting. Release the horse of Rāmacandra, the destroyer of all demons. Otherwise, pierced by my arrows you will go to Yama's abode.

Hastening suddenly to the best hero who was speaking like this, Suketu made his bow ready and discharging arrows quickly became steady. Those arrows had sharp joints; had their feathered parts made of gold; they were difficult to be put up with; they were seen to pervade (everything) in the battle.

31b-40. Having speedily destroyed that volley of arrows, Lakṣmīnidhi stretched his bow and discharged at his chest six sharp arrows charming with whetted joints. Those arrows were seen to have gone down to the earth after having pierced the heart of the brother of the strong-armed one; they were smeared with blood and were stained. With his chest pierced by his arrows, Suketu, who was full of anger, struck him with twenty sharp arrows

with their joints curved. Both were seen by the soldiers to have their bodies pierced with arrows, covered with blood like the kiṁśuka (trees) full of flowers. The two who were discharging crores of arrows, who were fixing (on their bows)quickly(-going) arrows, who were dexterous and mighty, were (i.e. could) not (be) distinguished by any one. They had coiled (i.e. bent) their good bows, they were showering (their enemy) with the stream of arrows, and were like new clouds executing Indra's order. Their arrows were just seen to behead elephants, horses and brave men, but were not seen when they were fixed on the bow or discharged. By them having bows and arrows in their hands and biting their lips through anger, the earth was filled with great warriors having diadems and rings. Between the two, knowing (the use of) all weapons and missiles, and fighting proudly, a fierce, great battle, causing wonder (even) to the gods, took place. A great battle, piercing crores of warriors, took place. Nobody at no place saw (i.e. could see) the sky in (i.e. due to) the net of arrows.

41-63a. At that time brave Lakṣmīnidhi who destroyed his enemies, fixed sharp, strong arrows, eight in number, on his bow. With four arrows the hero killed the horses of Suketu; and laughing he quickly cut off the very lofty flag (of his chariot). With one he knocked down on the ground the charioteer's head from his body. He, full of anger, cut off, with one (arrow) the (enemy's) bow along with the string. The swift king, with one (arrow) pierced the chest of Suketu. Seeing that wonderful deed, heroes were astonished. (Suketu) whose bow was cut off, who was without a chariot, whose horses and charioteer were killed, took up a big mace and approached (his enemy) with a desire to fight. Seeing him, skilled in mace-fighting, to have approached, he got down with a mace (in his hand) from (his) chariot. Lakṣmīnidhi, who was very angry, took a big mace fully made of iron and variegated with gold (i.e. bright) and full of all charm, hastily struck that mace resembling the fire of the thunderbolt on the chest (of Suketu). O great sage, that hero (though) struck by the mace, did not shake like an intoxicated elephant struck with garlands by a child. Then that best hero said to Lakṣmīnidhi: "O you tormentor of the enemies, if you are brave, (then) put up with one stroke of my mace."

Saying so, he heavily struck on his forehead with the mace. Being struck on the forehead with the mace, he vomitted blood, and was very angry, and struck on his head with the mace of the nature of death (i.e. the fatal mace). Suketu, knowing the ways of the world, also struck him on (his) shoulder. Thus the two, skilled in mace-fighting, being very much angry, fighting with maces, desiring to conquer each other, avoiding each other's strokes, were intent upon killing each other. In that war nobody would lose and nobody would win. The two very mighty and brave ones were wet with streams of blood on (i.e. flowing from) the head, the forehead, the shoulder, the chest, and all the limbs. Then Lakṣmīnidhi, getting angry, raised his mace speedily and he, the powerful one, went (forward) to strike the powerful younger brother of the king on his chest. Then the king's brother, seeing him coming, held his great mace, and went all of a sudden to kill him from (his) army to (Lakṣmīnidhi's) army. This one held (i.e. caught) in his hand the mace hurled by him; (and) the very powerful one struck him with the same mace. Then king Lakṣmīnidhi, seeing that he had taken (i.e. caught) his mace, desired to have hand-to-hand fight with the strongest one. Then the king's younger brother who was angry, who knew (i.e. proficient in) fighting of all kinds, and who was the best among the heroes, seized him with his arms. Then Lakṣmīnidhi struck on his chest with his fist. Then he too, raising his fist, struck him on his head. The two who were angry and were biting their bud-like lips, struck each other with terrible slaps with the hands resembling the thunderbolt. They indulged in boxing; they bit each other with their teeth; they seized each other's hair; they scratched each other with their nails.

63b-69. Thus the fight between the two was fierce and horripilating. Then the angry brother of the king seized the king's foot, swung him round and threw him on the ground. Lakṣmīnidhi seized the hand of the king's younger brother and swinging him round for a hundred times high up (in the air), overthrew him on the hip of the elephant. Then he fell on the ground; and then in a moment regaining consciousness, the brave one in the same way speedily whirled him in the sky (i.e. in the air). Then the two, who were fighting, again indulged in

boxing. The two, desiring to kill each other, clung to each other—one's foot on the other's foot, seizing the hand (of the enemy) with his own hand, chest with chest, and mouth with mouth. Both were very valourous, both swooned. Seeing that (men) in thousands were amazed and praised (them): "O king Lakṣmīnidhi is blessed; blessed is the mighty younger brother of the king!"

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Killing of Citrāṅga

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Citrāṅga who was seated in his chariot and was at the neck of the Krauñca(-array), and was adorned with heroes, plunged into that army as a boar plunges into the ocean. Having stretched his very strong bow, resounding like thundering, he discharged sharp arrows burning crores of enemies. Great heroes with their entire bodies very much pierced with the arrows, lay (there) with the diadems and armours on their bodies and with their lips bitten.

4-8. When the battle proceeded like this, Puṣkala taking the bow that was variegated with gems and that very much tormented the enemies, went to fight. The forms of the two who had come together (to fight) looked very charming like the forms of Skanda and Tāraka in the Tāraka-battle in ancient times. That dexterous Puṣkala, quickly stretching his bow, quickly struck him with arrows having curved joints. Citrāṅga too, who was overpowered with anger, fixed sharp arrows on his bow and repeatedly discharged them in the front part of the battlefield. The taking (of the arrow from the quiver) was not noticed; the fixing (of the arrow on the bow) was not noticed; the discharge (of the arrow) was not noticed. Only the two (heroes) who had coiled (i.e. stretched) their bows were noticed.

9-13. Then that Puṣkala who was angry pierced the great, pre-eminent warrior on his chest with a hundred arrows.

Citrāṅga in a moment cut off all those arrows into (pieces of the size of) sesamum seeds; and with (his) arrows he struck Puṣkala on the limbs of his body. With his charming, deceptive missile Puṣkala whirled that divine chariot in the sky (i.e. air). It was indeed a wonder. That chariot, along with the horses, after having moved round in a circle (in the air) became steady; and with a great difficulty it remained on the battlefield. Seeing his valour, that intelligent Citrāṅga who was skilled in (the use of) all missiles, was angry, and said to Puṣkala:

Citrāṅga said:

14-19. You have done a good deed, appreciated by good warriors in the battle, viz. you whirled for a moment my chariot with the horses in the sky (i.e. air). (Now) see also my valour displayed by good warriors. You would be moving in the sky and (would be) honoured by gods.

He the best one among those familiar with the use (of weapons), and knowing (the use of) great missiles discharged with (i.e. from) his bow an extremely fierce missile. Being pierced in the battle with that arrow he alongwith his chariot, horses, flag and charioteer moved in the sky like a bird. (And) even before the best chariot quickly whirling in the sky (i.e. air) became steady, he discharged another arrow. The chariot, along with the charioteer, again whirled round (in the air). Seeing that act of his son, the king was amazed.

20-29. Puṣkala, the killer of the heroes on the side of the enemy, somehow became steady and struck his chariot, along with the charioteer and horses, with arrows. That hero, whose chariot was shattered, resorted to another chariot. That too was broken with his arrows by Puṣkala on the battlefield. When, after having got into another chariot he encountered him, he again shattered his chariot with sharp arrows. In this way that hero, Puṣkala, shining in the great battle, shattered ten chariots of the king's son. Then Citrāṅgaka, remaining in a variegated chariot, speedily came to fight with Puṣkala in the battle. In the battle he struck Puṣkala with five arrows. The son of Bharata (i.e. Puṣkala), being struck with those arrows, was extremely pained. He, being angry, raised his bow, and discharged ten

great, sharp arrows with their feathered ends beautified with gold, at his chest. Those extremely fierce arrows drank his blood. Having drunk it, they fell on the ground like one's ancestors who were false witnesses. Then the angry Citrāṅgaka took five arrows and discharged them at the forehead of the very vigourous son of Bharata. He (i.e. Puṣkala) being struck with those arrows, fixed an arrow on his excellent bow and took a vow to kill Citrāṅga:

30-38a. "O hero, listen to my pledge regarding killing you. Knowing it, you should attentively fight here. If, with this arrow, I do not deprive you of your life, then indeed it is my pledge that I would have (i.e. go to) that world which is reached by those people governed by Yama, who have polluted a chaste woman graceful with good conduct." Having heard these best words, the killer of great heroes laughed. The intelligent hero spoke auspicious words to Puṣkala: "Death always and everywhere is certain in the case of beings. Therefore, O you crest-jewel of heroes, I am not sorry about my death. O hero, that pledge which you, endowed with valour, have taken, is certainly true. That sin which a man who breaks (i.e. changes) the mind of him who desires to go on a pilgrimage, or which a man who knows (i.e. values) any other vow than the lofty vow of Ekādaśī has, gets, will accrue to me who would violate my vow (i.e. if I violate my vow)."

38b-39. Speaking these words only, he became silent, and took up his bow. Then he, having taken out from his quiver an excellent arrow, spoke distinct words leading to the enemy's murder.

Puṣkala said:

40-48. If I have served with a mind free from wickedness the pair of Rāma's feet, then my words would come true. If I have enjoyed my own wife, and do not know (i.e. have not seen) any other woman (even) in a dream, then my words will come true.

Saying so he fixed on his bow an arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world, and (capable of) cutting the heroes' head, and discharged it. The powerful son of the king,

seeing the arrow that was discharged, fixed on his bow a sharp arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world. That arrow cut off the arrow ready to kill him. There was a great wailing when that arrow was cut off. The hinder part of the arrow fell on the ground, and the forepart along with the blade cut off his neck in a moment like a lotus-stalk. Seeing him falling on the ground his soldiers wailed profusely and fled away. That excellent head along with the diadem and ear-rings fell on the ground and looked beautiful like the cresent moon (falling) from the sky. Seeing the hero fallen, Puṣkala, Bharata's son, plunged into the array, fully accompanied by all heroes.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

Subāhu's Defeat

Śeṣa said:

1-4. Then the king, having seen his pre-eminent son fallen dead (on the ground), was pained by the grief due to (the death of) his son, and wept very much. Being extremely afflicted, he struck on his head with his hands. Trembling very much, he shed tears from his lotus-like eyes. Taking the son who was fallen (dead), who was charming like the curved orb of the moon (i.e. like the crescent moon), who was wet with the blood (oozing) from the wounds caused by the arrows of Puṣkala, who looked charming by means of the ear-rings, whose pair of eye-brows was curved, who was the best, who had bitten his budlike lower lip, he kissed him with his lotus-like mouth and lamenting said these words:

5-7. "O (my) brave son, O hero, why do you not look at me, of an eager heart, with the pair of your clear eyes? Why are you without (i.e. not telling me) a story for my diversion? You indeed appear to have your mind plunging into the sea of anger. O son, tell me how (i.e. why) you are not laughing and not talking to me. (Why) are you not amusing me with your nectar (-like words) having a sweet taste, O son? O you very intelligent

one, take Śatrughna's horse adorned with a white chowrie and possessing beauty on account of a golden leaf; (but) give up your sleep.

8-12. This Puṣkala, spotless with his valour, the best due to his valour, the tormentor of his enemies, the killer of enemies' heroes, appears having a bow (in his hand) before you. Ward him off by good, sharp arrows discharged from your bow. O hero, how do you, being unconscious, lie in the battlefield? The elephants, the foot-soldiers, so also those seated in chariots, being afflicted through fear, will surrender themselves to you. Look at them, O very intelligent one. O son, how, without you, am I able to bear the sharp arrows of Śatrughna, discharged from his fierce bow on the battlefield? Henceforth who is capable of protecting me abandoned by you? If you will abandon your sleep, then I am capable of (having) victory."

13-19. The king, lamenting very much like this, afflicted due to the grief (of the death) of his son, very much and repeatedly beat his chest with his hand. Then (his two sons) Vicitra and Damana seated in their own chariots saluted the feet of their father, and spoke what was proper for the occasion: "O king, when we are alive, tell us what grief you have in your heart. The death longed for by the heroes in a battle, becomes great. Indeed this lordly Citrāṅga who, with his diadem, with his lips bitten with his teeth, looks splendid on the heroes' ground, is fortunate. Quickly tell what work, desired by you, we should do today. We two shall today destroy the entire helpless army of Śatrughna. Today only we shall cause to fall down from the chariot, Puṣkala, the killer of our brother in the battle, after having cut off his head adorned with a crown. Give up your grief. O you very highly intelligent one, how do you appear to be very much afflicted with grief?"

20-24. Having heard these words of his two brave and highly honoured sons, the great king gave up his grief and decided to fight. They too, who were furious in the battle, and who longed for an opponent, went into the enemy's army, full of unlimited warriors. The two heroes, resembling clouds in the rainy season fought in the battle—Damana with Riputāpa, and the other (i.e. Vicitra) with Nīlaratna. The powerful king, holding a bow and remaining in his chariot, covered with gold, beautified with

gems, rich in beauty on account of jewelled poles, and looking down upon great heroes skilled in archery, went to fight with Śatrughna surrounded by crores of heroes.

25-29. Seeing Subāhu, full of wrath, having come to fight with Śatrughna who had destroyed his son and had caused the killing of his entire army, Hanūmat having his nails as his weapon, making a loud sound, and moving by the side of Śatrughna ran to him. Subāhu, with his eyes full of anger, seeing that Hanūmat making a loud sound, coming to him, said laughing: "Where has Puṣkala gone after having killed my son in the battle? Today I shall quickly knock down his head with bright ear-rings. Where is Śatrughna, the protector of the horse? Where is Rāma? And where are the warriors? Let them see me who will snatch away their life in the battle to have come."

30-36. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, Hanūmat spoke to him: "Śatrughna, the destroyer of Lavaṇa (the son of Madhu), is the guardian of the army. How would he fight in the battle, O king, when his servant is in the fore. O best of men, having conquered me in the battle you will go to him." He speedily struck with ten arrows on the chest of the monkey who spoke like this, who was very strong and who remained like the best mountain. He took in the cavity of his hands the arrows that came to him and pounded them, the sharp ones tearing (i.e. capable of tearing) the enemy, (to pieces as small as) sesamum seeds. The very mighty one having pounded those arrows and roaring like the thunder of clouds and having surrounded his chariot with his tail, took it high up (in the air). Then that best king, while remaining in the sky (i.e. in the air), repeatedly cut off his (i.e. Hanūmat's) tail with arrows of sharp end. He (i.e. Hanūmat) struck on the end of his tail with arrows with curved joints, abandoned that divine chariot spotted with gold.

37-45. When he (i.e. Subāhu) was released by him, he, with his eyes full of wrath, struck with sharp arrows, that best monkey, Hanūmat. Hanūmat, the lord of monkeys, pierced with arrows and covered with blood everywhere (on all the parts of his body), entertained great wrath against the king. Having seized with his large teeth his chariot along with the horses, he speedily pounded it. That was indeed a wonder. Seeing his own chariot being broken, the mighty king quickly resorted to

another chariot and fought with the mighty (Hanūmat). The king, proficient in taking aim with an arrow and conversant with (the use of) great missiles, struck him on his tail, face, and chest and on arm and feet. Then the angry and best monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), jumped and struck with his foot on the chest of the king shining among good (i.e. brave) warriors. He, being struck with (Hanūmat's) foot fell unconscious on the ground; and vomitting blood from his mouth, he trembled with a flood of (i.e. heavy) breathing. Then Hanūmat who was very angry, speedily pounded the horses the heroes and (even) the elephants on the battlefield. Then his brother Suketu and king Lakṣmī-nidhi—both, quite ready, came near (each other) to fight.

46-50. Men, wounded with volleys of arrows showered by Puṣkala, fled and went (away) on seeing the king who was unconscious. The king's powerful son, Damana, seeing his army being defeated, stopped it as a dam stops the high-going sea. Then the king who being struck with the stroke of his foot by the best monkey in the battle was unconscious, saw a dream: in a pavilion on the bank of Sarayū in Ayodhyā Rāmacandra was surrounded by many pre-eminent brāhmaṇa sacrificing priests. There gods like Brahmā and others, crores of universes, with the palms of their hands joined, repeatedly praised him with eulogies.

51-54. Nārada and others with their hands glittering with lutes sang (the praise of) the dark Rāma, of beautiful eyes and holding a deer's horn. Celestial nymphs like Ghṛtācī and Menakā danced there. Vedas, being embodied, stood by Rāghava, full of all charm, and giver of whatever things (i.e. everything), and giver of pleasures to his devotees. Seeing this and other (things), he whose knowledge was destroyed by the curse of a brāhmaṇa, while getting up, regained consciousness, and said: "What have I seen?"

55-58a. Having got up, he, having a retinue of a crore of servants, and surrounded by a crore of chariots went on foot to the feet of Śatrughna. Having called Suketu, so also Vicitra and Damana who were ready to fight, he, who was familiar with law, warded them off. The great, righteous king, endowed with piety said to them: "O brother, O sons, listen to my words possessed of virtue. Now immediately stop fighting.

58b-67. Great unfairness has taken place, since you, O Damana, seized the excellent horse of Rāmacandra. This Rāma is the highest Brahman and is beyond effect and cause. He is the lord of the mobile and the immobile world. He has taken up a human form. I have now perceived this knowledge of Brahman. I, the innocent one, was formerly deprived of the wealth of my knowledge due to the curse of Asitāṅga. Formerly I had gone on a pilgrimage with a desire to know the true nature (of Brahman). There I saw many sages most familiar with religion. With a desire to know (Brahman) I went to see the sage Asitāṅga. Then the brāhmaṇa, showing favour to me said to me: "He, who is the lord of Ayodhyā, is known by the term Para Brahman (the highest Brahman). She who is his queen Jānakī, is said to be actually full of pure intelligence. The meditating sages, desiring to cross the boundless ocean of the worldly existence, difficult to be crossed, directly wait upon him by means of restraints etc. He whose banner is Garuḍa, removes great sins, merely when he is remembered. That wise (man) who waits upon him, will cross the mundane existence." Then I laughed at the brāhmaṇa (and said): "Who is he? Rāma is just a man. Who is that queen Jānakī who is full of joy and sorrow? How can a birthless one be born? What here is the act of a non-doer, which is beyond birth, death and old age? O sage, tell it to me."

68-75. The best sage, getting angry with me who spoke like this, cursed me: "O meanest among the mean, not knowing the (true) nature of him, you are replying (i.e. speaking) to me. Laughing, you are censuring Rāma, (by saying that) he is a human being. Therefore, you who do not know the truth, are (just) feeding your belly (i.e. you are selfish)." Then I clasped his feet. Then he, the ocean of pity, seeing my modesty, spoke to me with kindness: "O king, when you will create an obstacle in Rāma's sacrifice, then Hanūmat will forcibly strike you (with) his foot. Then you will realise the truth, not otherwise (simply) due to your desire." Formerly he told me like this. Now I have seen (i.e. realised) it. When the angry Hanūmat struck me on my chest, I saw Ramā's (i.e. Lakṣmī's) lord, of the nature of the perfect Brahman. Therefore, the very mighty one should bring the horse, rich in beauty, so also wealth and garments. I

shall give my kingdom (to Rāma). Seeing Rāma in the sacrifice giving great merit, I shall be blessed. Let them bring the horse. I like to hand him over (to Rāma)."

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

King Subāhu Surrenders to Śatrughna

Śeṣa said:

1. They, the strikers (of their enemies), (too) hearing the words of their father, said joyfully, "Let it be so", to the great king longing to see Rāma.

The sons said:

2-9. O king, we do not know anything except the lotuses of your feet. Let that which you have in your mind, take place quickly. Let this horse, adorned with a white chowrie, very much beautified with a jewelled necklace, and smeared with sandal (-paste) etc. be taken there. Your kingdom has the fruit of your orders (i e. your orders are obeyed), O lord. Your treasures are very rich. Your garments are very costly, fine and excellent. There is (plenty of) sandal; so also there is camphor. Your horses are very charming. The elephants are haughty due to rut. The chariots have golden poles. There are a hundred thousand female servants who are adorned with many ornaments of various colours. There are very agreeable servants. There are gems resembling the sun. There are various jewels. There are white pearls produced from the temples of elephants. There are a hundred thousand corals. O you very intelligent king, give all those things which are very splendid, to Rāmacandra. O king, offer us, your sons and your servants (to Rāmacandra). O king, how is it that you do not make your throne over to him?

Śeṣa said:

10. Hearing these words of his sons the king became glad;

and he said to the brave sons who were ready to do his words (i.e. to obey his orders):

The king said:

11. Let all (the heroes) having put on (their armours), having weapons in their hands, and surrounded by many chariots, bring the horse. Then I shall go to the king.

Śeṣa said:

12-18. Hearing these words of the king the diligent (men), brave in battle, viz. Vicitra, Damana, so also Suketu, went by his order. The heroes went to the city and took in front of the king the horse which was adorned with a golden plate etc., was richly decorated with a jewelled necklace, was decorated with a variegated note, was well adorned with a mass of pearls, and was held by the heroes possessing great weapons and missiles and having all (kinds of) charm from the front and the back by means of a rope. On the head of the horse, a white chowrie appeared aloft. In front of him a couple of good chowries shone again and again. (They) took the horse of the good (i.e. auspicious) horse-sacrifice, which had wind's speed and was made fragrant with Kṛṣṇāgaru sandal, in front of the king. The intelligent king seeing the horse decorated with a jewelled necklace, having the speed of mind and a beautiful form brought (before him) was pleased.

19-23. The very righteous king adorned with royal insignia and accompanied by his sons and grandsons went on foot to Śatrughna. Thinking that wealth is perishable and gives pain to them whose hearts are attached to it, he went to make a proper use of the unsteady wealth. Then he saw Śatrughna adorned with a white umbrella and being fanned by servants standing before him, asking Sumati (to narrate) Rāmacandra's story free from any tidings causing fear, well adorned by heroes, crowded with crores of heroes who desired to protect the horse, and surrounded on all sides by thousands of monkeys.

24-26. Seeing the feet of Śatrughna, he was delighted; and thinking 'I am lucky', and with a concentrated mind uttering

(the word) 'Rāma', he with his sons saluted the feet of Śatrughna. Seeing that pre-eminent and affectionate king, Śatrughna got up from his seat along with all his heroes and embraced him with his arms. The king, the killer of his enemies, having very much (i.e. devoutly) honoured Śatrughna, and being delighted, spoke with a faltering voice to Śatrughna.

Subāhu said:

27-31. Today I am blessed along with my sons, my family, my horses (and elephants) that I am seeing your feet praised by crores of kings. O you ocean of kindness, my ignorant son Damana had seized this best horse. (Please) forgive him this unfairness. He does not know (Rāma) the crest of the Raghus, the deity superior to all gods, the creator of the universe with ease, the destroyer and yet the protector also. (Take) this kingdom rich in all constituents and having mighty horses (and elephants). These treasures of me are full of wealth. These sons of me and I myself—all of us are Rāma's servants, obeying your commands. Take all (this) along with their effects. I have no superiority complex.

32-41. Where is that Hanūmat, the bee at Rāma's lotus-feet, due to whose favour I shall have the sight of the king of kings? What is not obtained on the earth in the company of the good? Seeing that great king (i.e. Rāma) having eyes like lotus-petals, I the ignorant one, have today overcome (the effect of) the brāhmaṇa's curse, and will obtain here the entire fruit of my existence, difficult to secure. Being very much separated from Rāma, I have passed a large (portion of my) life. Only a little (part of) it is left. How shall I see the best of the Raghus? Show me (that) Rāma who is proficient in the rite of sacrifice, and by the dust of whose feet (Ahalyā) the dear wife of sage (Gautama) who was turned into stone was purified. The crow—the bird—obtained the highest position due to his arrow's touch. Many in the battle went to (the best) position on seeing the lotus of his face. Those who respectfully take the name of this Raghunātha go to the highest place thought of by ascetics. Blessed are the people born in Ayodhyā, who having drunk with the cups of their own eyes the lotus of Rāma's face go to (i.e. obtain) happiness (and) great prosperity.

Having spoken like this to the king (i.e. Śatrughna) he offered the (sacrificial) horse, his kingdom and wealth (to Śatrughna) and said (to him): "O lord of the earth, I am (your) servant." Hearing these words of the king the eloquent Śatrughna who conquered the cities of his enemies and who was proficient in (using correct) words replied to the king:

Śatrughna said:

42-49. O king, how do you speak (like) this? You are old, (therefore) you are venerable to me. Let this Damana command your entire kingdom. It is the duty of kṣatriyas which enjoins a battle. By my order let all this kingdom and this wealth go back (to your son Damana). As Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) is always adorable to me by means of speech and mind, similarly, O lord of the earth, you will also be adorable (to me). Having armed yourself, having put on an armour, having taken a sword, and with your elephants and horses, you should today be ready to go after the horse.

The lord of the earth who was highly respected by Śatrughna, having heard these words of Śatrughna, consecrated his son on his throne, and the king, a great warrior and a knower of the truth, surrounded by great heroes, having performed purificatory rites according to the sacred commands over his son killed on the battlefield by Puṣkala, grieved for a while from the point of view of the world (i.e. as commonly people do). Recollecting Raghunātha he destroyed his grief with knowledge. Being ready and seated in a chariot, he, led by great warriors and surrounded by a great army, came to Śatrughna.

50-53. The king (i.e. Śatrughna), having seen him having come with his entire army, made up his mind to go to protect the horse. The horse marked by a note on his forehead and released by him, took a turn towards the left and wandered towards many eastern countries. At every place respectable and very brave kings saluted him. Nobody seized him. Some brought variegated garments, some brought wealth, (others brought) people, and some brought (i.e. handed over) their kingdom and saluted him.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Janaka Releases Sinners from Hell

Śeṣa said:

1-7. Then the horse, adorned with the note, reached Tejaḥpura (city) in which king Satyavān truthfully protected his subjects. Then Raghunātha's younger brother (Śatrughna) with a retinue of a crore going after the horse went in front of (the king) the conqueror of cities. Having seen the beautiful city, adorned with variegated ramparts, shining with golden pitchers all round, adorned at every place with thousands of temples of deities (Śatrughna said to Sumati). "In it monasteries of ascetics, full of ascetics, look beautiful. Here flows the great goddess (Gaṅgā), remaining on the head of him having three eyes (i.e. Śiva), and crowded with swans and ducks, and resorted to by hosts of sages. O Sir, in every house of brāhmaṇas smoke produced from the sacred fire purifies those whose minds were overflowing with sins." With his mind amazed due to the joy produced on seeing that city Śatrughna, the subduer of his enemies, said to Sumati.

Śatrughna said:

8. O minister, tell (me), whose city this is, which being seen by me, gives joy to my mind as it is righteously protected.

Śeṣa said:

9. Hearing these words of king Śatrughna, Sumati told him everything properly and without exaggeration.

Sumati said:

10-13. O lord, being attentive, listen to the auspicious tales of Viṣṇu's devotees, hearing which one is freed from sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Satyavān is a king who is liberated while living, is a bee resorting to the lotuses in the form of Rāma's excellent feet, knows sacrifices and their constituents, is a performer of sacrifices and a great protector, whom his father known as Ṛtambhara-famous in the world and very religious, obtained after having propitiated the cow

by means of many vows. The cow, pleased (with him) gave him a son, adorned with many virtues and having a great charm, (called) Satyavān. Know that best king.

Śatrughna said:

14-15. Who is king Ṛtambhara? Why did he worship the cow? How did he have a son—a devotee and worshipper of Viṣṇu? Tell me all this account of the devotee of Viṣṇu. When heard, it removes the mountain of the great sins of beings.

Śeṣa said:

16-18. Hearing these very meaningful words of Śatrughna, he clearly told him the story about his origin. Formerly there was king Ṛtambhara who was childless. He had many wives, but did not have a child on (i.e. from any one of) them. Then he, intent on his well-being, asked the sage named Jābāli who had luckily come there, the cause of (i.e. leading to) the birth of a son.

Ṛtambhara said:

19-21. O lord, tell me, the childless one, the words leading to the birth of a son. Knowing from you that by doing which an excellent child (i.e. a son) holding (i.e. continuing) my family will be born to me, I shall certainly carry out these excellent words (of you). (I shall give) a gift, (I shall observe) a vow, (visit) a sacred place or (perform) a sacrifice, O best sage.

Hearing these words of the king longing for a son and bowing to him, the best sage told him words leading to the birth of a son.

He said:

22-30. O lord, there are three means for him who longs for a child: Viṣṇu's grace, grace of a cow or of Śiva. Therefore, O king, you offer worship to a cow having a divine body, in whose tail, mouth, horn and back gods live. When she is pleased, she will give what is longed for (and) is accompanied

by righteousness. Knowing thus, O Ṛtambhara, offer worship to a cow. The ancestors of him and the deities also are always pleased with him who everyday worships a cow with grass etc. All the desires of him, of a pious vow, who gives a cow her daily measure of food, are really fulfilled. A thirsty cow tied at home, an unmarried daughter in menses (i.e. who has attained puberty) and a deity with faded flowers destroy the religious merit obtained before. The ancestors of him who forbids a cow that is eating her grass (i.e. grass meant for her), are on the point of falling (into hell). That foolish man who beats a cow with a stick, goes, bereft of his hands, to the city of Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). The ancestors who have gone down (to hell), of him who wards off the gadflies, dance (saying): "This fortunate son (i.e. descendant) of me (of us) will emancipate us."

31-37. In this case they narrate this ancient account: the wonderful event of Janaka that formerly took place in the city of Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). Once king Janaka gave up his life by means of abstract meditation. Then an aeroplane decorated with a mass of small bells came (there). Then the king, with his body being carried by servants, got into it, and went (to heaven). On his way he went near the city of Yama. Then sinners were being oppressed in crores of hells. Having received the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from the body of Janaka they became happy. The affliction due to the tormentation in hell became joyful (i.e. bearable) for them. Due to the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from Janaka's body, their great misery perished (i.e. disappeared) at that time. Then the beings oppressed due to sins, not desiring separation from him, lamented very much. They uttered piteous words to him: "O blessed one, do not go from here. We who are tormented, are happy due to the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from your body."

38-39. Hearing these words, the very righteous king, filled with a flood of pity, thought in his mind: 'If the beings are happy here due to the touch of the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from my body, I shall stay in this city only. This is charming heaven (for me).'

40-43a. Thinking like this, the king, with his mind being sympathetic, and causing happiness to beings, stayed there only

in front of the hell. Dharma (i.e. Yama), causing severe torment to the sinners, came there at the door of hell. Then he saw king Janaka, doer of great meritorious deeds, full of pity, who had stood at the door (having come) in an aeroplane. The lord of the dead bodies (i.e. Yama), smiling, said these words to Janaka:

43b-53. "O king, why have you, the crest-jewel of piety, come here? This is a place for the wicked sinners who cause harm to the life (of others). O king, men like you, who do meritorious acts, do not come (to this place). Those men who are intent upon deceiving others, who are engaged in censuring others, and are intent on (grabbing) other's wealth, alone come here. That man who would abandon his wife who is religious and absorbed in serving him without her fault, would come here. He who, greedy through attachment for wealth, deceives his friend, comes here, and receives intense torment from me. Having bound the man who, a foolish one, does not remember Rāma mentally, with words or acts, through hypocrisy, hatred, or ridicule, I throw him among these and cause him to be boiled. Those who have remembered the lord of Ramā, leave my place and quickly go to Vaikuṇṭha. O very intelligent king, my servants, unable to look at (people) like you, bring those who are great sinners. Therefore, O great king, go, enjoy many pleasures. Having got into an excellent aeroplane, enjoy the (fruit of the) religious merit earned by you." Having heard these words of Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), the lord of that (city), he, full of the flood of compassion, said to him:

Janaka said:

54-55. O lord, due to pity for (these) beings I (shall) not go (to Vaikuṇṭha). Comforted by the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from my body, they are staying here. O king, if you release all these living in hell, then, being happy, I shall go to heaven resorted to by meritorious persons.

Jābāli said:

56. Hearing these words, he, pointing out to him each one of the many dwelling in hell, said to Janaka:

Dharma said:

57-65. This one cohabited with his friend's wife that confided in him. Therefore, I have roasted him on an iron-pale for a myriad of years. Then having thrown him—the defaulter—into the species of pigs, he, marked with the marks of a eunuch, would be cast down into the species of human beings. This one repeatedly and forcibly embraced the wife of another (man). Therefore he, is roasted in Raurava (hell) for a hundred years. This wicked one stole the wealth of others and enjoyed it. Therefore, having cut off his hands, I shall cook him in puss and blood. This one did not honour and welcome a guest oppressed with hunger that had come to him even by words. Therefore, he should be dropped into the Tāmisra (hell) full of fuel. Let him, troubled by bees, meet with torment for a hundred years. This one, being shameless, loudly reviled another person. This one too sending forth his ears (i.e. with great interest) listened that reviling many times. Therefore, these two have fallen into a dark well. This one who had deceived his friend being dejected, is very much roasted in Raurava hell. Therefore, making them eat the fruit of their sins, I shall release them. O best among men, you, accumulating a heap of religious merit (would please) go (to heaven).

Jābāli said:

66. Thus he pointing out the sinful beings became quiet. The devotee of Rāma with his eyes full of pity said:

Janaka said:

67. Tell me quickly how the miserable beings can be free from hell and doing what would they obtain happiness.

Dharma (i.e. Yama) said:

68-71. These have never propitiated Viṣṇu. They have never listened to his stories. How can (these) sinners (then) be free from hell? If, O great king, you (desire to) release them, even though they are great sinners, then give them that religious merit (of you about) which I shall tell (you now). Once, having got up in the morning, you meditated with pure heart upon

this Śrī Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) who is called the remover of great sins. Give them that religious merit which you collected when you uttered with pure heart the name Rāma, Rāma; by that their freedom from hell would take place.

Jābāli said:

72-77. Hearing these words of the intelligent Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), the great king gave (them) the religious merit obtained by him from his birth. (He said:) "Let there be pleasing release of these from hell due to the religious merit earned (by me) from birth by the worship of Raghunātha." When he was speaking like this, the beings dwelling in hell that moment only became free from hell and became divine-bodied. They said to king Janaka: "O king, by your favour we have been in a moment freed from miserable hell, and will (now) go to the highest position." He intent on showing kindness to all beings, seeing those men resembling the sun freed from hell, was very much pleased in mind. All those, praising Janaka, the great king, the treasure of pity, went to heaven adorned by gods.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

King Ṛtambhara is Blessed with a Son

Jābāli said:

1. When those men living in hell went (to heaven), king (Janaka) asked Yama, the best among those who know dharma.

The king said :

2-4. O Dharmarāja, you have said that men who commit sins and are not interested in religious discourses, come to your place. O you righteous one, tell me for what sin I have come here, and the cause of my sin, from the beginning.

Hearing these words of him, O you tormentor of the enemies,

Dharmarāja then told him (the cause of) his arrival to Yama's city.

Dharmarāja said :

5-12. O king, you have great religious merit. None else has like it on the surface of the earth. O you who have been observing the vow of (drinking) the honey from the two (lotus-)feet of Raghunātha, the celestial river in the form of your fame which gives great joy and emancipates the wicked, purifies all the sinners full of the dirt (of sin). Still, O you best king, there is a small bit of sin (in you), due to which you, full of merit, have come to my residence (Saṁyaminī). Once you prevented a cow that was grazing (from doing so). Due to the effect of that sin, you have seen the gates of hell. Now, freed from (that) sin and endowed with great religious merit, enjoy many many pleasures obtained through your religious merit. Raghunātha, the ocean of pity, taking away (i.e. desiring to remove) the misery of these, has sent (you) the devotee of Viṣṇu on this great route. O you of a good vow, how would they have been free from sin, if you had not come along this way? O very intelligent one, people like you who are afflicted by others' misery and who are the abode of kindness, thus remove the misery of beings.

Jābāli said :

13-15. Having saluted Yama, who was speaking like this, he went to heaven in a divine aeroplane adorned with the host of celestial nymphs. Therefore, cows are to be honoured; one should not even mentally censure them. One who censures them, remains in hell as long as the fourteen Indras rule. Therefore, O best among kings, worship a cow. Being pleased, she will quickly give you a son who is devoted to piety.

Sumati said :

16-20. Having heard it, he asked about the worship of a cow: How is she to be respectfully and carefully worshipped? What kind of man does she make him? Jābāli duly told him the worship of a cow. He who has undertaken the vow of (worshipping) a cow, should everyday go to the forest to graze her. He

should make the cow eat barley-grains and should collect them from her dung. O king, one longing for a son should eat those barley-grains. He should drink pure water (only) when she drinks water. He should be seated (only) when she would sit on a high seat. Everyday he should ward off the gnats and should himself collect grass or fodder (for her). She gives a son devoted to piety to him who does like this.

Sumati said :

21-27. Hearing these words that pious Ṛtambhara, longing for a son, practised the vow. Worshipping the cow everyday, he pleased her with grass etc. The intelligent one, showing great care for her food (like) barley, warded off the gnats. Of him who was worshipping the cow grazing grass etc. in the forest and having fear from nowhere, auspicious days passed. Once that king, curious to observe the beauty of the forest, had cast his eyes on it, and was roaming all around. At that time a lion having come from the interior of the forest struck the cow that was yelling in many ways, that was helpless and that was afflicted due to the burden of the lion (on her body). Then the king, having come there and having seen his mother (i.e. the cow) struck by the lion, was very much distressed and cried. Being afflicted he came to Jābāli, the best sage, and asked him about the atonement for the sin of killing a cow.

Ṛtambhara said :

28-29. O lord, I had resorted, by your order, to the forest and looked after the cow. A lion not falling within the range of (my) sight (i.e. not noticed by me) came from somewhere and attacked the cow. What do (i.e. should) I do for the atonement of that sin, by your order? How can I fulfil the vow granting a son to me?

30-40. The best sage said to the king speaking like this: "O king, there are means for the atonement of a sin. There are expiations, O you very intelligent one, for all sins of one who has killed a brāhmaṇa, who is ungrateful and who drinks liquor. All the sins of him who observes the (vows) duly go away by means of vows like Kṛcchra, Cāndrāyaṇa (observed) along with

restraints and controls. For two sinners who have committed heaps of sins, there is no expiation: for him who deliberately kills a cow and one who censures Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). The meanest one who mentally desires (giving) pain to cows, resides in a place in hell as long as fourteen Indras (rule). Even that unfortunate man who just once censures Hari, would, surrounded by his sons and grandsons, see hell. Therefore, O lord of men, you should realise that he who censures Viṣṇu or causes pain to cows never gets release. There is an expiation if a cow is killed through ignorance. You (now) go to Ṛtuparṇaka, the intelligent devotee of Rāma. He looks equally upon all his foes and friends. He will quickly tell you the expiation for this killing of the cow. Formerly you had attached his countries, so he had abandoned them. Giving up enmity, go to Ṛtuparṇaka. Being composed, do quickly what he will tell you (to do), so that there will be the expiation of the sin committed by you."

41-48. Hearing these words of (i.e. spoken by) him, he went to Ṛtuparṇaka who was an excellent devotee of Rāma and who looked equally upon his foe and friend. He told him whatever, the killing of the cow etc., took place. He too thought of a means for the expiation of that sin. Having reflected for a moment, king Ṛtuparṇa who was intelligent and who knew dharma laughed and said to Ṛtambhara: "O king, who am I before (i.e. as compared with) the sages knowing the scriptures? Why have you, abandoning them, come to me, fancying myself to be learned? If you have faith in me, then I shall say something. O best of men, carefully listen to my words. By means of act, thought and words have recourse to Raghunātha. O you highly intelligent one, please the lord of the worlds without deceit. When pleased, he will grant (i.e. satisfy) all desires of your mind. He will destroy the sin of having ignorantly killed a cow. O you religious-minded one, O you best one, remembering Rāma, look after the cow. By giving gold to a brāhmaṇa, you will atone for the sin."

Sumati said :

49-57. Hearing those words king Ṛtambhara, with his mind purified, took to remembering Rāma, and observed the vow. Engaged in the well-being of all beings, and always remembering Rāma, he, looking after the cow, went to the forest as before.

Surabhi was pleased with him. When gratified, she said: "O king, choose a boon from me according to the desire of your mind?" Then the king said (to her): "Give me a son who is a devotee of Rāma, who is fond of his father, and who will follow his own duty." The merciful, desire-yielding, divine cow, being pleased, gave the boon to the king longing for a son, and disappeared. Then at the (proper) time he obtained a son—Viṣṇu's devotee and serving Rāma. His father (i.e. king Ṛtambhara) named him Satyavān. Having obtained the son (named) Satyavān who was greatly devoted to his father and comparable to Indra (only) in valour, the great king obtained great joy. The king, having obtained a righteous son, was full of joy and having deposited (i.e. entrusted) the kingdom with him, went to a forest for practising penance. There, with his mind full of devotion he propitiated Viṣṇu, and with his sins fully washed, he physically went to the place of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

Satyavān Meets Śatrughna

Sumati said:

1-9. O dear one, this king too who was well known by the name Satyavān pleased by means of his duty Raghunātha, the lord of the worlds. Being pleased (with him) the lord of Ramā (i.e. Viṣṇu) gave him unswerving devotion to his feet, difficult to obtain through crores of religious deeds by his worshippers. He, full of pity and not being fatigued, everyday told the purifying tale of Śrī Raghunātha to people. He beat with sticks, causing fear even to Yama, the man who did not worship Ragunātha (i.e. Rāma), the lord of Ramā (i.e. Viṣṇu). He made every man who would be above the age of eight till he would be eighty years old, observe the fast of Ekādaśī. To him Tulasī was dear; his neck never abandoned the excellent garland from the lotus-like feet of Raghunātha. He was venerable even to the sages.

How then was he not (so) to others? He loved remembering Raghunātha. His sins were washed. His misfortune was destroyed. He, knowing that the very wonderful horse of Rāmacandra has come, will come and give you the kingdom free from troublesome fellows. O king, I have told you the best (thing) that you have asked for. O lord, what more do you ask? Order it (and) I (shall) do it.

Śeṣa said:

10. The horse, possessing many wonders, went into the city. Seeing him, all the people went to the king, and reported to him.

The people said:

11-12. A certain horse, shining with a note on his forehead white like the water of Gaṅgā, has come.

Hearing those charming and pleasing words uttered by the people, the king laughed and said (to them): "Ascertain whose horse that is."

13-20a. They told him: "A horse, looked after by Śatrughna, has come from the city of king Rāma." He, having heard the very pleasing, two-lettered name of Rāma, marked with a faltering sound, was very much delighted in mind: "The horse of that Rāma, the lord of Ayodhyā, who is constantly thought by me has come with Śatrughna to my city. Hanūmān who serves the feet of Rāma and who never forgets Rāma in his mind, will also be there. I (shall) go there where there are Śatrughna, (Hanūmat) the son of Maruta (i.e. the Wind) and other men who serve the lotus-like feet of Rāma". He ordered his minister: "Quickly come, taking all the royal wealth with me. I shall go to look after the excellent horse of Raghunātha, and to do (i.e. to offer) service to Rāma's lotus-like feet, which is difficult to be had." Saying so he with his soldiers went out to Śatrughna.

20b-26. Just then Rāma's brother (Śatrughna) along with his soldiers reached the city. Mighty heroes roared; chariots produced big sounds; there were the sounds of the triumphant conches; everywhere there were the flute-sounds. King Satyavān, having come along with his ministers, saluted (Śatrughna's) feet

and presented to him his very wealthy kingdom. Śatrughna, having recognised the king, observing Rāma's vow, gave his great kingdom to his son named Rukma. He, endowed with truth, and of great glory, having embraced the very glorious Hanūmat of mighty arms and also other devotees of Rāma, regarded himself blessed; and with Śatrughna, he was delighted in mind. Just then the horse well-protected by heroes went a long way off. Śatrughna along with that king and heroes went (after the horse).

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

Śatrughna's Army Gets Ready to Fight Vidyunmālin

Śeṣa said :

1-7a. When many excellent warriors like Śatrughna and all great kings having crores of chariots were going, there was all of a sudden, on the way, very fearful darkness in which kinsmen could not recognise their own man or a stranger. The sky was covered with dust and was full of lightning and thunder. In such a very fearful confusion clouds showered profuse blood with puss and (other) foul things. The heroes who were great enemies, became very much confounded. When the people were perplexed, the condition was: 'What is this? What is this?' The eyes of people of renowned vigour were pervaded with darkness. (A demon) who was well known as Vidyunmālin who was Rāvaṇa's friend, lived in the nether world and was surrounded by a line of demons took away the horse. He was seated in an aeroplane made of iron and going according to (occupants') desire.

7b-10a. He causing fear to all heroes took away the horse. In a short while the darkness disappeared and the sky became pure. Those heroes led by Śatrughna said: "Where is the horse?" Looking for the best horse, they saw one another; (but) when they did not see the horse, there was loud wailing. "Where is the horse of (i.e. intended for) the horse-sacrifice? Who, the wicked one, has taken it (away)?"

10b-12. They spoke such words. Just then that lord of demons who was surrounded by the best demons, seated in an excellent aeroplane, was seen by all the best warriors, seated in chariots and adorned with valour. There fearful demons, having bad faces, terrible mouths, long fangs, were seen ready to seize the army (of Śatrughna).

13-14. Then they informed Śatrughna, the best among kings: "We do not know (how) one, shining in an aeroplane, took away the horse into the sky. Having confounded us—the heroes, with darkness, he came, and seized the horse. O best king, do what is proper."

15-18. Hearing those words, Śatrughna was full of great anger. (He said:) "Who is this powerful demon that has seized my horse? Today let the aeroplane, struck by the volley of my arrows, fall down. Today let the head of my enemy fall down, (after being struck) by my arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads. Make ready all chariots filled with great weapons and missiles. Let (our) warriors go to strike back the horse-snatcher." Speaking thus, he, with his eyes red due to anger, said to his minister who knew justice and injustice and who was proficient in the affairs of a war.

Śatrughna said :

19-21. O minister, tell me who, that are diligent in killing the demon, are very brave, are having great weapons, are best among those who know (the use of) excellent missiles, should be appointed (to kill the demon). Think and quickly tell me. I shall do your words (i.e. I shall do as you tell me). Tell me about the heroes knowing (the use of) all missiles and capable of (fighting with) him.

Having heard this the minister spoke befitting words showing the heroes, bent quickly (before Śatrughna), capable of (fighting in) that excellent battle.

Sumati said :

22-31. Let Puṣkala, the tormentor of the enemies, and having great weapons and missiles and ready to get victory in the

battle, go to conquer the demon. In the same way let Lakṣmīnidhi possessing a mass of missiles, go. Let him break his vehicle with his sharp arrows. Hanūmat of bold deeds is capable of fighting with the demons. O lord, let him strike the demon with his face and tail. So also let all the brave monkeys who are skilled in fighting and are prompted by your words, go to fight. Let the best ones (like) Sumada, Subāhu, Pratāpāgrya, go to fight with the mean demons with their sharp arrows. May you too, seated in a chariot endowed with great weapons and ready to kill the demon, obtain victory in the battle. O king, this is my view. Let those warriors who are brave and capable of destroying him, go (to fight with him). What is the use of (sending) many other warriors?

When the minister, named Sumati, and best among the heroes, spoke like this, Śatrughna told the heroes skilled in fighting (as follows): "O heroes, let Puṣkala and others, who are skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, state in my presence their pledge to destroy the demon. Let you, making a great solemn declaration befitting your valour and accompanied by the army, go into the battlefield."

32-33. Hearing these words, the mighty (heroes) of Śatrughna, who were endowed with lustre, made their own great solemn declarations. Then, first, the hero Puṣkala, endowed with great energy, having heard the words of the lord of the earth, made this (i.e. the following) solemn declaration:

Puṣkala said :

34-40. O best king, listen to my very wonderful solemn declaration made due to my valour in the presence of all people that are listening to it. If I do not make the demon overcome with a swoon and his face full of scattered hair, let me have the sin which he who enjoys his own daughter, gets, or which one gets by censuring deities. Let me have that sin if I falsify your words. O great king, listen to my pledge in case the very powerful soldiers (of the demon) do not fall on being pierced with my arrows. If I do not make my words true, let me have the sin of him who distinguishes between Viṣṇu and Śiva or Śiva and Śakti. These are all the words uttered by me (i.e. I had to say). That

firm devotion which I have towards the lotus-like feet of Raghunātha, will itself make (my words) true.

Hearing that pledge of Puṣkala, king Lakṣmīnidhi, made a truthful solemn declaration, adorned with his valour.

Lakṣmīnidhi said :

41-43. If I turn back (from the battlefield), I would have that sin which a man gets if he keeps mum on hearing the censure of the Vedas, or being outcast from all religions, he mentally likes (the censure of Vedas); (I shall have the sin of) the brāhmaṇa who is wicked and sells liquor and lac etc., or who, the fool, being tempted by greed sells a cow; (or of him) who having drunk the water from the money of a mleccha, does not observe an expiation.

44-54. Having heard the pledge, Hanūmat, skilled in battle, said, after having remembered Rāma's feet, (the following) auspicious words: "My lord (Rāma) whom all gods along with demons salute by (bowing) their heads (adorned) with gems, should always be reflected on by meditating saints in their hearts. The glorious Rāma is the lord of Ayodhyā and is worshipped by the lord of the world. Those words which one would utter by remembering him will come true. O king, who (i.e. how insignificant) is this mean, weak demon, seated in (the aeroplane) moving according to (occupants') desire? Tell me quickly what should be done by me. Who would (i.e. is able to) knock me down? With my tail I (shall) lift up the Meru (mountain) along with the lord of gods. I (shall) dry up the entire ocean. I shall even drink up the Saṁvarta (cloud abounding in water). I have the favour of king Śrī Raghunātha and Jānakī. O king, there is nothing on the surface of the earth which would ever be unattainable for me. If, O king, these words uttered by me would be untrue, then at that time only I would be away from devotion to Raghunātha. If I falsify my words, then let me have the sin which a śūdra who would keep a tawny cow with the desire (to obtain) milk (from her), would have. If I speak false words, let me have the sin of that śūdra who infatuated by love has sexual intercourse with a brāhmaṇa woman. Certainly let me have that sin which a

man greedy through the taste of the tongue would drink liquor by the smell of which a man would go to hell and by its touch would even go to Raurava (hell), if, due to Rāma's grace I shall not make my pledge true."

55-59. When this was spoken by the great heroes, the warriors quickly made a solemn declaration shining with their valour. Śatrughna also praising those heroes skilled in battle (with the words) 'Well (said), well (said)', made a solemn declaration when people were observing (i.e. in the presence of people): "In front of you, I shall declare my vow adorned with my energy. Let the magnanimous ones endowed with exertion for fight, listen. If I do not strike with my arrows and knock down on the ground from the aeroplane his head cut off and broken from his trunk, let me certainly have that sin which one would get by giving false testimony or by stealing gold or due to censuring the Vedas."

60-63. Hearing the good words of Śatrughna, those (warriors) honoured by heroes (said:) "O Rāma's brother, you are blessed. Who else but you would be (so) great? O lord of the world, you alone killed the very mighty Lavaṇa, Madhu's son, who caused misery to gods and demons. Who (i.e. how insignificant) is the demon? Where (i.e. of what importance) is his small army? O you very intelligent one, you will (just) in a moment destroy him." Saying so, the heroes became ready on the battlefield. Gladly they went to (attack) the demon to make their pledge true.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

Vidyunmālin Killed in Battle

Śeṣa said :

1-7. With chariots having good horses (yoked to them), rich in charm and full of all weapons and missiles and endowed with various jewels, they went to (i.e. marched against) the mean demons. Seeing them the demon seated in a vehicle going according

to (occupants') desire, as it were, repeatedly threatening them, said with a deep-sounding voice: "Let the brave warriors not go to fight. Let them go home. Let them not cast their life. I shall not release the excellent horse. I am well-known as Vidyunmālin, and am the friend of Rāvaṇa. I have come to atone for my friend who is dead. Where has that Rāma who has killed (my) friend Rāvaṇa, gone? Where also is his brother (Śatrughna) who is the crest-jewel of all the brave men? Having killed him—the younger brother of Rāma, and drinking his blood along with bubbles coming up from his neck, I shall atone for (the death of) him (i.e. Rāvaṇa)." Hearing these words Puṣkala, the best among the excellent warriors, said to him endowed with valour and bravery:

Puṣkala said :

8-11. Excellent warriors do not brag in the battle. By means of showering their weapons and missiles they show (their) valour. O you maddened one, he who killed Rāvaṇa is surrounded by his kinsmen. Where will you go by snatching his horse? You will fall (when struck) with Śatrughna's arrows discharged from his bow. Jackals will eat you fallen dead on the ground. O wicked one, do not roar when I, Rāma's servant, am (here). In a battle excellent warriors roar in the battle due to great accomplishment after conquering their enemy.

Śeṣa said :

12-21. The best demon hit strongly with a (missile called) Śakti, Puṣkala—the hero—who was speaking thus, and who was ferocious in battle, on his chest. That Puṣkala, seeing that great iron missile, attached (i.e. decked) with gold, cut it off with three very fierce and sharp arrows. Made lustreless by the arrows, it fell on the ground in three parts. While falling it shone like Viṣṇu's three missiles. Seeing the missile cut off the demon, the tormentor of his enemy, quickly took up a lance having three points and made of iron. The best demon discharged it having sharp points and resembling fire. He, called Puṣkala, made it into (pieces like) sesamum seeds with his arrows. Puṣkala, Rāma's servant, having quickly cut off the trident, fixed on his bow sharp arrows having the speed of mind. The arrows quickly sticking (i.e. striking) his chest produced anger, as the charming qualities

of Viṣṇu produce love in the heart of a devotee of Viṣṇu. The very ferocious Vidyunmālin afflicted with pain due to being pierced by his arrow and ready to strike took up a fierce mallet. He whose name was Vidyunmālin, sent (i.e. discharged) that mallet. It struck the chest (of Puṣkala). It produced (blood) and made him foul. Puṣkala, the tormentor of his enemies and the hero struck by the mallet, shaking with tremour, fell in the middle part of the chariot.

22-28. In the same way his brother Ugradaṁṣṭra fought with Lakṣmīnidhi, with fatal weapons and missiles discharged in various ways. Ragaining consciousness just at that moment, he said to the demon: "O greatest among the demons, you are fortunate. Great is your valour. Now listen also to my great vow honoured by the brave. Today with sharp arrows I shall knock you down from the aeroplane." Speaking thus, he took up an arrow, which was sharp, difficult to be overtaken, burning, having the lustre of fire, and having great excellence. Just when he exerted to retaliate, a very fierce and sharp arrow got into his chest. Confused by the arrow and with his heart perplexed, the demon, losing his consciousness, fell on the ground from the middle part of the vehicle going according to the occupants' desire. Ugradaṁṣṭra saw his elder brother falling. Being afraid of the enemy, he took him into the interior of the vehicle.

29-37. With great anger he said to his enemy Puṣkala, the best among the mighty: "O wicked one, having overthrown my brother, where will you go? Having vanquished me in the battle (i.e. if you vanquish me in the battle then only), you will get excellent victory. When I am (alive), put an end to the hope of victory in your heart." He (i.e. Puṣkala), with his eyes full of anger, quickly struck with ten arrows on (i.e. discharged ten arrows into) the chest of the wicked one who was speaking like this. The wicked one, struck with ten arrows by the magnanimous Puṣkala, got angry in his mind, and started to strike him. Grinding his teeth in anger, he raised his fist and struck (Puṣkala). Causing in (others') hearts fear (like) the noise of the whirlwind (caused) by the fall of the thunderbolt, he roared. The hero Puṣkala, knowing (how to wield) great missiles, struck with a fist, desiring the destruction of the wicked-minded one, did not tremble. He discharged into his chest arrows very sharp like the

teeth of a calf. The demon, pained (due to being struck) with those arrows, took up a trident which had three points, which was burning and which was extremely fierce due to lines of flames. The fierce one struck (i.e. hit) the chest of Puṣkala, the great hero. The best archer, struck by the trident, fainted. He suffered from a great mental depression and fell on the chariot.

38-51. Knowing him to have fainted, Hanūmat, the son of Wind, with his heart overcome with anger, spoke to the demon: "O you wicked-minded one, where are you going? With kicks I shall kill you who have come here to snatch away the horse." Saying so, and remaining in the air, he tore with the tips of his nails the great demons, the soldiers of the enemy seated in the vehicle. The son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat) struck some with his tail, some with the soles of his feet, some with his fore-arms. Some, when struck, perished; some, being struck, fainted. Then (they) afflicted and frightened due to strokes with the feet, fled. The Wind's son (i.e. Hanūmat) killed there many very fierce demons; they were cut off, broken and divided into two pieces. The vehicle, going according to the will (of the occupants) and with its defences and gateways broken, was surrounded on all sides by the wailing demons. When the very brave Hanūmat was in the sky in a moment, on the earth the (next) moment, the unassailable vehicle moving according to the (occupants') will, would be seen here and there. The monkey, Wind's son, taking any form at will, would be seen striking (the enemies), wherever that vehicle (moved). When the great men (i.e. the demons) remaining in the vehicle, were thus distressed at that time, Ugradaṁṣṭra, the lord of demons, approached Hanūmat. (He said): "O monkey, you have done a great deed, viz. knocking down the warriors. If you stay for a moment, I shall deprive you of your life." Speaking thus, that wicked-minded one struck Hanūmat with a very sharp trident having the lustre of a blazing fire. The mighty one (i.e. Hanūmat) seized the trident coming to him in his mouth and reduced the entire one made of gold to powder. Having powdered that iron trident discharged by the demon, the powerful Hanūmat struck him with many blows of his open hands.

52-57. He (i.e. Ugradaṁṣṭra) struck here and there by the lord of the monkeys with the blows of his open hands, was afflicted and created an illusion, causing fear to the entire world. Then there was

darkness in which none was noticed, in which (a soldier) belonging to one's own side or of the enemy did not recognise many men. Rocks resembling mountain-peaks fell upon the (bodies of) excellent warriors. Being struck by them all of them were perplexed. (Streaks of) lightning flashed; clouds thundered violently, showered puss and blood, discharged dirty water. Many trunks with the heads having ear-rings cut off, were seen falling from the sky. Everywhere naked, ugly, fierce, terrible, very hideous demons, with their hair very much scattered, were seen.

58-63. Then the people, distressed and full of fear of one another, took to their heels; a great portent was thought (to appear). Then the very glorious Śatrughna came (there) in his chariot, and having remembered Śrī Rāma, he fixed arrows on his bow. Having shaken off the illusion with the bewitching missile the powerful one, scattering streams of arrows in the sky, showered the demon (with them) in the battle. Then the quarters brightened up; the sun had its halo (of lustre), clouds went (away) as they had come; lightning subsided. Then the great vehicle, occupied by the demons, and full of words like 'Cut off, break' was seen in front; and thousands of arrows with their feathered ends adorned with gold, repeatedly fell on the vehicle remaining in the sky and going according to (occupants') desire.

64-68. Then the aeroplane, a portion of which was broken, did not appear (moving) high, (but) appeared like a portion of the city that is broken, on the earth. Then the demon, being very angry, fixed arrows on the bow, and roaring, he scattered (i.e. discharged) them on (Śatrughna) Rāma's brother. Those arrows in hundreds stuck to his body in many ways. They, the sharp and bent ones, causing streams of blood to flow, gave him great charm. Śatrughna, endowed with a great power, fixed on his bow a missile presided over by the Wind-deity and causing the demons to tremble. The demons, with their hair loose, and falling from the vehicle and the sky, appeared like groups of ghosts and vampires moving in the sky.

69-76. The demon's son, seeing the missile discharged by Raghunātha's brother, fixed on his bow a missile presided over by Śiva. From it proceeded vampires, ghosts, evil spirits and fiends, having skulls and swords and drinking profuse blood.

They difficult to ward off, and adorned with swords in their hands, gladly drank the blood of the heroes of Śatrughna even while they were alive. Seeing that missile pervading (everything) and destroying all the warriors, he discharged, to send it back, the missile called Nārāyaṇa. That missile, presided over by Nārāyaṇa, in a moment, checked all of them. All of them, impelled by the demon, met with destruction. Then that angry demon Vidyunmālin took a sharp, fierce and strong trident to kill Śatrughna. Seeing Vidyunmālin coming with a trident in his hand, (Śatrughna) struck (him) on his arm with arrows resembling the crescent moon. With his arm cut off with those arrows he prepared himself to strike (Śatrughna) with his hand. (He said:) "O Śatrughna, you are (now) killed. Go. Who will be your protector?"

77-81. When he was talking like this, (Śatrughna) quickly cut off with arrows the head along with the ear-rings of that mighty hero. Seeing him (i.e. Vidyunmālin) with his head cut off, the valourous Ugradaṁṣṭra started striking Śatrughna served by the brave with his fist; but Śatrughna cut off his head with an arrow with a sharp horse-shoe-shaped head. All the heroes skilled in the use of weapons and missiles ran on the battlefield. Except the lord of the demons all with their life remaining (i.e. saved) went (away). Having saluted Śatrughna they gave (back) the horse snatched (away by them). Then were heard all around the sounds of lutes, the sounds of conches and the charming cries of victory of the brave soldiers.

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

Dialogue between Lomaśa and Āraṇyaka

Śeṣa said:

1-5. King Śatrughna, along with Puṣkala, obtained great joy on obtaining the horse taken away by the demons. Those warriors, with their bodies sprinkled with blood, so also Lakṣmī-

nidhi praised the great king full of energy to fight. When that great demon Vidyunmālin, difficult to conquer, was killed, all gods, O sage, gave up their fear and obtained happiness. The rivers became clean; and the sun became clear. Breezes sprinkled with scented water blew. The great heroes, with spotless lustre and of clean bodies seated in the chariots, became ready. All of them endowed with the good luck of victory said to the king:

The heroes said:

6-8. O you very intelligent one, luckily you have killed the demon Vidyunmālin, due to whose fear gods were frightened and were driven out of the heaven. Luckily the great horse of Raghunātha has been got (back); luckily you have obtained victory everywhere on the globe. O lord, release this charming horse having the speed of mind. Let there be no delay now, O you very intelligent one.

Śeṣa said:

9-14. Hearing these words of the heroes which were proper for the occasion, he, having praised them (with the words) 'Well, well', released the best horse. He that was well-protected by chariots, foot-soldiers, best horses and those who were proficient in the use of all weapons and missiles, went, when released, to the northern direction. O Vātsyāyana, listen to the account of what took place (in the case) of Śatrughna, which burns heaps of sins. He reached Revā's bank resorted to by hosts of sages. Her water was the fluid of the heap of sapphires under the pretext of water. He (i.e. Śatrughna) waited upon by the brave, saluted the respective (i.e. everyone of the) sages and followed the gem of the horse going at will. He went to that old hermitage made of the leaves of palāśa, sprinkled with the waves of Revā and the refuge of those who remove sins.

15. Śatrughna who did all deeds bringing merit and worldly prosperity, on seeing it, said to Sumati who knew everything and was proficient in political wisdom.

The king said:

16. O Minister, O you who are best among those who think,

tell me who am asking you, to whom this hermitage, which appears auspicious belongs.

Śeṣa said:

17. Hearing these words, Sumati, showing his affection, said to the king, with words accompanied by a bright smile.

Sumati said:

18-24. O great king, having seen this best sage, absorbed in all scriptures, we shall indeed have our sins removed. Therefore, bow down before him, and ask him. He who is extremely greedy of the honey from the lotuses in the form of Rāma's feet, will tell you everything. (Bow down before him) known by the name Āraṇyaka, the servant of the feet of Rāma, full of very severe penance and proficient in the significance of all sacred texts.

Hearing these words augmented by religious significance, he went along with a few servants to see him. (They were) Hanūmat, the brave Puṣkala, the best minister Sumati, Lakṣmīnidhi, Pratāpāgrya, Subāhu, and Sumada also. Noble-minded king Śatrughna, surrounded by these reached the hermitage to salute that best brāhmaṇa Āraṇyaka. Having gone there he with all the heroes who had bent down their necks in modesty, saluted the best ascetic.

25-27. Having seen all those kings led by Śatrughna, he then offered them respectful offering and water for washing their feet etc. along with fruits and roots. He said to all the kings: "Where had you gone together? O sinless ones, how have you gathered here? Tell (me) all that." O brāhmaṇa, having heard those words of the best sage, Sumati, skilled in speaking (proper) words, said (to him):

Sumati said:

28-29. By all (these) the horse of the king belonging to Raghu's family is being protected. The hero (Rāma) will perform a sacrifice furnished with all ingredients.

Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) them the best sage, as it were dispelling the entire darkness with the lustre of his teeth, said:

Āraṇyaka said:

30-34. What is the use of other sacrifices furnished with all ingredients, giving (but) little merit and giving perishable positions? Foolish people worship other (god), leaving Hari, the Raghu hero (i.e. Ramā), the lord of Ramā, giving a stable glorious position. A foolish man torments (himself) by sacrifices, abstract meditations and vows by leaving him who, even when merely remembered, removes the mountain of sins. Oh! see the folly and illusion of people (that) a man leaving the easy worship of Rāma, would practise (i.e. he practises) difficult (things). It gives liberation to men and removes all sins merely by being remembered. It is reflected upon by the meditating saints having desires.

35-40. Formerly with a desire to know the reality and thinking much about (how to find) a wise man, I went to many holy places. But nobody taught me the truth. Then, due to my great luck I came across the sage Lomaśa who had come (down to the earth) with a desire to visit the holy places. Having saluted that great sage who had a great (i.e. long) life and whose couple of feet was served by great meditating saints, I asked him (about the truth): "O lord, today (i.e. now) I have obtained the human existence, which is wonderful and difficult to obtain. What should one who desires to cross the fearful ocean of the worldly existence, do? Having thought, tell me if there is a vow, a gift, a prayer to be muttered, a sacrifice, or a deity, that would emancipate me from the ocean of the mundane existence. O lord of reflective thinking (i.e. greatest mediating saint), O You who are the master of the significance of all the scriptures, tell me that knowing which I shall by means of the ocean of your grace cross the fierce mundane existence."

41-49. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) me, the best sage said: "O brāhmaṇa, listen attentively and with great faith. There are gifts, holy places, vows, voluntary religious observances and restraints. So also there are many abstract meditations, sacrifices giving (i.e. taking one to) heaven. O magnanimous one, I shall tell you a great secret which removes all sins and helps (one) to cross the ocean of the worldly existence. Listen to it. It is not to be told to an atheist, or to a non-

believer, so also to a censurer, or to a wicked man; it should not be given to the enemy (i.e. hater) of devotion. It (i.e. the secret) which is excellent and removes all misery, should be told to Rāma's devotee who is calm and free from lust and anger. There is no greater god than Rāma; there is no greater vow than (that in honour of) Rāma. There is no greater reflection than (on) Rāma; there is no greater sacrifice than (in honour of) Rāma. Having remembered him, having muttered prayers to him, and having worshipped him, a man gets the highest (position) and obtains great glory in this and the next world. When he is remembered, when he is mentally meditated upon, he who is the giver of all desired objects, gives (i.e. generates in the mind of the man) great devotion which helps him to cross the ocean of the mundane existence. Even a cāṇḍāla by remembering Rāma goes to (i.e. obtains) the highest position. Then what about those like you who are greatly devoted to the Vedas and (other) scriptures?

50-52. I have disclosed to you the secret of all the Vedas and (other) scriptures. Act as you would desire. Rāmacandra is the only god. His worship is the only vow. (Uttering) his name is the only hymn; and praising him is the only scripture. Therefore, worship the charming Rāmacandra by all means; so that the ocean of the mundane existence would be as trifling as a small puddle."

53-70. Having heard those words, I again put a question: "How is the god meditated upon by men? Or how is he worshipped by them? O you highly intelligent one, O you who know everything, tell me (all that) in detail, knowing which I shall be blessed in the three worlds, O best sage." Having heard these words of (i.e. uttered by) me, that Lomaśa, having reflected, told me everything preceded by the meditation on Rāma: "O best brāhmaṇa, O you sinless one, I shall tell you what you have asked me, as to how the lord of Rāma (i.e. Viṣṇu) burns (i.e. removes) the distress of the mundane existence. In the city of Ayodhyā, which is charming and adorned with a variegated pavilion, at the root of the desire-yielding tree giving all prosperity, one should meditate upon the charming Raghurāja (i.e. Rāma) seated upon an attractive throne, adorned with great emeralds, gold and jewels like the sapphire remov-

ing darkness by means of its lustre. (One should meditate upon Rāma) whose body is dark like dūrvā-blades, who is worshipped by god of gods, whose face condemns the beauty of the full moon on the full-moon night, whose forehead resembles the portion of the moon on the eighth day (of the month), who is rich with the beauty of dark hair, who is tinged with the jewels of his crown, who is adorned with beautiful ear-rings having the shape of crocodiles, who is beautified with lips shining with coral-like lustre, who is adorned with the row of teeth having the shape of the rays of the lord of the stars (i.e. the moon—i.e. having pointed teeth), whose mouth is beautified with a tongue sweet like the China rose, on which reside Vedas like the Ṛgveda along with sacred books ,who is adorned with a neck possessing the charm of a conch, who, the excellent one, possesses lofty and fleshy shoulders like those of a lion, who has long arms marked with armlets and bracelets hanging up to the knees and adorned with rings and diamonds, who has a very large chest beautified by the perfume of Lakṣmī and marked with beautiful marks like that of Śrīvatsa, who has a large belly with a large navel and adorned with a beautiful waist endowed with a jewelled girdle and special charm, who is adorned with spotless thighs and knees and with majesty, who is adorned with delicate feet marked with lines like a diamond-pin and a barley-shoot and fit to be reflected upon by the meditating saints. Having reflected upon and remembered him you will cross the ocean of the mundane existence. One worshipping him according to his own desire by means of sandal etc. obtains great prosperity in this world and the other world.

71. O great king, you asked me about the excellent meditation upon Rāma. I have told it to you. (With its help) cross the ocean of the worldly existence."

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

Lomaśa Narrates the Deeds of Rāma to Āraṇyaka

Śeṣa said:

1. The best brāhmaṇa, having heard this very important (advice) from Lomaśa, again asked that sage, who knew everything and who was best among the meditating saints.

Āraṇyaka said:

2-4. O best of sages, O you very intelligent one, tell me (what) I am asking you. Preceptors are full of compassion, and explain everything to their servant(s). O magnanimous one, who is that Rāma who is reflected upon by you everyday? What are his deeds? O best brāhmaṇa, tell me. Why has he taken the incarnation? Why is he born as a human being? (Please) quickly tell me all that to remove my doubt.

Śeṣa said:

5-7. Having heard these very charming words of the sage, Lomaśa narrated to him the wonderful good conduct of Rāma. Knowing that people have been merged into hell, the lord of the lords of abstract meditation, the charming highest lord, the ocean of kindness—knowing thus, descended along with Śrī in four ways to spread his glory in the world, by means of which (a man) would cross the terrible (mundane existence).

8-10. Formerly when the Tretā age came, Rāma, the descendant of Raghu, the full incarnation, having lotus-like eyes, was born in the solar dynasty. That Rāma had Lakṣmaṇa as his companion and the young (boy) had side-locks of hair on his temples. Due to the promise of their father, the two youths (i.e. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa), devoted to Viśvāmitra, were handed over (to Viśvāmitra) for the protection of his sacrifice by the king. They were restrained, (good) archers, brave, and were devoted to Viśvāmitra.

11-15a. To cause an obstacle to them a demoness named Tāṭakā met them in the fearful forest when they were going along their way. Rāma, the descendant of Raghu, sent by the sages' permission Tāṭakā (to face) the torture inflicted by Yama

by means of his practice of archery. By the touch of the sole of his foot Gautama's wife Ahalyā (who had been transformed into) a stone due to Indra's contact, again got her own form. When Viśvāmitra's sacrifice proceeded well, (Rāma), the best among Raghus, killed with great arrows Mārīca and Subāhu. He broke Śiva's bow that was in Janaka's house.

15b-17. When Rāma was fifteen years old, he married, according to (the proper rite of) marriage, the charming Sītā not born from the womb. Having had Sītā (as his wife), Rāma then became (i.e. regarded himself) fortunate. Then for twelve years he enjoyed with her. In his twenty-seventh year, he prepared (himself) for the rank of (i.e. for being consecrated as) an heir-apparent.

18-23a. Then Kaikeyī asked king (Daśaratha to grant) two boons: "By one of the two Rāma, having matted hair, should go away along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa for fourteen years. By the second, my (son) Bharata should be (consecrated as) the heir-apparent." The king sent away Rāma accompanied by Jānakī and Lakṣmaṇa. For three nights he took (only) water (and) on the fourth day he ate fruits. On the fifth (day) Rāma prepared an abode on the Citrakūṭa (mountain). In the thirteenth year, O great sage, Rāma disfigured the demoness Śūrpaṇakhā in Pañcavaṭī. When he was moving in the forest along with Jānakī, the demon (Rāvaṇa), due to the ripening of his sins, came to kidnap her.

23b-27. Then on the eighth day of the dark half of (the month of) Māgha, at the time called Vṛnda, Rāvaṇa took away Sītā left (alone) without Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. She, being taken away by him, wailed like an osprey: "O Rāma, Rāma, protect me who am taken away by a demon." As a hawk overcome with hunger would take a wailing quail similarly Rāvaṇa being under the influence of passion took away Janaka's daughter. When he was thus carrying away the daughter of Janaka, Jaṭāyu, the lord of birds, fought with the king of demons. Struck by Rāvaṇa he fell (down).

28-29. On the tenth day (of the first half of Mārgaśīrṣa) Sampāti told the monkeys about Sītā whom (he had seen) on the ninth day of the first half of Mārgaśīrṣa to be living in Rāvaṇa's house. On the eleventh day Hanūmat jumped from

the Mahendra mountain and saw her the same night in Laṅkā. During the remaining (part of that) night Hanūmat had the sight of Sītā.

30-34a. On the twelfth Hanūmat stayed on the śiṁśapā tree. On the same night (he told) a story for (generating) confidence (in Sītā's mind). Then his fight with Akṣa and others took place on the thirteenth day (of the first half of Mārgaśīrṣa). On the fourteenth day the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat) was bound by Indrajit with the missile presided over by Brahmā. He burnt Laṅkā with fire set to his tail. On the full-moon day the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat) returned to the Mahendra mountain. (Having spent) five days from the first day of the second fortnight of Mārgaśīrṣa on the way, Madhuvana was burnt (by the monkey) after again having come back. On the seventh day (a token of) recognition (from Sītā) and full report (of the adventure) was given (to Rāma).

34b-35. Rāma set out on the eighth day when there appeared the Uttarāphālgunī constellation and the time was (the auspicious) Vijayā, and when the sun had reached the middle of the sky (i.e. at mid-day). Having made a solemn declaration, Rāma went towards the southern direction: (His solemn declaration was:)

36-38a. "Even having crossed the ocean, I shall kill the lord of demons." Sugrīva was the companion of Rāma who proceeded towards the southern direction. After seven days his army encamped on (the shore of) the ocean. Rāma, along with his army encamped on (the shore of) the ocean from the first day to the third day (of the first half of Pauṣa).

38b-40a. On the fourth day Bibhīṣaṇa joined Rāma. Consultations took place for crossing the ocean on the fifth day. For four days Rāma undertook fasting to death. Then he obtained a boon from the ocean who advised to make a joint effort.

40b-42. (The construction of the bridge) was begun on the tenth day, and was completed on the thirteenth day. On the fourteenth day Rāma encamped his army on the Suvela mountain. From the full-moon day to the third (of the dark fortnight) the army of the lord of the monkeys crossed the ocean and with Lakṣmaṇa besieged Laṅkā for (getting back) Sītā.

43-45. The encampment lasted for eight days, beginning with the third day and ending with the tenth. On the eleventh day Śuka and Sāraṇa came (to Rāma). On the twelfth day of the dark half of Pauṣa, the counting of (the soldiers in) the army was done. The lord of the best monkeys quickly described the army. For three days from the thirteenth day to the new-moon day Rāvaṇa assessed (the soldiers in) his army and showed inclination to fighting.

46-52a. On the first day of the bright half of Māgha Aṅgada went (to Rāvaṇa) as (Rāma's) envoy. Then Sītā was shown an illusory head of her husband (by Rāvaṇa). For seven days from the second of Māgha to the eighth (of Māgha), a confused battle took place between the demons and the monkeys. On the night of the ninth day of the bright half of Māgha Indrajit bound Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with the serpent-noose. When the lordly monkeys were perplexed and were completely nervous, Pavana, on the tenth day, muttered into Rāma's ear his real form for freeing him from the serpent-noose. Then there was the arrival of Garuḍa on the eleventh day. On the twelfth day Dhūmrākṣa was killed (by Rāma). He himself killed Kampana in the battle on the thirteenth day. From the fourteenth of the bright half of Māgha to the first day of the dark half, Nīla (after fighting with Prahasta) killed him after three days.

52b-58a. From the second day of the dark half of Māgha till the fourth day, in the fierce fight that lasted for three days Rāma made Rāvaṇa flee the battlefield. From the fifth day to the eighth day Rāvaṇa woke up Kumbhakarṇa. Then he ate food for four days. After six days—from the ninth to the fourteenth—Rāma killed in the battle Kumbhakarṇa who had eaten up many monkeys. On the new-moon day there was a temporary cessation of hostilities due to grief. During the four days from the first day of the bright half of Phālguna to the fourth day five demons—Bisatantu and others—were killed. In the same way Atikāya was killed (in the battle that took place) from the fifth to the seventh. During (the battle that lasted for) five days from the eighth day to the twelfth day (the two demons) Nikumbha and Kumbha were killed. Then, after three days Makarākṣa was killed.

58b-59. On the second day of the dark half of Phālguna Indrajit won (the battle). There was a temporary cessation of hostilities for five days from the third day to the seventh day due to the soldiers being intensely occupied in fetching the herbs.

60-61a. Then, in the battle that lasted for five days (from the eighth day) to the thirteenth day Lakṣmaṇa struck Indrajit who was well-known for his power and valour. Temporarily ceasing the hostilities, on the fourteenth day Rāvaṇa took initiation (i.e. performed a sacrifice).

61b-70a. Rāvaṇa went to fight on the new-moon day. When from the first day of the bright half of Caitra to the fifth day Rāvaṇa was fighting for five days, there was a great killing of the demons. Mahāpārśva and others were killed (in the battle that took place) from the sixth day of Caitra to the eighth day. On the ninth day of the bright half of Caitra Lakṣmaṇa was pierced (i.e. struck) by a missile (discharged by Indrajit). Rāma who was full of anger made Rāvaṇa flee. The son of Añjanī (i.e. Hanūmat) brought the Droṇa mountain for (treating) Lakṣmaṇa (with the herbs on the mountain). The demons temporarily ceased fighting on the night of the tenth. On the eleventh day the charioteer Mātali sent by Indra devoutly presented Rāma in the battle with a chariot (sent by Indra). From the twelfth day (of the bright half) to the fourteenth day of the dark half i.e. for eighteen days Rāma fought with Rāvaṇa in a single combat in chariots. In the battle that was fierce Rāma obtained victory. During the eighty seven days of the war which began on the second day of the bright half of Māgha and continued up to the fourteenth day of the dark half of Caitra, there was a cessation of hostilities for fifteen days—thus the (actual) war took place for seventy-two days. The obsequial ceremonies of Rāvaṇa and others took place on the new-moon day. Rāma stayed on the battlefield on the first day of Vaiśākha.

70b-75. On the second day of Vaiśākha Bibhīṣaṇa was consecrated on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of Laṅkā. On the third day took place the purification of Sītā and obtaining boons from gods. Having, after a long time, killed the lord of Laṅkā, he, the elder brother of Lakṣmaṇa, accepted the auspicious Jānakī, afflicted by the demon (viz. Rāvaṇa) and taking her (with him) with great love, he returned. On the fourth day of

Vaiśākha Rāma got into the Puṣpaka and through the sky again came back to Ayodhyā. When the fourteenth year was complete Rāma along with his group stayed in Bharadvāja's hermitage on the fifth day of Vaiśākha. On the sixth day he met Bharata at Nandigrāma. On the seventh the descendant of Raghu (i.e. Rāma) was consecrated (as the king) in Ayodhyā.

76-79a. Maithilī (i.e. Sītā) lived without Rāma in the house of Rāvaṇa for eleven months and fourteen days. Rāma ruled (i.e. was consecrated as the king) when he was forty-two years old. At that time Sītā had completed thirty-three years. That lord Rāma being delighted entered the city Ayodhyā at the end of the fourteenth year and with his brothers ruled there.

79b-83. When he is thus ruling, Agastya born of a pitcher, the priest best among the eloquent, will come to the lord of the Raghu (dynasty). At his words (i.e. suggestion) he will perform a horse-sacrifice. O you of a good vow, his horse will come to your hermitage. His delighted warriors will (also) come to your hermitage. In front of them you will narrate pleasing tales about Rāma. O best of brāhmaṇas, along with them you will go to Ayodhyā. Seeing Rāma having eyes like lotuses in Ayodhyā, you (will) be just at that moment crossing the ocean of the worldly existence."

84-86a. Having thus spoken to me, that best sage Lomaśa, (most) intelligent of all, said: "What do you want to ask (now)?" Then I spoke proper (words): "Due to your grace I have known all the wonderful deeds of Rāma. By your favour I shall obtain the lotus-feet of Rāma." The lord of sages saluted by me went (his way).

86b-92. By his favour I have secured the worship of the feet of Rāma. That I (i.e. such as I am, I), everyday, repeatedly remember Rāma's feet. Being careful, I shall again and again sing his deeds. I shall purify other people by the enchanting song. With a desire to see him and repeatedly remembering the sage's words I shall be delighted. On the earth I am fortunate, I am blessed, I am lucky (that) I shall have a desire to see Rāma. Therefore, by all means that charming Rāma should be worshipped, for he (alone) should be saluted by all with a desire to cross the ocean of the mundane existence. Therefore, (tell me) why you have come here. Which king, a religious-minded

one, will perform the great sacrifice, viz. the horse-sacrifice? You should tell me all that now; and should go to look after the horse. You should, repeatedly remembering Rāma's feet, remember them (constantly).

93. Hearing these words of the sage, they were wonder-struck. Remembering Raghunātha, they said to sage Āraṇyaka.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

Sage Āraṇyaka Goes to Viṣṇu's Heaven

Śeṣa said :

1. By the best sage they were asked (about) the wonderful deeds of Rāma. Regarding themselves as blessed and fortunate they spoke with respect.

The people said :

2-5. On seeing you we are now purified, since by (telling us) the account of Rāma you are purifying people (like) us. Listen to the true statement. You are the best among the brāhmaṇic sages. We shall tell all that you have asked us. By the words (i.e. at the suggestion) of Agastya Rāma is performing a very great sacrifice furnished with all ingredients for removing (the sin due to) the killing of a brāhmaṇa. We who all look after him have come along with the horse to your hermitage. O very intelligent one, know it.

6-11. Hearing these pleasant words, an elixir of life, the brāhmaṇa, devoted to Rāma was highly delighted. "Today the tree of my desire for glory has become fruitful. Today my mother who gave me birth, is blessed. Today I have obtained kingdom free from troublesome fellows. The treasures are very rich today. Today the gods are very much pleased. I have today obtained the fruit of maintaining the sacred fire to which oblations were offered, that I shall see the pair of the lotus-like feet of Rāmacandra.

That extremely charming lord of Ayodhyā, who is everyday meditated upon in my heart, will indeed be seen by me. Hanūmat, embracing me, will ask me about my well-being. The best one, on seeing my great devotion, will be pleased."

12-13. Hearing these words, Hanūmat, the best of the monkeys, clasped the pair of the feet of the sage Āraṇyaka. "O lord, O brāhmaṇa-sage, I am (Rāma's) servant standing before you. O lord of sages, know me, Rāma's servant, resembling a dust-particle."

14-17. When he was speaking like this, the sage, who was highly delighted, embraced Hanūmat adorned with his devotion to Rāma. Both were full of love, both were bathing with nectar (as it were). Covered (by each other) they appeared as it were drawn in a picture. They sat there and told very pleasant stories. Their minds were full of love for the lotus-like feet of Raghunātha. Hanūmat said various charming words to that excellent sage Āraṇyaka who was full of the thought about the feet of Rāma:

18-24. "O lord, this is the great diamond-like offspring of Daśaratha's family. He is Rāma's brother; is very brave. This Śatrughna salutes you. He killed Lavaṇa who was fearful to the entire world; and he made all sages, of excellent penance, happy. This is (Bharata's son) named Puṣkala, who is served by very great heroes and who now conquered many great heroes on the battlefield. Know this one of many merits and of great power to be Rāma's minister, dear to Raghupati (i.e. Rāma) like his own life, knowing everything and proficient in dharma. This is Subāhu, who is very fierce, who is a conflagration to the families of the enemies, and is a bee (howering) round the lotus-like feet of Rāma. This one of great fame salutes you. This Sumada too, who, due to service of Rāma's feet given (i.e. assigned) to him by Pārvatī, has now achieved the great crossing over the ocean of the mundane existence. This Satyavān who having heard from his servant that the horse (of Rāma) had come, offered his kingdom (to Rāma). He is saluting you (by prostrating himself) on the ground."

25-29. Having heard these words, sage Āraṇyaka, having embraced (them) with respect, welcomed them by offering fruits etc. They, very diligent ones, being delighted, having performed their daily morning rites in Revā, stayed in the hermitage of the

excellent sage. Having put the sage with his servants in a man-drawn vehicle, Śatrughna reached Ayodhyā where Rāma had taken his abode. He (i.e. the sage) seeing from a distance the city in which the king of the solar dynasty lived, quickly (got down from the vehicle and) went on foot with a desire to see the lord of Raghus. He reached the beautiful city of Ayodhyā adorned with people. A thousand of desires got (into his mind) for seeing Rāma.

30-32. There on the bank of Sarayū adorned with a pavilion, he saw Rāma who was dark like dūrvā-blades, whose eyes had the beauty of lotuses, who was holding on his waist a charming deer-horn endowed with beauty, was surrounded by hosts of sages led by Vyāsa, was well-served by the brave (soldiers), was surrounded by Bharata and Sumitrā's son (Lakṣmaṇa), was giving to the groups of the poor whatever they asked for.

33-36. Having seen him, (the sage) called Āraṇyaka regarded himself as blessed. "My eyes, resembling lotus-petals, are seeing Rāma. Today my knowledge of all sacred texts has become very significant, since, knowing Śrī Rāma, I have reached this city of Ayodhyā." He, delighted, saying these and many other words, and shining with his body very much delighted on seeing the feet of Rāma, went near Ramā's lord who was extremely inaccessible even to other lords of deep meditation, devoted to reflection. "Today I am lucky (that) Rāma's feet will come within the range of my sight (i.e. will be seen by me)." Saying these charming words (he stood) seeing Rāma.

37-40. Rāma too, seeing the best brāhmaṇa glowing with his own lustre, having the form of penance, got up. The great Rāmacandra saluted his feet for a long time. "O brāhmaṇa god, you have today purified my body." Saying these words, the lord, before whose feet (the lights of) the gems on the crowns of gods and demons bending before him were waved, fell at his feet. The best brāhmaṇa, of a great penance, held the best king between his arms, and embraced the dear lord.

41-46. The son of Kauśalyā (i.e. Rāma), the lord, having put him on a high jewelled seat, washed his pair of feet with water. And Hari (i.e. Rāma) himself took (i.e. put) that water, used for washing the sage's feet, on his (own) head, saying: "Today with my attendants and (members of) my family I am purified. Having

smeared him with sandal (-paste), he gave him a milch cow; and he, served by the lord of gods, said (these) charming words: "O lord, I would perform the sacrifice called Vāji-medha (i.e. horse-sacrifice). That will be today fully completed due to the arrival of your feet. Today, sacrifice (called) Aśvamedha (i.e. horse-sacrifice), purified by your feet, will destroy my sin due to the killing of a brāhmaṇa." To him, served by the lord of kings the sage Āraṇyaka smilingly spoke thus in sweet words:

47-58. "O lord, O king friendly to brāhmaṇas, your words are proper. O great king, the brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas, are (but) your forms. O king, when you will perform the auspicious act like worshipping brāhmaṇas, all the (other) kings will worship a brāhmaṇa. O great king, the words which you uttered, viz. "I shall perform a pure sacrifice to remove (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder" are but laughable. (Even) a fool void (i.e. ignorant) of all sacred texts, would go to the highest position after having crossed the ocean of all sins (merely) by remembering your name. It is clear that the essential meaning of all the Vedas and old narratives is that Rāma's name is remembered to overcome sins. O Rāmacandra, as long as your name is not distinctly uttered, sins like those of brāhmaṇa murders, roar. O great king, having heard your name, the elephants in the form of great sins run away with a desire to find a place somewhere (to hide themselves). Therefore, O Rāma, O you whose sight is meritorious, how can there be a killing by you? A men, having heard your good (i.e. auspicious) account, instantly becomes pure. Formerly in the Kṛta age I heard the words from the mouth of (i.e. uttered by) sages knowing ancient accounts and residing on the bank of Gaṅgā: 'As long as men do not utter the charming name of Rāma, there are fears for those very sinful cowardly men'. Therefore, now I am blessed; O Rāmacandra, the destruction of my mundane existence has now become easy due to my having seen you." He worshipped the sage who was speaking like this. All the sages uttered the words, 'Well, Well'.

Śeṣa said:

59-67. O Vātsyāyana, best among the sages, and greatly devoted to Rāma, a great wonder took place there. Listen to it when I am telling (it to you). When he saw the great king Rāma

(just) as he had seen him in his meditation, he, who was extremely delighted, said to the best sages: "O best sages, listen to my very pleasant words. Who will be (i.e. who is) so very lucky like me on the earth? There is none like me; there was none born like me; there will be none like me, since Rāmabhadra having saluted me inquired about my (i.e. offered me a) welcome. He the dust of whose feet is always sought for by the scriptures has today after drinking the water (flowing) from my feet regarded himself pure." When he was speaking like this, Brāhmaṇic (lustre) burst out (from his body) entered (the body of) the lord of the Raghus. (The sage) when all people were watching in the pavilion on the bank of Sarayū, obtained absorption (into the deity, viz. Rāma), which (absorption) is difficult to be secured by the meditating saints. In the sky there was at that time the sound of musical instruments. There was (also) the sound of lutes. Shower of flowers fell in front of them who were watching the interesting wonder. The sages also, having seen it, praised the best sage (saying): "The best sage is fortunate, since he has secured residence in the body of Rāma."

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

Getting Back the Horse from the Possession of an Under-Water Female

Sūta said:

1. Having heard this account, the noble-minded Vātsyāyana obtained great joy and said to the lord of the serpents.

Vātsyāyana said:

2-5. O lord of the serpents, I who listen to the story of Raghunātha who is famous for destroying the affliction of his devotees, am not (at all) satisfied. The great sage Āraṇyaka possessing (the knowledge of) the Vedas, who cast his perishable body after seeing Raghunātha, is blessed. From there where did the king's horse go? By whom was he restrained? How was the

glory of the lord of Rāma produced there? O lord of serpents, tell me all the truth, since you are omniscient. You hold the body of Viṣṇu; you actually possess his form.

Vyāsa said:

6. Hearing these words, he, with his heart delighted, narrated Rāma's deeds highlighting his so many (innumerable) virtues.

Śeṣa said:

7-16. O brāhmaṇa sage, you are well asking about Raghunātha's virtues by expressing a desire to hear them, by regarding them as not having been heard, though you have repeatedly heard them. From there the horse, surrounded by many soldiers, went out to the charming bank of Revā resorted to by hosts of sages. Then all the soldiers, skilled in fighting and carefully watching the path of (i.e. taken by) him, proceeded wherever the horse (moved). Then the horse holding a golden note on his forehead and with his body worshipped, went to a pool of water in Revā full of unfordable water. Then the excellent horse of Rāmacandra plunged into water. At that time all the great heroes were wonder-struck. They just said to one another: "How can the horse be regained? Who will go into the water to bring the horse of great splendour?" When, thus dejected, they were consulting one another, the lord of the Raghu (family) arrived there with hundreds of heroes. Seeing all of them dejected, the crest-jewel of the brave called Śatrughna, asked them with a voice deep-sounding like that of the clouds: "Why do you all today stay in groups in the water? Where is Raghunātha's horse adorned with the golden note? Has it been drowned into the water? Or has it been snatched by some haughty person? Tell me that quickly as to how you are confused."

Śeṣa said:

17. Having heard these words of the best (descendant of) Raghu, the king, the heroes told everything to the crest-jewel of the brave.

The men said:

18-22. O lord, we do not know. For a while he was in the water. Then he plunged (into the water). Your charming horse did not come (up). You yourself (should) go there, and bring the horse quickly. O you very intelligent one, we would go there with you.

Hearing these words of the soldiers, the descendant of Raghu (i.e. Śatrughna) was dejected on seeing the men ready to swim in the water. He said to the chief minister: "What should we do hereafter? Tell (me) how the horse will (i.e. can) be brought (back). Which brave ones should be employed to find out the horse in the water? Tell me who will bring back the horse and by what means."

23-26. Hearing these words of the king, Sumati, the best minister, said, as it were delighting Śatrughna, what was proper for the occasion: "O lord, you, of wonderful deeds, have glorious power. It is clear, you have the power to go to the nether world through water. Another thing is: Puṣkala the magnanimous one, has also the power. So also Hanūmat engaged in serving the feet of Rāma (has the power). Therefore, you three (should) go and certainly bring the horse from the place where the sacrificial horse of the intelligent Raghunātha might be."

Śeṣa said:

27-32. Hearing these words, Śatrughna, the killer of the enemy's warriors, himself, along with Hanūmat and Puṣkala entered the water. When he entered the water, he saw a city. The city was rich with the beauty of many gardens and immeasurable. He saw there Rāma's horse well adorned with the golden note, and tied to a golden pillar decked with rubies. There excellent ladies having attractive forms were waiting upon a beautiful lady comfortably seated upon a couch. Seeing them all the ladies said to their queen: "These (individuals) of a small height, young and with well-nourished bodies will be the best object of your food. The blood of these men when they die (i.e. when they will be killed) will be sweet."

33-36. Hearing these words of her female servants, that

sinless beautiful lady, gesticulating her face with her eye-brow; laughed a little. At that time the three shining with the beauty of their armours, having helmets, and endowed with valour and bravery, reached there. O brāhmaṇa, seeing there the ladies endowed with the wealth of beauty, they expressed their amazement: "What is this great thing being seen?" With the feet (of the lady) shining with the lustre of the gems in their crowns, all the magnanimous ones saluted the divine, excellent, ladies.

37-39. That beautiful young lady, the greatest of all, asked those men: "Who are you that have come here? How is it that you men are holding bows? My place is greatly deluding and is inaccessible to all gods. No one that has come here ever returns. To which king does this horse belong? How is it that the horse is fanned with chowries? (How is it) rich in beauty with the golden note? You should tell (everything) to me."

Śeṣa said:

40-43. Having thus heard her words full of deluding manner, Hanūmat, with his fear gone and smiling, said: "We are the servants of the king, the crest-jewel of the three worlds. This group of the three worlds salutes (him) the crest-jewel of all gods. Know the horse to belong to Rāmabhadra who is proceeding to (perform) a horse-sacrifice. Release our horse. O you beautiful lady, how (i.e. why) has he been tied? We are skilled in (the use of) all missiles; we are proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles. Killing those who obstruct (our) horse, we shall forcibly take (back the horse)."

44-49. Hearing these words of the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), that excellent lady, seated in a hollow, proficient in (using proper) words, laughed, and said: "Nobody is able to free this horse brought by me, even (if he fights) with sharp points of arrows that are blazing up, (even for) a myriad of years. But I am the servant of the lotus-like feet of Rāma. I do his work. I shall not seize the horse of that intelligent king of kings. I, who took away the good horse, have committed great rudeness. Let that Rāmacandra, the protector, who loves his devotees, pardon me. You, the men of him, the protector, are afflicted for that horse. O best one, ask for a boon difficult to be secured even by gods, so that the best man would forgive me the severe harm

(done to him). Giving up all bashfulness, choose the best boon."

50-52. Hearing her great words, Hanūmat said to her: "Due to the grace of Raghunātha everything that we have is excellent. Still, I ask for an excellent boon. Give that one, desired by my mind: Let Raghunātha be our lord in every existence, and let us be his servants doing his work." Hearing these words of the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), that lady laughed and said sweet words, honoured for their merit:

53-63. "O servants of the lord of (the) Raghu (family), whatever is desired by you, which is difficult to be obtained by deities, will take place. There is no doubt. Yet, I who slighted (Rāma) shall give (you) a boon to please Ragunātha. My words would come true. Later king Vīramaṇi, accompanied by great heroes and protected by Śiva, will seize your horse. O you very powerful ones, take a great missile from me to conquer him. You, great Śatrughna, should fight with him in a single combat in chariots. When, in the battle, you will discharge this missile; he, being purified by it, will again realise the true nature of Rāma. Realising him, and giving the horse (back to you) he will fall at your feet. Therefore, take from me the missile destroying the enemy." Hearing that (i.e. those words), Rāma's brother (i.e. Śatrughna), facing the north, and with his body purified, received that wonderful missile given by that female devotee. Having received that missile, he became one with great might, destroyer of the enemies, difficult to be assailed and propitiated, and a hook to drive the elephants in the form of his enemies. Having saluted her, Śatrughna, the best among the descendants of Raghu, took the best horse, and from the water went (up) to the bank of Revā, fit for comforts. Having seen him, all the soldiers, with their bodies delighted and full of joy, praised him (as): "Well (done), well (done)!" and asked him about the coming out (i.e. as to how the horse came out of the water). Hanūmat told them about the great (i.e. important) coming (out) of the horse, and also about having received the boon. They too, hearing (it) were delighted.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

The Seizure of the Horse by Vīramaṇi's Son

Śeṣa said:

1-8. When everywhere the tabors were sounded and when everywhere there were the sounds of lutes, the horse was released. From there he (went) to Devapura fashioned by gods, in which men's houses laughed, as it were, (i.e. were bright) by means of the constructions of crystal walls at the spotless Vindhya mountain resorted to by elephants. Even the houses of the subjects (i.e. ordinary people) were made of silver here (i.e. in this city). Here the ornamental ruby gateways were girdled by variegated gems; in every house there were attractive, most beautiful women that with side-glances attracted the hearts of men. Here, O brāhmaṇa, in every house rubies were seen to have been fixed in the good (i.e. beautiful) floors, as it were, to vie with the lips of the women. In every house the pleasure-mountains fashioned with sapphires produced the hope of (the arrival of) clouds in (the minds of) the peacocks having plumages. In this city swans, restrained on the crystal-floors in the houses were not afraid of a cloud and did not remember the Mānasa lake. (In it) at the abode of Śiva darkness was always dispelled by the moonlight; (so) the men there did not distinguish between the bright half and the dark half (of the month).

9-11. There the great king Vīramaṇi, the chief among the righteous (kings), ruled over a large kingdom full of all enjoyments. His very brave and powerful son named Rukmāṅgada (once) went to a forest to sport with women of charming bodies. The sound of their anklets and also the sound of their bracelets attracted the mind of Cupid (himself); then what to say about others!

12-16. He (i.e. Rukmāṅgada) went to the great forest which was full of trees with good flowers, where Sadāśiva had made his abode, and which shone with the six seasons. In it the many campaka trees adorned with blooming buds caused affliction in the hearts of passionate men, when they were seen by the men. (There) the mango trees, having crores of sprouts, were bent with fruits etc. (There were) the nāga (trees), the punnāga trees,

the śāla (trees), the tāla (trees) and the tamāla (trees). In it the cooings of cuckoos were heard. The good jasmine (creepers) had always lost their sleep (i.e. were blossoming) due to the humming of bees. (There) the groups of the pomgranate (trees) were linked to the karṇikāra (trees); the rows of the sylvan trees shone with the ketakī and kanakī trees.

17-20. With his mind full of joy, singing sweetly and indistinctly, and having a body—the abode of charm—he, with women on all sides having a strong desire to talk sweetly and having raised breasts, entered the forest through passion and free from fear. Some pleased him with their knowledge of dancing, some (pleased) him with their singing arts, some with clever words; others, being intoxicated, pleased him with the signs (i.e. knittings) of their eye-brows. The women made him happy with their skill in embracing. Having collected flowers with them he, having Cupid's body, praising them with tender words, adorned those women.

21-23. When the intelligent king of kings was passing his time like this, that extremely charming horse went to that region of the forest. The women seeing him, on whose forehead was arranged (i.e. put) the golden note, who resembled Gaṅgā (in colour), whose body was tawny due to the reddish saffron, who was uniform in speed which excelled that of the wind said (the following) to their lord. The women had a tawny complexion like the interior of a lotus. They had set back the beauty of corals afraid of their red lips, with their red lips. Their faces were beautiful due to the laughter meted out by the rows of their teeth. They were lustrous due to their seductive eyes resembling Cupid's arrows.

The women said:

24. O darling, who is this great horse adorned only with the golden note? To whom does he, endowed with loveliness, belong? Seize him with your might.

Śeṣa said:

25-26. Hearing those words spoken (by the women), he having charming and sportive eyes, easily seized the horse with only one hand resembling a lotus. Having read the golden note

having clear letters, he seized him, and again said these words to the women.

Rukmāṅgada said:

27-32. On the earth there is none else like my father in valour and wealth. How can that king Rāma show haughty disregard of him? Let my very mighty father whom Rudra, the holder of the trident, always protects, whom gods, demons, yakṣas salute with their heads having jewels (bowed), perform the horse-sacrifice. Let this (horse) go to the stable. Let my soldiers tie him.

Hearing these words, the charming women had their faces joyful, and embraced their lover. The great son of king Vīramaṇi, seizing the horse, entered with his wives the city with great enthusiasm. When the sounds of the tabors that were beaten, were loud, he, being praised on all sides by the bards, went to the great house (i.e. palace) of his father.

33-37. He told him about his having seized Rāma's wonderful horse released for the horse-sacrifice, moving freely and protected by Śatrughna endowed with great power. The great, very intelligent king Vīramaṇi, having heard his words, did not very much approve that deed of him. Taking the seizure of that horse which was brought (to him by his son) like a thief's act and bringing him (to Śiva) he told lord Śiva, of wonderful deeds, having a lady (i.e. Pārvatī) as the half (part) of his body, having the moon for decorating his body. The great king Vīramaṇi honoured by the great, having condemned the deed done by his son, consulted him.

Śiva said:

38-44. O king, your son who took away the great horse of the intelligent Rāmacandra, has done a wonderful deed. Today a great war deluding gods and demons, with the great king Śatrughna, the only protector of a crore of heroes, appears (imminent). Your son has carried away (the horse)—the constituent of the sacrifice—of that Rāma who is held by me in my heart, and who is spoken (about) with my tongue (by me). But in the battle there will be a great gain, since we shall see the

lotus-like feet of Rāma, which are waited upon by me. Now a great effort must be done to protect the horse. They will forcibly take this horse, though protected by me. Therefore, O great king, with modesty you should (first) give along with the kingdom, the horse and food and then see the pair of his feet.

Having heard these words of Śiva, the best king said to him, whose pair of lotus-like feet were adorable (even) to Indra and others.

Vīramaṇi said:

45-50. This is the duty of kṣatriyas to preserve valour. He is eager to surpass it by the sacrifice called horse (-sacrifice). Therefore whosoever is possessed of self-respect, has to maintain his own valour, by doing, as is possible, a deed, (even) spending (i.e. harming) his (own) body. Everything is done by (my) son since he has seized the horse. He has angered king Rāma. (So) O lord, do what is proper for the occasion. It would certainly not be an act to be done by kṣatriyas that he (i.e. a kṣatriya) overcome with fear, should all of a sudden, salute the feet of his enemy. The enemies laugh at him (and say): "This mean king is a coward. He is insignificant; he, the mean one, being overcome with fear like a common man, has bowed (before me)." Therefore, when the fight is imminent, you should think and do whatever is proper and should protect your devotee.

Śeṣa said:

51-56. Hearing these words, Śiva laughed, and spoke words in a voice deep-sounding like a cloud, and infatuating his mind: "Even if the thirty-three crore gods are present, who would take the horse from you when I am your protector. If Rāma comes and shows himself to me, then I shall salute his very delicate feet. One should not fight with one's lord. (Doing so) is said to be a very evil course. Other heroes are (insignificant) like blades of grass. They are not capable of doing anything. Therefore, O best of kings, fight when I, your protector, am well-settled. Who would take (away) the horse even if the three worlds come together."

Śeṣa said:

Hearing those great words of Candracūḍa (i.e. Śiva) the king who took pleasure in fighting was very much delighted in his mind.

CHAPTER FORTY

Śatrughna Resolves to Fight Against Vīramaṇi

Śeṣa said:

1-7. Looking for king Rāma's horse the great king's soldiers endowed with great power (or army) came (there). (They said:) "Where is the horse? Who has taken him? How is it that he is not seen? Who, a very dull one, will go to Yama's city after having (i.e. because of his having) taken the horse?" While the soldiers of Raghu were searching the course of the horse, the great king surrounded by a large army came (there). He asked all his servants: "Now where is my horse? How is it that the horse, adorned with the golden note is not seen?" Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the servants who were following the horse, said: "The horse having the mind's speed has been snatched away by someone into the forest. Therefore, even though we know the path well, the horse is not noticed. Therefore, O lord, an effort should be made now to get (back) the horse." Hearing their words, Śatrughna, the killer of his enemies, and having a fascinating form, asked Sumati:

Śatrughna said:

8. Which king stays here? How did he secure the horse? How much is the power (or army) of the king, who has today taken away my horse?

Sumati said:

9-12. O king, this is Devapura fashioned by the lord himself. It is like the Kailāsa (mountain) inaccessible (even) to hosts of

the army, well joined together. In it rules the very brave and valourous king Vīramaṇi, protected by Śiva, and he is ruling justly. He, Śiva who is the destroyer of the whole universe, (but) who always lets loose (his) partiality for his devotee, is won over (by the king) by means of his devotion. So if the horse is taken, there will be a great war. Let the good ones, being careful, protect the army.

13-16. Hearing this, that Śatrughna, the very glorious one, and the crest-jewel of all kings, waited (i.e. got ready to fight) after arranging the army. When he having consultations with his good minister (Sumati), waited comfortably, the divine sage (Nārada), eager (to see) the battle, came there. Having seen the sage, the abode of austerities, that had arrived there, Śatrughna got up (from his seat) and seating him on a seat, offered him a respectful offering. He, skilled in speaking, pleasing Nārada the best sage, with words, said to him pleased with the welcome (offered to him):

Śatrughna said :

17-19. O highly intelligent brāhmaṇa, tell me where my horse is. My servants, experienced in their duty, cannot trace his course. Tell (me the name of) that insolent kṣatriya who has taken (away) my horse. O you abode of penance, how will the horse be got (back by us)?

Hearing these words of Śatrughna, Nārada, sounding the lute and repeatedly singing Rāma's account, said:

Nārada said :

20-24. O king, this is Devapura. Vīramaṇi is the great king there. His son, who was in the forest, has seized your best horse. Today you will wage a very fierce battle (against him). Here (i.e. in this battle) soldiers having might and valour will fall. Therefore, O very powerful one, you should remain here with great effort. Make an array to which access is difficult for the enemy's soldiers. O king, in it you will have victory over the best king with difficulty. Who would defeat Rāma even on the entire earth?

Speaking like this, the brāhmaṇa disappeared, and remained in the sky watching the very fierce battle like the one between gods and demons.

Śeṣa said:

25-26. Then king Vīramaṇi, the crest-jewel of all brave men, asked his general, very eminent and brave among the enemies, to proclaim loudly by beating the war-drum; and told him with deep sounding words:

Vīramaṇi said:

27-31. O general, give the order (with the beating) of the war-drum in my beautiful city. Hearing it, let my well-equipped (heroes) march against Śatrughna.

Hearing the words of Vīramaṇi, the general at that time made the proclamation with the war-drum making a great sound. In every house and on the road the sound of the war-drum was heard: "Let all the heroes present in the capital march (against) Śatrughna. Those who looking upon themselves as brave disobey the order of the king, even though they may be sons or brothers, should be killed by the king's order. Let the heroes listen to the sound (which is produced) when the war-drum is beaten. Having heard it, they should, without delay, perform their duty."

Śeṣa said:

32-34. The best heroes, having heard the sound of the war-drum, with their bodies decorated with golden armours and with the interior of their hearts delighted by the festival of fight, went to the best king. Some, having put on beautiful helmets on their heads, and very charming due to the armours, and (thus) crores of them well adorned, went (to the king). The furious ones, as a result of the king's message, went (to the king), in chariots to which two horses looking beautiful due to gems and gold were yoked.

35-45. All of them obeying the command of the king went riding very charming horses to the king's abode. Rukmāṅgada also, who was well adorned with a distinguished golden armour and a helmet, got into his chariot having mind's speed. His

younger brother Śubhāṅgada, having put on his body an excellent armour full of (i.e. decked with) big gems, went to (participate in) the festival of fight. The king's brother Vīrasiṁha, proficient in the use of all weapons and missiles went there by the king's order, for that was a royal order. The king's sister's son also who was known as Balamitra, equipped with an armour and a sword, went to the king's palace. His great general Ripuvāra, making ready the army with its four constituents, reported to the king. Then king Vīramaṇi got into the best chariot full of all weapons and missiles and high due to having high wheels made of gems. Then in the ocean of the heroes the sound of conches, as if well impelling the cowardly warriors to fight, was heard. Kettle-drums sounded by auspicious musicians were beaten on all sides. The troops of him who proceeded to fight, stood there. All (the soldiers) had averted the evil by recitation of hymns; all were adorned with all ornaments. All fully equipped with missiles and weapons went to the battlefield. The mountains and caves were filled with the sounds of kettle-drums and conches. Is it that their sound went to call those who stayed in heaven?

46-48. When that din took place, the great king Vīramaṇi, full of enthusiasm to fight, went to the battlefield. When, after arriving at the battlefield full of chariots and foot-soldiers, he remained there, his army went there like the ocean to wash away the (enemy's) men from that place. Having seen that army full of warriors fighting from chariots, proficient in (the use of) weapons, and making a great noise, the king (i.e. Śatrughna) said to Sumati:

Śatrughna said :

49-50. The powerful Vīramaṇi who had seized our horse, has again come with a great army having four divisions. How should the battle be fought? Who, fierce with might, will fight? Show all those heroes to me, and (show me also) how the desired victory would be had.

Sumati said :

51-54. O lord, that great king, endowed with devotion to Śiva and surrounded by a huge army, has come to fight. Now, let the hero Puṣkala knowing the use uf great missiles fight. Let

other warriors like Nīlaratna, proficient in fighting (fight). O innocent one, you should fight with Śiva or with the king. He, of a great power and valour, should be conquered in a single combat. In this way, O king, you will be victorious. O very intelligent lord, later you should do what you like.

Śeṣa said :

55-57. Hearing these words Śatrughna, the killer of the heroes of his enemy, having determined to fight, ordered his good warriors: "All the kings with their armies proficient in (the use of) weapons, should quickly exert themselves in such a way that I get victory." Hearing it, those (kings) proficient in fighting, full of great energy, went with their soldiers to fight (against the enemy in order to obtain) victory for the descendant of Raghu.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

Rukmāṅgada Is Defeated by Puṣkala

Śeṣa said :

1-7. Those very powerful heroes of Śatrughna, endowed with valour and quite ready to fight, went into the army of Vīramaṇi. The men discharging arrows, piercing many soldiers, holding bows were seen standing in the battlefield. Many elephants were killed there. On the battlefield were seen jewelled chariots shattered with their horses. Having heard about their destruction the mighty Rukmāṅgada, standing in a jewelled chariot, came there to fight with the soldiers. He fixed arrows on his bow and had two inexhaustible quivers. That mighty Rukmāṅgada, full of great anger and with blood in his eyes, making thousands of brave men terrified with his arrows causing wailing (in the enemy's camp), went (to fight). The mighty prince challenged Śatrughna and Bharata's son Puṣkala like himself in fame and glory.

Rukmāṅgada said:

8-15a. You who perform brave deeds and whose power and valour are great; come to fight with me, the strong and lustrous prince. O brave one, what is the use of frightening and killing others, crores of men? Having fought a great battle with me, obtain victory.

The mighty Puṣkala laughed and quickly struck him who was speaking like this on his large chest with sharp hooks. Not bearing it, the prince fixing arrows on his great bow struck with ten arrows Puṣkala in his chest. Both excited while fighting, both desiring victory, shone in the battle like Kārtikeya and (the demon) Tāraka. Fixing very sharp arrows ten in number on his bow Puṣkala, the hero, made the prince chariotless. With four (arrows) he knocked down his four horses; with two (he knocked down) his charioter; with one (he knocked down) his flag and with two (he knocked down) the guards of his chariot. The swift one pierced the prince with one (arrow).

15b-17. Seeing that wonderful act all heroes were very much delighted. He whose bow was broken, who had lost his chariot, whose horses and charioteer were killed, became extremely angry and got into another chariot. Standing in the excellent chariot adorned with gems of horses, he took a big strong bow furnished with a string.

18-19. Rukmāṅgada said these words to the brave Puṣkala: "O you tormentor of the enemies, having done (a) great (act of) valour where are you going? Today see my valour brought about by might. O hero, stand carefully; I shall take your chariot to the sky."

20-22a. Saying so he fixed a very fierce arrow on his own bow. Then enchanting the 'bhrāmaka' missile (i.e. the whirling missile), he discharged that sharp arrow adorned with gold at the feathered part into Puṣkala's chariot. By that arrow his chariot was taken to a distance of a yojana. With difficulty it was held in check by the charioteer; the chariot roamed on the earth.

22b-24. Puṣkala, who knew the (use of) great missiles, getting back his position with difficulty, and fixing an arrow on his bow said (these words) to him: "O best among the heroes, reach heaven resorted to by all gods. O best king, people like you are

not fit for (living on) the earth. They are fit for the assembly of Indra. Therefore, go to the abode of gods."

25-28. Speaking thus he discharged a great missile reaching the sky. (Struck) by that arrow the chariot straightway went into the sky. Going beyond all worlds it went to the sun's orb. By its flame the chariot, along with the horses and the charioteer, was burnt. With his chariot greatly burnt by its rays, he being extremely pained, fell, keeping in heart Śiva, the destroyer of the impious ones. With his body burnt by the rays, he fell there on the ground. He became extremely unhappy; and swooned on the battlefield.

29-33. When the prince dropped unconscious on the ground, there was a great wailing on the battlefield. The enemies led by Puṣkala got victory; (while) the enemies who had preserved the horse, were intent on fleeing. Then king Vīramaṇi, seeing the swoon of his son (i.e. seeing that his son was unconscious), was full of anger, and marched against Puṣkala who stood in the battlefield. At that time the earth, along with the mountains and excellent forests, trembled; the brave ones were delighted, (while) the cowards were oppressed with fear. Holding a great bow and two inexhaustible quivers and breathing heavily due to anger, he challenged his enemy.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

Vīramaṇi Is Defeated

Śeṣa said:

1-4. Seeing him challenging king Puṣkala in the ocean of the great army, even Hanūmat, the lord of monkeys, having with a sound raised the tail of his big body and having made a sound like that of a cloud, ran to him. When the best heroes stood in the battlefield, the lord of monkeys went to the best king. Seeing Hanūmat coming the mighty hero Puṣkala looked at him with his eyes full of much blood (i.e. very red) due to anger towards his enemy with a deep-sounding voice like (the

sound of) a cloud and filling the battlefield with his sound Puṣkala who knew (the use of) great missiles, spoke to that Hanūmat:

Puṣkala said:

5-10. O great monkey, how (i.e. why) have you come to fight in this battle? How much is the 'great' power of the king Vīramaṇi? It is very little. When the three worlds coming together stand before you, (even) then you may or may not desire to go to fight. Who is this king Vīramaṇi (before you)? How much is his power? It is battle. O hero, your fierce arrival (i.e. the arrival of you, the fierce one) here is not considered (necessary). By virtue of the side glance in the form of the grace of Raghunātha I shall come out after overcoming him who is difficult to be subdued. O lord of monkeys, do not have a mind to fight. With the heap of Rāma's grace you crossed the ocean in the form of demons. Similarly by remembering Rāma well I shall overcome this one difficult to be subdued. There is no doubt that the ocean of the miseries of them who after having encountered a difficulty remember Rāma, gets dried.

11. Therefore, O mighty hero, O powerful one, go near Śatrughna. I shall just come, after having vanquished king Vīramaṇi in a moment.

Śeṣa said:

12. Having heard these courageous words uttered by Puṣkala (Hanūmat), the killer of the heroes of the enemy, again spoke (these) words to Puṣkala.

Hanūmat said:

13-16. O son, do not act rashly towards king Vīramaṇi. He is a donor, a protector and is endowed with might and valour. You are young, (while) the king is old and the best among those who know (the use of) all weapons and missiles. In a battle he has conquered many heroes adorned with (i.e. characterized by) bravery. Know that by his side is protector Śiva, won over by means of devotion and living in his city with Umā (i.e. Pārvatī). Therefore, O Puṣkala, I will fight with this king only. Having vanquished other heroes, obtain great fame.

Puṣkala said:

17-23. Having won over Śiva through devotion he has installed him (i.e. his image) in his city; but the great lord does not directly live in his heart. That Rāma, having propitiated whom Sadāśiva reached the highest position, does not go to any other place after leaving my heart. The entire immobile and mobile world remains where Rāma remains. Therefore, I shall conquer king Vīramaṇi in the battle. O monkey, go to fight with other kings who are very haughty, in the battle. Do not be worried (about me), O lord.

Having heard these courageous words, Hanūmat went to fight with Vīrasiṁha, the younger brother of king (Vīramaṇi), in the battle. Lakṣmīnidhi, fought in a single combat in chariots with his son named Śubhāṅgada who knew the use of great weapons and missiles. Prince Sumada, distinguished by his own valour and might, (equipped) with weapons went to fight with Balamitra.

24-25. Seeing the king and challenging him, Puṣkala, skilled in a single combat in chariots, seated in a chariot decked with gold went to him. The king who spoke well, seeing Puṣkala, skilled in fight, to have come (there), said (to him) with fearless words on the battlefield.

Vīramaṇi said:

26-30a. O child, do not march against me who am angry and fierce and irascible in a battle; go (back) with a desire for (i.e. in order to save) your life. Do not fight with me. Kings like me favour children like you. They do not strike them. Therefore, go out of the battlefield. I was eager (to fight with you) till I had not seen you with my eyes. Now my mind does not desire to strike you. All that great act of you, having (but) a child's intelligence, viz. that you pierced my son with arrows and caused him to swoon, is forgiven by me.

Hearing these words, Puṣkala said to him:

Puṣkala said:

30b-33. (You say) I am a child, and you are very old, proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles. But the view of kṣatriyas is: Those alone who have a superior power are old and

not those who are old in age. I made unconscious your son who was proud of his valour and might. Now I shall knock you down with (my) weapons in the battle. Therefore, O king, stand with care in the battle. Nobody (even if) he remains at Indra's position, can conquer me, a devotee of Rāma.

34-45a. Hearing these words of Puṣkala, the best king, seeing (i.e. knowing him to be) young, laughed, but again became angry. The furious son of Bharata, having seen him to be angry, struck the king in his chest with twenty sharp arrows. The king, seeing those arrows, discharged by him (i.e. Puṣkala) coming to him got very angry and cut them off in many ways with sharp arrows. Seeing the arrows being cut off he, the prince named Puṣkala and the son of Bharata, was very angry at heart, and struck the king on his forehead with three arrows. Stuck there, they shone as if they were the three peaks of the Trikūṭa (mountain). The king afflicted by the arrows and full of great anger, struck the hero Puṣkala, in his heart with nine arrows. By these arrows profuse blood was quaffed from the body of the son of the younger brother of Rāma, as (it were) angry poisonous snakes had clung on his body. Puṣkala who was extremely angry, again quickly pierced the king with a hundred arrows of sharp joints. By the arrows his armour was cut off. His crown along with the helmet (was broken). His chariot (was) broken. His great bow which was made ready, was also cut off due to the flood of (i.e. profuse) anger. Wet with the blood and with his body pierced with arrows the king getting into another chariot marched against the son of Bharata. (He said to Puṣkala:) "O hero, O bee (howering round) the lotus-like feet of Rāma, you are blessed. Today you have done a great feat that I was deprived of my chariot. Now, O hero, protect your life when I am fighting (with you). For you, (to save) your life is not easy when I stand (before you) in the form of death."

45b-56a. Speaking like this, he, proficient in (the use of) many weapons, struck (him) with innumerable arrows. On the earth and in (every) direction (only) his arrows (were seen) there. On all sides he pierced and cut into two the chariots along with the warriors (in them). On the battlefield flowed a river having the stream of blood, where the intoxicated elephants

looked like peaks of mountains, the hair on the heads of beings again and again appeared like moss. Many arms of the heroes, which were beautified with rings and which were smeared with sandal, appeared after they were cut off like serpents. The heads of the best heroes had the resemblance of turtles. There the flesh of the great heroes was (i.e. looked like) mud. When such an incident took place, hundreds of witches drank, with vessels, the blood of the creatures falling in the battle on the battlefields. With joy and eagerness they enjoyed the flesh. Having drunk the blood and having eaten the flesh, the furious (witches) danced, laughed and sang loudly on the battlefield. The goblins there on the battlefield with their bodies intoxicated, holding with their hands the heads of creatures, were engaged in sounding them like musical instruments made of bell-metal. The furious jackals, causing fear to cowards, having eaten much flesh of those that fell on the battlefield roared. The cowards who were frightened got into the hollows of aśvattha trees. They were eaten up by the witches. Sinners survive nowhere.

56b-64. Seeing this destruction of his army, Puṣkala, the best among the heroes, also, brought about destruction on the battlefield. The heads of elephants were cut asunder, pearls fell (from their heads). That river (of blood) full of hair, appeared like the Tāmraparṇī (river). The arrows discharged by Puṣkala and stuck into the bodies of men destroyed the life of the heroes on all sides. On the battlefield, all the excellent warriors with their bodies wetted with blood, with their bodies pierced appeared like the kiṁśuka (trees). At that time Puṣkala who was angry and full of wrath, having spoken (a few words) to the king, struck him with many arrows. The king with his body pierced by his arrows and with his armour shattered, regarding him as very powerful, struck him with crores of arrows. Due to those arrows profuse blood discharged from the armour flowed (down). His body in the grip of the cage of arrows, became brilliant. That son of Bharata, remaining in the cage of arrows and with his mind afflicted, was not able either to take or to fix his arrows. Remembering Rāma, and holding tightly the great bow in his hand, he discharged sharp arrows keeping off the hosts of his enemies.

65. O best of sages, having shaken off the net of those arrows with those arrows, and having blown his conch, he with his fear gone said to the king in the battle.

Puṣkala said:

66-70. O hero, you have done a great feat by putting me, a great warrior and tormentor of heroes, into the cage of arrows. Due to your old age you are venerable to me; (but) O king Vīramaṇi, today, now, see my great act of valour on the battle-field. O hero, if with three arrows I shall not make you unconscious, then listen to my pledge deluding all the heroes: O hero, if I do not cause you to fall into a swoon in the battle, let me have the sin of him who, a great sinner and of very foolish deeds, even after reaching Gaṅgā that removes sins, censures her and does not plunge into her (water). Be ready, O king.

71-78. Hearing these words of Puṣkala, the best king (Vīramaṇi) was angry, and being very much afflicted fixed sharp arrows (on his bow). Those arrows went (off) after piercing the great chest of the son of Bharata and fell down on the earth like those who are averse to the devotion to Rāma. Then he aiming at his large expansive chest, discharged a sharp arrow, bright like fire. The lord of the earth cut it into two with his arrow; and burning like the orb of the sun it fell into the chariot. He fixed another auspicious arrow through (i.e. remembering) his devotion to his mother. He too cut it off with a big arrow. Then dejected in heart and remembering Rāma, the destroyer of his affliction, as to what to do (then), the knower of (i.e. he who was proficient in the use of) great missiles discharged (an arrow). The arrow resembling a serpent and burning with the sun's radiance, stuck into his chest, and made him unconscious. Then all wailed and were intent on fleeing. When the king became unconscious, Puṣkala obtained victory.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

Defeat of Puṣkala and Śatrughna

Śeṣa said:

1-7. Hanūmat having come to Vīrasiṁha, said these words: "O brave one, stop; where are you going? In a moment I shall conquer you." Hearing these powerful words of the monkey, he burning with a flood of (i.e. great) anger sounded his bow having the sound of clouds and discharging sharp arrows shone on the battlefield. Hanūmat, Añjanī's son, seeing those sharp arrows firmly stuck to his body, (and therefore looking) charming as in a heavy downpour of rain from a cloud in Āṣāḍha, became extremely angry in his heart. With his fist having adamantine strength he struck (Vīrasiṁha) on his chest. The hero struck with the fist fell on the ground. Seeing his uncle fainting, Śubhāṅgada (came to the battlefield). Rukmāṅgada also abandoning his swoon, went to the battlefield. Both of them showering arrows, loudly thundering like two clouds and causing great destruction, marched against the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat).

8-11. Seeing that the two heroes had come the lord of monkeys having encircled with his tail the two holding bows along with their chariots, broke them (by throwing them) on the ground (and) they became unconscious just at that moment only. With their bodies tinged with blood the two became motionless. Balamitra fought with Sumada for a long time and made him unconscious with (i.e. by striking him with) arrows having very sharp joints. In a moment Puṣkala led him to a swoon (i.e. made him unconscious) which was (characterized by) loss of sensation. Śatrughna's army destroying the (enemy's) warriors got victory.

12-20. At that time Śiva seated in an excellent chariot and stretching his divine bow ran (i e. rushed) to these warriors. The great one carrying the crescent moon in his twisted hair and having as ornaments serpents touching at will, took up his bow. The great god, the remover of the afflictions of his devotees, seeing his own men unconscious, went along with mighty troops to fight with these warriors of Śatrughna. With his attendants and followers he causing the earth to tremble came there to protect his devotees as he formerly came to Tripura. The trident-

holder saluted by gods, the author of deluge, having eyes very red due to anger, saw very intelligent soldiers (there). Seeing the great god who had come there, the powerful younger brother of Rāma went to the battlefield to fight with the crest-jewel of all gods. Seeing Śatrughna having come (there), the holder of the trident, held a bow with the string (stretched), and being very angry said: "Puṣkala, the servant of Rāma's feet, who went to the battle after having killed my devotee, has done a great feat. Today where is that Puṣkala knowing (i.e. proficient in the use of) great missiles? Killing him who troubled my devotee in the battle, I shall get happiness."

Śeṣa said:

21-28a. Saying so he sent Vīrabhadra to Puṣkala. "Go to fight with Puṣkala who is troubling my servant in the battle." He sent Nandin to (fight with) the very mighty Hanūmat. He sent Bhṛṅgin of mighty arms to (fight with) Kuśadhvaja. He ordered his own attendant by name Caṇḍa to (fight with) Sumada. The large-minded Puṣkala seeing that the great attendant of Mahārudra (i.e. Śiva) had come went to fight (with him). In the battle Puṣkala struck him with five arrows. With his body wounded by those arrows he directed the trident (towards him). The very strong one, having cut off the trident in a moment, roared. O brāhmaṇa, seeing his trident cut off the mighty follower of Rudra quickly hit Bharata's son on his head with (the missile called) Khatvāṅga. That great warrior, hit with the Khatvāṅga, became unconscious for a moment. That good warrior Puṣkala knowing (i.e. proficient in the use of) great missiles, giving up his swoon (i.e. regaining consciousness) that moment only cut off with his arrows the Khatvāṅga in his hand.

28b-42a. Vīrabhadra, with the Khatvāṅga in his hand cut off became extremely angry and shattered the warrior's chariot. Having broken the chariot of the warrior and having (thus) made him a foot-soldier, he fought with the magnanimous Puṣkala in a close fight. That very mighty Puṣkala abandoning the chariot shattered to pieces by him (i.e. Vīrabhadra), hit Vīrabhadra with his fist. They hit each other with fists, thighs and knees. They were eager to kill each other. They desired to conquer each other. Thus (the fight) between the two powerful

ones lasted for days, going on day and night. None lost in it and none of the very powerful ones won it. When the fifth day came, the very mighty Vīrabhadra seized the great hero Puṣkala and jumped into the sky. There a great fight, attracting (even) the gods, took place between the two, with fists, strokes of feet, arms and excellent hoofs (i.e. feet). Then Puṣkala who was extremely angry seizing Vīrabhadra by the neck struck (i.e. threw) him on the ground. The very mighty Vīrabhadra distressed by that stroke seized Puṣkala by the foot and repeatedly shaking him and throwing him on the ground the very mighty one cut off his head with blazing ear-rings with his trident. The very strong Vīrabhadra having killed Puṣkala roared. That roaring follower of Śiva frightened great warriors. When Puṣkala fell in the battle, there was a very great wailing. All the very proficient men became frightened on the battlefield. They informed Śatrughna that Puṣkala killed by Vīrabhadra, the attendant of Śiva, had fallen on the battlefield. The great hero, the mighty (Śatrughna) having thus heard about Puṣkala's being killed in the battle, was very much grieved and due to great grief trembled.

42b-47a. Knowing that Śatrughna was distressed Rudra spoke to him who was grieving for the hero (viz. Puṣkala) when Puṣkala was killed in the battle: "O very powerful Śatrughna, do not be distressed on the battlefield. The fall of heroes in a battle is said (to lead) to fame. The hero named Puṣkala who fought for five days with Vīrabhadra who causes great destruction and who in a moment killed Dakṣa that insulted me, and who in a moment killed the demons, the soldiers of Tripura, is blessed. Therefore, O lord of kings, O very powerful one, giving up your distress fight; When I—the warrior—am standing (before you), stand (i.e. wait) carefully, O best among the heroes.

47b-54. The brave Śatrughna, having abandoned his grief got angry with Śaṅkara, and making his bow ready he covered the great god with arrows. Those arrows, it was a great wonder, did not produce any wound on the body of the lord of gods who had come there for the protection of his devotees. Those arrows (of Śatrughna) and also the arrows of Śaṅkara remained in the sky, pervading this entire universe of the sage (i.e. Brahmā) working wonders. Everywhere (people) on seeing that war of arrows thought it to be the deluge, destroying the world and

deluding everyone. Those (gods) who had remained in their own cities having come to see it by resorting to (their) divine cars, praised very much that (fight) of the two: "This one is the author of the destruction and the creation of the three worlds. This one is also the younger brother of the great king Rāmacandra. What will be this (i.e. what will it lead to)? Who, on the earth, will be victorious? Which hero will meet with a defeat on the battlefield?" The fight between the two thus continued for eleven days.

55-62. When the twelfth day came, the king (i.e. Śatrughna) full of anger discharged the missile called 'Brahmā' to kill Mahādeva. Knowing that (his) enemy Śatrughna had discharged the great missile he laughed and absorbed it and discharged the great (missile called) Brahmaśiras. Being very much astonished (he thought) what should be done hereafter? Into the chest of him (i.e. of Śatrughna) who was thinking like this, the crest-jewel of gods (i.e. Śiva) quickly struck an arrow resembling fire. (Being struck) by that arrow Śatrughna became unconscious on the battlefield. The entire army served by the warriors, wailed. All heroes, led by Subāhu, Sumada, and proud of the strength of their arms, were knocked down on the earth by the attendants of Śiva. Seeing Śatrughna pained by the arrow and fallen unconscious and Puṣkala being put in a chariot by the servants to protect him, the angry Hanūmat, wagging his dreadful tail, remembering Rāma, and delighting his own (colleagues) came to fight with Śiva, the author of destruction.

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

Hanūmat on the Droṇa Mountain

Śeṣa said :

1. The hero Hanūmat, desirous of killing the lord of gods, came near Rudra on the battlefield and said (to him):

Hanūmat said :

2-5. O Rudra, what you are doing is against religious merit.

Therefore, I desire to punish you eager to kill Rāma's devotee. Formerly I heard it said variously by gods and sages that Rudra, the trident-holder, always remembers Rāma's feet. All that has become (i.e. proved) false in your case, who are fighting with Śatrughna. My brave (hero) Puṣkala is killed and Śatrughna also has become unconscious. Therefore, I shall today knock you, ready to destroy the three worlds, down. O Śarva (i.e. Śiva), you who are averse to Rāma's devotion, stand carefully.

Śeṣa said :

6-9. That great lord said to the monkey speaking like this: "O best hero, you are fortunate. What you say is not false. This Rāmacandra saluted by gods and demons is my lord. Śatrughna, the killer of his enemy's heroes, brought his horse. Inspired by devotion to him (i.e. Rāma) he came to protect him. The duty (of the lord) is that his devotee, his own soul, must be protected on any account. Let the great Raghunātha look upon me who am shameless by showing pity for me who was a little angry due to the great grief of my devotee."

Śeṣa said :

10-16. When the lord of Caṇḍī was speaking like this, Hanūmat, extremely angry, took a big stone and hit it at his chariot. His chariot, hit with the stone was broken to pieces along with the charioteer, horses, flag and banners. All the deities in the sky praised the lord of monkeys; "O lord of monkeys, you are blessed; you have done a great feet." Seeing Śrī Śiva without a chariot Nandin ran to him. He said to the great god: "Sit on my back." Hanūmat was extremely angry with Śiva who was seated on (the back of) the bull (i.e. Nandin). Drawing out a big stone he then quickly hit it on his chest. Hit with it the lord of the beings (i.e. Śiva) took a sharp, bright, spear, having three points and resembling the flames of fire. Seeing that great trident, bright like fire, that came to him, he (i.e. Hanūmat) took it in his hand and in a moment quickly broke it into (pieces as small as) the sesamum seeds.

17-21. When the lord of the monkeys quickly in a moment broke the trident, Śiva took in his hand the (missile called) Śakti entirely made of iron. That Śakti discharged by Śiva stuck to

(i.e. hit) the chest of the intelligent (Hanūmat) (and) in a moment the lord of the monkeys became afflicted. In a moment having overcome that pain he seized a strong tree and hit it on (Śiva's) chest adorned with great serpents. The lordly serpents struck by the hero were frightened. Leaving him and going here and there they speedily went to the nether world. Śiva seeing the tree discharged (by Hanūmat) and (hitting) his chest got angry and took a terrible pestle in both his hands.

22-29a. (He said): "O mean monkey, you are (now) killed. Flee and go (away) from the battle. In a moment I shall destroy your life with (this) pestle." Seeing the pestle discharged by the angry Śiva the monkey remembering Viṣṇu (i.e. Rāma) avoided it very speedily. That pestle made of strong iron and discharged by Śiva, fell down. Having torn off the entire earth it went to the nether world. Hanūmat, the servant of Rāma, was extremely angry at that time. Taking a mountain in his hand he hit it on the chest (of Śiva). While the lord of Satī (i.e. Śiva) was thinking of cutting off the mountain he was struck by the lord of monkeys with a tree having many branches. When he (i.e. Śiva) was intent on cutting it off, he was hit with rocks (by Hanūmat). The persevering Śiva made up his mind to break those rocks. Just then he showered him (i.e. Śiva) with trees and mountains. Having encircled the protector of the beings (i.e. Śiva) with his tail he struck him again and again with stones, mountains, trees and strokes of his tail. Nandin was very much frightened, and even the moon was reduced to pieces. The very angry great god got very much confused.

29b-32. He said to the lord of monkeys who every moment made him very much disquieted: "O follower of the protector of Raghus, you are blessed. You have today done a great feat, so that I am very much pleased with you. O you, having a great speed, I am not easily obtainable by means of charity or sacrifice or a little penance. Therefore, ask for a boon from me."

Śeṣa said:

33. Hanūmat laughing (i.e. smiling) and speaking in fearless words, spoke to that very much delighted great god (i.e. Śiva) who was speaking like this:

Hanūmat said:

34-40. O great god, by Ragunātha's grace I have everything. Yet I ask for a boon from you who are pleased with the battle. This our (hero) named Puṣkala has fallen down dead. So also Śatrughna, Rāma's younger brother, became unconscious in the battle. Many other heroes wounded with arrows have also fallen. Some are unconscious, some have sunk; (please) protect them along with your own attendants. Do that by which big ghosts, vampires and fiends, so also foxes and others, will not take them away and eat them up; and (do that by which) their bodies will not be split. By all means preserve all of them, till, having conquered the attendants of Indra, I bring (either) the Droṇa mountain or the herbs thereon, and bring back, per force, to life these heroes kept under (your) control. Here I go to take that Droṇa mountain on which life-restoring herbs exist.

41-47. Hearing these words (Śiva) said to him: "All right. Quickly go to that mountain. I shall preserve your dead warriors." Having heard those words of the lord, he went to the mountain Droṇa. Having crossed all islands he went to the milky ocean. Here (i.e. on the battlefiled), great Śiva, with his very strong and brave attendants took care of the corpses. Hanūmat having reached (the mountain) Droṇa and having put that great mountain called Droṇa on his tail quickly started for the battlefield. O brāhmaṇa, when he was engaged in carrying it, the mountain shook. Seeing it shaking the hosts of deities protecting it wailed and said: "What is this happening on the mountain? Who is this hero of great power and valour that is taking away this (mountain)?" Doing (i.e. saying) so all the gods together saw the monkey. Saying to him, "Leave it" they struck him with crores of weapons and missiles.

48-55. Seeing them all striking (him) Hanūmat was very much angry. In a moment the hero struck them all as Indra had struck the demons. Some of them were struck (by him) with his feet; some were crushed with his hands. Some were struck with his tail and some were hit with the peak (of the mountain). All of them struck by the monkey, perished in a moment. Some wet with blood, fell on the ground. Some trembled due to the fear of the monkey (and) went to Indra, the lord of gods. Seeing them

disturbed with fear and wet with blood, Indra, the best of all gods, being dejected said to the gods: "How (is it that) you are shaking with fear? How (is it that) you are wet with blood? By which demon or by which mean goblin have you been struck? Tell me the whole truth, so that knowing it I shall go to (i.e. march against) him; and having struck and bound him, the mad one who struck you, I shall come (back)." Hearing these words the best gods spoke in piteous words to Indra saluted by gods and demons.

Gods said:

56-61. We do not know (we are not sure, but) someone, taking the form of a monkey, came here and was intent upon taking that mountain after encircling it with his tail. When he decided (i.e. was about) to go back, all of us gathered together and being well-equipped and showering him with all weapons and missiles, fought with him. He, the powerful one, vanquished all of us in a battle. Many excellent gods, struck (by him) there fell on the ground. We with our bodies quite wet with blood and afflicted with the wounds and (i.e. but) alive due to our religious merit, have come here.

Hearing these words of the gods Indra ordered all gods endowed with great power: "Go to the great mountain Droṇa to bind the very mighty monkey. Binding him who has committed a great sin against the gods, bring him (here)."

62-67. Thus ordered, they went to the best mountain Droṇa, where the mighty hero, Hanūmat, the best monkey, stood. Having gone there all of them spoke to Hanūmat. They were struck by Hanūmat with fists and slaps. In a moment, they with their bodies having bloody wounds fell there. Others intent on fleeing went to the lord of heaven. Hearing it (i.e. the account) angry Indra, the best of gods, directed all the best gods towards the great hero, the lord of monkeys. Ordered by him they went where the mighty lord of monkeys (stood). Having seen all of them come there the best of the monkeys said: "O heroes, do not go to (i.e. march against) me in the battle. I shall now forcibly take you near the city of Yama."

68-72. Though told like this, all of them endowed with great

power, got ready and struck the monkey with weapons and missiles discharged in various ways. Cruel due to anger some of the best gods struck the mighty one with various (weapons and missiles like) lances, hatchets, swords, spears with sharp edges, pestles and śaktis. He quickly struck all the best gods with rocks. Some fled to Indra and told (the account) to him. Hearing the words told by them the lord of the gods was frightened. Having gone near (i.e. to) Bṛhaspati, the head and the counsellor of the residents of heaven, the excellent preceptor of gods, and having saluted him, he asked him:

Indra said :

73. O lord, who is the monkey that has come to carry Droṇa (mountain)? Who (i.e. he) has killed my heroes, the gods, holding weapons.

Śeṣa said :

74. Having heard these words uttered by him, the great Āṅgirasa (i.e. Bṛhaspati) spoke to Indra, the lord of gods, who was dejected with fear.

Bṛhaspati said :

75-80. He is the servant of him (i.e. of Rāma) who killed Rāvaṇa in the battle and burnt (i.e. destroyed) Kumbhakarṇa and who killed all the enemies. Know him to be Hanūmat who with the fire (set) to his tail burnt Laṅkā along with the Trikūṭa mountain and who killed Akṣa. He killed all (the gods). He is intent upon (taking) the Droṇa (mountain). The great king (Rāma), the best one among the mighty, is performing the horse-sacrifice. The great king Vīramaṇi, Śiva's devotee, took away his horse. Then a battle fascinating the gods, took place. In the battle Śiva killed many heroes of Rāma. To revive them this very mighty one will certainly take the Droṇa (mountain). (Even) after fighting with him for hundreds of years he, the powerful one, will not be vanquished by you. Therefore, propitiate the monkey. Give him the herb thereon.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

Śrī Rāma Appears on the Battlefield

Śeṣa said:

1-2. Having heard the words of Bṛhaspati, the Supreme Being, the enemy of Vṛṣaparvan, having come to know that Wind's son (Hanūmat) had come there on Rāma's mission gave up the fear in his mind that was due to the monkey and was delighted and said to Bṛhaspati.

Indra said:

3-8. How shall we manage, O master of gods, if this Droṇa (mountain) is taken (by Hanūmat)? Tell me further, how can the gods survive? Now properly propitiate the son of Wind. Rāma will be very much delighted, and the gods would have happiness.

Hearing the words of the lord of gods, Bṛhaspati, putting Indra in the front and surrounded by all gods went there where the fearless monkey, Hanūmat, stood. Having forcibly conquered the happy gods he was roaring. They led by Bṛhaspati, went near him and having saluted the feet of the son of Wind fell (at his feet). Bṛhaspati, the best among the eloquent being urged on by the lord of gods, the master of the world, spoke to the hero.

Bṛhaspati said:

9-11. Not knowing your valour the gods have done (this) act. O you highly intelligent one, you are the servant of Rāma's feet. What for is this undertaking, and how have you come here? We who are bent before you, will carry out what you say. O you son of Wind, having a body causing fear to the demons, give up anger and regard the lord of gods with favour.

Śeṣa said:

12-15. Hearing these words of the preceptor of gods he of a great fame, spoke to all gods and to Bṛhaspati: "In the battle with king Vīramaṇi, Śiva killed many warriors. To bring them back to life I shall carry the Droṇa mountain. Those who, proud

of their power and valour, will stop it (i.e. the mountain from being carried by me) will be sent to Yama's abode by me. Therefore, give me either (the mountain) Droṇa or the herb on it, by which I shall revive the heroes who died on the battlefield.

Śeṣa said:

16-21. Hearing these words of the magnanimous son of Wind they all bowed before him and gave him the reviving herb. The gods had given up their fear and were delighted and the residents of heaven being happy went (back) keeping the lord of gods in front (i.e. led by the lord of gods). Hanūmat took the medicine and came to the battlefield. He was praised by all the hosts of gods eagerly watching that feat. Even all the enemies having seen the monkey who had come (back), praised him (with the words), "Well (done), well (done)", and looked upon the monkey as wonderful. The monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), full of great joy, came there and went near the dead warrior Puṣkala, the heart of Rāma, protected by Śiva on the fierce battlefield. Having called Sumati, the minister honoured by the great, he said (to him): "I shall bring back to life all the heroes, that died in the battle."

22-27. Saying so, (he put) the medicine on the great chest of Puṣkala, and joining his head with his body, spoke (these) auspicious words: "If I recognise (only) lord Rāghava (i.e. Rāma) by the deeds of my mind, body and speech, then let him quickly revive by means of the medicine." When he was saying these words, Puṣkala got up on the battlefield and he, the crest-jewel of the brave, gnawed his teeth in anger: "Where has that Vīrabhadra, making me unconscious on the battlefield, gone? I shall instantly knock him down. Where is my excellent bow?" To him who was speaking like this the lord of the monkeys said: "O hero, you who are talking about him on the battlefield, are blessed. You who were killed by Vīrabhadra, have been again brought back to life by the grace of Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma). Come on, let us go to Śatrughna who is unconscious."

28-35. Saying so he went to the front of the excellent battle. (There) Śatrughna afflicted by Śiva's arrow, was breathing (i.e. was alive). Having gone there near the magnanimous

Śatrughna Hanūmat put medicine on his chest that had come to (i.e. started) breathing, and said to him: "O best Śatrughna, revive. O you of great might and valour, why (i.e. due to what) did you become unconscious on the battlefield? If I being diligent (i.e. diligently) keep celibacy till (the end of) my life, then let this hero Śatrughna revive in a moment." No sooner did he utter these words than Śatrughna came back to consciousness in a moment. (He said:) "Where is Śiva? Leaving the battlefield where has Śiva gone?" Śrī Rudra, the trident-holder had killed many heroes in the battle. The magnanimous lord of the monkeys revived them all. Then all of them were well-equipped; their minds were full of anger. Seated in their own chariots they with their bodies wounded marched against their enemies. Puṣkala marched against Vīrabhadra; Kuśadhvaja against Caṇḍa; the hero Hanūmat against Nandin; and Śatrughna against Śiva in the battle.

36-52a. The king marched against Śatrughna who was the best among the mighty, who had stretched his bow, and who had stood after calling (i.e. challenging) Śiva in the battle. The heroic king Vīramaṇi and the mighty Śatrughna fought in the battle with each other a fight causing wonder to the sages. O brāhmaṇa, king Vīramaṇi in a moment shattered to (pieces like) sesamum seeds more than a hundred chariots of Śatrughna, the lord of kings. Then Śatrughna who was very angry on the battlefield, discharged the Āgneya missile (i.e. the missile presided over by Agni) to burn him along with his army. The king seeing that great burning missile discharged by Śatrughna got very angry and took up the Vāruṇa missile (i.e. the missile presided over by Varuṇa). Seeing that (fire) cooled by the Vāruṇa missile the strong younger brother of Rāma discharged at him the Vāyavyāstra (i.e. the missile presided over by Vāyu). Due to it great (i.e. strong) wind was produced. The clouds struck by the wind moved in all directions. They roamed here and there and the army (of Śatrughna) became happy. Seeing his army afflicted by the wind the great king Vīramaṇi took (i.e. fixed) the mountain-like missile eradicating the enemy on his bow. The wind was checked by the mountains and did not blow on the battlefield. Seeing it the younger brother of Rāma (i.e. Śatrughna) took up the missile like the thunderbolt.

All the mountains struck by the Vajrāstra were reduced to pieces like sesamum seeds and were powdered in the battle honoured by the heroes. The heroes with their bodies shattered by the Vajrāstra (i.e. the thunderbolt-like missile) were adorned with blood on the battlefield. The battle was interesting. Then the great king Vīramaṇi who was very angry fixed on his bow the wonderful Brahmāstra (i.e. the missile presided over by Brahmā) burning the enemies. Śatrughna took an arrow and remembered the very charming missile given by that female devotee and deluding all enemies. The Brahmāstra, which left his hand came to the enemy. Just then he, named Śatrughna, discharged the deluding missile. In a moment the Brahmāstra was cut into two by the Mohanāstra (i.e. the deluding weapon) and quickly stuck into the king's chest and made him unconscious. Hundreds of arrows were discharged by king Śatrughna. And all the brave attendants of Śiva that had become unconscious lay so on the ground near the feet of Śiva.

52b-60. The very angry Śiva seated in his chariot went to the king. Śatrughna at once went to fight with Śiva on the battlefield. Making his bow ready and drawn out he fought. Between the two a fight breaking the enemy, took place. It brightened up the atmosphere by means of the weapons and missiles discharged in various ways. Such a battle due to (i.e. involving) killings by missiles and counter-missiles and strikings and counter-strikings did not take place even between gods and demons. At that time Śatrughna was very much afflicted in the battle with Śiva. On the advice of the son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat) he remembered his lord (i.e. Rāma): "O lord, O brother, the very fierce Śiva is snatching away my life. Raising your bow protect me on the battlefield. O Rāma, many crossed the ocean of grief by (uttering) your name. O Rāma, O Rāma, the cloud of kindness, lift me who am in misery." When he was speaking like this, Rāma who was dark like the blue lotus, whose eyes were like lotuses, having (tucked) a deer's horn to his waist, and who had the body of (i.e. like that of) an initiated person, was seen on the battlefield. Seeing him on the battlefield, Śatrughna was amazed.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

Vīramaṇi Surrenders the Horse to Śri Rāma

Śeṣa said:

1-4. Seeing his brother Śrī Rāma destroying the affliction of him who had saluted him to have come (there) Śatrughna became free from all unhappiness, O best brāhmaṇa. The confused Hanūmat seeing with joy Rāma's feet saluted him who had come (there) for the protection of his devotees and said: "O lord, it is (but) proper for you to protect your devotees, since you freed everyone vanquished and tied with a noose in the battle. O you descendant of Raghu, we are now blessed that we shall see your feet. In a moment only we shall conquer the enemies by your grace."

Śeṣa said:

5-17. O brāhmaṇa, seeing Rāma who was within the scope of (i.e. known by) meditation of the meditating saints, who gave fearlessness to those who saluted him, who had come there, Śiva fell at his feet, and said: "You are the only Puruṣa (i.e. the Supreme Being) actually rising above Prakṛti (i.e. Nature). With a portion of you, you create and destroy the universe. You who are formless, are the highest cause of the entire world. Endowed with Māyā you who are only one, take up three forms: At the time of creation (you exist) in the form of Brahmā, In protecting (the world) you are full of your lustre; and at the time of the final destruction of the world (you are) I known as Śarva (i.e. Śiva). O highest lord, your act of performing the horse-sacrifice for removing (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, is (but) a wonderful mockery. Wherefrom can sin (come to) you, the spotless waterfrom whose feet called Gaṅgā I carry inside (i.e. on) my head to pacify my sins? Certainly I did the act to hurt you much. O you kind one, forgive (me) about it which obstructs you. What do (i.e. can) I do? I did this for maintaining truthfulness. Knowing your prowess I came (here) for the protection of my devotee. This (king Vīramaṇi) formerly bathed in the river called Śiprā and practised wonderful penance in the temple of Mahākāla at Ujjayinī. Then, I who was pleased,

said to the king: 'O great King, ask for (your desired object).' He chose a wonderful kingdom. I said to him: 'Your kingdom (i.e. rule) will be in Devapura. I shall diligently dwell for your protection in your city till Rāma's sacrificial horse comes (to your city)'. O Rāma, I who granted such a boon, am really your servant. I am now pitied (by you). The king will give back (i.e. restore) the horse along with his sons and beasts; and he will offer service to (your) feet."

Śeṣa said:

18. Hearing these words of Maheśa (i.e. Śiva), the best of Raghus (i.e. Rāma) with his eyes full of pity spoke with a grave voice:

Rāma said:

19-22. It is but the duty of the gods to protect their devotees. You have done an auspicious deed, since you have now protected your devotee. O Śiva, you are in my heart (and) I am in your heart. There is no distinction between us. (Only) the wicked-minded fools see (the distinction, i.e. they look upon us to be different). Those men who make distinction between us who are indeed of the same nature are roasted for a thousand kalpas in (the hell called) Kumbhīpāka. Those who are your pious devotees were (i.e. are) my devotees only; and my devotees also salute you with great devotion.

Śeṣa said:

23-36. The lord (i.e. Rāma) having heard these words of Śiva revived the unconscious king Vīramaṇi by touching him etc. The able lord and god along with Śiva, also revived other unconscious sons of king Vīramaṇi, who were afflicted with arrows. Making the king ready, the lord of the beings (i.e. Śiva), made him, surrounded by his sons and grandsons, salute Rāma's feet. Blessed was king Vīramaṇi who saw the best Raghu, difficult to be secured by meditating saints devoted to deep and abstract meditation even after myriads (of years). O best brāhmaṇa, having saluted Raghunātha (and thus) having their bodies rendered blessed, they became most venerable even to Brahmā etc. The king (Vīramaṇi) gave (back) the best horse

to Rāma who was praised by Śatrughna, Hanūmat and (other) great warriors like Puṣkala. The king Vīramaṇi urged on by Śiva then gave (Rāma) everything along with his kingdom and with sons, beasts and kinsmen. Then Rāma was praised by all his enemies and servants, and especially by Śatrughna and others, who were very much eager. Seated in a jewelled chariot he then disappeared. When Rāma disappeared, all were amazed. Do not look upon that Rāma who alone is saluted by the world, as a human being. Being in water or on the land he is always present everywhere. At that time the heroes were thoroughly delighted and embraced one another. A great festivity with (the sound of) musical instruments and auspicious instrumental music, took place. Then all the heroes who were pleased and amazed, and who were proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, followed the horse that was released. Having directed that servant (viz. Vīramaṇi), telling him to seek the refuge of Śrī Rāma, the only one difficult to be obtained in the world, Śiva, of a truthful vow, and the author of the deluge and creation, disappeared there. Adorned with (i.e. accompanied by) his servants, Śiva went to Kailāsa.

37-38. King Vīramaṇi meditating upon the lotus-like feet of Śrī Rāma and accompanied by his army, went along with the mighty Śatrughna. For those excellent men who listen to this story of Rāma, there is never the misery due to the mundane existence.

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

The Sacrificial Horse Develops Stiffness

Śeṣa said:

1-6. Then, O brāhmaṇa, the horse went to Hemakūṭa close to Bhārata. The horse with chowries tied (on to his body) was protected by thousands of warriors. That Hemakūṭa was (many) yojanas in expanse and length on all sides and had myriads of silver and golden peaks. There was an excellent

garden adorned with trees (like) śāla, tāla, tamāla, karṇikāra, hintāla, nāga-punnāga, kovidāra and bilva, also campaka, bakula, megha (a kind of fragrant grass), madana, kuṭaja and others. It was also adorned with creepers like jātikā, yūthikā and navamālikā (varieties of jasmine), so also with mango-trees, vines with sweet grapes, and pomegranates. It was noisy with many birds; it was resounding with (the humming of) bees. It had the sounds of peacocks' notes. It gave joy in all seasons.

7-13. Accompanied by Śatrughna the horse which had mind's speed and had a charming golden note on his large forehead (came there). While that horse (let loose) for the horse-sacrifice, was (thus) going, suddenly a wonder took place. Listen to it, O best brāhmaṇa. His body became stiff, and he did not move, but (just) stood on the path. The best horse became immovable like the Hemakūṭa. Then all the guards of the horse gave him strokes with whips. Even though he was (thus) beaten (i.e. whipped) the horse with his body having become stiff, did not move (on). The guards of the horse, having approached Śatrughna, cried: "O lord, we do not know what has happened to (our) excellent horse. O you very intelligent king, when the excellent horse having mind's speed, was proceeding, there was a sudden stiffness in his body. We whipped him, but he did not move. O best king, having considered this, take whatever action (you deem proper)."

14-21. Then the king who was amazed, went along with his soldiers near the great horse. Puṣkala seized his feet with his hand, and lifted (i.e tried to lift) him up from the ground. But he did not move from it (i.e. from the ground). Though attacked by the strong one the horse did not move at that time. Large-hearted Hanūmat decided to lift him up. The best among the powerful ones encircled him strongly with his tail, and with (great) might dragged (i.e. tried to drag) him. Yet he did not move. Then, Hanūmat, the best monkey, being amazed said to Śatrughna, the greatest among the mighty, when the heroes were listening (i.e. in the presence of the heroes): "(Encircling) Droṇa with my tail, I now (i.e. recently, had) lifted it up easily. But it is a great wonder now that this (comparatively) small horse does not move. The excited, strong heroes have in this

case realised the general cause: Even though dragged, he did not move from his place as much as (the measure of) a sesamum seed." Having heard the words of the monkey Śatrughna, the best among speakers, said to Sumati, the best of the ministers.

Śatrughna said:

22. O innocent minister, why is there the stiffness in the body of the horse? Why (for what cause) is there stiffness in the horse's body, O innocent one? What remedy should be employed here, so that the horse can move?

Sumati said:

23. O lord, some sage proficient in all (branches of) knowledge should be looked for. I know only what actually occurs in a region and is perceptible but do not know what is concealed from the senses.

Śeṣa said:

24-29. Hearing these words of Sumati he, the knower of dharma, looked, along with his servants, for an auspicious sage. All the soldiers going everywhere looked for a sage, a knower of dharma. But, nowhere did they find the best sage. But one diligent follower (of the horse) went as far as (the distance of) a yojana in the east. There he saw a great hermitage where all beasts and men also had no enemies, (as) the very charming ones had all their sins destroyed due to a bath in Gaṅgā, where many (sages) practised penance with fire. With their faces hung down, they filled their bellies with (i.e. subsisted on) smoke, leaves and air; where the smoke rising from the sacred fire always purified (everything). It was happy with many sages and was excellent due to creepers with their leaves taken off.

30-32. He, coming to know that the charming hermitage belonged to the sage Śaunaka, reported it to the king with his heart full of wonder. Hearing that Śatrughna along with his servants became extremely glad. Along with Hanūmat, Puṣkala and others he went to that hermitage. Having seen there the best sage who had properly offered oblation to the fire, he

saluted (prostrating before him) like a staff, his feet destroying sins.

33-36. Seeing king Śatrughna, best among the mighty, coming (there), he offered him materials of worship and water for washing the feet; and became glad on seeing him. The best sage seeing him comfortably seated and resting said to the king: "O lord, why are you wandering? Your wandering is great. If, kings like you do not roam over the entire earth, then the wicked will harass the good who are free from affliction. O king, Śatrughna, the best among the mighty, tell me (why you are wandering like this). May all your wandering etc. be for our good."

Śeṣa said:

37. The king with his body delighted replied in a faltering tone to the brāhmaṇa who was speaking like this.

Śatrughna said:

38-41. Not far away from your abode all of a sudden a wonder took place in the case of Rāma's horse having the mind's speed. O best among the wise, hear (about) it. The horse by chance went into your garden rich in beauty. In its skirt there developed stiffness in his body (just) in a moment. Then my mighty heroes like Puṣkala, fierce with madness, forcibly dragged the horse. Yet he did not move. Due to our good fortune you who are known to be a boat for us who are drowned into the boundless ocean of misery, are seen by chance. Tell us the cause (of the stiffness of the horse's body).

Śeṣa said:

42-43. The best and very intelligent sage, when asked like this, mentally conceiving the horse along with the cause (of its stiffness), thought for a moment. Having in a moment known it with his eyes dilating with amazement, he said to the king who was grieved and full of doubt.

Śaunaka said:

44-55. O king, listen, I shall tell you the cause of the stiffness (of the body) of the horse, hearing which you will be free from

misery. Such is the strange account. In the Gauḍa country in a great forest adorned by the bank of Kāverī, a brāhmaṇa named Sāttvika practised a great (i.e. severe) penance. One day he drank water. One day he ate (i.e. subsisted on) air. One day he did not eat anything. In this way he would pass three days. When he was thus engaged in the vow Death himself seized him with his fangs; (and) the observer of the great vow met with death. Playing with celestial nymphs in a divine car, rich in all (kinds of) beauty and adorned with all gems, he went to the peak of Meru. There was a great Jambu tree, the fluid from which was enjoyable. (There was) a river called Jāmbavatī, full of golden water. In it, sages, meritorious due to many (kinds of) penance, and having all pleasures, sported eagerly according to their desires. There he (i.e. Sāttvika) joyfully playing at his will with the celestial nymphs, being arrogant due to pride on account of his high opinion about himself, acted disagreeably with them. Then he was cursed by the sages: "Be a hideous demon." Then, he being extremely afflicted said to the sages, rich in knowledge and penance: "May all you kind brāhmaṇas favour me." He was then favoured by them: "When you will speedily stiffen (Rāma's) horse, you will hear Rāma's account. After that you will be free from this very fierce cause." O lord, that brāhmaṇa thus addressed by the sages became a demon. He has stiffened Rāma's horse. Free him by narration (of Rāma's account), O sinless one.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

The Horse Is Relieved of Stiffness

Śeṣa said:

1. He who killed the enemy's heroes, having heard what the sage told, was amazed at heart, and said to Śaunaka:

Śatrughna said:

2-3. The way of fate is mysterious, due to which that (brāhmaṇa) named Sāttvika, though he had reached heaven (i.e.

had become divine), was made a demon by his deeds. O lord, O great sage, tell me about the path (i.e. the consequence) of deeds, and which hell is (obtained by beings) due to the result of which deeds.

Śaunaka said:

4-36. O best among the descendants of Raghu, you are blessed that you have such a good thought. Though you know (it) you are saying (i.e. asking about) for the good of the people. I (shall) tell (you about) various results of various deeds. O great king, listen to them. Hearing (about) them one would obtain salvation. He, of a wicked mind, who forcibly seizes the wealth of others, the child of another person, and another's wife for the sake of enjoyment, is dropped after being tied with Yama's noose into the Tāmisra hell for a thousand years. There the arrogant servants of Yama beat him up. Then tormented by the fruition of his sins, he goes to (i.e. is born in) the species of pigs. Having experienced great misery there he goes to human species (i.e. is born as a human being) which is characterised by diseases etc. and which acquaints him with his infamy. He engaged in (committing) sins, deceives (other) beings, and feeds his own family only. He would fall into (the hell called) Andhatāmisraka. Those men who kill beings here (i.e. in this world) wrongly fall into (the hell called) Raurava and are eaten up by ruru (deer). He who, for (filling) his own belly, plainly kills (other) beings, is, through Yama's order, dropped into (the hell called) Mahāraurava. He, the sinner, who hates his own father or a brāhmaṇa, (is dropped) into the vicious (hell called) Kālasūtra extending over a myriad yojanas. He who hates cows is roasted for as many years as the hair on (the bodies of) the beasts by Yama's servants. That king who would, on the earth, punish him who does not deserve punishment or that greedy king who gives physical punishment to a brāhmaṇa, is harassed by Yama's servants having faces like those of pigs. Then for being free from (his) sins he is born in wicked stocks. Those men who through their might foolishly snatch or destroy the little wealth of brāhmaṇas or the means of subsistence of cows, are oppressed very much, and are thrown into (the hell called) Andhakūpa in the other world. He who being greedy brings and

eats all alone sweet food, and intent on tasting (i.e. enjoying) it does not give it either to a deity or to his friend, certainly falls into the hell called Kṛmibhojana. That man who, when not facing a calamity, would snatch away gold etc. or the wealth of a brāhmaṇa, would fall into the very vicious hell (called) Sandaṁśa. The fool who nourishes his own body (only) and does not know (i.e. care for) anyone else, is dropped into the very terrible hell (called) Kumbhīpāka hot with oil. The servants of Yama make the man who would, through folly, desire an unapproachable lady to be his wife, embrace her metallic image (in hell). Those who, insolent through their might, violate the propriety of conduct as laid down by the Vedas, fall into Taraṇī and become eaters of flesh and blood. He who having made a śūdra woman his wife would lead the householder's life withher, is full of great misery and certainly falls into the Pūyoda (hell). Those fools, those rogues who practise religious hypocrisy for cheating people, are beaten by Yama and fall into Vaiśasa hell. Those fools, those sinners who make their wives of the same caste drink their semen, are engaged in drinking semen in a stream of semen. Thieves, those who set fire, those who are wicked, those who administer poison, those who plunder villages, being full of sins, are thrown into Sārameyādana (hell). A man who, full of sin, forcibly snatches the wealth of others, falls with his face downwards into Avīcinaraka. Having experienced much misery there he would go to (i.e. would be born in) the most sinful stock. The servants of Yama make him, the foolish man who through (sheer love of) taste drinks liquor, drink liquid iron. That man who through the pride of his knowledge and conduct, would disregard his elders, is after death thrown with his face downwards into the Kṣāranaraka. Those men who deviating from righteous conduct commit treachery, are thrown into the hell (called) Śūlaprota full of many torments. That wicked man who inflicts pain on all men through his words, falls into the Daṇḍaśūka (hell) and is bitten by snakes. Thus, O king, there are many hells for the sinners. Having committed sins they go (to them); and these (sinners) experience terrible agony. Those who have not listened to the story of Rāma or have not obliged others, have all (kinds) of miseries in hell. It is said that he who has happiness here,

would have it in heaven. Those who are miserable and diseased, have come from hell.

Śeṣa said:

37-39. Hearing this the king, trembling every moment, again asked the brāhmaṇa to get all his doubts removed. (He said:) "O great sage, tell (me) the characteristics of the respective sins. Due to which sin, and having which characteristics, is (a man) born on the earth?" Hearing those words of him, the sage said to the king: "O king, listen, I shall tell (you) the characteristics of the sinners."

Śaunaka said:

40-69. One who drinks liquors and one having black teeth is born in hell. One who eats what is prohibited, is born as one having chronic enlargement of the spleen. He who eats (food) seen by a woman in her course, is born as one who has worms in his belly. Having eaten (food) touched by a dog, a cat etc. a man would be of (i.e. give out) foul smell. A man who eats (food) without offering (it) to gods etc. has a disease in his belly, is unhappy, and is troubled by a great malady. By creating obstacles in the food of others (i.e. by spoiling their food), indigestion takes place (in the body of the man who spoils others' food). He who though he has wealth (i.e. though he can afford to give good food), gives bad food, has slow digestion. A man who gives (i.e. administers) poison, gets vomitting sickness; he who kills (a person) on the way, has a disease in his feet. A wicked man is born as one suffering from asthma and cough in hell. A rogue would suffer from epilepsy; and he who torments others would suffer from colic. He who causes forest conflagration would suffer from dysentery. He who would throw dung into a temple or into water, would suffer from a very terrible disease of the anus (as) a manifestation of his sin. The diseases caused by miscarriage are consumption, urinary diseases and dropsy. A man who breaks the image (of a deity), does not have stability (in life). One who speaks wickedly becomes maimed; one who censures others becomes bald-headed. A man who laughs at what others say becomes squint-eyed; he who steals gold of a brāhmaṇa has bad nails. He who steals copper becomes

corpulent. He who steals bell-metal becomes a leper. A man who snatches tin has his hair tawny. A man who takes away lead suffers from headache. A man who steals iron becomes a block-head. A man who steals hide is surrounded by (i.e. full of) fat. A man who steals honey smells like a goat. By stealing oil a man is extremely troubled by itch. By stealing raw food a man becomes toothless; and by taking away cooked food he would suffer from a disease of the tongue. By copulating with his teacher's wife a man suffers from strangury. By copulating with his sister he becomes a leper. So also by cohabiting with his daughter he suffers from leprosy. By cohabiting with his brother's wife he suffers from leprosy called gulma-kuṣṭha. By cohabiting with her who is approachable only by his master, he suffers from leprosy with red spots on the cheeks. By cohabiting with the wife of his confidant he suffers from ring-worm. By having sexual intercourse with his father's sister he would have boils in the right side of his body. By cohabiting with his maternal uncle's wife he would have boils on the left side of his body. He has leprosy on his waist by cohabiting with the wife of his paternal uncle. By having sexual intercourse with his friend's wife he becomes one whose wife dies (i.e. becomes a widower). By having sexual intercourse with a woman of his own family he suffers from fistula in the anus. One who cohabits with a famale ascetic suffers from urinary disease. By having sexual intercourse with the wife of a learned brāhmaṇa he suffers from ulcer in the nose. By cohabiting with the wife of him who is initiated a man has a flow of defective blood. He who cohabits with the wife of his kinsman suffers from the ulcer of the heart. He who has sexual intercourse with a woman of a higher caste suffers from the ulcer of the head. By cohabiting with a beast he suffers from a urinary disease. There is no doubt that men suffer from these diseases in hell. Women also suffer from these diseases by having sexual intercourse with the respective men. Thus, O king, the characteristics of great sinners are narrated. The sin would perish by means of religious merit due to charity, by hearing Rāma's deeds, or by (practising) penance. The river of the narration of the deeds of Viṣṇu would wash all the sins—the mud—of the sinners. There should be no doubt about this. (Even) Gaṅgā does not purify him who despises Hari. Even very meritorious holy places are not

able to purify him. He who being weak in knowledge (i.e. being ignorant) laughs at the deeds being narrated, does not get freedom from hell even at the end of the world. O king, go with your followers for freeing the horse. Relate the deeds of the lord of Śrī, so that the horse would move.

Śeṣa said :

70-76. Having heard this, Śatrughna, the killer of the enemy's heroes, became delighted and accompanied by his servants saluted him, and turning back went (back). Having, with Hanūmat, gone to the side of (i.e. near) the excellent horse, he narrated Rāma's deeds destroying terrible misfortunes. "Go (in) to the divine vehicle due to the religious merit obtained by the narration (of the deeds) of Rāma. Move freely in the world. Be free from the bad birth." When after having these words Śatrughna stood by, he saw an excellent (man) borne in a divine car. He said: "By listening to the narration (of the deeds) of Rāma, I have become free. O very intelligent king, I (shall) go to my abode. Give me leave to go." Saying so the divine one seated in his divine car, left. At that time, the followers (of Śatrughna) along with Śatrughna were amazed. Then the horse was free from the stiffness and the ground; and wandering through that forest full of birds proceeded.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

King Suratha Seizes the Horse

Śeṣa said :

1-3. Seven months passed as the horse easily roamed over Bhāratavarṣa full of kings. He going round all the excellent Bhārata (country) was honoured by excellent kings. Surrounded by excellent warriors and mighty soldiers like Śatrughna he roamed over many countries near the Himālayas. Taking into consideration Rāma's might nobody seized him.

4-11. Praised by the kings of Aṅga, Vaṅga and Kaliṅga the horse went to the beautiful city of Suratha. The city was named

Kuṇḍala, where the ear-rings fell from Aditi's ears trembling with joy and fear. There no man ever violated religious laws. The people there remembered Rāma everyday. There everyday men, Rāma's servants, free from sins, worshipped Aśvattha and Tulasī. There everyday men of pure hearts, free from fraud, worship charming temples having Rāma's idols. There is the name of Rāma (told) in words and never the account of a quarrel. In the heart he alone is meditated on, and no memory of sex finds a place. There men whose bodies are purified by the story of Rāma and who have assiduous devotion to truth, never indulge in gambling. In it lives the mighty and righteous (king) Suratha whose mind is delighted by recollecting Rāma's feet, and is very mad (after Rāma).

12-17. How shall I describe the excellent servant of Rāma, viz. Suratha, whose all virtues spread on the earth purify sins? Once the servants of that king saw, while they were wandering, the sacrificial horse smeared with sandal (-paste). When they saw the note (on the forehead) of the horse, which had clear letters, they were amazed. Knowing that the horse which was charming to the eye, was released by Rāma, they were delighted; and being eager they told (about him) to the king who was in the assembly: "O lord, there is the city Ayodhyā. Its lord is Rāma. The horse which is fit for a horse-sacrifice and which is released (by Rāma), has, while wandering, reached along with the servants the vicinity of your city. O great king, seize that very charming horse."

Śeṣa said :

18. Hearing these words uttered by his (servants), the king, being full of joy, said to his strong heroes in a voice grave like (the thundering of) the clouds:

Suratha said :

19-20. We are blessed that with our servants we shall see the face of Rāma. I shall seize his horse surrounded by a crore of warriors. I shall release the horse when Rāma would come. The object of me, the devotee, always engaged in meditating (on Rāma) will be fulfilled.

Śeṣa said :

21-24. Saying so, the king ordered his servant: "Forcibly seize the horse. The horse should not be released. He (should be kept) within sight. By this, I think I shall have a great gain in that I shall see Rāma's feet, difficult to be obtained by Brahmā, Indra and others. He, one's relative, or son, or kinsman, or beast or vehicle, alone is blessed, by whom Rāma would be obtained. Therefore, seizing the sacrificial horse which has the speed he desires, which is charming, and which is adorned with a golden note, tie him in the stable."

25-26. They who were thus addressed, went and quickly seized Rāma's horse and gave him whose entire body was auspicious, to the king. The king, the destroyer of the demons and proficient in righteous deed, gladly received him, and said to his mighty servants:

27-35. "O very intelligent Vātsyāyana, listen attentively. No man in his (i.e. Rāma's) country was attached to another man's wife. No man was attracted to another man's wealth, and no one was lustful. No man was attached to (things liked by) the tongue, and went along a wrong path; (everyone) would narrate (nothing else) but (the deeds of) Rāma." The king said to his servants: "You skilled in religious deeds have come to serve; tell (me) your movements. (In my country) men have the vow of having one wife only (i.e. were loyal to their wives). They do not crave for others' wealth. They are not attached to censuring others. They have not gone away from the course laid down by the Vedas. The warriors everyday do recollection etc. of Rāma. I who am angry towards Yama, keep them for service to Rāma. I do not allow those wicked, sinful men, behaving in the opposite way, to reside in my country." In his country did not live the most sinful ones who mentally committed sins. (There lived people whose) all sins were destroyed by meditation on Hari and were full of joy. When the country was like this and the king was religious, all the men that died (i.e. after death) obtained bliss. In the city of Suratha there was no entrance for the servants of Yama.

36-38. Then Yama taking up the form of a sage came to the king. He having put on garments of the barks of trees and with

his head adorned with matted hair, saw Suratha, the servant of Viṣṇu, in his assembly. He had the Tulasī (-leaf) on his head and uttered the great name of Hari. He always made his people listen to (i.e. narrated to his people) the accounts dealing with religious deeds. Then the king, seeing the sage who was, as it were, penance incarnate, saluted his feet and gave him water for washing his feet etc. The best king said to the sage who was comfortably seated and who was resting:

39-41. "Today my existence is blessed; today my house is blessed. Tell me various excellent stories about Rāma, hearing which the sin of the hearers perishes everyday." Hearing these words uttered (by the king) the sage, showing all his teeth, laughed very much and clapped his palms. (The king) said to the sage who was laughing: "What is the reason for your laughing? (i.e. what made you laugh)? Kindly tell me so that my heart will be pleased." Then the sage said to the king:

42-54. "O king, listen attentively to the excellent reason for (my) laughter. You told me: To me narrate the glory of Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu). Who is Hari? Whose glory (should I narrate)? All men are influenced by their deeds (i.e. fate). Due to deeds heaven is obtained; due to deeds (one) would go to hell. Due to deeds alone, all (things) like sons and grandsons would (be had). Indra after performing a hundred sacrifices went to the highest position. Brahmā also obtained the wonderful world called 'Satya' due to his deeds (i.e. his fate). Many gods like Maruts who became successful due to their deeds enjoy, being served by the hosts of celestial nymphs, pleasures. Therefore, perform sacrifices etc. and indeed worship deities, so that you will have spotless fame on the earth." Hearing these words of him he, with his mind agitated with anger and with his heart fixed on Rāma alone, spoke to the brāhmaṇa skilled in (various) acts: "Do not say (anything) about the account of deeds giving a perishable fruit. You who are condemned by the world, go out of my city. Indra will quickly fall down. Brahmā also will fall down, but men eager for Rāma's worship will not fall. See Dhruva, Prahlāda and the wonderful Bibhīṣaṇa. So also others who are Rāma's devotees never fall. These servants of Yama will beat with iron mallets and by binding with nooses, those wicked ones who condemn Rāma.

O mean brāhmaṇa, I do not punish you due to your brāhmaṇa-hood (i.e. because you are a brāhmaṇa). Go, go away from my sight; otherwise I shall beat you."

55-63. When the greatest king called Suratha, his servants were eager to drive him out by holding him with his arm, then Yama taking up his own (i.e. original) form, adorned by people, said to the king: "O servant of Viṣṇu, I am pleased; ask for (what you want). O you of a good vow, though I tempted (i.e. tried to lead astray) you with many words, you, served by the good, did not swerve from service to Rāma." Then the king, seeing Yama very much pleased, said: "If you are pleased, then grant me an excellent boon. Let me not meet with death till I meet Rāma. O Yama, let me never have fear from you." Then Yama said to the king: "This will take place in your case. The chief of the Raghu (family) will truly do everything desired by you." Saying so Yama praising the deeds of him who had set his heart on the devotion to Rāma, vanished and went to his own city. That righteous king, the servant of Rāma, seized the horse with great joy and said to the servants of Viṣṇu: "I have seized this horse of Rāma, the lord of the earth. All of you, skilled in fighting, should be ready everywhere."

64-69. Thus told, all the very powerful soldiers of the king became ready in a moment, and being eager (i.e. eagerly) went to the assembly. The king's ten brave sons were: Campaka, Mohaka, Ripuñjaya, Durvāra, Pratāpin, Balamodaka, Haryakṣa, Sahadeva, Bhūrideva and Sutāpana. These ten sons of the king became ready on the battlefield. Full of great enthusiasm they desired to march (against Śatrughna). The king too called his bright chariot fashioned with the beauty of gold and adorned with horses having excellent speed. The king having enthusiasm to fight, surrounded by the entire army, stood directing all his servants in the assembly.

CHAPTER FIFTY

Aṅgada Delivers Śatrughna's Message to Suratha

Śeṣa said:

1-6. Then the younger brother of Rāma came (there) and asked his servants: Where is the very charming sacrificial horse?" At that time those very mighty heroes said (these) words to Śatrughna: "We do not know. Some warriors took the horse and went into a city; and all of us were despised by the mighty servants of the king. You are now the authority as to what should be done now." Hearing those words of them, Śatrughna became very angry and the hero gnawing his teeth and repeatedly licking (his lips) with his tongue said: "Snatching my horse where will you go? Now (only) I shall ruin with (my) arrows (your) city with the people (i.e. the inhabitants)." Saying so, he said to Sumati: "Whose city is this? Who is its lord that took away my horse?"

Śeṣa said:

7-12. Hearing these angry words of the king the minister spoke in a sweet voice words with distinct syllables: "Know this to be a very charming city named Kuṇḍala. The righteous, mighty kṣatriya Suratha lives here. He is always given to religious conduct and is the servant of the couple of feet of Rāma; he is Rāma's servant like Hanūmat by thought, deeds and speech. There are hundreds of (good) deeds of this righteous (king) Suratha who is all-good, has a retinue of very strong (soldiers). If the best horse is snatched away, there would be a great war here. Many heroes skilled in fighting will fall (in the battle)." Having heard (the words) thus spoken, Śatrughna, the killer of the heroes of his enemy and the best among the eloquent, again said these words to (his) minister.

Śatrughna said:

13. How should we act here if he has snatched away Rāma's horse? He does not come to fight with (our) army which is strong and served by heroes?

Sumati said:

14-16. O great king, an eloquent messenger should be sent to the king, by (hearing) whose words the best among the strong will come along with his army. Or, the horse might have been carried away through ignorance by some proud (person). He will give us (back) the excellent, auspicious, sacrificial horse.

Hearing these words of (i.e. spoken by) him, the intelligent and powerful Śatrughna said these polite words to Aṅgada.

Śatrughna said:

17-19. You (please) go to Suratha's great city which is nearby. Having gone (there) as a messenger say to the king: "You have taken away knowingly or unknowingly Rāma's horse. Give him (back); or go in for a fight along with your warriors." O you, who are endowed with the greatest might and who are intelligent, act as a messenger in the same way as you acted as the messenger of Rāma to Rāvaṇa in Laṅkā.

Śeṣa said:

20-22. Hearing these (words) and saying, 'Yes' to the king, Aṅgada went to (Suratha's) assembly full of groups of warriors. He saw (there) king Suratha holding Tulasī-sprouts and telling (about) Rāma to his own servants. The king too seeing the monkey having a charming body and knowing him to be Śatrughna's messenger and Vālin's son, said to him.

Suratha said:

23. O lord of the monkeys, how and for what purpose have you come here? Tell me the full reason so that knowing it I shall do that (what is proper).

Śeṣa said:

24-29. The lord of the monkeys very much wondering in his heart said to the king who was speaking like this and who served Rāma: "O best king, know me to be Vālin's son, the lord of the monkeys. I have been sent to you as a messenger by Śatrughna. O king, some of your servants came and have now suddenly and unknowingly taken away my horse, (and thus)

have done an unjust act. Go gladly to Śatrughna and having fallen at his feet quickly give the horse (back to him) along with your kingdom and sons. Otherwise, with your body wounded and deprived of your head by the arrows discharged by Śatrughna you will lie adorning the surface of the earth. Where will you go by snatching the sacrificial horse of him who easily in a moment destroyed the lord of Laṅkā?

Śeṣa said:

30-35. The lord of the earth, replied to him (i.e. to Aṅgada) who was speaking like this. "You are saying everything that is proper. Your words are not untrue. But listen to my words, O servant of Śatrughna's feet. I have seized the great horse of the intelligent Rāmacandra. Through the fear of Śatrughna and others I will not at all release him. If Rāma himself will come and appear before me, then (only) I with my sons will, after saluting his feet, give him my entire kingdom, much wealth, corn and army. If Rāma would not come, I shall now even in a moment conquer the great warriors like Śatrughna and bind them in my house."

Śeṣa said:

36. Hearing this, the intelligent Aṅgada laughed at the king; and said very important words with great courage.

Aṅgada said:

37-48. You, being devoid of understanding due to your old age, are speaking (like this)! That (i.e. understanding) has left you, since you, strengthened by your devotion (to Rāma) are despising Śatrughna who easily killed the demon Lavaṇa, the enemy of king Māndhātṛ, who killed many very strong and insolent warriors in battles. You are binding (i.e. thinking of binding) that lord of warriors who killed Vidyunmālin seated in (a vehicle) moving according to the occupant's desire. You appear to me to be devoid of wisdom. Śatrughna's brother's son Puṣkala is very mighty and knows (the use of) great missiles. Śatrughna has very much pleased Vīrabhadra, the attendant of Rudra. How can I describe his great valour earned through his might, resembling whom in might, fame or glory, there is none

on the earth? Near him remains Hanūmat who has (set) his heart on the lotus-like feet of Rāma, whose (i.e. of Hanūmat) many deeds will be heard (i.e. known) by you, who in a moment forcibly burnt the demon's (i.e. Rāvaṇa's) city (Laṅkā) along with the Trikūṭa mountain, who killed Akṣa, the son of the wicked lord of demons, who repeatedly brought the mountain Droṇa along with the deities in it on the tip of his tail for reviving the soldiers. Rāma (alone) knows his uprightness. None else who is a dunce, knows it; him, the lord of monkeys, his servant, Rāma does not forget (even) a little from his heart. All the lordly monkeys like Sugrīva who live on the earth, serve king Śatrughna. They are eager to see (the horse). (So also there are others like) Kuśadhvaja, Nīlaratna, Riputāpa knowing (the use of) great missiles, (and) Pratāpāgrya, Subāhu, Vimala and Sumada. (So also) king Vīramaṇi, full of truth (i.e. truthful), is the servant of the king. These and other kings serve him.

49-50. There (i.e. among them), who are you (but) a mosquito in the ocean, O hero? Realising that, go (i.e. march) with your sons to the kind Śatrughna. Having given (back) the horse you will go to the lotus-eyed Rāma (and) seeing him you will make your limbs and your existence blessed.

Śeṣa said:

51-56. The king said to the messenger who was speaking in various ways: "You (will) immediately show them (to me, as) I do not know all (of them). O messenger, the might of Hanūmat who, taking Rāma on his back went to protect the sacrifice, is not as (great) as my own. If with devotion I worship Rāma mentally, with words and deeds, then he will quickly show me his body. Otherwise, let the heroes led by Hanūmat endowed with devotion bind me, and take (back) the horse speedily. (You) go to (my) enemy Śatrughna and tell him what I said. Let (your) good warriors be ready. This I, powerful one, am going to the battlefield. On the battlefield he will after thinking (properly) do what is proper. Let them free the great horse or give him to me."

Śeṣa said:

57. Having heard this and having smiled the hero went where the king (stayed), and having gone to him told him (everything) as was told by Suratha.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Hanūmat Frees Puṣkala from Campaka

Śeṣa said:

1-7. On hearing the words of Suratha from the mouth of (i.e. through) Aṅgada all (the soldiers) proficient in fighting and seated in their chariots became ready (to fight). There was the sound of the war-drums, so also of kettle-drums. On the battle-field the sounds of the roars of the soldiers arose. All the world was full of the sounds of the chariots and the trumpets of the elephants. The great sound (even) reached the sky. The soldiers skilled in fighting and full of enthusiasm for fighting made various sounds which scared the timid ones. When such a din took place, the king named Suratha surrounded by his sons and soldiers went to the battlefield. Pervading fully the earth with elephants, chariots, horses and hosts of foot-soldiers, and inundating it as the ocean (inundates it), he was seen with (or by) soldiers. Seeing that army resounding with the sounds of conches and also with cries of victory, and ready to fight, the king said to Sumati.

Śatrughna said:

8. The king surrounded with a huge army has come. O you very intelligent one, tell (me) what we should do now.

Sumati said:

9-10. Now many very fierce warriors like Puṣkala skilled in fighting and proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, should fight. The very strong, very brave son of Samīra (i.e. of

Vāyu, viz. Hanūmat), very proficient in fighting, should fight with king (Suratha).

Śeṣa said:

11-18. When the great minister was speaking like this, the haughty sons of the king indeed stretched their bows on the battlefield. Seeing them, the very strong, respected soldiers like Puṣkala who were furious in battles and who had bows and arrows in their hands and who were seated in their chariots, went (to fight). The great warrior Puṣkala knowing the (use of) great missiles, fought in a single combat in chariots with Campaka protected by a great hero. That Kuśadhvaja, son of Janaka, fought with Mohaka. Vimala (fought) with Ripuñjaya, Subāhuka with Durvāra. Pratāpāgrya (fought with) Pratāpin, and Aṅgada with Balamoda. Nīlaratna fought with Haryakṣa, and Satyavān with Sahadeva. The powerful king Vīramaṇi fought with Bhūrideva. Ugrāśva, endowed with might, fought with Asutāpa. (Those warriors) skilled in fighting, fought a great single combat in chariots. All of them were skilled in (the use of) weapons and missiles and were proficient in fighting. O best sage, when the fight with Suratha's sons thus started, there took place great destruction.

19-21. Puṣkala said to Campaka: "O prince, what is your name? You who have come (to fight) with me in the battlefield, are lucky. Now wait; why do you go? How would you live (now)? O you proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, come to fight with me." Hearing these words of (i.e. spoken by) him the mighty son of the king said to Puṣkala with a tone grave like the (thundering of) the clouds:

Campaka said:

22-25a. Fight here will not take place with (i.e. depending upon) name or family. Yet I shall tell you my name preceded by (i.e. with) my might. My mother is lord Rāghava; my father is said to be Rāghava. My brother is Rāmacandra; and my kinsman is Rāghava (i.e. Rāma). My name is Rāmadāsa (i.e. Rāma's servant). I am ever Rāma's servant. Rāma who favours his devotees, will save me in the battle. Yet following the belief of the people (i.e. convention) I shall now describe (myself) to you.

25b-28. I am Suratha's son; and Vīravatī is my mother. My name is that (i.e. Campaka) which makes all lovely in the spring season. The bees attracted by honey abandon the abode of my juice drunk in the spring. In complexion I resemble gold. I have a mark in the centre. O hero, know me as having the attractive name which is the name (of that tree). Fight with me with arrows. Nobody is able to conquer me in a battle. I shall now show you my wonderful valour.

Śeṣa said:

29-31. Hearing these great (i.e. important) words Puṣkala was glad in heart. Taking him to be difficult to be conquered he discharged arrows in the battle. He went (i.e. marched against) Puṣkala who was discharging arrows in crores. (And) then Campaka, full of anger, made his bow ready. He discharged sharp arrows which destroyed the hosts of enemies, which were marked by his name, and which had golden-feathered ends.

32-37. The great hero Puṣkala discharging arrows sharpened on (whet-) stones and causing darkness everywhere with arrows, cut off those (arrows) on the battlefield. Seeing his arrows being cut off by the hero, Campaka, full of anger, challenged the mighty Puṣkala. Saying "Leaving the battlefield, do not go (away)" he again quickly pierced Puṣkala at his chest with ten arrows. Those arrows of a sharp speed came and stuck very much (i.e. very deep) into the chest of Puṣkala, and quaffed the powerful blood. Afflicted by those arrows the hero too, through great anger, took five arrows, holding them like mountains. These powerful arrows, and the arrows of him, arranged in the sky, were cut off in a hundred ways by the king's son.

38-41. The mighty son of Suratha having cut off the very sharp arrows, took up a hundred arrows and struck Puṣkala on the chest. Those arrows cut off into a hundred ways by the magnanimous Puṣkala and opposed by the speed of (his) arrows fell in the vicinity of the battlefield. Seeing that very great feat the mighty son of the king clearly struck him on his chest with a thousand arrows.

42-44. Puṣkala knowing (the use of) great missiles, quickly cut them off too; but he again immediately fixed a myriad arrows on his own bow. Puṣkala knowing (the use of) great missiles cut

them off too. Then being very angry he sent a shower of arrows. Perceiving that shower of arrows (coming to him), the destroyer of heroes, viz. Campaka, praising Puṣkala (with the words) "Well (done), well (done)", struck him. Seeing Campaka possessing great valour Puṣkala who knew (the use of) all weapons, fixed the missile of (i.e. presided over by) Brahmā on his bow.

45-48. The great missile discharged by him set ablaze the ten directions; and having pervaded the sky, the heaven and the earth, it was on the point of causing universal destruction. Campaka, proficient in (the use of) all missiles, seeing that missile discharged, discharged the same missile to kill his active enemy. People looked upon one of the two lustres as the final destruction of the world. The best missile united with the other one, destroyed it. Seeing that wonderful feat, Puṣkala saying, "Wait, wait", angrily struck Campaka with infallible arrows.

49-52. The magnanimous Campaka not caring for the arrows discharged (by Puṣkala), discharged the terrible missile called Rāmāstra towards Puṣkala. When he saw the missile discharged by the noble Campaka, and decided to cut it off, he was struck by an arrow. He was bound by the brave Campaka and was again put into his own chariot. The noble-minded one decided to send him to the city. When he named Puṣkala was bound there was great wailing. The warriors intent on fleeing, went to Śatrughna.

53-56. Seeing them routed, Śatrughna said to Hanūmat: "Which hero has completely defeated my army adorned with heroes?" O king, then he said: "This hero Campaka, firm in his position, is taking (away) the hero after tying him up." Hearing such (i.e. these) words of him, Śatrughna full of anger, said to Vāyu's son (i.e. Hanūmat): "Quickly free (him) from the king's son (i.e. Campaka) who, the very mighty one, has tied up (our) warrior Puṣkala, O best among the heroes, free him (i.e. Puṣkala) from him (i.e. Campaka). How do you delay in the battle?"

57-67a. Hearing these words, and saying "Yes", Hanūmat went to free Puṣkala from the hero Campaka. Seeing Hanūmat to have come to free him he, the very angry one, struck him with hundreds and thousands of arrows. He broke the arrows discharged by the noble one (i.e. Campaka). The mighty one

was again quickly discharging arrows at him. He pounded all those arrows discharged by the enemy. Taking a śāla (tree) in his hand he struck the king's son (with it). The strong one made the śāla discharged by him like (i.e. of the size of) sesamum-seeds. Hanūmat discharged an elephant on the head of the prince. He too was struck by Campaka, so he died and fell on the ground. Hanūmat knowing (the use of) great missiles, discharged rocks. By means of a mechanism controlling arrows Campaka greatly pounded all the rocks; O brāhmaṇa, it was a great wonder. Seeing that all the rocks discharged by him were pounded, Hanūmat thinking that he was very powerful, was very much angry at heart. The monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), seized him in his hand, and jumped into the sky. Campaka fought with that Hanūmat. The best monkey was very much beaten by him in a close fight. The hero, terrible on account of a mountain of (i.e. great) pride, was angry in his mind.

67b-71. Seizing Campaka by his foot, he dashed him on the ground. Struck by the lord of monkeys, the speedy one got up in a moment and seizing Hanūmat by his tail whirled him round. The lord of the monkeys seeing his power and laughing again seized him by his foot. Having whirled him for a hundred times he dropped him on the haunch of an elephant. That Campaka, the son of the king, fell on the ground. Adorning the battlefield rich due to being embellished by heroes, he fainted. At that time the men, the followers of Campaka, wailed. (Hanūmat) freed Puṣkala who was tied up from the noose of Campaka.

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

King Suratha Wins the Battle

Śeṣa said :

1-4. Seeing Campaka fallen Suratha, the mighty kṣatriya, with his body filled with grief, went, seated in a chariot (to the battlefield). Suratha who was very powerful, was angry and heaving heavy sighs, called (i.e. challenged) the monkey. Seeing the

king challenging him the very brave hero, the lord of monkeys, having great speed, went to (i.e. marched against) him. King Suratha with his beautiful voice deep-sounding like (that of) the clouds, seeing Hanūmat who despised great heroes coming, said:

Suratha said :

5-8. O best monkey, possessing great might and valour you who performed a great feat for Rāma in the demon's city, are blessed. You are the devoted servant of Rāma's feet. You, the hero, overthrew my mighty son Campaka. Now having tied you up I shall go to my city. O best among the lordly monkeys, wait carefully. I have told (you) what I thought to be the truth.

Hearing these words of Suratha the lord of the monkeys said with a grave voice (to him) on the battlefield adorned only by warriors.

Hanūmat said :

9-10. You remind (us) of Rāma's feet. We are the servants of Rāma's feet. If you bind me forcibly, my lord (Rāma) will free me. O hero, make true (i.e. carry out) the pledge that you have in your heart. (A man) who remembers Rāma goes to the end of (i.e. destroys) his misery. The Vedas say this.

Śeṣa said :

11-18a. Suratha having praised Vāyu's son (Hanūmat) like this, pierced him with many fierce arrows sharpened on a whetstone. Not minding those arrows discharged (by Suratha) and causing bloodshed, Hanūmat seized (Suratha's) bow ready with arrows with his hand. The angry monkey holding the bow in both his hands broke it; and shouting (i.e. with his shouts) he scared the warriors and tore them with his nails. Seeing that his bow with the string attached was broken by him (i.e. by Hanūmat), he took another bow adorned with a great (i.e. strong) string. The monkey angrily seized that bow also and broke it. He (i.e. Suratha) took another bow. The mighty (Hanūmat) broke that (also). When that bow was broken, he took another bow. He (i.e. Hanūmat) having a great energy, quickly broke

that bow also. Making great sounds in many ways every moment through great anger, he thus broke to pieces eighty bows of the king. Then (the king) getting very angry took (the missile) called Śakti.

18b-23. The hero (i.e. Hanūmat) struck by the Śakti fell down. (Then) in a moment being anxiously desirous (to defeat Suratha) he got up and, being very angry, seized the king's chariot. Seizing it he flew with a great speed toward the sea. Seeing him flying Suratha, the killer of his enemies, struck the active Hanūmat on his chest with iron-clubs. He dropped the chariot from a distance and in a moment it was shattered to pieces. Getting into another chariot he (i.e. Suratha) speedily went (i.e. rushed) to (Hanūmat), the son of Vāyu. Encircling the chariot along with the horses and the charioteer and with the banners, Hanūmat shattred it on the battlefield. Getting into another chariot, the very powerful king went (to attack Hanūmat). Hanūmat with his body getting strength violently broke it.

24-27. Seeing the chariot shattered Suratha got into another (chariot). He forcibly broke it along with the horses and the charioteer. In this way Hanūmat shattered fortynine chariots. Seeing that feat the king too along with his soldiers was amazed. Being angry he said to the lord of monkeys: "O son of Vāyu, acting bravely (like this) you are blessed. No one (but you) has done or will do this feat. O son of Vāyu, O bee (hovering round) the lotuses of the feet of Rāma, wait for a moment till I make my bow ready."

28-34. Saying so, and stringing the bow he, full of anger, fixed on his strong arrow the missile called Pāśupata (i.e. presided over by Paśupati). Then ghosts, friends, goblins, led by witches, frightening Hanūmat, suddenly appeared (there). The monkey was bound by the Pāśupata missiles. He was seen by the people (bound by the missiles). While they were wailing, the son of Vāyu remembering Rāma in his mind broke them in a moment. With his body freed he at once fought with king Suratha. Seeing him with his body freed Suratha, knowing (the use of) great missiles, taking him (i.e. Hanūmat) to be very strong, took the missile known as Brāhma (i.e. presided over by Brahmā). The strong Māruti laughed and swallowed the Brāhma missile. The king, the protector of the earth, seeing that (the missiles was) swallowed

by him, remembered Rāma. Remembering Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, he fixed the Rāma-missile (i.e. the missile presided over by Rāma) on his bow, and said these (words) to him: "O best monkey (now) you are bound."

35-39a. Having heard those words, when the hero Hanūmat, Rāma's servant, would go ahead, he was bound on the battlefield by the king with the Rāma-missile. To the king Hanūmat said: "O king, what do (i.e. can) I do now? You have bound me with the missile of (i.e. presided over by) my master, and not with any ordinary one. I respect it; O king, take me to your city. That abode of kindness, my master, will come and release me." When the son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat) was bound, the angry Puṣkala went to (i.e. marched against) the king. He pierced that Puṣkala who had come (like that) with many arrows. The mighty one struck the king with thousands of arrows.

39b-46. The king cut off many of his arrows on the battlefield. When that great warrior Puṣkala was thus angry in the battle, the entire world—immobile and also the mobile—was filled with arrows. Seeing their firm resolve to fight, the soldiers of gods were perplexed. Then what to say of (i.e. what can be said about) men who got scared in a moment! With the discharges of missiles and counter-missiles a fierce, thrilling battle took place among the warriors. Then the angry king took an arrow. But it was cut off by the arrows angrily discharged by Bharata's son (Puṣkala). When that arrow was cut off, the king took another. When he (i.e. Puṣkala) cut off (i.e. tried to cut off) that arrow, he was wounded on chest (with it) which stuck to (i.e. struck) his chest. Having fought a very great (i.e. fierce), wonderful battle with the king, the very lustrous and very intelligent Puṣkala fell into a swoon. When Puṣkala had fallen, Śatrughna who tormented his enemies, got angry with Suratha and seated in his chariot went (to him).

47-58. The very mighty brother of Rāma said to king Suratha: "You have done a great feat that you have bound the son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat). You have overthrown even the great hero Puṣkala and so also my other very mighty and brave warriors in the battle. Now wait. O king, where will you go by overthrowing my soldiers on the battlefield? Now put up with my arrows." Hearing these words of the hero, the mighty Sura-

tha having in his mind the charming lotus-like feet of Rāma, said: "In the battle I have knocked down your warriors waiting for Hanūmat. Now I shall overthrow you also on the battlefield. Recollect Rāma who, the hero, (will) himself come and protect you. Otherwise, O you tormentor of the enemies, you will not live before me." Saying so, the king struck him with thousands of arrows. He put the great Śatrughna into the cage of the volley of arrows. Śatrughna (trying to) avoid the volley of arrows, discharged a missile to burn the arrows with bent joints. The great king Suratha, seeing that missile discharged, destroying it with the Varuṇa missile (i.e. the missile presided over by Varuṇa), pierced him with crores of arrows. Then he fixed on his bow the wonderful missile given by the female devotee which deluded all heroes and made them sleep. The king seeing that great deluding missile remembered Viṣṇu and said to Śatrughna: "This one is proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles. No other delusion seems to be causing fear and tormentation to me who am deluded by the recollection of Śrī Rāma."

59-65. When the hero spoke like this, he discharged the great missile. Cut off by the arrow it fell on the battlefield. Seeing that the great missile was fruitless against the king, he being extremely amazed, fixed an arrow on his bow. The destroyer of great demons fixed on his bow that fierce arrow resembling fire in lustre with which Lavaṇa was killed. Seeing that (arrow) the king said: "This arrow sticks to (i.e. strikes) the chest of the wicked. It does not even remain in front of the devotee of Rāma." When he was saying like this, Śatrughna struck him with that arrow and pierced him in his chest (with it) resembling flames of fire. The tormentor of the enemies, afflicted by the arrow and full of great agony became unconscious for a moment in the interior of his chariot. Having in a moment overcome that agony he said to his enemy before him: "Endure one stroke of (i.e. given by) me. Where will you go from my presence?"

66-69. Speaking like this in the great battle he fixed on his bow an arrow full of flame of fire and having golden feathered ends. That arrow that was discharged from the bow and that remained on its way, though cut off by Śatrughna with the upper part of his (sword's) blade, fell upon his chest. Being rendered un-

conscious by that arrow, he fell on the chariot. The entire army that was defeated wailed and fled away. Suratha, the servant of Rāma, obtained victory in the battle. Then heroes rendered unconscious by his ten sons, fell somewhere.

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Rāma Frees the Bound Heroes

Śeṣa said:

1-11. Seeing the army defeated and also seeing his master (lying) unconscious, Sugrīva went to fight with the king. "Come, O king, where are you going after rendering all the warriors unconscious? O you proficient in fighting, quickly fight with me." He possessing power saying so uprooted some huge tree with branches and struck it on his head. Due to that stroke the very mighty, very brave king looked at Sugrīva and angrily fixing sharp arrows (on his bow) struck them on his chest. Sugrīva laughed and at once foiled all those arrows. He, the very powerful one, struck Suratha on his chest. Tearing Suratha with his nails he violently struck him with mountains, peaks (of mountains), trees and bodies of elephants. With the very terrible missile called Rāma (i.e. presided over by Rāma) he quickly bound him also. The best monkey (i.e. Sugrīva) took Suratha to be a servant of Rāma. He became like an elephant which, having an iron chain hanging from his feet, cannot do anything. Putting all the warriors into his chariot he went to his own city. Going to his assembly, the very great one said to Hanūmat who was bound: "Remember the kind Raghunātha, the protector of his devotees, so that he of the best mind will instantly release you. Otherwise, even after a myriad years I shall not free you from bondage."

12-13. Having heard these words Hanūmat seeing himself tightly bound and the warriors unconscious and afflicted with the strokes of the enemy, remembered for freedom from the bondage Śrī Rāmacandra born in Raghu's dynasty, husband

of Sītā and having eyes like lotus-petals. With all his senses free from grief he remembered the kind one for his own freedom from bondage.

Hanūmat said:

14-17. O lord, O best among excellent men, O kind one, O lord of Śītā, O you whose face is charming on account of beautiful hair, O you who burn (i.e. destroy) the affliction of your devotees, O you having an attractive form, release me at once from the bondage. Do not tarry. O abode of pity, you freed (beings) like the excellent elephant, so also gods who were being profusely burnt by the fire of the family of demons, and you untied the hair-bonds on the heads of their beautiful wives. (Please) remember me. You are engaged in the performance of a sacrifice along with the best sages; you give a thought to religious merit, O you whose feet are praised by kings. O god, O Supreme Being, today I have been firmly tied with a noose by Suratha; quickly release me. If in spite of my remembering you very much, O you whose lotus-like feet are worshipped by excellent gods, you would not release me, then the manifested world would laugh at you; therefore do not delay in this matter; quickly release (me).

18-27. Hearing this (prayer), the Raghu-hero (i.e. Rāma), the lord of the world and the abode of kindness, quickly came by the Puṣpaka (aeroplane) to release his devotee. The monkey (i.e. Hanūmat) saw him who was well accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa who followed him, and Bharata, and who was accompanied by hosts of sages led by Vyāsa. Seeing his lord having come (he) said to the king: "O king, see Hari who has kindly come to free his own (devotee). Formerly, merely by being remembered he freed many votaries of him. In the same way he has come to free me tied with a noose." Seeing Śrī Rāmabhadra (who had) come there, that Suratha, full of the flood of devotion, in a moment saluted him hundreds of times. Śrī Rāma having four arms, embraced him with his arms; and, repeatedly sprinkling his devotee with tears of joy, he said: "Your body is blessed. You have done a great feat. You fully tied the powerful lord of monkeys—Hanūmat." Śrī Rāma freed the excellent monkey from the bondage. He

looked at all those unconscious warriors and (merely) by (his) glance he revived them. They gave up their swoon (i.e. they regained consciousness). They were seen by Rāma serving gods. They got up and saw the charming Rāmacandra. They saluted the lord of Raghus. He enquired after their well-being.

28-32. Then Suratha, having seen Rāma to have come there for favouring his votary, gladly presented to him his entire kingdom along with the (sacrificial) horse. He pleased Śrī Rāma with (i.e. by giving him) many excellent garments. He said (to Rāma): "O Rāghava, I did an unjust act; (please) forgive me." Then Śrī Rāma said: "You have protected the (sacrificial) horse. It is the duty of kṣatriyas to fight along with the lord. You have done a good deed. The warriors are highly pleased on the battlefield." (The king) along with his sons (then) worshipped Viṣṇu in a human form (i.e. Rāma). Having stayed (there) for three days and having dismissed him with a blessing, the mighty Śrī Rāma along with the sages went back in the divine car (i.e. Puṣpaka) moving according to (the occupants') will. Seeing him (going like that) all of them were amazed and told (one another) charming stories about him.

33-37. The powerful and very mighty Suratha, having placed (his son) Campaka in his city, decided to go with Śatrughna. Śatrughna, having got (back) his horse, caused the kettledrums to be sounded. He (also) caused the various sounds of conches to be produced everywhere. The hero along with Suratha let loose the sacrificial horse. He roamed in foreign countries. (But) no powerful (man) seized him. Wherever the wandering horse went there Śatrughna along with great army and with Suratha also went. Once he (i.e. the horse) went to the excellent hermitage of Vālmīki which was resorted to by excellent sages and was marked with smoke in the morning (and which was situated) on the bank of Gaṅgā.

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Lava Binds the Sacrificial Horse

Śeṣa said:

1-5. Jānakī's son Lava surrounded by sages' sons went to bring sacred fuel fit for the rites in order to perform the rites. There he saw the sacrificial horse marked with a golden note and made fragrant with the divine perfume of saffron, agaru (sandal) and musk. Seeing (the horse) and with curiosity aroused he said to the sons of the sages: "Whose horse having mind's speed has fortunately come to my hermitage? Come with me; observe (him); do not be afraid." Saying so that Lava quickly went near the horse. He born in the family of Raghu and standing near the horse, holding a bow and an arrow, stood invincible like Jayanta near the horse.

6-11. Having gone (there) with the sons of the sages he read the excellent note, shining with lines of distinct letters, and placed on the (horse's) forehead. "There is the great family of Vivasvat which is well-known in all the worlds; in which there is no one that is dependent or none that is greedy of another's wealth. To the family belongs Daśaratha who is the banner of the solar dynasty, who is a (great) archer, who is great, who is a teacher initiating (one) in (the science of using) a bow, whom all the deities with gods salute with their heads having (ornaments of) jewels (bent down). The noble Rāmacandra, descendant of Raghu, crest-jewel of all the brave, removing the pride of the might of the warriors, is his son. His (i.e. Rāma's) mother is the daughter of the king of Kośala, the producer of a jewel. From her womb was born a jewel of a son, Rāma who causes fear to his enemies, who is well-trained by a brāhmaṇa, is performing a horse-sacrifice to remove the sin due to his having killed the best brāhmaṇa, viz. Rāvaṇa.

12-17. He has let loose this sacrificial horse, chief among horses, surrounded by a large army and well-protected by moats. My brother Śatrughna, the killer of Lavaṇa, surrounded by an army consisting of the groups of elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers, is his protector. Let that king who has, through his conceit, the pride that he is great, or let those who think that they

are brave, they are best among the archers or that they are mighty here (i.e. on the earth), seize forcibly the horse adorned with a jewelled necklace, having the velocity of mind and moving at his will, and very bright due to his movement everywhere. From him (who has seized the horse) hurt by the arrow discharged from (Śatrughna's) bow, my brother Śatrughna will easily and forcibly free him. Let those kṣatriyas born from a kṣatriya girl (i.e. woman) or born in good families having good wives, seize him. Those of wrong bodies (i.e. those that are not proper kṣatriyas) should, after presenting their kingdom to Raghu (i.e. Rāma), salute him."

18-21. Having read like this, Lava, wielding a weapon and a bow, got angry, and with words faltering through anger said to the sons of the sages: "See quickly the audacity of that kṣatriya king who has written this in the note on the (horse's) forehead about his valour and might. Who is this Rāma? Who is Śatrughna? They are (but) insects having very little might. They are born in the family of kṣatriyas, and not we, the excellent ones? He does not have as his mother Sītā who has given birth to a hero—who has given birth to Kuśa, who had in her womb a gem called Kuśa, as the piece of wood (called Araṇi) used for kindling the sacred fire has fire (in it).

22-24. I shall now show on all sides my being a kṣatriya etc. If he is born of a kṣatriya and if he is killer of his enemy, he will take (back) this horse fit for the sacrificial rite, which is bound by me. Otherwise, he will abandon his kṣatriyahood and will worship Kuśa's feet. Now, with the arrows discharged from my bow he will lie down. So also the other great warriors, ornaments of the battlefield (will lie down)."

25-28a. Uttering these words, Lava, the best one, holding a bow and arrows, despising all kings, seized the horse. Then the sages' sons said to Lava who desired to seize the horse: "Rāma, the king of Ayodhyā, is very mighty and brave. Even Śakra (i.e. Indra), insolent through his power does not (dare) catch his horse. Do not seize him. Listen to these words of me (i.e. of us) which are beneficial." Hearing these words he said to the brāhmaṇa-sons:

28b-34. "O best brāhmaṇas, you do not know the power of kṣatriyas. Kṣatriyas are proud of their valour (while) brāh-

maṇas have food (only). Therefore, going home, you eat (whatever) is brought by your mothers." Thus told they remained quiet and watched the valour of that Lava. Those sons of sages remained away and out (of the range of the imminent fight). When this incident took place, the servants of that king (i.e. (Śatrughna) came (there, and) seeing the horse bound, they said to Lava: "Who has bound the horse? Oh, with whom is Yama angry? Who, being in the midst of volleys of arrows, will get (i.e. suffer from) a great agony?" Then Lava quickly said: "I have bound this excellent horse. With him who releases (i.e. tries to release) him, (my) great brother Kuśa will be angry. What will even lord Yama himself, after coming over here, do? Being very much pleased with the shower of arrows, he will salute (Kuśa) and go (back)."

Śeṣa said:

35-37. He holding the bow in both his hands discharged arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads at those servants of Śatrughna who had on hearing these words come there to release Rāma's horse that was bound and who said, "This is a child". They with their arms cut off went to Śatrughna through grief, and when asked (by him), they all told about the cutting off of their arms by Lava.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

The Observation of the Spies

Vyāsa said :

1. Having heard this charming account of the powerful Lava the sage entertaining a doubt again asked the serpent (i.e. Śeṣa) having a thousand faces.

Śrī Vātsyāyana said:

2-3. Formerly you had said that Rāma due to the censure by a washerman and ardently longing for fame abandoned Sītā all

alone in the forest. Where were the two sons born to Jānakī (i.e. Sītā)? Where did they learn archery? How did they learn the science which enabled them to take away the horse of Rāma?

Vyāsa said:

4. Hearing these words of the sage, the very intelligent serpent Śeṣa praised the brāhmaṇa and narrated to him the wonderful deeds of Rāma.

Śeṣa said:

5-8. Protecting according to dharma a part of the earth, along with his wife Rāma ruled in Ayodhyā with his brothers. Sītā retained his semen (i.e. Sītā conceived), and five months had passed (i.e. her pregnancy was five months old). The queen shone very much like the triad (of Vedas) holding the Supreme Being. Some time Rāma asked (Sītā) the daughter of Videha (king Janaka): "What is your cherished wish? I shall fulfil it." The chaste lady, getting abashed, was asked in private only. With her words faltering through abashment she said these nectar(-like) words to Rāma:

Sītā said:

9-17. By your grace I have enjoyed everything and shall enjoy good (things). O dear one, no cherished wish remains in my mind. She whose lord is like you whose good feet are praised by gods, has all excellent (things). Nothing remains (to be secured). You are asking with persistence about the cherished wish present in my mind. (So) O you charming lord, I tell the truth to you. O lord, a long time has passed since I saw the chaste ladies like Lopāmudrā. O lord, my mind becomes eager to see those beautiful ladies. With you I obtained the kingdom and lived happily. I am ungrateful (as I have not seen them). Desirous of saluting them some time, I, having gone (to them) shall honour them, the treasures of penance, with garments etc. I shall also offer them bright gems and ornaments, so that the chaste ladies gratified by me will give me pleasant blessings. This, O dear one, is the longing in my mind. (Please) fulfil it.

Hearing these very charming words of Sītā, Rāmacandra

who was very much pleased, said to his beloved (i.e. Sītā): "O Jānakī, you are lucky. In the morning you will go, and having seen those ladies with penance as their wealth, (and thus) having made yourself blessed, you will come back near (i.e. to) me."

18-26. Hearing these words of Rāma she was extremely pleased. (She thought): 'In the morning I shall certainly see the female-ascetics.' The spies who were sent to ascertain his fame that was reported (by others) slowly went to him at night. Everyday listening to very charming stories about Rāma, they had that day gone to the large house of a rich man. Seeing a lamp burning and noticing (i.e. hearing) human voices, the spies remained there for a moment, and heard the great glory (of Rāma). There a certain beautiful lady pleased with her child sucking her breasts, said these pleasing words to it: "O son, drink (i.e. suck) as much pleasing milk of me as you like. O my son, later it will be difficult for you to have it. Rāma, shining like the petals of a blue lotus, is the lord of this city. Therefore, the people living in the city will not be reborn. How can there be the drinking (i.e. sucking) of milk in the absence of birth? Therefore, thinking in your mind that the milk is (later) difficult to obtain, drink (suck) it repeatedly. For them also who will remember Śrī Rāma, meditate upon and talk about him, there will certainly be no drinking (i.e. sucking) of (the mother's) milk (i e. they will not be reborn)."

27-38. Hearing these words—the nectar of Rāma's glory, they being delighted went to another house—a great house of a fortunate person. Just then, another spy, thinking that it was a pleasant house, remained there for a moment with a desire to listen to Rāma's glory. There a beautiful lady, chewing tāmbūla, affectionately offered it to her husband, seated on a couch. She, abounding in beauty, fumigated with camphor and agaru (sandal), seeing her husband, and with her eyes moving said with her bangles making a jingling sound to him having the form of Cupid: "O lord, you appear to me like the lord of Raghu (family) having an extremely handsome and very delicate body, a pair of eyes with their corners resembling lotuses, an attractive and expansive chest, and arms with armlets—you are to me actually Rāma." He, handsome like Cupid, having heard these very pleasant words of his wife, dancing (i.e. moving) the corners of his eyes, said: "Listen,

O darling, you, a chaste lady, have spoken very pleasant (words). It is proper for the loyal wives that their husbands are just like Rāma to them; but (see), where am I, the luckless one, and where is that great, fortunate Rāma? (i.e. there is a great disparity between Rāma and me). Where am I, small like an insect, and where (is Rāma) worshipped by gods like Brahmā? Where is the fire-fly, the gem of the sky, and where is the low moth? Where is the lord of beasts (i.e. the lion), the enemy of the elephants, and where is the dull-witted hare? Where is that respectable Gaṅgā, and where is the water on the street flowing the wrong way? Where is Meru, the abode of the gods, and where is a small heap of the guñjā fruits? Similarly, where am I, and where is Rāma, by (the touch of) the dust of whose feet the lady who was reduced to a stone, became in a moment one having the form that enticed (even) Brahmā?"

39-45. With passion produced in her, taken away by love for him, and making her eye-brows like bows dance (i.e. knitting her eye-brows), she embraced her husband who was speaking these words. Hearing words like these, the spy went to another house. Just then another spy heard words full of glory. Some lady making ready all (things) like a bed with flowers (strewn over it), sandal with camphor, fit for love-making, said (these) words to her husband: "O my lord, lie on the bed with flowers (strewn over it) and fit for enjoyment, also have smearing with sandal etc., so also enjoyment in various ways. People like you alone deserve enjoyment, and not those who are averse to Rāma. Enjoy properly everything that is obtained through Rāma's grace. A loving (wife) like me, sandal removing torment, a bed with flowers arranged over it—all (this) is due to Rāma's grace. Those men who will not worship Rāma are deprived of garments, enjoyments etc. and are not able to fill their belly (i.e. to maintain themselves)."

46-51. To the lady who was speaking like this, the husband who was delighted, said: "You are telling the truth; I have everything due to the grace of Rāma." The spy, hearing about Rāma's glory, went (away). Just then a spy, remaining in someone else's house, heard (these) words. A certain lady engaged in playing upon the lute with her husband on the bed, to whom her husband was singing the glory of Rāma, said to her hus-

band: "O lord, we in whose city lord Śrī Rāma himself is the king and protects his subjects like his own sons, are most fortunate. The great feat, difficult to perform, which he performed, is not easy to do: He controlled the ocean and built a bridge over it; he having killed his enemy Rāvaṇa, after having shattered it with (the help of) the monkeys, brought (back) Sītā. Thus he performed a great act."

52-56. Hearing this speech containing very sweet words, the husband smiled, and again said these words to her: "O innocent, beautiful lady, this is not a great feat of Rāmacandra, viz. the killing of Rāvaṇa etc. or controlling the ocean etc. He, the great one, requested by Brahmā etc. easily came (down) to the earth and performed good deeds which remove great sins. Do not look upon Rāma who gives joy to Kauśalyā, as a human being. He who sportively obtained humanhood (i.e. was born as a human being), creates, protects and destroys the world. We are lucky that we see Rāma's lotus-like face which is difficult to be seen by gods like Brahmā."

57-67. He heard the deeds of Rāmacandra, giving delight to the ears. The spy that stood at the door repeatedly heard such words. Another spy having gone to another house stood there to listen to Hari's (i.e. Rāma's) glory. There also he heard the splendid glory of Śrī Rāmabhadra. A very beautiful lady, playing with dice with her husband, as it were causing her bangles to dance, spoke (these) sweet words: "O dear one, I have speedily won everything; what will you, having a mind to win, do (now)?" Saying these words in jest she joyfully embraced her husband. The husband said: "O you of a beautiful body, O you very charming one, I alone have won. I, who always remember Rāma, do not have a defeat anywhere. Remembering Rāma, the charming one, I shall just now vanquish you, as formerly the gods after remembering him, vanquished Diti's sons (i.e. the demons) in a moment." Saying so he turned over the dice. Just then he won; being delighted he said these words: "What I said has come true; I have defeated you, O young lady. One who remembers Rāma has never any fear from one's enemy." Speaking like this they who longed for each other, tightly embraced each other. Then the spy went home. Thus the five great spies, having heard the glory of the king and praising one another gladly went home. One, the

sixth spy, having seen the houses of artisans, went there desiring to hear (about) the glory of the king, the lord of the earth.

68-73. A washerman, with his eyes red due to anger and full of anger kicked his wife who had stayed at another's house, and despised her: "From my house, go to the house of him where you stayed for a day. I shall not accept you who violate my commands." Then his mother said to him: "Do not abandon her who has come (back) to (our) house, who has not committed any fault, and who is free from bad acts." The angry washerman said to his mother: "I am not as great as Rāma as to accept (my wife) who stayed in another's house. Whatever that king does, might by lawful; (but) I will not accept my wife who has stayed in another's house." He again and again said these words: "I am not king Rāma who protected Sītā that had stayed in another's house."

74-79. Having heard these words, the spy was full of anger. He took a sword in his hand and decided to kill him (i.e. the washerman). He (then) recollected Rāma's words: "None of my subjects should be killed." Realising this, he, of a noble mind, wrathfully withdrew (his sword). On hearing (the washerman's words), he was very much afflicted with grief, and being angry and breathing out and in repeatedly (i.e. repeatedly sighing) he went where the five spies stood. They met one another there, and told (one another) the deeds of Rāma honoured by all people without an exception, and heard by them. Having heard his words they told one another: "This censure uttered by a wicked man should not be reported to Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma)." Having thus spoken to one another, the eager ones went (home) and slept, after having mentally decided: 'In the morning, we shall tell the king'.

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

Rāma Seeks Bharata's Advice

Śeṣa said:

1-9. Having performed the daily morning duties, having duly gratified the brāhmaṇas, the most learned in the Vedas, with presents of gold, he went to the assembly. All men went to the assembly to salute Raghunātha, the king looking after all the subjects like his own sons. Lakṣmaṇa had held an umbrella over the king's head. Bharata and Śatrughna had at that time held the chowries. Sages led by Vasiṣṭha attended there (upon Rāma). Ministers led by Sumantra who did justice, (were present) there. When the time moved on like this, the six well-adorned spies came to salute the king seated in the assembly. Seeing them desirous of speaking, the best king, being eager, entered the interior, private chamber in the assembly. The good-minded king asked all the spies in private: "O spies, O you who restrain your enemies, tell me correctly how people talk about me; how (they talk) about my wife; in what way do they talk about the acts of my ministers?" Hearing these words the spies spoke in a grave tone like that of the (thundering) clouds to the lord of the Raghus who was asking them.

The spies said:

10-17. O lord, now your fame purifies all people in the world. We heard it, being told by men and women in every house. You the Supreme Being, went to the earth to adorn the great family of Vivasvat. You have largely spread your fame. (In that family) many famous and very mighty (kings) were (born) but they did not have that fame as you have. You, the lord, have made blessed all the subjects that do not have an untimely death and trouble from disease. As the moon, or as the river Gaṅgā illumines the earth, your good fame illumines the earth. Having heard (about) your fame, Brahmā and others are very much ashamed. O lord, everywhere your fame now purifies the people. We all who are your spies, O lord, are most blessed, (since) every moment we see your charming face.

Having seen (i.e. heard) these words of the five spies, he asked the sixth one whose face was marked with abashment.

Rāma said:

18-21. O you very intelligent one, tell me truly what you have heard (being talked) in the commingling (i.e. crowd) of people. Tell all that to me as it is. Otherwise you are a sinner.

Again and again, and fast, Rāma asked him in detail. Yet he did not tell Rāma the words of the people (i.e. popular scandal). Then Rāma said to the spy with an abashed face: "I swear you with truth. Tell me everything properly." Then a spy slowly said (these) words to the spy: "You have to tell what was said by the artisans, even if it is not fit to be told."

The spy said:

22-30. O lord, except that your wife stayed in the demon's house, your fame due to your having killed Rāvaṇa has (spread) everywhere. But an artisan—a washerman—despising his wife who had stayed in another's house, beat her at night. His mother said to him: "Why do you beat this innocent one? Accept the woman (i.e. your wife); do not censure her; follow my words (of advice)." Then the washerman said: "I am not king Rāma who accepted Sītā that had stayed in the demon's house." O lord, (the washerman further said:) "Every act done by a king is proper. The act of others, even though they perform meritorious deeds, is improper." Again and again he said: "I am not king Rāma." I got angry. (But) just at that time I remembered your words (viz. 'Do not kill a human being'). (I also thought:) 'Cutting his head I (should) at that time knock him on the ground.' Then I thought: 'Where is Rāma and where is the washerman? (i.e. there is a great disparity between Rāma and the washerman). This wicked one is telling a lie. He is not speaking the truth'. O Rāma, if you order I (shall) kill him now. Due to your persistence, I told you about the analogy, though (really) it should not have been told. The king is the authority here (i.e. in this matter). Let him think (what is relevant).

Śeṣa said:

31-32. Hearing these words which were like the great thunderbolt, (Rāma) heaving and breathing repeatedly fell unconscious. Seeing the king (fallen) unconscious, the spies full of grief fanned him with the end of their garments to remove (Rāma's) grief.

33-40. The king who regained consciousness after some time, said to them: "Go and quickly send Bharata to me." The spies carrying messages and grieved, quickly went to Bharata's house and told (him) Rāma's message. The intelligent Bharata, having heard Rāma's message went to the assembly. Learning that Rāma was in the private (chamber), he quickly came to him, and the noble-minded one said to the door-keeper: "Where is that Rāmabhadra, (that) treasure of kindness, my brother?" The hero went to the house charming with gems, indicated by him. Seeing Rāma tired out, he became afraid in his mind: 'Is this Rāma angry? Or is it the grief of the lord?' Then he said to the king, heaving repeatedly: "O lord, how is that your face which is easily pleased, is hanging (like this)? Your face, due to the tears appears like the moon eclipsed by Rāhu. Tell me the full and true cause. What do (i.e. should) I do for you? O great king, give up your grief. How can you be the receptacle of grief?"

41-46. The righteous hero Rāmacandra, who was thus being spoken to by his brother, spoke to him in a faltering voice: "O brother, listen to my words. (Listen to) the cause of my grief. O very intelligent one, this morning remove it. In the family of Vivasvat no king was (ever) hurt by infamy. My fame today has become foul; Gaṅgā has been joined by Yamunā. The life of those kings only is good on the earth who have fame. The life of those who are wounded by infamy is like (that of) the dead. Those who would have fame on the earth, go to eternal worlds. Those who are bitten by the female serpent in the form of infamy, would go down. Today my fame, the divine river in the world, has become turbid. Listen to the words which the washerman said about me.

47-52. In this city a washerman today uttered certain censurable words about Jānakī (i.e. Sītā). Then, O brother, what

should I do on the earth? Should I abandon myself (i.e. should I commit suicide) today: or should I abandon my wife Jānakī? Which of the two should I do? Tell me what is proper." Speaking like this Rāma, the crest-jewel of Dharma shedding tears and with his body shaken with horripilation, fell on the ground. Seeing his brother fallen, Bharata, full of grief, having examined him carefully, slowly brought Rāma (back) to consciousness. Having seen Rāmacandra who was very much grieved, to have regained consciousness, he spoke very charming words to remove his grief: "Who is this washerman? Which censurable words did he utter? I shall cut off the tongue of him who censures Jānakī."

53-60. Then Rāma told the words that came out of the washerman's mouth (i.e. that were uttered by the washerman) and that were heard by the spy, to the magnanimous Bharata. Hearing them, Bharata said to his brother who was afflicted with grief: "Brahmā said: 'She is pure'. Your father Daśaratha also (said the same thing). (Then) how should she respected by the world, be abandoned merely on (the strength of) the washerman's words? Your fame praised by Brahmā and others, purifies the worlds. How will it be turbid today due to the words of the washerman? Therefore, give up the great grief due to the censure of Sītā. Look after the kingdom along with her—the very fortunate one—who is pregnant. How do you wish to abandon your charming body? Without you who remove our grief, we all are doomed today. That very glorious Sītā will not live without you (even) for a moment. Therefore, with (that) loyal wife enjoy ample glory." Hearing these words of Bharata, the righteous (king), the best among the eloquent, again spoke these words to him:

61-64. "O brother, whatever you say is all just. But by my order, carry out the words which I utter. I know that she is purified in fire, is chaste and is honoured by the world. (But) I am afraid of public scandal. (Therefore) I (shall) abandon my (wife) Jānakī. So, taking in your hand a sharp and very fierce sword, (either) cut off (my) head, or abandon (my) wife Jānakī in the forest." Hearing these words of Rāma, Bharata, with tremor in his body and tears (in his eyes), fell unconscious on the ground.

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

The Washerman's Former Birth

Vātsyāyana said:

1-2. O you of a good vow, tell me how the lord received the utterance of the censure of Jānakī having pure, excellent fame in the world. O Śeṣa, do that by which my mind shall have very splendid happiness, so that I who drink the nectar coming out from your mouth, shall be satisfied, and by which my worldly existence will be cut off.

Śeṣa said:

3-11. In Mithilā, a great city, there lived a king by name Janaka. Pleasing his subjects, he ruled righteously. When that Sīradhvaja (i.e. Janaka) was ploughing the field, an extremely beautiful girl came out from the long, first furrow. Then king Sīraketu (i.e. Janaka) became extremely glad. He named her, the fascinating one, the glory of the world, Sītā. When she, extremely charming, was playing in the grove of the garden, she saw a pair of a male and a female parrot that delighted her mind. The parrots were extremely delighted and lustful, and affectionately talking to each other in pleasant words. That pair, enjoying (each other's company), quickly flew in the sky, settled on the lap of a mountain, and spoke (to each other): "On the earth, charming Rāma will be the king. His wife will be (a woman) by name Sītā. The intelligent, powerful king, vanquishing (his enemies), will rule (over the earth) along with her for eleven thousand years. Blessed is that queen Jānakī, and blessed is he, named Rāma, who having approached each other, will gladly enjoy."

12-16. When the couple of parrots was conversing in this way, Maithilī, observing their words and realising that this was a divine couple and thinking, 'this couple of parrots is telling charming tales about me, (so) I shall catch the couple, and will ask about all the words, the meaning of which is already expressed', she said to her friends: "Slowly catch this charming pair of the birds." The friends just then went to the mountain, and caught the excellent pair of the birds, and with a desire to

do what was dear to their friend (Sītā), reported it to her. Seeing the pair uttering many words in various ways, she comforted it, and said to it these words.

Sītā said:

17-18. Do not be scared. Who are you two, the charming ones? Where have you come from? Who is Rāma, and who is Sītā? Wherefrom did you have the information about them? Tell me all that quickly. Let your fear of me go away.

The pair of birds said:

19-26. There is a very great sage Vālmīki who is the best among those who know dharma. That sage made his disciples sing the future adventures of Rāma. He, engrossed in the well-being of all beings, everyday remembered its words. All those future adventures of Rāma, being sung repeatedly, were heard by both of us; they came to us (i.e. were mastered by us) due to repetition. Listen to them. In the end we shall tell who that Rāma is and who that Jānakī is and what will happen to her with Rāma of a playful nature. Glorious Viṣṇu, good stories about whom are sung by celestial women, will, having divided himself into four, come up at the sacrifice performed by Ṛṣyaśṛṅga. He, having a bow in his hand, will come along with Viśvāmitra and his own brothers to Mithilā. Then there seeing a bow difficult to be taken (i.e. wielded) by other kings, he will break it, and will obtain the very charming daughter of Janaka. O excellent one, we have heard that with her he will rule over a large kingdom. O you of a beautiful body, we who had flown there, heard this and other (things) about you, told by those who lived there. Release us who desire to go.

27-40. Grasping (i.e. hearing) these words very pleasant to the ears, she again spoke (these) words to that pair of birds: "Where would that Rāma be? Whose son (will he be)? In what way will he marry her? What form will the excellent man have? Tell me exactly all this that I have asked you. Later I will do all good things liked by you." Hearing those (words), the female parrot, seeing Jānakī and realising in her heart that she was oppressed by love, then said to her: "There will be an intelligent mighty king having a line of chariots, and the scion

of the solar dynasty, having resorted to whom gods will be fully victorious. He will have three wives, having forms that will fascinate (even) Indra. On them (i.e. from them) four children (sons) lofty on account of might, will be born. Rāma will be the eldest of all. Bharata is said to be (born) after him. After him (i.e. Bharata) Lakṣmaṇa (will be born), and after him (will be born) Śatrughna, powerful everywhere. The large-minded one (i.e. Rāma) will go by the name Raghunātha. They will have endless names; O friend, the face of the powerful Rāma will be charming like the calyx of a lotus. His very long (i.e. large) eyes will have the beauty of lotuses. His nose will be raised, large and charming. His eyebrows will be lovely and charming due to their being harmonious. His lovely hands will be hanging up to his knees. His very small neck will be charming like a conch. His chest will be plain and expansive and charming. His chest will be pure and will have a mark. Endowed with the beauty of charming thighs and waist, he will have a pair of knees, pure and naturally adored. His lotus-like feet will always be worshipped by all his (votaries). The very charming Raghupati (will be like this). Rāma possess a form like this. Who am I to describe him? Even one having a hundred mouths cannot describe him. Then what about birds like me? Seeing his form, (even) Lakṣmī, charming and having a beautiful body, was enticed. (Then) which (lady) is there on the earth that will not be enticed? He has great power, great valour, and has a very enticing form. What power do I have to describe Rāma endowed with all glory and virtues?

41-53. Lucky is that queen Jānakī (i.e. Sītā), having a very attractive form, who will gladly enjoy with him for a myriad years. O beautiful lady, who are you? What is your name that you cleverly and respectfully ask me to narrate (the account) of Rāma?" Hearing these words, Jānakī, telling the couple of birds about the charming and enticing (story of) her birth, said to them: "I am that Jānakī, the daughter of Janaka, whom you mentioned. I shall truly release you when that very charming Rāma comes to me; not otherwise—being (just) allured by your words! I shall caress you. You, having (i.e. speaking) sweet words, stay happily (with me)." Hearing these words they trembled and were frightened. They were mutually (i.e. both)

afraid; (and) said this to Jānakī: "O good lady, we are birds, living in forests and resorting to trees. We wander everywhere. We would not get happiness (merely by staying) at home. I am pregnant. Having gone to my place and having given birth to sons (i.e. young ones) I shall come (back). I have told you the truth." (Though) thus addressed by the female parrot, she did not release her. Then her husband (i.e. the male parrot), eager, and with his face hung down spoke to her: "Sītā, release my wife. How do you keep this my beautiful wife? We shall go to the forest and shall happily move in the forest. My charming wife would be (i.e. is) pregnant. Having performed her (i.e. after her) delivery I shall come to you, O lovely one?" Thus, addressed, she said to him: "O you very intelligent one, you can gladly go. I shall keep this happy one, doing what is dear to me, near me." Thus addressed, the bird was unhappy; and full of tenderness, he said to her: "Those words which are uttered by the meditating saints are true: (The words are:)

54-56. 'One should not speak, one should not speak. One should remain by resorting to silence. Otherwise, due to the blemish in one's utterance, the mad one would be fettered.' Had we not talked (to each other) on this tree, how would we have been bound? Therefore, one should resort to silence." Saying so, he spoke to her: "O beautiful lady, O Sītā, I shall not live without this wife of me. Therefore, O you charming one, leave her."

57-66. Though admonished with various words, she did not release her. The (parrot's) wife, who was angry, and miserable, then cursed Janaka's daughter: "As you are separating me from my husband, in the same way you will be, when pregnant, separated from Rāma." When she, the afflicted one, was repeatedly saying like this, her life departed due to misery, full of the distress of her husband. For her who was repeatedly remembering Rāma and uttering (the name) Rāma, a divine car properly arrived. The female parrot became luminous when she had gone to heaven. When she died, her husband, that lord of birds, was extremely angry, and being distressed, fell into Gaṅgā: "In Rāma's city, full of people, I will be born as (a śūdra so) that due to my words she will be dejected, and extremely unhappy due to separation (from her husband)." Saying so, he who was

distressed, angry, frightened and shaking due to separation from her, fell into the water of Gaṅgā graced with eddies. Due to his being angry, due to his being distressed, and due to his having insulted Sītā, he obtained very (mean) śūdrahood (as he was born as) a washerman named Krodhana. That best bird (or best brāhmaṇa) who, doing ill to the great, abandons his life through anger, obtains śūdrahood after he dies. That took place. Due to the words of the washerman she was censured and separated. On account of the curse of the washerman, she was separated (from Rāma), and she went to the forest.

67. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you what you had asked about (Sītā), born in Videha. Listen to the further account here (i.e. regarding Sītā). I (shall) narrate it.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Lakṣmaṇa Leaves Sītā in the Forest

Śeṣa said:

1-8. Seeing Bharata unconscious, Raghunātha who was very much afflicted, said to the door-keepers; "Bring Śatrughna quickly to me." Hearing these words, (the door-keeper), in a moment brought Śatrughna where his brother Rāma remained with Bharata. Seeing Bharata unconscious and Rāma afflicted, he who was grieved, saluted (Rāma) and said: "What has this frightful (incident) come about?" Then Rāma, with his face hung down with a piteous voice and with his words faltering and with tremor, told Śatrughna, the servant of his feet, the words of the śūdra—the popular censure: "O brother, listen, and quickly and carefully do what I tell you, so that my fame will go (i.e. flow) like Gaṅgā on the earth. Having heard the words unequalled in the world, uttered about Sītā by the śūdra, I indeed decided to abandon my body or Jānakī." Hearing these words of Rāma, Śatrughna, the killer of his enemies, being afflicted fell down with a termor on the earth. Having regained consciousness after some time, he said to Raghunātha:

Śatrughna said:

9-13a. O lord, why are these horrible words being talked about Jānakī? Are the sacred texts, censured by the wicked-minded heretics, outcast from all religions, not to be accepted by the brāhmaṇas? Does Gaṅgā that destroys the sins of all the people and that removes calamities, not deserve to be touched by the good, since she is touched by sinful men? In the world the sun rises to give light to the world? What is lost if he is not liked by the owls? Therefore, you (please) accept this (your) wife, (though) censured by a śūdra. O Rāmabhadra, kindly do what I say.

13b-16. Having heard these words of the high-minded Śatrughna he again and again said what he had told Bharata. Hearing those words of his brother, Śatrughna, full of the flood of grief, fell unconscious on the ground like a tree with its roots cut off. Seeing his brother Śatrughna fallen (unconscious), he (i.e. Rāma), being very much afflicted, said these words to the door-keeper: "Bring Lakṣmaṇa near me." He, having gone to Lakṣmaṇa's house, told him these words (i.e. this message).

The door-keeper said:

17-19a. O lord, Rāma has summoned you quickly.

Hearing that summons (made) by Rāma, the sinless one quickly and speedily went where his brother (Rāma) was. Seeing Bharata unconscious, also seeing Śatrughna unconscious, he said (these) words to Śrī Rāmacandra, who was afflicted with grief:

19b-23a. "O king, what is this frightful (scene) like swoon etc. Therefore, O sinless one, tell me the entire main cause." To Lakṣmaṇa who was talking like this and was full of the flood of grief, the king quickly told the entire account from beginning. Hearing those words arising from the deserting of Sītā, he, sighing again and again, had his body as it were stupefied. Seeing his brother with his body stupefied, and repeatedly trembling, and not talking anything, he, afflicted with grief, said:

23b-27a. "Marked with infamy, what shall I do by being (i.e. living) on the earth? I, being afflicted, will abandon, through the fear of the world, this my glorious body. My brothers were always eager to do what I had told them; but, now unfortuna-

tely (for me) they are also doing opposite of what I tell them. Where should I go? Whom should I approach? Kings on the earth will laugh at me marked by infamy, as handsome men laugh at a leper. (When) formerly kings were born in Manu's race, they were born with superior qualities. (But) now when I am born that has become false."

27b-33a. Seeing Rāmabhadra speaking like this, he checked his profuse tears, and spoke in a weakened tone: "O lord, do not be dejected. How is it that you are deprived of your understanding? Who are you, learned one (i.e. How does a learned person like you) to abandon Sītā? I shall call the washerman, and ask him: 'How did you censure that Jānakī, the best among ladies?' In your country no small person is forcibly harassed. Therefore, act towards him as there is the conviction about him in your mind. Why do you (unnecessarily) abandon the timid one who is loyal to her husband (i.e. you)? The daughter of Janaka does not know anyone else (but you) mentally or by speech (i.e. she does not think or talk about anyone else). Therefore, accept her; do not abandon Jānakī. Having shown favour to me, resort to (i.e. do) it quickly."

33b-34. To Lakṣmaṇa who was speaking like this, Rāma, who was overpowered with grief and who was determined to abandon Sītā, advising Lakṣmaṇa with words of righteousness, said to him:

Rāma said:

35-41. How do you tell me: 'Do not abandon her?' Though I know her to be sinless, I am abandoning her due to public censure. For the sake of my fame I shall give up my unhappy body. I shall even forsake you, my brother, (if you are) condemned by public censure. Then how much more about other (member of my) family, sons, friends, and splendid wealth? For the sake of my fame, I shall give up everything, indeed Sītā also. To me my brother, my wife, my kinsmen, are not so dear as my beloved, spotless fame, known in the world. Certainly now the washerman is not to be questioned. In course of time the minds of people will be fully satisfied. A disease, as long as it is unripe (i.e. not properly developed), cannot be diagnosed on the earth, but goes away (i.e. is cured) after it has aggravated by means of

medicine. Similarly this will take place (i.e. people will be satisfied) in course of time. Now do not delay. Leave this chaste lady in a forest, or kill me with a sword.

42-44. Hearing these words uttered (by Rāma), the great one was pained. Lakṣmaṇa, overpowered with grief, thought in his mind (i.e. to himself): 'Jamadagni's son (Paraśurāma), killed even his mother by the order of his father. The order of an elderly person, whether it is proper or improper, is not at all to be disobeyed. Therefore, with a desire to do what is dear to Rāma, I shall leave her (in the forest).' Thinking like this in his mind (i.e. to himself), he said to his brother:

Lakṣmaṇa said:

45-47. What ought not to be done should even be done. An elderly person's order should not be violated (i.e. disobeyed). Therefore, I shall carry out your words that you speak to me, O you of a good vow.

To Lakṣmaṇa, who was speaking like this, he said: "Good, good, O very intelligent one, you have pleased my mind. Tonight only, under the pretext of (fulfilling) Sītā's cherished wish to see the female ascetics, put her into a chariot and leave her in the great forest."

48-54. Hearing these words, he, with his mouth fully parched, weeping, shedding tears, went to his own house. Having called Sumantra, he said these words to him: "Make ready my chariot, adorned with good horses." He, having heard these words, then brought the chariot. Seeing the chariot that was brought Lakṣmaṇa overpowered with grief, was very much distressed; and he, the servant of his brother (Rāma), got into the excellent chariot, and sighing, went to Sītā's abode, and having gone into the harem and heaving and full of grief, said (these) words to the daughter of Mithilā: "O mother Sītā, Rāma has sent me to you. To fulfil your cherished wish you (can) go the female ascetics." Having heard these words of (i.e. spoken by) Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā who was very much delighted, said to Lakṣmaṇa:

Jānakī said:

55-63. I, Maithilī, who remember Rāma's feet and to fulfil whose cherished wish he sent Lakṣmaṇa, am blessed. Today I shall salute the female ascetics living in the forest, and looking upon their husbands as deities I shall honour the charming ones with (presents of) garments.

Saying so, Raghunātha's wife (Sītā), in order to do what was dear to her, took (with her) charming garments, costly ornaments, gems, spotless pearls, camphor etc. having fragrance, so also various things like sandal in thousands. Repeatedly accepting these (things) from the hands of the female servants and then going to Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā tumbled at the threshold. Not minding it through curiosity, she said to Lakṣmaṇa who did good to her: "Where is the chariot in which you will take me (to the forest)?" Heaving he along with Sītā got into the golden chariot. He said to Sumantra: "Drive the horses having the speed of mind." At the words of Lakṣmaṇa he looking at Lakṣmaṇa's face full of tears called the chariot, well-yoked (with horses). The horses, struck by kim with a whip, fell on the path. When the horses did not move, he said to Lakṣmaṇa:

Sumantra said:

64-78. O lord, though driven with effort, the horses do not move. What should I do? I do not realise the cause of their fall.

To him who was speaking like this, Lakṣmaṇa said in a faltering voice after mustering courage to the charioteer: "Strike these with whips etc." Hearing these words, the charioteer somehow drove them. Then Sītā's right eye, indicating trouble, throbbed. Just then in her heart grief, indicating misfortune, was produced. Just then only, auspicious birds turned round. Seeing these, Sītā said to her brother-in-law: "How is it that I have a desire to go to see the female ascetics. May well-being come to Rāma; so also to his younger brother, Bharata; so also to his subjects everywhere. Let misfortunes not come to them." That Lakṣmaṇa with his throat chocked and full of tears, did not say anything to Sītā who was speaking like this. She (while) going saw deer turning to the left and causing multitudes of miseries.

She said (to Lakṣmaṇa): "It is laid down that since today the deer are turning to the left, it is not proper that I am going after abandoning Rāma's feet. The highest duty of women is to serve their husbands' feet. So, whatever would happen to me who am going after leaving him, (must be said) to be proper only." When the queen (Sītā) was thinking like this on the way, she actually saw Gaṅgā which was resorted to by groups of sages only, in which waves of water resembling milk were seen, in which waves having the form of a staircase to heaven were seen. By the touch of the drops of her water the heap of great sins not finding any place all around, runs away. Having reached Gaṅgā, Lakṣmaṇa shedding tears said to Sītā, seated in the chariot: "Sītā, come down to the ground from the chariot." Having heard his words Sītā with her arms held by him, in a moment got down and on the way tumbled on thorns.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

The Birth of Kuśa and Lava

Śeṣa said:

1-8. Then Lakṣmaṇa, having made Sītā cross Gaṅgā in a boat to the other bank, took her by hand and went to the forest. On the way she who was marked with her face parched up, walked. Her good (i.e. delicate) feet were hurt with thorns. She tumbled at every step. At that time Lakṣmaṇa carrying out the order of Rāghava took her into the very fearful forest causing misery, in which there were fierce dense trees like barbula, khadira śleṣmātaka, ciñciṇīka, which were dry due to wild fire. Serpents living in the hollows of trees and getting very angry, hissed. Owls causing fear to the minds of people, cried. (In the forest) artless, very wrathful, tigers, lions, foxes, and elephants, eaters of human beings were noticed. Buffaloes, hogs which were wicked, which were marked with two fangs, afflicted the minds of beings. Sītā seeing such a forest suffered from grief through fear. With her feet pricked by thorns she said (these) words to Lakṣmaṇa.

Jānakī said:

9-12. O hero, I do not see (here) hermitages resorted to by sages and giving joy to the eyes. Nor do I see their wives having a great treasure of penance. I am only seeing fearful birds and dry trees. This entire forest is being burnt by wild fire. I notice you too with your eyes full of tears. At every step I am experiencing a thousand ill omens. Therefore, O best hero, tell me whether I of a wicked heart, am abandoned by the noble Rāma. Tell it to me quickly.

13-18. Hearing these words, Lakṣmaṇa, overpowered with grief, and with tears (flowing) on his face checked, then said nothing. She, afflicted with grief and moving with Lakṣmaṇa in that forest only looked at his face and again spoke to that hero; yet, he, desiring to see something, did not say anything to her. Then, (when) she asked him, she very much insisted (on getting a reply). When Lakṣmaṇa was asked by Sītā persistently, he with his throat choked and repeatedly repenting, told her the reason why she was deserted. Hearing those words like (the fall of) the thunderbolt, she, (though) free from any disease, became like a good creeper with its roots cut off. Just then the Earth did not take (back) this daughter (i.e. Sītā) of her, since she believed that Rāma would not abandon sinless Sītā.

19-24. Seeing Sītā fallen down, Lakṣmaṇa, eager (to revive her) revived her by means of breezes produced by (the movements of) the tips of sprouts. Having regained consciousness, she said, "O brother-in-law, do not joke. How does the descendant of Raghu abandon me who am sinless?" Having thus moaned much, she, having seen Lakṣmaṇa full of grief, being fully distressed, fell unconscious on the ground. Having regained consciousness after a while, she full of grief and hurt by sorrow, (and) remembering Rāma's feet, said: "How does that very intelligent, great Raghunātha who along with the monkeys restrained the ocean for my sake, abandon me? How will that great hero abandon me by (relying) upon the words of the washerman? Now, my destiny is unfavourable."

25-32. Saying so the daughter of the Videha(-king) again swooned. Seeing her unconscious he wept in a tone affected by emotion. Having regained consciousness she who was very much

distressed, looked at Lakṣmaṇa who was afflicted with grief and whose throat was choked, and said to him: "O Lakṣmaṇa, go to Rāma, the (very) image of Dharma and the treasure of glory, and tell him these my words in the presence of the treasure of penance: 'Even knowing me to be sinless, you abandoned me. Does it behove your family, or is it the fruit of your knowledge of the sacred texts? You abandoned me who was always attached to your feet, who always ate what was left over by you. For all that my destiny is the cause (i.e. is responsible). O best among excellent warriors, may you have welfare everywhere. Remembering you mentally, in deeds and speech, I shall just hold my breath (i.e. live) in the forest. All others were mentally abandoned by me, O you born in the family of Raghu. O lord of the earth, you alone should be my husband in every birth: I who remember your feet, have all my sins destroyed and have become the best chaste lady.'

33-39. O best of the Raghus, convey all my message to my mothers-in-law. 'I (though) sinless, have been abandoned in the very fierce forest. I remember your feet in the forest, full of herds of deer. The very noble Rāma abandoned me (though) pregnant in the forest.' O Lakṣmaṇa, listen to my words. May well-being come to you. Now preserving well Rāma's semen (in my womb), I would give up my life. As you are proving true Rāma's words, you will have prosperity. One serving the lotus-like feet of Rāma, and depending upon another, has to do it. I should be favoured, and be remembered at times." Saying so, she fell unconscious on the ground in front (of Lakṣmaṇa). Seeing Jānakī unconscious, Lakṣmaṇa became afflicted. Saumitri (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa) fanned her with the ends of his garment, and having saluted her who had regained consciousness, he repeatedly consoled her with sweet words.

Lakṣmaṇa said:

40-43a. This I (i.e. I Just) go to Rāma; and will tell him everything. Near you, there is the great hermitage of the sage Vālmīki.

Speaking thus to her, he being afflicted and full of tears, turned round, and shedding tears, sorrowfully went to king

Rāma. Seeing her brother-in-law going, Jānakī with amazed eyes (said): "This my noble brother-in-law is joking. How (is it that) Rāghava abandoned me who was dearer to Rāma than his own life!"

43b-50. Thinking like this, she looked at him with unwinking eyes. Realising on his having crossed Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) that her desertion by Rāma was a fact, she fell down, was in a very great peril, and fainted. At that time swans brought water from all places and sprinkled (it over her). Sweet fragrant breezes blew. Elephants with the tips of their tongues full of (i.e. wet with) water, washed as it were, her body covered with dust. Deer came near her with their eyes full of wonder. At that time, trees were full of flowers, without the spring (i.e though it was not the spring season). When this was the time (i.e. when so much time passed), the chaste lady regained consciousness and being very much afflicted with grief, and saying 'Rāma, Rāma', moaned. "O lord, O friend of the poor, O good treasure full of pity, how do you abandon me in the forest without my fault?" She talked like this; she wept again and again. She looked here and there: and she again and again became unconscious.

51-55a. At that time revered Vālmīki had come to the forest. At that time he heard weeping with piteous words. He then said to his disciples: "Find out from the interior of the forest who is weeping in a distressed tone in the forest." Ordered by the sage, they went to the place where Jānakī saying 'Rāma, Rāma' and full of a flood of tears, was sitting. Seeing that they eagerly came back to the sage Vālmīki. Having heard the words uttered by them, the sage then went (there). Seeing that heap of penance (i.e. Vālmīki), Jānakī who looked upon her husband as a deity, (said):

55b-58. "My salution to the sage, the image of the Vedas, the ocean of religious acts of austerity." He greeted that Sītā who was saying like this with blessings. "Live long with your husband; obtain two bright sons. Who are you? Why have you come to the fearful forest? Why are you like this? Tell me everything, I would (like to) know the cause of your sorrow." Heaving and with tremor produced in her body, Rāma's wife then spoke with piteous words to the sage:

59-63. "Listen to my significant words—the cause of all my sorrow. Know me to be the servant of king Raghunātha. I have been abandoned without a fault. I do not know the reason for that. By Rāma's order Lakṣmaṇa left me here and went (back)." Vālmīki, consoling Sītā having lotus-like eyes and lotus-like face full of tears, and who had said like this, spoke to Sītā: "Know me to be the sage Vālmīki who is your father's preceptor. O Vaidehī, do not be afflicted, come to my hermitage. O you who look upon your husband as a deity, suppose that your father's house is (situated) at a different place. In such an act (i.e. when such an act is done), let me be angry with the king (i.e. Rāma) (i.e. I would be angry with Rāma, and not with you)."

64. Hearing words like these, Jānakī who looked upon her husband as a deity, who was full of affliction, and whose face was full of tears, was a little happy."

Śeṣa said:

65-68. Having consoled her whose eyes were full with the flood of grief, Vālmīki took her to his auspicious hermitage full of the groups of female ascetics. She, going after Vālmīki, the treasure of penance, shone like a charming star going after the moon. Having reached his hermitage full of sages, Vālmīki told the female ascetics about Jānakī who had come to his hermitage. Vaidehī, of a noble mind, saluted all the female ascetics. Being very much delighted, they embraced one another.

69-72. That treasure of penance, Vālmīki, said to his disciples: "Construct a beautiful hut of leaves for Jānakī." Hearing these very pleasant words of Vālmīki, they constructed an attractive hut with leaves and (pieces of) wood. Waiting upon Vālmīki and eating (i.e. subsisting upon) fruits, Vaidehī, a chaste wife, lived in it. Jānakī who looked upon her husband as a deity muttering 'Rāma, Rāma', (both) mentally and in words, passed her days there.

73-80a. At (the proper) time Jānakī gave birth to two sons, having charming bodies, and having the likeness of Rāma and like (the two) Aśvins. Hearing about the birth of the two sons of Jānakī, the sage was delighted; he who knew the sacred prayers, performed the purificatory rites like the ceremony performed at the time of the birth of a child. Vālmīki performed (these)

rites with darbhas and the hair of a cow's tail. So the two sons have well-known names Kuśa and Lava. Vālmīki also performed the auspicious rites where she free from menstrual excretion (i.e. who had given birth to a child) remained, in such a way that she having lotus-like eyes, was very much delighted in her heart. The same day, Śatrughna, with a few soldiers, had, after killing Lavaṇa, come to Vālmīki's pleasant hermitage at night. At that time Vālmīki had directed Śatrughna: "Do not tell Rāma about Jānakī's sons. I shall (later) tell it (to him)." The attractive sons of Jānakī grew there (i.e. in Vālmīki's hermitage). Vālmīki brought up the two joyful excellent (boys) with bulbs, roots and fruits. The two, very charming like the moon of the first day of the bright half (of a month), were purified (with rites) in due course.

80b-86. The two charming ones were initiated into sacred study (by Vālmīki). Having initiated them into sacred study, the sage taught the two boys the Vedas with their six limbs. He taught them the science of archery with its secrets and Rāmāyaṇa. Vālmīki gave them two bows well adorned with gold; (the bows were) unbreakable, had strings, and were best in warding off the groups of enemies. (He gave them) two inexhaustible quivers full of arrows, and two swords. He (also) gave to Jānakī's two sons, shields that could not be pierced through. The two archers who had mastered the Vedas, gladly moving in the hermitage, shone like the two bright Aśvins. Seeing (her) two excellent sons holding swords and shields, Jānakī was very much delighted and gave up (the grief) due to her desertion (by Rāma). O brāhmaṇa, I have told you this account of the birth of Jānakī's sons. Hereafter listen to the cutting off of the arms of the soldiers that took place.

CHAPTER SIXTY

Lava Defeats the Army and Kills the General

Śeṣa said:

1-4. Seeing his soldiers with their arms cut off, Śatrughna getting very angry and biting his lower lip with anger, said to them: "O you, which hero has cut off your arms? I shall cut off both the arms of him, (even though he is) protected by gods, O soldiers. The great fool does not know (anything about) the great might of Rāmacandra. Now through my valour I shall show (him) my might. Where is that hero? Where is the charming hero? Which fool, not knowing the valour, would seize sleeping serpents?" When the heroes were told (like this) they were amazed and much afflicted.

5-10a. They told (him) about the child that had the likeness of Rāmacandra. He on hearing the seizure of the horse by the boy, had his eyes red due to anger and willing to fight he ordered his general Kālajit: "O general, by my order array the entire army. We have to encounter a very mighty and brave enemy. This is not a child who has seized the horse. He might be Viṣṇu or he might be Śiva. My horse could not have been taken away in any other way. Certainly a great destruction of the mighty army will take place. The boy with a fearless mind, is playing (doing) acts according to his own will. We difficult to be conquered by our enemies, should get ready and go there."

10b-14a. Hearing these words of Śatrughna, that general of the army made ready that army which was arranged in(such) a way that it would be hard (for the enemy to dislodge it) and which had four divisions. Śatrughna, having seen that excellent (complete) army with four divisions made ready, ordered it to go to that place where the boy who had seized the horse, stood. Then the army moved with the four divisions causing that part of the earth to quake and scaring by its might the enemies. The generl saw that boy having a form (like that) of Rāma. Thinking (i.e. finding) him to be the likeness of Rāma, he spoke to him beneficial words:

14b-21a. "O boy, leave the best horse of the powerful

Rāma. I am the ferocious general, named Kālajit, of the king. Seeing you resembling Rāma, pity is produced in my heart. Otherwise, you will not live due to the suffering caused by me." Having heard these words of the warrior of Śatrughna (i.e. of Kālajit), the boy laughed a little, and with a little wrath said (these) wonderful words: "Go, you are free; report to that Rāma the seizure of the horse. O brave one, I am not afraid of you by means of (i.e. though you have uttered) words of political wisdom. I do not care (even) if crores like you (encounter me). Due to the grace of my mother's feet, they are to me (as light) as cotton. That your name which your beautiful mother gave to you, is only due to complexion and not due to valour, like the ripe bimba fruit (having red colour but no efficacy). Now, characterised by (i.e. on) the strength of your name (Kālajit), show me your valour. You will prove your name to be true vanquishing me who am your death."

Śeṣa said:

21b- 25a. He, the crest (i.e. the best) of excellent warriors, disturbed by the words like thunderbolt, got very angry in his mind, and again said (these) words: "O boy, in which family are you born? What is your name? I do not know your name, so also your family and your virtue. How can I, being in a chariot, conquer you who go on foot (i.e. are a foot-soldier), by following the prescribed course of conduct?" Then, he got very angry, and again said these words: "O warrior, what is the use of (your knowing) my family, my virtue, or my name? I am Lava and will in a moment vanquish all the soldiers of my enemy. Now I shall even make a warrior like you (seated in a chariot) go on foot (i.e. a foot-soldier)."

25b-33. Speaking like this, that mighty Lava made ready his bow; he made the twang-sound (of the bow) and scared the soldiers at heart. Having recollected Vālmīki first and (then) his mother Jānakī, Lava discharged sharp arrows which instantly took away the life (of his enemies). Kālajit who was angry, made his bow ready and he who was quick and proficient in fighting, struck Lava. The younger brother of Kuśa (i.e. Lava) in a moment quickly cut off his arrows into hundred (pieces) and deprived the general of his chariot by means of bright, excellent

arrows. He who was deprived of his chariot, mounted upon an intoxicated, very speedy elephant which (i.e. whose ichor) was flowing in seven ways (i.e. streams) and which was brought by his soldiers. The victor (i.e. Lava), seeing him mounted upon an elephant, laughed, and pierced all the hosts of the enemies with ten arrows fixed on his bow. Kālajit, seeing his valour, and with his mind amazed, threw (at him) a big mace made of great (i.e. strong) iron. (Lava), the younger brother of Kuśa, seeing the mace, made with (i.e. weighing) a myriad of bhāras coming to him speedily, cut it off quickly into three pieces with arrows having sharp, horse-shoe-shaped heads.

34-40. He then discharged (at Lava) a sharp, fierce iron club, out to take away his life. Lava, full of speed, cut it off. Having cut off the fierce iron club, he, with his eyes red due to anger, observing him to have mounted upon the haunch of an elephant, became angry. At that moment (only) he cut off with his sword the trunk of that elephant. Supporting his feet with (i.e. standing on) the tusks of the elephant, he mounted on his head. Having cut off the general's crown into a hundred pieces, and his armour into a hundred pieces, and having dragged the general with (i.e. by seizing) his hair he knocked him down on the ground. The general knocked down from the haunch of the elephant, again got angry. He struck him on his chest with his thunderbolt-like fist; he, struck with fists, having bent his bow, quickly discharged arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped arrows at his chest. He who had bent his bow and who had put on a helmet and an armour unbreakable even by crores of arrows, shone on the battlefield. He pierced by sharp arrows, took a sword to kill him.

41-48a. Lava, gnawing his teeth through anger, and repeatedly heaving and breathing, cut off the centre of the arm of the general who was coming with a sword in his hand. He, with the sword in his hand fell down. The general, seeing that his (right) hand holding the sword was cut off, angrily went to strike him with a mace (held) with the left (hand). That arm of him along with the armlets was also cut off with sharp arrows. Then the hero, getting extremely angry struck Lava with his feet. Lava, (though) struck by his feet, did not move on the battlefield. He bore up the cutting off of the feet

like an elephant struck with a garland. Even then he started striking him with his head. Then Lava, looking upon the general as having superior valour, took a sword resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world in his hand, and cut off his head adorned with a large crown. When the general was struck down, there was a great wailing. The angry soldiers came (forward) to kill Lava.

48b-57a. By striking them with his arrows, Lava made them intent on fleeing. Some were broken; some were pierced; some went (away) from the battlefield. Having warded off all soldiers, he gladly penetrated the army, as the hog, having heaved, plunges into the great ocean at the time of the deluge. The elephants were pierced and cut into two, and the earth was filled with pearls, and became inaccessible for the great warriors (when) it is covered with mountains. Horses, shining with power, having golden saddles, charming, and decorated with gems, fell into the pool wet (i.e. full) with blood. The warriors fighting from chariots, who looked lovely on account of the bows in their hands, fell into the interior of the chariots like gods going to heaven. Warriors skilled in fighting, who bit their lips, marked with charm revolving round their faces, were seen to have fallen there. A river of blood, with the tortoises in the form of horses' heads and charming due to its great stream and causing fear to the enemies, flew (there). The arms of some were cut off; the feet of some were chopped off. The ears and noses and armours and earrings of some were cut off. When the general fell in the battle, such (was the) destruction (that) took place. All heroes fell down. None survived then.

57b-67. Lava, having got victory in the battle and having vanquished the host of his enemies, thinking that someone else might come, looked (everywhere). Some who were spared from the battle, did not die on the battlefield. They went near Śatrughna to tell him (about) the wonderful account. Having gone (to him), they told him (the account) as it took place on the battlefield—the death of Kālajit from (i.e. at the hands of) the boy, and his wonderful effort in the battle. Hearing that, Śatrughna who was amazed, laughed, and remembering the seizure of the horse by the boy, gnawed his teeth in anger, and said to them: "O heroes, were you intoxicated, or were you cheating

imps? How did incompetency overcome you? How did Kālajit die? How would a boy vanquish him who was fearful to the hosts of enemies in the battle, who was (always) victorious in a battle, and who was invincible even for Yama?" Hearing the words of Śatrughna, the warriors, wet with blood, said: "We were not under the influence of intoxication etc. There was no fraud, nor gambling. O king, know that Kālajit had his death from (i.e. at the hands of) Lava. The boy having matchless skill, shook the entire army. (Now you decide) what is to be done hereafter, or which excellent men should be sent (against Lava). Thinking him to be a child, you should not use your force rashly." Then Śatrughna, having heard these words of the warriors, spoke to Sumati, the best intellect, about the waging of the war.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Hanūmat Falls Unconscious

Śatrughna said:

1. O great minister, do you know who is the boy that took away the horse and who destroyed all my army like an ocean?

Sumati said:

3-5. O lord, this is the great hermitage of the best sage Vālmīki. O you who torment your enemies, kṣatriyas do not at all live here. It might be that Indra became (i.e. took the form of) the great sage and snatched the horse, or it might be Śiva. Otherwise, who else would take away your horse? O great king, who else but Puṣkala can go to (i.e. march against) him who killed the very fearful Kālajit? O you destroyer of your enemies, go there surrounded by all your brave warriors, kings, and your great army.

6-8. Having gone there, having bound the hero, I shall show it to Rāma, who has a curiosity. This is my careful (i.e. well-considered) view.

Hearing these words, he ordered all his warriors: "Go with a great army. I (shall) come after you." In a moment the soldiers went there where the mighty one (i.e. Lava), stretching his very strong bow furnished with a string, stood.

9-11. Having seen that very mighty army full of warriors, coming, the powerful Lava was not at all afraid in his mind. Lava, looking upon all the warriors as deer, angrily stretched his bow, and discharging arrows in thousands, stood up like a lion. They, being afflicted by the arrows, and full of great anger, looking upon the hero as a boy, then rushed to him.

12-14. Seeing thousands of warriors arrayed in a circular arrangement of the troops, Lava, full of anger, quickly fixed arrows (on his bow). The first circular arrangement had a thousand (soldiers). The second had ten thousand as the number (of soldiers). The third had twenty thousand; the fourth had fifty thousand; the fifth had a lakh of soldiers; the sixth had ten thousand more; and the seventh had a couple of lakhs. He was surrounded by seven (such) circular arrangements of the troops.

15-16. In the midst was Lava, surrounded by the circular arrangements of the troops; and moving like fire he burnt (i.e. destroyed) all the soldiers forming the circular arrangements. The noble one destroyed all the arrangement(s)—some with swords, some with arrows, some with barbed missiles, some with lances, (some) with spears having sharp edges, and some with clubs tipped with iron.

17-21. The younger brother of Kuśa, freed from the seven circular arrangements of the troops, shone like the moon freed from the group of clouds at the advent of the autumn. He with his disc cut off many trunks of elephants and mighty heads of warriors, and completely struck (down) the warriors. Afflicted by Lava's arrows many fell and fainted on the battlefield; others, very timid, fled away. Seeing the army afflicted by Lava's arrows, intent on fleeing, the hero named Puṣkala went to the battlefield to fight. The mighty one, seated in his chariot, charming due to good horse, saying, 'Wait, wait' and with his eyes full of anger, went to (i.e. marched against) Lava.

22-23a. That Puṣkala knowing the (use of) great missiles, said to Lava: "Stand in the chariot adorned with good horses in

the battle. How shall I fight with you—a foot-soldier—in the battle? Therefore, stand in the chariot, and then I shall fight with you."

23b-26. Hearing these words, Lava said to Puṣkala: "If I standing in your chariot, fight in the battle, then my victory would be doubtful. O hero, we are not brāhmaṇas given to receiving (gifts), but we are kṣatriyas, always engaged in acts of charity. Now, through anger I shall break your chariot. Then you will (also) be fighting on foot. Then you will fight (with me)."

27-29. Puṣkala having heard these words full of righteousness and courage, was amazed in heart for a long time and made ready his bow. Lava seeing him having taken a bow, got angry and cut off the bow in his hand, and took an aim with his arrow. The powerful one, laughed and being excited broke his chariot in the battlefield, while he was stringing his bow.

30-35. Seeing his chariot broken and his bow cut off by the noble one, he regarded him as a great hero, and the fighter on foot ran away in the battlefield. Both heroes were heroes; both had raised their arrows; both were wet with blood; both had their armours cut off. Both were seen to have their bodies shattered with the strokes of arrows of each other; both desired victory; both desired to kill each other like Jayanta and Kārtikeya or Śiva and Indra. In this way they fought with each other on the battlefield. Puṣkala said to the boy: "O crest-jewel of the brave, I have not seen a crest-jewel (i.e. best) of the brave like you. Today I shall knock down your head with arrows having sharp, fine joints. Do not run from the battlefield. Being restrained, protect your life."

36-39. Saying so he put brave Lava in the cage of (i.e. formed by) arrows. Puṣkala's arrows settled on the ground after having pervaded the sky. Lava, being in the cage of (i.e. formed by) arrows, said to Puṣkala: "O hero, you have done a great feat that you harassed me with arrows". Saying so, the hero skilled in taking aim with an arrow and cutting off the volley of arrows, said to Puṣkala: "Take care of yourself (while) standing in the battle. Afflicted by the strokes of my arrows, you will fall covered with blood, on the earth."

40-45. Having heard these words, Puṣkala, full of anger, fought with the very strong hero in the battle. Lava, getting angry in a moment angrily took out a sharp arrow (capable of) killing the enemy and resembling a serpent from the quiver. That blazing arrow discharged from Lava's bow and ready to pierce his chest was quickly cut off by Bharata's son (Puṣkala). When Bharata's son cut off with his fatal arrow (the arrow of Lava), he got very angry and took another fierce arrow. The sharp arrow discharged from the bow drawn up to the ear, pierced the chest of that Puṣkala in the great battle. The crest-jewel of the very brave, pierced in the chest by that fast going arrow, fell on the ground.

46-54. Seeing Puṣkala fallen, the son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat) took him who was unconscious and handed him over to (Śatrughna) brother of Rāghava. Seeing him unconscious, he, with his mind overcome with grief and full of anger, ordered Hanūmat to kill Lava. Hanūmat, burning with rage, uprooted a śālmali tree and quickly went (i.e. rushed) to vanquish in the battle the very powerful Lava. The mighty Hanūmat struck on Lava's head with the tree. Lava, seeing it falling upon (him), quickly cut it off into hundred (pieces). When the tree was cut off, the very mighty one again angrily uprooted trees from the root and struck them on his chest and head. The mighty one speedily cut off with his arrows of sharp joints those trees which Wind's son (i.e. Hanūmat) took, and with which he struck him. Then the monkey, Wind's son, having uprooted rocks like high rocks thrown down by an earthquake, speedily threw them on the head (of Lava). Struck by those multitudes of rocks in the battle, he raised his bow and powdered them with his arrows as particles with turners' wheels.

55-62. Then, in the battle the angry blessed Hanūmat encircled the mighty Lava with his tail. Seeing himself tied up with his tail, he the powerful one, remembering his mother in his heart, struck with his fist Hanūmat's tail. Distressed by the strokes of the fist, Hanūmat freed him. He the powerful one, freed from the tail, discharged arrows in the battle. The monkey with his body afflicted by the unavoidable strokes of arrows, looking upon the shower of arrows as very unbearable thought: 'What should we do here? If I run away then it is

shameful for my lord; (If I stay here), the boy would strike me. Due to the boon given to me by Brahmadatta, I had neither a swoon, nor did I die. The affliction caused by the arrows is unbearable. Let Śatrughna go to (i.e. march against) Lava in the battle and get victory over the boy. I desiring victory, shall lie in false swoon!' Thinking like this in his mind, he fell on the battlefield, fraudulently unconscious when all the heroes were seeing (i.e. in the presence of all the heroes). He, skilled in discharging arrows, knowing that the very mighty Hanūmat was unconscious, struck all the kings (with arrows).

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

Lava Becomes Unconscious

Śeṣa said:

1-14. Hearing that Hanūmat was unconscious, Śatrughna was distressed: 'What should I do in the battle? This boy is very powerful.' Himself seated in a golden chariot along with excellent heroes he went where Lava, skilled in fighting in a wonderful way, stood. He saw Lava, as if Rāma reduced to childhood had come on the earth, having a bow and arrows in his hand and discharging (arrows) in the battle. At that time he thought: 'Who is this having Rāma's form and having a charming body dark like the petals of a blue lotus? This must be the son of (Sītā) the daughter of (the king of) Videha; not otherwise (i.e. none else), (who) having vanquished us in the battle, will go like the lord of beasts. There is no possibility of the victory of us who are void of power. What shall we, (though) proficient in fighting, (yet) being weak, do?' He, having thought like this, said (these) words to the boy who fought with vehemence, knocking down crores of heroes: "O boy, who are you that are knocking down our heroes on the ground? You do not know the power of Rāma who killed the demons. Who is your mother? Who is your father? Being very lucky, you got victory. O you very mighty one, what is your name well-known in the world? Release

(the horse); how (i.e. why) have you caught the horse? (Since it is) due to your being a child, I forgive you. Come, see Rāma, he will give you large (wealth)." The boy who was addressed like this, said (these) words to Śatrughna: "What have you to do with my name, or my father, or my family, or my age? O hero, if you are endowed with power, then fight (with me) in the battle; otherwise, salute the hero Kuśa (by falling) at his feet; otherwise you cannot go. You are the brave brother of Rāma; (but) for us you are not the best among the mighty. If you have power, then forcibly release the horse." Saying so, the mighty warrior, taking aim with his arrow, struck him on his chest, head and arms on the battlefield.

15-27. Then the king (Śatrughna) got angry, and making a grave sound like that of the clouds, and as it were scaring the boy (i.e. in order to scare the boy) made his bow ready. The best among the mighty discharged innumerable arrows. The boy powerfully cut off all those volleys of arrows. The surface of the earth was pervaded by the arrows discharged by Lava in many ways. They became inexhaustible (i.e. did not fail) like gifts given on a day of a great portentous calamity. Those arrows fixed (on his bow) by Lava pervaded the entire sky. Having reached the sun's orb, they proceeded uninterruptedly everywhere. Even the wind did (i.e. could) not enter the cage of his arrows. Then what can be said about human beings said to live for a moment? Seeing these arrows spreading on, Śatrughna was amazed. Skilled in discharging arrows he cut off a hundred thousand (arrows). Seeing all his arrows cut off, the younger brother of Kuśa (i.e. Lava) quickly cut off the bow of king Śatrughna. When, having taken another bow, he discharged his arrows, he shattered the chariot with arrows having sharp joints. He cut off, the very strong bow in his hand, that had a string. The heroes remaining on the battlefield, appreciated that feat. He, with his bow cut off, deprived of his chariot, with his horses killed, with his charioteer killed, resorted to another chariot, went to fight forcibly with Lava. Pierced with many arrows, with blood flowing from his body, he shone in the battle like a kiṁśuka tree with flowers. Struck by the arrows of Śatrughna, he, skilled in aiming with an arrow, and having bent his bow became very angry. He made Śatrughna's body such that its

armour was shattered, that the head was bereft of the crown and wet with the flowing blood.

28-38. Then Rāma's younger brother (Śatrughna) got angry; and he who was extremely angry discharged ten fatal arrows having sharp tips. Having reduced them to very small pieces like the sesamum seeds with his arrows having sharp joints, he struck on Śatrughna's chest with eight arrows. Very much afflicted with (the strokes of) the arrows and thinking of the mighty Lava and regarding him to be invincible, he discharged arrows at that time. Then Lava pierced him in his large chest with an arrow resembling the crescent moon and looking charming in the joints. Pierced in the chest, he received a terrible affliction. He, having a bow in his hands and well-adorned, fell into the interior of the chariot. Seeing Śatrughna unconscious, Suratha and other kings, eager to get victory in the battle ran to Lava. Suratha, the brave Vimala, so also king Vīramaṇi, Sumada, Riputāpa and others surrounded him in the battle. Certain kings struck him all round with arrows having sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads, pestles; some with very fierce arrows; some with darts and hatchets. The crest-jewel among the fighting heroes, seeing them eager to fight unjustly, struck them (each) with ten arrows in the battle. They, struck with showers of arrows in the battle, were very angry. Some fled away and some fainted on the battlefield. Just then, king Śatrughna, full of might, gave up his unconsciousness (i.e. regained consciousness) and went to fight with the great warrior Lava.

39-47. Having come (to him), he said to that Lava: "You who are like a boy, are lucky. You are not a boy; you are a god; you have come to outwit (us). I was never vanquished by any hero in battle. You have made me unconscious, when I am seeing (i.e. under my very nose). Now see my valour. I shall knock you down in the battle; put up with (at least) one arrow; O boy, do not run away." Saying so, he who had destroyed Lavaṇa, fierce like Yama's face, took an arrow in the battle. (Then) he fixed a blazing arrow and decided to strike on the chest of Lava who was like fire burning everything, all the heroes. Seeing that blazing arrow illumining the ten quarters, he remembered Kuśa who knocked down his enemies. 'If at this time my strong, brave brother were here, I would not have

been humbled by Śatrughna, and there would not have been excessive fear.' When the noble Lava was thinking like this, a mighty, fierce arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world, stuck to (i.e. struck) his chest. At that time the hero, struck by the king's arrow became unconscious in the battle adorned with the heads of all heroes.

CHAPTER SIXTYTHREE

Kuśa's Victory

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Seeing Lava, the destroyer of his enemies, unconscious, Śatrughna, the very mighty one, obtained victory in the battle. Putting Lava, the boy adorned with a helmet etc. and the likeness of Rāma in form, in the chariot he desired to go from there. Seeing that their friend was arrested by the enemy, the boys who were full of grief, quickly reported it to his mother, Sītā.

The boys said:

4-9. O mother Jānakī, your son forcibly snatched the horse of some proud king endowed with power. Then, O Jānakī, the great brave boy vanquished all the army. Later also he got victory. Having made that king unconscious, he obtained victory in the battle. Then the very fearful king, having given up the swoon (i.e. having regained consciousness), got angry and knocked down your son on the battlefield. We had in the beginning warded him off (saying): "Do not seize this excellent horse." Despising all of us, the brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas, (he seized him)."

Hearing these very terrible words of the boys, she fell on the ground and full of grief she wept.

Sītā said:

10-20. How is the cruel king fighting with the boy? He who

has vanquished my son, has a wicked mind as a result of impious deeds. O hero Lava, where are you, full of great power? How (is it that) you seized the excellent horse of the unkind king? You are a boy, they are invincible and proficient in (the use of) all weapons. They were in their chariots, (while) you were without a chariot? How can the fight (be said to) be (between two) equal (parties)? With you (i.e. in your company) I gave up (i.e. did not mind) the unhappiness due to Rāma's having abandoned me. Now without you, how shall I live in the forest? Come to me; release the sarcificial horse; let this king go. You who wash away (i.e. remove) my sorrow, do not realise my sorrow. Had Kuśa, the crest-jewel of the brave, been here today, he would have (by) now freed you from the vicinity of the king. Due to my (bad) luck he too is not nearby. Now what shall I do? It is just my fate that is the cause for the rise of (this) sorrow.

The glorious one scratching the earth with the toe of her foot and with tears in both her eyes, wept much like this. She said to the boys: "This one (i.e. Lava) is a child, and he (i.e. Śatrughna) is a king. How and where will he go on having vanquished my son in the battle?" When this Jānakī who looked upon her husband as her god was speaking like this, Kuśa along with great sages came (back) from Ujjayinī. After having worshipped Mahākāla on the fourteenth day of the dark half of Māgha and after having secured many boons from him, he came in the vicinity of (i.e. to) his mother.

21-28a. Seeing Jānakī afflicted and overcome with fear and with tears produced in her eyes, and helpless due to being overcome with grief, he, being anxious, said. At that time, his (right) arm, throbbing and indicating fight, said (to him). In the heart of the mighty warrior there was great enthusiasm to fight. He spoke to his mother, speaking piteously in a faltering voice: "When I, your son, have stood by you, your affliction has gone. When I am alive, tears should not fall from (your) eyes." He, of a courageous mind, said to his mother who was sad with tears, who was speaking in a piteous and faltering voice, who was instantly unhappy due to Lava's being bounded by grief. "Where is my brother, the destroyer of his enemies, who having come to have known that I have arrived, would always come near me?

How (is it that) the hero is not seen? Where has the hero gone to play? Or with whom has he, due to his being a child, gone to see (i.e. look for) me? O my mother, why do you weep? Where is that Lava (now)? Tell me all that is the cause of your grief."

28b-32. Hearing those words of her son, she who was afflicted, said to Kuśa: "Some king, protecting a horse, has seized Lava. My boy bound here the horse fit for the sacrificial rite. The mighty one, all alone vanquished many guards (of the horse). The king, having made him unconscious, bound him in the battle. The boys who had gone with him, told me like this. Then having heard that Lava was arrested, I became distressed. (Now) you who have come in time (should) forcibly release him from the excellent king." Having heard his mother's words, Kuśa, full of anger, biting his lips and gnawing his teeth, said to her:

Kuśa said:

33-38. O mother, know that Lava is (surely) freed from the binding by the noose. With my arrows I (shall) now kill him with his entire army and horses (and elephants). Even if a god or a deity comes, or even Śiva comes, I shall free him with arrows having sharp joints. O mother, do not weep; vigourous fight here (i.e. in this world) leads to fame; (but) running away leads to infamy. O mother, give me a divine armour, and a bow with a string, so also a helmet and a sharp sword. Now I shall go to the battlefield; I shall vanquish the mighty army; I shall free my brother fainted on the battlefield. If, O mother, I do not today release your son from the great battle, then let your feet be angry with me on the earth.

Śeṣa said:

39-44a. With these words Jānakī, of auspicious characteristics, endowed him with blessings and gave him all the multitude of missiles: "O (my) son, go to fight, and free the unconscious Lava": Thus ordered, Kuśa who had put on an armour, who was decorated with ear-rings, who was powerful, who had worn a crown, who had a sword, who had a shield, who held a bow after putting the inexhaustible quiver on his shoulders powerful

like those of the lion, and who was the best among the warriors, saluted his mother's feet, and quickly went (to fight). When he speedily and quickly went to fight, he saw his (brother) Lava, the destroyer of hosts of enemies. The very great warriors saw Kuśa coming like Yama approaching to destrory the entire universe.

44b-51. Lava, seeing his very mighty brother Kuśa resembling wind, coming, shone very much like fire. Having freed himself from the chariot, he went out to fight. Kuśa threw all the heroes on the battlefield into the eastern direction. Lava, through anger, urged on (i.e. made flee) all of them into the western direction. O sage, the men in the army, pervaded by affliction caused by Kuśa's arrows and troubled by Lava's arrows resembled the eddies in the ocean with the waves rising. The entire army, troubled by the volleys of the arrows of Kuśa and Lava, did not get happiness. The frightened army repeatedly scattered here and there. No one endowed with might remained anywhere on the battlefield and desired to fight. At this time Śatrughna who tormented his enemies went to fight with the hero Kuśa resembling Lava. The killer of the heroes of his enemy seated in a golden chariot, seeing Kuśa full of power and resembling Rāma's form, said:

Śatrughna said:

52-56. Who are you, very mighty one, and resembling your brother Lava? O great hero, what is your name? Who is your father? Who is your mother? O best of men, how (is it that) you are staying in the forest resorted to by brāhmaṇas? O very powerful one, tell me everything so that I shall fight with you.

Hearing these words, Kuśa, filling with noise the battlefield with his voice grave like that of the clouds, spoke to the king: "(I know) only (that) Sītā, devoted to her husband, gave me birth. Devoted to worshipping the feet of Vālmīki, we two live in the forest. O sinless king, we are engaged in serving our mother, are proficient in all lores (sciences and arts); we are known as Kuśa and Lava.

57-65. Who are you, the hero, desiring to fight? Why is the excellent horse let loose? Today in the fight, you, possessing

power, are the victor. O king, if you are a warrior, fight with me. Now I shall knock you down in the battle." Śatrughna, knowing him to be the son of Sītā from Rāma, was amazed in his heart and angrily took his bow. Seeing him having taken a bow, Kuśa, full of anger, stretched his own very strong and excellent bow. Śatrughna who knew (the use of) all weapons discharged sharp arrows. Kuśa, laughing, easily cut them off in the battle. O sage, hundreds and thousands of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) Kuśa and the king (i.e. Śatrughna) pervaded the entire world. It was a wonder. The mighty Kuśa quickly burnt all of them with the missile presided ovey by the Fire. The brave king quelled it with the missile presided over by Rain. The king who was very brave, put it down with the missile presided over by Vāyu. Then everywhere on the battlefield strong wind blew. He covered the wind that disturbed (everything) with the missile presided over by Mountain. The king cut off the mountain-stones with a thunderbolt-like missile. Then that very great warrior Kuśa discharged the missile presided over by Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). That missile presided over by Nārāyaṇa, was not able to hurt the king.

66-79. Then Kuśa got very angry. He, given to anger, spoke to Śatrughna having great might and valour: "I think you are a great hero, getting victory in the battle, as my fearful missile presided over by Nārāyaṇa, did not hurt you. O king, today with three arrows I shall knock you down on the ground. If I do not do this, hear my solemn declaration. I shall have in this world the sin of the man who, having obtained human body (i.e. birth) due to crores of religious deeds, does not honour it through delusion. On this battlefield you should be attentive. I shall instantly knock you down on the ground." Saying so, he fixed on his bow a fierce arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world after aiming it at the great expansive, hard chest of the enemy. Seeing that arrow fixed, Śatrughna, full of anger, discharged sharp arrows piercing the skin of Kuśa. The arrow of a terrible form, resembling fire, and hissing like a serpent, went forth to pierce his chest. The best king, remembering Rāma, quickly noticed the arrow. He cut off that arrow having sharp joints and discharged by Kuśa. Then, Kuśa who was very angry due to his arrow being cut off, fixed on his bow an-

other arrow with sharp joints. While he, full of power decided to pierce his chest (with an arrow), he cut off his arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world. Then Kuśa, full of anger, remembered his mother's feet, and fixed on his arrow a third wonderful arrow. Śatrughna too, quickly took an arrow to cut it off. Just then, he, pierced by the arrow fell on the ground. When Śatrughna fell, there was a great wailing. Kuśa proud of his might, obtained victory then.

CHAPTER SIXTYFOUR

Rāma's Army Revives

Śeṣa said:

1-5. Seeing Śatrughna fallen, the excellent king Suratha getting into his very wonderful chariot fashioned with jewels went (to fight). Realising that Puṣkala was formerly defeated in battle, he went to fight with Lava, the crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of the great heroes. Suratha, the crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of the great heroes, having reached Kuśa and discharging arrows in various ways, troubled him. With ten arrows with rising flames he deprived Suratha of his chariot. He speedily cut off his bow, strong and strung. The battle between the two heroes (fought with) destruction of missiles and counter-missiles and throwing and counter-throwing of missiles was fierce and thrilling.

6-11. When the invincible king Suratha was very much exerting in the battle, Kuśa thought: 'What should I do (now) in the battle?' He, possessing great power, having thought, took a sharp, fierce arrow to kill the king. Seeing the arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world, coming (towards him), he decided to cut it off. Just then the great arrow struck him. Then the very brave hero fainted in the battle, and fell in the interior of his chariot. The charioteer took him (away). Seeing on the fall of Suratha Kuśa getting victory and scaring the hosts of heroes, (Hanūmat), the son of Wind, went (to fight with him).

Seeing the powerful monkey, the son of Wind, coming (to fight), he grinned, as it were provoking him to become wrathful.

12-17a. He said to Hanūmat: "Come face to face with me. I shall pierce (you) with a thousand arrows. You will go to (i.e. fall on) the ground dead." Hanūmat, who was addressed like this, realising that Rāma's son was very powerful and that the duty for the master should be done, ran (to him). The very powerful one, having quickly uprooted a lofty śāla-tree having a hundred branches and aiming at Kuśa's chest, went to fight with him. The mighty one, seeing Hanūmat with a śāla-tree in his hand coming (to him), pierced him on his chest with three arrows having sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads and resembling the (crescent) moon. The son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat), being quickly pierced by the powerful Kuśa, gnawing his teeth struck him on his chest with the śāla-tree. The bov (though) struck with the śāla did not shake a bit.

17b-22. Then the heroes through amazement (i.e. being amazed) praised him on account of his being a child. That hero Kuśa, knowing (the use of) great missiles (and) being struck with the śāla-tree, took through anger a destructive missile to kill his enemy. Seeing the invincible destructive missile discharged by Kuśa, (Hanūmat) mentally meditated upon Rāma, the destroyer of the difficulties of his devotees. Then that missile causing great pain, which was discharged by Kuśa, stuck to (i.e. struck) the chest of Māruti and he again swooned. Seeing the monkey (fallen) unconscious, the powerful one (i.e. Kuśa) pierced with sharp arrows that entire huge army. That entire army consisting of four divisions, shattered with myriads of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) him on the battlefield took to fleeing.

23-28. Then Sugrīva, the lord of monkeys and a great protector uprooted many trees and ran to the great warrior Kuśa. Kuśa, laughing, easily cut off all (those) trees. The mighty one again speedily cut off the trees that came to him. Afflicted by many arrows on the battlefield, Sugrīva took a fearful mountain (to hit it) on the head of Kuśa. Seeing the mountain coming (to him) Kuśa pounded it with arrows (discharged) in many ways and quickly rendered it fit for Mahārudra's body (i.e. converted it into ashes). Seeing that great feat performed by the boy, Sugrīva was averse to the hope of (i.e. was disappointed towards) victory on the

battlefield. Seeing in the battle invincible Kuśa striking (Hanūmat's tail) and becoming very impatient and overpowered with anger, he took a mountain to strike him (with).

29-36. Seeing Sugrīva eager to strike him, he carefully struck him with many arrows with sharp joints. He, struck with arrows of different kinds, and being afflicted, was exasperated to kill Kuśa, (and) went, (and) took a śāla-tree. Then also that hero Kuśa took a missile presided over by Varuṇa and he, the elder brother of Lava, bound him with that strong noose. He being (thus) bound with soft nooses by the powerful Kuśa, fell on the battlefield adorned by great heroes. Seeing Sugrīva fallen, the warriors fled everywhere. Lava's brother, the crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of great heroes, got victory. Just then, Lava, having vanquished warriors, also Puṣkala, Aṅgada, Pratāpāgrya, Vīramaṇi, and also other kings, got victory in the battle, and came to his brother who got victory in the battle and who destroyed crores of enemies. O sage, pleased with each other, they embraced each other. They obtained victory. Then, being elated they talked (to each other).

Lava said:

37-42. O brother, because of your grace, the ocean of the battle has been crossed (by me). Now we shall cleanse the well-adorned battlefield.

Saying so the heroes, Kuśa and Lava, went (to the battlefield). (Lava) took the beautiful crest-jewel of the king which was decked with gold; so also the hero Lava took the auspicious crown of Puṣkala. He also took the very costly armlets of Śatrughna, and of someone else. Seizing the heap of weapons and also Hanūmat, the lord of monkeys, they went near Sugrīva and tied both (Hanūmat and Sugrīva). The younger brother of Kuśa held the tail of the son of Wind and said to his brother: "I shall take (him) to my (i.e. our) abode holding him by his tail, to please our mother, for the sages' sons to play (with) and for (satisfying) my curiosity."

43-49. Hearing these words, Kuśa then spoke to Lava: "I shall seize this strong, powerful monkey." Speaking like this, the two, best among the mighty, having bound the two at

their tails and holding the two powerful ones, went to their hermitage. The two best monkeys (i.e. Hanūmat and Sugrīva) seeing them going to their hermitage, trembled and said to each other in frightened words (i.e. words full of fear). Hanūmat, with his mind soft through fear, said to the lord of monkeys: "These two sons of Rāma will take us to their hermitage. Formerly I who had gone to Jānakī, had done a (good) act for Jānakī. At that time the lovely queen Jānakī was (well) disposed to me. That Vaidehī will see me bound with a noose by my enemy. The excellent one will then laugh (and) I shall be ashamed. What should I do now? My life will end. A great misery has befallen. What will that Rāma do."

50-52. Hearing his words (Sugrīva said): "O great monkey, my (condition) is the same. If he will take me like this, I shall die." When the two who were very much frightened, were telling like this to each other, Kuśa and Lava energetically reached the house of their mother. Seeing them to have come, their mother was delighted. With great affection she embraced her two sons, one by one.

53-57. Jānakī, having seen the two monkeys, Hanūmat and Sugrīva, the best among the heroes and the lord of monkeys, held by the two (i.e. by Kuśa and Lava) by their tails, laughed. The excellent lady, seeing them tied with nooses, speaking for their release, said these excellent words: "O my (two) sons, free these very brave and very powerful monkeys. If the two big ones see me, they will cast their life. This is the hero Hanūmat, who burnt the city of (the son of) Danu (i.e. the demon Rāvaṇa). This also is the lord of bears, the king of all monkeys. Why have you, and where have you arrested them? What have you done (to them) through disrespect? That (you) two young ones have seized them by their tails makes me wonder."

58-66a. Hearing these soft words of the mother, the two sons, best in politeness and possessing great power, then said: "Mother, there is a strong king (named) Rāma, the son of Daśaratha. He has released a horse, well-adorned and having a golden note on his forehead. O mother, this is what is written there: 'My mother has given birth to one brave (son only).

Those who are (i.e. call themselves) kṣatriyas, may seize (the horse); otherwise, they should worship the soles of (my) feet.' Then, O you chaste lady, I thought in my heart: 'Are you not a kṣatriya lady? Would you not be the mother of heroes? (i.e. Have you not given birth to heroes?) Seeing the arrogance of the king, I have forcibly seized the horse. (Our) hero Kuśa has conquered and destroyed his army in the battle. O you who look upon your husband as a deity, know this to be the crown of the king. This also is the crown of another hero, the noble Puṣkala. Know this to be another crown, adorned with gems and pearls. O excellent one, know this to be the king's attractive horse, going at will, which is for my strong brother to ride upon. I have brought these two monkeys, the best among the strong, to play (with). They, who fight, are (brought here) for (i.e. to satisfy) your curiosity?"

66b-67a. Hearing these words, Jānakī, who looked upon her husband as a deity, repeatedly said to her brave sons: "Release them".

Sītā said:

67b-69a. You have done injustice. You have snatched Rāma's great horse. You have knocked down many soldiers. You have bound these lords of monkeys. The brave horse of your father is let loose by him for a sacrifice. You have snatched his horse too (which is to be used) in the best sacrifice.

69b-75a. Release these two monkeys; release this best among horses. Apologise to the very angry Śatrughna, the brother of the king.

Hearing these words of their mother, the best among the mighty, said: "We have conquered that king possessing might in the manner of kṣatriyas. Unfairness is not possible in the case of us who fight in the manner of kṣatriyas. Formerly Vālmīki said to us who were learning (under him): 'In the hermitage a horse fit for a sacrificial rite was seized. Therefore, a son would (i.e. could) fight with his father, or a younger brother with his (elder) brother; or a disciple with his teacher. By that no sin accrues.' By your order now we shall give (back)

the excellent horse. We shall release these two monkeys. We shall do (i.e. carry out) your words (i.e. your order)."

75b-80. Saying so, the two went to the battlefield, released the lords of monkeys, so also the horse fit for the horse-sacrifice. Queen Sītā, having heard from her sons about the destruction of the army, reflecting in her mind upon Śrī Rāma, looked at the sun, the witness. "If by mind, words or deeds I worship Raghunātha and none else, then let this king revive. O you lord of the worlds, due to my truth (fulness) let the entire big army, forcibly destroyed by my sons, revive." While Jānakī who looked upon her husband as her deity, was talking like this, the entire army revived on the battlefield.

CHAPTER SIXTYFIVE

Sumati Describes the Adventurous Events to Rāma

Śeṣa said:

1-4. In a moment Śatrughna, the hero, gave up his swoon on the battlefield. Other mighty warriors also, who had fainted, revived. Śatrughna saw the best among the horses, standing before him, and saw (i.e. found) himself to be without the helmet and the army revived. Seeing this he wondered in his mind and spoke to Sumati, the best among ministers, who had then revived: "Having shown pity, the boy has returned the horse for the completion of the sacrifice. We (shall) quickly go to Rāma desiring (i.e. waiting for) the horse's arrival."

5-11. Saying so, he, having got into the chariot and without (the sounds of) kettle-drums and conches, quickly went to Rāma far away from the hermitage. After him moved the great army full of four divisions and making the lord of serpents broken down due to (i.e. under) its load. Having quickly crossed Gaṅgā, full of water having waves, he went to his own country adorned with his own men. The king was accompanied by Puṣkala and Suratha; he, holding a bow, was seated in a jewelled

chariot; he had put the horse in front; the horse was adorned with jewelled necklaces; and on his head only shone the white umbrella. Surrounded by thousands of chariots and mighty kings who were adorned with heroic cries, he in due course reached the city, adorned by the solar dynasty, decorated with many excellent flags, and shining with citadels.

12-18. Rāma, having heard that the army along with this Śatrughna and with the brave Puṣkala had reached the city, was delighted in many ways. Showing Lakṣmaṇa the great army with four constituents, he sent him, his brother, best among the mighty (to receive it). Lakṣmaṇa having along with the army gone to his army, and being beside himself due to joy, embraced him whose body was adorned with wounds. Being asked about the safety everywhere, he told him the news. Śatrughna became very joyful and met with happiness. The brave and noble-minded son of Sumitrā, being seated along with his brother (Śatrughna) in his own chariot, went along with the great army to the city. Sarayū had sacred water, had purified the three worlds, was purified by the dust of Rāma's feet, was bright like the autumnal moon, was crowded with swans and ducks, was adorned with the ruddy geese, and was very much resounding with birds, having very strange colours.

19-33. Rāmacandra had abundantly got constructed there pavilions resounding with the separate recitals of brāhmaṇas knowing the Vedas. There were many kṣatriyas with their hands well-adorned with bows, and filling the earth with the noise of the various twangs of their bow-strings. There brāhmaṇas enjoyed (i.e. ate) charming and various kinds of food. Praising one another, they talked about (i.e. discussed) interesting news (topics). There were foods like rice boiled with milk, which were white and resembled the moon. They were full of (i.e. mixed) with profuse milk and ghee and were mixed with sugar. There were many small round cakes resembling the orb of the moon in beauty. They were very lovely and were made fragrant with perfumes of camphor etc. There were soft components of macaroni having hundred holes or no holes. With sweet food there were baked thin cakes that were dressed. There was boiled rice which resembled lotuses, which was mixed with kidney-bean-seeds, which was having a perfume, and which gave delight. The

boiled rice was (mixed) with curd, and accompanied by (i.e. mixed with) camphor. It was prepared by cooks cooking tasty food, and served by waiters. There, certain brāhmaṇas on seeing the rice boiled with milk put (i.e. served) in their dishes, said to one another: "What is this wonder that is seen (here)? Is it the orb of the moon fallen from the sky through the fear of darkness? Here there is the wonderful nectar which puts an end to death." Hearing that, another excellent brāhmaṇa, with his eyes red through anger, said. "The orb of the moon is not at all wet with nectar. The form of the moon is one (only). Then how can it be seen to be similar in every individual dish of a thousand of brāhmaṇas? Therefore, know that it may be a lotus or camphor. Do not regard it to be the moon's orb endowed with white lustre." Just then another (brāhmaṇa) overcome with anger, shaking his head (said): "These foolish brāhmaṇas, not proficient in the knowledge of tastes, do not know: This is cooked with the bulb of campaka. They are sweet lotuses."

34-40a. O sages, brāhmaṇas who (generally) ate bulbs and roots, were pleased and were very eager to know the tastes and thus conjectured among themselves. Just then another brāhmaṇa said: "The existence of the kṣatriyas is excellent. They will enjoy food like that served on account of their great religious merit." To him a brāhmaṇa said at that time: "Such is the fruit of charity. Those who give to brāhmaṇas, obtain what is desired. Such food will never be seen by them who have never repeatedly worshipped Viṣṇu with various offerings of eatables. Those men who feed brāhmaṇas with (foods of) various tastes, enjoy (food of) sweet taste abandoned by (i.e. kept away from) the sight of the sinners. Those best brāhmaṇas, proficient in the Vedas, thus fed with (foods of) desired tastes, recited (the Vedic texts) in the pavilion. Being delighted, some danced, some laughed and some cried. A great festivity took place there.

40b-52. Then Śatrughna came there. Rāma, seeing Śatrughna coming along with Puṣkala, could not contain the joy rising (in his heart). Then Rāma got up (to greet his) brother stuck to (i.e. fallen at) his feet. Seeing his brother fallen at his feet, Rāma firmly embraced him who was full of politeness, and whose body was adorned with wounds. Shedding tears in various ways (i.e. profusely) on his head, Rāghava got great delight which is far

away from (i.e. which cannot be expressed in) words. He, overcome with (Puṣkala's) modesty, took polite Puṣkala who had bent at his feet, between his arms, and embraced him much (i.e. closely). Raghunātha himself closely embraced others also like Hanūmat, the hero Sugrīva, so also Aṅgada, Lakṣmīnidhi, the son of Janaka, Pratāpāgrya, conquering his enemies, Subāhu, Sumada, the hero Vimala, the gem(-like) Nīla, Satyavat, Vīramaṇi, and Suratha, the servant of Rāma—who were affectionate and had bowed at his feet. Sumati, the lofty one, being pleased and standing in front of Rāma, closely embraced Śrī Raghupati favouring his devotees. Then Rāma, the best among the eloquent, seeing his minister come near him, spoke with great delight to him: "O Sumati, O best among speakers, O best among ministers, tell me who are these kings. How (i.e. for what reason) have all of them come here? Where (i.e. to which places) did the horse go? By whom was he arrested? How was he released by my brother having great might?"

Śeṣa said:

53. Thus addressed that very intelligent Sumati, the best among ministers, laughed and spoke in a voice grave like the (sound of the thundering) clouds.

Sumati said:

54-59a. How should I speak before you, the omniscient one? You are asking in the manner of the world. You who are everything, know all. Yet, O crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of all kings, always holding your order on my head (i.e. obeying your order), I shall speak; today (i.e. now) listen to it. O lord, by your grace, your horse, adorned with a note on his forehead, wandered on the surface of the earth. No one, proud (through the pride) of his name and power, seized him. (On the contrary) having given their kingdom (to you), they saluted your lotus-like feet. Who, desiring victory (and) free from old age and death, seized (i.e. would seize) the best horse of the killer of Rāvaṇa, the lord of demons? Your lovely horse had just gone to Ahicchatra (city).

59b-62. The king of that city, Sumada, heard that your horse had come; and the very powerful one, with his sons, and surro-

unded by his entire mighty army, offered his entire kingdom in which the elements causing nuisance were destroyed, O lord, That king Sumada who having propitiated the mother, the leader of the worlds, Jagadambikā, obtained a long life and a kingdom free from bad elements, salutes you, served by lords. Accept, with a favourable eye, him who desires to see you for a long time.

63-71. Then in king Subāhu's city, full of army, his son Damana seized the best horse. With that Damana a great battle took place. Having caused (Damana,) the son of Subāhu, to faint, Puṣkala obtained victory. Then Subāhu, getting angry, fought, in the battle with (Hanūmat,) the son of Wind, the servant of your lotus-like feet, and best among the mighty. Being struck by his foot, he obtained the knowledge covered due to the curse. Having dedicated everything to you, he has become the protector of the horse. This king Subāhu, of a lofty body, salutes you. Sprinkle with a favourable glance king Subāhu, proficient in political wisdom. Then the horse that was let loose, plunged into the puddle in Revā. There the mighty Śatrughna obtained the deluding missile. Then the horse went to Śivapura, adorned with the residence of Śiva. You know what happened there, as you yourself had come there. The demon Vidyunmālin was killed; Satyavat then joined (us); O you highly intelligent one, you know about our battle with Suratha. Then the horse, released from Kuṇḍalaka, roamed everywhere. Nobody proud of his might, seized him.

72-80. Then the horse reached Vālmīki's hermitage. O best among men, listen to what curious thing took place there. Then a strongest boy, sixteen years old and having resemblance with you, seeing the horse marked with a note, seized him. Then O best of men, a great battle with Kālajit took place. He was struck by the hero with a sharp missile. Many very mighty ones like Puṣkala were killed in the battle. The crest-jewel of the heroes made even Śatrughna unconscious. Then the brave king, the best among the mighty, feeling great pain in his heart, angrily made him unconscious. When he was made unconscious by the king, another (warrior) came (there). He and this one, having revived, destroyed your army. Having seized the weapons and ornaments of all that were unconscious, and taking (with) them

the two monkeys that were bound, the two (i.e. Kuśa and Lava) went to their own hermitage. Having favoured (us) he gave (back) the great sacrificial horse. The entire army that was dead was brought back to life. Having taken the horse, we have come to your vicinity. I have told you these words (since) I knew this only.

CHAPTER SIXTYSIX

Singing of Rāmāyaṇa by Kuśa and Lava

Śeṣa said:

1. Having come to know that the two boys in Vālmīki's hermitage were his sons, he (i.e. Rāma) went to Vālmīki.

Śrī Rāma said:

2-5. Who are the two boys having my resemblance and the best among the mighty? Why do the two, skilled in archery, live there? Having heard what the minister told about them who easily bound Śatrughna and Hanūmat, I am amazed. Therefore, O sage, tell me all the deeds of the two boys, since a great, desirable delight thus comes to me.

Hearing those words of the intelligent king of kings, he (i.e. Vālmīki) spoke important words, with clear syllables.

Vālmīki said:

6-11a. How is it that you who live in the heart of men, would not have the knowledge (of the deeds)? Yet, to delight you I am telling it now. O king, these two boys, the best among the mighty, who resemble your form, and have charming bodies like yours, (live) in my hermitage. When you abandoned in the fierce forest the pregnant, innocent Jānakī, afflicted with grief and repeatedly crying like an osprey, I saw the daughter of Janaka and brought your righteous wife to (my) hermitage. The sages' sons constructed a lovely hut of leaves for her. In it

she gave birth to the two sons illumining the ten quarters. It is clear that I named them Kuśa and Lava.

11b-15. As the moon waxes in the bright half of the month, they grew there continuously. In due course I performed all (sacraments) like the thread-ceremony. O king, I made them grasp (i.e. taught them) all the Vedas with their limbs. From my mouth they learnt all the Upaniṣads, so also Āyurveda, archery, science of (the use of) weapons, so also the lore of magic; I made them skilled in music. The two, unsteady and fickle of heart, skilled in all lores, sang on the bank of Gaṅgā and in the bowers of creepers and in groves. Then, O best of Raghus, I got the highest delight.

16-21a. Having given them all the missiles, I put my hand on their heads (i.e. I blessed them). Seeing them extremely skilled in singing and proficient in knowing the difference among the notes like the first, the fifth and the third (notes of the gamut), people were wonder-struck. Seeing them like that I made them sing charmingly. Due to my knowledge of the future, I composed the holy Rāmāyaṇa. The two, skilled in (playing upon) the tabor, musical instruments, lutes, sang in every forest and infatuated the beasts and the birds. O Rāma, the sweetness of the singing of your sons is wonderful. One night Varuṇa took the two boys to hear them. By the order of the god the two boys who have a charming age and form, who have crossed the ocean of the science of music, sang sweely there.

21b-28a. Varuṇa along with the members of his family and singers, heard your highly sweet, charming pure deeds. Having heard with Mitra your deeds sweeter than even nectar, O Rāma, Varuṇa was pleased. With the functions of his life and senses taken away by the joy of music, he did not direct (i.e. allow) your sons to come back (to the earth). The two boys, though enticed by charming, great pleasures, did not swerve, as a result of (their) remembering the feet of their teacher and their mother. I too then went to the excellent abode of Varuṇa. O lord, Varuṇa, having affection (for me), worshipped me. To Varuṇa who, though he knew everything about the birth and deeds of the two boys, too asked me (about them), I told everything about the birth of the boys and their acquisition of knowledge.

Hearing that they are Sītā's sons, he (presented them) with garments and ornaments. To honour my words 'the (articles) should be accepted, as they are given by a god,' the two princes accepted whatever was given by Varuṇa who was pleased with their musical instruments, singing, knowledge, age and virtues.

28b-36. Then the fortunate Varuṇa asked me with reference to (i.e. about) Sītā: (He said:) "Sītā is at the head of chaste ladies; she is endowed with beauty and good character; she has brave sons; she is noble; she does not deserve to be abandoned. O descendant of Raghu, there is a great loss (to Rāma) in (i.e. due to) abandoning her. She is the greatest well-being of all well-beings, which never perishes. O Rāma, the hearing about and narration of the account of whom is holy, what loss is thereby if the stupid sinful persons do not realise her greatness? Her purifying behaviour is always before us. Those who reflect upon Sītā's feet, instantly attain perfection; by the mere thought about her, these divine functions of the worlds like origin, maintenance and destruction, take place. Sitā is death; is nectar; (it is) she (who) gives heat; she sends down rain. Your Jānakī is heaven, salvation, penance, deep abstract meditation and charity. None else but your dear Sītā alone creates Brahmā, Śiva and other gods like me. You are the father of all the worlds, and Sītā is the mother. Therefore, your erroneous view about her is not at all proper for (i.e. will not at all lead to) happiness.

37-43. You, the omniscient one, the lord, yourself know that Sītā, the daughter of the Earth, who is dearer to you than your own life, is ever pure. Therefore, you should respect Jānakī who is pure and dear to you. (If you do this,) there will be no mortification of the curse for Sītā or for you. O Vālmīki, O best sage, you should actually tell these words of (i.e. uttered by) me to Rāma, the lord of the worlds." O lord, thus was I told by Varuṇa about your receiving Sītā. I was also told in the same way by all other gods. The gods, demons, all the gandharvas also, with minds full of curiosity, have heard the recital of Rāmāyaṇa done by your two sons. All of them were pleased, and they praised your two sons. By means of their form, singing, age and virtues, they have enticed the three worlds. Whatever was given by the gods to your two sons, has

been accepted. Sages (gave) them blessings; and from others they (received) fame.

44-51. Formerly the sages saw the world to be full of one Rāma (only). Now the entire world has become full of three Rāmas on account of your two sons. Formerly in the world only one form of Cupid was seen; but now with four Cupids (i.e. Cupid, Rāma, Kuśa and Lava), he will be born (i.e. will have four forms). O lord of kings, everywhere else Kuśa and Lava are declared to be Rāma's sons. Then why do you, a learned man, shrink (from accepting it)? O you crest-jewel among those having an auspicious fame, except in the case of your having abandoned Sītā, praise about all your deeds is heard. O Rāma, you who are the lord of the three worlds and are following a householder's life, should accept these two sons who are endowed with knowledge, good character and virtues. They will not leave their mother and stay with you. Therefore, you should invite your sons with their mother. Now by reviving the army, she has given a pious, convincing proof to all the people—even the sinking ones (i.e. sinners) (of her purity). O you who cut off the pride (of your enemies), it is, therefore, not unknown to us or to gods. In her purity (being established), what was (supposed to be) lost for the people, is indeed (proved to be) eternal.

Śeṣa said:

52-54. Thus Vālmīki enlightened Rāma, though he was omniscient. Praising and saluting Vālmīki, he spoke to Lakṣmaṇa: "O deer one, go, resorting to a chariot with Sumantra to bring Sītā, (my) virtuous wife, along with (our) sons. Telling her these my words and also the words of the sage and having (thus) enlightened her, quickly bring her back."

Lakṣmaṇa said:

55-59. O supreme one, O lord of all of us, by your order I shall go. If the queen will come, then my journey will be fruitful. If the chaste one, being displeased with me for my former fault (of having abandoned her in the forest), does not come, then I, coming (back alone) should be forgiven.

Speaking thus to Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa getting with Sumitra and a disciple of the sage into the chariot by the king's order, went to Sītā's hermitage. 'How should I propitiate Sītā who would know (i.e. remember) the former fault of me who always depend upon Rāma?' Thinking like this and (oscillating) between joy and fear, Lakṣmaṇa reached Sītā's hermitage, destroying fatigue.

60-69. Having got down from the chariot, he with his eyes (i.e. sight) checked by tears, repeatedly addressing her 'O noble one, O revered one, O respected one, O auspicious one', and with his entire body trembling, fell at her feet. She who was beside herself by love, caused him to rise (and said): "O dear one, why have you come to the forest dear to the sages. Is the king, the pearl from the pearl-oyster (in the form) of Kauśalyā, all right? Carried away merely by his fame, is he without anger towards me? By all he is called the ocean of auspicious virtues. Entering into the fear of infamy, he appointed you to abandon me. If after that his fame has become spotless, then the fame of me who, even by dying, spread his good fame, will be very firm. O brother-in-law, let me quickly have the proximity of my huśband. Though he has abandoned me, I have not, in the least, forsaken him. The fruit (effect) depends upon the means (cause); but the cause is not dependent upon the fruit. Is Kauśalyā whose son is the protector of the three worlds, who is free from heart-rending grief, and who has always been full of compassion for me, all right? Are all kinsmen like Bharata all right? Is the noble Sumitrā, to whom I am dearer than her own life, all right? Have you also been abandoned like me (by the king) for his fame? What is difficult for the king, to whom his own self is not dear, to abandon (anything)?"

70-86. In this way she asked Rāma's younger brother in many ways. He said to her: "The king is all right. He is asking about your well-being. O queen, Kauśalyā, Sumitrā and other royal ladies that there are, have with love and with blessing asked about your well-being. O you auspicious one, I report to you the salutation, preceded by a question about your well-being, offered to you by Śatrughna and Bharata. O Jānakī, the preceptors, and all their wives, have given you blessings and O

auspicious one, have enquired about your well-being. The self-possessed one, not finding delight in anything else but you, is, truthfully inviting you, O beautiful lady. O daughter of Janaka, the lord, finding all the quarters vacant without you, weeps and makes others (us) also weep. O you born in the Videha country, he always remembers the place where you have stayed and looks upon it as occupied (by you), and says: "This hermitage of Vālmīki where Jānakī spends her time in (talking about) tidings about me, has become blessed." Our lord, while weeping, said something more to you. Listen to it: "There is no doubt that whatever is in the heart of the speaker does find an expression. People call me alone the lord of their lord; but I say that for them the unseen (destiny) is the independent cause. Even the lord of everything follows destiny in all his acts. Then, would not those that are ruled (by him), follow it in (times of) happiness or of misery? That inevitable cause which bore fruit at the time of bending the bow (of Śiva), the frenzy of Kaikeyī, the death of my father, going into the forest, your being kidnapped there, crossing of the ocean, killing of the lord of demons, at the time of receiving you (back), the truthfulness of my pledge, at the time of the murmur about (you, my) chaste wife, at the time of my again being connected with my relatives, my acquiring the kingdom, O beautiful lady, again at the time of separation from you, is again succeeding at the time of our re-union. Due to that (destiny) which falsified the Veda, due to which I followed (the ordinary) people (in abandoning you), I have become the first cause. The wise people follow destiny. Destiny wears out by fruition (enjoyment and suffering). That you (have exhausted) in the forest.

87-92. O Sītā, O you not seen by people (or by light), my causeless love for you, which is growing, having abandoned you (now) invites you respectfully. The merging of the purity of love takes place (i.e. the purity of love disappears), even if a fault is suspected (to be present in an individual). The wise ones should always enjoy that (pure) love. O good one, I have purified my love for you. It is not otherwise. It should be thought (i.e. borne in mind) that by me, following eminent persons, has been protected even this world in all conditions for the sake of purity, (even) through our censure, O queen;

for due to the acts of the great this confused world would perish. The fame of both of us is bright; the love of us is splendid; the families of us are bright; the acts of us are splendid. On the earth there would be bright singers of the fame of us. Those who are the devotees of us go to the end of (i.e. cross) the ocean of the worldly existence."

93-100. Being pleased with your virtues you were thus addressed by him. Make your mind compassionate to see the lotus-like feet of your husband. For you are prepared lovely garments, great ornaments, fragrant unguents, charming scents. For your delight Rāma has sent chariots and female servants; so also an umbrella, white chowries, elephants and horses, O beautiful one. Followed by me and praised by best brāhmaṇas and by bards and panegyrists, saluted by the ladies in the city, served by warriors, covered with flowers by celestial ladies, giving wealth to brāhmaṇas as desired by them, having put in front the two sons mounted on elephants, you the queen, the ruler of men, (should) go to Ayodhyā, your city. When you have gone there and are united with your husband, today there will be songs (sung) for all royal ladies and all the wives of sages that have come from all (places), so also for those (that have come) from Kosala.

Śeṣa said:

101-104. Hearing this request that respectable Sītā said to him: "I have not been the cause of the king's fame; on the contrary I myself am infamy. Void of good *dharma*, *kāma* and *artha*, what can I accomplish for him? Under the circumstances who would have faith in your autocratic king? By one like me born in an auspicious family the faults of my husband that are in my mind should never be told directly or indirectly. He does not move away from my heart in that form in which he settled in my heart at the time of (our) marriage.

105-109. O Lakṣmaṇa, these two sons of me are born from the portion of his lustre. They are the sprouts of his family; they are very brave; they are skilled in archery. Take them to their father and carefully fondle them. Staying here at will I shall propitiate Rāma by means of penance. O noble one, you should tell (i.e. convey) my salutation to the feet of the revered ones;

so also (you should tell) all after going from here about my well-being." Sītā directed her sons (as): "Go to your father. You have to serve him only, who would give you his position." The two boys, Kuśa and Lava, though thus ordered, were, unwilling (to go), (but) went there with Lakṣmaṇa due to the words of (i.e. due to being ordered by) Vālmīki.

110-111. The two sons went near the lotus-like feet of Vālmīki. Lakṣmaṇa also, going along with the two boys, saluted him. These i.e. Vālmīki, Lakṣmaṇa, and the two boys—gathered, and knowing Rāma to be in the assembly, they, being eager (to see him), went (there).

112-120. The very intelligent Lakṣmaṇa, full of joy and sorrow, having saluted (Rāma), reported to Rāma all the words of (i.e. uttered by) Sītā. By the words of Sītā's message Rāma fell into a swoon (i.e. he became unconscious). Having regained consciousness he said to Lakṣmaṇa who knew the way of life: "O friend, go there again and having told her my words bring her quickly by making great effort; well-being to you. (You should say to her:) 'Have you, practising penance in the forest, thought of, heard of, or seen any other course than (coming to) me, that, O Jānakī, you are not coming (to me)? By your own desire you went from here to the forest, dear to sages. You honoured those wives of the sages and saw the groups of sages. O beautiful lady, your desire is fulfilled. Then why no you not today come (back)? Taking note of (i.e. considering) your own desire you would not find fault with me. O you lady of beautiful thighs, to a lady, whether she goes or does not go (away from her husband), her husband alone, whether he is without virtues or is an ocean of virtues, is the recourse. Then what about him who is desired by her mind? Whatever act is done by a noble woman, is (done) for pleasing her husband. I was pleased with you formerly; now I am extremely pleased (with you). Sacrifice, muttering prayers, penance, charity, vows, (visits to) sacred places, (showing) pity etc., all become fruitful and deities are pleased, when I am pleased. There is no doubt about it.'"

Śeṣa said:

121-122. Taking this message to (i.e. for) Sītā from the lord of the world (i.e. Rāma) Lakṣmaṇa bowed down through

attachment for Rāma and said to the lord of souls: "I shall tell those words full of politeness, which this one has uttered for bringing back Sītā."

123-125. Saying so and saluting the feet of Raghunātha, Lakṣmaṇa getting into a speedy chariot quickly went to Sītā. Having looked at the fortunate and very energetic sons of Rāma, making his face lovely by having a smile on Vālmīki said: "O sons, playing on the lute, sing (songs describing) the wonderful good deeds of Rāma, adorning them with your sweet voice."

126-133. Thus addressed, the two noble sons (of Rāma) sang Rāma's good deeds which give great religious merit, which were beautified with good sentences and words, in which the way of righteousness was actually present, in which chastity was present, so also were present brotherly affection and devotion to the teacher, where appeared in a bodily form the behaviour of the master and the servant, where punishment to one behaving unrighteously was actually (found to be inflicted) from (i.e. by) the descendant of Raghu. The singing pervaded the world; even in heaven gods remained (motionless); hearing which singing even kinnaras fainted in a moment. The entire assembly there on hearing the sound of the lute adorned with beating of time and measure, became (motionless) like a doll painted (in a picture). Rāma and other kings shed tears of joy; they being enticed by the singing of the fifth note, remained like (being) painted (i.e. motionless). Then seeing (Rāma) intent on (giving) a gift they laughed and with their eyebrows knit a little spoke to the best sage Vālmīki:

134-136. "O sage, a great injustice is being done by this king, since he (trying) to allure us desires to give us gold coins. Accepting gifts is recommended for brāhmaṇas and not for others. A king (i.e. a kṣatriya) intent upon receiving a gift is fit for hell only. (This) king is enjoying the kingdom, let free by us through compassion. How does he, adorned with good fortune, desire to give (us) gold coins?"

137-140. Vālmīki, full of compassion, looked at them who spoke like this and told them: "O you who are most prudent, know (this to be) your father." Hearing these words of the sage the two boys, full of modesty, and extremely pure due to their devotion to their mother, stuck to (i.e. fell at) the feet of

the king. Full of joy, Rāma firmly clasped the two boys to his body. He thought that the actual likenesses of his wife had stood by him. O best sage, the assembly too, seeing the charming faces of Rāma's sons, regarded Jānakī's devotion to her husband to be true.

141. Having heard this spoken from the mouth of Śeṣa, Vātsyāyana said: "I have a mind (i.e. I desire) to hear Rāmāyaṇa, full of all morality."

Vātsyāyana said:

142. At what time was this great Rāmāyaṇa composed? Why did he (i.e. Vālmīki) compose it? What is described in it? Tell me that.

Śeṣa said:

143-146a. Once the brāhmaṇa Vālmīki went to a great forest where there were tāla (trees), tamāla (trees) and blossomed kiṁśuka (trees); where ketakī (tree) made the forest fragrant with its pollen and was seen like the great lustre of the moon by having white heads; where there were many blossomed trees like campaka, bakula, and kovidāra and kuraṇṭaka. The forest sounded with the notes of cuckoos and the hummings of bees; it was charming everywhere and full of lovely birds.

146b-149a. There a pair of curlews, which was lovely, which was afflicted with Cupid's arrows, which was delighted with each other, which was (having) affection for each other, enjoyed. Then, a certain cruel hunter, greedy for eating flesh, came there, and killed one lovely (bird) of the two. Then the female curlew seeing her husband (i.e. her mate) killed by the hunter, became afflicted, and giving out loud cries through grief, lamented.

149b-151a. Then the sage (Vālmīki) who was angry, touching the holy water of the river, cursed the hunter who killed the (male) curlew: "O hunter, since you killed one of the two curlews infatuated by love, you will not attain glory for eternal years."

151b-153a. Then the brāhmaṇas—his followers, thinking that the composition of a verse had taken place, were delighted,

and praising the sage with the words 'Well (done), well (done)', they said: Lord, in the words that rose from the curse Sarasvatī has produced a verse. O best sage, this verse has been an extremely attractive one. O best brāhmaṇa, then the mind of the sage was extremely delighted.

153b-157. At that time, Brahmā having arrived with his sons said (these) words to Vālmīki: "O best sage, you are fortunate, (since) Sarasvatī, residing in your mouth, has become a verse. Therefore, compose the lovely Rāmāyaṇa of sweet words, by which your fame will last till the end of the world. Blessed is the speech in (your) mouth which is accompanied by the name of Rāma. Other stories about sensual love of men generate sin only. Therefore, compose the biography of Rāma, well-known in the world, by which the sins of the sinners will perish at (i.e. by means of) every word."

158-162. Saying so the Creator along with other gods disappeared. Then he thought; 'How would Rāmāyaṇa be (composed)?' Then on the charming bank of the river he became engrossed in meditation. Then in his heart appeared the lovely Rāma. Seeing Rāma who was dark like the petals of a blue lotus and whose eyes were like lotuses, and observing his past, future and present deeds, he met with great joy, and composed Rāmāyaṇa full of charming words and many kinds of metres, in which Rāmāyaṇa there are, O sinless one, six very charming divisions. (They are): Bāla, Āraṇyaka, Kiṣkindhā, and Sundara; so also Yuddha and Uttara.

163. O highly intelligent one, a man who listens to these six is freed from (i.e. absolved of) all sins.

164-167. In it, in the Bālakāṇḍa (is the description how) king Daśaratha who was pleased, obtained by performing the sacrifice to obtain a male issue, four sons, actually Viṣṇu, the eternal Brahman. Then (he, i.e. Rāma) goes to Viśvāmitra's sacrifice, marries Sītā, (meets) Paraśurāma, comes (back) to the city (of Ayodhyā), is allotted the position of heir-apparent; (then) at the words of his mother, he, with his wife and Lakṣmaṇa went to the forest after having crossed Gaṅgā, (then) to Citrakūṭa mountain. Having heard that he (lived) in the forest, Bharata, the wise one, went to his brother. Not securing him

(i.e. unable to get him back), he himself lived in Nandigrāma. (This is what) you listen to in the Bāla (kāṇḍa).

168-170. The description in the next takes place in Araṇya (i.e. forest). It describes his residence in the hermitages of the sages. At places there is a minute description. (Then there is the description of) the cutting of Śūrpaṇakhā's nose; (so also is the description of) the destruction of Khara and Dūṣaṇa; (then of) the killing of the illusory (deer) Mārīca; (the description of) the kidnapping of his beautiful wife by the demon (Rāvaṇa); the wandering of him separated (from Sītā) in the forest; (thus) he was endowed with human deeds. (Then follows the description of) his seeing Kabandha there, and his arrival at Pampā; (then is the description of) his meeting with Hanūmat.

171-174. This (kāṇḍa or division where these events are described) is called Vana (or Āraṇya kāṇḍa). O sage, listen to (the description occurring in) the next division. I shall abridge it and tell you (i.e. I shall tell it to yon in brief). The breaking of the seven tāla (trees); the wonderful killing of Vālin; giving the kingdom to Sugrīva, and the description of the trees; then the message (i.e. advice) of Lakṣmaṇa about his act (i.e. duty); expulsion of Sugrīva; so also the full description of the army, and search for Sītā; then meeting Sampāti, crossing the ocean, meeting with the monkeys on the other shore. (This is the description that occurs in) the wonderful Kiṣkindhā (kāṇḍa or division).

175-182. Listen to (the description occurring) in the Sundara-kāṇḍa where (you find) the wonderful story of Rāma. The error of the monkey of seeing the picture in every house; then (Hanūmat's) seeing Sītā there, and (his) talk with Sītā; breaking of the forest (by Hanūmat); the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat) being bound by the angry (demons); then (the description of) the burning of Laṅkā; then joining the monkeys; then the giving of the token of recognition (given by) Rāma; then the march of the army; then (the description of) constructing a bridge over the ocean; meeting with Śuka and Sāraṇa. (The kāṇḍa which contains) this (description) is called Sundara. In the Yuddha (kāṇḍa, is given the description of) union with Sītā. In the Uttara (kāṇḍa) (is given the description of) the conversation with sages and the commencement of the (horse-) sacrifice. There

are many tales about Rāma, which destroy the sins of the listeners. Thus these are said to be the six Kāṇḍas (i.e. divisions, listening to which) removes the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder. I have told you in brief (this) very charming (account). That is Rāmāyaṇa destroying great sins, having twentyfour thousand (verses), and marked with (i.e. having) six Kāṇḍas. Having heard it, Rāma was pleased, and putting (i.e. seating) his sons on the seat, and embracing them closely, he remembered (his) dear Sītā.

CHAPTER SIXTYSEVEN

The Commencement of the Sacrifice

Śeṣa said :

1-5. Then Lakṣmaṇa, having come (there) repeatedly saluted her, and with (his voice) faltering through love, he told her the words uttered by Rāma. Having seen Lakṣmaṇa full of modesty to have come (there) and having heard Rāma's message through his mouth, Sītā being abashed, said: "O Lakṣmaṇa, how (i.e. why) have you come? I forsaken by Rāma in the great forest and remembering Rāma, am staying in Vālmīki's hermitage." Having heard the words that came out from her mouth Lakṣmaṇa said: "O mother, O you chaste lady, Rāma is inviting you again and again. A chaste wife does not bring to her mind the fault committed by her husband; therefore, seated in an excellent charriot, come with me."

6-10. Hearing these words Jānakī who looked upon her husband as god, gave up the anger in her heart and sat in the chariot with Lakṣmaṇa. Having saluted all the female ascetics and the sages bright with (the knowledge of) the Vedas, and mentally remembering Rāma, she sat in the chariot and went to the city (of Ayodhyā). She having costly ornaments, reached the city in due course. She reached the river Sarayū where Rāma was waiting. Having got down from the chariot with Lakṣmaṇa, the charming one, devoted to her husband, stuck to (i.e. fell at)

the feet of Rāma. Rāma, having seen that Jānakī, beside herself due to love, (said): "O good lady, I shall complete the sacrifice with you."

11-16. Having saluted Vālmīki and other best brāhmaṇas, she, eager to salute the feet of his mothers, went (to them). Having showered blessings on that dear Jānakī, the mother of the heroes, Kauśalyā became glad in many ways. Kaikeyī, seeing the daughter of the Videha-king bowing at her feet, gave her the blessing: "With your husband and sons live long". Sumitrā, seeing the daughter of the Videha-king bowing at her feet, gave her blessing giving sons and grandsons. O brāhmaṇa, the chaste Sītā, dear to Rāmacandra, having fully saluted them indeed obtained great joy. Seeing the religiously wedded wife of Rāmacandra come there, the Pitcher-born (i.e. Agasti), disregarding the golden (image of Rāma's) wife, placed (in its place) (his) chaste wife.

17-19. In the sacrifice Rāma at that time shone with Sītā, like the Moon having rising lustre in the autumn along with the star (Rohiṇī). With his chaste wife Vaidehī, he performed the sacrifice removing all sins when the lovely time had come. (People) seeing Rāma engaged with Sītā in the sacrifice, were, being full of eagerness, very much delighted.

20-34. At that time of the best sacrifice Rāma said to the intelligent Vasiṣṭha: "O lord, what needful things should be done hereafter?" Hearing Rāma's words the very intelligent preceptor said: "Worship of brāhmaṇas, giving delight to them, should be done. Formerly (king) Marutta[1] made the sacrifice ready with preparations. Then brāhmaṇas were gratified with (gifts of) money etc. The brāhmaṇas were unable to carry large loads of the gifts. The brāhmaṇas unable to carry the loads of gifts threw them in the region of Himavat. Therefore, O foremost king having wealth, O best king, you too give gifts etc. to brāhmaṇas, so that there will be excellent (i.e. great) satisfaction." Hearing this the foremost king, looking upon Agasti as venerable, first worshipped Brahmā's son, the treasure of penance. He worshipped delightful Agastya with his wife by means of many loads of gems and various loads of gold surrounded by (i.e. together with)

1. Marutta—A king of the solar race, who is said to have performed a sacrifice in which the gods took part as waiters.

countries and people giving great delight. In the same way he honoured Satyavatī's son Vyāsa with gems, gold coins, and various countries. He worshipped Cyavana with his wife with good gems. He also honoured all other sages, priests, the treasures of penance, in many ways with heaps of gems and loads of gold. At that time, in the sacrifice Rāma gave large presents to brāhmaṇas. He gave a lakh of gold coins to each brāhmaṇa. He gave various gifts to the helpless, blind and poor with lovely gems given according to their satisfaction. There he gave, as laid down in the sacred texts, variegated garments, soft food, giving joy to all. The city crowded with well-fed and delighted people, grown (more populous) with all beings, surrounded (i.e. crowded) by women became very much delighted. The brāhmaṇa, the pitcher-born sage (i.e. Agasti), seeing him (i.e. Rāma) giving gifts to all, was very much delighted.

35-41. Then he called sixty-four kings with their wives, to bring nectar-like water to bathe (the horse). Rāma with Sītā, adorned with all (kinds of) ornaments went to bring water in a pitcher of a golden colour. Saumitra (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa) also (went) with Urmilā, king Bharata with Māṇḍavī, Śatrughna with Śrutakīrti, and Puṣkala with Kāntimatī. Subāhu (went) with Satyavatī, Satyavat with Vīrabhūṣā, Sumada with Satkīrti, and king Vimala with his queen. King Vīramaṇi went with lovely Śrutavatī, Lakṣmīnidhi with Komalā, Riputāpa with Aṅgasenā, Bibhīṣaṇa with Mahāmūrti, and Pratāpāgrya with Pratītā. Ugrāśva (went) with Kāmagamā, Nīlaratna with Adhiramyā. Suratha (went) with Sumanohārī and the monkey with Mohanā. The sage Vasiṣṭha sent these (and other) kings.

42-44. Vasiṣṭha who knew the sacred hymns, having gone to Sarayū flooded with holy and auspicious water, consecrated the water: "O water, purify this horse with this charming water for the sacrifice of Rāmacandra, the protector of the entire world." All kings like Rāma brought that water touched by the sage to the pavilion praised by best brāhmaṇas.

45-50. The pitcher-born sage (i.e. Agasti) having bathed the horse, white like milk, consecrated him with a hymn through the hands of Rāma: "O great horse, purify me in this crowd of the brāhmaṇas. May all the delighted gods be pleased by your sacrifice." Saying so, king Rāma with Sītā touched him. Then all the

kings through curiosity looked upon it as a wonder. They said to one another: "What does that Rāma by remembering whom men are freed from great sins, say?" When king Rāma spoke like this, the pitcher-born sage (i.e. Agasti), consecrated a sword and gave it into Rāma's hand. When Rāma held and touched the sword, the horse gave up the beast's form and assumed a divine form at the sacrifice.

51-53. Surrounded by celestial nymphs, fanned by chowries, and decorated with a necklace, he got into an excellent divine car. Then all the people seeing him to have given up the horse's form and to have assumed an excellent divine form, were wonder-struck at that sacrifice. Then that very righteous Rāma, knowing it himself, and making the people all around to know it, asked him of a divine form:

54. "Who are you who have obtained a divine form; for what reason are you turned into a horse? How are you accompanied by a divine woman? What do you desire to do? Tell it (to us)." Having heard the words of Rāma, the god said to the king (i.e. Rāma):

55-56. He laughed, and spoke very charming words with a voice resembling that of clouds: "To you who move without and within, there is nothing anywhere that is not known. Yet, I shall tell you who ask me, everything properly.

57-67. O Rāma, O tormentor of enemies, in the former existence I, an exteremely righteous brāhmaṇa, behaved in a manner opposed to the Vedas. Formerly, sometime I went to the bank of Hutapāpā which was charming with trees and lovely everywhere. O you of mighty arms, having bathed there and gratified the dead ancestors, having duly given gifts, I took to meditation upon you (in a manner) acceptable to the Vedas. O King, at that time many kings had come there. To deceive them, I practised this religious hypocrisy. An excellent enclosed place was fixed with the preparations for many sacrifices. That charming and big place was covered with garments and had wooden rings on the tops of sacrificial posts. The smoke rising from the sacrificial fire and having a wonderful form, made the wide firmament charming and matchless. I whose body was beautified with many beautiful marks, whose penance was great, who was adorned with darbhas, who had the sacred fuel in his

hands, was indeed religious hypocrisy in an embodied form. (At that time) Durvāsas, of a great lustre, roaming at will over the world, came there on the bank of the river Dhūtapāpā. Before him he saw me practising religious hypocrisy, observing silence, not offering him materials of worship, arrogant, and not uttering words of welcome. Seeing (me), the very intelligent sage, overpowered with anger like the ocean on a parvan-day, cursed me, a religious hypocrite: 'O you of a wicked mind, O you mean ascetic, since you are practising religious hypocrisy on the bank of the river, obtain beasthood (i.e. be born as a beast) which is fully censurable'.

68-74. Having heard that curse given (by him), I became extremely distressed at that time; and I indeed seized the feet of that sage Durvāsas. Then, O Rāma, the brāhmaṇa showed me an excellent favour. (He said:) 'O ascetic, be a horse at the sacrifice of the king of kings. Then, due to contact with his (i.e. Rāma's) hand, go, after taking up a divine, charming form, free from religious hypocrisy, to that highest position.' Even that curse given by him became favourable to me, since I obtained the lovely touch of your hand. O Rāma, I have obtained the touch of your hand, difficult to be obtained, which was difficult to be had by gods etc. even after many births. O great king, give me an order. Through your favour I shall reach that great, eternal place of you, which is free from misery etc. O king, O lord of men, through your favour I shall go to that place where there is no grief, no old age, no death, no confusion about time."

75-83. Saying so to him and turning round, he got into that excellent divine, car decked with jewels, and very much honoured by all gods. By the grace of Rāma's feet he went to an eternal place, free from re-birth, and bereft of grief and delusion. Having heard what he had told, the other people knew Rāma (properly), and mad with joy they were amazed. O brāhmaṇa, O you very intelligent one, even if Viṣṇu is remembered with religious hypocrisy it gives salvation. Then what (will happen) by avoiding religious hypocrisy! Somehow or other Rāma should be much remembered, by which a man obtains the highest position, difficult to be obtained (even) by gods etc. The sages having seen that wonder regarded themselves blessed. When the god

who formerly had a horse's form, went to heaven, Rāma said to the treasures of penance and the best among those who know the Vedas: "O brāhmaṇa(s), what should I do? The horse is lost; he has obtained happiness. How will the sacrifice, gratifying all deities, will (now) proceed? May the sages do that by which the gods would be gratified, my sacrifice will be excellent, and I would have what is told by the sacred rules."

84-87. Hearing these words, the best sage Vasiṣṭha, skilled in knowing the hearts of all sages, said: "Quickly bring camphor, due to which gods having first received oblation, will now accept it, after being impelled by my words." Hearing these words Rāma quickly brought very shining camphor for pleasing the gods very much. Then the sage, with his heart very much delighted, invoked the wonderful gods. All of them surrounded by their attendants, came that moment only.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

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PREFACE

This forty-fourth volume in the series of *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* comprises the sixth part of the Padma-Purāṇa containing the remaining chapters (68-117) of the fifth section of the Purāṇa, viz. *Pātālakhaṇḍa.*

Like the foregoing parts this part also contains a number of interesting topics and a good variety of fascinating stories and anecdotes characterized by fine dramatic qualities and poetical fancy and flavour. The most dominating themes are the worship of god Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu and the importance of the month of Vaiśākha for Viṣṇu worship, and the worship of Śiva and his Phallus, and the efficacy of sacred ash therein. Some striking observations of the Purāṇa in this part are noted here.

Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Being and the three gods of the Trinity are equal to a croreth of a croreth (i.e. insignificant) part of his feet.

The purification of Viṣṇu's devotees is accomplished in twelve ways, viz. purification of the feet by going round the idol with devotion etc., purification of the hands by taking leaves and flowers etc. for his worship, purification of speech by describing his virtues etc., that of ears and eyes by listening to stories of Kṛṣṇa, witnessing his festival etc., and of the head, of the heart, of the nose and so on in ways described in ch. 78.

Worship of Kṛṣṇa is of five kinds, viz. *Abhigamana, Upādāna, Yoga, Svādhyāya* and *Ijyā* as explained in ch. 78.

Thirty-two offences against Viṣṇu such as going to the Lord's temple in vehicles, drinking spirituous liquor etc. are described in ch. 79.

Five sacred rites are prescribed for a devotee of Viṣṇu, such as marking the body with a mark of conch etc.

While the first three castes should worship in the manner laid down in the scriptures, women and śūdras who are exempted from this should propitiate Viṣṇu by uttering his name.

In addition to the common flowers used in worship to please

Viṣṇu eight internal flowers are described in ch. 84, such as harmlessness, control of senses etc. A few external flowers are also mentioned.

Devotion is said to be of various kinds in ch. 85, viz. (1) mental, (2) of speech, and (3) of body; and again (1) secular, (2) Vedic, and (3) spiritual.

The name of Gaṅgā is said to be very efficacious in destroying sins. If a man at a distance of thousands of yojanas remembers Gaṅgā, he, even though a sinner, obtains the highest position.

Five kinds of sons are described in chapters 87-88.

In ch. 90 beauty, good character, truthfulness, nobleness, religious merit, sweetness, internal and external purity, devotion to husband, service to him, patience and affection have been called the eleven ornaments of a woman.

In ch. 94 it is said that there is no other worthy recipient than Brāhmaṇas; there is no god higher than Viṣṇu; no holy place like Gaṅgā; no prayer like Gāyatrī, no vow like that of Dvādaśī, no friend like wife; no virtue like compassion; no happiness like freedom; no āśrama like that of a householder; no better conduct than truthfulness; no greater pleasure than contentment; and no better month than Vaiśākha.

In ch. 96 among those who go to hell are included those who look upon Brahmā, Śaṅkara and Viṣṇu as different from one another, those who cause obstruction when wealth is being given to Brāhmaṇas, who are sceptic and atheists, who torment their wives, who feed their own belly, are gluttons, break a family, cut off the bond of love and who test the Brāhmaṇas. Of all pious acts giving gifts alone is considered the greatest and no gift is said to be equal to that of food, water or a cow.

In ch. 98 it is said that there is an expiation for a very great sinner, a rogue or a malevolent one but there is no expiation for an ungrateful person.

In ch. 105 the application of bhasma (sacred ash) on various parts of the body is praised as most efficacious in destroying the sins committed by those parts, and besmearing the forehead with ash is said to destroy the writing of Yama as fire destroys a writing on a tablet.

In ch. 114 it is said that in Kṛtayuga meditation alone is the best, in Tretā sacrifice is the best, in Dvāpara worship is the

best, while in Kaliyuga charity and recital of Viṣṇu's name are the best.

In ch. 117 it is declared that no benefit comes from worship which is performed with stolen or unjustly procured material.

In ch. 116 the story of an ancient Rāmāyaṇa is narrated which differs from the familiar one by sage Vālmīki in some minor points. Daśaratha is said to have four queens instead of three, viz. Kauśalyā, Sumitrā, Surūpā and Suveṣā; Rāma's army crosses the ocean with the help of Śiva's bow named Ājigava; Rāvaṇa is the first to be killed by Rāma followed by the killing of Kumbhakarṇa. In this so-called ancient version supposed to have been composed much before the time of the historical Rāma many dramatic episodes including those connected with Viśvāmitra's hermitage, the bringing of Sañjīvanī by Hanumān, the abandonment of Sītā etc. are missing.

In ch. 115 thirty-six Purāṇas—18 major and 18 minor ones—have been listed in the following order: Brāhma, Pādma, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, Bhāgavata, Bhaviṣya, Nāradīya, Mārkaṇḍeya, Āgneya, Brahmavaivarta, Laiṅga, Vāmana, Skānda, Mātsya, Kaurma, Vārāha, Gāruḍa and Brahmāṇḍa (*major*); and Sanatkumāra, Nārasiṁha, Māṇḍa, Daurvāsasa, Nāradīya, Kāpila, Mānava, Auśanasa, Brahmāṇḍa, Vāruna, Kālikā, Māheśa, Sāmba, Saura, Pārāśara, Mārīca, Bhārgava and Kaumāra (*upapurāṇas*: *minor ones*). There is duplication of two, viz. Nāradīya and Brahmāṇḍa without any explanation on the part of the author.

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—Editor

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ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)—Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, v—verse, vv—verses, Ftn—Footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo.—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S.M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F. E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series, MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch. S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, MLBD, Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgītā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha)
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka, Com. by Mahidāsa
DB	*Devī Bhāgavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N.L. De, Oriental Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* by Hastings
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa*, ed. R. S. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P.V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇi*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradīya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣīya Prācīna Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd. P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Śat. Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

CHAPTER SIXTYEIGHT

The Horse Sacrifice Ends

Śeṣa said:

1-6. Indra together with the gods tasting at the sacrifice the oblations cooked and seen by Rāmacandra, did not obtain satisfaction. Viṣṇu, Śiva, so also Brahmā having four faces, Varuṇa, Kubera and other gods tasted the oblations refined by Vasiṣṭha. The best brāhmaṇas also were as it were oppressed with hunger after taking the food. The treasure of pity (i.e. Rāma), having gratified all gods with the oblations, and being urged on by Vasiṣṭha, did what was necessary to be done according to the rules. The brāhmaṇas were pleased with the gifts; the great gods were pleased with the oblations. All being gratified on receiving their portions, went home. To the priests headed by the hotṛ (i.e. the priest reciting the prayers of the Ṛgveda at the sacrifice) he gave kingdoms in the four directions. Those brāhmaṇas who were pleased, gave blessings to Rāma in an auspicious manner.

7-18. Then having offered the full oblation, Vasiṣṭha said to the good ladies: "You should felicitate the king who has completed the sacrifice." Hearing those words, those ladies gladly scattered parched grains over Rāma who had vanquished Cupid by means of his handsomeness and was adorned with great gems. Surrounded by crores of kings going on foot, he went to the best river surrounded by groups of birds. As the lord of stars with his lustre going up and being surrounded by his wives, shines, in the same way Rāma surrounded by hosts of kings shone. Coming to know about that great festival, all people were hurrying and their eyes had become steady after seeing the face of the husband of Sītā. The people, seeing the lord of kings going with Sītā to the river and having desired since long to see (Rāma) were delighted. Many actors and singers, singing the bright glory (of Rāma), followed the lord of the earth saluted by the entire world. The female dancers, dancing there and disturbing the minds of their husbands, and sprinkling (water) over them with syringes, went to serve Rāma.

Smearing the great king with turmeric and saffron and smearing one another, they obtained highest joy. They, with necklaces of pearls put on the pairs of their breasts and marked with ear-rings of gold, touching the pairs of their ears, went along the path crowded with men and women. They duly reached the river flooded with auspicious and holy water.

19-24. Having gone there, Rāma with Sītā followed by Vasiṣṭha and others entered the holy water. All the kings and the people entered after him. With lovely syringes they sprinkled the water purified by the dust of his feet and saluted by the entire world over one another. All with very red eyes enjoyed more than they expected. That righteous Rāma, having sported for a long time along with Sītā with the waves in the flood of that auspicious water, again went out (of the river). The king having put on a silken garment, having (worn) a crown and ear-rings, having excellent bracelets with the beauty of armlets, having the charm of a crore of Cupids, and being praised by best kings, shone. The noble-minded king, having fixed the sacrificial post adorned with excellent colours on the bank of the river, obtained the wonderful glory in the three worlds, which was not easily obtained by other kings.

25. Thus, along with the daughter of king Janaka he, performing three horse-sacrifices, obtained matchless fame in the three worlds very difficult to be obtained even by gods.

26-38. O dear one, I who was asked (by you), have described (to you) the good story of Rāma. I have described the sacrifice in detail. O brāhmaṇa, what do you ask again? He who, through devotion for Viṣṇu, hears the (description of) the good sacrifice of Rāma, would, after having crossed (i.e. overcome) the sin of killing a brāhmaṇa, obtain the eternal Brahman. A sonless man would obtain sons; a poor man would obtain wealth; a person suffering from a disease gets rid of it; one that is bound gets free from bondage. Hearing Rāma's story even a wicked cāṇḍāla obtains the highest position. What to say of the best brāhmaṇa, solely intent on devotion! By remembering Rāma sinners would obtain the highest position, the highest heaven difficult to be obtained by gods like Indra. Those men who remember the best of the Raghus, are blessed.

In a moment they, having crossed the mundane existence, go to inexhaustible happiness. Every letter (of the story of Rāma) is a wild fire burning the bamboo in the form of a brāhmaṇa's murder. One should worship that teacher who makes one hear (i.e. recites to one) that. Having heard the story, one should give the reader along with his wife a couple of cows after having honoured him with garments, ornaments and food. O best brāhmaṇa, having fashioned charming, excellent, golden images of Rāma and Sītā shining with ear-rings and adorned with rings, they should be presented to a brāhmaṇa only. His deities and dead ancestors would then reach Viṣṇu's heaven only. You formerly asked me about Rāma's story. I told it to you. O brāhmaṇa, what else should I tell you, the intelligent one. Those who listen to this story, destroying the heap of (sins due to) brāhmaṇa-murders, go to the highest position, very difficult to be obtained by gods. There is no scope for doubt here that he who kills a cow or his son, or he who drinks liquor, or who violates his teacher's bed (i.e. his wife), becomes purified in a moment.

CHAPTER SIXTYNINE

The Story of Kṛṣṇa Begins

The sages said:

1. O glorious one, we have duly heard from you the (description of) Rāma's horse-sacrifice. Now tell us the greatness (i.e. glory) of noble Śrīkṛṣṇa.

Sūta said:

2-3. O best sages, (please) listen to the nectar-like story of Śrīkṛṣṇa. I shall tell you what Pārvatī asked the lord of beings. Once goddess Pārvatī with her mind affectionate towards Śiva, having saluted him with reverence, said these words to him:

Pārvatī said:

4-5. The place of Viṣṇu staying without and within the crores of universes, is beyond them, is the chief one, the best one, and excellent. There is no place superior to the one which is Kṛṣṇa's charming place, dear to him. O great lord, I desire to hear it all. (Please) tell it.

The lord said:

6-15a. The highest, excellent secret place dear (to Viṣṇu) is more secret than a secret place, is holy, is very wonderful, and gives great joy. O goddess, it is great, very difficult to reach among all the places that are difficult to reach; it is full of all power, and is concealed among all places. This place of Viṣṇu is the chief among the places of the Sātvatas, is extremely difficult to reach, is eternal, is called Vṛndāvana, and is situated above the universe. It is the complete Brahman, happiness and glory, is eternal, is bliss, and is imperishable. Vaikuṇṭha is a part of its portion; on the earth there is Vṛndāvana itself. Whatever is the glory of Goloka is settled in Gokula. Whatever glory is (found) in Vaikuṇṭha is settled in Dvārakā. Whatever is the glory of that highest Brahman, it always resorts to Vṛndāvana. In the forest Kṛṣṇa's abode is especially great among them. Since that which is named Māthuraka is solely dear to Viṣṇu, therefore in the three worlds the earth is blessed. His own abode, named the region of Māthura, is superior; it is a concealed, multiform place, situated within a city. The Māthura region is of the form of a thousand-petalled lotus. Due to the roaming about of Viṣṇu's disc, the wonderful abode of Viṣṇu (has come about). Its pericarp and petals are extensive, and has sprung up with secret trees.

15b-23a. The twelve groves are important. In the order of importance they are: Bhadra, Śrī, Loha, Bhāṇḍira, Mahā, Tāla, Khadīraka, Bakula, Kumuda, Kāmya, Madhu(vana) and Vṛndāvana. They are twelve in number. Seven of them are (situated) in the west of Kālindī. The five on the east are (together) called Pañcavana (i.e. the five groves). There is a great, secret grove called Gokula and also Madhu(vana)-Vṛndāvana. This latter is

called the place of Kṛṣṇa's sport-delight. (Then there are:) Kadamba, Khaṇḍana, Nandavana, Nandiśvara, Nandanandana-khaṇḍa, Palāśa, Aśoka, Ketakī, Sugandhamānasa, Kaila, Amṛta, the place of his eating (food); Sukhaprasādhana, Vatsaharaṇa, Śeṣaśāyika; the village Śyāmapūrvodadhi, so also the city Cakrabhānu; Saṁketa, Dvipada, dusty due to the sports of children; Kāmadruma, Sulalita and the grove Utsuka. It is a place of the enjoyment of pastimes of various kinds, so also of the enjoyment of many sports; Nāgavistāraviṣṭambha (literally, stopping of the expanse of the serpent), and having secret trees growing in it.

23b-51. The great place called Gokula is the thousand-petalled lotus. The great place in it, its pericarp, is the excellent abode of Govinda on a golden seat and is adorned with a golden pavilion. The petals have sprung up in (i.e. from) the pericarp in due order in the (main) directions and intermediate directions. The petal which is said (to be situated) in the south is the best and the best among the best (i.e. most) secret places. In that petal is a great seat inaccessible to the Vedic and sacred texts. It is difficult to obtain even for the lords of the meditating saints, is the soul of all, and is Gokula. In the south-east there is the second petal, a secret petal. It is Saṁketa, Dvipada; in that region two huts are situated. In the east there is the third petal, an excellent and chief place. It is said to be hundred times more meritorious than the contact with all holy places like Gaṅgā. In the north-east is the fourth petal, and the place is on the seat of the inspired sages. A cowherdess would obtain Kṛṣṇa as her husband at that place due to her worshipping Kātyāyana. It is said that snatching off of the garments and ornaments (of the cowherdesses) took place there. In the north is said (to exist) the fifth petal, the best of all petals. Here itself is the petal resembling Karṇikā (literally, the pericarp), called Dvādaśāditya (i.e. having twelve suns). In the north-west is the sixth petal. Kālīhrada is said (to be situated) there. It is said to be the best of the best petals, and the chief place. In the west is said (to exist) the seventh petal, the best of all petals. It gives the desired boons to the groups of the wives of Viṣṇu. Here even a demon obtained salvation difficult to be obtained by gods. Here only is the petal called Brahmadala deluding

Brahmā. In the south-east is said (to exist) the eighth petal (called) Vyomaghātana. The killing of Śaṅkhacūḍa took place there. It is the place of the enjoyment of many sports. The eighth petal is well-known, and is said to be situated within the Vṛndāvana-forest. The glorious Vṛndāvana is on the south of Yamunā. There is seen the place of Śiva-phallus, called Gopīśvara. Outside it is the sixteenth petal, glorious and full of beauty, which, due to going round it in order, is said (to exist) in all directions. It is a great place, a great abode, named Svadhāmādhava. The first petal is the greatest, and its greatness is like Karṇikā (the pericarp). There is the Karṇikā on the Govardhana mountain which is lovely and is ever the abode of pleasure, is a grove full of great sports where Kṛṣṇa would be the lord of the Nityavṛndākānana. Kṛṣṇa became (there) a cowkeeper. What is the use of further talking much? The third petal is called Sarvaśreṣṭhottamottama. The fourth petal is called Mahādbhutarasasthala. There is the beautiful grove (called) Nandīśvara, and there is said (to exist) abode of Nanda. The fifth petal is called Karṇikādalamāhātmya. Here Gopāla (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) engaged in tending the cows, dwells. There, which is said to be the sixth petal, is said (to exist) Nandavana. The seventh lovely petal is called Bakulāraṇya. The eighth is Tālavana where the cows were killed. The ninth charming petal is called Kumudāraṇya. The tenth (called) Kāmāraṇya is the chief and the cause of all. There is Brahmaprasādhana (lit. decoration of Brahmā), and the manifestation of the disguise of Viṣṇu. It is the place of the pleasures of (i.e. due to) Kṛṣṇa's sports, and is said to be preeminent. The eleventh petal is called Bhaktānugrahakāraṇa. A bridge is constructed here; and the place is full of many groves. The twelfth lovely and charming petal is Bhāṇḍīra; there Kṛṣṇa was engaged in sports and was surrounded by Śrīdāman etc. The thirteenth best petal is known as Bhadravara. The fourteenth petal is called Sarvasiddhipradasthala. There is Śrīvana, which is charming, and is the cause of all splendour; it has a part of Kṛṣṇa's sports and enhances glory, beauty and fame. The fifteenth excellent petal is known as Lohavana. The petal resembling Karṇikā is said to be the sixteenth petal.

52-55. There is said to be a secret, excellent, great grove. (Kṛṣṇa) surrounded by keepers of calves (i.e. young cowherds) is engaged in child-sports. The murder of Pūtanā etc. and the breaking of twin Arjuna trees (took place) there. The young Gopāla, five years old, the ocean of love, joy and pleasure, and called Dāmodara, lives there. This is said to be a well-known petal, and best and excellent of all petals. The sport of Kṛṣṇa (takes place here). It is called Kiñjalkīvihāradala. It is also called Siddhapradhānakiñjalka.

Pārvatī said:

56. I desire to hear the importance and the wonderful secret of Vṛndāraṇya. O great lord, narrate it.

The lord said:

57-59. O most beloved one, I have told you the best, greatest mystery, the secret of secrets, and the rare of the rare. O goddess, it is watched over in the three worlds, and well-honoured by the lord of gods. It is desired by Brahmā and others; the place is resorted to by gods and inspired sages. The best among the meditating saints are devotedly always intent upon meditation on it only. There is the continuous singing and dancing of gandharvas and celestial damsels.

60-69. The glorious Vṛndāvana is charming and is an abode of complete joy and pleasure. There are many desire-yielding gems; and the water is full of the taste of nectar. The big tree there is surrounded by Kadamba trees. There is the lady Lakṣmī, the man Viṣṇu, produced from the tenth part of it. There (one sees) Kṛṣṇa, of the age of a boy, always of a joyful figure, walking dramatically, with a face having continuous sweet but indistinct talk, with the forest resorted to by devotees of Viṣṇu, of a pure nature, and full of love, engaged in the joy of the complete Brahman, full of the thoughts about him; being inspired by his image; (the forest was) charming due to the sweet notes and humming of the intoxicated cuckoos and bees, having the music of pigeons and parrots, with thousands of intoxicated bees, rich with the dance of the enemies of serpents (i.e. peacocks), full

of all amorous joyful sports; it was full of the pollen of flowers of various colours; it had the full moon always rising, and served with the sun having cold rays; it was without misery, free from grief, and old age and death. It was free from anger, free from jealousy, unbroken (i.e. complete) and without ego; it had the nectar of full joy; it was the ocean of full love and happiness. The great abode was beyond (all) qualities and was of the nature of full love, where due to horripilation tears were shed by trees etc.; then what can be said about Viṣṇu's devotees having consciousness! It was Vṛndāvana on the earth due to the constant contact with the dust of Kṛṣṇa's feet.

70-78. The Vṛndāvana is the seed-vessel of the lotus having a thousand petals, by the touch of which the earth is blessed in the three worlds. On the earth Vṛndāvana is a greater secret than a secret (i.e. the greatest secret) and a charming (place). It is an inexhaustible, unchangeable abode of Govinda, containing greatest joy. It is non-different from Govinda's body, and is the abode of the joy of (reaching) the complete Brahman. There salvation is had by the touch of the dust(-particles). What can be said about its importance? Therefore, O queen, by all means, keep in mind that forest. In the Vṛndāvana parks, (one sees) Kṛṣna having a boy's body. Kālindī went round its pericarp. The water of Kālindī is pleasant due to sports, is deep, and attractive due to fragrance; it was mixed with the nectar of joy; it is the dense place of honey; it is bright with many colours due to flowers like lotuses and blue lotuses. The water is lovely; it looks beautiful with birds like the ruddy geese with various sweet and indistinct notes; it is very lovely due to the waves. On both of its sides (there is a pericarp) which is lovely and fashioned with pure gold, said to be a crore times more meritorious than Gaṅgā (Gaṅgākoṭiguṇa). In the pericarp (Karṇikā) there is the Koṭiguṇa where Kṛṣna is engaged in sports. Kālindī, Karṇikā and Kṛṣṇa are not different from one another. They (just) have one body.

Pārvatī said:

79. O you not having a beautiful body, I desire to listen to the wonders of Govinda. O you treasure of compassion, tell (them to me).

The lord said:

80-107. In Vṛndāvana adorned with lovely sprouts and beautified with the foliage of the branches of good trees extending over a yojana, in a charming abode there is a very bright seat for abstract meditation. It is fashioned with eight angles and is charming due to various lustres. On it is an auspicious throne (decked) with rubies. There is an eight-petalled lotus lying comfortably in the pericarp. It is the great abode of Govinda. How can its greatness be described? A man should meditate upon Kṛṣṇa who is served by the group of cowherdesses remaining in (i.e. following) the advice of Govinda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) who has the (proper) age and form for the divine station of the cowherds, who is the lord of Vṛndāvana, who is the chief of the station of the cowherds, who always has splendour, who alone is dear to the children of the station of the cowherds, whose childhood has broken into youth due to age, whose body is wonderful, who is without a beginning but is the origin of all, who is the dear son of the cowherd Nanda, who is to be sought after through the sacred texts, who is unborn, who is always charming to the cowherdesses, who is the highest abode, who is the highest form, who has two arms, who is the lord of the station of the cowherdesses, who is the son of a cowherdess, who is the only cause of the qualityless (Brahman), who is very glorious, who is fresh and pure, who has a dark lustre, who is charming, who is much glistening like the row of fresh clouds, who is pleasing to touch due to his great loveliness like a fully opened blue lotus, who gives comfort, who is glossy like the heap of collyrium that is expanded and is dark and attractive, whose entire (set of) hair is very glossy, dark, curly and fragrant, who is charming due to the dark lock of hair and the right part over it, who is bright on account of many colours and adorned with bright feathers of peacocks, who has on his crest a charming string of mandāra (flowers), who has put on lovely ornaments, who is at times adorned with a crown made with a multitude of big leaves, who at times has the ornament of a crown made with many gems and rubies, who is covered with unsteady hair, whose face is like a crore of bright moons, who has put on (his forehead) the mark of musk, who has been (smeared) with bright,

charming yellow pigment made from the urine or bile of a cow, whose eyes are long like very long petals, having the beauty of fully opened blue lotuses, in whose smile the creeper-like eyebrows dance (i.e. move) closely, and the sight is (i.e. the eyes are) charming, the tip of whose nose is charming on account of its beauty due to its being very beautiful and rising, who entices the three worlds with the rays of the pearls supposed to be found in the projection on the foreheads of elephants on the tip of his nose, who is lovely on account of his red and glossy lower lip resembling red lead, who puts on ear-rings resembling the shape of crocodiles and made of pure bright gold and of many colours, and the good cheeks of whom have the resemblance with mirrors due to the heap of rays of (i.e. shooting from) them (i.e. the ear-rings), on whose ears are placed mandāra and lotuses and who is well-adorned with chaplets of the shape of crocodiles, who has on his chest the (mark of) Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha, whose neck shines with a necklace of pearls, round whose arm are the bracelets and armlets with divine rubies shining and mixed with lovely gold, whose waist is adorned with small bells, whose beautiful feet are adorned with the beauty of sweet(-jingling) anklets, (on whose body) sandal etc. looks bright with camphor, agaru (sandal) and musk, who is painted with divine fragrant unguents mixed with a bright yellow pigment made from cow's urine or bile, who is shining with soft, yellow garment and with whose feet the collyrium is disturbed, whose lotus-like navel is deep, whose chaplet is depressed in the line of hair, whose pair of knees is quite round, who is lovely due to his lotus-like feet, whose palms and soles are adorned with (signs of) flag, diamond, gold and lotus, who having the row of rays shooting from his nails is the only cause of the complete Brahman. Some say that the unique supreme spirit, Brahman, is his portion; the wise ones say that Mahāviṣṇu is his tenth part; that one alone, who has three modes and who is fashioned with the essence of (materials required to) fashion all good things, is thought of in their hearts by the best meditating saints like Sanaka, who is lovely (as he has) vanquished innumerable crores of Cupids due to his neck that is turned (to a side), whose golden ear-rings shine when he has put his fine

cheek on his left shoulder, whose smile is accompanied by a side-glance, who deludes the three worlds with the sweet, indistinct notes of his flute put between the contracted lips, who is drowned in the ocean of love.

Pārvatī said:

108-115. O lord, tell me everything about the highest cause Kṛṣṇa, the highest position called Kṛṣṇa, the lord of Vṛndāvana, the eternal one, and the only cause of the qualityless (Brahman); tell me the importance of each secret, about the lovely wonder. O lord of lords, I desire to hear it.

The lord said:

O goddess, how much can be said about the greatness of him, the knowledge of whose moon-like rays cannot be had? Listen joyfully. In the innumerable crores of the universes, in the rise of the infinite (Prakṛti) with three constituents, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva are equal to the parts of the measure of a croreth of a croreth of his feet. (These) arising from him are endowed with creation, maintenance, and destruction. The bodies of Cupid are the parts equal to the portion of a croreth of a croreth of his form. Born of his aṇḍāntara(?) they entice the world. Brahmā is (made of) a part equal to a croreth of a croreth of the lustre shining in his body. The forms of the sun are the partial rays equal to a croreth of a croreth of his light. Those of the form of rays which are a croreth of a croreth of his portion live due to rays of his body which are the nectar of great joy, which are of the nature of highest bliss and intelligence, and which are the only cause of the qualityless Brahman.

116-118. They say that the lustres of the gem-like (crescent) moon(-shaped) nails of his two feet are even the cause of the complete Brahman, difficult to be understood by the Vedas. (The fragrance) enticing the universe is but a part which cannot be measured (i.e. is negligible) of his fragrance; and the various fragrances are produced from the fragrance etc. of the flowers touched by him. The first (primordial) matter is Rādhikā, dear to Kṛṣṇa. Durgā and others having the three constituents are a

part equal to a croreth of croreth portion of her. The excellent Viṣṇu is produced from the touch of the dust of her feet.

CHAPTER SEVENTY

A Description of Śrīkṛṣṇa

Pārvatī said:

1. O lord, I desire to hear (the account worth) hearing of him and about those who are the members of his assembly. O you treasure of kindness, (please) narrate it.

The lord said:

2-7. (One can see) Govinda along with Rādhā seated on a golden throne. He has the loveliness of form as described before. His ornaments, garments and garland are divine. He, in his crooked posture (assumed with his body bent at three points while playing on his flute) is sweet and very glossy and is the pupil of the eyes of the cowherdesses. Outside sitting on the seat for abstract meditation (Yogapīṭha) covered with a golden sheet resembling a lion's skin(?) are the chief ladies dear to Kṛṣṇa and having a strong devotion for him in every limb (of their bodies). They are Lalitā and others, and are the portions of the primordial matter. Rādhikā is the primordial matter. In front of him is goddess Lalitā; in the north-west is Śrīharipriyā; in the east is Viśākhā; and after her, in the south-east is Śaibyā; Padmā is in the south; and then in the south-west, on the Yogapīṭha, in front of a bakula tree, is Candrāvatī, dear to him. Thus they remain in order. These eight are auspicious and chief natural forms, dear to Kṛṣṇa.

8-13. The chief form is Rādhā who is similar to Candrāvatī. Candrāvalī, Citrarekhā, Candrā, Madanasundarī, Priyā, Śrī, Madhumatī, Candrarekhā, Haripriyā—these are the sixteen original natural forms dear to Kṛṣṇa. At Vṛndāvana Rādhā is the (chief) goddess, so also Candrāvatī dear (to Kṛṣṇa). In front

are thousands of cowherdesses having identical virtues and beauty and charming eyes. They are lovely, are dressed attractively, are young and bright. They resemble the mass of pure gold, are very much pleased, and have lovely eyes; his form has got into their hearts, eager for his embrace; they have plunged themselves into the nectar of Kṛṣṇa; in their minds thoughts about him flash; they have dedicated their hearts to the lotus-like feet of Kṛṣṇa, worshipped by their lotus-like eyes.

14-26. On the right are Śrutikanyās, gathered in thousands and myriads, having forms which have infatuated the world, having in their minds a longing for Kṛṣṇa; they have enticed the three worlds with many natural sounds; there they, overcome with love, sing the concealed (i.e. great) secrets; on the left are divine damsels, with divine dresses and splendid with love; they are proficient in many skills, and are full of many divine sentiments. They are endowed with excellence of beauty and are very attractive due to their glances; they, not being ashamed of Govinda, are eager for the touch of his body. Their minds are merged in devotion to him. They look with a smile and obliquely. Then outside the temple, clearly filled with his beloveds, (there are ladies) of a similar dress and age, of a similar might and valour, of similar virtues and deeds, to whom similar ornaments are dear. They are engaged in singing songs of similar notes and playing upon similar lutes. At the western door is Śrīdāmā; similarly at the northern (door) is Vasudāmā; in the same way, Sudāmā is at the eastern door and Kiṅkiṇī at the southern door. Outside it on the golden seat, surrounded by a golden temple, on another golden altar, adorned with golden ornaments (one can see) little Kṛṣṇa, surrounded by myriads and myriads of cowherds like Subhadra, having horns, lutes, flutes, canes and having (similar) age, dresses, forms and voice, and being overcome (with sentiments) and meditating upon his virtues, singing (his praise), drawn in pictures of wonderful forms, always shedding tears of joy, with their entire bodies full of horripilation, steady like best meditating saints; with trickling aloe-wood (paste), (he is also) surrounded by innumerable cowkeepers; outside it, on a golden rampart, bright with a crore of suns, and stupefied with sweet fragrance, is a great park

(spreading) in (all) four directions and having a glorious Pārijāta tree in the west.

27-31. Below it (is) a divine golden seat, decorated with gold; on it (is) a divine throne, decked with gems and rubies. On it (one can see), Vāsudeva, the lord of the world, who is the highest joy, who is beyond the three guṇas and of the nature of intelligence, who is the cause of all causes, who is dark like a sapphire and a cloud, whose dark hair is curly, whose eyes are broad like a lotus-petal, who has put on ear-rings of the shape of a crocodile, who has four hands, whose weapons are the disc, sword, mace, conch and lotus, who is without a beginning or an end, who is eternal, who is the chief, the Supreme Being, who is of the form of light, who is the great and ancient abode, who puts on the garland of wood-flowers, who has put on a yellow garment, who is glossy, who is adorned with divine ornaments, who has smeared himself with divine unguent, who is charming due to his lustrous body.

32-37. Then (one can) also (see) the eight ladies dear to Vāsudeva: Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā, Nāgnajitī, Sulakṣaṇā, Mitravindā, Anuvindā, Sunandā, and Jāmbavatī dear to him, and also Suśīlā. They are bright, are surrounded by their retinue, and are intent on devotion. In the north (is) a very great park, having the yellow sandal tree; below it (is) a golden seat decorated with a jewelled pavilion in it on a petal fashioned with gold; on a bright throne (one can see) Saṅkarṣaṇa i.e. Balarāma, with Revatī; he is very dear to the lord, and not having different virtues and form; he is like a pure crystal; his eyes are like red lotuses; he has put on a blue strap, is glossy, and has put on divine ornaments, garlands and garments; he is always addicted to drinking liquor with his eyes red due to (drinking) liquor.

38-42a. In the best region in the south, remaining in the interior of the lovely navel, at the root of the Santāna tree, there is the embellishment of a jewelled temple. In it on a bright divine throne decked with gems and rubies, one (goddess) attends upon god Pradyumna seated upon it. He is full of the charm of the row of the essences of beauty deluding the world. He resembles a heap of dark lotuses; his eyes are like the petals of lotuses; he is (adorned with) divine ornaments and decorations and

(with) smearing of divine sandal; his wonderful body has the full beauty which has infatuated the world.

42b-52a. In the eastern park in the great forest, resorted to by divine trees, below there, is a golden seat adorned with a golden pavilion. On it on a shining, divine, bright throne (one can see) glorious Aniruddha with Uṣā; he is the lord of the world; he is dark like a dense cloud; he is very glossy; his hair is dark; his eyebrows are lovely, and resemble a bent creeper; his cheeks are good (i.e. charming); his nose is fine; his neck is nice; his chest is lovely and is extremely handsome; he has put on a crown (and) ear-rings; he is decorated with an ornament round his neck; his body is extremely lovely on account of the sweetness of the charming anklets; he is being propitiated by his dear attendants; music is dear to him; he is the complete Brahman, always full of joy; his nature is pure goodness; above him, in the atmosphere (one can see) Viṣṇu, the god of all gods; he is without a beginning; he is the source and of the nature of intelligence; he is intellect and joy, is supreme, and is the lord; he is beyond the three constituents; is unmanifest; is eternal; inexhaustible and immutable; his dark body has the beauty of the sweetness of the mass of clouds; he is very handsome due to his dark curly and glossy hair; his charming eyes are very long (i.e. broad) like the petals of a white lotus; he is surrounded by pure beings having crowns and ear-rings (dangling) about the cheeks; so also by lovely individuals, of the nature of intelligence and intent upon meditation on his form, having thoughts about him in their hearts, and with their eyes fixed on the tips of their noses.

52b-65. By means of body, mind and speech purposeful devotion is practised. On their left (he is surrounded by) yakṣas, gandharvas, siddhas, vidyādharas etc., so also by groups of very charming celestial damsels, intent on dancing and singing; and in front, in the atmosphere, on a comfortable seat, by all devotees of Viṣṇu, longing for Kṛṣṇa, and very much desiring service to his body; (he is surrounded by) Prahlāda, Nārada and others; so also by Kumāra, Śuka and devotees of Viṣṇu; so also by Janaka and others, having a bright (i.e. strong) sentiment, and intent upon inspiration out of the heart (*hṛdbāhya-sphūrtatatparaiḥ*?), with their entire bodies overcome with

horripilation, full of darting love and sprinkled with the nectar of secret. The hymn of twin letters (viz. Kṛṣṇa) is said to be the crest-jewel of all hymns and the origin of all hymns. Of all the hymns of the lord, the child's hymn (i.e. the hymn addressed to Kṛṣṇa, the child), is the cause. The hymn is the crest-jewel of all hymns (addressed to the) child. Resorting to full love and pleasure they mutter the name mentally. They desire a steady means of love for his lotus-like feet. Outside it on a very lovely crystal platform (one can see) in the west the door-keeper—Viṣṇu, who is fair, and has four hands; (he is sprinkled with) saffron, white and red flowers crowding (all) the four directions; he is adorned with a conch, a disc, a mace, a lotus, a crown etc.; he is red, has four hands, and has the lotus, the conch, and weapons like a disc and a mace. In the north, (one can see) a door-keeper, bright with a crown and ear-rings; he, Viṣṇu, is fair; has four hands, has a conch and weapons like a disc and a mace; he is adorned with crown and ear-rings etc. and has put on wood-flowers. On the eastern gate is a door-keeper; is fair and called Viṣṇu. The southern door-keeper is dark in complexion, has four arms, has ornaments like a conch, a disc etc. He is Śrī Viṣṇu of a dark complexion. He, who being restrained and pure, would read or listen to the account of Śrīkṛṣṇa with devotion, obtains love for Govinda.

CHAPTER SEVENTYONE

The Greatness of Rādhākṛṣṇa

The goddess (Pārvatī) said:

1-3 O holy one, O lord of all beings, O soul of all, O you the origin of everything, O lord of gods, O great god, O omniscient one, O you who show pity (to everyone), since I was pitied by you, I again say tenderly. O lord, you told me the hymns enticing the three worlds. (Now) tell me, by means of which particular things that god (Kṛṣṇa) having a very fascinating form, played with the cowherdesses.

Mahādeva said:

4-9a. Knowing about the descent of (Viṣṇu as) Kṛṣṇa, once Nārada, the best sage, playing upon his lute, went to the village of Nanda (literally, the cow-pen of Nanda). Having gone there and having seen there in Nanda's house the supreme ruler, the lord full of great concentration, who acted as a child, who looked as a god, who was lying on a golden couch on which a soft (bed-)sheet was spread, who was constantly, joyfully looked at by the cowherdesses, whose body was extremely delicate, whose sight was innocent, who was adorned with a mass of dishevelled, dark and curly hair, who manifested just one bud-like tooth by his sprout-like (i.e. delicate) smile, who illumined with his lustres (i.e. mass of lustre) the interior of the house on all sides, who was naked, he was extremely glad.

9b-14. He (i.e. Nārada) who was dear to all lords, addressing the lord of cows, Nanda, said to him: "To get the birth of Nārāyaṇa's devotees is extremely difficult. Here no (persons) know his matchless power. Even Śiva, Brahmā and others desire eternal bliss in him. The deeds of this boy give delight to all; and (people) like them gladly sing and hear about him, and greet him. Men have affectionate minds towards (i.e. men love) this son of yours whose prowess cannot be conceived. They will not be troubled by worldly existence. O best of the cowherds, give up all your desires in this world and the next world. With exclusive and singular mind, love this child." Speaking like this, the best sage went out of Nanda's house.

15-24a. He (i.e. Nanda), having saluted him, honoured him looking upon him as Viṣṇu and gave him leave (to go). Then the sage, the great devotee of Viṣṇu, thought: 'His beloved, glorious Lakṣmī, must have undoubtedly taken up the form of a cowherdess, descended (here) to play with Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu holding the Śārṅga bow. Today I shall look for her in every house of the residents of Vraja.' Thinking like this, the best sage, being (i.e. as) a guest entered the houses of the residents of Vraja. They, looking upon him as Viṣṇu, worshipped him. Seeing the great attachment of all the cowherds etc. to Nanda's son, the best sage mentally saluted them all. In the house of (one of) the cowherds, he saw a girl of a white complexion.

Seeing her, he conjectured: 'This must be Lakṣmī; no doubt about it.' Then the intelligent one entered the large house of certain excellent cowherd named Bhānu, a friend of the noble Nanda. He was duly honoured by him. The noble-minded one too asked him: "O good one, you are known on the earth for your devotion to piety. I observe your prosperity in wealth, grains etc. Do you have a worthy son or a daughter with auspicious marks, due to whom you will have fame pervading the entire world?"

24b-27. Thus addressed by the best sage, Bhānu brought his very lustrous and powerful son and made him salute Nārada. The great, excellent sage, having seen him, who was matchless in form on the earth, whose eyes were long (i.e. broad) like lotus-leaves, whose neck was nice, whose eyebrows were beautiful, whose teeth were fine, whose ears were beautiful, embraced him with his arms, shed tears of love, and affectionately and in a faltering voice said:

Nārada said:

28-31. This your boy will be a good friend of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. Being alert, he will play with them day and night.

Then, when the best sage, after having talked to the excellent cowherd, decided to go, Bhānu spoke to him like this: "O god, I have (also) a daughter, resembling the wife of a god. She is younger than this boy. Her form (i.e. she) is dull and blind and deaf. Prompted by the desire for her prosperity, I seek a boon from you, O most glorious one. By just casting a pleasing glance at the girl make her quite composed."

32-37. Hearing these words, Nārada, with his mind attracted by curiosity, entered the house, and lifting up the girl rolling on the ground and with his mind overcome with great love, put her on his lap. Bhānu, too, reverential due to devotion, came near the excellent sage. Then the best devotee of Viṣṇu, the great sage, very dear to Kṛṣṇa, loving Viṣṇu, seeing her excellent wonderful figure, unseen and unheard of (before), became fascinated as before. Plunging into the ocean of great joy, a unique elixir, the sage, resembling a stone (i.e. being motionless) remained there (i.e. in that condition) for two muhūrtas. Slowly open-

ing his eyes, the best sage woke up. He was very much amazed, and remained silent only. The very intelligent one thought like this only in his heart:

38-46a. 'I, moving freely everywhere, have wandered over all the worlds. But nowhere have I seen any (beautiful woman) like this. I (can) move in the world of Brahmā, in the world of Rudra, and in the world of Indra. But nowhere have I seen one even a croreth part of her in beauty. I have seen the great worldy illusion, the glorious daughter (i.e. Pārvatī) of the lord of mountains, whose form fascinates all the mobile and the immobile (objects). Even she, of an extremely delicate body, does not at all have the beauty (like that of this girl). It is not at all seen that excellent ladies Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Kāntividyā, just touch (i.e. have) even the shade of her (beauty). I have seen Mohinī, the form of (i.e. taken up by) Viṣṇu, by which Śiva was fascinated. How can it even be similar to her (form)? Therefore, I do not at all have the power to know her true nature. Mostly even others do not know this dear wife of Hari. That growth in love, which now I have for the lotus-like feet of Govinda, on just seeing her, was never there before. Showing great magnificence, I shall praise the respectable one in a lonely place. Her form will cause great delight to Kṛṣṇa.'

46b-56a. Thinking like this, the sage, having sent the excellent cowherd somewhere, praised the girl of a divine form in a lonely place: "O goddess, O you controlling the great illusory power, O you of great lustre, O you having a very fascinating and divine body, O you who shower great sweetness, O you who have let loose the mind due to very wonderful love and delight, you have come wthin the range of my sight due to my indescribable great fortune. O goddess, your sight is always observed to be within (i.e. you always look within); and you appear to be gratified with great joy within yourself only. This your good (i.e. beautiful), pleasing, sweet, agreeable, charming face manifests great wonder and an indescribable rise of joy within. O you very beautiful one, you have the power of a bud to form pollen. You are of the nature of creation, maintenance and destruction. You are of a pure energy, of a quick power and of the nature of knowledge and the highest one. You have the highest heap of great joy of Viṣṇu. O you who have a wonderful

splendour, O you difficult to be obtained by Brahmā, Rudra etc., who are you? You never touch the path of meditation of the best meditating saints. You are the will-power, the power of knowledge and the power of action of the controller (of the world). It is just a part of you that my desire proceeds for. Of the highest lord Viṣṇu, of the magician, the child of illusion, inconceivable are the superhuman powers. They are just the portions of your portions.

56b-60. O you goddess, there is no doubt that you are the power of the nature of delight. In the form of just a child, Kṛṣṇa plays in the Vṛndāvana grove; you fascinate the (entire) universe. Of what nature is your wonderful form touched by youth? Of what kind is your youth, endowed with sportive glance with a smile due to longing for Viṣṇu as a man. O you dear of Viṣṇu, I desire to see that form of yours by which Nanda's son Kṛṣṇa will be enticed? O you great goddess, please show, through kindness, your own form to me who have bowed (before you) and have sought protection with you."

61-69. The best sage, with his mind devoted to her, and saluting that very great goddess, who was great and full of great joy, who was eager with great love, whose body was full of (love), whose eyes were auspicious, stood there, looking at Govinda and describing him like this: "Victory to you, O charming Kṛṣṇa; victory to you who are dear to Vṛndāvana; victory to you who have a charming knitting of the eyebrows; victory to you who are overcome with the sound of the flute; victory to you who have a chaplet of a peacock's tail-feathers; victory to you who entice the cowherdesses. Victory to you whose body is smeared with saffron; victory to you who have put on jewelled ornaments. When shall I, through your grace, see you in your childhood (i.e. as a child)—you who entice (everyone), along with this (girl) of a divine form, and having a beautiful body charming on account of youth, O lord of the world?" When he was praising (Kṛṣṇa) like this, she, that moment only, took up a divine, very fascinating form resembling (that of a young girl) fourteen years old and extremely charming. At that time only, other young girls of Vraja, of the same age, and having divine ornaments, garments and garlands, surrounded her. That motionless best sage became stunned with wonder.

70-79a. Then those friends of the girl, being full of compassion, sprinkled the sage with drops of water at the foot of a tree and revived him, and said to him: "O great sage, O glorious one, O lord of great meditating saints, you indeed have propitiated with great devotion, god Viṣṇu who fulfils the desires of his devotees. Since this (lady) dear to Viṣṇu, who is enticing due to her very wonderful age and beauty, who is difficult to be seen and approached by gods like Brahmā, Rudra, and lords of siddhas and sages, so also by other great devotees of Viṣṇu, has been seen by you due to your indescribable and inconceivable luck; therefore, get up, you brāhmaṇa sage, and quickly muster courage. Having gone round her by keeping her to your right, salute her again and again. Do you not see that the beautiful-bodied is extremely perturbed? Indeed, this moment only she will vanish. (Then) in no way you will (ever be able to) talk to her. O you best among those who know Brahman (or Vedas), you will not again (be able to) see her. But, in Vṛndāvana there is an auspicious Aśoka creeper (Aśoka-tree). In all seasons it is full of flowers; its fragrance pervades all directions. Not far from Govardhana, on the bank of the lake called Kusuma, you will see us all at midnight at its root."

79b-91. Having heard these words of them whose hearts were overcome with love, while the sage, having gone round her keeping her to his right, would salute her who was fashioned with many beautiful objects, (prostrating before her) like a staff Nārada called Bhānu and told him (about that) all-beautiful (girl): "Such is the prowess of the girl, that she cannot be obtained even by deities. But, in that house which is marked with her feet (i.e. her foot-prints) god Nārāyaṇa, Mādhava, himself lives. Lakṣmī also stays there with all prosperity. O best one, today (i.e. now) protect this great one, the most beautiful one, carefully, like a deity". Talking like this, and recollecting her form in his mind the best devotee of Viṣṇu entered the dense forest. The best sage, having resorted to the root of the Aśoka-creeper, waited for the deity—her arrival just there at night, remained there, thinking, overcome with love, of that dear one to Kṛṣṇa. Then, seeing at midnight, those very wonderful damsels who were seen (by him) before, who had put on variegated ornaments and garlands, the sage confounded in his mind, fell (prostrate) like a staff. All

those auspicious ones, having surrounded the sage, entered. Even the sage, desiring to ask something about what was dear to him and he liked, being overpowered by the language dear to beauty (i.e. unable to find appropriate words), could not do so. That deity of the Aśoka-grove, named Aśokamālinī, full of pity, came (there) and said to the best sage who stood with the palms of his hands joined, whose neck was bent due to the burden of (i.e. great) devotion, who was full of wonder and was confused, and who was most polite.

Aśokamālinī said:

92-103. O great sage, I always live in this Aśoka-bud. I always wear red garments, I wear red garland, and red unguents. I use buds red like red lead. I use chaplets, the red lotuses. I am decorated with red rubies, red armlets and red crown. Once, the cowherdesses, having put on variegated garments, while sporting with their beloved one, met just there; and then I devoutly and duly worshipped, with Aśoka-garlands, Viṣṇu taking up the form of a cowherd, and all those of the form of Lakṣmī. Since then I have always been staying among them and pleasing Lakṣmī's lord (i.e. Viṣṇu), the highest (god), with various decorations. I know everything from everywhere. I also know the secret of the cows, the cowherds, and the cowherdesses. You had the desire and said into your heart (i.e. to yourself): 'How shall I see that goddess, of a wonderful form, giving a wonderful joy, dear to Viṣṇu, looking (bright) like gold, having a bright diamond ring and having unsteady eyes? How shall I propitiate her feet with devotion?' Thus, O brāhmaṇa, you thought. In this matter, I shall tell you the account of the very noble sages who remained at the Mānasa lake and practised severe penance, who muttered effective hymns, who meditated upon Viṣṇu, and who constantly longed for his lotus-like feet. Today I shall tell you the great secret in the forest.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTWO

Devotees of Kṛṣṇa Born in Gokula as Cowherdesses

The lord said:

1-6a. O you beautiful goddess, listen with a concentrated mind: There was a sage, named Ugratapas who was firm in his vow. He, performing rites in honour of Agni, ate (i.e. subsisted on) fire, and practised a very wonderful penance. He muttered the great hymn, fit to be muttered and having fifteen letters, bound together by a desire-yielding hymn, securing desired objects from one giving the desired boon, with the word *Kṛṣṇāya* (to Kṛṣṇa), along with the word *Svāhā* (offered to), and giving great prosperity. He meditated upon the dark Kṛṣṇa, mad with dance, eager to grant a boon, having put on a yellow garment, with a flute put at his lower lip, endowed with fresh youth, and dragging his beloved with his hand. Thus, the great sage, engaged in meditation, cast his body after the end of hundred kalpas and was born as the daughter of the cowherd by name Sunandā.

6b-11. She was called Sunandā and held a lute in her hand. There was another sage named Satyatapas practising a great bow. He ate (i.e. subsisted on) dry leaves and muttered a great hymn, ending in devotion, bound by ten letters having the seed of desire. The best sage meditated upon Viṣṇu who put on a variegated dress, who held the creeper-like arms of Ramā, bright with bracelets, who was dancing, getting mad, repeatedly embracing (Ramā), laughing loudly, and having waves of joy in the sky (i.e. cavity) of his belly, holding the flute, who was decorated with the necklace reaching his knees, whose face with folds on his forehead was wet with the drops of sweat.

12-19a. Again and again, casting his body, the great sage, after ten kalpas, was born here from Nandavana, as the daughter of the cowherd named Subhadra, and known as Bhadrā. On her back is seen a divine fan. There was a certain sage named Haridhāman. He practised a difficult penance and always ate leaves only. He muttered a hymn of twenty letters, giving the fruit quickly. Then from the (hymn having) the seed of desire, he got upon it only (*obscure*!). There was Māyā; in front of her were water, swans, saffron and bright moon. Then, recollecting

and with a salutation (he muttered the hymn) with ten letters and in the charming bower of the jasmine-creeper he meditated upon the lord who was lying on his back on the beautiful bed of leaves, whose expansive chest was being repeatedly covered by a cowherdess who was greatly overcome with passion and whose eyes were red, with her pair of breasts, who (i.e. the lord) was being kissed on his cheeks, and whose lips were being gratified, who, the wonderful one, was with a smile holding his beloved with his arms.

19b-28. That sage, having cast many bodies was born after three kalpas as the daughter having auspicious marks, of a cowherd named Raṅga. She was known as Raṅgaveṇī. She was skilled in drawing pictures. On her teeth were variegated marks of red colour. There was (also) a sage named Jābāli, a teacher of the Vedas. He, engaged in austerities, roamed over this earth. Once, by chance, he went to a great forest extending over a myriad of yojanas. There he saw a very beautiful well which had on all sides crystal-walls, which was full of sweet water, which was cooled with breezes fragrant with blooming lotuses. In the region to its west, at the root of a banyan tree he saw a female ascetic who was practising a severe penance, was endowed with youth, was of an extremely beautiful form, whose lustre was like the lunar rays, all of whose limbs were beautiful, who had put her left hand on her waist, and made the position of the fingers of her right hand as practised in religious worship, whose eyes were steady, who had given up food and enjoyment, and who had remained steady. The excellent sage desiring to know her (to know who she was) remained there for a hundred years. At the end of that (period) the sage raised her, and politely said to her who was walking (away).

29-30a. He asked her: "Who are you of a wonderful form? What will you do? If it would be proper (to tell me), then please tell it to me." Then the young lady, who was extremely emaciated due to the penance, slowly said (to him):

30b-33. "I am the matchless knowledge of Brahman, who am sought after by best meditating saints. That I, meditating upon the supreme spirit, have been practising in this fierce forest for a long time penance with a desire for Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet. I am full of the joy of Brahman. My mind is pleased with that

joy. Yet, I am looking upon myself to be lonely for want of Kṛṣṇa's love. Now I am extremely dejected, and desire to cast this body in this auspicious well here only."

34-46. Hearing these words of her the sage being extremely amazed and with great love fell at her feet and asked her about the auspicious rite of the service of Viṣṇu after having abandoned dislike for the self. Having known (i.e. learnt) the hymn told by her he went to the Mānasa lake. Then he practised an amazing penance very difficult to practise. Standing on one leg and looking at the sun unwinkingly he muttered a great hymn of twentyfive letters. With great devotion he meditated upon Kṛṣṇa who was of the form of joy, who was moving along the streets of Vraja with a strange and sporting gait, who was making a jingling sound of his anklets with charming steps, who attracted the minds and bodies of the beautiful women of Vraja with the knots of their garments loose and suddenly embracing him, with various sports of love and side-glances accompanied by a smile, and with the charming golden flute called Sammohana, having the fifth note, and kissing (i.e. touching) his bimba-like lower lip, who had put on divine flowers and garments, and who had smeared divine sandal (to his body), who enticed the three worlds with the mass of the lustre of his dark body. Thus having worshipped the lord of the world with many hymns he was born in Gokula at the end of nine kalpas as a daughter having divine form, of a very famous cowherd named Pracaṇḍa. The girl of an auspicious face was well-known as Citragandhā and delighted the ten directions with the various fragrances of her body. See her, the auspicious one, who drinks sweet drinks from Vṛnda, who, being full of passion takes her husband on her body. Necklaces strike her breasts while in contact with them, while fragrances of lovely aloe-wood etc., fall out from them.

47-54. Other great sages whose minds are always pure and who eat (i.e. subsist on) air, muttering a great (i.e. very sacred) hymn, practised penance: 'A recollection to (i.e. of) Kṛṣṇa, having the skill of destroying passion.' Having recited the hymn of fifteen letters the great sages meditated on the figure of Kṛṣṇa, along with Agni's wife, the image which was having divine ornaments, whose fleshy waist was covered with a beautiful silken garment, whose crest was covered with peacock's feathers, whose ear-

rings were bright, who had put the right lotus-like foot on the left shank, who, after having folded his charming lotus-like hands, was wandering, who had put the flute with its cover moving at his waist-region, who gave delight to the eyes and minds of the cowherdesses, who had very wonderfully entered the hall that was filled (i.e. covered) with showers of flowers on all sides by the cowherdesses. Then having cast their bodies at the end of the kalpa they are now born here. On their ears are seen large ear-rings shining with gems. Round their necks are jewelled necklaces, and in their braids are (put) flowers.

55-59. There was a sage named Śuciśravas. There was also another sage named Suvarṇa. They, proficient in the Vedas, were the sons of Kuśadhvaja. With their feet put up (in the air i.e. standing on their heads), they practised a severe penance with a three-lettered hymn. With their minds controlled, they muttered (the hymn) saying 'Hrīm, Haṁsa'. They meditated upon Kṛṣṇa (living) in Gokula, a child ten years old, and constantly enticing the beautiful women looking at him, with his figure like Cupid and with his charming youth. At the end of the kalpa they, having cast their bodies, were born in Vraja as the extremely beautiful daughters of the cowherd Suvīra. In their hands were seen two parrots of auspicious sounds.

60-66a. There were four sages—Jaṭila, Jaṅghapūta, Ghṛtāśī and Karbu—who were blessed and were desireless here and in (i.e. for) the next world. With single devotion they sought the refuge of (Kṛṣṇa) the lover of the cowherdesses. Plunging themselves into water, they muttered a hymn having ten letters with a recollection (of Kṛṣṇa) at the beginning and end, and put together by the triad of Ramās. As cowherdesses, they with deep devotion meditated upon (Kṛṣṇa) who was wandering in every forest, who was valuing the charming, whose entire body was smeared with sandal, who had put on a China rose as an ear-ornament, who had undergone a change due to a garland of lotuses, and was covered with blue and yellow garments. At the end of three kalpas they were born in Gokula (as cowherdesses) of auspicious marks. Those charming ones with curved eyebrows are seated in front. Round their forearms are lovely bracelets supported by (i.e. decked with) gems etc. and divine pearls etc.

66b-73. In the former kalpa a sage name Dīrghatapas was the Vyāsa. His excellent and very intelligent boy, always remembering the feet (of Kṛṣṇa), abandoned his father, mother etc. and meditating on Kṛṣṇa went to a forest. There he, night and day, without eating anything, worshipped god Viṣṇu who had taken up the form of a cow(-herd). With great devotion, muttering the hymn of eighteen letters put together by Ramā, he reflected upon Hari who was seated in a golden pavilion upon a golden seat, who was holding a golden flute with the tips of his golden hands, who was whirling a golden lotus with his right hand, who looked charming due to his body clasped by his dear beloved of a golden complexion, who was laughing with great joy and who was looking at his hermitage. He, full of tears due to joy, with his body decked with horripilation, loudly saying, 'O lord, be pleased', and trembling, fell on the ground to salute the creator of the world with a prostration.

74-79. Saying loudly 'I am fatigued', Viṣṇu with his eyes full of joy, holding the hands of him who desired devotion, who had prostrated himself (before him) like a staff, touched him and spoke to that Śuka, who had obtained the form of his beloved: "O good one, you are my beloved. Thinking of my form, and having become the abode of my love, stay by me." Two cowherdesses are chief, are of the same age, and auspicious. They are practising a steady vow, are of a firm devotion, and are named after the same constellation. One is bright like heated gold and the other has the lustre of lightning. The eyes of one are sleepy, (while) the eyes of the other are pleasing and long (i.e. broad). He worshipped with great devotion the left and right sides of Viṣṇu; and at the end of the kalpa, he, having cast his body, was born as Upananda's daughter, resembling in beauty the petal of a blue lotus, in Gokula of that magnanimous one.

80-91a. That one is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's wife who had put on a yellow garment, who is covered with a red bodice, whose breasts are like golden pitchers, who has put on her entire body the veil of red lead, whose cheeks are shining with golden ear-rings, and who is very beautiful. She is adorned with the garland of golden lotuses, and her stout breasts are smeared with saffron. In her hand there is something to be chewed, given to her by Hari. She is very skilled in playing upon a flute and (other) musical instru-

ments; she is the attendant of Keśava (i.e. Śrī Kṛṣṇa), and some time is engaged by the delighted Kṛṣṇa in singing. An auspicious string of guñjā fruits shines round her conch-like neck. (She is) afflicted by love due to Kṛṣṇa's charm even in his absence; (Kṛṣṇa) causing this young lady to dress as he likes, would make her, singing extremely melodiously, dance, when her friends are playing upon musical instruments. Again and again, she devoutly embraces and kisses Govinda. She is dear to all cowherdesses and is also very dear to Kṛṣṇa. (Then) there was the son of Śvetaketu. He had mastered Vedas and Vedāṅgas. Giving up all this, he resorted to great penance. He constantly muttered the eleven-lettered hymn, meditating upon her who had served the feet of Kṛṣṇa, who was resonant like the sweet Gaṅgā, who was a dear power of Govinda, who was inaccessible to Brahmā, Rudra etc., who was devoutly resorting to the charming glory of (Kṛṣṇa). Making everybody laugh, and keeping himself on sylvan paths, and settling the world all round with smiling lustre, always thinking about the meaning of the hymn, he lived in the spring.

91b-100. He too, after a couple of kalpas attained perfection, and was born here. This girl of a thin body, having bud-like breasts, with a necklace of pearls shining round her neck, having put on a pure silken garment, having anklets, bracelets, armlets, and rings inlaid with pearls, acts like a child. She put on divine ear-rings which were oozing nectar and were auspicious. She had (a mark) like the dot of red lead in her braid that was dressed with musk. On her forehead she had a mark along with (sectarian) marks of sandal. That same tranquil one was seen to worship the highest position (i.e. Brahman). There was a handsome royal sage by name Candraprabha. By Kṛṣṇa's grace he got a son with a charming figure. He was known as Citradhvaja and was a devotee of Viṣṇu from his childhood. The king taught the great eighteen-lettered hymn through a brāhmaṇa to his good son who was handsome, well-composed and twelve years old. When the boy was being sprinkled with water full of the nectar-like hymns, he, that moment only, full of tears, saluted the king. That day the guileless boy of a pure heart, wearing a spotless garment, adorned with necklaces, anklets, strings, neck-ornaments, armlets and bracelets, having

touched (i.e being full of) devotion to Viṣṇu, went to the temple of Viṣṇu, remained (there) all alone, and thought:

101-107a. 'How shall I worship him who is worshipped (by his devotees), who fascinates the cowherdesses and always sports with them on the sand-bank of Kālindī and in the forest.' The boy thinking like this and with his mind very much perturbed, obtained a very great lore and also had a dream. Before him there was the figure of Kṛṣṇa. It was beautiful. It was made of stone. It was (placed) on a golden seat. It was marked with all (good) characteristics. It was dark like a blue lotus. It was having glossy beauty. It was adorned with peacocks' feathers. It was having charm due to three folds; it was gladly playing upon the flute which was made of gold and was put to his lower lip. It was served by two beautiful damsels standing on its left and right sides. It aggravated their passion with kisses, embraces etc. Citradhvaja, having seen Kṛṣṇa having a sporting attire like that, was abashed in his mind, and bent his head before him.

107b-116. Hari, laughing, said to the beloved on his right side: "O you lotus-eyed one, having produced a divine, wonderful form of a young lady, resembling you and being very bashful and seated on your body, look upon it as non-distinct from your body. Touched by the lustres in your body it will have your form." Then that lotus-eyed one went near Citradhvaja, and remained thinking his body to be non-different from her body. Then the lustres from her body filled his body. From the lustre of her breasts, too charming, stout breasts were produced. From the lustre of her buttocks, charming, round hips were produced. From the lustre of the hair, ornamented hair was produced. From (the lustre of) her two hands, hands were produced. Thus, everything—ornaments, garments, garlands etc.—was well-accomplished. And with fragrance inside, she became skilled in arts. Seeing, as one lamp (is lighted) from another, that fortunate girl on the earth, named Citradhvajā, who was charming with a smile and was beautiful, she, by her arms, seized her with love and gladly took her away. And having embraced the woman standing by Govinda's side, she said: "This is your female servant. Give her a name. With love tell her, the beloved, liked by you, (what) service (she should do to you)."

117-129a. Then, as she liked, she named her Citrakalā, and said: "For serving the lord of our life, full of virtues, you take the flute, always remain near him, and sing in various notes. This is the practice enjoined upon you." Then Citrakalā, obeying the order saluted Mādhava. Having seized the feet of his beloved and having taken the dust-particles from his feet (on her head), she sang very sweet songs, giving joy to both of them. Then Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of joy, embraced her with love. When she was fully (merged) in the ocean of joy, she woke up. Citradhvaja, overcome with great love, and intent on remembering that (Kṛṣṇa) only, the highest joy, wept with a free voice (i.e. freely). Since then, giving up food and pleasures, he, who was weeping, though talked to by his father etc. did not say any word. Resorting to Kṛṣṇa at night, he remained in his house for a month. (Then) going out (of the house) to a forest, he (there) practised a penance, difficult to be practised by sages. After casting his body at the end of a kalpa, that great sage, only due to his penance, was born as the auspicious daughter named Citrakalā, of a cowherd named Vīragupta. On her shoulder, a charming lute, adorned with the seven notes, was always seen. On (her) left (shoulder) a wonderful golden pitcher (decked) with jewels, remained. In her right hand, (she had) a jewelled spittoon. (Then) there was a sage, Kaśyapa's son, named Puṇyaśravas, who knew all duties. His father was a davotee of Śiva, and everyday praised the lord of gods, the lord of the universe (i.e. Śiva) who loves his devotees.

129b-134a. Śiva along with Pārvatī was pleased with him. He granted him a boon at midnight on the fourteenth day (of a fortnight): "Even as a child, your son will be a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Having performed his thread-ceremony in his eighth year, teach him the twentyone-lettered hymn which (will) be told (to you) by me. This hymn, called *Gopāla-vidyā* (lore of Gopāla), gives the power of (getting whatever is expressed by) words. On the tip of the tongue of him who accomplishes this, the wonderful account of Kṛṣṇa remains. The figure of the Infinite one himself, granting boons, comes (to him). Beginning to recite the hymn with the words *Kāmamāyā Ramākaṇṭha Sendrā Dāmodarojjvalā* (i.e. the bright Dāmodara with Indra etc.),

then reciting the ten-lettered (hymn) in the middle, he should again refer to them.

134b-147. I shall tell you the meditation with the sages etc. expressed by ten letters. He should remember the island full of light of the full treasure of nectar, and surrounded by Kālindī, (and) he should reflect on him in the grove of Vṛndāvana. It is covered with trees and creepers dropping flowers in all seasons, and (resounding) with the cries of dancing and intoxicated peacocks and the crying cuckoos and (humming) bees. In it is a great Pārijāta-tree which is a hundred yojanas tall and has the expanse of branches and twigs. At its spotless foot, the young cowherds holding flutes and syringes have formed a circle, surrounded by a circle of cows. Inside it there was a charming circle of the beautiful women of Vraja, who had many presents in their hands, whose minds were overcome with ardent passion, who had joined the palms of their hands (in obeisance); it was a circle of them who had put on white garments, who were adorned with bright ornaments, whose hearts were overcome with love. He would think about the dear words of the daughters of Śruti (i.e. sacred ordinance). Then on the jewelled altar he would think about Hari, covered with a silken garment, lying on the breasts of Rādhā on a portion of a plantain tree, and looking at her beautiful face with a charming smile on it, with his left foot slightly bent, embracing his beloved with the left hand holding a flute, touching her chin with his right hand, having the brightness of pearls, having large eyes like white lotuses, having put on a yellow and spotless garment, with his head shining with a load (i.e. mass) of peacocks' feathers, charming due to a necklace of pearls, having ear-rings of the shape of crocodiles shining on his cheeks, having a Tulasī-garland (hanging) up to his feet, having the ornaments like bracelets and armlets, adorned with anklets, rings and a girdle, being very delicate, being of the age of a child; the worship is said to be of ten letters only. The initiatory rite is marked with the scriptures.

148-154. Saying so the lord vanished; so also the goddess, daughter of the (Himālaya) mountain and his chaste wife. The sage having come (to his) son taught him like that. Puṇyaśravas, after having vanquished all the sages, described (in) various

(words) him who was having wonderful marks like form, beauty, cleverness and charm. Then the boy, delighted at heart, went out of his house. Eating (i.e. subsisting on) air, he practised panance for three myriad kalpas. At the end of it he was born in Gokula, in the house of Nanda's brother. Her name was Lavaṅgā. She observed (i.e. knew) the internal thoughts of Kṛṣṇa. In her hand is seen the mechanism with which the face was washed. I have thus told you about certain principal beloveds of Kṛṣṇa. That man, who devoutly reads or causes to read this chapter full of many pleasures of Kṛṣṇa along with the excellent girls in Vraja, having charming and smiling eyes, goes to the abode of the lord Śrī Vāsudeva.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTHREE

The Greatness of Mathurā

The lord said:

1-6. I have told you in (due) order, the wonder about which you asked me. Who is not stupefied there, where Brahmā and others are stupefied? Yet I shall tell you what the great sage (Vyāsa) said to Ambarīṣa, a devotee of Viṣṇu, connected with Śiva. The king, having come to the Badaryāśrama, saluted and praised, with a desire to know the Vaiṣṇava way of life, Vedavyāsa who was seated there, who had restrained his senses, who was noble, omniscient, and best among men: "Please protect me from this mundane existence. I am detached from the sensual pleasures; I salute them, I salute everything. How would I always obtain mental recourse to that highest Brahman, a position free from dejection, having a form of auspiciousness, intelligence and joy, the highest sky, the absence of ether, which is healthy, and seeing which the sages cross the ocean of worldly existence?"

Vyāsa said:

7-14a. You have asked me a great secret. I have not told it (even) to Śuka, my son, what you have asked me. But I shall tell it to you who are dear to Viṣṇu. Listen, this great universe

was of his form, was situated in him; it was unmanifest, free from pain; it was full of the lord. Formerly, I, subsisting on fruits, roots, palāśa-leaves, water and air, practised penance for many thousand years. Then Viṣṇu said to me who was engaged in meditation on him: "O you very intelligent one, what do you want to do, or what do you want to know? I am pleased; ask for a boon from (me) who am the best among the givers of boons. I tell you the truth that the mundane existence lasts till I am seen." Then, with my body full of horripilation, I said to Kṛṣṇa: "O Madhusūdana, I desire to see you with my physical eyes, whom the principal Vedas described as the truth, the highest Brahman, the light of the world, the lord of the world, the wonderful visible lord."

The lord said:

14b-19. I was formerly asked by Brahmā and was requested by him. I shall tell you also what I had told him. Some describe me as Prakṛti (i.e. the primordial matter); some call me Puruṣa, the lord. Some call me Dharma (i.e. Piety); some call me wealth; some call me Mokṣa (i.e. salvation) where there is no fear from anywhere. Some call me void. Some call me devotion. Some call me Sadāśiva. Others described me as the only eternal one remaining on the top of the Vedas, of a good disposition, without a change, and of the form of goodness, intellect and joy. See, today I shall show you my form concealed by the Vedas.

Then I saw, O king, a boy who was like a dark cloud, who was surrounded by cowherdesses, who was laughing along with the cowherds, who was seated at the root of a Kadamba tree, who had put on yellow garments, and was wonderful.

20-23a. (I also saw) a grove named Vṛndāvana, which was adorned with fresh foliage, which was resounding with the notes of cuckoos, which was charming due to (the presence of) Cupid. I (also) saw the river Kālindī, which had the colour of the petals of blue lotuses. I also saw the Govardhana (mountain) which was held up by the hands of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, for destroying the pride of the great Indra and which gave pleasure to the cowherds. I saw the cowherd (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) who was happy in the

company of women and who was playing upon the flute. On seeing him, the ornament of all ornaments, I was extremely delighted.

23b-29a. Then the lord, moving in the Vṛndāvana grove, himself said to me: "There is no greater form of mine than the one which is divine, eternal, partless, actionless, calm, and of the form of auspiciousness, intellect and joy, complete, having eyes like the petals of a fully blossomed lotus, which you saw (now). The Vedas describe this only as the cause of causes, which is true, eternal, of the form of great joy, a mass of intellect, eternal and auspicious. Know my Mathurā to be eternal, so also Vṛndāvana; so also (know to be eternal) Yamunā, the cowherdesses and the cowherds. This incarnation of mine is eternal. Do not have any doubt about it. Rādhā is always dear to me. I am omniscient, greater than the great. I have all my desires (fulfilled), I am the lord of all, I am all joy and greater than the great. In me appears all this universe, spread out by (my) Māyā (illusion)."

29b-31a. Then I spoke to the lord, the cause of the cause of the world: "Who are the cowherdesses? What are the cowherds? What kind of tree is this said to be? Who is the grove? What are the cuckoos etc.? What is the river? And what is the mountain? Who is this noble (one that has become the) flute, the only place of joy to all people?"

31b-36a. The lord, happy and with his lotus-like face pleased, said to me: "The cowherdesses should be known to be the Vedas. The young daughters of cowherds should be known to be the ṛcs (hymns). They are divine damsels, O king. They are endowed with penance and desire salvation. All the cowherds are sages, the forms of joy in Vaikuṇṭha. This Kadamba is the desire-yielding tree, the receptacle of the highest joy. The grove is called Ānanda, which destroys great sins. The cuckoos and others are siddhas, sādhyas and gandharvas. There is no doubt about it Some are his joyful heart, Yamunā is the body. This mountain is the servant of Viṣṇu and has no beginning. Listen, who is the flute. O brāhmaṇa, you know it (to be) like that.

36b-54. There was a brāhmaṇa, of a tranquil mind, engaged in penance and truthfulness. His name was Devavrata, and

he was proficient in ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites as enjoined in the Vedas. Being in the midst of Viṣṇu's devotees, he was engaged in (various) rites. O king, once he heard that the lord of sacrifice was (present in the house). The brāhmaṇa, determined (to see) me went to his house. That devotee of mine in his house worshipped (me) with a Tulasī-leaf and water and offered me something (like) a fruit and a root. The intelligent one affectionately gave him the water for bath and fruits. Smiling without faith, he too accepted it from the brāhmaṇa. Due to that sin he had the extremely fierce condition of a bamboo; and as a result of that religious merit he became dear to me. Due to that (merit), O king, he shines as the chief. At the end of the age, he, being one with Viṣṇu, will obtain (the state of) Brahman. Oh, men with wicked hearts do not know my ancient city, which is great, which is praised by lords of gods and serpents and sages, which is charming and old. Though there are cities like Kāśī, Mathurā alone is virtuous among them; birth, thread-ceremony, death or cremation in that gives salvation to men. When men become purified by penance etc., have pure hearts, and have constant meditation as their wealth, then only they see my city, not otherwise, even after hundreds of kalpas, O best brāhmaṇas. The residents of Mathurā are blessed, and are respected even by the residents of heaven. Their greatness is immeasurable, and all of them have four hands. The residents of Mathurā do not see any defect due to thousands of births and deaths in those in whom (other) men see a fault. Those who are even poor, but who remember Mathurā, are (really) blessed. There the god, the lord of beings, giving salvation even to the sinners (lives). That great lord of beings, who is always most dear to me, never leaves the city due to affection for me. That man of bad conduct who would not salute the lord of beings or would not worship him, would not see this my self-shining city, called a great deity. How would that sinful man who would not worship my great devotee, viz. Śiva, obtain devotion to me? Those mean men who do not salute the lord of beings, do not remember him or praise him, have their minds mostly deluded by my Māyā (illusion). Even the boy Dhruva, engaged in worshipping me, obtained a pure place, obtained with difficulty by the grandsires. A man, being lame, or blind,

would come to my city Mathurā, difficult to be reached by gods and would cast his life there.

55-56. O glorious Vedavyāsa, do not have any doubt at all about the secret of the best of the Vedas, which I have divulged to you. He, the pure one, who would recite or listen to with devotion this chapter narrated by the lord, will have eternal salvation."

CHAPTER SEVENTYFOUR

Arjuna's Wish and Its Fulfilment

The lord said:

1-3. Once, in private, glorious Uddhava, dear to the lord and an attendant of his, asked Sanatkumāra: "Where is that great place which is always the abode of gods, where Govinda sports everyday with the cowherdesses? If you have affection for me, tell me the account of (Govinda's) sport and whatever else that is wonderful, if you know it."

Sanatkumāra said:

4-6. As occasion arose, I have told what that noble Arjuna, of a good vow, and the attendant of the lord, at some time seated on the bank of Yumunā, at the root of a certain tree, saw and did—his experience in loneliness. I shall tell you that. Listen with great attention. But you are not to divulge it here and there (i.e. anywhere).

Arjuna said:

7-12. O you ocean of compassion, O lord, be pleased to tell me all that which Śaṅkara and others, so also Brahmā and others have not seen or heard. What have you told before? The cowherds' wives are dear to you. How many kinds do they have? How many are they in number? How many names do they have? Who are they? Where are they? Where are they settled? How many (i.e. what) are their deeds? O lord, what is their age?

What is their dress? O lord, with whom and where will you sport in privacy in every forest that is eternal, that has eternal happiness and eternal grandeur? Where and of what kind is that eternal and great place? If you have that kind of favour (towards me) then please tell all that to me. O you glorious one, O you who destroys the distress of the distressed, you will (please) tell me all the secret, which even I have not asked and which is not known to me.

The lord said:

13-29a. That is my place. Those are my dear ones. Such is my sport, which is imperceptible even to men who are (to me) like my own life. This is the truth. O dear one, when told about it, you will be eager to see it. How other people can, when it cannot be seen even by Brahmā and others? Therefore, O dear one, desist (from asking about it). What (do you lose) without that?

Hearing these very fearful words of the lord, Arjuna, being helpless, fell at both his lotus-like feet (prostrating himself) like a staff. Then the revered lord, affectionate towards his devotees, raised him with his arms, and with great love said to him: "What is the use of telling about it now? For you are going to see it. Having with great devotion propitiated that glorious goddess Tripurasundarī, in whom everything has come up, remains even now and will merge, present yourself to her. Without her I can never give this position to you."

Having heard these words of the lord, Arjuna, with his eyes full of joy, went to the feet of the glorious goddess Tripurā. Having gone there he saw the altar of the desire-yielding gem, very much decorated with staircases fashioned with various jewels. There (he saw) a desire-yielding tree which was bent with many flowers and fruits, and which was brightened due to foliage, having leaves, tender in all seasons and dripping with sprays of flowing honey and unsteady due to wind; which (i.e. the tree) was resounding with parrots, flocks of cuckoos, sārikās and pigeons, so also with sportive partridges and (other) charming birds; which had at its foot a divine, very wonderful, jewelled temple which was shining with bright jewels, and charming

like a wild fire. There was a jewelled throne, made of bright gold and enchanting, and very wonderful.

29b-31a. Arjuna, saying, "I am known as Arjuna", and having repeatedly saluted, by folding the palms of his hands, and full of devotion to the goddess who resembled the young (i.e. morning) Sun, who was decorated with many ornaments, who was endowed with fresh youth, whose four arms resembling creepers shone with a goad, a noose and a bow, who was very much pleased and attractive, whose lotus-like feet were adorned with the rays of the gems in the crowns of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa (i.e. Śiva) etc., who was covered with (i.e. who possessed) the (supernatural powers) like aṇimā,[1] sat in a secluded place. The goddess, the treasure of compassion, knowing his adoration and good temper, and overcome by his recollection said (to him) tenderly:

The goddess said:

31b-37. O child, which rare gift have you made to a person worthy to receive gifts? Which sacrifice have you performed? Or, which penance have you practised here (i.e. in this world)? Or formerly which (kind of) devotion have you accomplished? Or which difficult and auspicious, great act have you done, so that the lord has, indeed, gladly done you a favour, which is the most secret, and which cannot be had by anyone else? O child, that favour which the universal soul has done to you, is not (done by him) to the people of the mortal world, living on the earth, (so also) to deities etc. living in heaven, and not at all (done) to all his devotees who are best ascetics and practise abstract meditation. Then, come on; knowing the lake, my seat, resort to it. The goddess fulfils all desires. (Therefore) go with her; and having duly bathed there, quickly come (back) here.

38-46a. Then only, Arjuna went there, bathed, and came like that (i.e. as he was told). The goddess made him who had bathed and come (back), offer nyāsa[2], mudrā[3] etc., and told into

1. Aṇimā—The superhuman power of becoming as small as an atom.
2. Nyāsa—Assignment of the various parts of the body to different deities, which is usually accompanied with prayers and corresponding gesticulations.
3. Mudrā—Name of certain positions of the fingures practised in religious worship or devotion.

his right ear the lore (called) *Bālāvidyā* which gave instant success, which was great, which had for its goal half the portion of Śiva (i.e. Pārvatī), which was unique and which was adorned by everything. (She also made him) practise religious austerities, worship and mutter the prayer five lakh times; and having duly carried out the performance (of worship) with the buds of karavīra tree, the goddess, kindly spoke to him this (i.e. these words): "Worship me in this manner only. Then, when I shall be pleased, you will be entitled to the sport of Kṛṣṇa due to my favour. This rule has been formerly formulated by the lord himself."

Having heard like this, Arjuna worshipped her with that hymn. Then having performed the worship and muttering, he pleased the goddess. Then, having performed an auspicious sacrifice and having bathed duly, Arjuna regarded himself as blessed, as one whose almost all desires were fulfilled, and as one having every success in his hands.

46b-51a. At this time the goddess, coming to him, spoke, with a smiling face, to him: "O child, now go into the interior of that house". Then, Arjuna hastily and joyfully got up, and full of immeasurable delight, he saluted her in the manner of a staff (i.e. by prostrating himself before her). Then, ordered by the goddess, Arjuna, along with the friend of the goddess went to the place of the lord of Rādhā, which is inaccessible even to siddhas. Then he was shown Vṛndāvana which remained above Goloka, which was stable, sustained by wind, eternal, the abode of all happiness, in which the great festival of Kṛṣṇa's dance with the cowherds constantly went on. He saw the great secret full of the feeling of love.

51b-54. By her words (i.e. order) only he saw that secret, and being beyond himself and overcome with enhanced love, he fell there. Then regaining consciousness with difficulty he was raised by her by (holding) his arms. Due to her words of consolation, he somehow became stable. "Tell me what other penance should be practised by me?" Thus, full of anxiety to see him, he was unsteady. Then holding him by her hand, she went towards the southern direction of that place.

55-61a. Going along a good region, she spoke these words

(to him): "O Arjuna, in order to bathe enter this (lake) which is auspicious, has extensive water, has the shape of a thousand-petalled lotus with a bud in the centre, four waterfalls and four streams, and is full of a multitude of wonders. On entering into its interior, you will notice a special property. To the south of it is this lake. There is drunk honey and spirituous liquor distilled from the madhūka tree, after which the stream (flowing) from Malaya (mountain) is named. This park is full of flowers, where, in the spring season, Kṛṣṇa celebrates the vernal festival in honour of Cupid, heaped with vernal flowers; where they, day and night, praise the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, by whose mere recollection the sprout of love would be (rising) in the heart of an ascetic. Then, having bathed in this lake, and having gone to the bank of the eastern lake, and having bathed in its water, accomplish your desire (i.e. desired object)."

61b-74a. Then having heard the words, when Arjuna plunged into the water of the lake, which was tinged with the pollen dropped from white lotuses, lotuses opening on moonrise, (other) lotuses and red and blue lotuses, and which was agreeably perfumed with honey-drops, which was shaken by the notes of corpulent swans, whose four banks were decked with jewels, which had ripples due to gentle breezes, she vanished just there. The charmingly smiling one got up and on seeing around, was confused. He instantly saw himself (to be turned into) a wonderful, excellent lady, who had a slim, fair, charming body like the rays of pure gold, whose age was that of a sparkling youth, whose face resembled the autumnal moon, whose hair was very dark, curly, glossy and shining with jewels, whose curls of hair on the plate (-like forehead) were brightened up due to the rays from the mark of red lead, who had vanquished Cupid's bow due to the knittings of the creeper-like eyebrows being manifest, whose wagtail-like eyes were dark like clouds and sportive, whose round cheeks were sparkling due to the bright lustre of the jewelled ear-rings, whose wonderful creeper-like arms were delicate like lotus-stalks, whose sprout-like hands took away all the beauty of autumnal lotuses, who had put on a waist-band made of gold and arranged cleverly, whose hips were shining with jingling girdles, whose beautiful place of hips was covered with a shining garment, whose lotus-like feet were very charming due

to the jingling jewelled anklets, who possessed the skill in the various arts of love being manifested, who was endowed with all (good) characteristics, who was adorned with all ornaments. Due to the illusion of (i.e. created by) the lover of the cowherdesses he forgot whatever belonged to his former body; and after that, being very much astonished, stood there, not knowing what to do.

74b-80. In the meanwhile, there was heard a sudden, grave voice in the sky, saying: "O beautiful lady, go along this (path) only to the eastern lake. Having bathed in its water, accomplish the (object of your) desire. O you of an excellent complexion, there are your friends. Do not sink. They will, there only, accomplish (for you your) desired choice." Hearing these divine words, she went to the eastern lake which had many wonderful streams and which was crowded with various birds, which shone with quivering white lotuses, white lotuses opening at moonrise, (ordinary) lotuses and blue lotuses that were quivering, and with rubies, which had a good bank of (i.e. decked with) lotuses, whose four banks were adorned with various lovely arbours of creepers and trees having abundant flowers. Having bathed (there), she stood for a moment. Then she heard in her ear (i.e. with her ears) the tinkling of small bells tinged with the (sound of) jingling girdles and sweet anklets.

81-88. Then (she saw) a bevy of young damsels that had wonderful youth, who had put on wonderful ornaments, whose figures and speech were wonderful, whose bodies were wonderful, who were unique, whose amorous actions were the same and wonderful, whose conversation was interesting, whose laughter and beholding were agreeable, whose beauty was sweet and wonderful, who possessed all sweetness, whose charm of understanding had reached the extreme, who were wonderfully beautiful, whose beauty was wonderfully glossy, whose favour etc. was wonderful, who were a heap of all wonders, whose appearance etc. was wonderful. Seeing that great wonder and thinking a little in her heart, she, scratching the ground with her toe, remained (there) with her face hung down. Then they hastily looked at one another: 'Who is this one, belonging to my class, that has created curiosity (in us) for a long time?' Having thus observed her, and (thinking) for a moment, 'she should be known'

(i.e. 'we should know who she is'), they, clever in deliberation, deliberated, and came to see her out of curiosity. One of them, a wise one, named Priyamudā, came (to her) and with sweet words and affection spoke to her:

Priyamudā said:

89-91. Who are you? Whose daughter are you? Whose beloved are you? Where were you born? Who brought you into this (region)? Or have you come on your own? Tell all this to us. What is the use of anxiety? Is there any trouble to anyone in this place of great joy?

Thus asked by her, she bowed through modesty; and enticing their minds, she spoke in a sweet voice.

Arjuna said:

92-97. I do not know anything as to who I am, as to whose daughter I was born, whose beloved I was, who brought me here or if I came here on my own; but the goddess might know it. (Please) hear what is told by me, if you believe my words. To the southern side of this, there is a lake. I came to bathe there, and remaining there only I became fearfully eager. Then looking all round in (every) direction, I heard a wonderful voice in the sky, "O beautiful lady, go along this (path) only to the eastern lake. Having bathed in its water, accomplish the (object of your) desire. O you of an excellent complexion, there are your friends. Do not sink. They will, there only, accomplish (for you your) desired choice."

98-104a. Having heard these words I came here from there. My mind is full of dejection and joy and I am fully overcome with anxiety. I came here, and after bathing in its water, I heard many kinds of auspicious sounds, and then I saw you, the great ones. Physically, mentally, and through words, I know this much only. O respectable ladies, this much I have told you, if you like. Who are you? Whose daughters are you? Where were you born? Whose beloveds are you?

Hearing those words of hers, that Priyamudā spoke: "Let

it be so. O auspicious one, we are his beloveds. We are daughters happily sporting with the Moon of Vṛndāvana (i.e. Kṛṣṇa). We are self-delighted. So we have come here as the cowherdesses. These are the groups of the sacred texts; these again are the sages. We are cowherdesses. I have told you about our nature.

104b-121. (We are those) most beloved to the lord of Rādhā due to (our) mirth. We always sport irregularly; we always play and move. This is goddess Pūrṇarasā. This is Rasamantharā. This one is Rasālayā by name; and this is Rasavallarī. This is Rasapīyūṣadhārā; this is Rasataraṅgiṇī; and this is Rasakallolinī; and this is Rasavāpikā; this is Anaṅgasenā; and this is Anaṅgamālinī. This young lady is Madayantī and this is Rasavihvalā. This is Lalitā by name, and this is Lalitayauvanā; and this is Madanamañjarī. This is Kalāvatī by name, and this one is known as Ratikalā. This is Kāmakalā by name; this is Kāmadāyinī. This young lady is Ratilolā; and this young lady is Ratotsukā; and this one is Ratisarvasvā; and this one is Raticintāmaṇi. Some of these are always delighted and always give love. After this (come) the groups of the scriptures. Listen to (the names of) some of these: This one is Udgītā; this one is Sugītā; this dear one is Kalagītā. This young lady is called Kalasurā; this young lady is Kalakaṇṭhikā. This one is Vipañcī; this one is Kramapadā; this one is known as Bahuhutā. This is one known as Bahuprayogā. This lady is called Bahukalā. This one is called Kalāvatī; and this one is known as Kriyāvatī. After this (come) the groups of the sages. Some of them are here: This one is named Ugratapā; this one is known as Bahuguṇā. This one is Priyavratā by name; and this one is said to be Suvratā. This one is known as Surekhā. This young lady is known as Suparvā. This is Bahupradā. This one is called Ratnarekhā. This one is known as Maṇigrīvā; and this one is Suparṇā; (and these are) Ākalpā, Sukalpā, Ratnamālikā. This (lady of) beautiful eyebrows is Saudāminī; and this one is Kāmadāyinī; and this one is called Bhogadā; this chaste one is Viśvamātā. This one is Dhāriṇī; and this is Dhātrī; this one is Sumedhā; and this one is Kānti. This one is Aparṇā; this one is known as Suparṇā; and this one is Sulakṣaṇā. This one is Sudatī. This one is Guṇavatī; and this one is known as Saukalinī. This one is called Sulocanā; and this one is known as Sumanā. (These are known

as) Aśrutā, Suśīlā, and Ratisukhapradāyinī. Next are we, the cowherdesses, that have come here.

122-138. O you having a face like a lotus, get acquainted with some of them. This one is Candrāvatī; this auspicious one is known as Candrikā. This is Candrāvalī. This one is Candrarekhā and this is Candrikā. This one is called Candramālā and this one is known as Candralikā. This is Candraprabhā and this lady is known as Candrakalā. This one is Varṇāvalī; this one is Varṇamālā; this one is Maṇimālikā. (This one) is called Varṇaprabhā; this one is Suprabhā; this one is Maṇiprabhā. This one is Hārāvalī; this auspicious one is Tārāmālinī. This one is Mālatī; this one is Yūthī. (These are) Vāsantī and Navamallikā. This one is Mallī; this one is Navamallī. This one is known as Śephālikā. This one is Saugandhikā. This one is Kastūrī; this one is Padminī; this one is Kumudvatī. This one is Rasollāsā; this one is Citravṛndā; this one is Surekhā; this one is Svarṇarekhikā. This one is Kāñcanamālā; this other one is the chaste Asantatikā. All these have surrounded (you). Others also are to be introduced to you. O you beautiful, young lady, you will amuse yourself with us and with these. Come on to the bank of the eastern lake. There, O friend, having duly given you a bath, I shall give you a hymn, giving success."

Thus suddenly taking her (to the lake) and having duly bathed her, she made her accept, according to the proper rites, and in brief, the excellent hymn of the beloved of the Moon of Vṛndāvana, which was excellent and belonged to the germ of Varuṇa (-hymn), and put forward by the seed of the hymn sacred to Fire, which was endowed with the fourth note, and decorated with a point of sound, and sewn between the Praṇavas and extremely difficult to get in the three worlds. Every success comes by merely accepting the hymn. There is the repetition of the name of a deity accompanied with burnt offerings. There is meditation; and there is a number of sacrifices and the success due to muttering of prayers. Along with her friends she gladly worshipped the goddess whose body was fair like heated gold, who was adorned with various ornaments, whose form and beauty were wonderful, who was well-pleased, and who gave boons according to proper rites, and with white lotuses and karavīra flowers etc., with camkaka flowers and lotuses, so also with other fragrant

flowers and (other objects) having fragrance, with water for washing feet and rinsing mouth, with charming incense and lights, so also various offerings of eatables; then she repeated the hymn for a lakh times; she made offerings according to the proper rites, praised her and fell (prostrate) on the ground like a staff.

139-143. Then without a wink the goddess was praised with a longing for her. She, through illusion, got ready her shadow, and put, as it were through force, the beloved, near her. She was surrounded by her friends, and was delighted. Due to the worship, muttering of prayers, eulogies, devout salutations, she manifested herself through grace. Her complexion was like gold or campaka flowers. She was bright due to beautiful ornaments. Her figure was lovely due to beauty in every limb, large and small. Her face was beautiful like the full moon in autumn. Her smile and appearance were kind and simple. She was attractive in (all) the three worlds. She brightened the ten directions with her lustre. Then that goddess, granting boons and affectionate towards her devotees, spoke:

The goddess said:

144-154. The words of my friends are true. Therefore, you are my dear friend. Get up, come along, I shall fulfil your desire.

Arjunī, having heard the words of the goddess which were (but) the longing of her heart, and with her body lovely due to the sprout-like horripilations, with her eyes full of tears, and again overcome with love, fell at the feet of the goddess. Then she said these words to her friend-goddess, Priyaṁvadā. "Holding her hand, and cheering her up, bring her near me." Then, being zealous by the order of the goddess, Priyaṁvadā took her like that and came near the goddess. The goddess, dear to Hari, went to the bank of the northern lake, and having duly bathed her and made her worship according to the proper rites and preceded by a solemn vow, made her accept the hymn, granting good success, of (i.e. sacred to) the Moon in Śrī Gokula. The vow is called Gokulanātha, is old, and adorned by Mohana (i.e. Kṛṣṇa); the hymn gives all success and is preserved in all reli-

gious treatises teaching magical and mystical formalities. She, knowing the songs of Govinda gave her steady devotion. She told her the meditation and the enchanting king of hymns. It is told in the religious treatise called Mohana. Even its recollection gives success. One should meditate upon (Kṛṣṇa), dark like the petal of a blue lotus and adorned with many ornaments, and having beauty like that of a crore Cupids, and full of love. For purification, she told this secret to Priyaṁvadā.

Śrī Rādhikā said:

155-167a. Till her excellent initiatory rite would be over, be attentive, and along with your friends, protect her.

Having kept (there) the shadow of her own and of her beloveds, she went near the lotus-like feet of Kṛṣṇa. That Rādhikā, the beloved of Kṛṣṇa, remained there as before. Here, by the advice of Priyaṁvadā, she prepared an auspicious eight-petalled lotus, and having written that wonderful auspicious hymn, and drawn the mystical diagram giving success, with bright yellow pigment, saffron, and sandal mixed together, and having made Nyāsa etc., and having duly offered water for washing the feet, materials for worship, and having offered worship to Nanda's son with many flowers of the season, with saffron and sandal incenses, lights, offerings of eatables, tāmbūlas and perfumes used to scent the mouth, and with garments, ornaments and flowers, and having, along with all followers, weapons and vehicles, praised and duly saluted him, she remembered him. Then the lord, Yaśoda's son, influenced by devotion, with a smile and wavy side-glances and thoughts said to goddess Rādhikā: "Quickly bring her here." The goddess (thus) ordered, sent for friend Śāradā, and she brought her suddenly before the playful one. Having come in front of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and overcome with love, she, observing everything wonderful, fell on the ground after being turned into gold. Having somehow got up with difficulty, and having slowly opened her eyes, she, full of burden of perspiration and horripilation and trembling, saw there a beautiful and attractive place.

167b-177a. There was also a desire-yielding tree, which was having bright emerald-like leaves, which was having foliage

with sprouts, which was delicate, and had golden stems, which had crystal-like shoots and roots, which granted rich objects of desire, and which gave the desired fruits to a suitor. Under it was a jewelled temple. There was a jewelled throne. There (i.e. on it) was an eight-petalled lotus. There were the two treasures[1] viz. Śaṅkha and Padma, placed on the left and right (sides). In the four directions were placed the desire-yielding cows at proper places. Around it was the Nandana garden. It was served by the Malaya-breezes. It was scented with lovely fragrances of flowers of all seasons (and) thus had defeated (the fragrance of) Kālāgaru (sandal). It was cool due to the shower of the drops of honey and was very lovely. Its interior was constantly resounding with the hummings of the swarms of female bees intoxicated on tasting the honey. It was resounding with the sweet notes of cuckoos, pigeons, sārikās, and female parrots, and others in (i.e. hidden behind) leaves. It was full of the dances of intoxicated peacocks and enhanced the passion of love. It had the beauty of the thin (layer) of darkness like collyrium produced by the emission of juice.

177b-196a. She saw Kṛṣṇa whose hair was very glossy, dark, curly and fragrantly perfumed; on whose head was tied the best tail of a peacock intoxicated with madness; on whose left side was the ear-ornament of flowers resorted to by bees; who was shining with the mirrors of his cheeks, bright with the bee-like hair; who was shining with the beauty of the large forehead having a beautiful mark; whose nose was lovely like the sesamum-flower and the eagle's beak; whose lips were charming and like the bimba fruits; who inflamed passion of love with his gentle smile; who looked lovely due to the necklace resembling a wild flower; whose both large and charming shoulders were shining with the garland (of the flowers) of the divine tree, resorted to by thousands of intoxicated female bees; who was adorned with the Kaustubha on the region of the chest shining with a pearl necklace; who had the mark of Śrīvatsa, who was attractive on account of his hands hanging up to the knees; who was very handsome on account of having his waist like that of a

1. Nidhi—The treasure of Kubera. They are nine in number: Mahāpadma, Padma, Śaṅkha, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Kunda, Nīla and Kharva.

lion and with a deep navel; who was lovely due to not long and very round knees like a good tree; who was adorned with excellent ornaments like bracelets, armlets, and anklets; whose hips were covered with a portion of his yellow garment; who had vanquished a crore of Cupids in beauty by means of his loveliness; who enchanted (others) by means of charming songs proceeding from his flute; who made the three worlds plunge into the ocean of happiness; who had the arrogance of Cupid in every part of his body; who was tired due to his interest in dancing. There were deities appointed at respective places, observing his internal feelings, having fixed their eyes on his face, who were in due order and with respect carrying separately a chowrie, a fan, a flower, a perfume, sandal, and tāmbūla, a mirror, a drinking vessel, a spitting pot, and also other objects of sport, so also frankincense and an amulet. Arjunīyā, having seen in confusion on the left side of the pleasing goddess Rādhikā, propitiating and offering a tāmbūla to him of a bright smile, was overcome with the passion of love. Then Śrīkṛṣṇa, who knew everything, knowing her to be like that, seized her hand, and he the lord, the great master of magical art secretly sported with her in the entire pleasure-forest. Then putting his sport-like arm on her shoulder and coming to Śāradā, said to her: "Bathe quickly this slim-bodied lady of a gentle smile, fatigued due to sport, in this western lake." Then that goddess Śāradā (took her) to the western lake, (and) said to her, "Take bath". The fatigued one did like that. She who got to the interior of the water, again turned into Arjuna and got up at the place where the lord of gods and the chief of the beautiful Vaikuṇṭha stood. Seeing Arjuna dejected and broken-minded, Kṛṣṇa kindly touched him with his hand and put him (back) to his nature.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

196b-198a. O Dhanañjaya, I bless you. You are my dear friend. In the three worlds there is none else like you who knows my secret. O Arjuna, you will curse me if you tell anyone the secret about which you asked (me) and which you have experienced.

Sanatkumāra said:

198b-200a. Thus having received his grace and having taken decision due to being bound by oaths, Arjuna, with his mind delighted and having wonderful recollections, went home from that (place). I have thus told you the entire secret of Govinda that is known to me. I swear you if you tell it to him.

The lord said:

200b-204. Having heard these words the follower of the cowherd got success. He went to Vṛndāvana in the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa. There he, knowing the daily sports of Kṛṣṇa, stays even today. I did not tell this secret to Nārada, even though I was asked by him. Yet, having reached the natural form, he obtained it. O you auspicious one, like one of your stock, you are not to tell the secret which I told you through love (for you), to anyone else.

He who would read or listen to this wonderful chapter describing the greatness of the lord's devotee, obtains pleasure in Hari.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFIVE

Nārada's Experience

Pārvatī said:

1. O lord, you have told me in various ways the secret of Vṛndāvana. Due to which particular religious merit did Nārada obtain the natural form?

The lord said:

2-6. Once, formerly I desired to know a wonderful account. From the lotus-like mouth of Kṛṣṇa I heard the secret told by Brahmā. Nārada asked me. Then I got this. "I am not at all able to tell its greatness. What shall I do? Remembering his

oath I am distressed in my mind." Hearing these words of mine, when he became sad, then, O dear one, I called Brahmā and ordered him: "Tell Nārada what you told me." Then Brahmā, hearing my words, went with Nārada near Kṛṣṇa and asked him that only.

Brahmā said:

7. O you lord of the subjects, what is that Vṛndāvana forest of thirtytwo (parts)? O lord, I desire to hear (about it). If I am fit (to hear about it, then) tell it to me.

Bhagavān said:

8-14a. This charming Vṛndāvana is just my unique abode where there are actually these beasts, trees, insects, men and gods, who stay near me. When they (will) die they (will) come to me. Those wives of the cowherds that live in my abode, are the female devotees. The gods (also) are devoted to me. This forest of mine, which is of a divine nature, is (having an area of) five yojanas. This Kālindī called Suṣumnā (the artery in the human body lying between Iḍā and Piṅgalā), is a great river of nectar; and in it gods and beings live in a subtle form. I have pervaded (the forest) on all sides, and I never leave it. In every yuga appearance and disappearance take place here. This place is full of lustre, and it is invisible to the physical eyes. In the yuga, see my secret, my prowess—the Vṛndāvana. It can never be seen by gods like Brahmā.

The lord said:

14b-16. Having heard that, Nārada saluted Kṛṣṇa and Brahmā, and came to the Miśraka Naimiṣa forest on the earth. There he was well-received by the best sages like Śaunaka; and they asked him: "O brāhmaṇa, tell us wherefrom you have come now." Hearing that Nārada said: "Having heard the secret of Vṛndāvana from Kṛṣṇa's lotus-like mouth, I have come from Goloka."

Nārada said:

17-18. There repeatedly a number of questions were asked.

There I heard all the hymns and spells. I shall truly tell (you) those only according to the questions (asked by you).

Śaunaka and others said:

19. If you favour us, then tell us the secret of Vṛndāvana, which Brahmā told you.

Nārada said:

20-22a. Sometime, on the bank of Sarayū we saw Gautama who was wise, very unhappy and had his mind full of anxiety. Seeing me, the divine Gautama fell on the ground (i.e. prostrated himself before me). I said to him: "O child, O child, get up. If you like, tell me why you are called wise".

Gautama said:

22b-24a. From your mouth (i.e. from you) only, I have heard the fact about Kṛṣṇa like that. (I have also heard) many times the secret called Dvārakā and Mathurā. But from your lotus-like mouth I have not heard the secret about Vṛndāvana, from (i.e. by hearing) which my mind will be steady, O good preceptor.

Nārada said:

24b-32a. This is a great secret, the secret of secrets. Formerly Brahmā told me that secret about Vṛndāvana (when I had said to him): "O lord of gods, O father, tell me the secret of Vṛndāvana." Hearing this desire (of mine), he remained silent for a moment. Then he said to me: "O child, go to Mahā (i.e. great) Viṣṇu, my lord. Undoubtedly I must also go there with you." Saying so, and taking me (with him) he went to the abode of Viṣṇu. He told Mahā Viṣṇu what I had said to him. Hearing that Mahā Viṣṇu himself ordered the self-born one (i.e. Brahmā). "By my order, you take the sage Nārada, and arrange for his bath in the lake called Amṛta." Ordered by great Viṣṇu the self-born one acted like that with me. Having entered the Amṛta lake, I took bath there. Just at that moment I was (i.e. I found myself) near women, beyond (i.e. on the other side of) the lake. (I was) turned into a woman, endowed with all (good) characte-

ristics and was very much amazed. Seeing me coming, those (women) repeatedly asked (me):

The women said:

32b-35. Who are you? Wherefrom have you come? Explain your conduct.

Listen to what I said on hearing their agreeable talk. "Where I have come from, who I am, how I have become a woman—all this appears like a dream. Am I confused on the earth?" Hearing those words of mine, the goddess spoke to me in a sweet sound: "This is the city by name Vṛṇdā, which is always dear to the Moon in the form of Kṛṣna; and I am the goddess Lalitā, gone beyond the fourth state and without parts (i.e. whole)."

36-39a. The great goddess, who was addressed like this, and whose mind was soft with pity, again said to me: "Come along with me." All other women, devoted to Kṛṣṇa's feet, said the same thing to me: "Come along with her." O you who resemble gods, the fourteen-lettered hymn of the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa—the noble one, and also of that goddess was then kindly narrated to me; and just at that moment, I got her resemblance.

39b-45. With them, (we) went where the eternal Kṛṣṇa remained. The lord, who was merely of the form of the Good, the Intelligence and the Joy, and of that of a woman, and whose heart was delighted due to the women, again and again said to me: "Come along O dear one, O beloved, embrace me devoutly." O you best brāhmaṇa, there only he enjoyed (with me) for a year. Then that best lover said to that goddess Rādhikā: "This was my natural form there, which had taken the form of Nārada. Take her to the Amṛta lake, and arrange for her bath." Then I spoke agreeable words to my lover. "I am Goddess Lalitā and that Rādhikā who is celebrated in songs. I am called Vāsudeva, who always is of the nature of the art of love. I am truly of a feminine form, and I am the ancient woman, and I am goddess Lalitā, and in a manly form I have Kṛṣṇa's body.

46-53. O Nārada, there is no difference between us. This is the truth, the (only) truth. He, who knows, along with the (code of) conduct and convention, the fact and usual practices about

me, so also the hymn (sacred to me), is dear to me like Lalitā. This sacret (place) named Vṛndāvana, is my abode. This is to be disclosed at no place. It should never be told to a brute." After that goddess Rādhikā took me to the lake, waited there, and went (back) near the feet of the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa. Then immediately after plunging (into the lake) I came (back) as Nārada, having the lute in his hand, and repeatedly engaged in gladly singing that great secret. Having saluted the self-born (i.e. Brahmā), I went to Viṣṇu's assembly. The self-born one saw that, but did not say anything at that time. O child, I have told you a great secret. You too have to guard carefully the (secret about the) unique, perfect abode of the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa, like (that of) the paramour of one's mother. As I have told the agreeable (story) along with its secret to my dear disciple Gautama, in the same way I have narrated fully to you the great secret.

54-55. O brāhmaṇas, if sometime it would be disclosed wheresoever, then certainly there would be a curse from the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa, O best sages.

He, who would read or listen to this excellent chapter full of the sports of Kṛṣṇa goes to the highest position.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSIX

The Greatness of Kṛṣṇa

The lord said:

1-3. Here, hearing that Śiśupāla was killed, Dantavakra came to Mathurā to fight with Kṛṣṇa. Hearing that Kṛṣṇa got into a chariot and came with him to Mathurā. Then he killed him, and having crossed Yamunā, and having gone to Nanda's abode, he saluted his parents and consoled them. He was embraced by them. He embraced all the old cowherds, consoled them, and pleased all living there by (giving them) many garments and ornaments.

4-6. On the charming sand-bank of Kālindī (i.e. Yamunā), crowded with auspicious trees, he, day and night enjoying sports with the cowherdesses, lived for three nights. In that region, all people like the cowherd Nanda, with their sons and wives, so also beasts, birds and animals, having divine forms, got into an aeroplane and reached the highest place—Vaikuṇṭha. And Śrīkṛṣṇa, having given all the residents of Nanda's cow-pen his own infallible place, and being praised by hosts of gods, entered the glorious Dvārāvatī.

7-9. There he was everyday worshipped by Vāsudeva, Ugrasena, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Akrūra etc. He of an omnipresent form, enjoyed on very soft beds, strewn with flowers of the divine trees in the divine, jewelled bowers of creepers, with his queens numbering sixteen thousand and eight. Thus, for the welfare of the gods, for destroying the entire burden of the earth, he descended in the Yadu family, and having destroyed all the demons (and thus) having destroyed the great burden on the earth, having released the immobile and mobile living in Nanda's abode and at Dvārikā from the bondage of the worldly existence, he established them in his great, eternal, charming abode meditated upon by the meditating saints. Being always waited upon by divine queens etc. Vāsudeva said to all: "Brahman was unseparated like (the particles of) hail and ghee. Freed from the constituents (of the Primordial Matter), he, living in the Prakṛti (the Primordial Matter), melted and went to heaven."

CHAPTER SEVENTYSEVEN

A Description of Kṛṣṇa

Pārvatī said:

1-2. Tell me in detail the importance of the meaning and the words of the hymn; so also (tell me) the nature of the god, and (about) the splendour of his places. O lord of gods, (tell

me) all (about) the great abode of Viṣṇu and Hari's (i.e. Viṣṇu's) different modes called eternal bliss.

The lord said:

3-6a. In the excellent Vṛndāvana (one sees) Kṛṣṇa surrounded by crores of cowherdesses. Gaṅgā is a great power there. The Ānandakānana is (also) there. It is made fragrant by fragrant breezes (blowing) over many good flowers. It is cool and has the colour of the divine ripples of the daughter of Kalinda (i.e. Yamunā). It has come in contact with the best sages—the devotees of the lord like Sanaka etc. It is adorned with flocks of cows, bellowing joyfully and sweetly. It is covered with boys having charming garlands and ornaments and dancing.

6b-13a. There is a glorious desire-yielding tree, covered with gold. It is rich with many gems and corals. It is bright with many gem-like fruits. At its root is a jewelled altar. It is brightened by the rays of jewels. There (i.e. on it) is an excellent golden throne made of the triad (of the Vedas); (one can see there) the lord of the world who is seated there, who is beyond the three constituents (i.e. beyond Prakṛti), who is immutable, who resembles a crore of moons, who is bright like a crore of suns, whose handsomeness is like that of a crore of Cupids, who illumines the ten quarters, who has three eyes, two hands, who is fair and bright like heated gold, who is always embraced by beautiful women, who is always everywhere respected, who is meditated upon and influenced by Brahmā and others and Sanaka and others, who is always surrounded by crores and crores of scriptures that have obtained the bodies of cowherdesses repeatedly kissing him, embracing him and laughing, and with their hearts set upon the spirituous liquor (coming) from his lotus-like feet.

13b-18. That goddess who among them is bright like heated gold, who brightens up all directions and makes them bright as (with) lightning, is the Pradhāna (i.e. Prakṛti), who has pervaded all this. She is of the nature of creation, maintenance and destruction. She is beyond knowledge, ignorance and the triad (of Vedas). She is of (his) natural form, is of the nature of power, of the nature of illusion (Māyā) and is full of intelligence. She brings about the cause of the bodies of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

The entire mobile and immobile world is grasped by illusion. Due to her similarity with Viṣṇu, Rādhā is called Vṛndāvaneśvarī. A man should meditate like this, upon him, god Kṛṣṇa, the lord of Vṛndāvana, who remains embracing her, who is shaking due to the influence of passion for kissing and embracing. He would obtain success.

19-21. That noble one, who knows this best hymn, hymn of (i.e. sacred to) him, and mutters or listens to it, is very difficult to find. (There are) Rādhikā, Citrarekhā, Candrā, Madanasundarī, Śrīpriyā, Śrīmadhumatī, Śaśirekhā, Haripriyā, beautiful like gold, deluding and shining with horripilation due to love, having paleness and perspiration, attached due to love, talking agreeably. (Then there are) Suvarṇamālinī, Śāntā, Surasā and Rasikā.

22-23. She who leads the full life of a woman, who is affectionate to the helpless, who is of a pure heart, who has fully drunk the nectar of (Kṛṣṇa's) name, is called Rādhā. Rādhā is endowed with a prolonged smile, has the lustre of heated gold, is the river of surging love, a choice collyrium for (better) view.

24a. She who possesses pity and envy, who lives in the empire of charity, who indulges in the joyful battle of copulation, is called Citrarekhā.

24b-27a. She whose body is fair, who is not very tall, who is always engaged in instrumental music, who gesticulates helplessness, who is overcome by swoon and horripilation, who remains on the right side of Hari (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), to whom all hymns are dear, who possesses sweetness due to desire for love (-making), is called Candrā.

27b-30a. She whose gait is sportive and slow, who has charmingly closed her eyes, who is bright and full of the stream of love, who looks charming due to expanded collyrium, who is interested in Kṛṣṇa's love, who is eager for the sound of Kṛṣṇa's dance, who possesses egotism, who has condemned the moon with her face, who is clever in (speaking) sweet words, who is the crest-jewel of those who have curbed their senses, who is endowed with a charming smile, is Madanasundarī.

30b-31. She who is interested in the faultless dance of Kṛṣṇa, who is dark (yet) charming, who attracts Hari's heart through love and affectionate glance, who has conquered her senses, who has curbed her anger, is called Priyā.

32-34a. She whose body is fair like well-heated gold, who has a sportive gait and is beautiful, whose figure is sweet due to the strikingness of the love caused by Cupid and horripilation, whose face endowed with a charming smile has put down the moon, who is skilled in (speaking) sweet words, who is the crest-jewel of those who have restrained their senses, and who is intent upon the fulfilment of love, is Madhumatī.

34b-40a. She who is endowed with the fever of delusion, horripilation and stream of love, who diverts herself with charity (looking upon it as insignificant) as dust, who is a great dancer following the sound of Kṛṣṇa's dance, and who is always Kṛṣṇa's beloved, is Śaśirekhā. She is Kṛṣṇa's soul. She is excellent, is dark, has lovely and tawny eyes. She is fascinated by the love for his feet; sometimes she is touched by horripilation. At Śivakuṇḍa she is Śivānandā; on the bank of Dehikā she is Nandinī. She is Rukmiṇī at Dvārāvatī; and in the Vṛndāvana-grove she is Rādhā. This goddess of mine has become Devakī at Mathurā; similarly at Citrakūṭa she is Sītā. On the Vindhya (mountain) she is Vindhyanivāsinī. At Vārāṇasī she is Viśālākṣī; and in (i.e. with) Viṣṇu she is Vimalā. Kṛṣṇa who graced her, gave her the rule over Vṛndāvana. At other places she is the goddess and is Rādhā in the Vṛndāvana-grove. Kṛṣṇa has always a happy body, who is called bodiless.

40b-48a. He having Kṛṣṇa's body is described as the superintending deity of Air, Fire, Sky (i.e. Ether) and Earth, so also of Brahmā. Though the sun is powerful, yet is not designated with power; in the same way Kṛṣṇa endowed with brilliance, certainly deludes time. He does not have a material form, produced from marrow, flesh or bones. He possesses a wonderful power, is another lord, and having an eternal body, is the soul of all. Hardness is accidental as in the case of (particles of) hail and ghee. The surface of the foot of Kṛṣṇa of unlimited primary substance is not a deity (*obscure*!). In the mass of dust in Vṛndāvana, there are crores of Viṣṇus. In Ānandakiraṇa, the Moon of the universe (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) is surrounded by a group. The souls are parts of his rays as the nature of constituents is present in the soul. Kṛṣṇa is surrounded by (i.e. having) two arms. He never has four arms. There, surrounded by a cowherdess, he always sports. Govinda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) alone is a man; Brahmā and

others are women only. From that nature appears. This lord is a mode of nature.

48b-51. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are the first Prakṛti and Puruṣa. Except the lord of Vṛndāvana, everything is the product of Prakṛti. Due to their appearance, this world appears, and breaks on their disappearance. As gold does not perish (even though its products may perish), so Kṛṣṇa does not fall even if (his incarnation like) Matsya perishes. This expanse of the three constituents (guṇas) (i.e. the mundane existence) is the expanse of him who sports in Vṛndāvana. The ripple of an ocean turns into a wave; but the ocean is not (newly) produced.

52-55. There is no woman resembling Rādhikā, and no man resembling Kṛṣṇa. There is no (better) age than adolescence; that is the great innate disposition of Prakṛti. Adolescence should be thought upon. Vṛndāvana-grove should be thought upon. The greatest form is (that of) Śyāma, and the greatest delight is the first god. Childhood lasts up to the fifth year. Boyhood is up to the tenth year. Adolescence lasts for eight and five years. The limit (of it) is the fifteenth year. Adolescence, springing up from youth (*yauvana*) is called fresh youth (*navayauvana*). That age is his all-in-all; other age (than that) is unreal (*prapañca*).

56-62. I salute the charming childhood, boyhood and adolescence. I salute the young cowherd Kṛṣṇa who is of the form of Cupid-like cowherd, who is the cowherd-Cupid, of the nature of an adolescent and is wonderful, and whom they call the Cupid-enticer, whose youth has just broken up (i.e. set in), who is the great ocean of continuous, matchless nectar-like joy. The lord of Śrī is victorious. The body of him having the form of youth is hidden. Men of different minds, according to the difference in their likings, see him who is one only, immutable, ancient, who is to be known through meditation in the group of the cowherdesses. I salute him, the lustre of whose nails is Brahmā, who is meditated upon by gods like Brahmā, who is beyond the three constituents (i.e. Prakṛti), who is the lord of Vṛndāvana. Govinda never leaves Vṛndāvana. His body elsewhere is artificial. There is no doubt about it. I worship that Nanda's son who is easily accessible to the women in Vraja, but

difficult to be reached by those who desire salvation. The hymn is the great lustre of his nails.

Pārvatī said:

63. As long as the female imp in the form of the desire for salvation or enjoyment is present in the heart, how can, till then, the delight of love rise there?

The lord said:

64-65. O good one, you have asked well. I shall tell all that there is in my mind. Listen attentively. (A devotee) remembers his virtues, his name, songs pleasing the mind; enlightens himself, and always is merged in (his) love.*

CHAPTER SEVENTYEIGHT

Worship Prescribed for a Devotee of Viṣṇu

Pārvatī said:

1. Tell me the correct way of life of the followers of Viṣṇu, practising which all men will cross the ocean of worldly existence.

The lord said:

2-9. Here the purification of the devotees of Viṣṇu is said to be in twelve ways: Smearing the house, similarly approaching Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), going round (his idol) with devotion, (lead to) purification of the feet. Taking leaves and flowers with devotion only for the worship of Hari (leads to the purification) of the hands. This purification is the most important of all purifications. Narration of the names, so also of the virtues of god Śrīkṛṣṇa with devotion, is said to cause the purification of speech. Listening to his account, and witnessing his festival—this is said (to lead to) the proper purification of the ears and eyes. Putting on one's head the water (used for washing the idol's) feet, the flowers that had been offered (to the idol), and the garlands (offered to

*Some verses of this charter like 41, 44ff. are not quite clear. Some, e.g. 52b ff. seem to be irrelevant.

the deity) is said to cause the purification of the head of him who has bowed down before Hari. O dear one, smelling the flowers etc. offered to him (leads to) the purification of the heart, and it is laid down as causing the purification of the nose also. That (place) alone, where there are flowers (and other objects) offered at the couple of feet of Kṛṣṇa, is purifying in the world, and that (alone) would purify everything.

10-11. Worship (of Kṛṣṇa) is said to be of five kinds. Listen from me (i.e. as I tell) the difference in them. I shall, in proper order, describe to you the worship of five kinds, viz. *Abhigamana*, *Upādāna*, *Yoga*, *Svādhyāya* and *Ijyā*. The real approach (to the deity consists in) cleansing the place of the deity, smearing it and removing the flowers that were offered to it.

12a. *Upādāna* (i.e. acquisition) is the collection of sandal, flowers etc.

12b. *Yoga* (i.e. union) is the thought that the deity of one (i.e. worshipped by one) is oneself (only).

13-14a. *Svādhyāya* (i.e. self-study) consists in muttering (the deity's name) with the scrutiny of the meaning of the hymn, reciting Vedic hymns and hymns of praise (of a deity), so also the narration of (the virtues etc. of) Hari. *Svādhyāya* is also said to be study of branches of knowledge about the (final) truth etc.

14b-16a. *Ijyā* (i.e. worship) is properly worshipping one's deity. O you of a good vow, I have thus told you the worship of five kinds. According to the occasion I shall in due order tell you about (the worship) that gives equality with the deity, nearness of the deity, residence in the same heaven with the deity, intimate union with the deity, and assimilation to the deity. (I shall also tell you about) the worship of the Śālagrāma stone.

16b-27. In the hands of Keśava having four hands, are held, in order, a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus beginning with the right hand, then the upper hand (etc.). The mace-holder is called Keśava. Nārāyaṇa is he who in due order holds the weapons viz. a lotus, a mace, a disc and a conch. Mādhava would be (he who holds), in order, a disc, a conch, a lotus and a mace (in his hands beginning with the right hand, then the

upper one...). The mace-holder called Govinda holds a mace, a lotus, a conch and a disc. My salutation to you, of the form of Viṣṇu, holding a lotus, a conch, a disc and a mace. My salutation (to you) of the form of Madhusūdana, possessing a conch, a lotus, a mace and a disc. My salutation to Trivikrama having a mace, a disc, a conch and a lotus. My salutation (to you) of the form of Vāmana having a disc, the Kaumodakī (mace), a lotus and a conch. My salutation (to you) of the form of Śrīdhara, having a disc, a lotus, a conch and a mace. Salutation to you, O Hṛṣīkeśa, having a disc, a mace, a conch and a lotus. Salutation to your own form of Padmanābha, having a lotus, a conch, a mace and a disc. Salutation to Saṁkarṣaṇa, having a conch, a lotus, a disc and a mace. O Vāsudeva, salutation to you having a disc, a conch, a mace and a lotus. Salutation to him who has taken the form of Pradyumna, having a conch, a disc, a mace, and a lotus. Salutation to the form of Puruṣottama having a lotus, a conch, a mace and a disc. Salutation to (you having) the form of Adhokṣaja having a mace, a conch, a disc and a lotus. Salutation (to you) of the form of Nṛsiṁha holding a lotus, a mace, a conch and a disc. Salutation (to you) of the form of Acyuta having a lotus, a disc, a conch and a mace. Salutation (to you) of the form of Śrīkṛṣṇa having a mace, a lotus, a disc and a conch.

28-43. That is god Śrī Gadādhara who is present in the aperture of Śālagrāma stone, who holds two discs, who has white lines and who is rich in beauty. That is Puṣkala, the forepart, with two discs present and of a red lustre. There is Saṁkarṣaṇa, so also is Pradyumna. The one having small discs is Pītaka. The round one that is having a long hollow and holes is Aniruddha. The dark one, dark-blue at the aperture and having three lines, is Nārāyaṇa. Nṛsiṁha is the one having the lines of the form of a mace, and having a very tall navel-lotus; he has a big disc. One having three dots is Kapila. (This one) or one having five dots is Kapila. (This one) or one having five dots should be worshipped by a celibate. That is Varāha that has three marks and two uneven circles. Nīla has three lines, is having dots, and is big. That is the form of the tortoise. The dark one having circles and eddies, is whitish and

has the backside preserved. Śrīdhara has five lines. Vanamālin is marked with a mace. Vāmana is round; one having a disc in the centre is Nīlaka. Anantaka is the one that has many colours, many forms and the hood of a serpent. Dark and corpulent is Dāmodara. The one having a circle in the centre is Nīlaka. May he, of a contracting aperature, protect (me). So also Brahmā, the very red one. The one having a very long line is Suṣīra; Pṛthu is the one having a disc and a lotus. Kṛṣṇa has a big disc and a large hole. Bindumān has a dot. Hayagrīva has the form of a goad. One having five lines is Kaustubha. Vaikuṇṭha shines spotless. The black one, having one disc, is like the shape of a long lotus, is having a long lotus, is having a long line, and whitish is Matsya. Rāmacandra has vertical lines. That one that is dark, is Trivikrama. Salvation to him, staying in the Śālagrāma-Dvārakā, who, marked with one, and having a mace and looking charming, should protect (me). With two (are formed) Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa; with three Trivikrama. With four, the four modes. With five, Vāsudeva (is formed). May Pradyumna, with six, and Saṁkarṣaṇa with seven, protect (me). Puruṣottama would be (formed) with eight; the one with nine modes is placed as new. May Anirundha, having the ten incarnations and with ten, protect (me). The one with twelve souls, with twelve (may protect me). Anantaka has more than this (number). Brahmā has four faces, a staff, a water-pitcher and a garland and is tall. Maheśvara has five faces, ten arms and is bull-bannered, and has respective weapons.

44. The mother are Gaurī, Caṇḍikā, Sarasvatī and Mahālakṣmī. Divākara has a lotus in his hand.

45-46. The attendants like Gajāsya, Gajaskandha, Ṣaṇmukha are of many kinds. They are there, or are installed and if they are worshipped in a palace, a man obtains *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma*.

CHAPTER SEVENTYNINE

Do's and Don't's for a Devotee of Viṣṇu

The lord said:

1-2. Not only in the house (but everywhere) the worship of Hari should be done everyday on the Śālagrāma, a gem, a mystical diagram or images. In one region of Gaṇḍakī there is a great place of Śālagrāma (i.e. where Śālagrāma stones are found). May the stone found there protect. This is the case.

3-5a. By the touch of the Śālagrāma stone, the destruction of sins committed during crores of existences takes place. Then (what can be said) about Viṣṇu's worship there? It is the cause of (being in) the vicinity of Hari. One would obtain the fruit of worshipping a hundred liṅgas. If one would obtain a black stone (i.e. Śālagrāma) having a mark of a cow's foot, as a result of religious merit of many existences, then (the mission of) one's life is accomplished.

5b-11. First one should examine a glossy, excellent, black stone. One that is slightly black is said to be mediocre. A mixed one always gives a mixed fruit. As the fire always present in wood is manifested by friction, in the same way the (all-)pervading Hari is felt in a Śālagrāma. He who everyday would worship twelve Śālagrāma stones from Dvāravatī, is honoured in Vaikuṇṭha. (If) a man observes an aperture on the Śālagrāma stone, his dead ancestors live contentedly in heaven till the end of the world. There is the residence in the form of Vaikuṇṭha, where there is the Dvāravatī stone. A man dying (here) goes to the city of Viṣṇu. That sacred place spreads over three yojanas. Everything (like) muttering, worship, sacrifice (performed there) would be crorefold meritorious. Over the area of one krośa, whatever is desired (is obtained). There is no doubt about this, since, even an insect dying here goes to Vaikuṇṭha.

12-15. The man who fixes a price on the Śālagrāma stone, so also who sells it, and he who gives consent (to the deal), so also he who sanctions its examination—all these go to hell till the sun (shines in the sky) and till deluge. Therefore, O respectable lady, one should avoid the purchase and sale of the

(Śālāgrama with a) disc. There is no doubt that salvation takes place there where there is the union of the deity in Śālagrāma and the one born in Dvārakā. The one produced in Dvārakā, endowed with a disc, marked with many discs of the shape of a stone having a round seat, is of the form of Brahman and unstained.

16-21a. Salutation to (you) of the form of Oṁkāra and of the form of constant joy; O glorious Śālagrāma, favour me, (your) devotee, who desires your grace and is stricken by death. Hereafter I shall gladly tell you the manner (in which) the dot (or mark is put), hearing which all men would obtain assimilation to Viṣṇu. (A man) should have Keśava (i.e. take Keśava to be present) in the forehead, Śrī Puruṣottama in the neck, god Nārāyaṇa in the navel, Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu) in the heart, Dāmodara in the left side, and Trivikrama in the right, Hṛṣīkeśa in the head, and Padmanābha at the back, Yamunā and Gaṅgā in the ears, and Kṛṣṇa and Hari in the arms. (These) twelve deities are said to be pleased in their respective places.

21b-25. When a dot (i.e. a mark) is put he should recite these names. He, with all his sins purified, goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. He, even though he is a cāṇḍāla, on whose forehead an upright line is seen, is of a pure heart, and deserves to be honoured. There is no doubt about it. One should not look at a man on whose forehead an upright mark is not seen; (and) on seeing him one should look at the Sun. On seeing or touching a brāhmaṇa on whose forehead a mark with three lines or an upright mark is not seen, one should bathe with one's clothes on. One should put a mark of the form of Viṣṇu's foot, keeping space between (the toes).

26. On the head of that mean brāhmaṇa who would not put an upright mark, there is always the foot of a dog (placed on it). There is no doubt about this.

27-29. One should know that a very auspicious upright mark starting from the nose and ending with the hair, and having a hole (i.e. space) in between, is the temple of Viṣṇu. One should know that Brahmā has settled on the left side, Sadāśiva on the right, and Viṣṇu in the middle. Therefore, one should not besmear (i.e. cover) the middle (part). The glorious one who, after

looking into a mirror or into water puts the upright mark, goes to the highest position.

30-33a. Fire, Water, the Vedas, and the Moon and the Sun, so also Wind, always remain in the right ear of a brāhmaṇa. Gaṅgā also remains in the right ear, and Fire in the nose. By touching both (these), one is purified at that moment only. Having put water in a conch and having mixed it with Tulasī, one should give it to the noble devotees of Viṣṇu, drink it, and salute (them) with the head (bent down). One should drink it and sprinkle one's body, one's son, friend and wife with it.

33b-36a. The water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, when drunk, destroys sins (committed) in crores of existences. The sin becomes eightfold on dropping (even) a drop on the ground. He who, holding a conch full of water in his hand, praises (the deity) and goes round (it), always holds the water, has obtained the fruit of his existence. He in whose house there is neither a conch nor a bell with the (form of the) eagle on it before (the image of) Vāsudeva, is not a follower of the lord (i.e. Viṣṇu) in the Kali age.

36b-45. (Going) to the lord's temple in vehicles, or with sandals on, or drinking spirituous liquor there, not (offering) service in the festivals of the deity, not saluting before (the image of) him, or saluting the lord with the remains of food on the hands etc. not washed, or when impure, saluting the lord with (only) one hand, or spreading the feet before him towards the south, or enjoying a bed before him, or lying (in front of him), or eating, or telling lies, or talking loudly, or talking to one another, crying and quarrelling, curbing or favouring, talking cruelly to women, covering with one garment (only), censuring or praising others, speaking obscene words, breaking wind, behaving badly with an inferior because of having power, eating without (first) offering (the food) to the deity, not offering (to the deity) fruits etc. produced during the season, giving the remains after use of a seasoned article etc., eating (food) after making it distinctly visible, censuring and praising others, keeping mum before the preceptor (i.e. not talking to him), praising himself, censuring deities—these are said to be thirtytwo offences against Viṣṇu: "O Madhusūdana, day and night I commit thousands of offences. Thinking me to be yours, foregive me."

46-47. Uttering this prayer he should salute (the deity prostrating) on the ground like a staff. Hari always forgives thousands of offences. Similarly the brāhmaṇas should eat in the evening and in the morning whatever food is left over by Viṣṇu's devotee. (Such a person) is freed from the sins committed during the day.

48-57a. Uttering me (i.e. my i.e. Śiva's name) and thinking 'food is Brahmā, and sauce is Viṣṇu', he who eats (food) is never covered by the faults of the food. A man who is a devotee of Viṣṇu should not eat a round bottle-gourd, masura-beans with their skin on, the white nut of the palmyra tree, egg-plant; (similarly) a man who is Viṣṇu's devotee should not eat on the leaves of a bunyan tree, aśvattha or arka tree, or a kovidāra or kadamba. In (the month of) Śrāvaṇa he should avoid vegetables; he should forgo curd in Bhādrapada. In the month of Āśvina he should avoid milk and should give up (eating) flesh in Kārtika. (He should) also (avoid) burnt food, citron, and whatever is not offered to Viṣṇu, so also common citron, vegetables and visible salt. If by chance he would eat (any one of these), he should remember his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) name. Haimantika (a kind of rice), grains anointed with sugar, mudga sesamum, barley, kalāpaka (a kind of grass), kaṅgu, wild rice, vegetable, Enhydra Hingcha, kāla vegetable, vāstūka (a kind of vegetable), radish other than red, rock-salt and ocean-salt, curd and ghee obtained from a cow, milk from which water is not taken out, jack-fruit, green vegetable, Piper Longum, cumin-seeds, so also oranges and tamarind, plantain, lavali (a kind of creeper), Dhātrī, jaggery from any other object than sugarcane, that (food) which is not cooked in oil—the sages describe these as food for offering.

57b-59a. One should know even him who has flowers along with Tulasī-leaves etc., to be Viṣṇu. This is the truth (and) truth (only). There is no doubt about it. By planting Dhātrī-tree a man would be equal to Viṣṇu. One should know that the area round about it to the extent of three hundred cubits is Kurukṣetra.

59b-65. Having put round his neck a garland made with (pieces of) Tulasī-wood having the shape of rudrākṣa, a man should start the worship (of Viṣṇu). Similarly, the worshipper of Viṣṇu should carefully wear round his neck a garland of

āmalakas, or a good garland of lotuses, or that of kadamba-flowers; he should also put on his head flowers taken off after being offered (to Viṣṇu) and Tulasī-mālā. He should mark his body with flowers Taken off after being offered and sandal, with (the accompaniment of) his epithets. He should put (the mark of) a mace on his forehead, and (the marks of) a bow and an arrow. On the chest (he should put the mark of) the Nandaka (sword), and (the marks of) a conch and a disc on both the arms. If a brāhmaṇa endowed with (the marks) of a conch and a disc dies on the cremation ground, he certainly gets the same (highest) position which is said (to be obtained by dying) at Prayāga. He who being devoted to Viṣṇu, puts a Tulasī-leaf on his head, performs all his deeds, obtains an inexhaustible fruit.

66-68. The rites performed in honour of the dead ancestors and deities by one decorated with Tulasī-garlands, become a crorefold meritorious. The sin of that man who devoutly wears a garland made of Tulasī-wood, after offering it to Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu), perishes. Having worshipped (Viṣṇu) with water for washing the feet etc. he should utter this prayer: "Salutation to that Tulasī which, when seen, destroys the multitude of all sins; which, when touched, purifies the body; which, when saluted, removes diseases; which, when sprinkled, frightens Yama; which, when planted, bestows the vicinity of lord Kṛṣṇa; (and) when placed at his feet, gives the fruit (in the form) of salvation.

CHAPTER EIGHTY

Monthwise Rites Prescribed for a Viṣṇu Devotee

Pārvatī said:

1-2a. Then, how does (a man) survive, when the terrible Kali age, full of the alligators in the form of objects of senses, and having the distress in the form of a son, a wife and wealth,

has arrived, O lord? O great god, O treasure of kindness, tell the remedy for it.

The lord said:

2b-8. Kali does not harass them who always utter the name of Hari and Hari only, or the auspicious (utterance) 'Hare Rāma, Hare Kṛṣṇa' or 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa'. Doing (his) deeds one after another, a man should remember (Viṣṇu's) epithets. He repeatedly says, 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa'. He should also use your name and my name with inversion. He too would be free from sin as fire (goes away) from a heap of cotton. He who mutters my auspicious name with your name as 'Victory to the First One', or preceded by the word 'Śrī', is freed from the worldly existence. He should remember it by day, at night, in the evening—at all times. He, remembering Rāma day and night, sees Kṛṣṇa with his eyes. He being pure or impure, just by remembering always and at all times, (Viṣṇu's) name, is, just at that moment, freed from the worldly existence.

9-12. (Uttering) the name removes the sin of even him who is having many offences. In the Kali age a sacrifice, a vow, penance or charity is not complete in all parts. This couple—bath in Gaṅgā and Viṣṇu's name—is free from evil. O auspicious lady, horrible thousand sins connected with killing, (sin due to) cohabiting with crores of wives of preceptors, thefts and other (sins) do not take place due to the name 'Govinda' dear to Hari. He who is impure or pure or who is reduced to every condition, who remembers (Viṣṇu) of lotus-like eyes, is pure from within and without.

13-20a. By remembering his name or by reflecting on his feet he should start worshipping him by fashioning his image with gold, silver, flour or of the shape of a garland marked with his feet. He bears (the mark of) a disc at the root of his right thumb. He causes the end of the worldly existence of the man who bows there. Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu) bears a very beautiful mark of a lotus at the root of the middle finger, which attracts the bees in the form of the hearts of those who meditate (upon Viṣṇu). Below the lotus he bears (the mark of) a flag, which is the victory-flag of all calamities. At the root of the small finger is the mark (like a diamond-pin) that breaks (i.e. destroys) the

stream of the sins of a devotee. In the side is a goad, the cause of joy in the devotee's heart. At the joint of the thumb he bears (the mark of) a barley-corn which is full of pleasures and riches. At the root (of the thumb) there is (the mark of) a mace breaking the mountain of sins of all men. The unborn lord also bears marks like lotuses etc. on the right (foot) to illumine all knowledge. The treasure of kindness would stand on the left foot and has (these marks).

20b-40a. Therefore, he who would always listen to or narrate the greatness of Govinda, which is charming due to the relish of joy, is fully free. There is no doubt about it. I shall (now) tell the rites (to be performed) in (different) months, which give delight to Viṣṇu. In Jyeṣṭha, one, being pure, should carefully bathe Śrī Viṣṇu. On the full-moon day (when this is done), daily sins, sins committed during the fortnight, the month, the season and the year, so also thousands (of sins like) killing a brāhmaṇa, those committed knowingly or unknowingly, (sins like) stealing gold, drinking liquor, violating the teacher's bed (i.e. wife), so also thousands of crores of minor sins—all these perish. One should sprinkle (the idol of) Acyuta on (its) head with water from a pitcher to the accompaniment of the hymn (called) *Puruṣasūkta* or (the group called) *Pāvamānī* hymns. (Or one should sprinkle the idol) with coconut water, or water from the tāla fruit, or fragrant water with gems put into it or water offered with flowers. Having propitiated (Viṣṇu) with the five articles of worship, according to (one's) expanse of wealth, one should offer the musical instrument viz. bell, saying, 'Gham, salutation to Ghaṇṭā'. 'I am fallen into the heat of sins put along the great path'. 'Protect me, a sinner—falling into the ocean of the terrible mundane existence'. A learned brāhmaṇa, pure and wise, who does like this, is freed from all sins, and he goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. One should celebrate the great festival of (Viṣṇu's going to) sleep on the eleventh day of the bright half of Āṣāḍha. In Āṣāḍha one should take out (Viṣṇu's) chariot (in procession). In Śrāvaṇa one should perform the ceremony called Śrāvaṇa-vidhi (performed on the full-moon day). He should be intent on a fast on (Viṣṇu's) birthday in Bhādrapada. In the month of Āśvina, one should perform the ceremony of (Viṣṇu's) turning to another side. One

should (also) perform (the ceremony of) Śrī Hari's getting up. Otherwise he will be a traitor to Viṣṇu. In the auspicious Āśvina month one should worship the golden or silver (idol of) Mahāmāyā of the form of Viṣṇu, without making an oblation. A religious-minded worshipper of Viṣṇu should not indulge in killing or hating (anyone). In the months of Kārtika and Pauṣa one should perform (deeds of) religious merit according to his desire. One should also offer a lamp (kept) on a high place to Dāmodara. The lamp should be of the size of four fingers and should have seven wicks. At the end of the fortnight one should arrange an auspicious row of lamps. In the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa, on the sixth day, one should, with (i.e. having put on) white garments, worship the lord of the world, particularly Brahmā. In Pauṣa one should sprinkle (water over the idol) with flowers. One should avoid loose sandal(-paste). On the Saṁkrānti day and in the month of Māgha one should make an offering of food made from fragrant rice to Viṣṇu, and should recite this prayer. One should also feed brāhmaṇas residing in the city of the god of gods. One should (also) honour Viṣṇu's devotees and brāhmaṇas looking upon them as the lord. When one devotee is fed, a crore of them are fed. Merely by feeding brāhmaṇas a deficient (deed) certainly becomes complete.

40b-45a. On the fifth day in the bright fortnight one should bathe (the idol of) Keśava, worship it duly with fruits and powders, along with young leaves of mango trees, and with fine, fragrant garments. The house should be (rendered) charming, should be bright and illumined with lights. It should have grapes, sugarcanes, plantain-trees, jambīra, nāgaraṅga, nut-trees, coconuts, dhātrī, jackfruits, and green vegetables. (It should be decorated) with portions of other trees, with flowers of all seasons, with other various fruits and flowers, with canopies, with abundant flowers and pitchers full of water, with branches and twigs of mango-trees and with umbrellas and chowries.

45b-57a. The festival of the swing is laid down after remembering (Kṛṣṇa) with the words 'Victory to Kṛṣṇa' and after going round (the idol)—especially in the Kali age (it is celebrated) on the fourteenth day in Phālguna (at the time) called Yāma. Or one should devoutly and duly worship (the idol) with four kinds

of powders of figs on the full-moon day on the first day at a time called sandhi. One should please the highest lord with white and red (articles), white and yellow (articles), and (articles) mixed with camphor etc.; so also with (articles) having lovely colour and form due to the colour of turmeric. Or one should please the highest lord with (articles) having other colours and forms. One should start (the festival) on the eleventh day and finish it on the fifth day. The swing-festival is laid down (to last for) five days or three days. Men, seeing Kṛṣṇa facing the south and swinging, get free from heaps of sins. There is no doubt about it. A man should, in the month of Caitra, put the deity rising from (i.e. present in) Śālagrāma, in a pot containing water or in a golden, silver, copper or earthen vessel and should worship him while (the idol) is in water. Or, O magnanimous one, he should worship his image. His religious merit cannot be measured. Having planted the damana (tree), he should offer (the leaves of) it to Śrī Viṣṇu. He should offer it in Vaiśākha or Śrāvaṇa or Bhādrapada. While offering damana etc. he should do so in the foremost sheltered place; otherwise it is fruitless. On the third day of Vaiśākha he should get fashioned (the idol of Viṣṇu) especially in water or in a circle or in a pavilion in a big grove. Day by day he should nourish it well with fragrant sandal. With care as he can bestow, he should do it, which gives nourishment.

57b-66. They recognise these things to be Viṣṇu's Gandhāṣṭaka 'eight fragrances'—sandal, agaru (a kind of sandal), hrībera, black saffron, rocanā (a kind of yellow pigment), jaṭāmāṁsī (a kind of black pigment), murā. With these particular (articles) he should smear the body (i.e. the idol) of Viṣṇu. Rubbed Tulasī-wood with camphor and agaru or used with filaments of flowers is called haricandana. The men who, at the time of pilgrimage, see Kṛṣṇa (i.e. his idol) with devotion, are not reborn even after hundreds of crores of kalpas, (so also those) who put (i.e. bathe the idol with) water mixed with fragrant articles. Or having gone to Vṛndāvana, having put in the midst of flowers (the idol of) the lord of the world, and having decorated (it), he should make a worthy devotee of Viṣṇu enjoy (all) that fully. He should pluck a coconut or the seed-vessel of a lotus and offer it (to the deity), so also jujube fruit, bread-fruit, after removing the cover.

He should also cause to be offered food mixed with curd, after dipping it into ghee. He should also cause to be offered cooked flour, cake with ghee, so also ripe fruit with oil mixed with sesamum (-seeds). He should give whatever is dear to himself. Having offered (an article) he should never take it back; especially that which is intended for Viṣṇu and given to his devotees.

67-69. O Mahesvarī, O Pārvatī, I have told you something in brief. You should protect it like your own vulva. When there is this section (giving) instruction in the class of sacred texts describing the form and virtues of Śrīkṛṣṇa, enough of other texts. When the (devotee's) mind is (fixed) on the necklace of love (for him), interest (in him), devotion (to him) and his sports and names, what is the use of beautiful women? With heart worship that lord of the children in Vraja, the ground of Vṛndāvana, water of Yamunā; a body smeared with dust of the lotus-like feet of the lord of the world (is better than one smeared with) agaru, sandal etc. which are indeed vain.

CHAPTER EIGHTYONE

Mantracintāmaṇi for Devotees of Kṛṣṇa

The sages said:

1-3. O Sūta, O good one, live long. You have disclosed the nectar of the deeds of Śrīkṛṣṇa, which emancipates all devotees from the mundane existence. O lord, tell (us) all the daily sports of Śrīkṛṣṇa, on hearing which devotion to Kṛṣṇa increases, O good man. O glorious one, tell us separately the application and characteristic of the prayer of the teacher and the disciple; for, you are our great friend.

Sūta said:

4. Once Nārada saluted and said to the lord of the world, the god of gods, Sadāśiva, seated on the bank of Yamunā.

Nārada said:

5-10. O god of gods, O great god, O omniscient one, O lord of the world, O you who know the truth about the characteristics of the lord, O you best among those who know the prayers of (i.e. addressed to) Kṛṣṇa, I secured great prayers (addressed) to Kṛṣṇa from you and from my father. Those best prayers and others have been properly learnt by me eating vegetables, roots and fruits for many thousand years, subsisting on dry leaves, water, air etc. or (sometimes) not eating (at all), avoiding looking at and talking to women, conquering the six qualities like lust, curbing the external organs. Even though this was done, O Śaṅkara, my mind was not pleased. Therefore, O lord, tell me that which would succeed even without purificatory rites etc., and which gives an excellent fruit just by uttering it even once. O lord of gods, if (you think) I am fit, then please tell it to me.

Śiva said:

11-16. O glorious one, you, desiring the welfare of the world, have asked well. I shall tell you the prayer—the gem yielding all desires, though it is to be well (i.e. carefully) protected. This is the secret of secrets and the excellent secret of secrets. I have never before told it to the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī) nor to your elder brothers. I shall tell you the excellent pair of prayers (addressed) to Kṛṣṇa. The pair is called *Mantracintāmaṇi*—the desire-yielding gem. There are alternatives to this prayer—so also the five-syllabled (prayer). Beginning with (the words) 'Gopījana' and ending with 'Vallabha' and 'I seek the refuge' —This is the five-lettered (prayer). The great prayer of sixteen letters is called the *Mantracintāmaṇi*. Saying 'Gopījana' first, he should then say 'Vallabhābhyām'. The prayer having two lines is said to be (having) ten letters.

17-22. Having internally repeated with or without faith, (just) once, he would go to the proximity of those dear to Kṛṣṇa. There is no doubt about this. For him there is no (need for) the consideration for an initiatory rite, no (need for) the order of rite of nyāsa, no restriction about place or time, no requital of an enemy or a friend etc. O best sage, all are entitled

to it (even) up to a cāṇḍāla. So also women, śūdra and others, the dull, the dumb and the lame. Others (like) the Hūṇas, Kirātas, Pulindas and Puṣkaras, Ābhīras, Yavanas, Kaṅkas, Khasa and others, so also other low-born ones, those having much religious hypocrisy and egotism, those given to wickedness, killers of cows and brāhmaṇas, those having (committed) major and minor sins, those without knowledge and detachment, those without learning etc.—these and others—all are entitled to the prayer.

23-25. O best sage, if these have devotion to Kṛṣṇa, the god of all gods, then all of them are entitled; not otherwise. A performer of sacrifices, one engaged in giving gifts, one practising all regular orders of ceremonies and rites, one who speaks the truth, or an ascetic, master of Vedas and Vedāṅgas, one intent upon the contemplation of the Supreme Being, one born in a noble family, one practising austerities, one engaged in vows—is not entitled to this (hymn) if he does not have devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

26-28a. Therefore, it should not be told to him who is not a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, who is ungrateful, who is proud, who is faithless, and who is an atheist; so also it should not be told to him who is not desirous of attending, or to him who does not serve Śiva. This (prayer) should be carefully given to him who is a devotee of Kṛṣṇa only, free from religious hypocrisy and greed, free from lust and anger.

28b-33. I am the inspired poet (i.e. the author) of it, and its metre is said to be Gāyatrī. The lover of the cowherdesses (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) is said to be the deity of this hymn. Its application is said to be to the service of Hari with his beloved. A man should employ the five modes (of devotion) beginning with the disc etc. and hymns also, or he should practise the assignment of the hands and body with the mystical letter forming its essential part. The first letter of the hymn is decorated at the top with a dot. The mystical letter would be 'gem' here, and the power is said to be 'namaḥ'. In the last syllable there are ten parts, and worship is to be done with them, so also with sandal and flowers, with water in their absence. It should be done (i.e. muttered) after first doing the assignment of the various parts

of the body to different deities for pleasing Hari. Therefore, only others tell the nyāsa etc. of this hymn.

34-35a. Even if it is recited once it bestows blessedness. Yet one should always assign in ten ways for the muttered (hymn) etc. O best brāhmaṇa, now I shall explain (to you) the meditation of this prayer:

35b-43. (A man) should remember Kṛṣṇa seated, along with his beloved, on a throne in Vṛndāraṇya—Kṛṣṇa, who has put on a yellow garment, who is dark like a cloud, who has two arms, who has put on a garland of sylvan (flowers), who has a chaplet made of peacocks' tail-feathers, whose face resembles a crore of moons, whose eyes are rolling about; who has a karṇikāra (flower) as the ear-ornament, who has a round dot put on the centre of his forehead which is all around (smeared) with sandal, who is shining with ear-rings resembling the young sun, whose cheeks are like mirrors as they are glittering with drops of perspiration, whose eyes are rivetted on his beloved's face, who has sportively raised his brow due to a side-glance, whose very high nose is shining due to pearls put on its top, whose lips like ripe bimba fruits are shining by means of the moonlight (shooting) from his teeth, whose hands are shining with ornaments worn on the upper arms, with armlets and rings set with good (i.e. bright) gems, who holds in his left hand a flute, so also a lotus, whose waist is shining with a girdle and a chaplet, whose feet are glittering due to anklets, who is agile in the flurry caused by the joy due to love-sports, whose eyes are unsteady, who is laughing with his beloved and who is repeatedly making her laugh (thus he should remember Kṛṣṇa).

44-52a. Then he should remember Rādhikā who is seated to his left side, who has put on a blue bodice, whose lustre is like heated gold, whose lotus-like, very smiling face is half covered with the end of her garment, who has fixed her eyes on the face of her lover, whose eyes are unsteady like those of a cakorī, who is putting with her thumb and fore-finger a nut along with a (betal) leaf and powder into her lover's mouth, whose lovely, plump and elevated breasts are glittering due to a necklace of pearls, who has a slender waist, whose buttocks are large and are adorned with a mass of small bells, who has put on large jewelled ear-rings, armlets, rings and bracelets, who has

put on a jingling string, anklets and jewelled foot-rings, whose body is bewitching due to her being an essence of beauty, who is beautiful in all limbs, who is submerged in the water of joy, who is pleased, who has fresh youth. O best of brāhmaṇas, there also are her friends who are of the same age and have the same qualities, and would be engaged in serving her with chowries and fans. Now, O Nārada, I shall tell you the meaning of the prayer; listen to it. Rādhikā, the beloved of Kṛṣṇa is called Gopī due to her being concealed by the external parts of the manifestation (of the world), her own parts like the powers of illusion etc., so also with the internal parts, always present, like intelligence etc.

52b-56a. The goddess, full of Kṛṣṇa, and the highest deity is called Rādhikā. She is of the nature of all beauty and of the nature of Kṛṣṇa's joy. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, she is called Hlādinī by the wise. Durgā and others having the three constituents (like Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas) are a part of the croreth portion of her. She is actually Mahālakṣmī, and Kṛṣṇa is lord Nārāyaṇa. O best sage, there is not the slightest difference between the two. She is Durgā (i.e. Pārvatī); Hari is Rudra. Kṛṣṇa is Indra; she is Indrāṇī. She is Sāvitrī; Hari is Brahmā. She is Dhūmorṇā; Hari is Yama.

56b-60a. O best sage, what is the use of (speaking) much? There is nothing of the nature of living or non-living that is without them. The whole world is full of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. In this way, O Nārada, that all (this) is the splendour of the two. It is not possible for me to describe it even (if I do so) for hundreds of crores of years. In the three worlds the earth is venerable; Jambudvīpa is better than it. In it Bhārata country (is excellent); in it the city Mathurā (is the best). In it the (grove) named Vṛndāvana (is excellent); in it the group of Rādhā's friends is excellent. In it Rādhikā is the best.

60b-66. Due to her proximity, superiority in successions of the earth etc. would be there. Nothing else is lofty here. This is that Rādhā. The cowherdesses are the group of her friends. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are dear chiefs of the lives of the group of her friends. In this world, their feet should be sought for refuge. I go to them, have gone to them; I the soul that is very much afflicted, have sought their refuge; whatever is mine is his. All (I offer) to them, is for

them; it is to be enjoyed by them; it is not mine. O brāhmaṇa, this in brief is told (as) the meaning of the prayer. I have told the five alternatives as: the meaning of the couplet, nyāsa, reaching them and taking shelter of them, offering oneself. This hymn alone should be carefully reflected upon day and night.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTWO

The Greatness of Vṛndāvana

Śiva said:

1-4. O Nārada, I shall now accurately tell the rite of initiation. Listen to it. Even without doing it a man would be freed just by listening to it. The wise one, realising that all this world from Brahmā is evanescent, having experienced the threefold misery like that of the mind, and due to all pleasures being transitory, putting them on the side of (i.e. looking upon them as) misery, and being free from them, and being detached should think about the means of the cessation of the worldly existence. He should be very much satisfied to obtain highest happiness.

5-8. The very intelligent one knowing the wickedness of men, being very much afflicted, should, O brāhmaṇa, seek refuge of me, the great one. A teacher is said to be calm, free from jealousy, devoted to Kṛṣṇa, having no other aim (than reaching Kṛṣṇa), having no other means, having virtue, free from lust and greed, knowing the truth in the interest in Śrī-kṛṣṇa, the best among those who know prayers (addressed) to Kṛṣṇa, always resorting and attached to prayers of (i.e. addressed to) Kṛṣṇa, always pure, teaching good ways of life, always prescribing good practices, following the tradition, full of compassion and detached.

9-10. A disciple is said to be one who has mostly these qualities and who is desirous of serving his teacher's feet, who is extremely devoted to his teacher, and who desires salvation. The actual service offered to him through love is said to be the

salvation of the Vaiṣṇavite by the wise knowing the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas.

11-18. Having resorted to the feet of one's teacher one should tell him one's account. He (i.e. the teacher) removing doubts, repeatedly instructing him, should, with a very much delighted heart, teach the other one (i.e. the disciple) who has bowed down to his feet, who is calm and who desires to serve his feet. O brāhmaṇa, on the left and right shoulder-blades he should draw, with sandal or clay, a conch and a disc. In the same way he should then draw, according to the rules, the upright mark on the forehead etc. Then he (i.e. the teacher) should indicate (i.e. whisper) the two prayers into his right ear. Then in proper order and properly he should tell him the meaning of the prayers. He should carefully give him a name along with the word *dāsa*. Then the wise one should affectionately feed the devotees of Viṣṇu. He should also honour his honourable teacher with garments, ornaments etc. O great sage, he should give all his possessions to the teacher or half their number. The poor ones should even remain after throwing down their bodies (i.e. should throw down their own bodies) for the teacher. The wise one who is consecrated with these five sacred rites, shares the service of Kṛṣṇa; not otherwise even for crores of kalpas.

19-21. The former learned ones have described these to be the five sacred rites: marking (the body with mark of a conch etc.), the upright mark, the prayer, taking up a name and the fifth one is sacrifice. Marking is (done) with a conch, a disc etc.; the upright mark is said to have a hole; name is connected with the word *dāsa*; the prayers are two. Sacrifice is the worship of the teacher and a devotee of Viṣṇu. I have told you these five great sacred rites.

22-24. O Nārada, I shall now tell you the duties of those who have taken refuge (with Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu), resorting to which men will go to Viṣṇu's abode in Kali (age). A wise one, having thus obtained the hymn from his teacher, and greatly devoted to his teacher, serving the teacher every day, would obtain his favour. Then he should learn the duties of the good, especially of those who have taken refuge (with Viṣṇu). He should always

gratify the devotees of Viṣṇu looking upon them as his own desired deity.

25-27. As women due to being the objects of enjoyment by lustful persons get beating and reproach, in the same way the wise ones should get the respective things of the devotees of Viṣṇu. They should never worry about worldly things or things in the next world. The worldly things always come according to the deeds done in the former (existence). In the same way Kṛṣṇa will bring about the things in the next world. Therefore, men should always give up (making) effort for them.

28-32. All expedients should be given up and Kṛṣṇa should be worshipped thinking oneself to be Kṛṣṇa. As a woman devoted to her husband and loving him, is afflicted when the lover has gone on a journey for a long time, and as she, desiring his company only, would always think about his qualities and sings and listens to them (i.e. qualities), so he should think of the qualities and sports of Śrīkṛṣṇa. It should never be adopted as a means (to reaching Kṛṣṇa). As the woman (devoted to her husband) kisses, embraces, and drinks with the corner of her eye, her husband looking upon him as her lover who has come after travelling for a long time, in the same way a devotee should serve Hari with adoration.

33-37. He (should) never seek the refuge of anyone else; he should never have any other means. Because of his having no other means he would have no other aim (than Viṣṇu). He should not worship any other deity; should not bow to or remember any other deity. He should never see or sing about or censure (any other deity). He should not eat what is left over by another person. He should not wear what is given up by another person. He should avoid talking to or saluting those who are not devotees of Viṣṇu. He should cover his ears and go. If he has power he should punish (the person censuring these deities). O brāhmaṇa, I think that he, resorting to the course of a cātaka till the body falls, should concentrate on the meaning of the two (hymns).

38-46. As a cātaka, when thirsty, abandons a lake, a river, a sea etc. and either dies or appeals to a cloud, in the same way a man should think about the means. He should always solicit his desired deity, saying 'You should be my recourse'. He should

always remain in (i.e seek) the favour of his deity, those belonging to the deity, and especially of the teacher also; and should avoid their disfavour. I who have sought their refuge once, will tell about their propitiousness. Thinking 'these two will emancipate me', he should have faith in them. "O lord(s), you who destroy the fear of him who has taken your refuge, are the saviour (of your devotee) from the worldly existence, and from friends, sons, home and family. Who I am, whatever I have in this and the next world, all that I have today dedicated to your feet. I am the abode of sins; I have given up the means; I have no (other) course; therefore, O lord, you alone are my recourse. O lover of Rādhikā, through my acts, mind and speech, I am yours. O Kṛṣṇa's beloved, I belong to you. You two only are my refuge. O you heaps and mines of compassion, I have sought your shelter. Favour (me) by (giving) me, the wicked and sinful one, (the opportunity) of serving (you)".

47-50a. Thus, muttering to himself these five verses, he, desiring their service, should quickly remain (thinking about Kṛṣṇa), O best sage. I have briefly described these external qualities. Now I shall describe the essential, internal quality of those who have sought refuge (with Kṛṣṇa). Having, with effort, resorted to the condition of the friend of Kṛṣṇa's beloved, he should carefully serve both of them day and night. I have told (you) the hymn, the constituents of it and (about) those who are entitled to it.

50b-59. I have described their duties, the fruit of the hymn (accruing) to them. O Nārada you (should) also do it. You will obtain their servantship (*dāsya*). O brāhmaṇa, here there is never a doubt about the (consequent) loss of one's authority (ego?). I have no doubt that Hari would grant his (servantship) to him who has but once sought his refuge, and who has appealed to him, saying, 'I am yours'. Now I shall tell you a great, wonderful secret which formerly I had heard from lord Kṛṣṇa himself. O best sage, I have told you the secret course of conduct. This is more secret than a secret; it has to be guarded carefully. Formerly, muttering this gem of a hymn and pondering over god Nārāyaṇa, I lived on the top of Kailāsa in a dense forest. Then the lord was pleased and appeared before me. "Choose a boon". When this was said (by him), I too opened my eyes and saw the

god with his wife and seated upon Garuḍa. Having saluted the lord of Kamalā, the giver of boons, I said to him: "O ocean of compassion, O highest god, I desire to see with my eyes that form of yours which gives great joy, which is the abode of joy, which is eternal, which is embodied, which is superior to everything (else), which is qualityless, actionless, calm, and which the wise know as Brahman."

60-64. Then, the glorious lord of Kamalā said to me who had sought his refuge: "Today you will see that form (of mine) which is desired in (i.e. by) your mind. Go to my Vṛndāvana, to the western bank of Yamunā." Saying so, the lord of the world vanished along with his beloved. Then I also came to the auspicious bank of Yamunā. There I saw Kṛṣṇa, the lord of all gods, who had put on the dress of a cowherd, who was lovely, who was of the age of a boy, who had properly put his charming left hand on the shoulder of his beloved, who was laughing and making her laugh in the group of the cowherdesses, who was bright like a glossy cloud, who is the abode of auspicious qualities.

65-73a. Then, having laughed, Kṛṣṇa, speaking (sweetly) like nectar, said to me: "O Rudra, having known your desire, I have appeared before you, since you have today seen this uncommon form of mine, which is the embodiment of spotless love that is solidified and of goodness, intelligence and joy (i.e. Brahman), which is (at the same time) formless, qualityless, (all-)pervading, actionless, and higher than the highest. The groups of the Upaniṣads describe this faultless form of mine only. Because my qualities have not sprung from the constituents of Prakṛti, and because of their being endless, and because of their not being effected, they call me the qualityless lord. O Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva), because this form of mine is not visible to the physical eyes, all the Vedas describe me to be formless. The wise ones also know me to be Brahman, as a part of the supreme spirit, because of my (all-)prevading nature. As I am not the agent of the visible world, they (also) call me actionless; since my portions through power of Māyā perform creation etc., I do not myself perform creation etc., O Śiva. O Mahādeva, I am overcome with the love of these cowherdesses. I do

not know any other act, even myself, O Nārada(?). Being influenced by her love, I always sport with her.

73b-79. Know this my beloved Rādhikā to be a great deity. Around her see her friends in hundreds and thousands. O Rudra, they are eternal as I having an eternal body. The cowherds, cows, cowherdesses and this my Vṛndāvana always (exist). All this is eternal, and full of the joy of intelligence. Know this called Ānandakanda ('the root of delight') to be my Vṛndāvana, merely by entering which a man would not again get into the worldly existence. The fool who, after having reached my grove, goes elsewhere, would be self-killer only. I have told the truth and the truth (only). I never leave Vṛndāvana and go anywhere else. With her I always live here only. O Rudra, I have thus told everything (I) had in mind. Tell me now, what else do you want to hear."

80-88. O best sage, then I said to the god: "Tell me the means by which you would be obtaind like this." Then the lord said to me: "O Rudra, you have spoken well. This is a very great secret, (and) it is to be guarded carefully. The man who has once sought our refuge, worships us, after giving up (other) means, as a cowherdess, comes to me, O lord of gods. He who has sought the refuge of the two of us, or only of my beloved, and serves us or her with unswerving devotion, comes to me. There is no doubt about it. O Maheśvara, he who has sought my refuge and of my beloved, undoubtedly comes to me. Thus I have told you. He who has but once sought (our) refuge and would say, 'I am yours', comes to me without any (other) means. There is no doubt about it. Therefore, with all efforts a man should seek the refuge of my beloved. O Rudra, having resorted to my beloved, you can impress me. I have told you this great secret. O Mahādeva, you have also to guard it carefully. You too, having resorted to this my beloved Rādhikā, and muttering this couple of hymns, always live in my abode."

Śiva said:

89-91. Having thus spoken, and having taught the great hymn, and sacred rites into my right ear, Kṛṣṇa, the treasure of compassion, disappeared along with attendants there only when I was looking (at him). Since then I have been constantly

here. I have fully told you all this. Now, O best brāhmaṇa, tell me what more you want to hear.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTHREE

Kṛṣṇa's Love Sports in Vṛndāvana

Nārada said:

1. O lord, O great one, you have told me whatever I had asked (for). Now I desire to know the excellent path of devotion.

Śiva said:

2-11. O brāhmaṇa, you, desiring the well-being of all the worlds, have asked well. I shall tell you the secret also. Listen as I (shall) tell it to you. O greatest sage, the maid-servants, friends, parents and beloveds of Hari live here. All of them are eternal and virtuous. As they are described in the Purāṇas (indulging) in open sports, in the same way they remain in sports on the Vṛndāvana ground. They always go from the grove to the cow-pen and come back. They, along with their friends, also graze the cows without any harm from the demons. Similarly people dear to him are proud of those having water-pitchers (the ascetics). With secret devotion they delight their beloved persons. A man should there look upon himself among them as one who is charming, who is endowed with beauty and youth, who is a young woman, who has the form of a young beautiful woman, who knows many crafts and arts, who is fit for Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment, who is averse to enjoyment though solicited by Kṛṣṇa, who is the follower of Rādhikā and who is devoted to serving her, who loves Rādhikā and who is devoted to serving her, who loves Rādhikā even more than Kṛṣṇa, who, through love, day by day brings about the union of the two (i.e. Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā), who is extremely happy due to the pleasure and joy of serving them. Thus looking upon oneself, one

should, beginning with the early part of the day till late night, offer service there.

Nārada said:

12. I desire to hear correctly the everyday sport of Hari. How can I mentally serve Hari without knowing his sport?

Śiva said:

13-14. O Nārada, I do not correctly know that sport. From here go to Vṛndādevī. She will tell you the sport. She, the attendant of Govinda, surrounded by the group of her friends, lives near Keśītīrtha, not far from here.

Sūta said:

15-16. Then the best sage Nārada, who was addressed like this, went round him, and being delighted, saluted him again and again and went to Vṛndāvana. Vṛndā too, seeing Nārada, repeatedly saluted him and asked the greatest sage, "How have you come here (i.e. what brings you here)?"

Nārada said:

17. I desire to hear from you (about) the daily life of Hari. O auspicious one, if I am fit, then tell it (to me) from the beginning.

Vṛndā said:

18-30. O Nārada, I shall also tell you the secret (since) you are a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. You too are not to disclose this great secret which is a greater secret than a secret (i.e. the greatest secret). In Vṛndāvana which is charming and adorned with fifty bowers, in a chamber with divine gems, in an arbour of the desire-yielding tree, the two embracing each other remain (in a) sleeping (position), though later they are awakened by birds obeying my orders. They have obtained great joy due to a close embrace and are afraid of its being disturbed. They do not at all desire to get up from the bed. Then they have to get up from their bed when awakened with various notes made on all sides and repeatedly by groups of sārikās and parrots etc. Seeing them

seated gladly on the bed, the friends enter (the bower) and offer the two service appropriate for that time. Then the two, having got up from the bed by the notes of sārikās, overcome with eagerness go to their respective houses. In the morning, Kṛṣṇa, awakened by his mother, quickly gets up, and having with Baladeva brushed his teeth and being allowed by his mother, goes, being surrounded by his friends, to the cowstall. O brāhmaṇa, Rādhā too, awakened by her friends, gets up from her bed, and having brushed her teeth would then smear her body with unctuous substances. Then she goes to the quandrangular for bath. There she is bathed by her friends. (Then) she would go to the chamber for decoration, and there her friends decorate her with ornaments and various divine fragrant flowers and unguents. Then when, with effort, her friends request her mother-in-law she is invited along with her friends by Yaśodā to cook good food.

Nārada said:

31. How is it, O goddess, that she is invited by Yaśodā to cook food, when there are foremost cooks like Rohiṇī?

Vṛndā said:

32-43. I have formerly heard from the mouth of Kātyāyanī that in olden days she was granted a boon by Durvāsas, O great sage. (The boon was:) "O respectable lady, the food which is cooked by you, would be, as a result of my favour, sweet and vying with nectar, and would in the same way promote long life of the eater (of it)." Therefore, Yaśodā, loving her son, everyday calls her thinking, 'my son, due to longing for sweet (food), would, (after eating it) live a long life.' Allowed by her mother-in-law, she, being delighted, would go to the house of Nanda. Going there with the multitude of her friends she cooks there also. Kṛṣṇa also, having milked the cows and having some others got milked by (other) men, comes home surrounded by his friends at the words (i.e. order) of his father. Having smeared his body with unctuous substances and having had shampooing and after being gladly bathed by servants, he puts on washed garments, a garland, and has his body smeared with sandal. With his neck and forehead shining due to the hair on

his head separated and tied at two places, with the hair reddened by the dot on the forehead resembling the moon, and shining, with his hands delightfully glittering with jewelled bracelets, armlets, and bracelets worn on the upper arm, with his chest shining due to a pearl necklace, having put on ear-rings resembling crocodiles, he, holding the hand of his friend, and being followed by Baladeva, would enter the dining hall, after being again and again called by his mother. Then, surrounded by his friends and brother, making them laugh by means of (anecdotes etc. causing) laughter, and himself laughing with them, he eats various kinds of food. Having thus eaten (food), having sipped (water), having rested on a cot for a while, and distributing and chewing the tāmbūla given by the servants, Kṛṣṇa, having put on the dress of a cowherd, with the flock of cows going ahead of him, followed on the path by all the residents of Vraja with love, having saluted his father and mother, and having sent back properly the host (following him) with a glance, would go to the forest.

44-52. Having entered the forest and having played there with his friends for a while, he then gladly sports there, in the forest by means of various pastimes. Then, having deceived all, and surrounded by two or three friends, he, being eager to see his beloved, would gladly go to the rendezvous. She too, who had come home, on seeing Kṛṣṇa, goes, after deceiving her elders, under the pretext of Sun-worship etc. or for collecting flowers, to the forest with a desire to meet her lover. Thus the two, having, after many efforts, met in the forest, gladly sport there for the (whole) day with various pastimes. Sometimes the two get upon a swing and are rocked to and fro by their friends. Sometimes, Hari, deceived by the bevies of his beloveds, is seen, searching his flute dropped from his hand, and hidden by his beloved. He, made to laugh by them by means of merriment, remains there. At times the two enter the forest endowed with vernal breezes, and sprinkle each other with water (mixed with) sandal, or with water (mixed with) saffron etc., released from syringes, or smear each other with mud. In the same way, the friends also sprinkle them (with water etc.) and the two also sprinkle them.

53-59a. Then the two, O brāhmaṇa, being tired due to

many pastimes proper for the time in the groves endowed with vernal breezes on all sides, resort, with their attendants, to the root of a tree, and sitting on a divine seat, drink liquor, O best sage. Then the two, intoxicated due to the liquor, with their eyes closed due to sleep, holding each other's hands, being under the influence of Cupid's arrows, and desiring to sport, enter, with their words and mind stumbling on the path. There they sport like a female elephant and (the male elephant,) the lord of the herd. All the friends also, intoxicated by wine, and with their eyes troubled by sleep (i.e. drowsy) sleep all around in the charming bowers. Again and again incited by his beloved, Kṛṣṇa, the lord, would go near all, with a separate body (for each) and simultaneously. Having satisfied all of them as a lord of elephants satisfies the female elephants, he would, along with his beloved and with them, go to the lake to sport.

59b-69. Then the two, with their attendants, sport between themselves by sprinkling water (on each other). They are adorned with garments, garlands, sandal(-pastes), and also with divine ornaments. O sage, I have there, in a chamber full of divine gems, on the bank of the lake, already arranged fruits and roots. Hari, having eaten first, and being clasped by his beloved, and being served by two or three (maids) would go to a bed made of flowers. There, being served (by them) with tāmbūlas, fans and shampooing of his feet, he laughing with them, and remembering his beloved rejoices. Rādhikā too, when Hari is asleep, extremely delighted along with her attendants, having put her heart into him, eats what is left over (by him). Having but eaten a little there, she would go to the bed-chamber to see her lover's face as the female cakora bird sees the moon. The maids there have told (her) about his having chewed the tāmbūla. She also chews tāmbūlas and distributes them among her dear friends. Kṛṣṇa too, desiring to hear their free mutual talk, though sleepless, covers himself with a piece of cloth, appearing as if he is asleep. Those too, looking at one another in jest, and getting the hint from somewhere, biting their tongues with their teeth, look at one another's face. Merged as it were into the ocean of bashfulness, they do not say anything for a moment. Just after a moment, having removed the piece of

cloth from his body, and saying 'You were really asleep' they laugh and make him laugh.

70-75. Thus sporting with the attendants by means (of jokes etc. causing) laughter, and having, for a moment, experienced the pleasure of sleep, he sits upon the seat gladly spread by his attendants, and the two having mutually staked necklaces, kisses, embraces and garments, play with dice preceded by jocular talk. Though defeated by his beloved he, saying, 'I have won', proceeds to seize her necklace etc. and is beaten by her. Thus beaten by her on his lotus-like face with her hand Kṛṣṇa, being dejected in his mind, thinks of going. "If, O honourable lady, I am defeated, then accept what is staked (viz.) kisses etc. offered by me." On his saying so she would act like that to see the crookedness of his eyebrows and to hear his words of reproach.

76-80. Then having heard the mutual wordy fight among the sārikās and the parrots, they two, desiring to go home, move out from that place. Having allowed his beloved (to go), Kṛṣṇa would go to the cows. She, accompanied by the circle of her world goes to the Sun's abode (temple). Having gone a little away from there, Hari, again, returning, after having put on the dress of a brāhmaṇa, goes to the Sun's abode. Requested by her friends, he would worship the Sun there, with Vedas (hymns), containing jokes and composed then only. Then the clever ones, having recognised their lover who makes himself known, merge in the ocean of joy, and do not know themselves or other (persons).

81-91a. Having thus passed two watches and a half in various sports, they would go home, and Kṛṣṇa would go (to the place) of the cows. O sage, Kṛṣṇa, joining his friends, and taking the cows from all sides, comes playing upon the flute joyfully to Vraja. Then, all like Nanda and others, so also women and children, hearing the sound of Hari's flute, and also seeing the sky full of dust (raised) by the cows, give up all their jobs, and being eager to see Kṛṣṇa go towards him. Kṛṣṇa also, joining all the residents of Vraja, on the royal path, at Vraja-gate—wherever they are—(honours all) as before in due order—by means of seeing them, touching them, speaking to them, looking them with a smile, saluting with words and physically the old cowherds, and saluting his parents and Rohiṇī also (in such a way that) the eight parts (of the body touch the ground),

O Nārada, so also his beloved with a modest side glance. Thus very much and properly respected by the residents of Vraja, having sent the cows to the cowstall, he goes, after being requested by his parents to his abode with his brother. Having bathed there, having drunk (milk), having eaten a little, and being allowed by his mother, he, with a desire to milk the cows, again goes to the cowstall. Having milked them, and got them milked, having made some of them drink (water), he, being followed by hundreds of venerable men goes home with his father.

91b-101a. There with his father, paternal uncles, their sons, and Baladeva, he eats various kinds of foods like those that are chewed, those that are sucked etc. Even before he entertains a desire, Rādhikā, through her friends, would send dressed foods to his house. Hari, praising them, and eating them with his father etc. would, with the bards, go to the assembly hall. The friends (of Rādhā), that had come there having brought with them many foods, take (from his house) many kinds (of food) given by Yaśodā there and also whatever is left over by Kṛṣṇa. Having brought all that, they inform Rādhikā of it. She too, along with her group of friends, having eaten it in order and being decorated by her friends, would be (ready) to meet by appointment (her lover i.e. Kṛṣṇa). 'From here or there some friend is sent away by me'. Met by her, she, surrounded by her friends, and having put on a dress proper for white (i.e. bright) or black (i.e. dark) night goes to the chamber having divine jewels, near Yamunā. Kṛṣṇa also, seeing their curious things, then having heard delightful music from Kātyāyanī, and having properly pleased them with (gifts of) wealth and grains, and propitiated by people, goes with his mother to the house of his friend.

101b-106a. When his mother departs, he, having eaten, comes here—to the rendezvous—unnoticed and with his beloved. Both of them meet here and play in the groves of trees, with many sports, with Kṛṣṇa's dance with the cowherdess, accompanied with singing and instrumental music and laughter. Thus having spent two watches and a half of the night in sporting, the two desiring to sleep, enter, unnoticed by female birds, the bower. There, in the solitary place, the two sleep on a charming bed made of flowers and for sport, and are served by their

female friends. Thus I have told you the full daily life of Hari. O Nārada, even sinners are freed on hearing it.

Nārada said:

106b-107a. O goddess, I am blessed; I am favoured by you. There is no doubt about it, since today you have disclosed to me the delightful sport of Hari.

Sūta said:

107b-111a. Saying so, going round her, and honoured by her also, Nārada, the best sage, vanished, O brāhmaṇa. I too have told you all (the account) in due order. One should daily carefully mutter this couple of prayers. Formerly Rudra obtained it with effort from Kṛṣṇa's mouth. He told it to Nārada; and Nārada told it to me. Prescribing the sacred rites like this, I have told it to you. You too have to guard this very wonderful secret.

Śaunaka said:

111b-112a. O great one, I have been actually contented by your favour, since you disclosed to me the secret of secrets (i.e. the greatest secret).

Sūta said:

112b-117. Practising these modes, and muttering the hymn day and night, you will soon obtain the position of his attendant. There is no doubt about it. O brāhmaṇa, I too have to go to the eternal abode of the supreme lord of lords on the bank of Yamunā. Those men who, full of devotion, listen to this glorious and very pure account narrated by Maheśa, go to the eternal place of Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu). It is excellent, it gives glory, promotes (long) life, health and gives desired success. It is the cause of the wealth in the form of heaven and salvation, and destroys sins. Those men, devoted to Viṣṇu, who everyday devoutly recite it, never come back from the heaven of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFOUR

Meditation of the Lord

The sages said:

1-5. O Sūta, O Sūta, O glorious, pleasing Romaharṣaṇa, you have told (us) a story giving delight to the world. O highly virtuous one, we have heard the entire, very wonderful life of Śrīkṛṣṇa, as you narrated it. We are pleased with it. Oh, since (the recital of) the glory of Śrikṛṣṇa gives (the highest) position (i.e. salvation) to the devotees, who would not then obtain joy by (listening to) it? Therefore, we again desire to hear the great account of Śrīkṛṣṇa, so also other vows, presents, worship or bath which were formerly done by whom and how. Tell all that in detail so that we would be satisfied.

Sūta said:

6-10a. O best brāhmaṇas, you have asked well about the great liberating (account). You whose minds are full of devotion to Kṛṣṇa are blessed. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall tell (you) the life of Kṛṣṇa, a great, excellent and auspicious tale which gives great delight to the good. Once the best sage Nārada, dear to the lord, while wandering over the worlds, saw in Mathurā the highly virtuous Ambarīṣa intent on a vow and engaged in worshipping Kṛṣṇa. That best sage, seeing the excellent sage having come (to him) welcomed him, and with his mind delighted, asked with faith as you (have done).

Ambarīṣa said:

10b-18. O sage, that which is said to be the highest Brahman by the teachers of the Veda, is that highest god Nārāyaṇa himself, having lotus-like eyes, who (though) unembodied, is the embodied lord, is manifest and unmanifest and is eternal. He is full of all beings; he is inconceivable. Howshould that Hari, in whom the whole world is sewn lengthwise and crosswise, in whom it remains, who is known as the only highest unmanifest one, and as the highest soul, from whom the origin etc. of the world takes place, who, having created Brahmā, gave him the Vedas

abiding in himself, be meditated upon? Please tell us how he who gives all objects of human pursuit, and who is inaccessible even to the meditating sages, is meditated upon. Those who have not propitiated Govinda, do not know the accomplishment of their well-being. He who has not tasted the drink from the lotus-like feet of Govinda does not get an excellent fruit of penance, sacrifice and gifts. He would not know the rich fruit which is beyond desires. O sage, I do not see a greater expiation for beings than the propitiation of Hari, which removes streams of sins, (of Hari) at the dance (i.e. knitting) of whose eyebrows all accomplishments are known to exist.

19-25a. How is that Keśava propitiated who removes affliction? How is that lord Nārāyaṇa waited upon by men? Being pleased, tell all this to me for the good of the world. By which devotion is this lord, to whom devotion is dear, pleased? How would devotion to him take place? How is he propitiated by all? You are a devotee of Viṣṇu; you are dear to him; you know the highest truth. Therefore, I ask you, O excellent brāhmaṇa knowing the Veda. A question about Kṛṣṇa purifies the listener, the speaker and the questioner, as the water from his feet does. For human beings, human body which is perishable, is difficult to obtain. There also, I think, the dear sight of Viṣṇu is difficult to have. In this worldly existence, company of the good even for half a moment is a treasure of men, from which all the four goals of human life can be secured.

25b-29a. O revered one, your journey is (meant for) the good of all human beings, as that of the parents is for (the good of) children (going) along the excellent path of fame. The life of gods leads to the happiness or unhappiness of living beings. But that of good men like you, who are not fallen, leads to happiness only. Gods honour them in the same way, as (men) honour them. The good men, loving the distressed, are the companions of the acts (of human beings) like their shadow(s). Therefore, O venerable one, teach (us) the way of life of a great devotee of Viṣṇu, by giving which instruction one gets the fruit due to the (study of the) Vedas.

Nārada said:

29b-48a. O king, you, having devotion for Viṣṇu, have ask-

ed well. You know that the highest duty is the one of serving Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu); that when Viṣṇu is propitiated everything is propitiated; that when that Hari full of (i.e. containing) all gods is pleased, the mobile and the immobile (world) is pleased; that by merely remembering Hari the heap of major sins perishes that moment only. Hari alone should be served. O king, who having senses and facing death on all sides, does not worship Mukunda's lotus-like feet which are the object of worship of the sages and deities? The powerful way of life of the good, when heard, studied, reflected upon, honoured and approved of, instantly purifies even those who seek to harm all. That Hari who is the cause even of the cause of the cause, effect etc., who is the unique cause, who is a meditating saint, who is the soul of the world, who is full of the world, who is subtle and gross, who is lean and strong, who is qualityless and has qualities, who is great, who is unborn, who is beyond birth and death, should always be reflected upon. O best among men, you have done this properly, since you are asking (me) about the practices of the followers of Viṣṇu, which promote the welfare of the universe. The spotless stories of Kṛṣṇa who deserves to be glorified, are due to their devotion, the elixir to the soul, mind and ears of the good. This god is to be obtained through devotion. You yourself know it. Yet I tell (about him) for the good of the world and through regard for you. He is Acyuta, whom they describe to be the highest Brahman, and beyond Pradhāna (i.e. Prakṛti) and Puruṣa, and who controls everything spread through (his) Māyā. The unconquered one, propitiated with devotion, would give everything desired like sons, wife, long life, kingdom and heaven or salvation. O best king, due to love for you, I shall tell you (about) the vows of those men who, through their deeds, mentally and through their speech are devoted to him. Harmlessness, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy, freedom from impurity—these are said to be mental vows in order to please Hari. O lord of men, eating once, eating at night (only), fasting, (eating what is had) without begging—this is said to be the bodily vow of men. Study of the Vedas, glorifying Viṣṇu, speaking the truth, absence of slandering – this, O king, is said to be the best vow of speech. A man should always and everywhere recite the names of (Viṣṇu), having the disc as his weapon. In

his glorification there should be no impurity, since he brings about purity. The highest man (Puruṣa), viz. Viṣṇu is propitiated by a man who follows the practices of castes and the (four) stages of human life. There is no other path causing delight. Vāsudeva, the treasure of compassion, is propitiated by means of vows and restraints of mind, speech and body by women to whom the good of their husbands is dear.

48b-52. Even women and śūdras should worship the moon-like Kṛṣṇa, having the excellent form of a brāhmaṇa, according to the manner laid down in sacred texts. The (first) three castes are engaged in worship according to the manner laid down in Vedas; women and śūdras etc. are intent on propitiating (Viṣṇu) by (uttering) his name. Mādhava is not pleased with worships, sacrifices, and even vows. He is said to be merely loving devotion. To women who are loyal wives, their husbands are their deities. The husband should be honoured with Viṣṇu's devotion (i.e. as much devotion as is shown towards Viṣṇu) by means of mental and physical acts and acts of speech. Acts pertaining to Viṣṇu should be performed by thinking (i.e. keeping) in mind the husband.

53-55. The worship of a deity by śūdras also is (done) by (uttering the deity's) name. All should do (the worship) according to the mode laid down in the sacred texts following the Veda. Even women engaged in doing what is dear to their husbands are entitled to the worship etc. of Viṣṇu. This is (what is laid down in) the ancient sacred texts. A man should practise the ritual laid down according to the mode proper for his family. By that Keśava is pleased.

56-60a. The wise worship Hari everyday in the fire with oblations, in water with flowers and in the heart with meditation, and in the Sun's orb with the muttering (of a prayer). Harmlessness is the first flower. Control of senses is the second flower. Compassion to beings is the third (flower); and forgiveness is the fourth (flower). Tranquillity is the fifth flower; restraint is the sixth (flower). Meditation is the seventh (flower). Truth is the eighth flower. Keśava is pleased with these. Hari is pleased only when worshipped with these eight flowers. O best of men, there are also other external flowers, using which Viṣṇu, when worshipped, is pleased.

60b-63a. (They are:) Water is a flower of Varuṇa. Ghee, milk and curd are a flower of Soma. Food etc. is a flower of Prajāpati. Incense and lamp are a flower of Agni. Fruits, flowers form the fifth flower and it is called Vānaspatya (i.e. of herbs). Kuśas, roots etc. form the Pārthiva flower (i.e. of the Earth). Fragrant substances and candana form the Vāyavya flower (i.e. of Vāyu). The flower of Viṣṇu is called faith; and a musical instrument is said to be the feet of Viṣṇu. When Viṣṇu is worshipped with these, he is pleased.

63b-69a. The sun, fire, a brāhmaṇa, cows, a devotee of Viṣṇu, the sky, the wind, the water, the earth, the soul—all these are the places of Viṣṇu's worship. A man should worship with a sacrifice, with the muttering of a hymn in the sun, with an oblation in fire, with hospitality towards an excellent brāhmaṇa, and with a mouthful of water etc. in (i.e. towards) a cow, with the good deeds of a brother in (i.e. towards) a devotee of Viṣṇu, with firm meditation in the heart, with the thought that Vāyu is the chief in Vāyu, with substances accompanied by water in water, with main parts of hymns on a bare ground, with enjoyments in the soul; and he should worship the individual supreme soul as being equal (i.e. the same) in all beings. On these subordinate altars his form is endowed with a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus; it has four arms; is calm. Being devout and reflecting upon the form he should worship it. When he is worshipped by brāhmaṇas, he is (properly) worshipped; there is no doubt about it. When, O king, the lord is censured by them he would be censured.

69b-74a. O brāhmaṇas, that form of Viṣṇu, due to whose support the Vedic texts and the code of laws proceed, is regarded as highly purifying. Everything that is auspicious in the world should be obtained through moral merit only. O king, from (the point of view of) the Vedic texts and the code of laws, moral merit alone is the recourse. Even of the two, the brāhmaṇas are the refuge on the earth. The lord of the world would be worshipped here (i.e. in the world) if he is worshipped by them. The lord, the god of gods, is not that pleased with sacrifices, austerities and meditation or worship as he is with the brāhmaṇas being pleased. A brāhmaṇa is well-versed in the Vedas; knows

the Vedas; promotes them. The lord would be pleased through brāhmaṇas, when the deity in the form of a brāhmaṇa is pleased.

74b-80. When a son worships Viṣṇu, his ancestors from both the families (i.e. of his father and his mother), though plunged in hell for a long time, just then go to heaven. What is the use of their life here or their acts like beasts, whose mind is not disposed to Vāsudeva full of the world? I shall tell (about) the meditation of him who is not seen by anyone. O king, listen to (the description of) the final emancipation which is unique and free from impurity. As a lamp in a place sheltered from wind, being free from wind, is steady and, O highly intelligent one, it, while burning, destroys all darkness, in the same way the soul is free from blemishes, is untainted, is devoid of hope, is steady, powerful, has no friend or foe. So also he does not have pain or pleasure, or dejection, or greed or jealousy or delusion. He is free from confused talks and attractions and from pleasure or pain. He is also free from all objects of senses. Then he becomes one who has absolute knowledge and beatitude is produced (in him).

81-87. O king of kings, a lamp, all alone and free from wind, would dry up, with the help of the wick, the oil due to its contact with the act of the flame. O highly intelligent one, later on it ejects soot of the lamp; a black line is seen. Having drawn up the oil it would be pure in lustre. Similarly, the soul remaining inside the body would dry up the oil in the form of (one's) deeds. Making the objects of senses the soot, he would himself illumine. Free from the breezes called wrath, greed etc. and being desireless and steady, he would brighten up his own lustre. Remaining in his own place, he sees the three worlds by means of his own lustre. I have described to you this (soul) that is of the form of absolute knowledge.

88-95. Those great souls, intent upon the knowledge about Brahman and endowed with abstract meditation, who do not see him, the omniscient one, manifesting everything are ignorant. Without hands and feet he moves everywhere; and grasps all the three worlds (with) the immovable and the movable. O king, bereft of nose and mouth he smells and eats. Without ears he hears everything. He, the lord of the world, is a witness to everything. (Though) formless, he is connected with a form; is under

the influence of the group of the five (senses). He who is the life of the entire world, is worshipped by the movable and the immovable. Tongueless, he speaks everything as (laid down) in the Vedas and the sacred texts. Though skinless, he gets the touch of all. He is always joyful; has a judicious eye; has one form; and no prop. He is qualityless; does not have the feeling of mineness; pervades (everything); has qualities; is spotless and sinless. He is not influenced by anyone; everything is under his influence; he gives everything; he is the best among the omniscient; he does not have a mother; the mighty one is full of everything. He who, not having any other thought, meditates thus on him full of everything, goes to the formless highest place resembling nectar.

96-109. I shall tell you another (meditation). O very intelligent one, listen to it. O prince he is called Vāsudeva, since the matchless universe, having an embodied form, having a form and formless and pure is perfumed by his dwelling (in it). He has that lustre which would be the one of a showering cloud. In the right hand of him who resembles the sun in lustre, who has four arms, and who is the lord of gods, shines a conch decorated with gold and jewels. O brave one, in the left hand of that magnanimous one shines the Kaumodakī mace which destroys great demons. In his right hand is a great lotus rich in fragrance. It always shines with a weapon and the beauty of the lotus. His neck is like a conch; he has a round face; his eyes are like lotus-petals; he, Hṛṣīkeśa, is shining with teeth like kunda(-petals). The lower lip of Guḍākeśa resembles a coral. He, having eyes like lotuses, looks charming due to a bright crown. Janārdana shines with large, charming chest, marked with Kaustubha only. He also shines with ear-rings resembling the sun in lustre. Hari always shines with the auspicious mark of Śrīvatsa. The best among the victorious shining with armlets, bracelets, necklaces and pearls (bright) like stars, and with his body, is victorious. That Govinda also shines with a garment resembling gold. He shines with rings on his fingers. Hari, endowed with all, complete and divine weapons and ornaments, mounted upon (Garuḍa) the son of Vinatā, is the creator of the worlds and the lord of the world. A man who, with a concentrated mind, meditates upon him, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

I have thus completely told you about the meditation of the lord of the world.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFIVE

Greatness of Vaiśākha

Ambarīṣa said:

1-2. Well (done), well (done), O greatest sage who favour the world, since you told (me about) the meditation of Viṣṇu, with and without qualities. O you who favour the good, now explain (to me) devotion – of what kinds (it is), by whom (it is done), how (it is done), where (it is done), and when (it is done).

Sūta said:

3-4a. Hearing these words uttered by the best king, the delighted sage again spoke to the king: "O king, listen; I shall (now) properly tell you (about) devotion to Hari, which removes all sins. (Now) I shall tell you (about) devotion of various kinds, which destroys sins.

4b-13a. Devotion is said to be of various kinds: mental, of speech and of body. It may also be (divided as) secular, Vedic and spiritual. Mental devotion is said to be the one in which recollection of the Vedas is done with the idea of having meditation and concentration which brings about devotion to Viṣṇu. That which is done through utterances of prayers and (hymns of) the Vedas, through untired reflections, and mutterings in the forest, is called verbal (devotion). That which accomplishes all objects and is done through vows, fasts, restraints and curbing of the five senses, is said to be physical (devotion). That devotion which is the worship done by men through (offerings made) with ornaments, marked (i.e. decked) with gold and jewels, so also with beautiful words, with ribbons of garments put round the waist, with large purifying fans, with dancing, musical instruments, songs, with all offerings and presents, with eatables, food and drinks, and which is intended

for Nārāyaṇa is said to be secular. The same, accomplishing all objects is said to be physical. That devotion in which mutterings of hymns from the Ṛgveda, Yajurveda and Sāmaveda are done, and studies of the hymnical texts of the Vedas are done with reference to Viṣṇu is said to be Vedic. (So also) the act (of devotion) done through the Vedic hymns, and sacrifices where offerings are made (into fire) is looked upon as Vedic (derived from the Vedas).

13b-18. Offering into fire should be done on the new-moon day and the full-moon day. (Offering) food, giving gifts, a sacrificial oblation made of ground rice and offered in a vessel, an oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled (and presented to) gods and manes, sacrifices, drinking Soma—are all sacrificial acts. All rites performed in honour of Fire, Earth, Wind, Sky, Light, Śaṅkara and the Sun, (reach) the deity Viṣṇu. O king, spiritual devotion is of various kinds: One is called Sāṁkhya; (another) has come up from Yoga. O king, listen as it is described. The principles like Pradhāna (i.e. Prakṛti), twentyfour in number, are insentient and are objects of enjoyment. The Puruṣa is the twentyfifth (principle) described to be sentient, and is the agent of acts and the enjoyer (of their fruits). The soul is eternal, immutable, controller, and employer. Puruṣa is unmanifest and eternal and Maheśvara would be the cause.

19-25. Really (there are three creations): Creation of principles, psychic creation and physical creation. The Pradhāna of the Sāṁkhya is of the nature of guṇas (constituents). The similarity and difference and that the Pradhāna is of a different nature should be known; so also the cause of Brahman is said to be desire. The being directed of the Pradhāna is said to be the difference. Brahman is all action; Puruṣa also has absence of action. This is said to be the similarity with the insentient Pradhāna. There is a difference among the principles, and they are related to one another as cause and effect. The wise who ponder over all true principles call it Sāṁkhya, knowing through the number of the principles, the employment and the state of being employed (of the principles). Knowing in this way its existence, and the number of principles correctly, the wise know that the physical principle is in addition to the principle of Brahman. This devotion formulated by the Sāṁkh-

yas is known as spiritual devotion. O king, I shall also tell you (about) the devotion, due to (i.e. in accordance with) the Yoga (school).

26-30. A man always given to controlling his breath, (always) reflecting and controlling his senses, eating what is obtained by begging, having controlled all senses, having reflected upon the mental representation (of Viṣṇu) in his heart, reflects upon the great god seated in the pericarp of the lotus of heart, wearing a yellow garment, and having charming eyes, and seeing (the lord) with a bright face, and having the sacred thread round his waist, of a white complexion, having four arms, and having the hand giving boons and fearlessness. This mental accomplishment due to Yoga is said to be great devotion to Viṣṇu. He who is thus devoted to the lord, is called Viṣṇu's devotee. O prince, I have thus explained various kinds of devotion, according to these divisions, viz. Sāttvikī (endowed with the quality of sattva or goodness), Rājasī (endowed with the quality of rajas or passion) and Tāmasī (endowed with the quality of tamas or darkness).

31-35. Many kinds should be known (of devotion) to Viṣṇu of unlimited lustre. As fire with highly blazing flames reduces fuel to ashes, in the same way devotion to the lord burns sins at that moment only. Till a man does not, on the earth, hear about devotion to Viṣṇu which is actually nectar, the essence of all other liquids, he obtains hundreds of striking afflictions (in the form) of old age, death, birth, due to many bodies (i.e. many existences). The endless lord, when described, when his fame is thought about, when his majestic lustre is heard (i.e. known) internally, destroys all sins, as wind does the clouds, or the sun does the darkness. The heart does not obtain that purity by means of gifts, worship, sacrifice, bath at a sacred place, behaving as laid down in sacred texts, and austerities, which it has when the eternal lord is in the heart. O lord of men, the stories are pure; they are true; these true stories about Hari are alone wholesome.

36-41. (As) these stories of him of a pure form are heard here by you whose good fame is heard, you are blessed. O brave king, you are the leader of the right path. Your heart is concentrated on Puruṣottama, since your firm heart, your good

luck, have become prone to listening to the good deed of lord Śrīkṛṣṇa. O king, how can a self-respecting man have religious merit without propitiating with devotion Viṣṇu who grants boons and who is immutable? He, the guileless one, is born of illusion, and is won over through sincere devotion. You being a good man, know it yourself. O king, the truth about the way of life is not unknown to you. Yet you are asking me about the pure sacred place on this occasion. There is no greater sweetness than this, viz. the glorification of Viṣṇu's devotee. I do not see greater nourishment of delight and proper religious merit mutually (i.e. enhancing each other). The good having greater devotion very much enjoy his unlimited qualities, having unending religious merit.

42-47. Brāhmaṇas, a cow, truth faith, sacrifice, austerities, sacred texts, Smṛti-texts, compassion, initiation and tranquillity are the bodies of Hari. The lord (occupies) the sun, the moon, wind, earth, water, the sky, quarters, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra—is full of all beings. He, of the form of the universe, himself created this mobile and immobile world. Having entered (the body of) a brāhmaṇa, he himself always eats food. Therefore, worship the brāhmaṇas, the dust of whose feet is a sacred place, who are gods on the earth, the abode of the mountains, who are high-souled, who are all-in-all of the auspicious Lakṣmī, and the souls of all. He who properly looks upon a learned brāhmaṇa as Viṣṇu, and who is attached to his own duties, is alone the devotee of Viṣṇu. I have told a secret (to you). It is time for me to go and bathe in Gaṅgā. There is (now) no more time for the story (to be continued).

48-51. The auspicious month of Vaiśākha, dear to Mādhava, has come. In it also the seventh day (for bathing) in Gaṅgā is extremely difficult to get. Formerly on the seventh day of the bright half of Vaiśākha, Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) was drunk through anger by Jahnu, and let out from the cavity of his right ear. A man should, after having bathed in her (water), propitiate Gaṅgā, the girdle of the sky, according to proper rites. Such a man is blessed and fortunate. A mortal (i.e. a man) who would, according to the proper rites, gratify deities and manes in her (water), would see (himself as) the one who has had ablution there, and whose sins have gone away.

52-59. There is no month like Vaiśākha; there is no river like Gaṅgā. Such a difficult combination is secured only through devotion to Hari. She (i.e. Gaṅgā) has sprung up from the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu; she came (down) from Brahmā's heaven. She is not tired (though flowing) in three streams, and she purifies the three worlds. She is a ladder for climbing to the heaven; she always gives joy; she removes the streams of many sins; she helps to surmount a difficulty. She remains in the twisted hair of Śiva. She removes grief. She destroys the lover's sport (i.e. lust) in the heart of the man who worships her. She is the cause of the emancipation of Sagara's family. She sustains Dharma (righteousness). The goddess moves along three paths; she adorns the worlds. By means of her sight, touch, bath (in her water), recital (of her virtues), reflection (on her) and resorting to her, she purifies, in thousands, virtuous and non-virtuous men. Even when those away from her say 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā' at dawn, noon and sunset, she destroys their sins earned (i.e. committed) during three existences. If a man at (a distance of) thousands of yojanas remembers Gaṅgā, he, even though a sinner, obtains the highest position (i.e. salvation).

60-67. Especially on the seventh day of the bright half of Vaiśākha, she is difficult to reach; (but) is obtained through the favour of the brāhmaṇa in the form of Hari, the protector of the world. There is no month like Vaiśākha; there is none so supreme as Mādhava (Viṣṇu or Vaiśākha). The stream of the water of the sins of him who dips (in Gaṅgā in Vaiśākha) is gone. O king, that which is given, uttered, offered, or the bath taken devoutly (in Gaṅgā) in the month of Vaiśākha, would become inexhaustible religious merit hundreds of crores of times more (that what is given etc.). As among gods is the soul of the universe, viz. god Nārāyaṇa Hari, (or) as Gāyatrī is among the muttered hymns, so is Jāhnavī among rivers. As Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) is (best) among all females, or as the sun is (best) among those that shine, as the gain of health is among gains, as Brāhmaṇa is among bipeds, as obliging others is among the acts of religious merit, as the Vedas are among lores, as Om is among the prayers, as self-reflection is among reflections, as truth and abiding by the rules of one's own class are superior to austeri-

ties, as purity about wealth is among purities, as grant of fearlessness is among gifts, as the end of greed is said to be the chief among virtues, in the same way the month of Vaiśākha is said to be the best among months.

68-77. The śrāddha (offered in it), (or) the sacrifice (performed in it), (or) the gift (given in it), (or) a fast (observed in it), so also austerities (practised) in it, or study or worship etc. done in it—all this is said to have inexhaustible fruit. Sins end in Vaiśākha; darkness ends with (the rise of) the Sun; harm done to others and wickedness end with good deeds. O king, all that bath, gifts etc. (done or given) in the month of Kārtika, when the Sun is in Libra, would be a parārdha-fold more (meritorious). Thousand times more (is the religious merit) when (bath etc. is had) in the month of Māgha when the Sun is in Aquarius. It is hundred times more when, in Vaiśākha, the Sun is in Aries. Those men who having bathed in the morning worship (Viṣṇu), the enemy of (the demon) Madhu, in the month of Vaiśākha, according to the proper rites, are fortunate and blessed. Taking morning bath in Vaiśākha, (offering) sacrifices, (giving) gifts, (observing) fasts, (offering) oblations, and practising celibacy (in Vaiśākha) destroy great sins. Again, O king, in Kaliyuga the greatness of Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) is to be kept secret (like) Aśvamedha etc. The meritorious Aśvamedha (i.e. the horse-sacrifice) does not take place in Kali (age). This rite of Vaiśākha is similar to that of Aśvamedha. The sinners of wicked minds do not realise in Kali (age) the religious merit of the horse-sacrifice, viz. attaining heaven and salvation. Men born in it being sinners, must go into the ocean of hell. Therefore its spread is made rare by him."

CHAPTER EIGHTYSIX

Acts to be Performed in Vaiśākha

Sūta said:

1. Hearing these words of the high-souled Nārada, the royal sage Ambarīṣa who was amazed, said (these) words:

Ambarīṣa said:

2-11. O great sage, leaving auspicious months like Mārgaśīrṣa etc. why do you praise Vaiśākha as the month superior to all (other) months? Why is Vaiśākha most dear to Viṣṇu? What are the rites (to be done) in it? What are the gifts (to be given)? What is the penance (to be practised) and the deities (to be invoked in it)? O sage, please be graceful by favour of your advice, to me who am purified by the dust of your lotus-like feet. O great sage, you alone know the way of life; you emancipate (men) on the ways of religious life. You know the entire truth, you teach the way of life. You are an author, you are an instructor; you are a thinker; you respect (others); you are an employer. O best sage, those who distribute equally, are remembered by those who know sacred texts. All that fruit which is obtained by vows, sacrificial sessions, penance, gifts, is obtained by (giving) instruction in the way of life. O sage, he who prompts another, is also the sharer of the fruit of a bath at a sacred place, penance, and sacrifices which he (who is prompted) gets. Other people do what the pre-eminent people do. The people follow the authority accepted by them. Therefore, you deserve to teach (i.e. please teach) me that wonderful way of life. The advice of a teacher proper for the place and occasion is difficult to get. There are no other objects such as gaining a kingdom, which cool us (i.e. me) down as a meeting with you.

Sūta said:

12. Then the best sage Nārada, with his teeth shining due to a gentle, soft smile said to Ambarīṣa.

Nārada said:

13-19. O king, listen. I shall narrate, for the good of the world and of you, the rites (performed) in the month of Vaiśākha, which I formerly heard from Brahmā. It is difficult to get birth in Bhārata. (More difficult) than that is to be (born as) a human being. Proceeding according to one's own way of life is (more difficult) than being born as a human being. O king, more difficult than that is devotion to Vāsudeva. There also, the month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu, is difficult. Those

men, who, having come across that month, perform (acts like) bathing, (giving) gifts and muttering prayers according to rules, are blessed and fortunate. Merely by seeing them, sinners, desiring religious merit and purified by devotion to the lord, become free from sins. Those who, with voluntary religious observances, have bathed (according to rules) in the month of Māgha, sport for a crore of years in the Nandana grove. As in the world there is no lake like the ocean, in the same way there is no other month like Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu.

20-29. Sins remain in the bodies of men till the Vaiśākha month, destroying impurity, does not come. The remaining five days of that month, beginning with the eleventh day are equal to the entire month. Those who have, with various articles, worshipped god Viṣṇu, the killer of (the demon) Madhu, have obtained the fruit of their existence. What more and more difficult (gain) is not obtained by means of bathing and properly worshipping the highest lord in the month of Vaiśākha? O king, the existence of those who have not given (gifts), who have not offered oblations into fire, who have not muttered prayers, who have not met with death at a sacred place, who have not at all reflected upon Nārāyaṇa, the destroyer of all sins, is fruitless. The wealth of that man who is a miser, when there is wealth with him and he dies without giving (gifts), is useless. Birth in a good family is obtained by bathing at a holy place etc. and penance. (But) O king, nothing (of these) serves (a man) without (i.e. unless he gives) gifts. Due to the importance of a (regular) bath during the five days in the month of Vaiśākha birth in a good family is obtained, so also wealth of various kinds (is obtained). So also, O king, a good son, a good family, wealth, grains, excellent women, good birth, (painless) death, nice enjoyments and pleasures (are secured).

30-34. O king, by the grace of that god—the high-souled Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa, greater love for giving gifts, generosity, excellent courage, and desired accomplishments take place. A man having bathed in the month of Kārtika or Māgha or Vaiśākha and having especially devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu, the killer of (the demon) Madhu, and having given gifts according to his capacity, and having had pleasures of this world, would reach the place of Viṣṇu. As darkness disappears at sunrise,

similarly the series of sins earned (i.e. committed) during many existences would disappear by bathing in the month of Vaiśākha. The self-born one (i.e. Brahmā) himself told me these words. Viṣṇu gave a great currency to the month named Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) and considering secretly Yama's words, made it go to the human world.

35-40. Therefore, O great king, when this month of Vaiśākha has arrived, the devotees of Viṣṇu should bathe in the holy water, purifying men, of Gaṅgā, or of Revā, or Yamunā or Sāradā. O best king, having got up before sunrise, and having worshipped, according to sacred injunction, Mukunda or Madhusūdana, the lord of gods, and having enjoyed all desired superior pleasures along with sons, grandsons and wealth, and having practised penance, one would obtain heaven which is inexhaustible. O glorious one, having known like this, having bathed, worship according to proper rites Madhusūdana, especially in Vaiśākha. Having worshipped Govinda, Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, you will obtain happiness, a son, wealth and Viṣṇu's position. O king, having saluted the god of gods, Viṣṇu, destroyer of sins, a man should begin this vow of the full-moon day of Caitra.

41-47. Endowed with curbs and restraints, and having given something according to his capacity, eating food fit to be eaten during these days, sleeping on the (bare) ground, remaining in the vow of celibacy, emaciated due to austerities like bodily mortification, meditating on Nārāyaṇa in his heart, he should, when the full-moon day of Vaiśākha has arrived, offer honey, sesamum seeds etc. He (should also give) food to the chief brāhmaṇas devoutly and a cow along with presents. He should also request the brāhmaṇas for the absence of a defect in the (effect of) the bath. O king, as Lakṣmī is dear to Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, so is the month of Vaiśākha dear to Madhusūdana. A man, having thus bathed (in every Vaiśākha) according to the rites for twelve years, should, according to his capacity, bring it to conclusion to please Madhusūdana. O king, I have told you this importance of the month of Vaiśākha, which I had formerly heard from the mouth of Brahmā.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSEVEN

Subtle Are the Ways of Dharma

Sūta said:

1. Having heard these words of Nārada the king who was amazed, saluted him, and thinking of Viṣṇu said (to him):

Ambarīṣa said:

2. O sage, we are confused. How can a very difficult fruit be obtained by a little exertion—merely by means of a bath?

Nārada said:

3-5a. O king, you have spoken the truth that with little exertion great fruit is obtained. Have faith in it. It is the statement of the Creator. The ways of religious merit are subtle; for they are difficult to understand even for the masters. (Even) the learned are bewildered about the act of Viṣṇu whose power is inconceivable. O king, kṣatriyas like Viśvāmitra attained brāhmaṇahood due to the excellence of religious merit.

5b-15a. Therefore, the ways of religious merit are subtle. O king, even Ajāmila who was known as a female slave's husband, had abandoned his religiously wedded wife and always remained on the path of sin. When he died, he, through affection for his son, called, 'Nārāyaṇa'. Due to that thought and utterane of the name (Nārāyaṇa) he obtained a position very difficult to be had. As fire, though touched unwillingly (i.e. unknowingly) burns (one's limb etc.), in the same way, the name of Govinda, though uttered under a pretext (i.e. non-seriously or casually), burns (the sins). The grandsons of sage Vyāsa cohabited with their brothers' wives. Similarly the sons of Pāṇḍu were themselves sons born of their mothers (Kuntī and Mādrī) by those (deities) other than Pāṇḍu. O king, all the five Pāṇḍavas enjoyed Draupadī. And (still) their fame is auspicious. Therefore, the course of religious merit is subtle. Strange are the deeds (of human beings); strange are the ideas of beings. Strange are the beings; strange are the potencies of acts. Perhaps a good deed which remained hidden, grows with some auspicious act, O king; and in a certain existence it gives a great fruit. Religious merit is subtle, and cannot

be guaged in any manner. O king, no positive evidence for the fruit of this (auspicious deed) is heard (i.e. available). A certain auspicious deed, covered by other sins, comes from somewhere and gives its fruit somewhere.

15b-23. There is no destruction of a good or bad deed in this world. Yet due to many auspicious deeds a terrible sin goes (away). O king, with regard to the statement which you made, that due to great exertion great religious merit is (had), listen from me about the cause thereof. If little or much exertion depends upon smallness or greatness (of an activity), then the cultivators etc. would always be men of great religious merit. The utterance of a hymn is a great exertion for a lion. The five products of a cow would not have been (mentioned) as constituents of a vow. Thus the greatness or smallness of an act that ought to be done would follow from another vow of (i.e. like) entering water or fire. There is no such rule that this is a small or this is a great (exertion). O king, the fruit alone which is mentioned in the sacred texts, would be great. As a small (thing) is destroyed by a great one, in the same way a great (thing) is destroyed by a small one. A heap of grass (i.e hay) is burnt even by a small spark of fire. A thousand formidable sins connected with killing, crores of violations (of the modesty) of the teacher's wife, sins like theft, committed by devotees of Kṛṣṇa through ignorance, come to an end.

24-31. (Even) a small good act, done by Viṣṇu's good and wise devotee, would obtain an inexhaustible fruit, O hero. No doubt should be entertained in this (matter). A man having devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha, would obtain whatever is desired by him. By means of devotion to Viṣṇu, children, wealth, gems, a wife, a mansion, horses, elephants, pleasures, heaven, salvation are not away (from the devotee). Thus, there is no doubt that even by means of (an act done according to) rite told in sacred texts, there would be the destruction of a great sin, and the nourishment (i.e. enhancement) of good deeds. The fruit would increase, O king, due to the excellence of devotion and deeds. Even by means of the various (fruits), the course of religious merit should be understood to be subtle. This month of Vaiśākha is dear to the great-souled Viṣṇu. Even if one is observed (i.e. even if bath etc. is done in only

one Vaiśākha) by people, it gives the entire desired (object). O king, this is my view that a man who is given to bathing (right) from his birth with the holy water of Gaṅgā at the proper time and place, who is void of devotion and yet is a giver, does not become pure. Creatures live at holy places on Gaṅgā etc. and flocks of birds always live in temple(s). (Though) they observe fasts, they, being bereft of devotion, meet with death, and do not get the (highest) position (i.e. salvation).

32-38. We are not able to describe the religious merit of him who devoutly keeping Viṣṇu in his heart, who intent on bathing and thus being pure, worships Viṣṇu in Vaiśākha. He, defective in devotion, having entered fire at the time of his death, after the fire which is sprinkled with ghee and oil, whose flames are turning round, is enkindled, does not go to heaven, nor does he obtain any other (good) fruit. Therefore, O king, have faith in the fruit of (i.e. given by) Mādhava. Even a small auspicious act destroys (the fruit of) hundreds of impious acts. As due to the fear of Viṣṇu's name the hosts of all sins perish, and O king, as they perish by bathing in the morning at a holy place when the Sun is in Aries, similarly they certainly perish by taking a bath at dawn (every day) in Vaiśākha, as serpents perish by the lustre of Garuḍa. He, O king, who bathes in Gaṅgā or Narmadā when the Sun is in Aries, and devoutly recites the hymn removing sins, once, twice or thrice, at dawn, noon and evening, goes, being free from sins, to the highest place (i.e. salvation).

39-40. O Ambarīṣa, for getting great religious merit, take care to observe the rule of taking bath in the morning in the month of Vaiśākha. What is said to be obtained by those living in the city of Ānarta for crores of years, is obtained by a single morning bath in the month of Vaiśākha.

41-48. O king, listen to an old account in this regard, viz. the conversation with his wife of the brāhmaṇa Devaśarman. On the bank of Revā, in the very auspicious holy place Amarakaṇṭaka was born the best brāhmaṇa Devaśarman as the son of Kauśika. He was sonless, had no wealth, and was having (i.e. suffering from) many afflictions. He was always troubled by the great grief of poverty. Day and night he would think about a means of (getting) a son and wealth also. Once his beloved wife, of a good vow, named Sumanā, saw her husband full of anxiety

and with his face hung down. Seeing her husband at that time she, the glorious one, said: "Your mind is agitated by numberless troubles. You are confused with delusions. O you very intelligent one, give up your anxiety. Tell me your grief, be calm, be happy; for there is no other grief like anxiety that dries up the body. He who would give it up, becomes happy. O lord, O brāhmaṇa, tell me the cause of your anxiety."

Nārada said:

49. Having heard the words of his dear wife, the very intelligent Devaśarman, having the chaste wife as his companion, though afflicted, said (these) words:

Devaśarman said:

50-51. O good one, I shall tell you all about the cause of my worry, which you have thought about; having heard it, listening (to me), understand it accurately. O you of a good vow, I do not know for what sin I am wealthless and sonless. This is the cause of my anxiety.

Sumanā said:

52-66. Listen, I shall speak (that) which (instruction) will remove all doubt, and will contain all wisdom. Contentment alone is the great auspicious cause of happiness etc. Lack of contentment is a great sin. So said lord Hari. This greed is the seed of sin and its root is ignorance. Falsehood is its trunk; and the great trunks are there due to its great expanse. Its leaves are lustful passion and crookedness; it is always blossomed with bad thought. Its fragrance is falsehood, and ignorance is its fruit. Its walls are the heretics and thieves. The cruel, the fraudulent, the sinners are the birds that have resorted to the large branches of the tree of ignorance. Its great fruit is ignorance, and unrighteousness is the juice in the fruit. It is nourished by the water of emotion; and vehement desire loves its nourishment. It has delight in unrighteous acts, and becomes sweet due to being moist. With fruits like that the tree of greed is fructified. A man who lives by resorting to its shadow, every day eats its self-ripe fruits; being well-nourished by the juice of the fruits—unrighte-

ousness—a man would be well-fed; he (then) sets about for a fall. Therefore, O (my) lord, one should not, resorting to anxiety, have greed. One should not worry about wealth, sons and a wife. O dear one, he who is not wise, being deluded, day and night thinks in vain along the path (i.e. in the manner) of fools. 'How shall I get good objects? How shall I get sons?' The deluded one thinks like this day and night. While worrying he would find great pleasure (just) for a moment. Again he becomes conscious, and is troubled by great affliction. O Brāhmaṇa, giving up anxiety and delusion, follow him. O you very intelligent one, in the worldly existence (one) has relation with none else. Friends, relations, sons, father, mother, are related to themselves only. So also is wife and others.

Devaśarman said:

67. O good one, tell me in detail, of what kind is the relation due to which all—wealth, sons etc. and kinsmen—happen (to be related).

Sumanā said:

68-80. O (my) husband, five kinds of sons are born. I shall now tell about (i.e. explain) them. They are: one who snatches away what is deposited with him; the other is the one connected through debt; enemy; suitable; and neutral, O dear one. O lord, I shall narrate their characteristics separately. Sons, friends, dear wife, father, mother, kinsmen are born on the earth being related to themselves (only). He who has been robbed (of his wealth) on the earth by snatching away his deposit, that is the owner of the deposit; he would be born as a virtuous, handsome son in the house of him who had snatched the deposit. There is no doubt about this. He had passed (away) after having given (the son) the affliction of snatching away the deposit. The owner of the deposit was (i.e. would be) a virtuous, handsome son, endowed with all (good) characteristics, of him who had snatched away the deposit. Talking agreeably and sweetly, and being eloquent, he would show great affection. Being (born) as his son of great qualities, he would, O glorious one, give very fearful affliction, which he (i.e. the father in the present existence) had given him, after generating matchless love and after having seized his wealth,

by means of snatching away his deposit. Being short-lived he meets with death. Again and again striking him and giving grief to him, he departs. When he (i.e. the father) says: 'O son, O son', and laments, then he laughs: 'Who is whose son?' 'This wicked one snatched away my deposit; due to the snatching away of (my wealth), and due to great, unbearable grief, my life formerly departed. Then (I shall depart) by giving him grief, and seizing his excellent wealth'.

CHAPTER EIGHTYEIGHT

Sumanā on Kinds of Sons

Sumanā said:

1-11. (Now) I shall describe to you the son connected through debt. Someone having taken debt from someone dies. The giver of wealth (lender) being a son, or a brother, or a father, or a beloved, would, always wicked internally, remain in the form of a friend. He, of a rough figure, would not at all notice virtue(s). He always speaks cruel words to his relatives. He eats sweet (articles of food), and always enjoys pleasures. He is always engaged in gambling, and longs for stealing. He steals money from the house, and, when prevented, gets angry. Every day he abuses his father and mother. He is a thief; he frightens (others); he speaks very harsh words. Thus having seized his wealth, he remains happily. In childhood he takes formidable wealth through the ceremony performed at his birth etc. Again on the occasions of marriage etc. (he takes money) many times and in various ways. In this way the wealth is reduced, and he says this much also: 'All this—the house, the field—is mine. There is no doubt about it.' Every day he torments his father and mother with strong sticks, pestles and by ruthlessly plucking their hair. On the death of his father and mother the very cruel one becomes affectionless and harsh. There is no doubt about

it. He never performs the śrāddha-rites and never gives gifts. O king, dear sons become like this.

12-16a. O best brāhmaṇa, I shall describe to you the inimical son. When childhood has come, he always behaves as a son. He, while sporting, would beat his father and mother. Having beaten them and again and again laughed he goes away. Again he comes there and is always angry with his father and mother, and abuses them every day. Thus, due to wealth he always indulges in inimical acts. Then again having beaten his father and mother, the wicked-souled one just goes away due to the power of the former enmity.

16b-21. Now I shall describe how the proper son would become dear. As soon as he is born, he would do what is agreeable, and by means of sportive beatings (he would do what is agreeable) in his childhood. Then, after he attains youth, he would do what would please his mother and father. Through devotion (to them) he would please them, and by means of affection, words, and conversing with them in a pleasing way, he would gratify both of them. Coming to know of the death of the elders, he weeps through affection (for them). Being extremely afflicted he performs all śrāddha-rites and offers them piṇḍas. He gives them support of life. Being resolute, he, having the three debts, would certainly, through affection, emancipate them. O dear one, since he would be a proper (son), he would give (to him from whom he borrows). There is no doubt about this. O very wise one, he becomes a son in this manner.

22-27a. Now before you I shall describe the neutral son, O dear one. He always behaves in a neutral manner. He does not at all give. He does not receive. He does not get angry, or is not pleased. O best brāhmaṇa, the neutral one does not go away after abandoning (his parents). Servants, beasts, so also horses, elephants, buffaloes—all these are connected (with a man) through debt. One of us, or both of us have not taken anything fraudulently, nor have we made any deposit with anyone in our former existence; I am not pleasing anyone. O dear one, listen for a moment. (Right) from our childhood I have not had enmity with anyone in the former existence; and O best brāhmaṇa, I have not abandoned my husband. Realising this, be calm; give up (this) useless anxiety. O lord, you never snatched (anything)

from anybody; nor have you given (anything) to anyone. How will (then) wealth come to you? Do not be surprised, for whatever is obtained by one who guards (i.e. tries to guard) it, does not remain (with him).

27b-32. Realising thus, be calm; give up (this) useless anxiety. To whom do the sons, dear wife, kinsmen and relatives belong? In this mundane existence nobody belongs to anyone (else). There is no connection (between two persons), O best brāhmaṇa. Men of wicked feelings, deluded by infatuation and illusion (say:) "This is my house; this is my son; this is my wife." O dear one, the bond of the worldly existence appears to be untrue.

CHAPTER EIGHTYNINE

Devaśarman's Life in the Previous Birth

Nārada said:

1-3. Thus addressed (by his wife) the best brāhmaṇa, Devaśarman, again spoke to his wife, having (his) welfare in mind, and talking wisely: "O good one, you have told the truth which destroys (i.e. removes) all doubts, for it has been said that good men, the truly wise ones, desire (the continuity of) their family. O dear one, I am not so much anxious about (getting) wealth as about (having) a son. With whatever means I shall produce (i.e. have) a son."

Sumanā said:

4-11. A man wins the worlds through a son. A son emancipates (his) family. O glorious one, due to a good son, the father and mother survive. O dear one, it is better to have one son (only). What is the use of (having) many worthless sons? One son emancipates the family; the others (i.e. many sons) cause torment. Formerly only I have said that (these) others (simply) enjoy relation. Due to religious merit a good son is

had; due to religious merit (birth in a noble) family is obtained. A good womb (i.e. being conceived by a noble woman) is obtained through religious merit, and a bad death is had as a result of sins. A heap of pleasures (is had due to religious merit), O dear one. I am telling the truth only. A man lives by celibacy, truth, penance, necessary means of living, gifts, restraints, forgiveness, purity, O dear one; so also by harmlessness, might and non-stealing also. By means of these ten constituents he produces Dharma only. By means of these constituents Dharma becomes complete as the foetus (becomes complete) by means of limbs in the womb. A righteous person produces Dharma with three kinds of acts (viz. of body, of mind and of speech). Dharma being pleased with him, gives him meritorious pleasures. The wise one obtains whatever he thinks of.

Devaśarman said:

12-14. O respectable lady, you have told me the entire excellent knowledge called Dharma. O glorious one, O you of a good vow, if you know, tell me how I would obtain a son devoted to Viṣṇu and possessing virtues. O sinless one, you have obtained (i.e. learnt) the whole way of Dharma from your father. O dear one, I know that due to the favour of Cyavana, with whom Viṣṇu was formerly pleased, you are one who expounds the Vedas.

Sumanā said:

15-20. O you who know religious merit, go to Vasiṣṭha. Request that great sage. From him you will obtain the son knowing religious merit, to whom religious merit is dear.

When these words were uttered by her, the best brāhmaṇa Devaśarman (said:) "O auspicious one, I shall follow your advice. There is no doubt about it." Saying so, that best brāhmaṇa Devaśarman went to Vasiṣṭha who knew everything, who was bright, who was the best among those who practised penance, who, the best brāhmaṇa, remained on a seat on the bank of Gaṅgā, who was surrounded by flames of lustre, who was, as it were, another sun, who, the glorious one, was shining, who was the lion among brāhmaṇas and the best brāhmaṇa. He

repeatedly and devoutly saluted, (prostrating himself) like a staff, that sage. That very lustrous son of Brahmā (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) said to the sinless one: "O you very intelligent one, be comfortably seated on the auspicious seat."

Nārada said:

21-23. The best among the meditating saints who was seated, said to (Devaśarman) the treasure of penance: "O dear man, O glorious one, in your house, your wife and servants are well, so also everything is well with fires, with which sacred rites are performed. You are healthy in all limbs; and you always practise righteous things." Saying so, the very wise (Vasiṣṭha) again said to the brāhmaṇa: "O best brāhmaṇa, what cherished desire of yours (should) I fulfil?"

Nārada said:

24-28. Having spoken these good words to the brāhmaṇa, he ceased speaking. Then that glorious brāhmaṇa said to Vasiṣṭha, the best among sages, the magnanimous one, and the best among those who practised penance: "O revered best brāhmaṇa, (please) listen to my words; you may interrupt (me). Due to which condition (I am suffering from) poverty? How (is it that I am) not having the happiness of (having) a son? O dear one, this is my doubt. Tell me due to which sin (I am poor and sonless). Perplexed by great delusion I was advised by my dear wife, O brāhmaṇa. O dear one, sent by her, I have come to you. Tell me all that which will remove all doubt. (Please) be my emancipator from the bondage of the worldly existence."

Vasiṣṭha said:

29-30. For a man there are five kinds of connections: Sons, friends, so also a brother and other kinsmen and relatives. These respective ones have been already explained to you by Sumanā. O best brāhmaṇa, those (sons) that are related (to the father) through debt, are bad sons.

31-36a. I shall explain to you the auspicious characteristic(s) of a son. He is attached to religious merit; his mind is always

engaged in the practice of truth: he is pure; he is endowed with knowledge; he practised penance; he is the best among the eloquent; he is well-adorned with all rites; he is intent upon Vedic studies; he well knows all sacred texts; he honours gods and brāhmaṇas; he performs all (kinds of) sacrifices; he is a giver and a donor; is sweet-speaking; he is always engaged in the meditation upon Viṣṇu; he is calm; controlled; he is always friendly; he is always devoted to his father and mother; he is learned; he maintains his family. A good son having these qualities gives happiness (to his parents). Others having relation (with a man) cause grief and torment.

36b-38. O sinless one, what have you to do with a neutral son (giving) no fruit? All of them come in the form of sons to the worldly existence, and all of them go after giving terrible grief, O best brāhmaṇa. I shall explain all the wonderful deeds you did and preserved in the former existence.

39-53a. Listen, O you very wise one, you were in your former existence a śūdra, and none else; you were a cultivator of land, you did not have knowledge; you were extremely greedy. You had one wife; you always hated (others); you had many sons; you never gave (gifts); you never knew righteousness and perfect truth. You never gave gifts; you never studied sacred texts; you never visited a holy place; you never undertook a pilgrimage, O you very intelligent one. O brāhmaṇa, you thus repeatedly practised cultivation (of land), and O you best brāhmaṇa, you also formerly reared beasts, so also again and again you reared she-buffaloes and mares. O best brāhmaṇa, you yourself did such deeds formerly (i.e. in your former existence). Similarly, you greedily amassed much wealth. But you never spent it in a righteous way, even after seeing a worthy but feeble recipient; having cultivated land you did not give wealth (to others). O brāhmaṇa, having sold all cowdung and your cattle, you amassed large wealth. You always sold butter-milk, so also ghee and milk and curd. Infatuated by the illusion caused by Viṣṇu, O brāhmaṇa, you thought of bad times and made this money (through making things) very costly. Indeed, you, the pitiless one never gave gifts at that time. O brāhmaṇa, you never worshipped the deities. On the parvan days (in a month) you never gave wealth to brāhmaṇas. On the arrival of

the time for offering a śrāddha, you never performed one devoutly. When the forenoon of the day came, your virtuous wife said to you: "O very intelligent one, it is the time to offer śrāddha to (my) father-in-law, so also the mother-in-law." Hearing these words of them (i.e. your wife and others), you left the house and ran (away). You never realised the path of righteousness, nor did you ever listen to it. Greed was your mother, father, brother. Greed was your relatives and kinsmen. Giving up righteousness, you always preserved greed only.

53b-65a. Therefore, you became unhappy, and were very much tormented by poverty. Day by day great avarice was produced in your mind. Whenever wealth always increased in your house, you were burnt by avarice of the nature of fire. (When) at night you slept, you thought more of greed. When you reached (i.e. when it was) the day, you were always filled with great delusions. (You thought:) When (would this money) be a thousand, a lakh, a crore, a hundred millions, a thousand millions, a million millions in my house? Thus, a thousand, a lakh, a crore, a hundred millions, a thousand millions, a million millions (worth of wealth) was (amassed); but (your) avarice never left (you). Thus, disregarding the time, it always increased. You never gave (gifts); you never offered oblations into fire; you never enjoyed (your wealth), O brāhmaṇa. Definitely you put (i.e. buried) it into the ground. (Your) sons did not know (it). O brāhmaṇa, you always adopted other means for the acquisition of wealth. Being intelligent you always asked people. Deluded by avarice, and asking other(s) about a spade, collyrium, having discussions, and asking (others) about alchemy, you wandered alone. You always thought about formulae that would give you success. You consulted the desire-yielding gem and (others) about entering into various castes. You were burnt by the fire of avarice, you did not move happily. You were blazing with the fire of avarice, you waited, and had lost your intelligence. O best brāhmaṇa, you who were (reduced to a condition) like this, were under the influence of destiny. When your wife and sons asked about that wealth, you never told them, nor did you give it to them, and having died you went to Yama.

65b-69. I have thus told you your whole former account.

Due to these deeds, you are not having wealth, you are poor, O brāhmaṇa. Viṣṇu is pleased with him, in whose worldly existence his sons are always devoted, are of good character, endowed with knowledge, always engaged in truthfulness and righteousness. He with whom Viṣṇu is pleased, enjoys wealth, grains, a wife, sons, grandsons endlessly. Without Viṣṇu's favour a (good) wife and (good) sons are not (obtained), O brāhmaṇa, to have a good birth in a family (i.e. to be born in a good family) is (indeed) the highest position of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER NINETY

An Account of Devaśarman's Good Deeds of Previous Birth

Devaśarman said:

1-4. You have described to me these deeds done (by me) in my former existence; for, O brāhmaṇa, I earned wealth as a śūdra only. (But) O best brāhmaṇa, how is it that I attained brāhmaṇahood? Tell me the reason for all this, O you who are proficient in sacred and profane knowledge. Birth in the Bhārata country is difficult. More difficult is to get manhood (i.e. to be born as a human being). In manhood to be born as a brāhmaṇa is difficult; and extremely difficult is to be born in a good family. There also, due to what did I get a chaste wife, knowing everything, speaking agreeably, endowed with all virtues and difficult to obtain?

Vasiṣṭha said:

5-16. O brāhmaṇa, I shall now describe the righteous deeds that you did in (your) former (existence). If you think (like listening), listen. There was a brāhmaṇa who was highly religious-minded, who was of a good conduct, who was very wise, who was a devotee of Viṣṇu, who was religious-minded, who was always solely devoted to Viṣṇu. He always roamed over the earth for bathing at the holy places. While wandering the very intelligent one came to your house. Merely on seeing

good thought was produced (in your mind), since, when the arrival of the good takes place into one's house, what is not obtained by one, O brāhmaṇa? Whatever is difficult to be obtained in the world, even the stable place of salvation (is obtained) by service to Viṣṇu. O best one, he (i.e. that brāhmaṇa) asked for a place to stay in. Your wife and you, along with your sons, gave it to him. "O brāhmaṇa, come, come comfortably to my house." Thus you repeatedly said to that holy brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu. "Stay here comfortably; this is your house, O you of a good vow. Today I am blessed; I am meritorious; I have gone to a holy place. O brāhmaṇa, on seeing you today I have obtained the fruit of (visiting) a sacred place. You have shown me the great meritorious place where cows live." You shampooed his body, properly rubbed his feet, and washed them with water; and you bathed with the water (flowing from) his feet. You instantly gave ghee, curd, milk and many other substances to that brāhmaṇa, as you were urged by destiny. O glorious brāhmaṇa, with your wife and sons you thus pleased that brāhmaṇa, the devotee of Viṣṇu, and proficient in sacred knowledge.

17-26a. Then, in the bright morning, in the month of Vaiśākha, he who, being pleased, was going to Gaṅgā, taught you through kindness, the greatness of the bath in Vaiśākha; and he made you, with your wife and sons, bathe properly. "As in the world there is no lake like the ocean, similarly there is no (other) month like Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu. Till the month of Vaiśākha, destroying sins, does not arrive, sins remain without any obstacle in the body". O brāhmaṇa, having heard his words, you resorted (to bathing daily) in Vaiśākha, and with a pleased mind you worshipped Viṣṇu. Beginning with the eleventh day you took a morning-bath (every day) with proper rites, for the remaining five days of the month. Due to your devotion to the brāhmaṇa, you every day took bath in Revā (river) during the month of Vaiśākha. You worshipped the highest lord, the god of gods and the killer of (the demon) Madhu. You did not get (a chance) to bathe for a full month from the beginning. Thus, you could bathe (only) for five days. Due to that religious merit and especially due to the company

of that brāhmaṇa, and due to the favour of Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) you obtained brāhmaṇahood.

26b-27a. Due to your contact with that month, you got (birth in) this great family which is endowed with truth and righteousness difficult to be obtained (even) by brāhmaṇas.

27b-33a. You also obtained a very chaste wife born in the house (i.e. family) of Cyavana and a teacher of the Vedas. O great sage, beauty alone is a great ornament of women. The second (ornament) is good character. The third is truthfulness. Always being noble is the fourth (ornament). The fifth (ornament) is excellent religious merit. Sweetness is the sixth (ornament). The seventh (ornament)—a full ornament—is their constant great purity within and without. Devotion to the husband is the eighth (ornament). Service (to him) is the ninth (ornament). Patience is the tenth (ornament). Affection is the eleventh (ornament) of women, O best brāhmaṇa. Your chaste wife, expounder of the Vedas, is adorned with these (ornaments). You have respectfully got her due to your bathing in the month of Vaiśākha.

33b-41. Which difficult things are not obtained by bathing in the month of Vaiśākha and by duly worshipping the lord? You were deluded by attachment. Your mind was occupied by avarice. O brāhmaṇa, in the former existence you amassed wealth only. You never gave it to brāhmaṇas or to other poor people or to your relatives or sons or wife. While dying you thought of greed only. You did not give (gifts); you did not offer oblations into fire; you did not mutter (prayers); you did not die at a holy place. You did not meditate upon god Nārāyaṇa who destroys all sins. When there is wealth with a man, he becomes a miser. What is more painful than that he dies without giving (gifts). By bathing at a sacred place etc., by penance a birth in a (good) family is obtained. O brāhmaṇa, nothing except (the merit due to) the gifts stands by a man. Due to that sinful thought you were reduced to poverty. You were sonless and were always tormented by affliction. Due to the peculiar virtue of bathing in Vaiśākha even for five days and to worship of Viṣṇu at that time, and due to the company of that brāhmaṇa, O brāhmaṇa, you obtained birth in a (good) family.

42-47a. Even brāhmaṇahood is difficult (to have). A good

son, a (good) family, brāhmaṇahood, wealth, grains, excellent women, good birth and death, good enjoyments, so also happiness, always to have a strong desire to give (gifts), generosity, excellent courage—(thus) O brāhmaṇa, all desired accomplishments are had by the favour of that high-souled god, Viṣṇu. Having bathed (daily) in the month of Kārtika, or in the month of Phālguna, or in the month of Vaiśākha, and having worshipped Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), having devoutly given presents, having enjoyed worldly pleasures, a man then goes to Viṣṇu. By taking a bath (every day) in the month of Vaiśākha, the row of sins committed in many existences disappears, as, O brāhmaṇa, darkness disappears at sunrise.

47b-54. The self-born one (i.e. Brahmā) told me these words. Viṣṇu conceived a pure idea; (so) he first brought about the rite (in) the month of Vaiśākha, to make people go to heaven, after having mentally thought (i.e. known) Yama's secret. Therefore, in this month of Vaiśākha, that has now come, having bathed in a sacred place having holy water (every morning) before the sun has risen, and having, with proper rites, worshipped Madhusūdana, and having enjoyed (i.e. having had) sons, grandsons, wealth, good fortune and desired pleasures, you will, in the end, obtain heaven. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you all that (i.e. all those deeds which) you did in the former existence. O glorious one, having known like this, especially (the importance) of Vaiśākha, bathe (daily) and with proper rites worship Viṣṇu, Govinda, Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, the god that should be worshipped. (Thereby) you will obtain happiness, a son, wealth and immutable Viṣṇu.

Nārada said:

55-57. The best brāhmaṇa, of great prowess, instructed by Brahmā's son (i.e. Vasiṣṭha), was glad, and the magnanimous one, having saluted Vasiṣṭha there, and having taken his leave of the brāhmaṇa, went home; and the great sage spoke to his wife, Sumanā: "Due to your favour that brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) told me all the account of my former deeds. O good one, Vasiṣṭha brought to light all of them. Today only my delusion is destroyed. I shall devoutly worship Viṣṇu, after (daily) bathing in the month of Vaiśākha."

Nārada said:

58. Having heard these very pure, very auspicious words leading to an auspicious result, she, who was delighted, said to her dear husband: "You are blessed, since you have been advised by the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vasiṣṭha)."

CHAPTER NINETYONE

Happy End of Devaśarman's Story

Nārada said:

1-6. That very wise Devaśarman along with that Sumanā took a bath according to proper rites at the very famous and holy sacred place called Kanakhala in (i.e. on the bank of) Gaṅgā in Vaiśākha when the Sun was in Aries. Observing curbs and restraints, he worshipped Viṣṇu according to the proper rites, and gave something (by way of gifts) according to his capacity. He ate food fit to be eaten during days of fast, slept on the bare ground, and practised the vow of celibacy. He became emaciated by the practice of penance like Kṛcchra (i.e. mortification of the body) and meditated upon Nārāyaṇa in his heart. When the full-moon day arrived, he gave honey, sesamum seeds etc., so also he devoutly gave food, a cow along with other presents, to brāhmaṇas, and requested the brāhmaṇas for the absence of a defect in (the fruit of) bathing there. That beautiful, chaste wife, solely devoted to her husband, every day served her husband, after bathing and worshipping Viṣṇu.

7-14. The couple, undoubtedly looking upon themselves as fortunate, went home, well-pleased. Due to the efficacy of that religious merit, he had, after some time, unlimited wealth, grains, and (other) riches. He obtained four sons who were endowed with modesty, were proficient in sacred texts, knew the ways of the world, were devoted to Viṣṇu, were solely devoted to their mother and father, whose intellect was unbounded, and who were instructed for (having the fourfold) goal of human

life, were well-known, knew the Vedas and were devoted to Brahman, who were endowed with all virtues, and were famous. The couple, having enjoyed the full rich pleasure from the sons, took, after a long time, a great (i.e. auspicious) bath in Vaiśākha, due to devotion to him (i.e. Viṣṇu) and the favourableness of their religious merit, O king. As Viṣṇu is actually said to be the lord of Vidyā (i.e. knowledge) and of Lakṣmī (i.e. prosperity), in the same way the month of Vaiśākha is dear to Viṣṇu. O sinless one, I have told you in a slightly abridged form this importance of (the month of) Vaiśākha, which, O hero, I had formerly heard from (my) father (i.e. Brahmā).

CHAPTER NINETYTWO

Citrā's Story

Sūta said:

1. Hearing these words of that Nārada, that king, being amazed, saluted him, and thinking of Viṣṇu in his mind, said (to him):

Ambarīṣa said:

2-6. How should we err about it, since by means of little exertion a śūdra behaving sinfully obtained excellent brāhmaṇa-hood? O dear one, to obtain brāhmaṇahood, even by means of various acts of religious merit, is difficult. (Then) how is it that the mean one obtained it (merely) by bathing (daily) during the month of Vaiśākha? O lord, even rich kings like me do not obtain the lordship of the earth by (performing) sacrifices, (giving) gifts, (practising) severe austerities, and other acts called (acts of) religious merit. That (Viśvāmitra, the) son of Gādhi obtained it after a long time and with great difficulty by practising continuously for full hundred years various kinds of severe austerities and with many efforts. How is it (then) that that sinful one belonging to the lowest caste, bereft of his own duties, poor

and non-giver obtained through this small religious merit done without exertion the essential nature of Rāma?

Nārada said:

7-12a. O king, you have told the truth. Brāhmaṇahood is very difficult to get. The ways of Dharma are subtle and difficult to understand. Strange are the deeds; strange is the thought of a being; strange are the beings; and strange are the powers of deeds. O king, at some time a good deed, done in secret, thrives due to some auspicious act. It gives great fruit even in the same existence. This is mysterious and subtle Dharma. It cannot be carried in any manner. No certainty about the time when it would give fruit is known. Whatever good deed concealed by other sins, comes from somewhere and at some place and gives a good fruit.

12b-18. In this world (the fruit of) a good or bad deed does not perish. Yet due to many auspicious acts (even) a formidable sin perishes. O king, you said that the fruit of a deed would be obtained there due to greater exertion; in that matter listen to what I say. If smallness and greatness of a deed depended on little exertion and much exertion (respectively), then there are men observing great vows and constantly doing deeds. There is great exertion to obtain the urine of a lion, a tiger etc. Therefore, in a rite the products of a cow are recommended. Thus if repetition of a deed would mean its greatness, then entering water, fire etc. would be smaller than (any) other vow. There is no rule which says this is small or that is great. The fruit of it that is laid down in sacred texts is alone its great produce, as a great thing destroys a small one or a small thing destroys a great one. The destruction of grass (i.e. hay) is seen (to take place) even due to a small spark.

19-24. O king, Ajāmila was known to be the husband of a maid servant. He had forsaken his religiously wedded wife; he constantly remained in (i.e. committed) sins. At the time of his death he called his son by his name Nārāyaṇa. And due to uttering the name (of Viṣṇu) he obtained a very difficult position (i.e. salvation). As fire though touched unwillingly (i.e. unknowingly) burns, in the same way, the name of Viṣṇu, even though it is uttered under some pretext, burns (sins). (Sins due to) myriads of killings, thousands of swearings, all thefts, crores of violations

of the teacher's wife are instantly destroyed by (uttering) the name 'Govinda' dear to Viṣṇu. O hero, whatever small good deed full of devotion to Viṣṇu is done by a learned man, would have an inexhaustible fruit. No doubt should be entertained about this.

25-33. A man having devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha, would obtain whatever is desired by him. Due to devotion to Viṣṇu, children, wealth, wife, land, mansion, horses, elephants, pleasures, heaven and salvation are not away (i.e. are easy to obtain). Thus by means of a small act laid down in the sacred texts, if it is done according to the proper rites, even a great sin would perish. There is no doubt about this. O learned one, due to the excellence of the devotion and the act, there would be greater fruit. The ways of Dharma are subtle, and are difficult to be known even by the wise. This month of Vaiśākha is dear to glorious Viṣṇu. Even all alone it gives all the desired objects in the three worlds. In my view a wise one who gives gifts without sincerity even from his birth, and one who somehow bathes with the holy water of Gaṅgā at the proper place and time, is not purified. A man of wicked thoughts, though at the time of death enters fire, blazing by the sprinkling of ghee and oil with its flames turning all round, and is burnt, yet he does not obtain heaven or any other (similar) fruit. Gods live at the holy places on (the bank of) Gaṅgā etc., so also hosts of yakṣas live in temples. They, being bereft of devotion, observe fast and perish, (but) do not get the (desired) fruit. Therefore, we are not able to describe the religious merit of him who intent upon bathing (daily) and purified, would, having kept devotion in the lotus of his heart, devoutly worship Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. O king, in this context also listen to an old account.

34-44a. I shall tell you about a certain queer fruit due to the favour of the month of Vaiśākha and of Viṣṇu, viz. that a certain brāhmṇa woman obtained. Formerly there was the lord of Kānti well-known as Divodāsa. His daughter, a great gem, always best among females endowed with virtues and beauty, of a good character and charming and auspicious, and matchless in beauty on the earth, was known as Divyādevī. Her father saw her endowed with form and beauty. Seeing his daughter Divyā-devī, the king became anxious as to which good, glorious bride-

groom this daughter should be given. (Thus) thinking and properly knowing the king of Rūpadeśa the king called the magnanimous Citrasena and gave his daughter to that intelligent Citrasena. O king, when the time of his marriage came, that Citrasena died due to the perversity of destiny. The religious-minded king Divodāsa thought and, O king, having called brāhmaṇas, he asked them: "At the time of her marriage Citrasena died. (Please) tell me what kind of fate she will have."

A brāhmaṇa said:

44b-58. O king, the marriage of a daughter is performed according to sacred injunctions. Another husband is enjoined by the scriptures in the case of a woman, when her husband dies, or when he forsakes her, or when afraid of a great disease he abandons her and goes away, or, O king, if he would renounce the world. Mainly it is the father who would get (his daughter) married. There is no doubt about this. This is, O king, what is ordained by the good people in law books.

The best brāhmaṇas said: "Get her married." The religious-minded Divodāsa was urged by the brāhmaṇas. The king made up his mind to get her married. O king, again he gave Divyādevī away in marriage to the meritorious, magnanimous king Puṣpasena. That king too died at the time of marriage. Whenever the glorious father (king Divodāsa), extremely afflicted, made an effort at getting her married, at the auspicious moment (of marriage) the husband died. Then twentyone husbands died at different times. Then the king, of a known valour, being firm along with the minister, called him, and the lord of the earth decided upon her self-choice marriage. Then he invited many kings and chiefs devoted to religion for her self-choice marriage. Those foolish kings disturbed by her beauty and pounded by death fought among themselves. Thus, O lord, men, those kṣatriyas perished. Divyādevī, afflicted with grief, then wept piteously. Then king Divodāsa, seeing that girl very much afflicted and weeping, saluted, with his neck (bent) politely, his family-priest knowing law, having sacred knowledge, and practising penance (and said to him).

Divodāsa said:

59. Favour me and tell me what the great sin of my daughter Divyādevī is, that has done this (mis-)deed.

Jātukarṇa said:

60-76. O hero, I shall tell you the deeds of Divyādevī done in her former existence. Listen while I am telling them. There is a holy city called Vārāṇasī that destroys sins. In it there was a very wise man named Suvīra. He was born in the vaiśya caste and was endowed with wealth and grains. His wife, O very wise one, was quite well-known as Citrā. Abandoning the family-practices, she behaved badly. She did not care for her husband, and remained in (doing) fearful deeds. She, of a wicked mind, gave up auspicious acts, and acted sinfully. She, a wanton woman, loving quarrels, always censured her husband. Always given to staying in another man's house, she wandered much. The wicked one would always find the weak point of others among the beings. She was engaged in condemning the good; she always laughed very much. She was addicted to bad company; due to her speech she was dear to people of bad conduct. She was cunning; she hated religious people; she was a liar. Knowing her to be like this, Suvīra married another (woman). That pious Vīra (i.e. Suvīra) always given to truly holy thoughts constantly enjoyed, according to pious ways, objects of senses dear to his heart and happily along with that new wife. He was honoured by that unlimitedly truthful chaste lady of a good mind. That strange Citrā, of an excellent complexion, a wanton woman, hating piety in company of (i.e. with) virtues, was driven out by him. Moving freely and being shameless she moved with her paramour. She joined those who were engaged in (committing) sins; she was attached to the job of a messenger. She was skilled in the art of a go-between of other women. She broke families and had a crooked heart. Having called a chaste woman she would urge her by words generating conviction in stories about the desire for diversion and sports. The sinful one would stir the minds of good men and women. She would cause good women to be offered to other men (than their own husbands). Thus she caused fraud, bereft of the host of pious (acts), to be done (by others). Having

thus enjoyed for a hundred years. She lived like a prostitute. Always given to sinful acts she died in course of time. She was born as your daughter Divyādevī in your house. She was (born) as a beautiful girl endowed with a (good) form, as she was urged by her destiny in the former (existences).

Nārada said:

77. Hearing these words of him (i.e. Jātukarṇa), Divodāsa was extremely amazed. The king spoke sweet words to the sage Jātukarṇa.

Divodāsa said:

78-79. When she who was of such a bad behaviour and engaged in bad acts, died, how is it that she was born as a worthy daughter of mine, whose deity is Lakṣmī's hushand (i.e. Viṣṇu) and who am born in a very noble family? And, O sage, due to which strange religious act, she doing (such) acts has obtained a lucky birth, difficult to get, in a large, royal, rich family?

Nārada said:

80. Having heard these words of enquiry of that king, the wise sage then spoke a few true and pleasant words.

Jātukarṇa spoke:

81-86. Citrā, deceiving covert, lustful paramours, bereft of wealth and intelligence, by means of strange sexual unions, and drinking poisonous drinks, went from here and became a prostitute in the very famous city (called) 'Nāga'. A certain brāhmaṇa, afflicted and troubled, (but) of a pure heart, one evening came to that city named Nāga. Not seeing any other place (for camping), the ignorant one went to the house of Citrā. (Merely) by looking at him, the prostitute very much deluded him. He was pleased by her with shampooing his feet, bathing him, offering him a tāmbūla, a seat and food, and diversions. Then he was free from dejection. Then with strange sexual unions, she, absolutely without having any purpose in view, served him well. The brāhmaṇa who was attached (to her) due to her peculiar devotion, passed the entire night with her. When, in the morning,

he was about to leave, he whose mind was somehow attached to Citrā and who was pleased by her being solely devoted (to him), with her acts and deeds (said):

The brāhmaṇa said:

87-98. O dear one, I who am pleased (by you) must do a good turn in return. I shall without any discrimination tell you my strong affliction. Listen with respect to that auspicious (act) which destroys all sins, a description of (i.e. told by) the brāhmaṇas, formerly telling a tale on the bank of Narmadā. He who in the month of Vaiśākha, when the Sun enters Aries, carefully bathes even for three days just before sunrise, is freed from heaps of sins. He who for the entire month of Vaiśākha would bathe outside (his house), and would worship Viṣṇu with due rites, also destroys his sins. A man is freed from great sins especially by such acts as bathing at a holy place and giving gifts (there) during the month of Vaiśākha. The heap of great sins freely remains in the body of a man till he gladly, at dawn, before sunrise, bathes (at a holy place), when the Sun has entered the Zodiacal sign Aries. Thus I heard from the brāhmaṇas that were talking, about the excellent boat (useful) in crossing the ocean of many sins. Nearby is the excellent river Śivadehā. To destroy that stream of sins I am going to bathe there. O dear one, if you like, or if your mind is detached (from the worldly existence) then come with me for the bath in Vaiśākha. This life, so also this extremely charming youth are transitory. They are the cause of the stay in hell, and it would be difficult for us to avoid it. You pleased me and caused me to fall into the ocean of sins, which is true even of the great who live with the wicked. What is the use of talking much in this matter? Delay for (even) a moment is not proper. I shall emancipate you also, if you have special attachment to Viṣṇu.

Citrā said:

99-100. O lord, due to luck I am having your company as a result of (my) religious merit. My mind is certainly detached. It has a dislike for the worldly existence. Indeed I have learnt in (i.e. from) the sacred texts about the company of the good. My salutation to him who is inconceivable and uncontrolled.

Jātukarṇa said:

101-109. Speaking like this and urged by the sage that Citrā, after having taken a little wealth that was there with her, then went with him. Then that brāhmaṇa also reached the body (i.e. the stream) of Śivadehā in the month of Vaiśākha, bathed (there), and the kind one gave her the joy of bathing on that day. Then the kind-hearted brāhmaṇa made that Citrā, talking beautifully, bathe according to the proper rite. When the brāhmaṇas were separately reading the Purāṇas, she gladly heard there the greatness of the bath in Vaiśākha, by merely hearing which the darkness of sins gets exhausted, as at the sunrise the stream (i.e. the heap) of darkness perishes. She, due to the bath in that holy water causing cessation of birth, of Śivatanu (i.e. Śivadehā), had her mind pure and she became spotless like the sun's lustre. There in the Revā various people longing for the end of (the visits to) the worlds and engrossed in the service to Viṣṇu plunged in Vaiśākha. The men who clean their impure bodies in (the water of) Narmadā, giving happiness here (only), especially in the month of Vaiśākha, become those who enjoy the sports of the kings of mortals. (Merely) by (one's) remembering Revā she destroys the sin (committed) from birth. When seen, she (destroys the sin) of ten existences. If somehow (someone) bathes in her, she (destroys) the sins of a hundred births. When she is resorted to, she gives (residence in) Rudra's heaven.

110-123. During the entire month of Vaiśākha that Citrā bathed in the water of Narmadā, and every day, according to her capacity, gave something to brāhmaṇas. Due to the company of the brāhmaṇa she devoutly listened to the prayer to Viṣṇu, when the brāhmaṇas there recited it. Having bathed there in the water of Revā for the entire month of Vaiśākha, and having received, according to the proper rite, (a blessing) about absence of defect from the brāhmaṇas, she lived there for a month. That brāhmaṇa named Sudeva also made a new hut there, lived in the hut due to compassion for Citrā and favouring her incessantly bathed in the water of Revā. Then after some time the brāhmaṇa died. After him, O king, Citrā also died. Due to the religious merit of (i.e. collected during) the month of

Vaiśākha she, without seeing (i.e. experiencing) the torments inflicted by Yama, became your daughter at that time only. It is the result of the acts of (i.e. done during) that (month), that she obtained (birth) in a king's family which is devoted to Viṣṇu, which is pure, and which cannot be obtained by sinners, O hero; and O best among men, her excellent name was (fixed as) Divyādevī. She is enjoying the fruit of the food, enjoyments, pleasures and happiness that she formerly gave to the brāhmaṇa, though she was associated with him as a prostitute and of that little that she gave after having bathed in the month of Vaiśākha. She is drinking cold water and incessantly eating sweet food; and, enjoying divine enjoyments, lives in the house of the lord (i.e. you); and, being tormented by pain, grief etc. enjoys whatever is given by destiny. A little of the fruit of her act, viz. that she was engaged in breaking the houses (i.e. families of men and women), has (now) come up. O hero, that beautiful woman, though a great sinner, was born as your daughter without going through the torments inflicted by Yama due to the efficacy of the bath in the month of Vaiśākha. O hero, I have thus told you the behaviour of your daughter which was due to bad acts during her entire (former) existence.

CHAPTER NINETYTHREE

Divyādevī Is Married to Vīrasena

Nārada said:

1. Having heard these wonderful words of Jātūkarṇa, the king having respectfully saluted the learned sage, said:

Divodāsa said:

2a. O sage, how would she now be free from this affliction?

Jātūkarṇa said:

2b-4. I shall tell you about a very meritorious (act) by (doing) which she would be happy. Though generally it is not

to be disclosed, I shall tell it to you. Though the act is small, it is wonderful (and) so would destroy (the fruit of) hundreds of bad acts. As due to the power of meditation upon Viṣṇu great and full sin perishes, in the same way a formidable (sin) perishes due to the (daily) morning bath and gifts (given) in the month of Vaiśākha.

5-6. As elephants flee due to the fear of a lion, similarly all heaps (of sins) perish due to morning bath at a holy place when the Sun has entered Aries and due to the eulogy of Viṣṇu. Certainly sins run away due to a (daily) bath at dawn in Vaiśākha, as serpents run away due to Garuḍa's lustre.

7-11a. Therefore, Divyādevī, after having listened to greatness of Vaiśākha, and having listened to the sin-removing eulogy of Viṣṇu, should again be given (in marriage). She will enjoy the happiness of the company of her husband. O king, that Sudeva also is born as the mighty king of the Pāṇḍya country due to the religious merit (obtained by him) by means of bathing in Revā in the month of Vaiśākha. Give him only your daughter purified like that by the (Vaiśākha) bath, and again by (her) listening to Viṣṇu's eulogy (in the month of Vaiśākha). No doubt should be entertained about this. O king, see the wonder. The fruit of a pious act is said to be the same in this world and in the next one.

Nārada said:

11b-15. Just on hearing this the king was delighted, and made his daughter perform the entire rite as told by Jātūkarṇa. He married Divyādevī to that Vīrasena only, the chief of the Pāṇḍya country and her only friend in her former birth. With Vīrasena, her friend due to her deeds in her previous existence, she who well practised vows, enjoyed many objects of senses. O Ambarīṣa, I have in brief told you a little about the greatness of Vaiśākha. What else would you like to hear?

CHAPTER NINETYFOUR

The Means of Destroying Sins

Ambarīṣa said:

1-5. O lord, I desire to hear that hymn which destroys sins (and) by merely hearing which the heap of sins melts away. I am lucky; I am favoured, that I was made to hear the auspicious rite by merely hearing which the (fruit of) bad deeds that is earned is lost; then what is wonderful there if (greater merit is earned) by auspicious ablutions in the month of Vaiśākha sacred to god Viṣṇu? By ablutions which are laid down as compulsory the heap of sins perishes. Even by the recital of his name, there would be (i.e. one would reach) his heaven. O sage, I think that which is called Viṣṇu's name is alone meritorious, great, pure, charming, to be attained in the world by good deeds only, and is present in the month of Vaiśākha. Oh! they are blessed who remember the name of Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. O (sage), tell me again his account which is pure and which is the friend of all.

Sūta said:

6. Hearing the words of the best king to whom Viṣṇu was dear, the sage was pleased, and though he was eager for having the bath in Vaiśākha, he said so because of his interest in the account of Viṣṇu.

Nārada said:

7-8. O king, it is true that this rite of sweet talk about the account of Viṣṇu between ourselves is pure; and it is superior to the holy bath in the month of Vaiśākha, as (the talk is) with you whose deity is Viṣṇu. On the earth I look upon him as the devotee of Viṣṇu, whose life is for Dharma, whose Dharma is for Viṣṇu, and whose days and nights are (spent in doing) virtuous deeds.

9-10. O king, I shall tell you a little about the fruit due to the bath in Vaiśākha. Even my father would not be able to tell in detail the entire (account of the importance of Vaiśākha), by

merely bathing in which the dead got emancipation. Sinners bathed in the superior water of Narmadā in the month of Vaiśākha.

11-17a. Formerly a brāhmaṇa who was known as Muniśarman, who was religious-minded, who was truthful, who was pure, who possessed tranquillity and restraint, so also forgiveness and contentment, who was engaged in rites in honour of the dead ancestors, who followed the injunctions of the sacred texts and the codes of laws, who was engaged in (speaking) sweet words, who was diligent in worshipping Viṣṇu, who was intent on the company of the devotees of Viṣṇu, who knew (what happens in) the three times, who was engrossed in his own duty, who was wise, tender-hearted, to whom his wife was dear, who was kind, very intelligent, who knew the essential nature of things, who was learned and dear to brāhmaṇas, while wandering for pilgrimage to the holy places went to Revā for bathing in the month of Vaiśākha and saw before him five men who were very much afflicted, who did not touch one another, whose bodies were dark, who were seated after having resorted to the shade of a bunyan tree, who, with their hearts dejected, were looking in all directions.

17b-20. Seeing them the best brāhmaṇa, being amazed, thought: 'Who are these men here in the forest, who are frightened, and whose movements are timid? They appear to be thieves, with their forms changed, and sharing one another's company. These, having dark, lustrous bodies are talking to one another'. While the best and wise brāhmaṇa was thinking like this, all (the men) came there, and remaining away (i.e. at a distance) from him, and respectfully joining the palms of their hands and saluting him, spoke clearly thus:

The five men said:

21-30a. We are looking upon you as the best, bright man, venerable due to your behaviour, chief among the kind, O brāhmaṇa. Listen to our words. You are our friend. The good are the prop of the helpless who have become sinful due to fate. The good remove the suffering of the oppressed merely by their sight. I am a kṣatriya, named Vīravāhana, and a resident of the Pāñcāla country. Through folly I killed a brāhmaṇa with an arrow hit-

ting an invisible mark, the sound of which was only heard. I was bereft of the lock of hair on the crown of my head and of the sacred thread, and was without a mark. I roamed on the earth saying, "I am the killer of a brāhmaṇa. Give alms to me who am a killer of a brāhmaṇa and who am very sinful." Thus wandering at all holy places, I have come here. O best sage, my (sin due to the) killing of a brāhmaṇa does not go away even today. O lord, doing like this I who am being burnt by sin, and whose heart is full of grief, have passed a year. O brāhmaṇa, this other one that is seen here, is a brāhmaṇa (named) Candraśarman. O brāhmaṇa, with his mind full of folly he killed his preceptor. He is said to be the killer of his preceptor due to his mind being full of folly. He lived in the country of Māgadha. He was abandoned by his kinsmen. Since then wandering due to (ill) luck, he has come here, O sage. He is without a lock of hair on the crown of his head and without a sacred thread. He is (also) bereft of the marks of a brāhmaṇa.

30b-32. I asked him his account; and the brāhmaṇa told me the truth that by him, staying in his preceptor's house, with his mind full of anger and being greatly deluded, was killed his preceptor. Burnt by that sin he lives oppressed by grief. O brāhmaṇa, this third one again is the composed Vedaśarman.

33-35a. Due to folly, and as a result of his attachment to a prostitute this brāhmaṇa became a drunkard. I asked him (his account), and he too told me everything that had taken place; (he) oppressed by mental torment told me all his acts. All people, his wife and relatives, drove him away. Smeared with that sin and wandering, he has come here.

35b-37a. The fourth one is a vaiśya, Vidhura by name, who violated the bed (i.e. the wife) of his teacher. Through ignorance he enjoyed his mother who had become a prostitute and who lived in Videha for three months. Then, having come to know the truth, he, being afflicted, moved from there and has come to this land, O sage.

37b-43a. This fifth one is a great sinner, keeping the company of sinners. Every day through greed for money he committed a sin like theft. This vaiśya filled with many sins, was abandoned by his (own) people. With his mind dejected, he, named Nanda, has come to one place. O best brāhmaṇa, none of us

touches one another by means of (having) food (together) or having the same covering, except talking to one another, O glorious best brāhmaṇa. We do not sit on the same seat; do not sleep on the same bed. Thus overpowered by grief, we went to various holy places; (but) O best sage, our formidable sin does not leave us. Seeing you, the bright one, our pleased minds say: 'Due to the auspicious sight of a good man like you, our sins have come to an end.'

43b-45a. O lord, tell us a remedy, by which our sins will perish. O brāhmaṇa, O lord, we know you to be kind and to be one who knows the meaning of the Vedas. You are certainly the emancipator of those that are oppressed and are seeking (refuge), that are repenting, and that have got (i.e. committed) sins through folly.

Nārada said:

45b-46a. Hearing these words of them, the sage Muniśarman, the ocean of compassion, said these words after thinking:

Muniśarman said:

46b-48. You have committed sins through ignorance. You are telling the truth. You are repenting. Therefore, now you deserve to be favoured by me. Listen to my true words. With my hands raised I am speaking. (Listen to) what I formerly heard from Aṅgiras in a conclave of sages. It is found in the Vedas, and is also heard from the mouth of the teacher.

49-57. Firstly you did not propitiate Viṣṇu. You have truly told it. There is no other satisfaction than eating. There is no other teacher than (one's) father. There is no other worthy recipient than brāhmaṇas. There is no god higher than Viṣṇu. There is no holy place like Gaṅgā. There is no gift like that of a cow. There is no prayer like the Gāyatrī. There is no vow like that of the twelfth day. There is no friend like the wife. There is no virtue like compassion. There is no happiness like freedom. There is no excellent stage of a man like that of a householder. There is no better conduct than truthfulness. There is no greater pleasure than contentment. There is no better month than Vaiśākha which destroys sins when resorted to according to (proper) rites and through devotion, and which is dear to Viṣṇu.

It is especially very difficult to be secured at holy places like Gaṅgā (i.e. visiting holy places like Gaṅgā is very difficult in Vaiśākha). All expiations like (sacrifices) lasting for twelve years (are easier). Sins roar till the month of Vaiśākha has not arrived. He, of a pure heart, solely devoted to Viṣṇu, who bathes in the water (of Gaṅgā) that has sprung from Viṣṇu's feet during the entire month of Vaiśākha, alone destroys all his sins. The sinners have met him for the atonement of their sins. What should people say about him?

58-60. That man who now bathes in the water of Narmadā, which gives happiness and removes sins, in this month called Mādhava, when (the Sun) is in Aries, is freed from all sins. In the month of Vaiśākha big rivers are difficult to be found everywhere. Yet more difficult (to get) is Gaṅgā, so also Revā, so also Yamunā. He who, having gone respectfully at least to one of these three, bathes there in the month of Vaiśākha, becomes sinless and would go to Viṣṇu.

61. Therefore, you who have committed sins, should, along with me, go to Revā, and bathe there in the water of Revā, the only essence of religious merit, resorted to by hosts of sages, in the month of Vaiśākha, to remove your entire fear of sins.

62. Thus addressed, all the sinners, being delighted, went with the sage to Revā, praising her (power of) working wonders.

63-66. Muniśarman who was going from there, and who was followed like that by (those) men, saw on his way eight frightened (but) fearful goblins who were making various sounds, who were moving here and there, whose hair was raised and red, whose teeth were black and who were thin-waisted. Seeing them running towards him in the forest filled with thorns and without trees and water, he, with his mind disturbed by fear, said: "Salutation to Nārāyaṇa. (O Nārāyaṇa) protect (me), protect (me)."

67-69. Hearing the words, "Salutation to Nārāyaṇa" which are the great abode of piety, they who had obtained the condition of goblins, mentally went back to their previous existence. Seeing them of a modest mind, Muniśarman speaking sweetly, said: "Who are you, O deformed men? Who has done which deed due which this deformation has been obtained (i.e. has

taken place)? How is it that all of you are afflicted like this and are fearful?"

The ghosts said :

70-77a. We are always oppressed by hunger and thirst; we are overcome with a heap of griefs. O wise one, we are cruel of heart, we have lost our power of understanding and are confounded. We who are fools and kill human beings, do not know the directions anywhere. We have told (one) grief. This is again the absence of happiness. On hearing your loud (but) delicate utterance 'Nārāyaṇa', it appears as if the morning has dawned due to the sight of sunrise. Having seen you, O brāhmaṇa, we have attained purity of nature. O brāhmaṇa, on seeing you and having heard Viṣṇu's name, we have reached another existence, we have become kind. Generally the sight of a devotee of Viṣṇu removes disgrace, purifies the minds of men, and gives them courage. I am Paryuṣita by name. This sacred one is Sūcaka. The next is Śīghraga; then is Rodhaka. This fifth one is Lekhaka. This sixth one is Vāgduṣṭa; this seventh is Vidaivata. This eighth one, giving trouble, is Nityayācaka.

Munisarman said:

77b-78a. How do you who are goblins, have names which are due to deeds (performed by individuals)? What is that reason for which you have names?

The ghosts said:

78b. I always ate sweet (articles of food) and gave stale (food) to a brāhmaṇa, (and that too) without ghee, though there was ghee (in my house).

79-88a. This impure and overanxious one by nature looked for and reported real or unreal weak points and failings of others. Therefore, he is called Sūcaka. O best brāhmaṇa, this one, when requested by a hungry brāhmaṇa, would quickly disappear. For this reason, O best brāhmaṇa, he is (called) Śīghraga. This sinful and bad-hearted one, sitting upon the top of the house, has always eaten all alone. Therefore, he is known as Rodhaka. This one has always resorted to silence and scratches the earth with (the toes of) his foot. He is the greatest sinner among us. He is

(called) Lekhaka, accompanied by (other) people. This one hates the virtues of the virtuous; (has) appreciation of virtues in one who does not have them; he attributes knowledge to one who does not have it. Therefore, he is called Vāgduṣṭa. This sinful one due to heresy does never care for manes, deities and men and for good deeds. Therefore, he is (called) Vidaivata. This one is always a suppliant; always shows real or unreal poverty; tortures beings; and is greedy. Therefore, he is (called) Yācanaka. These goblins—i.e. we—having formerly experienced torments inflicted in hells, have again become well-settled on seeing (you.) I have told you all this account about ourselves. If you believe, then ask a question. I shall tell you (something) else.

The brāhmaṇa said:

88b. All the beings that are there on the earth, are all dependent upon the food (they eat). I desire to hear about your actual food.

The ghosts said:

89-97. Listen to the food of (i.e. taken by) us, which is condemned by all beings, and on hearing about which you will always repeatedly censure us. (We subsist on) phlegm, urine, excrement, and the dirt from the bodies of women. We enjoy at those houses where purity is abandoned, and enjoy there things like burnt utensils etc. thrown out by women, and which are censurable due to dirt. The goblins enjoy in those houses where they do not worship Viṣṇu, which are controlled by women, which are without kindness and forgiveness. Goblins enjoy at that house where indecent language is used, where the women are impure, and where struggle is constantly going on. We enjoy there where the daughters (and sisters) are not honoured, so also excellent women (are not honoured), and where contact with bad people is frequent. The goblins enjoy there where no service is (offered) to Viṣṇu; where no story about Viṣṇu is (told); where there is no love for Viṣṇu. Those also in whose house goblins, being delighted enjoy, become goblins, and due to that sin become the destroyers of their own family. (Thus) O brāhmaṇa, I who am talking, get my food.

98-99a. Nothing more sinful than this can be told. Being dejected due to the condition of a ghost (i.e. due to my being turned into a ghost), I am asking you of a firm vow so that I should not continue to be a ghost, and I would be free from this existence as a ghost.

The brāhmaṇa said:

99b-105a. By means of auspicious vows like Ekādaśī etc., by means of narrations of (the tales about) Viṣṇu, by means of worshipping deities and guests, so also by means of worshipping the teacher (or the elders) etc., by means of practices followed by good people, (by observing vows on auspicious) days as told in the sacred texts and codes of laws, so also by means of performing śrāddha rites and giving gifts: as performed according to the wise by practices like these there would be no ghosts in the family. He who being polite to his kinsmen, repeatedly salutes a cow, a brāhmaṇa, a holy place, the top of the Amara mountain, a river, a big river, and the aśvattha tree, does not become a ghost in the world. That man also who, being controlled, worships (these) in this order at the holy places on (the bank of) Gaṅgā etc., has inexhaustible religious merit. Even a powerful person like me would not be able to describe it even in thousands of years. He would be free from his existence as a goblin merely on seeing (these).

105b-109. The month of Kārtika is great and is dear to Viṣṇu. The best month for austerities is Phālguna, dear to Viṣṇu. The month of Vaiśākha is Viṣṇu's month, and has Viṣṇu as its deity. The deities knew it to be the best of all months, in which all rites are accomplished. The esteemed knowledge of Brahman comes (then). (Thus Brahmavidyā) is Lakṣmī, the cause of everything, since she stays there in this month. Therefore, this month is known as Mādhava. As it is certain that among gods there is no god like Viṣṇu, similarly among all months there is no month like (Vaiśākha) dear to Viṣṇu.

110-118. Even by devoutly listening to the greatness of that month of Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) one becomes free from the existence as a goblin; then what (would happen) by performing rites (in this month)! A man who is solely devoted (to Viṣṇu) is freed from all sins merely by means of conversing with the good

resorting to a holy place, reciting (the name) Nārāyaṇa, or even by means of hearing that name. O goblins, I shall try for your freedom (from this existence as goblins), since religious merit due to doing good turns to others could not be had even by means of sacrifices. O goblins, I go to bathe in the water of Revā in the month of Vaiśākha when the Sun is in Aries. I am followed by these five men. Those five only had become the heaps of sins through folly. They will come for bath by my words, who am kind. Till then, by my order, stay there in this forest, (and be) free from grief. Going (there) and after bathing in the water of Narmadā, having fashioned men of darbha, I, bound by kindness, shall merge the helpless ones according to proper rites into the water of Narmadā in the month of Vaiśākha. Thus, there is no doubt that merely by bathing the lads made of darbha, you will be free from your existence as goblins in three days only.

Nārada said:

119-122. Having spoken like this, and being honoured by them who were firmly resolved, Muniśarman followed by these five (men) went (to Narmadā). Having gone there in the morning and having bathed there, he gave bath according to proper rites to the goblins fashioned from darbhas and by pronouncing the name (of each one of them). The goblins, remembered and bathed at the holy place by the sage pronouncing their names, became pious thereby, and being instantly free, went to heaven. When those five sinners of pale bodies, plunged by his word (i.e. on being told by him) in the water of Revā in the glorious month of Vaiśākha, they instantly became (men) of the lustre of gold only.

123-129. In the presence of all people Muniśarman made them hear (i.e. recited to them) the hymn destroying sins (and) they became men of great brilliance. But the men there did not touch them, though they were free from dust merely on bathing, due to the fear of the contact of sinners. Due to consideration for Muniśarman, and due to his religious authority, there was heard all of a sudden a divine voice: "These (men) are free from sins. What wonder is there that freedom from a heap of sins takes place in the case of those who, having Mukundy (only) as their heart and soul, have bathed in the month of Vaiśākha, and

have been here respectfully hearing the hymn removing sins? For all sinners this is a great hymn removing sins. For all sinners this is a great expiation, viz. to plunge in the morning into (the water at) a sacred place with devotion in the month of Vaiśākha, since, even those sinful goblins who were bathed (i.e. whose darbha-representations were bathed) by merely pronouncing their names, were remembered and made free by that pious Muniśarman."

130-133. Having heard these very wonderful words being (produced) in the sky, the men there instantly praised those five holy men, the month of Vaiśākha and the sage (Muniśarman) and (river) Revā. Then the king heard the hymn of praise which destroyed sins, devoutly hearing which a man is free from heaps of sins, and by merely hearing which sinners attained purity. Many others also became free from the sin caused by ignorance. When the mind of men is occupied with (copulating with) another man's wife, (snatching) another's wealth, and harming a being etc., then the expiation is eulogy (of Viṣṇu).

134-150. (One should say:) "I am always saluting Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu and Viṣṇu (only). I salute Viṣṇu who is in my mind, who is the controller, who is unmanifest, who is endless, who is undefeated, who is fit to be praised of all, who is without beginning or death, and who is powerful. Since Viṣṇu is in my heart, since Viṣṇu is in my mind, since Viṣṇu is the cause of (my) ego, since it is Viṣṇu, the author of the immovable and movable, who remains in me, therefore a sin perishes when he alone is reflected upon. Since, when reflected upon, or seen devoutly in a dream, he removes the sin, I salute that Upendra, that Viṣṇu, to whom a salutation is dear. In this propless world, I salute this eternal Viṣṇu, Madhusūdana, Acyuta, who supports my hand. My salutation to you, O lord of all, O controller, O powerful one, O supreme being, O Viṣṇu, O Hṛṣīkeśa, Hṛṣīkeśa, Hṛṣīkeśa, O Nṛsiṁha, O Govinda, O Bhūtabhāvana (i.e. cause of the beings), O Keśava. Bring to an end bad words, bad deeds and sins. Salutation to you. O Keśava, appease that very severe sin which ought not to have been done, which bad (deed) I, being under the sway of my heart, thought of. O Brahmaṇya, O god Govinda, O you who are solely devoted to the highest truth, O Jagannātha (i.e. the lord of the world), O Creator of the world,

O Acyuta, put an end to my sin. O Hṛṣīkeśa, O Puṇḍarīkākṣa, O Mādhava, let all my sins—committed in the afternoon, in the evening, in the mid-day or at night, through body, mind or words knowingly or unknowingly, perish by means of the utterance of the three names. O Hṛṣīkeśa, O Puṇḍarīkākṣa, may my sin committed through body, mind and words come to an end, O Mādhava. Let that sin which I committed while eating, drinking, standing, sleeping, keeping awake or seated, for getting money through body, mind or words, whether it is small or big, and which leads to a bad birth or to hell, be appeased by means of the narration of (the virtues of) Vāsudeva. When that Viṣṇu who is the highest Brahman, who is the highest abode and is pure, is praised, let the sin that there is, perish. That is Viṣṇu's position, having reached which the wise, free from (the sensations of) odour, touch etc. never return (to this world). Let him put an end to all that".

151-159. That man who would recite or listen to the eulogy putting an end to sins, is freed from sins due to body, mind and speech. Freed from (the influence of) evil planets, he goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu. Therefore, when a sin is committed, the eulogy crushing all sins should be muttered. Best men should recite (the eulogy)—the expiation for the streams (i.e. heaps) of sins. By means of expiations, excellent hymns of praise and vows the sin perishes. Then the deeds should be performed for excellent success, enjoyment and salutation. O lord of men, the sin committed during former existences, so also the sin committed in this world, melts away (i.e. disappears) instantly on hearing this eulogy. This is an axe for the trees in the form of sins. This is a wild fire for the fuel in the form of sins. O king, this eulogy is the sun for (i.e. dispelling) the darkness in the form of the heap of sins. I have disclosed this hymn—this secret—which I respectfully received from my father (i.e. Brahmā) to you and also due to compassion for the world. Even Viṣṇu himself is not able to describe the greatness of the religious merit of him who, O king, hears this auspicious account. Well-being to you, O great king, I am quickly going to Gaṅgā to bathe (in her water, as) this great month of Vaiśākha has arrived.

CHAPTER NINETYFIVE

More Rites and Rituals to be Observed in Vaiśākha

Sūta said:

1. Then the king joyfully asked the sage, after saluting him who was ready to go for his bath, the rite in brief, proper for bathing, giving (gifts) and other performances.

Ambarīṣa said:

2-3. O sage, in this month of Vaiśākha which rite (should be performed)? Which is superior penance? Which gift (should be given)? How should a bath (be taken)? How should Viṣṇu be worshipped? O brāhmaṇa sage, please tell it (to me). You know everything, and you are dear to Viṣṇu. Tell (me) in particular about the procedure of worship at a holy place.

Nārada said:

4-7. O best one, when the Sun enters Aries in the month of Vaiśākha, a man, remembering Viṣṇu, should bathe in a great river, at the bank of a river, in a big river, in a lake, in a spring, in a natural pond, or a reservoir that he would come across by chance. Having observed a fast, on the eleventh day of the bright half of Caitra or on the fifteenth day when the Sun enters Aries, he, with the consent of a brāhmaṇa, and after having taken a good bath and having worshipped Viṣṇu, should take up the vow of the (daily) bath in Vaiśākha.

8-11. "During the entire month of Vaiśākha, when the Sun has entered Aries, I shall bathe in the morning with (certain) restraints. May the killer of (the demon) Madhu (i.e. Viṣṇu) be pleased. May my bath on every day during the month of Vaiśākha be free from difficulty by the favour of (Viṣṇu,) the killer of (the demon) Madhu and the favour of the brāhmaṇas. O Murāri, O Madhusūdana, give me the fruit (as told in the sacred works), O lord, due to my bath (every) morning in the month of Vaiśākha, when the Sun has entered Aries. O Madhusūdana, since this month of Vaiśākha is dear to you, be a giver of fruit, and a killer of (my) sins due to my (daily) morning bath during that (month)."

12-13. Having uttered these words at that holy place, having washed his feet, and being controlled in speech, he, remembering god Nārāyaṇa, should bathe according to the proper rules. A man should prepare a holy place by reciting this basic hymn: 'Salutation to Nārāyaṇa'. This is said to be the basic hymn.

14-19a. Taking darbha in his hand, having sipped water according to the rules, and having bowed, a man should fashion a quadrangular having the measure of four cubits on all sides, and should invoke Gaṅgā by means of this basic hymn: "You have sprung up from Viṣṇu's feet. You belong to Viṣṇu. You have Viṣṇu as your deity. Therefore, protect us from the sin (committed by us) from birth to death. Vāyu has stated the number of holy places to be three crores and a half. O Jāhnavī, your holy places exist in heaven, on the earth and in the intermediate region between heaven and earth. Your name is Nandinī; among gods it is Nalinī. You (are) also (called) Dakṣā, Pṛthvī, Vihagā, Viśvagāthā, Śivapriyā, Vidyādharī, Mahādevī, so also Lokaprasādinī, and Kṣemaṅkarī, Jāhnavī, Śāntā, Śāntipradāyinī."

19b-23. He should pronounce these names at the time of bathing. Gaṅgā moving in the three worlds, is present there. Having with the cavities of the hands (i.e. palms) joined and put on his head, and having put (i.e. sprinkled) water on his head four, five or seven times, then one should like that bathe with clay, after having invoked it according to the rules (as): "O you earth, O you day, O you who are trampled over by horses, O you who are trodden over by chariots, O you who are trampled over by Viṣṇu, remove my sin—the misdeed I have done. You have been upheld by Viṣṇu, (in) the Boar (incarnation), having a hundred arms. Salutation to you of a good vow, and the araṇi (the cause) of the rise of all people."

24-27a. After thus having bathed, and having sipped water according to the rules, he should stand up and wear pure, white garments. Then for the satisfaction of the three worlds he should offer libations. He should first gratify Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Prajāpati, gods, yakṣas, so also serpents, gandharvas, celestial nymphs and demons, cruel snakes, eagles, trees, creatures and birds, vidyādharas, clouds, so also those moving in the sky.

27b-29a. (He should say:) "For the satisfaction of (these

and) the beings also who have no support and who are engaged in sinful deeds, this water is offered by me." A man should wear the sacred thread on the left shoulder and under the right armpit, and wear it round the neck while making offerings to gods. With devotion he should gratify offerings to gods. With devotion he should gratify men, sons of sages and sages.

29b-51. (He should say:) "Sanaka, Sanandana, so also Sanātana as the third, and Kapila, Āsuri, Voḍhu, and Pañcaśikha also. Let all of them always be satisfied with the water offered by me." With sacred rice-grains and water he should gratify all divine and brāhmaṇa sages like Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu, and Nārada. Then he should make the sacred thread hang down towards the left part of the body over the right shoulder and then wear it on the left shoulder and under the right armpit, after going (down) to the ground (i.e. after touching the ground) with his knees. With sesamum seeds, water and sandal, he should devoutly gratify the manes like: Agniṣvātta[1], Saumya, Haviṣmanta[2], so also Uṣmapa[3], Kavyānala, Barhiṣad[4], and Ājyapa[5] also. (He should say:) "Salutation to Yama, Dharmarāja, Mṛtyu, and Antaka, Vaivasvata, Kāla, Sarvabhūtakṣaya (i.e. who destroys all beings), to Udumbara, Dadhna, Nīla and Parameṣṭhin; salutation to Vṛkodara, Citra, Citragupta." Then, with darbhas in his hand, he should gratify the manes. Having, with proper rite, gratified his manes (mentioning them) with their names and family, so also his grandsires on the mother's side, he should recite this prayer: "May all kinsmen (in this existence) and the kinsmen in former existences, desiring (libations of) water from me, be fully gratified." Having sipped water according to the rules, he should, in front (of him) properly draw a lotus with sacred rice-grains, flowers, water and red sandal. By mentioning

1. Agniṣvātta—A class of manes who, on earth, neglected the sacrificial fire.

2. Haviṣmanta—Name of a class of manes regarded as progenitors of kṣatriyas and descended from Aṅgiras.

3. Uṣmapa—Literally, imbibing the stream of hot food; a class of manes.

4. Barhiṣad—Deceased ancestors.

5. Ājyapa—A class of manes who are the sons of Pulastya or of Kardama, and the ancestors of the vaiśya-order.

the names of the Sun, he should carefully make respectful offerings (to the Sun): "Salutation to you of the form of Viṣṇu, of the form of Brahmā, to you, O Sun, having a thousand rays, and who are all-lustre; salutation to you, having the body of Rudra; salutation to you, to whom devotees are dear. O Padmanābha, salutation to you, adorned with ear-rings and armlets; salutation to you who are the lord of all the worlds, who awaken the sleeping ones. You always observe all good and bad deeds. O Satyadeva, salutation to you. Favour me, O Bhāskara. O Divākara, I salute you. O Prabhākara, my salutation to you." Having in this way saluted the Sun, and having gone round (the lotus drawn in front of him) keeping it to his right seven times, he should touch a cow, a brāhmaṇa, and gold, and then go home. Having worshipped the (venerable ones) in the hermitage, he should then worship the image. Being restrained and self-possessed, a householder should first devoutly only worship Viṣṇu and again at both places, with devotion, and according to the rules. He who would especially worship Viṣṇu during the month of Vaiśākha, has worshipped him all the year round. He should perform the group of the vows in honour of Viṣṇu, for pleasing him, when the month of Vaiśākha has arrived and when (the Sun) the witness to (all) deeds has entered Aries. He should give many gifts like sesamum seeds, ghee etc., which destroy sins produced (i.e. committed) during crores of existences. A rich person should give, for the fulfilment of his desire, gifts like water, food, the (representations of a) cow made of sugar, sesamum etc. With his senses controlled one who bathes daily during the entire month of Vaiśākha, who mutters (prayers), who eats food fit to be eaten on days of fast, is freed from all sins.

52-60a. He who, being careful, eats once only (in a day), or eats at night, or eats without asking for the food during the month of Vaiśākha, gets all his desired objects. The rule is that one should have daily two baths outside (his house), at a river etc., according to proper rules, should eat food fit to be eaten on days of fast, should observe celibacy, and sleep on (bare) ground. (Observance of) a vow, (giving) gifts, muttering (hymns), sacrifice, and worship of Viṣṇu burns terrible sin committed during thousands of existences. As Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu)

when reflected upon, destroys sin, similarly (daily) bath in Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) done according to rules (destroys sins). A man should bathe every day at a holy place, should gratify his dead ancestors with sesamum seeds, should give gifts of jars of fragrant water etc., and should worship Viṣṇu during the month of Vaiśākha. This gives satisfaction to Viṣṇu. He should give water with sesamum seeds, gold, food, sugar, garments, ornaments; he should devoutly worship thrice a day lord Viṣṇu who is actually accompanied by pure Lakṣmī. He who gratifies brāhmaṇas with many golden pots containing sesamum seeds, or with jars full of water according to his capacity, removes (the sins of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

60b-81a. A man, being concentrated, should bathe in a river in the morning in the month of Vaiśākha, and worship Viṣṇu with devotion with seasonal flowers and fruits. Free from heretic talk, he should honour a brāhmaṇa according to his capacity. He should gratify him by giving gifts of garments, cows, jewels etc. and heaps of wealth, or should give him other valuable things in small quantity according to his capacity. Then, the man who has no possessions left, should worship Viṣṇu by offering him flowers in the month of Vaiśākha. He, being free from all sins, would emancipate a hundred of his dead ancestors. He would not experience grief for a hundred thousand existences. He has no fear from a disease; he is not bound by poverty. He would become a devotee of Viṣṇu, and is blessed in existence after existence. O hero, he would live in heaven for one hundred and eight thousand yugas and would again be (born) as a king. Enjoying various pleasures of a king happily, he, due to Viṣṇu's grace, then merges into Viṣṇu. O king, listen; I shall tell you in brief about the worship of Viṣṇu. (It is of three kinds:) as laid down in the Vedas, as laid down in the Tāntric works and that which is of mixed types (all of which) destroy sins. There is no end to him whose fullest extent is limitless; O king, there is no end to the rite of worship. Now it will be in due order explained properly. The worship of Viṣṇu is of three kinds: As laid down in the Vedic texts, as laid down in the Tantras (i.e. religious treatises teaching magical and mystical formularies for the worship of a deity), and mixed. The Vaidika or the mixed one is laid down for brāhmaṇas and others. The Tāntrika is enjoined

for even a śūdra who is Viṣṇu's devotee. A man having attained brāhmaṇahood as laid down in his own Veda (i.e. the Veda looked upon as most authoritative by him), should, being composed and practising celibacy, worship Viṣṇu according to the proper rite. By his teacher's consent, he should worship him on an altar or in (i.e. by offering oblations to) fire or the Sun, water, or his own heart or a brāhmaṇa, with devotion and wealth. Having brushed his teeth, he should first take bath for the purification of his body. At both times the bath should be taken to the accompaniment of hymns and with clay. The rites like the morning and evening prayers are prescribed in the Vedic texts and the Tantras. At the end of the worship he should properly fix the solemn vow to perform the observance, which purifies the rite. The image (of the deity) is said to be of eight kinds: (made) of a stone, of wood, of iron, smeared (with clay, i.e. of clay), drawn, of sand, metal and of jewels. It is of two kinds and said to be the abode of life (i.e. alive): movable and immovable. The invocation and allowing (the deity invoked) to go are not (necessary) in the case of the immovable (image) at the time of the worship of Viṣṇu. In the case of a movable one, there is an option. Both these (i.e. invocation and allowing it to go) take place on the altar (itself). In the case of that which is not smeared (i.e. which is not made of clay) bath is (enjoined). In the other case (i.e. in the case of one made of clay) only sprinkling (with water should be done). A sincere devotee should devoutly worship the deity with well-known articles as become available. O king, in the worship, bathing and decorating (the image) is best. They (i.e. articles) may be put on the altars or oblation with ghee (should be offered) into fire. Or the worship offered into (i.e. to) the Sun is the best, or on the altar with water etc.

81b-96a. Even water offered with faith by a devotee is best. Being pure, and having first got his seat prepared with darbhas, he should, after having collected material like fragrance, incense, flowers, lamp, food etc., sit facing the north, or facing the deity, for worshipping (it). Having made the nyāsas[1], he should then

1. Nyāsa—assignment of the various parts of the body to different deities, which is usually accompanied with prayers and corresponding gesticulations.

touch with his hand (the materials of) worship of Viṣṇu. He should properly make ready the pitcher (from which water) is to be sprinkled. With that water he has to worship the deity and sprinkle the materials of worship and himself. Sprinkling the three pots with water he should (fill them) with the material and offer them. He should cause to be given (i.e. should give) three pots for water for washing the feet, material of worship and sipping water. With the tuft of hair on the crown of the head, from which the (head-)dress is removed, he should consecrate them with the Gāyatrī-hymn. At the end of the recitation (of the hymn), he should meditate upon a small portion representing the life of the lord, as is (conceived) in the lotus of his heart, and cherished for the fulfilment (of his desires) on a lump made ready with air and fire. When the lump is occupied by the image as conceived by himself, he being devoted to it, should invoke the deity to the (place of) worship etc. and with its body placed there, he should worship it. He should keep ready the articles of worship like water for washing the feet, for bathing, and the materials of worship etc. Having prepared, in nine ways, a seat for Viṣṇu—a lotus with eight petals, bright with a pericarp and filaments—he should, for success at both places (i.e. in this world and in the next), worship according to the ways laid down in the Vedic texts and in Tantras, worship Viṣṇu's (disc called) Sudarśana, (conch called) Pāñcajanya, mace, sword, arrow, bow, plough, pestle, Kaustubha, garland and (the mark called) Śrīvatsa. He should also worship by sprinkling etc., at their respective places, with their faces turned towards him, Nanda, Sunanda, Garuḍa, Pracaṇḍa and Caṇḍa. So also Mahābala, Bala, Kumuda, Kumudekṣṇa, Durgā, Vināyaka, Vyāsa, Viśvaksena (i.e. Viṣṇu), teachers and (other) gods. He, Viṣṇu's devotee, should always, when he has the money (to do so), adorn Viṣṇu with sandal, (fragrant root of a plant called) uśīra, camphor, saffron, agallochum, and fragrant water, with (proper) hymns—like the Vedic Svarṇagharma, or the incantation in honour of Viṣṇu, or the hymn called Puruṣa-sūkta, so also with waving the light etc. before the deity, with garments, sacred thread, ornaments, leaves, garlands, fragrance and unguents.

96b-101a. The worshipper should give, with faith, water for washing the feet, for sipping, sandal, flowers, sacred rice-grains, perfumes, incense, and other articles to be offere. He should keep ready jaggery, rice boiled in milk, ghee, baked cake, small round cakes of flour, sweetmeats, milk, curd, ghee, and offering of eatables. Day after day there should be anointing the body, massaging it, showing the mirror, brushing the teeth, bath and all songs. In a basin as laid down according to the rules and with a round belt and altars, he should lay fire and gather it on all sides, and having diffused water with his hand, and sprinkled it, should offer fuel according to the rules. Taking the articles with holy water, he should sprinkle ghee with water used for sprinkling.

101b-119. He should meditate upon and worship (Viṣṇu) who resembles heated gold, whose four hands shine with a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus, and who is calm and who has put on a garment (soft) like the filaments of lotuses, who has put on a bright crown, bracelets, a girdle, and excellent armlets, who has the Śrīvatsa on his chest, whose Kaustubha is shining, who has put on a garland of wood-flowers. Having worshipped the wooden pieces having ghee (sprinkled over them) along with the oblation, having thrown two portions of ghee, and having sprinkled clarified butter and having offered oblation covered with ghee, having then worshipped and saluted he should offer the oblation to his associates. O brāhmaṇa, remembering Nārāyaṇa, he should mutter the basic prayer. Then having given (water for) sipping, he should keep the leftovers for Viṣṇu. Always singing and describing his deeds with words he should offer him perfume used to scent breath, and fragrant tāmbūla etc. Causing to hear and listening to good stories he should have leisure for a moment. Having praised him with hymns, and with various eulogies from the Purāṇas and Prākrita (provincial or vernacular) panegyrics, he should, (prostrating himself before him) like a stick, salute him, saying, 'O lord, favour me'. Putting his head on his (i.e. of the image) feet and joining his hands, (he should say), "O lord, protect me, who have taken refuge with you, and who am afraid of the ocean having a shark-like death." With these words he should put on his head the leftovers of the articles offered to Viṣṇu, and should cause

to stay in himself the lustre fit to be put into (his heart). A man with faith should worship wherever there is a foot-mark of the idols etc. A man should worship him who dwells in all beings and in himself also, by means of purificatory rites and abstract meditation. Due to this he obtains desired welfare from Viṣṇu. Having installed the idol, he should get constructed a strong temple, so also charming flower-garden for accomplishing the worship (of the idol), so also should (introduce) worship, pilgrimage, festivals etc. for the continuation of the worship etc. on the parvan days and also every day. Having presented a (piece of) land, a market, a city, a village etc. (to the deity) he should reach intimate union with it. By means of the installation (of the idol), one would get sovereign empire; by (building) a temple one would get (happiness in) the three worlds; by worship etc. one would reach Brahmā's heaven; and by the three he would attain similarity (with the deity). By means of firm, desireless devotion, one obtains him (i.e. Viṣṇu) only. He who worships Viṣṇu like this obtains loyal devotion. That (really) is the body (of a man) which is white due to the dust (clinging to the body) while saluting Kṛṣṇa; it is auspicious like him. Those are the very charming eyes earned by means of penance, by which Viṣṇu is seen. That (alone) is the pure mind, which is white like the moon and a conch, and which pervades Mādhava. O king, that is the tongue, speaking softly, which repeatedly praises Viṣṇu. Women and śūdras also should worship (Viṣṇu) with the basic hymn, with devotion and according to the manner advised by the teacher; so also by other devotees of Viṣṇu. I have told you all this worship of Mādhava which is purifying. O king, do it especially in the month of Vaiśākha.

Sūta said:

120. Having heard these words of Brahmā's son (Nārada), which were lovely, auspicious, and pure, the king, best among the devotees of Viṣṇu, being curious, saluted him with the palms of his hands joined, and said:

Ambarīṣa said:

121-124. I am the lord of the entire earth; my order is always obeyed; I serve the wise; I have dedicated my heart to

the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu; I have pleased the brāhmaṇas heartily. I am the gem from the family of well-known kings; I always have a liking for piety. I am successful. I am given to (appreciation of) beauty, appearance of bravery and to charity. I am having good sons. I have conquered a host of enemies. Due to some religious merit I have been born of a pure mind, and have been associated with the wealth of such virtues. From where again have I obtained this beautiful wife, the embodiment of religious merit and resembling Lakṣmī? O sage, tell me all these good deeds I did in the former existence. O you treasure of compassion, you know everything.

Nārada said:

125-132. This one who is your extremely beautiful wife, of a good conduct, was in the former existence a prostitute named Rūpavatī. This beautiful lady, performing auspicious deeds by the direction of a brāḥmaṇa, would live (i.e. lived) as a prostitute as indicated (below). You were a goldsmith known as Devadāsa. You were, in a former existence, the lord, the paramour of her (who was then known as) Rucī. This Rūpavatī remained on the path of righteousness—the best knowledge—for (i.e. while) spending money (obscure!). Once on hearing about the religious merit due to the (daily) bath in Vaiśākha she, following (the path of) righteousness bathed when the Sun had entered Aries. The diligent, beautiful, prostitute Rūpavatī, always devoutly and respectfully saluted and gave gifts to a brāhmaṇa. You, Devadāsa, bound by love (towards her) were always advised by her. You intentionally and respectfully bathed in the month of Vaiśākha. At that time, at the beginning of Tretāyuga, on having got the third day (i.e. when the third day arrived), she spoke to the goldsmith Devadāsa, with respect:

The prostitute said:

133-135. Fashion an excellent (image of) Madhusūdana, Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu). Having worshipped the deity with these barley grains and having gratified fire, I shall give it to a brāhmaṇa, with the consent of brāhmaṇas. In Purāṇas, this gift is said to be inexhaustible there (i.e. in the next world). I have heard from the brāhmaṇas that this Tṛtīyā (i.e. the third day of

Vaiśākha) is called 'Akṣaya (tṛtīyā)' of the bright half of Vaiśākha. It gives inexhaustible fruit. On this day I shall give this (image of) immutable Viṣṇu (to a brāhmaṇa).

Nārada said:

136-144. Hearing these sweet words of her, the goldsmith, truthfully and free from theft (i.e. without taking away a portion of the gold), fashioned an extremely beautiful image of Viṣṇu, thinking it to be meant for a religious purpose. She gave that beautiful image, having the characteristics of the (beautiful) moon as indicated, after she had taken bath, to a brāhmaṇa according to the proper rites, after worshipping it on that day of Akṣaya (tṛtīyā), O king. After some time, that prostitute, devoted to religion, died. Then that Devadāsa also died when (the span of) his life was over. Due to that religious merit, O king, that Devadāsa, reached (i.e. was born on) the earth as you, endowed with all virtues. That Rūpavatī too, due to that religious merit became your wife, full of love, named Kāntimatī. O hero, many desires are due to former deeds. Their courses are varied. O dear one, they are not known even by the wise. Therefore, there is no doubt that (the rites) should be performed during this month of Vaiśākha. It was kept as a secret by that god Brahmā and by Viṣṇu.

145-148. The religious merit due to the month of Vaiśākha is not obtained by those who have the company of the bad, who have no other knowledge (like that of religion), who are not restrained, who are bereft of the practices of the stages (of the human life), who have not visited holy places, who have not practised vows. The vow of the month of Vaiśākha is not (possible) for them in whose mouth the words, 'Govinda, Keśava, Mukunda, Hari, Murāri, Lakṣmī-nivāsa, Madhusūdana, Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu' do not find a place. Those who do not properly listen to the words of the good, which are very beneficial, and are the nectar in the form of the deeds of Viṣṇu, and who do not see (i.e. visit) the temples of (Viṣṇu) the lord of Lakṣmī, do not obtain (the religious merit of) the vow in the month of Vaiśākha. They, who have not served their teachers, who have not given (in marriage) their adorned daughter to the bridegroom on his arrival, and who have not taught their sons the practices of

modesty etc. do not get (the religious merit of) the vow of the month of Vaiśākha.

Sūta said:

149-150. O brāhmaṇas, having thus advised the lord of men, the sage, the foremost among the knowers of hymns, took his leave, and, honoured by him (i.e. the king), went to Gaṅgā to bathe (in accordance with the vow) in the month of Vaiśākha. The king too, of a pure fame, thinking of him (i.e. Viṣṇu) only, performed, along with his wife, and with a religious mind, the rite of the month of Vaiśākha, as ordained by the sage.

CHAPTER NINETYSIX

Deeds Leading to Hell and Heaven

The sages said:

1-2. O Sūta, O Sūta, O you very wise one, live for a hundred years, since we were made to hear (i.e. you told us) what is beneficial to the world. Again talk the most. We (shall) drink your words. Again and again drinking those words, we are not satisfied, O Sūta.

Sūta said:

3-6a. In this case also there is known an old account—a dialogue between the prime world among the worlds (i.e. the Earth) and the lord of the world. The height of the Earth was six thousand yojanas and the expanse is three thousand yojanas. Thus making the Earth to have (an area of) nine thousand yojanas, he first held the Earth with his large left tooth and lifted her. He held the Earth for a thousand divine years. In course of the legendary account of religious importance she politely said to the lord:

The Earth said:

6b-11a. These twelve months and three hundred and sixty days (constitute a year). Which of these is the best, (most) auspicious, and dear to you? The month of Kārtika, when the Sun is in Libra is sacred. The month of Māgha when the Sun is in Capricorn is said to be sacred in (i.e. by) the Purāṇas. The wise say that when the Sun is in Aries, it is the (sacred) month of Vaiśākha. Mārgaśirṣa is also said to be purifying among the (twelve) months. Thus these are said to be the sacred months. Certain days also are (said to be) sacred. There are the beginnings and ends of the yugas. So also there are the beginnings of the kalpas also. Tell me the most sacred month among all the months. O you who are full of all sacrifices, O you glorious one, tell me (about) any one chosen by you.

Varāha (i.e. Viṣṇu) said:

11b-19a. I am always to be adored with devotion by those mean men who worship me in the month of Vaiśākha with or without rites. O you beautiful one, in Vaiśākha Hiraṇyākṣa was killed, so also Madhu. Having killed these two first demons, I lifted you up. The religion based on the three Vedas, and the settlement about knowledge and the castes took place in the month of Vaiśākha in Tretāyuga. Therefore, Vaiśākha is dear to me. On the third day of the bright half of Vaiśākha Tretāyuga commenced. So also the practices based on the three Vedas started, and they advanced. That day is called Akṣaya (i.e. inexhaustible) in the world. It is dear to Viṣṇu for bathing, giving gifts, worshipping, offering śrāddhas, muttering (names of the deity) and offering oblations to the (dead) ancestors. To them who worship Viṣṇu with barley-grains and carefully perform a śrāddha I give all excellent things desired by their minds. Those religious men are fortunate who give gifts, who every day worship Viṣṇu by means of various sacrifices. The fruit of him (i.e. which he gets) who worships me in Vaiśākha, is greater than (the fruit obtained) by those.

19b-27. O venerable lady, listen to the meritorious fruit of that which is done is Vaiśākha, such as a bath, gifts, muttering (hymns), sacrifice, penance, sacrificial rite and other vows. For

ten, five and seven crores of the periods of Manu they have obtained my proximity and remain without fear. Even if all the cruel Planets are situated in the twelfth and the eighth (places in the horoscope of a man) all of them become pleasing by means of the (daily) morning bath in Vaiśākha. The dead ancestors in number(s) like four of him who being solely devoted feeds brāhmaṇas in the month of Vaiśākha, are satiated by each lump of rice. Those who give very sweet foods, or meals consisting of barley-grains or with water mixed with sesamum seeds, so also umbrellas and garments, so also (shoes) capable of protecting the feet, are blessed, and give delight to Viṣṇu. Here (i.e. during the month) especially sesamum seeds with honey should be given for great religious merit and for the destruction of long(-standing) sin. Who can measure even for hundreds of crores of years the religious merit obtained by men when such (things) are done? A man (doing as above) obtains in this world the wealth in the form of sons and grandsons, long life, and whatever is desired, and in the next world he comes to me only. The series of sins of (i.e. committed during) many existences of a man melts away by bathing at dawn at a holy place according to the rites or of him who resorts to it.

28. He who, abandoning the Vaiśākha-vow, would practise some other vow, gives up a great gem in his hand, and asks for a clod.

Sūta said:

29-39. In this way the lord of the world, the mighty first god spoke in the world with reference to the month of Vaiśākha. What is the use of talking much in this matter, O brāhmaṇas? There is nothing that is not obtained by worshipping Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. In this matter listen to a very wonderful, ancient account, and the dialogue between a brāhmaṇa and the glorious Yama. In Madhyadeśa at the foot of the Yāmuna mountain between Gaṅgā and Yamunā there was a village called Mahāgrāma of brhāmaṇas. There many learned brāhmaṇas lived. Yama said to a man who was dark and tawny, had red eyes, whose hair (stood) up and whose shanks, eyes and nose were like those of a crow: "O you, go to Mahāgrāma, and having gone there, bring a brāhmaṇa, Yajñadattaka by name, who is

born in Vasiṣṭha's family, who is settled in tranquillity, who is learned and who is skilled in sacrificial rites. Do not bring the other one who belongs to the same family, (and who lives) by his side, for he has similar qualities, is like him, in learning and birth. In form and characteristics he, the best one, is like him. Bring him, I have to worship him as advised." He went and did (exactly) the opposite of Yama's order. He brought him only whom Yama had disallowed. Yama got up (when he came) and honouring him, he, knowing religious merit, said: "Take him (back). Bring that other one".

Sūta said:

40. When Yama said these words, the brāhmaṇa, disgusted with going (i.e. unwilling to go), said to Yama.

The brāhmaṇa said:

41. Why was I brought here (and) why do you impel me (to go back)? O lord, I am not at all eager to go to the mortal world again.

Yama said:

42-46. Here the meritorious persons whose life has ended, would stay. This is known as Dharmaloka, belonging to Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). This entire land is full of happiness. I am Dharmarāja, its lord; I give the beings happiness or unhappiness according their religious merit or the opposite of it. I am of the form of Yama who gives hell (i.e. who sends to hell) the sinful men. In the same way I am religious merit embodied, who gives heaven to the meritorious. O brāhmaṇa, today only go (back) to your house as you had come (here). Still ten years' span of your life remains (to be enjoyed). When your life comes to an end, you will obtain this world. You (may) ask anything else that you want to ask. I shall explain it to you.

The brāhmaṇa said:

47-49a. Tell me (about) that great religious merit, having done which heaven would be (obtained). In deciding what is religious and what is irreligious, you are the authority, O god, I

have duly to go back to my house, then tell me due to which act men fall into hell. Please tell me (also) all that by which men go to heaven.

Yama said:

49b-76a. Those men who are averse to religion through their deeds, mind and words, and who are without (i.e. who do not have) devotion to Viṣṇu, go to hell. Those men who look upon Brahmā, Śaṅkara and Viṣṇu as different (from one another), and who are detached from knowledge about Viṣṇu, go to hell. That man who, through lust or delusion, gives up the act proper for his family or country, and would do something else, goes to hell. A man who worships what should not be worshipped, and does not worship what should be worshipped, and is disinterested in the knowledge about Viṣṇu, suffers in many hells. That sinner who dies as a wealthy man without giving to his dead ancestors, deities, brāhmaṇas, or his mortal relatives, goes to many hells. He who discriminates in (the distribution of) food, when all kinds of food are ready, and eats without making an offering to all deities, goes to (lives in) hell for a long time. O brāhmaṇa, those rich men who earn wealth by too much deceiving beings and the religious hypocrites experience grief. Those who, when proper time has come, do not devoutly offer śrāddha through atheism or greed or delusion are roasted in hell. That sinful man who causes obstruction when wealth is being given to brāhmaṇas, would go to hell. That man who, when the presents made in common, being deluded, takes them all alone, and who is inclined to atheism, would live in the abode of hell. His not being patient with other's virtues would be the cause (of his falling into hell). The great sin that has arisen is the cause of (his falling into) hell, who, after (some) time abandons his faultless, good-hearted wife and goes (away). That man who would not support their glory would fall into hell. That man who, being deluded, describes impiety as piety, is a sceptic, is an atheist, lives in hell. That man who has one idea in mind, and would speak in a different way, and would make the heart (of another person) displeased, would live in hell. Those men who, having showed disrespect for the narration (of the virtues) of the lord, go to the terrible hell due to

that sinful deed. Those who, even after seeing the door of (the temple of) the lord or (even after hearing) his name or the sacred text or (even after seeing) his attendants, do not salute etc. become the residents of hell. Those men who torment their wives without their faults, or abandon their good wives, go to hell. The man who does not listen to the words of his teacher or to the sacred texts, and who torments the hearts of others dwells in hell. Onewho feeds his own belly with sweets while his relatives and children are looking on, is merely a glutton, and goes to hell. The atheist who would not take bath in the morning in rivers etc. (when the Sun is) in Libra, Capricorn or Aries, would live in hell. O brāhmaṇa, he who does not, through love or respect, stand up on seeing Viṣṇu's devotee, is the guest in hell (i.e. goes to hell). Those who obstruct the ways by means of (pieces of) wood, spikes or darts or stones, go to hell. Those who do not reflect upon Viṣṇu, the first god, the controller, the great lord of the entire world, go to hell. Those men who cut off the livelihood of (a man through) farming, who break a family, who cut off (the bond of) love, so also (of) hope, go to hell. That foolish man who would test the brāhmaṇas who are distressed for want of livelihood, and who have come for eating food, should be known as a guest of (i.e. would go to) hell. Those fools who do not show compassion for a forlorn, poor, old devotee of Viṣṇu, afflicted by a disease, go to hell. Those who have not restrained their senses, having taken up vows, and who later give them up, go to hell.

76b-100. O brāhmaṇa, listen as to how the kind men go to heaven. I shall tell something in brief and through respect for you. This is (what) the ancient text (says): "Those who worship god Hari, Jiṣṇu, the ancient Viṣṇu, the unborn Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, the four-armed Viṣvaksena (i.e. Viṣṇu), who meditate upon the divine man, and remember Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu), obtain the position of Viṣṇu. Narration (of the virtues) of Viṣṇu—this alone is auspiciousness, this alone is earning money, this alone is the fruit of life. By means of the narration (of the virtues) of Viṣṇu, the god of gods and of unlimited lustre, sins melt away as darknees (melts away) at daybreak. Those men who, full of faith, every day sing the verse about Viṣṇu, and who are always engaged in their own duties, who, having given up

all worldly occupations, glorify Viṣṇu only, go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, the fearful messengers of Yama do not approach the men who, even though they are sinners, are devoted to the muttering of prayers. They do not see anything else in case of the beings except the narration of the virtues of Viṣṇu, which is an expiation putting an end to all sins. Those men who, when solicited, are delighted, who, having given gifts, speak agreeably, and who abandon the fruit of gifts (made by them) go to heaven. Those mortals who avoid sleep by day, who put up with everything, who are the asylums on the parvan days, go to heaven. Those men who never mention the faults even of their enemies, (but) mention their virtues (only), go to heaven. Those men who, having seen the wealth of others are not distressed through jealousy, (but,) being delighted, congratulate them, go to heaven. Those who, of a firm resolution, show respect for the statements in the sacred texts, in active worldly life or in resignation of worldly acts, go to heaven. Those men who, born in any family, are kind, successful, tender, and of a good behaviour, go to heaven. Those men who, being pure and good, never take delight, through act, mind, or words, in the wives of others, go to heaven. Those men who knowing their capacity, always do the acts that are laid down (in the sacred texts), as told (in the sacred texts), go to heaven. He who always has faith in the religious act performed mentally, physically, or through words, and who is liked by the good, would become a guest in (i.e. goes to) heaven. That man who puts up with the impulse of his speech, his mind, his belly or his generative organ (i.e. impulse of sex), becomes a resident of heaven. Those wise men who take delight in virtues, whose speech is (directed) towards the sacred texts, whose mind is (interested) in true spiritual knowledge, go to heaven. Those men who preserve their vow from (the influence of) anger, who protect wealth without (being influenced by) jealousy, who preserve their knowledge from (being influenced by) pride or insult, and preserve (i.e. keep) themselves (away) from faults, who keep their mind free from greed, from lust, who protect (i.e. keep away) piety from (the influence of) bad company, go to heaven. Those men who, on the eleventh day of the bright or the dark half of a month are engaged in observing a fast, go to heaven. The day

of Ekādaśī (the eleventh day of a fortnight) is created as a mother for all children, as a medicine for the sick, and for the protection of all people. There is no other protection for the feet like Ekādaśī (since it makes one go along the right path).

101-110. Men fasting on that day according to proper rules, go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, having quickly shaken off the sin committed by the eleven organs of sense and action, a man, being pleased, would go to heaven. Thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices are not equal even to the sixteenth part of the Ekādaśī-fast. All sacrifices, all holy places and austerities, gifts like the great gifts are on one side, while the vow (in honour) or Viṣṇu is on the other side (i.e. the sacrifices etc. do not stand comparison with the vow in honour of Viṣṇu). The creator had weighed together the religious merit due to the vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu and the religious merit due to sacrifices etc. The former would be heavier. O brāhmaṇa, I do not control those who are devoted to Viṣṇu's day (i.e. the eleventh day of the lunar fortnight) and who talk endlessly about Viṣṇu; I am especially afraid of them. Their son or their grandson who observes a fast on the eleventh day strongly emancipates, along with himself, a hundred men (of his family). Therefore, a man should observe a fast on the eleventh day of both the fortnights. He is the only abode of enjoyment and salvation. Jayā, Vijayā and Jayantī, Pāpanāśinī, Trispṛśā, Vañjulī, and the excellent Pakṣasaṁvardhinī, the other one to be known as Tiladugdhā, so also Akhaṇḍadvādaśī, the one called Manorathā, so also the excellent Bhīmadvādaśikā—these are the many varieties of Dvādaśī (the twelfth day of the lunar fortnight).

111-114. Those who are capable of (observing) these vows have remained in Brahman. Those who listen to religious texts, are convinced of piety, who do what is agreeable to children, go to heaven. The dead ancestors of those men who on one day—on the new-moon day—of every month, are engaged in the vow of a śrāddha, are gratified; and they are blessed and go to heaven. Those good men, when suitable meals (are ready), respectfully offer eatables without changing the complexion on their face (i.e. without showing unwillingness), go to heaven.

115-117a. Those men who are bereft of truth and even full of passion, (but) are devoted to Madhusūdana, Nārāyaṇa, the

lord of everything, having endless religious merit, go to heaven. Those who, of a good conduct and solely given to bathing and giving (gifts), resort to Vitastā, Yamunā, Sītā, and the auspicious Godāvarī river, never see the path to hell.

117b-120. Those who dip in Narmadā, giving happiness in this world, and are even pleased at her sight, go, after having shaken off their sins to the world of the great lord, and enjoy there for a long time. Those men who, for three nights (i.e. three days) have bathed at the bank of Carma-river, and especially in the hermitage of Vyāsa, are said to be the residents of heaven. Those who die in the water of Gaṅgā, at Prayāga, Kedāra and Puṣkara, in Vyāṣa's hermitage, Prabhāsa, go to Viṣṇu.

121-124. Those who die while practising abstract meditation at Dvāravatī, Kurukṣetra, and those who have the letters 'Hari' in their mouths, are not reborn. O brāhmaṇa, those who have stayed, even for three nights, at the city of Dvāravatī, and take bath at the bank of Gomatī, are blessed, and are dear to Viṣṇu. Those who have stayed at the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa, and have resorted to Nanda on the earth for three nights are dear to Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, those men who have lived near Viṣṇu for six months, have indeed become one with Viṣṇu, and would remove the sin (of a person) on merely looking at him.

125-127a. Those men who bathe in the water of Maṇikarṇikā, the holy water secured after many existences, and having reached Kāśī salute Viśveśa, are venerable even to me. Those men who die according to the sacred command after having worshipped Viṣṇu on the earth with darbhas and sesamum seeds, after having spread sesamum seeds on the ground and after having given iron and milch cow (to a brāhmaṇa), go to heaven, O brāhmaṇa.

127b-142. Those who die after having produced sons, and having installed them on the position that has come down from the father, grandfather etc. (i.e. which is hereditary), and who are not having the feeling of mineness and egotism, also go to heaven. Those men also who have turned away from stealing, and who are content with their own wealth, who derive their livelihood due to their good luck, go to heaven. Those men, who, at the time of welcoming (a person) speak gentle, sweet and natural

words, not afflicting (the person) go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, those men who know the consequence (of their deeds) on the heaping up of the fruits of their auspicious or inauspicious deeds, go to heaven. Those men who increase the enthusiasm of those who are occupied with (earning) wealth and religious merit and follow the path of righteousness, are delighted in heaven. He who gives fire (i.e. warmth) in the cold season, so also he who gives water in summer, who gives shelter in the rainy season, is delighted in heaven for a long time. He who devoutly offers a śrāddha at all auspicious times, also at the time of all regular and occasional rites, enjoys the world of gods. Giving gifts to a poor man, forgiveness in a lord, penance of the young (i.e. in youth), silence of the learned, cessation of desires in the case of those used to happiness, and compassion to beings, take (men) to heaven. The connection (of a being), with deeds is twofold: it is due to sin and to religious merit. The decision in this matter is done only after resorting to truth only. Penance accompanied with meditation leads to the crossing of the ocean of the worldly existence. Sin is said to lead to a fall. This is true. There is no doubt about it. That (merit) of a man, void of religious merit, and (though) endowed with might, service and valour, melts away with force. In the difficult places on the mountains there are tall and well-nourished trees. Though dense, they fall along with their roots due to the force of wind. Similarly, those who do not practise truth, go to Yama's abode. Everything else is common to all beings. Righteousness alone is the strength (that differs from individual to individual), due to which a being is rescued in this world and in the next world. I have narrated to you in brief all this giving (i.e. leading to) the path to heaven. What more do you desire to hear?

CHAPTER NINETYSEVEN

More Sinful and Meritorious Deeds

The brāhmaṇa said:

1-4. Even a fool knows that a man doing auspicious deeds does not go to hell; in the same way a man engaged in doing sinful deeds does not go to heaven. By those skilful in (good) conduct is obtained the happiness of heaven by means of various sacrifices, and desired vows, gifts, muttering of prayers and truthfulness. Heaven is obtained by sages who have the wealth of knowledge and (good) conduct and who are the masters of the Vedas, due to religious merit and not by means of sacrifices. By a man who is attached to his family, even though having much wealth, much wealth in charity cannot be given without (i.e. unless he has) liberality.

5-9. In Kaliyuga the rites especially like Agnihotra (keeping the sacred fire continuously) are difficult to perform. O lord, the merit due to charity also is thought to be difficult. O you who show what is righteousness and what is non-righteousness, especially tell me that by which pious acts of little exertion religious merit can be stored. So tell me that pious act, the best among all such acts, having done which the entire sin is exhausted, due to which wealth, grains, glory, religious merit, and (span of) life increases, by which there would be intimacy in the mortal world, and heaven would be inexhaustible (i.e. would be obtained permanently), by which actually Nārāyaṇa, causing fearlessness to his devotees would be pleased. Due to his favour desire is on the palm of the hand (i.e. can easily be controlled).

10-13. O Yama, tell me that (rite) by which a fruit greater than that of all sacrifices, penance, gifts, resorting to sacred places, is obtained. If I am to be favoured by you by means of teaching me about religious merit, then please tell me that which is the essence of all pious acts. The wise ones have, after recollecting, narrated the expiations of sins as and when (they are to be taken). O god, it is not possible for men to do each one of them. So if there is (only) one pious act that would remove all sins, then tell it (to me).

Sūta said:

14. Having spoken thus, the best brāhmaṇa, being self-subdued, and desiring to know the subtle moral merit, praised Yama who was Righteousness embodied.

The brāhmaṇa said:

15-23a. Salutation to you, who destroy everything. Salutation to you, O lord of the worlds. Salutation to you of the form of a god, who give (i.e. show) the path to heaven, who are of the nature of the sacred texts; salutation to you, O Dharmarāja. You protect the earth, the gods, the atmosphere, the heaven, (the worlds like) Mahas, Jana, Tapas, and Satya. So also everything is protected by you. There is no world—immobile or mobile which is devoid of you. The world seized by you instantly perishes. You are the soul of all the beings. You have the nature of goodness. You are the rajas (i.e. passion) of the rājasa people (i.e. people endowed with the quality of rajas or passion). You are the tamas (i.e. the quality of darkness) of the tāmasa ones (i.e. those who are endowed with the quality of darkness). Of the quadrupeds, O god, you are one having four horns and three eyes. You have seven hands; you are bound in three ways; salutation to you, O you of the form of a bull. Righteousness, full of all sacrifices, is the expansion of your body. O lord of the worlds, you are (now) actually seen (by me). O god, my repeated salutations to you. Remaining in the hearts of all you are the observer of religious merit and sins. Therefore, you are the ruler of the beings. O god, you are a donor and a controller. O god, you are the founder of righteousness. On the earth you hold the sceptre. Tell me the well-determined essence of all the meritorious deeds.

Yama said:

23b-29. O brāhmaṇa, I am especially pleased with your eulogy. So also, O best one, you are respectable to me due to your following the practices laid down in the sacred texts. O brāhmaṇa, I, being pleased by your modesty shall tell you the great secret of me, though it should not be told, which I have determined after taking out the essence of all (sacred words), which greatly banishes (i.e. takes out one) from the group of

great hells. Those Purāṇas and sacred texts are for (i.e. lead to) the delusion of the mobile and immobile world. Let them speak about that great deity only in their sacred precepts and rites. (But) in the established view of the thinking people Viṣṇu alone is decided to be the lord when (the views of) all sacred texts are put together. Śiva, Brahmā and Viṣṇu—these three only are looked upon as the Trinity. As the lamp is (burning) due to fire, the wick and the oil, in the same way, O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu (shines with these). Having devoutly propitiated Viṣṇu, a man should obtain the auspicious Goloka. When Viṣṇu is propitiated, all desires remain on the palm of the hand.

30-32. O brāhmaṇa, of all pious acts giving (gifts) alone is the greatest. Sin perishes by means of giving (gifts), and everything is obtained through giving (gifts). Giving (gifts) is said to be of five types: regularly prescribed, occasional, optional, and the other one is of the nature of prosperity, and the last one is the highest (type of) charity. Something should be carefully given in the morning, in the noon and afternoon. This is said to be regularly prescribed.

33-41. A man, desiring his well-being should not pass a day without (giving gifts). Gift given (by the members) in a family, stands by here or there (i.e. is useful in some way or the other). In him who, being thoughtless, would, through folly eat (all alone) I produce a disease keeping off his enjoyments. That door contented with the deeds (of the inmates), giving great trouble, having gentle breezes (i.e. not fully opened for guests), is tormenting. Those who have not given to brāhmaṇas and gods at the three times (of the day), and who eat (all) alone, have (indeed) committed great sin. I purify them by means of fearful expiations and fasts like those that dry up the bodies etc., O brāhmaṇa. As the shoe-maker would mercilessly cleanse the hide in the bowl by means of whips etc., or would tear open a bad substance, similarly in the form of a physician I purify a sinner by means of proper use of herbs, and by means of astringent, bitter (medicines), hot water (etc.) tormenting him, and in no other way. There is no doubt about this. Before him (i.e. in his presence) others enjoy pleasures as desired by them. What should I do? I am capable. He has not given excellent

gifts. In the form of a great disease he would be prohibited (from enjoyments).

42-43a. O brāhmaṇa, the sinners have not with faith and capacity, given the gifts which should be regularly given. I will burn with terrible means, those who have come like that (i.e. without giving gifts).

43b-51. Before (i.e. to) you I shall explain the occasional gifts. That gift which is carefully given when the day of Mahāparvan has come, or when one has reached a sacred place, or on a day like the death-anniversary of a dead ancestor, or in months like Vaiśākha, is called occasional. I shall explain to you the time of an optional gift, which gives fruit, has a vow etc. for its object and which is intended (to have) the desired fruit. A man overcome with a feeling of devotion, gets the fruit like that (gift) (i.e. proper for the gift) due to the purifying (nature) of the gift which is duly said to be harmonious in all its constituents. I shall (now) explain (the gift) called *Abhyudaya* (i.e. leading to prosperity), which is said to be in the sacrifices etc., so also the rites like the ceremony performed at the birth of a child or thread ceremony or marriage; O brāhmaṇa, the gift of the nature of (i.e. leading to) prosperity is said to consist in careful installation of a flag, (images of) deities in a palace etc. It brings about growth in progeny, and gives enjoyments, glory, and happiness in heaven. And (now) I shall explain the last (kind of) gifts. O best brāhmaṇa, listen. Realising the loss of sex (i.e. sexual desire) and being oppressed by old age, a man should carefully give gifts. He should entertain hope about nothing.

52-58. 'What will happen to these my sons, wife, relatives, brothers (and sisters) and my friends without me when I die? How shall I again continue to live like a poor man?' Thinking like this, he, a fool bound by hundreds of bonds of hope due to his (ill) luck only, dies; and then his sons weep. Being oppressed by grief, and with their hearts full of confusion, they do not devise even a small gift at that time. When this time has passed, and when their great grief has gone, they forget (to give) the gift, or through delusion, do not give it. Knowing that the father is dead, the bond of love recedes. O brāhmaṇa, he who is dead, and who is controlled by Yama's nooses, who is over-

come with thirst and hunger, who is very much oppressed by many agonies, is, for a long time, roasted in an awful hell.

59-68. Therefore, there is no doubt, one should give gifts. To whom do the sons and the grandsons belong? To whom does the wife or the wealth belong? In this world nobody belongs to anybody else. There gifts should be given. O brāhmaṇa, one should according to one's capacity, give various gifts like a drink, food, tāmbūla, water and gold also. So also garments, a cow, a (piece of) land, an umbrella, vessels etc. in many ways. So also fruits and grants of land. No doubt should be had in this matter. O brāhmaṇa, I shall describe to you the characteristics of holy places. (These are) the holy places: This Gaṅgā that appears (here), holy Sarasvatī, Revā and Yamunā, the river Tāpī, so also Carmaṇvatī, and excellent Sarayū, Veṇī, and Pūraṇā, the destroyer of sins. Other are: Kāverī, Kapilā and Viśalyā, Viśvatāriṇī, (the river) known as Godāvarī, Tuṅgabhadrā and Gaṇḍakī. The river Bhīmarathī is said always to cause fear to sins. Devikā and Kṛṣṇagaṅgā, and other excellent rivers—these become, in many ways, the holy places on auspicious occasions. Rivers, whether they are in a village or in a forest, are everywhere purifying. Rites like a bath, giving gifts should be done there only. O brāhmaṇa, when the name of a holy place is not known, then these words should be uttered: 'This is a great holy place of Viṣṇu'.

69-73a. There is no doubt that everywhere the (presiding) deity of a holy place is Viṣṇu. One who wants to secure (salvation) should remember the name 'Nārāyaṇa' at the holy places. The proper fruit of the holy place is produced merely by Viṣṇu's name. There is no doubt that a man should give Viṣṇu's name to those holy places and deities which are not known. All sanctifications are auspicious. An ocean, lakes like Mānasa, springs, small pools etc., so also all small rivers become holy places due to the name of Viṣṇu (being given to them). The mountains are of the nature of holy places, so also a sacrifice and the sacrificial ground.

73b-81. That (place) where learned brāhmaṇas have remained with eagerness, is alone said to be a very great holy place, removing all sins. Śrāddha, the place where a śrāddha is offered, a temple, a sacrificial ground, the place where the proper sound

of (the recital of) Vedas (is heard), where auspicious tales about Viṣṇu (are narrated), one's own house endowed with religious merit, so also the holy place of cows, a forest where there is the Aśvattha tree, a place where there is a sanctifying dwelling—all these and others are holy places, so also one's mother and father. There is no doubt that that place where (food) is cooked for moral merit, where the teacher himself stays, where there is a chaste wife, is a holy place. That is his holy place set up for his liberation, where his son, learned and interested in piety (lives). These and others are the holy places, so also the king's palace. It is certain that at these and other holy places, nobody among all the human beings would obtain anything, anytime, without propitiating Viṣṇu, the giver of everything. Children, wealth, wife, a high mansion, horses, elephants, pleasures, heaven and salvation are not away (from a man) by means of devotion (i.e. when he is devoted) to Viṣṇu.

82-89a. Nārāyaṇa is the highest god; he, Janārdana, is of the nature of truth. That highest lord, dividing himself into three parts, created (everything). The lord became united with Rajas (i.e. activity) and Tamas (i.e. darkness or ignorance). The lord had Rajas and Sattva (i.e. goodness) more (than Tamas). In the lotus in his navel he created Brahmā. The lord created Rudra possessed of Rajas and Tamas. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas (together) are said to be the Trinity. Due to Sattva a being is freed. Sattva is of the form of Viṣṇu. A man with Rajas joined with Sattva would be rich and superior due to glory. That which practises the rites by alluding to the Vedic words is known as Rudra (and) is said to be distinctive of men. Due to that a man would be a king in the world, and again due to Rajas and Tamas. Those practices which are bereft of Rajas (i.e. activity) and are only Tāmasa (i.e. done through ignorance), give (i.e. lead) men (to) a difficult situation in this world and in the next world. He who is Viṣṇu, is himself Brahmā, and he who is Brahmā is himself Śiva. In the sacrifice all the three gods are present. Worship should daily be offered to the (three) gods.

89b-101. O best brāhmaṇa, he who differentiates among these three, is a sinner, is of a sinful mind, and would have an undesirable mode of existence. O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu alone is the highest Brahman. Viṣṇu alone is the world. This month of

Vaiśākha is said to be dear to him in (i.e. for) all rites, and gives the fruit of the great sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice. It is excellent for a bath at a holy place, penance, giving (gifts), muttering prayers and sacrifices. O brāhmaṇa, those who, when the Sun has entered Aries, continuously bathe at daybreak in a river, and worship (him) at a holy place, do not get punishment from me. Again and again killing the stream of sins before me, again and again destroying the writing of Citragupta, again and again bathing in the month of Vaiśākha, men emancipate their ancestors from sins. This great secret cuts off fear. Therefore, it is not disclosed. It is the cause of expulsion from the abode of hell and the cause of the end of my authority. Bhāgīrathī, Narmadā, and Yamunā and Sarasvatī, Viśokā and Vitastā are to the north of the Vindhya (mountain). Godāvarī, Bhīmarathī, Tuṅgabhadrā and Devikā, Tāpī and Payoṣṇī are said to be to the south of Vindhya. He who would duly bathe in the morning in (any) river, has plunged into these twelve rivers. All rivers are holy; all excellent mountains are holy; all abodes (of deities) are holy; and resting places in the forests are holy. They are seen to have been plunged into by him, saluted by him, and very much resorted to by him, who, being controlled, would bathe in Vaiśākha where the Sun has half-risen. O brāhmaṇa, his religious merit cannot be described even if one has thousands of thousands mouths.

102-107. O best brāhmaṇa, it would be possible to describe the fruit of Vaiśākha if one would have a long span of life (given) by Brahmā. As Viṣṇu is the fire dragging (one away) from hell, in the same way the month of Vaiśākha, properly observed, would burn sins (committed during) thousands and hundreds of crores of kalpas, like the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder, illicit intercourse, sin committed willingly or unwillingly, a secret minor sin, great commingling (of castes), the great sin of loss of caste, so also (giving gift to) an unworthy person, sin causing filth and confusion due to speech, mind and body. He who would worship Viṣṇu in Vaiśākha, would live in Viṣṇu's city.

CHAPTER NINETYEIGHT

The Greatness of Vaiśākha

Sūta said:

1-3. Having heard these words of that Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), the brāhmaṇa again asked him about the auspicious rite of Vaiśākha.

The brāhmaṇa said:

O magnanimous Dharmarāja, you have properly disclosed the secret of the religious merit due to a bath in Vaiśākha which gives salvation to men, and is great. Tell me the manner in which a man, being calm and having bathed in the morning, should worship the god (Viṣṇu) and with which flowers in the month of Vaiśākha.

Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) said:

4-11a. Of all kinds of leaves Tulasī is dear to Viṣṇu. Holy places like Puṣkara, so also rivers like Gaṅgā and gods like Viṣṇu live in the leaf of Tulasī. Always and at all times Tulasī is dear to Viṣṇu. Leaving the flower of jasmine and abandoning a lotus, and taking a Tulasī leaf a man should devoutly worship Viṣṇu. Even Śeṣa would not be able to describe the fruit of the religious merit due to it. All that—plucking a Tulasī leaf in honour of a deity or for a rite in honour of the dead ancestors without bathing—becomes fruitless. (Such a man) becomes pure by (drinking) the five products of a cow. As yellow myrobalan removes diseases, so Tulasī quickly removes very many sins like poverty and experiencing calamities. A man, a devotee of Viṣṇu, who especially worships Viṣṇu with (leaves of) Tulasī called Kṛṣṇagaurā, would become Viṣṇu. He who, being restrained, would worship (Viṣṇu) the killer of Madhu at three times of the day during the entire month of Vaiśākha, has no rebirth.

11b-17. A man should always worship Viṣṇu even with food etc. if flowers and leaves are not available, or with rice grains or wheat. He should gratify, after bathing in the morning, with proper rites deities, dead ancestors and men along with the mobile and the immobile. He who always would sprinkle profuse

water at the root of the Aśvattha (tree), and would go round it full of all gods, or he who would worship with water god Aśvattha on all sides, has liberated a myriad (members of) his family. There is no doubt about it. All griefs like poverty, misfortune, bad dreams and bad thoughts melt away by gratifying Aśvattha, O dear one. He, the hero, who would worship Aśvattha has gratified his dead ancestors, has worshipped Viṣṇu; he alone has worshipped the Planets. He should touch white flowers, so also śamī (leaves), fire, sandal, Sun's orb and Aśvattha tree, and then should perform the duties of his caste.

18-21a. After scratching (the body of a cow), giving a morsel to a cow, after having bathed and gratified a pippala, and having worshipped Viṣṇu, he would not face misfortune. A woman or a man, though quite weak, who, observing rules already stated, bathes according to her or his capacity in the morning for the three days of Vaiśākha—the thirteenth, the fourteenth (of the bright half) and the full-moon day, gets free from all sins and obtains inexhaustible heaven (i.e. obtains heaven eternally).

21b-26a. If a man, being restrained and pure, gets up on the three nights (i.e. the days, viz. the twelfth, the thirteenth and the full-moon day), and feeds, according to his capacity, ten brāhmaṇas, and, offering white or black sesamum seeds with water to twelve brāhmaṇas, would perform a solemn observance saying 'May Dharmarāja be pleased with me', and would gratify the dead ancestors and gods, (then) the sin committed by him during his life perishes at that moment only. He would happily stay in heaven a myriad after a myriad (years). He, honoured by all deities, would not see me only. O brāhmaṇa, he who, to gratify the dead ancestors and deities, devoutly gives cooked food, jars full of water etc. on the three days, viz. the thirteenth, the fourteenth (days of the bright half) and the full-moon day, is freed from great sins.

26b-28a. He who, every day, would gratify brāhmaṇas with golden vessels full of sesamum seeds and water, destroys (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. The sesamum seeds created by Brahmā should be given on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha with devotion, for the good of the children.

28b-31. In this matter, listen to an old account, O you of a

good vow. The fruit of the month of Vaiśākha is very wonderful (when a gift is given) on the full-moon day (of that month). Thirty days beginning with (the Sun's) passing through Aries are excellent. They are said to be superior to all sacrifices and holy. Especially (holy) are the three days (viz. the thirteenth, fourteenth the full-moon day) which are to be secured with a difficulty by sinners. The full-moon day of Vaiśākha is still more holy and is dear to Viṣṇu. This day is the day of the beginning of the period of the duration of the world called Vārāhakalpa.

32-36a. Formerly on this day Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) killed these two pre-eminent demons—Hiraṇyākṣa and Madhu, and lifted up the earth. This lord performed these three (feats) only on the thirteenth, fourteenth and the full-moon day, in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha. Since then, O best brāhmaṇa, due to the speciality, this full-moon day, the beginning of the period of the duration of the world, is called purifying and the proper witness of the feat. O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of the life of him, indeed harming himself, who, controlling himself, has not bathed in the morning in Vaiśākha?

36b-38a. A woman or a man who restraining herself or himself, has, according to proper rites, bathed in the morning on the thirteenth and fourteenth, and especially on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, is freed from all sins. He who has passed the full-moon day of Vaiśākha without bath, gifts, worship, śrāddha, or (other acts of) merit, has indeed hell as his abode.

38b-44a. There is no other sacred treatise like the Veda; there is no other holy place like Gaṅgā; there is no other gift like a cow or water; and there is no other day like the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. He who being solely devoted to Viṣṇu, gives a cow with water (to a brāhmaṇa) on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, is especially the fourth of (i.e. in addition to) the three gods. A man who has killed his mother or father, or who causes abortion, or who violates his teacher's bed (i.e. his wife), gets free from all sins on seeing a cow along with water. Those who, in this earth, give a cow along with water according to the proper rite (to a brāhmaṇa) on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, liberate ten earlier and ten later members of the family. Those who give to the best brāhmaṇas sugar, fruits, tāmbūla, shoes and documents, are declared to be fortunate in this world. He who gives jars with gems and water, cooked food, and golden presents on the full-

moon day of Vaiśākha, would obtain the fruit of a horse-sacrifice.

44b-49a. Here also they relate an old account, and the conversation of a brāhmaṇa with ghosts in a great forest. O sinless one, formerly there lived a brāhmaṇa Dhanaśarman by name. When he had gone to the forest for (collecting) kuśa, he saw a wonder. He who was frightened, saw three wicked and very awful ghosts whose hair was raised, whose eyes were red, whose teeth were black, who were emaciated, who were making various sounds, and were running here and there. Seeing them, the brāhmaṇa, afflicted with fear, speedily ran away. They too, crying, went after him at that time. Being overpowered by the ghosts, he spoke sweet words (to them).

Dhanaśarman said:

49b-53. Who are you? Due to what have you been reduced to this condition suitable for hell? Please protect me, afflicted with fear, fit to be pitied, afflicted, a devotee of Viṣṇu, very much frightened, a poor brāhmaṇa who has come to the forest. That Viṣṇu, the lord, Brahmaṇya, Keśava pleased with you through compassion towards me, will give you felicity. That Viṣṇu is like the hemp-flower, has put on a yellow garment, and by merely hearing his name great darkness goes (away). The god is without origin and death, holds a conch, a disc and a mace. He is endless; his eyes are like lotuses; he gives salvation to the dead.

Yama said:

54-55. The goblins were pleased by merely hearing the name of Viṣṇu. They lived in religious merit. They were controlled by compassion and generosity. They were pleased by his words and were impelled by his direction. The goblins, afflicted with the flood of hunger and thirst, said these (words) to the brāhmaṇa:

The goblins said:

56-64. O brāhmaṇa, on seeing you and on hearing the name of Viṣṇu, we have reached another condition. We have become kind. Indeed the union with the good removes sin, and joins (a man) with virtue, and quickly spreads fame. Whom does the

moonlight of the nectar of a devotee of Viṣṇu, which is full of the elixir of life, and which gives great delight, not give joy? This is named Kṛtaghna. This second one is Vidaivata. This third one is Avaiśākha, who is the (most) sinful of the three. This sinful one always practised ingratitude. Therefore, his name is fixed as Kṛtaghna due to his (ungrateful) actions. This Kṛtaghna was a śūdra named Sudāsa in the former existence. Due to that sin (of ingratitude) he has reached this condition. There is an expiation for a very great sinner, a rogue, or for one who acts malevolently to his teacher or master; but there is no expiation for an ungrateful person. O brāhmaṇa, having experienced (i.e. lived in) groups of many hells with bodies enduring torments, he has come to this stage. Without worshipping the deities, so also without giving to the teacher and brāhmaṇas, he ate food all alone. Therefore, he is (called) Vidaivata.

65-76a. This one known by the name Harivīra in the former existence, was the king of ten thousand villages. Through anger, egotism and atheism, he was always bent upon violating his teacher's orders. He who censured brāhmaṇas, ate without offering the (five) great sacrifices. Due to that sinful act, he, having experienced the great peril of hell, was then born as a ghost called Vidaivata. I am the third one, Avaiśākha by name. I am (most) sinful of the Gautama family, known by the same name. I lived in Viprovāsapura, and was a sacrificer in the former existence. I who follow the path as laid down in the Vedic texts, did not bathe in honour of Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. I did not give (any gift), or did not offer any oblation, especially on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. During that month I did not worship (Viṣṇu) the killer of (the demon) Madhu. Nor did I please the learned men. I also did not gratify dead ancestors and deities with the gifts of jars containing water; and I did not offer sesamum seeds with water to learned brāhmaṇas. In that month I did not honour, in order to gratify the dead ancestors and deities with flowers, fruits, tāmbūla, sandal, fans and garments. Not a single full-moon day of Vaiśākha, giving complete fruit, did I (even) observe by good deeds like a bath, giving gifts or worshipping (Viṣṇu). Therefore, all my deeds done according to the Vedic texts have become fruitless. Then I totally became

a ghost named Avaiśākha. I have fully told you this cause of (the turning into ghosts of) all the three of us.

76b-80. (Please) be our emancipator from (our) sin, since you are a restrained brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, brāhmaṇas, auspicious due to having done good deeds, are superior to holy places. They liberate great sinners even though they have resorted to (i.e. fallen into) hells. Between the two, viz. the man who always bathes at the holy places like Gaṅgā and the man who keeps the company of the good—he who has the company of the good, is better. Or, you who are exerting for us, (please) go to my son, well-known as Dhanaśarman, and inform him, O lord. He, who exerts when some work of others has come up, obtains much more fruit than obtained by sacrifices or giving gifts.

Yama said:

81-82a. Having heard those words of the ghost, Dhanaśarman was extremely pained. Having recognised him to be his father, fallen into hell, he entirely censured himself, and said these words.

Dhanaśarman said:

82b-87. O lord, I am the useless son of you—of Gautama. That son who would not carefully liberate his father, would not purify himself, or being rich, would not give (gifts, is useless). Even an intelligent person has to note carefully that religious merit s difficult (to understand), as you who are my father, have reached this misfortune. You have not secured continuous happiness from me. He, due to whom continuous happiness is obtained in both worlds is called a son due to that. According to law, a man has two teachers in this world—his father and his mother. Of the two also, the father is superior as his superiority due to his (depositing the) seed is seen. What should I do? Where should I go? O father, how (i.e. what would be) your condition? I do not know the true nature of propriety. I depend upon your words.

The ghost said:

88-96. O son, listen to my true words. Due to the force of future interest, I shall have bliss as a result of some religious

merit. I who was performing the rites as laid down in the scriptures arrogantly, dishonoured the words of my teacher; (and thus) I insulted my teacher. Due to the teacher's insult, and the man's great delight, anger or pride, the religious merit perishes, like glory due to bad conduct. A rite which is not against the Vedic rites (should be performed) according to the rules laid down in the Purāṇas. (But) through ignorance I performed only the Vedic rites. O son, I never duly observed even a single full-moon day of Vaiśākha, which is a flame like that of the wild fire for the fuel of sins, and an axe for the tree of sins. That man who does not observe the vow of the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, would be Avaiśākha. After that for ten existences he is born in the stocks of animals. Then in course of time he would become a ghost in the end. He somehow gets the human existence which is hard to get. I shall tell you a great means which brings about the liberation of a ghost; I had heard this in my former existence from the mouth of my own teacher. O son, go home and bathe duly in Yamunā. That full-moon day of Vaiśākha, the beginning of kalpa, and the giver of all good conditions, has come today. The full-moon day is beneficial for the worship of the dead ancestors and the deities in the later part of the day. A man should devoutly give on this day even water mixed with sesamum seeds, with water jars and food, to the dead ancestors.

97-103. That śrāddha offered here (i.e. on this day) lasts for a thousand years. He who feeds brāhmaṇas on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, has his dead ancestors satisfied with each ball of rice for a life time. Having duly bathed on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, one should feed ten brāhmaṇas with milk. There is no doubt that by (doing) that he gets freed from all sins. Having given white or black sesamum seeds along with water, he should invoke their blessings. Saying, 'May Dharmarāja be pleased', he should gratify his dead ancestors and deities. Just at that moment only the sin that he has committed throughout his life, perishes. The sesamum seeds created by Brahmā should be offered (to a brāhmaṇa) with devotion on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha and should be applied to the entire body, O brāhmaṇa. To him who bathes with sesamum seeds mixed with barley grains (applied) to the entire body, O brāhmaṇa, Brahmā gives a desired boon, so also does Dharma.

104-114. He who gives, to please Dharmarāja, water-jars, there is no doubt that he has liberated seven (members before) him and seven (after him of his family). O son, give us that fruit which is produced by devoutly bathing, muttering (prayers), offering oblations, giving gifts and worshipping (Viṣṇu) on the thirteenth, the fourteenth and on the full-moon day (of Vaiśākha). Abandoning these two ghosts I shall resort to a position in the heaven; for, the end of the sin of these two has also come by.

Yama said:

Saying 'All right' he left. Then the brāhmaṇa took a bath and gave gifts very much devoutly on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. Having devoutly bathed and being very much pleased, he, when the full-moon day of Vaiśākha arrived, gave many gifts and gave them separately for his religious merit. Just at that moment only, they, seated in an aeroplane, went to heaven. O best brāhmaṇa, they were pleased with his having given his religious merit to them. The best brāhmaṇa Dhanaśarman also, who knew the sacred texts, the law-codes and the Purāṇas enjoyed many pleasures for a long time and obtained Brahmā's heaven. Therefore, with great regard (for you), I describe in brief this most meritorious full-moon day of Vaiśākha, which purifies all. Those men who, of a pure heart, bathe duly in the morning in the month of Vaiśākha, and worship (Viṣṇu) the destroyer of Madhu, are alone fortunate, blessed and they alone are born in the world as men having a purpose. The man who, having bathed in the morning, worships (Viṣṇu) the lord of Ramā (i.e. Lakṣmī), and is endowed with (i.e. observes) all controls and restraints, indeed destroys his sin.

115-128. Those who, being controlled, bathe in the month of Vaiśākha have alone overcome death; are alone fortunate among men; they alone are free from sins; they alone do not enter (a mother's) womb (i.e. are not reborn). That month of Vaiśākha, even a small meritorious act alone in which would be equal to (merit done in) a day of Brahmā, roars with sacrifices and austerities and giving of gifts. Even the quality of viciousness of a man who bathes and worships Viṣṇu at sunrise in the month

of Vaiśākha, tends to make his body pure due to his contact with a drop of water. Till that Virāṭ, Viṣṇu, the dear lord of Ramā (i.e. Lakṣmī) does not arrive, sins, having got upon a man's body move there. The steps which a man puts for going to a holy place in the month of Vaiśākha, again become equal to horse-sacrifices, due to recollection of Śrī Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu) and by reciting his name. The month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu, burns, when a (daily) bath is taken during it, many grave sins like (the mountains) Meru and Mandara. O brāhmaṇa, to favour you, I have, in brief, told you this greatness of the month of Vaiśākha, which destroys the sins of the listener. He too, who will devoutly listen to this account narrated by me, will be free from sins and will not see me. The many sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa committed (by a man), definitely perish by performing the rites (narrated above) in Vaiśākha. A man who has duly bathed during Vaiśākha would liberate thirty former, thirty later dead ancestors, so also thirty far and near ancestors. On one side are all holy places and sacrifices with presents, and on the other side is the month of Vaiśākha (in) which (the vows are) properly observed. Since this month of Vaiśākha is very dear to that lord Viṣṇu of excellent deeds, it is superior to all (sacrifice etc.). O lord of the earth, having got what I told about the month of Vaiśākha, do not entertain any doubt whatsoever. In this matter listen to a wonderful, old account. Though the account should not be told (to anyone), I shall tell it to you.

CHAPTER NINETYNINE

Kaśyapa's Advice to King Mahīratha

Yama said:

1-7. Formerly there was a well-known king named Mahīratha who had obtained great power and wealth due to his former religious merit. He merely confined himself to amorous play with his wife who subjected him to lust. He was addicted

to that vice only, and was not settled in piety. Having transferred (the administration of) his kingdom to his minister, the king enjoyed the objects of senses. He, moving in the company of beautiful women, and averse to royal offices, did not consider (i.e. care for) his subjects, wealth, religious rites, material welfare and (other) acts. He only had desire for the amorous play with beautiful women. After a long time his family priest, Kaśyapa, thinking in his mind that a preceptor who, through folly, does not ward off the king should be known as a sharer in the sin, spoke righteous words to him. (He also thought:) 'If he disregards the words of the family priest though admonished by him, then the family priest is not at fault. The king shares the entire fault':

8-13. "O listen, O king, listen to the words of me—your teacher—which are accompanied with piety and substance, which are unbroken (i.e. clear) in meaning, which are significant and are free from (selfish) desire and passion. This alone is a great religious merit to live in (i.e. abide by) the words of the preceptor. A small order of the teacher (if followed) increases the life, wealth and happiness of kings. You have not gratified brāhmaṇas with gifts; you have not worshipped Viṣṇu. You have not observed any vow; you have not practised any penance; you have not visited a holy place. You who were under the influence of lust, did not think of Viṣṇu's name. Oh! due to the company of cowards you did not keep contact of the learned. To whom are beloveds, carrying the chowries of Cupid, not dear? But they are fickle like the leaves of kadalī due to violently moving wind. Men of large hearts are not satisfied with things unsteady like ripples, pleasures transitory like the knittings of eyebrows, and youth that is drunk (i.e. enjoyed) for a short time.

14-17a. What is the use of knowledge, penance, sacrifice, political wisdom, or what is the use of a discriminating mind to him whose heart is taken away by women? Religious merit alone is the friend that follows (a man) after (his) death. All else perishes along with the body. (A man) should collect religious merit gradually, as the ants put up an anthill. With religious merit as his companion, he crosses darkness difficult to cross.

17b-19a. O best of kings, do you not know the flurry of men's life which is unsteady like the violent billows on water sent up by wind? What is the use of senseless ornaments to them who have politeness as their jewelled crown, truth and piety as the ear-rings and sacrifice as the bracelet? The kinsmen leave the dead body on the ground like (a piece of) wood or a clod and turn away.

19b-26. Religious merit (alone) goes after him (i.e. the dead man). Why do you not get up and run, when all (your relatives) are going away, your (span of) life is decreasing and your existence is being cut off? The family, the sons, the wife etc., the body, collection of wealth belong to others and are uncertain. Good or bad deeds alone are yours. When, leaving everything, you who are helpless, should go, why is it that you are attached to worthless objects? Why do you not do your duty? How will you, the dead one (i.e. after death), go all alone along the path in the forest where there is no rest, no support, no provisions for the journey and without a spiritual teacher? Nobody will go after you who have started (along the path after death). (Only) your good and bad deeds will follow you who will be going. Being careful, resort to the deed which is told by the sacred texts and the codes of law, which is proper for your family and place, which is beneficial; and resort to good conduct based on piety. One should give up worldly prosperity and love of sensual enjoyment if they are bereft of virtue. All pleasures like worldly prosperity and sensual enjoyment are had by means of virtue.

27-29. Day and night one should practise the control of senses and deep abstract meditation, for one whose senses are controlled is able to keep his subjects on the (right) track. Wealth which is very fickle like glances of a very bold woman lives with kings for a long time through discipline due to great effort. (But) the wealth of those who are given to lust and pride, who do things thoughtlessly, and who are fools, perish along with their life.

30-36. Large-hearted persons do not dance (with joy) due to prosperity which is (first) seen and which (later) disappears. An ocean does not increase in size due to rivers that come or go. Between an evil habit and death, evil habit is said to be trouble-

some, for the addicts to a bad habit go down and down, while a king who is not addicted to a bad habit, goes to heaven. Vices, especially due to lust are difficult to end. Give up this lust which is hostile to piety. There are also the kingdoms of the foolish, thoughtless demons of bad conduct, which are enjoyed due to their luck. Those accompanied by sins, are not stable in this world. They vanish as fuel does due to the contact of fire. He whose heart, while he walks, stands, is awake or sleeps, is not given to thought is certainly dead. Since a teacher is said to be the adviser of the learned those near whom stand calamities, should hold on their head (i.e. should honour) words of advice.

37-41. A wise man accomplishes his objects after giving up the fever of the (addiction to) objects of senses by means of his mind which is in equilibrium, which is steady, and through a practical scheme. The mind of beings like a child, (though) taken (away) from foul things goes to good things and (again) from them to the other (i.e. foul things); therefore one should drive it (away) with force. A king, accepting the opinion of the old who see (i.e. know) the righteous conduct, should control one's mind going astray. Riches do not help, nor friends, nor kinsmen; the movement of hands and feet (does not help); going to another country (does not help); freedom from bodily suffering (does not help); so also resorting to holy places. One can get the highest position by muttering (prayers) with mind devoted to Him.

42-46. Therefore, a wise man should certainly strive to control the mind remaining in the objects of senses, as the driver (of a chariot) controls the horses. O king, you, being restrained, should do that of which you are deprived, and (which was done) by devotees getting the respective fruits. Therefore, also listen now. A man who is erring should ask (i.e. consult) his wise friends. It is proper to do what they would say when asked. He who desires bliss, should, by all means, curb his lust and anger, since they are bent upon harming his bliss. O king, lust is a great, powerful enemy residing in the body. A man who longs for bliss should not go under its sway.

47-50a. This Cupid (i.e. lust) was formerly burnt with the fire from his forehead by the trident-holder, god of gods (i.e. Śiva), and was rendered bodiless. Such was the situation. When this mind-born one desires to strike a woman, he resorts to the

body of men, and manifests his nature. He maddens a man by invisibly resorting to his body when he again and again thinks of the form of a woman. In the same way he also maddens the body of a woman. There is no doubt about it.

50b-69a. Therefore, O king, his name has come to be *Smara*, due to his being remembered (i.e. thought of). O hero, he has any colour. He would resort to (i.e. put on) any garment. Due to the light of his lustre he would go to a condition free from the stream of tears being drunk. Having taken up the form of a woman he would delude even a courageous man, and having resorted to (the body of) a man he would cause a woman to melt. O king, he is but natural; (though) bodiless is present in a body. How is (then) sin done in the case of the body? Who is more impure than him by reaching whom the pure products of a cow and the oblations become impure (just) in a moment. The (people in) this world, smelling their own foul odour, seeing their own feces, troubling their own noses, do not get disgusted. Who is more impure than him reaching whom agreeable food, fragrant food and drinks become impure? Food, reaching his belly would give up its nature; its impurity mixed with insects is quickly realised. Yet, O king, in the body he gives up his own nature, and goes to a dog's condition in the body full of the foul smell of insects. There is no doubt that lice or insects are produced there. That insect causes bursting; and there is an awful itching. It would create agony; and would shake the entire body. That scratching rubbed by the tips of the nails is allayed. Like that is the pleasure of a sexual union. There is no doubt. Thus a man enjoys pleasures. He also drinks (i.e. eats) good eatables. The fire (in the body) digests (the food) that is there, and would drop the feces at the anus. The fluid there that has become strong, becomes excessive. Being pure, and of a pure vigour he goes to the place of Brahmā. The vigour does not obtain a seat, and remains unsteady. He is dragged by samāna (i.e. vital air having its seat in the cavity of the navel and essential for digestion); and is carried by that air. In the skull of beings there are five insects. These two are at the root of the ear. Then there are in the seat of the eyes; O king, they are of the size of the small finger. They are red-tailed. The black-tailed have the colour of fresh butter. There is no doubt about this.

Well-being to you, hear their names from me who am telling them. The two insects *Piṅgalī* and *Śṛṅgalī* are at the root of the ear. The other two, *Śṛṅgalī* and *Jaṅgalī*, remain in the interior of the eyes. There is no doubt that there are a hundred and fifty insects like that. All remain in the forehead and are of the size of a mustard. There is no doubt that all suffering from skull-disease get disturbed.

69b-77. I shall (now) tell about another great insect *Prājāpatya*. It has the size of a rice-grain and its colour. There is no doubt about it. O king, listen, there is a couple of hair in his mouth. The intelligence of beings is perishable at that moment only. There is no doubt about it. That vigour falls in the form of a fluid into the mouth of that Prājāpatya remaining in its own seat. There is no doubt about this. It happily drinks that vigour (i.e. that fluid) and becomes intoxicated due to that. Breaking the place of palate only, it remains unsteadily. The arteries (called) *Iḍā*, *Piṅgalā* and *Suṣumnā* are stationed there. By its own power the artery is shaken for a moment. (Then) O king, there is the itching for sex in all beings. The penis of the man expands, so also the vulva of the woman. The woman and the man, getting mad, are then united. Due to rubbing of one body with another, there is a momentary pleasure. Then there is the same kind of itching. O hero, such a feeling is indeed seen everywhere. This consequence of the (enjoyment of the) objects of senses is unpleasant.

78-82a. Virtue alone, practised duly is better. Resorting to firmness then, practise virtue alone. This is the unsteady breath which, in a moment, has hundreds of goings and comings. The life of men is dependent on it. Who causes delay in (the practice of) virtue? Oh! the heart of a man who has reached even a hundred (years) would not keep away from the prohibited senses of objects. Sexual desire can never be pacified by enjoying senses of objects. Like fire with oblation it again enhances.

82b-93. Who else, but the soul-lord Rāma—the lord Viṣṇu, is able to free the mind taken away by an unchaste woman? Therefore, due to the foulness of lust everything becomes fruitless. You have age (i.e. you are young) even now. Practise what is beneficial to you. On one side are all virtuous deeds causing the destruction of the sins of sinners, and on the other side,

there is always the month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu. Murder of a brāhmaṇa, drinking liquor, stealing, cohabiting with one's teacher's wife are declared to be great sins by best sages. The month of Vaiśākha would destroy all the great darkness of sins committed by men through mind and body by means of a vow; as the sun would totally destroy darkness, in the same way the month of Mādhava would remove (sins). Duly practise (the vows) in that month. O king, having abandoned, due to the powerful religious acts performed in the month of Vaiśākha, the great, awful sins committed from birth, men, being delighted reach the city of Viṣṇu. Even sinners, if they practise (vows during) even one Vaiśākha with devotion, go to Viṣṇu's abode. Therefore, O king, you too, bathing (every) morning, duly worship (Viṣṇu), the enemy of (the demon) Madhu, during this month of Vaiśākha. As the cover of a rice-grain or the blackness of copper go away due to the act (of pounding or rubbing), in the same way, O hero, the sin of a man goes away (by means of a rite). Like (the cover of) a rice-grain, the natural impurity of a man is abundant. There is no doubt that it perishes. Therefore, do a bright deed."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED

Carnal Enjoyment Is Sinful

The king said:

1-4. I have been advised by you with words that are like the water of the milky sea, that have a viewpoint that is cool and pure, that are true and beautiful. O dear one, you have made me drink the nectar which has not come up from the ocean, which is not a substance, which is a medicine for the calamity, and which removes the disease in the form of the worldly existence. O brāhmaṇa, it is said that contact of the good gives delight to men, removes their sins, is a medicine for their life, and destroys old age and death. Due to the association of the good only, those desired objects difficult to obtain, are obtained.

5-11a. For him, who has bathed with (i.e. in the water of) Gaṅgā in the form of the company of the good, which removes sins, what is the use of (giving) gifts, (visiting) holy places, (practising) austerities and sacrifices? The good who know the ways of the world, who are tranquil, are the final emancipation for men who sink and come up in the ocean of the worldly existence, are a strong boat for those who sink in the water (of the mundane existence). O lord, that my feeling desiring the happiness through lust only which was formerly there, has been reversed due to your sight and your words. One would lose a thousand existences for the happiness in one existence. A wise man collects the (fruit of) thousands of existences by means of (i.e. in) one existence. Oh! O brāhmaṇa, by me, a fool, whose heart was longing for carnal pleasures, my own good has not at all been done. Oh! (great was) the delusion of my mind due to which I threw my soul into an awful calamity, ending in misery and difficult to overcome. O holy one, I am pleased (as) I have been roused by your words.

11b-14. Please liberate me by giving me advice. Since you advised me due to my former meritorious deeds, I am (now) especially purified with the dust of your feet. O best among speakers, describe to me the rite of the month of Vaiśākha, which you have said to be removing all sins. O brāhmaṇa sage, for my emancipation from the sins (please) tell me: What are the gifts in that month? What (kind of) bath is prescribed? Who is the deity? Which are the rules?

Yama said:

15. O brāhmaṇa, that glorious Kaśyapa, the treasure of compassion, who was thus addressed, said words which were meritorious, auspicious and beneficial to all.

Kaśyapa said :

16-19. A wise man has to explain to you what is asked with a mind capable of putting together the earlier and later (ideas), and not to mean person of a wicked mind. There is no doubt that by giving in that way a good (i.e. proper) opinion to him who is engaged in sinful activities, the proper

fruit of giving knowledge is obtained. One should not speak to anyone when not asked; so also to him who is asking unjustly. A wise man, even though he knows (the truth), should behave towards the people like a dumb man. (But) he should speak to his learned disciples and sons, though he is not asked. The good of those who have faith is (always) superior.

20-28a. O king, due to my words and due to certain religious merit you had acquired before, now you have become one of a pure heart. Your body having a sinful condition has now gone due to (your) having resorted to me. Due to your having heard the knowledge of religious merit, it has (now) become one having a meritorious condition. A body is of a sinful condition; it is known as unrighteous and is without knowledge. The other which is of (i.e. practises) good vows should be known as righteous. The third one intended for enjoyment of religious merit, and suffering (fruit of) impiety is beyond the senses. Thus those who know religious merit say that the body is of three kinds. As there is the enjoyment of the good deeds and there is salvation, it is of three kinds. The body of a sinful condition is called sinful. Now, the body of you who are having devotion to your teacher, who are following my words (of advice), and who are hearing the nature of religious merit, has become of the nature of religious merit. By that only spotless purity, proper for religious rites, has been produced. Due to luck the minds and acts of bodies of men undergo a change from time to time. Now indeed your body moves on to piety. Therefore, I am inviting you to the excellent bath in the month of Vaiśākha.

Yama said:

28b-32. Then that family priest Kaśyapa urged the king to bathe, (give) gifts, worship (Viṣṇu), and perform proper rites, as formerly told in the sacred texts, in the month of Vaiśākha. The sage spoke to the king as told (in the holy texts). He made him hear the essence of (Viṣṇu's) hymn, and taught him Viṣṇu's worship, having heard and studied which he would obtain the proper fruit. He made him (a man of) pure devotion. The king also performed (the rites) according to the rules. The performance (of rites) in the month of Vaiśākha is praiseworthy. He listened to it with respect.

33-39. The best king devoutly performed morning bath, (got) water for washing the feet with, (offered) oblations and worshipped Viṣṇu. He also made an offering of eatables (to Viṣṇu). That best brāhmaṇa who gives gifts according to the rules and with respect, and who performs the rite like this, who devoutly, every day and every year does like this, goes to the abode of Viṣṇu. Then in other months he again becomes one sporting with the breasts of beautiful women, and has the only desire of enjoyment, according to his liking. He being under the influence of lust, does not follow the rule of piety nor does he consider the royal affairs, except in the month of Vaiśākha. O best brāhmaṇa, even for the great, this mind-born (one), born with the body, is difficult to resist. The course of desires is beginningless, since the women who are endowed with (beautiful) hair and collyrium, whose touch is bad, who are dear to the eyes, who have flames like those of fire, burn a man like grass (i.e. hay). Carnal desire is an awful enemy duly living in the bodies of men. It is full of the smoke of delusion, is sinful. Whom has he (i.e. it) not blinded?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ONE

King Mahīratha Goes to Viṣṇu's Abode

Yama said:

1-7. Then the king, observed by the glance of Death, and with his body emaciated due to consumption caused by extreme sexual enjoyment, died. He was being taken by the attendants of Yama, was repeatedly being beaten, was wailing with loud cries, and remembered his sins. Then Viṣṇu's messengers, having come, beat my followers, and saying, 'He is righteous', they put him into an aeroplane. The king, with his sins exhausted due to the morning bath in the month of Vaiśākha, and being praised by the hosts of celestial nymphs, was taken to Viṣṇu's city. Then, thinking that he was unrighteous, the king was again put by the divine messengers at the behest of Viṣṇu, not far from the

path to hell. While going, he heard the various wailings of beings, being roasted in hell. Hearing the very awful cries of the sinners being boiled, the king was amazed and became extremely afflicted.

8. He said: "O messengers, what is this awful wailing that is heard and is not heard again. Please tell me the reason of it."

The messengers said:

9-17. Beings who have abandoned bounds of morality, who are sinful, and who are bereft of (good) behaviour are thrown into awful hells like Tāmisra. Those who have committed sins here (i.e. in this world), after death resort to the path of (the abode of) Yama, suffer very terrible grief. Being dragged by fierce men of Yama, and fallen into darkness, they are eaten up by very awful dogs, foxes, carnivorous animals, crows, herons, cranes etc. and by wolves and tigers having fire-like mouths and by serpents, scorpions etc. Being burnt by fire, being pricked by thorns, being cut off by saws, being troubled by thirst, and being oppressed by hunger, so also by awful hosts of diseases, fainting at every step due to the odour of pus and blood, they are at times boiled in oils, at times beaten with pestles, are roasted in iron-vessels or at times on stones. At times they eat what is vomitted; at times (they eat) pus and blood. At times they eat feces; at times awful flesh at places with a foul smell. At times they are eaten by insects with fire-like mouths.

18-24. They, wailing in various tones, are again and again roasted in houses where, in the heaps of hair, blood, flesh, marrow and bones, the dead bodies are scattered in a disorderly manner and are clearly eaten by insects, which (houses) are destroyed by the mouths of crows, herons and great vultures and have crores of bodies put very closely without interstices, which have saws and small flat stones for grinding and have no oil, which are made of trees with sharp thorns, and have the pillars of iron, oil and marrow, which are bright with pillars with fierce flames and razors, thorns and nails, which are full with the hot pus of Vaitaraṇī, and the breasts of men and women cut off with swords, and which are awful on account of being seized with fearful darkness. They have nooses tied round their necks; at

places they are surrounded by serpents; at places they are squeezed by machines, and at places they are dragged with their knees (seized).

25-29. O king, the sinners, doing bad acts, and wailing, with their backs, heads and necks broken, with their throats choked, (appearing) very awful, they with bodies capable of suffering torment, being whirled in an apartment on the top of the house, are troubled. They wail along with the enjoyment of sensual objects. All beings suffer this (due to) what they have done before. The union (that was had) for love with another's wife, gives pain. The enjoyment of objects of senses for a short while, has turned out to be giving pain for many years. O best king, having got the touch of the breezes coming from the body of you who bathed duly in the morning in Vaiśākha, they are delighted for a moment and due to your lustre have become strong. Therefore, they who remain in the hell are free from wailing. Even the name of those who have a meritorious character is said to lead to happiness. The touch of the breezes that had the touch of their bodies causes delight.

Yama said:

30-32a. Hearing these words, the king, the treasure of compassion, said to the messengers of Viṣṇu of wonderful acts: "The heart of the good is indeed soft like fresh butter, which heated with fire, certainly melts."

The king said:

32b-39a. Abandoning an oppressed and unhappy being, I am not able to go. Fie upon him who, though capable, does not remove the affliction of the oppressed. If these beings became happy due to the touch of the breezes that left after touching my body, then you may take me there. As the sandal-trees that remove the torment of others purify sandal, in the same way those men who remove the affliction of others purify their mother, are blessed. Those alone are the good, who, in this world remove the affliction of others, and for whom their life is (as insignificant) as a blade of grass in the matter of removing the affliction of the afflicted. This earth is sustained by those

men who are bent on (doing) good to others. The constant happiness of mind is heaven; it may resemble hell (outwardly). Therefore, the good are always happy with (i.e. due to) the happiness of others. It is better to fall into hell, it is better to die, than having pleasure for a moment except the one that is had by removing the affliction of the afflicted.

The messengers said:

39b-45a. Sinful beings are roasted here in the awful hell. They live by (the fruits of) their own deeds. There is no place for misunderstanding. Those who have, in the other world (i.e. on the earth), not given (gifts), not offered oblations, or (have) not bathed at a holy place, (have) also not obliged (any one), or (have) not done, with devotion, a great meritorious act, (have) not offered sacrifices, (have) not practised penance, (have) not muttered (prayers) with joy, are roasted in awful hells. Those who are of a bad character, whose practices are bad, who are condemned due to their diversions and food, who harm others, who commit sins, who amuse themselves in a bad manner, who cut asunder the hearts of others with words cutting the vitals, so also those who sport with the wives of others, are roasted in a hell. Come on, O king, we shall go to Viṣṇu's abode. It is not proper for a meritorious person like you to stay here hereafter.

The king said:

45b-57. O messengers, if I have done meritorious deeds, then why am I brought along this path leading to hell? Or what is my great religious merit? I, given to carnal pleasures, have not done any meritorious act like that. (Then) how shall I go to the city of Viṣṇu? I have a doubt.

The messengers said:

It is true, you, with your mind influenced by lust, did not do a meritorious act, did not perform sacrifices, did not eat the leftovers of a sacrifice; but, formerly, you, impelled by the words of your teacher, bathed duly in the morning (every day) in the month of Vaiśākha for three years and devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu, the lord of the universe and the killer of (the demon) Madhu. He to whom his devotees are dear, destroys the stream

of major and heinous sins. O lord of men, by means of that, the essence of all religious practices, he being honoured by the hosts of gods, is taken to an auspicious place. Viṣṇu, when worshipped, destroys even major sins. In the same way the month of Vaiśākha is declared (to be destroying sins) by Brahmā. As by a spark of fire a heap of grass (hay) is burnt, in the same way by the (daily) morning bath in Vaiśākha the stream of sins is burnt. As long as a man does not bathe in the morning (every day) in the month of Vaiśākha, even the major sins originate in his body. A man who is engaged in vows as laid down (in sacred texts), is freed from streams of sins due to devotion to Viṣṇu and would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O lord of men, since, formerly you did not do meritorious acts from your birth, you were taken along the path to hell. Now, O lord of the earth, being praised by us and the hosts of gods quickly go by an aeroplane to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWO

King Mahīratha Gives Part of His Merit to the Sufferers in Hell

Yama said:

1-4. O brāhmaṇa, then the king, the ocean of compassion, afflicted by their grief, spoke politely to Viṣṇu's messengers: "The good ones look upon the protection of the frightened one as the fruit of affluence, nobility of birth and meritorious deeds. If I have some religious merit (to my credit) then, by means of that let these beings, free from their sins, go to heaven. I shall live in their place." Having heard these words of the truthful king, they, thinking of his truthfulness and generosity, said these words to the king:

The messengers said:

5-11. O king, due to this your kind deed and your words, your religious merit, especially the accumulated one, has in-

creased. They know that a bath, gift, muttering, sacrifice, penance, worship of deities etc. which is done in the month of Vaiśākha, gives an inexhaustible fruit. A sacrificer or a donor plays in heaven with the gods in ponds having golden lotuses and at the root of the desire-yielding tree. Being sung by the bevy of divine young beautiful damsels he is delighted. By giving water and food a man obtains the auspicious heaven of Varuṇa. One who gives a cow easily liberates seven (members) of his family. By giving a horse a man goes to the Sun's heaven. A man who imparts knowledge goes to Brahmā's heaven. Similarly by giving gold a man goes to the abode of gods. In the same way, one who gives his daughter (in marriage) goes to Viṣṇu's world. A man who bathes in the month of Vaiśākha, gives gifts after worshipping Viṣṇu, obtains all his desired objects and reaches an immutable place.

12-14. On one side are penance, gifts and rites like sacrifices and extraction of Soma juice, and on the other is the great month of Vaiśākha observed properly. O king, the good deed which you formerly did even on one day of the month of Vaiśākha is more than all gifts. O king, O treasure of compassion, give, through pity, your religious merit of a day to the afflicted ones being roasted in the hell.

15-20. There is no virtue like compassion. There is no penance like compassion. There is no gift like compassion. There is no friend like compassion. A man who gives his religious merit (to others) always gets religious merit a lakh times (more); especially due to pity your religious merit would increase. A man who removes the affliction of afflicted beings, is alone blessed in the world; he should be known as born from a portion of Viṣṇu. Give duly, repeating thrice, the religious merit of your bath, gifts etc.—destroying all sins—which you did on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, to these, by keeping lord Viṣṇu as the witness; by that they would obtain heaven. Śibi, the ocean of fame, gave formerly, through kindness, his flesh for (saving the life of) a pigeon, and the ocean of compassion shines in the heaven.

21. The royal sage Dadhīci also gave the collection of his bones, and obtained glory, the moonlight to the three worlds, and inexhaustible heaven.

22-32. The royal sage Sahasrajit abandoned his dear life for a brāhmaṇa, and he of a great fame went to the best heavens. We think that a man does not get that happiness even in salvation which he gets by offering complete satisfaction to an afflicted being. O king, O wise one, due to this deed you have, employing your courage, become the foremost among donors in the tales (about donors). Seeing (i.e. knowing) your intention, your religious merit, pity and your very firm gift, we also, speaking meritorious things, have made an effort to speak. O king, if you like, then without delay, give your religious merit, burning their torment and affliction, to these.

Thus addressed, the kind one, making the mace-holder (Viṣṇu) the witness, duly gave, repeating thrice, his religious merit to them. All those beings, free from the torments inflicted by Yama, got into an excellent aeroplane, and being delighted and saluting, praising and looking at him, went to heaven, when he gave them the religious merit that he had earned on a day of the month of Vaiśākha. Having accepted the religious merit given by the king, which was earned (just) on a day of the month of Vaiśākha, all of them, freed from hell, got into an aeroplane and went to heaven. This is the wonder. Strange is the host of beings on the earth, and strange in many ways is the devotion arisen in them. In the same way, the path of action is strange; (and) the heap of its powers is strange. He who is being praised by groups of sages, who has got more religious merit due to that particular act, who is being saluted by the attendants of the lord of the world, went to that highest place that cannot be obtained by meditating saints.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THREE

How to Meditate on Kṛṣṇa in Vaiśākha

Yama said:

1-8. O best brāhmaṇa, I have narrated in brief some importance of the month of Vaiśākha, especially of the full-moon day.

He who recites this account dear to Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha, getting purified quickly goes to Viṣṇu's abode and gets delighted (there) for many kalpas. This (description of the) greatness of the month of Vaiśākha, the life of the king and our dialogue are blessed, give fame, long life, are a great means of securing prosperity, lead to heaven, give prosperity, delight, are praiseworthy and destroy sins. Having heard and recited it duly, and delighting the one dear to the mind, there would be (i.e. take place) devotion, due to which there would be the destruction of sins. O brāhmaṇa go, as you desire, from the world of gods. Your kinsmen, having dropped (i.e. put) your body on the ground, are still weeping. Go, as it were, you have just got up from the sleep, before your body is quickly thrown (i.e. put) into fire by your kinsmen that are weeping. By my favour you have heard this path of religious merit. Do it properly. By doing it, you will be united with gods at the (proper) time.

Sūta said:

9-12. The brāhmaṇa, having heard these words of the god, and having saluted the lord of Dharma (i.e. Yama), and with his mind pleased, again fell down on the ground due to the favour of Yama from there; and being attended by his kinsmen, he got up as if he had been asleep. The brāhmaṇa himself performed this rite on the earth year after year, and made men bath in the month of Vaiśākha. On the occasion of the meritorious bath in the month of Vaiśākha, I have told you this dialogue between Yama and the brāhmaṇa.

13-14. To him, the wise one, who would bathe in the month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu, and gives gifts, (performs) sacrifices and good deeds with great devotion, the place of Viṣṇu is not difficult to get. He who with a concentrated mind listens to this greatness, due to the Sun's being in Aries, goes, being freed from all sins, to the highest place of Viṣṇu.

The sages said:

15-18. O Sūta, O very wise Sūta, you, of a very kind heart, have told (us) the greatness of the month of Vaiśākha which

destroys sins. You have (also) told us the restraints which are to be observed, and also the worship, bath (to be done and) gifts (to be given) according to the statements in the sacred texts and the codes of law, so also (you have told us) how Viṣṇu, who destroys sins, is pleased. Now we desire to hear about the meditation that liberates one from the worldly existence, of the magnanimous Kṛṣṇa dear to his hosts of devotees.

Sūta said:

19-20. O sages, all of you (now) listen to (the account) of Kṛṣṇa, the soul of the world, the life of the cows, the cowherds and the cowherdesses, and moving in Vṛndāvana. O brāhmaṇas, once Gautama asked Nārada (about this). I shall tell you about that meditation which he had told him.

Nārada said:

21-25. A man of sharp intellect should always remember the excellent Vṛndāvana which appears forth with the fragrant honey dropping from the host of flowers; which is endowed with beauty, being bent due to the mass of new sprouts of good trees; which is surrounded by creepers charming with blossoming fresh sprouts; which is auspicious. He should think of the desire-yielding tree in it, which (tree) was resounding with the hummings of the wandering bees, which were coming out from their mouths and which were sweet due to their enjoying the honey of the blooming flowers; and also resounding with the birds like pigeons, parrots, sārikās and cuckoos; which was full of (the peacocks) the enemies of serpents, dancing here and there; which was constantly served by breezes carrying the drops from the tossing waves of (Yamunā) the daughter of Kalinda, which (breezes) were dusty due to the mass of pollen from the interiors of full-blown lotuses, which were intent upon tossing about the garments of the women from Vraja with their feeling of sex inflamed; which had shoots and new sprouts, the leaves of which were like emeralds, the buds of which were like the mass of the lustre of pearls, which had many fruits of the colour of lotuses; which was the greatest; which was always served by all the seasons; which gave the desired objects. A cautious, wise man should remember a golden ground which

is bright like the sun risen on the mountain with bright golden peaks; which has lustrous jewelled floor; which is shining with the pollen of flowers: which has six parts under it (i.e. the tree) having a shower of the drops of nectar.

26-51. Thinking of the eight-petalled tawny lotus on the greatest seat for abstract meditation, arranged on that jewelled floor, and bright like the sun, one should think of Mukunda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) seated comfortably in it; (of Mukunda) (who was) like the mass of clouds of split up collyrium; and who was bright like a fresh blue lotus; whose mass of hair was very glossy, dark, dense and curved; whose crest of the peacocks' tails was bright and charming; who was endowed with the flowers of the divine tree fondled by bees; whose ear ornament was a blooming fresh lotus; who had a bright mark of yellow pigment on the base of the forehead bright with unsteady bees; who had the bright cilli-bow; whose face was charming like the autumnal complete orb of the moon without spot; whose eyes were large like petals of lotuses; whose mirror-like cheeks were brightened with jewelled and bright ear-rings of the shape of crocodiles; whose nose was raised and charming; whose lips were more beautiful than red lead; who had brightened the quarters with his gentle smile resembling the moon, the kunda and the mandāra (flowers); whose charming conch-like neck was bright due to the neck-ornament accomplished with the mass of excellent sprouts and flowers; whose shoulders were adorned with spreading garland of santānaka flowers from which were hanging the intoxicated noisy bees; who was shining with the sun in the form of the Kaustubha gem glittering in the sky in the form of his large bosom shining with a series of garlands; whose raised shoulders were well-marked with the auspicious curl of hair on his bosom; whose hands reaching his knees were large and round; who had a little wavy belly; whose hair (on his belly) resembled a swarm of female bees; who had put on armlets, a line of bracelets, a neck-ornament, a girdle, and anklets fashioned with various jewels; whose slim body was tinged with yellow divine fragrant unguents; who had put on a yellowish garment round his round hips; whose thighs and knees were lovely; whose shanks were round and beautiful; who had censured the lustre of the tortoise by means of the lovely and raised foreparts of his feet; whose

lotus-like feet were beautiful, shining like mirrors of emeralds, bright with excellent nails and having the sheaths of red toes; who was charming as his reddish palms and soles were marked with (signs like those of) fish, goads, cupid's flags, barley-corns, lotuses and diamond-pins; whose body was fashioned with the mass of the essence of beauty; who had censured the beauty of Cupid's body with his loveliness; who made the continuous line of the subdued beings salute him due to the constantly produced divine musical orders discharged by the fingers of his hands moving to and fro over the holes of the flute filled with (the breath from) his lotus-like mouth; who was surrounded by cows whose eyes merged in his lotus-like face, that were stumbling, dull and walking slowly due to the burden of their udders, that had in their mouths sprouts of grass left after they were bitten with the tips of their teeth, and whose creeper-like tails were hanging; who was surrounded by calves maddened with the foamy milk dropping from their steady mouths full of their mothers' udders—the ornaments—from which milk was oozing, and with their pairs of ears raised due to the charming, gentle song, sent out by the flute; who was also surrounded by male and female calves with unsteady plantings of the foreparts of their hoofs-unsteady due to the feeling of confusion as a result of gentle strokes of the new horns on their heads; who was surrounded by large oxen who had disturbed the quarters with their bellowing, weary due to the burden of their humps, and having drunk the nectar of the sound of the flute by the steady cavities of their ears, and with their spreading and large noses raised; who was also surrounded by cowherds who were of similar qualities, character, age, sports and dresses, who were made violent by the sweet-sounding flutes and lutes, who were engaged in singing slowly, and with a high and loud tone, who were delighted in lovely dancing accompanied by singing and instrumental music, due to their unsteady creeper-like arms, whose groups of moving bells tied to the cavities of their fat loins and inside their shanks, were sounding, who were roaming, who were maddened, who had made charming ornaments out of the nails of hyenas; who was surrounded by children who were speaking indistinctly but sweetly; and who was all round served by the rows of the very charming, beautiful cowherdesses whose

braids were big and who walked slowly due to (large) hips, who had a line of hair manifested on the three folds, fragile due to the burden of the heavy breasts, whose body-creepers of that tree of Cupid blossomed by the nectar of the musical instruments like the extremely sweet and lovely flute were adorned with horripilation charming like buds that had shot forth, who continuously had the drops of fatigue resembling the spray on unsteady ripples of that ocean of sexual feeling increased by the laughter, who had unbearable affliction along with tremor spreading over their distressed bodies, all the vital parts of which were crushed by shower of Cupid in the form of his sharp glances from the extremely lovely and gentle bows of cilli (i.e. his eyes), who longed for drinking the nectar of the beauty of his very lovely dress and form, who were the rivers flooded with the water of love, whose lotus-like eyes were gentle and unsteady, who were repeatedly served by a swarm of bees greedy of the honey dripping from the full-blown flowers dropping from their beautiful braids, whose words were faltering and soft due to intoxication caused by intense passion of love, whose buttocks appeared beautiful due to the lustre of the ends of the silken garments which were getting loose due to their knots being untied by the unsteady girdles, who had filled the quarters with anklets inlaid with jewels, due to gentle plantings of their stumbling and charming lotus-like pairs of eyes which were broad and had beautiful eye-lashes, whose ear-rings were bright, whose sprout-like reddish lips were fading due to the torment caused by wind of the longest breath (i.e. sigh), whose lotus-like hands were shining with many presents.

52-56. A man should remember him (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) whose entire body was worshipped by the wreaths of the lotuses hidden in the sheaths of their long, unsteady, blue eyes; who has a body which is the abode of sports, which tastes the honey from the lotus-like faces of those innocent ones, which through love has the row of bees in the form of the damsels of bewitching eyes, which is beautiful; a man should remember outside (the group) of the cowherdesses, the cowherds and the beasts, the host of divinities, desiring riches, and led by Brahmā, Śiva and Indra, and intent on praising him. (A man should remember) on his right side, a host of sages, bent upon (following) the

tradition due to their strong desire for religious merit; behind him, (a man should remember) the chief meditating saints like Sanaka, desiring salvation through abstract meditation; (he should remember) on his left, yakṣas, siddhas, gandharvas, vidyādharas and cāraṇas with their beloveds and with kinnaras, so also the chiefs of celestial nymphs desiring (the fulfilment of) their desires through dancing, singing and sounds of musical instruments, who are white like a conch, the moon and the kunda (flower), who know all the Vedas, whose matted hair is tawny, like streaks of lightning, and remembering me (i.e. Nārada), Brahmā's son who desires spotless devotion to his feet, who has given up the company of any one else, who pleases (the lord) with charming modulations in the seven musical orders and the three gamuts endowed with qualities of various notes, should devoutly think of him.

57. The man, of a sharp and clear intellect, having thus meditated upon the son of Nanda, should again deliberately and devoutly worship him in his own body and outside with splendour. O best brāhmaṇas, I have told you all that was desired by you.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOUR

Dialogue between Śambhu and Rāma

Om, salutation to Śrī Gaṇeśa.

The sages said:

1. O illustrious one, tell us again the wonderful account of Rāma, which is the all-in-all of Rāma's greatness and which gives delight to the devotees.

Sūta said:

2-6a. The wise son of Daśaratha, after having performed the excellent horse-sacrifice, engaged himself in the worldly deeds and in acts laid down in the sacred texts. Śaṅkara, the

magnanimous one, desiring to go to Ayodhyā, lived with Pārvatī on the bank of Sarayū. Great-souled sages like Kaśyapa approached that Śaṅkara, of a universal form, and asked him of unlimited lustre. (They said:) "O best sage, wherefrom have you come with your wife? For what deed have you come with your wife? For what deed have you come here? Which country are you bent on going to?"

Śaṅkara said:

6b-12a. I am a brāhmaṇa named Śambhu and living on Himālaya. I am going to see Rāma; I have a great deed to do. That king interested in listening to the Purāṇas, invites (i.e. has invited) me. You too may come. Rāma will be glad.

Then all the sages and Śambhu went with a desire to see Rāma. Knowing them to have arrived, Vasiṣṭha informed Rāma. Then he with his family-priest (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) quickly came out (to meet them). Offering them materials of worship and water for washing their feet, he honoured all the sages. He who curbed his enemies, took them into the best mansion. Having given a seat to each one of them, the best among the Raghus, honoured the sages, seated them on the seats one by one with words of welcome. Pleasing them with sweet words, he said these words to them who were seated on the seats.

Śrī Rāma said:

12b-15a. Today my existence has become fruitful; today I have obtained the fruit of my penance. Today the time of obtaining the fruit of my practice of the lores has come. Today my dead ancestors are pleased; my kingdom has become fruitful today. My (good) conduct has become fruitful today; today my learning has become fruitful.

To king Rāma, having lotus-like eyes, who was speaking like this, the brāhmaṇas, Kaśyapa and others said:

The sages said:

15b-21. This brāhmaṇa is Śambhu who is conversant with all sacred texts, who knows the essential truth of the Vedas and

the Vedāṅgas, who is engaged in the good of all beings, who lives at Kailāsa, and who is always determined in (practising) penance, who is comparable to Brahmā in divine glory, who is the best of those who know the Vedas, who is comparable to Viṣṇu in his affection for brāhmaṇas, and to Śaṅkara in (showing) grace. Such is (this) very lustrous best brāhmaṇa Śambhu who knows the eighteen Purāṇas and who is well-versed in Mīmāṁsā[1] and Nyāya[2]. Due to your great luck this best sage has come (here). This best sage invited by you, has come from Kailāsa, O lord. Therefore, O you descendant of Raghu, O illustrious one, ask him (about) the excellent account of the Purāṇas. We, desiring to hear (it), have today come (to you). The knowledge of a man who has mastered the Vedas and knows all sacred texts, but has not heard the Purāṇas, is not accurate.

Sūta said:

22. Thus addressed by the sages who had realized the truth, the best of the Raghus, eager to listen to the Purāṇas, got incomparable delight.

Śrī Rāma said:

23-26. O excellent, best sage, I desire to hear from you all that, viz. the varieties of the worship of the Phallus, the greatness of the Phallus, the greatness of the name of the great lord (Śiva), the importance of worship, the significance of salutation, the greatness of wisdom, the importance of offering water, so also of offering incense, O best one, so also of offering lamps, aloewood etc. and the importances of flowers, the account destroying sins

1. Mīmāṁsā—One of the six systems of Indian Philosophy. It was originally divided into two systems: the Pūrvamīmāṁsā and the Uttaramīmāṁsā. The former is said to be founded by Jaimini. The latter is ascribed to Bādarāyaṇa. The two systems have very little in common between them. The Pūrvamīmāṁsā, concerns itself chiefly with the correct interpretation of the ritualistic part of the Veda and the settlement of doubts in regard to Vedic texts. The Uttaramīmāṁsā, also called Brahmamīmāṁsā, deals mainly with the nature of Brahman or the Supreme Spirit.

2. Nyāya—A system of Indian Philosophy founded by Gautama, also known as Gotama and Akṣapāda. The system is primarily concerned with the conditions of correct thinking and with the means of gaining a true knowledge of reality.

from many tales and traditions, so also the four goals of human life, viz. *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa* and the means of (attaining) them.

Śambhu said:

27-33. O Rāma, Rāma, O you of great (i.e. mighty) arms, O Rāghava, you are meritorious, (since) though attached to (i.e. engaged in the administration of) the kingdom you have a liking for hearing the Purāṇas. O Rāma, it would be due to the service of the great and resorting to holy places. That is the tongue that would sing (the praise of) Śiva; that is the heart which is dedicated to him; those two hands alone that worship him, are fit to be praised. That body alone is best born among all existences which brightens with horripilation at the narration (of the virtues) of Viṣṇu. O great king, you are blessed since your mind has moved in (asking) questions about him.

Immediately thereafter couriers, hurrying and tired, came (there). The best among the Raghus took a letter from the hands of (one of) them, and read it. Rāma thought to his mind: 'How has it taken place?' Śambhu who was in the guise of a brāhmaṇa and accompanied by his wife, then asked Rāma: "O you descendant of Kakutstha, what are you thinking about when the sages are sitting in front of you?" Hearing his words, Rāma said to the best sages:

Śrī Rāma said:

34-41. Oh, how is it that Bibhīṣaṇa seeing the Phallus of Śiva, (called) Rāmeśvara and installed by me, is bound with chains by the crooked, wicked-minded Drāviḍas? Think about it with your (i.e. by applying your) mind.

Thinking (about it) the best sages were unable to know (it even) a little. They said to Rāma: "We do not know." Then Rāma said: "O best ones, having duly seen (i.e. looked into) a Purāṇa tell (me) all that. After that the cause of your ignorance may be considered. Which Purāṇa should be looked into; similarly which should be avoided; which verse is excellent; which is other than that; what kind of worshipper should be there and

for what kind of act; and on seeing (its) verdict (*obscure*!) as to how the worship should be done by devotees." Hearing these words of Rāma, those best brāhmaṇas spoke to Rāma whose mind was full of anxiety: "O Rāma, we shall not tell it. One who knows the Purāṇa, should look into it." Hearing that, Rāma, full of modesty, asked Śambhu; he too, who was very intelligent, hearing those words, said:

Śambhu said:

42-50a. A very intelligent man who lives by (expounding) the Purāṇas, who deserves honour, who has studied (the scriptures of) the branch of Veda to which he belongs, who is pure, who knows the essence of Mīmāṁsā, who is learned, who censures falsehood, who looks equally upon all gods, who loves Śiva, who mutters the Śatarudriya hymn, who maintains sacred fire, who is a great speaker, who is especially a follower of the Yajurveda, should worship the book (i.e. the text of the Purāṇa). The book is written on palm leaves, is auspicious and is written in the divine script (i.e. in Sanskrit). It is extensive as it is bound (together) and has at the same time the syllable 'Om' (at its beginning). At the end of the two vertical lines here would be the line being the first line of Om. Near it should be the letter 'a'. Beginning with the topmost part and hanging down it should have an angle. That which has a (vertical) line to the right (of the letter 'a'), should be known to be the letter 'ā'. The letter 'i' is known to have two dots and bent like (the figure) six. (Long) 'ī' is said to be (formed) by a line on the left top of it. Except Om, every letter has a line on its top. But on it there is a vertical line and at its end there is (the figure) like that of a sickle. That should be known as 'u'. (Long) 'ū' is formed by means of two (figures of) sickles. Bhāratī (i.e. Sarasvatī) has said that other letters are (to be formed) like these.

50b-54a. That Purāṇa which is written in this script alone, is praiseworthy. (The Purāṇas are:) Brahma, Padma, Vaiṣṇava, Mārtaṇḍa, (the one) narrated by Nārada, Mārkaṇḍeya, and Āgneya, Kaurma and Vāmana, Gāruḍa; Laiṅga (is also) said (to be one of them); Skānda, Mātsya, Nṛsiṁha; O Rāma, Kapila is also said to be (a Purāṇa); so also Varāha; Brahmavaivarta is recommended for omens; (and there are) Śiva, Bhāgavata,

Daurga (i.e. of Durgā), Bhaviṣyottara also known by the sub-title Bhaviṣya. One should avoid others.

54b-61a. Untying the (string of) the book (the reader) should put the hallowed book on a jewelled stool. He should put on washed garments; he should bathe and be pure; he should be without wrath and without distress; he should, having first worshipped his soul and having made a mental resolve, meditate upon the white (-complexioned) Sarasvatī, of a pleased face and holding a goad, a rosary, a noose and a book. The worshipper should begin the worship after first having duly meditated upon Śiva whose figure is(white) like the cow's milk, who has three eyes, whose vehicle is the bull (Nandī), whose face is smiling, who is tranquil, who has put on a white garment, who is fearless, whose both arms have been (tossed) up, who has a crown (on his head), whose right hand is put on the left, who gives boons, who is richly adorned with many jewels, whose half seat is occupied by (Pārvatī) the daughter of (the Himālaya) Mountain, whose lotus-like feet are being meditated upon by many chief sages, who is being praised by Vedas embodied, so also by Purāṇas, so also whose lotus-like feet are waited upon by all other people.

61b-64a. The consecration of the pitcher (should be done with the utterance of the hymn) *Āpo vā idam* ('This is water'). Having taken that water, he consecrates (the water) in the vessel. He, having (consecrated) himself, and having praised (Brahman) with the hymn *Tat sad Brahma*, should then invoke all the vessels. He should worship Sarasvatī with the Ṣoḍaśārcana (worshipping sixteen times) with the ṛc *Yad vāg*, or he should do it with the recital of the Puruṣa-sūkta (hymn), or with the Gāyatrī hymn.

64b-69. He should worship the Purāṇa by (first saying) 'Om, salutation to the lord, such and such Purāṇa (is being expounded).' With the recital of the hymn *Kāṇḍāt* he should bring dūrvā (grass) and worship it (saying:) 'Om, salutation to the respectable Dūrvā'. The worship should be done along with (that of) the guardians of the quarters. Then a (young) girl should be hououred. (She should be) auspicious and should be above five years but below ten years. She should not have attained puberty. He should carefully worship her with fragrant substance, flow-

ers, sacred rice grains, incense, lamp, tāmbūla and ornaments. The worshipper should make the young girl recite this hymn: 'Speak the truth, speak what is agreeable; O venerable Sarasvatī, salutation to you, salutation to you.'

70-75a. According to the meaning of the order of the (words of the) Gāyatrī (hymn) he should make her keep near the book two dūrvās, then under it with the ṛc *Sahasra paramā*. The wise one (i.e. the worshipper) should give three pairs of dūrvās into her hand; after that she should throw (i.e. put) three small sticks into the joints of the book. Throwing them (away), he should again give her (small sticks), saying *Śivābhyām namaḥ* ('salutation to Śivas'). The verse in between two leaves suggests the success in the work (to be undertaken). O Rāghava, if the verse would come to an end on the previous leaf, then he should read the verse on the next leaf, and having discerned it, should read it aloud. The wise one should read it slowly, and should explain it slowly. Here no hurry should be done, (as) Sarasvatī gets angry due to haste. The time should be the quarter of a ghaṭikā (i.e. twentyfour minutes); hurry would be said to be done (if less time than that is taken).

75b-79. One should not hasten the speaker known as the brāhmaṇa after Vyāsa. The speaker should discern the meaning in his mind; having discerned it, he should not say what is opposed to it, O Rāma. Leaving the verse, whether proper or improper (found) in the book, if the worshipper reads another verse, it should be known to be like that only; a discord is not recommended. That verse has appeared there due to luck (i.e. chance), and luck is more powerful (than anything else). Since in the hearing (i.e. the text) there is no fault of the brāhmaṇa (who reads it), so one should not wonder; the course of destiny is crooked.

80-84a. If there is a change in a letter due to water (etc.) on the leaf, he should discard that command, and should read another (verse). Then the third (verse) should be read, and then decision (about the meaning) should be taken. The five other than the class of letters beginning with 'pa' (i.e. labials) end without a visarga. A verse not containing a mark of praise is commended for omens. The wise should always avoid these in (i.e. while finding out) an omen: the beginning of a

chapter; its end; a useless leaf or script; repetition of what is (already) stated; double (i.e. repeated) mention; a burnt leaf; script that has disappeared; doubtful letters.

84b-86a. A question should be known to be of two types depending upon its two varieties: radiant and calm. The calm (-type) also should be known to be of two types: depending upon the development of creation or maintenance. There (i.e. out of these) the calm marked with the characteristics (noted) before is recommended. Certain varieties of acts useful for mortals are (now being) described.

86b-89a. Someone taking up the mission of someone (else) becomes the questioner (i.e. asks questions). When he asks a question, what does he remember? He again holds a leaf. A leaf there is recommended. Or if a reader somehow getting delighted, and being capable of (reading) it (sees a text) intent upon detachment or glorificatory, then that should be avoided and another auspicious for that matter (should be looked for).

89b-92. Such a question as 'A dead man grasps the meaning of words' conduces to inauspiciousness. The indication of success is desired in case of a question about discussion and victory. Creation is also here. There would be one who would praise. In case of its being cruel, the victory is due to trouble. When it is calm and mixed, one would be a best merchant through means. The description of a city etc. which is mediocre, may be excellent; so also in the description of the thoughts about Kali and in that of the element of love. In the consideration of the administration of kingdom the mark of it is auspicious.

93-101a. The wise ones (should tell) what is proper for whom after (due) consideration. In case of (something) to be done about praise and detachment destruction is enjoined. By means of an error the undertaking is a little (i.e. partially) accomplished, and the undertaker of it cannot go through it. O Rāma, in the consideration of peace the meaning of one thing would have another significance. There will be the end of a visarga and the inversion of the former part. If there is another significance at the end of a chapter or at the end of a section, then (it indicates) the destruction of the undertaking. Therefore, if somebody sneezes, or if the book drops down, or if someone is struck on the head etc. it is a dishonour to the speaker, and as a result the

omen perishes. Therefore, when such a fault (is noticed), the man should avoid that omen. If there is a simile, there would (just) be the semblance of the undertaking, but not in reality; in other cases progeny (is indicated); (reference to) creation is said to give a mediocre fruit. In the decision of a meritorious undertaking eulogy is excellent anywhere. Eulogy in case of a marriage, medicines, gifts, dealings, agriculture, if it is proper, incurs no fault in being narrated. In the case of that eulogy which is improper, the undertaking does not succeed.

101b-103a. When the meaning of a verse is not understood, or when it is disregarded in a Purāṇa etc., or when there is fleeing, or the advice about a country or about the possibility of a disease, or when there is (a mention about) an attack by a thief etc. then the undertaking would terribly perish, if the question is (of a) tranquil (nature). So say those who know the ancient (accounts).

Rāma said:

103b-105a. How will he who knows the meaning of the Purāṇas, when he is not told, or when he has not heard, explain the meaning to the listeners? The decision of this (should be made). (Please) illustrate it to me, and let the meaning also be thought over. O intelligent one, you please tell it even if it explains a part.

Śambhu said:

105b-111. The meaning of the verse: *Madhūni ca madhūnyatra madhurmadhubhujam madhuḥ*; *madhunā madhunādyarthaṁ viṣāṇi ca viṣāṇi ca* is unintelligible; it is not recommended in (finding out) an omen. So also the verse: *Rutī rute rute roraurīri rāraṁ rarīraram*; *evaṁ karoti śuddhātmā brāhmaṇo brahmaṇotiṭhiḷ*. This verse is intelligible in part (the latter half is intelligible: a pure-souled brāhmaṇa, the guest of Brahman, acts like this). (Therefore) it is not recommended in (finding out) an omen. O best of the Raghus, such and other verses occur in the Purāṇas. They have no explanation. Their text would be pre-eminent. How can the faultlessness of the speaker and the listener in the vows and restraints (be had)? How is it that the Purāṇas are not to be regarded like (i.e. on par with) the Vedas? The idea about the

meaning may be had on reciting it thrice and on thinking. The meaning of the verse, and the manner of acting (according to it) should be actually thought out. In this case the verse is (more) powerful; the manner of acting is inferior to it.

112-115a. If the leaf is useless, if the labour is fruitless, and if the leaf is burnt, then the undertaking would be lost. When the manner is hidden on the leaf, then there is lack of coordination in the undertaking. In case the leaf is withered, or if the writing on it has disappeared, then the destruction (of the undertaking) is said (to take place). In case the letters are wrong, the trouble taken is fruitless; (so also) in case of repetition or lack of agreement. If there is a comparison, the undertaking may or may not succeed. Or success may be delayed; so also when the letters are clear, there is a doubt about (the success of) the undertaking within days that are indicated.

115b-123. O king, an omen from a Purāṇa should not be seen every day. Similarly a man should not see a Purāṇa (for an omen) after he gets up after having eaten (food). Having performed worship on the night of the previous days or in the morning of the next day a man should see (the Purāṇa) for an omen, or should do so immediately (after the worship). He should tell about a special omen, particularly with reference to the manner (in which the act is to be conducted), in all auspicious deeds; the śrāddha offered to a dead person should be excluded. Inflicting a punishment, a curse, a change in the country, killing beings like demons and wicked beings is pure. Immediately after the burning of the dead body, there are spitting, vomitting, weeping, laughter, loathsomeness, pain, bad dreams, confusion etc. causing sins. So also covering with a garment, troubling, quarrel and death. Coming out of cruel (animals) and fear from the great (are there). All these and other manners should be avoided. When getting wealth is to be considered the royal creation is conducive to happiness. The rise of the Planets, the healing of diseases is also told here. What is the use of talking much here? That particular relation should be considered.

124-127. Of all the Purāṇas Skanda is recommended for this. Some choose Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa; others choose Rāmāyaṇa. There is no fault in the Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa like oaths etc. There are faults in Skanda and Rāmāyaṇa; but they are (on

a) small scale. But only a devotee of Viṣṇu and none else is able to worship it. If the worship takes place without (the worshipper being of) a good conduct, then inauspiciousness creeps in, and the omen is not successful, as a bull bound to a branch full of (i.e. allowing) all movements.

Sūta said:

128-129. Rāma who was thus advised by that brāhmaṇa Śambhu, proceeded to (find out) an omen in ascertaining (the condition of) Bibhīṣaṇa. Rāma said to Vasiṣṭha who knew the entire truth, who was proficient in (understanding the meaning of) the Purāṇas: "(Please) look into the Purāṇa".

130-132. Vasiṣṭha also said to that Rāma: "O Rāma, I am not able to speak or look into (the Purāṇa) in the vicinity of this sage." Then Rāma told Śambhu whose face was being observed by the sages: "You know the truth; you are proficient in (understanding the meaning of) the Purāṇas. So you may please tell me about the omen for my undertaking." Saying, "All right", Śambhu purified himself and became the worshipper.

133-136. Having worshipped the Skanda (Purāṇa) duly, he put the question: "Is my devotee Bibhīṣaṇa bound by a chain?" Then in three ways these three verses indicating that were seen. "Having bound the ocean, the best of Rāghavas checked the demons in the city (of Laṅkā). They, the best among those having gigantic bodies, went out of the city of Laṅkā to fight (with Rāma). The communities will have banners on their mansions. Brāhmaṇas will have Śiva as their emblem, and women will have their hair as the banners in Kaliyuga."

137-138. Thus praised, the great lord Śiva said to your deities: "I shall free your wives restrained by the demon Malla." Having observed three verses, he told about the certainty of (Bibhīṣaṇa's) being bound. (He said to Rāma:) "O Rāma, he will be soon freed. There is no doubt about it."

139-142. Having heard these words of that sage (Śambhu), Rāma, along with sages and monkeys, quickly went out to look for Bibhīṣaṇa. He quickly entered the city named Śrīraṅga. The kings that lived there worshipped Rāma. Rāma who was worshipped by them, asked them: "Where is Bibhīṣaṇa?" (They

replied:) "O god Śrī Rāma, we do not know this account". The descendant of Kakutstha (i.e. Rāma) sent the monkeys in all directions. Then the best monkeys after having gone (and looked for him) did not at all see (i.e. find) him.

143-144. Then Rāma said to that sage Śambhu: "Tell me later." Then that sage Śambhu accompanied by Rāma and followed by the sages, saying "show me" and (being told) "All right", went to a hamlet of brāhmaṇas. The brāhmaṇas there when honoured and asked showed the demon bound with many chains in an underground chamber.

145-151. Then Rāma said: "O brāhmaṇas, what has he done?" They said: "(He has committed) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. An old brāhmaṇa, an excellent, religious, aged, slim brāhmaṇa stayed in a secluded place in a grove for meditation. Having gone there, Bibhīṣaṇa hurt him with his foot (i.e. kicked him). The brāhmaṇa too, who was very much bruised, could not move even a step. Though struck by us with fatal (weapons), the wicked Bibhīṣaṇa did not die. Therefore, O Rāma, slay this sinful one and be righteous". Rāma who had suspicion, said to the brāhmaṇas: "Death is better for me (than killing my devotee). How can my devotee be killed by me? I have given him kingdom and long life. He will continue to be like that (i.e. continue to be a king and live long). Everywhere punishment is prescribed for the masters for the offence of (i.e. committed by) their servants." Having heard (these) words of Rāma, the brāhmaṇas, through amazement, said these words:

The brāhmaṇas said:

152-154a. O Rāma, death of one bound with strips is not acceptable to the sages. Think along with the best sages like Vasiṣṭha as to what is beneficial.

The sages, asked by Rāma, told the expiation: "The (sin due to the) murder of a brāhmaṇa (committed) through ignorance, is removed by means of expiations. Thus murder (committed) through ignorance requires expiation.

154b-159. That Bibhiṣaṇa should give (to brāhmaṇas) three hundred and sixty cows." Those brāhmaṇas who had bound (Bibhīṣaṇa) saying, "All right", said to one another: "We shall

free that demon. Let him go through an expiation." Having liberated the demon, the brāhmaṇas reported it to Rāma. Rāma also would not talk to him (but) said what was relevant: "Having bathed and having asked the angry sages, (and having) then (gone through) the expiation, the sinful demon may approach me." Having heard these words of Rāma, the demon, united with the sin, went through the expiation as told by the sages, and went to Rāma. He, with his soul purified by means of expiation, bowed down to Rāma. In the assembly, Rāma, laughing (i.e. smiling) said these words to him.

Śrī Rāma said:

160-162a. O son of Pulastya, from today do whatever is beneficial after thinking (properly), since, O demon, this exertion on our part was due to you. Be kind everywhere, since you are my servant.

When Rāma had (thus) settled the matter, all the sages said: "How is it that ignorance quickly overtook us?"

Śambhu said:

162b. O brāhmaṇas, due to the contempt of brāhmaṇas (that took place). The ignorance will perish.

The sages said:

163. He was charming in Tretāyuga. The Purāṇas also were entire. How will this Bhārata be employed at the end of Dvāpara?

Sūta said:

164-170. The Purāṇas are just like that; they have the same names. Today even they are told by Vyāsa; it is not otherwise. Even today the same is the rule; (and the same is) the fruit of hearing the Purāṇa. Even Mahābhārata excels in (explaining) the omens. Having worshipped just one Ādiparvan, a man should take note of the decision. Or for the decision regarding a matter all the Parvans are recommended. In this case also all the characteristics of a verse etc. mentioned before are (applicable). A particular meaning from the connection of words in a sentence

may be had, or another purport (may be had) from verses. The import is to be grasped. The explanation of a matter etc. is to be done only from the meaning. Where a meaning is seen, (it should be understood that) the primary substance is narrated. Here the determination (of the significance) should be done from the meaning of words. Therefore, everywhere the wise should not take another meaning.[1]

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIVE

The Importance of Sacred Ash

The sages said:

1. What did the illustrious Rāma do thereafter? What did the magnanimous sages do after that?

Sūta said:

2-9. When Rāmacandra was seated comfortably, (so also) Bibhīṣaṇa, the lord of monkeys, the best sages said to Śambhu: "Tell us a meritorious tale." Having heard their words, Śaṁkara said to Pārvatī: "This is the extremely beautiful house of a certain brāhmaṇa. It is adorned with a lovely garden, wells and creepers. It has (as it were) invited Cupid by means of the rows of humming bees. The sun is, as it were, proceeding to ascend to the mid-day position. We (shall) have bathed in the water of a beautiful well, and (shall have) put on fine garments. We (shall have) besmeared (our bodies with) thick, excellent sandal paste ground (i.e. mixed) with musk. We (shall) have firmly braided hair ornamented with the wreaths of the sallakī (flowers). Having tasted the tāmbūla that is large and dense and excellent and being glad and delighted, we shall remain comforting each other on a bed that is strewn in an auspicious house furnished with artificial jets, full of notes of peacocks along with sweet songs (sung) outside. If the face having a broad smile and red

1. Verses like 45ff. 74ff, 85ff, 91, 92, 108, 109ff. etc. are obscure.

lips will be kissed, then we shall have enjoyed the fruit of the mundane existence."

10-14a. Having heard these words spoken, the sages got angry and said: "Why have you told us these very auspicious words now? Due to your attachment to your beloved you made an unmeaning talk. You did not do our words (i.e. what we had asked you)." Then from the face of Śambhu who was full of anger, a very wonderful flame went out; and she too had a terrible face. She seized the wife of a certain sage and was intent upon fleeing quickly, but was frightened on seeing Rāma. Rāma too said, "I shall free the brāhmaṇa-woman." Again and again talking of liberating (the brāhmaṇa-woman), he went by Puṣpaka only.

14b-17a. Rāma did not remember (i.e. he forgot) to fix the arrow onto the bow. Śambhu also, seeing very auspicious forests and abodes, and strange cities, did not remember Rāma. Then in a moment Rāma reached the great mountain Lokāloka. Then Rāma, seeing the mountain full of houses and paths (said to the brāhmaṇas): "O illustrious brāhmaṇas, tell me which way the brāhmaṇa-woman has gone."

17b-20a. They said: "This way she has gone to the dark side of the mountain." Rāma with a pale face thought: 'Oh, it is bad'. Then Śambhu, of great lustre, gave matchless light. Due to the prowess of that light, Rāma went after that female deity to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes. The great region was full of darkness and without beings. From the primordial egg to the fragment of a broken jar, it spread over a hundred crores of yojanas.

20b-23a. In the darkness was settled a great silver (piece of) land. There was the city of Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), having lustre like that of a crore of suns. Seeing it, the best sages along with Rāma, were amazed. Thinking (i.e. they thought): 'What is this? How can we enter it? Could it be the fire at the time of the end of the world due to the magic power of the highest lord? Shall we die today or shall we have bliss?'

23b-30. When the sages, along with Rāma, were thus full of anxiety, Śambhu said: "O Rāma, listen to what I tell you today. For you I have brought about this illusion. This is no wonder. This is the great city of Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). It is bright with

lustre. It cannot be destroyed by heat or cold. It is accessible through knowledge (only). It is not visible to the (physical) eyes. Look above at Brahmā and others who are worshipping it. Look in all directions at the pure sages who are worshipping it. Look at the four Vedas, praising the Highest Position (i.e. the highest god). O Rāghava, see this Highest Lustre which the meditating sages like Sanaka, resorting to abstract meditation, are meditating upon. See also this Romaśa going round and saluting. Look at these crores and crores of best sages like Vālakhilya. Look at the Highest Position (i.e. the highest god) being worshipped by all women like Lakṣmī. It is described as the Brahman having a form and without a form. The ignorant do not (i.e. cannot) see it. (Only) those having the eyes of knowledge (can) see it."

31-34. On (hearing) the words of Śambhu all worshipped Acyuta, so also Girikarṇī, Tulasī, Mallikā and Māruta. (They saw) the high-souled ones worshipping the illustrious Janārdana. They saw Nārada having matted hair and a lute, uttering loudly the word (i.e. name) *Nārāyaṇa*, having a large beard and a sacred thread. He too thought to his mind: 'Who is this?' He (i.e. Nārada), full of joy, fell at the feet of Śambhu.

35-36a. The sage mentally muttered the five-lettered incantation dedicated to Śiva. "I am blessed; I am favoured; today my life is fruitful, (since) I have known your place which is saluted by Brahmā and others, which is inaccessible".

36b-42. Then Śambhu said to Nārada: "Do not say so. Behave with me in such a way that they do not recognise me. Go quickly and tell Viṣṇu about my arrival in a short time." Then, he hurriedly went and informed Viṣṇu of everything. Then he, the yogin, taking the auspicious water with materials for worship, along with Lakṣmī, and surrounded by crores and crores (of followers), seizing Nārada with his hand went (forth to greet him). The word *Viṣṇu* does not fit in the verse! He, having Garuḍa as his banner said: "Salutation, salutation to Śaṅkara." Viṣṇu honoured all with materials of worship and water for washing the feet. He, of an immeasurable intellect, made them enter (i.e. took them into) the auspicious Nārāyaṇapura (i.e. city of Viṣṇu). Then remaining in the best house, Nārāyaṇa said: "How have these come (here)? Who is this king

of great glory? Human beings cannot enter this (place). This is inaccessible even to Brahmā and others."

Śambhu said:

43-46a. We, dressed as sages, have come (here); and this valourous king is Rāmacandra who is a portion of you. O Keśava, he desires to see your wife.

Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) saying, "All right", said to Rāma "Enter (here)". Then having entered the residence, having seen Lakṣmī, and bowing through modesty he saluted her, and said (these) meritorious words (to her): "I am blessed; there is no doubt about it. Tell me what you feel."

Śrī Devī said:

46b-48. O Rāghava, you are young; you are attracted by love for sensual enjoyments; you are handsome. That Sītā, beautiful in all limbs, is your wife. Formerly you were separated from her, and being afflicted due to separation from her were, as it were, sinking. Tell me all that or you will not speak. Words accompanied by smile attract the hearts of young persons.

49-53. Having heard all those words, Rāmabhadra who was restrained and composed, having bowed down his lotus-like face, desired to go out from there. Having tormented the best among the Raghus, with a lotus—an arrow of Cupid—goddess Padmā, to whom Padmavana was dear, went out after him. Knowing Rāma to be one devoted to his only wife, they came to the king (i.e. Rāma) whose entire body was trembling and whose steps were faltering. Seeing that Śiva and Viṣṇu were very much amazed. "Oh, the firmness of his mind! His heart is not subjugated by Cupid. See his controlled steadiness. Rāma is well-known due to that. In every respect he has auspiciousness. Nothing inauspicious is (to be found) anywhere (about him)." Then Rāma said (these) words: "O lord, I would go."

54-60. Then, Rāma, permitted by Viṣṇu, went, along with the sages, along with Śambhu and Nārāyaṇa, by the Puṣpaka (plane). He quickly went to the Lokāloka (mountain), and thence to the sweet ocean. From there he went to the islands

and seas and then to Jambūdvīpa. He stayed in the hermitage of Bhāradvāja on the bank of Gautamī. Bhāradvāja, the best among the sages and the glorious one, having bathed in the great river and surrounded by his disciples, saw the Puṣpaka (aeroplane). The great sage then duly worshipped Rāma of mighty arms, so also Śiva, Nārāyaṇa, and the sages, and said to them: "O you best ones, please enjoy (yourselves) in my hermitage." On (these) words of the sage, Rāma somehow said, "All right!" Then Vasiṣṭha spoke (these) words to Rāma who had bathed in the great river, who had made offerings to deities etc. and who desired (i.e. was about) to take food: "O Rāma, religious merit would be lost if the obligatory śrāddha is not performed".

Śrī Rāma said:

61-64a. O revered one, if a śrāddha is missed on a new-moon day, on an eclipse-day, at the time of great portentous calamity, at a sacred place, at the time of the passage of a planetary body through a zodiacal sign, it is done again. An obligatory śrāddha should not at all be done again. These are your words. As when the death of my mothers took place, and when it was the mourning period, the obligatory śrāddha was not at all performed. But it was performed, as told by you, at the time of a great portentous calamity etc.

Vasiṣṭha said:

64b-66a. All these sages and this brāhmaṇa Śambhu are here. The decision will be fully made from their mouth (i.e. by them).

All the sages, deciding together, said to Śambhu: "O best brāhmaṇa, tell us everything (since) you are great."

Śambhu said:

66b-68. The (obligatory) śrāddha may be avoided (on such occasions). (But) it should be done again. I am telling about (the circumstance when) the period of impurity has approached, and when there are (other) obstacles. They prescribe all śrāddhas like the monthly, or offering jars of water, and all

other śrāddhas, so also the annual śrāddha (to be performed) after the impurity period (is over).

69-70a. There is no doubt that all (the śrāddhas) that were avoided due to the difficulty caused by the period of impurity, should be performed immediately after it. In the same way all monthly śrāddhas, the annual śrāddha, or (any other śrāddha not performed) due to any other difficulty, should be performed immediately after the period of impurity.

70b-74a. One desiring merit should perform a śrāddha on the eleventh day of the dark fortnight. If it is not performed at that time, then it is done on the new-moon day, (or) it should be performed without difficulty on (any of the) subsequent days. O Rāma, the śrāddha which should have been performed on the new-moon day in the dark fortnight, was not performed. If the month of the day of death is not somehow known (i.e. if the day is known but not the month), then the day in Mārgaśīrṣa or Māgha is recommended for the śrāddha. But when the day is not known, but the month is known, the annual śrāddha should take place on the new-moon day of that month.

74b-76. If the day or the month of the death or going away of a person is not known, then that day (on which the news is got) should be taken as a day for the performance of the śrāddha. If that also is not known, i.e. due to not knowing the day or the month, one of the three, viz. new-moon day of Āśvina or of Mārgaśīrṣa or Māgha may be taken (as the day on which the śrāddha should be performed). The waxing of the moon should be taken for the śrāddha month after month.

77-82. The *Nitya* (i.e. obligatory) *śrāddha*, the *Kumbha śrāddha* should be performed even in the intercalary month, so also on an eclipse day, day of the birth of a son etc. or of an expiatory rite. When everything is planned, there is no fault in performing it even in the intercalary month. When the rite of śrāddha is at hand, if the man who has to perform the śrāddha, is unwell, he should appoint his wife, brother or his disciple to perform it. In his absence the rite called śrāddha does not suffer. He should appoint (i.e. invite) one who would eat (the food at the śrāddha and feed him) according to his capacity at an obligatory śrāddha; so also at the monthly śrāddha performed on a new-moon day, other than the day on which the person is

dead. If he is unable, he should appoint his son or a brāhmaṇa. The śrāddha to be offered by a man who is appointed to do a royal job or employed as a servant, should be got done by a brāhmaṇa; so also in case of all difficulties. The best brāhmaṇas do not perform a śrāddha in the morning.

83-88. No such restriction about time is ordained in the case of occasional śrāddhas. The course for one who is separated from his wife is said to be his sister's or daughter's son (obscure!). The latter should be near him. The date for a śrāddha to be performed every month should be touching the afternoon. When the new-moon day spreads over two days, it should be touching the afternoon. When the day ends between the two sunrises or when there is sameness the next day is recommended (for śrāddha). That new-moon day which lasts for two afternoons is *sama* (i.e. same). When the day ends between two sunrises, then the former is recommended; when it comprises two sunrises, the latter is recommended; and when it has sameness, the latter is (ordained). When the moon has waned, the śrāddha should be done on the parvan day. She (i.e. *tithi*) is feasible on the eighth part of the new-moon day.

89-90a. If she has not passed the eight parts, that should be taken as covering the midday, and that should be the day when a śrāddha is offered to one individual only. That day should be taken (for śrāddha), which covers the evening of a parvan day. That new-moon day which lasts for a part of the afternoon should be accepted for a śrāddha etc.

90b-92a. On the day of the death (anniversary) the day for the śrāddha would be three watches in the evening. When it has ended then, as told before, it should be performed during the three watches on the next day. Among the śrāddhas, the śrāddha performed on the next day brings about the destruction of the eldest son. When the day of the deceased has arrived, the śrāddha of the full-moon day should be performed. For a brāhmaṇa it is laid down to be covering the midday.

Rāma said:

92b-93a. Please tell us about the rule to be fully followed in the case of a śrāddha-rite or rites to be performed by a mortal, so also the occasional rites.

Śambhu said:

93b-96. When the day for the śrāddha has stood by, a man, being restrained, should, on the previous day, invite best brāhmaṇas endowed with the characteristics of a (good) brāhmaṇa. (On this day) he should eat once only. He should observe celibacy, and should not talk to the low-born ones. The performer of the śrāddha should perform brushing his teeth, anointing his body or clipping his nails on the previous day and should avoid these on the next day. He should follow the rules that are laid down; and should avoid all this. If the worship is to be done thrice, he should worship his deity in the morning.

97-101. If he who knows how to perform the rites, worships (his deity) at sunrise, then he should sleep on the (bare) ground and should do so on getting up in the morning. Having performed the rites to be performed in the morning after taking a bath, he becomes free from the three debts (to sages, gods and manes) and goes to that highest Brahman. He who worships Śiva at the time of sunrise, becomes lustrous like the sun and is honoured in the heaven of Śiva. He who worships after a ghaṭikā (i.e. 24 minutes) after sunrise, becomes bright like Rudra and is honoured in the heaven of Śiva. If he worships the lord in the second ghaṭikā (of the day), he becomes radiant like Vāyu and is honoured in the heaven of Śiva.

102-105. He who would perform Śiva's worship in the third ghaṭikā, becomes bright like Kubera and is honoured in Śiva's heaven. He who devoutly worships Śiva in the fourth, fifth, sixth or seventh ghaṭikā becomes like a god in Śiva's heaven. The worship should be done at that time at which it is ordained. Or he should take a vow, observe restrictions and should worship. He should observe the rule according to his capacity in the formalities. O lord, would a rite be (a proper rite), if the rule is violated?

Śrī Rāma said:

106-109. Where should the worship of Śaṅkara be done—of Śaṅkara who is the god of gods, who is of unlimited prowess, who destroys sins when remembered, and who also gives salvation when remembered, who is auspicious, who is of an auspicious form,

who knows the auspicious essential truth, who is Soma (i.e. Śiva), who is best adorned, whose eyes are best, who shines, who is of the form of Vedas, who is formless, who knows the essence of the Vedas, who knows the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, who is to be known and cannot be known, who is a meditating saint, whose body is like cow's milk, who takes delight in bathing with cow's milk, who looks after the cows, who has three eyes, who has the three eyes in the form of the triad (of the Vedas) and who is powerful.

110-114. In between the questions he showed Rāma auspicious knowledge. He, seated as it were he had become a post, with his eyes fixed on the tip of his nose, with the stream of tears of joy trickling from his eyes and touching his cheeks, held in the lotus of his heart god Śiva whose body was very glossy like milk and was very charming. In the body of Rāma the reflection was seen. Seeing Śambhu having four hands and three eyes reflected thus, all the sages, Viṣṇu and the lord (Śiva) were very much amazed. Seeing Rāma, auspicious and of a bright form, remaining in Śambhu's chest, they kept mum for half a watch. He, referring to his question, said: "Please tell the whole thing."

Śambhu said:

115-117. According to one's desire worship is done of a stable image or of an unstable one. If an image etc. is not acquired, (then) the principal (thing) is Phallus worship. In that case also a man should carry on worship according to his authority. The Phallus worship, faulty or without a fault, is fruitful. The worship of an image, if faulty, does not become fruitful. The worship of a Phallus, fixed one or unstable, is recommended.

118-125. I shall (now) tell about the worship of an unstable (image etc.); so also about its installation and dismissal. No sage anywhere knows both these. The meditating saints always install the lord of gods, Śaṅkara, in their lotus-like hearts, take care of him, worship him and then take him out. The sacrificial priests have a great rite in worshipping the three-eyed god in fire. All the worshippers install the great lord on the Phallus of Śiva. The installation of the Phallus (should be done); its worship

should be performed; it should then be dismissed; the great Phallus of Śiva should be put on (the body); it should be decorated, be highly excellent, should be fashioned with gold, or silver, or with portions of silver; the top of it should be arranged with portions of bamboo, or tendrils of creepers, or with wood, or it would be arranged with a piece of cloth or with clay. It should be surrounded with a piece of cloth made fragrant; it should have a pair of washed garments, and endowed with a seat of clay. It should be without cold or heat, and should be endowed with four feet. It should have a portion of a hedge, and without worms and insects.

126-129a. Having covered on all sides that (Phallus of) Śiva with a soft, washed garment, and having put him (i.e. it) on an altar, one should again cover the lord; this, O Rāma, is said to be the decoration in front of the god. It should be installed, and the recitation (of the hymn) of the great lord should be done in a secluded place. Or it should be placed at the root of a wall or on an altar; so also in a protected region; and he should appoint a protector (to look after it). He should, along with restrictions, bring about the union with Prāṇa (i.e. the vital breath) etc.

129b-130a. This installation of the highest lord is said to be Rājasa (i.e. endowed with the quality of passion). The Sāttvika (i.e. of the nature of goodness) is that which is (kept) near oneself. The Tāmasa (i.e. of the nature of darkness) is again (like this):

130b-136. It should be worn so as to touch the body or would cover the entire body. The chief one is wearing it on the head. Brahmā had done like that. Wearing it by keeping it under the crown is said to be auspicious. Wearing it on the forehead is (also) recommended, as Lakṣmī had worn one auspicious one. Bāṇa had worn it on the head and also on the right (part of the) chest. The great meditating sage Harakarṇa had worn it on his ear. Some excellent demons fashioning one of iron, cut a part of their body and wear it there. Weak men having no abodes should wear it on their heads. Wearing it near the knot of the lower garment etc. is said to be most mean. When they get what is left over, it should be worn on the head. Those whose conduct is the meanest, and those who are sinners, should always wear a Liṅga. The wonder is: It is not in Yama's world.

Śrī Rāma said:

137. How does the worship of Śambhu change the (visit) to hell due to the writing firmly done by Citragupta on the forehead (of a person)? How does it destroy a sin?

Śambhu said:

138-143a. It destroys all the sin committed during hundreds of existences. Due to the destruction of all the sins and the recollection of the great god, the word *bhasma* (sacred ash) is mentioned. The wearing of (i.e. besmearing with) bhasma—the ash is excellent. As fire would destroy a writing on a tablet, in the same way besmearing the forehead with ash would destroy the writing of Yama. On its application to the face the sin done by the part above the ears would perish. On applying it to the neck sins due to enjoyments had by the throat would perish. (Its application) to the arms (destroys) the sin committed by the arms. (Its application) to the chest (destroys) sins committed by the mind. (Its application) to the navel (destroys) sins committed by the male generative organ. (Its application) to the back (destroys sins) committed by the anus. O Rāma, by applying it to the two sides (of the body) the sin due to embracing the wife of another man etc. perishes.

143b-149. In every case the application of bhasma (i.e. the sacred ash) is recommended to be in three lines. (Due to it) the holding of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, and of the three fires (is secured). For the protection of the three worlds the application was done by him. Bhasma that is consecrated and put on (i.e. applied to) the fifteen places (of the body) is auspicious—the two visceras (like the lungs etc.), the pair of the arms, above the visceras. It is accepted by all to be applied by all bodies for the purpose of worship. There is no doubt that those who eat the sacred ash, who sleep on the sacred ash, and who have their bodies smeared with the sacred ash, and bathe with (i.e. apply) sacred ash, are always freed from sins. It is said to be giving a triple power at the initiation of a brāhmaṇa. It is a protector at the time of the birth of men, and at the time of being possessed by a ghost. It is a remedy for all for the destruction of the poison of a serpent etc. A devotee of Viṣṇu or any other man who

bathes with sacred ash or has applied sacred ash, excels in his acts.

Śrī Rāma said:

150. Tell me all that: First (tell me) the importance of the sacred ash; (tell me) how it prolongs life and how it is preserved.

Śambhu said:

151-152a. It is the cause of increasing (the span of) life in the three kinds of men. (Merely) by touch it destroys sins, so also cold and hot, and it gives Śiva's position. In this matter I shall tell you an ancient account.

152b-156. There was a brāhmaṇa named Dhanañjaya belonging to Vasiṣṭha's family. He had a hundred wives endowed with form and beauty. One of them, Śāmākā, gave birth to (a son named) Karuṇa, O Sage. O Rāma, he had (a large number of) ascetic sons according to the number of wives. The father made an unequal distribution (of wealth) among them. Then there was a great enmity among the brothers. It is universal that men of the same stock have enmity (among themselves). Then (once) this Karuṇa along with hosts of sages went to the bank of Bhavanāśinī to see Narasiṁha.

157-162a. A certain brāhmaṇa had brought an excellent lovely fragrant fruit for (offering it after) seeing Nṛsiṁha. Karuṇa took that excellent fruit and smelt it. The hosts of brāhmaṇas (that were present) there joined him with a curse (i.e. cursed him): "O you of a sinful mind, from now onwards be a bee for a hundred years. The end of your curse will be (done) by the magnanimous Dadhīci." Then, he who had become a bee, said to his wife: "O auspicious one, I am turned into a bee. (Please) look after me." Saying so, and being like that (i.e. a bee) he wandered here and there. Then his kinsmen of a sinful resolve, having come to know him to be like this (i.e. to be turned into a bee), having attempted to kill him, threw him into oil.

162b-167. Taking (i.e. finding) her husband to be dead, the woman of a slim waist was afflicted. To appease her grief goddess Arundhatī said: "O you of a bright smile, I shall bring him

back to life with sacred ash only." Then she gave Arundhatī the sacred ash from the sacred fire. She threw it on the dead being (the dead man) with the Mṛtyuñjaya hymn. Then the woman of a bright smile fanned (her dead husband) gently with a fan. Then due to the power of the sacred ash, the being (i.e. the man) got up. Then when a hundred years were over, a kinsman killed (him). When the husband died, that chaste woman of a bright smile was afflicted. The chaste woman sought the refuge of Dadhīca, the best brāhmaṇa and a sage, a great devotee of the great lord (Śiva). The brāhmaṇa, a treasure of penance, said (to her):

168-171. Bhasma (i.e. the sacred ash) alone brought back to life Jamadagni, a treasure of penance, who was bereft of life (i.e. who was dead); so also Kaśyapa who was like that (i.e. who was dead); so also (it brought back to life) gods, (other) beings, and even me in olden times. Therefore, O sinless one, with the sacred ash only I shall bring back to life your being (i.e. your husband)." Saying so the venerable Dadhīca sought the succour of the great lord (i.e. Śiva). Taking the sacred ash in his hand and consecrating it with a hymn, he brought back to life the husband of that very chaste woman. At the touch of the hand of the great lord, Karuṇa became free from the curse. Going to (i.e. regaining) his original form, he went to his own hermitage.

172-174a. The chaste woman invited Dadhīca to her house for food; she solicited the brāhmaṇa sage (to take food); and then the brāhmaṇa ate (food). When the best brāhmaṇa had eaten food, a crore of (his) disciples came (there); so also gods with their bodies smeared with the sacred ash came (there). Having saluted Dadhīca, they approached him with a desire (to know) Śiva.

The gods said:

174b-178a. O you highly intelligent one, formerly our knowledge had disappeared. Seeing Gautama's wife we were affected by love. We outraged her who had gone through the auspicious rite of marriage. The knowledge of us who longed for her, perished. Then, all of us (turned into) ghosts went to the sage Durvāsas. He said: "Now (only) I shall remove the entire sin of you by

means of the Śatarudriya hymn, consecrated by Śambhu (i.e. Śiva) himself. He also gave it to me for appeasing (the sin due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc."

178b-180. Saying so, Durvāsas gave the excellent bhasma (the sacred ash) to us. Then, all of us, whose minds were perverted, became at that moment only free from sins after our bodies were smeared with the sacred ash to the accompaniment of the Śatarudriya hymn. This is a wonder. We know the power of bhasma to be like this.

Dadhīca said:

181-185a. I shall tell you in brief the power of the bhasma of (i.e. sacred to) Śiva. Even in hundreds of years it is not possible to tell it in detail. Now I shall tell you the old account of the two gods, Viṣṇu and Śaṁkara, (so also about) the destruction of (the sin due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Formerly at the time of the deluge (of the creation) of Brahmā in an awful ocean, the great illustrious Viṣṇu lay in the water of (i.e. caused by) the deluge. Two hundred 'eggs of Brahmā' (i.e. worlds) reached his two sides. Twenty were by the side of his two feet, and twenty near his head. The lord held the 'egg of Brahmā' as a pearl (worn) on the nose.

185b-191. Certain excellent sages like Lomaśa, were practising great (i.e. severe) penance in the circle of (i.e. his round) navel. They were propitiating the great god. Then Viṣṇu of great lustre, with a desire to create (the world) thought; being intent upon profound meditation, he did not see anything. Due to great grief he repeatedly cried aloud. In the meanwhile, seeing an extraordinary lustre, Viṣṇu, through fear, closed his eyes. He (who possessed that extraordinary lustre), having a body, and lustrous like cow's milk, came there and collected the pair of the row of a crore of 'Brahmā's eggs' in his couple of hands; he held to his bosom the lustre produced by the crore of 'Brahmā's eggs'. One 'egg of Brahmā' (i.e. a world) jumped up and fell into his two hands. Not being able to see him, Viṣṇu (desiring) to see him, praised him, the immutable one, who was like that and who was (adorned) with all ornaments.

Viṣṇu said:

192-200a. Salutation to you, the god of gods; salutation to you the eternal and immutable one. I do not know you; (but) you know (me). My repeated salutations to you. I do not know your (true) state. Your lustre is difficult to look at. I seek the refuge of you who have put on emerald ear-rings, who are adorned with a row of golden necklaces, who have put on a jewelled ring, who are illustrious, who have put on ornaments on your arms and viscera, whose eyes are slightly red, bright and long (i.e. broad), who view (sharply) like an arrow, who have an (additional) eye on your forehead, who are immutable, whose eyebrows create the illusions of Cupid's bow, who are the lord, whose lovely nose is high, whose cheeks are spotless, whose smile is gentle, whose face is pleased, who are mighty, who appear (charming) like the young moon, who have put on the red garment of wisdom, who have devised the anklets of the Vedas. O mighty one, give me sight. Be the refuge of one that is doomed by ignorance and that is helpless, blind and pitiable.

Then he (i.e. Śambhu) gave him divine sight capable of seeing himself. Then Viṣṇu, seeing the three-eyed Śambhu standing before him, said (to him): "Who are you? I do not recognise you of a great glory. I am able only to salute you but not to recognise you."

Sadāśiva said:

200b-201a. I shall give you knowledge. Bathe in the ocean. After that have bath with (i.e. apply) sacred ash, and after that I shall give you knowledge.

The lord said:

201b-203a. Nowhere is there water fit for my bath.

Thus addressed, he with 'Brahmā's egg' touching his body, sat there. It was not proper for Viṣṇu to bathe in thigh-deep water. Śambhu laughed (and said): "Oh, there is too much water for (your) bath."

Dadhīca said:

203b-210a. Then god Śiva looked at Viṣṇu with the eye on his forehead; and looked at him whose subtle limbs had disappeared with his left eye. Then Viṣṇu, having a subtle and cold body was (thus) told by Śambhu: "O Viṣṇu, take a bath; this deep lake is fashioned". Then Viṣṇu was not able to enter that deep lake prepared on Śiva's lap for bathing. Viṣṇu said: "There is no way to get into the lake. O god, give me a way (to enter it)." Then Śambhu said to him: "O mighty one, formerly this large (quantity of) water was a crore yojanas deep. When you entered it, it has become thigh-deep. When you are (already) standing there, how do you say you have no entrance? In this deep lake of mine I see that this thigh (of you) is of the measure of eight fingers. Get in; I shall give a touch to (i.e. support) your feet. One sentence uttered by me is a staircase; it is Veda that has come out of my words."

Viṣṇu said:

210b-211a. Nobody here has the ability to climb up (the staircase of) words. It is possible to grasp a tangible object. How can the scriptures be grasped?

Śambhu said:

211b-214a. A man has no capacity to grasp or climb up objects. Accept this great Veda.

Then Hari too accepted it. He, with his hands bent due to lack of strength, was as it were falling. (Then) Viṣṇu said to Śiva: "It is not possible for me to hold it." Śiva laughed, as it were dropping into the great deep lake. (He said): "O Keśava, having gone up the staircase, please take a bath."

Dadhīca said:

214b-217. He (i.e. Viṣṇu), having duly bathed there (i.e. in the great deep lake) where the Veda had become the staircase and the water was thigh-deep, came out, and said: "I have bathed. What next is to be done?" Then Śambhu said to Viṣṇu: "Tell me whether you are thinking or not thinking of something in your mind." Hari said: "(I am) not (thinking of) anything."

Then Śambhu said to him: "Having purified yourself with the bath with (i.e. the application of) sacred ash, you will know the highest auspicious object; for that is recommended for one who is initiated. I would protect that."

Dadhīca said:

218-222. Then Śiva took (i.e. scratched) the sacred ash on his chest with his nail, consecrated it with Om and the Gāyatrī (hymn) of the form of Brahman, took it with (i.e. between) his fingers, and with (the accompaniment of the hymn of) five syllables he threw it on the head and all limbs of Viṣṇu. Gazing on him with tranquil eyes, Śiva said to Viṣṇu: "Live (long). Meditate on what there is in your heart." Then he was intent upon meditation. In his heart he saw a lamp of a long (i.e. big) shape and very bright. Viṣṇu said to Śiva: "I have actually seen a lamp." Śiva said: "O Viṣṇu, your knowledge is not mature. Eat the sacred ash. (Then) your knowledge will be complete."

Viṣṇu said:

223-233. I shall eat the sacred ash. Formerly I have bathed with (i.e. applied to my body) the sacred ash.

Seeing the lord, accessible through devotion (only), Viṣṇu ate the sacred ash. (Then) there was a great wonder: In a moment Viṣṇu became one having the lustre of a ripe bimba fruit and having the complexion of a pure pearl. Since then this Viṣṇu is pleased and is (of a) white (complexion). Then again he became engrossed in meditation, and in the lamp saw a man who was like a pure crystal, who was Śiva with three eyes and two hands, who gave a boon with the right hand and fearlessness with the left, whose body was like that (of a child) of five years, whose brilliance was like that of a myriad moons, whose ear-rings were made of emeralds, who was adorned with a row of necklaces, who was handsome due to a jewelled ring, who had put on ornaments on his arms and chest etc., whose lips were small and red, whose eyes were long and reached his ears, whose eyes were sharp like arrows, who had an eye on his forehead, who was immutable, whose eyebrows created the illusion

of Cupid's bow, who was the lord, whose lovely nose was high, whose cheeks were spotless, whose smile was gentle, whose face was pleased, who looked like the young moon, who was mighty, who had put on the red garment of wisdom, who had devised the anklets of the Vedas, who had put a jewelled Om in the left finger (i.e. finger of the left hand), and who was immutable. Then Viṣṇu became (i.e. looked upon himself as) blessed. Then Śambhu said: "O Viṣṇu, what did you see in your heart?" Viṣṇu said: "First I saw a man of gentle body." Saying so, Viṣṇu fell at the feet of Śiva.

Viṣṇu said:

234. I do not know the power of the sacred ash, or whence can I know your prowess? Salutation to you, salutation to you. I seek your refuge.

Śiva said:

235. O illustrious one, ask for a boon which you desire with (i.e. have in) your mind.

Having then heard the words of Śiva, Viṣṇu chose an excellent boon.

Viṣṇu said:

236-239. O Śambhu, let me always have devotion for the couple of your feet.

Then having granted the boon Śambhu said these (words) to Viṣṇu: "Being happy with the application of the sacred ash, you will be my devotee."

Dadhīca said:

Thus I have told you from the beginning the great knowledge due to (the application of) the sacred ash. Therefore, O you all gods, apply sacred ash carefully.

The gods had their eyes dilated due to wonder (and said:) "Let it be so." He who every day listens to this meritorious, excellent account, is freed from all sins, and goes to the position of Śaṁkara.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIX

A Sinful Brāhmaṇa Becomes an Attendant of Vīrabhadra

Śucismitā said:

1. O great sage, the eating of the sacred ash is seen to prolong life. It is capable of giving a course of the other world.

Dadhīca said:

2-8. In this matter I shall tell you an old and well-known account of what happened between Yama and Citragupta. Formerly a dog wandered through hunger in Mithilā. In a hundredth previous existence he was a brāhmaṇa of sinful resolves. In his youth he was a very intelligent (man) who was endowed with the (knowledge) of Vedas and sacred texts. Having gone to Gaṅgā for bathing, he bathed (in Gaṅgā) and having worshipped his dead ancestors, gods and sages also, went to the city (called) Prāttalikā. He took shelter in a brāhmaṇa's house. There was staying a daughter of a kṣatriya. She was young. Her lover was killed. She had lost her kingdom. She possessed wealth of six crores of niṣkas. At night, after moonlight, she came near the brāhmaṇa who was asleep and was handsome in all limbs, and seeing him said these words: "O brāhmaṇa, wherefrom have you come? To which country will you go?"

The brāhmaṇa said:

9. Stirring (out) at a wrong time would certainly create suspicion (in the minds) of all; so also the talk between us who are young in this private, mirthful chamber.

The kṣatriya woman said:

10-11. A talk in private (between a young man and a young woman) is not censurable when a tale is told, on a pilgrimage, at a sacred place, at the time of the devastation of the country etc., at the time of a famine, or when the village is on fire. You yourself first took shelter in my house. I am (just) staying in this house. (Therefore) nobody will have a suspicion in this matter.

The brāhmaṇa said:

12-17. I have to keep mum. Quickly go from my presence.

Thus addressed by the brāhmaṇa she thus thought to herself: 'Somehow or other I should have union with him. I shall (now) weep so that he will come to console me. When he will come to console me, he will raise me up. Then I shall get up and have contact of his neck with my creeper-like arms (i.e. I shall throw my creeper-like arms round his neck); and as it were fainting, I shall touch his body with the pair of my breasts. Seeing me having lost consciousness, he, the best brāhmaṇa who would be seated, will put my body on his lap. I, as it were being unconscious, will throw off my garment, and as it were weeping (i.e. pretending to weep), shall show him that (private) part (of me) which is very lovely, which is free from hair, which has the shape of a ripe aśvattha-leaf, which is the very fragrant abode of Cupid.

18-22. Having, while rolling on his body, removed his garment, I shall make his mind perplexed and bring the brāhmaṇa under my control. His mind would not be (as perturbed) when (my private part) is not seen as it would be (perturbed) when it is seen. The mind is not so (much perturbed) in (i.e. due to) talk as it is by means of actual seeing (the private part). The mind is not (perturbed) like that in a mirthful talk as it is in (i.e. by means of) a dialogue. The mind is not so (much perturbed) by means of a touch as it is in (i.e. due to) a mirthful talk. (The mind is) not so (much perturbed) by touching the vulva as by seeing it. Whose mind does not become excited and whose semen does not trickle down on seeing a woman's armpits, her pair of breasts and her vulva being touched (by herself)?'

Dadhīca said:

23-28. Thinking like this with (i.e. in) her mind, that kṣatriya woman went to her house; and having approached the door of her house, she wept gently. She wept for a long time. 'Removing the grief of a woman, a child, an old man, a feeble person, a king, a meditating saint due to poison, fire, water or the fall of a stone etc. is recommended; they say it is like giving a well.' Thinking like this that brāhmana, the treasure of kindness, being

pure and with his mind pleased, went near her, and then the brāhmaṇa said to her: "Enough of (i.e. desist from) this great grief going against (happiness in) this and the next world. This leads to the drying up of the body and harms the mind also. O you young woman, give up this grief. It is no use grieving. What is the cause of your wailing; what is it for which you are weeping?"

Dadhīca said:

29-35a. Thus addressed by that brāhmaṇa, she did not say anything. She fell on the ground as if she had fainted; and looked at him (and showed) as it were she did not see him. The brāhmaṇa, knowing the highest truth, made her get up. When he made her get up, she got up but again and again fell down. The brāhmaṇa sat down and again and again got her up who had repeatedly fallen down, put her on his lap, and wiped her eyes. Then as it were she had fainted, she removed her garment, and showed him her breasts, her private part, her arm-pits and eyes. Having hung to his neck with her arms, she touched the brāhmaṇa with her breasts. The moonlight was clear, and there were gentle breezes. Then the brāhmaṇa became engrossed in thinking: 'This is not my work. It is proper for the father, the mother, the husband or the teacher. To me who am not enlightened, everything appears inauspicious.'

35b-40a. Then Cupid came there when the two were in private. Cupid, of a bad heart, struck the brāhmaṇa with sharp arrows. The brāhmaṇa, being afflicted due to the arrows of Cupid, became lustful, and thought: 'This one, very beautiful in all limbs, appears to be lustful. Otherwise how can there be horripilation on her vulva? All that will be clear from the touch of her breasts.' Thinking like this, the brāhmaṇa touched her breasts and vulva. She too, who feigned a swoon, had a smile on her face. She closely embraced the brāhmaṇa, and kissed his face. Then they were united even for a hundred years.

40b-42. When a hundred years had passed, the brāhmaṇa one day in the morning went to a river to bathe. She too went with the brāhmaṇa. He bathed there and listened to the Kaurma Purāṇa which destroys all sins and gives (i.e. produces) devotion

to Śiva; and heard this verse uttered by the one who knew the Purāṇa.

43-45a. "He who kills a brāhmaṇa, he who drinks liquor, a thief, he who violates his teacher's wife, becomes free from the sin by just listening to the Kaurma Purāṇa." Hearing this statement, the brāhmaṇa said to that brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Purāṇas: "The sins committed by me have no number (i.e. cannot be counted). Tell me that which would destroy the heap of all (my) sins."

The brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Purāṇas said:

45b-47. Propitiate Śaṅkara, the god of gods, the lord of gods. O brāhmaṇa, by means of his worship all your (sin) will perish. Sin is said to be darkness. It perishes by means of the lamp of knowledge, or O brāhmaṇa, all sins perish due to the worship of him. Those who are bereft of knowledge and worship certainly fall into a hell.

Dadhīca said:

48-51a. Then the brāhmaṇa went to an excellent temple of Śiva. (There) he worshipped Śaṅkara with a thousand droṇa flowers. Then he went home and took food. Leaving the kṣatriya woman the brāhmaṇa went to the desired region. Having procured food to be eaten on days of fast, and having eaten it according to his capacity, he went to the temple of Śiva. Going there, he ate his meal with the ghee in the lamp outside the temple. Then he was under the sway of death, and went to Yama's world.

Yama said:

51b-57. Certain sins formerly committed by you have perished. O brāhmaṇa, since you offered worship to Śaṅkara on one day, a thousand of your sins have perished. Of the sins that have remained, the fruit is a fall into hell, (and staying there) for two crores of years, and having the existence of a dog a hundred times. Due to stealing the ghee from the lamp of Śiva a man has to resort to (i.e. to live in) hell for a hundred very awful years. He turns into wood in the Kumbhīpāka hell, and repeatedly becoming ash for ten years,

he then becomes an insect for another ten (years). Then for ten years he becomes the wick of a lamp. Sinking in and coming up from phlegm, impure feces, and pools of urine and semen, he eats phlegm, feces and dirt. Then when the residence in hell is over, he gets a hundred existences as a dog.

58-62. Hearing these words of Yama, the brāhmaṇa fell down. Then his dear wife became full of anxiety. In the meanwhile, Nārada came near her. She who was extremely afflicted, fell at the feet of Nārada. Having raised her, Nārada said to the pure one about her dead (husband): "O innocent one of large eyes, please go to your husband. O you of large eyes, your husband, abandoned by his kinsmen, is dead. O auspicious one, you should not weep. Enter fire (i.e. funeral pyre of your husband)."

The brāhmaṇa woman said:

O sage, tell me whether I should or should not go, so that the time for entering the fire should not elapse.

Nārada said:

63. That city is at a distance of a hundred yojanas from here. The brāhmaṇa (i.e. the body of your husband) will be burnt tomorrow.

Avyayā said:

64-69a. O sage, I deserve to go to the lord of my body, who is away.

Hearing her words, Nārada said to her: "You sit upon the handle of my lute. I shall go (there) in a moment." Saying so, he made haste and went there—to the country and abode of the dead brāhmaṇa. The sage said to that Avyayā: "If you will go to (i.e. desire to enter) fire there, then do not weep. O daughter, if you have committed a sin like enjoying another man (than your husband) then make an expiation to purify that. On entering into the fire your minor sins will perish. Leaving (i.e. except) entering the fire I do not see any other (expiation) for women for the appeasement of all sins."

Dadhīca said:

69b-70a. Impelled by Nārada's words, she said: "O great sage, what have women to do at the time of entering fire?"

Nārada said:

70b-75a. They have to bathe, sanctify themselves, have to put on ornaments and apply unguents, have to apply sandal (-paste), have to put on flowers, have to have incense, turmeric and sacred rice grains. They have to wear an auspicious thread and apply red lac to their feet. They should give gifts according to their capacity, they should speak agreeable words, and should have a pleasing face. They should listen to (the sound of) many auspicious musical instruments and songs. When a sin of (the nature of) infidelity is committed, then, with reference to that old sin (i.e. sin committed previously), that is said to be an expiation for the appeasement of that sin. Then she should put on the ornaments and offer them to a brāhmaṇa. In the absence of (such) ornaments, she should not make (the brāhmaṇa) perform the (rite of) expiation. In no other way, and nowhere, can that sin perish.

Avyayā said:

75b-76a. I shall do all this; (but) I do not have turmeric. What are the ornaments? O brāhmaṇa, give all that to me.

Nārada said:

76b. There is no such article of the auspicious state of wifehood as is required.

Dadhīca said:

77-78a. Then in a moment he (i.e. Nārada) went to Śiva's abode, Kailāsa. Seeing Girijā (i.e. Pārvatī) he saluted her and said to her: "O mother, give me turmeric, ornaments and an auspicious thread."

Pārvatī said:

78b-79a. How should I give any ornament to a widow ? If I give (her an ornament), widowhood is not possible.

Nārada said:

79b-80a. O mother, a woman is not a widow as long as her husband's body remains (unburnt). Till the husband's body is burnt, there is no impurity and the auspicious state of wifehood remains.

Pārvatī said:

80b-83. No other body (than mine) deserves to put on my ornaments and turmeric. When ornaments etc. are given by me, long life is prescribed. Whatever you have said would be given by (my maid) Jayantī.

Then he went to Jayantī and carried whatever was given by her. Then the sage gave turmeric to Avyayā who was being given a bath. Then the sage gave her fine garments and ornaments. He said to her: "Who will perform your funeral rites? Appoint him."

Avyayā said:

84. O sage, you alone are the cause of (i.e. will perform) all rites in my case. You are my father. Perform every (rite); salutation to you, O best sage.

Dadhīca said:

85-90. Then having burnt (i.e. consigned to fire the body of) the brāhmaṇa, Nārada said to her: "O Avyayā, go, and enter the fire if you so desire." Then the chaste lady decorated (herself), and having saluted Nārada after going round him three times keeping him to her right, dedicated her mind to Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī). Desiring to please Pārvatī, she separately (i.e. one by one) touched her very fine auspicious thread, turmeric, so also sacred grains and flowers, garments, musk, sandal, golden comb, various fruits, from presents to her garments—gave all (these) to elderly married women. The chaste woman went three times round the fire which was, as it were, burning the sky with rows of flames, by keeping it to her right, and stood in front of it. Then with the palms of her hands folded and with a smiling face she said these words:

Avyayā said:

91-98. O regents of the quarters like Indra, O mother Earth, O Sun, O all gods like Dharma (i.e. Yama), hear my words: "If, from (the day of) marriage till today I have, day and night, devoutly served my husband by words, thought, and by acts, and if in the three states (of youth, adulthood and old age) I have not transgressed (in my duties to him), then truly grant me going with my husband."

Saying so, she quickly dropped the flower from the tip of her hand (and) entered the blazing fire. Then she saw an aeroplane, which was excellent like the Sun and graced with the music of celestial nymphs. She got into the aeroplane and went to heaven with her husband. Then Yama, having honoured that chaste wife, said to her: "You will have (i.e. live in) heaven eternally; (now) no sin of you remains. In hell your sin was washed off (by staying there) for two crore years. There is no doubt about it. But (still) there is a sin. One is committed by eating the ghee of the lamp (kept in honour) of Śiva. There may not be a fall into hell, but will be hundred existences as a dog."

Avyayā said:

99. How can there be (a fall into) hell for those who are purified by entering fire? The destruction of all sins would take place by entering into fire.

Yama said:

100-106. Formerly Śambhu had said that the sin of him who steals (the articles) of Śiva, never perishes. Other sins may perish. Then he obtains the existence of a dog, which would be (continuing) for a hundred years after that.

Reaching the abode of Dadhīca he has entered the mouth of death. Near his wall there was the sacred ash that was consecrated. The dog fell into the sacred ash, died, and went to Yama. Yama honoured him, bowed down to him (and said): "You are the most meritorious sage. There is no proper place for you in my house. (Please) go out." Then that dog, impelled by Yama, went out and

remained there. Nārada saw him who remained there with tormentation; and he asked him: "Why do you, the bright one, remain here? O you of high intelligence, I know you to be a devotee of Śiva, who died remaining in the ash of (i.e. sacred to) Śiva. There is no residence in Yama's world for them who are devotees of Śiva (but) who being sinful, cast their bodies. This is Śiva's order given by Śiva."

Dadhīca said:

107-112. Speaking thus to the dog, the sage went to Kailāsa. Having saluted Śiva (by prostrating himself) like a staff, he respectfully said to him: "O god, a certain dog (having come) from Yama's city remains outside. He is dead in the sacred ash. Therefore, he deserves (residence in) your heaven." Then Vīrabhadra, the chief among the attendants, being impelled by Śiva, brought that dog having a divine form and having saluted the feet of Śiva. Then he respectfully said to the god. The attendant of Śiva (i.e. Vīrabhadra) said to the god: "Make him an attendant (i.e. one of the attendants) of me." Śiva said: "All right." The attendant became one with a dog's face (i.e. the dog became one of the attendants).

Dadhīca said:

O you Śucismitā, the importance of the sacred ash is matchless. O you of a good vow, what more than this do you wish to hear?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVEN

Vīrabhadra's Heroic Deed

Śucismitā said:

1. O brāhmaṇa, O sage, tell me how formerly the sacred ash protected Kaśyapa, Jamadagni of the gods?

Dadhīca said:

2-6. Formerly gods accompanied by Kaśyapa and others went to a well-known mountain named Śokara. In the middle of the mountain was a very beautiful (forest) which was full of many birds, which was resorted to by various hosts of sages, which was the resort of Vāsudeva, which was charming, which was resorted to by bevies of celestial nymphs, which was crowded with strange trees, which was bright with flowers of all seasons. We and others entered the best mountain (forest) like that and praising Viṣṇu went there to lord Śiva. We saw a great flame there and we entered it. Excepting me that deity (i.e. that flame) burnt (other) sages. After that it (also) burnt me. O auspicious one, we were reduced to ash.

7-14. Seeing us like this, that brave Vīrabhadra went to that mountain for some reason. With his entire body smeared with sacred ash, he remaining at the top, auspicious and pure, all alone, desireless and tranquil, heard the sound of wailing. Then he was full of thought: 'The sound of the bodies of dead men and the smell as it were of dead bodies, are being perceived.' Deciding like this in his mind, he went to the fire of great brilliance. Then that fire also started to burn Vīrabhadra. But it went out as the fire of (i.e. burning) grass (i.e. hay) would go out on receiving (i.e. being sprinkled over with) water. Then Vīrabhadra saw a great, mighty flame, which went (up) to the sky even (like) flame falling (i.e. dropped by) Śiva (obscure!). The brave Vīrabhadra thought in his mind: '(This) flame is the destroyer of hundreds of crores of beings. So for the protection of all I desire to drink it. As a thirsty man drinks water, I shall consume this great flame.' In the meanwhile a divine voice said to (Vīrabhadra) the hero.

The voice said:

15-17. O hero, do not do a rash act. Where is your thirst, and where is the fire? (i.e. What a great disparity is there between the two!). Those that are thirsty are interested in water. Opposite is (their attitude towards) a wild fire. The lord of demons, viz. Praṇaṣṭa had a large head extending over a yojana. There was another (demon) whose face extended over a hundred yojanas

and who had a hundred arms. The illustrious Agastya had completely drunk (the water of) the ocean. This flame destroyed these and other well-known (beings).

Vīrabhadra said:

18-19a. This flame will not cause fear as told by you. O Sarasvatī, I shall be angry with you. Know me to be Vīrabhadra whose position is honoured by all gods.

Bhāratī said:

19b-22a. O sage, what I said was with an affectionate feeling, and not through hatred or any other feeling. O hero, give up your anger and do what is beneficial for yourself.

Saying so the goddess vanished through the fear of the hero. Then that hero easily drank (i.e. consumed) the great flame.

22b-26a. In a moment Vīrabhadra all alone drank that great flame which extended over a hundred yojanas and was extremely difficult to bear. Just on seeing the heaps of ashes (of the bodies) of (gods) led by Indra and of sages, the magnanimous Vīrabhadra called them (out). Those dead sages and residents of heaven (i.e. gods) did not respond. Knowing the destruction of the sages and gods, Vīrabhadra thought: 'How can I, (though) an experienced one, bring all of them back to life?' Through meditation he knew (how to bring them back to) life. Sipping (water) he consecrated with the hallowed Mṛtyuñjaya hymn and with sacred ash the ashes (of the bodies) of the dead.

26b-28a. Then the best sages, having resorted to their respective bodies, got up. Then they went to the very bright side of the mountain. There also they were swallowed by a serpent of a mighty body. Then the mighty hero (Vīrabhadra) went to the great serpent.

28b-33a. Seeing Vīrabhadra to have come (there), the serpent started fighting. The serpent, taking up various forms, fought for a year. Then the hero holding with both his hands, the two lips (of the serpent), tore his entire body into two (parts). Seeing the gods dead, Śaṅkara brought them back to life with the sacred ash only. Then the gods, along with the sages, saluted Vīrabhadra and went their way. (Then) they saw the

demon Pañcameḍhra who had come there, had a large body, was endowed with ten arms, possessed five feet, had eight heads, and desired a large (quantity of) food.

33b-38. That demon, when he had fought with the monkey Vālin, who had certainly double the strength of Viṣṇu, having the body of a large boar, had suddenly struck Vālin with his five feet in boxing, and had proceeded to kill Sugrīva with his hands. He put Sugrīva into his mouth and swallowed him like a morsel. Seeing Vālin and Sugrīva swallowed, he thought: 'How shall I kill him and how shall I save the monkey?' When he was thinking like this the lord of demons ate up the monkey with one effort. Seeing the demon like that, all the gods and sages became intent on running (away).

39-44. Seeing them running, that demon Pañcameḍhra took all of them with all his hands and ate them up. Then Vīrabhadra, seeing the monkeys, sages and gods being eaten up (by the demon) angrily took in his hand a rock extending over fifty yojanas and struck it on the heads (of the demon). The middle head (of the demon) fell down. Then taking the peak of the mountain which was a hundred yojanas long and holding it more firmly, he struck the lord of mountains. Then the demon said to that three-eyed Vīrabhadra: "(Now) see the strength of my arms. I have seen your might. There is a couple of swords. They are glistening with oil, and they are fifty yojanas high (i.e. long). They extend over a yojana, are very strong, and have (good) characteristics. You take one liked by you. The one that remains is dear to me."

45-49. Saying, "All right", the very strong Vīrabhadra took one sword; and he moved the sharp sword with his hand; and then roared angrily. The best demon also took a sword and roared in the same way. Having approached Vīrabhadra, he put it on his neck (i.e. struck on his neck with it). The limb (i.e. the neck) was pierced, and profuse blood flowed out. With one hand the demon then drank the blood. Vīrabhadra angrily struck the demon on the region of his neck. He took the two heads that were cut off and that were falling down. The magnanimous one swallowed them, and roared like a lion. Due to that great roar the three worlds were agitated.

50-55. With their bodies pierced by strokes of swords made by each other, they who were roaring and who were wet with blood, appeared like the blossomed kiṁśuka (trees). The god (Vīrabhadra) and the demon (Pañcameḍhra) with swords (in their hands) fought for a year. After that they fought a mace-fight for a year. Then a battle with knives took place (between the two) for a year. Then again taking two swords, they fought with each other. Then the lord of (Śiva's) attendants, of the nature of a tusk, saying, 'Prosperity (to you)', and with his eyes red with anger, moved a great sword before him, and cut off his entire forest-like neck, as (one would cut off) a plantain tree. Taking all the heads, he ate them up. Having torn his body with his nails, he took out and saw the deities, the lordly monkeys (i.e. Vālin and Sugrīva) and the great goddess.

56-63. Seeing this very fierce battle, Nārada went and told Brahmā, Vāsudeva and Śaṅkara (about it): "The sages, the deities, the two monkeys Vālin and Sugrīva have been protected by him; and he, of the nature of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva has brought the two (monkeys) back to life." An awful boon was given by Śiva to a demon. There was a mighty demon in the kingdom of Hiraṇyakaśipu. He wonderfully fought for a hundred years with the gods. Many fled in various ways, and hundreds of demons died. He, thinking like this, was protected by his preceptor, Śukra: "O Śukra, I died a hundred times, and was brought back to life by you only. Make me immortal, and make him who is in my belly mortal (i.e. let me be immortal, and let those eaten by me die). Otherwise, I shall die; there is no doubt about it. O preceptor, I had a very terrible fight with Yama. In the battle, that valorous king Yama was swallowed up by me. He entered my belly, pierced it and roared. I then died, but was again brought back to life by you. Therefore, I shall practise penance for the death of those who are in my belly."

Śukra said:

64-65a. This is so. There is no doubt about it. You practise it duly. There is a holy place (called) Syamantapañcaka. Please go there.

The demon said:

65b-74. I shall practise a very terrible (i.e. severe) penace, (like) which was not practised by gods and demons. I shall bind with iron fetters my feet at the end, i.e. at the ankles. I shall fashion a couple of iron-pillars having iron-straps. I shall bind (i.e. keep tied) my feet in the strap and put my head below (and feet above); similarly I shall keep my mouth open, and make my face (let) down. I shall remain with a flame fluttering in a circular way and will keep my eyes open. I shall practise penance like this, whosoever may be the giver of the boon. Let Brahmā or Śaṅkara or Viṣṇu be the giver of the boon, whosoever may grant it.

Having thus spoken to his preceptor Bhārgava (i.e. Śukra), he practised the penance for five or six months and again practised another penance. Having cut off his head with his nails, he offered it, with (the accompaniment of) a hymn, into the fire. He offered his four heads, with (the utterance of) the hymn, 'Salutaion to Bhadra'. When the demon was trying to abandon (i.e. to offer) his fifth head, the revered lord of Ambikā (i.e. Śiva) stood up from the fire. He resembled a pure crystal and was adorned with the young moon. The great god said to the demon who had bent down his head: "O demon, do not do a rash act. I am the giver of a boon. Ask for a boon."

The demon said:

75-81a. You, the great god, are the giver of many boons. Let my heads that are struck off grow again and let the beings swallowed by me die. Let me have four times the power of Viṣṇu, having the body of the Boar. You may never be angry with me and be always near me. A man would come up when your matted hair is pulled out. Let me die at his hands; and not (be killed) by others. This is what I ask for.

"It shall be just so". Saying like this Śiva disappeared. (Bhāratī said:) "You have killed the sinful demon who had received such a boon." Then having embraced the hero (Vīrabhadra), Viṣṇu, Śiva and the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā) went as they had come. The wives of deities etc. fell (i.e. prostrated before him)

on the ground like a staff and said to Vīrabhadra: "Salutation to you, O lord of the god of gods; salutation to you, O eternal and endless one; salutation to you; be the giver of boons."

Vīrabhadra said:

81b-86. By means of the sacred ash I shall bring back to life the gods along with the sages and the monkeys. You should be pleased; now you should not grieve.

Saying so, Vīrabhadra brought them back to life with the sacred ash. The sages and the gods, so also the two monkeys (i.e. Vālin and Sugrīva) got up. With the palms of their hands put to their heads, they who were pleased, saluted him, and said: "O dear one, you have brought (us) back to life; you are our spiritual father. O you born of Śaṁkara, always be our refuge. Punish the children on seeing their bad behaviour; so also protect them as your own sons from the torment inflicted by the enemies and from diseases. O you sinless one, you punished those who had committed sins at the sacrifice of Dakṣa. O father, we are now (to be protected by you) like children."

Vīrabhadra said:

87-92. This is true. There is no doubt about it. Remember me when you are troubled. The trouble will quickly perish. The troubles from demons to those who recite the name of Vīrabhadra a hundred and eight times, beginning with 'Om' and ending with (the word) 'salutation', with (i.e. using) the dative (as Vīrabhadrāya), will come to an end. At the time of trouble from brāhmaṇa-ghosts and fear from goblins etc. all the troubles vanish (merely) by remembering the name (of Vīrabhadra). (One should remember him) whose eyes are like the brilliance of lightning, who is the lord, whose lips are tawny and shining with fangs resembling the young moon, whose body is very dark, who has the garland of matted hair, and who has on his body three lines of sacred ash. This recollection (of Vīrabhadra) is told for (getting) freedom from brāhmaṇa-ghosts. All this is explained in the hymn of Vīrabhadra.

Dadhīca said:

93-95. The hero accomplished (like this). So also the sages and gods that had come. By these three the great importance of the sacred ash is proclaimed. Of him who recites or listens to it, it destroys the sins, gives devotion to Śiva, and prolongs life and good health.

Śucismitā said:

I am happy; I am blessed; I am best among women. My sins are destroyed. My salutation to you, O best sage.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHT

How to Prepare Sacred Ash

Śrī Rāma said:

1. O illustrious one, tell about the origin of the sacred ash, the greatness of the sacred ash, and the religious merit (earned) through the application of the sacred ash.

Śambhu said:

2-8a. O Rāma, I shall tell you about the origin of the sacred ash. (I shall tell you about its effect) by (just) remembering or telling about it. O king, listen to it. He who is that eternal god Sadāśiva, who is saluted by Brahmā, who has three eyes, who is the prop of virtues, who is beyond qualities, who is unchangeable and immutable, had once a desire to create on seeing the three qualities in himself—this triad of qualities should be known as the three Vedas. O dear one, having divided himself and the region there, he created on his right side the son, viz. Brahmā and Hari from his left side. At the back side he created Maheśāna (i.e. Śiva); thus the mighty one created three sons. As soon as they were born they became the three gods—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. They distinctly spoke these words: "Who are you? Who are we?" To those sons Śiva

said: "You are the sons, (and) I am your father. O sons, resort to these three qualities which are the cause of (all) acts."

The sons said:

8b-16. O lord, who should resort to which quality and how long? How can there be the cessation from the qualities? Tell this to us.

Śiva said:

As long as you have (i.e. retain your) knowledge or as long as you live, each one of these qualities should be retained by you. Brahmā should retain the quality of Sattva (i.e. goodness), Viṣṇu should retain Rajas (i.e. activity) and Maheśvara (should keep) Tamas (i.e. ignorance or darkness).

As soon as the lord of gods had said this, Brahmā took up Sattva. He could not move it; then how could he be capable of holding it? Abandoning that quality, he took up the quality of Rajas. He was not able to move it; (so) he took up the Tamas quality. He was not able to move it. He fell down and wept; and Viṣṇu held the Rajas quality with his left hand. (Then) Maheśa held the Tamas quality with his two fingers; one, i.e. Viṣṇu, with his two fingers, took up the Sattva (quality). He sustained Brahmā at the footstool, and danced. The giver of the boons, having seen Śiva who was dancing, who had a graceful form, whose form was (fair) like the cow's milk, who was young and had three eyes, who held everything, who caused joy, said to his sons:

Śivā said:

17-18. O son, I am pleased (with you). Ask for a boon as desired (by you).

Then the son said to the father: "Give this boon to me: O auspicious one, let the worship intended for me be yours. You should always remain in me; you, the immutable one, are me only."

Śiva said:

19-20. O magnanimous one, this will happen; there is no doubt. These two reddish and fair, Brahmā and Viṣṇu are my

two sons. They are the fine soft hair of the armpits, they have my form and are innocent.

Then he said to Brahmā: "You resort to (i.e. take) this one quality."

Brahmā said:

21-22a. O lord, I am not able to hold the quality indicated by you. O god, I shall sustain the Rajas (quality); let Hari resort to the Sattva (quality). This god will hold the remaining quality.

Śambhu said:

22b-24. After having taken the qualities, those gods were not able always to hold them. For being able to sustain (them) they again said to Śiva (i.e. the lord): "We are not able to hold these qualities for all the time. O lord if you are the giver of boons, (then) give us the capacity (to hold them)." Then hearing their words, Śiva said (these) words.

Śiva said:

25-28. Of all (powers), the power of knowledge (alone) is called power. Vidyā (i.e. knowledge) resorts to the three qualities. Ignorance also resorts to them. Please hold the essence of the three qualities after burning them. You should hold that what would be (remaining) there.

Then his son said (these) words: "There cannot be burning without fire." Śiva said: "Fire certainly exists in the eye of Śaṅkara. These three qualities are the cow; and knowledge would be (i.e. is) the auspicious cowdung. Upaniṣad is said to be the urine (of the cow). Then one should prepare the sacred ash from them.

29-30a. One should consecrate the cow; the dung of her whose calves are dead, with the hymn *Ágāvaḥ*. (Uttering the hymn) one should make the cow eat the grass and drink the water with the hymn *Gāvo gāvo gāvaḥ*.

30b-34a. Or the one who observes the vow, should observe a fast on the fourteenth day of the bright and the dark fortnights. Then the next day one should get up in the morning and being

pure and composed and having bathed, having put on garments that are washed, should go to the cow for the dung. Having carefully got her up, one should get the urine from the cow. One should hold it in a pitcher made of gold, silver, copper or clay; or (one should hold it) in a blue lotus, or a vessel made of palāśa(-leaves) or in a horn. One should have the cow-urine and a little cowdung also. One should take in an excellent pot as told before, without letting it fall on the ground.

34b-35a. The wise one should purify the cowdung with the hymn *Śrīḥ me bhajatu* ('May prosperity resort to me'). With the hymn *Alakṣmīrmayi* ('Prosperity should not come to me'). one should purify the cowdung.

35b. With the hymn *Saṁ tvā siñcāmi* ('I sprinkle you'), he should put the cow-urine into the cowdung.

36-38a. With the hymn *Pañcānāṁ tvā* one should prepare fourteen piṇḍas. Having dried them with the rays of the sun, one should put the balls of the cowdung in the vessel already referred to. According to the rule in his own Gṛhya (Sūtra), he should install them and kindle fire. Then one should put balls (saying) 'to Arṇadeva'.

38b-39a. The wise one should perform the two rites called *Āghāra* (i.e. sprinkling clarified butter upon fire) and *Ājyabhāga* (offering two portions of clarified butter to Agni and Soma). Then he should make offerings to the lord of destruction. Then thirteen offerings like Jaya etc. should be made.

39b-42. Then five hymns like *Namo Hiraṇyabāhave* (should be recited). Thus having made all offerings ending with the fourth with the accompaniment of hymns, he should offer (an oblation) to Rudra, Śarva with the hymn *Yasya vai kaṅkati*. A wise man should offer with these the three that are known. Having made the Vyāhṛtis (i.e. uttering the words like Bhūr, Bhuvas etc.), he should offer the right sacrifice (to Agni). Then having withheld the remaining fuel, he should add other water to the water in the full vessel with the Yajus formula *Pūrṇam-āsānta*.

43-47a. He should sprinkle that water on his head with the hymn *Brāhmaṇeṣu amṛtam*. Then with the hymn *Prācyām* he should sprinkle the water in the directions. He should give a present to a brāhmaṇa. He should bring a ball of boiled rice.

With the hymn 'For the protection of the rite of all gods, I shall bring this to you, O fire; cover this one of mine today', he should cover the fire with that ball. The covering by it is said to be remaining in fire for three days. He should feed the brāhmaṇas, and being restrained in speech, should himself eat. If he desires more sacred ash, he should bring more cowdung.

47b-50a. After three days or one day, on the third or fourth day, he, having bathed in the morning, having put on white garments, having worn a white sacred thread, having put on white flowers and unguents, with his teeth (brushed) white, (his body) besmeared with the sacred ash, with the uttèrance of the hymn *Tad vā* should, indeed, not give up the sacred ash. Having offered presents, he should observe the sixteen formalities like invocation.

50b-55. Then he should collect the fire. With (the utterance of) the hymn *Agne, bhasma,* he should take the sacred ash produced (from the cowdung). Then, he should clean it with (the utterance of) the hymn *Agnirasmi* ('I am fire'), then mix it with the water of Gaṅgā or the milk of a cow. Then having powdered camphor, Kāśmīra-saffron, uśīra, sandal with agaru (a kind of sandal) well, he should drop that powder into the sacred ash with sacred hymn (i.e. syllable) *Om.* Then the hymn (that is said i.e. prescribed) at the time of sprinkling the milk is: 'O goddess, your sacred milk, giving intelligence, is nectar here (i.e. on the earth); due to your favour men are freed from all sins'. Then the learned one should invoke the small lumps of the sacred ash with the utterance of *Om.* With (the utterance of) the hymn, *Aṇoraṇīyān* the wise one (should do so).

Śambhu said:

56-61. Having thus procured the sacred ash and having taken it (in his hands), the knower of the hymns should clean it with *Om* and should get it hallowed with seven hymns. (He should apply it) to his head with (a hymn addressed) to Īśāna. (He should apply it) to his face with (the hymn) *Tat Puruṣa.* He should hallow the chest with the *Aghora* (hymn) and, the private parts with the *Vāma* (hymn), the feet with the *Sadyojāta* hymn, and the entire body with *Om.* Then he should dust

the entire body from the soles of his feet to his head (with sacred ash). Then he should sip water, and should put on a white, washed garment. Having sipped water again, he should do his rites fully. Then having taken the sacred ash and cleaned it with (the utterance of) *Om*, he should, recollecting (Śiva) the three-eyed one, the support of the three qualities, the creator of the three (Vedas) and the mighty one, with the hymn *Namaḥ Śivāya*, put the mark consisting of three lines on his forehead.

62-64a. Saying (the hymn) *Namaḥ Śivābhyām*, he should also put the mark consisting of three lines on both his arms. Saying (the hymn) *Aghorāya namaḥ* he should put (a similar mark) on both his forearms. Then (uttering the hymn) *Bhīmāya* he (should put the mark consisting of three lines) on his back, and the backside of his head. (Saying) 'salutation to Nīlakaṇṭha, the soul of all' he should put it on his head. Then having washed both his hands, he should perform (the proper) rites.

Śiva said:

64b-65a. Having, in this way, prepared and applied the sacred ash, you will be able to sustain the (three) qualities, and then create the beings.

Śambhu said:

65b-70. The gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara, thus addressed by (Śiva) did like that according to the (proper) rule, and vied with each other, being unable to recognise one another, they saluted and said to Śiva: "Who should sustain which quality?" Then Śiva said to his sons: "Due to the (particles of) dust the power of doing rites and knowledge also perish. Brahmā is seen to have a short life. He lives (longer) due to hymns. I was formerly decorated with the rows of 'Brahmā's eggs'. Having rested upon the Rajas quality, you are not recognising me.

71-78a. Viṣṇu has more power than Brahmā, and has also longer life than Brahmā in sustaining the row of 'Brahmā's eggs'. The life of Viṣṇu is said to be of the measure of four inhalings of Maheśa and me. May that Viṣṇu support you due to his having more of the Sattva (quality) than Brahmā (has). He knows me the entire time, and would not forget me. His only

worship is Sāttvikā, and neither Rājasī nor Tāmasī. Salutation to the Tranquil, Auspicious, of the Sattva quality; his possession of the Rajas quality is to be inferred. Salutation to Nīla, so the (Tamas) quality. Śambhu resorted to (it) like that. Formerly, he indeed possessed Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Therefore, worship of three kinds is laid down (in the case) of Śiva. Rajas, conjoined with Tamas is said to be awful. Śiva's worship, even more awful than that is regarded as giving a good course (i.e. salvation); and Rajas conjoined with Tamas is capable of propagating the sacred precepts. The worship even more interrupted than that is said to give fruit. Tamas mixed with Sattva promotes a mixture. A mixed worship of Śiva, causing the good of the world, is fruitless. This way or that way (but) worship of the lord should be regularly done. (The worship) of Śaṅkara in whatever way is said to give a quick fruit to a man."

Śambhu said:

78b-79. In brief this rule about the application of the sacred ash is told, O sinless one. It destroys all the sins of the speaker and the listeners.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINE

Jābāli Recommends Phallus Worship to the Brāhmaṇa Ikṣvāku

Śambhu said:

1-5a. In this regard I shall tell you a story which destroys sins and hearing which the pious one (i.e. Ikṣvāku) obtained excellent devotion. (There was) the best brāhmaṇa, Ikṣvāku by name. He was very learned, very intelligent, proficient in many sacred precepts and well-versed in the science of ethics. He did not perform a sacrifice; he did not give (in charity); he did not worship deities. He did not teach the Vedas, nor did he explain the sacred texts; so also (he did not teach) the Purāṇas, history, the sacred texts or the Vedas. With difficulty he could (get food to) eat and proceeded only with the

embellishment of his body. The life (of the span) of a lakh of years of that brāhmaṇa of that type passed.

5b-10. In the next (span of a) lakh, at night on the third day of the fifth month in (i.e. of) a year he heard this Purāṇa (text): "He, who has not given in charity the wealth earned by him, is certainly roasted for those many years in hell, (for the wealth) being enjoyed day-by-day would become (i.e. becomes) depleted. Then having gone through a thousand existences of insects etc., he then is (born) as a poor man suffering from diseases, having no relatives, having a wicked wife and many children. Every day he lives by begging and supplicating. He leads his life by asking for broken seeds (not capable of growing), or the life among servants (of a man) having no ears, no eyes and with dirt falling (from his body)."

11-13. Having heard the Purāṇa (text) like this, that Ikṣvāku became extremely afflicted. The mean brāhmaṇa repeatedly thought in his mind (like) this: 'Even Durgā, having flowers and beauty is void of fruit due to her having a buffalo. In the same way, knowledge without the Purāṇas would not show the (right) path. A man, (even) after studying many sacred texts, and Vedas with (all) their expanse, does not get proper knowledge unless he has studied the Puraṇas.'

Śambhu said:

14. When he was thinking like this he met with an untimely death. He then went to Yama's world, and was (thus) addressed by Yama.

Yama said:

15-19. You are having many sins. You have not secured great religious merit by teaching the Vedas. Sin (alone) is known to you. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, you will remain in hell for a crore of years. You have a very short span of life. Go back to your former body (i.e. existence). O brāhmaṇa, do religious deeds that are beneficial like giving in charity, worshipping the deities, and repeating hymns; so also teach (Vedas) along with their limbs (i.e. the Vedāṅgas), and apply sacred ash. Worship God Viśveśvara, the god of gods and the lord of Umā. Merely by his perseverance you will not go to my world, O sinner, every day

listen to a little (i.e. small portion of) Purāṇa with respect. Then merely by listening to it, you will not see (i.e. experience) the pangs inflicted by Yama (i.e. me).

20-22. Hearing the words of Yama, the brāhmaṇa went back to (i.e. took up) his own (i.e. former) body. Then that brāhmaṇa made efforts to worship the lord. He went to the sage Jābāli, the worshipper of Śiva, who was endowed with penance and self-study, who discussed the sacred texts and the codes of law, who knew the truth about the Purāṇas, who was surrounded by a lakh of disciples, whose entire body had become loose due to old age, who had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas.

23-36. Desiring to see him he (i.e. Ikṣvāku) went to the Mandara (mountain) which had beautiful caves, which was crowded with many blossoming creepers full of various kinds of birds, which possesed flowers of all seasons, which was adorned with various fragrances, whose big caves were full of the songs (sung) by kinnara couples, the trees in which were resorted to by many beautiful, charming women, the lovely ones, suspending themselves from them, which was resounding with the (hummings of) bees made to rouse them who had slept due to the fatigue caused by love-sports, in which the cuckoos also cooed very much, indeed to unite the separated (lovers), which was crowded with hosts of various sages, where calm (i.e. undisturbed) deer were moving, which was crowded with the bevies of the celestial nymphs, which was resorted to by the groups of gandharvas, the interior of the forest of which was full of the songs produced from the mouths of many siddhas, which was full of lovely fruits, and which had many temples, which was thronged with hundreds of palaces, which had many houses, which was adorned with fierce and angry lords of attendants that had faces like those of lions, like those of elephants, like those of wolves, or having different or strange faces, (or) that had half faces, (or) had half-curved faces, (or) had faces like those of the female deer, (or that) had the faces like those of the creatures like the ruru deer, or like those of alligators, bears and monkeys, that had faces like those of tigers, scorpions, bears, camels, dogs and donkeys, that had faces like those of all the beings, that had faces like creepers, like trees, curved like

rocks and (made) of iron, that had superior bodies, faulty bodies, that had matted hair, that had tufts of hair on their heads, or that were clean-shaved, that had faces like those of birds, that had twelve faces, that had three-figured faces, that had faces like bells, that had faces, ears, or feet like winnowing baskets, that had face like bells or like flutes or like small bells, that had iron-faces like whatever (i.e. all) things in the world; (it was adorned with) certain (attendants) that had put down the charm and beauty of Cupid with their tender faces, that resembled a crore of suns, and that had lustre like those of a crore of moons, that had many colours, that had all (kinds of) faces, that had all forms and four faces, that hand two faces, five faces, three faces or even six faces, that had one or many faces, that were tranquil and were always happy.

37-44a. The mountain Mandara was resorted to by (beings) that were affluent with many enjoyments, and that resembled Rati and Cupid, that had faces like those of Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu, and had bodies like those of Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) and Śiva. It was also resorted to by others having various forms. There the cows were the Vedas, having the calves in the form of Mīmāṁsā; Dharma and others were bodily (present); Purāṇas (presented themselves) with (i.e. in) deeds; there were all the Codes of Law and (all) Histories; there were Vedas embodied; they stayed on the Mandara (mountain); the mountain destroyed sins. In its midst (i.e. on it, there was) a very auspicious and extremely beautiful city. It was decorated with wells, lakes, groves and hundreds of palaces. It had seven ramparts, trenches, and jewelled upper stories. It had nine town-gates, and beautiful houses. Its lustre is matchless, and it is without heat and cold. In it is an auspicious seat, beautified with the feet of Vedas.

44b-48a. The very beautiful foot-stool is prepared with all the Upaniṣads. To the two auspicious feet are (attached) Purāṇas and Vedas for auspiciousness. A great meditating saint is seated there. His figure is (fair) like cow's milk. His charming face has a gentle smile on it. The lord's age is sixteen years. On his chest he has a rosary made of gems and rudrākṣa. He having the lustre of a karṇikāra (flower) wears a sacred thread. The god has (put on) good, jewelled ear-rings. He has put on a crown and

golden garments. He has (put on) many ornaments, and has applied sandal of various kinds.

48b-54. On his left lap Pārvatī is seated, and he is looking at her face. The god embraces with his left arm the innocent, young goddess of a beautiful face adorned with fresh youth, decorated, beautiful in all limbs, and having a golden lotus, and raises her face with his right hand. With his left hand the god touches her head, and puts a mark (on it) with his right hand. With the fan of Oṁkāra Bhakti (i.e. Devotion) fans the gods. The charming Pūjā (i.e. worship) gives a garland with (i.e. of) flowers to the god. Jñapti (i.e. Cognition) and Virakti (i.e. Detachment)—the two ladies—hold the chowries in the form of abstract meditation. Samādhi (i.e. profound Meditation) works for him and Dhāraṇā (i.e. steady Abstraction of mind) is his wife. Checks and Restraints are said to be his servants. Prāṇāyāma (i.e. Suspending the breath) is his family-priest, and Pratyāhāra (i.e. Withdrawing the senses) is the holder of (the staff of) gold. Dhyāna (i.e. Meditation) is the superintendent of his wealth, so also Satya (i.e. Truth) is the general of his army. From Brahmā to an insect all are the animals and Śiva is their lord.

55-62a. Dharma is the guardian of the animals, and Adharma (i.e. Unrighteousness) is a thief. They (i.e. the animals) are bound by the noose of illusion. Death at Kāśī is the liberator; and women of various sorts (serve) the god of gods, the lord of Umā (i.e. Pārvatī). A crore of beings would remember (i.e. remember) the lord of Umā who is like this. Having obtained desired pleasures they are honoured in Śiva's heaven. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, great Indra are the door-keepers of his city. The two goddesses Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī are appointed to worship the threshold etc. on the ground. Gods and celestial women are the servants of the god of gods. All gods are the servants of the noble one. Ikṣvāku saw such a great mountain. Having saluted the sage Jābāli, he said these words: "O sage, I desire to go to the mountain. Are you capable of doing this (i.e. taking me there) or not? Formerly the wise Yama told me about the short (span of) my life. He told me (that I would stay in) many hells. How can there be absolution (for me)?"

Jābāli said:

62b-66a. By means of my divine eye I too knew all this about you. O brāhmaṇa, your life is (i.e. you will live) for ten (more) days. Though a learned man, you did not practise acts of piety. Due to lack of repeated practice, you have not practised penance. Due to the time being short you (have) not (practised) abstract meditation. You have not given gifts due to absence of wealth. You did not go through worship due to lack of capacity. You did not perform sacrifices. You did not do acts of pious liberality. (Therefore) you, having no life (i.e. having a short life), have no religious merit (to your credit). Due to (your) going against the time you did not resort to teaching or to holy places. So, to destroy that sin, no expiation is laid down; so also no religious practice leading to salvatation is laid down. (Hence,) O sage, stay (here) or go (back).

Ikṣvāku said:

66b-69a. O brāhmaṇa, by means of the religious practice which is performed after taking a pledge throughout life, the destruction of sins definitely takes place. Tell me about those religious practices by means of which my sin will perish; so also (tell me) due to which religious merit I shall go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa sage, be the refuge of me who am extremely afraid of hell. They say that looking after him who has sought one's refuge, is the fruit of all religious practices.

Jābālī said:

69b-70. It is true that within a short time religious merit like that cannot be obtained. As long as falsehood has not ceased, it is possible to speak like that in dreams. There is a secret. It is not spoken (out) to anyone.

Ikṣvāku said:

71a. O sage, protect me who have sought your refuge. My time will pass out.

Jābāli said:

71b-75a. O brāhmaṇa, the secret enjoined by the sacred texts is greater (i.e. more valuable) than my life. (It is) the

worship of Śiva's Phallus. It was practised by Brahmā and others. It destroys all sins. It destroys all calamities. It gives enjoyments and salvation. Therefore, perform the worship of Śiva. O sage, one should not violate the auspicious worship of the Phallus of Śiva. He who would disturb Śiva's worship has cut off my head. It is preferable to be thrown on a spike, to be dragged to hell, to give up one's life, but never violation of (Śiva's) worship.

75b-83a. It is better to fall into fire, to bow down the head, to eat one's own feces, but not the violation of Śiva's worship. The food of him, the mean man, who eats without worshipping the lord, or if he enjoys or eats without uttering Śiva's name, is said to be of sins of the form of food. The crores of the great sins of him who has in his words (i.e. on his tongue) the auspicious name *Śiva* are quickly reduced to ash. The man who goes round (the Phallus of) Śiva (keeping it to) the right and salutes him, would get the same religious merit which one would get by going round the earth. Having gone round (the Phallus) three times and saluted five times, and having again gone round (it) and saluted (it), one would be free from sins. He who would make or cause to make (the sound of) musical instruments in Śiva's temple, is endowed with great power and is born as one who resorts to the Vedas. He who would make the three-eyed god, the god of gods, hear the Purāṇas (i.e. would recite Purāṇas before him), would, being free from all sins and being blessed, live in Śiva's city. The god always speaks to him sweet words with regard.

Jābāli said:

83b-90. This excellent worship of Śiva has been told (to you) in brief. O brāhmaṇa, you are short-lived (i.e. the span of your life is short). Perform the worship of Śiva. Thrice, twice or even once (a day), for a watch, perform Śiva's worship. Resorting to the stage of a recluse, resorting to a recluse, worship Śiva with the flowers of a recluse in the morning. A man should worship Śiva with coconut, lotuses, saugandhikas, nīpa-flowers, japā-flowers, punnāgas, karavīras pāṭalas, tulasī, arkas, aparājitā, apamārgas, rudrajātadamana, with all these and with fruits and bilva leaves and dhūrtakas, droṇa-flowers, abundant śirīṣa flowers, dūrvā, korakas, nandyāvartas, sacred rice grains or

mixed with sesamum only, or with other (materials of worship) according to his capacity. The worship of Śiva is also (done) with karṇikāra flowers and a golden dūrvā.

91-98a. He should not worship Śiva with buds or campaka flowers, except the lotus. All lotuses, leaves and sacred grains, darbhas and flowers should be kept separately from the silver and golden (flowers etc.). O king, cake cooked in oil would not be said to be stale. That which is with fruits and with acid and sour substances or with cumin-seeds should be sprinkled with water. (All) that, viz. roots, fruits, vegetables etc. sprinkled with water is not said to be stale. All that water, viz. water of a great river, water (flowing) from a mountain, or water in the form of a pool (i.e. in a pool), or well-water, or the water that would be (available) from a tank, a lake, well is holy water. It would not be stale. Water should not be procured at night. He should procure it by day. Water with sand (i.e. from a sandy place) should also be taken; for it is not stale. Knowing like this, you offer a worship to Śiva's Phallus.

Śambhu said:

98b-100. That Ikṣvāku dear to brāhmaṇas (or to whom brāhmṇas were dear), thus addressed by the sage, became engrossed in Śiva's worship (and) remained (in doing the worship) for eight days. When the ninth day arrived, he performed (Śiva's) worship in the morning. When the time of his death came, he, having performed Śiva's worship, offered his life as a present to the great lord (Śiva).

101-109a. Knowing him to be dead, Yama's messengers who took (the dead) to Yama's world came (there) and made efforts (to take him). Śiva's messengers, like Vahnimukha, also came there. Among them there was a dispute: 'This is mine, this is mine.' Then, a messenger of Yama, with a noose in his hand hurt a messenger of Śiva. Then Vahnimukha got angry, and becoming of (i.e. turning himself into) a great body, seized a hundred messengers of Yama with one hand and squeezing their heads with another, cut them off like young grass. Then killing the messengers and taking Ikṣvāku (with him) he went (to Vīrabhadra). He presented him to the intelligent Vīrabhadra. He too (presented) him to Śiva. Then the great god said to him: "Every

day for eight days, you offered a worship. Formerly you had censured me saying 'Śiva's Phallus is (just) the tip of a penis.' Therefore, you will be one with a penis-like mouth. On its tip there will be a round hole. You will be without a tongue, a nose etc. (But) because of your having uttered my name formerly, you will be a speaker (also)." Due to the words of the lord he became like that in a moment.

Śambhu said:

109b-112. He who will every day listen to this excellent old account, will, being free from the bond of sins, become Śiva's devotee. He would go to Śiva's place and would also be a speaker. He who tells this story, would be like Śiva. Formerly a king named Adhīra, having told this story, went, though he had committed a sin, to heaven with his wife.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TEN

How a King Became Śiva's Attendant Agniśikha

Śrī Rāma said:

1. Tell me, how this fire named Agniśikha became an attendant of Śiva like that. Salutation to you.

Śambhu said:

2-9a. Formerly he was a kṣatriya who was always angry. He had lost his wife, his army and his country. (Therefore) he was extremely afflicted. Having got a couple of buffaloes, he practised agriculture with his sons. He was full of (i.e. had incurred) a great debt, and so was very much unhappy. The king was also unhappy on account of his son being killed by (the bite of) a serpent. The king, though like that, also gave up agriculture. He also abandoned his two sons, and having given up food, wept. Then the two sons came to the father, and said these (words) to him: "O father, why do you weep? What has

gone does not come (back) by weeping excessively. Your lamentation today will (only) lead to the parching up of your body. Due to the grief your eyes have been impaired; so also your throat has been impaired. Similarly your practice of religious rites has been harmed. (Then) why do you torment (yourself)? One that has gone does not come (back). Protect the five breaths that have remained (with you). It is meritorious to protect many, especially those that have resorted to (a person). How do you grieve over this enemy who has resorted to someone else?"

The father said:

9b-10a. O sons, how (do you say that) a son is an enemy? Then you are also my enemies. How do you call an extremely happy son as an enemy?

The two sons said:

10b-21a. The son, as soon as he is born, would snatch away (the father's) wife. When he is growing he would take away (the father's) wealth. When he dies, he (would take away the father's) life. In what way is enmity different from this? I tell you, O king, that which you described as happiness is all resulting in unhappiness. At the time of the birth of a son, there is a thought about the death of the wife. And if the wife survives, then he (i.e. the husband) loses his happiness. When the vulva has become impure, no union is possible. If he becomes intent on embracing her, his body gets covered with milk (coming out of her breasts). Even then if the union takes place, the heart of the woman necessarily goes to the child due to the child's weeping (i.e. when the child weeps). Then he (i.e. the man) loses interest. Then, if the child falls into (i.e. comes between) the couple that is united, then there is loss of joy. When the union is disrupted, the displeasure is great. When everything is limited by time, there is a possibility of union (only) on some occasion. At that time there is no food, no water, (no union) with his wife. Due to the trouble caused by Planets such as diseases and thirst etc., there is great pain in protecting children. That beautiful pleasure of getting on the father's

lap, embracing and kissing him, speaking very sweet words—(all) this which is regarded as a pleasure does not deserve (i.e. is not equal to) the sixteenth part of discontinuance of coitus. In (i.e. due to) a son, there are other thousands of sorrows. What will you do with him who will oppose you in this world and in the next? Therefore, give up this grief. We two, your sons, are here.

The king said:

21b-25a. I shall give up the grief which is difficult to check and which goes against (i.e. impedes) all acts. O my sons, in this world and the next one should accomplish one's well-being. I shall go to Vasiṣṭha, my priest and the foremost and great preceptor and the best sage. He will give (i.e. show) me the (proper) way.

Speaking thus, he went to his preceptor, the brāhmaṇa living in Vārāṇasī. He saluted him (prostrating before him) like a staff. He was honoured by the sage, was embraced by him, was smelt on his head, and was offered a seat; and was thus addressed: "What for have you come? What should I do for you?"

The king said:

25b-26a. O brāhmaṇa, give (i.e. show) me the way to cross this worldly existence. I am always unhappy with my fate. (Therefore) I have sought your refuge.

Vasiṣṭha said:

26b-32a. It comes to this: take recourse to the lord of the universe (in the form of) the great Phallus. O lord of kings, worship the god of gods, the trident-holder, propitiating whom, formerly, the sage Śakti, the son of Arundhatī, though devoured by a demon, did not go to Yama's world. For a short time he went to heaven, and then went to Brahmā's heaven. My son (i.e. Śakti), (having gone to Viṣṇu's heaven) from Brahmā's world, is sporting in Viṣṇu's heaven. O great king, (also) see this hunter, moving in the forest, and worshipping the lord of the universe, merely with leaves of the śamī-tree collected by himself, with

the flowers of pūga tree, also with the kadamba-flowers and with flowers of the jasmine (creeper). See him worshipping the great lord with these and other (materials). It is a wonder that he will die merely after half a watch from now.

32b-41. When his time of death came, the hunter saw, for offering a present to Śiva, by his side a jar full of mangoes, but censurable due to the fruits being left over (after some of them were eaten) by a dog. Due to the absence of an offering as planned by him, the hunter uttered these auspicious words suggesting the devotion of people: "The sage Jamadagni offered his eye in the absence of flowers, his finger in the absence of fruits, and his soul when the Phallus was falling, and cut asunder his body and offered it when the seat of the Phallus was broken. Other devotees of Śiva have also performed great rash acts. I too have to do like that. Otherwise I shall incur a sin." In the meanwhile a mad man came to Śiva. Having snatched the (materials of) worship performed by the hunter, he, in a moment, ate it up. He also vomitted on the seat of Śiva. Then the hunter thought: 'Should I or should I not kill this one harming Śiva?' Then that devotee of Śiva strove to kill himself. (He said to himself:) 'As this mad man has eaten up the (materials of) worship that I had offered to Śiva, when the Phallus was covered, I must also quickly remove the covering of my body—my skin. This is for making (the materials of) the worship free. One should abandon one's throat due to the loss of the fruit (of the worship)'.

42-52a. Deciding like this, he, with a sharp axe, did a wonder: He cut off the skin (on) his right leg, and below the waist. He also quickly cut off the skin on the left leg up to the waist. Being delighted and trembling, he also cut off the skin about it (i.e. the waist). The hunter who was delighted, also cut off the skin on the hands, shoulders, chest, and throat and also the skin on the head. Then between the two he cut off the body in a circular way, and having cut off his finger and taking it, he offered his skin to the god. Then the devotee of Śaṅkara, of a divine form, of good eyes, having four hands, having many ornaments (on his person), quickly stood in the sky. Then hundreds of thousands messengers of Śiva, having beautiful

crowns, and decorated with all ornaments, having tridents in their hands, all resembling pure crystal, having four arms, of lovely forms, seated in excellent aeroplanes, all resembling the sun, tranquil, accompanied by their beloveds resembling Rambhā, and followed by sons, wives and army, and hundreds of energetic and amorous women resembling the sun in lustre, showered flowers. And the hunter was called by them; but he did not go (to them), and said to them: "Would I or would I not go with my wife and kinsmen?" The followers of Śiva having heard these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, said these (words) to him: "The fruit is to be had by him (only) who has done a virtuous or a sinful act."

The hunter said:

52b-55. Of practices that are impure, the author is (but) one; but of the practices done in honour of Śiva, the fruit (would go to) two or many.

In the meanwhile, Vīrabhadra arrived (there) with a hundred children and many crores of attendants. (He said to the hunter:) "O hunter, come along with your kinsmen. As you said, (you may come) along with your wife, relatives and kinsmen; and having got into this aeroplane, go to Śiva. Well-being to you." Then due to those words, he, having got into the aeroplane, reached Śiva's heaven.

Vasiṣṭha said:

56-60a. You have observed all (this). Perform the worship of the lord. Being free from the bond of sin, you will go to Śiva's heaven. O king, if you long for kingdom, worship the lord of attendants; and besmear (the ground) with water and cowdung every day. By (doing) this much, you will certainly get the kingdom of the earth. As long as you live you will have (i.e. enjoy) the kingdom, and in the end you will go to Śiva's position. You will not get the kingdom during this (existence); but (will get it) after death (i.e. in the next existence). Therefore, after having got another body (i.e. existence), you will have due to the prowess of your service to Śiva, the kingdom, and your devotion to Śiva will be stable.

Śambhu said:

60b-70a. Then, having performed the worship like that, he died and went to heaven. Then he again got the birth of (i.e. was born as) a king, and, being devoted to Śiva, he ruled his kingdom. Once the king went to Śiva's temple, which was having many lamps, like the lord of serpents having gems. There was also the crowd of warriors. One lamp fell on the king. Then the king got angry, and quickly taking the lamp, angrily dropped it in the charming temple. The abode of the god (i.e. the temple) was burnt, and sin came (to him). Then the king again fashioned the temple etc. that was burnt and got Śiva worshipped. Then when the day of his death came, the king who had propitiated Śaṅkara, who had applied sacred ash and who lay in sacred ash, died while muttering (the hymn sacred to) Rudra. He went to Śiva's heaven. Vīrabhadra (thus) spoke to him: "You become best of the attendants, (and) my servant. On my order bring the devotees of Śiva in my proximity (i.e. to me). You will be without a head, and flames will be coming out of your mouth." He then said to Vīrabhadra, the noble chief of the attendants (of Śiva): "How would action be possible for me without eyes, ears, and the group of tongue, nose, mouth and head?"

Vīrabhadra said:

70b-75. The beautiful woman who was formerly accepted by you yourself, every day serves the auspicious bull-bannered god (i.e. Śiva) by arranging an auspicious river, an auspicious eddy etc.; by arranging white and blue lotuses, and also a fan and a chowrie. (She also arranges) a trident, a conch, a disc, a mace and a bow. Also a trident, a drum, a sword, a bull and the auspicious (attendant) Bhṛṅgiriṭi. So also other (objects) like an eight-petalled lotus, a mystical diagram etc. Once that prostitute was present in the temple of the deity. A certain jail official of the king entered the temple of the deity. He saw her there, and said these words:

The official said:

76-78. The prostitute is in a secluded part (i.e. alone). I am young, and not old. A woman would abandon a man who is

old, diseased, impotent, weak and poor, whose penis is short and who is helpless. A woman should avoid from a distance a man who has no moustache, who is covered with dirt, who is dull, and is defiled with a bad odour, who is small and has no addiction. Therefore, O prostitute, let me cohabit with you. Quickly restore me to life.

The prostitute said:

79-80. We hear that for women of all castes loyalty to their husbands is a great duty that gives them happiness in this world and the next. A prostitute, when in the charge of a man, does not unite with any other man. She (then) is known as a chaste woman. Therefore she should keep him (only).

The official said:

81-94. If this is so, there is no doubt that (your) death will soon take place.

Then going to the king, he said these (words:): "A prostitute is (just) a prostitute. She is not a wife. It is not proper (i.e. necessary) to say this." Speaking thus to the king, he took some froth from a hollow lotus stalk from a well, and went to her house. Seeing it was time for (her to) sleep, he extended his hand, and in the hole of her garment, the wicked-minded one put the froth there. Having done like this, and going to the king he said these (words) to the king: "O king, having gone out (of your palace) go to the prostitute, the woman (you love). Having got that prostitute up, please observe her entire body, and loosening the knot of the garment, observe it carefully." The king went to the house, and said these words to the official: "She is asleep. See her. I (now) go. You see (this)." But he then said to the king: "O king, this is not proper for you. Arrange to see her mother or father. When they are seen, all this will quickly be clear." Then the king brought her mother, and made her see (the garment). At the words of the king, she made a search of the garment. Seeing the froth there, the mother rubbed it. The garment became wet due to the rubbing. The king said: "What is it?" The mother of the prostitute said: "There is nothing, O lord, there is nothing." (Thus she told it)

with many words. The king observed the garment with a doubt. He said: "The garment is wet with semen. See it." Then the men who were near there, said to the king: "It is like that." Then the king went home, and said to the chief magistrate: "Now only, without thinking, cut off the head of the prostitute. Within a ghaṭikā (i.e. a period of twentyfour minutes) her head should be shown to me." The chief magistrate also did like that at the words of the king, and showed (it to him).

Vīrabhadra said:

95-96a. Thus you did formerly; (and) today you have got the fruit. With flame only (in your mouth) you will speak, hear, see and smell. You will know the taste; you will be intelligent and very wrathful.

Śambhu said:

96b-98. Thus the intolerant king has become Śiva's follower (named) Jvālāmukhī. Therefore, one who desires happiness in this world and the next, should be tolerant. He who would every day listen to this excellent account, will, being free from the bond of sin, be (i.e. live) in Śiva's heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ELEVEN

The Sinner Vidhṛta Goes to Śiva's Abode

Śrī Rāma said:

1-2. O preceptor, tell me the importance of the name of the great lord, the importance of worship, of salutation, so also the greatness of sight, the importance of giving water, so also the importance of offering incense, so also of lamp and sandal, O best one.

Śambhu said:

3-8. It is not possible (to describe) in detail the importance of each of the names. I shall tell (it) to you in brief. O Rāma,

listen carefully. Formerly in the Tretā age, there was a powerful king by name Vidhṛta. When his father died, he, even though a child, was consecrated (as the king) on the kingdom. He kept near him all those of his age. He did not like those who were old and learned. He liked the young men who were wicked, who did acts which ought not to be done, who were adept in bringing beautiful women (to the king) and were skilled in acts of stealing. He liked those who were engaged in buffoonery, and who were skilled in dancing. Those who knew the charms of subjugation, also those who knew (the use of) herbs, who were given to singing and dancing, who were rogues, and who knew gambling, were dear to him. That king deserted those who did what his father liked.

9-14. Having had consultations with those wicked ones, he did his acts. He joined these and other wicked (men). Depending upon the words of these (wicked men), he abandoned the advice of the wise. Those who put their fists on the chests and who howled, who knew the essential things about the characteristics of the pudendum muliebre (i.e. the private parts of women), and who were proficient in the technique of sexual enjoyment, were dear to him. That kingdom then became bereft of political wisdom. As elephants, horses, chariots, camels, goats, cows, buffaloes etc. were taken away from here and there, all of them perished. At that time no gems other than the land were seen in that city. He (i.e. Vidhṛta) being vanquished by another king, fled. Having gone to a great forest, he made a mountain the inaccessible place (for his enemies). There, with a few followers, he resorted to the way of life of a thief.

15-21. Having, at various places, shown to thieves and cheats by disposition gold, garments, corn etc. and gems, sandal etc., he made them bind (the possessors) in order to take away their wealth. When he did not get food, he prepared food with the flesh of cows and buffaloes. If he did not get food, he got prepared the meal with the flesh of horses and human beings. Such was his conduct, bereft of offering the prayers (thrice a day) etc. He had only one minister, a demon by name Surāpa. He always ordered him, 'bring, strike,' He, the abode of cruelty and surrounded by a thousand men, thus followed the opinion of the demon and seized men coming from many countries. Having come to know

about the women liked by him, he abducted them. Having enjoyed them for some time, he ate their flesh. Thus killing men and women he ruled unbearably.

22-28. The mean man thus ruled for a thousand years. Then his body became loose due to old age, and he was deformed due to folds (on his body). The place was without any living being all around (as far as the area of) ten yojanas. Then the day of the death of the noble king(?) came. When the time of his death came, all his followers remained by him, surrounding him who had bathed and lay on the ground. The minister Surāpa said "Order me as to what is to be done." Then the king, weak like that, (almost) dead, was afflicted. His life had become weak below the navel. (So) he uttered (these) words with difficulty: "O lord of demons, for all the time you strike, take away forcibly, snatch away." Saying so, he died. The messengers of Yama came (there). Intent on beating (him) they tried to tie him in a wonderful way. Their bonds and nooses were reduced to powder. Also their weapons and staffs were pounded just by the touch of his body. Such wonder took place.

29-34. Then Death himself came there and bound him with his noose. Seeing even the noose of Death cut off, Mṛtyu thought: 'I have seen the death of all mortals but nowhere like this'. When Death was thinking like this, the brave Jvālāvaktra holding a dart and being ordered by Vīrabhadra, suddenly came there. Then seeing Jvālāvaktra, Death quickly ran (away). Seeing that Death running away, Jvālāmukha, (i.e. Jvālāvaktra), the brave one, (said to him): "O thief, stop, stop. Where are you going? A thief gets freed from his sin only on his being put to the gallows." Speaking thus to Death, he pierced by his dart (the body of) Death. Making the dart pass through his shoulder, and having tied his messengers with a rope, and with their feet tied in chains, he took them and went to the king. Putting him into an excellent aeroplane, well-decorated with songs and musical instruments, he approached Vīra(bhadra). He reported everything to him.

35-41a. Vīrabhadra too, reported all that to Śiva whose form was unlimited, who was being served by many hosts of sages and gods led by Brahmā and Viṣṇu, and who was accompanied by Pārvatī. After saluting Śiva he also reported to him

about Mṛtyu on the spike. The powerful Vīrabhadra, the universal soul, remained silent. Seeing Agnyānana (i.e. Jvālāvaktra), Śiva reproached him (and said to him): "O attendant, how did you do this rash act? How are you not afraid of Death, the superior Yama? Tell me all that truly." Having saluted him, that Vahnimukha (i.e. Jvālāvaktra) who was very angry, seeing Death, danced with joy and said: "(This) Death has just committed a theft. Therefore, I put him on the spike." Śiva too got Death freed and made all his messengers sound.

41b-45. Seeing Death Śiva said: "My name remains with them at the time of their death. I give my heaven only to those who have (i.e. utter) my name with some letters fewer or more. It is true, he uttered the word *Prahara* (i.e. 'strike'). They say that the word *Hara* (i.e. Śiva) having just the word *Pra* added to it, gives (i.e. leads to) the (highest) position. Salute these in the vicinity who are muttering (my name) and tell my words to Yama. Those who offer salutation, have restrain, narrate (the glory of Śiva), wait upon (Śiva), resort to his service, become his servants, recite the sacred texts, recite the hymn (in honour of Śiva) of five letters, or recite the *Śatarudriya* hymn, are not to be considered (by you). He, who (utters) my name, he who wears rudrākṣa (rosary), he who applies sacred ash, he who explains the Purāṇas before me, even if he has (committed) all sins, I rule over him. It is not at all the authority of Yama (to punish them).

46-53. Also those men who, though they have (committed) sins, though they are cheats, though they have used others' garments and have enjoyed others' wives, are intent upon dying at Vārāṇasī, or who die on Śrīśaila, are not to be considered (by Yama). Even lice, gad-flies, bugs, beasts etc., insects and ants, serpents, scorpions, pigs, that die at Kāśī, reach Śaṅkara. O Death, having saluted him who uttering his name, would meditate in the temple of his heart upon Śiva who has three eyes, who is Virūpākṣa (i.e. has an uneven number of eyes), whose eyes are the triad (of the Vedas), who has the moon, the sun and fire as his eyes, get away by my order." Having heard what was said by Śiva, Death praised Śaṅkara: "Salutation to you, the lord of deities; salutation to you, the form of gods; salutation to you, the omniscient one; salutation to you, the lord of

animals." Then god Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva) said to Death: "Choose a boon. I am pleased with this eulogy." Death (then) asked for a boon: "O lord, O Śaṁkara, protect me, a sinner belonging to you." Saying "All right" the lord said to Death: "O child, you (can) go." He too went to Yama's world, and told the entire (account) to Yama.

Śambhu said:

54. He who would every day listen to this auspicious, excellent account, is freed from all sins, and goes near Śaṅkara.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWELVE

The Story of Śoṇa and His Wife Kalā

Śambhu said:

1-5. (Now) I shall also tell you another account of a woman. (I shall tell you) what Devarāta's daughter obtained by the utterance of (Śiva's) name. The young, very beautiful daughter of Devarāta was the wife of the intelligent Śoṇa, the son of Dhanañjaya. The two were restrained, devoted to pious acts alone, and virtuous. When they had gone for a bath in Gaṅgā, they found a treasure. (When they had gone) to bring clay on the bank that had fallen due to the current, they took a clod of clay and saw a great silver pitcher having a stone on it (i.e. covered with a stone). Then Śoṇa said these words to his dear wife: "How should we act? What should we do that would be beneficial to us?"

The wife said:

6-13a. A man should not undertake any work depending upon the view of a woman. A man should not also share a secret dear to him or (of) any (other kind). If a treasure would be noticed in the presence of a woman, then by groups of such words the woman should be deceived. Whatever remains there is not to be seen by us. If it is wealth, it is not to be seen, (for) it

results in suffering. If it is not known by anyone else, wherefrom can definite knowledge be had? If someone is not seen now, he remains hidden. If there is no hiding (i.e. if someone has not hidden himself), then someone remains (here) deceitfully. If it is not a deception on the part of human beings, then Śiva remains here. If it is not Śiva, then a brāhmaṇa (turned into a) demon (after his death) remains here. If he is not that (demon), then it may be the great lore (Mahāvidyā?) of kings. If the king does not know it, then there is a possibility of an affair (done) in a secret manner. (Or) it may be a trouble from thieves. If you are not cautious, then a great peril will take place.

13b-20. Generally, desire for enjoyment is produced in wealthy kings. From one enjoyment desire for another enjoyment (follows), and it destroys the religious rites. If a woman knows about the wealth found through chance, then she becomes free, and through anger divulges (i.e. may divulge) what is found. Due to anger she becomes one having lack of trust (i.e. she is not trusted); then the fault told before (follows). Trust is put in a familiar person; (so also) journey (is undertaken with him), or the mind is fixed on someone else. Various kinds of acts are possible for women due to trust (put in them). (Their) love would go towards any young man on seeing him. Due to love contact takes place; and due to contact sexual union takes place. When sexual union takes place constantly, then another (place of trust) may occur. Formerly you have enjoyed a woman, and now also you are enjoying one. Whom do you long for now or whom do you love? Which clever or very affectionate woman would go to another man than her own? If today you speak the same words as he spoke to her, then I shall tell you all this. Otherwise no words will be uttered (by me).

21-23a. Having gained so much audacity, so also due to change in form, she would behave independently after taking whatever wealth (she can). He, getting her killed, and taking that wealth, will cause her to be thrown. On the death of the husband before (her death) she should not enter fire (with the thought:) 'In my widowhood, all this wealth will be useful for my religious merit.'

23b-33a. Resolving like this with (i.e. in) her mind, when widowhood has come, she, when she gets an itching of the vulva

(i.e. has a desire for sex) by day or at night, she said (i.e. would say), after having gone to a lonely place and after having uncovered (i.e. taken off) her garment, to her vulva these words, through grief, and with her hand on her generative organ: "O vulva, what have you done? What sin have you committed? Or is it the sin of the penis due to having got into you? Or is it the sin of the doer due to avoiding service like me?" Even then when the itch is produced, she would put her finger (into her vulva); and due to the feeling of the itch she would do strange movements after that. Having rubbed it with her hands, having struck it and having expanded it, she, being extremely pained, repeatedly shook her feet. She, after having embraced the (piece of) wood of the cot, and pressed her breasts (against it) as she liked, became sad due to a peculiar disposition of her mind. Or having in the day stayed in the house she would process the vegetable, and having hung it in the house, she, having changed her dress (would stir out) on the highways in the evening, and is enjoyed by any one. Then due to the prowess of her words, she, being unsuspected, would act indecently. Or going to an unknown house, she would certainly make (someone) sport with her. This is what is expected of the wealth that is obtained in the presence of a woman. Therefore, there is no need for you to consult me (in this matter).

Śoṇa said:

33b-39a. It is so. There is no doubt about it. Go and stay away for evacuation of the bowels and passing urine. Remaining (here for some time) I shall go hereafter. When she had gone, Śoṇa also cut his garment into pieces. Then in each piece he took ample wealth. On the sand-bank, he made a hole as deep as the knee, threw the wealth (into it), filled it (with sand) and evacuated his bowels over it; and he put the pitcher, supporting it with the garment somewhere. Doing all this, as if he knew nothing, the sage went for his bath. Then his wife having bathed and having worshipped Pārvatī, when told by her husband to go, the chaste woman went home. Knowing her to be alone, a demon by name Mārīca assumed the form of her husband and said to Kalā:

Mārīca said:

39b-41a. On the bank of Saptagodāvarī there is (a grove) called Drākṣārāma where Bhīma himself had stayed, which gives enjoyments and salvation and which destroys sins merely by being remembered. Let us go there. O beautiful woman, quickly come out.

Kalā said:

41b-42. You who had proceeded to bathe, have not bathed. How do you say this now, which you have not said before? The best ones know the change of nature as a calamity.

Mārīca said:

43-53. Not to go against the husband is said to be the duty of women. Quickly tell me whether you are friendly or hostile to me.

The chaste woman remained silent, and that he was her husband, the young woman went out with him; and the chaste woman went into a forest. (She said to him:) "It is the mid-day. Perform your daily rites." Hearing her words, the demon said: "This is not the place for performing rites. We have to go to that (region) where it is. So we shall go from here." Having gone to some region, and seeing (there) a cave and a lake (he said:) "This is the place for me to stay at; O dear one, I shall bathe (here)." Saying so, he bathed in the lake and ate fruits. When it was the time for (taking) the meal, Kalā meditated upon Umā (and) Śiva. She was engrossed in reflecting upon whether he was or was not her husband. Then ascertaining by means of reflection that he was a thief, she was frightened, was very submissive, and had her face full of (i.e. bedewed with) tears. Saying, "Oh, a hurtful misery has befallen (me)!" she fell down. Seeing her weeping, the demon started to offend her; and (i.e. but) he (was not able) to offend her. When the demon tried to rape her, she made a covering of stone from her knees up to her navel. The demon, having seen her with a stonelike garment (thought): "I shall kill her and eat her up." Saying so and whirling the sword he proceeded to cut off her head. (She said to him:)

54-57. "I am Kalā. My husband, knowing (you) will curse you. Do not snatch me away." When she just uttered these words, the demon cut off her head. When she met with such a bad (i.e. miserable) death, the messengers of Śiva, who had put on lovely ornaments, who had held all (kinds of) weapons, and who were auspicious, came there. Putting her into an aeroplane, they went to Śiva's heaven. Seeing her who had come there, Umā, the daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, honoured her with joy, and spoke (these) words to her who had bent (i.e. fallen) at her feet and who was pure: "I am pleased with your loyalty to your husband. I (shall) give you whatever is desired by you."

Kalā said:

58-61a. Give me the status of your servant. Your lotus-like feet are dear to me. What is the use of many other requests?

Śivā (i.e. Pārvatī) said: "All right." She was honoured by the wives of Indra and others. The sage Śoṇa, the treasure of arts reached his house. Not seeing his wife there, he became engrossed in reflection. Through his eye of wisdom he saw her to have been snatched away by the demon, to be dead, to have reached Śiva's heaven and Umā, and to have been granted a boon by Umā.

61b-66a. The best sage had some affliction for a long time, turned back and went to his father-in-law Devarāta. Having reported everything to him, he went to sage Viśvāmitra with him. He reported it to Vasiṣṭha. Vasiṣṭha also said to those sages: "Having gone to Kailāsa and having first seen god Maheśvara, and then having got permission from Śiva and gone to Pārvatī's abode, we shall request the goddess and tell her everything properly." The excellent sages, saying "All right", went to Śaṅkara's abode, and saluted the god of gods. Being honoured by Vīrabhadra, they informed him this: "The wife of Śoṇa has been kidnapped."

66b-71. Śiva said to the best sages: "I had already known this. Her death is untimely. (Still the span of) her life is a hundred years (more). For those who have met with an untimely death, there is life again. She will give birth to ten sons; she will have

beauty and good fortune also. Ascertaining this, you have come here, O brāhmaṇas. All this is certain about people that have gone to Yama's world. (But) there is no other course for those who have come to my heaven. Formerly, at the time when her vital breath went out of her body (i.e. at the time of her death) she had uttered my name (viz. Hara). By that the writing of Yama was wiped. Then how (can) a decision (be had) about her life? Or you (better) tell the entire (account) to (Pārvatī) the daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain." Then the brāhmaṇas went to see the feet of Pārvatī.

72-75. All of them saluted the mother. Viśvāmitra said these (words): "O mother, having formerly protected the wives who were helpless and forlorn and children who had lost their parents, you have always been one who gave whatever was desired. This Kalā is my grand-daughter only. Having propitiated you, she had obtained this Śoṇa as her husband. This is the fruit of your worship. O Aparṇā (i.e. Pārvatī), I shall get (back) Kalā through penance, or through charity, or through vows and fasts. I desire to eat food served by her. How (can I have it)?"

Pārvatī said:

76. I give the wife as she is desired to be (by her husband). I am unable to part with her. What do you think, O sage?

Viśvāmitra said:

77. I spoke without any fear as you are (our) mother. O mother, this sage Śoṇa will (now) request you.

Śoṇa said:

78. I love that wife (i.e. Kalā) only, (since) the chaste one gave (me) more than said (i.e. asked for by me). Give me that wife only. Otherwise death would come (to me).

Pārvatī said:

79-80a. The wife and husband (should be) equal to (i.e. fit for) each other. Those that are not equal (i.e. fit) are condemned. This one is not proper for you. I shall give you a suitable one. I shall not desert her who came to my abode without a body.

Śoṇa said:

80b-83a. If you do not give (back) this wife, then give me another dear to me; and give me, as an excellent boon, kingdom, and devotion to Śiva.

"It will be just like this." Speaking thus, she said to the sages: "Here, in my (house), you will enjoy for three days. To please god Śiva, eight brāhmaṇas are always to be fed on every Monday, O best sages".

83b-87a. As one desires, one should commence this vow anywhere. When a year is over, one should get fashioned (the image of) the lord with gold weighing four niṣkas or half of it. One should assign all these (articles)—a pair of fine white garments, two chowries, also a couple of fans, wooden sandals, shoes, an umbrella—to a brāhmaṇa. Having given gifts to brāhmaṇas, one should dismiss the brāhmaṇas. A wise man should do so at the time of the conclusion, the beginning and in the middle (of the vow).

87b-93. Every day he (should offer) worship to Śiva, the highest soul. The hymn to be recited at the time of the worship is: 'We know (the lustre) of the Puruṣa. We reflect upon that (lustre) of Mahādeva. May Rudra, therefore, urge us on'. He should worship the god on an altar or in an image. He himself endowed with (i.e. observing) celibacy, should eat once (a day). This is said to be the auspicious vow of (i.e. in honour of) Śiva. It gives pleasure to Śiva. One, a man or a woman, who devoutly practises this (vow), always follows Śaṅkara like his shadow. Today Monday has come (i.e. it is Monday). So meal (will be taken) after mid-day. O you best sages, all of you, after having performed the forenoon rites, please eat food (here)." Hearing the words of the mother (i.e. Pārvatī), and saying "All right", they went to river Gaṅgā for the performance of religious rites.

94-100. Performing their mid-day rites in the confluence and having worshipped the lord of the universe with the sixteen articles of worship, they went to Pārvatī's house and saluted her. By the order of the mother of the worlds, Śālaṅkāyana's son arranged for the formalities like washing the feet. He took the pañcagandhaka (i.e. five fragrant substances) and applied them to (the bodies of) the sages. He who would give pañcagandhaka,

would obtain a great kingdom; and being like Cupid, he would be dear to women. He too, who would offer (presents) to Viṣṇu, would become like Cupid. He who would long for Śiva (and observe a vow) for five years on Kailāsa, would be born as a king having all fragrances, would enjoy pleasures, whould move (as he likes), would behave according to his desire. Musk, sandal, camphor with double agaru are (together) called pañcagandhaka. It is auspicious in all rites.

101-107. When the illustrious brāhmaṇas, to whose bodies pañcagandha was applied, were seated, there came an old, weak, brāhmaṇa dressed like a mad man. He was stark naked, was disabled due to old age and was hurrying. He was bald-headed; he suffered from asthma; he very much hiccoughed; he was oppressed with hunger. He was oozing saliva, had bent with a brush-like moustache and phlegm and his steps were faltering. (He was accompanied by) a girl sixteen years old; she was decorated with all ornaments. She was endowed with form and beauty. She was excellently beautiful in the world. She was looking at men here and there; she was singing; she was dancing, looking at her husband; she was laughing at him. She troubled her old husband (saying): "O weak, mean man, come quickly. O old man, by supporting your hand constantly, I am afflicted. Ornaments, garments, fragrances, garlands, unguents, laughter, singing, also drinking, decoration, a good house, affluence in all seasons are for the augmentation of sex only.

108-112a. Sex alone is the purpose of all desires. If all the pleasures are placed together (on one side) and pleasure of sex remains (i.e. is placed on the other side), and if they are weighed with a balance (then) sexual pleasure is a hundred times more (weighty). Then having obtained (a husband like) you what will a woman like me do?" She, holding him by his hand, spoke these and other words. He gave this reply to her: "What shall we do? Our destiny is like this, knowing me to be like this, do not strike me with bad words." Such a brāhmaṇa went to Pārvatī's house at that time. Not recognising Pārvatī at all he spoke these words:

The brāhmaṇa said:

112b-114a. O sage, know me to be a brāhmaṇa who has

come here for food at the time of (serving the) meals. Do not feed the brāhmaṇas.

His wife said (these) words: "Where is the sage? This is just a woman. The words of a blind man are always certainly like this."

Pārvatī said:

114b-119. Having washed his feet, make him sit on a seat.

She has not satisfied the brāhmaṇa having a vessel (decked) with good jewels by the food cooked in a golden vessel. Then Ambikā (i.e. Pārvatī) called Arundhatī who expounded the Vedas and made her dress the food. Kalā, Arundhatī and the chaste Anasūyā, who were decorated with garlands, sandal, and sacred rice-grains, dressed separately the articles of food of six flavours. When the brāhmaṇas were eating, that naked, brāhmaṇa (-like) figure in a moment ate everything. The ladies could not give (i.e. serve food) to others. Then that goddess Girijā herself started giving (i.e. serving) food, as the brāhmaṇa in a moment ate up whatever was served.

120-124. He desired to eat, along with his beloved, everything that had remained in the vessels. Then Ambikā took it and gave it saying, "Let this be inexhaustible." Then he desired to eat with the lelf hand. Then also saying, "Let this food be inexhaustible for you", gave it to him. Then the best brāhmaṇa produced a thousand hands like this, and desired to eat. The goddess gave him again and again, but did not get angry. Then the brāhmaṇa, realising that he could not divert her mind, washed his hands and feet, and with a fragrant substance applied to his hands, said these words to Pārvatī: "I am pleased. Ask for a boon."

Pārvatī said:

125-127. O best brāhmaṇa, even if you are capable of granting me a boon, what is the use of the boon to me, since Śaṅkara is my husband.

Then the brāhmaṇa said to the goddess: "Of what kind is

Śaṅkara? Is he suitable or not for you? He would be suitable for you, and not otherwise. Handsomeness and cleverness are liked by women. How otherwise such an auspicious woman would have come under my influence?"

Pārvatī said:

128. O brāhmaṇa, having heard your wife's words, and also your words, this is untrue. O brāhmaṇa, is it untruth or venom?

Brāhmaṇa said:

129. I shall tie your braid; sit upon my lap. If your mind will be diverted, wherefrom would be your chastity (i.e. how can you be called chaste).

Pārvatī said:

130-136. O best brāhmaṇa, my vow is to sit on the lap of Śaṅkara only.

Then the highest god, knowing the mind of Pārvatī, became a youth of sixteen years. His tied hair was very glossy. His charming eyes were very affectionate. His body was (fair) like cow's milk. His handsomeness was like that of a crore of Cupids. He was adorned with all ornaments. He had spread both his hands on the shoulder of the woman seated by his side. He sang gently as (Śiva) with Umā. Then Śambhu dragged Pārvatī with his hand, and smiled. Putting both his hands on the two shoulders of the lady (i.e. Pārvatī), he, with all ornaments (on his body), and with pleasing eyes, with his body full of joy and sung (i.e. praised) by sages, sang and danced at that time. By meditating upon Śiva like this, he (i.e. a man) has no grief for hundreds of crores of existences. Joy always comes to him. Thus praised by the best sages, he changed the girl into Viṣṇu. Then that Pārvatī who was pleased, said to the trident-holder:

Pārvatī said:

137-141a. Why is it that taking recourse to this condition and turning Viṣṇu into a young girl. Why did you not come in your natural (i.e. original) forms (as Śiva and Viṣṇu)?

Śiva said: "In this vow the food (taken as) a guest is auspicious. I know that those who do not have dejection obtain perfection. It is definite that when there is dejection, the vow is improper. He would, O respectable lady, (stay) in my city, will be endowed with all enjoyments, and living along with his wife, sons and relatives, his (full) life as told in the Vedas, will later go to Vārāṇasī, and having died (there) will obtain salvation."

Śambhu said:

141b-145. When the god remained there, the sages went round him, keeping him to the right, thrice, then saluting five times, again having gone round him, again being (i.e. prostrating themselves) like a staff, and being dismissed by him, went out from that place. Then Śoṇa obtained his wife whose body was auspicious and who was not censured (i.e. was praised). The brāhmaṇa religiously ruled in the country called Bhārata. The devotee of Śiva enjoyed all human pleasures. He was always engaged in charity. He always performed sacrifices and always listened to (the recital of) the Purāṇas. When he died, he went to the auspicious heaven of lord Śaṅkara.

Śambhu said:

146-147. As the occasion had come, I told (you) the importance of the utterance of his names. It destroys all the sins of the listeners—the devotees. It gives all auspicious things. It always gives a good wife and a (good) kingdom. It is auspicious. It gives (i.e. creates in one) devotion to Śiva. It is to be observed. A man should not tell it to any one.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN

The Requirements for Narrating a Purāṇa

Śrī Rāma said:

1-6. In the sky are seen seated in aeroplanes auspicious ones having many forms, good wives, and hundreds of women.

At every step they are honoured by thousands of men and women. Twenty damsels, delicate with (good) figures and beauty, are singing. One is carrying a small box; some have their arms attached with (i.e. are carrying) chowries. (Some) have taken a pair of tāla fans and are fanning. Another (man) has made the pillow of her lap. He has given his hand in the hands of one. He is surrounded by many flatterers. His lotus-like face is blooming due to jests of many kinds done (i.e. indulged in). In one aeroplane, he, having the moon's brightness is seen. In the aeroplanes having hundreds of women, the auspicious lord is seen. Have these done (acts of) religious merit? Or is it (simply) Viṣṇu's illusion, O sage?

Śambhu said:

7-11. These are meritorious brāhmaṇas, leading a householder's life. Your (father) Daśaratha had given that food to them. Once a thought arose in (the minds of) them who are my hearts, as, 'we who depend upon others are happy here. Here hundreds of men depend on us. Due to that religious merit all of us enjoy as we desire. We are waited upon by good women, and are endowed with the pleasure of kingdoms. We are free from old age and death, and we are always young.' Having thought like this, all the brāhmaṇas went to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage. Having honoured them who had come (to him), Vasiṣṭha said (these) words: "O best brāhmaṇas, speak quickly why you have come (to me)."

The brāhmaṇas said:

12-17a. All of us desire to get into an aeroplane which is endowed with all riches and which goes according to the desire (of the occupant). O preceptor, procure it for us.

Hearing this thought (i.e. desire) of them, Vasiṣṭha spoke (these) words: "O brāhmaṇas, Purāṇa which destroys sins, should always be listened to. In it only are seen righteousness (dharma), material welfare (artha) and sensual enjoyments (kāma)." Saying, 'All right', the sages went to sage Aṅgiras who was proficient in Purāṇas, was the greatest (sage), knew all sacred texts, all the scriptures and Purāṇas, and always did good

deeds. Having saluted him, they spoke these words to him: "O brāhmaṇa, our life is fruitful, we are contented, since, O sage, we have seen you."

Aṅgiras said:

17b-22a. I shall do the work for which you have come (to me). With a desire to listen to Purāṇas you have come here. I shall narrate to you the sacred precept which destroys all sins, gives all (kinds of) knowledge, is divine, has sprung up from the knowledge of truth, gives (i.e. creates in one) devotion to Śiva, is charming, gives (i.e. creates in one) devotion to Viṣṇu, is auspicious, which would give (one) a beautiful woman, which (contains) auspicious knowledge of various kinds, discloses the science of sexual love, has enjoyment and salvation as the chief (aim), which illuminates various systems of philosophy, tells about various (kinds of) devotion, which narrates daring courage in devotion, gives the rules about a vow, a site etc. and about (applying) the sacred ash and about worship.

22b-25. The Padma Purāṇa is said to have been accomplished from the lotus of Brahmā. It is narrated by Śiva, and (contains) the description of Pramatha's (an attendant of Śiva) form. This is told elsewhere in the Padma Purāṇa itself. Formerly, Vasiṣṭha, when asked by Dilīpa, narrated it. O best sages, listen to it, (thereby) you will have all knowledge.

Then, by his words the brāhmaṇas got interested in listening to the Purāṇa. They said to the sage (Aṅgiras): "Now doing what, and how should we listen to it?" He too told everything.

26-33. "Listen to the ancient practices. A man (who wants to listen to a Purāṇa) should salute him who knows the Purāṇa and then should offer him a respectful seat. Then saying, '(Please) be seated', he should worship him with sandal and flowers; or he should also offer him wealth and tāmbūla. He should say to him: 'O brāhmaṇa, tell (us) the auspicious story from the Purāṇa.' For the accomplishment of religious merit, material welfare and sensual enjoyments, he should listen to it not by sitting upon a cot or (any other high seat) but (should listen to it) by sitting upon a low seat. The knower of the Purāṇa, having said to the listener, 'Listen', should recite this

hymn: A man deserves to (i.e. should) explain the Purāṇa (after saying) 'Salutation to Viṣṇu, Śiva, Gaṇeśa and Sarasvatī' and having saluted the desired deity. Every day he should listen (to the Purāṇa) or as he would desire. In the same way he should listen to the narration up to the end, (and then) should do his duty. The listener should silently reflect on it; he should silently listen to it. Otherwise Sarasvatī would be angry, and due to her anger dumbness would come. Therefore, the listener should offer tāmbūla etc. (to the narrator); and according to his capacity, he should also undertake the subsistence of the speaker (i.e. the narrator).

34-38. At the commencement (of the narration) of the Purāṇa he should give (the narrator) a pair of washed garments, or should give him a subtle garment or a pair of garments, and (should give him) a great, lovely, beautiful, strong and soft seat. Similarly he should give (him) gold, and cows, a residence etc. O best of all brāhmaṇas, formerly Dakṣiṇāmūrti Śiva narrated this to sages residing in heaven." Then all the sages, having saluted him seated on the seat, and having separately given him a tāmbūla, remained there with a desire to listen (to the Purāṇa). He too, narrated the whole Purāṇa, which gives everything. The best sages listened to it till the last chapter.

Dilipa said:

39. A holy place was reached by the aeroplane which moved according to the desire (of the occupant), was equipped with all luxuries, and was fully provided with all facilities.

Vasiṣṭha said:

40-46a. O king, you have not asked enough. That is said to be holy which enables one to be more sportive, O king. He should make Śiva's temple white with whitewash on all sides. He should have women who are endowed with beauty and graceful movements, adorned with all ornaments, skilled in (singing) many good songs, and proficient in various kinds of dancing. There should be four, eight, or six women sounding a drum. Two should be powerful, two should be professionals having the bow of a lute and drum-stick. Four should be dancers, and one should be a contented singer. One or two are

said to be knowing singing well and not garrulous. Two should be kept for (playing upon) the lute, and six or eight are silent. All should be beautiful and should have graceful movements. All should be of firm breasts. They should be skilled in the ways of sexual love and should be trustworthy. Their dresses should be of very fine garments, and their eyes unsteady like (flashes of) lightning.

46b-52. O king, he who has caused women like this to dance (even) on one day, gets into a (divine) aeroplane in a year. His face is looked at by hundreds of women. He is honoured by many young (women). He is complete with his joy being nourished. He is without anger and jealousy. His body is smeared with pañcagandha. His face is like a piece of (i.e. small) cloud with the moon. He is like the sun. All the ten women are having brilliance like that. They have garlands of the pārijāta-flowers which have blossomed the same day and which are fragrant. All have garlands of blossomed flowers of rohi and saffron joined together. They carry the braid on their breasts. Their lips have a good (i.e. sweet) smile on them. He moves being delighted by women like these with dancing and singing. Thus he gets into a (divine) aeroplane and having lived (in heaven) for an inexhaustible (i.e. very long) period, he then would be born as a king. Having ruled over the kingdom like this (i.e. as a king) and having enjoyed the fruit (of the stay in) heaven, he will become a devotee of Śiva.

Śambhu said:

53-56. Aṅgiras told the sages what Vasiṣṭha had told Dilīpa. They executed, like that, the union of song and dance of (i.e. in honour of) the lord of Umā; and having listened to the entire Padma Purāṇa, they became happy. O Rāma, these are those brāhmaṇas who are seated in the excellent aeroplane, in the sky, and appear to be happy and of delighted minds. I have told you all this as ascertained in (i.e. by) the Purāṇas. O Rāma, what other (i.e. more) than this do you wish to hear ?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOURTEEN

Dialogue between Śiva and Rāma

Rāma said:

1-5. Who is this seen in the sky, who is adorned with all ornaments, seated in an aeroplane, who is, as it were, another sun very brightly shining at mid-day and difficult to be looked at by all mortals? On his lap is a sweet-smiling lady like another Lakṣmī. So also there are five good (i.e. beautiful) women. They are singing a sweet song, accompanied by their glances with knitted eye-brows, gentle smiles and sounds made by clappings. At times they are singing songs in their throats (i.e. singing in subdued tones), by striking on one another's hands, and by looking at one another's faces with cupidity preceded by songs. Tell me, due to what religious merit the great meditating sage resembling filaments of lotuses, is sporting like this.

Śambhu said:

6-16. O Rāma, this brāhmaṇa was formerly endowed with all (kinds of) riches. He had many pleasures. He was engaged in maintaining his wife. He was sonless. He was without (i.e. he did not give in) charity. He was without the worship of (i.e. did not worship) deities. He was bereft of the five (great) sacrifices and without self-study. He was bent upon eating (only) in the morning, mid-day and evening. He was impure. Once he went to the house of noble Gautama on the holy mountain of Tryambaka resorted to by many hosts of sages. There also was a beautiful house fashioned with pillars of crystal. Its walls were smeared with liquid agaru (sandal), musk and camphor. Its ground was beautiful with the fragrance of the santāna-flowers and was sprinkled with musk and juice of flowers. It was beautified with many fine, white canopies. The courtyard was adorned with large plantain and nut trees. In the lake nearby there was the sweet humming of the bees. The quarters were filled with the fragrance produced by the sandal-trees. The quarters were filled with instruction in songs and joyful songs. It was fashioned with a machine removing the heat produced in summer. In it a cover is made with the citraka tree

covering the shoots of the plantain trees. The very glossy and thick panels of the doors are made of the pāṭīra tree. The inner walls are fashioned in such a way as to be fragrant and giving great joy. As a portion of the lord a beautiful, pleasant raised seat is prepared. The seat is fashioned with gold and is having a beautiful altar. It has very pleasing and thick shade.

17-20. It is fashioned at the root of a bunyan tree. It is decorated at its skirts with lakes having flowers and groups of plantain trees. It has the clouds showing sprays as they are touching the great bunyan tree. It is decorated with beautiful groves having breezes from heavenly gardens. It is decorated with wells, lakes etc. and with many groves. In that abode wind giving comfort, blew very gently. Excellent women beautiful in all limbs and the wealth of Cupid, played on different musical instruments such as a lute, a flute and a pipe.

21-25a. Women had triple symphony (of song, dance, instrumental music) in (all) the four directions and above also. In golden vessels etc. were put auspicious tablets of sacred ash. They were made fragrant with all fragrant substances and were fumigated with good incenses. Heaps of kuśa were arranged; there were crores of rosaries. In the outskirts there were hundreds of deer-hides. In such a house the best sage, fit to be saluted by gods, put camphor etc. in the four directions, and arranged a throne of camphor on the seat of sandal, which was fine, white, very glossy and was covered with camphor.

25b-32a. He bathed (the Phallus of) Saṅkara with water made fragrant and with milk. Having got Sadāśiva bathed with the accompaniment of other Vedic hymns, he put a piece of cloth as a seat on the wooden seat with camphor. He put a vessel with parts in front of it. He put these (articles) in the (various) parts (of the vessel). In one pot he put the sacred rice grains. In another he put sacred rice grains with sesamum. In one he put pañcagandha; in another he put aṣṭagandhaka. He also (put) the musk from Kāsmīra, camphor and sandal in other pots and arranged them at the place of worship. Then the worship was done in the way selected. God Sadāśiva with five faces remains in the Phallus. The Phallus is his cover. Śakti (power, his counterpart) is placed there. Viṣṇu is the cover of Śakti, and Brahmā is the cover of Viṣṇu. The Moon is the cover

of Brahmā; the Sun is the cover of the Moon. The sacred texts are his (i.e. the Sun's) cover. They are protected among the goddesses of the quarters; and they are covered by the quarters. Śambhu is the cover of the quarters, and the qualities are his cover.

32b-42a. The worship of the Phallus of Śiva with ten covers is auspicious. This would be (i.e. is) the opinion of some. The cover of knowledge is said (to come) after (these) covers. It is said to have the cover of Umā. Viṣṇu is its cover. Brahmā is Viṣṇu's cover. The Moon is the cover of Brahmā. The Sun is the cover of the Moon. The lord is the cover of the Sun. Thus the cover is said to be of sixteen kinds. The fivefold cover without Brahmā is said to be the best. These three are the covers of the Moon, Viṣṇu and Śakti. The unique cover—the cover of Ambikā—is said to be the best. Or in the worship of Śiva, the guardians of the quarters would be (i.e. are) the cover. In case of Śiva uncovering or worship is recommended. One should worship Śiva with the articles placed in the eight parts of the vessel. I shall describe the characteristics of the vessel useful for all rites. It shines with gold or is made of copper. A man should fashion the eight auspicious parts of the vessel resembling pearl-oysters. He should fashion it with eight angles resembling the petals of a lotus. It is recommended to have the parts of the measure of a pala. It should be uncovered and of large parts. In the centre it should not be large. At the top it should have eight parts of the size of a lotus. Or through the Śakti he should have it with five parts. Or should make it with three in the Śakti, and as he thinks.

42b-47. The wise one should keep the vessel in such a way as it looks beautiful. The rosary fashioned with eight hundred rudrākṣas hidden in the Śakti is auspicious. He should have the sacred thread with thirty or eight. One should be put on each of the cheeks and two should be tied on the forearms. He held one on the head and the great sage had one around his neck. The rosary was made with rudrākṣas and crystals and gems. The sage has fashioned a seat of tiger-skin and was seated in the Padmāsana posture.[1] Having finished invoking (the deity), having

1. Padmāsana—A posture in which the left foot is put at the root of the right thigh and the right foot is put on the left thigh.

offered him a seat, materials of worship, water for washing the feet and rinsing the mouth, he bathed Śaṅkara with the water of Gaṅgā and with flowers of bakula and pāṭala along with aṣṭagandha kept in golden vessels, and (wiped the Phallus) well with a washed piece of cloth.

48-53. At the door was kept a copper pan. It was auspicious with an oval wooden vessel; so also with a cow-horn and the horn of a gavaya, or with a conch curved to the right or with pots decked with jewels, or with golden or silver or copper or bell-metal pots; he bathed (the Phallus) according to his desire with (water from) the fine golden pitchers. A man may even bathe (the Phallus) with water from earthen vessels or with lotus petals, or with (water from) vessels made of (the leaves of) palāśa, mango, jambu and other trees. He should bathe the lord. He should, after having solicited the lord with the hymn 'salutation to you' etc. called *Śatarudriya* or with the repetition of *Śaṁ ca*, of the nature of tranquillity, then apply sandal etc. according to his capacity. Then he should worship him with nice flowers and bilva-leaves.

54-70. That Gautama worshipped the lord with (the leaves of) tulasī and maruvā, white and big blue lotuses, so also with blue lotus and water-lilies, so also with karavīra-flowers, with karṇikāra-flowers, white lotuses, (the leaves of) the aparājitā (creeper), with sesamum and sacred rice grains, with sarala-leaves mixed with sesamum. Thus (he worshipped) the great lord. He fumigated him with camphor, agaru (sandal), musk, sarja, and agaruka-sandal and with other (incenses). He lighted sixteen lamps having camphor-wicks and put on props. He made an excellent offering of eatables to Maheśa. It contained food of well-cooked rice and flour; (it contained varieties of food) like those that could be eaten, that could be licked, that could be sucked; it was accompanied with sweet articles, and with food of five types; it was rich with many cooked vegetables, and mixed with many cooked articles. The drink was accompanied by twenty (ingredients), and with grapes and plantains; it was accompanied by eight kinds of soup, and with roots and fruits. It was also arranged with other articles as were available. The sage offered the food with excellent flowers. Having offered a thousand lights (to be waved in front of the deity) kept in golden

vessels to the deity and having saluted him, he (offered) crushed pieces of nut, washed leaves, with the tops of their backside (not visible), and covered with a very white cover. He also offered auspicious camphor-powder put on three leaves. He also offered the tāmbūla kept in a golden vessel to the lord. Then after he had gone round the deity by keeping him to the right, and saluted him, eight women who had held lutes and flutes and who were playing on beautiful musical instruments reached the vicinity of the sage. He himself, taking a small instrument of bell-metal, started singing. When Gautama started singing, the women protracted the tone. Others gently played upon the musical instruments. When the sage was singing sweetly, those having the manifestation of notes, danced in front of Maheśa. It was (a) wonderful (sight). In the meanwhile the revered sage Nārada arrived (there). Gautama also honoured and saluted him who had come (there), and said to him: "I am fortunate. None else is like me. What is the object of your arrival and wherefrom have you come?"

Śrī Nārada said:

71-74a. Having eaten in Bāṇa's abode, I have come (here) from the nether world. The noble ones, Bāṇa, Śukra and others will come to (your) house.

Then in a moment the demon Bāṇa, conqueror of the enemies' cities, mounted upon an elephant and accompanied by (an army of) twenty akṣauhiṇīs[1], came there. Śukra (had mounted) upon another elephant. Prahlāda (was seated) in an excellent chariot. Vṛṣaparvan (was seated) in an excellent chariot, and Bali on an excellent horse.

74b-83. Knowing them all to have arrived, Gautama along with his disciples went out and hurriedly offered them a respectful offering. They also, seeing Gautama, got down from the elephant etc. The demons also saluted him. The best sage saluted Bhārgava (i.e. Śukra), embraced all the demons, duly honoured them and made arrangements for the camping of the army. The sage washed

1. Akṣauhiṇī—A large army consisting of 21870 chariots, as many elephants, 65610 horses and 109350 foot soldiers.

the feet of Śukra and put (i.e. sprinkled) water on his head, and offered him a worship with beautiful fruits. All the demons, along with their priests having offered the rites, after bathing in the wells, lakes and ponds, entered that auspicious abode—the hermitage of Gautama, situated on the confluence, and worshipped the deities in the brāhmaṇa's house. Śukra worshipped Śiva on the altar which was immediately fashioned. On his left side only, Prahlāda worshipped Viṣṇu; and Bali worshipped Śiva. So also other excellent demons (worshipped other deities). Bāṇa worshipped god Śiva alone. Śukra too worshipped the revered lord of Umā. In the mid-day Gautama also worshipped Śaṁkara. All had put on white garments; the bodies of all were dusted with sacred ash. All had made marks of three lines on the proper places (of their bodies) with white sacred ash.

84-88. Having saluted Śukra, all of them commenced purification of the elements. In the lotus of the heart there is a cavity. In it are the five elements. Among them is ether; in ether there is pure air. In it is the great lord. A man should meditate upon him, the bright and auspicious one. The element is united with ignorance, is impure, and connected with everything. He should burn that body in the lamp of ether with the fire of knowledge. Having burnt egotism covering ether, he should then burn ether. Having burnt the ether, he should burn air and then the element of fire. Then having burnt the element of water and the element of earth, he should burn the qualities resorting to them and then should get burnt his body.

89-92. The man, having thus burnt the elements with the fire of knowledge, (should worship) Viṣṇu who remains in the lock of hair on the crown of the head, who is full of the flavour of joy, who is having rays like those coming from the moon, and who is auspicious, with the rays produced from Śiva's body and united with the nectar-liquid. Then the flame (becomes) very cold like the rays of the moon. The inundation has also become dense due to the spreading lustres of the nectar. Gradually the group of elements is inundated.

93-97a. Having thus purified the elements, the pure mortal, fit to perform the rites becomes pure only for offering the worship and doing the muttering (of hymns). Then on meditation upon the god, the destruction of the sin due to the murder of a brāh-

maṇa follows. Having in this way meditated upon him, lustrous like the moon's light, and quickly placed (the deity) in the Phallus of Śiva, having thought on Sadāśiva in the lamp, he should worship the immutable with (the hymn of) five letters. He should also go through the formalities like invocation, should bathe (the Phallus of) Śaṅkara as before. The seat should be made of udumbara, silver, gold, and should be covered with cloth etc. In the end he should shower bubbles on the seat. He should fashion one (representation of) snake in the seat above, a pair of them near the deity, on the right side and the left. In between the serpents he should put a japā-flower and a piece of cloth of (the measure of) twelve prātis[1].

97b-99. He should put the lord of the form of the Phallus and fit to be worshipped with very white (materials) and along with the seat on the piece of cloth. The demons led by Bāṇa and others, having done this, and having repeatedly offered pañca-gandha and aṣṭagandha, having worshipped (the deity) with flowers, leaves, sesamum-seeds, sacred rice grains mixed with sesamum-seeds or with only sacred grains, having duly offered incense, having presented a lamp, and an offering as told (before), having finished the remaining (part of the) worship, all of them sang and also danced there.

100-113a. In the meanwhile there came Gautama's disciple named Śaṅkarātman. His dress was like that of a mad person—he was naked, and had many coverings. At times he appeared like an excellent brāhmaṇa, at times like a cāṇḍāla. At times (he looked) like a śūdra. At times (he looked) like a meditating saint or an ascetic. He roared, jumped and danced, praised and sang. He wept, heard clearly; at times, he fell (and again) rose. He was endowed with Śiva's knowledge only; he was full of great joy. He arrived at the time of the meals, and went near Gautama. He ate with his preceptor eating at times what was left over by the preceptor. At times he licked up the plate of the preceptor; at times he went (away) silently. Holding the preceptor's hand, he, at times, himself ate (food). At times he urinated in the house (itself); at times he applied mud (to his body). He always held his preceptor with his hand and taking

1. Prāti—The span of the thumb and the forefinger.

him into his abode seated him on his own seat and fed him. The sage Gautama himself ate from his plate. To know his mind, a beautiful, auspicious lady Ahalyā called the disciple and said to him, "Eat". She put foodin a golden pot and a drink (like water) etc. in a goblet. She put fire in a plate, and a heap of charcoals and of thorns in another, and (said to him), "Eat, eat (these)". The sage also ate (them). The brāhmaṇa ate up the fire, as (easily as) he would drink water. He also ate the thorns and remained as before. Formerly he was invited for food by the daughters of the sages. Every day they gave him clods, water and cowdung. Eating mud, wooden staff, he was pleased and delighted.

113b-120. Such was the sage having the figure like that of a cāṇḍāla. Taking his old shoes in his hands (one in the right and one in the left), and (using) words fit for a śūdra he came to Vṛṣaparvan. The naked (disciple) stood between Vṛṣaparvan and the lord. Vṛṣaparvan, not knowing him, harassed him and cut off his head. When the best brāhmaṇa was killed, this mobile and immobile world became extremely excited; so also the sages in it. The very noble Gautama was very much afflicted. Tears, indicating his grief, went (i.e. flowed) out of his eyes. In presence of all the demons, Gautama uttered (these) words: "What (great) sin he has committed since he has cut off this head of this constant devotee of Śiva and greater (i.e. dearer) than my life (to me). It is virtually my death as the preceptor is of the form of his disciple. Certainly we must die where (i.e. when) the death of Śiva's devotees, full of piety and always living in Śiva, is seen".

Śukra said:

121-125. I shall bring him back to life. Śiva is dear to my family. How can this brāhmaṇa die? See the power of my penance.

When the best brāhmaṇa was speaking like this, Gautama also died. When he died, Śukra also cast his life through deep meditation. Learning from Prahlāda that he was dead, all the lordly demons died just in a moment. That was a wonder. The

army of that intelligent Bāṇa also died. Ahalyā tormented with grief, repeatedly and loudly wept. The lord was worshipped with (the materials of) worship of Śiva by Gautama. The great meditating sage Vīrabhadra on seeing all (that) got angry.

126-135. He said: "Oh how painful! Many lords are dead. I shall inform Śiva of this; I shall do as he tells." Having determined like this he went to the immutable one to the Mandara mountain. Having saluted Śiva, he told him all this. Seeing Brahmā and Viṣṇu standing there, Śiva spoke (these) words: "O Viṣṇu, seeing the daring act done by my devotees, I the granter of boons, will go (there). You two also will come (with me)." Then the lord mounted upon the bull (i.e. Nandin). Chowries were moved by Vāyu. Extremely lovely umbrellas were held (over the lord's head) by Nandika who was very well dressed. The very white, golden staff of the lord was held by some ascetic. Obtaining the consent of the lord, Viṣṇu got on the enemy of the serpents (i.e. Garuḍa). He whose Kaustubha (gem) was noticeable, shone with two reddish and dark blue umbrellas. With Śiva's consent Brahmā also mounted upon his swan. Brahmā shone with two umbrellas having the brilliance and form of the indragopa insect. All gods led by Indra got into their own vehicles. Gladdened by (the sound of) various musical instruments all of them set out. Crowded with crores of (Śiva's) attendants, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva went to Gautama's hermitage. Seeing that great wonder (Śiva) brought his devotee back to life by looking at him from the corner of his left (eye). Śaṁkara said to Gautama: "I am pleased with you. Ask for a boon."

Gautama said:

136-140. If, O lord of gods, you are pleased with me, and if a boon is to be granted to me, then let me always have the power of worshipping your Phallus, O great lord. This is what I have chosen. O you three-eyed (god), listen to this: My noble disciple is without (i.e. does not care for) what should and what should not be given up. With his eyes he does not see what should be seen with a feeling of mineness. With his nose he does not smell what is fit for being smelt; nor (does

he give) what is fit to be given, or (does not do) any other similar act. Knowing this he did like that. The very illustrious meditating saint, of a figure resembling that of a mad man, and known as Śaṅkarātman did like that. Nobody would prohibit him; nobody would harm him. O god, grant me this, and also the deathlessness of these.

The lord said:

141-142a. May they live till the end of the kalpa; then let them enjoy salvation. For a moment we shall stay in this extensive, specially made and auspicious abode of you. Then we shall go home.

Gautama said:

142b-147a. O lord, I am asking for an improper thing. A suppliant does not notice a blemish. O lord of gods, if you like, give me what cannot be obtained by Brahmā and others.

Then the lord looked at Viṣṇu and seized Viṣṇu's hand. Sadāśiva, having laughed, said to him whose eyes were like lotuses: "O Govinda, you are thin-bellied. What food should be offered to you? Or get in and as in your own house eat (whatever food you choose). Or go to the house of Pārvatī who will fill your belly." Speaking thus, the lord held his hand and went to a secluded corner. And as told before, he said to Nandin, the door-keeper. He told Gautama the subsequent words of Viṣṇu.

Sadāśiva said:

147b-161. O sage, procure food for all of us. We desire to eat (food).

Saying so Śaṅkara went to a secluded place with Viṣṇu. Having got on a soft bed, the excellent deities lay there. Having talked to each other, both of them got up. The two excellent gods went to the bank of Gaṅgā, and bathed (in) deep (water). They drank water from each other's hands. Then Viṣṇu and Śiva quickly splashed water (on each other). Then Śaṅkara, scattered lotus-filaments held in the hollow of his hands over

Viṣṇu's face having eyes like fully blown lotuses. Keśava closed his eyes when the filaments fell (on his face). In the meanwhile, Śiva mounted upon the shoulder of Viṣṇu and holding with his hands Viṣṇu's hand, plunged him (into water). Viṣṇu who was (thus) repeatedly troubled by being plunged, delicately put down Śiva. He dragged him by seizing his feet and whirled him round. (Śiva) struck on the chest of Viṣṇu and dropped him down. Then Viṣṇu who had got up, took water in the hollow of his hands, and scattered it over Śambhu. Then Hara (i.e. Śiva) scattered it over Viṣṇu. Thus they sported in water. The group of sages also had their matted hair dishevelled in the flurry of water-sport. Then due to the confusion, they tied the matted hair with others' matted hair; and the excellent sages, strong or weak, drew (the matted hair). They caused others to fall, and cried and wept also. When such confusion started and took place in the water, Nārada danced and cried in the sky. Playing upon the musical instrument—his charming lute—he loudly sang a song. With a charming song, he sang in ten modes.

162-171a. Śaṁkara, Lokabhāvana (literally, the creator of the world), heard that sweet song; and he himself gradually began to sing sweetly. When the lord of gods himself sang the mingled auspicious Kaiśikī (veriety of the dramatic style), Nārada danced and sang indistinctly. Taking up a firm note having all (good) characteristics and endowed with the nectar of the flow of the excellence (of his voice) he connected it with that song; and Viṣṇu beat the drum with his hands. The four-faced (Brahmā) had a depression, and Tumbura became garrulous. Gautama and others quietly sang in protracted tones. When the lord of monkeys—Hanūmat—sang a sweet song, the wearied became glad; the weak became strong. All of them, having just despised their own songs, got confused. All the gods, the hosts of sages and the demons became silent. Only that Hanūmat sang, and all others were listeners. In the mid-day when the time for meal came, Śiva, listening to the song, took a couple of silken garments. Viṣṇu, (took) a couple of yellow garments, and Brahmā a red one. Then performing rites befitting themselves, and (prescribed to be performed at) that time, all the deities, mounting on their own vehicles, went out.

171b-184a. But the great lord (i.e. Śiva) who loved music, said to the lord of monkeys: "O monkey, you are ordered by me. Be fearless and mount upon the bull (i.e. Nandin), and facing me, sing all songs." Then the best of the monkeys said to the revered great god: "The power to mount upon the bull is only yours. None else has it. O lord by mounting upon your vehicle, I shall be a sinner. O lord of gods, just mount upon me. I (shall be) a bird—Śiva's vehicle. I shall sing facing you. See". Then the lord got upon Hanūmat as on his own bull. When the god Śaṁkara got upon the head and neck of Hanūmat, he cut his skin, and having turned his face, sang as before. Śambhu, listening to the nectar-like (sweet) song, went to Gautama's house. All the hosts of gods and sages and the demons came there. At the time of the meal, Gautama honoured them. When Hanūmat sang, everything like the household utensils made from dry wood increased (i.e. put forth shoots). At the time of his singing the eyes of all stood (rivetted) as in a picture. With his two hands (Hanūmat) held the feet of the lord. He (i.e. the lord) was having (on his person) all ornaments. He had a pleased form. He was young. He was praised by the gods with their hands well-folded on the slender waist. Having held Hanūmat's head with his hands, Śiva turned it to the east. He put one of his feet on the hollow of the hands of Hanūmat, seated in the Padmāsana posture, and the other into his mouth, and the lord affectionately and gently seized Hanūmat's nose with two of his toes. Then he put one foot against his belly, then into his circular navel and the other one into the hollow of his hands. Then Śaṁkara, seized his head, bent it, touched his back with his chin, with (i.e. producing) a sound. Śaṁkara put round Hanūmat's neck a necklace made of pearls.

184b-191a. Then Viṣṇu spoke these words to Śiva: "There is none (else) in the entire universe, since your foot inaccessible to scriptures and gods, remained on the monkey's body. Your foot is not made manifest (even) by all Upaniṣads. The monkey is fully united with it. Your foot is (i.e. your feet are) not (reached) through the means like restraints etc. and deep meditation. The power is spotless in Hanūmat, the lotus of the heart of a great meditating sage. (Even) best sages, after having practised difficult penance for thousands of crores of years, do

not know your form, then how (can they reach) your foot (i.e. feet)? Oh! wonderful is the luck (of the monkey), that the unsteady beast, the monkey, holds the couple of your feet not capable (of being conceived) in their hearts by meditating sages. For a thousand years every day, I devoutly worshipped the foot (i.e. the feet) of the lord. But you did not manifest it (i.e. them) to me; (and) there is a talk among people that Viṣṇu is dear to Śambhu. The monkey (alone) is dear to Śambhu like that; I do not have luck like that."

Sadāśiva said:

191b-197a. O revered Viṣṇu, none else is so dear to me as you, or Pārvatī is (dear to me) like you. None else is (dear) to me.

Then saluting the great god, Gautama respectfully said: "O you immeasurable one, O god, O you treasure of pity, come along. The mid-day has passed. It is time for meal for all." Then the mighty great god (i.e. Śiva) sipped water, and along with Viṣṇu, entered Gautama's house, and started eating food. Śiva who was adorned with jewelled rings, anklets, silken garment, a girdle (bright) like lightning, many necklaces, (many) golden ornaments put around the neck, a sacred thread, upper garments, with jewelled rings that were hanging and with excellent, ornamented hair, with the besmearing of pañcāṅga and sandal, with armlets, with bracelets and rings, sat on an excellent seat; and the god seated Viṣṇu, so as to face himself, on an excellent seat.

197b-199. The two excellent gods, Viṣṇu and Śiva were seated facing each other. Gautama too gave them golden vessels. The sage prepared food of thirty varieties, excellent sweetened milk of four kinds, two hundred (varieties of) well cooked food, three hundred (varieties) of the mixture of uncooked and cooked (food); so also the sage prepared food from good bulbs and vegetables. Vegetables etc. were accompanied by ghee. He offered them (food containing) sugar etc. of twenty-five kinds; so also pomegranates etc., plantains, bunches of grapes, dates, oranges, rose-apples, piyāla-fruits, nuts.

200-206a. Having duly offered these and other articles and

having given apośana[1] (i.e. making the seat for the food), the brāhmaṇa said to them: "(Please) eat." When all of them were eating, Gautama himself took a fan made of very fine cloth and fanned Śiva and Viṣṇu. Then the great god desired to indulge into jest. (He said:) "O Viṣṇu, look at Hanūmat. (See) how the monkey is eating (food)." When Viṣṇu was looking at the monkey, the great god (i.e. Śiva), even when the hosts of sages were observing, threw a cake into Viṣṇu's dish. He also gave Hanūmat sweetened milk etc. left over by him. (Hanūmat said to him:) "O lord, what is left over is not to be eaten according to your statement." (Śiva said:) "Offering of cooked food to me is not proper. The cooked food, so also leaves, flowers, fruits offered to me should be thrown into a well only. Due to your words an article is not enjoyed; and an article is eaten only due to your favour."

Sadāśiva said:

206b-208a. When the bāṇa-liṅga, self-born and bright like the moon remains, the eating of the cooked articles of food of (i.e. offered to) Śambhu should be known to be like the Cāndrāyaṇa (vow). This is now the time for eating. It would be tasteless due to (our resorting to) other tales. I shall tell you after we have eaten. Eat the food without any doubt.

208b-212. Then the sage performed the rite of (sprinkling) water (indicating commencement of the meal). He filled the pitchers reddish, very glossy and fine, with all their parts washed in many ways and dried; with water from lakes, rubbed with seeds and cleaned. He covered the new altar on the sandy bank of the river with spotless, whiter, fine pieces of cloth, and put on them pitchers full of water. In them he should put yellow orpiment, nut-meg, kaṅkola, musk-powder, sandal, and under the layer he should put a garland white like the moon-rays. After having cleaned the pitcher with water and cloth, he should have a knot like a peacock's tail; then should put a garland of bakula and pāṭala flowers.

213-220a. He should keep the pitchers in a place where

1. Apośana—The act of making an upastaraṇa (seat) and apidhāna (covering) for the food eaten.

there is no sun and which has gentle breezes and should be fanned with subtle fans. O king, then he should also sprinkle the goad. Having consecrated well-controlled men or women or their daughters who have bathed and put on washed garments, he should put the sweet, tawny exuberance, thick, profuse sandal. Having applied it to the armpit, neck, he should apply jāpyaka to his head, and apply pañcagandha. Their good hair should have flowers tied to it. Their faces should be good and should be very clean. Such women only whose bodies have saffron applied to them, are proper. So also young women adorned with ornaments. He should offer food through these women or men. They also should, at the time of offering, keep the pitcher covered with fine and small (piece of) cloth in their left hand, and looking into it, unbinding it which is put on a thread, should cause water to be given.

220b-226. Thus the sage Gautama honoured them. When all the noble ones of them like Śiva and others had eaten, had washed their feet and hands, and had rubbed perfumes to their hands, the god of gods, Śiva, was seated on his seat. The gods along with the sages were seated on the lower seats. In the jewelled pots were kept pieces of nuts after covering them after having fumigated them. They were angle-less, round, big, small and even thin. Then Gautama, having cleaned white leaves and put powder of camphor-pieces on them, offered it to Śaṅkara (saying) "O god, accept the tāmbūla." When the sage said these words, (he said to Hanūmat:) "O monkey, take the tāmbūla, give me the pieces." The monkey said: "O great lord, I have no purity. How can purity come to a monkey after his having eaten fruits?"

Sadāśiva said:

227-230. Everything would be purified by my words. Due to my words poison becomes nectar. All Vedas are due to my words. Deities are due to my words. Knowledge of religion is due to my words. Salvation is said to be due to my words. Purāṇas, sacred texts and the codes of law are due to my words. Therefore, take the tāmbūla and give me the good pieces.

The monkey took the tāmbūla with the nut-pieces with his

left hand. (Then) from that he took the leaves and gave the nut-pieces (to Śiva). Śiva ate the camphor after taking it when it was given.

231-235a. When the god had the tāmbūla, Pārvatī holding the hands of Jayā and Vijayā, came to the sage's house from the Mandara mountain. Then, having saluted the feet of the god, she hung down her face in modesty. Lifting her face, the three-eyed god (Śiva) said these (words): "O you most respectable lady among gods, I have offended you. I have eaten without you. So also listen to (other things), O beautiful lady. Having kept you in my abode, without god of gods, and free from all bonds, I have committed a great sin. O you great goddess, (please) forgive (me), and giving up your anger, look (at me)."

235b-237a. She, who was thus addressed, did not speak, and went out with Arundhatī. Coming to know that she was going out, the sage (Gautama) saluted her (prostrating before her) like a staff. Beginning with that a man should salute the great god (prostrating before him) like a staff and praise him. Pārvatī said (to Gautama): "O Gautama, what do you desire?"

Gautama said:

237b-238a. O goddess, I am fortunate. If a boon is to be given to me (by you then), O illustrious one, now take food in my abode.

The goddess said:

238b-243. O sage, I shall eat in your house if I am permitted by Śaṅkara.

The brāhmaṇa Gautama went to the god and securing his permission, again went (to Pārvatī). He fed goddess Pārvatī and Arundhatī also. Then Pārvatī, after having eaten and with all perfumes and ornaments went along with hundreds of maiden-followers to Śiva. Then Śaṁkara said to the goddess: "Go to Gautama's abode. After having offered my sandhyā prayer I shall again come to (Gautama's) abode." When told like this, the goddess went to Gautama's abode. All (gods and sages) desiring to offer their sandhyā prayers went out. All of them, Maheśa and others offered their sandhyā prayers on the

bank (of the river). Then Śiva facing the north and going through the nyāsa muttered the prayers.

244-247a. Then Viṣṇu, of a great lustre, said these (words) to Śiva: "Which (prayer) will you, who are saluted by all, are worshipped by all, invoked in all sacrifices, mutter? All, having folded their palms so as to form a hollow, wait upon you only. To whom have you, O lord of gods, folded your palms (in obeisance)? O great god, you are the giver of the fruit of such religious acts as salutation. Tell (me) who gives you fruit, who is saluted by you, who is superior to you."

Śaṅkara said:

247b-254. O Viṣṇu, I am not meditating upon anyone. I am not saluting anything. O Viṣṇu, I am not waiting upon anyone. I shall not mutter any prayer here; but O Viṣṇu, I have to exhibit (like) this for leading the unbelievers to activity. Otherwise they will be sinners. Therefore, for obliging the world, I have done all this.

Saying. "Yes", Viṣṇu then saluted him and remained (there). Then all the hosts of gods and sages reached Gautama's house and worshipped Pināk in (i.e. the Pināka-holder), the god of gods, O best of the Raghus, the god (i.e. Śiva) remained singing with Hanūmat. At that time they all muttered the five-syllabled great lore. Śiva, seizing the hand of Hanūmat, went near the goddess (Pārvatī). The divine couple sat on the same couch. That Hanūmat remained singing. So also Tumbura and Nārada. The great lord indulged into many kinds of sports. Calling Pārvatī, the lord said these words to her:

Śrī Sadāśiva said:

255-259a. I shall arrange your braid. O auspicious one, come before me.

The goddess said: "It is not proper for the husband to serve his wife. When my hair is dressed by you, another calamity may befall. O god, all the desired facts (may) not accrue on dressing (my) hair(?). When the (hair) is tied, the cleaning of the shoulders will have to be done; so also the cleaning of (i.e. removing of)

the hair, flowers adhering to my back (will have to be done). When this takes place (i.e. when you do this), if the noble ones would come, what reply would you saluted by gods and others, have? O supreme lord, if they do not come, my fear will come to an end."

259b-264. Śaṅkara drew her who was talking like this, (near him) and putting her on his lap, untied her braid of hair, separated the hair with his hands, and spread them with his nails. He put on her hair the garland of pārijāta flowers given by Viṣṇu, tied her braid, and also put on the garland (that he had) in his hand. Taking the garland of jasmine flowers he tied her hair. The great god also put the garland of flowers given by Brahmā. He also made Pārvatī put on a pair of garments having unidentifiable fragrance. Then the great lord cleaned (i.e. removed the hair etc. from) her shoulders and back. The wearing garment of the goddess, with the tie loosened, had gone down. The god, saying, "What is this?" tied the knot of the wearing garment. "I am ardently looking for your nose-ornament."

265-266. Saying so, he took a bright pearl. The pearl was bright due to its contact with turmeric. (He said to her:) "Put on this pearl dear to me and you."

Pārvatī said:

267-270. O Śambhu, your abode is rich with all articles. I have already known all the articles. Oh, due to superior and other ornaments the wealth is known. Your head is decorated with string of the heads of brāhmaṇas; you also have the Naraka-string as the ornament of your chest. The poisonous Śeṣa and Vāsuki are your bracelets. The quarters are your two garments. Your matted hair is your (beautiful) hair. The sacred ash is the unguent to your body. The great bull is your vehicle; and your pedigree and your family are already known! Your parents are not known. Your body has a deformed eye.

271-277a. To Pārvatī who was speaking like this, Viṣṇu who was very angry, said: "O goddess, why are you censuring the god of gods, the lord of the world? O good lady, I shall abandon my dear life. Indeed this is your lack of restraint. Our vow is to die where the censure of the god is (undertaken),

O auspicious lady." Saying so, Viṣṇu proceeded to cut off his head with his nails. Śiva seized his hand, and said: "Do not do this rash act. All the words of (i.e. uttered by) Pārvatī are dear to me, (though) they are not dear to (i.e. liked by) you. O Viṣṇu, what is desired to be done (by you) is not liked by me." Saying 'Yes' the revered Viṣṇu remained silent. Then Hanūmat respectfully said these words to the god: "I desire to carry out my vow of worship without a desire. I would (therefore) go to worship (my desired deity). Please permit me."

Śaṅkara said:

277b-279a. Whose worship (i.e. to worship whom are you going)? Where will the worship (be done)? What flowers (will you use)? What leaves (will you use?) Tell (all that to me). Who is your preceptor? Which is the hymn (you will employ)? How will the worship (be done)?

When the god was speaking like this, Hanūmat trembled very much. With his entire body shaking, he started praising (Śiva):

Hanūmat said:

279b-286a. Salutation to the great god Śiva of an immeasurable form. Salutation to the meditating sage, the prop of abstract meditation and to the preceptor of the meditating sages. Salutation to him who is known (only) by the meditating sages, to the god, and to the lord of the wise. Salutation to you, the lord of the Vedas; salutation to you, the lord of gods. Salutation (to you who are) meditation, who are understood by meditation, to the preceptor of creators. Salutation to the wise, to one who is understood by the wise, to the lord of the earth etc. I am your servant—with these and other words salutation to the treasure of the Vedic words. Salutation to you who is to be thought of with (the utterance of such) words as 'stretch out'. O you eight-formed[1] one, salutation to you. Salutation to the lord of beings.

1. Aṣṭamūrti—For the eight forms of Śiva, see verse 373 of this chapter.

To Tryambaka (i.e. having three eyes), to Trinetra (i.e. the three-eyed one), salutation to you having the Sun and the Moon as your eyes. Salutation to you, to whom the excellent bhṛṅgarāja, and dhattūra and flowers of droṇa are dear, to whom big nuts, punnāga, campaka etc. are dear. Salutation to you; my repeated salutations to you.

Then Śiva said to Viṣṇu: "Do not be afraid. Tell me the whole (thing)."

Hanūmat said:

286b-294. With one's body dusted with the sacred ash one should worship Śiva's Phallus with flowers procured by day, and even now remaining (fresh) like that. O god, I shall respectfully narrate to you the auspicious rite of Śiva's worship. When evening has come, a man should bathe without (making) his head (wet). Then the most wise man should put on a washed garment and sip water twice. Then having taken sacred ash he should bathe in honour of Agni. Then muttering (a hymn) with Om eight times, or with the five-syllabled hymn or with any other name, he, with darbhas in his hand, should collect the sacred ash consecrated seven times. Saying '*Īśānaḥ sarva-vidyānām*' he should drop the ash on his head. He should sprinkle (i.e. apply) the ash over his face by saying '*Tat puruṣāya vidmahe*'. He should put on (i.e. apply to) his chest the sacred ash (after saying:) '*Aghorebhyaḥ atha ghorebhyaḥ*.' He should apply it to the private parts (of his body) saying '*Vāmadevāya namaḥ*.' He should throw on (i.e. apply to) his feet the sacred ash after saying '*Sadyojātam prapadyāmi*.' The wise one should dust his entire body with the sacred ash, with the utterance of *Om*. The excellent rite of bathing etc. is prescribed for the (first) three castes. I shall tell (you) about the rite for the śūdras and others as told by (my) preceptor.

295-304. Uttering the word *Śiva* the wise one should consecrate the sacred ash. Taking it seven times, he should put it on (i.e. apply it to) his head, (uttering:) 'To Śiva'. It is said that (he should put the sacred ash) into his mouth (afther uttering

the word *Śaṅkarāya* (i.e. to Śankara). He should put it on his chest after saying 'To the omniscient one'. Uttering the words *Salutation to Sthāṇu* (he should apply the sacred ash) to the private parts (of his body). Saying 'to Svayambhū' he should apply it to his feet. Then the sacred ash is purer. It is said that the entire body should be dusted with the sacred ash after uttering *Namaḥ Śivāya.* (Then) he should, having washed his hands and having sipped water, be composed. In the absence of darbhas gold should be (used). In its absence cow's hair (should be used). In its absence dūrvā-grass should be (used). In its absence silver should be used. Having offered the sandhyā prayer and having muttered (the names) of the goddess, he should go to the temple of the deity. The altar for the deity or a raised platform for the deity should be pure and made of clay. It should have the arrangements of lotuses etc. on it. It should be painted with four colours or with white colour only. (Then he should arrange) beautiful lotuses, Svastika-figures, blue lotuses etc., a mace, a conch, a trident and so also a drum; the five shrines as told by Śiva, so also the Phallus of Śiva, the tree yielding all fruits, kulaka, kolaka; it should have six angles, three angles or even nine angles. The swing should have twelve angles, so also wooden sandals and fans (should be kept).

305-309. The intelligent man should also fashion with powders (the images of) Viṣṇu, Brahmā etc. on the altar; or the wise one should arrange these where the worship of the deity would take place. The best (materials of worship are those) that are fashioned by his own hands. The mediocre are those that are purchased. Lowest are those that are begged; and the meanest are those that are (secured) forcibly. Whatever is secured with force, whether proper or improper, is fruitless. He should do everything properly, with red rice, japā flowers, kalamā rice, white or red rice, or ears just coming out from the paddy plants, according to the proper order, and with placing lotuses etc. which are said to be the best, the mediocre and the lowest. He should face the north or the east.

310-316. I shall tell (you) about the seat as I have seen it or heard about it. It should be made of silk, hide, which are like cloth, wooden or of palm-leaves; or of wool, gold, silver, and

copper or made of dry (cakes of) cowdung. He should make the seat (also) of the hide of tiger, ruru deer, antelope or deer. (Thus the seat) made of hide should be known to be of four kinds; so also it should be of bandhujīva (a kind of tree) as (anyone of of these) is available. He should sit in the padmāsana posture, or in the svastika posture. He should be seated with darbhas and with the sacred ash (applied to his body); he should control his breath and his speech. He till then is of the form of the deity. In the end he should practise meditation. He should meditate upon Śiva of a subtle body remaining at the end of the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (and of the measure of) twelve fingers, (Śiva) moving within (the bodies of) beings, in the cave (of the heart) and in all forms. (He should meditate upon Śiva) who is having all ornaments, who is endowed with qualities like (being) small. He should keep him in his heart; he should fill his (own) body by means of his parvasion.

317-322. Due to that brilliance the sin in the body perishes as gold becomes crimson or white due to its contact with mercury. Having fashioned the pure seat covered with twelve leaves (or eight or three leaves), he should place the Phallus there. Then he should think of Śiva remaining in the cave (of the heart as placed) in the Phallus. Into the pitcher that is cleaned, he should put water which is cleaned, perfumed with fragrances and containing fragrant flowers, and which is consecrated with (the sacred syllable) *Om*. Restraining the breath and (the utterance of) *Om* are not prescribed in the case of śūdras. In place of the restraint of the breath (they should have) meditation and (in place of) consecration with *Om*, (they should utter the word) *Śīva*. He should place near him the materials of worship like sandal, sacred rice-grains etc.; and then he will make a solemn vow: 'To please Śiva only, I shall worship Śiva.'

323-328. Having made a solemn vow like this, he should then invoke (the deity) etc., till (the deity is given) a bath. Then he should give bath (to the deity) with the hymn *Namaste* etc. and according to the rite of the Śatarudriya. A stream (of water) that is unbroken is called *muktidhārā*. He who bathes the deity with that (i.e. muktidhārā) for a month, while muttering (the names of) Rudra in a low voice, once, thrice, five times, seven or nine times or eleven times (is meritorious). This (bath) should

be known as *muktisnāna*; (when continued) for a month, it gives salvation. The bath (should be given) with (the accompaniment) of the Śaiva lore (i.e. hymn) or merely with (the utterance of) *Om*; or with clay pot and pieces of coconuts, with bell-metal, pearls, or string of flowers. Thus he should bathe the lord with materials as told and as are available.

329-343a. I shall tell (you about) the rite of the horn, and about how it would be fit for the bath (to be given with). Having cleansed it before and after, he should make a very glossy and small peg, and should cut it somehow. With (water from) the bucket placed at a low region near the door and with darbhas he should bathe the deity. Thus is said to be the water-form of the gavaya-horn. At the door having joints, he should fashion a staff, bent and of the shape of a peg; at the place of the plank he should fashion a goblet having even number of holes with a staff. There only he should cause to fall (the water) remaining in the pitcher (placed in) a machine above. He should make it fall with the other (i.e. the right) or with just the left hand. He is said to have put the muktidhārā. It is pure and destroys sins. Having thus installed the (representation of) the lord of gods, he should bathe it with the five products of a cow or with five sweet things, or with three sweet things.[1] Having adorned the deity with decorations and having again bathed the great lord, he should offer cold (water etc.). (Then) he should bring a piece of cloth, a sacred thread, pañcagandha, camphor, agaru (sandal), or (ordinary) sandal. Or both should be mixed. (Then) he should worship Śiva's Phallus. The entire seat may be full (i.e. fully made) of sandal, or according to his real wealth. The worship (should be offered) silently; he should offer seasonal flowers, like śrīpatra, sarala, according to his capacity, and unbroken. The incense of many materials, or similarly guggula (a fragrant resin) only along with ghee (made from the milk) of a cow are recommended for a full incense. He should offer incense according to his capacity, so also lamps burning with the ghee (made from the milk) of a cow, or he should offer lamps burning merely with ghee, and other offerings. He should offer flowers procured according to his

1. Pañcāmṛta—The collèction of five sweet things used in worshipping deities. They are: milk, sugar, ghee, curd and honey.

capacity. Then he should respectfully offer (water for) washing the mouth and tāmbūla. He should go round and salute (the deity). Thus the worship is accomplished. Then the five constituents of singing (should be gone through).

343b-347. They are: Songs, instrumental music, (recital of) a Purāṇa, dancing and mirthful talk. He should also wave the light (before the deity), offer a cavity-ful of flowers and everything. He should apologise to the deity, then dismiss the deity; this is said to be an upacāra[1]. Similarly, ornaments, umbrellas, chowries, fans, Śiva's sacred thread and service to him are said to be six upacāras. He who would worship Śiva with thirtytwo upacāras in a day, will certainly have all his sins destroyed. The worship with thirtytwo upacāras is the best.

Sadāśiva said:

348-349a. O best among the monkeys, it is like this. I shall tell you about the worship. The couple of my feet are fit to be worshipped. Be the worshipper of all. Having thus propitiated the Phallus, you propitiate me.

Hanūmat said:

349b-354. My preceptor has certainly enjoined on me the Phallus-worship only. O god, I shall do it first; then I shall worship your feet.

Having just spoken like this, he saluted the lord, and became (engaged) in the worship of Śiva's Phallus. He should go to (i.e. he went to) the bank of a lake and having made a sandy altar, should arrange a seat made of palm-leaves. Having washed his hands and feet, and having sipped water, he became composed. He bathed with (i.e. applied) sacred ash; and again having sipped water, he controlled his speech. On the altar for the deity he put lotuses; then the monkey who had taken the posture called padmāsana, made a very beautiful (seat) of the palm-leaves. Having, along with the nyāsas, restrained his breath, he, endowed with pure meditation, saluted the great god and muttered (his names) thereafter.

355-362a. Then he also made an effort to worship the god.

1. Upacāra=service; worship; act of worship; article of worship.

He brought pure water in a couple of the hollows of palāśa-leaves. Placing the fire, to the accompaniment of three hymns, which was in the pitcher on the head, he made invocation etc. up to the bath only. Then he took (the representation of) the god in the hollow made by the palms of his hands to bathe him. Having observed, the monkey did not see the god and the seat. Seeing only the Phallus in his hand, he was full of fear. The great meditating sage said (thought) this: 'What sin have I committed so that (only) this Śiva-Phallus without the seat remains in my hand? I shall certainly die today if the seat does not come (back). I shall mutter the Rudra(-hymn); then the great god will come.' Thus having resolved in his mind, he muttered the Śatarudriya (hymn). Even then the great god did not come (there). Then the lord of the monkeys dropped Rudra on the ground. Vīrabhadra came (there). "O devotee, why do you weep? Tell me the cause of your weeping."

Hanūmat said:

362b. This Phallus is without the seat. See the heap of my sins.

Vīrabhadra said:

363-367. If the seat does not come to the Phallus, do not do a rash act. I shall burn the world if the seat does not come (back). See and show me the Phallus. (Let me see,) if Vīrabhadra saw the Phallus and (noted that) the seat had not come back, he desired to burn all the worlds.

He threw fire on the ground; in a moment the earth burnt at that time. Then he burnt the seven nether worlds, and again set out to lift them. He burnt the five upper worlds, the abodes of the people. Taking (out) with his nail the citron-like fire produced in his eye on his forehead, the lord put it on the palm of his hand.

368-375. If the seat would not come, then certainly the worlds are burnt. The brave Vīrabhadra knew (that the seat) did not come (back). The noble ones like Sanaka, having come to know (about this incident) through deep meditation, came (there). The brāhmaṇas came to the excellent hermitage of Gautama, but did not see the origin of gods (i.e. Śiva) though

he was there. They praised (him) with eulogies from all the Vedas: 'Salutation to that god of gods; salutation to that (god of) pure lustre and inconceivable form. Salutation to the lord of gods; salutation to the pure one concealed by the Vedas. Salutation to Śiva, the first god; salutation to (Śiva) having a snake as his sacred thread. Salutation to him who supports everything with the drops of the three (Vedas)—the heap of the joy of the gods. Our repeated salutation to that Śaṅkara whose eight forms are: earth, air, ether, water, moon, fire, sun and soul also, and who is known (only) through knowledge.' Having heard this praise, Śiva, who had given (back) to Bhaga his eyes, said to Viṣṇu: "Go and bring here those brāhmaṇas." They were brought there by Viṣṇu. They bowed before the god. Śaṅkara spoke (these) words to them: "Why have you come (here)?"

The sages said:

376. O god, heaps of the ashes of the twelve worlds (burnt by Vīrabhadra) are seen. This forest alone remains. (Please) note the destruction of the worlds.

Sadāśiva said:

377. We have a doubt about the burning of the five worlds that are above (the earth). How is there the shower of (burning) charcoals? Or how (i.e. due to what) is the great sound?

The sages said:

378-388. Now we have fear from Vīrabhadra. He alone, like one desirous to drink, has dropped the shower of charcoals.

Then the god called Vīrabhadra and said to him: "O Vīra, what is (this)?" Vīra (said:) "This was done due to the loss of the seat of the Śiva-Phallus of Hanūmat. To know the heart of the monkey, I did this great (deed)." Then the god, treasure of kindness, made (everything) as before. The supreme lord made all the worlds burnt (by Vīrabhadra) as beautiful as before. Then the universal soul (i.e. Śiva) said to Vīrabhadra; Śiva embraced him, smelt him on the head and gave him a tāmbūla. Then Hanūmat performed the worship of the lord. He then said to a gandharva

having a lute and wandering in the forest, these (words:) "Give the lute to me." (The gandharva said:) "I shall not part with my lute. It is (dear to me) like my (own) life." The lord of the monkeys said: "The lute is (dear to me) like my own life." Then when by the stroke of his fist the gandharva fell down, he took the great lute endowed with notes and strings, and made it joined with a bottle-gourd resembling the form of a royal tree. Putting it on his chest, he came singing in the vicinity of Śiva. He worshipped the feet of the god with pure flowers of bṛhatī. Then the lord gave him a boon and (a span of) life till (the end of) the kalpa. He also gave him another (boon)—capacity to cross the ocean.

389-395a. He with his body well adorned with all decorations, having lessened the brightness of the gods with his own brilliance, of a pleasing form and an auspicious body, honoured all gods. The great god (i.e. Śiva) took a yellow pair of washed garments (and said to Viṣṇu): "O god Viṣṇu, you take this auspicious (pair)." The giver of wealth gave a red garment to Brahmā, and gave a good pair to (each of) all the gods, sages, demons etc. Rāma too, hearing this, offered a pair to Śambhu, so also a very subtle, very costly golden ornament. Then Rāghava, seated comfortably with his ministers and family-priest, also with hosts of many sages, kings and monkeys, after having eaten (food), on the bank of Gautamī, said to Śambhu who knew the essential nature of the Purāṇas: "You alone know the hundred secrets of all the ways of life. O brāhmaṇa, tell me what is the peculiarity of which yuga."

Śambhu said:

395b-401. In Kṛta (yuga) meditation alone is the best. In Tretā (yuga) sacrifice alone (is the best). In Dvāpara (yuga) worship (is the best). In Kali (yuga) charity, a recital of Viṣṇu's name (are the best). Everything is recommended everywhere, but not meditation in Kaliyuga. Due to the minds of men being in difficulty, being deluded, O lord, they do not have a firm mind in religious rites, in the Vedas and in the codes of law (smṛti). So also in sacrifice, in the exclamation of Svadhā (made at the time of offering oblation to a deity), and in listening to the Purāṇas. So also (they do not have a firm mind) in sacrifices,

sacred places and serving the gods; in offering sacrifices to deities, in the duties of their own castes, in remembering god: nowhere (have they a firm mind) in Kaliyuga. Therefore, men are incapable of having religious merit lasting for a long time. Due to the time being short a man is capable of giving (gifts). Therefore, for those who are polluted by Kali, there is no expiation. The destruction of the sins of some takes place due to expiations, not in any other way.

402-411a. All these—one who knows Brahman, one who performs the śrāddha ceremony at Gayā, one who goes to Kāśī—are inferior to him who knows the Purāṇas; so also the listener of a Purāṇa (is inferior to him), O Rāma. The brāhmaṇa who expounds a Purāṇa is superior, due to his explaining the meaning according to yugas, due to his convincing himself and others, and due to his illumining Brahman (or the Vedas). Even the sin committed by him would not stick. Then what about (sin) from another (source)? The Purāṇa would destroy certain other sins. There is no doubt that all the sins of him who believes in the Purāṇas, looks upon the speaker (of the Purāṇas) as his teacher, and upon the giver of the lore of Brahman (or Vedas) as superior to his kinsmen and relatives, perish. The worshipper of the great lord should go to Śrīśaila; the Purāṇa destroys the sin of men in Kaliyuga. O Rāma, I shall tell you an account (that) formerly (took place) in Kaliyuga. Listen to it. There was a brāhmaṇa named Gautama who was destitute of the Vedas. He had two brothers Puṣṭi and Paśu who (also) were destitute of the Vedas. With them (i.e. with their help) he did husbandry, and obtained prosperity. He also gave some wealth and grains to the king. Once he said a few words to the king: "Give me (some) authority. I shall not lose wealth. The two brothers of mine are capable."

The king said:

411b-412a. A brāhmaṇa is qualified for the religious rites as told by the Vedas. The brāhmaṇahood of a brāhmaṇa employed at any other (job) than that perishes.

Gautama said:

412b-415. This is a way of life (followed) in other yugas.

The way of life in Kaliyuga is not like that. O king, behaving like a king is said to be the duty of kings. A brāhmaṇa who is extremely emaciated, is not at a fault if he practises it. Agriculture is the duty of śūdras. A brāhmaṇa is not to pursue it (even) in a calamity. Therefore, I shall live as a kṣatriya; grant me (a few) villages. I like to live as a kṣatriya at other place than this. (I do) not like anything else.

(The king) said, "All right", and gave (a few) villages to the brāhmaṇa.

416-421a. He, the wicked official of the villages, behaved differently. He ate flesh, he drank liquor, he uttered bad words; similarly he approached others' wives; he snatched away the wealth of others; he indulged in gambling; and he, the eater of bad things, ate the flesh of an animal struck with a poisoned weapon. He did not worship the lord of the worlds—Śiva or Viṣṇu. The king, after some time, spoke (to the brāhmaṇa) who behaved badly like this: "O brāhmaṇa, having given up brāhmaṇahood, you have secured śūdrahood (i.e. have become a śūdra). Therefore, I shall dismiss you by my order." "I do not want brāhmaṇahood. The condition of a śūdra is better for me. Without that, even if they are brāhmaṇas, they do not enjoy. Therefore, śūdrahood is better for me. O lord of the earth, I am not able to give up all this."

Śambhu said:

421b-423. When the bad brāhmaṇa spoke like this, the king remained silent. He, equal to a śūdra, ate food with flesh. Once that man of bad behaviour remained in a pavilion on the street. He heard this verse being recited by a brāhmaṇa; and the verse recited by the brāhmaṇa remained in his heart:

424-426. "Those who are greatly devoted to Viṣṇu go to a place higher than the highest. Those who hate the great lord (i.e. Śiva) will not go there." Also on hearing the explanation he said to the public reader of the Purāṇas: "Of what kind is said to be Nārāyaṇa? And how is Maheśvara? What is said to be the great path? How is hatred explained? What is that known to be the highest? What is higher than that?"

The public reader of the Purāṇas said:

427-429. That highest is Brahmā's place, whose only characteristic is the manifestation of happiness. Higher than that is Viṣṇu's abode. It is superior to that of Brahmā. That highest place is described as having (the quality of) indestructibility. In it the (supreme) man is Viṣṇu. The lord, O lord, dear one, is the highest. Water, due to the (supreme) man being born in it is called Nara. Nara (i.e. water) is his abode; therefore, he is declared as Nārāyaṇa.

430-431. Those who have a devotion to him are said to be tatparāyaṇa (i.e. devoted to him). He who is the controller of the principles like mahat etc., and whose eyes are the sun, fire, and the moon, and who is the lord of Umā would be (i.e. is) the great god (Śiva). Hatred should be known to be the enmity towards the lord, the highest soul.

Śambhu said:

432-441. In this way the brāhmaṇa who read the Purāṇa, uttered these words. Thinking (about it) he again said: "What would be the fate of (a person) like me?" Then the public reader of the Purāṇas said to him: "Listen, I shall tell (you) about your fate. With all efforts duly take an expiation. Practise religious merit according to your capacity at the proper time and according to the proper rules. Being free from sins, you will then reach an excellent condition. Or being attentive, listen to a Purāṇa every day. Or free from hopes, worship the great god, the trident-holder (Śiva), or Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu), the god whose eyes are like lotuses and who destroys suffering. Or take to renunciation for good. Be devoted to the knowledge of Brahman. Or go to the lord of Kāśi, and obtain death for securing salvation. Or go to Gayā, and try to offer a śrāddha there. Or mutter every day with respect the Rudra(-hymn); pleasing Rudra, the essence of all the Vedas, and the destroyer of sins. Or go to Śrīśaila, or to Kedāra, if you please. Or practise bath in Māgha every year. What is the use of talking too much in this matter. Always be devoted to piety. (If you do) like this, you will not live in hell, O you mean brāhmaṇa."

Gautama said:

On hearing the Purāṇa from your mouth, I shall do all (this). Also tell me the sacred precepts, the cause of faith and the taboos.

The public reader of the Purāṇas said:

442-448a. (These are) prohibited: flesh, liquor, enjoying another's wife, gambling, boasting, harshness, falsehood, deceit, censure of god of gods, reviling preceptors, seniors, gods and expounders of Purāṇas and codes of laws, white egg-plant, living on bottle-gourd, citron, safflower, the rice called lohita, lotus, awl, coconut, pumpkin gourd, kovidāra fruit, cooked oil, human milk, so also milk of a rhinoceros, of a female donkey, the milk of a woman recently delivered, so also of a female goat, of a camel, of a one-hoofed animal, of a deer, sheep and of human beings, so also the milk of a calf-less cow and of one that is in heat, salt that is touched, the juice of coconut in a bell-metal vessel or in a copper vessel, honey in a lead vessel; he should never have butter-milk in a glass-vessel or have flour mixed with curds, smeared with ghee. A burnt offering or a cake offered as an oblation shines in a clay-vessel.

448b-453a. A wise man, desiring auspiciousness, should not serve a stranger in (this) world. The smearing of the inside of a vessel with a powder, or eating therefrom (is prohibited). Similarly eating betel-nut, and crushed (betel-)leaves (is prohibited). The eating of ripe betal-nut brings about a union with worms. So also salt added to milk merely with the hand (is prohibited). In (countries like) Sindhu, Saurāṣṭra, Kamboja, Magadha and Siṁhala milk accompanied by salt does not lead to a sin. In other countries all (kinds of) milk and salts lead to sin. There is a doubt here in case of drinking. What is the use of talking much in this matter? Good men should avoid what is censurable.

Śambhu said:

453b-464. Having heard these words of the magnanimous brāhmaṇa, he went to his own house, and being afflicted thought: 'Even a great man does not know whether death would

come at night or by day. In the other world there may be happiness or unhappiness. In this world there are pleasures and entertainments. The pleasures and pains of the worms and insects and of human beings etc. are separate for each being. The difference in purpose also is well-determined. Even for one being the condition is not of one kind (only). At the time of birth there is great ignorance. In infanthood there is very little knowledge; when the steps stumble (i.e. in early childhood there is little understanding; it is also very little in childhood. In adolescence there is interest in sport; in youth there is a longing for carnal pleasures. When youth has passed there is the desire to secure wealth. In old age there is a desire for enjoyment, but (the old man) is not capable of enjoyment. He suffers from rheum of the eyes, phlegm, saliva, folds, greyness and trembling; the senses are overpowered by asthma, wind, and are defective. He is not able to hold anything, nor does he know anything. He would show (i.e. he shows) his private parts when wives of others are there. He is engaged in scratching his testicles, and is cruel due to the nature of living. He raises his garment, moves his buttocks, and scratches them. Eating (i.e. trying to eat) the mouthful he is not able (to do so) due to phlegm. When there is cough there is wind passing from the anus with a sound. So also the feces come out, and phlegm also comes out. He is rebuked by his daughters-in-law etc. and children laugh with clapping.

465-471. Having given a thought to the going out of the elders he was repeatedly invited for food etc. Having censured the eatables, food etc. and having for a long time condemned the hot (food) he again thought: 'I am a man who has done very bad deeds. How shall I eat? How shall I sleep? How shall I stand? How shall I go? How can I reach the other world (i.e. heaven)?' He was thus always worried. He, not having a thought for the highest one, did not bow down. O Rāma, he went to the house of a brāhmaṇa, well-versed in the Purāṇas. With his face bent down through shame, he said: "What (should) I do (now)?" At that time the brāhmaṇa, the public reader of the Purāṇas, said nothing; knowing that he was a sinner he drove him away through his disciples. Gautama too, going out,

remained outside the house, at the door. To him who was (first) seated on the ground and who somehow reached the brāhmaṇa pondering over the meaning of the Purāṇas, a seat was offered (by the Paurāṇika). He did not occupy it. O Rāma, seated on the ground, he said to (the brāhmaṇa) who knew the Purāṇas: "I shall go through an expiation. Let it be done here only."

The brāhmaṇa said:

472-474a. Narrate fully the sins committed by you.

He too, saying, "I have done no sin", wept, and being extremely afflicted fell on the ground, saying, "how, O dear one, (can I save myself)?" The brāhmaṇa then said to him: "There is no expiation if a major sin is committed three times."

Gautama said:

474b-475a. O noble reader of the Purāṇas, how am I sinful even when I have come to you? If I am sinful even now, then the company of an excellent brāhmaṇa (like you) would be fruitless.

The public reader of the Purāṇas said:

475b-478. In the decision about the expiations of all sacred precepts are the (only) authority. If one would say anything about it then that would not be an expiation. (The expiation) is said to be gone through once, if (the sin) is committed once. For the second (sin) it would be double. For the third (sin) it is said to be triple, and for the fourth (sin) there is no atonement. You have committed many sins. Even the fourth one you have committed deliberately. How am I able to tell an expiation to (a person) like you?

Gautama too said again: "Where should I go now?"

479-487. O Rāma, the brāhmaṇa, the public reader of the Purāṇas, remained quiet. Gautama too went to the great Śrī-śaila. Then, having bathed in the river, and having seen the lord Mallikārjuna, and having observed three fasts (i.e. having fasted for three days), he had Śivarātri (i.e. it was the day of Śivarātri). He who was very much grieved, observed the fourth

fast; he also broke his fast by (eating) fruits and barks of trees on the new-moon day. Then the brāhmaṇa went round Śrī-śaila, keeping it to his right. He, extremely emaciated due to worry and heaving, then went to the temple. 'How will I, remaining silent, accomplish freedom from sins? Which is my very great, infinite sin that is inconceivable? (Even) having heard (about my sins) nobody would say to me—Go through an expiation. But on hearing some Purāṇa, it will be known.' Thinking like this, he said to (the brāhmaṇa) who knew the Purāṇas: "O dear one, may the revered one expound one Purāṇa to me. Quickly make me go through the sacraments like the one performed at the time of birth; I shall listen to the Purāṇa after becoming a twice-born; thereafter, I (shall) go through an expiation. If a Purāṇa is narrated to me, it will be helpful to me. So I determining the meaning of the Purāṇa shall do (whatever) is possible."

The public reader of Purāṇas said:

488-489a. I shall duly narrate the Purāṇa destroying sins to you, according to my knowledge (of it), according to my capacity, as uprightly as possible and according to the proper rules. Which Purāṇa do you desire (to hear)? I shall narrate that only.

Gautama said:

489b-490a. Tell me which Purāṇa should be said to be liked by all, and hearing which there would be no difference felt between Viṣṇu and Śiva.

The public reader of Purāṇas said:

490b-494. That Purāṇa which is called Kaurma is said to be telling about the non-difference between the two gods. The sin of him who listens to it first, perishes. There would be no danger for him who would be its reader. If a sinner desires to hear it, his wife perishes; moreover, one difficult thing I shall tell (you) and that is the absence of the censure of the listener and the speaker. If the listener has love for the expounder, it becomes manifest through the merit only. When meritorious behaviour which shows (the path to) salvation, is noticed, then the great

god (i.e. Śiva) is pleased, and Viṣṇu gives the desired fruits. He has emancipated his dead ancestors. They obtain the highest state.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN

Reciting and Listening to Purāṇas Is Meritorious

Śrī Rāma said:

1. O best brāhmaṇa, how did (the brāhmaṇa) knowing the Purāṇa explain it to the mean brāhmaṇa to whom heaps of sins had come?

Śambhu said:

2-7. Union takes place in teaching and learning. When they go together, O Rāma, in a year the sin of a sinner goes away. O you descendant of Kakutstha, when the knower (i.e. the reader) of a Purāṇa knows all the essential things, then even repeated heap of sins perishes, as the heap (i.e. column) of smoke perishes when a large fire perishes. A moth is capable of destroying a lamp, (but) not (capable of) destroying fire. As one who frees the mortals seized with the fear of ghosts etc., so a public reader of Purāṇas destroys the sin committed by others. One who knows a spell would send away (the ghost etc.), and not he who is afflicted. Similarly, a public reader of Purāṇas does not receive any sin. One who knows Purāṇas, destroys the sin committed by himself or by others, and even (the fruit of) a very wicked sin.

8-11. One who has discrimination looks equally upon (Śiva) the lord of Pārvatī and upon Viṣṇu. He knows the acts of the world and those that are told in the Vedas; he mutters the Rudra(-hymn); he is very desireless. He is contented; he is calm; he is diligent in work; he is mature; he practises abstract meditation; and is controlled, as your reader of Purāṇas—the

revered sage Vasiṣṭha—is, who has remained by your command in Ayodhyā and has protected the entire earth. The demon rushed to you. At the advice of Śukra the demon came to (attack) you. (He thought:) 'I shall kill him when he is asleep. Otherwise there is no chance.'

12-16. Then the brāhmaṇa Vasiṣṭha, to whom your well-being was dear, knowing this (thought:) 'There is no doubt that the demon will kill Rāma who is asleep and unaware. The demon has obtained a boon from Brahmā. I have to keep him off'. Thinking like this, the brāhmaṇa sage took the army and went out. The sage was unable to kill the demon who was immune to death. Then the great sage himself became a demon and said (these) words: "Why have you come to this forest resorted to by sages?" He said: "The king (i.e. Rāma) kills the demons. I have come to kill him." The sage said: "What have you to do with him, alive or dead? Having eaten my flesh, and having fought with me, go (back)."

The demon said:

17-20a. How can you, a demon, be fit for my food?

Then Vasiṣṭha too, becoming a human being, stood in the sky (i.e. air). He spat on his head and struck him with his fist. He struck the demon. The sage made him flee. The two running (after each other) went to the ocean. At that time, the demon was seized by a crocodile living there. The sage was in Ayodhyā as before.

Śambhu said:

20b-22. Therefore, he who knows a Purāṇa, should do what is agreeable to him. I shall tell you the auspicious manner of listening (to a Purāṇa). On a holy day in the bright half (of a month), when the day and constellation are in union, when there is the (proper) Karaṇa, an auspicious moment, when there is the strength of the planets and stars, when old Jupiter remains with a young, wise Planet (a Purāṇa should be heard).

23-25a. (It should not be heard) in a dark fortnight, on an eclipse-day, or in the vicinity of an atheist. A man should listen to a Purāṇa having the characteristics as stated before.

(He should listen to it) in a pure house, or on a pure altar, or in a place of learning, on the bank of a river, in a temple, in an assembly hall, in a beautiful monastery on the road, or in auspicious halls, O Rāma.

25b-30a. Having himself saluted the best brāhmaṇas, and especially him who knows the Purāṇa, a man should fashion a seat above (all other seats) and superior to all (other seats). He should gently say (to the reader of the Purāṇa): "Come to (this) religious seat." He should declare what is to be done on the day of the commencement of (the recital of) the Purāṇa. Having given the expounder of the Purāṇa auspicious, fine, new garments and ornaments for his hands, neck etc., so also a proper seat, he should honour him with garments etc. After having worshipped Viṣṇu having the complexion like that of the moon and having four hands, and having put on a white garment, with sandal, flowers and sacred grains, and having offered him a tāmbūla, he should, for the removal of all difficulties, reflect upon him, of a pleasing face.

30b-34. Having honoured the members of the assembly, he should then pray to Gaṇeśa. He should worship him with the hymn: *Oṁ namaḥ* etc. (Then should follow) the eulogy of Sarasvatī. The commencement (of the recital) of the Purāṇa should be done in the morning. O Rāma, on the day of commencement three, five or ten auspicious verses (should be read). Double this number (should be read) on the second day. O Rāma, (the reading of) more verses than on the second day is prescribed for the third day. The narration and the hearing should go on without a break on all days. When (proper) arrangement is made, he should give the preceptor, the reader of the Purāṇa, tāmbūla etc. and should also listen to it on the next day.

35-39. The scripture says that every day Purāṇa should be listened to. If a man listens to the Purāṇa as a vow, he undoubtedly goes to that place wherefrom the Purāṇa (has come). There is no doubt that the sin committed on the day would perish, if he who desires to listen to (the recital of) the Purāṇa, has heard even one verse. He who would listen to the Purāṇa like this, would be free from the bond of the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder; so also from (sins due to) drinking liquor, snatching

gold, and the sin due to (enjoying) his teacher's wife. So also all the other sins which are committed and were formerly committed by men (perish). So also sins committed by the listener and the speaker in this world (perish).

40-49a. In Kaliyuga all brāhmaṇas do not know all things. Therefore, even if the narration is faulty, it gives fruit like the act of charity. Vyāsa, and none else, understood the import of the Purāṇas. I know it especially more than even Vyāsa or even Brahmā. In Kaliyuga, self-study, penance, hymns or oblation do not become so fruitful as listening to Purāṇa (is fruitful). There is no doubt that by listening to each Purāṇa even great sin perishes, as by living on Śrīśaila. Therefore, the knower of Purāṇa is the preceptor. He is venerable to the listeners and destroys (their) sins. There is no preceptor superior to him who would give the highest position. Those preceptors who are regarded as knowers of the hymns and Vedas, are not capable of giving all knowledge. Therefore, they are not teachers. O Rāma, generally goblins who are the ghosts of brāhmaṇas know the Vedic hymns, and not ones who know the Purāṇas. All who are averse to Purāṇas do not see (i.e. know) everything. Therefore, one who knows Purāṇas is a master who destroys sins. His worship is the worship of all. Troubling him is offending all. As among all gifts, gift of knowledge is praised, in the same way the public reader of Purāṇas is blessed; and giving a gift to him gives great fruit.

Rāma said:

49b-50a. What should be given to the public reader of Purāṇas? How much (should be given)? In what way (should it be given)? What kind of Purāṇa should be avoided? What kind of the reader of Purāṇas should be avoided?

Śambhu said:

50b-54a. O Rāma, a man should cause to give (i.e. should give) (the eatables having) the six flavours, food, drinks, oily substances, a house with furniture. All these are sufficient. (If) more (are given) greater fruit (is had). He should also give much wealth, a soft, decorated garment, ornaments of proper value.

(These) he should give according to his capacity. Every day he should give sandal, flowers, or only sandal, or merely a flower, and seasonal fruits also. Similarly he should give him a tāmbūla, and salute him devoutly.

54b-58. At the close (of the reading session) of the Purāṇa, he should give gifts etc. O king, more (things) like land, gold etc. should also be given. Nobody remaining silent (i.e. not giving anything) should listen (to the Purāṇa). The worship (should be) done by the members of the assembly or by one only. At a temple worship should be done by all according to their capacity. O Rāma, a man should honour the knower of Purāṇas at a sacred place. O king, I have already told you the characteristics of a listener. I shall now tell you about the characteristics of a public reader of Purāṇas.

59-60. (A public reader of Purāṇas having the characteristics mentioned below should be avoided:) A man without a family (i.e. one not born in a noble family), a man having a great (i.e. an incurable) disease, a great sinner, a man who is condemned, a man without pure conduct, a man without (i.e. not versed in) Vedas and codes of laws. Also, a man having (i.e. a devotee of) another god, a man having a stinking speech, a defective man or a man having an additional limb, a man who has married a woman having a husband, a thief, one who harms beings and one who is condemned.

61-64. O best king, now I shall tell you about the Purāṇa that should be avoided. (The reader) should recite that Purāṇa which is narrated by the ancient wise ones, or one which is narrated by the great sages, or which the sages like Vyāsa have narrated. He should read the text of the Purāṇa, and should explain it after (properly) thinking over it in any language (like) a regional language, O Rāma. A man would not get the (desired) fruit by listening to a text in the regional language. Whatever the explanation, it is good for the Purāṇa. Therefore, O lord, ask for the Purāṇa which I shall (i.e. should) expound.

Śambhu said:

65-68a. Thus spoke the public reader of the Purāṇa. Gautama also listened to it. He himself gave three garments to

the noble brāhmaṇa. It is learnt by us that he first listened to the Kaurma Purāṇa. He gave the (reader) more gold and bright garments. Then he listened to Laiṅga (Purāṇa), then to Vaiṣṇava and Vāmana also. So also to Pādma, Gāruḍa, and Saura, and Brāhma as well. Thus that Gautama listened to eight Purāṇas.

68b-73. Then he listened to Rāmāyaṇa, and also to Kaurma again. He always muttered the hymn *Śiva Nārāyaṇa*. He died, and went to Brahmā's place. Brahmā honoured that brāhmaṇa who then went to Viṣṇu's heaven. Being honoured by Viṣṇu, he then went to Śiva's abode. That best sage Gautama was honoured by all. I have also narrated the rules for listening to Bhārata. Formerly Vyāsa composed that auspicious book in three years. By listening to it (a man gets religious merit). He who expounds Bhārata should not salute any brāhmaṇa except an excellent meditating sage. He who expounds Bhārata should be honoured by all.

74-77. That brāhmaṇa who every day expounds or would read Mahābhārata, is superior to all, and would emancipate all men. He who expounds one parvan or all parvans or some parvans, becomes free from all sins, and is distinguished in the offering to gods and deceased ancestors. A man should salute that brāhmaṇa only; he should honour that worthy brāhmaṇa only; he should always feed him only; he should offer everything to him. The manner of honouring him at the time of exposition (is:). He should be honoured with garments etc. and a man should honour him according to the rules.

78-81. At the conclusion (of the recital) of Ādiparvan, (a man) should give (the reader) three garments, so also gold according to his capacity. At (the conclusion of the recital of) Sabhāparvan, a pair of garments (should be given). At the conclusion of the recital of Ānuśāsika, Āraṇya and Svargāroha, the same (kind of) honour should be done (to the reader) as is done at the time (of the conclusion of the recital) of the Ādiparvan, O best among men. At (the conclusion of the recital of the) Karṇa, Aśvamedha, Virāṭa, Śalya and Droṇa parvans, three fine, pure garments should be given, or a couple of niṣkas. At (the time of the conclusion of the recital of) other small parvans, he should bring (and give to the reader) two niṣkas.

At (the time of the conclusion of the recital of) Harivaṁśa, he should give the reader three garments with a niṣka.

82-84a. He should give (the reader a piece of) land at the time of the conclusion (of the recital) of the entire Bhārata. A man should worship the reader at the conclusion of the recital of every kāṇḍa, when Rāmāyaṇa is listened to. He should cause to give (i.e. should give) enough land or even gold. The words of the speaker, i.e. the preceptor destroy all sins. O best king, (they lead to) material welfare, religious merit, fulfilment of desires and salvation.

84b-88. All wise men become successful due to their listening to the exposition (of a Purāṇa-text). By (just) one listening (i.e. by listening just once to a Purāṇa) all sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa perish. Have the men not heard about it on the earth? A man should every day honour the expounder (of the Purāṇa) with (the gifts of) a vehicle, wealth, gold etc. so that the heap of his sins perishes. Even other Purāṇas recited by sages destroy the sins of the listeners, especially of the speaker. The mind of him who would expound all the thirtysix Purāṇas, or listens to them, is never divided.

89-93a. The first Purāṇa is Brāhma; the second is said to be Pādma; the third one is Vaiṣṇava (i.e. Viṣṇu Purāṇa); the fourth one is said to be Śaiva; the fifth is said to be Bhāgavata. Bhaviṣya is said to be the sixth; Nāradīya is declared to be the seventh; Mārkaṇḍeya is said to be the eighth; the ninth is Āgneya (i.e. Agni Purāṇa); Brahmavaivarta is said to be the tenth; then (there are) Laiṅga (i.e. Liṅga Purāṇa), Vāmana, Skānda (i.e. Skanda Purāṇa), Mātsya (i.e. Matsya Purāṇa), Kaurma (i.e. Kūrma Purāṇa); Vārāha (i.e. Varāha Purāṇa) is also said (to be one of the Purāṇas); Gāruḍa (i.e. Garuḍa Purāṇa) is also said (to be a Purāṇa); so also Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa. Thus the wise know the Purāṇas to be eighteen.

93b-97. Similarly I shall tell about the Upapurāṇas hereafter. The first one is Sanatakumāra; after that (comes) Nārasiṁha; the third one is said to be Māṇḍa; then there is Daurvāsasa (i.e. Durvāsas); then Nāradīya; the next is Kāpila; then is Mānava; then is said to be Auśanasa; then comes Brahmāṇḍa; then there is Vāruṇa; there is one called Kālikā; so also there are Māheśa and Sāmba, Saura and Pārāśara, Mārīca, and the

one called Bhārgava; so also Kaumāra. (These) are said to be eighteen Upa(purāṇas). Manu would be (i.e. is) the expounder of the eighteen Purāṇas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN

Narration of the Rāmāyaṇa of a Former Kalpa

Sūta said:

1-4. Rāma said to the sage: "Perform the rite of the (evening) prayer; this sun is setting; this flock of birds is going to the nests." Having abandoned his conveyance, he himself, desiring to offer his prayers went to the northern direction. Songs were sung by (the gandharvas) Hāhā, Hūhū. His glory was praised by the chief bards. Rāma went to the bank of Gautamī. His pair of feet was washed by Hanūmat (the son of Vāyu). His hand was supported by Jāmbavat. He reached the excellent river Gautamī. Holding kuśa (i.e. darbha) in both his hands that Rāma went to the excellent quarter of Varuṇa (i.e. the Western direction). Having made a respectful offering to the deity according to the proper rite, Rāma who was delighted, muttered (the hymn) in his mind (i.e. silently).

5-8. Rāma, after having solicited Varuṇa, saluted, in due order, Śambhu and Vasiṣṭha. Being blessed by them, he went to the deity (i.e. reflected upon the deity) in his mind, and after his feet were washed by Hanūmat, he offered oblations into the fires. Then, being praised by bards and panegyrists, he set out. The sky was, as it were, smeared with bright rays of the moon, and was, as it were, a canopy everywhere having the flowers of bright stars. Then he went to the palace. The king (i.e. Rāma) went to the assembly-hall fashioned by the old minister and having many seats. Then that Rāma, having made the sage sit, himself occupied the first seat. The groups of monkeys with large bodies were seated around him in (proper) order.

9-13. Seeing the king comfortably seated, that brāhmaṇa Śambhu then said proper words: "O best king, you, honoured by all, remain here. What is the thing in your heart i.e. what is your desire?" The descendant of Raghu, having heard the brāhmaṇa's words, desired to hear a story. His clever words were just then heard by all. "I desire to hear a wonderful tale referring to me or telling about the destruction of the demons." Then the king said this: "The murder of Kumbhakarṇa took place first and Rāvaṇa was killed afterwards. Who is this best brāhmaṇa who, causing ungodliness (to spread) among all the people, narrates it in a different way after having gone to the king's place? Should he be punished or honoured by me?" Then Jāmbavat spoke to this best of the Raghus about the story. "This is not your Rāmāyaṇa (i.e. not your account as told by Vālmīki). This is recognised as prepared (by someone else). O lord, now I shall tell it in detail. Listen to it. It was formerly heard by me from the son of the lotus-born (Brahmā)." Requesting Jāmbavat, Rāmacandra said (these) words:

Śrī Rāma said:

14-18. Narrate that tale of the past. I have curiosity to listen to it. Who propounded it and who knew it?

Then Jāmbavat spoke: Salutation to the Creator (i.e. Brahmā), so also salutation to (Śiva) having the moon as his ornament and to Viṣṇu. Now I shall narrate the ancient Rāmāyaṇa, by listening to which sin committed during the entire existence perishes. King Daśaratha who was equal to ten warriors fighting from chariots, who was full of great wrath, desired to conquer with his great army the city named Sumānasa. He called Vasiṣṭha, the son of the lotus-born (Brahmā), and saluted him. Permitted by the sage, he, mounting upon a horse having a body (white) like the moon, and saluting Viṣṇu, took out the expedition with an army of a hundred akṣauhiṇīs.

19-27. Sādhya (the king of that city), surrounded by his own army, faced Daśaratha to fight with him. The war between the two took place. Having fought for a month, Daśaratha seized that (king) Sādhya. Then, Sādhya's son Bhūṣaṇa, having a few attendants, fought with Daśaratha. Daśaratha too,

observing Sādhya's son to be the ornament of world, did not desire to fight. (He thought:) 'How (should) I kill one like this? When he is killed, what will be (the condition of) his father, his mother and dear wife of full-grown youth? On his body are, as it were, seen flowers, having the receptacles of lotuses with fresher petals, due to embraces, kisses and rollings. My son, similar to him in complexion and age, handsome like him, causing great delight, eaten up by a bear (and thus) dead, comes to my recollection (i.e. I remember him). He, as it were, desires to protect me. He changes my mind.' Thus thinking in his mind, be commenced seizing the boy. That Sādhya also became subservient (to Daśaratha). He too, looking upon the depression due to the defeat as joy, lived happily with the boy.

28-33. Daśaratha also, living there for a month, and observing that pleasure which one gets from seeing the son, thought: 'Oh! this seeing the face of this (boy) is capable of removing all sorrows. Nourishing a son is equal to my conquering of all countries. It just makes me who remember the separation from (i.e. death of) my son, unhappy. Therefore, I shall ask him how such a son is born.' Thinking like this, he asked him. Sādhya also showed the entire path of salvation to the king (i.e. to Daśaratha): "(A man) should worship Viṣṇu and Śiva together. He should fast on all the Ekādaśī-days. He should propitiate brāhmaṇas on the Dvādaśī-days. Having justly procured the food, sauce, along with the seasonal fruits and flowers, he should bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with cow's milk and besmear it with the powder of kidney-beans. Then he should bathe (the image) with pleasing water, and besmear the entire body (of the image) of the deity with fragrant sandal rubbed by himself, and with excellent musk; then having worshipped (the image) with Tulasī-leaves, and jasmine flowers, karavīra-flowers, blue and other lotuses and red lotuses, with droṇa-flowers, with maruva, damana, girikarṇikā, and ketakī-leaves, as are available, he should propitiate the deity with (the hymn of) twelve syllables, with the Puruṣa-sūkta (hymn) or with the repetition of the deity's name or with the sixteen requisite articles, should salute (the deity), and after dancing, should apologise to the deity. So also he should practise vows to please Viṣṇu.

34-40. The revered sage, being pleased, gives the desired

son. So propitiate him." Thus he spoke to Daśaratha. He too installed Sādhya there (i.e. on the throne), went to Ayodhyā, and did all like that. When the sacrifice to obtain a male issue was over, the image of the sacrifice having a conch, a disc and a mace in the hands, came up from the Āhavanīya[1] and said to the king: "Ask for a boon." The king chose (four) sons; he said to (the deity): "Give me four sons who would be very pious, would have a long life, and help the world." The king had four queens: Kauśalyā, Sumitrā, Surupā and Suveṣā. They said to the king: "O lord, let one son be born to each wife (of you)." Then Kauśalyā said: "If this god is pleased, let him be born of me."

The king said:

41. This Viṣṇu is solicited (to give that) which is desired by me: "O Viṣṇu, O lord of gods, O lord of Kamalā, O you holder of a conch, a disc, and a mace, O you fearful one, O you whose couple of feet is saluted by all like the regents of the quarters in the creation, O you eternal one, O Hari, be pleased. My repeated salutations to you."

The lord, thus praised (by the king), said to the king.

Viṣṇu said:

42-45a. I shall be born as your son on Kauśalyā.

Then Viṣṇu entered the oblation of rice and barley boiled for presentation to the gods and manes. The king divided that oblation into four parts and distributed them among his wives. Then Rāma was born from Kauśalyā, Lakṣmaṇa from Sumitrā, Bharata from Surupā, and Śatrughna from Suveṣā; and a shower of flowers fell from the sky. The four-faced (Brahmā) himself came and performed the ceremonies like those performed

1. Āhavanīya—A consecrated fire taken from the householder's perpetual fire, the eastern fire; the other two fires being: (i) Gārhapatya—one of the three fires perpetually maintained by a householder, which he receives from his father and transmits to his descendants and from which fires for sacrificial purposes are lighted, and (ii) Dakṣiṇa—the southern fire.

at the birth of a child. He named Rāma as Rāma due to his being extremely pleasing in the three worlds; he named the second son Lakṣmaṇa for his being fit due to wealth and qualities like form and valour; (he named the third son) Bharata, since he protected the earth from burden; (he named the fourth one) Śatrughna, since he killed the enemies.

45b-46. Having named them thus Brahmā went home and the childern grew. King Daśaratha having seen the boy Rāma who walked, who looked like the young moon, whose lips were like the bimba-fruits, whose nose was high and was like the sesamum-flower, whose jewelled leaf(-like ornament) moved in front of his crest, from whose ears ear-rings were dangling, the necklace of big pearls on whose chest was dishevelled, whose golden bracelets were bright, whose jewelled bracelets and rings were tinkling, whose girdle was fashioned with gold and gems, whose feet looked charming due to the jingling anklets, whose middle toes were adorned with rings, whose large soles of the feet were adorned with the marks of a diamond-pin, a goad and a lotus, whose shanks were like quivers, whose thighs were like the trunks of elephants, whose hips were large, whose waist was slender, whose navel was round like an eddy and deep, whose chest was large like an emerald-rock, whose neck resembled a conch, whose face was like the orb of the moon, whose forehead was like the half (i.e. crescent) moon, whose hair was dark and curly, who was engaged in playing, who had become grey due to dust (particles), whose eyes were reddish like the petals of a fully blown red lotus, who was dusted as Śiva with the sacred ash, who was naked like Śiva, had his heart full of joy, and having embraced and kissed his son, he firmly clasped him against his chest.

47-49. Then the boy also got on his lap from one side, and with his eyes charmingly fixed on him said something. The king, looking at his son asking (for things) here and there and saying, 'Father, I go; father, I sleep; father, I play' and thus repeatedly deriving joy from his son, became happy. Then once, when the king had come (to the dining hall) to eat, Rāmacandra, with his mind attached to child-sports, and having many toys in his lotus-like hand, was jumping and running, and taking with his left hand the food from the golden plate, decked with gold,

and lying before the king, threw it on the king. This too the king looked upon as pleasure (i.e. even this act of Rāma pleased the king). Rāmacandra did such and other (acts).

50-55. Once when Rāma was playing, a stormy wind knocked him down, and he fell down crying. In the meanwhile the ghost of a brāhmaṇa seized Rāma and he fainted. Then the boy, his companion, crying hither and thither, informed the king of Rāma in that condition. Then the king took Rāma and spoke to Vasiṣṭha. He asked him: "What is this (that has happened) to Rāma?" Then Vasiṣṭha took sacred ash, consecrated it, and got rid of that ghost of the brāhmaṇa. He asked him: "Who are you?" and he said: "I am a brāhmaṇa, proud of (my knowledge of) the Vedas. Having frequently snatched away the wealth of others, I became a Brahma-ghost. Think of my acquittance."

Vasiṣṭha said:

56-57. From now onwards you will experience demonhood (i.e. will live like a demon), (go to hell,) and then (after having) a bath in Gaṅgā, and having offered a hundred bilva-leaves to Śiva, and then (again) having bathed, you will be free from sin. If you might do (acts of) religious merit like that I shall give you a (good) status, and after that enjoy an excellent position.

Hearing these words of Vasiṣṭha, that ghost of a brāhmaṇa, due to (the acts of) religious merit as advised by Vasiṣṭha, got a divine body, and having saluted (him), he went to heaven.

58-60. Having invested Rāma with the sacred thread at the proper time, Vasiṣṭha taught him the Vedas, the Vedāṅgas, both the Mīmāṁsās, and science of politics; he also taught him archery, the science of medicine, science of music[1] and dramaturgy, and of singing, the science of building houses, of omens[2], and various rules of war. Then Daśaratha who desired to get (Rāma) married, sent his messengers to the kings of various countries.

61-62. Then one messenger quickly came to the king, and said: "O king, the lord of the Vidarbha country is the king Videha by name. His daughter is Vaidehī whom he obtained

1. Bharata—Science of music and dramaturgy.
2. Śakuna—Science of omens.

from a sacrifice. She is like Lakṣmī in beauty; she is endowed with all (good) characteristics. She is proper for Rāma. The king is ready to give her (in marriage) to Rāma. So go (to that king) quickly." Then he (i.e. Daśaratha) sent Vasiṣṭha and others. They went there, and having found out an auspicious moment, decided it; (then) they came to Ayodhyā and informed the king; and with Rāma, and with kings, they quicky (went) with many elephants, horses, carts, palanquins, swings.

63. Many ladies came there to celebrate the auspicious ceremony of marriage. They were very beautiful and were skilled in the acts of pleasures and amorous pastimes. They knew the various acts of gandharvas. They were adept in the science of love. Their breasts were soft and hard, and reached their necks. Their lotus-like faces had big and small foreheads and bimba-like lips. Their braids had curly and long hair. They had put on golden ornaments on their ears. Their teeth appeared reddish due to the japā flowers, adorned by the down rising due to the act of bathing. Their eyes were clear and tremulous like the small glittering fish. Their ears were like conches. Their noses were adorned with big pearls resembling the stars. Their cheeks were like mirrors. Their noses were like sesamum flowers. The nipples of their breasts were slightly bent in the middle. The wounds made by the teeth (of the lovers) on their lips resembled the indragopa insect (of red and white colour). Their bodies appeared even and tall. They were round in all parts. They were not very fat. The top knots of their garments were like balls. Their armpits were bent round. The armpits resembled the petals due to the down recently standing up and due their colour like that of turmeric. Their waists were soft, glossy and had fine circles. Their breasts looked charming on account of various jewelled necklaces dangling on the breasts with the neck ornament in between the two breasts, hard and large, and with the nipples slightly sunken in. Their bellies looked beautiful due to the uneven line of the short hair growing on the region round their deep navels, that had secured a foot round their breasts as a result of a series of the glances of the young. Their bellies were adorned with three folds, and their middle (part i.e. waist) could (just) be seized with the fist. Their hip-regions resembled the trunks of elephants. Their knees were soft, glossy, clean and even.

The pairs of their thighs were like the plantain trees. Their shanks had the knees slightly sunken in, were round and without fleshy swelling. Their ankles were slightly sunken in. Their feet had fine, glossy short and long toes, and were challenging Cupid with the jingling of the anklets. They were walking like swans and elephants. The ends of their lower garments touched their right toes. Above the hem of the lower garment, they had made folds which they had held in both their hands; their necks were not covered with garments (but) the garments (i.e. the bodices) of the breasts were covered with the upper garments. Their slim bodies were adorned with the fringes of their garments (hanging) from their left shoulders to their right sides.

64. Young girls, with their slim bodies purified with lightning (-like) (bright) silken garments, with their breasts adorned with various necklaces (put on) the breasts resembling lotus-buds that had shot up, talking something, and walking quickly (yet) gently (also had come there).

65. Old ladies also had come there. Then in a little wood of mango-trees, at a distance of a krośa (two miles) from Videha, Daśaratha, along with his ministers and family priests, and along with his sons like the lovely Rāma, camped comfortably. The young ones of the deer in it listened to the cooing of the various birds in the extensive regions of many bushes; in it there were various birds in the regions adorned with high and low palaces fashioned with gold; the row of trees there were adorned with the meditation and worship of the hosts of sages who were covered with the garments of campaka-barks, whose bodies were dusted with sacred ash and who had matted hair; which had a lake, the ripples on which were disturbed, being overpowered by the burden of the breasts of many young wives of vidyādharas; in which young men were invited by the young maid-servants who had gathered on the banks of the lake; the entire region of which was made fragrant with the flowers of many colours, in which prostitutes, with a desire to enjoy, had their bodies shining with the unsteady brilliance of their eyes resembling the small glittering fish, and largely exhibited here and there.

66. The king of Videha also decorated the city of Mithilā with many banners, with various palaces, city-gates, gardens and temples; it was crowded with young ladies skilled in sporting

with one another; the great supply of water of the city was embellished with sandal; its highways were adorned with people engaged in charming sports; its streets were decorated with various commodities; the places of learning everywhere were graced with the sound of (the recital of) the Vedas; in every house the study of Sāmaveda was done along with explanations of the Mīmāṁsā; where the orchards of the brāhmaṇas were having the fragrance of auspicious oblations and were full of the sacred texts like Sāmaveda recited with accents, and with each word being pronounced in its original form and independently of the phonetic changes and in due order; in which, at the entry of lordly abodes there were rewards like agaru (sandal), saffron and the abodes of the Adhvaryus; in which were ladies graced with bulb-like left shoulders looking charming due to the middle region of the breasts that were glossy and round, and that were rubbing against each other, and due to the upper part of the soft, white garment worn round the hips; which was graced with thousands of florists, smiling gently with their teeth resembling many pearl-necklaces and lips (red) like japā flowers; in which were abodes where pleasing spirituous liquors could be had; it had beautiful arches everywhere; its paths were clean; at every place desire-yielding trees were planted; its gates were adorned with plantain trees.

67-72a. The king went out with ladies who carried auspicious articles like turmeric, dūrvā, sacred rice grains, collyrium for the hair, braids, head charming due to parting of the hair, beautiful ornaments for the nose, face, so also articles like ghee, guggalu (a fragrant gum resin) and fruits put in golden pots; and (he was) also (accompanied) by other persons who had adorned themselves. At that time, the auspicious sound of the musical instruments, the sounds of small and big drums and of conches etc. became audible. The singers also sang auspicious (songs). The brāhmaṇas well-versed in the Vedas filled the entire sky with the auspicious Vedic recitals, and the family preceptors filled it with the sound of drums. Then they, accepting one another after giving sacred rice grains (to one another) and being praised by bards and panegyrists, entered the city.

72b-87. Daśaratha entered the abode made in the western

part of the city. The rest (of the people) also duly entered the abode. At that time only Nārada had come to Mithilā. King Videha worshipped the divine sage and looking to his reception, fed him, and giving tāmbūla with camphor to the sage who was comfortably seated, said to him with respect: "Tomorrow (is my daughter's) marriage. Please stay on to get the marriage (-ceremony) performed."

Nārada said:

Tomorrow the stars such as the solar stars would (only) be seen. The marriage should not be celebrated on that day.

Then the king, having called his astrologer Gārgya, asked him: "Which is the auspicious time for the marriage?" Gārgya said: "Tomorrow". Then the king looking up at Nārada and Gārgya asked (i.e. said): "Oh, this is so." Then Nārada spoke to Gārgya: "How can you give the auspicious moment?" Then Gārgya said, "Avoiding the inauspicious time, I shall give (i.e. state) the auspicious moment." Then Nārada also said to Gārgya, "Do you not know the words of Brahmā?" Gārgya, who was pleased, quoted the faults: "Formerly Brahmā has observed that a meteor, the curse of a brāhmaṇa and causeless trembling lead to the destruction of the entire undertaking.

88-92. Except in the rites of thread ceremony and consecration, in all other (auspicious) rites like the installation (of images), marriages, a man should avoid inauspicious moments. One who performs the rites after (these are avoided) is not at a fault. Afterwards I shall tell about the defect in rites like marriages". "A meteor would burn the entire family; a brāhmaṇa's curse would destroy (it); the causeless tremor would lead to death and to the disturbance of the rite." Having heard (these words) uttered by Nārada, the sage Gārgya became silent. He thought (to himself): 'Avoiding the Sun, the lord of Planets, and inauspicious time, the marriage should be performed.'

Nārada said:

93. How are the words of the brāhmaṇa? (i.e. what does the brāhmaṇa say)?

The Sun said:

94-95. The arrangement is said to (be based) on the difference in regions. In this country the marriage must be celebrated by avoiding the inauspicious time.

Nārada also consented.

96-98. He said: "The kṣatriya-marriage will take place tomorrow afternoon. So let the kings come for the self-choice marriage. O king, send messengers (to the kings)." Then, having brought all the kings with Daśaratha's consent, the king thought: 'How should Vaidehī be given to Rāma, after condemning all (other) kings?' At night, he though sleepy, did not get sleep.

99. At midnight the king, having purified himself mentally thought of Tryambaka who was with Ambā (i.e. Pārvatī), who had worn an auspicious silken garment, whose lotus-like feet were being served by all gods led by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Indra, by the leading sages like Bhṛgu, by gandharvas led by Hāhā, by Tumburu (and others), so also by the sacred texts, the codes of laws, historical works and Purāṇas in bodily forms, so also by the hosts of divine mothers, by siddhas, vidyādharas, and by the attendants led by Nandin, who removed all inauspicious things, whose region of the head was being waited upon by Gaṅgā of holy water and by the spotless moon, to whom a tāmbūla was being offered by Girijā (i.e. Pārvatī) seated on his left lap, who took it with a smile, willingly and with a glance, who was (fair) like cow's milk, whose neck was (having the colour) opposite to that of musk, who had arranged his matted hair with soft, fine, glossy, clotted hair, the regions of whose cheeks were graced with pure, golden ear-rings, whose age was twice eight (i.e. sixteen), whose region of the head was wrapped up with a skirt having the colour of large pearls like cow's milk and of Kausumbha, whose chest was adorned with (ornaments) of gold decked with various jewels, whose body was graced with a very white sacred thread, whose body had become reddish and fragrant due to the saffron (from) Pārvatī's body touching his body, who was observing and deriding Cupid's arrow, who resembled a crore of Cupids.

100-102. He (i.e. the king) muttered the Śatarudriya (hymn);

with that (hymn) only he offered desired oblations and praised (Śiva) with the Puruṣa-sūkta (hymn). Then the king saluted him and praised him.

The king said:

103. O you, having eight forms (constituted) by earth, water, sky (i.e. ether), air, fire, the sun, the moon (and) the sacrificer, O you of a universal form, O you of the form of the world, O you of the form of the three worlds, O you of the form of the Vedas and the Purāṇas, O you of the form of sacrifice, O you of the form of Nārāyaṇa, O you of the form of all deities, O you full of the three (Vedas), O you the authority on the three (Vedas), O you having eyes in the form of the three (Vedas), O you loving the Sāma (Veda), O you to whom the capital of Kubera is dear, O you who are (easily) accessible to your devotees, O you who are away from those who are not your devotees, O you who like praise, O you who like incense, O you who like a light (to be waved in front of your representation), O you who like ghee and milk, O you to whom droṇa and karavīra are dear, O you who like śrī-leaves, O you to whom lotuses and white lotuses are dear, O you who love Nandin's curly hair, O you who love bakula, jasmine, kokanada, a watery place in summer, O you who like restraints and curbs, O you to whom one with one's senses controlled is dear, O you who love muttering of a hymn, O you to whom śrāddha is dear, O you who love singing, O you to whom the Gāyatrī(-hymn) is dear, to whom the five, Brahmā (and others) are dear, O you to whom good conduct is dear, O you whose feet are worshipped by the three, viz. Indra, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, O you who manifested the disc sought for by Viṣṇu and produced from water, O you who give recollection and reasoning, O you who grant auspiciousness when remembered, O you victory on the earth, my repeated salutation to you.

104. Having heard this hymn of praise Lord Śiva said to the king: "I shall grant (you) a boon. Ask for one."

The king said:

105-108. O lord, I desire to give my daughter (in marriage) to Rāma. If, in the gathering of all beings like many kings,

demons, brāhmaṇas, someone of a superior strength and endowed with (birth in a noble) family, power and energy takes her away then my words would be falsified, and sin will come to me; (and) on the other hand, when Daśaratha capable of destroying the kṣatriyas comes to conquer all these, so also when Rāma (comes), then what will my daughter do? Whom will the king, with a big army and horses and elephants, send? What will he get done ? What will he do to me? He may destroy all the three worlds. Moreover, for me of a small energy you alone are the refuge. Tell me the remedy so that it would be helpful to the marriage, and Rāma will be my son-in-law.

Śambhu also said: "I shall do like that. Rāma only will be the husband of Sītā. Today only I shall do auspicious things for Rāma. Take this Ājagava bow (of mine)."

The king said:

109. What is the use of this Ājagava bow? You yourself (should) take (i.e. marry) Sītā to Rāma.

Śaṅkara said:

110-113. Make this pledge: "This bow is not strung. I shall give Sītā (in marriage) to him who will string it."

Speaking like this, Śiva vanished with his attendants. Even with a great effort the king could not take up the bow. Then calling Ujjvala, having the strength of a thousand elephants, he said to him: "Take (this bow)." He too, saluting his maternal uncle, having laughed loudly, having jumped, raised the bow with his two hands upto his knees. The maternal uncle (of Rāvaṇa), viz. Mārīca, alone put on the garb of a brāhmaṇa, and solicited (king) Videha: "Know me to be a guest who has come at the end of the offering to all deities."

The king said:

114-117. Welcome to you. O brāhmaṇa, this is the seat. (Please) be seated on it.

The guest also, saying, 'All right' sat there. Then the king

took water, washed his feet (with it) and after having worshipped him with sandal, flowers and sacred rice grains, and having offered him (the cooked meat of) a big goat, requested him to eat it. He too, as it were looking here and there, saw that food having six flavours and put in a golden plate.

118. At that time only Sītā came there. She had the splendour of lotus-filaments. She had put on a reddish garment. Her forehead was graced with hair which was dark and curly, which was unsteady, which attracted the minds of young men, which spilt up the sight of the seer, thereby as it were showing that ladies' hearts are like this only. Her eyebrows were like Cupid's bow. Her eyes were reddish like lotus-petals. Her nose was like the sesamum. Her reddish lips were close to her glossy, hairy cheeks, and resembled rubies. Her teeth were like (the seeds of) a pomegranate. Her lips were reddish like the japā flowers. Her chin was very beautiful. Her ears were like oyster-shells. Her neck was even and long. Her breasts were fleshy. The bud-like breasts were round and raised. She looked beautiful with many necklaces. Her figure was beautiful. Her creeper-like arms were not very fleshy. She was innocent. The tips of her fingers were moderate, even and were dyed with the alaktaka dye. She had put on various jewelled rings. She was holding a white lily. She came in front of Mārīca who was eating.

119-122. Seeing her, he thought: 'How shall I kidnap her? How shall I embrace her? How shall I do something else?' Thus (he thought). (But) not getting an opportunity, he just quietly went out. Then the gods strove to string the bow. They stood there competing with one another and disdaining one another. Indra reached that excellent bow. But he was not able to do more than (just) bending the two ends. Then the Sun took the bow, but fell down while bending it. Vāyu, the best among the mighty, seized the Ājagava bow and while lifting it with his own hand, fell down; and the bow fell on him. All laughed at that time.

123-128. In the meanwhile, demon Bāṇa having a thousand arms, surrounded by demons with many heads, and accompanied by Prahlāda came there after having mounted upon an excellent horse. Then, making the directions bright with his ornaments, making the gods void of glory by means of his glory, hearing

many songs, he was able (to lift it to the height of) two fingers, and gave up. Prahlāda and Bali also ran, but they also stopped. When the demons became quiet, very powerful kings arrived there, were unable to string the bow, (so) went away (i.e. withdrew) and remained (there). Then brāhmaṇas came there. Then Viśvāmitra took the bow, and after stringing it upto the length of a finger, stopped. The others retired.

129-132. And then in the space of the day, when the bow was silent, Rāma came with his brothers, and observing the bow, touched it. Then princes, adorned with all ornaments, came in hundreds. They saw the bow, touched it, but were unable to move it. Then other boys, led by Daśaratha's (other) sons arrived (there). Then men having canes and drums in their hands came there, and drove away all.

133. Then Rāma holding the hand of Lakṣmaṇa and adorned with all ornaments reached the bow, touched it, saluted it, went round it keeping it to his right. Then he took it, and lifted it.

134-138. When he took it, all laughed and said: "Here (i.e. in the attempt at lifting it) very mighty warriors have failed." Then that Rāma, bent the place of the string of the bow, and putting his knee on the bow, strung it, raised it with one hand, and bent it at the tip. Seeing the bow strung (by (Rāma) all kept their fingers on the tips of their noses (i.e. were amazed). Rāma also made the twang of the bow. Due to that sound the minds of all were agitated. Everywhere there was the talk; "Rāma has strung the bow".

139-141. Janaka too gave Sītā to Rāma. Having fought with the kings, and having vanquished them, he came to his own city. Then once Daśaratha consecrated Rāma as the heir-apparent, and became happy. There was a talk among all the subjects that Rāma was liked as a king due to his pleasing the subjects. Then, Suveṣā, the daughter of the king of Kaikeya, not enduring (that) Rāma (was to be) the king, said to the king (i.e. Daśaratha): "This is the time for granting my boons." The king thought: 'What should be given (to her)?'

The queen said:

142-144. Let Rāma enter (and live in) a forest for fourteen years. Let Bharata look after the kingdom.

Due to the fear of lying the king somehow accepted (her demand). Then he spoke to Vasiṣṭha about (Rāma's future): "Rāma is going out to the forest. What will happen to him? Having thought (about it) tell (me) (what is) good and (what is) bad (in his future)."

145-148. Vasiṣṭha thought over (it), and gladly spoke to the king: "Having gone to the forest, he will kill all the brave demons. He will worship Śiva in many ways. Rāma, being angry due to being separated from Sītā, will cross the ocean with the army of the monkeys, and will kill Rāvaṇa. Having come (back to Ayodhyā), Rāma will rule for many years. Having had great fame in the entire world, he will live for a long time with god Śarva (i.e. Śiva). He will be endowed with good sons, will perform many sacrifices; he, the lord, will be superior to all in virtues."

149-151. Hearing these words of Vasiṣṭha, Daśaratha, remembering the virtues of Rāma, spoke thus: "When Rāma goes out (of my kingdom), it is better for me to die." Then Rāma, having saluted his mother, father, preceptor Vasiṣṭha, the preceptor's wife, left for the forest. Then having lived for one day in the park, having arranged the matted hair, having put on a bark-garment, having worn one sacred thread, having cleaned his teeth, having tied his matted hair with one sacred thread, having dusted his entire body with sacred ash and thus looking rough, wearing on his head a rosary in place of a necklace of pearls and jewels, accompanied by Sītā adorned with a few ornaments, and followed by Lakṣmaṇa, entered the interior of the forest.

152-154. Then he killed many demons in it; did everything like you; everything like Sītā's being kidnapped took place as in your case; then he went to Ṛṣyamūka mountain, to the hermitage of Sugrīva; and having found a mango tree with a dense shadow, put up there a resort with the help of Lakṣmaṇa. He put the two bows on the tree; put his head on Lakṣmaṇa's lap, and lay on

a bed of deer-hide; listened to a known song; observed the fruit of the tree; he (then) saw a monkey, having jewelled ear-rings, tawny like gold, with the girdle of muñja grass firmly tied around his privity, having, a clean sacred thread, being very fickle, taking a fruit and throwing it to himself, scattering flowers and shoots, imitating the song, fanning Rāma with a fan, fanning him, even after having climbed the branch of the tree, having tied only the mango fruits, and said to Lakṣmaṇa: "Lakṣmaṇa, who is this monkey?" Lakṣmaṇa also said: "I do not know". Then Rāma called (the monkey) and asked him: "To whom do you belong? What is your name?"

155-157. He said, "I am Hanūmat (the servant) of Sugrīva." Having saluted him (i.e. Sugrīva; he said): "There is a man, who is like another Viṣṇu, who is young, who is dark like a cloud, who has matted hair, whose hands reach his knees, who is extremely glorious, and who is accompanied by another man resembling the sun. The two princes, endowed with all good characteristics are staying in the shade of a tree. They saw me and said to me: 'Inform Sugrīva.' Therefore, I have informed you."

158-161. Then Sugrīva quickly got up, took materials like flowers and water, and having washed their feet etc., having offered fruits, he said respectfully: "Who are you, young men? What have you, ascetic princes, come (here) for?" Having heard (these) words of Sugrīva, Rāma, with Lakṣmaṇa, said: "We two are Daśaratha's sons, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. We have come to the forest for curbing the wicked and protecting the good." Then Sugrīva said: "It appears that your help is harmful; otherwise you would have come with an army."

162. Lakṣmaṇa said: "There is another mission. This one's wife has been kidnapped by someone. We do not know (by whom). We have come to search for her. That is our (main) mission. Other (things) are incidental. For that we would even cross the ocean, we would even enter the nether world, we would even go to heaven, we would even knock down Indra, we would even strike Bali; (in short) we would do anything."

Sugrīva said:

163-165. I shall show you certain ornaments dropped by a lady who was kidnapped by Rāvaṇa and collected by me.

Saying so, and inviting Rāma to his abode, he showed them (to Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa). Rāma too observed them and having decided (that they were Sītā's ornaments), wept and asked: "Where has that Rāvaṇa gone?" He replied: "He has gone to the southern direction." Rāma formed friendship with him (i.e. Sugrīva) and asked him: "Why do you remain here without your wife?"

Sugrīva said:

166-173. My very mighty brother Vālin, having snatched away my kingdom and my wife, lives in Kiṣkindhā. I was defeated by him in a battle; all my anxiety is about killing him. If you kill him, then I also, restraining the ocean, will offer you Sītā kindnapped by Rāvaṇa and living in Laṅkā on the other shore (of the ocean).

Speaking like this, and taking an oath, he invited (i.e. challenged) Vālin for a fight, and fought with him. Then Rāma too, not being certain (about the identity of Vālin), did not kill him. Then Sugrīva fled, and said these (words) to Rāma: "Not knowing (what was in) your mind, I set out to die" Rāma also (said): "Not having particular knowledge about you two, I kept quiet. Having observed (i.e. recognised) you who would have a mark, I shall kill him." Then Sugrīva making a mark (on his person), invited (i.e. challenged) Vālin for a fight. Tārā said to Vālin: "It appears Sugrīva has some companion. Otherwise he would not challenge like this. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, Daśaratha's sons, and portions of Viṣṇu, who have come to lessen down the burden of the earth, have become his companions."

Vālin said:

174-179. I have heard that Rāma has political wisdom. A man like him would not leave a strong man and resort to a weak one. Let Rāma come. He will be frightened after taking the one who has approached him as superior. If Rāma himself comes to fight, then fight has to be gone through.

Having said so and honoured Tārā, he went out to fight with Sugrīva. Then between the two a fight of fist took place. Rāma

too struck Vālin; Vālin fell down. He said (to Rāma): "You have struck (me) with an arrow in a fight without weapons." His entire body was full of blood. Then Tārā and Aṅgada came (there) and were afflicted. Then the monkeys came to Rāma, fell near Vālin, and wept.

180-184. Then Tārā said to Rāma: "Formerly the descendents of Raghu were well-versed in sacred texts, brave and righteous. How is it, O Rāma, that you have committed a sin? You do not know the way of the life of a kṣatriya, which is followed by hosts of kings. In a fight (between two warriors) fighting with each other, victory or death would take place. The one who kills the other one (not fighting) is called the killer of a brāhmaṇa. Have you killed Vālin due to enmity or with a desire for (eating) the flesh of a monkey? The flesh of a monkey is not to be eaten. If you think that others are like that (i.e. like you) because of the absence of happiness (i.e. unhappiness) of you, or if you, through infatuation, have done this to take me (away), then (you have to remember that) you have the vow of having one wife (only).

185-187. If you have done this for (getting) Sugrīva's help to bring (back) Sītā kidnapped by Rāvaṇa, then there is a great difference (between Vālin and Sugrīva). Your mission would succeed when Vālin, rich in might, able to bring (back) Sītā in a day, able to give (you) Rāvaṇa (just) when you remember him, and having fifty parārdhas of the army of monkeys and bears, is there. Then what is the use of Sugrīva, the monkey who is the general of seven parārdhas (of army), who has little might? What mission of you who keep your promise, would succeed" "O! what you have said and which is auspicious to all is understood (by me)." Rāma says, "By me who am a king, curbing of the wicked and the protection of the good is to be done. Vālin took away Sugrīva's wife Rūmā and his kingdom also. Therefore, there is no sin in killing one like him."

Tārā said:

188. Then Sugrīva also should be killed. Vālin, fighting with Dundubhi, entered a cave, and remained there for a year. In the meantime, Sugrīva kidnapped me and ruled (over Vālin's kingdom). Therefore kill him first, then him (i.e. Vālin).

Rāma said:

189. Tell me before which time this took place.

Tārā said:

190-193. In the eightieth year before sixty thousand years Sugrīva took away the kingdom in a battle with the demons. Then when a year was over Vālin made Sugrīva flee. He took away his wife and kingdom also. On that day only the consecration of your father Daśaratha (as a king) took place.

Rāghava said:

194-196. By the order of my father and due to the custom of not transgressing the words of elders, I curbed the wicked in his kingdom. At the time of her being kindnapped, he who was the king, did not act (properly). Or the beasts are free. Vālin, one of the two beasts, is killed. Beasts tear off one another and dislike one another. Say, since my hunting is of the beasts that are moving, stationary or bound, or of those moving away, getting confused and having fled, when I parted company (with the king), I had given up hunting.

197-199. I have executed this hunting according to the rules of the science of hunting—(sometimes) running, and (sometimes) not running. The spot higher than a creeping plant in case of those belonging to the same family, is pierced through (*obscure*). Hunting without eating the flesh (of the animal killed) is the rule in the hunting done by a king.

Having heard Rāma's words, all nodded their heads.

200-205. Having put the hollow made by his palms on his head, Vālin said to Rāma: "I salute you, O Rāma; listen to my words. I have heard that you are actually Viṣṇu himself having in his hands a conch, a disc, and a mace, wearing a yellow garment, and the master of the world. The meditating saints think of you (only). The sacrificers offer sacrifices to you. You alone enjoy the oblations to deities and dead ancestors. You take up the form of the deities and the manes. The salvation of him who thinks about you at the time of his death, is not far

away. That you, O Rāma, is (today) seen by me. My sins have perished. O you descendant of Kakutstha, take your arrow. I am very much afflicted." Then, Rāma, saying, 'All right', took an arrow and said to Vālin, "Tell (me) what desired thing should be given (to you)."

The monkey (i.e. Vālin) said:

206-209. If the revered one is pleased, then give me beatitude. Thus, Sugrīva should be protected by you, so also Aṅgada, and Tārā (also should be protected). I, a sinner had committed a sin; I have experienced its fruit.

Then looking at Rāma, Vālin died and went to heaven. Then (Rāma), having consecrated Sugrīva as the king, entered the forest.

210-212. Then, Rāma, with him as his companion, went near the ocean, and said to Sugrīva: "Where is Laṅkā? Where is Sītā? Where is the enemy?" Then Hanūmat said: "May the lord order whether after having entered Laṅkā, having looked for Sītā, and having known the full truth, truce or war should be made. What suggestion do you make for crossing the ocean?" Then Rāma said to Sugrīva: "How can this take place?"

The monkey (i.e. Sugrīva) said:

213-214. I have crores of monkeys led by bears. Having appointed one (of them), and having known the whole (truth), what is proper should be done.

Then Jāmbavat said:

215-217. Let Hanūmat alone go and know (i.e. find out all about) Laṅkā.

Then Hanūmat went to the city of Laṅkā, looked for Sītā seated in the Aśoka-grove, talked to her, secured her confidence, devastated the grove and baffled the demons. He was bound by the demon (Rāvaṇa); he burnt Laṅkā, went to the northern shore, saw Rāma, told him the account, and remained silent.

218-220. Then Rāma had consultations with all. Jāmbavat said: "I was told by Nārada that Rāma will destroy Laṅkā through the monkeys. So we should strive to cross the ocean."

Then Rāma propitiated Śaṅkara, and told him: "I shall do whatever is told by you." Uttering these words, having worshipped Śiva and having saluted him, he said (to him) respectfully:

221. "O great god, O you who swllow great beings, O you the cause of the great deluge, O you having ornaments of the great serpents, O Mahārudra, O Śaṅkara, O highest god, O Virūpākṣa, O you having the serpent as your sacred thread, O you having the garment of an elephant's, hide O you having the ornament of the string of skulls, O you having the ornaments of the demon's bones, O you to whom ash is dear, O you who love Nārāyaṇa, O you of an auspicious conduct, O you the god of the five like Brahmā etc., O you who are known by the five-faced one, the four-faced one, and the Vedas, O you who are easily accessible to your devotees and difficult to be obtained by non-devotees, O you who are great joy and knowledge, O you who knocked the teeth of the great Pūṣa, O you who cut off Dakṣa's head, O you who removed the fifth head of Brahmā, O you dear to Pārvatī, O you whose auspicious life (-story) is sung by Nārada, O Śarva, O you having three eyes, O you trident-holder, O you having the bow (called Pināka) in your hand, O you having matted hair, O you having many forms, O you having the bull (viz. Nandin) as your vehicle, O you resembling a clear crystal, O you having four hands, O you having many weapons, O Dakṣiṇāmūrti, O lord, O god, O lord, O you having Gaṅgā (on your head), O you conqueror of Tripura, O you having your abode on Śrīśaila, O Kāśīnātha, O you the ornament of Kedāreśvara, O Siddheśvara, O Gokarṇeśvara, O Kanakhaleśvara, O Pārvatīśvara, O giver of the disc, O you who removed the worry of Bāṇa, O you whose lotus-like feet are worshipped by the conqueror of Mura, O Soma, O you, having the moon as your ornament, O you omniscient one, O you full of lustre, O you full of the world, salutation, salutation to you."

222. Before Rāma who was praising like this, an image, full of lustre, and remaining in the Phallus, appeared. He granted fearlessness also.

223-225. Rāma saw the lord who was seated in the posture called padmāsana, who had Pārvatī on his lap, who had tied (i.e. put on) all ornaments, whose crown was very bright, who

touched the waist of the daughter of Himavat, granting a boon of fearlessness with both hands, full of lustre due to many wavy directions, whose face was smiling, whose face was pleased; with his palms joined he saluted the highest lord, and again fell (i.e. prostrated before him) like a staff. Then the lord also said to Rāma: "You ask for a boon; I am the giver of boons."

Rāma said:

226. I shall go to Laṅkā. O Śambhu, give (i.e. show) me a way to cross the ocean.

Śambhu said:

227-233. I have the Ājagava bow; it becomes (i.e. changes itself) according to the time and has no alternative. Having got on it, having crossed the ocean, reach Laṅkā.

Rāma, saying, 'All right', remembered the Ājagava (bow). The bow came (there). Rāma then worshipped it. Then Śiva took the bow and gave it to Rāma. Rāma too dropped it into the ocean. All the monkeys and Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa also got upon it; when the sixty parārdhas of monkeys mounted upon it, it reached the (other) shore according to (Rāma's) desire. Then the monkeys also having gone (here and) there, observed.

234-237. Then a demon named Atikāya saw the army of the monkeys and said to (i.e. told) Rāvaṇa (about) it. Rāvaṇa too said: "Has our food fortunately come through the monkeys, or through the human beings—Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa?" Then, when the sun went to the west (i.e. when the sun was setting), Sugrīva, along with innumerable very strong monkeys of large bodies like Hanūmat, Jāmbavat etc., went to the side of (i.e. near) Laṅkā, entered the park, ate various fruits, drank water, made the demons guarding the park flee, seized the entire forest (by seizing the trees) one by one, and ran away. Then he went to Laṅkā, the city-gate, climbed the palace, shattered it, took every pillar and fought with the demons. Some broke to pieces the hall, pounded the houses, killed all the young and the old and women etc.

238-246. Then having known that one rampart was acquired

by conquest, Rāvaṇa ordered Indrajit The monkeys also fought with Indrajit, were frightened and ran away. Then Hanūmat having come to know that all had gone out, so also knowing Rāvaṇa, and calling the monkeys and having considered Rāvaṇa, was delighted. Then Indrajit, remaining in the sky (i.e. air) only fought, and the monkeys did not notice him. Then Hanūmat and Jāmbavat jumped into the sky and struck Indrajit with the peaks of mountains. Then he fell on the ground, and Lakṣmaṇa made him go to the world of Yama. Then Atikāya and Mahākāya struck the army of the monkeys in various ways, harassed Lakṣmaṇa, fought with Rāma, hurt Sugrīva, fought with Hanūmat and Jāmbavat. The two (i.e. Hanūmat and Jāmbavat) defeated them, and capturing the two warriors, took them near Rāma, and reported to him. Rāma said to Atikāya: "Tell (us) about the war between me and Rāvaṇa and other very fearful ministers."

Atikāya said:

247-248. Having divided the army, we shall first certainly have war (with you). There is a demon by name Vidyunmālin. He is very mighty. He is a strange fighter. He is visible or invisible when he fights. He alone will fight with all monkeys. Many other strong, great (warriors) who have been taught (the use of) weapons, have come. We two also shall fight with you. Having got into the Puṣpaka, from the other side Rāvaṇa shall kill you only.

249-253. Other demons like Kumbhakarṇa also, taking their own forms, will surround and seize you; then they will show you to Sītā and kill you near her only.

Rāma said: "Oh, what cannot be accomplished by the powerful! The way of destiny is crooked." Sugrīva, getting very much enraged, looked angrily at Rāma and said to him: "These two should be killed. They should not be released". Rāma said: "They should not be killed; they should be released. Bring garments and ornaments". As soon as he said these (words), Hanūmat brought them, and Rāma gave them to the two (demons). Having saluted Rāma, (they said): "Śukra has said that when the wood bent at five places, which is seen at the

gate of Laṅkā, is broken, Rāvaṇa will be killed.

254-260. The order stated by Bhārgava written down is: 'Immediately after the cutting of the wood, he should go to the nether world.' Therefore, cut off this wood in one effort by dropping your arrow into the five parts. Then, knowing your power, we shall have a very close fight." Then knowing the words of Bhārgava, Rāma strung the bow just by touching the first end of it, and fixing the arrow on the bow, and just while making the demons and Hanūmat hear (the stringing of the bow), discharged an arrow. The arrow left the bow. The two demons marked the path of the arrow. The wood was cut off into five parts by the arrow. Seeing this they requested Rāma: "Our children should be protected by you." Rāma said: "All right." The demons entered Laṅkā. Then the monkeys went to fight at the rampart; everywhere they covered it with their hips, feet, knees, hands and backs and made it level, and then went to another rampart. Then that Rāvaṇa came (there), and made them flee by (striking them with) his arrows, and as he followed them, he went to Rāma. He struck Rāma also with five arrows. Then Rāma wounded Rāvaṇa with ten arrows.

261-275. Then a very fierce fight took place between the two. Rāvaṇa struck (Rāma) with ten arrows. Then the demon, with his body wounded by Rāma's arrows, became intent upon running (away). The monkeys and Lakṣmaṇa killed crores of demons. Then the next day, Bibhīṣaṇa discussing (this) with Rāvaṇa, said these words to Rāvaṇa: "This is the time (to use) the third means of success against the enemy. Do not think of the fourth. The fourth one, which is wrong, is not recommended for one who acts according to (the rules of) material welfare. Knowing the power of the enemy and of his own, and if his own power is superior, then war is recommended. The opposite would be destructive. You who are weak should not fight with the strong Rāma. He killed Vālin with (only) one arrow; and you have known Vālin before. He (killed) Mārīca with one arrow; and you too have fled. The brave demons are killed. Your son Indrajit also is killed. The excellent triad is broken; (so) do not fight with him. Accept his service after having given (back) Sītā to him. The wood at the city-gate, crooked at five

places, was cut off by Rāma with one arrow. Therefore, Rāma will kill you. For your sake many have perished; and many others will perish. O my brother, justice alone leads to happiness and not folly. Dismiss the loyal human wife who is embracing death, of the strong (Rāma) after honouring her. There will be a series of calamities if you unite with her when she is unwilling. The union with a woman accompanied by stinking filth is censured. If there is detachment, then doing what is prohibited leads to unhappiness. If you love her, then there would follow your death, and then (you will go to) hell.

276-281a. In vain will you die today if you unite with her; and, O dear one, you will either abandon your religiously wedded wife, or she might also die. There will be this and other sin. I shall make to you another suggestion dear to and beneficial for all. Going to Rāma and saluting and praising him say to him respectfully: 'O Rāma, loving those who have sought your refuge, forgive me. We all are vicious demons and are great sinners. Giving up (i.e. making us absolved of) the sin of kidnapping Sītā, protect our sons. O Rāma, we depend upon you. Protect or kill us as you wish.' O Rāvaṇa, we who, after having spoken like this, stand before that Rāma, will have a stable life, and a stable kingdom."

281b-283. Then Rāvaṇa said (these) words: "Oh! you are not a demon, you are not brave; you do not know the eternal way of life of a king. The best way of life for the brave-and not for the impotent ones like you, is by means of resorting to another man's wife, another man's wealth, and another man's kingdom. O prince, if you desire, join the enemy's side; get out."

284-288. Then Bibhīṣaṇa, having (first) gone to his abode, (and then) near Rāma, sought his refuge. Then Rāvaṇa went out of his city and fought with Rāma. The (other) demons also fought with Lakṣmaṇa and the monkeys. Rāma was unable to kill Rāvaṇa of a great might. Then he looked at Bibhīṣaṇa's face, and struck with his arrow the spot with a mark as told by Bibhīṣaṇa. Then Kumbhakarṇa took a great mace, brought about everything, swallowed many monkeys, and struck on the head of Rāma with (his) mace. Then with a hundred sharp arrows Rāma struck him. Kumbhakarṇa died.

289. Then Rāma made Bibhīṣaṇa perform the śrāddha ceremony etc. of Rāvaṇa and others; he got a Śiva-temple erected in his name; he consecrated just that Bibhīṣaṇa only on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of Laṅkā. He made Sītā, purified by means of her entering the fire, salute Śiva and Pārvatī; he who was given by the conqueror of (Tri-)pura full nectar-like power and life, got into the Puṣpaka, crossed the ocean, settled his army on the other side, installed (a representation of) Śiva there, and being honoured by sages and gods went to Ayodhyā.

290-291. Then accompanied by Bharata and others, and honoured by the citizens, Vasiṣṭha and (other) sages, he went home. He honoured gods like Indra who had come to him by offering them seats; having well honoured the monkeys, and having untied his matted hair, he was consecrated on the kingdom. Gods delighted by the elimination of Rāvaṇa, said to Rāma:

292. "You have put us back on our kingdoms (i.e. thrones); always protect us; you are the first (man) Viṣṇu; you have descended (on the earth) for curbing the wicked. By killing Rāvaṇa along with his relatives, you have become the protector of the three worlds. Be happy with Lakṣmī." Saying so, they went to heaven.

293-298. Then the residents of Ayodhyā, being very much delighted, said to Rāma: "You have come (back) after having killed your enemies. You saw and met Śiva. Rāma, fortunately you shine; fortunately you are protecting the subjects. You will perform sacrifices; you will cause righteousness to grow." Hearing these (words) of his citizens, Rāma, having lotus-like eyes, honoured all the citizens with (i.e. by giving them) garments etc. Worshipping the sages along with all people, the righteous one said to them: "I hope your penance is prospering; I hope your sacrifices are performed well. I hope you are devoted to your wives. I hope you worship the lord. I hope your wives bring forth good progeny. I hope you (enjoy) all excellent pleasures."

The sages said:

299. O descendant of Kakutstha, everything about the ascetics is well-settled. From here we (shall now) go home. Or, O king, what do you think?

Rāma said:

300-305. Śamhbu is pleased with him with whom brāhmaṇas are pleased. He with whom Śiva is pleased, becomes happy. Therefore, please go after taking food here.

Saying, "All right", the hosts of sages ate excellent food, and congratulating him with blessings, and being delighted, they went to their respective abodes. Rāma also, along with wife and younger brothers, was very much pleased. He who was dear to all people ruled over the kingdom free from bad elements. Even if a sinner listens to this episode, he becomes free from all sins, and reaches the highest Brahman. The man who would remember this (episode) would not meet with a calamity; so also the same is said about him who would narrate this episode.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

Fruit of Worship by Justly Procured, Stolen and Impaired Material

Sūta said:

1-10. Rāmacandra, of a pleased mind, ate along with the best sages, Viṣṇu, the monkeys and the bears at the hermitage of Bhāradvāja. The sky was covered with clouds; breezes were blowing gently; in that forest, there was somewhere the excellent house of Sudeva. It had eight pillars; it was fashioned with golden strips; it was (decked) with gems and pearls; it had silver pitchers in it; it was made fragrant with sandal, camphor, musk and saffron; it had multitudes of mire and was covered with pieces.*

Moonlight did not reach the walls in its middle part, and also they could not be seen by the sun (i.e. the sun's rays also did not reach them), The entire floor in the house was sprinkled with excellent juice of flowers. The entire (portion on) the north was without a construction of a wall (i.e. without a wall). On every

*कर्दमैर्जालकयुतं शकलोपरिसंवृति—this half of verse 4 is obscure.

pillar there were pictures; its courtyard, measuring a hundred cubits had natural parts and was fashioned with crystal. There was a desire-yielding tree in the courtyard, and it covered a larger part of the courtyard by means of its shadow. There was a dense grove of plantain trees forming the entire hedge. With the grove of the plantain trees there was the hedge of ketakī grove. It was full of the cries of peacocks, and bees were sweetly humming in it. It had the cooing of pigeons and was graced with many parks. It was thronged with hundreds of mansions; it was resounding with the notes of intoxicated cuckoos. It had many trees which were graced with big gems hanging from their branches.

11-17. The quarters were filled with the sound of the songs of the female kinnarīs. It was pleasing due to many gardens. (Nearby) there was the excellent bank of Gautamī. The abode of Bhāradvāja was auspicious and was having many excellences. It was full of many male and female servants (respectively) resembling Cupid and (his spouse) Rati. The auspicious abode of Bhāradvāja was full of various implements. Inside it was a white-washed mansion, and there were eight orchards inside it. In the midst of them there was an extremely beautiful house. It was beautified with the palace-like abode of the great god on (all) the four sides. Each temple had graceful nocturnal instrumental music. It was just fashioned for the excellent heavenly women to rest (in it). Rāma moving out of the house of Bhāradvāja went accompanied by all to the great house in the middle of the forest. He entered it, the interior of which was covered with blankets; it had also separate seats (covered) with cloth; at the centre there was a throne; it had many seats for the sages.

18-21. Near the incomparable seat of the public reader of Purāṇas were the excellent seats for the king, the monkeys and the bears. Having seated the public reader of Purāṇas in the east, and then Vasiṣṭha and the best men, as well as Viṣṇu and the kings, he took a low seat. The sky was covered with clouds; the quarters were bright; the earth, with the seeds sown, was having good flowers. The courtyard was neither hot nor cold, had santāna flowers, and was fragrant with dama flowers. Looking at Śambhu, Rāma said (these) words: "(Please) tell (us) the story of Śaṅkara. O best sage, I who am hearing the excellent account of the great lord, which destroys a stream of

sins, am not satisfied. Tell me what the great lord, surrounded by the host of gods, did in Gautama's hermitage."

Śiva said:

22-23. The son of Vāyu, seated with a great lute, asked Śiva; "Tell (me) what the fruit would be by worshipping the lord with materials brought (after) they are procured justly. (Tell me also) what fruit would accrue if they are offered after stealing, and when materials that are collected are impaired. O lord, tell me (about these) one by one. Give the answers (to these) questions quickly. What is the use of the story, O Śambhu?"

24-27a. Then the lord said to the monkey: "I shall tell everything to you. Listen attentively. That Gautama, having worshipped the unborn Sadāśiva with (materials) procured justly, obtained this splendour. Formerly a brāhmaṇa named Ākatha, Maṅkaṇa's son, obtained as his chaste (wife) Suśobhanā. He was poor, full of pity, and without parents. He ate (every) sixth day. When, after having fasted for five days, he proceeded to eat, (just then) an ascetic came (there). The ascetic spoke sweet (words) to Ākatha: 'I who have fasted for a month, stand (here) after having come to you to eat. I shall eat if you have (food). O sage, I do not have a desire to eat in another's house.' "

Ākatha said:

27b-29. O best brahmaṇa, I do not eat for five days. On the sixth day my (turn to eat) food has come. Then I have to think what ought to be done. Come, I shall today wash your feet.

Then the meditating saint said, 'Yes,' and with his both feet being washed, desired to eat the food. He ate that food brought with ghee after it was cooked on the piece of a leaf of plantain tree. It was well furnished with wild articles; it (was) respectfully (served). Nothing was left of the food.

30-33. The ascetic Ākatha, seeing the sage to be pleased, was (himself) pleased along with his wife. The ascetic, having eaten, left. That Ākatha also, with his mind pleased, muttered (a hymn). With his wife he followed the way of the life of pigeons. The sage, with his wife, became ready for the expansion

of his austerities. Having put the lord of Umā in Śiva's Phallus on a seat, he worshipped him accompanied by his attendants. After putting the Phallus when he saw, he observed an unknown brāhmaṇa of an emaciated figure. The lord was naked, without feet, squint-eyed, a cripple with a withered arm, without ears. He recited Sāmans; he was well-versed in many sacred texts. He saw him who had come to his house.

34-36. Then Ākatha said (these) words to his wife Suśobhanā: "This brāhmaṇa of a loathsome dress is coming. Half the food should be given to him. Preserve half the food. When this day also passes, then, I think, on the sixth day you will not live for want of food. Tell me what you think?"

That Śobhanā said:

37. The (span of) life is written on the forehead. Nobody dies in between.

Ākatha said:

38-43a. Vīrabhadra had cut off the head of Sacrifice(?) of a fixed (span of) life and of a perpetual character, then what to say of human beings of a sinful nature? So if, avoiding (to give) him (food) you eat it, then I shall give him (my) food. I shall do according as you wish.

The wife said: "How shall I eat when you have not eaten? Have I formerly eaten (like this)? Listen to this another (thing). Food is the life of beings. This is actually seen by all living beings (i.e. men). Therefore, she who gives food is said to be the giver of life. Beings are produced from food; and since they grow (because of food), there is not greater gift than that of food. The gift of food is highly fruitful. The life of him who does not give to a being a drop of water sticking to the end of a shaking leaf of Aśvattha, is useless. Piety alone helps (a man) in the next world. Neither the wife nor the relatives.

43b-45a. The wife, the parents, the sons are helpful as long as a man's life lasts (i.e. as long as he is alive. They are) not (real) kinsmen. Wealth, youth, friends (of a man live) here only. He, best of those practising piety, enjoys piety here and in the next world. What about us?"

Having heard these words of his wife, Ākatha, the treasure of kindness, gave, without any apprehension, the excellent food to him (i.e. that ascetic).

45b-50. 'This is god Śiva, of many acts, who has come (here)'. Deciding like this, he washed his body—destroying sins—his feet up to his knees, his shanks and ankles below them. Then he made the brāhmaṇa sip water. Then Ākatha brought that brāhmaṇa with crippled feet to his courtyard. He lifted him, of crippled feet, and made him sit on a seat offered to him. Ākatha, having worshipped the sage, fed him. In the meanwhile, some mad man came to the house. He took the man with the crippled feet and took him out of the house. He also burnt their house, and beat up the couple.

51-54a. The brāhmaṇa Ākatha who was beaten, quickly entered the burning house to take (out the representation) of the god. Then the best brāhmaṇa took (the representation of) the god whose worship was burnt, and coming out saw the heat on his face. Despising the worship that was (thus) burnt, and seeing (the representation of the god) with a burnt body, the pious one said to his wife: "Certainly my entire body should be rendered like that (i.e. should be burnt) as the worship of the great lord (is burnt)."

The crippled one said:

54b-55. Your worship done even afterwards will be fruitful, as when other materials are burnt, people give the material like those (as were burnt). In the same way, when (the materials of) worship are burnt, worship should be done like that (i.e. with fresh materials).

Ākatha said:

56-59a. O brāhmaṇa, nothing beneficial takes place by means of the worship which is done with stolen materials. So also, O brāhmaṇa, Śiva's worship done with materials unjustly procured, does not give auspicious (things).

Saying so, Ākatha quickly started to burn his body. Then the mad man took the burnt Phallus and vanished in a moment. Then the crippled one having become Hara (i.e. Śiva) warded

off Ākatha: "O brāhmaṇa, why are you dejected? I am the giver of boons. Ask for a boon." Ākatha also asked for a very steady devotion for the feet of the lord.

Sūta said:

59b-61. Hearing this account, Rāma, surrounded by sages, was pleased. He saluted Bhāradvāja, and solicited his order to leave. Then the sage Bhāradvāja, being pleased, and having saluted Śambhu, the best sage Vasiṣṭha, Viṣṇu and the hosts of sages, dismissed them. They also went after saluting (Gautama).

The (sages) in the Naimiṣa (forest) said:

62. What did Rāma, of great lustre, along with all sages, do? So also (what did) that Śambhu of great glory (do?)

Sūta said:

63-67a. Rāma, desiring to perform the monthly śrāddha of Kauśalyā on the next day, invited excellent brāhmaṇas almost like sages. Rāma, who was singly devoted, (also) invited Śambhu who knew the entire truth, Nārada, Romaśa, Bhṛgu and Viśvāmitra. He slept on a comfortable bed on the ground. When the next morning came, he, having bathed in the morning according to the proper rites, got prepared by cooks pure food, vegetables etc. He (got) prepared various agreeable foods (dishes) to be sucked and chewed; so also thirty-six (other) dishes fit to be eaten like cakes.

67b-71a. He (got) prepared sweetened milk of six kinds, and two hundred cooked vegetables. He kept ready three hundred varieties of uncooked and mixed (articles); so also kāla vegetables, and various (kinds of) fruits. So also Rāma got ready roots and bulbs and bark-garments. With his brothers and family priest he went to the river; and having bathed in the water of Sarayū, having offered oblations into the fire, and speaking words of welcome to the guests the king worshipped the deities. Having restrained his breath, and having decided upon the object he gave them the invitation.

71b-76. Rāma invited Romaśa, Nārada at the all-god sacrifice. He invited Śambhu, Bhṛgu and Kauśika at (the rite in honour of) divine mothers. Then having prepared a circle and

having properly worshipped, he washed the feet (of the sages) with water given by Sītā. Having made those brāhmaṇas sip water he was about to go home. (At that time) a guest came (there). He was old. His figure was deformed. He was slim. His limbs were trembling. Similarly his feet and head were shaking. His (loose) skin was hanging. He was troubled by the excess of asthma. His cheeks had rheum of the eyes clinging to them. His beard was smeared with saliva. He said to king Rāma: "I am the only brāhmaṇa that remains (unfed). Give food also to me who am old and weak."

77-80. Rāma too, hearing his words, said (these) words to Lakṣmaṇa: "You wash his feet. I shall worship the brāhmaṇa". The guest also spoke (these) words to Rāma who was absorbed (in the ritual): "I desire (to have) food (only) if you wash my feet. Do you insult me because (you think these) brāhmaṇas are superior to me? You do not know the method of performing a śrāddha as is practised by the great sages. If you insult me, then all brāhmaṇas are insulted. The śrāddha (would) be harmed and you will go to hell."

81-88. Then Rāma himself washed the feet of the brāhmaṇa; and having made the brāhmaṇa sip water he took him into the house. Then Rāma having sipped water, himself gave him a seat. When the brāhmaṇas were seated on their seats, he controlled his breath, and having obtained (their) consent to the performance of his rite, he would throw (i.e. he threw) water with sesamum seeds, with (the accompaniment of) the hymn *Apahata* at the region of the door. Then he should throw it at the place where the vessels for the dead ancestors are kept, with (the utterance of the hymn) *Udīratām.* Then he should throw the water with the sacred rice grains with (i.e. by reciting) the Gāyatrī (hymn) at the place where vessels for the gods are placed. Then having sprinkled the entire (food) that is cooked, he should utter this hymn. Then having thought of the place of śrāddha as Gayā, and having reflected upon Viṣṇu, so also having meditated upon the Vasus and (his) dead ancestors. he should proceed with the śrāddha Then he should offer worship to all gods with grains of barley or rice. Then he should take along with sacred rice grains, two darbhas with their roots and tips joined. Touching the ground with his right knee, he should

offer water into the hands of the brāhmaṇas. Then, he who offers the śrāddha, should offer a seat with (the utterance of these words) *Purūravārdravāṇām devānām idamāsanam*, and should request them.

89-97a. Then having made a respectful offering on the tips of the darbhas at the north, he should turn the pot making it lie with the face on the knot of the darbhas. Then he should make the vessel lie with its face upwards, and should sprinkle it with water and golden ornaments. He should put water into the pot in which the pavitra (darbhas) have been put, with (the hymn) *Śam no devyā.* He should also (recite the hymn in honour) of all gods as long as the rite enjoined by the rules goes on. He should put barley-grains into the pot to the accompaniment of the hymn *Yavosi dhānyarājo vā.* Then he should offer water-pots mixed with honey (i.e. in which honey is placed) and with sandal and flowers. Then the respectful offering should be made with the utterance of the words: 'O brāhmaṇa, this is a respectful offering to you'. Then he should ask (the brāhmaṇas): 'May I invoke the gods'. Then saying *Viśvedevāḥ* he should put the darbhas on the head of the brāhmaṇa. He should then mutter: 'The Viśvedevas listen. May they come (here).' Then having come and being seated, he should take the pot with the darbhas. Then having thrown the water from the main vessel on his right foot, he should put the water from the pot on the right hand of the brāhmaṇa in front of the pavitraka, to the accompaniment of the hymn *Yā divyā.* Then saying: 'This respectful offering to you' and collecting the water of the respectful offering in a pot, he should put that vessel containing the water used for the respectful offering somewhere.

97b-102a. Then having put water on their hands, he should worship them with barley-grains. Requesting them: 'Worship, propitiate', he, the giver of the water, having worshipped from the foot to the head, and repeating the hymn *Gandhadvāreṇa*, he should, likewise, worship the dead ancestors, with his sacred thread hanging down from his right shoulder. Then having invested a brāhmaṇa with a sacred thread, and with the darbhas with the sesamum seeds, he should, with his left knee put on the ground, offer him a seat. Then facing the south he should ask them about the appropriate moment. Then he should put the

pot in the darbhas with their tips in the southern direction, in such a way that it lies on its face. Then having been tied with three darbhas he should make it lie with its face upwards.

102b-105a. Then having sprinkled (water) into the pots with two darbhas and sesamum seeds, he should put water to the accompaniment of the hymn *Śam no devyā*, and should put the sesamum seeds, uttering (the hymn) *Tilosi*. Then having offered sandal and flowers, he asks them: 'Are you satisfied with the respectful offering?' When they give the answer: 'The respectful offering (is satisfactory)' he should invoke his dead ancestors. Then, he should stand, and holding in his hand the respectful offering made of sesamum seeds, flowers and darbhas, he should offer the water of the respectful offering with the (utterance of the) hymn: *Uśantastvā*.

105b-106a. Then after that he should worship them, and should, as before, put the sacred thread so as to hang from his right shoulder. He should use a golden pot for (offerings to be made to) gods after having washed it.

106b-110a. He should use a silver pot for (oblations to be offered to) the dead ancestors, or as is available. In its absence a pot made of bell metal, not obtained from anyone else, is excellent. In its absence vessels made of palāśa leaves would be (used). But not a mediocre one. So also vessels made of leaves of plantain trees, mango trees, jambū leaves, punnāga leaves, parāka leaves, leaves of campā, madhūka, kuṭaja, so also leaves of mātuluṅga should be given by men at a śrāddha. Having brought the food in a ladle and ghee in hands, he should ask the brāhmaṇa about the spreading of the food after wearing the sacred thread over his right shoulder and under the left arm-pit. (He should say to the brāhmaṇa:)

110b-112a. 'I shall put (the oblation) into fire'. The reply (would be:) 'Do so.' Then having spread it out he should wear the sacred thread (in the usual way) and having sprinkled (water) should collect it. Saying *Somāya pitṛmate svadhā namaste* he should offer (oblation) to Soma. (He should also say:) *Yamāya pitṛmate svadhā namaḥ*.

112b-115a. Then he should offer the second oblation and then having scattered sacred rice grains (he should say:) *Agnaye*

kavyavāhanāya svadhā namaḥ. Then having offered oblation, and wearing the sacred thread over the right shoulder, he should surround the brāhmaṇas and go. Then he should repeatedly drop it into the vessels meant for the dead ancestors. Then he should wash the vessel meant for the piṇḍas and the ladle. Then he should arrange the vessels.

115b-116a. Then to the right side of the vessels he should offer food. He (i.e. Rāma) gave all (kinds of) food, edible vegetables.

116b-117. Then a very old guest, looking here and there, said to the calm Rāma: "Quickly salute me. I am hungry. I shall eat with your (i.e. after you) order."

118-121a. Rāma spoke (these) words: "O sage, wait for a moment. I shall now quickly salute the deities and the dead ancestors." Saying so Rāma offered the food in the vessels. He put the darbhas on the pavitraka meant for gods in such a way that their tips faced east and north, and those darbhas on the pavitraka (i.e. the two darbhas placed on the ground) meant for the dead ancestors in such a way that their tips faced west and south. They offer food and darbhas, barley grains and sesamum seeds looking upon them as 'the earth'.

121b-125. He should first offer that, saying *Ye devāḥ*, to the gods, which is touched by the thumb of the brāhmaṇa to the accompaniment of these words: *Idam Viṣṇuḥ*. Then he should offer it to the dead ancestors and then to the guest. Then saying *Devatābhyo* he should offer the prayer repeated before and after eating. Having muttered the Gāyatrī(-hymn) three times, and with his sacred thread over his left shoulder and under the right arm-pit, he should face the east; then wearing the sacred thread over his right shoulder and under the left arm-pit he should say, 'Hereafter (please) eat madhutraya'. When the brāhmaṇas have eaten, he should repeat a hymn that kills the demons, and should cause the food and (other) eatables to be served. I shall (now) tell in brief what great wonder that brāhmaṇa who was the guest, performed.

126-132a. With one mouthful he swallowed the entire (food) that was there in the pots; and said (to Rāma): "Give me that much food which would be enough for oblations to the vital airs. Why are you engaged in (performing) the śrāddha rite,

if you are unable to give this much? O Rāma, if you are unable to give (food) to me alone, then why are you intent upon giving to many (brāhmaṇas)? Deeds done rashly are not (properly) accomplished. All (the varieties of food) prepared by you are not enough even for making an offering to my vital airs. Tell me how you will give food to me and also to these (brāhmaṇas)." The hero Rāma said to him: "You eat according to your pleasure." Saying so, Rāma observed that very wonderful deed of him. Then calling Śambhu, he said: "You spread out (i.e. serve the food). I think that you are my father and Śivā, Pārvatī is my mother. I think Bhavānī is Annapūrṇā and the highest goddess."

132b-142. That Pārvatī said (these) words: "I shall give him sufficient (food)." Then Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) brought a bell-metal-vessel full of boiled rice and adorned. With (i.e. in) a golden ladle she brought fragrant and bright boiled rice. "Let this be inexhaustible for him", saying so she gladly gave once (only) the boiled rice on the right hand of the brāhmaṇa. He, with his head trembling, looked up. He had his hand stretched out. "Taking the boiled rice in the hand, give it to me. Is it sweet and well-cooked?" Śambhu's wife (i.e. Pārvatī) said to him: "Eat from your hand, then (only) I shall give." Then the brāhmaṇa again ate the food that was (placed) on his hand. Knowing that was inexhaustible, he stretched out the other hand. The goddess put the boiled rice on that hand. The chaste one gave the cooked, inexhaustible food to other brāhmaṇas (also). Then that brāhmaṇa, having seen that inexhaustible boiled rice on both his hands, stretched out another (i.e. a third) hand; and he said: "Give me excellent food, with soup and ghee." Then that goddess Śivā, dear to Śambhu, gave the inexhaustible (boiled rice) to him. Whatever the chaste lady gave was all inexhaustible. (But) again and again another (i.e. a new) hand was produced. Thus having produced a thousand hands he stopped. The brāhmaṇa said to her: "Give me a mouthful of water. O good lady, you have satisfied me. Neither Rāma nor Sītā has satisfied me."

Śambhu said:

143. Now Rāma has given you; Sītā has given you; I too

have given you. What full (food) should be given to you hereafter. Tell that to me.

The brāhmaṇa said:

144-147. I am satisfied. More should not be given to me.

As he knew that there was food on his hand, it somehow did not fall down. Seated (there) he thought a long time: 'How is it that I have (but) one hand? This is prepared for my enjoyment, and not for any other act of mine. Therefore, all this of another's activity will be empty.' Determining like this with his mind, the guest besmeared his body with (the food). That wonder took place when all gods were watching. Knowing that the brāhmaṇas were pleased, Rāma who knew the highest truth and who had a ladle in his hand, duly asked them: "Are you satisfied?'

148-153. The excellent brāhmaṇas (said:) "We are satisfied." He should, having scattered the food to the accompaniment of hymns, and facing the south, place the piṇḍa near the vessel. There only he should give mouthful (of water) to the brāhmaṇas. They threw their mouthfuls into the vessels of leaves in which remnants (of the food) were kept. Those brāhmaṇas entered the house without the guest. The guest said: "O king, I shall sip the water outside (only). O Rāma, I cannot get up. Give me your hand." Then Rāma gave his hand. (But) the best brāhmaṇa did not get up. Then Hanūmat also gave him his strong hand. Then taking the best brāhmaṇa with his other hand, the lord of the monkeys dragged him. The brāhmaṇa said with a loud cry:

The brāhmaṇa said:

154-160. Oh, clearly my hand is being cut off. Lift me by holding at any other (place) than that.

Then he (i.e. Hanūmat) covered (i.e. tied) his back up to his head with his tail, and forcibly ran over the ground. But the brāhmaṇa did not move. Then the brave monkey, cutting the ground with his feet, put both his feet on his head. The house became shattered; (and) all the brāhmaṇas stood outside. Then that Hanūmat came out along with that old brāhmaṇa. He put that old brāhmaṇa on a seat. Bringing water for the brāhmaṇa

in an earthern pot, Jāmbavat said (to him): "O brāhmaṇa, you should take clean water along with the pot. Sītā would wash the body, and Lakṣmaṇa will give (i.e. pour) water." Then Jāmbavat told Rāma all that the brāhmaṇa had said. Rāma ordered his younger brother and his wife to wash (the body of) the brāhmaṇa. Then Lakṣmaṇa brought water to wash the brāhmaṇa's body.

161-165. Then the king washed his entire body as he would wash an image. Then by Rāma's advice the two (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā) did just like that. Then the guest threw his mouthful on the face of Sītā. She, having ornaments (on her person) was covered with water. Then that chaste lady cleaned the brāhmaṇa's face full of phlegm and saliva. Again she washed, and his nose gave out phlegm. Then having made the brāhmaṇa sip water, Lakṣmaṇa said to him, "Get up". The brāhmaṇa said: "It is not possible." Then Hanūmat also came (there). The guest said to him: "I, a brāhmaṇa guest, am troubled by Hanūmat. Some time back while lifting me, the monkey dropped me down."

166-170. Then Jāmbavat said to him: "My body is soft like the down. I shall hold you. O brāhmaṇa, you will not have any harm." Saying so, Jāmbavat lifted the brāhmaṇa after supporting him with both his arms. Bringing him to the verge of the place occupied by the brāhmaṇas, he put down the sage. Then Rāma went round the best brāhmaṇas keeping them to his right. Blessed by the excellent brāhmaṇas he gave them tāmbūla and saluting, along with his brothers their feet, said: "O Sītā, you have not washed the feet of this guest. There is dirt at the couple of shanks of him. His face also is full of dirt. Wash his face properly. The brāhmaṇa cannot stand dirt."

Sītā said:

171a. It was properly washed. (The dirt) has again come out.

Rāma said:

171b-174. Again wash off the dirt. Otherwise it would be my fault.

Then Sītā, having done like that, remained silent. That brāhmaṇa, highly enraged, said to Rāma and Sītā: "O best

king, Sītā should support my feet, you should support my hands, and let Bharata fan me. Let Lakṣmaṇa dress the multitude of (i.e. my profuse) hair. Let Śatrughna remove (i.e. cleanse) the phlegm on my body with his own garment."

Sūta said:

175-182a. Then they did all that in the case of the guest as was told by him. The brāhmaṇas, men, monkeys and demons were amazed. Goddess Pārvatī and Śambhu looked at him with the knitting of their eyebrows (i.e. with frowns). Then the guest and Śambhu spoke mentally. The guest holding a conch, a disc, a mace, wearing a yellow garment, with his entire body adorned and very bright, was pleased. That Śambhu who had three eyes, who resembled pure crystal, who was adorned with all ornaments, who was (bright) like a crore of suns, who had put on a crown, who was the treasure of compassion, and who was formerly propitiated, became pleased. Sadāśiva holding the hand of the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) got up. Rāma who was very righteous, and whose body was horripilated, and whose eyes were full of joy, fell (i.e. prostrated) on the ground like a staff. His brothers, lying on the ground like staffs, saluted him (i.e. Śiva). Śiva, having raised Rāma, embraced him, smelt his head and spoke sweet words to Rāma having lotus-like eyes.

Śiva said:

182b-183a. I am pleased, ask for a boon which is difficult to be had even by Brahmā and others. I have nothing to receive from you. You ask for a boon. Do not delay.

Śrī Rāma said:

183b-187a. O lord of the worlds, I have nothing to ask for. Now I have (in my possession) the kingdom of the earth. Heaven is secured through (one's) deeds. I have devotion through seeing your feet. I am enjoying good health, (as) you see. That Sītā (my wife) is the best among women. I have subjugated all kings. My subjects are endowed with righteousness. O you imperishable one, due to your arrival I am glad. Yet I shall ask for something. Let my devotion for you be stable. So also, O god,

O lord, stay in my house for three years in this form and expounding all duties.

Śiva said:

187b-192. Let it be so, O Rāma. Everything will be possible for you.

Then the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) said to the lotus-eyed Rāma: "O noble one, ask for the boon that you desire. I am pleased with you." Śrī Rāma said (these) words: "I have nothing to be solicited. Whatever I wanted to have, I have had it from Śambhu. All else has (already) been said. Yet, O Viṣṇu, I ask for one (thing). Always be pleased (with me)." Then Viṣṇu said to Sītā: "I am now pleased with you. Ask for a boon. I shall grant it." Then Sītā said (these) words: "Before (some) time my husband has asked for a boon. I have no other boon (to seek from you). If you willingly grant (one), then let my mind (always) turn away from another man (than my husband). O brāhmaṇa, O lord, my salutation to you."

193-197. Then all the sages saluted the two excellent deities. He then said to Rāma: "(Now), eat along with your brothers. With the goddess (Pārvatī) I shall stay in your charming, secluded mansion. Let Viṣṇu who does all things, and who is accompanied by the daughter of the ocean (i.e. Lakṣmī), stay in one mansion, O Rāma, for he is very greedy." Then the revered sage Vasiṣṭha sat in front of the two in a clean, great house, rich with seats and containing many vessels. Other sages and kings also sat according to their (seniority in) ages. Then king Rāma, along with his brothers, made them sit on a soft, even seat.

198-205a. Rāma, comforting his servants led by Hanūmat, said: "You should stand round about. I shall eat afterwards. (This will not be) in a different manner." Then they all gave them respectful offerings one by one. All those who were Rāma's attendants, also ate (food). Giving them tāmbūla etc. (Rāma) fed the chief monkeys and others. Then the lotus-eyed Rāma, after they all had eaten (food), gave food to the helpless, the blind, the poor so also to the beasts, birds and animals, and started offering the sandhyā (prayer). Then the king offered his sandhyā (prayer) and muttered (the hymns), and having saluted

them occupied the throne. That Rāma, the descendent of Raghu, being waited upon by the citizens and inhabitants of the country, shone, when in the assembly, as god (Indra), the lord of Śacī, surrounded by all gods. He executed all the work of (the administration of) the kingdom along with his brothers; (then) Rāma, (calling) each one by his name gave leave to all. He also dismissed his brothers and other monkeys.

205b-207. Then the very lustrous Vasiṣṭha said (these) words to Rāma: "O Rāma, do not forget the duty that you have to perform in the morning. The venerable lord of Ambikā, the lord of the worlds, Śambhu is seated there. The glorious one should be diligently remembered and saluted." Saying, "All right", the king (i.e. Rāma) saluted his preceptor, and gave him leave; and thinking of the lord of lords, he resorted to his wife.

The sages said:

208. O preceptor, tell us what Rāma, the best among the intelligent, did after having got up in the morning. We have a curiosity to listen to it.

Sūta said:

209. Then seeing Śambhu, Rāma said to him: "(Please) narrate the tale of Śaṅkara. O best sage, I am not (fully) satisfied with (the account of) the greatness of Śiva, which destroys the stream of sins, (though) I have been hearing it."

Śambhu said:

210-217. Now I shall tell you the reply given by the lord to the remaining question. Those who wait upon the deity with materials procured unjustly, become deformed, as (for example) a demon, named Rūpaka, propitiated Śaṅkara with wealth earned unjustly. He made a bell to please the lord by (spending) that wealth only. His son was known as Sampāti. He worshipped Śaṅkara with wealth earned unjustly. Both of them died one day. They went to Śiva's heaven. Vīrabhadra spoke to them: "O Rūpaka, you offered worship with wealth that was unjustly earned; you also made a bell etc. Due to that conduct you will be deformed and will be (born as) a thief. Clearly due to

not listening to the uttarance of Śiva's name, his ears would perish due to the sound (of the name) and he would not see (the lord). By this much, O lord, you have properly offered the worship. Therefore, you will have properly offered the worship. Therefore, you will have devotion". Thus Vīrabhadra directed the attendant named Anaśana, wandering somewhere. The two, who were reduced to that state, stayed in Śiva's heaven.

Śambhu said:

218-223. I shall now tell (you) the story about the impaired materials of worship which the great lord told Hanūmat: O Rāma, listen to the account of each of the goblin-attendants of Śiva. I shall also tell you (about) the ripening of actions.

Śiva who was asked by Hanūmat to narrate (the account of) the attendants with impaired bodies said: "Listen to what is said about him who is a knower, and who will knowingly offer impaired materials to the lord: He has perspiration on his entire body; for all the time he has perspiration on his body; his garments are wet due to perspiration; his body has a small stream brought about by perspiration; drops of perspiration fall from the tip of his nose. He is seen to be unfit for touch. Formerly, he, while perspiring, propitiated the lord. I shall tell you a historical account about this:

224-230a. There was a brāhmaṇa peasant named Cekitāna. Everyday he had agricultural produce after having bathed in the morning. When the time of mid-day came, the brāhmaṇa muttered (a hymn). He then said to his wife: 'Quickly bring me food.' With the food she brought, he who always perspired and who was tormented by the sun, speedily worshipped Śiva with sandal, flowers, sacred rice grains full of (his) perspiration. When the evening came, he, with his body washed and looking very handsome, worshipped the lord of gods with means (i.e. materials) available in the season. The very intelligent one died and went to Śiva's heaven. Vīrabhadra also said to him: 'Be Śiva's attendant (named) Svedila. Formerly you worshipped Śambhu with materials touched by your perspiration. You were always full of perspiration. Therefore, you become the attendant (called) Svedila.' "

Śambhu said:

230b-231. O Rāma, thus ordered by Vīra (i.e. Vīrabhadra) he became an attendant. O noble one, see this Ghaṇṭāmukha. He was a vaiśya named Vibhāvasu in his former existence. He was pious. He was a great donor. Everyday he fed brāhmaṇas. He practised religious rites. In the morning he saluted and worshipped Śiva with flowers. He smeared a small (portion of the ground) with cowdung; and having worshipped the lord and offered him a lotus etc. he sounded his impaired bell.

Rāma said:

232. How (i.e. due to what) was his bell impaired?

Śambhu said:

233-236. Formerly there was a stout (person) known as Soma. His son, called Manda, was ten years old. He had put kulmāṣa grains cooked in fire into a bell, O king; and he had eaten them. Therefore, it had become impaired. Trying to seize that vaiśya he said these (words). The vaiśya himself cleaned (other) materials but (not) the bell. Due to his using it (without cleaning it) he contracted sin, and so became the attendant Ghaṇṭāmukha.

Rāma said:

237. When the materials of worship were purified, it was also purified. Then how could it cause sin? It is properly said that the purifier of materials is for purifying the materials(?).

Śambhu said:

238. In the ordinary parlance there will be none who will not be devoted to you. He will go to Śiva's place. The narrator also would be like that.

Sūta said:

239-242. He who narrates this story, will be like him on the earth. This most secret (account) would give the knowledge about Śiva. O brāhmaṇas, I have told you this great (account) helping (you) to lead an auspicious life. He who listens to it

devoutly, is honoured in Śiva's heaven. To the reader of the Purāṇa one should give a garment, a cow, golden ornaments, fertile land according to one's capacity. He who recites or listens to this dialogue between Śiva and Rāghava destroying the entire stream of sins, goes to the highest place.

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THE
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PART VII

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

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PREFACE

With the publication of this seventh part of the Padma Purāṇa we have now made available forty-five volumes in the AITM series to the students and scholars of Indology. This part comprises chapters 1 – 81 of the sixth and the largest section, viz. Uttarakhaṇḍa of the Padma Purāṇa, consisting of a total of 255 chapters. Though the existing text of the Purāṇa is complete in seven sections, the Kriyāyogakhaṇḍa being the last, the present section in chapter 1, vv. 66 – 70 enumerates only five sections as belonging to the Purāṇa, omitting thus two sections, viz. the Brahma and Kriyāyoga. It appears that originally there were only five sections, the Uttarakhaṇḍa, as the name itself indicates, being the last one, but later two more sections were added. As to the period of time when this was done, Winternitz opines that it was perhaps after the composition of the Bhāgavata.

The major themes of this part are the birth, adventures and ultimate defeat and death of the demon Jālandhara in chapters 3—18 and a description of the Ekādaśī and other vows in chapters 30—70 and 77. There is a duplication of two names, viz. Putradā Ekādaśī and Kāmadā Ekādaśī, as the former occurs as the tittle of two chapters, 41 and 55, and the latter as that of chapters 47 and 63. This could be taken as one among the indications of the multiple authorship of the Purāṇa.

The reader will find the following informations gleaned from this part especially instructive.

The gods Śiva and Viṣṇu are not different but identical. "Viṣṇu is Śiva and Śiva is Viṣṇu." We can say that they are only functionally two but existentially one, and this has been emphasized by the Purāṇa frequently elsewhere also as an answer perhaps to the controversy arising from the appearance of divergent warring sects in course of time.

Ridiculing gods, their images and religious and sectarian practices associated with their worship due to egotism, parti-

cular sectarian leanings etc. is strongly disparaged. A brāhmaṇa indulging in this is declared to be a cāṇḍāla and one is said to undergo a very despicable birth for thousands of years in the form of "worms in feces."

Muttering God's names is recommended as especially efficacious in this age for freeing oneself from sins and attaining the highest spiritual position. "A man obtains by repeating the names of Viṣṇu in the Kali age what he obtains by meditation in the Kṛta age, by performing sacrifices in the Tretā age and by worshipping Viṣṇu in the Dvāpara age." The *Thousand Names of Viṣṇu* are narrated in chapter 71, but in the end it is said that the thousand names are equal to the single name 'Rāma'.

The author(s) of the Purāṇa has (have) a good sense of humor, as is proved on many occasions when we meet a ludicrous or incongruous situation in this part as well as elsewhere. God Brahmā is usually made a laughingstock on account of his beard. Once Brahmā takes the child Jālandhara in his lap when the latter catches his beard which the former is unable to free from his hand—this naturally makes the child's father Ocean laugh. In another situation, Śiva fashions a disc out of the tejas contributed by gods and sages for the destruction of the mighty demon Jālandhara. Śiva gives that disc into Brahmā's hands for inspection and appreciation. He seeing that the beard of Brahmā is burnt by the sparks issuing from the powerful weapon laughs and takes it quickly back. Brahmā is again made a butt of laughter when Kīrtimukha, a hungry attendant of Śiva, proceeds to eat Brahmā but is warded off by Śiva. Perhaps this indicates that the cult of this god of the Trinity had already declined and lost its popularity long before this Purāṇa was composed while the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava cults were still very much thriving.

There are so many passages in this part which show, as against the popular belief of there being one Nandin, that at least two Nandins existed in Śiva's entourage—one, the chief of Śiva's attendants (gaṇas) and a general of his army and the other, the bull, Śiva's vehicle. "Śiva said to Nandin, the chief of his attendants: 'You should kill the brave, great demon Jālandhara, in battle'." Again, "Then hearing the words of

Pārvatī Śiva said to Vīrabhadra: 'Quickly make ready my bull (i.e. Nandin)' " (ch. 12).

There occur many names of historical and geographical interest in this part too, which include some unfamiliar ones also, such as 'Go', a mountain (ch. 6, v. 22) and 'Gaṇḍikā', a sacred river (ch. 75), which are rather difficult to identify. The name '*Medinī*' (i.e. the earth) is explained thus: "The entire earth was filled with the marrow of the Ocean's son. O king, due to the marrow (*medas*) only Medinī got that name" (chap. 18, v. 109). A mythological origin of gems and metals is described in chap. 6, vv. 25—31. When Indra struck the demon Bala by his thunderbolt, the latter's body was shattered to pieces which fell on the earth. "From his eyes dropped sapphires. Rubies were produced from his ears...copper was produced from his urine...Gold was produced from his nails..."

Charity is extolled as a very great virtue. The gift of food, especially to a brāhmaṇa who is tired and travelling, is considered of exceptional merit. Offering food even to a śūdra is superior to any other gift. Giving food and water is considered the best of gifts. A preceptor is the most venerable of all the worthy recipients of gifts and a knower of the Purāṇas is the best recipient. Since he saves ('*tra*') a man from falling ('*pāta*'), he is called a '*pātra*' (a deserving recipient). Land is another praiseworthy gift destroying the great sins of murdering a brāhmaṇa, a woman, a child and killing cows. Snatching another's land and a brāhmaṇa's property are considered greatest sins. Incidentally, brāhmaṇa was the most privileged caste in ancient and medieval India deserving the highest veneration and protection by the state and society in view of his most vital role in society.

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—Editor

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47. Kāmadā Ekādaśī 2500
48. Varūthinī Ekādaśī 2503
49. Mohinī Ekādaśī 2505
50. Aparā Ekādaśī 2508
51. Nirjalā Ekādaśī 2510
52. Yoginī Ekādaśī 2514
53. Devaśayanī Ekādaśī 2517
54. Kāmikā Ekādaśī 2519
55. Putradā Ekādaśī 2522
56. Ajā Ekādaśī 2525
57. Padmā Ekādaśī 2526
58. Indirā Ekādaśī 2530
59. Pāpāṅkuśā Ekādaśī 2532
60. Ramā Ekādaśī 2534
61. Prabodhinī Ekādaśī 2538
62. Kamalā Ekādaśī 2543
63. Kāmadā Ekādaśī 2546
64. The Importance of Cāturmāsya 2548

65. Cāturmāsya Vow to be Concluded Properly 2555
66. Propitiation of Yama 2557
67. The Importance of Gopīcandana 2563
68. The Greatness of Viṣṇu's Devotees 2564
69. The Vow of Śravaṇa Dvādaśī 2565
70. The Vow of Nadī-trirātra 2569
71. Viṣṇu's One Thousand Names 2572
72. Merit of Reciting the Viṣṇusahasranāma 2597
73. Rāmarakṣā Stotra 2598
74. Merit Earned Through Gifts 2599
75. The Greatness of Gaṇḍikā 2602
76. The Hymn Causing Prosperity 2603
77. The Vow of Ṛṣipañcamī 2606
78. The Hymn called 'Apamārjana' 2610
79. The Importance of Apamārjana 2616
80. The Greatness of Viṣṇu 2618
81. The Importance of Gaṅgā 2629

ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)—Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, v—verse, vv—verses, Ftn—Footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo.—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S.M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F. E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series, MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch. S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Maṇḍal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, MLBD, Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgītā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha)
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka, Com. by Mahīdāsa
DB	*Devī Bhāgavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N.L. De, Oriental Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* by Hastings
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa*, ed. R. S. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P.V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇī*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradīya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣīya Prācīna Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd. P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Maṇḍal, Aundh
Śat. Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

VI UTTARAKHAṆḌA

(The Sequel or Concluding Section)

CHAPTER ONE

The Contents of the Section in Brief

1-2. Om, salutation to Śrī Viṣṇu. Om salutation to Śrī Vedavyāsa.

Om, having saluted Nārāyaṇa, so also Nara, the best among men, and goddess Sarasvatī and Vyāsa, one should narrate the (god's) glory. Salutation to the preceptor who opened the eyes of one who is blind due to the darkness of ignorance with the pencil of the collyrium of knowledge.

The sages said:

3-4. O best among the learned, we have heard the Pātālakhaṇḍa full of various accounts and giving great joy, which you narrated (to us). Now we desire to hear what remains (i.e. the remaining portion) of the Padma (Purāṇa), and which augments devotion to the lord. O preceptor, please narrate it.

Sūta said:

5-7a. O sages, listen, all of you, to what Śaṅkara told Nārada who asked him, and which is the knowledge that destroys sins. Once Nārada, dear to the lord, while roaming over the worlds went to Mandara mountain to ask Śambhu some secret. There he saluted the lord of Umā who was seated. Directed by Śiva's order, he sat on a seat in front of the lord. He asked the god the same as you, the best ones, have asked.

Nārada said:

7b-8. O lord, O god of gods, O lord of Pārvatī, O preceptor

of the world, tell me that by which the knowledge about the truth of lord can be had.

Śiva said:

9-15. O Nārada, listen to the Purāṇa which I shall tell you, which is like the Vedas and hearing which a man is free from all sins. There is no doubt about it. First there is the glory of Uttara. Then there is the story of the Parvata (Mountain). Then there is the narration of Haridvāra; then there is the account of (Gaṅgā) rising from Viṣṇu's feet. I shall also describe the holy place of Prayāga, so also the (holy place called) Aśvamedhika. I shall tell (you) about the greatness of Tulasī; so also (I shall describe) the conch, the disc, the mace etc. Then there is the account of Dvārakā. (Then there are) the rules about a great festival. (So also) there is the description of the religious merit obtained from (bathing in) a lake, so also (from bathing in) a reservoir of water, a well, or a cistern; (there is the description of the views of) the Gāṇapatya, of the holy texts of the Vaiṣṇavas; (then) there is (the description) of the greatness of repairs (of old temples etc.); of visiting Gangā; of the greatness of Sābhramatī; so also of the banks (of rivers etc.), of the duties of women and śūdras and of what (course) should be followed by those who are forsaken.

16-19. In the dialogue between Umā and Maheśa *The Thousand Names of Viṣṇu* are told. That was brought from Kailāsa by Nārada, the brāhmaṇa. It should be recited with a concentrated mind to the people, brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and especially to women and śūdras. It is holy; it is pure; it increases (the span of) life; it should be especially recited; (thereby a man) would obtain intimate union with Viṣṇu. That hymn containing the thousand names of Viṣṇu is known in the world to be purifying. It (i.e. the Uttarakhaṇḍa) will tell about the places of the twentyfour images.

20-24a. I shall tell about their parents and their interior. I shall also tell you about their family, their Vedas, their deeds; so also about their wives, as I see these from my knowledge. (I shall tell you) about the importance of the twentyfour Ekādaśī days and Dvādaśī days. (I shall narrate to you) the greatness of Godāvarī; so also about putting on (one's person) the conch and

ths disc. Brāhmaṇas especially should put these on with a rite. O sage, I shall describe to you the importance of Yamunā, so also of Gaṇḍikā. I shall undoubtedly tell you about the greatness of Vetravatī. (I shall tell you) about the religious merit due to (a visit to) the holy place called Gilli. I shall describe to you the Śilā Kṣetra which is great.

24b-28. All that I shall describe in the Khaṇḍa called Uttara. (I shall narrate to you) the greatness of Arbudeśvara and the holy places etc. that are there. (I shall similarly tell you about) the importance of Sarasvatī and the holy place called Siddhakṣetra. (I shall tell you about) the rise of Padmanābha and the wearing of Tulasī(-leaves etc.). (I shall tell you about) the greatness of gopīcandana, and about the worship of the throne. (I shall describe to you) the greatness of Nirañjana (i.e. Śiva); so also about the vision of knowledge; so also about offering of lights there, and especially of incense. (I shall tell you about) the importance of Kārtika and also that of Māgha. I shall tell you about the greatness of all vows (performed) duly.

29-33a. O Nārada, I shall tell you about (the holy place of) Jagannātha, the best one, seeing whom men are freed from the sin of the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc. (Please) listen; whatever is performed and experienced there gives (i.e. leads one to) the other world. (Even) brāhmaṇas, well-versed in the Vedas eat there; then what to say about other people, O you of a good vow! Here there are twentyfive serpents and various famale dancers also. On seeing Jagannātha (the sins due to murders such as) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, the murder of a child or that of a cow, all perish. A being (just while) uttering (the name) *Jagannātha* is free from great sins.

33b-36. I shall tell you about Viṣṇu's worship with flowers, and its importance also. I shall tell you all that—the description of the mountains; so also the description of countries; so also the supreme greatness of worshipping the cow etc.; so also about the worship of the siddhas; (I shall also tell you about) the religious merit which is obtained when boiled rice is given (to brāhmaṇas). (I shall tell you about) the gift of the interior of a Kadalī; the gift of a tree. After that (I shall tell you about) the gift of a horse; the gift of an elephant; so also about the supreme importance of muttering (a hymn); so also about the

knowledge of hymns and initiation; about the characteristics of a preceptor.

37-43. In (the Uttarakhaṇḍa) the characteristics of a disciple, as the public readers of the Purāṇas know them, are also told. (So also it contains) the importance of the water (flowing) from the feet (of the superiors), and (the information about) śrāddha etc. offered to the dead ancestors; (it also contains information about) the gift to the manes on the days (fixed for making offerings to them); so also the rite of giving sapphires. (It also contains information about) the lunar and solar eclipses and (about) what gifts should be (given on these days). (It tells about) the importance of the gift of a Śālagrāma (stone); so also of flowers and sandal; about the time of the tenth, eleventh and twelfth (days) and about the days sacred to Viṣṇu. (It contains information about) their greatness and the names of Rudra etc. (It also gives the information about) the greatness of Mathurā, and (about) Kurukṣetra etc. (It also contains) the account of the construction of the bridge (over the sea); so also (the account) of Śrī Rāmeśvara. (It also contains the information about) the greatness of Tryambaka, and (about) the fruit of (staying at) Pañcavaṭī. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to the importance of the Daṇḍaka forest. (It tells about) the greatness of the Daṇḍaka forest and about the cause of the birth of Nṛsiṁha. (It tells about) the greatness of the Gītā; so also of the Bhāgavata, so also the importance of Kālindī (i.e. Yamunā), and the description of Indraprastha.

44-50. (It contains) the life of Rukmāṅgada and (tells about) the greatness of a devotee of Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, listen; if a devotee of Viṣṇu is fed but once, the man who feeds him gets that fruit which he would obtain by giving the entire earth along with ocean. The sāttvika are endowed with goodness; the rājasa are said to be lustful. The tāmasa are described to be vicious. The characteristics of the devotees of Viṣṇu are also described (in it). O Nārada, I shall tell you about the greatness, as described, of the brāhmaṇas who are devotees of Viṣṇu and who are intent upon practising the way of life as told in the Vedas. O best sage, then I shall tell you about the sin of those who, through greed for wealth, are engaged in censuring Viṣṇu. (I shall tell) you the account of Jvālāmukhī, and (about the importance

of) seeing the Himālaya. I shall describe to you the region where Brahmā was born. I shell tell you about the origin of kāyasthas; so also the account of Gayā. (I shall describe to you) the nature of Gadādhara and (give you) the description of (the river at Gayā called) Phalgu.

51-56a. In the Padma (Purāṇa), the importance of these is seen (and) is also heard (from it). (It also contains) the nature of great knowledge, and the glory of Kalki. (It contains the description of) Rāmagayā and Pretaśilā. I shall tell you the account of Brahmā and Śilā; so also the account of Brahmā's origin, and of the bunyan tree called Akṣaya. Great religious merit (accrues) by (performing) a śrāddha there. I shall tell (you) all about that. (I shall tell you about) the worship of Śiva done by the noble Viṣṇu. Even now Mahārudra mutters (the names of) Anāmaya (i.e. Viṣṇu). After that, O Nārada, I shall describe to you the greatness of the ocean; so also the religious merit due to the offering of sesamum seeds and also due to (the offering of) barley-grains; so also (the religious merit) due to the offering of water mixed with Tulasī leaves and due to the (worship of) deity.

56b-59a. I shall tell you about its greatness as Brahmā told it to me. (I shall describe to you) the greatness of the sound of the conch and religious merit of its innumerable (varieties). (I shall tell you about) the greatness of Sunday, and of abstract maditation on him called Viṣṇu. (I shall tell you) the importance of Vaidhṛta and also of Vyatīpāta (i.e. a great calamity). O Nārada, I shall tell you all this, as has been told.

59b-64. Uttarakhaṇḍa tells about the gift of food, the gift of garments, the gift of land, so also (of) a bull, about the greatness of Janmāṣṭamī, the importance of the Matsya (Purāṇa), the importance of the Kūrma (Purāṇa) and so also of the Vārāha (Purāṇa). I shall also tell (you) the importance of the gifts of cows etc. After that I shall describe to you the greatness of the devotees like Prahlāda, who are well-known on the earth. Listen, O best divine sage. O best divine sage, (it contains) the importance of keeping awake (during certain nights); so also of the gift of lamps; so also (it tells about) the fruit of the separate worship (offered) during different watches. (It contains) the account

of Paraśurāma; so also (of) the murder of Reṇukā; so also (of) the gift of land made to brāhmaṇas and whatever Rāma did.

65-66a. I shall describe fully the religious merit due to (the stay in) Rāma's hermitage. I shall tell you the account of Narmadā, and that of the religious merit and the worship; so also (I shall tell you about) the gift of (the texts of) the Vedas and the Purāṇas and the form of the (various) stages of life.

66b-70. (I shall tell you about) the religious merit due to the gift of gold and that of the world; (about) the gift of the Padma Purāṇa and the nature of (its) Khaṇḍas. The first is Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa; the second is Bhūmikhaṇḍa. The third is Svargakhaṇḍa and the fourth is called Pātāla. The fifth is called Uttara. These are the Khaṇḍas in order. The noble Vyāsa composed this Padma Purāṇa for the well-being of the people and for the welfare of brāhmaṇas. It creates religious merit in śūdras, and removes acute poverty. It gives salvation and happiness and quickly brings about inexhaustible good fortune. O Nārada, having listened to it, a man should give gifts according to the rite (told therein).

CHAPTER TWO

Nārāyaṇa Grants Boons to Rudra

Maheśa said:

1-8a. There are one lakh and twentyfive thousand mountains. In the midst of them stands the very holy, excellent Badarikāśrama where, O Nārada, lives Nara-Nārāyaṇa. I shall now tell (you about) his nature and lustre. O brāhmaṇa, two men, of the form of Kṛṣṇa and called Nara and Nārāyaṇa, live on the peak of the Himālaya. One man is white; the other one is black. Those striving (to reach) the Himālaya go along that path (and reach them). The great lord is of a tawny and fair complexion and has matted hair. This is Kṛṣṇa, Nārāyaṇa, the origin of the world and the great lord. He has four arms; he is great; is rich (or has Lakṣmī); is manifest; is unmanifest; and is

ancient. O you of a good vow, in the period of the summer solstice a great worship takes place there. (Then) for six months no worship is offered. The (region) is then covered with snow till the period of the winter solstice sets in. Therefore, such a deity was never there seen in the past nor will ever be in future.

8b-12. Gods live there; so also the hermitages of the sages are there. The oblations to Agni are made, the Vedas (are recited, and so) the sound (of their recital) is always heard there. A man should see the deity; it destroys (the sin of) a crore murders. A man should bathe where there is Alakanandā-Gaṅgā (confluence). He is free from a great sin after bathing there. There is no doubt that the god, the lord of the universe, dwells there. O brāhmaṇa, on one occasion I practised good (i.e. severe) penance (there). Then god Nārāyaṇa who favours his devotees, who is the immutable Puruṣa, who is actually the god having Garuḍa as his banner, was very much pleased, and said to me: "O you of a good vow, ask for a boon".

Śrī Nārāyaṇa said:

13. O god, whatever desire you have, I shall fulfil it. You are the lord of Kailāsa; you are actually Rudra, the protector of the universe.

Rudra said:

14-18. O god Janārdana, you are well-pleased. I shall completely accept (the boons). If you desire to grant boons, then grant me two boons. Let me always have devotion to you. I shall be (i.e. let me be) the chief among the devotees. Let all people say: 'This one is a constant devotee'. O lord, through your favour I shall be the giver of salvation. I shall grant (salvation) to those people who will resort to me. There is no doubt about this. In the world I shall be famous as Viṣṇu's devotee. O lord, let him whom I (will) grant a boon, have salvation. I, having matted hair, and with my body smeared with sacred ash, (would stay) near you. By the grace of your feet I shall be well-known in the world.

CHAPTER THREE

Jālandhara Is Born and Blessed by Brahmā

Sūta said:

1-6. Once Nārada went to the Kāmya forest to see the Pāṇḍavas emaciated due to grief. They properly received the brāhmaṇa. Then saluting the greatest sage, Yudhiṣṭhira said: "O venerable one, due to which act (of ours) have we fallen into this ocean of distress?" To him the sage said, "O son of Pāṇḍu, give up your grief. Which man is happy in this mundane existence which is an assemblage of pleasures and pains? Even the lord is not stable. He is troubled by the heaps of bodies. Nobody is free from grief; everyone has to put up with grief, since (even) the Sun's body is seized by Rāhu. Rāhu's head is also cut off by Viṣṇu at the time of enjoying (i.e. drinking) nectar. That god holding the Śārṅga bow (i.e. god Viṣṇu) also was thrown into the deep ocean by brave Jālandhara. He too was killed by Śiva."

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

7-8. Who was that brave Jālandhara? Whose son was he? Due to what was he strong? How did the bull-bannered god (Śiva) kill Jālandhara in a battle? O you treasure of penance, tell me all this in detail.

Thus addressed by the king (Yudhiṣṭhira), Nārada told (it).

Nārada said:

9. O king, listen to the divine tale which destroys the entire stream of sins; so also (listen to) the very wonderful (account of) the battle between Śiva and (Jālandhara) the son of the Ocean.

10-15. Once Indra who was crowded with the bevies of celestial nymphs, who was surrounded by many gods, who was crowded by gandharvas well-versed in the art of (playing upon) the lute, went to praise Śiva. (The celestial nymphs) Rambhā, Tilottamā, Rāmā, Karpūrā, so also Kadalī and Madanā, Bhāratī, Kāmā adorned with all ornaments and other female dancers went into the vicinity of the god (Śiva). Gandharvas, yakṣas, siddhas, so also Nārada and Tumburu, and kinnaras and female kinnaras repeatedly came there. So also

Vāyu, Varuṇa, Kubera, the giver of wealth, Yama, Agni, Nirṛti, so also other groups of deities (went there). Indra, seated in an aeroplane, celestial ladies seated in aeroplanes, and (other) gods seated in their own vehicles speedily went to Kailāsa.

16-23a. Then the gods saw that Kailāsa, an excellent mountain, the best among all the mountains, the ornament of the earth as it were. It stood giving pleasure on all sides, (was) pure and (stood) like the heap of superhuman powers. The trees there were the desire-yielding trees. The stones there gave whatever was desired. The mountain looked charming due to punnāga, nāga, campā, tilakā, devadāru, aśoka, pāṭala, mango, mandāra (trees). The breezes there carried the fragrance from the adjoining forest. The breezes from the Malaya (mountain) became crippled on account of a great movement. The wells there had crystal staircases, and their water was clean and deep. The lotuses (in them) resembling gold had clung to the emerald-like stalks. There the brightness of the white lotuses shone in all directions. The wells there were beautiful with white lotuses, and were covered with rubies. They were decked with green gems and were, on all sides, covered with the gomeda[1] (gems). They were constructed with ruby-stones, and were beautified with various minerals. They saw the Kailāsa mountain, more beautiful than heaven, and fashioned superior to it.

23b-30a. Seeing that greatest mountain Kailāsa, they were amazed. Indra and those deities got down from their aeroplanes. Then having come to Nandin, the door-keeper, they spoke (these) words: "O you best among the excellent attendants, listen to these good words: Quickly inform respectfully the lord of gods that the chief of gods (Indra), surrounded by all gods, has come here to dance." Having heard (these) words of Indra, Nandin said to Śiva: "O lord, this lord of gods, Indra, has come here with all (deities) to dance." Then (Śiva) said to him: "Quickly bring (in) the lord of Śacī (i.e. Indra)." Then Nandin brought in Indra along with them. He (i.e. Indra) seeing god Śiva, having the bull as his banner, praised him. All the female

1. Gomeda: A gem brought from the Himālayas and the Indus, described as of four different colours, viz. white, pale, yellow-red, and dark-blue.

dancers like Rambhā gladly danced there, near Śiva, with (i.e. to the accompaniment of) tabors, lutes and (other) musical instruments. Others, holding bell-metal musical instruments, lutes and large drums performed a zealous dance.

30b-34a. Indra himself excessively performed a beautiful dance, difficult (to be seen even) by gods. The god was delighted, (and) spoke (these) words to Indra: "O best among the gods, I am pleased with you. Ask for a boon". When the god of gods (i.e. Śiva) spoke like this, Indra who was proud of the might of his arms, said in reply (these) words to Hara (i.e. Śiva): "I ask for that battle in which I shall have a warrior like you (to fight with). O lord, grant me such a battle." Saying so, and having obtained a boon from lord Śiva, he went out.

34b-37a. When that Indra had left, Śiva said (these) words: "O attendants, listen to my words. The chief of gods has become very proud." Saying so, Śiva then became angry. Then his wrath manifested itself in a bodily form, and stood before him; (that) wrath, (dark) as dense darkness, then said to Śiva: "Give me the order. O lord, what do (i.e. should) I do for you?"

37b-41a. Then (Śiva) the lord of Umā said: "You, the brave one, (should) after reaching the heavenly river of the Ocean, go and conquer Indra." That wrath that was told like this, vanished. Those attendants were amazed. When the lord's ordinance took place, the celestial river due to the heat of her excessive youth, was excited with lust; and seeing her, the lordly Ocean was full of the billows of water. Then, O best king, the union between Gaṅgā and the Ocean took place. The great river, reaching (the Ocean) enjoyed according to her might.

41b-43. Meantime, a mighty, very brave son was born on the great river by the Ocean. O king, the son of the great Ocean, weeping as soon as he was born, shook the earth. The three worlds resounded. Brahmā gave up the position of his fingers formed during profound concentration.

44-45. Meantime (Brahmā) the creator seeing the three worlds alarmed, went to the great Ocean at the words of Indra. Thinking that it was a wonder, he, mounted on his swan, speedily went (to the Ocean). Seeing Brahmā to have arrived, the Ocean offered him worship. Then Brahmā said to him: "O Ocean, why do you roar in vain?"

The Ocean said:

46-48a. O lord of gods, I am not roaring. It is my mighty son (that is roaring). (Please) protect my child. To see you is difficult.

"Let the son be seen (i.e. Present the son to Brahmā)." (Thus) he spoke to his very charming wife. She, at the behest of her husband, approached Brahmā along with the son. Putting him on the lap of Brahmā, she saluted his feet.

48b-49. Then seeing the Ocean's son, Brahmā was indeed amazed. When Brahmā was unable to free from the hand of the child his beard seized by the child, the Ocean laughed and freeing the beard from the child's hand, seized the child's hand and left.

50. The self-born (Brahmā), seeing the child's valour like that, affectionately called him Jālandhara, and he became Jālandhara by name (i.e. was named Jālandhara).

51-52. The lord of the beings (i.e. Brahmā) affectionately granted him a boon: "This Jālandhara will be unconquerable (even) by gods. By my favour he will enjoy (the lordship of) the heaven along with the nether world." Speaking like this, Brahmā, mounting upon his swan, hurriedly disappeared.

CHAPTER FOUR

Jālandhara's Marriage and Consecration

Nārada said:

1-5. That boy thus gradually growing in his childhood, jumped on his mother's lap and ran to the ocean. Having brought the young ones of lions he, intent upon playing, put them into cages. Thus his was a fight of a lion with an elephant etc.; his valour was useful for a fight. From there he would fly into the sky and would drop down the birds on the ground. He, by means of his roars, frightened the heaven along with the ocean. O king, all the beings in the ocean were stricken by him

and due to his fear they concealed themselves. Seeing the water (of the ocean) without beings the submarine Fire, due to his fear, left his own region and entered the Himālaya (mountain).

6-8. That son of the Ocean gradually gave up childhood, reached youth, and valorously went to the heaven. Once the Ocean's son (i.e. Jālandhara) said to his father, the Ocean: "O father, give a very extensive place proper for my residence." Having understood the words of his son, the great Ocean said: "O son, I shall give you a kingdom difficult to be obtained on the earth."

9-10. Then Bhārgava (i.e. Śukra), the preceptor of the demons, went to the Ocean. Seeing him coming, the Ocean worshipped him duly. Then when he was seated on the seat which had the lustre of gems having beauty spreading out, and which was offered by the lord of rivers, he had the great lustre like that of the lotus-born (Brahmā seated) upon the beautiful region of the peak of the Meru mountain charming with lustre.

11-13. The Ocean, joining the palms of his hands, said to Śukra: "Luckily (for me) you have come here. Tell me what I should do." Then Śukra, the preceptor of the family of demons, said to the Ocean: "What is the use of him who, being born, (simply) robs his mother of her youth, and does not grow above (the members of) his own family like a flag? Your son, due to his valour, will certainly enjoy the three worlds.

14-17. You have inundated a great seat on the Jambūdvīpa which is resorted to by the female attendants of Durgā. Give it up as the abode of Jālandhara. O great Ocean, give the kingdom there (i.e. of that region) to this son of yours. Being there he will be unconquerable and free from death." The Ocean thus addressed by Bhārgava (i.e. Śukra) with love, easily moved away, and due to his love for his son, showed (him) the place in the water. It was a hundred yojanas extensive, and was three hundred yojanas long. The auspicious country was well-known as Jālandhara after him.

18-31. The Ocean having called the excellent demon Maya, said to him: "Fashion a city for Jālandhara in the seat (i.e. region) of Jālandhara." Thus told by the ocean, Maya fashioned a city full of gems, having ramparts and city gates and having houses with staircases. In it the peacocks, engaged in violent

dances, and remaining on the grounds of the mansions decked with sapphires took them to be the movement of the clouds. In it the birds resorted to the rays rising from the ground (decked) with corals and rubies, taking them to be the lovely mango-sprouts. In it the peacocks, seeing in the golden mansions, the brilliance (as) in fires, ran away fearing it to be the wild fire. In it the directions are mingled with the lustre coming up from the crystal chambers. They appear as it were rising from the Mandara (mountain), and resemble the ocean with foam. In it the bright women, standing in groups in their mansions and with their faces resembling the full moon of the evening caused infatuation. In it the joys from the park with breezes made fragrant by indranīpa flowers etc. entered the women's hearts and brought about the fever of fascination (in their hearts). In it a man, on seeing a coitus drawn in a picture, doubly indulges in it while engaged in a coitus with his wife. In it the lines of the smoke of the incense rising from the windows have become the sky resembling the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā. The entire sky in (i.e. above) it looks like being covered with a rainbow due to the lustre coming out from many houses and with autumnal cloud rising in it. In it the horses of the Sun, that have constantly wandered (and therefore are) very much vexed, take rest after remaining on the tops of mansions at midday. In it the excellent women in some of the mansions, wearing jasmine wreaths, shone like stars rising at night. In it the sound due to the friction of the chains of the golden swing made the ground beautiful like that of the Meru (mountain).

32-33. The Ocean along with the rivers and with Śukra consecrated there his son (as the king) with self-sounding musical instruments. We expect (i.e. think) that (Śukra) performed the auspicious rite at the time of the marriage of the Earth (with Jālandhara and his consecration as the king) with gay incantations and with words—the beautiful female swans as it were, in the lake of the mouth of Brahmā, with which the self-lustrous self-born (Brahmā) (performed the auspicious rite) at the time of Skanda's victory over Tāraka, and with which Bṛhaspati (the preceptor of gods) performed (the auspicious rite) at the time of the festival of the sovereignty of Indra.

34-36. The great Ocean gave Jālandhara a fierce army that

sprang from his interior and that (amounted to) a thousand mahāpadmas. Śukra also gave Jālandhara through love his infatuating lore called *Mṛta-sañjīvanī* and infatuating Rudra. Brahmā also gave the Ocean's son (i.e. Jālandhara) various other lores (secrets) of weapons and missiles. All else was then explained to him by Śukra.

37-40. Then having consecrated Jālandhara, his son, the Ocean, surrounded by the rivers, went with a divine body to his place. Jālandhara saw that divine city adorned with city gates; and being well honoured by groups of brāhmaṇas, moved with Śukra (into the city). In the meanwhile all the very mighty demons residing in the nether world and led by Kālanemi, came to Jālandhara. Then the very mighty heroes appointed the demon Śumbhāsura the general of the army resembling the milky ocean.

41-44. Then that Jālandhara, having brought under his control his army on the earth and making the water stable, looked after the kingdom given by his father. Meantime there was formerly in heaven a celestial nymph named Svarṇā. Due to Krauñca's favour a daughter named Vṛndā was born to her. The Creator fashioned the body of Vṛndā, to see the beauty along with splendour which he had made separately in one place. Svarṇā gave that young, beautiful girl Vṛndā, charming in all limbs and infatuating people, to Śukra who solicited her for (being married to) Jālandhara.

Śukra said:

45-52. O you beautiful lady, live long and be happy with the wonderful weapon of Cupid, that (hurts) the eyes of the world. Obtain him—the brave man—of large eyes, as your husband, not seeing whom the women have fixed Cupid as the man.

(Jālandhara), the son of the Ocean married Vṛndā according to the Gāndharva type of marriage. O king, the couple caused delight to the people. She gave up her fickleness. Jālandhara too, following the practice of wise men, did not long for any other woman. Once, while seated in his assembly, he saw Rāhu with his head cut off; he asked Śukra, "Why is he one whose half body (only) remains?" He told him the old account from the beginning

as to how the milky ocean was churned by the gods for (securing) nectar. Hearing it, the demon Jālandhara who was amazed, spoke (these) words: "You become favourable to Rāhu and of a handsome form." With the advice of Śukra, the valorous son of the Ocean, remembering his paternal uncle started a war with the gods, O brave one.

CHAPTER FIVE

War Between Gods and Demons

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Who is the paternal uncle of the Ocean's son? What happened to him in the war? How did the demon fight? O Nārada, tell me that.

Nārada said:

2-5. O best king, listen. The Milky Ocean is the paternal uncle of Jālandhara. After the gods and the demons had churned from him Lakṣmī, the Moon, the elephant (called Airāvata), the horse (named Uccaiḥśravas) the gods snatched the wealth. Hearing that the demon Jālandhara fought with the gods. Once the mighty one, having instructed his messenger what to speak, sent him, Durvāraṇa (by name), to the residence of the lord of gods. Then, getting into a chariot, Durvāraṇa went to heaven. Desiring to enter the residence, he was prohibited by the door-keepers.

The massenger said:

6-11. I am Jālandhara's messenger. I have come to Indra. Please go there and respectfully inform (Indra) about me (i.e. my arrival).

Then a door-keeper, having heard his words, just then went to (Indra), the lord of Śacī. Having saluted him, he said: "O lord, a messenger from the earth has come." To him Indra said:

"Bring (in) the messenger." He, holding the hand of the messenger, brought him near Indra. Durvāraṇa entered the assembly of the gods. He saw Indra who was surrounded by thirty-three crore gods, (who was seated upon) a divine, golden throne, who was waited upon with the breezes (produced) by chowries, whose one thousand eyes resembling fully bloomed lotuses were full of the feeling of love for Śacī. Then Durvāraṇa, seeing the lord of gods along with Bṛhaspati, (and) laughing at the beauty of his eyes, saluted him.

12-20. That messenger of Jālandhara occupied the seat that was pointed out. Indra said to him: "To whom do you belong? On what mission have you come?" He said to Indra: "I am Jālandhara's envoy. He is the king of all worlds. From my mouth listen to his order: 'Why did you, by employing the Mandara mountain (as the churning rod) churn my uncle, the Milky Ocean? You took away the treasure, the great wealth like Lakṣmī, the Moon, the elephant (viz. Airāvata), the horse (called Uccaiḥśravas), gems like corals. Give (back) all that. So also, O Indra, quickly leave the heaven. By my words, quickly do everything that is proper. If you desire to live, apologise to the king." Then Indra laughed and spoke to Durvāraṇa: "O messenger, hear in brief the reason for churning the Ocean. Formerly my enemy Maināka, the son of Himālaya, was held by the foolish Ocean in his side, and the wicked Ocean also held (i.e. supported) the Fire in the form of a horse, who had burnt the mobile and the immobile. This lord is the place of refuge of the demons, the haters of Dharma. He always gives curd, ghee, milk to the demons.

21-24. O Durvāraṇa, therefore, he was churned by us; and he, with his wealth lost, was punished by the ancient gods. O messenger, listen. He was dried up by the brāhmaṇa (Agastya) born from a pitcher, due to his (i.e. Agastya's) association with me. Moreover, he is tormented due to his bad company. (If) he also, surrounded by his entire army, will come to fight with us, he will just then meet with destruction." Speaking like this, (Indra) the killer of Vṛtra, ceased (speaking). He loudly praised the messenger of the Ocean's son. (The messenger), having come (back) to the son of the Ocean, told him everything from the beginning that the lord of gods had said.

Nārada said:

25-34a. Having heard Indra's words (i.e. message) from the mouth of his messenger, the Ocean's son became angry and called his entire army. Then by (Jālandhara's) order the demons who lived in the lower world, so also those who lived on the earth came there with their armies to Jālandhara. He set out on a march. Due to the roars of the army of the Ocean's son, O king, the sky, the nether world and all the quarters burst. (Demons) fearful with faces like those of horses, elephants, camels, cats, (so also those) having faces like those of tigers, lions, rats, having eyes like the lightning, (and) some having serpent-like hair, large bodies, some with sword-like nails, and others also ran and roared with the sound (like that) of the clouds. O king, that entire army, full of chariots, elephants, horses and foot-soldiers, and fearful due to the multitudes of amusements in the war shone at that time. Having got into the aeroplane which was a hundred yojanas extensive, to which crores of swans were yoked, which had a stream of a thousand grandeurs, which was filled with all things, Jālandhara quickly went (out). On the first day, he, with his armies, reached Mandara at mid-day. It was broken (into portions) by palanquin carriers and divided by many elephants. On the second day he, along with his army, reached Meru. That great army remained on the peak (called) Ilāvṛta.

34b-40a. Then the chief demons destroyed the Khāṇḍava, Nandana forest. The best demons shattered the peaks of Meru. The best demons, after having tied the couch-like swings to the *s*antāna trees, dallied with siddha women. The river on Meru was filled with saffron on the breasts, tāmbūlas, sandal, agaru (sandal) ornaments, and flowers dropped from the hair. The eastern side of that good Meru was shaken by his elephants. The chariots moved to the south and the warriors to the north and west. Then the demon Jālandhara made the demons set out. Others also, along with the sounds of drums, went to the Mahendra peak. Having destroyed the city of the king of kings, and of Yama and Varuṇa, so also (the cities) of other regents of quarters, they came to Amarāvatī.

40b-42. Then divine portents, so also portents in the sky, the earth and the atmosphere appeared. Much dust fell (down);

mass of darkness spread (out). Then the thunderbolt, being lustreless, fell down from Indra's hand. Seeing fearful omens, Indra said to Bṛhaspati: "What should we do, and whose refuge should we seek? See, the war is imminent."

43-45. Then Bṛhaspati spoke these words to the king of heaven: "Approach the feet of Viṣṇu living in Vaikuṇṭha." Indra, thus told by Bṛhaspati, went along with the gods to (Viṣṇu's) abode—Vaikuṇṭha—and quickly sought the refuge of (Viṣṇu) the enemy of Kaiṭabha. Vijayā, the doorkeeper, informed Viṣṇu (of his arrival). All gods, trembling through fear of Jālandhara, came (there).

Śrī said:

46-49. You who are fighting for gods, should not kill him, my brother. He, O god, should only be cursed and not be killed.

Hearing these words of Lakṣmī, Viṣṇu the protector of the three worlds, mounted upon Garuḍa that covered the sky (just) by the flapping of his wings. Hari quickly moved out of his Vaikuṇṭha abode and saw the gods trembling through the fear of Jālandhara and with their lustre lost. All the gods saw Viṣṇu resembling a dense cloud, and with his four hands adorned with the Śārṅga (bow), the conch, the mace and the lotus.

50-56a. Having recited a hymn of praise in front of (Viṣṇu) Indra said: "O god, Jālandhara, the son of the lord of the rivers has devastated the heaven." Hearing these words (of Indra) and having granted safety to the residents of heaven (i.e. the gods), (Viṣṇu) the destroyer of the demons, shone along with the gods to conquer the demon. Then Indra, holding the thunderbolt and getting into the chariot brought by Mātalin, went before Viṣṇu. All the gods were on the left side. He came from the left. (Agni) to whom the oblations are dear, seated on a ram, was on the southern side. Indra's son, Jayanta, mounted upon the elephant Airāvata, and Indra mounted upon (the horse) Uccaiḥśravas, and both (remained) in front of the lord. (There were) Dhātṛ, Aryaman, Mitra, Varuṇa, Aṁśa, Bhaga, Indra, Vivasvat, Pūṣan, and the tenth was said to be Parjanya. Then Tvaṣṭṛ shone, so also Viṣṇu, the younger brother (of Indra).

56b-60. Thus these twelve Ādityas stood before Indra. Vīrabhadra, Śambhu, and the very glorious Giriśa, Ajaikapād, Ahirbudhnya, Pinākin who was (never) defeated, Bhuvanādhīśvara, Kapālin, Sthāṇu, and Bhaga, and Bhagavat, are said to be the eleven Rudras, O king, before him (also stood) the eight Maruts, viz. Śvasana, Sparśana, Vāyu, Anila, so also Māruta, Prāṇa, Apāna and Sajīva. Vivasvat also went among them with his ten forms. At that time Dhanada (i.e. Kubera), the lord of kinnaras, having got into a palanquin (also) went there.

61-67. The Rudras mounted on bulls, so also Māruta, being carried by a deer and having the weapons like tridents and iron clubs, went in front of the army. Gandharvas, cāraṇas, yakṣas, piśācas, snakes, guhyakas holding all weapons went in front of the army. The soldiers also crossed the eastern and western oceans. In it Hari, with the body (i.e. in the form) of a boar moved with a desire to kill the army of the demons, after he had speedily come from the heaven. The northern part of the Sumeru mountain was covered by the army of the gods. Having resorted quickly to the southern peak of the golden mountain, the wonderful huge army of Jālandhara remained. The battlefield remained day and night in the region of Ilāvṛta where it was arranged between Meru and Mandara (mountains). The demons, full of joy, quickly went to that region described as bringing victory by Śukra, so also the gods went to that region described (like that) by Bṛhaspati.

68-71. It was surrounded by excellant chariots, surges of elephants giving out the streams of rut resembling clouds. The land causing (the armies) move shone with innumerable horses and footsoldiers walking in front of Garuḍa. Then there was the great sound of the musical instruments of both the armies; so also the tumult of the warriors roaring at one another. Then a great war, causing fear, took place between the demons and the gods. There was the friction of the entire army like the destruction of the three worlds. Śruti (the sacred text) overpowered with fear, and much fatigued wept again and again. The battlefield was at that time filled with arrows concealing the forms of the chariots.

72-75. The Sky also, tossing the garment of dust, was horripilated. She (i.e. the Sky) was as it were crying through fear with

the loud notes of the birds. Then Indra ordered the clouds like Saṁvartaka. They, mounting upon tall elephants fought in the war. Gandharvas and kinnaras became the drivers of the horses of gods. Sādhyas and siddhas (became) chariot-fighters. Yakṣas and cāraṇas (became) elephant-riders. Serpents eating (i.e. living upon) air, so also kinnaras (became) the foot-soldiers. O king, the leader Yama (became) the chief of the diseases, viz. consumption.

76-81a. A fierce battle took place there between the demons and the diseases. The demons (struck by) diseases like acute pain and fever fell and rolled on the ground. The diseases struck by the demons dropped on the battlefield. Certain diseases fled to the mountains. There were natural herbs which rendered them free from trouble. With them the servants of Yama rendered (the soldiers) in the armies free from trouble. The groups of foot-soldiers among the demons killed all the foot-soldiers (among the army of the gods) with arrows, mallets and spears with sharp edges, sharp swords, and hatchets. Crores (of the warriors) with their bodies tawny due to blood killed one another. The quick horses threw up in the sky the horse-riders at that time. With their bodies tawny due to blood, they clung to one another, and struck one another.

81b-86. The fierce mass of the fighters from chariots covered the earth with streams of chariots. They pierced with sharp arrows discharged from the bows the great fighters from chariots. The elephants, with their temples emaciated due to rut, and being angry, knocked down the elephants after binding their trunks with their own trunks. Some demon lifting a chariot with his arms went to the sky. He knocked down on the ground the horse-riders, horses and elephants. Taking them on his shoulder he quickly went to Jālandhara. Someone, taking two elephants on his two sides, a third one on his belly and a fourth one on his head, runs (i.e. ran) on the battlefield. A demon, taking out his sword from the sheath and shaking the clear sky, went after knocking down thousands of gods on the battlefield.

87-88. A semidivine female able to fly, of stout breasts, lustful, slim-bodied, quickly came from the sky and took away a demon from the battlefield. She kissed his face fixed with sharp

arrows. Then Kālanemi, having bound the army of the gods, danced.

89-93. Then angry Viṣṇu went out to (attack) Kālanemi; Yama (went against) the hero Durvāraṇa, and Rāhu (against) the Moon and the Sun. God Vaiśvānara (went out to attack) Ketu, and Bṛhaspati went (out to fight with) Śukra. The restrained Aśvins went (out to attack) the demon Aṅgāraparṇaka. (Jayanta) Indra's son (went to attack) Saṁhrāda, and Kubera went (to attack) Nihrāda. Rudras surrounded Niśumbha and Vasus surrounded Śumbha in the war. Viśvedevas went (out to attack) Jāmbha who stood in the form of a cloud. Vāyus (went out to attack) Vajraroman, and Mṛtyu went (out to attack) Maya. Vāsava with the Śakti-missile in his hand, ran to Namuci who was distracted. The other gods also surrounded the demons matching them in valour.

CHAPTER SIX

Death of Demon Bala

Nārada said:

1-18a. When the duels in this way had commenced in many ways, the angry Viṣṇu struck Kālanemi with his mace. He, giving up his swoon (i.e. regaining consciousness) thought, and struck Viṣṇu with arrows. Then the angry Viṣṇu dropped him dead on the ground. O king, having reflected, Candramā (i.e. the Moon) struck Rāhu with a sword. Rāhu at that time leaving him ran to the Sun. Having vanquished the Sun in the battle, Rāhu ran to the Moon. The lord of the night (i.e. the Moon) struck him with a sword in the battle. Due to the hardness of the body of Rāhu the sword at that time was powdered. Rāhu struck him deeply with his hard fist. Having lifted up Candra (i.e. the Moon) he swallowed him speedily in the great war and again spat him out. He, putting his mark, the dear on his chest, dismissed him. That Rāhu, seizing (the horse) Uccaiḥśravas, took him to Jālandhara, and offered him to him (i.e. to

Jālandhara) with devotion. The angry Durvāraṇa struck Yama with a mace in the war. Saṁhrāda, pierced with sharp arrows by (Jayanta) the son of Indra seized Jayanta who fainted due to the stroke of the iron club, mounted upon Airāvata, and went to Jālandhara. Kubera also struck Nirhāda with his mace in the battle. The Rudras vigourously hit Niśumbha with the strokes of their spears. Niśumbha too very much harassed them with volleys of arrows. The demon Śumbha filled (i.e. covered) the hosts of gods with arrows. Maya, full of deceit, tied Yama with nooses, and took him (to Jālandhara). He gave him to Jālandhara, and Jayanta also to the Ocean. The Ocean too threw him into his mouth (so that) the world should be free from fear. Then Indra also, having tied Namuci with nooses, took him, the destroyer of the universe; then Jālandhara went. O king, a very fierce battle took place between Indra and Bala. The splendour from the body of Bala shone, like that of the Sun, in the ten directions. All the missiles of Indra were shattered on (striking) the body of Bala. The mighty Bala struck Indra with a mallet on his chest. Then Indra roared fiercely. Hearing that Bala laughed. From the mouth of him who was laughing, pearls dropped down. With a desire for (securing) his body, Indra did not fight.

18b-24. Then he very much praised Bala, the ocean of might. "O best among gods, ask for a boon." When told like this, Indra said to Bala: "O lord of the demons, if you are pleased, then (please) give your body to me." Hearing these words of Indra, that Bala also said: "Cutting me (i.e. my body) with weapons take me (i.e. my body)." Then he also (said): "What is that which cannot be (i.e. is not) given by the noble?" "Like speech to one who cannot hear, like a woman of fickle eyes to a blind man, like a garland of flowers to a dead man, wealth is fruitless to a miser. The noble ones do not seize their enemies though they harm. The Rivers also take their co-wives (i.e. other Rivers) to the Ocean. A good man, engaged in the welfare of the others, does not get perturbed even at the time of their destruction. The sandal tree, though cut, makes fragrant the mouth (i.e. the edge) of the axe. Even a divine body perishes, but not the wealth given to the good. That digit of the Moon alone, which is on the head of Śiva remains (intact). Those who show goodness to those

who harm them, are the good that are at the top of the earth. Even a wicked man loves them who for their own cause get their bodies cut off for those who have harmed them before." Saying, 'All right', Indra struck Bala with a mallet. Yet his hody did not split up. Indra became worried. Being reminded by Mātalin, he hit the body (of Bala) with his thunderbolt. Due to that stroke of the thunderbolt the body of Bala was shattered. A portion of Bala's body fell on thc golden mountain. Another (fell) upon the Himālaya. The third one fell upon the Go mountain. The fourth one (fell) into the divine river. The fifth one (fell) upon the Mandara (mountain). The sixth produced from the body of Vijaya fell into the mine of diamonds.

25-31. All the limbs of his body born pure, became the sources of gems due to the pure act. Particles of the bones fell from the thunderbolt. The hexagons became gems. From his eyes (dropped) sapphires. Rubies were produced from his ears, (so also) rubies were produced from his blood. Emeralds were produced from his marrow. From his tongue corals were produced. In the same way his teeth became pearls. Emeralds were produced from his marrow. So also emeralds were (also) produced from his nose. His excrement became bell-metal. His semen turned into silver. Copper was produced from his urine. From the unguent of his body brass came out, so also lustrous wealth. From his lsound lapis lzuli came out; so also more charming gems. Gold was produced from his nails. Mercury came out from his blood. Crystal was produced from his marrow. Corals were produced from his flesh. The gems were (thus) produced on the earth from the body of Bala. They are enjoyed by pure persons due to the wealth of the collection of their religious merit.

32-37. Meantime, having heard that Bala was killed in the battle by Indra, his queen named Prabhāvatī, went near (i.e. to) his (i.e. Indra's) feet. Seeing her husband with his limbs shattered in the battle, Prabhāvatī, full of tears, with her hair loose, of stout breasts, lamented: "O lord, O Bala, O you brave one, O you of a handsome body, O you dear to the world, why have you, abandoning me, gone to aloofness? Men do not cast their bodies, even on realising that they are full of old age, and leprosy; but O dear one, you have in vain cast your body; O dear one, by means of your divine body the string of pearls is adorned. O

dear one, untie the braid of me afflicted with the grief of widowhood, which you yourself, eager to fight, had tied." The Ocean's son, seeing the queen lamenting like this, and being afflicted, said to Śukra: "O Bhārgava, bring him back to life."

Śukra said:

38. He died willingly. How can I bring him back to life? Yet due to the power of the hymn he will utter words.

Jālandhara said:

39-42. O Bhārgava, I wish (to see Bala's) form (and) hear his words.

Being thus addressed by Jālandhara, he became engrossed in meditation. Then from his mouth sound pleasing the ears came out, addressing Prabhāvatī. It as it were came out from a musical instrument "O Prabhāvatī, unite your body with the parts of my body." Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, Prabhāvatī turned herself into a river. She got united with the parts of Bala's body, and flowed towards the east. Due to her water, excellent brilliance was produced in gems.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Lakṣmī Intervenes in the Fight between Viṣṇu and Jālandhara

Nārada said:

1-3a. Then Jālandhara who was angry, spoke to (Indra), the killer of the demon: "O you of a mean power, where will you go after killing Bala through trickery?" Speaking thus to Indra, that brave son of the Ocean, cut off, with arrows, his chariot along with the charioteer, horses and flag. Indra, wounded by the arrows, fell after fainting on (i.e. in) his chariot.

3b-9. Seeing that Indra had fallen down, the Ocean's son roared. Giving up his swoon (i.e. regaining consciousness), Indra discharged his thunderbolt against Jālandhara. Then holding a

piece of a mountain the Ocean's son held the thunderbolt at his side and quickly getting down his chariot, ran to Indra with a desire to seize him in the battle. Then, Indra, abandoning the chariot and remembering Viṣṇu, ran away. The arrogant son of the Ocean got into Indra's chariot, and making Mātalin the charioteer, went with his desire fulfilled. That mighty-armed Jālandhara went quickly like a cloud after getting into Indra's chariot (as he liked). Then, Viṣṇu through anger raised his sword (called) Nandaka in the battle, and inciting Garuḍa, having mind's speed, struck the army of the demons angrily. He, with force, knocked down chariots, horses, elephants and foot-soldiers in thousands.

10-12. Viṣṇu, surrounded (i.e. accompanied) by Kaśyapa's son performed a fierce feat in the battle. (The battlefield had become) a river, which carried hair, bones, marrow and stream of blood, which was resorted to by goblins, vampires and birds, which was filled with hands, thighs, shanks, missiles and weapons, which was very difficult to cross, which was resorted to by tigers and lordly elephants, which was adorned with blood, entrails, necklaces and armlets. Seeing the army which blocked the beautiful festival to the the rolling eyes, struck by Viṣṇu, all the excellent demons, obstructed Viṣṇu on all sides at the order of Jālandhara.

13-15. There those demons showered volleys of arrows, as clouds shower (water), as bees shower (i.e. moisten) a lotus, as the clouds shower a mountain (with water), or as hosts of birds shower (i.e. moisten) a mango-tree, or as a mass of incense showers (i.e. fills) the sky. In that danger of the battle, Viṣṇu was not visible, so also Garuḍa was not visible. All those great demons who had got into their chariots, roaring with fearful sounds, struck Viṣṇu with all weapons.

16-20. The angry enemy of the demons (i.e. Viṣṇu), with a fierce form, knocked down all of them in the war as wind knocks down a mass of leaves. Then the demon Śailaroman, angrily ran to Viṣṇu. Even the arrows of Viṣṇu were shattered on (i.e. after striking) his body. Śailaroman also struck with arrows the body of Viṣṇu who taking out his sword cut off his head. When the demon's head was cut off, his trunk, walking on the battlefield seized Garuḍa by his wings with his hands. His head

too quickly jumped and stuck fast to his shoulders. Then seeing the fighting of his face even Viṣṇu was amazed.

21-25a. Seeing the head stuck (to the shoulders), Garuḍa fell down on the ground. Again speedily flying, he resorted to the place of the head. Then the powerful Śailaroman snatched off Viṣṇu from Garuḍa. Viṣṇu struck him with the palm of his hand; and he fell dead on the ground. Then Jālandhara said to Khaḍgaroman, his charioteer: "Drive the chariot there, where god Viṣṇu is." By the words (i.e. the order) of Jālandhara, Khaḍgaroman took the chariot (to that spot). Seeing that Viṣṇu in front of him, the Ocean's son said: "O Viṣṇu, kill me fearlessly. I shall not kill you, O Mādhava."

25b-29. Hearing those words of him, Viṣṇu, with his eyes red due to anger, filled (i.e. covered) him with fatal arrows. The Ocean's brave son, with his body pierced by Viṣṇu, continuously covered Viṣṇu with streams (i.e. volleys) of arrows. Garuḍa, pierced by his hundreds of arrows, fell unconscious. Seeing Garuḍa fallen on the ground (after being struck) by the arrows of the Ocean's son, Viṣṇu was reminded of his chariot that stood in Vaikuṇṭha. That chariot, without a charioteer, (but) surrounded by horses, came to him. Seeing that chariot yoked with horses on the battlefield the lord was amazed.

30-34. Having brought Garuḍa to consciousness, he appointed him as its driver. That Viṣṇu, putting the crown on his head, the Kaustubha gem on his chest, and prompting the horses to exert, went up to Jālandhara. With (other) gods, he tore the earth with the chariot's wheel(s); he quickly struck the army of the demons with (his) arrows. Ordered by the lord of gods, Fire burnt the demon's army (as he was) aided by Wind. At that time, the lord, along with the gods, destroyed the army of the demons. Seeing his army of which a small portion was left, Jālandhara thought, and then (he) the king said to Śukra:

35-39. "When (even) you, well-versed in incantations, were there, the gods destroyed my army. You are well-known for your lore. O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of the lore which does not protect those who are afflicted with diseases, and what is the use of that kṣatra power which does not protect those seeking refuge?" Hearing the words of Jālandhara, Śukra said to

him: "O king, (now) see the power of me, a brāhmaṇa." Saying so, he touched them with water (i.e. sprinkled water over them, and) roused them with the 'hum' sound. They were (thus) roused by Śukra. The Ocean's son struck the gods with fatal arrows, and they fell in the battle all around. O king, with their bodies shattered by arrows, they sustained their life. They, pierced by arrows, did not die because of their immortality, O best one.

40-45a. Then god Viṣṇu said to Bṛhaspati: "O preceptor of gods, fie upon the power of you who are not bringing the gods back to life." Bṛhaspati then immediately said to the lord of the world (i.e. Viṣṇu): "O lord, by means of the herbs I shall bring the gods back to life." Speaking like this, Bṛhaspati too went to the mountain Droṇa, lying in the ocean; and comfortably taking the herbs (from the mountain), Bṛhaspati, by using them, brought the gods back to life. Then the gods who rose, killed the army of the demons. Seeing the gods to have risen, the Ocean's son (Jālandhara) said to Śukra: "O Śukra, how did they get up without your lore?" Hearing these words spoken by the demon, Śukra said to the Ocean's son:

45b-48a. "There is a great mountain named Droṇa, that lies in the ocean. There are herbs there, which bring the dead back to life. The preceptor of gods (Bṛhaspati), having gone there, and having taken the herbs (from there), rouses, with an incantation, the gods killed in the battle." Hearing what Śukra said, Jālandhara, having entrusted the responsibility of his army to Śumbha, went to the Ocean.

48b-54. Having gone into the Ocean of Milk, he entered a divine, very bright house and saw there the pleasure-chamber of the Ocean of Milk. In it neither hot nor cold breezes (blew). Darkness was not noticed there. There excellent females, rich with the burden of breasts, having slim bellies and good teeth, sang, danced and sported. The sportive females served there by casting amorous glances, moving to and fro, with fascinating bodies, by means of lovely movements of their creeper-like arms, and the sounds of their steps, with sweet words and eulogies, by giving the pleasure of fragrance, with the hummings of the bees in the form of their eyes, by sportively moving the chowries, with garlands, and smiling glances. Having gone there

the Ocean's son who was eager to fight and seeing the Ocean of Milk sporting there, saluted the Ocean of Milk, and said to him: "O uncle, you are killing me. With the water inundate (Bṛhaspati) under the pretext of the herbs from the Droṇa mountain."

The Ocean of Milk said:

55-61. O son, how shall I inundate with my waves him who has sought my refuge? The best sages do not praise him who abandons him who has sought his refuge.

Hearing the words of his paternal uncle, the king of the demons continuously, angrily, struk the (Droṇa) mountain with the soles of his feet. Then, O king, mountain Droṇa who was very much afraid of Jālandhara, came, in his (original) form to Jālandhara, and said to him: "I have become your servant. Protect me who have sought your refuge. O you of great arms, by your order I shall (even) go to lower region. I shall stay (there) till you rule the kingdom." Accompanied by the cry of the herbs and the weeping of the siddhas, the (Droṇa) mountain went to the lower region, (even) when the Ocean's son was observing. Then the hero Jālandhara came to the great battlefield. Having got into the chariot already made ready, he went to Viṣṇu. The son of the River (i.e. Jālandhara) seeing Viṣṇu seated in the chariot, laughed loudly. (He said to him:)

62-69. "Wait in your chariot till I kill (other) enemies." Speaking like this, he quickly struck the army of gods. The gods rent by (his) arrows, said to Bṛhaspati: "Protect (us)." Then Bṛhaspati quickly went to the Ocean of Milk. O king, not seeing (the mountain) Droṇa (there) he became very anxious. Then Bṛhaspati, having quickly come (back) to the battlefield, said to the gods: "O gods, all of you run away. The Droṇa mountain has perished." Of Bṛhaspati who was speaking like this, the Ocean's son, laughing at the gods, cut off the sacred thread and hair with sharp arrows. Then Bṛhaspati afflicted through fear to his life speedily ran away. O king, all gods (also) leaving the battlefield, fled. Having thus made the gods flee, he ran to Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu also, eager to fight, ran to the lord of demons.

Then a fierce battle took place between Viṣṇu and Jālandhara. Dreadful by means of his volleys of arrows he overcame Viṣṇu.

70-74. Cutting to pieces those arrows and filling (i.e. covering) him with arrows, mighty Viṣṇu, harassed the demon Jālandhara with arrows. Jālandhara, with his body injured by the arrows, abandoned his chariot, and quickly ran to Viṣṇu standing in the battle to vanquish him. Seeing him coming, Viṣṇu pierced him with arrows. He bore the arrows of Viṣṇu on his body and came near his chariot. Whirling repeatedly Garuḍa with one hand and Viṣṇu's chariot with the other (hand), he dropped them on the Śveta-dvīpa. Garuḍa, thrown from Jālandhara's hand, also fell down. For a long time he took rest in Krauñca-dvīpa only. Viṣṇu, freeing himself from the whirling chariot, came to the battlefield, and said to the lord of demons: "Wait, wait."

75-78. The Ocean's son who liked fighting, seeing Viṣṇu who had again come to the battlefield, covered the ground with arrows and roared. Viṣṇu quickly pierced the demon on his chest with a (missile called) śakti that was throbbing. He (then) fell down. His son (then) took him from the battlefield to his residence, and said to him: "Oh, who has made me void of shame?" Then a great fight between (Viṣṇu) the enemy of the demons and Jālandhara, standing on the ground, took place there. Viṣṇu did not kill the demon out of his love for Lakṣmī; (but) himself fell down (struck) by his arrows.

79-83. Then seeing Viṣṇu fallen on the ground, the Ocean's son, took him and got into his own chariot. Then Lakṣmī, dear to Viṣṇu, came weeping to him. Lakṣmī stood there. Seeing her husband, having eyes like lotuses, fallen, Lakṣmī said to the Ocean's son: "O brother, listen to (my) words. You have vanquished and held Viṣṇu. O you of great power, it is not proper for you to bestow widowhood on your sister." Hearing her words, he released the lord of the world (i.e. Viṣṇu). (Then) Jālandhara, of mighty arms, devoutly saluted his sister (i.e. Lakṣmī). Then he quickly saluted Viṣṇu's feet through his love for his sister. Viṣṇu said to Jālandhara: "I am pleased with your act. O lord of demons, ask for a boon. Which boon shall I grant to you?"

Jālandhara said:

84-86. O Viṣṇu, if you are pleased with this (act of) valour of me, then you should stay with Lakṣmī, at my father's abode.

Saying, 'All right', the lord of the earth, remembered (i.e. thought of) Garuḍa (and on his arrival) mounted upon him and (went) to the Ocean of Milk with his wife (Lakṣmī). Since then Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) lives in his father-in-law's house. The lord of the gods desiring to do what is dear to Lakṣmī, lives in the ocean.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conditions During Jālandhara's Rule

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O Nārada, tell me what Jālandhara, the Ocean's son, did after having made the gods flee in the battle, and after having put Viṣṇu in his own abode.

Nārada said:

2-8a. Having given gifts due to being pleased to the heroes like Śumbha, Jālandhara went to heaven, and having reached it saw that the trees constantly bore fruits by decorating men every-day with the shower of gold. It is the fruit of the horse-sacrifice. Those noble ones who give an elephant, a garment, gold, a cow, a girl (in marriage), sesamum-seeds, flowers, camphor, tāmbūla, musk and saffron, see Amarāvatī. (They see Amarāvatī) by giving a house (i.e. a shelter) in the rainy season, fire (i.e. warmth) in the cold season. They play upon all the musical instruments in Śiva's temple. Those who put up stalls where water is distributed to travellers in Caitra (see Amarāvatī). In that city the swings with couches swing on their own. There sārikās, parrots, swans, wandering bees and cuckoos act as messengers and bring about the union with the dear.

8b-12. There are, O Rāma, (the celestial nymphs like) Rambhā, Menakā, Tilottamā, Suṣamā, Sundarī, Ghṛtācī, Pañjikasthalī, Sukeśī, Sumukhī, Rāmā, Mañjughoṣā and Mālinī; (so also) Mṛgodbhavā, Sukhadā, Dhanadaṁṣṭrā, Tilaprabhā, that cause (men) to receive the fruits of the Aśvamedha sacrifices, and give the fruits of the Rājasūya sacrifices. The celestial nymphs that were sinless, sported there in crores. The son of the Ocean established the demon Śumbha, (dear to him) like his own life in the heaven like this. Having come (back) from the heaven, and having consecrated Niśumbha as the heir-apparent, Jālandhara, due to his own might ruled for a couple of arbuda years (i.e. for two hundred million years).

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

13-14. He fought with the gods in the battle with them. He was not defeated by the gods. What did the brave son of the Ocean do after that? Tell all that in detail to me who desire to listen to it.

Nārada said:

15-17. O king, listen properly to what the Ocean's son did: Having conquered the gods in the battle, he ruled without any trouble. Gandharvas like Citrasena waited upon the lord of the demons. The lord of the demons also enjoyed the shares in the sacrificial offerings. The mighty one snatched away all the wealth and also other (objects) after having vanquished (the gods).

18-26. O king, when the Ocean's son was ruling over the earth, no human being died, and nobody would go to hell. There was no other waste than (in) enjoyment. There was no unfortunate barren woman. There no ugly, distressed, wicked or notorious woman was seen. There was no widow, nor was there a poor man. Everywhere there were donors and no recipients. Meritorious persons gave their wealth to brāhmaṇas. In every house the women were endowed with beauty and youth. There were cow's milk, curd, and ghee. Men there were without old age. All were happy, there was nowhere bondage by means of fetters. Killing was not done by an arrow. Nobody harassed anybody else. Debt was not seen (to be incurred); O king, everywhere there were rich people. O king, the subjects were contented, and rich with all crops. In the

houses of men there was the milky juice which was taken out from plantains and sugarcanes and which was very sweet. A man listened to the beneficial words of a woman and a man. There was no one who robbed (people) passing along the way. The streams fall continuously from the sky, so they get mixed with Karmāra(?) ghee and with sugar and are heard to have fallen into the people's mouths just by recollecting the Ocean's son.

CHAPTER NINE

The Creation of a New Powerful Weapon by Śiva

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O best brāhmaṇa, what did Indra and other gods, vanquished by Jālandnara, do then, when the kingdom of the heaven was snatched (by him)?

Nārada said:

2-7. The gods, having abandoned heaven, met with a bad condition. They (had) neither ambrosia, nor (the portions in the offerings made at) sacrifices. They went to the place of the Self-born (Brahmā). In Brahmā's house they saw Brahmā, Parameṣṭhin, who had engaged his mind through suspension of his breath in the Supreme Soul. All the careful gods praised him with true words. Then the lord who was pleased, said: "What should I do?" Then the gods again told Brahmā, all (the acts) of Jālandhara, and (about) their own defeat. Thinking for a moment, Brahmā along with the gods went to Kailāsa. They, full of surprise, remained by the side of Kailāsa; and the gods, led by Brahmā and Indra praised (Śiva): "Salutation to you, Bhava, Śarva, Nīlagrīva. Salutation to you, Sthūla, Sūkṣma, Bahurūpa (having many forms)."

8-11a. Śiva, turning his face to all sides, and having heard (these) words, said to Nandin: "Quickly bring the gods (here)." Hearing the words of Śiva, Nandin quickly called the gods. The

gods having entered the inner apartment, with their eyes full of wonder, saw there, seated on a seat, Śiva who conferred happiness on the world, who was waited upon by crores of devout attendants who were greyish due to dust.

11b-15a. Having first, along with the gods, saluted him, the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā) said: "Since this Indra had a malady he has foolishly come here. O great god, to whom those who seek his refuge, are dear, favour (us)." Then having heard the loud laughter of the Trident-holder (i.e. Śiva), Brahmā said to the lord of gods: "See the condition of the residents of heaven." Then the lord of all, the highest god (Śiva) having known the desire of Brahmā's (i.e. in Brahmā's) mind, and having known Indra's insult for the sake of gods, and being affectionately requested by Pārvatī, spoke (these) words, O king:

15b-18. "How can I kill that enemy who is not killed by Viṣṇu? O grandsire, the weapons like the thunderbolt have been fashioned in olden times. That demon Jālandhara would not at all be killed with those weapons. Even I cannot kill him with weapons fashioned in olden times. Let gods fashion a weapon bearing my energy and strong." Having heard this reply of Śiva, Brahmā said to him: "You (please) fashion the great weapon. You know your own power."

19-23. Hearing these words of him, Śiva spoke to him: "O Brahman, with gods you discharge your lustre united with wrath." Then Brahmā, the teacher of the Brahmāstra (Brahmā's missile), discharged (his) lustre. Then Rudra (i.e. Śiva) himself discharged the lustre produced in his three eyes. All gods also angrily discharged a mass of lustres. In the meantime, Viṣṇu who was remembered by Śiva, came (there). Śiva, who was addressed by him, 'What should I do?' spoke to Viṣṇu: "O Viṣṇu, why was Jālandhara not killed by you in the war? How is it that leaving the gods you have gone to the Ocean of Milk, for lying there?"

Śrī Viṣṇu said:

24-25. O lord of gods, if I kill him, how (can I say) Lakṣmī is dear to me? Therefore, O you, husband of Pārvatī, you (should) kill Jālandhara in a battle.

Viṣṇu who was told by Śiva, 'Discharge your lustre due to anger', discharged the lustre of Viṣṇu (i.e. his own lustre) and all that increased. Seeing the lustre to have increased and to have become extensive, (Śiva) spoke to Viṣṇu:

Śiva said:

26-29. Please fashion my missile with this lustre.

Hearing those words of Śiva, Viśvakarman and others, looking at one another, thought: 'What should we do?' Seeing them to be silent, and knowing what was in their mind, Brahmā said: "The deities cannot bear your lustre which they are unable to look at. Who can curb your lustre?" Then jumping over the lustre, lord Śiva danced by roving in all directions with the hinder part of his left foot.

30-38. Then gods like Indra and others, seeing Śiva dancing over the lustre, joyfully sounded musical instruments. Since then, in dances roving in all directions is practised. Then due to the crushing caused by Śiva's dance, a disc was produced, which had three lakhs of spokes, and which was full of a crore of bones. Due to being crushed by the foot of Śiva, particles went out from the lustre. And with that Viśvakarman fashioned a missile and aeroplanes. O king, the ageless gods, seeing that Sudarśana disc, said, through fear, to the lord of gods: "Protect us, protect us." The earth received hardness due to the bright metals. The sheath that was fashioned by Viśvakarman was reduced to ash. With that weapon which was fashioned, Kāla, being burnt, fell on the ground. Then Śiva gave that disc into Brahmā's hand. The lord of Umā, Śiva, seeing that the beard (of Brahmā) was burnt by the masses of lustre from the disc, laughed, and quickly taking it (back) from Brahmā's hand, kept it under his arm-pit, as a poor man keeps a treasure. Then, the disc, remaining under the arm-pit of Śiva was not seen, as the fruit of the gift which is given by a great fool.

CHAPTER TEN

Jālandhara's Messenger Rāhu Meets Śiva

Nārada said:

1. After this, having gone to the Ocean's son, I told him: "O best among all heroes, Śiva has made a vow to kill you."

Jālandhara said:

2. O great sage, is there a collection of gems in the house of the Trident-holder? Tell me all about that. No war takes place without a desire (to get something).

Nārada said:

3-7. Ash is (applied) to his body; his bull (i.e. his vehicle) is old; there are serpents on his body; there is poison in his throat; in his hand there is a begging bowl. Gajānana and Ṣaḍānana (i.e. Kārtikeya) are his two sons. Such is his wealth. What is different (from this) you should know from me: (His wife is) the daughter of the lord of mountains. She is noble and has raised breasts. The lord, though he has burnt Cupid, is fascinated by her beauty. Maheśa (i.e. Śiva) has always a desire to amuse her. Śiva dances and sings and (thus) causes her to laugh. She is well-known as Pārvatī. She is the divine limit of beauty. O king, beautiful Vṛndā and these celestial nymphs do not have (i.e. are not equal to) even a sixteenth part of Pārvatī.

8-11. Speaking like this to the intolerant Jālandhara, I disappeared in a moment when all the demons were watching. Then that son of the Ocean sent Rāhu as his messenger. Reaching Kailāsa in a moment, he saw the abode of the god. In the meanwhile, Viṣṇu, taking leave of the fierce Śiva, went unnoticed and quickly to the Ocean of Milk for fear of (being charged with) treachery. Rāhu saw the extremely bright abode of Śiva. Looking at (i.e. thinking to) himself he, being very much amazed, said (to himself): 'What is this?'

12-13. Desiring to enter, he was stopped at the door by the doorkeepers. When, though prohibited, he tried (to enter) they

raised their weapons. Having turned away those attendants (of Śiva), Nandin said to Rāhu: "O you low fellow, who are you? Why have you come here? What is your mission? Tell (about) your mission, so that these fearful attendants would not kill you."

Rāhu said:

14-17. I am Jālandhara's messenger. You take me to Śiva. O doorkeeper, the object of the great king (Jālandhara) is not to be told to the intermediaries.

Having heard the words of the messenger, Nandin came to Nīlalohita (i.e. Śiva). Having saluted Śaṅkara (after prostrating himself) like a staff, and standing before him, he said to him: "O great king, the son of Siṁhikā (i.e. Rāhu) is standing at the door with some mission. You may order whether he should go or come (to you)." The great god (i.e. Śiva) having heard the words of Nandin, quickly dismissed from the inner chamber, Pārvatī who had slept there and who was surrounded by her friends.

18-22. Then he said to his doorkeeper: "O Nandin, show in the messenger." Then, holding the messenger by his hand, the very mighty Nandin brought him (in and) showed him Śiva (seated) in the midst of gods. Then Rāhu saw Śiva who had put on the sacred thread of a serpent, who was without goddess (Pārvatī), who was adorned with a crescent moon on his head, who was served by the group of serpents giving out breath (i.e. hissing), who was accompanied by all gods, (and) who was waited upon by crores of attendants. Knowing that the messenger had come, Śiva looked and said: "Speak (out)." Then Rāhu commenced speaking.

Rāhu said:

23-30. O lord, I have been sent by Jālandhara to you. O Śiva, having heard his words (i.e. his message) through my mouth, do quickly (what he tells you). O Giriśa (i.e. Śiva), you are practising penance. You are qualityless. You are without religious merit. You have neither a father nor a mother. You are without wealth or a family. This mighty-armed Jālandhara

enjoys the three worlds. You too are under his control. Therefore, do as (you are) told. How is it that you who are the ancient god, are lustful and ride a bull?

When he was speaking like this, the two sons (of Śiva) Kārtikeya and Gajānana came (there). At that time, the god of gods was massaging his body with his hands. Due to his hands being tossed about, Vāsuki fell on the ground. Then the serpent (i.e. Vāsuki) seized the tail of the mouse, the vehicle of Gajānana. Seeing his vehicle seized, he said: "Leave it, leave it." In the meanwhile, seeing the agitated vehicle, of a large note, of Skanda, Vāsuki ejected, through his fear, the tail of the mouse, which he had seized; and then mounting upon Śiva's body, he encircled his neck and remained there.

31-35. Due to its heat, the crescent moon remained in the forest of his matted hair. She (i.e. the crescent moon) then became wet, and bathed his body (with) ambrosia; the row of the skulls on Śiva's head was brought back to life. (And) it recited all the sacred texts in due order, which it had formerly studied. The heads, hearing recital (of the sacred text) done by one another, discussed it (i.e. started its discussion). "I am the first, I am before (you). I am the greatest, I am the creator. I am the protector." In this way they eagerly bewailed one another: "I did not give gifts; I did not enjoy (pleasures); I did not offer oblations into fire. Due to my mind seized with grief, I did not give wealth to a brāhmaṇa."

36-38. Then a great attendant of the lord, with a mass of twisted hair, appeared (there). He had three faces, three eyes, three tails and seven hands. He was the great (attendant) by name Kīrtimukha, having matted hair. Seeing him that row of the skulls remained as it were dead through fear. Then that attendant Kīrtimukha said in front of the lord Śiva, after saluting him: "O lord, I am very much hungry." Then Śaṅkara told him: "O, eat those who are killed in the battle."

39-43. That attendant thought for a moment; and not seeing the battle anywhere, went to eat Brahmā, but was warded off by Śiva. Then Kīrtimukha who was hungry and who was fully warded off, ate up all his own body. Seeing that rash act and the devotion of Kīrtimukha, the lord, being pleased, said to

him: "Always stay in my palace. He who, living in my house, has no thought about you, will quickly fall down." He who was addressed thus, vanished. At that time gods showered flowers on the head of Śiva.

44-51. Seeing such a wonder in the assembly of the Trident-holder (i.e. Śiva) Rāhu too, being amazed, again spoke to the lord of gods: "How do passions touch you who are restrained and a meditating saint? How are you honoured by the sense-organs? How are you reached by the objects of senses? You fully accept the worship of (i.e. offered by) the regents of the quarters like Brahmā etc. (But) you do not look (up) to any god; you do not worship any god. You are the lord; (then) how do you live in the world eating whatever is obtained by begging? O lord of the meditating saints, you are protecting beautiful Pārvatī. Give her to me. Now, along with your sons Kārtikeya and Gajānana, you, taking a begging bowl, go from house to house every day." In this way Rāhu spoke (words of) various types to the lord. The lord too, hearing them, did not give any reply. Leaving the lord who was silent, Rāhu said to Nandin: "You who have a hideous, round face are the minister and the general of the army (of Śiva). You deserve to (i.e. you should) teach him who has thus deviated from right conduct. Otherwise, due to (this) sin he will, struck in the battle, fall like Indra."

52-53. Hearing these words of him, Nandin respectfully spoke to the lord, and then understanding the view of the Trident-holder (i.e. Śiva) from the sign (of the knitting) of his eyebrows Nandin, the chief among the attendants (of Śiva) honoured Rāhu, and sent him (back). Then having gone to Jālandhara, Rāhu told his (i.e. Śiva's) account and (about) the charming form of Pārvatī.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Śiva's Attendants Fight the Demons Off

Nārada said:

1-4a. Then valorous Jālandhara, having heard the words of his messenger, called his entire army, and made a march (against Śiva). Then the sound of the armies that had gathered (there) was heard. It awakened the kinnaras resting, along with their wives, in the caves of Mandara. It made rise the elephants having echoes in the caves of Meru and Mandara. The flocks of lions lost their way ahead. Thus the din of the great army deafened the three worlds. Then, O king, in the seat of Jālandhara there was the sound of drums. Due to that great sound, dear to the brave, the high mountains trembled and the palaces shook.

4b-8a. From the interior of the seven oceans the daityas and dānavas (i.e. the demons) moved out. They being ready and endowed with various vehicles roared. The neighings of the horses and great sounds were (heard) outside and in front. The earth (as it were) pleased with the wheels (of the chariot) moved. With the herds of elephants that were driven the earth along with the forest was blocked up by the myriads of fierce (warriors) urged on by Jālandhara and remaining in the chariots. There were two thousand hundred millions of horses and one hundred millions of elephants. An army consisting of one lakh chariot-warriors shone (there) and ninety crore parārdhas of chief leaders were seen.

8b-13a. The huge army, covering the sun with umbrellas moved out. At places the lotus-ponds were yellowish like gold. At places blue lotuses appeared due to the peacocks' keeping off the sun. At places the clouds appeared to rise due to the masses of dust when he marched. At places due to the cloths of the banners the sky was full of banners and umbrellas; the quarters were full of chowries when the army of the demons moved on. Then the demon Jālandhara was eager to march. Putting the (missile called) Śakti, decorated with many gems, he came to great Viṣṇu, living in the Ocean, to inquire (i.e. to take his leave). Having saluted Viṣṇu, Jālandhara said these words: "O my sister's husband, what should I give you for enjoyment? Tell me (that)"

13b-16a. Hearing these words of Oceans's son, Viṣṇu, being delighted, said: "What should I do as desired by and dear to the Ocean's son?" Thus addressed, he, being delighted, quickly replied to Viṣṇu: "I am going to the battlefield. You live here happily in the Ocean." There he was given sacred grains by Lakṣmī, and was honoured by Viṣṇu. Moving out from Viṣṇu's place, he came to the Ocean to inquire (i.e. to take his leave).

16b-22. Having saluted the Ocean, he said: "O father, I am going away to conquer Śiva in the battle. Please allow me." Hearing the words of his son who was going to (march against) Śiva, the lord of oceans also said to him: "O son, leave that ascetic (alone). Enjoy the kingdom given by me, and leave the ascetic away. Your valour is very wonderful; there is no king like you. You have made the earth superior to heaven. The earth shines in your kingdom as in Vaikuṇṭha. The god, unconquerable by demons, whom you have brought (lives here) with Lakṣmī. O child, live by me. Leave alone that mendicant, Śiva." (Though) told like this by the Ocean, he (i.e. Jālandhara), having attachment for Pārvatī, disregarded his father's words, and came to his own soldiers. Vṛndā spoke to Jālandhara who was ready to fight.

Vṛndā said:

23-28. O lord of kings, you should not fight with the condemned meditating saint. Turning away your mind going to Pārvatī, look at (i.e. think of) her. Why do you long for Pārvatī? Is Pārvatī superior to me? The poor one is without any support. She is always attached to Śiva. She longs for a son. She is barren. So she is a doll. In vain was she praised by Nārada. Give up (thoughts about) her, and enjoy me."

Hearing these words of Vṛndā, the Ocean's son (i.e. Jālandhara) replied: "Without seeing Pārvatī's beauty my mind will not turn back. O Vṛndā, you look after the country and the capital. O angry woman, you should always remember me, if Śiva kills me." Hearing these words of her husband, Vṛndā, laughing, went, after getting into a palanquin, to the seat of Jālandhara.

Nārada said:

29-40. Then the very mighty son of the Ocean proceeded to

Kailāsa. He was surrounded by sixty thousand mahāpadma soldiers. In the meanwhile, Śiva, leaving Kailāsa, went, along with his attendants, his sons and his dear wife, to (that part of) Kailāsa to the north of the Mānasa (lake). Then on the first day Jālandhara reached Kailāsa. Setting his army there, he was eager to see Kailāsa. There the breezes to which the masses of the divine filaments and the pollen of mandāra (flowers) had resorted, and which were broken by the showers of the sprays of cold drops, blew. Charming breezes, high like the stout breasts of the siddha women, and rich with the honey of mandāra, blew there. Seeing there the planting of their feet by ladies bright and glossy like the aśoka(-flowers), the lord of the demons became full of the sexual desire. The gods there delighted at seeing their own reflections were pleased. There, the mandāra (trees) with their sprouts withered, shone everywhere, after having manifested the coitus of the kinnara lovers. There the groves of many trees were occupied by the attendants of Śambhu. They appeared to be as it were well sustained by king Cupid. There the swarms of bees intoxicated by the fragrance of sandal and musk appeared like the charcoals of the burnt Cupid, that were put out. There, I think, having seen the entire beauty of the charming ladies, the friend of (i.e. resembling) excellent beauty, musk gave up the amusement of its mind, and plunged into blackness. At places there were lotuses shining like excellent red chalk. At places there were buds moving from their stems resembling the cloveshoot. At places there were bracelets shining like rafts on the mountain-streams. At places there were bees bowing through the humility of the nicula (a kind of reed) blossoms. At places there were fresh mango blossoms, burst and affected by cuckoos. At places there were the strong roots of the śāli rice, resorted to by herds of deer. At places there were groves sanctified by the extremely beautiful young married divine ladies, which caused a change even in the minds of sages.

41-45. On seeing the abode of Śiva, having these qualities, and the beautiful Kailāsa, the abode of all gems, the demon who was extremely amazed, said to Śukra (the son of Bhṛgu): "O dear one, why do (people) like you call him a sage whose wife is (so beautiful) like that and whose house is so charming?" Not seeing Śiva there, he asked (Śukra): "O Śukra, where has Śiva

gone? How is it that he has gone due to my fear? (i.e. has he gone through my fear)?" Thus asked, Śukra said: "The great god, lord Śiva, has gone to that (part of the) great mountain to the north of Mānasa. Others cannot go there." Hearing these words of Śukra, the very mighty demon said:

Jālandhara said:

46-49. I shall go to the lord of gods. You go first, O Śukra.

Saying so he went where Śiva himself remained. The son of the Ocean saw that excellent (part of) the mountain to the north of the Mānasa (lake). Its height was sixty thousand yojanas. That (part of) the mountain called Mānasa was, O king, surrounded by the army of the demon (Jālandhara). Many lordly demons quickly went up the mountain. There was, all round, darkness due to the umbrellas. There was a tremor due to the sound of the musical instruments. The din of their army filled the heaven and the earth.

Nārada said:

50-60. Seeing the huge army that came there, the lord kept Pārvatī, surrounded by her friends, on a very high peak of the mountain. Lord Śiva was surrounded by all his attendants who were ready (to fight) and were maddened by the fighting (spirit), so also by pramathas (i.e. the goblins attending upon Śiva) numbering thirty thousand mahābjas. Śiva said to Nandin, the chief of the attendants: "You should kill the brave, great demon Jālandhara, in the battle. Being surrounded by brave (warriors) like Mahākāla and others you go (to the battlefield). In the battle, you should fight very bravely as long as my enemy is not conquered, O hero." Hearing these words of Śiva, he said to his charioteer: "O very intelligent Kākatuṇḍa, bring my chariot today (i.e. now)." Hearing the words of Nandin, he too brought the chariot. That chariot used in battles, to which thirty-two horses were yoked, which had sixteen wheels, which had sixty flags, which was thirty yojanas long, which was full of all weapons, came (there). Śiva ordered his two sons, Kārtikeya and Gajānana to protect Nandin's troops. They were ready with their vehicles. Nandin was surrounded by the attendants. Nandin,

having honoured the lord with words, got into his chariot, and went out to (fight with) the demons. On his head shone an umbrella (of the measure) of twelve yojanas. When that Nandin went out, the demons first climbed up the mountain. The fierce-looking demons, fell on the ground.

61-68. The demons, being struck by the attendants left the mountain (and went) far away. Then coming down like smoke from the mountain the attendants struck the very powerful demons with sharp weapons. Seeing the (mountain) filled with the divinities, the demon-soldiers blocked it up. Then a great war of the attendants took place with the demons. A fierce shower of arrows was (sent by) the demons and gods. Then, the very mighty Kākatuṇḍa and others, with fire-like faces, killed all the elephants in the battle, so also (they destroyed) chariots and (killed) horses and footsoldiers. With the loudly laughing and fearful heads of the hosts of very deceitful demons killed (in the battle), the sky was filled. So also with lions, with hair let loose, having tawny faces, fierce fangs and eyes, and cutting off trunks, shanks, thighs, waists and backs. Everywhere the earth was filled with trunks tawny due to blood. Then, a very great noise was made by the lordly demons who were running in chariots, and whose soldiers were knocked down, like that of the oceans roaring at the time of the end of a yuga (i.e. the end of the world).

CHAPTER TWELVE

Śiva Arrives on the Battlefield

Nārada said:

1-6a. Seeing the demon-army killed by the attendants led by Nandin, the demons Śumbha and others, getting angry, went to (fight with) the attendants (of Śiva). Then the great demon Śumbha fought with Nandin. Niśumbha (fought with) Mahākāla, and Kāla with Lokeśvara in the battle. Śailaroman fought with

Puṣpudanta, and Mahābala with Mālyavat. Due to the power of illusion, O king, there was a din on the battlefield. Bhayānaka ran to Caṇḍa, and Rāhu to Skanda (i.e. Kārtikeya). Sarparoman (ran) to Kūṣmāṇḍa, and Gharghara to Madana. Ketumukha went to kill Śubha, and Jambha (went to kill) Vināyaka. Pātāla-ketu (rushed to kill) Hāsa, and Romakaṇṭaka (rushed to kill) Bhṛṅgīśa. The attendants of Rudra and the demons in crores fought with one another.

6b-19a When the lords of both of them were watching, the attendants and the demons, striking hard, struck (one another) with arrows. Nandin discharged those arrows as a great shower would (fall) on a mountain. Then he filled the face of Śumbha with arrows as wind fills the cave of Mandara with the masses of leaves. Kumbha left his bow, and ran to him (getting down) from the chariot. He uprooted a mountain and struck with it on the chest of Nandin, and having crushed his chariot in the battle, that mountain fell on the ground as a mountain would fall on coming in contact with the thunderbolt. He fainted for a moment, (then) regaining consciousness, he ran speedily. Mahā-kāla was struck on the chest by Niśumbha with a mallet. Coming (to him) he struck the demon on his crown with a mace. Ignoring that stroke, that very mighty Niśumbha also seized him by his feet and the very mighty one whirling him from his palm, threw him and roared. Drinking (i.e. inhaling) the air from his mouth (i.e. his breath), he, who had been tawny due to blood, roared. Puṣpadanta was struck on his face with a fist by Śailaro-man. He (i.e. Puṣpadanta) struck Śailaroman with a mace, and knocked him on the ground. Seeing him fallen on the ground, the very strong Giriketu struck with a mallet the very fierce Puṣpadanta. Then Puṣpadanta cut off Giriketu's head with a sword and ran taking with him the shield and the sword of Giriketu. (Giriketu's) head said to him, "Why do you go away, leaving me who desire to fight (with you)? Do you not feel ashamed of running when this body is deprived of the head?" Thus address-ed by his head, the trunk of Giriketu seized Puṣpadanta by his feet, and cut (i.e. pierced) his belly with a sharp sword.

19b-29a. From the side a demon, very strong and having a hundred heads, went out. He had two hundred eyes and two hundred arms. His head, whirling round, came near his

trunk, O king. Seeing the head come, Puṣpadanta cut it off with his sword. Then (came) a demon named Bhūkampana, and a fearful demon by name Jvara. Then, O king, Puṣpadanta was crushed there by the two. That unbearable and very speedy Jvara troubled him. The attendant of Śiva (viz. Puṣpadanta) left the battle and trembling went to the mountain (Kailāsa). A great archer Kolāhala struck Mālyavat with three arrows on his shoulders, and Mālyavat (struck) the demon on his forehead. Kolāhala who was struck by Mālyavat with sharp weapons of various kinds, showing his dexterity, struck Mālyavat. That Mālyavat, the chief among the attendants, ignoring the pain caused by the weapon, took a huge rock and struck Kolāhala with it in the battle. From him Feverish Heat, named Jvalana came out. He was very fierce, had three heads, nine hands, nine feet, and was very tawny. That Feverish Heat deluded Mālyavat with his lustre. Mālyavat, being subdued, left the battle and went to the mountain. In the battle Caṇḍi was struck with a strong noose on his chest. His horse went out (of the battlefield); from him he was hurled into the ocean.

29b-38a. In the battle Kārtikeya hit Rāhu with sharp arrows. Having covered him with volleys of arrows, he quickly discharged (the missile called) Śakti. Seeing the Śakti, burning as it were with lustre, coming to him, Rāhu flew into the sky and quickly seized it with both his hands. Seizing that Śakti, and roaring loudly, Rāhu struck him (i.e. Kārtikeya) with that same Śakti. Struck with that Śakti on his chest, a river went out of his body. In that battle, the son of Mahādeva (i.e. Kārtikeya) was washed by it. Somehow the river was checked; but a flood similarly went to the river. The Ocean's son, having heard from Jvara, the harsh cries of the mass of the (enemy's) army, did not remember even that melodious skilful note of the male cuckoo. Barbara killed with a sword Dahana (i.e. Agni) who was covering him with arrows. Sarparoman struck Kūṣmāṇḍa on his head with a fist. Pātālaketu struck Hāsa with a mallet. Taking it out from his body, the elephant bent the mallet. Pātālaketu hit him on his trunk with the stroke of his fist. Romakaṇṭaka wounded the lordly Bhṛṅgin with his weapons. The lordly Bhṛṅgin also being frightened, quickly went to the mountain from the battlefield.

38b-45. The white Dhūmravarṇa suddenly fell into the mouth of Ketu. The demon, of a large body and a large mouth, swallowed the attendant. When he was swallowed in the battle by Ketu, there was a very loud wailing. With the sharp arrows of Jṛbha, the body of Vināyaka was pierced. He cut off the trunk of that Gajānana. Then the mouse (the vehicle of Gajānana) also pierced with arrows entered a cave. In the battle Vināyaka afflicted with the stroke lamented, and was agitated. (He lamented:) "O mother, O father, O brother, O mouse dear to me." Hearing the cry of Gaṇeśa, the revered Pārvatī, coming (to Śiva) from another peak, said to Śiva at that time: "Gajānana is being killed by the demons. Kārtikeya also is knocked down. O Śiva, why are you sporting on the mountain. Protect your two sons and the attendants also. Today is the moment (i.e. the opportunity to use) the weapons like the trident always held by you." Then hearing the words of Pārvatī, Śiva said to Vīrabhadra: "Quickly make ready ready my bull (i.e. Nandin)."

46-52. When this was said, he did (like that) at that time. He fastened a diadem to his horns, which was lustrous like the sun. Having fastened a hundred bells round his neck, he put two mirrors on his ears. On his shoulders a mass of bells (was placed), and large anklets (were tied) to his feet. A thousand chowries were tied round his tail, and into his mouth (were placed) eight nooses. Then that auspicious goddess Ambikā, with the eight nooses and holding a sword, sat there (i.e. on the back of the bull) near Śiva. All the weapons were put (there, on his back). The bull was ready. With the string of her own bells, Pārvatī adorned him. The goddess also put a mark (on his face) and spoke to him after honouring him: "O best among the bulls, you should never leave Śiva in the dangerous battle. You should come (back) with Śiva after having vanquished the enemies in the battle." Hearing these words of the goddess, Śiva, adorned with his own ornaments, holding a thousand weapons, mounted upon his bull. With respect he spoke to that Pārvatī: "I am going to the battlefield."

The lord said:

53-57. With a desire for your own forms, you can remain even alone; for the demons, having a bad intention about ladies,

have come. Therefore, O beautiful lady, you have to protect yourself.

Speaking thus, Śiva, mounted upon his bull, went to the battlefield. Śiva was surrounded by thirty thousand mahābja pramathas (i.e. the goblin-attendants of Śiva) O king; the brave Vīrabhadra quickly going with (i.e. after mounting) his lion, guarded the left side of the great lord. The archer Maṇibhadra, the killer of the enemies, with (i.e. seated in) a chariot, protected the right side of Śiva. Climbing down from the high lordly mountain, Śiva reached the battlefield with his attendants.

58-62a. Seeing the great lord seated on his bull, the demons roared. Then there was a great din of (i.e. produced by) the armies of the demons and the pramathas. O king, a terrible destruction of the two (armies) took place. Then all those—Nandin, Mahākāla, Kāla, Skanda, the very strong Mālyavat, Puṣpadanta, Vṛṣalin, Svarṇadantika. Caṇḍīśa, Madana, Caṇḍa, Kūṣmāṇḍa, and Guptalomaka—who had formerly run away from the battle came to the dangerous battle. The very mighty demons fought before Śiva. A very fearful fight between the warriors—the attendants (of Śiva) and the demons—took place.

62b-64. Then having caused the army of the attendants to flee, the very mighty (demons) surrounded Śiva on all sides with showers (i.e. volleys) of arrows, with pikes, lances, maces, mallets, clubs tipped with iron, as the sense-organs surround the soul with the five objects of senses. Then Śiva with arrows that were very fierce, killed the demons in the battle, as Māgha quickly and that moment only destroys the sins by means of a bath (taken in that month).

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Jālandhara Disguised as Śiva Goes to Pārvaṭī

Nārada said:

1-3. Then hearing the din of the demons on the battlefield, Jālandhara, seated in a chariot, came where Śiva was. Angrily and quickly he spoke to his charioteer Khaḍgaroman: "Send forth quickly the chariot to which a thousand horses are yoked. I shall bravely kill that ascetic, adorned with matted hair, sacred ash and bones. What is the power of the crippled one mounted on the bull in the battle with me?"

Nārada said:

4-6. Speaking like this to Khaḍgaroman the haughty (Jālandhara) took his fierce bow and quickly ran to (the battlefield) in his chariot. Vīrabhadra checked him who was coming (there) with sharp arrows. With his body made breathless, he covered him with arrows. Though (Vīrabhadra) the attendant of the lord of beings (i.e. Śiva) was equal to the gods, yet can the skulls attain similarity with the moon?

7-9. Maṇibhadra also pierced the Ocean's son (Jālandhara). He having killed Maṇibhadra by a noose said to the lord (i.e. Śiva): "O Mahādeva, if you have the practice in (wielding) weapons, then come to fight (with me). You strike me. In the battle I shall not strike you having matted hair." Him who was proudly speaking like this, Vīrabhadra, who was angry, covered with arrows, as the sun covers a lotus with his rays.

10-13. Then Maṇibhadra hit his army with a mace. O hero, striking a chariot after a chariot, a horse after a horse, an elephant after an elephant, he knocked them down on the earth. In a moment, the ground was tawny due to the mud-like blood and became difficult to walk over; and the chief attendants (of Śiva) struck down the demons from the mountain in the battle. The brave demons dropped dead on the ground. O king, the demons (thus) fell (on the ground) and the ground was full of (their) trunks, arms, heads, and the backs and trunks and thighs of the elephants.

Nārada said:

14-17. In this way he saw that Śiva was extremely difficult to be conquered in the battle. He also saw other signs in the world: A different lustre was (noticed) in the stars, the moon and all (objects). The sheath of the world was opened (*obscure*); and the lustre of the sun was quite different. O king, Jālandhara who was disappointed again thought: 'I have not seen that Pārvatī about whom Nārada told me much. Now how shall I see Pārvatī, seated on a perpetual place? First I shall go to see her, and after that I shall fight with Śiva.'

18-20a. Thinking like this with (i.e. in) his mind, the son of the Ocean spoke to demon Śumbha: "O brave one, O you, equal to me in heroism, in (the battle for) fierce victory, please fight after taking up a form similar to that of mine. The burden (i.e. the responsibility) of the camp and the army is (now) yours. I shall go to see that Pārvatī who has captivated my heart."

20b-25. Speaking like this, he took down from his body ornaments and gave them to him. He also gave him the armour, the weapons etc., so also the chariot along with the charioteer. Then, O king, the son of the Ocean, along with Durvāraṇa, left the army, and unnoticed he went to the secret cave of that (part of Kailāsa) mountain to the north of Mānasa and took up Śiva's form. Like that (i.e. like him) Durvāraṇa also had taken up the form like that of Nandin. Then the two, disguised as Śiva and Nandin, climbed up the mountain, on a peak of which Pārvatī along with her friends remained, O king. Seeing him who was resting upon Nandin's shoulder, coming (there) and pierced with arrows and seeing his garment smeared with blood, Pārvatī was amazed. Her friends like Jayā etc. being confused, went to him.

26-29. Going near Śiva (i.e. near Jālandhara who was disguised as Śiva), they, being very much afflicted, said to him: "O lord of gods, what has happened to you? By whom are you conquered in the battle? O lord how (is it that) you are distressed, and are weeping like an (ordinary) creature?" He who was thus addressed by them, gave separately (i.e. to each one of) them his ornaments. He slowly took down Vāsuki and others from his body. Seeing under his arm-pit, the heads of Gaṇeśa

and Kārtikeya that were cut off, Pārvatī wept (saying): "O Skanda, O Gaṇeśa, O Rudra." Then all her friends, emaciated through grief, wept.

30-38. At this time Nandin said to Jayā: "You (please) look after her. Maṇibhadra, Vīrabhadra, the brave Puṣpadanta, Dambhana, Dhūmatimira, and Kūṣmāṇḍa and others are killed in the battle. So also Caṇḍin, Bhṛṅgin, Kirīṭin, Mahākāla, Śṛṅkhalin, Caṇḍīśa, Guptanetra, and Kāla and others are killed in the battle. O goddess, in the great battle I saw the heads of Gajānana and Kārtikeya whirling (round)." Saying so, he dropped them before her. Hearing these words of Nandin, and taking the heads of her sons, Pārvatī, saying, "O (my) son, O (my) son", lamented loudly. (She said:) "O (Kārtikeya, the) enemy of Tāraka, how (is it that) you were killed by the Ocean's son in the battle? You were consecrated by the gods as the general of their army when you were (just) three days old. O hero, how did you destroy (the demon) named Tāraka at that time? Did you fall on the ground because you were abandoned by Śiva? O son, I, who am luckless, have not seen the face of my daughter-in-law (i.e. your wife). O child, you have not enjoyed these pleasures which belong to the mundane existence. O dear Heramba, O Vighneśa, O Lambodara, O Gajānana, O my son, who knocked you honoured (even) by the siddhas, on the battle-field. How and by whom was your vehicle, the mouse, killed?"

39-43. Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī) who was lamenting like this, said to Śiva (i.e. to Jālandhara, who had disguised himself as Śiva) who was very much grieved: "O lord of gods, you are actually Rudra. You are Hara. Do not be afraid. Where has your bull gone? Is he killed by Jālandhara? What, dear to you whose body is wounded with arrows, should I do?" Then, on hearing the words of the goddess, Śiva, after heaving a sigh, said: "O darling, both your sons have been killed long back. Why do you lament in vain? O goddess, protect me now by giving me the contact of your body (i.e. by having sexual union with me)." Having heard these untimely and eager words of Śiva, Pārvatī said to the god: "You have not spoken proper words. O Śiva, the wise avoid sexual union when there is great grief, when fear is caused, at (the time of someone having) profound meditation, at (the time of) offering oblations, when

having severe fever, at (the time of) a śrāddha, at (the time of) a march, and in the vicinity of the elders and the old.

44-49. How do you solicit me who am afflicted with grief, troubled by (the grief due to) my son's death, weak, and languid with tears, and who am (mentally) sick?" Hearing these words of Bhavānī, that false Śiva (i.e. Jālandhara disguised as Śiva) who was fascinated by the beauty of Pārvatī, said with a selfish motive: "Those ladies (who) do not give (the pleasure of) sex to the afflicted men (i.e. their husbands) undoubtedly fall into the fierce Raurava (hell). O you beautiful lady, I am without my attendants, without my sons, and without intelligence. O you beautiful young lady, now I am without possessions and without everything. I am void of a good life. I have come here to ask you. Entering my house, I shall quickly cast my figure (i.e. kill myself). O Nandin, get up. We shall go to a holy place. Be before me (i.e. lead me). O dear wife, you go according to your desire. Give up your nature (of a royal wife)."

50-51. Hearing these words of the illusive Śiva, Pārvatī heaved a long sigh, and was paralysed by grief. When he was thus greatly agitated, she did not say anything for a moment. She who had fascinated the entire immobile and mobile world, was herself bewildered by him. I do not know (i.e. cannot conceive) the pain to the mind.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Viṣṇu Creates Illusion for Vṛndā

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O brāhmaṇa, please tell me what happened after the illusive Śiva had (thus) bewildered Pārvatī.

Nārada said:

2-5a. The heart of Viṣṇu lying in the ocean was disturbed. All of a sudden, O best king, his eyes were full of tears. Seeing that sign of a great portent, the lord then getting up from the

bed of Śeṣa, looked at me and Vāyu, and thinking, 'What should be done (now)?' remembered (Garuḍa) the enemy of the serpents. He too, merely by being remembered, stood with his palms joined before the lord. Seeing before him (Garuḍa) the son of Vinatā, Viṣṇu said:

5b-9a. "O Suparṇa, go there where the battle is going on. Seeing whether the hero Jālandhara is killed or Śiva is deluded by him, quickly come (back) and tell everything to me. You alone are capable of seeing the battle between Jālandhara and the lord. Who else after knowing (what is going on) in the great battle would come (back) alive? At times the battle there was hard to be understood due to the showers of weapons and missiles. Going there (as fast) as the movement of an arrow, and with your body covered, come back after having observed the condition of Pārvatī."

9b-10. Lord Viṣṇu after having thought about removing the illusion caused by the demon, quickly gave a pill fully endowed with supernatural powers to Garuḍa. (He said to Garuḍa:) "O hero, due to this (pill) you will not be illusioned." Saying, "All right", he (i.e. Garuḍa) put it into his mouth.

11-17a. The bird (i.e. Garuḍa) thus urged by the lord went round Viṣṇu keeping him to his right, and he, of a wonderful speed, moved out, and having entered the sky, went (to the battlefield). Having gone there he saw unbearable terrible fight with the hosts of demons; but he did not know anything fully. Therefore, he flew speedily and went to (the region) Mānasottara, (a part of) the mountain, which was very high, inaccessible, and difficult to be reached even by gods. The lord of birds (though he tried) to see, could not see the place of Pārvatī. Having come there, (Garuḍa) the enemy of serpents heard a sound. After having gone near he saw the illusive lord of beings (i.e. Śiva). After having put into his mouth the pill, Garuḍa was not illusioned. He knew and understood that he was a demon and not Śiva. "Oh, (how) painful!" Saying so and weeping, he, having come (back) to the ocean, narrated the account to the enemy of Kaiṭabha (i.e. Viṣṇu):

17b-22. "O god, Jālandhara has imitated god Śiva. He, the sinful one, disguised (as Śiva) has deceived Pārvatī. Therefore, O Viṣṇu, if you are a god, (then now) go to the battlefield. O

lord of gods, (please) fight deceitfully with Jālandhara. I have seen his queen on the auspicious seat at Jālandhara. She was sporting by playing upon musical instruments and songs on the ground of the palace. She is more beautiful than Pārvatī and a hundred (nymphs like) Rambhā and Urvaśī. Now neither in the human world nor in the nether world is there a wife like her. Therefore, O Viṣṇu, she is fit to be associated with. What then can be said about (other) ladies. A man, who would touch her with his body would be blessed. And she is the wife of your wife's brother. Kidnap her who is dear to Lakṣmī. Do a good turn to Śiva and please yourself."

Nārada said:

23-27. Having heard the words of Garuḍa (Viṣṇu) dear to Lakṣmī, properly designed a remedy, and quickly sent away the bird. Having deceived Lakṣmī, and having covered her with a yellow garment (as she lay) on the bed, he went out with (i.e. after having taken up) another form and through his divine magical power Viṣṇu was fascinated by the love for Vṛndārikā. Seeing Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) going (after) having covered himself, O Yudhiṣṭhira, Śeṣa also came in another form to Viṣṇu, and devoutly said to him: "You (please) wait. Allow me (to go). O Viṣṇu, tell me what I should do, where I should go. (Tell me) the mission. It would be a pleasure (if) I shall always eat after seeing your face."

The lord said:

28-32. I shall after covering my body, kidnap the charming wife of Jālandhara for Śiva and for helping Pārvatī. O brother, come on. We shall go to the impassable forest for accomplishing the seduction of Vṛndā.

After he said so, they both went to the forest. There Viṣṇu and Śeṣa who had matted hair and bark-garments, put up a hermitage which was auspicious and gave the fruits of all desires (i.e. gave the desired objects). They had disciples and disciples' disciples, taking any form they liked of tigers, lions, boars, bears, monkeys and apes. Then in that forest, Viṣṇu

attracted Vṛndā with a spell. He, the killer of Madhu, caused torment in her heart.

33-38. In the meantime the queen had a terrible torment. She caused the chowries to be waved by divine ladies. The slim lady, repeatedly thinking about the arrival of her lover, and with her body smeared with sandal, quickly fainted. The queen saw a dream in the fourth watch on the fourteenth (night of the month), which caused fear, and indicated the fear of widowhood. (She saw) the head of Jālandhara, which was dry, was smeared with white ash, the eyes of which were drawn out by a vulture, and the tips of the hair were loose. Kālī whose face was fierce, complexion was dark, garments were tawny, mouth was red, who had held a skull in her hand was eating him. She saw a dream like this and herself mortified. The queen saw the demon having the qualities (i.e. signs) of destruction.

39-40. Then the wife of the demon-king awoke due to songs and (the sound of) the musical instruments of the bards, so also by continuous singing, eulogies, words, praises of the race recited by kinnaras. Then having given all of them who were tired, wealth as a result of her favour, she warded them off (i.e. dismissed them), called brāhmaṇas and told them about the dream that she had seen. The brāhmaṇas, who had mastered sacred texts, said, after having heard the dream:

The brāhmaṇas said:

41-47. O queen, it is a bad dream; it is very fierce; it is inconceivable and causes fear. Give gifts which would destroy the inconceivable fear, to brāhmaṇas. (Give them) cows, garments, gems, elephants and ornaments.

The brāhmaṇas who were pleased (with the gifts) sprinkled (with holy water) the king's wife. Though sprinkled (like that) Vṛndā was tormented with affliction. Dismissing the excellent brāhmaṇas, she then went to the palace. Even (after) remaining there, the lady saw her own city burning. Then being attracted by Viṣṇu due to her own acts, she could not, O king, remain in her house. So the queen went to a forest. The slim lady, having got into a chariot to which female mules were yoked and which

was driven by her friend Smaradūtī, she quickly reached an auspicious forest which was having many trees and was full of various groups of birds, which was endowed with a stream of flowers, was adorned with divine ladies. There only gentle breezes could enter and nothing else.

48-52. Seeing that forest, Vṛndā remembered her husband. 'Now shall I see the hero Jālandhara that has come in front of me?' She did not get pleasure there. So she, with the chariot brought by her friend, and fascinated by Viṣṇu's illusion, entered another forest. Then the fawn-eyed lady saw the forest which was crowded with trees, was blocked by large rocks, created fear, was full of the fear due to lions and tigers, was resorted to by wolves and serpents, in which the trees with their branches touching the sky filled the caves with darkness. Seeing the fearful forest, the lady of unsteady eyes was frightened. Vṛndā said to her friend Smaradūtī who was driving the chariot: "O Smaradūtī, quickly drive home my chariot."

Smaradūtī said:

53-57a. O friend, I do not know the direction. Where should I take the chariot? The tired female mules are proceeding; and here there is no path. Let the chariot driven by destiny go anywhere. Here some flesh-eater will devour (us); (and this will) not be falsified.

Speaking like this, she who was very wonderful, quickly drove the chariot. The chariot reached (the place) where there were delighted siddhas. The siddhas were seen there, and the forest was fearful. The wind was not strong there, nor was the sound of birds (heard there). There was no lustre, no light. There was no water. There were not (seen) quarters and subquarters.

57b-60. Even in the characteristic of the chariot that reached there a change took place. The female mules did not neigh. There was no sound of the fellies of the wheels. The banners did not move. The bells did not tinkle. The great bells placed on the pillar of the flag did not make a sound. Seeing (things) like this, Vṛndā said to her friend: "O Smaradūtī, where

shall we go? The forest is full of the fear from tigers and lions. O friend, I did not have happiness in my house, in my kingdom, and in the forest."

Smaradūtī said:

61-66. O Queen, listen. In front (of us) see a very fearful mountain. Seeing (it) the female mules, perturbed by fear, do not go ahead.

Hearing those words of her the queen was frightened. Seeing the necklace round her neck, she quickly got up from the chariot. In the meanwhile there came a demon of a fierce form. He had three feet, five hands and seven eyes. He was extremely fearful. He was tawny; his eyes were like those of a tiger. His shoulders and his face were like those of a lion. His hair red like blood hung like the lord of birds. Seeing him, Vṛndā, having a (tender) body like the calyx of a lotus, was suddenly frightened. Having covered her eyes with her hands, she trembled like a plantain tree. Throwing the whip, the door-keeper said to the queen: "O Queen, protect me who am frightened. This (demon) runs to eat me."

67-71. In the meanwhile the demon reached the vicinity of the chariot. He tossed up the chariot and whirled it with the female mules (yoked to it). The queen fell on the ground like a female deer through the fear of a tiger. Smaradūtī was wounded (and lay) like an aśoka-creeper. Then the demon devoured all the female mules. He seized the queen by her hand as a lion seizes a female young deer. Then the demon spoke to her: "I have heard that your husband is killed by Śiva in the battle. If you want to live, then taking me as your husband live long and without fear from anywhere. Also drink sweet liquor along with good flesh." Hearing these words, the queen was as it were lifeless.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Vṛndā Goes to Heaven

Nārada said:

1-7. Then Viṣṇu wearing matted hair and bark-garments and the other one—his follower—having a fruit in his hand came (to Vṛndā). Seeing them, that fawn-eyed Smaradūtī wailed. Hearing her words (of wailing), the two said to her: "O auspicious lady, do not be afraid. We have come to protect you. How have you come to this fearful forest resorted to by the wicked?" Having comforted the slim lady like this, Viṣṇu said to the demon: "O you of a mean conduct, leave this soft-bodied and sweet-smiling lady. O fool, O you of a wicked conduct, what have you decided to do? You are out to eat the wealth of the three worlds. She is born as a result of the religious merit of the world. You are killing this ornament of the world. By killing Vṛndārikā now in the forest you will today render the world void of light and void of the pride of Cupid. Therefore, quickly leave her who is the deity of a comfortable palace."

8-12. Hearing these words of Viṣṇu, the demon who got angry, said: "If you are capable, then free her today from my hand." As soon as these words were uttered, Viṣṇu looked at him angrily. Leaving Vṛndā far away, he fell down after being reduced to ash. Then, she who was stupefied by the illusion of the lord of the world, said: "Who are you, the ocean of pity, who protected me here? O you treasure of austerity, with your sweet words you have removed by destroying the demon my physical and mental agony and torment. O dear ascetic, I shall practise penance in your hermitage."

The ascetic said:

13-20. I am Bhāradvāja's son, known as Devaśarman. Giving up all the pleasures, I have with this lad come to the fearful forest. I have many disciples going (anywhere) as they will, and also other disciples who can take any form they like. O auspicious one, if you desire to practise penance in my hermitage then come along. O queen, we shall go to another (forest) which is far away.

Speaking like this to the queen, Viṣṇu with a slow gait went into eastern direction to a forest full of ghosts and goblins, O king. Vṛndārikā, with her eyes full of tears went after him. Smaradūtī also, saying 'Wait for me', went after him. In the meanwhile a man of a sinful figure and of a wicked conduct spread out a nest. He, the chief of sinners, withdrew the net when it was full of creatures. Seeing the two ladies the hunter let loose the creatures after having fetched them. Smaradūtī said to her (i.e. to Vṛndā): "O Queen, he comes to eat me. May my friend hold me by the hand."

21-26. Having heard what she had said, Vṛndā saw the (man) with a loathsome face. Seeing him, she, dear to the Ocean's son, was shaken by gout due to fear. Being clearly alarmed, she, with Smaradūtī, ran into the forest. While running with her friend, she came to the ascetic's hermitage. In the ascetic's hermitage she saw wonderful things. (There) she saw birds with golden bodies and having many notes. She (there) saw a well rich in golden lotuses and a golden ground. The rivers were carrying milk. The trees were exuding honey. There was a store of sugar. There were also heaps of sweetmeats. All sweet eatables were there. There were many ornaments; and many divine weapons fell from the sky. The horses, being contented, played, jumped and fell there.

27-31a. In a small ascetic's hut Vṛndā saw a very handsome ascetic seated on a seat made of tiger-hide and illumining the three worlds. To him she said: "O lord, protect me from (this) sinner. What is the use of austerities, or religious merit, or silence or muttering prayers? O you whose wealth is your penance, there is no greater penance than the protection of those who are frightened." Thus she who was frightened and whose body was fatigued, spoke to him. Just then the wicked-souled catcher of all creatures arrived there. Queen Vṛndā who was afflicted with fear, embraced Viṣṇu at the neck. Like a creeper she clasped him with her arms in a manner in which the touch was pleasant. (He said to her:)

31b-35. "By means of your embrace the head of your husband will again be endowed with the entrie body with excellences. O you beautiful lady, now go to the picture-room." She who was told by the sage (to go to) the picture-room, entered it. Having

got on a divine bed, she took the head of her husband, and being extremely lustful, and with her eyes closed when she drank its lower lip (i.e. kissed it), the form of Jālandhara appeared there, O king. The lord of the world was similar in figure to her husband, had a chest like that of him; his height was like that of him; his words were like those of him; his temperament was like that of him.

36-42a. Seeing her dear husband having the full form, she said: "O lord, I shall do what is dear to you. Tell me about your battle." Hearing the words of Vṛndā, the deceptive son of the Ocean said: "O queen, listen as to how Śambhu fought with me. O dear one, the terrible Śiva cut off my head with a disc. Then due to your divine power and due to my mind having gone to you the head that was cut off was brought here, and due to the contact with your body it came back to life. O dear young lady, due to separation from me you have become distressed. Forgive me (this) unpleasant (act) that I left you and went to the battlefield." With these other words he then reminded Vṛndā (of his acts). Then, queen Vṛndā who had all auspicious pleasures like tāmbūlas, diversions, garments and ornaments, who was very lustful, firmly embraced her dear husband and kissed him.

42b-46. God Viṣṇu looked upon the pleasure due to the fascination of Vṛndā as superior to (that derived from) salvation, and as giving greater delight than derived from Lakṣmī. Then Mādhava, Kṛṣṇa who was the royal swan in the well charming and shining due to her sports, lost (all) his longing for Lakṣmī due to the beauty of Vṛndā. In that forest, Vṛndā turned into the form of Tulasī. That (Tulasī) that was highly purifying arose from the sweat of Vṛndā. Having, for some days, enjoyed the pleasure due to the contact with Vṛndā's body, (Viṣṇu) the lord of the world, thought about the mission of Śiva.

47-50. Once, after the sexual act was over, Vṛndā saw the ascetic (that is) Viṣṇu with his two hands thrown round her neck. Seeing him and freeing from the clasp of his hands her neck, she said: "How is it that in the guise of an ascetic you came to fascinate me?" Hearing her words, and consoling her, Viṣṇu said to her: "O Vṛndārikā, listen. Know me to be (Viṣṇu) pleasing to Lakṣmī. Your husband has gone to vanquish Śiva and bring Pārvatī. I am Śiva, and Śiva is me. We have (just)

remained separately. O sinless one, Jālandhara has been killed in the battle. Now resort to me."

Nārada said:

51-54. Hearing these words of Viṣṇu, her face was dejected. Then, O king, Vṛndārikā who was angry, replied: "Is it proper for you to have snatched the young wife of him who bound you in the battle, and released you at his father's words, and were honoured with various gems? How can he who is the master of righteousness, dally with the wife of another (man)? The wise say that even the lord enjoys (the fruits of) his acts. Since you, an ascetic in disguise, deluded me, someone disguised as an ascetic will take (away) your young wife."

55-59. Thus cursed Viṣṇu in a moment vanished. When Viṣṇu had left, that bed in the picture-room, those monkeys—all that disappeared. Seeing the forest desolate, Vṛndā went to her friend and told her about the trickery played by Viṣṇu. "I have abandoned the city. My kingdom has gone. (The existence) of my husband is doubtful. I am in the forest. Realising this, where should I, fashioned (thus) by fate, go? My seeing my dear (husband) was (just) a matter of my desires." Vṛndā who was extremely afflicted, heaved a hot sigh and said: "I have, and you too, O Smaradūtī, met with death." Thus addressed by her, she said: "You are my very life."

60-62. Hearing words spoken like that by her, Vṛndā, deciding that this should be done, abandoned her grief and went to a great lake, and with (its) water, she washed her body. Sitting in padmāsana on the bank and making her mind free from the objects of senses, she withered her body which was polluted due to the contact with (the body of) Viṣṇu. She, with her friend, fasted and practised very severe penance.

63-66. The host of the celestial nymphs came to Vṛndā from the world of gandharvas and said to her: "O auspicious one, go to heaven do not cast your body. This (your body) is the weapon of gandharvas; it conquers the three worlds; it is the best joy of Viṣṇu by which he was brought here; how (then) do you cast this (your) body which has obtained (i.e. fulfilled) the desires? Know that your husband is killed with an excellent arrow of Śiva. Be the ornament of heaven obtained through

religious merit. O angry lady, today quickly resort to the grove of the gods." Hearing the sacred precept for young married ladies, the wife of the Ocean's son said (these) words: "Lord (Viṣṇu), the great hero, left (Lakṣmī) the young wife of the lord of gods, and (coming) from heaven, honoured me, and I who was conquered by the god, was made a receptacle of pleasures. Being guileless I shall try to do that by which I shall obtain an immortal state." Speaking like this, Vṛndā, along with her friend, dismissed the bevies of the celestial nymphs. Bound by the noose of love for her, they came and went every day.

67-72. Then Vṛndā, through practice of abstract meditation, burnt, with the fire of knowledge, the qualities, and having withdrawn her mind from the objects of senses, obtained the highest (position). Seeing Vṛndārikā there the great hosts of the celestial nymphs were pleased. With showers of flowers from the sky they showered her. Having made a heap of dry (pieces of) wood, Smaradūtī put on it the (dead) body of Vṛndā, kindled the fire and entered it. That round image of the particles of Vṛndā's body was burnt. Collecting the remaining ashes, they threw them into Mandākinī. At the place where Vṛndā cast her body and went to heaven, was the Vṛndāvana, near the Govardhana mountain. The divine ladies (i.e. the celestial nymphs) went to heaven and told the divine ladies there. Having heard that, all the gods and others, with their minds delighted, gave up the fear of their enemy, the demon, and beat the furious drums. The group of attendants seated there obtained the charm of auspiciousness.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Jālandhara Gives up His Disguise

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Tell me in detail, O sage, how Jālandhara took up the form of Śiva, and what he did on seeing Pārvatī.

Nārada said:

2-8. O king, when that deceptive Śiva (i.e. Jālandhara disguised as Śiva) longed for Pārvatī, she got disturbed, and did not speak anything. 'It is not proper on the part of the lord (to ask for sea) who was obtained by me by penance and is not unwell.' Deciding like this, Pārvatī did not speak to him, O king. Seeing no prevention, she, even as he was seeing, got up, went out and saw Gaṅgā flowing in the sky. Thinking her to be fit for residence, Pārvatī went to practise penance. Then, thinking, 'Even formerly I secured the lord through penance. Now also (I shall secure him) like that', she went with her friends from there. O king, in front of her Pārvatī saw Mandākinī falling from the mountain into the northern part of Mānasa. She was flowing like a series of necklaces separated from the garland of the sky. When the flood of the water of Mandākinī was drawn from the heaven, she dropped like the stream of the flood of the sacred texts from Brahmā's mouth.

9-13a. On seeing that Gaṅgā she was delighted. Having, with her friend, bathed (in the water of Gaṅgā) and honoured her, she then placed her body (i.e. was seated) on the bank of the golden river. Being mutually afraid, they looked at one another. Pārvatī said to her friend Jayā: "O friend, taking up my form (i.e. disguised like me), quickly go to him. Know the truth: Whether he is Śiva or someone else. If he embraces you and kisses you, then know him to be the demon who has come after resorting to deception. If he talks to you about my well-being or otherwise, then undoubtedly he would be Śiva. (Then) come here and tell me".

13b-17. Thus ordered by the goddess Jayā went near (i.e. to) Śiva. Seeing her coming, he was very much afflicted by lust, took her to be Pārvatī and embraced her. Then Jālandhara quickly ejected his semen; and O descendant of Kuru, his organ speedily became small. She said to him: "O demon, you shall never be Rudra. You are of a little semen (i.e. you ejected quickly). You are of a wicked behaviour. I am not Pārvatī. I am her friend." Saying so and resorting to (i.e. taking up) her own form, she again spoke to him: "Due to this sin of yours, you are (i.e. will be) killed by Śiva." Knowing thus (i.e. his falsehood), she reached (the place where Pārvatī remained).

18-23. Going there she said to Pārvatī: "O goddess, this one is Jālandhara, and not your husband Śiva." Then Śiva's wife (Pārvatī) was afflicted with fear, and she quickly entered a lotus. In the lotuses her friends became female bees due to the fear of Jālandhara, O king. Meantime, her guards, not seeing her, the queen, who had gone to the forest, were afraid, and quickly came to the battlefield. Then they were asked by Śumbha. They, with nervousness, saluted him and for getting themselves exempted, they approached Viṣṇu, the lord of gods (*obscure*). Hearing that Vṛndā was kidnapped, he (i.e. Jālandhara) being afraid of Rudra, left the battle. Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa, the two very speedy demons, who were sent by Śumbha, came to Mānasottara; and from behind a bush said to the demon who had taken up the form of (i.e. who was disguised as) Śiva:

24-28. "O best king, what is the use of that glory that has gone to a foreign country, which the enemies do not see (i.e. care for) and which is not enjoyed with the kinsmen. O lord, Śumbha has been vanquished; your army has been killed by Śiva in the battle. Come on, come on; fight; you will not obtain Pārvatī. How can a jackal secure a lioness? O king, how can darkness have the lustre of the sun? From the Jālandhara-pīṭha (i.e. your seat) Viṣṇu has taken away your queen. Such a news is heard. Therefore, fight. Having quickly vanquished Śiva in the battle, be the lord of all. Or (i.e. otherwise), being cut to pieces by the arrows of Śiva you will reach his place."

29-33. Hearing these words of Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa, Jālandhara, with his eyes red, angrily moved out from that mountain. Having cheered up Caṇḍa, and Muṇḍa, Jālandhara gave up the form (i.e. guise) of Śiva, and (while) going along the path, said to Durvāraṇa. "See, O Durvāraṇa, what now Viṣṇu has done there. Having resorted to deception, he has taken queen Vṛndā to his place. An intelligent person should never trust his son-in-law who lives in his house. A wise man should dismiss him after having given him (in marriage) his daughter. A man should never keep his son-in-law in his house. (For) he (i.e. the son-in-law) gradually takes (away) his wealth, wife etc."

Durvāraṇa said:

34. The (fruit of an) act is had in the same way as it is

done, O king. You had come to kidnap Pārvatī (and) Viṣṇu took away your young wife.

Hearing his plain words, Jālandhara silently thought for a moment.

Jālandhara said:

35. Should I go to vanquish Śiva or the powerful Viṣṇu? When the two duties have come up, tell me which is more important.

Durvāraṇa said:

36-39. If you go to conquer Viṣṇu, Śiva will strike you from behind. The brave will strike (you). Śiva will not allow you to go. Therefore, having (first) conquered (Śiva), the lord of beings, and (then) having brought him under control, march against Viṣṇu, if you know his place. O hero, now quickly go to the very powerful demons. Wage a fierce battle which will mature well (i.e. give you good fruit) in heaven.

Having heard (these) words of Durvāraṇa Jālandhara went to fight with Śiva, the meditating sage.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Śukra is Confined by Kṛtyā inside Her Vulva

Nārada said:

1-5. Then Jālandhara saw the battlefield which was fierce due to the heaps of headless trunks, and which was inaccessible due to flow of blood and flesh and due to marrow, fat and bones. There, on the battlefield, the demon Jālandhara who was distressed due to his wife being kidnapped, saw Śiva, the lord of Pārvatī, who was mounted upon a bull, whose body was adorned with the hood of a fierce serpent, who was marked with the (crescent) moon on the mass of his matted hair, and whose body

was graced with the flame coming out of his eye. The Ocean's son saw him not fighting. Having quickly got into his chariot, the Ocean's son, getting angry, then said to Śumbha: "You have not killed the ascetic." Śumbha said to Jālandhara: "He has practised great (i.e. severe) austerities. Therefore, he cannot be killed. Śiva is invincible in the battle."

6-11. Having heard these words of Śumbha, the Ocean's son was violent with anger, and taking the Kalakedāra bow, he (i.e. Jālandhara) went to Śiva, surrounded by a thousand padma army of the demons. In the battle the dreadful (demon) discharged many arrows that were sharp, very large and that had iron props, as a cloud showers (water) on its arrival. In the battle, Śiva's attendants stopped the Ocean's son who was coming (to Śiva). Then (the demon) was angrily struck by Śiva with volleys of fearful arrows. By Śiva's arrows his armour was knocked down on the ground. He, even without the armour, looked like a mountain left by a cloud. The body of Jālandhara was again nailed by Śiva with arrows. From Jālandhara's body much blood flowed. By means of the stream of blood the entire earth was moistened.

12-17. Then the gods were frightened and the dèmons trembled. The brave pramathas left the battlefield and fled. A great form like that of a river spread everywhere. Then the Ocean's son said to Śiva: "You are the best among the archers. Now I shall do that by which you will perish." Speaking like this, he took up the Kalakedāra bow with the arrows and quickly filled (i.e. covered) Śiva with various kinds of arrows. On the battlefield Śiva with his body covered with crores (of arrows) shone like the sky with birds or a great mountain with trees. Seeing that Śiva was covered with those arrows discharged by the demon (Jālandhara), Vīrabhadra angrily ran to Jālandhara. The powerful and magnanimous (Vīrabhadra) troubled the Ocean's son.

18-23. Jālandhara, the brave son of the Ocean, who was angry, piercing (Vīrabhadra) with thousands of arrows reduced to pieces as small as the sesamum-seeds, with his arrows, (Vīrabhadra's) bow, arrows, chariot, umbrella and charioteer. Then Vīrabhadra, who was without his chariot, struck the Ocean's son with a mace. In the same way he (i.e. Jālandhara) too struck him with a mace and knocked him down on the ground. Seeing him fallen due to the stroke with mace, and very much bewildered, Maṇibhadra.

then ran to Jālandhara in the battle. Seeing him who was very angry, coming (to him), the demon, son of the River (Gaṅgā) scattered his implements with his arrows. Then shaking off his bewilderment, he, roaring like a lion, got up. Then Vīrabhadra and the valourous Maṇibhadra angrily struck with two rocks the River's son remaining in the sky.

24-27. Seeing the two rocks to have fallen on his body, Vīrabhadra roared and struck the River's son (i.e. Jālandhara) with the blow of his fist. Maṇibhdra seized the Ocean's son by his feet and whirled him from his chariot. That was a great wonder. The very powerful king of the demons, though seized by Maṇibhadra, struck Maṇibhadra with the blows of his feet and knocked him down. That mighty-armed Jālandhara also (knocked down) Vīrabhadra with (the blow of) his fist. Then Nandikeśvara surrounded by attendants came (there).

28-35a. Seeing him coming Śumbha with his soldiers obstructed him. Then the attendants (of Śiva) and the demons came to one another fighting duels. In the battle Śumbha went to (fight with) Śilādaja, and Rāhu to (fight with) Mahākāla. Niśumbha ran to Kolāhala and Ketu to Kāla. Śailodara (ran) to Guha (i.e. Kārtikeya) and the very mighty Jambha (rushed) to Mālyavat. Mahāpārśva went to Caṇḍa and Caṇḍīśa to Romakaṇṭaka. Vikaṭāsya went to Bhṛṅgī and Urunetra to Gajānana. In this way the chiefs of the attendants went (to fight with) the lordly demons. Then Śilādaja, having an ape-like face, struck by the weapons and arrows of Śumbha, bruised him with great peaks of mountains. Śumbha, afflicted by that, struck Śilādaja with a śakti. Then in the battle Mahākāla struck that Rāhu with a śakti. He struck his chariot with a great rock. The brave Kolāhala was struck with a śakti by Niśumbha. Taking a śakti, he struck his chariot with the charioteer.

35b-41. The very angry demon, the lord of demons, who was without a chariot, struck Kolāhala with a sahasraphaṇin (a serpent-like weapon). Having struck him, he speedily went to another chariot. Struck with the phaṇicakra in the battle, he, in a moment, shook off his swoon, quickly got down from his chariot, took a sword and shield, and cut off everything including the chariot of Niśumbha. Again getting into his chariot, he struck the demon with arrows. The very strong Niśumbha too,

amazed at his valour, very angrily destroyed with a śakti his chariot with the horses. Kolāhala, the mighty one who was without his chariot, went running to Niśumbha and by chaining his arms rendered him who had a chariot, chariotless. Kāla seized Ketu's tail and whirled him into the sky. He too threw a rock. He (i.e. Kāla) quickly cut off the rock.

42-45. Seeing the rock pounded, he struck him (i.e. Ketu) with his fist. Kāla with his entire body bruised by Ketu, ran away through fear. In the same way Śailodara struck Kārtikeya on his chest with a mace. Kārtikeya also struck him with a śakti and knocked him down on the ground. Seeing the demon dead due to the stroke of the śakti, Kārtikeya roared. There was a surprise as when Krauñca was rent asunder. With volleys of arrows Mālyavat struck Jambha in the battle. Jambha too left him swooning after piercing him with sharp arrows.

46-51a. Then Mahāpārśva seized the chariot with volleys of arrows and rendering it horseless easily took it into the sky and knocked down the horseless chariot at Caṇḍa. Seeing the chariot without horses, Caṇḍa took up (i.e. mounted upon) an elephant. Caṇḍa struck with his mace Mahāpārśva attacking him. That very fierce demon, ignoring the blow of the mace, struck Caṇḍa with his fist and knocked him on the ground. The great demon Romakaṇṭha, struck by the weapon of Caṇḍīśa, seized Caṇḍīśa by the feet and dropped him on the top of chariot. All of a sudden he fell on the ground, and he of fearful eyes, went to (attack) him. Gajānana was struck with arrows by Urunetra in the battle. He struck him with his tusk in his chest and knocked him down on the ground.

51b-57. In a moment Urunetra became pacified, quickly came to the chariot, and, with a mallet, struck (Gajānana) on his head adorned with red lead. (Gajānana) the lord of (Śiva's) attendants struck the demon (Urunetra) on his chest with a spear having a sharp edge. From his mouth came out a great demon having nine heads and eighteen arms. O king, he too ran to (Gajānana) the son of Śiva. Gajānana was obstructed by Navaśīrṣa and Urunetra. Though his body was wounded, he angrily took an axe. With that the chief of the attendants (of Śiva) cut off their weapons in the battle. Seeing that Gajānana was obstructed by the two (demons), Senānī—Kārtikeya—quickly

came (there) and killed Navaśīrṣa. Having killed Navaśīrṣa in the battle, he ran to Urunetra. O king, with the blow of his (weapon called) śakti, Kārtikeya knocked him down. Jālandhara, seeing Kārtikeya, and surrounded by his army went to (attack) him.

58-62a. Śiva too through affection for his son and with his attendants (came there) to kill the demons. Then between the two armies a wouderful and very fierce battle took place. In the battle between Śiva and the Ocean's son the heaven and earth were as if lifeless. Then the angry Jālandhara, the lord of the demons, fixed a fierce arrow and with that arrow adorned all round with feathers numbering a thousand hundreds, struck Śiva on his forehead. It sank up to its feathered part into Śiva's head like the moon and like the sun in the evening in the autumn at the end of the summer.

62b-66. Then Śiva took up a great arrow which resembled fire, in whose speed there was wind (i.e. which was speedy like wind), at the head of which remained fire and the sun, at whose knots remained death; in the arrow goddess Dharā (the earth) remained. With that arrow Śiva quickly pierced the Ocean's son in his chest. Due to the stroke of the arrow, he, with his body wounded by that arrow, and wet with a stream of blood, fell down like a mountain struck by thunderbolt. At that time the demons wailed, and the pramathas (the goblin-attendants of Śiva) roared. Seeing the Ocean's son fainted, the demons obstructed Śiva. Some were eager to protect him, others stood around him.

67-70. While Jālandhara, the Ocean's son was in a swoon, Śiva struck the army of Jālandhara with arrows. After a long time Jālandhara gave up the swoon (i.e. regained consciousness), and, full of fear, saw his army killed (by Śiva) and dispersed on the battlefield; he mentally remembered his great preceptor, Śukra. Remembered by him, Śukra quickly came to Jālandhara. Wishing him well, Śukra said to the Ocean's son: "O great king, O mighty one, what mission of you should I do?"

Nārada said:

71. Hearing these words of Śukra, Jālandhara very much honoured Śukra, his preceptor, and saluting him said:

The king said:

72-76. O Śukra, bring back to life all these demons that are dead all around.

Thus addressed by the Ocean's son in the battle, he observed the army which measured twentyfive thousand yojanas and which was further and further crowded with the bodies and chariots of the demons piled up on earth up to ninetyfive yojanas. (He) then (saw) the earth as it were full of the bodies of the warriors and horses (and elephants). Having sprinkled the demons with charmed water, Śukra made them rise up. While Śiva tied firmly the mass of his matted hair with serpents, Śukra made the army rise up by means of a charm.

77-80. Śiva thought on seeing the demons that had come, as lions do on seeing tigers or lordly elephants do on seeing pigs: 'What has happened here? Somewhere he creates (i.e. brings back to life) the dead.' Thinking like this on the battlefield, Śiva saw on the battlefield, Śukra bringing back the demons to life and running faster (i.e. very fast). Then Śiva who was angry, made up his mind to kill Śukra. Requesting the Trident-holder (Śiva) in private, Śukra said to him: "I am a brāhmaṇa. How do (i.e. can) you kill a brāhmaṇa skilled in all lores? O Śiva, you will incur (the sin of killing) a brāhmaṇa on killing me."

81-84. Hearing these words of Śukra, Śiva gave up the trident. On remembering the former account, viz. the sticking of Brahmā's head (he thought:) 'A brāhmaṇa is not to be killed, even if he takes away one's life dear to one. But this (Śukra) who is bringing the demons back to life, must be fully curbed by me. Therefore, I shall quickly throw him leading the life of a demon, into the vulva of a woman.' From the third eye of Śiva who was thinking like this, a female deity to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes, quickly (came out). She was naked, very fierce; she had let loose her hair; her belly was big. Her breasts were big and hanging; Her vulva, fangs and eyes were fearful.

85-89. Śiva, who was addressed by her, 'Order (me)', said to her: "O Kṛtyā, put quickly the wicked-minded preceptor of the demons into your vulva; and carry (i.e. keep) him in your vulva

till I kill Jālandhara. After the demon Jālandhara is killed, you take him out and release him." That deity to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes, who was thus told by Śiva, ran to Śukra. On seeing her the demon fell on the ground; and the demons fled. Shaking Śukra by seizing his hair, she embraced Śukra, and laughing, she held him in her vulva, O Jayanandana. Seeing his preceptor put by the deity into her vulva when Jālandhara fixed the arrows, she disappeared.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Jālandhara Is Killed

Śrī Nārada said:

1-8. Then Jālandhara said to Śiva: "O Śiva, protect yourself now. O Śiva, I shall today throw you there where Viṣṇu lives. Then, having dragged Brahmā, I shall throw him into the ocean. When all of you are seized (by me) I am then the lord of all." Having spoken like this, he entrusted the responsibility of the army on the demons Śumbha etc. The warriors like Niśumbha guarded the endless four-limbed army. Seeing all the excellent demons like Śumbha, Niśumbha, Pheṁkāra, Pheruṇḍa, Dhūmralocana, Ketu, Biḍālajaṅgha, Rāhu, Durvāraṇa and Yama, so also Kālāsura, Lavaṇa, Bhūmiretas and the demon Andhaka, and Raktavīrya and others, Caṇḍin and Cāmuṇḍin, ready to fight in the battle, the attendants of Śiva like Vīrabhadra and others, confronted them in the battle, O king. Then a horrible, fierce and thrilling battle took place, in which even the principal demons, suffering from wounds, fell (down). O king, the attendants (of Śiva) struck with all weapons by Śumbha and others in the great war, fell and others fled.

9-12. The demons, having vanquished the attendants, confronted Śiva. They showered him with volleys of arrows, as the clouds shower the Meru mountain. Then Śiva, seated upon his bull (Nandin), drew his bow and struck with volleys of arrows the demons on the battlefield. The powerful one struck the

demons with arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads. He quickly killed the remaining army on the battlefield with weapons and missiles. The battlefield was covered with elephants, men and horses that had fallen (in the battlefield).

13-18a. It appeared like the earth (covered) with mountains cut off by thunderbolt. Then the Ocean's son fashioned an illusory (form of) Gaurī that was endowed with the quality of beauty and adorned with all ornaments. Making an illusory (form of) Jayā the Ocean's son said: "Quickly go in front of Śiva, and quickly fascinate him on the battlefield." The illusory Jayā thus addressed, went (to Śiva). Having gone to the battlefield and with her hair let loose she wept. Asked by Śiva, she said: "From the mountain north of Mānasa your dear wife, Pārvatī, O god, has been kidnapped by the Ocean's son." Hearing these words of her, the bull-bannered (god Śiva) said to her: "O Jayā, you go to the bull (Nandin). The demons will kidnap you."

18b-24. Then, Jayā, mounting upon the bull (Nandin) and embracing Śiva, said: "O Hara, I (shall) go. I cannot live without Pārvatī." Taking the moon that had entered the matted hair of Śiva, she—the illusory form—quickly got down from the bull. Clasped by the illusory form, he went to the battlefield. Then hearing that Pārvatī was kidnapped, Śiva became worried. O king, encircled by the demon's illusion, he did not recognise himself. In the meanwhile, the Ocean's son surrounded by a great army, came after having put the illusory Pārvatī in his chariot to Śiva. In the same way, there was the sound of musical instruments in (i.e. declaring) the victory of Jālandhara, due to which the earth shook and the mountains echoed. The Ocean's son showed Pārvatī to Śiva. Rudra (i.e. Śiva) too saw his dear wife who was distressed due to separation (from him), who was helpless, who was slim and whose eyes were overanxious, sitting in his enemy's chariot.

25-30a. She was again and again crying, "O lord, O dear Rudra." Śiva saw Pārvatī seated in the strong enemy's chariot like the sacred text remaining in the possession of a heretic. 'How shall I get (back) my beloved?' (Like this), Śambhu deluded by the demon's illusion lamented. 'O dear one, the demons deluded me. How have you been kidnapped?'

The Ocean's son, seeing Śiva bewildered with grief and delusion, laughed and uttered (these) words as kind (person would do). "You are without any authority. You are without sexual love. Though you are the lord, you have become miserable without Pārvatī. O Śiva, do not weep. I (shall) give you your dear wife. Having taken Pārvati, I have spared you the fight."

30b-36. Speaking like this to Śiva, he got down Pārvatī from the chariot. Then he sent his army towards Śaṅkara. To take Pārvatī who was crying "Protect (me), protect (me)", Śiva too, along with (his) bull (Nandin), quickly ran towards his (i.e. Jālandhara's) army. When Śiva seized Pārvatī with his hand, the demon Śumbha quickly seized her and remained in the sky. The mighty Śiva discharged his spear to kill the demon Śumbha. Śumbha left her and she fell on the spear. She, beautiful in all limbs and weeping, when left, fell along with the spear in front of Śiva, and saying "All right" died (there only). Rudra, seeing the illusory Pārvatī dead, was full of grief and delusion, and wailing "O dear one", he fell in a swoon on the ground. Having regained consciousness (after) a moment, he cursed Śumbha and others on the battlefield: "Pārvatī will kill you."

Nārada said:

37-42. O king, in the previous age of Manu the demons Śumbha and others were knocked down by the goddess due to Śiva's curse. Having cursed them and having gone out he wailed, "O dear one, where have you gone after abandoning me, the distressed one, on the battlefield? Giving up attachment for me, I Śaṅkara, am made distressed by separation from you. O dear one, even Viṣṇu does not know me to be abandoned by you (i.e. does not know that you have left me). O goddess, in the fire-vessel of Dakṣa, you had offered your head. You were again obtained by me. (Then) how do you abandon me again? O you of a beautiful body, O Girijā, get up, get up. Communicate with me." In the meanwhile, Brahmā remaining in the group of deities, knowing that Śiva was deluded by the demon's illusion, came (there). He who was invisible, spoke to the wailing Śiva:

Brahmā said:

43-45. You are without grief, delusion, father and mother. You do not have pain, pleasure, son, a wife, or an enemy. You are not born of a father, nor will you be born (of a father). You are looked upon (like this) by the sages? (Then) whence this delusion? O lord, you are one; you have taken up various forms, as the sun is seen (to be many) in the waves of the water. Those who observe restraint, reach by means of meditation your feet, the great form, unintelligible, and quite indescribable. This your beloved is not distressed like you. O god, give up the illusion fashioned by Jālandhara. That Pārvatī has gone into the bud of a lotus. Fight; kill the multitude of enemies. Protect us.

46-52. Having heard these words of Brahmā, Śiva knew (the illusion). Knowing the demon's illusion, he threw a large rock (at the demons). With that he killed three hundred crores of demons. O king, then having very angrily mounted upon his bull (i.e. Nandin), Śiva took his Pināka bow and arrows. Then the son of the Ocean (i.e. Jālandhara), seeing Śiva, free from the illusion, manifested quickly another group of illusions which deluded the lord of gods, which was very wonderful, which was very powerful. Jālandhara turned into (one) having a crore of arms and fought Śiva with trees, weapons and missiles; and he, the Ocean's son, put the earth that was decorated with the red chalk into the intermediate space; and the Ocean's son made the earth adorned with many charming temples of deities, full of various (kinds of) flowers. Celestial nymphs, more lovely than Menakā danced there. Śambhu, forgot (to fight) and instantly abandoned the bow, and deluded by (the sound of) musical instruments and songs and by the tāṇḍava dance of the lord of demons, started, being mounted upon the bull.

53-60. Seeing Śiva seated on the bull deluded, the Ocean in an embodied form, to delude him, roared with tāṇḍava, songs, musical instruments, and dances. He, constantly being rejoiced, threw the beings into the ocean; "Where are all those deities? Where are the attendants led by Nandin? You who are respectable, are deluded by the demon's illusion. O lord Śambhu, why do you neglect (him)? Taking out the disc remaining in your belly, and fashioned for killing him only, O Maheśa, kill

Jālandhara with that in the battle." By (i.e. on hearing) these words of Kṛṣṇa, and recollecting himself to be the lord, he quickly mounted upon the bull and came to the great battle. Seeing that Śiva coming, that angry demon Jālandhara surrounded by his entire army, stopped him. The form of Śiva, who was angry, (was one that) would destroy the creation. In his third eye there were fires and the demons were like moths. O king, seeing the lord's form full of fierce flames, the demons like Śumbha, so also those like Rāhu seeing Śiva, were frightened and through fear they entered the nether world.

61-66. Seeing many soldiers killed in the great war, and seeing certain demons like Śumbha that were spared, and (seeing a few) who had fled away, Jālandhara remained on the battlefield like a mountain. Seeing actually the true form of Rudra, he was delighted. Then Jālandhara laughed and said to Śiva: "Withdraw your (fierce) form with which you are burning (the world with) the mobile and the immobile. Give up your divine power and fight with a weapon." Hearing these words of Jālandhara, Śiva then said (to him:) "O lord of demons, ask for a boon. I am pleased with your deed that you are fearless even after having seen such a (fierce) form. O demon, even the entire universe is not able to look at this form of me and at my lustre. (But) you are fearless in that respect."

Nārada said:

67-71. Regarding this to be a favour of Śiva, Jālandhara, having no desire for the mundane existence, asked from him release as a boon in the form of absorption into him.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

O demon, this your divine body endowed with all pleasures and divine powers, and lovely due to Vṛndā and charming remaining here will meet with death here. Not knowing the highest soul that is one and immutable, for a while, how do you give it up? How do you desire salvation? Your dear queen Vṛndā has been taken away through divine power. Having known the nature of Brahman, she has reached that highest position. Now she is difficult to obtain, so also that position is

difficult to obtain. Ask for a boon in the worldly existence between heaven and salvation.

Jālandhara said:

72-75. O god, the position of salvation is obtained by a blessed one. Now I am blessed, since, struck by you I am seeing you.

Śiva said:

O demon, if you are eager to go to my place, a holy place, then (striking me) with strong arrows, quickly make me angry. Then, O sinless one, I shall kill you, (and) you will go to my place.

Hearing the words of the great god, Jālandhara said to Śiva: "I shall not first strike you who are adorable to the whole world."

Nārada said:

76-81. Thus addressed, Śiva quickly struck the Ocean's son with arrows and those arrows stuck to the Ocean's son's body shone as the bamboos blazing with fire shine on the skirt of Lohagiri. Jālandhara filled the body of Śiva with arrows. With those arrows Rudra shone like the sky full of birds. Then, O king, a duel took place between Jālandhara and god (Śiva). There is no other striker than Śiva. There is no other one than the Ocean's son who bears (the strokes). With thousands of crores of mountains taken out from the cavity of the earth, the Ocean's son filled the lord of Pārvatī in the battle. Then the demon (Jālandhara) was struck on his chest with a spear by Śiva. From his mouth fearful and yawning Jvara emerged. He having the face of a lion and a human figure was (called) Vīrajvara.

82-92. Seeing Jvara having a lion's face, moving out of the demon's body, (Śiva) made a 'hum' sound. From it a Śarabha[1] came out. He was knocked down by the Śarabha, sent out by

1. Śarabha: A fabulous animal said to have eight legs and be stronger than a lion.

Śiva. Seeing that Saṅkara, along with the lord of bulls (viz. Nandin) invincible, that Ocean's son speedily came near the bull. Seizing the bull by his tail, he whirled him into the sky. (That) mighty-armed Jālandhara threw him on the Himālaya mountain. Then Girijā's husband (i.e. Śiva) discharged the very fierce trident. Catching it with his hand near Śiva, the lord of the demons, the Ocean's son, mounted upon his chariot, took the bow (called) Kalakedāra, and filled with arrows Śiva standing on the earth. Śiva cut off his weapons and arrows and pounded with arrows his chariot which was ten yojanas extensive, along with the charioteer and horses. Jālandhara too, who was chariotless, ran to Śiva in the battle. A fierce, wonderful and thrilling battle took place between the two. Seeing it. the deities, through fear of the unexpected deluge, trembled. The two, of a fearful valour, shaking the earth by means of their foot(-steps) and making the sky tremble with the sounds struck each other with all missiles.Then seeing the great might of the lord of demons, Śiva, through his divine power, took a multitude of weapons. Then a demon, having a crore of arms and with eyes fearful due to the fangs, though without a weapon, quickly ran to Śiva.

93-99. On the battlefield he bound Śiva with the bond of his large arms. Then with a sword he cut off the jungle (i.e. multitude) of his hands. Rudra, overpowered by the arms of the Ocean's son, became dark blue. The Ocean's son easily fought with him. Though his hands were cut off, he fought as Rāhu (would fight) with his head. The River's son (Jālandhara) pleased Śiva with his fighting. Śiva who was pleased, said: "Ask for a difficult boon." Jālandhara too said to him: "Give me your position. Please do not insult me who am without arms and weapons. Quickly give me a divine power; otherwise I shall destroy you." Saying so, and being equipped with arms he struck him on his chest. Then, vomitting from his mouth the Sudarśana disc which he himself had formerly fashioned, he took it in his hand and angrily raised it. Its brilliance was like that of a crore of suns and it was swallowing (the world including) the mobile and the immobile.

100-106. With that disc the head of Jālandhara was cut off (by Śiva). Then that head flew into the sky to (the distance of) a hundred yojanas. O king, then it having a terrible mouth

with a hundred fangs, having eyes of heaven and earth, went, with the speed of a tiger to the house of Brahmā. Then again seeing the head in heaven Śiva ran to the head, from which blood was oozing and which was making a fearful sound. Then the quarters disappeared, and the sky (too) disappeared. The light of the luminaries was not there, and the earth trembled through fear. Rudra, with the disc, quickly cut off the head coming to him. Being cut into two it fell upon the Himālaya mountain. Then the pieces of Jālandhara's head quickly entered Śiva when all the beings were watching it.

107-112. That trunk of Jālandhara, red due to blood, danced. Again and again demons sprang up from his throat. They were repeatedly struck by Śiva with the disc. The entire earth was filled with the marrow of the Ocean's son. O king, due to the marrow only, Medinī (i.e. the earth) got that name. In the northern region of Kailāsa, where the blood of the excellent demon turned into a hill, the city (called) Śoṇitapura was (situated). Then seeing the heaps of flesh covering every place, the lord (i.e. Śiva) remembered his sixtyfour attendants. Due to the discerning recollection the goddesses also reached the vicinity of Śiva. With the palms of their hands folded they said: "O Śiva, what do (i.e. should) we do?"

Mahādeva said:

113-120. Together you who are permitted by me, should quickly eat the heaps of the demon's flesh which resemble mountains.

Brāhmī, Māheśvarī and Kaumārī so also Vaiṣṇavī and Vārāhī, and Māhendrī, (all) thus ordered by Śiva, and shining with their own attendants, looked at the heaps of flesh with a cruel eye, and in a moment they vanished. Then the weak body of Jālandhara was powerfully approached by śaktis. When his body was seized by them, from his body came out a lustre; it reached Śiva and in a moment it disappeared. That lustre resembling the sun's lustre, got merged into Śiva. Thus the enemy of gods met his destruction from Śiva. Maheśvara being pleased, said to them all: "Ask for a boon." Then all those female attendants asked the lord of the world: "Those men in the mortal worlds, who desire enjoyments and salvation and boons, will always worship the group of

your attendants (the Yoginīs) in their house. Due to your favour all that is desired by them will come about."

Mahādeva said:

121-128. I am the giver of a boon to him on the earth, whosoever will every day devoutly worship your group. To my devotee or that of Viṣṇu who hates the group of Yoginīs, I shall be terrible and will take away his religious merit.

Thus were boons given to the Yoginīs in the battle. In the meanwhile Śiva remembered that Bhavānī (his wife) and his bull (Nandin). On just being remembered Pārvatī and the bull came there in a moment. Śiva's beloved (i.e. Pārvatī) came there along with her friends. Giving up her Bhrāmarī form, she mounted upon half the portion of (the body of) Hara. Then, O king, with Pārvatī, Śiva rejoiced. To the Yoginīs he said: "Drink the blood on the trunk of Jālandhara. Hearing it they were very much delighted. The Yoginīs, after (eating and) drinking the flesh, marrow and blood danced with joy. Then seeing their sport, Śiva was pleased; and taking up his Bhairava form, he drank it in the midst of them. The group of the Yoginīs were of sharp fangs and huge bodies.

129-132. Even today at (this) time they are seizing the flesh. Therefore, demon Jālandhara killed in battle, does not get up. Then there came the groups of deities like Brahmā. The sages, the Maruts and the gods praised the great lord (Śiva). The quarters were bright; fragrant breezes blew; showers of flowers fell from the sky. The drums also, that were beaten, produced sound above (i.e. in the sky) when he was consecrated. Then the earth was sprinkled with the continuous showers of honey by the swarms of bees going over it and humming sweetly, being blinded by the fragrance. In his assembly fell the shower of flowers dropped by gods.

133-136. When the Ocean's son was killed by Śiva with the strokes of the arrows, shower of flowers appeared (there), beautiful women danced and, yakṣas led by gods and kinnaras sang (songs). Śiva, having great fame due to his victory, and then being praised by groups of gods, siddhas and cāraṇas, went to his own mountain. From the mountain, Pārvatī also surroun-

ded by her friends, went to the Śveta mountain. The divine damsels waited upon her with a shower of flowers. Lord Śiva, the kind god, knowing (this) established the groups of gods in their own positions, and gave them his wealth. What more should be said when great pity would be shown by the lord? Or which other god is there who would bring under his control the earth on all sides? Gods having got (back) their kingdom, shone as before. Being the regents of quarters (again) they shared portions in sacrifices.

Nārada said:

137-142. O king, I have thus narrated in a sequence to you the very wonderful account of Jālandhara, hero of the world. Even now Viṣṇu being under his sway, does not leave the Milky Ocean. Know that everyone enjoys the fruit of his own act(s). To remove your grief I have told you this excellent account. As long as the body lasts, a man being influenced, experiences (the fruits of) his actions—pains and pleasures. O king, there is no greater refuge than knowledge. Even Kṛṣṇa and others when bound in a body have pleasure, pain etc. Then what can be said about others who are averse to detachment? Knowing that such is the course of acts, which is the strongest of all, be patient, wait for the arrival of auspicious acts again. At (the proper) time, you will, after vanquishing your enemies, regain your kingdom.

143-148. Having heard this account, (a man) is not overcome by griefs. Here (the four goals of human life, viz.) righteousness, material welfare, sensual enjoyments and salvation are properly told. A brāhmaṇa gets the auspicious knowledge leading to heaven, removing sins, destroying delusion, and a kṣatriya obtains a kingdom. Hearing (it) a vaiśya would obtain wealth, and a śūdra happiness. A weak king who is deprived of his kingdom but remains on the good path, again obtains his kingdom by hearing it every day. O King, after hearing this, the good do not like to hear anything else, as a man does not like to hear the harsh crying of crows after hearing the sweet notes of cuckoos. Having heard this guileless account, he who is dear to the hearts of the good, should please the reader (of this

account) by (giving him) gold, sesamum-seeds, garments etc. and land. When he is pleased, he would get the (desired) fruit.

149-155. When the reader—the preceptor—is honoured, the deities also would be pleased. He should give gifts of food and honour brāhmaṇas. He, being prosperous with sons and grandsons, is always victorious. He who listens to this excellent account, is born in Viṣṇu's world. O king, those best men who, under this pretext, listen to the cause of the rise of Tulasī, have no sin anywhere. By listening to or telling this auspicious, sin-removing greatness of Tulasī (a man) undoubtedly attains salvation. By seeing Tulasī destroying sins, planted in one's house, the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder perishes. There is no doubt about this. (A man) should worship Viṣṇu with Tulasī (leaves) in Kārtika and Māgha. Viṣṇu's worship in Vaiśākha is especially laid down. Even by once going round it, all the sin goes (away). Those śūdras who are always engaged in (giving) gifts, are purified within (due) time. Their bodies also become worthy of worshipping deities. Those devotees of Viṣṇu, now very rare in this Kali age, have gone far away from sins.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

A Description of Śrīśaila

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O Nārada, where is that charming mountain Śrīśaila? Which is the holy place there? Which god is worshipped there? Tell me now in which direction it is said to lie in the world.

Nārada said :

2-9. O king, listen; I shall describe the best mountain Śriśaila, hearing about which people are free from such sins as killing a child. The grove on the mountain is charming and is resorted to by sages. It is full of many trees and creepers adorned with various kinds of flowers. It is resounding with the notes of

swans and cuckoos. The mountain grove is made fragrant with śrī trees, kapittha trees, śirīṣa and rāja trees. So also with pārijātaka flowers and with kadambas and udumbaras, with many fragrant flowers. It is very much resorted to by all the wives of the sages with their disciples. Some are engaged in studies and some in lectures. Some there have raised their hands; others are standing on their toes. Some are engrossed in meditation upon Śiva; others are devoted to Viṣṇu. Some are not eating anything; some are given to eating leaves. Some eat bulbs, roots and fruits; others have observed the vow of silence. Some are standing on one foot; some are sitting in the Padmāsana[1] posture. Some, eating no food, have practised very difficult penance.

10-13. There are auspicious hermitages and various beautiful rivers. There are many natural ponds and many tanks. O great king, all around is indeed seen the mountain, on which, O king, Mallikārjuna always remains. On top of the mountain is the charming peak, on merely seeing which peak (one gets) salvation. There is no doubt about it. Resorting to (i.e. in) the south stands the best mountain. Here is very beautiful Pātālagaṅgā.

14-18. Merely by bathing there (i.e. in it) a man is free from great sins. On seeing the peak of Śrīśaila, on dying at Vārāṇasī and on drinking water at Kedāra certainly there is no rebirth. It is a great place of the ascetics and meditating saints. Therefore, with every effort one should see it. This is Vijñānadeva (god of wisdom). He destroys great sins. There is the charming city Siddhapura giving divine pleasures, in which celestial damsels sing and rejoice. Therefore, this best mountain gives joy on seeing it. Those men who desire salvation, should see it.

1. Padmāsana: A particular posture in religious meditation. In it the left foot is placed on the right thigh. Then the right foot is placed on the left thigh.

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Story of Sagara

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-5. O best divine sage, hear about the very auspicious Haridvāra. Gaṅgā flows there (i.e. by it); and it is said to be the best holy place. There gods, sages and men dwell. (So also) there god Viṣṇu himself always takes resort (i.e. lives). O child, this great holy place came about in ancient days. On merely seeing it sin goes away. Here due to special religious merit Gaṅgā has become very holy. Due to her touching Viṣṇu's feet she has the water of (i.e. coming from) the feet of Viṣṇu. O wise one, Bhagīratha brought her along the path. The magnanimous one (thus) emancipated his ancestors.

Nārada said:

6-9a. O god, who is the Bhagīratha of great penance to whom you have referred, who brought the holy (water) for the good of the people? The holy place on Gaṅgā is very auspicious and destroys all sins. All people say like this that it is the best holy place. He who, even from (a distance of) hundreds of yojanas would say 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā', is freed from all sins, and goes to Viṣṇu's world. How did he bring it? What (was his) act? Tell that, O you of a good vow.

Mahādeva said:

9b-16. Who brought Gaṅgā, how he brought it at the very beautiful Gaṅgādvāra—all that I shall tell you in due order. Formerly there lived Hariścandra, (the only one) observing truth in the three worlds. He had a son, Rohita, solely devoted to Viṣṇu. He too had a son, called Vṛka, most righteous and established on a good path. In his family was born his son Subāhu. His son was Gara by name. He was extremely righteous. Some time, for (some) reason, the king became extremely unhappy due to fate. For religious reasons he was not censured in his country. Taking his family he went to Bhārgava's hermitage. Through compassion he was then protected by Bhārgava there. O brāhmaṇa, there a son named Sagara was born to him.

Looked after by Bhārgava, he then grew in the holy hermitage. He performed all (sacraments like) thread-ceremony of (i.e. befitting) a kṣatriya. He learnt (the use of) weapons and studied the Vedas.

17-24. Having received the missile of (i.e. presided over by) Agni, king Sagara moved on the earth and killed Tālajaṅghas with Haihayas. He, of a great penance, also killed Pāradas with Śakas.

Nārada said:

O Śaṅkara, tell in detail the greatness of Sagara. The very powerful great king of the solar dyansty is well-known.

Mahādeva said:

Due to a calamity of (i.e. befalling) Gara, his kingdom was taken away by Haihayas, Tālajaṅghas and Śakas, O Nārada. These tribes—Yavanas, Pāradas, Kāmbojas and Śakas (showed) valour. That king Gara whose kingdom was snatched, then went to a forest. The distressed one followed by his wife, died (there). His auspicious wife was pregnant and observing a vow. Formerly, he with his wife had chosen (i.e. gone to) Bhārgava with a desire for a son. She, having arranged the funeral pyre of her husband in the forest, wept. Aurva (the family preceptor) prevented Gara's wife, O Nārada. He told her about that son (of her) most righteous, good and dear (to all).

25-28. When she was told about the son, she refrained from dying. Then after two months he rose (i.e. was born) in Aurva's hermitage. Aurva performed his sacraments like the birth-rite. O great sage, thread-ceremony etc. took place there. Due to his contact with Aurva, he studied everything like Veda etc. Having taught him Vedas and sacred texts, he taught him (the use of) the missile of (i.e. presided over by) Agni, difficult to bear even for gods, O glorious one. He was endowed with that power of spiritual life in the battle.

29-36. Being angry, he quickly killed Haihayas with his might. He captivated them and obtained fame in the (three) worlds. Then those Śakas with Yavanas, so also Kāmbojas and Pallavas, being struck by him, sought the shelter of Vasiṣṭha. Vasiṣṭha, the very lustrous one, having made an agreement kept

away king Sagara after granting them protection from fear. Sagara, keeping his pledge and the preceptor's words, struck them righteously, and made them deformed. He half-shaved the heads of Śakas and sent them away. He completely shaved the heads of Yavanas and also of Kāmbojas. Pāradas are clean-shaved; Pallavas keep moustache. Having thus vanquished all he collected religious merit. Having conquered this earth, the all-righteous victorious king quickly prepared for (the performance of) a horse-sacrifice. His horse, moving near the south-east ocean, was taken away near the shore and was taken into the (interior of the) earth.

37-42. Then through his sons he got that region dug up everywhere. They digging there did not find the horse in the great ocean. They who were in a hurry, saw there an ancient man—the ancient man was Kapila, the lord of the worlds. The fire produced from the eyes of him getting awake, burnt sixty thousand of them; (only) four of them remained (unburnt). O brāhmaṇa, (the four) continuing his family (were:) Hṛṣīketu, Suketu, the other one Dharmaratha, and the brave Pañcajana. The revered lord Viṣṇu himself gave him five boons: (continuation of) family, salvation, good fame, ocean and son. Due to that act he got the state of ocean. He obtained that sacrificial horse from the ocean. He, of a great fame, performed a hundred horse sacrifices.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

The Greatness of Haridvāra

Nārada said:

1. O you master of knowledge, tell (me) how those very mighty, brave, valorous sons of Sagara, sixy thousand in number, were born.

The lord of Pārvatī said:

2-8. Sagara had two wives whose sins were burnt by penance. Aurva, the best sage, being pleased, granted them boons: One

(queen) chose sixty thousand powerful sons. The (other) one, having the boon, asked for one son supporting the family. Then in a gourd one gave birth to many brave sons. They were brought up in due course by the nurses. The boys enhanced love when the pitchers were filled with ghee. For the magnanimous ones the cows were milked. The noble ones grew due to that milk only. One son by name Pañcajana became the king. Then there was the powerful (son) of Pañcajana named Aṁśumat. Dilīpa was his son, and his son was Bhagīratha. He, of a good vow, brought (to the earth) the greatest river, Gaṅgā. Having brought her to the ocean, he made her his daughter.

Nārada said:

9. How did he bring Gaṅgā? What (kind of) penance did he practise? Tell me all that. O you treasure of kindness, you are of a good vow.

Mahādeva said:

10-16. For the well-being of his ancestors he went to the Himālaya mountain. Having gone there he practised penance for a myriad years. That first god who is untinged, was pleased (with him). This Gaṅgā given by him came (here) from the sky. There god Viśveśvara always remains. Seeing Gaṅgā coming, he seized that Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā). He held her in the mass of his matted hair for a myriad years. Due to the prowess of the lord Gaṅgā did not move out of it. Then he (i.e. the king) thought: 'Where has my mother gone?' Having thought like this through meditation (he knew): 'The lord has seized her.' Then that king Bhagīratha went to Kailāsa. O best sage, having gone there, he practised a severe penance. Then he propitiated (me). I gave him the river. Having given up (i.e. plucked) one hair, the river was given (to him).

17-23a. Taking Gaṅgā, he went to the nether world where his ancestors stood (dead). Then the first name of Gaṅgā was said to be Alakanandā. When she went (i.e. flowed) to Haridvāra, she came to be called Viṣṇupādodakī. That is an excellent holy place which is not easily accessible even to gods. Those men who bathe at that holy place, and especially after seeing (the image of) Viṣṇu go round (the image) keeping (it) to their right,

do not experience grief. There are many heaps of sins like (those of) killing a brāhmaṇa etc. All those perish on always seeing (the image of) Viṣṇu. Once I had gone to Haridvāra, the place of Viṣṇu. Due to the prowess of that holy place, I became of the form of Viṣṇu. Those best men who go (to this holy place), go to Viṣṇu. Those human beings—men and women, have four arms everywhere. Merely by seeing (the image of) Viṣṇu they all go to Vaikuṇṭha.

23b-28. For me also that holy place Haridvāra is a superior holy place. It is the principal holy place among the holy places. It gives the four goals (of human life). In the Kali-age it gives religious merit to men, and gives salvation and material welfare also. There the clear (water of) Gaṅgā always flows. This auspicious, excellent, account of Haridvāra is told (by me). Eternal fruit is (obtained) by those who listen to it. A learned man, merely by seeing (the image of) Viṣṇu obtains that fruit which is obtained when a horse-sacrifice is performed or when a thousand cows (are given). O brāhmaṇa, many sins of this kind —all of them—perish due to just seeing (the image of) Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

An Eulogy of Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Prayāga

Mahādeva said:

1-5. O best sage, I shall narrate the importance of Gaṅgā, as it has been told, by just listening to which sin perishes at that moment only. He who would utter (the name) 'Gaṅgā' even from (a distance of) hundreds of yojanas, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. O Nārada, the river has risen from the lotus-like feet (of Viṣṇu), is well-known by the name Gaṅgā, and she destroys large heaps of sins. (There are other rivers like) Narmadā, Sarayū, so also the river Vetravatī, Tāpī, Payoṣṇī, Candrā, Vipāsā, Karmanāśinī, Puṣyā, Pūrṇā, Dīpā, Vidīpā and Sūryatejasā.

6-10. A man obtains that fruit which he certainly gets by giving a thousand bulls in a moment by seeing Gaṅgā. This Gaṅgā is especially very meritorious for those who have killed brāhmaṇas. Gaṅgā smites the sins of those who are connected with (i.e. who have fallen into) a hell. O sinless one, a man obtains that fruit just by seeing Gaṅgā which is (obtained) at the time of the lunar eclipse or the solar eclipse. O dear one, as the darkness goes away at the time of sunrise, similarly the sin (of a man) perishes due to the prowess of Gaṅgā. This (Gaṅgā) is always honoured in the world. She is pure. She destroys sins. She is always of the nature of auspiciousness. She was formerly produced by Viṣṇu. She is of a divine form. She is the mother. She is said to be the purifier of the helpless.

11-14. As Viṣṇu is (the best) of the gods, so is Gaṅgā the best river (among the rivers). For those men who regularly bathe in (the month of) Māgha, there is no grief for three hundred kalpas. There is no doubt that having bathed and drunk (water at the holy place by which) Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī flow, a man enjoys salvation.

Mahādeva said:

O lord, the talk which I affectionately do about you is your praise. What I eat is an offering to you. That I go is (due to) my being sent by you. That I sleep quickly at the pair of your lotus-like feet may be (treated as) my prostration (before you) in the manner of a staff. O lord, may you, the lord of the universe be pleased with whatever I do. This is that water of Yamunā, by seeing which, by saluting which, or by holding which on the head, men are freed.

15-18. O you daughter of the Sun, O you great river, men are overpowered by the dangers like poverty, diseases, death, due to the mundane existence, till they do not see your very blue water and hold it on their heads. Today that Gaṅgā, the recollection of which even from (the distance of) a lakh of yojanas instantly cuts off the streams of sins, overcomes the row of sins, the utterance of whose name purifies the world, will luckily come within (our) sight. The path of the divine river is reached with a delighted mind eager to see her. (Even) the first creator went to this divine river. It is not a great wonder that a

bath, offering of sandhyā, a libation of water as the śrāddha ceremony, worship of gods, a śrāddha-ceremony, feeding the brāhmaṇas—all this becomes perfect (in this river) and gives delight to the lord. O Gaṅgā, you are Brahman turned into goddess (Gaṅgā); you give great delight. Accept my materials of worship. Remove my sin. My salutation to you.

19-21. O Bhāgīrathī, O glorious goddess, I salute you who carry the water which is righteousness in a liquid form, which is the essence of the nectar (flowing) from the lotus-like feet of the enemy of Mura, which is a boat of (i.e. helping to cross) the ocean of grief, which is a flight of steps leading to heaven and lauded by men and gods, which removes all sins, which has excellent merits, (and) which is lustrous. O Gaṅgā, O you heavenly river, O you who emancipate the people plunged in the ocean of sins, O you who have destroyed the mass of darkness (of sins) by means of the spotless lustre of your rising waves, O you, who purify the world, O goddess, purify (me) who am overcome with the fear of sins, who am a recipient of your favour; O mother, O you who give shelter to him who has sought it, protect me who am frightened. O (my) heart, O my friend, why do you trouble? I am alarmed due to the fear of (falling into) hell. 'Why do you fear?' Thus are the words heard of (i.e. uttered by) a sinner in the hell. Do not be afraid. If I have secured her who competes with the mountain (i.e. mass) of sins, then listen to my course (i.e. the course I shall have). How then will I have hell? What else do I have (as) righteousness or wealth?

22-23. In it (i.e. in the water of Gaṅgā) bathing is said to be the experience of joy due to the praise of the lord of all and others; seeing it the divine women are delighted due to the possibility of meeting gods and their lord. O daughter of Jahnu, those who engaged in curbs and restraints bathe in your water, clearly obtain godhead. Even those who do bad deeds (also secure godhead). In this (matter), the Vedas are the authority. O (my) intellect, may you have good thoughts like this. O (my) mind, well-being to you. O (my) feet, may you two be always remaining at the place (of the lord). May the eyes see well. O (my) speech, O you dear to me like my own life, may you, with the body of your virtues manifested, obtain the nourishment of

beings, so that through all of you I obtained (i.e. would obtain) the agreeable, incomparable merit due to the holy place.

24-32. O best sacred place Prayāga, the ornament of the three rivers, viz. Śrī Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī, O lord of all, favour me. Take me up (to heaven). With your lustre destroy the darkness of ten kinds. O you lord of speech, O lord of pious men, that lord of the holy places, viz. Prayāga, whose white and blue bank the gods like Indra, the best among the learned resort to for the destruction of their sins is victorious. That lord of holy places, viz. Prayāga, where the divine river (i.e. Gaṅgā) having had confluence with Yamunā, shakes off the three torments of the people like the one relating to the self, is victorious. That lord of the holy places, viz. Prayāga, where the sacred fig tree, of a dark colour[1], covers (the place) with its darkish shadow, and cuts off (i.e. removes) the dark (i.e. great) fatigue of the people when it is seen, is victorious. That lord of holy places, viz. Prayāga, the portion of religious merit, which Brahmā and others resort to after abandoning their act, and where Yama will cast his staff, is victorious. That lord of holy places, viz. Prayāga, resorting to which gods and divine sages—deities among men—do not care for heaven and the best kingdom on the earth, is victorious. It is well-known that (the holy place, Prayāga) destroys sins and that discerning takes place by the splendour of its name. That is the lord of holy places, viz. Prayāga, which holds all around the charming beauty of the chowries, where the white and black excellent rivers (i.e. Gaṅgā and Yamunā) meet, where the primitive fig tree exceedingly shines like an umbrella, is victorious. That lord of the holy places, viz. Prayāga, where at the confluence[2] of Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī (that is underground) they take those who bathe there to the position of Brahmā merely by means of their offering sacrifice with sacred rice grains is victorious.

33-35. (That is the holy place Prayāga to go) where many persons of good words pass a crore of lives saying, 'I (shall) go,

1. Śyāma: Name of a sacred fig-tree at Allahabad on the bank of Yamunā.

2. Triveṇī: The place near Prayāga where Gaṅgā joins Yamunā and receives unerground Sarasvatī.

I (shall) go'. Excellent years of those who long for the fixed one may pass there. He who cannot be described by words, and who is reached through lakhs of fortunate (occurrences), becomes ours (i.e. favours us) at Prayāga. Prayāga where sacrifices move (i.e. take place constantly) and which is marked by confluence (of the three rivers) becomes the guest of our sight (only) through good luck. Brahmā and others, after having properly and fully thought about the fruit of (sacrifices like) the horse-sacrifice, have prescribed this dear Prayāga for those men who long for heaven, who are worried as to how to reach the position of gods by means of hymns of the eulogy of the glory and hymns of praise (of gods), and who are unable to perform sacrifices in the Kali age. I have not performed the sandhyā (prayer) due to faults like carelessness and impatience. Let the sandhyā of me who am performing it here be accomplished for my entire life. Elsewhere also he, meditated upon in a penance where his greatness is loudly proclaimed by the distant people with love continuously gives the desired position without any expectation.

36-37. I salute in my heart that Prayāga which is surrounded by the confluence of the three rivers, the rich dust of which is incomparable, which is the lord of holy places, which shines with the presence of several (rivers), which itself is an excellent deity. Have we practised good penance, have we performed sacrifices, have we given various kinds of gifts to worthy recipients, have we worshipped gods, have we resorted to a good holy place, have we honoured a group of good brāhmaṇas, due to which we have reached that capital of Śiva which gives happiness?

38-41. Due to my good fortune of many existences I have had (i.e. reached) the city of Śiva, which destroys all sins, which is full of all wonders, and which is a boat to cross the ocean of the mundane existence. I have received the fruit of a good birth. (My) family is made pure. My soul is purified. (Thus) everything for me has been done. What else is there that stands above all? Since what is said, viz. 'A living man sees a lakh of good things' is not false, I have physically reached Kāśī with my transitory sight. The counting and worship of the sacred places and phalluses of the lord (found) in Kāśī, the divine land, cannot be done even by gods. With my hands joined, I

salute the ancient pious (places), which are secret or open here (i.e. in Kāśī). O men, what is the use of the fear from the multitude of sins, what is the use of the joy due to innumerable meritorious deeds done (by you), what is the use of the pride due to the study of the lores, what is the use of dejection due to the fault of dullness, what is the use of the pride due to prosperity, what is the use of being tormented due to poverty, if the lord of the universe is seen after bathing in the water of Śrī Maṇikarṇikā?

42-49. Since that city of Gadādhara, which though it has little (worldly) affluence, (though) it is small, is not reached even by desires, is not the object of even a dream, but which is reached by means of the power rich with enthusiasm, which is accompanied by the attachment of the mind and the practicability of which is possibly manifest, instantly gives salvation. I think that it is not my act, it is not the strength of the acquisition of an ancestor, it is not the unmoving authority of my kinsmen; how then can it be numbness or torment (which has brought me here)? Reaching Gaṅgā, Prayāga, Yamunā, Kāśī difficult to reach, on the coming of a good occasion—for that the favour of Śāradā, giving a great fruit, is triumphant. I salute that Gadādhara who is actually present in Gayā, and who even though remembered from a distance at the time of a śrāddha, gives salvation to the manes. A man with a potsherd and pitiable words, after having come from a remote place and after having trodden the path that is difficult to cross, and that is crowded with hostile (factors like) mean tigers, hyenas, thorns and snakes, should first solicit the immutable one; (for) O you rich Gadādhara living in water, he longs to see you every day. How do you, pleasing the deities and the universe by showing yourself as a result of the śrāddha at Gayā, resort, like an indifferent (person) to this apathy? O Gadādhara, I have performed the śrāddha through your favour. O god, (now) allow me to go home. The eulogy of the four deities gives the wealth of heaven. A man should recite it at the time of śrāddha. A man should recite it at the time of bathing every day. Due to the listening to it, reciting it and muttering it the bath is equal to the bath at all holy places. O brāhmaṇa, the sins due to (one's) deeds perish by listening to the praise of Prayāga, Gaṅgā and Yamunā.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Importance of Tulasī

Mahādeva said:

1-5a. O Nārada, listen. I shall tell you the importance of Tulasī, having heard which a man is free from sin from his birth to his death. Everything of Tulasī including leaves, flowers, fruits, roots, branches, skin, and stem is purifying, so also the clay (where) Tulasī-plant grows. Those whose bodies are burnt with the Tulasī-wood (are free from sins), so also he on whose dead body the Tulasī-wood is placed and who (i.e. whose dead body) is cremated after doing so, is freed from sins. He who at the time has (heard) the narration (of the virtues) or the recollection of Viṣṇu, and who is cremated with the Tulasī-wood is not reborn.

5b-11a. If among hundred (pieces of any other kind of) wood, there is (just) one (piece) of Tulasī-wood (in the funeral pyre), the man would have salvation just at the time of cremation—even if he has committed a crore of sins. By being sprinkled with the water of Gaṅgā, religious merit becomes meritorious. (Pieces of) wood become meritorious (when) mixed with Tulasī-wood. As long as the funeral pyre mixed with Tulasī-wood is burning, all his sins committed during crores of kalpas are burnt. Seeing (the dead body of) a man being burnt with the Tulasī-wood, Viṣṇu's messengers take him (to Viṣṇu's world) and not Yama's servants. Freed from thousands of crores of existences, he goes to Viṣṇu. On those men seated in aeroplanes, who (i.e. whose dead bodies) are burnt with Tulasī-wood, gods drop handfuls of flowers. All the celestial damsels sing and singers sing songs.

11b-21. Seeing him, Viṣṇu, along with Śiva, is pleased. Taking him by his hand and physically taking him to his house Viṣṇu would clean all his sins in the presence of gods after having celebrated a great festival along with cries of victory. The sin of men is burnt in the fire-chamber or crematory when the fire of Tulasī-wood is burning with clarified butter. Those men who perform a sacrifice with the fire of Tulasī-wood, would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice for every sesamum-

seed that is offered (into the fire). A man who offers the incense of a (piece of) Tulasī-wood to Viṣṇu, obtains the fruit similar to that of a hundred sacrifices (or that of the gift) of a hundred cows. That food which a man cooks as an offering of eatables to the deity with the fire made from Tulasī-wood, is indeed offered to Viṣṇu. O lord, he who offers one lamp (lighted from) the Tulasī-wood to Viṣṇu, obtains the fruit of the religious merit earned by (the offering of) thousands of lakhs of lamps. There is no devotee seen on the earth like him who offers the sandal (-like paste) of Tulasī-wood to Kṛṣṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, he becomes fit for the favour of Viṣṇu. Having devoutly smeared Viṣṇu with the sandal(-like paste) obtained from Tulasī-wood in the Kali-age, he always enjoys in the vicinity of Viṣṇu. He who with his body smeared with the paste from Tulasī-wood, worships Viṣṇu, obtains the fruit of having given a hundred cows in one day—(a fruit) of the worship offered for a hundred days.

22-27. Listen (i.e. note that), the fruit of the religious merit remains as long as the sandal(-like paste) from the Tulasī-wood, used for smearing the image of Viṣṇu, remains in the temple. The same fruit as the religious merit a man would obtain by giving eight prasthas of sesamum-seeds, is obtained by the favour of Viṣṇu. If a man gives (i.e. puts) a Tulasī-leaf on the piṇḍa offered to the manes, then for every leaf (that is thus offered) the manes are contented for a hundred years. A man should especially bathe with (i.e. after applying to his body) the clay at the root of Tulasī. As long as the clay is on the body, he has bathed at a holy place. When a man worships with the shoot of it (i.e. Tulasī), he has performed the worship with many flowers (and it lasts) as long as the moon and the sun (shine in the sky). All that sin like (that due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa perishes by touching or seeing (the plant) when there is a garden of Tulasī (-plants) in one's house. Even by seeing it, O Nārada, all that (sin) perishes.

Mahādeva said:

28-33. Now I shall tell you something else. Listen (to it) with a concentrated mind (i.e. attentively). O best of the divine sages, I have not told it to anyone (else). In whichever house, village or grove there would be the Tulasī(-plant), Viṣṇu, the

lord of the world, being pleased, would stay there. In that house where there is a Tulasī(-plant) there is no poverty, no (hostile) action due to (i.e. from) the kinsmen, no grief, no fear, and no disease. Everywhere Tulasī(-plant) is auspicious, and especially so in a sacred place. Due to its being planted on the earth, it is always in the vicinity of that god (i.e. Viṣṇu). When Tulasī is planted (by men) they eternally get Viṣṇu's position. When Tulasī is devoutly worshipped, Viṣṇu pacifies portents, fearful diseases and many ill-omens. Wherever the wind goes (i.e. the breezes blow) after taking the fragrance of Tulasī, (all) the ten quarters are (thereby) purified, so also the aggregate of beings of four kinds.

34-46. O best sage, the deities, Śiva, Viṣṇu always reside in that house in which there is the clay (taken from) the root of the Tulasī(-plant). At its root is Brahmā. In the middle is god Viṣṇu. Rudra stays in the sprout. Therefore, Tulasī is purifying. All that sprinkling himself with water which a man does at the time of the sandhyā (prayer) is snatched by demons, and gives (i.e. takes) him (to) hell. He who carries on his head the water dropping from the Tulasī-leaf obtains the fruit of (having bathed in) Gaṅgā and would get the fruit of a gift of a hundred cows. If he especially plants a Tulasī(-plant) in the temple of Śiva, he would stay in heaven for as many yugas as is the number of the seeds (of Tulasī). Formerly goddess Pārvatī had planted a hundred Tulasī-trees (i.e. plants) on the Himālaya for Śaṅkara. I bow down to Tulasī. A man should plant (a Tulasī-plant) on a parvan day (i.e. the day of the four changes of the moon), on (any other) occasion or in Śrāvaṇa, or on a Saṁkrānti-day. Tulasī gives great religious merit. A poor man who worships Tulasī daily would be rich. The image of Viṣṇu, bringing about every kind of success, gives fame also. Viṣṇu is present there where there is a Śālagrāma stone. Bath and (giving) gifts there is hundred times superior to (doing so) at Vārāṇasī. The religious merit is a crore of times superior to (a visit to) Kurukṣetra, Prayāga, and Naimiṣāraṇya. All that religious merit which can be had at Vārāṇasī, would be (secured) there where the mark of the form of Śālagrāma is present. By means of the worship of a Śālagrāma stone, a man would quickly destroy all that sin due to the killing of a brāhmaṇa etc.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

The Importance of Prayāga

Mahādeva said:

1-8a. I shall tell you, as I have heard, the greatness of Prayāga where live people who are intent upon giving large gifts and practise meritorious acts. That holy place (called Prayāga) where (i.e. by which) Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī are (flowing) is the best and is inaccessible even to gods. Such (a holy place) was never there (in the past) nor will be there (in the future). The excellent, holy place called Prayāga is best among all the holy places as the Sun is among the planets or the Moon among the stars. O learned one, he who would bathe in the morning at Prayāga, is free from great sins, and goes to the highest position. A man desiring absence of poverty should give something (to a brāhmaṇa at Prayāga). There is no doubt that a man who after going would bathe there, becomes rich and lives a long life. A man who sees the undecaying fig-tree there, (his sin due to his having committed) the murder of a brāhmaṇa perishes. That fig-tree is called *Akṣaya-vaṭa* and is (i.e. will be) seen even at the end of the kalpa.

8b-13. Since Viṣṇu lies on its leaf, it is known to be immutable. Men dear to Viṣṇu, worship (the lord) there. A man should get it worshipped (i.e. should worship it) after having covered it with a thread. The god called Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu) always stays there happily. One should see (the image of) him. One then is freed from great sins. Gods, sages, and men having resorted to their own places, always stay there everywhere. A man who has killed a cow, or who is a cāṇḍāla, who is wicked or of a wicked mind, or who has murdered a child, so also who is not learned, dying there becomes one having four hands and lives in Vaikuṇṭha for a long time.

14-19a. O best among the divine sages, listen. A man who bathes at Prayāga during the month of Māgha, has no (limit to the) number of fruits (that he obtains). We hear that *āpaḥ* (i.e. waters) is said to be *nārāḥ* (i.e. waters—*āpaḥ* and *nārāḥ* are synonyms) in the entire world. Therefore, he is called Nārāyaṇa. He gives pleasures and salvation to those who have bathed

there. As the Sun is best among the planets, the Moon among the stars, similarly Māgha is the best in (i.e. for) all acts. When in Māgha the Sun is in the Capricornus sign, a bath in the morning, even in the clear water of a very small puddle, gives heaven even to the sinners. O learned one, such an opportunity is rare in the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. He too who has made an effort (to bathe) here at Prayāga and would bathe (every day) for three days or five or seven days would grow like the Moon in his family, O best brāhmaṇa.

19b-23. The mobile and immobile living beings, so also human beings and others, go soon to Vaikuṇṭha after having resorted to the holy place of Prayāga. Those sages like Vasiṣṭha and like Sanaka also repeatedly resort to the holy place of Prayāga. There, in the excellent holy place of Prayāga, all (gods like) Viṣṇu, Rudra and Indra live. They recommend giving gifts here, so also observing restraints. After having bathed there and drunk (water) there, there is no rebirth.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

A Three-night Tulasī Vow

Nārada said:

1. Like this, I have, through your favour, heard the greatness of Tulasī. Now tell me the vow of Tulasī (lasting for) three days.

Sadāśiva said:

2-9. O very intelligent brāhmaṇa, listen to this ancient vow, having heard which (a man) gets freed from all sins. There is no doubt about it. Formerly in the Raibhyantara kalpa there was a king (named) Prajāpati. His well-known and very chaste wife was Candrarūpā. She practised this vow giving the fruits of all desires. Her vow, giving (the fruit of) righteousness, worldly prosperity, sensual enjoyment lasted for three nights. The life of those who have listened to the Tulasī-vow is fruitful.

O Nārada, on the ninth of the bright fortnight of Kārtika, a man should observe restraint, be pious, control his senses and sleep on the (bare) ground. Intending to practise the Tulasī-vow, he, being pure and with his mind controlled, should, as a rule, sleep in the vicinity of a Tulasī-grove. Then at mid-day, he, having bathed in the pure water in a river etc., should duly gratify (with oblations) the manes and deities. He should get fashioned (a) golden (image of) Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī. He, desiring his welfare, should not be dishonest as regards wealth. Then he should get fashioned a pair of garments. The garments should be yellow or white. He should duly commence the propitiatory rite for the nine planets.

10-14. Having put an oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled for presentation to the gods and the manes, he (then) should offer a sacrifice to Viṣṇu. Having on the twelfth day carefully worshipped the lord of gods, he should duly place a pure pitcher without any bruise with five jewels and with leaves and herbs. On it, in a vessel, he should place (the image of) Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī. He should put it at the root of Tulasī to the accompaniment of Vedic and Purāṇic hymns. He should sprinkle the grove of Tulasī with water only. He should bathe the god of gods, the best one in the world, with the five[1] sweet things (viz. milk, sugar, ghee, curd and honey) (and to the accompaniment of this hymn of solicitation): 'May that lord of gods, the divine one, who is of endless forms, who is of the form of the entire universe, who in the water sustains the creation of the world, who through his Māyā creates the world, be pleased with me'.

15. This is the hymn of solicitation. 'Come on, O Acyuta, O lord of gods, O mass of lustre, O lord of the world. You always remove the darkness. Protect me from the ocean of the mundane existence.'

16. This is the invocatory hymn. Good bath is (given to him) with the five sweet things and with sandal mixed with water, so also with the water of Gaṅgā and other (rivers). 'May Ananta (i.e. Viṣṇu thus) bathed, be pleased.'

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1. Pañcāmṛta: A collection of five sweet things used in worshipping deities. They are: milk, sugar, ghee, curd, and honey.

17. This is the hymn (to be recited) at the time of bathing the image of the deity. 'O god, I have devoutly offered you the smearing with sandal, agaru, camphor and saffron etc. With Lakṣmī, accept it.'

18. This is the hymn (to be recited) at the time of smearing (the image). 'O Nārāyaṇa, salutation to you, the protector (of me) from the ocean of hell. O you lord of the three worlds, I offer you two auspicious garments.'

19. This is the hymn (to be recited) at the time of (offering) the garments. 'O Dāmodara, my salutation to you. Protect me from the ocean of the worldly existence. I have offered you the sacred thread. O Puruṣottama, (please) accept it.'

20. This is the hymn (to be recited) at the time of (offering) the sacred thread. This is the hymn (to be recited) at the time of offering flowers.

21. 'O lord, I have offered you fragrant flowers like those of mālatī etc. O lord of gods, accept them with love.'

22. This is the hymn (to be recited) at the time of offering of eatables. 'O lord of gods, accept the betal nuts, the nāga-leaves along with camphor. (Please) accept the tāmbūla.'

23. This is the hymn (to be recited) at the time of offering a tāmbūla. Having devoutly offered incense, agaru mixed with guggula (a particular fragrant gum resin) he should offer the worship thus. He should use a lamp with (i.e. burning due to) ghee.

24-27. O best among sages, he, being controlled, should prepare various kinds of lamps in front of Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa in the vicinity of the Tulasī-grove, and should offer materials of worship to the god holding the disc. On the ninth he should offer the best materials of worship with a coconut for (obtaining) a son; on the tenth he should offer a citron fruit for the accomplishment of religious merit and sensual enjoyment. On the eleventh he should worship the twin deity with a pomegranate. (This would) always destroy his poverty.

28-29. Covering with a piece of cloth, a full plate of metal and a basket full of seven (kinds of) grains and betel nuts, he should offer it to the god to the accompaniment of this (i.e. the following) hymn. O Nārada, listen with a concentrated mind. 'O god, you, with Tulasī, (please) accept this material of worship

always accompanied by a conch, offered by me. O lord of gods, my salutation to you.'

30-35. This is the hymn (to be offered) at the time of offering materials of worship. Having thus worshipped Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, along with Lakṣmī, he should solicit the lord of gods for the fulfilment (of the vow). (He should say): 'O god, I, being free from sensual desires and anger, have fasted by means of this vow. O lord of gods, you alone are my refuge. O god Janārdana, let all that which in (i.e. while practising) this vow I have done (i.e. left) incomplete, be complete through your favour. Salutation to you, O lotus-eyed one; salutation to you who lie in water. O Keśava, through your favour I have practised the vow. O Keśava, O you who destroy the darkness of ignorance, being favourably disposed to me due to this vow, be one who would give me the sight of knowledge.' Then at night (he should) keep awake, should sing songs, read (religious) books along with those who know sounds and art of dancing and with very auspicious and meritorious accounts.

36-43. When it is daybreak, and when the bright sun has arisen, he should devoutly invite brāhmaṇas and offer a śrāddha in the manner of Viṣṇu's devotee. Having fed them, as they like, with sweetened milk and ghee, and having given them tāmbūlas, flowers, sandal etc. along with presents, so also sacred threads, garments, garlands and sandal, he should feed three (brāhmaṇa-)couples (and give them) garments, ornaments and saffron. He should also fill baskets according to his capacity with coconuts, cooked foods, garments and various kinds of fruits. He should make his preceptor and his wife put on the garments and divine ornaments (offered to them). He should worship (them) with sandal and flowers. He should also give a milch-cow along with articles of household use and with presents and garments. Listen to me who am telling you. All that religious merit which men obtain after bathing in all holy places is obtained by them through the favour of the lord of gods. Having enjoyed many pleasures and charming desired objects, he, through Viṣṇu's favour, obtains Viṣṇu's position in the end.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

Gift of Food Praised

Nārada said:

1. Tell me all that: Which things a man desirous of giving (gifts) to brāhmaṇas excellent in merit, should give in this world?

Mahādeva said:

2-6. Having known the truth in the world, listen, O you best among the divine sages. They praise food like this. Everything is settled in food. Therefore, men particularly desire to give food. There was no gift nor there will be a gift like food. The whole world consisting of the immobile and the mobile, is sustained by means of food. In the world food causes vigour. Life depends upon food only. A man desiring his own welfare, should even by troubling his family give eatable food to a magnanimous brāhmaṇa. O Nārada, he who would give food to a brāhmaṇa who asks for it and who is afflicted, is the best among the wise. He should look for his own well-being.

7-15. A wise man who is of a good character, who is free from jealousy, who, after abandoning his anger, gives food to a householder – a brāhmaṇa—who is tired, who is on the road (i.e. who is travelling), who has come at the time (of eating food), obtains happiness that is there in heaven and on the earth. He should not censure the guest. He should never hate him. He should offer food to a brāhmaṇa knowing the Vedas. That gift is superior. He who would give food to a brāhmaṇa who is tired, who is not seen before, and who is travelling, so also to him who is afflicted, would obtain full (merit of) righteousness. The religious merit of that man who would please the manes, gods, brāhmaṇas and guests with foods, is unlimited, O great sage. He who, even after having committed a very great sin, gives food to a suppliant, especially to a brāhmaṇa, is freed from sins. Gift given to brāhmaṇas is inexhaustible (in merit); (gift of) food to a śūdra gives a great fruit. Offering food to a śūdra and to a brāhmaṇa is superior (to any other gift). He should not ask (the brāhmaṇa about his) family, the school of the Vedas to which he belongs, or about his study (of the Vedas).

He should give food (thinking that) here is a brāhmaṇa that seeks (food), so also to a beggarly brāhmaṇa. For a man who gives food, auspicious trees full of the fruits of all desires, are (fruitful) in this world and in heaven he is full of joy.

16-21. O great sage, know those worlds which are (reached by him) by means of giving food. For the magnanimous ones (who give food) aeroplanes of many shapes and forms and endowed with (the fulfilment of) various desires, shine in heaven. (They enjoy) auspicious, golden wells and lakes everywhere. (They rejoice with) sounding vehicles and thousands of pearls. They see mountains full of food. There are (for them) garments and ornaments. There are (for them) rivers flowing with milk and mountains of ghee. There are (for them) palaces shining with white colour, beds bright like gold. They desire, therefore, to give food. So a man should give food. Those worlds are (reached) by the meritorious. Offering food gives great fruit. Therefore, in this world men should especially give food.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Constructing Tanks, Planting Trees etc.

Mahādeva said:

1-8a. Giving water is the best (gift); it is always the best of the gifts. Therefore, a man should get constructed oblong reservoirs of water, wells and tanks. Wells dug for giving water destroy half the sin of a person of bad deeds, who is (later) always engrossed in good deeds. He from the reservoir of water dug by whom cows, brāhmaṇas, and good men always drink water, emancipates his family. (He too emancipates his family) in whose reservoir remains water in summer, which is never obtained in an inaccessible place and a place risky and difficult (to reach). I shall (now) tell you which are said to be the merits of the tanks that are constructed. He who has (constructed) a tank is honoured everywhere in the three worlds. The establishment of tanks is like a friendly house, increasing friends and

friendship, producing fame and the best. A tank, which is well-constructed in a country, in a sacred place, and which is a great resort, is, the wise say, the fruit of *dharma* (righteousness), *artha* (worldly prosperity) and *kāma* (sensual enjoyment). (While constructing) a tank, one should have in view the four kinds of beings.

8b-18a. All the tanks lead to excellent virtue. Gods, men, gandharvas, manes, snakes, demons and immobile beings resort to a tank. He in whose tank there is water in the rainy season, gets the fruit of maintaining the sacred fire. There is no doubt about it. He in whose (tank) there is water in the winter season, obtains the fruit of (the gift of) a thousand cows. There is no doubt. If there is water in his tank in the spring and summer seasons, the wise say, (he gets) the fruit of the Atirātra and horse-sacrifice. Now listen to the merits of planting trees. He who plants them would emancipate both the families (of his father and of his mother), O great sage. Therefore, a man should plant trees. There is no doubt that these trees become (his) sons and grandsons. He too, when he dies, obtains inexhaustible worlds. The trees worship all the hosts of gods with flowers, the manes with leaves, and all guests with their shadow. Kinnaras, serpents, demons, gods, gandharvas, men, so also hosts of sages resort to trees. They, having flowers and fruits, gratify human beings in this world. Here and in the other world, they are the legal sons.

18b-26. Those brāhmaṇas who (construct) tanks, who plant trees and who have performed sacrifices, do not go away from heaven, so also others who tell the truth. Truth alone is the highest Brahman. Truth alone is the highest penance. Truth alone is the greatest sacrifice. Truth alone is the greatest knowledge. Truth is awake among gods; and truth is the highest position. Penance, sacrifices, religious merit, so also worship of deities and guests, the first precept, knowledge—all this is settled in truth. Truth is sacrifice; so also it is charity. It is the hymns. It is goddess Sarasvatī. Truth is practising a vow. Omkāra also is truth. Wind moves due to truth. The sun shines due to truth. Fire burns because of truth. Heaven exists on account of truth. Worship of all gods, bathing at all holy places, are said to be truth. (A truthful man) undoubtedly obtains everything in

the world. If a thousand horse sacrifices and truth are compared, truth certainly is superior to all (kinds of) sacrifices. Gods, manes and sages are pleased by means of truth. They say, truth is the highest duty. They say, truth is the highest position.

27-31. They say, truth is the supreme Brahman; therefore I am explaining truth to you. The sages who were devoted to truth, who were engrossed in practising truth, practised very severe penance, secured divine faculties, and from this world went to heaven in aeroplanes accompanied by beautiful celestial damsels. Always truth should be spoken. There is nothing superior to truth. Men with devoted minds should bathe in a deep, large, divine, holy place or a pure lake. That bath is said to be great. Those men who do not tell lies for their own sake, or for the sake of others, or for the sake of their sons, go to heaven. Vedas, sacrifices, also hymns always abide in brāhmaṇas. They do not become manifest in those who have abandoned truth. Therefore, a man should practise truth.

Nārada said:

32. Tell me specifically the fruit of austerities again.

Mahādeva said:

Of all the castes brāhmaṇas have the power of penance.

33-38. I shall explain to you the meditation with penance, which brings about (i.e. fulfils) all desires, and which is very difficult to practise for brāhmaṇas. Listen to me when I am telling it. Penance is said to be the highest. (A man) gets (his desired) fruit by means of penance. He who is always engrossed in penance, rejoices along with deities. (A man) obtains heaven by means of penance. Glory is obtained by means of penance. (A man) obtains salvation by means of penance. He gets a great (thing) by means of penance. Knowledge, proficiency, wealth, good fortune, (good) form—all this which a man desires mentally, he obtains. Those who have not practised penance never go to Brahmā's world. A man obtains (i.e. succeeds in) all that undertaking here and in the next world taking up which he practises penance. A man who is a drunkard, a man who cohabits with another's wife, a man who kills a

brāhmaṇa, a man who molests his preceptor's wife, crosses over all this (i.e. destroys sins due to these) by means of penance and is totally free.

39-46. Even the lord of gods Śiva, ancient Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Agni, Indra, and others who are endowed with penance, also eightysix thousand sages, abstaining from sexual intercourse, rejoice along with deities in heaven on account of penance By means of penance a kingdom is secured. Formerly Indra, the lord of all, protected all by means of penance and granted their request. The gods—the Sun and Moon—engaged in the welfare of the entire world, shine because of penance only; so also the stars and the planets. He, eating (i.e. subsisting on) wild roots and fruits in the forest, obtains everything and gets every pleasure through penance. O sage, he who first studies Vedas—that (study of the Vedas) is equal to penance. By reciting the chapter the best brāhmaṇa gets double the fruit of the religious merit which he gets by teaching it. O great sage, as the world is without light without the Moon and the Sun, so also (it is lightless) without Purāṇa. Therefore, it should be reflected upon. He who practised penance, has knowledge from sacred texts, enlightens the people.

47-59. Therefore, a preceptor is most venerable of all the worthy recipients (of gifts); the knower of Purāṇas is the best recipient. Since he saves (a man) from falling, he is called a *pātra* (i.e. a worthy recipient). Those who give wealth, grains, gold, and various garments to a worthy recipient go to (i.e. obtain) the best position. Listen to the fruit of him (i.e. which he gets) who gives cows, buffaloes, splendid elephants and horses to the chief (brāhmaṇa). He would obtain the fruit of the horse-sacrifice inexhaustible in all worlds. He who gives him (i.e. the brāhmaṇa reading the Purāṇa), a splendid (piece of) land that is tilled and fertile, emancipates ten preceding and ten succeeding members of his family; and in a divine aeroplane he goes to Viṣṇu's world. Gods are not so much pleased with sacrifices, with sprinklings (of water), with offerings, worships with flowers as they are with the books (of Purāṇas) being read. One who would arrange (the reading of) a religious book in the temple of Viṣṇu, or of the goddess, or of Śambhu, or of Gaṇeśa, so also of the Sun, obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya sacrifice or a horse-sacrifice. The reading of a book (containing stories from) Mahābhārata or Purāṇa is

excellent. He obtains all desired objects and breaks through the world of the Sun. Having broken through the Sun's world, he goes to the world of Brahmā; having lived there for hundreds of kalpas he becomes a king on the earth. He who would read Jaya (i.e. Mahābhārata) before a deity obtains the fruit which is declared to be the fruit of a thousand horse-sacrifices. Therefore, with all efforts, the auspicious reading of a book (containing stories) from Mahābhārata and Purāṇas should be done in Viṣṇu's temple. There is nothing else (except this) that delights Viṣṇu or other residents of heaven.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

Merit Coming From Exposition of a Sacred Text

Mahādeva said:

1-2. In this case also they relate an old historical account, a Purāṇa, which is highly meritorious, removes all sins, and is auspicious. O divine sage, Brahmā's son (Sanat-)Kumāra, having saluted the grandsire of the worlds, narrated this account to me.

Sanatkumāra said:

3-9a. I went to see Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). With joy and great devotion he honoured me with words and asked me (to be seated) on a comfortable seat. I who was seated there, saw a great wonder: Dharma, the lord, himself hastily got up from his seat, O best among gods, on seeing a man who had come there in an aeroplane which was golden, the altar in which was made of lapis lazuli, which was beautiful due to gems and pearls, and was charming on account of a mass of small bells. Having taken him by his right hand, he honoured him with materials of worship. Dharma (i.e. Yama), the lord of gods, having smelt him on his head, and having seated him before him, and having honoured him said these words to him: "Welcome to you, O you who know what is right. I am pleased on seeing

you. Be (seated) near me; and give me some knowledge. You will again go to the place where Brahmā is settled."

9b-16. When this was said, another man, seated in an excellent aeroplane came to the place when the lord, Dharmarāja was (seated). He, while he was in the aeroplane (itself), was honoured (by Dharma) who bowed (to him) with respect; and he himself gently spoke to him as he had spoken to the former man. "What deed has he done due to which you are very much pleased? I have a curiosity about this since you yourself honoured him. Then with amazement you also honoured the other man. I think that the two have done auspicious deeds, as the best ones (came in) an aeroplane, and as you honour them for religious merit. Your religious merit is such that Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and others always worship you. Tell me, O omniscient one, which deed they did, due to which they obtained (this) divine fruit." Hearing those (words of me), he said to me: "Listen to the deed done by these two. O you very intelligent one, listen, due to having performed which worthy deed they have come here."

Dharma said:

17-23. There is on the earth a well-known city named Vaidiśa. A king known as Dharāpāla lived there. Formerly, some time, the goddess angrily cursed her attendant: "Since no other woman than me was married by my husband, you will turn into a jackal for twelve years." That jackal, thus addressed (by her), roamed on the surface of the earth. The Mountain's daughter (i.e. Pārvatī) had told him: "O son, the curse of (i.e. pronounced upon) you will come to an end at the well-known confluence of Vetasī and Vetravatī. He, having fasted there at the holy place, cast his life. Being turned into a divine form, he went into the proximity of Viṣṇu. King Dharāpāla, seeing the great wonder there constructed a Viṣṇu temple and then cast his life at the holy place. Being turned into a divine form he installed (the image) of that lord in that city, and appointed all men to look after him (i.e. the image).

24-33a. The auspicious temple of Viṣṇu in that town is always full of (i.e. crowded with) people. The very intelligent king, full of modesty, having honoured the host of brāhmaṇas,

and especially the (public) reader of Mahābhārata and Purāṇa, who was the best among the brāhmaṇas and greatest due to his learning, so also having worshipped the book (i.e. the Purāṇa text) in due order with flowers etc., said to the reader: "This temple of Viṣṇu before you is constructed (by me). O best brāhmaṇa, this multitude of people of the four castes desiring to listen to it, is (present) here. (Please) read the book (i.e. the Purāṇa text) for one year after taking (money for) excellent livelihood. After that I shall (also) give you another hundred golden niṣkas after the year is over for my well-being, O best brāhmaṇa." Thus he started there the reading of the book. O best sage, after the year was over, and due to the shortening of his life, he went to Kāladharma (i.e. to Yama). Viṣṇu and I sent his aeroplane (i.e. the aeroplane for him) from heaven. This is the fruit of the deeds. He had heard the auspicious, great Padma Purāṇa, entitled 'an account', which is auspicious, pure, and which destroys sins. All gods are not so much pleased with offerings like those of sandal and flowers as they are with the listening to the Purāṇa.

33b-42. All gods will not be so much gratified with all the gifts of objects like gold and jewels or of garments or of villages and towns, as by listening to the religious discourse. O best sage, I have also in the same way a great love for listening to historical accounts (i.e. Mahābhārata) and Purāṇa, which brings about (i.e. fulfils) all desires. O best sage, I very much like the giving of the daughter (in marriage). But I do not like it so much as the reading of a book (i.e. a Purāṇa-text). What is the use of talking much? Nothing else gives me joy except the auspicious account. This is declared to be a secret. O brāhmaṇa, the other best man that had come here, had come due to company. Having listened to a religious text with faith, devotion is created (in his mind) for the highest soul. O best sage, this brāhmaṇa, having gone round the magnanimous reader (of the Purāṇa) keeping him to his right, gave him a māṣaka of gold. Due to his mind overpowered by grief he did not make any other gift at any time. But there is no doubt that he got the fruit due to his having made a gift to a worthy recipient. O great sage, I have told (you) this deed of the two.

Mahādeva said:

43. Those wise men who listen to the greatness of this religious merit never face a calamity in existence after existence.

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

The Importance of Gopīcandana

Mahādeva said:

1-13a. Now I shall tell you something else: the importance of (the sandal called) gopīcandana as I saw and heard about it, O best divine sage. A brāhmaṇa, or a vaiśya, or a śūdra, whose body is smeared with gopīcandana is free from the sin of killing a brāhmaṇa. There is no doubt that he who puts a mark of gopīcandana (on his body) is free from the sins like drinking etc. A Viṣṇu's devotee, exclusively devoted to Viṣṇu, with his body smeared with gopīcandana, is free from all sins; so also (he is free from sins) due to the water of Gaṅgā. A śūdra or a brāhmaṇa who has killed a brāhmaṇa, or who is a drunkard, so also (a brāhmaṇa) who has stolen gold, who has molested his preceptor's wife, is instantly freed from sins committed during hundreds of existences. Twelve marks are prescribed for all devotees of Viṣṇu; they should be put especially by brāhmaṇas (who are Viṣṇu's devotees) and who desire welfare. It should be of the form of a staff on the forehead; of the form of a lotus on the chest. (It should be) like (the form of) a reed-leaf on the shoulder-blade. The other one should be like the form of a lamp. On the right shoulder-blade there should be four marks like those of wheel above and two ring-like marks below. One of the two (should be of the form of) a conch. He should have two (marks) in the middle, so also on the sides. On the left (shoulder-blade there should also be) a mark of a disc and (marks of) two maces (drawn) separately. On the forehead (there should be the mark of) a mace, so also of a seal-ring on the chest. There should be three beautiful marks and two (marks

of) conches in the middle. On the chest, on the side above the breast, (there should be the marks of) a mace and lotuses as on the arms. At the root of the ear there should be three or four (marks of discs) and two below (it). He should put one (mark) out of other marks.

13b-21a. Following the wise he should put on the mark of his sect. He should put it as he likes, since there is no rule about it. By means of just putting a mark (all) upto a cāṇḍāla are purified. I look upon the reviler of the devotees of Viṣṇu as a greater (sinner) than a cāṇḍāla. He (i.e. a cāṇḍāla) should be looked upon like Viṣṇu. No doubt should be raised in this matter. None (else) should be known to be similar to a brāhmaṇa who is Viṣṇu's devotee and who is devoted to the meditation on Viṣṇu. He would (himself) be Viṣṇu in the world. A brāhmaṇa having (the marks of) a conch and a disc (on his body), and devoted to the study of the Vedas, is (alone) said to be Viṣṇu in the Veda. A brāhmaṇa who has the mark of (i.e. made with) a disc, purifies those brāhmaṇas who purify by their presence the persons who sit in the same row to dine with them. He who is devoted to him is freed from great sins, O brāhmaṇa. There is no doubt that a brāhmaṇa, after having worn the garland of Tulasī-wood, would enjoy salvation. Since a brāhmaṇa is of the form of Viṣṇu, he is said to be Viṣṇu's devotee in this world. He who has a mark of gopīcandana (on his body) at the time of his death gets into an aeroplane and goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu.

21b-26. O Nārada, I shall tell you that those best men who put on the mark of gopīcandana never meet with a calamity. A man who puts (the mark of) a conch and (that of) a disc on his right hand and particularly on the left hand also is freed from great sins. There is no doubt that those who are seen to have indulged in drinking, to have killed women and children, to have practised illicit intercourse, get freed just on seeing the devotees (of Viṣṇu), O brāhmaṇa. How can (one find) devotees of Viṣṇu in this mundane existence of little worth? I have surely become a devotee of Viṣṇu through the favour of Viṣṇu's devotion. There is no doubt that dwelling here in Kāśī and muttering 'Rāma, Rāma', he becomes Śiva due to the contact with that religious merit.

CHAPTER THIRTY

The Greatness of the Vow of Lamp

Nārada said:

1-2. O Śiva, tell me the importance of the vow, the best among all vows, the excellent rite of the lamp called Saṁvatsara, by (doing) which all other vows are undoubtedly practised, all desires are satisfied and all sin would perish.

Mahādeva said :

3-8a. O divine sage, I shall tell you the secret which destroys sins, and listening to which he who has killed a brāhmaṇa, or a cow or a friend, (so also) he who has molested his preceptor's wife, who has been a traitor, who has been cruel, obtains eternal salvation, and having emancipated a hundred families goes to Viṣṇu's world. I shall (now) tell (you) that excellent vow of the lamp lasting for a year, so also the mode of practising it and its greatness. On the auspicious eleventh day of the first month of Mārgaśīrṣa, a man, free from anger and having restrained himself, should, after having got up in the early part of the day, bathe at the holy places on the confluence of rivers or in tanks and rivers or in his (own) house.

8b-10. (He should then recite this hymn:) 'I have taken bath at all the sacred places. Always give me that bath (only).' This is the hymn to be recited at the time of bathing. He, having gratified gods and men, having muttered (the hymns) and with his senses controlled, should worship the lord, the god Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa. Having bathed (the image of the deity) with pañcāmṛta and then with sandal and water (he should say): 'God of gods, O lord of the world, you have bathed with Lakṣmī. Emancipate me, O chief of gods, from this fearful bondage of the worldly existence.'

11-15. After that he should devoutly worship Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī by means of Vaidika, so also Paurāṇic hymns. (Then) with the words: 'Therefore, O god, sandal etc. (is offered)' or with the man-composed (hymn like) 'Salutation to Matsya (i.e. the Fish-incarnation), to god, to Kūrmadeva (i.e. the the Tortoise-incarnation), Varāhadeva (i.e. the Boar-incarnation), to Narasiṁha-

deva (i.e. to the Narasiṁha-incarnation), to Buddhadeva, so also salutation to Kalki' he should worship (the lord). 'Salutation to god Rāma, to you god Viṣṇu; salutation to you the soul of all', with this he should worship his head. There are (also other) names like Keśava etc. He may worship Viṣṇu with them. 'O god of gods, this is the divine sap. It is fragrant and has perfume and is pure. This is incense. Salutation to you. Accept it'.

16-17. This is the hymn to be recited at the time of offering incense. 'The lamp destroys darkness. The lamp gives lustre. Therefore, may Viṣṇu be pleased by this offering of the lamp.' This is the hymn to be recited at the time of offering the lamp. 'O god of gods, O lord of the world, this is an offering of eatables like food etc. Along with Lakṣmī accept it which is the excellent and best nectar.'

18-19. This is the hymn to be recited at the time of offering eatables. Having thus meditated upon Viṣṇu, and having taken water with a fruit, his hand or a conch, he should then devoutly offer materials of worship. 'May all that sin which I committed during a thousand existences, perish due to your favour, O Viṣṇu.'

20-24. This is the hymn to be recited at the time of offering materials of worship. Then in front of Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu he should take a newwhite pitcher full of ghee or oil. On it he should put a vessel made of copper or of clay. In that vessel he should offer a wick having nine threads. Having put the pitcher very steadily, he should light the lamp. Then being pure and having worshipped the deity, he should resolve with (the recital of) this hymn in chambers having no breeze, O divine sage: 'This Kāma (i.e. Cupid) shines as the only emperor of what there was and what there will be. I have employed this lamp for a year. O Viṣṇu, may the unceasing sacred fire please you.'

25-28a. Then having curbed his senses and being intent on sacred knowledge, he should not talk to sinful and heretical persons. At night he should keep awake, should have songs and (should keep awake) with dancing, musical instruments etc., so also auspicious texts, various accounts and fasts. Then in the morning, after having performed the rites of the morning, he should devoutly feed brāhmaṇas and worship them according to

his capacity. Having himself broken the fast, he should salute them and dismiss them.

28b-31a. In this way (he should be) of a firm vow for day and night. The lamp should be of (the weight of) one pala of gold or half of it. The wick is said to be made of silver. It should be of the weight of two palas, or more than that by half a pala. A devout man, desiring the gate to salvation, should prepare the pitcher full of ghee and along with the copper vessel; so also he should fashion with gold (the image of) the deity Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa according to his capacity.

31b-36a. Then the wise one should invite best brāhmaṇas. The best alternative is (to invite) twelve (brāhmaṇas). As the middle alternative (he should invite) six (brāhmaṇas). Or he should employ three or (even) one brāhmaṇa who would perform the rite (for him). Having honoured a brāhmaṇa with his wife, who is calm, who performs rites, who especially knows historical accounts and Purāṇas, who is conversant with religion, and having worshipped devoutly Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa as before with the lamp-wicks placed in the copper-vessel and with the pitcher full of ghee, he should give (these things) to a brāhmaṇa after having meditated upon the highest Viṣṇu to the accompaniment of this hymn, O divine sage.

36b-39. I (shall) tell you the hymn: 'O sinless one, I have offered this lamp, since it destroys sins in this mundane existence pervaded by the darkness of ignorance, since it gives knowledge and gives salvation.' This is the hymn (to be recited at the time of offering) the lamp. Having given presents with devotion to the brāhmaṇa, he should then feed the brāhmaṇas with ghee, sweetened milk and sweetmeats. Then he should cover the brāhmaṇa with his wife with garments, and should give him a bed with furniture and a cow with a calf.

40-45. He should give them presents according to his wealth. Similarly he should honour his friends, kinsmen and relatives. Thus he should celebrate a great festival at the time of the end of the vow of the lamp. Then he should dismiss (the deity) and having saluted (it) he should apologise. Men, when they do thus, obtain that fruit—that religious merit—of the lamp maintained for a year which they would get by the Saṁkrānti-rites. By means of observing the vow of the lamp maintained for a year

men get the same religious merit as is obtained by monthly rites. When the lamp is maintained for a year, a man gets that fruit which he obtains by vows of giving gifts and vows of abstract meditation, according to their number.

46-47. A man who offers a lamp to the deity gets the same fruit which a learned man would obtain by means of gifts of cows, land, gold and especially of houses. The giver of a lamp gets brilliance; the giver of a lamp gets inexhaustible wealth; the giver of a lamp obtains knowledge; the giver of a lamp gets supreme happiness. There is no doubt that by offering a lamp a man secures good fortune, very pure knowledge, health and great prosperity.

48-49. A man who offers a lamp would obtain a lovely wife having all (auspicious) marks, sons, grandsons, great-grandsons, and undying progeny. A brāhmaṇa (who offers a lamp) would obtain great knowledge, a kṣatriya (who offers a lamp) would obtain excellent kingdom, a vaiśya (offering a lamp would obtain) all (kinds of) wealth and beasts, and a śūdra (offering a lamp would obtain) happiness.

50-55a. A maiden (offering a lamp) obtains a husband endowed with all (auspicious) marks, a long life, and many sons and grandsons. A young woman (offering a lamp) will never experience widowhood. She does not get (i.e. suffer from) separation (from her husband) due to the prowess of the gift of a lamp. Maladies and diseases do not take place due to the gift of a lamp. A man who is frightened, becomes free from fear, and one that is bound gets freed from the bondage. There is no doubt that one devoted to the vow of (offering) a lamp is freed from the sins of (i.e. due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc., for there is the statement of Brahmā to this effect.

55b-61. He who has constantly kept burning a lamp before Viṣṇu, has undoubtedly practised the vows like Cāndrāyaṇa and Kṛcchra. Those who having worshipped Viṣṇu, maintained the lamp for a year, are blessed, are magnanimous, and have obtained the fruit of their existence. Those also who see the wick of the lamp here, go to the highest place, difficult to be obtained even by gods; and those who put, according to their capacity, oil and wick into the lamp, go to the highest position. Those also who are unable to light the lamp that is going out, and inform

others, enjoy the same fruit. He too who begging little oil only for (maintaining) the lamp, keeps the lamp for Viṣṇu, also obtains religious merit. (Even) a mean man who sees the lamp being lighted, and has the palms of his hands joined (in honour) of Viṣṇu, would obtain (i.e. go to) Viṣṇu's world.

62-63. He who would give an idea (to others) to light a lamp (in honour of Viṣṇu), (or) he who himself would do so, is free from all sins, and would obtain (i.e. go to) Viṣṇu's world. In this case also they narrate an ancient account, merely by hearing which a man is free from all sins.

64-72. On the charming bank of Sarasvatī there was (a hermitage) known as Siddhāśrama. Formerly a brāhmaṇa named Kapila, a knower of the Vedas, lived there. He was engrossed in (the practice of) vows and fasts. He was poor and was learned. He maintained his family by begging. He propitiated Viṣṇu by means of vows, fasts and restraints. Having duly worshipped Viṣṇu, he always lighted the lamp. Having taken oil, having worshipped Viṣṇu in his own house, he would light the lamp with great devotion for pleasing Viṣṇu. When (that) magnanimous Kapila was getting along like this, a cat with sharp teeth would always eat mice. He (i.e. the cat) came there day and night to eat mice. He always remained meditating for getting a prey in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu. He ate many mice in the house of the brāhmaṇa. Intent upon meditation, he would eat those mice that came there to (drink) the oil and to take away the wick. When this was going on like this, after some time had elapsed, that pure brāhmaṇa Kapila along with his wife fasted and worshipped Viṣṇu in his house on an Ekādaśī (day).

73-81. Engaged in praising (Viṣṇu) and dancing (in front of his image) he kept awake. When it was midnight, the brāhmaṇa was overcome with sleep. The cat having sharp teeth and going quickly came there; and always remaining in a corner of the house he ate up the eatables offered to the deity. He saw a small female mouse that had come there to drink the oil, and that was used to take away the wick in the dim light. He jumped and attacked her with his foot. Then she entered a hole. Due to (the contact with) her foot the lamp became very bright. The oil-pot was bent and there was good light. The brāhmaṇa too abandoning his stupefying sleep got up. The cat that ate mice,

also kept awake during that night. Then when it had dawned, the brāhmaṇa, having performed his daily rites, broke the fast along with his relatives. That magnanimous Kapila who was going along like this had sons and grandsons. He obtained wealth, grains, excellent health, great prosperity and abundant riches. Having broken through the auspicious orb of the sun, so also of the moon, Kapila came to (secure) salvation through the prowess of the vow of the lamp.

82-84. He got joined (i.e. he merged) in the form of a lustre into the highest soul. The female mouse also died in the hole in (course of) time. Getting into an excellent aeroplane, she went to the world of Viṣṇu. The cat too died after (some) time and went to heaven. Having got into an excellent aeroplane waited upon and surrounded by celestial nymphs, accompanied by hosts of vidyādharas, being praised with auspicious cries of victory by serpents he went to the world of Viṣṇu.

85-91a. Having enjoyed many pleasures for thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas he became a king on the earth by name Sudharman who was religious-minded, who worshipped gods and brāhmaṇas, who was handsome, who was fortunate and who was very mighty and brave. His wife, most dear to him, was endowed with all (auspicious) marks, was devoted to her husband, and was of a good character. Her name was Rūpasundarī. She was the most beautiful among all ladies. Many sons and many daughters were born (to them). When the couple was thus enjoying (in each other's company) with love, the month of Kārtika opening Viṣṇu's eyes (i.e. making him awake) arrived. During that (month) lamps are lighted by those who are devoted to Viṣṇu. So also those devotees of Viṣṇu who are afraid of the worldly existence practise vows like Kṛcchra and Cāndrāyaṇa and restraints.

91b-94. When the Prabodhinī (Ekādaśī) arrived, the king said to the queen: "O good one, in the lotus from the navel of Viṣṇu it is the auspicious Prabodhinī. With my senses controlled through fast, I shall today worship (Viṣṇu). Having bathed in the holy place of Puṣkara, I shall worship the imperishable lord of gods having lotus-like eyes, along with Lakṣmī." Having heard these desired words, she who was engaged in the well-

being of her husband and who smiled charmingly, said (these) secret words to her husband:

Rūpasundarī said:

95-100a. O king, desire is also produced in my heart. I too have a desire for form and beauty. I desire to go with you to the best sacred place, Puṣkara.

Then the king, along with her, and with groups of elephants, horses and chariots and with family-priests came to Puṣkara. Then having bathed (there) he, meditating (on Viṣṇu) and gratifying manes and deities, worshipped the imperishable lord of gods, the lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu). There, in the very charming temple, full of rows of lights everywhere, he saw the cat drawn (in a picture). Seeing that, the king remembering his former deeds and existence, looked at the lotus-like face of his beloved, and smiled.

Rūpasundarī said:

100b-101a. O lord, why did you smile after looking at my face?

Seeing the fruit of his former deed, he said (to her):

The king said:

101b-103. O queen, formerly (i.e. in the previous existence) I was a cat in the house of a brāhmaṇa. There I ate hundreds and thousands of mice. Since, even under a pretext, I guarded the lamp in front of Viṣṇu, I got, O Queen, fruit of that deed. Having reached Viṣṇu's world, I have now obtained the kingdom.

Rūpasundarī said:

104-108. I too had the recollection of my former deeds and existence. I too was a small female mouse in the house of the brāhmaṇa. On the Prabodhinī (Ekādaśī) in Kārtika, when the light had become dim, I went out of the hole to snatch the wick. Seeing (the image of) the god Viṣṇu worshipped with flowers, and the brāhmaṇa overcome with sleep, I then dragged the wick. When you, taking an opportunity to seize me, got up, I

saw you and ran into the hole. With the foot of me who was entering (the hole) the wick of the lamp spread out, the oil-pot also bent down and I was happy.

109-115. O lord of great kings, since I brightened the lamp at that time, I have now secured excellent beauty; you are my husband, (I have obtained) kingdom, sons and (great) happiness like that. Due to my brightening the lamp I secured knowledge which is extremely difficult to obtain. Therefore, with all efforts and with great devotion, we have especially practised the vow of the lamp. So we have received the fruit of the deed, viz. the riches like the kingdom etc. We remembered our former existence and so also all our sins have perished. Therefore, men have practised with all efforts and proper rites and hymns the vow of the lamp which is auspicious and resembles the Sun, the Moon and stars.

Hearing this, O divine sage, the king full of faith properly practised the vow of the lamp with his wife. Having practised the vow of the lamp at the holy palce of Puṣkara, the two obtained the great salvation difficult to be obtained by gods and demons.

116-120. Those men who on the earth listen to this greatness (of the vow) of the lamp, are free from all sins, and go to Viṣṇu's abode. And those men or those women who being intent upon it, devoutly practise it are all free from sins and go to ancient Brahman. O learned one, I have told you about this vow of the lamp which gives salvation, which gives all happiness, which is virtuous, and which is a great vow. Diseases of the eye, so also maladies and (other) diseases of the body perish in a moment, when it is practised. O brāhmaṇa, there is no poverty, no grief, no delusion, no illusion. Prosperity comes to the house in every existence.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

The Vow of Janmāṣṭamī

Nārada Said:

1. O god of gods, O lord of the world, O you who grant fearlessness to your devotees, having favoured me tell me about the vow (of Janmāṣṭamī), O Mahādeva.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

2-12a. Formerly there was king Hariścandra who was a sovereign emperor. Brahmā pleased with him gave him an auspicious city which satisfied all desires, which was full of all gems, which was divine and lustrous like the young sun. Having stayed in it, the king righteously protected the earth with seven islands, as a father protects his legitimate son. The king having great wealth and corn, and having sons and daughters, and being very proud protected that auspicious kingdom. Nobody before (him) had such a kingdom anywhere (in the world). No other men also ever got into such an aeroplane (as he did). 'Of which act (of mine) is this the fruit that I am (enjoying) like the lord of gods?' Being engrossed in thinking like this, the excellent king seated in an excellent aeroplane saw the Meru, the best of mountains. The magnanimous one, as it were the other sun, was there. The king, having seen on the excellent mountain, on the golden strip of the mountain, Sanatkumāra, the brāhmaṇic sage, exclusively devoted to abstract meditation, got down with a desire to ask him about the wonder. Being delighted, he saluted his feet. He too greeted him. The king, who was seated comfortably, asked the best sage: "O lord, the wealth like the one that I possess, is difficult to obtain in the world. Due to which deed would it be obtained? Who was I in the former existence? If I deserve favour from you then tell me the truth."

Sanatkumāra said:

12b-20. O king, listen. I shall tell you the cause of your former behaviour, having practised which you were specially favoured. In your previous existence you were a good, pure vaiśya who spoke the truth. You gave up your duty; therefore

you were abandoned by your kinsmen. That you (i.e. you reduced to that condition), weak (i.e. unable) to maintain yourself, abandoned your relatives and went out, followed by your wife, to serve someone. But at that time (every man) was oppressed by famine, (so) nobody gave you a job. Then in a forest you saw a lake with the lotuses blooming. Then you had a thought: 'Let us take the lotuses.' Saying so, and taking them at every step they resorted to in the auspicious, meritorious city named Vārāṇasī. Then nobody purchased the lotuses. Somebody went out from the temple and stood in the courtyard. Entering that place he heard the sound of musical instruments. 'In which place (i.e. from which place) is the sound of the musical instruments being heard?' When he asked like this and was told that it was the sound from a musical instrument, he went ahead a (little) distance. There was king Indradyumna, the well-known king of Kāśī.

21-30. His well-known daughter was Candrāvatī by name, who was virtuous. The noble one had fasted on the auspicious day—the eighth day (of the month)—the day of the birth anniversary (of Kṛṣṇa). That vaiśya came there where she, the one, remained. His mind was pleased, and great joy came there. At that place you saw the sacred rite in honour of the deity, where lord Viṣṇu is worshipped along with the Sun. You and your wife worshipped him devoutly with flowers. The other made a heap of flowers there. Seeing that she, who was amazed, said: "Oh, who has made this worship?" Knowing all her act you also had protected all that. Then, she, being pleased, gave you much wealth. You did not accept the wealth. You were invited to a meal. You did not take the wealth or the meal at that time. The Sun, along with Viṣṇu, was duly worshipped. Then in the morning, you, always being looked after by her, having produced familiarity with them all, went out as you liked. This (then) is the good deed done by you in the previous existence. According to (the fruit of) your deeds, you died. Due to that great religious merit, an aeroplane came at that time. O king, you are enjoying the fruit of the deed which you did in the former existence.

Hariścandra said:

31. If I deserve to be favoured by you then tell me in what manner and in which month that day (of Aṣṭamī) is to be celebrated.

Sanatkumāra said:

32-40. Listen attentively, O king, to what is being told to you by me. If in the month of Śrāvaṇa on the eighth of the dark half Rohiṇī is seen (in the sky) then that day is named Jayantī (day). O great king, it would be the cause for existence again and again. I shall narrate to you the manner of (observing) it as I was told by Brahmā, doing (i.e. observing) which a man being free from sins, goes to Viṣṇu's world. Then having fasted and then bathed with (water) with black sesamum-seeds, he should instal a scratchless pitcher with five jewels. Kātyāyana said that these five jewels, viz. diamonds, pearls, lapis lazuli, topaz and sapphires are recommended. On it he should place a golden pot with (auspicious) marks. In it he should place the golden (image of) Yaśodā, Nanda's wife, giving a suck to her son and with a smile on her face. As his capacity is (i.e. permits), he should get fashioned a golden (image of the) god, sucking one breast of the mother, and touching the other with his hand, and looking at the mother with love and pleasing her again and again. If he has the capacity he should have the image (weighing) just two niṣkas, or of iron (weighing) three (niṣkas) or of gold also.

41-45. In the same way, he should fashion a golden (image of) Rohiṇī and a silver one of the Moon. The (image of the) Moon should be of the size of a thumb only, and (that of) Rohiṇī (should be of the size of) four fingers. He should place ear-rings on the ears and a neck ornament round the neck (of the image). Having done so, he should bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) along with (that of) his mother with milk etc. and smear them with sandal. He should cover (the image) with a white garment, and decorate it with garlands of flowers. Along with offerings of eatables and various varieties of fruits, he should put a lamp there decorated with an arbour of flowers. The devoted one should make the wise ones sing, dance and

play on musical instruments. Having done the rite according to his wealth, he should worship his teacher and should then bring the worship to an end.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

A Gift of Land Is the Best

Mahādeva said:

1-9. Seeing the Śatakratu completed and accomplished with excellent presents, Indra, in whose mind a thought had arisen, asked Bṛhaspati: "O you glorious one, O you of a great penance, tell me about that inexhaustible and very valuable gift by means of which a man gets happinsss everywhere." Thus addressed by Indra, that family priest (of the gods), the god of gods and the very wise Bṛhaspati said: "O Indra, he who gives the gift of gold, or of a cow, or of (a piece of) land, becomes free from all sins. All (this) viz. gold, silver, a garment, a gem, a jewel would be (said to be) given by him who gives (a piece of) land. By giving land that is tilled with a plough, that contains seeds and is shining with corn, a man is honoured in heaven as long as there is the light cast by the sun. That sin, whichever a man overpowered by his livelihood commits, is purified by the gift of land of the measure of a *gocarma*. *Daṇḍa* is of the measure of ten cubits. Thirty daṇḍas make a *vartana*. Ten such (vartanas) make a *gocarma*. This is the definition of *brahmagocarma*. That land where a thousand cows that have calved young calves and that are with bulls, remain uncontrolled, is known as *gocarma*.

10-14. He should give it to a brāhmaṇa endowed with virtues, possessing penance, and with his senses controlled. He would get its infinite fruit as long as the earth begirt by the ocean remains. As a drop of oil fallen into water spreads, in the same way, O Indra, the gift of (a piece of) land spreads in every grain. As the seeds scattered on the earth grow, similarly the desires accompanied by the gift of land, grow (i.e. become fruitful). The givers of food are always happy. One who gives a

garment would be handsome. That man who gives (a piece of) land repeatedly gives all.

15-17. O Indra, as a milch-cow feeds her calf by sending out milk, in the same way the land that is given (to a brāhmaṇa) feeds the giver of it. A conch, an auspicious seat, an umbrella, excellent horses and fine elephants (*obscure*). The fruit of the religious merit of the gift of land is heaven, O Indra. The Sun, Varuṇa, Fire, Brahmā, the Moon, Hutāśana (i.e. fire), the lord with the trident in his hand greet the giver of land. His manes clap (with delight) and the grandsires describe (his gift), 'In our family the giver of land is born. He will emancipate us.'

18-20. The three are said to be superior gifts: cows, land and knowledge. These lift (a man) from hell by means of muttering, sowing seed and milking. O brāhmaṇa, if they are taken up by the learned they help to cross a calamity. Those that give garments, go (to heaven with their bodies) covered. Those who do not give garments go naked. The givers of food go with gratification. Those who do not give food go hungry.

21-25a. All the manes frightened due to the fear of (falling into) hell say: 'That (our) son who will go to Gayā will be our emancipator.' Many sons should be desired, so that at least one of them would go to Gayā. He would perform the horse-sacrifice, or would give a 'nīla' bull. That bull which is red in colour, whitish at the tip of its tail, white at the hoofs and tail, is called 'nīla'. By means of the water which the 'nīla' bull, of a whitish tail, splashes, the manes are gratified for sixty thousand years; and by means of the mud which is on the horns, the family is emancipated; and his manes obtain (i.e. go to) the very bright world of Soma (i.e. the Moon).

25b-30a. It was (reached) by king Dilīpa, Nṛga and Nahuṣa; but none of the other kings reached it. Many kings like Sagara, gave (the gift of) land. Whenever he gave (the gift of) land he got its fruit (just) then. That (gift of land) destroys the sin (of one) who kills a brāhmaṇa, who murders a woman, who kills a child, who is fallen, or the killer of thousands of cows. He who takes away the land given by him or by someone else, becomes an insect in the feces, and is roasted along with his manes. The giver of land remains in heaven for sixty thousand years; and the one who strikes him (soliciting land) and who consents to (the

suppliant being struck) would go to (and live in) hell for that much period.

30b-37. None else is more meritorious or a greater sinner than the giver of land or the snatcher of it (respectively). They remain above (i.e. in heaven) and below (in hell) till the deluge. The first child of Fire is gold; the earth is (the child) of Viṣṇu; the cows are the Sun's daughters. He would obtain an unending fruit of (these gifts); so also he who would give gold, or a cow or (a piece of) land. He who receives (a piece of) land, he who gives it, both are meritorious, and certainly go to heaven. Those who snatch (a piece of) land or those who have caused (others) to snatch it unjustly would destroy their family (upto) the seventh member (i.e. descendant). He, a dull one and covered by (i.e. full of) ignorance, who snatches or causes someone else to snatch (a piece of land), is bound by the nooses of Varuṇa and is born in the stocks of lower animals. The gifts are censured along with the tears that are shed. The family up to three descendants perishes when the land of a brāhmaṇa is taken away. One who snatches (a piece of) land is not purified (even) by (digging) a thousand wells and tanks, or by performing a hundred horse-sacrifices, or by giving a crore of cows.

38-39. Whatever good deed is done, whatever gift is given, whatever penance is practised, whatever study is done, whatever is meritorious perishes by taking away (the portion of) the border (of a piece of land) of the measure of half a finger. He who oppresses (i.e. snatches) a (pasture)—a sacred land of cows, (a portion of) the road in the village, or (a portion of) cremation ground goes to hell (and remains there) till deluge.

40-44. A man kills five (members of his family) if he tells a lie with regard to his daughter, kills ten if he lies about a cow, kills a hundred if he tells a lie about a horse, and (kills) a thousand by telling a lie about a man. The liar with regard to gold kills those that are born and those that are not (i.e. are yet to be) born. He kills (i.e. destroys) everything by lying about land. (Therefore) do not tell a lie pertaining to land. Even if the life is on the point of departing, a man should not show interest in a brāhmaṇa's wealth. Those that are (duly) burnt with fire (after their death) go up. The one who is burnt by (the curse of) a brāhmaṇa, does not go up. Those who are burnt by fire, go up;

so also those who are scorched up by the sun; so also those who are struck by the sceptre of the king or by the curse of a brāhmaṇa. The limbs nourished by a brāhmaṇa's wealth, repeatedly waste away as the heat wastes away due to sand.

45-49a. A man who snatches the wealth of a brāhmaṇa goes to (the) Raurava (hell). Poison is not called poison; (but) a brāhmaṇa's wealth is called poison. Poison kills one(only), (but snatching) a brāhmaṇa's wealth kills one's sons and grandsons. A man may digest iron-powder, or stone-powder, or (even) poison. But which man will digest a brāhmaṇa's wealth in the three worlds? That wealth which through (snatching of) a brāhmaṇa's wealth gives happiness or which through (snatching away) the wealth belonging to (the temple of) a deity gives joy, leads to the destruction of the family and to that of oneself. A brāhmaṇa's wealth, the murder of a brāhmaṇa, the wealth of a poor man, the gold of the preceptor or friend would trouble a man even while (he is) living in heaven.

49b-53a. O best god, that (wealth) which is given to a brāhmaṇa who is contented, who is modest, who is accompanied by the essence of everything, who is endowed with Vedic studies, penance, knowledge and control of senses, is inexhaustible. As milk, curd, ghee or honey put in an unbaked pot splits due to the weakness of the pot, but the pot does not perish, similarly, an ignorant man who receives a cow, gold, a garment, food, land and sesamum-seeds, becomes reduced to ash like wood.

53b-61a. He who would construct a new lake or would get an old one dug up, emancipates his entire family and is honoured in heaven. Wells, tanks, lakes or (trees etc.) growing in gardens, if improved again, give a pearl-like fruit. O Indra, he who has water (to give to others) in (even) the summer season, would never meet with a difficulty, a danger or an evil. O best god, water remaining on the earth (even) for a day, would emancipate seven members preceding (and succeeding) him. The man (offering a lamp) would be of a strong body by means of the light of the lamp. By giving presents he obtains memory and intelligence. He who, even after having done a sinful act, would give to a deserving person, especially a brāhmaṇa. is not smeared with sins. He who does not report when (a piece of) land, cows, or a servant are forcibly snatched is called the killer of a brāh-

maṇa. He who, when a marriage is about to take place, or at the time of a sacrifice or gift, creates obstacle through delusion, becomes an insect after death.

61b-71. Wealth becomes fruitful by giving (a portion of it); life becomes fruitful by saving (another) life. Harmlessness gets (as) its fruit handsomeness, prosperity and good health. A man gets (the fruit of) worship by eating fruits and roots. Heaven is obtained through truthfulness. Due to fasting oneself unto death one gets kingdom and obtains happiness everywhere. O Indra, an embodied one who roams about as a religious mendicant, who goes on well while in initiation, who bathes thrice a day, drinks (i.e. inhales) air (only) obtains the (fruit of a) sacrifice. He should bathe every day, be diligent and be endowed with the sandhyā (prayer), Vedas and muttering. The harmless one goes to splendour, the indestructible heaven. One who enters fire is certainly honoured in Brahmā's world. By giving up tastes he obtains beasts and sons. He who fasts, lives in heaven for a long time. He who always sleeps on the (bare) ground, obtains desired position. He who takes up the posture of the brave, who sleeps like a brave man and occupies the position of a brave man has all inexhaustible worlds reached according to his desire. O Indra, having observed a fast, taken initiation and having bathed for twelve years he goes above the position of the brave. He practises purifying righteousness and is honoured in heaven." Of the men who read (this) view of Bṛhaspati, four things grow: life, knowledge, glory and power.

Nārada said:

O king, all the sacred rules told by Bṛhaspati to Indra were told by great god (Maheśa) to me, his devotee.

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

A Hymn to Śani as a Remover of Trouble

Nārada said:

1. O best god, tell me how the oppression caused by Saturn goes away (i.e. is removed). A living being is freed by that which is heard from your mouth.

Mahādeva said:

2-11. O divine sage, litsen to the account. By that you will be free from bondage. This Saturn is the lord of Planets and the great lord of all. This divinity is well-known. He is a great Planet of the form of death. He is having matted hair; is having hair like diamond pins; he is fearful to the demons. O lord, in this world his account is not well-known. I have especially guarded it and have not told it to anyone. Formerly in Raghu's family there was a very famous king, Daśaratha by name. He was a sovereign emperor and a great hero. Knowing Saturn to be near Kṛttikā the astrologers informed him: Now Saturn will go piercing Rohiṇī (i.e. will pass through Rohiṇī); the piercing of the cart (-like shape of the constellation Rohiṇī) is very fierce and fearful to the gods and demons; for twelve years there will be a very great (i.e. severe) famine. Having heard these words, the king held consultation with his ministers: "What is the fearful (calamity) that has come?" Seeing the world, the citizens and the peasants distressed, people everywhere said: "The end of the world has come. Regions with cities, villages have been frightened all around." The devout king asked brāhmaṇas led by Vasiṣṭha: "O best brāhmaṇas, tell me what measure (should) be (adopted) now?"

Vasiṣṭha said:

12-18. This is the star of Prajāpati. When it is pierced, where (i.e. how) will the subjects remain? This conjunction cannot be averted (even) by Brahmā and Śakra etc.

Thinking in his mind about a rash act, he took up his divine bow along with divine weapons, quickly got into

his chariot and went to the group of stars (i.e. to the sky), numbering a lakh, and remaining over the Sun, and (covering a region) of a yojana and a quarter, and dwelling on the back of Rohiṇī. Formerly king Daśaratha, shining with great jewels and bright with a diadem and a crown looked bright in his golden, divine chariot which was decorated with gems and jewels, to which horses having the colour of swans were yoked, and which had a banner (fluttering) high. At that time he shone in the sky like another sun. Having fully (drawn) his bow up to the ear he fixed a missile that would destroy (everything). Saturn, having seen that destructive missile causing fear to gods and demons, laughed through its fear and said these words:

Saturn said:

19-20. O lord of kings, your valour is great and causes fear to the enemies. O king, gods, demons, human beings, siddhas, vidyādharas, serpents, when looked at by me, are reduced to ash. O lord of kings, I am pleased with your penance and valour. Ask for a boon—whatever you desire in your mind. I shall grant it.

Daśaratha said:

21-24. You should never pierce Rohiṇī and go (i.e. you should never pass through Rohiṇī), as long as the rivers, the oceans, the Moons, the Sun and the earth remain. I have, O Sauri, solicited (what I want). I do not desire any other boon from you.

Granting him an eternal boon, Śani said: "Let it be so". Again being pleased, he said: "O you of a good vow, ask for a boon." With a pleased mind he (the king) then solicited another boon from Saturn. (He said): "O Sun's son, you should never pierce (i.e. pass through) the cart (i.e. Rohiṇī). Never cause a famine (lasting) for twelve years'.

Saturn said:

25-27. There shall never be a famine (lasting) for twelve years. This fame of yours will spread in the three worlds.

The king, having obtained a couple of boons, and thrilling (with joy) kept his bow on the chariot, and with palms of his hands joined he meditated upon goddess Sarasvatī and Vināyaka, the chief of (Śiva's) attendants. (Then) king Daśaratha recited this hymn of praise of Saturn:

Daśaratha said:

28-38. My homage to Kṛṣṇa, Nīla (i.e. the dark one), to Śitikaṇṭhanibha (i.e. one who resembles Śiva), to Kālāgnirūpa (i.e. of the form of the destructive fire), to Kṛtānta (i.e. Death). My obeisance to Nirmāṁsadeha (i.e. having no i.e. very little flesh in his body), to Dīrghaśmasrujāta (i.e. having long moustache and beard), to Viśālanetra (i.e. having big eyes), to you having thin belly and fearful figure. My homage to Puṣkalagātra (i.e. having a large body), to Sthūlaroman (i.e. having thick hair), to Dīrgha (i.e. long), to Śuṣka (i.e. dry); salutation to you having death-like fangs. Salutation to Koṭarākṣa (i.e. having hollow-like senses), Durnirīkṣya (i.e. difficult to be looked at); Salutation to Ghora (i.e. fearful), to Raudra (i.e. fierce), to Bhīṣaṇa (i.e. terrible), to Kapālin (i.e. wearing skulls); homage to Sarvabhakṣa (i.e. one consuming everything), to you, O Valimukha (i.e. to you who have wrinkles on your face); salutation to you, O Sun's son, to you, O Bhāskari (i.e. the Sun's son), to Bhayada (i.e. causing fear); homage to you, O Adhodṛṣṭi (i.e. (looking down), to you, O Saṁvartaka (i.e. fire of destruction), to Mandagati (i.e. moving slowly), salutation to Nistriṁśa (i.e. pitiless), to you whose body is burnt by penance, to you who are always engaged in abstract meditation; constant homage to Kṣudhārta (i.e. oppressed with hunger), to Atṛpta (i.e. not content); salutation to you, the eye of knowledge, to the son of Kaśyapa's son. When you are pleased, you give a kingdom; when you are angry you take it away in a moment.

Thus praised, that very powerful king of Planets, viz. Saturn, the son of the Sun, was thrilled (with joy) and again said these words (to Daśaratha): "O you best king of a good vow, with this hymn of praise of (i.e. recited by) you, I am pleased. Ask for your desired boon. I shall grant it, O descendant of Raghu."

Daśaratha said:

39. O Sauri (i.e. Sun's son), from today you are not to cause any trouble to anyone—gods, demons, men, beasts, birds and serpents.

Śani said:

40-51. Grahas (i.e. Planets) are (so called) since they seize (a being). They are said to cause trouble. I (shall) tell you about something proper which is solicited and cannot be given. A man who will recite once or twice this hymn of praise recited by you, will be free from trouble (just) at the moment. In the fourth existence in the end, I, having gone to death, would give death to gods, demons, human beings, siddhas, vidyādharas and goblins. On the other hand, I shall never trouble him who with faith, becomes pure and calm, worships my iron image with Śamī-leaves, and who would offer as present iron mixed with beans, rice, sesamum-seeds, and would give a black cow, a bull to a brāhmaṇa, and would, especially on my day (i.e. Saturday) worship (me) with this hymn, and would, with the palms of his hands joined, recite the hymn (in my honour) after having worshipped me. I shall always protect him and (keep away) the trouble from a Planet during the Planet's influence, in the sign of Zodiac in which a person is born, in the Planet's aspect or in the middle of it. By doing this only, the world would be free from trouble. Thus, O descendant of Raghu, I have skilfully granted you a boon.

Having obtained three boons, king Daśaratha regarded himself as successful and saluted Śani. Permitted by Śani, he speedily got into his chariot and went to his place. Then the king had obtained bliss. That man who having got up in the morning on a Saturday, would recite this hymn of praise, so also the man who devoutly listens to this hymn of praise when it is being recited, is freed from a sin, and is honoured in heaven.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

The Account of Trispṛśā

Nārada said:

1. O lord, especially narrate to me the vow called Trispṛśā, by hearing which people are free from the bondage of their acts (just) at (that) moment.

Mahādeva said:

2-12a. Listen to the great vow called Trispṛśā of the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa. It puts to an end all streams of sins. It destroys great unhappiness. It gives the desired objects to those who desire them, and gives salvation to those who have no desire. O brāhmaṇa, listen to that vow called Trispṛśā from me who am narrating it. Viṣṇu is directly worshipped in the Kali age by him who, O great sage, always narrates the (account of) Trispṛśā. All the sin would not come to an end by the repetition of the name of a deity accompanied with burnt offerings. (But) there is no doubt that it gets exhausted merely by uttering the name of Trispṛśā. O best brāhmaṇa, if Trispṛśā is not observed, salvation does not take place even by reading sacred texts, Purāṇas and other (works), (performing) sacrifices, (visits to) crores of sacred places, (observing) many multitudes of vows, worshipping deities. This date (*tithi*) sacred to Viṣṇu is noted by the god of gods for (securing) salvation. For brāhmaṇas, especially in the Kali age, the Sāṁkhya is difficult to understand; so also there is lack of control over the senses, and there is no stability of the mind. Trispṛśā gives salvation to those who are attached to sensual objects, who are without meditation and lack retentive memory. The Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) formerly narrated it to me and Brahmā and to those who had bowed down (to him) in the Milky Ocean. I have granted salvation even to those, except the Sāṅkhyas, who, even though attached to sensual objects observe the Trispṛśā vow. Trispṛśā gives salvation to those who are attached to sensual pleasures.

12b-18. O great sage, it (i.e. the vow of Trispṛśā) has been observed even by many groups of sages. If Trispṛśā takes place in the bright half of Kārtika with the Moon or Mercury, it

destroys crores of sins. The skull of Brahmā fell on the ground just at that moment from the hand of the great lord (i.e. Śiva), possessing (the sin of) murder and observing a fast on that day. The goddess Gaṅgā was freed from the streams of crores of sins in the Kali age, due to the advice of Viṣṇu and fasting on the Trispṛśā day. O great sage, the sin of eight murders that formerly took place in the case of Bahuvīrya, was removed by means of Bhṛgu's advice and fasting on Trispṛśā. O best brāhmaṇa, Śatāyudha had killed a brāhmaṇa in a forest. He was free from (the sin of) murder of the brāhmaṇa due to fasting on Trispṛśā. Due to the advice of Jīva, (the sin due to) the killing of Namuci (committed) by Indra vanished on account of fasting on Trispṛśā, O best among the principal sages.

19-23. O best brāhmaṇa, sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc. perish by means of fasting on Trispṛśā. Then what can be said about other sins? O best brāhmaṇa, if (the vow of) Trispṛśā is not observed, then salvation is not possible at Gayā, at Kāśī, at Gomatī or near Kṛṣṇa. Eternal salvation takes place by dying at Prayāga or at Gomatī or near Kṛṣṇa, (so also) merely by bathing at Gomatī. By fasting on Trispṛśā salvation takes place even at home in the case of him who indulges in (objects of) senses and is full of sensual pleasures. Even for one who has turned away from sensual objects salvation is difficult according to the Sāṁkhya(-path). Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, observe the Trispṛśā which gives salvation.

Nārada said:

24. O best god, what kind of vow is the great vow called Trispṛśā, which gives salvation to brāhmaṇas, and which you told me about now.

Mahādeva said:

25. O brāhmaṇa, formerly Viṣṇu told Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) about (the vow of) Trispṛśā through compassion (for her) on the bank of Prācī Sarasvatī.

Jāhnavī said:

26-27. O Viṣṇu, in this Kali age many (people) possessing the streams of crores of sins like those of the murder of a

brāhmaṇa, bathe in my water. Due to the blemishes of hundreds of sins of them, my body is made turbid. O god having Garuḍa as your banner, how will that sin of me go away?

Prācī Mādhava said:

28-35. I shall undoubtedly tell you. O daughter, do not weep. My place is the Śyāma Vaṭa; and Prācī Devī, daughter of Brahmā, flows in front of me. Looking at the chief goddess, every day bathe there. By that you will be purified. There is no doubt that I stay along with hundreds of holy places and gods there where there is Prācī, Brahmā's daughter. My place is pure and dear (to me). It destroys (the sin of) crores of murders. Since you are dearer to me than my (own) life, I, being pleased, have given it to you. O Jāhnavī, by my order thousands of crores of holy places always remain in the water of Prācī Sarasvatī. O daughter, Brahmā's daughter Prācī removes all sins on bathing once (only) in front of me (in her water). (She removes) sins due to the murder of a brāhmaṇa, drinking liquor, killing a cow or a śūdra woman, snatching the wealth of a brāhmaṇa, not honouring one's mother and father, using a vehicle, deceiving one's preceptor, or eating what is prohibited. O best river, bathe (there). You will be free from sins.

Jāhnavī said:

36. O lord of gods, I cannot come every day. O Viṣṇu, tell me now how (my) sins will perish.

Prācī Mādhava said:

37-40. O Jāhnavī, since you have risen from my feet, I shall tell you something else if you are unable to come (here) every day. You should observe (the vow of) the auspicious Trispṛśā, which is superior to (a bath in) Sarasvatī, which is superior to hundreds of crores of sacred places, which is superior to crores of sacrifices, which is superior to vows and gifts, which is superior to muttering (of hymns) and sacrifices, and which gives the four goals, which is superior to (the practices laid down in) the Sāṁkhya-Yoga (path). When it comes (i.e. falls) in a month, during either the bright or the dark half, it should be observed, O best river. When it is observed, one is free from a sin.

Jāhnavī said:

41-42. O god Viṣṇu, tell me how that Trispṛśā, about whose greatness of this kind you told me now, is. O lord, tell me if the day on which the three dates, viz. tenth, eleventh and twelfth combine would be the Trispṛśā day, or if it is different.

Kṛṣṇa said:

43-54. O goddess, that Trispṛśā which you mentioned is demonish. With care it is to be avoided as the husband who is without any livelihood (i.e. a job). It is said to be of the demons and destroys life and vigour. With care it should be avoided like a woman in her menses. My day especially in conjunction with the tenth day should be avoided like her who, having abandoned her own caste, has gone to lower castes. As ignorant people are polluted due to the contact with a woman in her menses, similarly my day in conjunction with the tenth is censurable for men. Trispṛśā, if properly fasted on, destroys (the sin) of a hundred murders. That day on which the three days viz. the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth fall, should be known as Trispṛśā and not one in conjunction with the tenth. A man, having gone through an expiation after having committed a fault, would be free. O divine river, I do not forgive the fault due to being pierced by the tenth. He who has observed the Ekādaśī-vow (on the day) mixed with the tenth has taken the *halāhala* poison or has taken poison. Thinking like this, he should not observe (a fast on) my day in conjunction with the tenth. The religious merit or the progeny of him (who does so) perishes. He would cause (the members of) his family to drop from heaven and takes (them) to (hells) like Raurava. Having purified one's body, one should observe (the vow on) my day. The day when there is increase (in its duration) should be avoided except piercing of (i.e. being mixed with another day) and combined with Śravaṇa etc. The merit of those who fast on the Ekādaśī day perishes. This is especially so in the case of the increase in its duration and when a doubt has arisen. Dvādaśī (-fast) should be observed. It is dear to him.

Jāhnavī said:

55. O lord of the world, according to your words (i.e. as you have told me) I shall observe (the vow of) Trispṛśā. By your behest I shall be free from all sins.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

56-57. Go (back) to your own place. You should never entertain fear. O goddess, O best river, sin shall never come to you. Those who, after having worshipped Mādhava, pay homage to the lord of the world, go to (i.e. obtain) the highest position.

Jāhnavī said:

58. O Brahman, tell me the manner (in which the vow is to be observed). I (shall) do it with everything (I have). I shall propitiate the lord of gods, Dāmodara, Anāmaya.

Prācī Mādhava said:

59-65a. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you the manner of (i.e. in which) Trispṛśā (should be observed), even by hearing which a man is freed from sins, O best river. According to the capacity of one's wealth, a golden image of me (weighing) a pala, half of it, or half of the latter, should be fashioned. A pot of copper should be made and should be filled with sesamum-seeds. A white pitcher containing water and with five gems, should be wrapped with garlands of flowers, and made fragrant with the incense of agaru. Then after having bathed (the image of) Viṣṇu and having smeared (it with sandal) one should put (it in the vessel). Then with a pair of garments (the image) should be seated and the worship should be done with hymns and by reciting (passages from) the Purāṇas, so also with white, seasonal flowers and tender Tulasī-leaves. One should offer an umbrella along with sandals to Viṣṇu, so also pleasing articles of food and very many fruits. One should offer a new, strong sacred thread along with an upper garment.

65b-77. One should also cause to be given a beautiful, long and strong bamboo-staff. Having duly and devoutly worshipped the feet (of the image saying) 'to Dāmodara', its knees (saying) 'to Mādhava', its private part (saying) 'to Kāmaprada', its waist

(saying) 'to Vāmanamūrti', its navel (saying) 'to Padmanābha', its belly (saying) 'to Viśvayoni', its heart (saying) 'to Jñānagamya', its throat (saying) 'to Vaikuṇṭhagāmin', its arms (saying) 'to Sahasrabāhu', its eyes (saying) 'to Yogarūpin', one should make a respectful offering. (Taking) a white coconut placed on a conch and wrapped with threads in both his hands, (he should say), "O Janārdana, if, by just being remembered you remove sins and bad dreams and evil omens seen by the mind, then, O god, protect me from the fear of hell due to fear and calamity, so also of this and the next world; accept (this) respectful offering. Salutation to you. O Dāmodara, always look favourably at me." One should then offer incense, lamp and wave a light and should revolve a lotus over the head of Viṣṇu. Having performed this rite, one should then worship his own preceptor. One should give (the preceptor) gold, garments, and a dress with a turban, so also shoes, an umbrella, a ring and a water-pot, so also a meal, a tāmbūla, seven (kinds of) corn, and a gift. Having properly worshipped the preceptor, the lord of gods, one should keep awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, with dance and music, according to the sacred precepts. At the close of the night one having duly made a respectful offering to the deity, and having performed the rites like bathing, one should eat along with brāhmaṇas.

Śiva said:

78-87. O brāhmaṇa, having heard this account of Trispṛśā which is wonderful and thrilling, one gets the religious merit due to bath in the Gaṅgā. By fasting on Trispṛśā one gets the fruit of thousands of Aśvamedha sacrifices and hundreds of Vājapeya sacrifices. Along with all the sides like that of one's father, that of one's mother, and that of one's own one is freed, and one is honoured in the world of Viṣṇu. By fasting on Trispṛśā one gets the same religious merit as is obtained by (visiting) crores of holy places and crores of sacred places. O best brāhmaṇa, all those—brāhmaṇas, evil-minded kṣatriyas, vaiśyas or those born as śūdras, so also persons of other castes—come to (i.e. obtain) salvation after having left the earth. This is the king-hymn among the hymns as would be (the hymn of) twelve letters. Of vows (it is the chief) for him who has observed it. It was first observed by Brahmā, then was observed by royal sages. Then,

O child, what can be said about others? Trispṛśā gives salvation. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the fruit of him (i.e. which he gets) who devoutly observes this Trispṛśā vow. He who observes the Trispṛśā (vow) gets that fruit which is obtained by bathing in Gaṅgā at Vārāṇasī for thousands of the periods of Manu. A man who observes the vow of Trispṛśā obtains that fruit obtained by means of bathing in Prācī and Yamunā for crores of years.

88-95. A man who observes the Trispṛśā vow gets that fruit which is obtained by (bathing during) crores of solar eclipses at Kurukṣetra, or by (giving) hundreds of bhāras of gold. By means of just one fast thousands of crores of sins and hundreds of (sins due to) murders are quickly reduced to ash. That vow of Trispṛśā gives salvation to those who have not got it. Hundreds of (persons committing) great sins desire salvation, O brāhmaṇic sage. Kṛṣṇa himself told (this vow) in front of (i.e. to) Pārāśarya. He who, even though bound by streams of sins, shows this Vaiṣṇava (Purāṇa) after writing it to a brāhmaṇa, obtains salvation. (This vow) is secured, O wise one, by means of religious merit (collected during) hundreds of ages of Manu. Trispṛśā is difficult to be secured by men. It is not easily had in the world. The fruit of the existence of those mean men, so also their life, who, having had (i.e. having known the day of) Trispṛśā, do not observe it, is fruitless. Those who have, after having (come to know the day of) Trispṛśā, observed it (even) once have overcome (being reduced to) the state of a goblin without Śrāddha or without sons.

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

The Vow of Unmīlanī

Mahādeva said:

1-9. Hereafter I shall narrate to you the excellent (vow of) the Unmīlanī (Ekādaśī), having just heard about which a man is free from the bondage of the worldly existence. A sinner is

free from his sins and is honoured in heaven. His deities and manes would obtain a good position. A student gets knowledge and would have all his desires (fulfilled) by means of the vow of that (Ekādaśī). There is no doubt about that. He is honoured in heaven. There only he secures his position, and is honoured in the world of Śiva (also). Therefore, O king, do honour the devotees of Viṣṇu. O king, those who always serve the devotees of Viṣṇu (obtain good position). Do not punish them. O king, a king takes food after they have taken it. They alone have worshipped Viṣṇu who have devoutly honoured (Viṣṇu's devotees). O king, having daily held the Śālagrāma stone on the head, every day very devoutly wear it round your neck. O king, devoutly partake of the remnant of the incense of (i.e. offered to) Viṣṇu. O king, you always inform the devotees on waving the light before the idol. Having devoutly turned water from the conch round the head of (the idol of) Viṣṇu, you bear it on your head and the remaining you give to Viṣṇu's devotees.

10-17a. O brāhmaṇa, having every day offered eatables with all ingredients (to Viṣṇu) you eat them. Food offered to Viṣṇu is eaten along with (i.e. in the company of) Viṣṇu's devotees. Every day devoutly praise him with (the hymn containing) his thousand names. Offer a light and respectful offering and sing and dance. O best king, worship him deserving worship with śyāmā shoots. O child, it is very difficult (to get an opportunity) to worship (the deity) with śyāmā shoots. The religious merit due to the worship performed with dūrvā sprouts is equal to (the one obtained by) the gift of the earth. Therefore, in this world, on this earth, there is nothing like dūrvā. He who desires absorption into Viṣṇu should worship (Viṣṇu) with dūrvā. You may not worship (him) especially with barley (grains) or sacred rice grains, O best king. Dvādaśī-vow which is observed in every fortnight destroys great sins, O great king. It always gives salvation, happiness and also (long) life.

17b-25a. This vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu is said to give salvation to Viṣṇu's devotees. It gives happiness to the householders and salvation to the ascetics. It cures all diseases etc., it is pure and it purifies the body. O king, do not observe it merely by words. Observe the tenth without penetration by another day and by keeping awake. Worship Viṣṇu every day with heaps of Tulaśī-

leaves, O best king. The gopīcandana leaf (i.e. a mark) put on the head purifies all the people, O best king. Therefore, put it made from gopīcandana (on your head). All those who have applied the mark—the killer of a brāhmaṇa, he who has stolen gold, a drunkard, he who has approached one (i.e. a woman) who should not be approached, and he who has told lies—obtain salvation. Put around your neck a garland—pre-eminent, disjoined and even—garland made of Dhātrī-fruits and of Tulaśī-leaves. You worship it daily with the Śālagrāma stone having come up in Dvārakā. It gives the fruit of enjoyment and salvation.

25b-28. You read before Viṣṇu the Purāṇa called Padma, so also the account of Prahrāda, king of demons. O King, noting carefully the sacred texts, you keep away those men who observe the day (in honour) of Viṣṇu along with the proximate day. The king in that country in which the day (in honour) of Viṣṇu is observed along with its proximate day is smeared with sin and becomes a resident of hell. Abandoning the proximate (day) of four kinds and having observed a fast on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, a man, after having emancipated a crore (members of) his family, is honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven.

Gautama said:

29-32a. O king, listen to the great vow called Vaiṣṇava, hearing which all sinners obtain salvation just at that moment. I have not told anyone (else) the religious merit due to Dvādaśī. O great king, you are a devotee of Viṣṇu and a follower of Viṣṇu among men. (Therefore) listen to that very secret vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu. Formerly, due to my devotion Viṣṇu who was very much pleased, told me about (the vow called) Unmīlanī.

32b-38. O king, I shall tell you (about) it. That day on which the Ekādaśī lasts for the day and night and for a ghaṭikā on the next day, should be known as Unmīlanī, and it is especially dear to Viṣṇu. All the holy places and sacred places that are there in the three worlds can be compared only with a croreth part of the merit of Unmīlanī, so also sacrifices and austerities. There was nothing and will be nothing like Unmīlanī. (Even) Prayāga, Kurukṣetra, Puṣkara, the mountains Himālaya, Meru, Gandhamādana, Nīla, Niṣadha, Vindhya, (the forest) Naimiṣa, (the rivers) Godāvarī, Kāverī, Candrabhāgā, Vedikā, Tāpī,

Payoṣṇī, Kṣiprā, Candanā, Carmaṇvatī, Sarayū, Candrabhāgā, Gaṇḍikā, Gomatī, Vipāśā, and the great river called Śoṇa, are not like Unmīlanī.

39-50. O King, what is the use of saying (these things) again and again? There is nothing superior to Unmīlanī, and none greater than Viṣṇu. The heaps of the groups of sins of those who have, on obtaining the Unmīlanī (day), worshipped Viṣṇu, fall at that moment only. O king, Viṣṇu should be carefully worshipped with the name of that month in which Unmīlanī day would fall. A silver (image of) Viṣṇu, giving it the name of the month, and of a universal form, should be fashioned according to one's capacity and with faith and devotion. A pitcher should be made (ready) containing pure water, and five jewels, and sandal, flowers and sacred grains, and adorned with a chaplet and a garland. A vessel should be made (ready) containing water and filled with wheat, with many gems and adored with many kinds of sandal, with the fragrance of jasmine flowers and adored with jasmine flowers. It should be carefully filled with rice called śveta. O royal sage, he should give (to a brāhmaṇa) a pair of garments, a sacred thread with an upper garment, a pair of shoes, and an umbrella (to be held) over his head. (So also he should give) food, a water-pot, seven kinds of corn along with sesamum-seeds, (also) silver, cotton, sweetened milk, and the image of Viṣṇu. Or a cow along with her calf and ornaments, and having golden horns, silver hoops and red back should be given. Or he should give the representation of a cow having bell metal udders and a jewelled tail, to his preceptor. He should devoutly give a furnished bed to a good (brāhmaṇa). He should offer incense, lamp, articles of food, fruits, leaves to the deity.

51-56a. The great devotees should worship Viṣṇu with Tulaśī-leaves and seasonal flowers, and with the hymn. (He should touch his) feet, with (i.e. uttering) the name of the month. (He should touch his) knees (saying 'My homage) to him of the form of Viṣṇu'. (He should touch his) private parts (saying 'My homage) to Guhyapati (i.e. the lord of secrets)'. (He should touch his) waist (saying 'My homage) to Pītavāsas' (i.e. to him who has put on a yellow garment)'. (He should touch his) navel (saying 'My homage) to Brahmamūrtibhṛt (i.e. one who holds Brahmā's form)'. (He should touch his) belly (saying 'My

homage) to Viśvayoni (i.e. the source of all)'. (He should touch his) heart (saying 'My homage) to Jñānagamya (i.e. to him who is reached through knowledge)'. (He should touch his) throat (saying 'My homage) to Vaikuṇṭhamūrti (i.e. to him of the form of Vaikuṇṭha)'. (He should touch his) forehead (saying 'My homage) to Ūrdhvaga (i.e. to him who goes up)'. (He should touch his arm (saying 'My homage) to Dakṣāntakārin (i.e. to him who destroyed Dakṣa)'. (He should touch his) head (saying, 'My homage) to Sureśa (i.e. the lord of gods)'. He should touch his) entire body (saying 'My homage) to Sarvamūrti (i.e. to the universal form)'. With (i.e. uttering) his name he should devoutly worship all (Viṣṇu's) weapons. With coconuts etc. he should offer an oblation. He should make a respectful offering after putting water over the conch, after wrapping it with a thread, and with sandal, flowers and sacred grains.

56b-62a. (He should say): 'O Devadeva (i.e. god of gods), O Mahādeva (i.e. great god), O Śrī Keśava, Janārdana, Subrahmaṇya, my salutation to you who increase the heap of religious merit. Emancipate me from the ocean of the mundane existenee full of grief, infatuation and great sin. I have not done any good deed even during hundreds of crores of existences. Yet, O great master, emancipate me from the ocean of the worldly existence. O lord of gods, by means of this vow emancipate my ancestors who have gone to evil stocks, who have been overpowered by sinful death, or those who will be or who were born from the world of the goblins. I am tired. The devotion of me who am dependent on you is faithful. I have devoutly made a respectful offering (to you). O Gadādhara, (please) accept it'. Having made a respectful offering with incense, lamp etc. due to Viṣṇu, he should please Viṣṇu with hymns of praise, by waving light in front (of his image), songs and dances.

62b-68. He should please his teacher with (gifts of) garments, (other) gifts, gifts of cows and meals. He should do (these) in such a way as the preceptor would be pleased; since the Creator has created the preceptor for emancipating the people, he should carefully honour the preceptor. He who always destroys what is harmful and shows what is beneficial and he who knows all righteous acts and worldly prosperity should be known to be the preceptor. Without practising guile about wealth he should

present it to the preceptor. O king, it becomes complete on its being presented to the preceptor. O best king, having done the daily duty he should take food in the company of brāhmaṇas. He should pass the day in (telling or listening to) stories (about Viṣṇu). He who observes the Unmīlanī-vow in this manner, lives near Viṣṇu for thousands of crores of kalpas.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

The Vow of Pakṣavardhinī

Nārada said:

1. O Mahādeva, of what type is (the vow) called Pakṣavardhinī, having observed which a being is free from a great sin?

Śrī Mahādeva said:

2. That would be Pakṣavardhinī, equal to myriads of horse-sacrifices, when either the new-moon day or the full-moon day is complete (i.e. lasts for the entire day and night) with sixty ghaṭikās and prolongs on the day of pratipad (i.e. the first day of a fortnight).

Nārada said :

3. O Mahādeva, now I am asking about the manner of the worship, having done which a man would obtain great fruit.

Mahādeva said:

4-12. O son of a brāhmaṇa, I shall now tell the manner of the worship. There is no doubt that a man gets the fruit when Viṣṇu is worshipped and adored, since by the performance of worship Viṣṇu is pleased. He should put a pitcher, which has no scratch, which is full of water, which is smeared with sandal, which contains five gems, which is wrapped with garlands of flowers. On the pitcher he should place a vessel containing wheat. (The image of) the deity should be made of gold and

should be named after the month. He should nicely bathe (the image of) the god of gods, Jagannātha, the lord of the world, with pañcāmṛta according to the (proper) rite. It should be besmeared with saffron, agaru and sandal. He should offer a pair of garments along with an umbrella and sandals. He should worship the (image of the) lord of deities kept in the vessel on the pitcher. (Touching) the feet (he should say, 'My homage) to Padmanābha'. (Touching) the knees (he should say, 'My homage) to Viśvamūrti'. (Touching) the thighs (he should say, 'My homage) to Jñānagamya (i.e. one who is reached through knowledge). (Touching) the waist (he should say, 'My homage) to Jñānaprada (i.e. one who gives knowledge). (Touching) the belly (he should say, 'My homage) to Viśvanātha'. (Touching) the heart (he should say, 'My homage) to Śrīdhara. (Touching) the throat (he should say, 'My homage) to Kaustubhakaṇṭha'. (Touching) the arms (he should say, 'My homage) to Kṣatrāntakārin (i.e. one who destroyed the kṣatriyas)'. (Touching) the forehead (he should say, 'My homage) to Vyomamūrdhan (i.e. one who has his head in the sky)'. (Touching) the head (he should say, 'My homage) to Sarvarūpin (i.e. of a universal form)'. He should also utter his name (and worship) Lakṣmī full of all limbs and of a divine form.

13-19. The wise one should thus duly worship and then should offer materials of worship along with a white coconut to the Disc-holder, the god of gods. The vow becomes complete by means of this offering. (He should pray to the deity as:) 'O lord of the world, lift me who am drowned in the ocean of the worldly existence. You are the lord of all the worlds. You are actually the lord of the world. Accept the respectful offering offered by me. Salutation to you, O Padmanābha'. Offerings of pleasant food, especially those having (all) the six flavours should be very devoutly offered to Viṣṇu. He should devoutly offer the nāga-leaf along with camphor to the god. He should fill the lamp with ghee or with sesamum-oil. Doing (these) properly he should (duly) worship the preceptor. He should cause to be offered (i.e. should offer him) garments, a turban and a dress. He should cause to be given (i.e. should give) the preceptor a present according to his capacity. Having given (him) food and tāmbūla

he should cause to be given (i.e. should give) him a respectful offering.

20-32. The Dvādaśi (called) Pakṣavardhinī should be observed by the poor while keeping in view the estimate of their wealth and according to their capacity. It should be carefully and properly observed. Then he should keep awake by singing, dancing, the recitation of a Purāṇa and laughter and mirth. They praise and command the keeping awake (in honour) of the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu). For ten existences an every day festival would take place in their houses. Therefore, a man should observe this most virtuous Pakṣavardhinī. Having done (i.e. had) all religious merit, he undoubtedly obtains(its) fruits. Those wise men who have listened to the greatness of Pakṣavardhinī, have done meritorious deeds till the final destruction of the world. A man obtains that religious merit which he (would) obtain by practising the Pañcāgnisādhana or by visiting sacred places, by keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu. The Pakṣavardhinī is virtuous, pure, and destroys sins. When a fast is observed on the day (of Pakṣavardhinī) it destroys (the sin due to) crores of brāhmaṇa-murders. It was, O sage, formerly observed by Vasiṣṭha, so also by Bhāradvāja; this one, dear to Viṣṇu, was observed by Dhruva and Ambarīṣa. It is virtuous like Kāśī. It is like Dvārakā. When a devotee fasts on this day, it gives him his desired object. It is blessed, most blessed. It destroys (the sin of) a myriad of murders. It should be especially observed by those who are devoted to knowledge. O god, lord of all should be served by all who are intent upon (observing) the vow. As the moon waxes, especially in the bright half, the Pakṣavardhinī waxes for the devotee (of Viṣṇu). As darkness goes away at sunrise, the sin of a man on observing (the vow of) Pakṣavardhinī perishes.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

Keeping Awake on Ekādaśī and Dvādaśī

Mahādeva said:

1. O Nārada, listen to the importance of keeping awake, having listened to which (even) a great sinner undoubtedly obtains salvation.

Nārada said:

2-6. Viṣṇu, the lord of all, is always a purifier. O Śiva, I have heard from your mouth the importance of a fast (in honour) of him. Still I desire to hear about the importance of keeping awake. Of what kind is the importance of keeping awake? Of what kind is the nocturnal devotion? O lord of the universe, O master, tell (me) about the worship (offered) during the various watches. You are always adored in the worlds. You are god Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu). You are the god, the lord of the universe, since you are devoted to Viṣṇu. You, the lord of Umā, are the greatest among all devotees. In this world you are known by means of your devotion. Therefore, O lord of the universe, tell (me) in which manner people will be emancipated, so also (tell me about) the importance of keeping awake.

Mahādeva said:

7-18. On the Ekādaśi day a man, after having devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu at night, should keep awake along with Viṣṇu's devotees in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu. The man who always sings, plays upon musical instruments, dances, listens to the Purāṇas, offers incense, waves lights (before the image), offers eatables, flowers, sandal and unguents, fruits, respectful offering, presents with devotion, and controls his senses, and O best brāhmaṇa, speaks truthful and proper words followed by action, and who always keeps awake gladly, is free from all sins and becomes dear to Viṣṇu. When keeping awake at night has become (necessary), those devotees of Viṣṇu who sleep, have lost (the fruit of) the fast and (that of) the vow called Viṣṇu(vrata).Those men, O wise one, who keep awake on the (night of the Viṣṇu-vrata) called Viṣṇu-jāgara through devotion for Viṣṇu and do

not at all sleep, and repeat mentally (i.e. to themselves) Viṣṇu's name, should be known to be most blessed. Especially on this night (the repetition of Viṣṇu's name gives the fruit of) the gift of a cow every moment; (the fruit) is fourfold (if the name is repeated) for a ghaṭikā; it is crorefold (if the name is repeated) for a watch (i.e. three hours); it is countless (if the name is repeated) for four watches. By keeping awake (just) for a twinkling of the eye (i.e. a moment), and that too especially in front of Viṣṇu, the fruit (obtained) is crorefold; it is countless. The fruit of (i.e. obtained by) the best man who dances in front of Viṣṇu, is never lost from his birth to his death. He should, with his mind free from dejection, wave lights before Viṣṇu, with wonder, energy, without sinful talk etc., accompanied by going round (the deity keeping it to his right) and preceded by a salutation.

19-27a. That man, who devoutly keeps awake on Ekādaśī, which is twentysixfold fruitful, is not reborn on the earth. He who thus without egotism born of wealth devoutly keeps awake on Viṣṇu's day, is merged into the supreme soul. That wealthy man who through egotism born of wealth keeps awake, (is) a rogue and a wicked man (and) has indeed lost his soul. He, when the (occasion for) keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu has come, ridicules it, is born as an insect in feces (and remains as such) for sixty thousand years. That brāhmaṇa knowing the Vedas who, especially through dancing, indulges in ridicule is called a cāṇḍāla. He who for a moment or half a moment(?) keeps awake, obtains the best position (as far as) righteousness, material welfare and sensual pleasures (are concerned). He who is always devoted to the Vedic and scriptural injunctions and who every day performs sacrifices, goes down (to hell if) he ridicules when keeping awake at night has come (to be practised). He who worshipping me, is given to ridiculing Viṣṇu goes to hell with twentyone (members of) his family. Viṣṇu is Śiva and Śiva is Viṣṇu. They have the same form, (but) remain (separately) in two forms.

27b-30. Therefore, a man should not in any way ridicule (the vow). Bitten by the serpent of Kali the destroyers of honey sleep by day(?); deluded by illusion they do not at all keep awake. Those to whom Ekādaśī has come (and is passed by them) without keeping themselves awake in the Kali age have perished,

since life is uncertain. There is no doubt about this. He raised the couple of eyes after having given the position of Viṣṇu (*obscure*!). Sinners do not see the awakening done (in honour) of Viṣṇu. In the absence of a public reader of a Purāṇa, he should get done singing and dancing. If there is a public reader, (then) O divine sage, he should first read the Purāṇa.

31-37a. O child, on doing the awakening (in honour) of Viṣṇu, the religious merit (that is obtained) is a crorefold more than that of a horse-sacrifice or a Vājapeya sacrifice. A man having kept awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, emancipates the families on the side of father, on the side of mother and on the wife's side. O brāhmaṇa, on keeping awake in honour of Viṣṇu he emancipates (the members of) his family. On a day of fast that is 'pierced' (i.e. that is mixed with another day) the keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, worshipping him, giving gifts—all this is useless as (a good) turn done to the ungrateful. When keeping awake is begun on such a 'pierced' day—the day of the fast—Viṣṇu leaves that place and goes after giving a curse. Among those who keep awake on a day that is not 'pierced' (i.e. not mixed with another day), Viṣṇu being pleased remains in their midst and dances. For as many days as he keeps awake in front of Viṣṇu for so many yugas he is honoured in Viṣṇu's world.

37b-41. For as many days as he remains without keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, for those many thousands of years he does not return from (i.e. lives in) Raurava hell. He who on the Ekādaśī day sleeps without keeping awake or who remains like a dumb man and does not practise singing or does not read (the Purāṇa text), has dumbness for seven existences for want of keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, one should know that he who, the foolish one, does not dance in front of Viṣṇu by keeping awake, has lameness for seven existences. But he who sings, dances and keeps awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, gets Brahmā's position, my position and truly that of Viṣṇu (also).

42-50. That devotee of Viṣṇu who (himself) being engaged in keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, enlightens people, would live along with his manes and for a long time in Vaikuṇṭha. The man who gives (others) the idea about keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, would live for sixty thousand years in Śveta Dvīpa. O

brāhmaṇa, all that sin which men commit during crores of existences, perishes during the night on keeping awake (in honour) of Śrīkṛṣṇa. For those who keep awake in front of a Śālagrāma stone the fruit for every watch is said to be that which is had (by keeping awake on) a crore of lunar months. Those who do not keep awake when the day (of the vow) of Viṣṇu has come, their observance of the vow is in vain due to the censure of the devotees. Even by (the performance of) myriads of sacrifices pleasures of senses, wealth, sons, fame, eternal worlds are not obtained without keeping awake on the Dvādaśī (day). He who does not have a mind to keep awake on the Dvādaśī day, has no right to worship Viṣṇu. The number of footsteps of him who goes to Viṣṇu's temple for keeping awake has the merit of an equal number of horse-sacrifices. For as many years a man keeping awake lives in heaven as the number of dust (particles) fallen there on the road from the feet (of those who) walk (along it).

51-58. Therefore, from one's house one should go to Viṣṇu's temple for keeping awake. In the Kali (age) to destroy sins this Dvādaśī is (the best) among Dvādaśīs. Keeping awake is said to be of nine types: Full of censure of others, with the mind void of tranquillity, bereft of sacred precepts, without music, so also without light (to be waved before the image of the deity), without the necessary articles (obtainable) according to one's capacity, indifferent, full of censure, and especially full of quarrels. That keeping awake which is according to the scriptural injunctions, is full of dance and music with musical instruments, with the beating of time in music, with light and honey, is accompanied by proper utterances produced with devotion, is pleasing and causing delight, and amuses the enchanted people—(such) keeping awake having these twelve merits and dear to Viṣṇu should be done with efforts in the bright and the dark halves (of the month). What is the use of observing many vows and living at a sacred place to him who does not keep awake when the twelfth day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu has come? He who even while travelling and though full of perspiration, does not give up keeping awake on the twelfth day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, is dear to me, O brāhmaṇa.

59-62a. That devotee of me who deluded by sin does not keep awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, has his worship in vain, (as) he would not (i.e. does not) worship him who is venerable to me. He who eats on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, is not a devotee of Śiva, is not a worshipper of the Sun, is not a devotee of Śakti, nor the votary of (Śiva's) attendant. He should be known to be inferior to a beast. He, a wicked and sinful person, who eats on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, has, after having resorted to the strength of my devotion, acted disagreeably.

62b-64. His body is wrapped inside and outside with crores of sins. Those who keep awake on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, are freed. He who having kept awake, has observed the vow of Dvādaśī that is not mixed (with another day), has given an elbow to (i.e. has avoided) the messengers of Yama. O best sage, they, expecting (to go to) heaven are undoubtedly freed. (On the contrary) those who observe the vow of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu on a day mixed (with another day) have longed for happiness in hell.

65-69. He (i.e. such a man) has killed his manes, and has murdered gods; has given (his kingdom to demons by observing the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu which is mixed (with another day). For a man who keeps awake with such dispositions on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, who clapping his hands and with a delighted mind dances, who sings songs with his mouth, manifests (many kinds of) joy, who remaining awake on the night stands before Viṣṇu, reads Kṛṣṇa's accounts, amuses the groups of Viṣṇu's devotees, who with his hair standing on end produces musical sounds from his mouth, presents many kinds of food, and causes (others) to talk freely, the fruit at every moment is said to be the same as got by visiting crores of holy places.

70-74. He who without a dejected mind presents incense and waves lights in front (of the image) of Viṣṇu on the night of keeping awake (i.e. on which he keeps awake) would be the lord of the seven islands (i.e. of the earth). Due to keeping awake on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, all those sins like (the ones due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, perish piece by piece. On one hand are all the sacrifices concluded with (the offering of) excellent presents, and on the other there is keeping awake (in honour) of the god of gods. Which is dear to Viṣṇu? Kāśī,

Puṣkara, Prayāga, Naimiṣa, Gayā, the great holy place of Śālagrāma, the Arbuda forest, Pauṣkara (i.e. the holy Puṣkara), Mathurā, and all (other) sacred places, so also sacrifices and all the four Vedas go to (i.e. attend) the keeping awake (in honour of) Viṣṇu.

75-78. O best brāhmaṇa, all rivers (like) Gaṅgā, Sarasvatī, Tāpī, Yamunā, Śatadrukā, Candrabhāgā, Vitastā, so also ponds, deep lakes, all seas go there on the Ekādaśī (day for) keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu. These men desirable to gods, being delighted by the musical instrument like the lute, dance and sing (at the time of) keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu. In this way having kept awake, having worshipped great Viṣṇu, he should, along with Viṣṇu's devotees, break his fast on the Dvādaśī (day).

Mahādeva said:

79-84. O brāhmaṇa, listen. I shall explain (to you) the excellent importance of Dvādaśī. Dvādaśī should always be known to give sons and to give salvation. Having bathed in the morning, having worshipped Viṣṇu, one should observe a fast. 'O Viṣṇu, by means of this vow of me who am blind due to the darkness of ignorance, be pleased, favour me and give me the sight of knowledge'. Then, after this, he should break fast as is possible for him. After this he should duly get done (proper rites) as desired. O brāhmaṇa, when the Dvādaśī (lasts) shorter for breaking the fast, then he who desires salvation, should break the fast at night. Then there would be no blemish due to (breaking the fast at) night and there would be nothing that is prohibited. He should get the duty done (i.e. should do it) as by day in the first and the next watches of the night, since it is said that a man should not bathe at night and should not eat at midnight.

85-92. When on the day of breaking the fast Dvādaśī lasts for a short time, then he should do both the morning and the mid-day rites in the morning. I am not able to describe the religious merit especially of that man who has always observed Dvādaśī on the earth. Great men having accomplised all desired objects, would obtain (salvation). Those devotees like Ambarīṣa and others who are well-known in the world, have gone to Viṣṇu's abode after having observed (the vow of) Dvādaśī.

What I told is the truth, the truth again, viz. that there is no god like Viṣṇu, and no day like Dvādaśī. Whatever is given on this day, whatever is eaten, and the worship etc. (offered on this day) —all that is complete when Viṣṇu is worshipped. What is the use of talking much? Viṣṇu dear to his devotees, gives them all their desired objects till the final destruction of the world. All that is given on the Dvādaśī would become fruitful. Whatever is given on the Kurukṣetra is never fruitless. In the same way, O best sage, whatever is given on Dvādaśī would become like that.

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

The Origin of Ekādaśī and the Killing of Demon Mura

Mahādeva said:

1. O son, on one occasion I had gone into the proximity of (i.e. to) Viṣṇu. There I first asked (him) about the importance of Dvādaśī, having heard which all sages having enjoyed pleasures went to heaven.

Nārada said:

2. O Mahādeva, of what kind would be the great (vow of the) Mahādvādaśī? O lord, O ruler of all, what kind of fruit (would one get) by observing it.

Śiva said:

3-17a. O brāhmaṇa, this Ekādaśī gives the fruit (in the form) of great religious merit. It should be observed by the best sages when it is in conjunction with (certain) constellations. Jayā, Vijayā, Jayantī and Pāpanāśinī—all these destroy sins. They should be observed by those who desire (certain) fruits. When, in the bright half (of the month), the star Punarvasu (i.e. the seventh lunar mansion) appears on the Ekādaśī day, that is called Jayā, and it is the best of days. Having observed a fast on that day a man is freed from a sin. There is no doubt about this. When, in the bright half (of the month), the star Śravaṇa

(i.e. the twentysecond lunar mansion) appears on the Dvādaśī day, that is called Vijayā and it is the best of days. Gift given on that day becomes thousandfold (in religious merit); so also food given to brāhmaṇas (becomes like that). In the same way a sacrifice (performed) or a fast (observed on that day) gives more than a thousandfold fruit. When on the Dvādaśī in the bright half Rohiṇī (i.e. the fourth lunar mansion) appears, that is called Jayantī. That day removes also sins. Viṣṇu worshipped on that day certainly washes sins, small or great, committed during (previous) seven existences. When on the Dvādaśī in the bright half Puṣya (i.e. the eighth lunar mansion) appears, then that will be the very meritorious Pāpanāśinī. (The religious merit of him) who every day gives a prastha of sesamum-seeds (to a brāhmaṇa) for the (whole) year, and (the religious merit of him) who observes a fast on that day (i.e. on the Pāpanāśinī) are said to be equal. Viṣṇu, the lord of all, the lord of the world, being pleased, appears actually (i.e. in person) only, and endless fruit is said (to be obtained by him who observes a fast) on that (day). Viṣṇu who was won over and worshipped on that (day) by Sagara, Kakutstha and Nahuṣa, gave (them) everything on the earth. There is no doubt that he (who observes a fast on that day) is freed from the sin due to speech, mental sin or especially bodily sin committed during the seven (previous) existences. A man having fasted on that (Pāpanāśinī) alone, which is joined with the star Puṣya, obtains the fruit of (having fasted on) a thousand Ekādaśīs. Whatever like a bath, (giving a) gift, muttering (of hymns), a sacrifice, self-study, worship of a deity, is done on that day is said to give an inexhaustible fruit.

17b-18. Therefore, those who desire the fruit (like salvation) should observe (a fast on) this (day) carefully. When Yudhiṣṭhira had the ablution after the fifth horse-sacrifice, he, the religious-minded one, asked Kṛṣṇa, the scion of the Yadu family:

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

19. O lord, O Janārdana, tell me all that, viz. what religious merit or what fruit (is obtained) by observing a fast on eating only at night or eating once (a day).

The lord said:

20-27a. In the cold season, when the auspicious month of Mārgaśīrṣa has come, a man should fast on that Dvādaśī which (comes) in the dark half, O son of Pṛthā (i.e. O son of Kuntī, O Yudhiṣṭhira). Knowing what 'nakta' is, a man, with a pure heart and of a firm vow, eating (only) once on the tenth, and being controlled, (should eat) during the eighth part of the day when the Sun is feeble (i.e. is setting). That should be known as 'nakta'. 'Nakta' is not eating only at night. Nakta is enjoined for a householder before the stars appear (in the sky). The nakta for an ascetic is eating only in the eighth part of the day. Eating at night is prohibited for him. Then, O Yudhiṣṭhira, he who has taken the vow, should make the religious observance in the morning, so also in the mid-day, and being pure, should bathe. Bathing in a temporary well is the lowest; bathing in a well is of a middling quality. Bathing in a tank is excellent. Bathing in a river is still better. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the sin and the religious merit are equal when a bath is taken in the water where living beings are troubled. Bathing at home is excellent, and the water should purify (him). Therefore, O best (or eldest) of the Pāṇḍavas, a man should bathe in his house.

27b-32. (At that time he should pray:) 'O you earth, that are stepped over by horses, gone over by chariots and by Viṣṇu, remove the sin that has been collected by me in (my) former (existence)'. He should give up anger and greed. He should think of one thing only, and be of a firm vow. He should not talk to a Śūdra, so also to heretics, so also to those given to lying, so also to those who censure brāhmaṇas, and to others of bad behaviour, to those who take away others' wealth, and to those who are adulters. Having worshipped Viṣṇu, he should make articles of food offered; and with a devoted mind he should offer lights in the house. O Pārtha, on that day he should avoid sleep and sexual union. He should pass the entire day in recreation by means of sacred texts.

33-39. O best king, he, being full of devotion, should keep awake during the night, should give presents to brāhmaṇas, and should, after having saluted them, apologise to them. He should get observed (i.e. observe) the Ekādaśī (vow) during the bright

half as during the dark half (of the month). He should not differentiate between (the two Ekādaśīs). Listen to the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who does like this. A man, after bathing at Śaṁkhoddhāra and after seeing (the image of) god Viṣṇu, does not deserve (i.e. obtain) even the sixteenth part (of the merit) of fasting on an Ekādaśī day. O best king, a man who gives four lakhs (of coins) on the days of the passage of the Sun from one Zodiacal sign to another, does not deserve (i.e. obtain) even the sixteenth part (of the merit) of fasting on an Ekādaśī day. Indeed he who observes a fast on an Ekādaśī day, gets the same fruit as the religious merit that is due to (the bath) during the lunar eclipse or the solar eclipse at the holy place Prabhāsa. Rebirth is not had by him after he has drunk water at Kedāra. In the same way, O Yudhiṣṭhira, it removes staying in a womb.

40-48. The religious merit that he who observes a fast on an Ekādaśī day gets, is a hundredfold more than the fruit that he would get from a horse-sacrifice on the earth. The religious merit of him who fasts on an Ekādaśī day is a hundred times more that the religious merit he would obtain by giving a thousand cows to (a brāhmaṇa) who has mastered the Vedas. Those who fast on the Ekādaśī day are equal to those in whose bodies live the three deities Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Those who are devotees (of Viṣṇu) and who worship Viṣṇu, are those who perform virtuous deeds. So also the religious merit of (i.e. due to) the vow of Ekādaśī cannot be counted. This would be its religious merit which is difficult to be obtained even by gods. Half the religious merit of this is obtained even through eating at night only. Men would have half the religious merit of this through eating once (a day). Sacred places, gifts, restraints roar till that time till a living being (i.e. a human being) would not fast on a day dear to Viṣṇu. Therefore, O best Pāṇḍava, observe this vow. O Pāṇḍava, I do not know the quantity of religious merit (about) which you are asking me. O Pāṇḍava, I have narrated to you the excellent vow, which should be kept secret. Even the performance of a thousand sacrifices is not equal to the Ekādaśī (vow).

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

49. O god, how has this auspicious Ekādaśī day come up? How is it pure in the universe and how is it dear to deities?

The lord said:

50-54. O Pārtha, formerly in the Kṛta-age there was a demon by name Mura. He was very wonderful, very fierce and caused fear to all gods. O king, even Indra, and so also other gods were vanquished by that death(-like), great, wicked demon. Driven out of the heaven they roamed on the earth. With uncertainty and full of fear, all of them went to the great god, and Indra told everything to the great lord (i.e. Śiva). (He said:) "O great god, the gods fallen from the heaven are roaming on the earth and they who are staying among the mortals, do not shine (at all). O god, tell me the remedy. What course do (i.e. should) the gods follow?"

Mahādeva said:

55-58. O You best among gods, O lord of gods, go there where he, the eagle-bannered (god), the lord of the world, the protector, and the best resort dwells. O best among gods, he will protect you.

O Yudhiṣṭhira, on having heard the words of the lord, the very intelligent king of the gods went there along with the gods. Seeing the god, the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) sleeping in the water, Indra joined the palms of his hands, uttered (this hymn of praise):

Indra said:

59-65. Salutation to you, O lord of the gods, O you who are saluted by gods and demons, O you enemy of the demons, O you lotus-eyed one, O Madhusūdana, protect us. O lord of the world, all gods frightened by the demon (Mura) have come to seek your refuge. O you to whom your devotees are dear, protect me. O lord of gods, protect us; O Janārdana, protect us, protect us. O you lotus-eyed one, O you destroyer of the demons, protect us. We all have approached you. You alone are our refuge, O lord. O lord, help the gods who have sought your shelter. O god, you are the master; you are the intellect; you are the agent; you are the cause. You are the mother of all the people. You are the father of the world. O holy one, O

lord of gods, O you who love those who seek your shelter; the deities that are frightened, have sought your refuge. O lord, all the deities have been vanquished. All of them have been expelled from heaven by the very fierce and very vigorous demon named Mura.

Hearing the words of Indra, Viṣṇu said (these words):

The lord said:

66. O Indra, of what kind is the demon? Of what form is he? Of what kind is his might? Where is the place of that wicked one? What is his strength? What is his valour? What is precious about him? O you very intelligent one, tell me (that).

Indra said:

67-75. O lord of gods, formerly there was a very fierce, great demon named Tālajaṅgha (who was) born in the family of Brahmā. His son, the demon Mura, was well-known. He was very mighty, very powerful and fearful to gods. (There was) a city by name Candrāvatī. He lived in that place. He vanquished all gods, and expelled them from heaven. He installed another Indra (as the chief of gods), so also (another) Vāyu and (another) Agni. He fashioned other (i.e. new) Moon and Sun, so also Vāyu and Varuṇa. He took possession of everything. O Janārdana, (this is) the truth, (the only) truth. He made the world of gods bereft of all holy places.

Hearing these words of him (i.e. of Indra), the angry Viṣṇu (said): "I shall kill the wicked demon, fearful to the gods." Then the god, along with (other) gods went to the city of Candrāvatī. The gods saw the demon roaring repeatedly. He vanquished all gods. They went in the ten directions. Seeing Viṣṇu the demon said: "Wait, wait." The lord, with his eyes red due to anger, said to him:

The lord said:

76-84. O demon, O you of a bad conduct, see (the power of) my arm.

Then all the wicked demons that were before him were struck

by Viṣṇu with divine arrows. They were overcome with fear. O Pāṇḍava, Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) discharged his disc against the forces of the demon. Hundreds (of demons) were cut off by it, and many died. Only one demon fought there repeatedly. He made all the gods flee and vanquished Viṣṇu. Then (of him who was) vanquished by the demon, a close fight with the demon took place. He fought that close fight for a thousand divine years. Viṣṇu became thoughtful. All gods had fled. Viṣṇu was vanquished. He went to Badarikāśrama. There was a cave named Siṁhavatī. Viṣṇu slept there (i.e. in it). O Pāṇḍava, it was twelve yojanas (in length) and had one door (only). He entered it and slept (there). The demon was bent on killing him.[1] He was tired due to that great battle, (and had slept there) through his divine power. The demon pursued him.[2] He then entered that cave. Seeing him (i.e. seeing Viṣṇu) asleep there, the demon was delighted. Thinking Viṣṇu to have been vanquished like this and to have been entered (i.e. overpowered) by fear, (he thought:) 'I shall undoubtedly kill him, the cause of fear to the demons.'

85-90. O Yudhiṣṭhira, then a maiden came out of Viṣṇu's body. She was beautiful, very auspicious, and had divine missiles and weapons. She, of a great might and valour, came up from a portion of his lustre. O Dhanañjaya, she was seen by that lord of demons, Mura by name. He directed a fight there. The maiden also had asked for it. The maiden skilled in all (kinds of) battle, fought there. The great demon by name Mura was reduced to ash due to (her) huṁkāra sound. When the demon was killed, the god (Viṣṇu) woke up. Seeing the demon fallen (dead) he was amazed: 'who has killed this fierce and very cruel enemy of me? (That person) has done a very ferocious deed through compassion for me.'

The maiden said:

91-93a. He having conquered gods, gandharvas, yakṣas and goblins, so also Indra and others, expelled them from heaven. I saw Viṣṇu asleep, and Mura had pursued him. (I thought:) 'He will destroy the three worlds when Viṣṇu is asleep.'

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1. and 2. *mām* appears to be a wrong word here. It should have been *tam*.

Hearing those words of her, Viṣṇu, spoke (these) words: "How is it that you vanquished him too who had defeated me?"

Ekādaśī said:

93b. O lord, due to your favour I killed the great demon.

The lord said:

94. In the three worlds sages and deities are delighted. O auspicious one, tell me what you like in your mind (i.e. what your mind likes). There is no doubt that I shall give it even if it is very difficult to be obtained by gods.

Ekādaśī said:

95-96. If O god, you are pleased, and if you have told the truth, O Janārdana, I desire one boon in (i.e. from) my heart, O lord of the world. O lord of gods, I shall ask for what is desired by me. O lord, O master of the world, if (your offer is) true, then give me three utterances (i.e. repeat your offer thrice).

The lord said:

97. O you of a good vow, I have certainly spoken the truth, I have made three utterances (i.e. I have repeated my promise three times). Now there would be no absence of promise (i.e. the promise will not be false).

Ekādaśī said:

98-101. O lord of gods, do for me what is proper in the three worlds, in the four ages and everywhere in the three worlds. Through your favour I shall be the chief of all sacred places, the destroyer of all difficulties, and one who brings about all (kinds of) well-being. If, O lord, you are pleased with me, then, may they who through devotion (for me) and devotion for you, fast on my day, have all (kinds) of well-being. O Viṣṇu, give wealth, righteousness and salvation to him who observes a fast or a *nakta* or who eats once a day (on the day sacred to me).

Viṣṇu said:

102-110. O auspicious one, all that you say will take place. O good one, you will grant all desires. (This will) not be other-

wise. My devotees who in the world will observe the Ekādaśī vow and worship me in Kārtika will undoubtedly obtain salvation.

O lord, the Ekādaśī is famous in the four ages and the three worlds. I look upon you as a power. The third, the eighth, the ninth, the fourteenth, and especially this eleventh are dear to Viṣṇu. (A man who observes the Ekādaśī vow gets) religious merit more than (obtained) from all the sacred places. This is true, undoubtedly true. He gave this vow to her repeating it thrice. There was no doubt about it. The Ekādaśī of a great vow became glad and strong. 'You will kill his (i.e. the observer's) enemy. You will give him the highest position. You, giving (all kinds of) welfare, will remove all difficulties. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the Ekādaśī of both the fortnights is equal (in merit) and is auspicious. A man should not differentiate between the bright and the dark (Ekādaśī of the bright half and that of the dark half). He should devoutly listen to (pious accounts) by day or at night. For both the fortnights the same day (i.e. Ekādaśī) would be the full (day). At the sunrise the Ekādaśī day is little (i.e. is in a small part). At the end of the vow is the Trayodaśī (i.e. the thirteenth day).

111-114a. In between (the two) there is the full Dvādaśī (i.e. the twelfth day). Thus that (Ekādaśī-vow) which touches (these) three (days) is dear to Viṣṇu. If a man fasts on one (Ekādaśi he would get the) fruit of (having observed) a thousand Ekādaśīs. This would be thousandfold if the fast is broken on Dvādaśī. Aṣṭamī, Ekādaśī, Ṣaṣṭhī, Tṛtīyā and Caturdaśī, mixed with the previous day, should not be observed (as fast days). A man should observe (a fast on any one of these) when mixed with the next day. If the Ekādaśī lasts for a day and night and would continue for a ghaṭikā in the (next) morning, that day should be avoided. That Ekādaśī, along with Dvādaśī, should be fasted on.

114b-118. Thus, I have told you about the Ekādaśī falling in both the fortnights. There is no doubt that a man should observe a fast on the Ekādaśī day. They (i.e. who observe this fast) go to the place of Viṣṇu where the eagle-bannered (god Viṣṇu) dwells. Those men who are absorbed in devotion for Viṣṇu are blessed in the world. That man who would at all

times recite the importance of the Ekādaśī(-vow), obtains the religious merit which is the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows. There is no doubt that those who devoutly listen to it by day or at night are freed from the sins of killing a brāhmaṇa etc. O best king, the (exposition of) the significance of the Gītā is not equal to devotion to Viṣṇu. There is no other vow like that of the Ekādaśī, that destroys sins.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

The Importance of the Mokṣadā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-3. I salute Viṣṇu who is actually the lord, who gives happiness to the three worlds, who is the lord of the universe, the author of everything, the ancient Puruṣottama. O lord of gods, I ask (because) I have a great doubt (and also) for the well-being of the world and for the destruction of sins. O master, tell me in detail and properly, about the manner in which that Ekādaśī[1] which would fall in the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa, is observed and which deity is worshipped (on that day).

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

4-17. O king, you have asked well. Your spotless fame is excellent. O lord of kings, I shall tell you about the excellent day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. The Dvādaśī that has come up in the dark half of Mārgaśīrṣa is dear to me. (This one) called Mārgaśīrṣa-utpatti has sprung up from my body. O best among

1. From this chapter onwards the Ekādaśis falling in each of the two fortnights of a month are described. The months are said to end with the full-moon day.

To the north of the Narmadā, a month is generally considered to end with the full-moon day, while in other parts of the country, the month is supposed to end with the new-moon day. The bright half is the same. That half of the month which is the dark half of Caitra according to the practice followed to the north of Narmadā, is the dark half of the Vaiśākha month in other parts of the country.

the Bharatas, it has sprung up for killing the gods (?) and demons. O best king, I have told about it to you. The day previous (to this) in the dark half of the (month of) Mārgaśīrṣa is called Utpatti Ekādeśī in the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. Hereafter I shall describe the one that falls in the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa, by hearing about which a man would obtain the fruit of the Vājapeya (sacrifice). It is great, is called by the name Mokṣadā and removes all sins. A man should carefully worship Dāmodara (i.e. Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu, on this day), O king. (He should worship Viṣṇu) carefully with the Tulasī-sprouts, according to the manner (told) before. This Ekādaśī (having on that day a portion of) Daśamī also, is called Mokṣā (i.e. Mokṣadā) Ekādaśī. It destroys great sins. At night he should keep awake with dances, songs and my eulogies. O king, listen. I shall tell you a divine, ancient story, by merely hearing which all sins would perish. There is no doubt that due to the religious merit that it gives, the (dead) forefathers (of a man) that have, due to (their) sins, gone to (i.e. born in) a mean stock, go to (i.e. obtain) salvation. In the city (called) Campaka which was adorned with Viṣṇu's devotees, there (lived) a king Vaikhānasa by name. He would (i.e. he did) look after his subjects like his own sons. (In the city) lived many brāhmaṇas who had mastered the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. The subjects of that king Vaikhānasa were prosperous. O king, he was ruling over his kingdom like this. He (once) saw at night in a dream his own forefathers gone to a mean stock. He, seeing all of them like this, with his mind full of amazement, told the account that took place in the dream to brāhmaṇas.

The king said:

18-23. O brāhmaṇas, I saw my forefathers gone to hell, and saying to me: "O you born of our bodies, emancipate us from this ocean of hell." I saw them speaking like this and weeping repeatedly, O best brāhmaṇas. Due to this I am unhappy. This great kingdom does not give me pleasure. O brāhmaṇas, I am not pleased with all the horses and the elephants. O best brāhmaṇas, my wife and sons do not please me. What do (i.e. should) I do? O best brāhmaṇas, tell me about that vow, that practice of penance, by means of which my

ancestors will go to (i.e. obtain) salvation. What is the fruit (i.e. use) of that son who is living richly, who is mighty and magnanimous, when his father lives in a fearful hell?'

The brāhmaṇas said:

24-29. The great hermitage of the sage Parvata who knows the past and the future, is nearby. O best king, go to that hermitage.

Then hearing (these) words of them, the great king Vaikhānasa quickly went to the hermitage of Parvata. The king was surrounded by brāhmaṇas and accompanied by (other) kings. The best king reached his (i.e. Parvata's) extensive hermitage. Having seen the best sage like another Brahmā, surrounded by sages well-versed in the study of Ṛgveda, Yajurveda and Sāmaveda, king Vaikhānasa saluted the sage (by prostrating before him) in the manner of a staff and touched his feet. The sage asked him about the welfare of the seven constituent[1] parts of the kingdom, so also about the absence of trouble in the kingdom and the king's happiness.

The king said:

30-38. O master, by your favour there is well-being in the seven constituent parts of my kingdom. How can those who are devoted to Viṣṇu and brāhmaṇas, have (any) difficulty? I saw in a dream my ancestors living in hell. O master, I have come to you to clear the doubt, O best brāhmaṇa, as to which religious merit will give them salvation. O best sage, some remedy should be adopted in this case.

Having heard these words from him, Parvata, the best sage, the ascetic, resembling Brahmā, fixed his eyes in meditation. Remaining in meditation for a short time, he replied to the king: "O lord of kings, I have understood the former acts of your ancestors. In his previous existence, your father, a kṣatriya, was proud of his kingdom. Prompted by his royal duty and

1. Saptāṅgāni: The seven constituents of a kingdom are: the king, the minister, the allies, the treasury, the territory, the fortress, and the army.

seeking to gain his object, he, leaving his wife behind in the time favourable for conception, went to a village. Your father did not give her (what should be given to his wife) during the period favourable for conception (i.e. did not copulate with her). As a result of that sin, O best king, your father, along with your ancestors, fell into a very terrible hell." After that king Vaikhānasa again said to the sage: "O sage, by to the power of which vow would they have salvation?"

The sage said:

39-47. In the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa there is the Mokṣā (or *Mokṣadā Ekādaśī*). All should observe this vow, and (its) religious merit should be given to a (dead) father (i.e. ancestor). By the efficacy of that religious merit they will have salvation. O glorious one, this is true since it is the statement of Brahmā.

Having heard the words of the sage he again came back to his house. And then the month of Mārgaśīrṣa also came. King Vaikhānasa, having observed the vow with effort, gave, along with all, its religious merit to his father. When the religious merit was given, just in a moment, shower of flowers occurred from the sky; and Vaikhānasa's father, along with his ancestors, entered (i.e. obtained) salvation. And from the sky he (i.e. the father) spoke (these) auspicious words: "O son, may it be well with you, may it be well with you." Speaking thus he went to heaven. O king, the sins of him who observes the auspicious (vow of) the Mokṣā (i.e. Mokṣadā) Ekādaśī, perish, and after death he would obtain salvation. There cannot be any Ekādaśī superior to this one, that would give (one) salvation. O king, I do not know the measure of religious merit (it gives). O king, this is the vow of him who does good to me. This (vow) is like the desire-yielding gem. It gives salvation to men. A man would get the fruit (of the performance) of a Vājapeya sacrifice by reading about and listening to it.

CHAPTER FORTY

Saphalā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Which Ekādaśī would take place (i.e. fall) in the dark half of Pauṣa? What is the name and the manner of observing it? Tell this to me in detail, O master; tell me which deity is worshipped on that day.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-14. O lord of kings, due to the bond of affection (between us) I shall tell (it to you). O king, I am not so much pleased with sacrifice in which profuse gifts are given, as I am pleased with the Ekādaśī-vow. Therefore, with all efforts, the day of Viṣṇu should be observed (as the day of vow). O you famous among the most religious, this is true, not false. On the Ekādaśī day falling in the dark half of Pauṣa and called Saphalā, a man should duly worship god Viṣṇu. This auspicious Ekādaśī should be observed in the same manner as told before. O king, as Śeṣa is (the best) of the serpents, as (Garuḍa) the eater of serpents is (the best) of the birds, as Viṣṇu is (the best) of the deities, as brāhmaṇa is (the best) of the bipeds, so the day of Ekādaśī is the best of the vows. O king, those men who are devoted to the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, and observe the vow of Ekādaśī, are always venerable to me. They are united with wealth here (i.e. in this world) only, and after death they obtain salvation. O king, on (the day of) the Saphalā (Ekādaśī) a man should worship Viṣṇu by uttering his (various) names, with coconuts, betel-nuts, citron-fruits, jambīra-fruits, pomegranates, and auspicious dhātrī-fruits, so also with cloves, badari-fruits and especially with mangoes. So also he should worship the lord of gods with incense and lights. Especially on the Saphalā (day) he should cause to be given (i.e. should give) the present of lights. He should keep awake along with Viṣṇu's devotees during (that) night. O king, listen to the religious merit of him, of a concentrated mind, who keeps awake during that night (just) for (the time of) the twinkling of an eye. No sacrifice is equal to that. There is

no sacred place like that. All (other) vows do not deserve (i.e. are not equal to even) the sixteenth part (of the Saphalā-vow), O lord of kings.

15-23. He who thus keeps awake, gets the fruit which cannot be obtained by (practising) penance for thousands of years. O best king, listen to the auspicious account of the Saphalā. There was a city of (i.e. belonging to) Māhiṣmata well-known as Campāvatī. That royal sage had five young sons. Of them the eldest was always engaged in (committing) sins. He was an adulterer, fond of prostitutes and a drunkard. The sinner spent his father's money in that only. He was always engaged in bad behaviour and censured brāhmaṇas. He always censured Viṣṇu's devotees and deities. Noticing his son to be like this, king Māhiṣmata called him, among the sons, by the name Lumpaka (i.e. a robber). His father and brothers expelled him from the kingdom. He was thus abandoned like an obstructor by the attendants also. Lumpaka also, who was abandoned like that, then thought: 'I have indeed been expelled from the kingdom by my kinsmen and my father.' Thinking like this he set his heart on (committing) sins. 'I must go to a fearful, dense forest; and from it I shall plunder the entire city of my father.'

24-31a. Thinking like this, Lumpaka, by a lucky coincidence, went out of that city, and went into that dense forest. He was always engaged in killing living beings. He was the treasure of the arts of stealing and gambling. That sinner plundered the entire city. He, moving in the city for stealing, was arrested by night-stalkers. To them he said: "I am the son of king Māhiṣmata." He who committed sinful deeds was released by them, and again came (back) to the forest. He was fond of to (eating) flesh and fruits. Near that wicked man there was the abode of Viṣṇu. There was an old Aśvattha tree (standing there) for many years. The tree had great divineness in the forest. That Lumpaka, of a sinful mind, living just there, ate, after many days had passed, fruits of trees due to some collection of (his) religious merit on the tenth day of the dark half of Pauṣa.

31b-38. Lumpaka who was the most sinful, was oppressed by heat. He was without clothes and lost his sight. Being oppressed by severe cold, he did not enjoy the pleasure of sleep near that tree of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. He was as it were dead.

Covering his mouth (i.e. his lips) with his teeth, he passed the entire night. Even at sunrise, the most sinful one did not (re-) gain consciousness. (Thus) Lumpaka remained unconscious on that day of Saphalā. When the Sun was in the middle (of the sky) that Lumpaka got (back) consciousness. He looked here and there; was pained; and tumbling from his seat, he again and again walked like a lame man with his feet. He went into the middle part (i.e. the interior) of the forest, was emaciated by hunger and was oppressed. That Lumpaka, of a wicked mind, did not have strength to kill a living being. O king, at that time that Lumpaka did not obtain fruits. When he came there, the Sun had set. 'O pity, what will happen (to me)?' Like this he wailed. There, at the root of the tree he placed many fruits and said:

39-44a. "May Viṣṇu be pleased with these fruits." Having spoken like this Lumpaka did not get sleep on (that) night. Viṣṇu regarded his (sleeplessness as) keeping awake at night (in his honour), and took the placing of fruits as being worshipped with fruits (on the day) of Saphalā. That Lumpaka observed this vow accidentally only. By the power of that religious merit he obtained the kingdom free from troubles. Till it was sunrise, Viṣṇu went to heaven. At that time a divine voice was heard: "By the favour of Saphalā, O son, you will obtain the kingdom." When he said "All right", he became one of a divine form. O king, he had a great inclination towards Viṣṇu.

44b-49. He, rich with divine ornaments, obtained the kingdom which was free from trouble. He ruled over the kingdom for fifteen years. By the favour of Kṛṣṇa he had charming sons and a (charming) wife. Having quickly abandoned his kingdom and having given it to his son, he went to Kṛṣṇa's proximity, going where a man does not meet with grief. O king, he who observes the excellent vow of Saphalā in this way, gets happiness in this world, and after death would obtain salvation. Those men who are engrossed in (the vow of) Saphalā, are blessed. Their existence is fruitful. No doubt should be raised about this. A man, by reciting, listening to and observing the (vow of Saphalā) obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya-sacrifice, O king.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

Putradā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-2. O Kṛṣṇa, you have told (me about) the auspicious (vow of) the Saphalā Ekādaśī. Favour me and tell me about the one that would fall in the bright fortnight (of the month of Pauṣa). What is its name? What is the manner of it (i.e. in which way is it) to be observed ? Which is the deity that is propitiated on that (day)? With whom are you, Puruṣottama himself, pleased?

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

3-12. O king, listen, I shall tell (you about) the one that would fall in the bright half (of Pauṣa). O great king, with a desire for the good of the people, I shall tell about it. O king, it is to be carefully observed in the manner (as told) before. Its name is Putradā. It is great, and removes all sins. Its superintending deity is Viṣṇu. He gives (all) desired objects and all prosperity. No greater (vow) than this (exists) in the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. Viṣṇu makes a man possessed with knowledge and makes him successful. O king, listen. I shall tell you an auspicious tale that removes sins. Formerly there lived king Suketumat in the city of Bhadrāvatī. His queen was Campakā by name. The sonless king passed his time in (entertaining) desires. The king did not obtain a son who would continue his line. Then the king thought of righteous deeds for a long time. 'What should I do? Where should I go? How can I have a son?' King Suketumat did not derive pleasure from his kingdom or his city. Every day, along with his chaste wife, he became unhappy. The couple was always full of anxiety and grief. His (dead) ancestors drank lukewarm water offered by him. 'We do not see anybody who will gratify us after the king'. Thinking like this his manes were unhappy.

13-19a. The king did not find pleasure in his kinsmen, allies, ministers, friends, so also elephants, horses and foot-soldiers. Despondency always prevailed in the king's mind. 'A man who is without a son does not get the fruit of his existence. The house of a sonless person is always desolate. His heart is always

unhappy. Without a son freedom from the debt of (one's) ancestors, deities and men is not possible. Therefore, with all efforts a man should produce a son. Those with religious merit, in whose house a son would be born, get success in this world, and an auspicious position in the next world. In the house of those men who practise righteous deeds long life, (good) health, and wealth prevail. O king, (these) cannot be had without religious merit and devotion to Viṣṇu. I think that sons are certainly the wealth (of a person).'

19b-31. Thinking like this the king did not get happiness. King Suketumat thought (like this) in the early morning and at night. He thought of destroying himself. Then the king, seeing misfortune in (i.e. due to) suicide, saw his body fallen and his sonlessness. Then according to his intellect, he saw (i.e. thought about) his welfare. Then the king mounted upon a horse, went to a dense forest. The family-priest and others did not know (that) the king had gone. In the dense forest resorted to by beasts and birds, the king roamed, observing the forest-trees like vaṭa, aśvattha, bilva, kharjūra, and panasa, so also bakula, saptaparṇa, tinduka, and tila. The king also saw (trees like) śāla, tamāla and sarala. (He also saw) trees like iṅgudī, kakubha, śleṣmātaka, sallaka, karamarda, pāṭala and badara also. He also saw aśoka (trees), palāśa (trees), wolves, hares, wild cats, buffaloes, porcupines and camara (deer). The king saw serpents that had half come out from the ant-hills, and wild intoxicated elephants with their young ones. (He saw) lords of herds having four tusks and accompanied by the female elephants and herds. Seeing the elephants of him, the king thought: 'The lord moving among them obtained great beauty.' The king observed the forest full of great wonders. Hearing on his way the cries of jackals and of owls, and seeing various bears and deer, he roamed in the forest.

32-36a. In this way the king saw the forest. When the Sun had gone to the middle (of the sky), he being oppressed with hunger and thirst, ran here and there. The king with his throat and neck dry thought: 'What deed have I done (by which) I have met with such grief? With sacrifices and worships I have pleased the deities. I have pleased brāhmaṇas with gifts and desired meals. I have always greatly looked after my subjects

like my (own) son. Due to what have I met with this great, terrible distress?' The king who was thinking like this, went ahead in the forest.

36b-42. By the efficacy of his good deeds, he saw an excellent lake. It was being touched by (i.e. had the contact of) fish. It looked very beautiful due to lotuses. It also looked beautiful with ducks, ruddy geese and royal swans. It was full of many alligators, fishes and other aquatic animals. The fortunate king saw many hermitages of sages near the lake, along with many omens suggesting auspiciousness. His right eye throbbed. So also his right hand, indicating auspicious fruit, throbbed. Seeing on its lake sages muttering Vedic prayers in an undertone, the king stood in front of the sages. The king saluted separately (i.e. individually) the sages of praise-worthy vows by joining the palms of his hands and repeatedly prostrating before them in the manner of a staff. The sages also said (to him): "O king, we are pleased with you."

The king said:

43. Who are you here? Tell me what your names are. Why have you assembled here? Tell the truth to me.

The sages said:

44-45. O king, we are Viśvedevāḥ.[1] We have come here for a bath. Māgha has come near (i.e. will commence) on the fifth day from today. O king, today is Ekādaśī called Putradā. Viṣṇu gives a son to those who observe this (Ekādaśī), O king.

The king said:

46. I have a great uncertainty about producing a son. If you are pleased, then give me a son.

The sages said:

47-53. O king, today only it is the Ekādaśī called Putradā. Do this well-known vow, which is the best (vow). O lord of

1. Viśvedevāḥ: Name of a particular group of deities, ten in number, and supposed to be sons of Viśvā. Their names are: Vasu, Satya, Kratu, Dakṣa Kāla, Kāma, Dhṛti, Kuru, Purūravas, and Mādravas.

kings, after ablution and by the favour of us and of Viṣṇu, you will certainly have a son.

By these words of them, and the advice of the sages, the king observed the excellent vow which is (that of) Putradā, according to the (proper) rules. Having broken his fast on Dvādaśī the king came home. Then the queen conceived. At the time of her delivery a bright son was born. By means of his righteous deeds he pleased his father. He became a king (later). Therefore, O king, the excellent vow of Putradā should be observed. I told it to you for the good of the people. Those who, with a concentrated mind, observe this Putradā vow, obtain sons in this world and after death go to heaven. O king, by reciting and listening to it, a man would obtain the fruit of (having performed) the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

The Vow of Ṣaṭtilā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-2. Very nice, O Kṛṣṇa, O Jagannātha, O first god, O lord of the world. Be pleased, and tell me. Show favour to me. Which would be the Ekādaśī in the dark half of Māgha? What is the manner in which it is to be observed? Tell me this in detail.

The lord said:

3-4. O best king, listen. That Ekādaśī which would fall in the dark half of Māgha is known as Ṣaṭtilā and destroys all sins. Listen to the auspicious, sin-removing account of Ṣaṭtilā, which the best sage Pulastya narrated to Dālabhya.

Dālabhya said:

5-7. O brāhmaṇa, tell that truly (to me) how those living beings who have come to the mortal world, who commit sins, and are having various sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, who take away others' wealth, who are deluded by great addictions,

do not go to hell. O glorious one, (please) tell me (how) sin perishes (even) by means of some small gift.

Pulastya said:

8-15a. Very nice, very nice, O you illustrious one, this is a secret, very difficult to be had. I shall tell it, O best brāhmaṇa, as I am asked by you, which is not told to anyone by deities like Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Indra. When the month of Māgha has arrived, a man being pure after bath, and with his senses curbed, and without lust, anger, pride, jealousy, greed and wickedness, having remembered the gods, having washed his feet with water, should take the cowdung fallen on the ground, scatter sesamum-seeds, cotton and should get fashioned balls one hundred and eight (in number). No doubt should be raised in this matter. Then when the month of Māgha has come, and if the Āṣāḍha star appears (in the sky) or if it is the beginning of the dark half, he should observe the restraints of Ekādaśī at an auspicious time. Listen to the manner (as) I (tell you). Having worshipped the god of gods, having bathed well, being restrained and pure, he should, by fasting on the Ekādaśī day, recite the names of Kṛṣṇa. He should keep awake at night, and should get performed a sacrifice first.

15b-20a. Again on the second day he should worship Viṣṇu, the lord of the lordly gods. Along with sandal, agaru, and camphor, he should offer eatables and a mixture of rice and peas with a few spices. Then remembering the lord by (uttering) his name, he should repeatedly offer to (the deity) called Kṛṣṇa respectful offering full of pumpkin gourds, coconuts or citrons. In the absence of all (these) (he should make the respectful offering) with betel-nuts, after properly worshipping Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu). "O Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, you are kind. Be the refuge of those who have no refuge. O Viṣṇu, favour them who are plunged in the ocean of mundane existence. Salutation to you, O lotus-eyed one; salutation to you, the creator of all; salutation to you, O Subrahmaṇya, O ancestor of great men. O lord of the world, accept, along with Lakṣmī, this offering, which is made by me." (This is) the hymn recited at the time of making a respectful offering. O brāhmaṇa, after that he should worship (the deity)

and should cause to be given (to it) an earthen pitcher along with an umbrella, sandals and garments. (He should say:)

20b-23. "May Kṛṣṇa be pleased with me." A dark cow should be given according to his capacity to the best brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, he, expert in recognizing a worthy recipient, should give him a pot full of sesamum seeds. O sage, the black sesamum seeds are recommended for bath and food. He should with effort give them to the best brāhmaṇa according to his capacity. For as many thousands of years as many sprouts from the sesamum seeds are there is the field, he is honoured in heaven. These six uses of sesamum seeds destroy sins: bathing with the sesamum seeds (i.e. with water mixed with them), rubbing (one's body) with sesamum seeds, offering a sacrifice with sesamum seeds, offering water with sesamum seeds, giving sesamum seeds, and eating them.

Nārada (Yudhiṣṭhira?) said:

24-25. O Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa, O you of mighty arms, O you the creator of everything, salutation to you. What kind of fruit is due to the Ṣaṭtilā Ekādaśī? Tell it to me, O Yādava, along with an episode, if you are pleased with me.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

26-32. O king, listen to what I saw as it took place. O Nārada(?), in the mortal world formerly there lived a brāhmaṇa woman. She was always engaged in observing vows and was always engrossed in worshipping deities. She was engaged in observing the monthly fasts; she was very devoted to me. She observed fasts in honour of Kṛṣṇa, and was intent on worshipping me. O best brāhmaṇa(?), she tormented her body with fasts. The very chaste woman always offered her house etc. due to her devotion to gods, brāhmaṇas and maidens. O brāhmaṇa(?), she always took delight in great expiation. She did not give alms to beggars; she did not gratify brāhmaṇas. Then, O brāhmaṇa(?), after a long time I thought: "There is no doubt that her body is purified by means of vows and expiations. By mortifying her body she honoured devotees of Viṣṇu. She did not offer food, by means of which great satisfaction would be had." O brāhmaṇa(?),

knowing like this, I went to the mortal world. Taking the form of a Kāpāla.[1] I begged alms in my (begging) bowl. (She said:)

33-43. "O brāhmaṇa, what for have you come? Where will you go later? Tell (this to me)." I again said: "O beautiful woman, give (me) alms." With great wrath she threw a lump of clay into the copper-vessel. Then O brāhmaṇa, I again went (back) to heaven. Then by the power of her practising the vow, the female ascetic of great vows, bodily came to heaven after a long time. Due to the gift of the lump of a clay she got a charming house; but O brāhmaṇa sage(?), it was without heaps of grains. When she would observe (i.e. she observed) the house, she did not see anything there. Then, O brāhmaṇa(?), she moved out of the house and came to me. She spoke these words full of great anger: "By means of many kinds of vows, expiations and fasts, and with worship, I propitiated the god, the guardian of the entire world. O Janārdana, nothing is seen there in my house." Then I said to her: "O you of a great vow, go home. Wives of gods, full of great curiosity and wonder will come to see you. Do not open the door unless they recite the auspicious (account of) Ṣaṭtilā." Thus addressed by me, the woman went (back to her house). O brāhmaṇa(?), in the meanwhile gods' wives came (to her house). There they said, "We have come to see you. O beautiful woman, open the door (so that) we shall see you."

The woman said:

44. If you want to see me, you must especially tell the truth —the meritorious vow of Ṣaṭtilā—for opening the door.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

45-54. None of them told her (about) the vow of *Ṣaṭtilā Ekādaśī*. Then one of them told (about) the vow of the Ṣaṭtilā Ekādaśī. The other one then said: "The woman should be seen by me." Then after opening the door, the woman was seen by them. O best brāhmaṇa(?), like that woman a goddess or a female gandharva or a demoness or a female serpent was never seen by them be-

1. Kāpāla: A follower of the Śaiva sect—the Left-hand Order characterised by carrying skulls of men in the form of garlands and eating and drinking from them.

fore. By the advice of the goddesses the vow of Ṣaṭṭilā which gives pleasures and salvation was observed by that woman of a true vow. She, endowed with beauty and loveliness, obtained in a moment wealth, grains, garments, gold and silver. By the prowess of Ṣaṭṭilā her house was endowed with everything. In a moment she became endowed with beauty and loveliness. One should not be very greedy; one should avoid fraud with regard to wealth. According to his wealth he should cause to give (i.e. should give) sesamum seeds and garments. A man obtains good health in very existence. He does not get poverty, or misery or misfortune. (All this) will not take place due to fasting on Ṣaṭṭilā. O king, there is no doubt that a giver of sesamum seeds in this way is free from all sins without any trouble. (Giving) a gift duly to a worthy recipient removes all sins. O best king, there is no misery or exertion in the body.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

Jayā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-3. O Kṛṣṇa, you have said well. O lord, you are the first god. (There are four kinds of living beings:) generated by sweat; oviparous; plants; viviparous. You make and mar them; you protect and destroy them. You told (me) about Ṣaṭṭilā falling in Māgha. O god, favour (me) and tell me which Ekādaśī would fall in the bright half (of that month). What is the manner of it (i.e. the manner in which it is observed? Which deity is worshipped on that day?

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

4-8a. O lord of kings, I shall tell you about (the Ekādaśī) that would fall in the bright half of Māgha. It is called Jayā. It is well known. It is great and removes all sins. It is pure. It destroys sins. It gives desired objects and salvation to men. It destroys (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, and it (also)

destroys the state of a goblin. Men are not reduced to the condition of ghosts when the vow of this (Ekādaśī) is observed by them. There is no (Ekādaśī) other than this that destroys sins and gives salvation. O king, for this reason it should always be observed. O best king, listen to an ancient auspicious tale. I have told about its greatness in the Padma Purāṇa.

8b-15a. Once Indra ruled in heaven. Gods happily lived in that charming (heaven). They were engaged in drinking nectar and were waited upon by celestial nymphs. In it there was a grove called Nandana. It was served by (i.e. full of) Pārijāta trees. Gods rejoice and are pleased by the celestial nymphs there. Once Indra, the lord of fifty crores (of the residents of heaven), rejoicing as he liked, joyfully made (the celestial nymphs) to dance. Gandharvas sang there. There was a gandharva (named) Puṣpadantaka. Citrasena was also there. So also there was Mālinī, the daughter of Citrasena. There was Citrasena's wife also. Puṣpadantī was born of Mālinī. Puṣpadanta's son was Mālyavat by name. Mālyavat was very much fascinated by the beauty of Puṣpadantī. She subjugated Mālyavat with her glances.

15b-22. Listen to (the description of) her charm with loveliness and her beauty. Her arms are as it were the nooses (thrown) round the neck by Cupid. Her eyes were long up to the ears, were reeling and red in the corners. Her ears looked beautiful due to the ear-rings. She had a conch-shaped neck, and was adorned with divine ornaments. Her stout and raised breasts resembled golden pitchers. Her waist was lean, excellent and could be grasped in the fist. Her buttocks were expansive. Her hips and loins were large. Her feet were beautiful and bright like red-lotus. By (that) Puṣpavatī who was like this, Mālyavat was very much fascinated. To please Indra, the two came there to dance. They sang there and were waited upon by bands of celestial nymphs. The two Puṣpadantī and Mālyavat, had their bodies filled with cupid (i.e. the feeling of love). Due to love for each other they were infatuated. With their mind perplexed they did not sing chaste songs.

23-31. Influenced by the arrows of Cupid they had rivetted their eyes upon each other. Indra knew that their minds were attached to each other. Due to the lapse in clapping of the

hands and in the measuring (of time), so also due to the execution of the song, Indra, thinking that it was an insult to him, got angry with both of them and giving them a curse said these (words): "Fie upon you; you are fallen; you stupid ones have disobeyed me. Be turned into goblins as husband and wife; go to the mortal world, enjoying the fruit of your deed." Thus cursed by Indra the two with their minds distressed, being deluded by Indra's curse reached the Himālaya mountain. Both became goblins and met with terrible grief also. Their minds were tormented, and met with misery caused by snow. Being deluded, they were not aware of their state of a gandharva or a celestial nymph. They were oppressed by summer and the effect of bodily sins. Troubled by (the fruit of) their deeds they did not get pleasure or peace at night. Talking to each other they moved in the mountain-caves. They were chattering their teeth and had horripilation on their bodies.

32-40a. Then that male goblin said to his wife, the female goblin: "What great, fierce and thrilling sin have we committed due to which we have obtained (i.e. are reduced to) goblinhood as a result of our bad deeds? Hell is looked upon as fierce, and goblinhood as painful. Therefore, with all efforts, one should not commit a sin." Thus being anxious, they were overpowered with grief. Due to their good luck, the Ekādaśī of Māgha, named Jayā and well-known as the best among days, came. When that day came, O king, they remained there without food and without drinking water. They did not kill any living being; they did not eat leaves and fruits. Near the Aśvattha tree, they remained always full of grief. O king, while they remained like that the sun set. Night, that was fierce, terrible and fatal, approached. The two, trembling and clinging to each other with their bodies and arms, then slept there on the (bare) ground. They did not have sleep, or coition, nor did they get pleasure.

40b-46. O best king, they were thus troubled by the curse of Indra. When they were thus unhappy the night rolled by. The sun rose when the day of Dvādaśī came (i.e. on the Dvādaśī day). O best king, I held in my heart (i.e. thought to myself) about their salvation. They observed the good vow of Jayā and kept awake at night. Listen to what happened by

the efficacy of that vow. When the Dvādaśī day came, and when the Jayā-vow was observed like that, their goblinhood disappeared by Viṣṇu's prowess. Puṣpadantī and Mālyavat had their forms as before. They had the same affection as before, had put on the (same) ornaments as before. They got into an aeroplane and went to the beautiful heaven. Having gone in front of the lord of gods (Indra), they gladly saluted him. Seeing them like that, Indra, being amazed said to them:

Indra said:

47. Tell me, due to what moral merit you who were reduced to goblinhood, who had received a curse from me, were freed and by which god.

Mālyavat said:

48-51. O lord, our goblinhood has gone by Viṣṇu's favour, the observance of the Jayā-vow, and the strength of devotion to you.

Hearing these (words) Indra also spoke again: "You have become sinless, pure, and have become adorable even to me. You have observed (the vow on) the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu; you are greatly attached to the devotion for Viṣṇu. There is no doubt that those mortals who adhere to (the vow of) the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, and are devoted to Kṛṣṇa, are adorable to us also."

Kṛṣṇa said:

52-54. For this reason, O king, the vow of the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu should be observed. O best king, Jayā removes the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder. He who has observed the vow of Jayā, has given all gifts, has performed all sacrifices. He certainly rejoices in Vaikuṇṭha as long as a crore of kalpas. O king, by reciting or listening to (this account), one would obtain the fruit (of the performance) of Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice).

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

Vijayā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. What is the name of the Ekādaśī that would fall (i.e. falls) in the dark half of Phālguna? O Vāsudeva, favour me and tell it to me.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2. Nārada asked the lotus-seated Brahmā: "O best of brāhmaṇas, favour me, and tell me about the religious merit due to the observance of the Vijayā Ekādaśī that would fall (i.e. that falls) in the dark half of Phālguna.

Brahmā said:

3-12. O Nārada, listen; I shall tell (you) a great account that removes sins. I have not narrated to anyone this Vijayā-vow which is ancient, pure, and which removes sins. There is no doubt that Vijayā gives victory to the kings. Formerly, Rāma went to the forest and lived in Pañcavaṭī for fourteen years with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. The glorious wife, Sītā, of Rāma of a victorious nature, who lived there was kidnapped by Rāvaṇa through lustfulness. Due to that grief even Rāma was embarassed, and (while) wandering he saw Jaṭāyus who was dead. Then he, wandering in the forest, killed Kabandha. (Then) his friendship with Sugrīva took place. The forces of the monkeys came together for Rāma. Then Sītā was seen in the (Aśoka) garden of Laṅkā by Hanūmat. He gave her the token of Rāma and performed a great feat. Then again having come back to Rāma, he told him the entire (account). Then Rāma, having heard the words of Hanūmat, was pleased to (take out) a march (against Rāvaṇa) with Sugrīva's consent. (He said to Lakṣmaṇa:) "O Saumitra, due to which religious merit this very unfathomable abode of Varuṇa (i.e. the ocean) full of aquatic animals, can be crossed? I do not see a means with which this (ocean) can be crossed easily."

Lakṣmaṇa said:

13-18. You alone are the first god, and the ancient, best man. In this island lives the sage Bakadālbhya. O Rāghava, his hermitage is at a distance of half a yojana from this place. O son (i.e. descendant) of Raghu, there are many other brāhmaṇas also. O best king, having gone (there), ask the best sage.

Having heard these extremely good words of Lakṣmaṇa, Rāma went to see that great sage Bakadālbhya. With his head (bent down) he saluted the sage, as a god (salutes) Viṣṇu. Then that sage having recognized that ancient best man who had entered the human body for some reason, was pleased, and said, "O Rāma what for have you come?"

Rāma said:

19-24. O brāhmaṇa, by your favour I have come along with the army to this shore of the ocean to conquer Laṅkā along with the demons. O sage, be favourable and tell me the means by which I shall cross the ocean. Now be pleased. O god, for this reason only I have come to see you.

Having heard the words of Rāma, the great sage Bakadālbhya, with his mind very much pleased, said to the lotus-eyed Rāma: "O Rāma, today you should observe the best among vows, having observed which you will be mightily victorious. Having conquered Laṅkā and the demons, you will obtain pure fame. Being concentrated in mind, observe this vow. The Vijayā Ekādaśī would fall in the dark half of the month of Phālguna.

25-35. O Rāma, by (the observance of) that vow you will get victory. You will, along with the monkeys, undoubtedly cross the ocean. O king, listen to the manner of this vow (i.e. in which the vow should be observed), which is fruitful. When the tenth day has arrived a man should cause to get fashioned a pitcher. He should place this decorated pitcher made of gold, silver, copper or clay and filled with water and with sprouts. He should put under it seven (kinds of) grains, and barley upon it. On it he should place the golden (image of) the lord Nārāyaṇa. When the eleventh day comes, he should bathe in the morning.

Along with a wreath round the neck and unguents he should keep it (the pitcher) steady. He should worship it especially with betel nuts and coconuts, so also with sandal, incense, lights and various offerings of eatables. O Rāma, the day is passed in front of it with (i.e. in narrating) good tales. A wise man should also keep awake at night in front of it. For the continuous observance of the vow he should light a lamp of ghee. When the twelfth day comes, on the rise of the sun he should take the jar to the region of water and place it in a river or into a stream and should worship it duly. He should give that jar to a brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas. O lord of kings, he should cause to give (i.e. he should give) the great gifts (Mahādānas) along with the jar (to a brāhmaṇa). O Rāma, observe along with the chiefs of troops carefully the vow in this manner. You will be victorious."

36-39. Having heard like this, that Rāma did as he was told. When the son (i.e. descendant) of Raghu (i.e. Rāma) observed that vow, he became victorious. He got (back) Sītā. He conquered Laṅkā, killed Rāvaṇa in the battle. O son, those men who observe the vow in this manner, get success in this world, and get the inexhaustible other world (i.e. they live permanently in heaven). For this reason, O son, the vow of Vijayā should be observed. The greatness of Vijayā destroys all sins. A man by reciting (about) or listening (to this vow) would obtain the fruit of the performance of the Vājapeya sacrifice.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

Āmalakī Ekādaśī

Śrīkṛṣṇa said*:

1. O Kṛṣṇa, I have heard about the importance and the great fruit of Vijayā. Now tell me about (the importance of) that (Āmalakī Ekādaśī) which falls in the bright half of the month of Phālguna.

*It should be Yudhiṣṭhira.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-4. O son of Dharma (i.e. Yudhiṣṭhira), O illustrious one, listen. I shall tell you about that (Ekādaśī) which the glorious Vasiṣṭha explained to Māndhātṛ, when he (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) was asked by Māndhātṛ. This is, O king, especially said to be the speciality of Phālguna. The Āmalakī-vow is auspicious and gives (i.e. takes one) to Viṣṇu's world. A man should go to the root of Āmalakī (tree), and should keep awake there (during the night). Having kept awake there for that night, he would obtain the fruit of (giving) a thousand cows.

Māndhātṛ said:

5-6. O best brāhmaṇa, when did this Āmalakī spring up? Tell all this to me. I have great curiosity (to hear about it). Why is it (said to be) pure? Why is it (said to be) the destroyer of sins? Due to what would a man obtain the fruit of (giving) a thousand cows by keeping awake on it?

Vasiṣṭha said:

7-17a. O glorious one, I shall tell (you) how it came about on the earth. The great tree of Āmalakī destroys all (kinds of) sins. When formerly (all this) was just an ocean only (i.e. when the earth was inundated in water), when the immovable and the movable had perished, when hosts of gods and demons had disappeared, and serpents and fiends had perished, then the lord of the gods, the highest soul, the ancient one went to Brahman, his highest and immutable position. Then from the spittle of Brahmā, keeping awake, a drop lustrous like the moon was produced, and it fell down on the eatrh. From that drop was produced the great Āmalakī tree, having many branches and twigs bent due to the burden of fruits. It was declared as the first shoot among all the trees. Then, after it Brahmā created all these beings—the revered God created gods, demons, gandharvas, yakṣas, fiends, serpents and so also the spotless great sages. Those gods came there, where Dhātrī (the Āmalaka tree) dear to Viṣṇu, stood, and O glorious one, seeing it they were very much amazed. They stood there thinking, 'We do not know this tree.' When they were thinking like this, a heavenly voice said to them:

"This excellent tree is Āmalakī, said to belong to Viṣṇu. Merely by remembering it a man would get the fruit of (giving) a cow. By touching it one's religious merit is doubled, and by wearing it it is tripled.

17b-21. Therefore, making all efforts, a man should always resort to Āmalakī. It is said to remove all sins, to belong to Viṣṇu and to destroy sins. At its root lives Viṣṇu; and the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā) stays above it; and in its trunk the highest lord, the revered Rudra lives. All the sages (live) in its branches, and the deities (live) in its twigs. The gods remain in its leaves, and the Maruts in its flowers. All the lords of the created beings are similarly settled in its fruits. I have declared this Dhātrī to be full of all gods. Therefore, it is most adorable for those who are greatly devoted to Viṣṇu."

The sages said:

22. We do not know who you are. Due to what have you become the cause? Tell us the truth—whether you are a god or someone else.

23-27a. Seeing the amazed wise men (*the voice said*:) "I am that ancient Viṣṇu, who is the creator of all beings and all worlds." Having heard those words of the god of gods, Brahmā's sons then began praising the god who was beginningless and endless. "Obeisance to the Being, the self-born one, the soul, the supreme soul. Repeated and constant salutations to the unfalling one, to the endless one (i.e. Viṣṇu). Repeated salutations to Dāmodara, to the omniscient one, to the lord of sacrifices." Thus praised there by the sages, lord Viṣṇu was pleased. He said to the sages: "What desired (objects) should I give you?"

The sages said:

27b-29. O venerable one, if you are pleased, then with a desire for our good, tell us (about) some vow which gives the fruit of heaven and salvation, which gives wealth, grains, religious merit, and pleasing oneself, which requires little exertion, which gives many fruits and which is the best vow among vows, having observed which one is honoured in Viṣṇu's world.

Viṣṇu said:

30-32. When in the bright half of Phālguna, the Dvādaśī comes with Puṣya (i.e. the eighth lunar mansion appearing in the sky), it would be very auspicious and would destroy great sins. O best brāhmaṇas, listen to the special (vow) to be observed on that day. Having gone to Āmalakī, one should keep awake there. One would be free from all sins and would obtain the fruit of giving a thousand cows. O brāhmaṇas, I have told you about this vow, the best of all vows. Having worshipped Viṣṇu (residing) in it, one is not dropped from Viṣṇu's world.

The sages said:

33-40. Tell us about the manner of (the observance of) this vow. How would it be perfect? What are the hymns, what are the salutations, and what are the deities that are declared? How is a gift (given)? How is a bath (taken)? What is said to be the manner of worship? So also tell us accurately the hymn for offering respectful offering and worship.

Viṣṇu said:

O best brāhmaṇas, listen to the manner (of the observance) of this vow. Having remained without food on the Ekādaśī day and the next day, he should, after cleaning his teeth, utter the words, "O lotus-eyed one, O you unfallen one, I shall (now) eat. Be my refuge." He should not talk with the fallen, the thieves, so also the heretics, so also with men of bad conduct, with those who have violated the limits (of good conduct), and who have outraged their preceptors' wives. Then the wise man, restrained and composed, should duly bathe in the afternoon, in a river, or a tank or a lake or at home. First, he should apply clay (to his body) and then should bathe. "O you earth, who are trodden by horses, chariots and by Viṣṇu, O you earth, remove my sin, and the wicked deed that I have done."

41-48. This is the hymn (to be recited at the time) of (applying) the clay (to the body). "O water, you are the life of all beings and protector of their bodies. Salutation to the lord of the species that are generated by sweat and that sprout as plants. Let this bath of me be (as it were) I have bathed at all holy

places, deep lakes, streams, in rivers and reservoirs." This is the hymn to be recited at the time of bathing. Having got fashioned the golden (image of) the sage Jāmadagnya (i.e. Paraśurāma) of the weight of a māṣaka of gold, or half of it, he should come home and perform the sacrifice for the worship. Then with all the requisites he should go to the Āmalakī (tree). Then having (thus) gone to the Āmalakī (tree), and having cleaned (the region) all round (it), he should place there a jar having no scratch, to the accompaniment of hymns, having five gems (attached to it), made fragrant with divine perfumes, with an umbrella and a pair of sandals, and smeared with white sandal, with a wreath and a garland attached to its neck, incensed with all (kinds) of incenses; he should make it charming by kindling a series of lamps all around; upon it he should place a pot full of divine parched grains. On the pot he should place (the image of) the very lustrous Jāmadagnya.

49-52. (Worshipping) the feet (of the image, (he should say "Salutation to Viśoka;" (worshipping) its knees (he should say) "(Salutation to) Viśvarūpin." (Worshipping) its thighs (he should say) "(Salutation to) Ugra." (Worshipping) its waist (he should say) "(Salutation to) Dāmodara." (Worshipping) its belly (he should say) "(Salutation to) Padmanābha." (Worshipping its chest he should say) "(Salutation to) Śrīvatsadhārin." (Worshipping) its left arm, (he should say) "Salutation to Cakrin." (Worshipping) its right arm (he should say) "Salutation to Gadin." (Worshipping) its neck (he should say) "Salutation to Vaikuṇṭha." (Worshipping) its mouth (he should say) "Salutation to Yajñamukha". (Worshipping) its nose (he should say) "Salutation to Viśokanidhi." (Worshipping) its eyes (he should say) "Salutation to Vāsudeva." (Worshipping) its forehead (he should say) "Salutation to Vāmana." (Worshipping) its eyebrows (he should say) "Salutation to Rāma." He should worship its head saying "Salutation to the Sarvātman."

53-54. This is the hymn to be recited at the time of worshipping (the deity). Then to the superior god of gods he should, with a devoted mind, offer a respectful offering with a white fruit. Then, with a devoted mind he should keep awake by means of dances, songs, musical instruments, religious tales and eulogies.

55-63. He should similarly pass the entire night by means of (listening to, reciting) accounts about Viṣṇu. Then by (repeating) Viṣṇu's names, he should go round the Dhātrī (tree). (The repetition of the names should be done for) one hundred and eight or twentyeight times. Then, in the morning, having waved a light (in front of the image) of Viṣṇu, and having honoured a brāhmaṇa, he should offer all that to him (saying) "In the Jāmadagnya ghaṭa there are a couple of garments and two sandals. May Keśava, in the form of Jāmadagnya, be pleased with me." Then he should touch and go round the Āmalakī (tree). Having then bathed duly, he should feed brāhmaṇas. Then surrounded by (i.e. along with the members of) his fraternity he should eat. I shall tell you about the entire religious merit (obtained) by doing like this. There is no doubt that he gets the fruit which is had at all the holy places, by means of all (kinds of) gifts, and which is greater than (that of) all sacrifices. I have thus narrated to you in full the vow that is the best of (all) vows.

Saying so, the lord of gods vanished there only. All the sages also did all that completely. In the same way, O lord of kings, (please) observe this vow which is hard to practise and which frees (one from) all sins.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

Pāpamocanī Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. I have heard about the Āmalakī (vow) in the bright half of Phālguna. What would be (i.e. what is) the name of the Ekādaśī in the dark half of Caitra?

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2. O lord of kings, listen to the sin-destroying account, which Lomaśa, when he was asked by emperor Māndhātṛ, told (to him).

Māndhātṛ said:

3. O venerable one, with a desire for the well-being of the people, I desire to hear what the name of the Ekādaśī in the first half of Caitra would be. What is the manner of it (i.e. in which way is it observed)? What is its fruit? (Please) favour (me) and tell it (to me).

Lomaśa said:

4-8. The Ekādaśī in the dark half of Caitra is called Pāpamocanī. It is said to destroy the state of a goblin. Listen, O king, I shall tell its account which gives the desired objects, divine power, auspicious and righteous things, and destroys sins. Formerly in the forest called Caitraratha, full of bees, and resorted to by celestial nymphs, when the spring season had arrived, gandharva maidens rejoiced along with kinnaras by (playing upon) musical instruments. The residents of heaven (i.e. gods) led by Indra also sported there. There was nothing else as delightful as the Caitraratha forest. In that forest many sages practised profuse penance.

9-18a. A celestial nymph known as Mañjughoṣā started to infatuate an excellent sage named Medhāvin, best among sages, who was a celibate and lived there. Showing her devotion to him, she through fear of him remained just a krośa away in the vicinity of the hermitage, singing sweetly and pressing (i.e. playing upon) the lute agreeably. The mind-born Cupid, seeing her with flowers (worn by her) and sandal (applied to her body) and desiring to vanquish the best sages, the devotees of Śiva, lived in her body. (Mañjughoṣā) having, in due order, made her eyebrows the curved end of the bow, her glances the string of the bow, her eyes along with her eyelashes the arrows, her breasts the tent, started for victory. Mañjughoṣā became the army of that Cupid only. Seeing that sage Medhāvin she too was oppressed by the passion of love. That Medhāvin also, with his body shooting up with youth, shone (there). Wearing a white sacred thread and appearing like another Cupid, that Medhāvin lived in the auspicious hermitage of Cyavana.

18b-24. Having seen the best sage staying there, that Mañjughoṣā was overpowered by Cupid (i.e. passion of love)

and she sang gently. That best sage, having seen her singing like that, with her bracelets jingling and her anklets and girdle tinkling, was forcibly deluded by Cupid with his army. That beautiful woman Mañjughoṣā, seeing that sage like that, approached him and deluded him with feminine coquettish gestures; and keeping her lute down (on the ground) she embraced that lord of sages, as a creeper would encircle a tree shaking due to the velocity of the wind. That best sage, Medhāvin, too rejoiced with her. Seeing in that (forest) only her excellent body, his auspicious nature left him, and he was influenced by the nature of Cupid. The lover did not know (i.e. care for) night or day, while rejoicing with her. Due to (i.e. in) the violation of (good) conduct, the sage passed a period of many years. Mañjughoṣā set out to go to the divine world. While going she said to the best sage, rejoicing (with her): "O brāhmaṇa, give me the order to go to my own region."

Medhāvin said:

25-30. O you beautiful one, today only just at the beginning of the nightfall you have come. Stay with me till (it is the time for my) morning prayer.

Hearing these words of the sage, she was frightened. She, afraid of the sage's curse, again delighted that sage for many years, O best king. She rejoiced with the sage for fiftyfive years nine months and three days. (But that period) was just half a night for him. When that much time passed, she again said to the sage: "O Brāhmaṇa, give me the order to go (back). I have to go home."

Medhāvin said:

It is (just) the morning. Listen to my words. Be steady till I offer my evening prayer.

Hearing these words of the sage, she was full of joy. Smiling slightly, she of a bright smile again spoke:

The celestial nymph said:

31-38. O sinless best brāhmaṇa, how long your prayer has

extended! (Please) favour me, and take into consideration the time that has passed.

Hearing these words of her, the best brāhmaṇa, with his eyes dilated due to wonder, calculated the time that had passed. Fiftyseven years were passed (by him) with her. Then he got angry with her, and was (like fire) with rows of flames. He, seeing her of the nature of destruction, putting an end to his penance, became very angry, and discharging sparks of fire from his eyes, and noticing that his penance earned with great effort had been wasted with her (i.e. in her company), the sage Medhāvin with his lips throbbing and his senses agitated cursed her: "Be a female goblin. Fie upon you, a sinful woman of bad conduct, an unchaste woman, who loves sins (i.e. sinful conduct)." Parched by his curse, she remained bent with modesty. The beautiful woman, desiring the sage's favour said these words to him: "O best brāhmaṇa, (please) favour me. Appease your curse; for the friendship of the good takes place (even) by (walking together for) seven steps (or by exchanging seven words). O brāhmaṇa with you I have passed many years. For this reason, O lord, O you of a good vow, favour (me)."

The sage said:

39-42. O good woman, hear my words appeasing the curse. O sinful one, what have I to do with you? You destroyed (my) great penance. In the dark half of Caitra would fall (i.e. falls) the auspicious Ekādaśī called Pāpamocanikā, which destroys all sins. Having observed the pure vow of it (i.e. on that day, your) state of a female goblin will go away.

Having spoken like this Medhāvin went to his father's hermitage. Seeing him to have come (back), Cyavana said to him: "What is this that you have done? You have destroyed your religious merit, O son."

Medhāvin said:

43. O father, I committed a sin. I rejoiced with a celestial nymph. O father, tell me an expiation by means of which my sin would perish.

Cyavana said:

44-46. In the dark half of Caitra falls the (Ekādaśī) called Pāpamocanī. O son, when the vow of it is observed, the heap of sins would perish.

Hearing these words of his father, he observed that excellent vow. His sin perished and he became endowed with (the merit of) his penance. That Mañjughoṣā too, having observed that excellent vow, was freed from the state of a female goblin due to (having observed) that vow of Pāpamocanikā. That excellent celestial nymph taking a divine form went to heaven.

Lomaśa said:

47-49. O king, all the sin (however) little of those best men who observe the vow of the Pāpamocanikā, would perish. A man, by reciting (about) it, by listening (to its account) would obtain the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows. All those who have killed a brāhmaṇa or have snatched gold or are drunkards or have gone to the teacher's bed (i.e. have violated the wife of the preceptor) become free from sins by means of the observance of this vow. By its observance the excellent vow gives great religious merit.

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

Kāmadā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Salutation to you, O Vāsudeva; tell me, Ekādaśī of which name would fall in the bright half of Caitra.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2. O king, listen attentively to an auspicious old tale which formerly Vasiṣṭha narrated to Dilīpa who had asked (him).

Dilīpa said:

3. O revered one, I desire to hear. Favour me and tell me what the name of the Ekādaśī that would fall in the bright half of Caitra, is.

Vasiṣṭha said:

4-12. O king, you have asked well. I shall tell (about it) to you. The Ekādaśī falling in the bright half of Caitra is Kāmadā by name. (This) Ekādaśī is most auspicious, and is a fire to the fuel of sins. O king, listen to this story which destroys sins, (and) which gives religious merit. Formerly in the beautiful city of Nāgapura, adorned with gold and jewels, lived very powerful nāgas led by Puṇḍarīka. In that city king Puṇḍarīka ruled. He was served by gandharvas, kinnaras, and celestial nymphs also. The excellent celestial nymph was Lalitā; and the (excellent) gandharva was Lalita; the couple, glowing with attachment, and oppressed by passion of love, rejoiced in their beautiful house which was full of wealth and grains. In the heart of Lalitā (her) husband always resided; (and) in his heart, that beautiful Lalitā always resided. Once Puṇḍarīka, remaining in his assembly, was sporting. Lalita, without his wife, was singing and dancing (there). Remembering Lalitā, his tongue stumbled over (i.e. while uttering) an arrangement of words. Knowing the state of his mind, the best nāga Karkoṭaka reported his error in (uttering) the arrangement of words to Puṇḍarīka.

13-20. Hearing the words of Karkoṭaka, Puṇḍarīka, the king of the nāgas, with his eyes red due to anger, became extremely fierce. He then cursed Lalita who was singing and was overpowered by the passion of love: "O you of a wicked mind, be a demon that eats raw flesh, and that eats human beings, since, being influenced by (the love for) your wife, you are singing before me." As a result of his words, he (i.e. Lalita) got a demon's form, O best king. His face was fierce. His eyes were deformed. He caused fear even when just seen. His arms were as long as a yojana. His mouth resembled a cave. His eyes were like the moon and the sun. His neck was like a mountain. His nostrils were (just) hollows. His lips were a yojana in length. O lord of kings, his body rose (up to) eight yojanas. He, as

result of his deed(s) became a demon of this type. And that Lalitā, seeing her husband thus deformed was oppressed by great grief, and thought to herself: "What do (i.e. should) I do? Where do (i.e. should) I go? My husband is troubled by the curse." Recalling like this to her mind, she did not obtain pleasure in her mind.

21-25. Lalitā, along with her husband, moved into a dense forest. That demon who took any form he liked, was cruel, was engaged in (committing) sins, who was deformed, ate human beings, wandered in that impassable forest. He, oppressed by sins, did not have pleasure at night or by day. Seeing her husband like that Lalitā was very much pained. She, weeping, wandered with him in (that) dense forest. Having seen a lovely hermitage and a sage of a tranquil form, she quickly went to him, and saluting him, stood before him. Seeing her distressed, the sage, solely devoted to kindness, said to her: "Who are you? Why have you come here? Tell the truth to me."

Lalitā said:

26-28. There is a gandharva Vīradhanvan (by name). I am the daughter of that noble one. Know me to be Lalitā by name. I have come here for the sake of my husband. O great sage, due to a sin, my husband has become a demon of a fierce form and wicked deeds. Seeing him, I am not happy. Now, O brāhmaṇa, instruct me. O lord, tell me what I should do. (Tell me about) the religious merit due to which he is free from his state of demon, O best brāhmaṇa.

The sage said:

29-31. O you beautiful woman, it is now the bright half of the month of Caitra. O Lalitā, (in it falls) the Kāmadā Ekādaśī which is great and which destroys sins. O auspicious one, duly observe its vow as told by me. Give the religious merit which (you will obtain) from this vow to your husband. When the religious merit is given (to him), his sin will go away in a moment.

Hearing these words of the sage, Lalitā was delighted.

32-39. Having fasted on the Ekādaśī, so also on the day of Dvādaśī, Lalitā, in the vicinity of a brāhmaṇa, and in front of Viṣṇu, uttered these words for the emancipation of her husband: "I have observed the vow, viz. the Kāmadā fast. Let his goblinhood go (away) by the prowess of that religious merit." Merely at the words of Lalitā, just at that moment, his sins went away, and he had a divine form. His state of a demon went (away) and he got gandharvahood again. Full of gold and jewels, he rejoiced with Lalitā. The couple having more lovely forms than before got into an excellent aeroplane, and looked more charming due to the efficacy of Kāmadā. O best king, realising this, this (Kāmadā-vow) should be carefully observed. For the good of the people I told it to you. It destroys sins like that of the condition of a goblin. There is nothing superior to it in the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. O king, by reciting about it, and listening to the (the account of) it one would get the fruit of a Vājapeya sacrifice.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

Varūthinī Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. What would be the name of the Ekādaśī in the dark half of Vaiśākha? Tell me (its) importance. Salutation to you, O Vāsudeva.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-15. O king, this Ekādaśī named Varūthinī, (falling) in the dark half of Vaiśākha, gives grandeur in this and the next world. Due to the Varūthinī-vow happiness always results; and the sins are destroyed, and good fortune is obtained. An unfortunate woman who observes this (vow) obtains good fortune. This gives pleasures and salvation to all the people. It removes all the sins of people, and cuts off living as an embryo (i.e. puts an end to rebirth). Due to the Varūthinī-vow only

Māndhātṛ went to heaven. So also many other kings like Dhundhumāra (went to heaven). Lord Śiva became free from the sin of (breaking) the skull of Brahmā. One who observes the vow of Varūthinī gets the fruit equal to that (obtained by him) who gives a bhāra of gold on Kurukṣetra when the Sun (is auspicious). That man with faith who observes the vow of Varūthinī, gets (his) desired (objects) in this world and the next (world). O best king, to those who observe it, it is pure, purifying; it destroys great sins. It gives them pleasures and salvation. O king, giving of elephants is superior to giving of horses. Giving of land (is superior) to giving of elephants. Gift of sesamum-seeds is superior (even) to that. Giving of gold is superior to that, and giving of food is superior to that (i.e. giving of gold). There was not nor there will be a greater gift than that of food. By means of food the manes, gods and men are satisfied. O best king, giving one's daughter (in marriage) is said by the wise to be like that. The lord himself said that giving of a cow is equal to that. Of all the gifts that have been mentioned, giving knowledge is the best. A man, by observing the Varūthinī(-vow) gets a fruit equal to that. Those men who, deluded by sin, subsist on the money (got) for (giving their) daughter (in marriage), lose their religious merit, and go to hell full of torments. Therefore, with all care money for giving a daughter in marriage should not be taken (i.e. should be avoided).

16-25. O lord of kings, he who through greed takes money for offering his daughter in marriage, certainly becomes (i.e. is born as) a cat in the next existence. O king, even Citragupta cannot measure the religious merit of him who, with his religious merit, gives, according to his capacity, his daughter well-adorned (in marriage). A man gets fruit equal to that by observing the Varūthinī(-vow). Bell-metal, flesh, masūra (a kind of pulse), thick peas, kodrava (a species of grain eaten by the poor), vegetables, honey, eatables of (i.e. offered by) others, and food and sexual union—these ten a devotee of Viṣṇu should avoid on the tenth day. Playing with dice, sport, sleep, tāmbūla, cleaning the teeth, censuring others, wickedness, theft, harming (others) and indulging in sex, anger, telling lies—(these) he should avoid on the Ekādaśī. Bell-metal, flesh, liquor, honey, oil, talking to those who are fallen, exercise, journey and food

and sexual union, (mounting on) a bull's back, food prepared with masūra—he should avoid on Dvādaśī. O king, to those who have observed the Varūthinī(-vow) in this manner, it would, after destroying all their sins, give them an undecaying position in the end. Those who, having kept awake at night, have worshipped Viṣṇu, are freed from all sins and reach the highest position. Therefore, those who are afraid of sins, should observe it with all efforts. A man afraid of (Saturn) the son of enemy of the night, should observe the Varūthinī(-vow). O king, by reciting (about) it and by listening to (the account of) it, a man would obtain the fruit of (the gift of) a thousand cows. Being free from all sins, he is honoured in Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

Mohinī Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Of which name would be the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Vaiśākha? What is its fruit? What is the manner of (observing) it? Tell it, O Viṣṇu.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2. O lord of kings, the same as you are asking me (now) was formerly asked by the intelligent Rāma from Vasiṣṭha.

Rāma said:

3-4. O glorious one, I desire to hear about the best among the vows, which destroys all sins, and which cuts off all miseries. I have experienced sorrows (like the ones) due to separation from Sītā. So I am scared. (Therefore), O great sage, I am asking you.

Vasiṣṭha said:

5-10. O Rāma, you have asked well. This is (due to) your devoted mind. Merely by uttering your name a man is purified.

Yet, with a desire for the well-being of the people, I shall tell you (about) the excellent vow, (most) pure of the purifying vows. O Rāma, the Ekādaśī (that) would fall in the bright half of Vaiśākha, is called Mohinī. It is great and removes all sins. Due to the prowess of the vow of this (Ekādaśī men) are freed from the noose of delusion and the multitude of sins. I am telling you the truth and the truth (only). Therefore, O Rāma, this one, that destroys sins and puts an end to great misery should be observed by (people) like you. O Rāma, listen attentively to the great, sin-removing story, merely by hearing which (even) a great sin perishes.

11-20. On the lovely bank of Sarasvatī there was an auspicious city Bhadrāvatī. A king named Dyutimat ruled there. He was born in the Lunar family. He was courageous and was true to his word. A vaiśya prosperous with wealth and grains lived there. He was known as Dhanapāla. He prompted auspicious deeds. He constructed public water places, wells, temples, gardens, tanks and houses. He was engrossed in devotion for Viṣṇu and was calm. He had five sons: Sumanas, Dyutimat, Medhāvin and Sukṛta. The fifth Dhṛṣṭabuddhi was alway engaged in (committing) great sins. He was attached to the union with others' wives, and was well-versed in stories about voluptuous people. He was attached to addictions like gambling, and ardently longed for (the company of) others' wives. He did not intend to worship deities, nor the dead ancestors, nor brāhmaṇas. The wicked one lived (by doing) injustice, and wasted the money of his father. He ate what was prohibited and was always attached to drinking liquor. The wicked one threw his arms round the neck of a prostitute and wandered over the crossway. He was expelled from the house by his father and was also forsaken by his kinsmen. He even exhausted the money, ornaments on his body. He was abandoned by the harlots and was condemned (by them) due to the loss of his wealth. Then he was disturbed in mind, was without clothes, and was oppressed by hunger. "What should I do? Where should I go? By what means shall I subsist?" (Thus he thought.)

21-29. Just in his father's city he started stealing. He was arrested by the royal officers, but was released due to the importance of his father. Being zealous, they bound him, again

released him and again bound him. The wicked Dhṛṣṭabuddhi was bound with strong fetters. He was repeatedly whipped and tormented. "O dull-witted one, you should not live within the range (i.e. limits) of my kingdom." Saying so, he was freed by the king from the strong fetters. Due to his fear he went out (of the city) to a dense forest. Being oppressed by hunger and thirst he ran here and there. Like a lion he killed deer, pigs and spotted (deer). Addicted to eating flesh, he always lived in the forest. Taking a bow in his hand, and putting the quiver on his back, he, going on foot, killed the birds moving in the forest. That blinded, cruel Dhṛṣṭabuddhi killed these—partridges, peacocks, francolins, and rats—and other (birds). He plunged into the mud of sins due to sins committed in his former existence. He was overcome with pain and sorrow. He was annoyed day and night. Due to his acquisition of some religious merit he reached the hermitage of Kauṇḍinya.

30-32. Dhṛṣṭabuddhi, oppressed with the burden of grief, approached the ascetic who had bathed in Gaṅgā in the month of Vaiśākha. Due to a slight contact of his garment his sins vanished and his misfortune was destroyed. Standing in front of Kauṇḍinya, he, with the palms of his hands joined, said to him:

Dhṛṣṭabuddhi said:

O brāhmaṇa, O greatest of the brāhmaṇas, taking compassion on me, tell me that religious merit due to the powers of which salvation takes place.

Kauṇḍinya said:

33-39. Listen attentively to that by which your sins will perish. In the dark half of Vaiśākha falls the well-known (Ekādaśī) named Mohinī. Prompted by my words, observe the vow of that Ekādaśī. When men observe a fast on this Mohinī (Ekādaśī), their sins comparable to Meru and earned (i.e. committed) in many existences perish.

Hearing these words of the sage, Dhṛṣṭabuddhi, pleased in his mind, observed duly the vow according to the advice of Kauṇḍinya. O best among kings, when he observed (this) vow, his sins vanished. Then, he, having a divine body and mounted

upon Garuḍa, went to Viṣṇu's world which is free from all calamities. O Rāmacandra, the Mohinī-vow is excellent in this way. In three worlds with the mobile and the immobile, there is nothing greater than it. Sacrifices and the like, so also (visits to) holy places, gifts are not equal even to the sixteenth part of (the religious merit) it (gives). By reciting (about) it and listening to (its account) a man would obtain the fruit of (the gift of) a thousand cows.

CHAPTER FIFTY

Aparā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. What would be (i.e. is) the name of the Ekādaśī falling in the dark half of Jyeṣṭha? I desire to hear (about its) importance. O Janārdana, (please) tell it.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-10. O king, you have, with the desire of the well-being of the people, asked well. (That Ekādaśī) is Aparā by name, O lord of kings. It gives unending fruit. He who observes the (vow of) Aparā becomes famous in the world. O king, he who is overcome by (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa, who kills (the members of) his family, who has procured an abortion, who censures others, who is interested in others' wives, certainly becomes free from sin on observing the (vow of) Aparā. These, viz. one who gives false testimony, who uses false measures or false weights, who would study false (i.e. unauthoritative) Vedas, so also false sacred texts, so also one who is a fraudulent astrologer, who is a fraudulent physician, and one who is connected with false testimony are the residents of hell. O king, by observing the (vow) of Aparā, they are free from sins. A kṣatriya who giving up the duty of a kṣatriya, flees from the battle, goes, being expelled from his caste, to a fierce hell. He too, by observing the (vow of) Aparā, would, after shedding his sin, go to heaven. A

learned disciple who censures his preceptor, having incurred great sins, goes to a fearful hell. That man also by observing the (vow of) Aparā would obtain good position (i.e. beatitude).

11-20. O king, listen to the greatness of Aparā. I am (now) telling it. A fruit similar to that which men obtain (by bathing) at Prayāga in Māgha, when the Sun is in Makara (i.e. the sign Capricornus of Zodiac), or that religious merit which is obtained (by a man) after bathing at Kāśī on an eclipse-day, or the fruit which a man who offers piṇḍas to his dead ancestors at Gayā, gets, or which a man who bathes in the Gautamī (river) when Jupiter is in Siṁha (i.e. the sign Leo of the Zodiac) gets, or the fruit which a man gets on bathing in Kṛṣṇaveṇī when Jupiter is in Kanyā (i.e. the sign Virgo of the Zodiac), or the fruit a man gets on seeing Kumbhakedāra, or in the pilgrimage to Badaryāśrama and visiting holy places during it, or the fruit which a man obtains (by bathing) at Kurukṣetra when the planet Sun (is auspicious), or the fruit that a man gets by performing a sacrifice with (the giving of) presents and gifts of elephants, horses or gold, is obtained by observing the (vow of) Aparā. So also a man obtains that fruit by the Aparā-vow which he gets by giving (to a brāhmaṇa) a recently calved cow, gold, or (a piece of) land. This (vow) is an axe (cutting) the tree in the form of sins, and is a wild fire to the fuel in the form of sins. It is the Sun (dispelling) the darkness of sins. It is a lion (killing) the spotted deer of sins. Those who are without (i.e. who do not observe) the vow of (this) Ekādaśī, are born to die like bubbles in water or like ants among creatures. A man, having fasted on the Aparā (Ekādaśī day) and having worshipped Viṣṇu, is free from all sins and is honoured in Viṣṇu's world. I have told (this vow) to you with the desire of the well-being of the people. O king, a man reciting (about) it and listening (to its account), would obtain the fruit of (gift of) a thousand cows.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Nirjalā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O Janārdana, I have heard the full importance of Aparā. O you who show respect (to others), tell me about that (Ekādaśī) which would fall (i.e. falls) in the bright half of Jyeṣṭha.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2. Satyavatī's pious son, Vyāsa, who knows the essence of all sacred texts and who has mastered the Vedas and the Upaniṣads will tell (you about) it.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

3. I have heard the duties as told by Manu, so also as told by Vasiṣṭha. O Dvaipāyana, you please tell properly the duties of Viṣṇu's devotees.

Śrī Vedavyāsa said:

4-9. O lord of men, you have listened to the duties as told by Manu, so also as told by Vasiṣṭha. They cannot be practised in Kaliyuga. O you very intelligent one, (the Ekādaśī vow) is the essence of (i.e. of what is told in) the Purāṇas, is an easy means, requires little money, little effort, (but) gives great fruit. One should not eat on the Ekādaśī-days of both the fortnights (of a month). On the Dvādaśī day, being pure, having worshipped Viṣṇu, having honoured (a brāhmaṇa), one should then eat with a brāhmaṇa. O king, one should not eat during the impurity caused by a birth or a death in the family. O best of men, those who desire to go to heaven should practise this vow as long as they live. There is no doubt about this. Even those who are sinners, who are of a wicked conduct, who are most sinful, who are bereft of piety, go to my proximity (i.e. reach me) if they do not eat on Ekādaśī.

10. Having heard these words of him, the mighty-armed Bhīma trembled like an aśvattha-leaf, and saluting his preceptor, said to him:

Bhīmasena said:

11-14. O grandsire, O you very intelligent one, listen to my important words. Yudhiṣṭhira and Kuntī, so also Draupadī and Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva, who practise (this) good vow, never eat on the day of Ekādaśī. They always tell me, "O Bhīma, do not eat (on the Ekādaśī day)." I told them: "For me hunger is difficult to bear. I shall duly give gifts. I shall worship Viṣṇu."

Hearing the words of Bhīmasena, Vyāsa said (these) words:

Vyāsa said:

15. If you desire (to go to) heaven, and if (you think) hell is painful, then you should not eat on the Ekādaśī of both the fortnights.

Bhīmasena said:

16-18. O grandsire, O you very intelligent one, I shall tell in front of (i.e. to) you. I am not able (to go on) by eating (even) once a day. Then O lord, how can I (put up with) a fast? That fire, called Vṛka, which is always present in my belly, is extinguished only when I eat many times. O great sage, I am not able to observe a (single) fast. I shall properly observe that due to which heaven is reached. Therefore, having decided about one, tell me that by (observing) which I shall obtain heaven.

Vyāsa said:

19-26. When the Ekādaśī would fall on (the day when the Sun) is in the second or the third sign of the Zodiac in the month of Jyeṣṭha, a wise man should carefully observe (the Ekādaśī fast) without (even drinking) water. He should avoid even sipping a mouthful of water and should not eat (at all). Otherwise the vow would be broken. Listen, when a man (lives even) by avoiding water from the sunrise of a day to the sunrise (of the next day), he obtains the fruit of twelve Dvādaśīs. Then in the auspicious morning of the Dvādaśī day he should bathe, and having duly given water, gold etc. to brāhmaṇas, he, being contended and controlled, should eat along with brāhmaṇas. O

Bhīmasena, listen to the religious merit (which is obtained) by doing like this. There is no doubt that he hereby obtains the fruit of the Ekādaśīs that fall during the year. Keśava, the holder of a conch, a disc and a mace told me like this: "Leaving all others a man should seek my refuge only." A man, not eating on an Ekādaśī day is freed from sins. In the Kali-age, there is no purity of objects. Rites (or ceremonies) are based on the Smṛtis.

27-33a. How can there be a rite based on the Vedas, when the wicked Kali-age has arrived? O son of Vāyu (i.e. Bhīma), what is the use of telling you much again and again? A man should not eat on the Ekādaśī of both the fortnights. Listen, O Bhīma, to the auspicious fruit that (a man) obtains by remaining without water on the Ekādaśī day of the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha. O Bhīma, if fasts are observed on all the auspicious Ekādaśī days that are said to fall during the year and in the bright or dark fortnights (of each month), they give wealth and grains, give sons, good health and auspicious (things). O king, there is no doubt about it. I am telling you the truth. The big-bodied, fierce, dark-formed, fearful messengers of Yama, who hold staffs and nooses, do not approach that man. (But) Viṣṇu's messengers who have put on yellow garments, who are gentle, who have held discs in their hands, whose speed is like that of the mind, take him on his death to Viṣṇu's city.

33b-41. Therefore, with all efforts a man should observe the Ekādaśī-fast without (drinking even) water. Then having given he is freed from all sins. Therefore, O son of Kuntī, on this day observe a fast and worship Viṣṇu with all efforts for the destruction of your sins. "Even by means of passion as much as the size of the point of an arrow, I have not sinned even in a dream. O lord of gods, I shall eat food on the next day of the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu." Uttering this hymn he should engage himself in (observing) the fast of Ekādaśī after being endowed with faith and restraint for the destruction of all his sins. By the power of Ekādaśī all the sin of the size of the Meru and Mandara mountains, which a man has committed, is reduced to ash. O king, those who are not able to give should give a pitcher containing gold along with garments.

He who, on this day, observes the vow of (not drinking even) water, is meritorious. The fruit of the gift of gold is said to be a crorefold in every watch. All that (like) a bath, a gift, muttering of prayers, a sacrifice that is given (or performed) by a man, becomes unending. This is told by Kṛṣṇa himself. What is the use of any other religious rite than the Ekādaśī observed without (drinking) water?

42-52. Having properly observed it with due rites, a man would obtain Viṣṇu's position. All that like gold, food, garments, which are given by a man on this day, would, O king, be inexhaustible. He who eats food on the Ekādaśī day eats sin. In this world he becomes a cāṇḍāla and after death gets a miserable position. Those who, having fasted, will give gifts on the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha, obtain the highest position. Those like the killer of a brāhmaṇa, a drunkard, a thief, a hater of his preceptor or one who always tells lies, who fast without (even drinking) water, are freed from all sins. O son of Kuntī, listen to the special gift which is to be given on the Ekādaśī day, on which not (even) water (is to be drunk) by men and women endowed with faith. He who lies in water should be worshipped and a watery cow should be given (to a brāhmaṇa). An actual cow should be given or of ghee. O best among the righteous, brāhmaṇas should be carefully pleased by means of big presents and with various kinds of sweet food. The brāhmaṇas are pleased, and when they are pleased, Viṣṇu gives salvation. Those who have not fasted on this day have wronged themselves. They—the sinners, and of a bad conduct—have been undoubtedly plundered. Those who, being calm, controlled, devoted to (giving) gifts, worshipped Viṣṇu, and keeping awake, fasted on this day, have taken along with themselves a hundred (members) past and future (of) their families to the abode of Viṣṇu.

53-58. On this day on (which even) water (should) not (be drunk) food, garments, so also cows, water, a good bed and a good seat, a water-pot used by an ascetic, so also an umbrella should be given (to a brāhmaṇa). He who gives a pair of shoes to the best brāhmaṇa—a worthy recipient—is honoured in heaven (after being taken there) by (i.e. in) a golden aeroplane. He who would listen to (the account of) this with devotion, and

he who would narrate it, both go to heaven. No doubt should be raised about this. That fruit which a man obtains by offering a śrāddha at Kurukṣetra when the Sun is eclipsed by Rāhu, is obtained even by listening to (the account of) this. After cleaning his teeth, he should have the restriction: 'On the day of the Ekādaśī, to please Viṣṇu, I shall, remaining without food, avoid water except for sipping.' Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, should be worshipped on Dvādaśī.

59-64. Having duly worshipped (Viṣṇu) with sandal, incenses, flowers, so also pleasing garments, he should recite this hymn: "O god of gods, O Hṛṣīkeśa, O you who emancipate (beings) from the ocean of the mundane existence, take me to the highest position due to (my offering) the pitcher of water." O Bhīma, on that auspicious Ekādaśī which falls in the bright half of Jyeṣṭha, a man should fast without (even) drinking water, by giving water pitchers with sugar to the best brāhmaṇas. (Due to this) he rejoices with Viṣṇu. Then he should devoutly give pitchers to brāhmaṇas. Having then fed the brāhmaṇas, he should take food with devotion to them. He who thus observes the full Dvādaśī, removing sins, is free from all sins and goes to the good position (of Viṣṇu).

Since then Bhīma observed (a fast on) this Ekādaśī day. In the world the Dvādaśī came to be known as Pāṇḍava-Dvādaśī.

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

Yoginī Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. What would be (i.e. is the name of) the Ekādaśī in the dark half of Āṣāḍha? Please favour and tell it to me.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-10. O king, I shall tell you the best of the vows, which destroys all sins and gives full salvation. In the dark half of

Āṣāḍha (falls) the Ekādaśī called Yoginī. O best king, it destroys great sins. (This) Yoginī is an ancient boat for those plunged into the ocean of the worldly existence and for (the good of) those observing the vow of Yoginī which has become the essence in the three worlds. I shall tell an old, auspicious tale. In Alakā (lived) Kubera solely devoted to Śiva. He had a flower-collector called Hemamālin. His beautiful wife was Viśālākṣī by name. With his mind attached to her and being under the sway of Cupid's noose, he, after having brought a heap of flowers from the Mānasa (lake) stayed at home. Being attached to his wife through love, he did not go to Kubera's house. In the temple of god Kubera was worshipping Śiva. O king, at mid-day he was waiting for the flowers. Hemamālin enjoyed with his wife in his house. The king of yakṣas, angry due to the delay, then said: "O yakṣas, why is the wicked-minded Hemamālin not coming (yet)? Ascertain about (i.e. the whereabouts of) him." Thus he spoke repeatedly.

The yakṣas said:

11-14a. O king, lustful for his wife, he rejoices in his house as he pleases.

Hearing their words Kubera was filled with anger. He quickly called that attendant, Hemamālin. He too having realized the delay, with his eyes full of fear, came there even without bathing, and stood in front of him. Seeing him Kubera was angry, and his eyes were reddish due to anger. Full of anger and with his lips trembling through anger, he said:

Kubera said:

14b-22. O sinner, O you of a wicked conduct, you have condemned the god (Śiva). O meanest among the attendants, you, separated from your wife, and suffering from eighteen kinds of leprosy, disappear from this place, and go away.

When these words were uttered by him, he fell from that place and overcome with great grief, his body suffered from leprosy. By day he did not get happiness, nor did he have sleep at night. In the shadow his body was extremely tormented, and

he was oppressed in the summer. Due to the efficacy of Śiva's worship his memory was not lost. Though overpowered by sin, he remembered his old deeds. (Then) wandering from there he went to Himālaya, the excellent mountain. There he saw the ascetic Mārkaṇḍeya, the excellent sage. His age was equal to that of Brahmā. The sinner saluted his feet from a distance. The best sage Mārkaṇḍeya, having seen him trembling like that, called him to oblige him, and said these words to him: "Why (i.e. due to what) are you overcome with leprosy? Why are you so much condemned?" Thus addressed, he replied to Mārkaṇḍeya, the great sage:

Hemamālin said:

23-27. I am Kubera's attendant, Hemamālin by name. O sage, everyday I fetched a collection of lotuses and offered it to Kubera at the time of his worshipping Śiva; and one day I, with my mind attached to the pleasure (derived) from my wife and with my mind distressed with grief, was not conscious of the time. Therefore, O sage, I was cursed by the angry Kubera. I am overcome with leprosy, and am separated from my wife. Due to my auspicious deeds, I have now come to you, knowing that the heart of the good is naturally capable of obliging others. O best sage, advise me, a sinner.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

28-34. Since you told the truth here and did not tell a lie, therefore, I am, instructing you in an auspicious vow. Observe the Yoginī-vow in the dark half of Āṣāḍha. Due to the religious merit of this vow, your leprosy will certainly disappear.

Hearing these words of the sage, he fell (i.e. prostrated himself) like a staff on the ground. Being lifted up by the sage, he became extremely delighted. By the advice of Mārkaṇḍeya he observed the vow, with the result that the eighteen kinds of leprosy of him (i.e. from which he was suffering) disappeared completely. When by the sage's words he observed the vow, he became happy. O king, the vow of Yoginī is said to be like this. A man who observes the Yoginī-vow obtains the fruit equal to that which a man who would feed eightyeight

thousand brāhmaṇas obtains. (The vow) removes great sins; it gives the fruit of great religious merit. By reciting and listening to this account a man is free from all sins.

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Devaśayanī Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Which would be (i.e. is) the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Āṣāḍha? What is the name and the manner of it? (i.e. in which manner is it observed?) Tell me about it in detail.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-8. I shall tell you (about that Ekādaśī) named Śayanī which is very auspicious, which gives heaven and salvation, which is great and which removes all sins, merely hearing about which a man would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya (sacrifice). I have told (you) the truth and the truth (only). Nothing is greater than this for men. O lord of kings, the best one is created by the Creator for the destruction of the sins of sinners. There is no greater (vow) than this which would give salvation. Listen, O king, for this reason that the best position would be obtained by men, the listeners, even by listening to it. Those are the Vaiṣṇavas (i.e. Viṣṇu's devotees) who are greatly devoted to me. In Āṣāḍha, the great god Vāmana (i.e. Viṣṇu) is worshipped. He who has worshipped with lotuses the lotus-eyed Vāmana in the bright half of Āṣāḍha on the day of Kāmikā, has honoured the entire world and has worshipped the three ancient gods (viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva); so also, he who has observed the Ekādaśī—the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu—has honoured the entire world and worshipped the three ancient gods.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

9-10. O Viṣṇu, I have a great doubt here. (Please) listen. How do you sleep (in the ocean)? How have you resorted to

Bali? What do the other people do? Why do they sleep on the ground, O very intelligent one, tell (i.e. explain) this. I have a great doubt.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

11-16. O best king, listen to the great account which removes sins, (and) by merely hearing which all sins would perish. O king, formerly in the Tretā age there was a demon named Bali. Greatly devoted to me he worshipped me everyday. With various sacrifices the demon worshipped me, the ancient one. O king, with great devotion he performed sacrifices and observed vows. Then having deliberated in many ways with Indra, Bṛahaspati and (other) deities, I though worshipped with hymns (by Bali) in various ways, conquered the demons with my Vāmana-form in my fifth incarnation, with (i.e. after taking up) a very fierce form of the nature of (i.e. pervading) the entire universe by prevarication. (Bali, however,) remained firm resorting to truth only. Śukra warded him off saying, 'This is Viṣṇu'.

17-26. O king, I begged for land measured by my three steps and a half. When he offered the water just for conveying his intention, O king, listen, I took up a form like this: I put my feet in the 'Bhūr' world, and I put knees in the 'Bhuvas' world. I put my waist in the 'Svar' world, and belly in the 'Mahas' world. I put my heart in the 'Jana' world, and my neck in 'Tapas' world. I put my face in the 'Satya' world, and head above it. The planets like the Moon, the Sun, so also the constellations, so also gods with Indra, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas and kinnaras praised (me) with various hymns from the Vedas. Seizing Bali by his hand, I occupied the earth in three steps. Then I placed half the step on his head. O king, the demon, my worshipper, went to the lower world. I threw down the demon. What else did I do after it? He was bent with modesty, Viṣṇu was very much pleased. Kāmikā in the bright half of Āṣāḍha is Viṣṇu's day. On that day one of my forms remains resorting to Bali. Another (form) lies on the back of Śeṣa in the ocean, O great king, till the coming (Ekādaśī) in Kārtika. Till then he would be very religious and devoted to best of all duties.

27-37. A man who observes the vow goes to the best position. For this reason, O king, it should be carefully observed.

There is no other (Ekādaśī) than this which is pure and which destroys sins. On that day on which the lord of gods holding a conch, a disc, and a mace sleeps, a man should worship the god holding a conch, a disc, and a mace, and he should especially, with devotion, keep awake at night. (Even) Brahmā is not able to measure the religious merit of (i.e. due to) it. O king, he who, in this way, observes this best vow of Ekādaśī, which removes all sins, gives pleasures and salvation, even though a cāṇḍāla, always lives in my heaven doing what is dear to me. Those men who pass the four months (from the eleventh of the bright half of Āṣāḍha to the eleventh of the bright half of Kārtika) by offering lights, and with the vow of eating on a palāśa-leaf, are dear to me. When Viṣṇu is lying (on Śeṣa), a man should sleep on the ground. He should avoid vegetables in Śrāvaṇa, and curd in Bhādrapada. He should avoid milk in Āśvina, and give up two-leafed (grains) in Kārtika. Or remaining in celibacy, he would reach the highest position. O king, due to the Ekādaśī-vow a man is freed from sins. It should always be observed. It should never be forgotten. That Ekādaśī falling in the dark half between Śayanī and Prabodhinī should be observed by a householder; never any other. O king, a man should listen to the great account which removes sins. He (thereby) obtains the fruit of a horse-sacrifice.

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Kāmikā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. What is the name of the Ekādaśī falling in the dark half of Śrāvaṇa? Tell that to us, O Govinda, salutation to you.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2. O king, listen. I shall narrate to you the account that removes sins and which formerly Brahmā told to Nārada who asked (him about it).

Nārada said:

3-4. O lotus-seated lord, I desire to hear from you, what would be (i.e. is) the name of Ekādaśī in the dark half of Śrāvaṇa. Who is its (presiding) deity? What is the manner (in which it is to be observed)? What is its religious merit. O lord tell (this).

Hearing these words of him Brahmā spoke (the following) words:

Brahmā said:

5-7. O Nārada, listen. With the desire for the good of the people, I shall tell you about the Ekādaśī named Kāmikā (which falls) in the dark half of Śrāvaṇa. Merely by hearing about it, one would obtain the fruit of (having performed) a Vājapeya sacrifice. Listen to the fruit which a man who worships the lord of gods holding a conch, a disc, and a mace, gets. Listen to the meritorious fruit of him (i.e. which he gets) who would worship or who meditates upon Hari, Viṣṇu, Madhusūdana, called Śrī Hari.

8-18. He does not obtain that fruit (by bathing) in Gaṅgā, at Kāśī, Naimiṣa or Puṣkara, which he gets by worshipping Kṛṣṇa on that day. He obtains that fruit by worshipping Kṛṣṇa, which he obtains (by bathing) at the time of a portent foreboding a great calamity, when Jupiter is in the Leo sign, in Godāvarī or Daṇḍaka. Both, he who gives the earth along with the oceans and he who observes the Kāmikā-vow, are said to get the same fruit. The man who observes the Kāmikā-vow obtains the fruit which he who would give a milch cow along with articles of household use, gets. The excellent man who would worship god Viṣṇu in Śrāvaṇa, has worshipped gods with gandharvas, uragas and pannagas. Therefore, sin-fearing men should, with all efforts, and according to their capacity, worship Viṣṇu on the Kāmikā day. The Kāmikā-vow is best for the emancipation of those who are plunged in the ocean of the worldly existence, full of the mud of sins. There is no other (vow) than this (so) pure and sin-removing. O Nārada, know it to be like this. Viṣṇu himself has said (so). Know that the fruit of (i.e. got by) the

observers of Kāmikā-vow is much superior to the fruit obtained by those devoted to the knowledge of the supreme spirit. The man who, after having kept awake at night, observes the Kāmikā-vow, does not see the fearful Yama, or does not face a calamity. He does not see (i.e. is not born in) a bad stock due to his observing the Kāmikā-vow. The meditating saints have reached final emancipation after observing the Kāmikā-vow.

19-29. Therefore, with all efforts it should be observed by those who have controlled themselves. The man who would worship Viṣṇu with Tulasī-leaves is not tinged with sin, as a lotus-leaf with water. He obtains that fruit by worshipping Viṣṇu with a Tulasī-leaf, which he obtains by giving a bhāra of gold or fourfold silver of it. Worshipped with gems, pearls, lapis lazuli, corals etc. Viṣṇu is not so pleased as he is with Tulasī-leaves. The sin of him, (right) from his birth, who has worshipped Viṣṇu with Tulasī-sprouts certainly perishes. Salutation to Tulasī which, when seen, destroys the entire heap of sins, which, when touched, purifies the body, which, when saluted, removes diseases, which, when sprinkled over, frightens Yama, which, when planted, brings about the vicinity of lord Kṛṣṇa, and which, when placed at his feet, gives salvation instantly. Citragupta is not able to know the measure of the religious merit of the man who gives (i.e. keeps) a light day and night on the day of Viṣṇu (i.e. on the day sacred to Viṣṇu). The dead ancestors of him whose lamp burns in front of Viṣṇu, remain in heaven and are gratified with nectar. Having burnt a lamp with ghee or sesamum oil, he, being honoured with a hundred crores of lamps, goes to the Sun's world. I have told you this importance of Kāmikā. Men should, therefore, observe it which removes all sins, which removes (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, which removes (the sin of) causing abortion. It gives (them) the abode of Viṣṇu, and gives the fruit of great religious merit. A man endowed with faith, on hearing about the greatness of this, obtains (i.e. goes to) Viṣṇu's world, and is free from all sins.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

Putradā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. What would be (i.e. is) the name of the Ekādaśī (falling) in the bright half of Śrāvaṇa? O Madhusūdana, please favour me and tell it to me.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-9. O king, listen attentively to this great sin-removing account, by hearing which the fruit would be that of a Vājapeya. At the beginning of Dvāpara age formerly in the city of Māhiṣmatī a king named Mahījit ruled over his kingdom. The kingdom did not give happiness to him who was sonless. A sonless man does not have happiness in this world or in the next. He passed a long time in the thought of (i.e. expecting) a son. But the king did not have son giving all happiness to men. Noticing himself to be advanced in age the king became anxious. Then being in the assembly among his subjects he said these words: "O people, in this (my) life I have not committed a sin. I have not put into my treasury money that is unjustly earned. I have never taken away a brāhmaṇa's wealth, nor the wealth of a deity. I have never taken away another's deposit, which (act) causes great sin; I have looked after the people like my own sons, and I have conquered the land righteously. I have inflicted punishment on the wicked, even though they were like my brother or son. The eminent persons were always honoured by me and I have not hated people.

10-17. O best brāhmaṇas, think over as to why a son is not born in the house of me who am thus talking about a righteous path.

Hearing these words the brāhmaṇas along with the subjects and the family-priest held consultation and went to a dense forest. Here and there they saw hermitages resorted to by sages. Desiring the well-being of the king, they saw the best sage Lomaśa who was guileless, who was (all) alone practising a severe penance, who was ancient, who did not eat food, who had con-

quered his soul, and who had controlled his anger, who knew the truth about righteousness, who was proficient in all sacred texts, who had (lived) a long life, who was magnanimous, who had hair, and who resembled Brahmā. As each kalpa passed, one of his hair withered. Therefore, this great sage who was omniscient, was named Lomaśa. Seeing him all were glad and came near him. They saluted him according to decorum, as he deserved and as laid down (in the sacred texts). Bowing with modesty, they said to one another: "Due to our good fortune only we have come across this best sage." Seeing them bowing like that, the best sage said:

Lomaśa said:

18-19. Why have you come here? Tell it to me with the reason. Why were you delighted on seeing me and why are you praising me? I shall certainly do what would be beneficial to you. There is no doubt that the existence of (people) like me is for obliging others.

The people said:

20-25. Listen. We shall tell the reason of our arrival. We have come to you to get our doubt removed. There is none greater than Brahmā except you. Therefore, for some work we have approached you. This king Mahījit by name is at present sonless. O brāhmaṇa, we are his subjects, looked after by him like his own sons. Seeing him sonless, and distressed by his grief, we have, entertaining a firm thought, come here to practise penance. O sage, give instruction as to how the king would have a son.

Hearing these words of them, he remained in meditation for some time. Knowing his former birth, the sage replied:

Lomaśa said:

26-30. In the previous existence he was a poor vaiśya, and doing evil deeds and engaged in trade he roamed from village to village. On the tenth day in the bright half of Jyeṣṭha, when the Sun had reached the centre of the sky (he saw) a pond on the border of a village. Seeing the well (pond?) containing water

he decided to drink water. At once there came a cow with her calf. Being oppressed by thirst and by heat, she drank water. Preventing her who was drinking water, he himself drank it. Due to that sinful act the king became sonless. Due to the religious merit of some (former) existence he obtained the kingdom free from nuisance.

The people said:

31. It is heard in (i.e. learnt from) the Purāṇa that sin perishes due to religious merit. Advise about the religious merit due to which the sin would perish, and by your grace the king would have a son.

Lomaśa said:

32-44. O men, observe the Ekādaśī which (falls in) the bright half of Śrāvaṇa, is called Putradā, and gives desired objects.

Hearing this, and saluting the sage, they went (back) to the city and observed that vow duly, justly and by keeping awake. The people gave its very pure religious merit to the king. When the religious merit was given, the queen had conception. When the time of delivery arrived, she gave birth to a bright son. A pavitraka (a ring) was fashioned in honour of Vāsudeva on the twelfth day of the bright half of Śrāvaṇa when the Sun was in Cancer. (The pavitraka was fashioned with) gold, silver, copper, silken threads or silken cloth and lotuses, kuśa, kāśa, or with cotton cut by a brāhmaṇa woman. Having bathed he should purify the thread of three strands. On the previous day, at the time separated by the times of milking the cow, preliminary consecration (should be done). Having saluted the brāhmaṇas and the feet of the preceptor, he should keep awake with the auspicious sounds of songs. Brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, bhillas, so also śūdras,—all following their own practices, should devoutly fashion the pavitraka. Then he should duly give it to his preceptor. He should also honour the brāhmaṇas—Viṣṇu's devotees —with sandal and flowers. A brāhmaṇa should offer it to Viṣṇu with the hymn: *Ato devā*. A śūdra should do so with the root-hymns to Śiva as to Viṣṇu. Every year men should fashion

pavitrakas. So also those who desire pleasures and salvation in the mundane existence which is an ocean of grief. He who does not fashion the pavitraka according to the rule, has his worship —i.e. the worship of Viṣṇu's devotee– (rendered) fruitless. Hearing the importance of this (vow) a man is free from sins. Having obtained in this world the pleasure from his son, he would go to heaven after death.

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

Ajā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O Janārdana, I desire to hear what would be (i.e. is) the name of the Ekādaśī falling in the dark half of Bhādrapada. (Please) tell it.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-11. O king, listen attentively. I shall tell (you) in detail. This Ekādaśī is called Ajā and it destroys all sins. The sins of him who on this day observes this vow after worshipping Viṣṇu, perish; (so also they perish) even by listening to the vow. O king, there is nothing greater than this, beneficial for both the worlds. I have told you the truth. My words are not false. Formerly there was a king known as Hariścandra. He was an emperor, true to his word, and the lord of the whole earth. Due to the acquisition of (the fruit of) some act he was deprived of his kingdom. He sold his wife and son and also himself. The righteous king became the slave of a cāṇḍāla. O lord of kings resorting to truth he removed the garments of the dead; (but) that best king never swerved from truth. In this way the king passed many years. Then the king, full of anxiety, became very much distressed. "What should I do? Where should I go? How shall I escape (this)?" When he who was plunged into the ocean of sin, was thinking like this, a certain sage knowing that the king was distressed came (there). Brahmā has created brāh-

maṇas to oblige others. The best king, seeing the excellent sage, bowed (to him).

12-23. Joining the palms of his hands, he stood before Gautama. He told (him) his account accompanied by (i.e. full of) grief. Hearing the king's words, Gautama was amazed. The sage instructed the king in this vow. The sage instructed the king (in the observance of) the vow. "O king, the very auspicious Ekādaśī falling in the dark half of Bhādrapada called Ajā and giving great merit has come. O king, observe its vow. Your sin will come to an end. Due to your good fortune it will fall on the seventh day (from today). Engaging yourself in a fast; keep awake at night. When thus this vow is observed, your sin will certainly perish. O best king, due to the efficacy of your religious merit, I have come (here)." Telling like this, the sage disappeared. Hearing the sage's words, the king observed the excellent vow. When the vow was observed, the king's sin perished in a moment. O best king, listen to the efficacy of this vow. There would be the end of the misery which (otherwise) would be had for many years. Due to the efficacy of the vow the king overcame his misery. He was united with his wife and lived with his son. Drums sounded in the sky and shower of flowers fell from the sky. By the efficacy of the Ekādaśī he got the kingdom free from (any) nuisance. Along with (the residents of) his city and his paraphernalia, Hariścandra obtained heaven. O king, those men who observe the vow of this kind, get free from all sins and go to heaven. By reciting (about this) vow or even by listening to (a man) would obtain the fruit of a horse-sacrifice.

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

Padmā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. What would be (i.e. is) the name of the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Bhādrapada? O Keśava, tell about its deity and manner (in which it is observed).

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2. O king, I shall tell you the wonderful account which Brahmā narrated to the magnanimous Nārada.

Nārada said:

3. O Brahman, salutation to you. Tell me of what name would be the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Bhādrapada? I desire to hear this for propitiating Viṣṇu.

Brahmā said:

4-13. O best sage, you are Viṣṇu's devotee. You have indeed asked well. In this world there is nothing superior to this day of Viṣṇu. This Ekādaśī in the bright half of Bhādrapada is known as Padmā. On it Viṣṇu is worshipped. (This) excellent vow should be observed. I shall tell you an auspicious old account by just hearing which (even) a great sin perishes. A royal sage, Māndhātṛ by name, born in the family of Vivasvat, was a valorous emperor who was true to his word. He righteously looked after his subjects like his own sons. In his kingdom there was no famine. There were no agonies or diseases. His subjects were healthy and prospered with wealth and grains. The wealth in the treasury of the king was earned justly. All castes and stages of life abided by their duties. In the kingdom of that king the land resembled the desire-yielding cow. When he was ruling like this, many groups of years passed. And one year there was indeed the maturity of his acts. The cloud(s) did not shower (water) in his country for three years. By that his subjects, oppressed by hunger, were frustrated. They were without Svāhā (i.e. offerings to gods), Svadhā (i.e. oblations to dead ancestors), Vaṣaṭkāra (i.e. oblations to deities) and Vedic study. Due to his misfortune, his country was troubled by (ill) luck. Then the subjects gathered and said these words to the king:

The subjects said:

14-16. O best king, listen to the words of your subjects. In the Purāṇa(s) the wise have called *āpa* (water) *nārā* (water). That is the lord's abode. Therefore, he is called *Nārāyaṇa*. Viṣṇu, the lord in the form of rain, is present everywhere. He

alone causes rain, from rain comes up food and from that subjects (spring up). O best king, without it the subjects perish. O king, do that by which security of possession would take place.

The king said:

17-26. You have told the truth. You have told no lie. Since food is called Brahman, everything is placed in food. Beings spring up from food. The world exists due to food. This is heard in (i.e. from) the very extensive Purāṇa (literature). Due to the bad behaviour of the kings the subjects would be oppressed. (Even) thinking with my intellect I do not see anything like this done by me. Yet with a desire for the well-being of the subjects I shall strive. The king having innumerable attendants thought like this, (and) saluting the Creator went into a dense forest. He went to principal sages and to hermitages resorted to by ascetics. Then the king saw the sage Aṅgiras, Brahmā's son, who had brightened the quarters with his lustre and who was, as it were, another Brahmā. Seeing him, the delighted king got down from his vehicle, and the restrained one, with the palms of his hands joined, saluted his feet. Having greeted him with blessings (like 'May it be well with you'), he asked about the well-being of the king in the seven constituents (of the kingdom). The king told it and asked him about his health. He who was offered a seat and had received a respectful offering, sat near him. The king, asked by the sage about the reason of his arrival, replied:

The king said:

27-28. O revered one, when I was righteously looking after the earth, there was a drought. I do not see the reason for this. I have come to you to get my doubt removed. Give delight to my subjects by (securing) their welfare.

The sage said:

29-31. O king, this is the Kṛta age, best among the ages. In this (age) people are devoted to Brahman, and Dharma has four feet. In this age (only) brāhmaṇas practice penance, not other people. O king, in your country a cāṇḍāla is practising penance.

For this reason the cloud does not shower. Make an effort to kill him, by which (your) sin will come to an end.

The king said:

32. I shall not kill that innocent one practising penance. Instruct me in righteousness which will destroy the trouble.

The sage said:

33-41. If this is so, then, O king, observe the Ekādaśī-vow. In the bright half of Bhādrapada (falls the Ekādaśī) well-known as Padmā. By its power there will certainly be good rainfall. This one gives all prosperity and destroys all calamities. O king, observe its vow along with your subjects and attendants.

Having heard these words of the sage, the king came home. In the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada he along with all his subjects and the four castes observed the vow of Padmā. O king, when thus the vow was observed, the cloud showered. Land was inundated with water and was resplendent with corn. By the power of the best sage people got happiness. For this reason this excellent vow should be thus observed. On this (day) a man should give a pitcher full of water along with curd and rice and well covered, so also an umbrella and (a pair of) sandals to a brāhmaṇa. (He should pray:) "Salutations to you, O wise Govinda, called Śravaṇa. Destroying the streams of (my) sins, give me all pleasures. Give pleasures and salvation and happiness to people." By reciting or listening to (this account a man) is free from all sins.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Indirā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. (Please) favour me and tell me, O Viṣṇu, as to what would be (i.e. is) the name of the Ekādaśī in the dark half of Āśvina.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-10a. The name (of the Ekādaśī falling) in the dark half of Āśvina is Indirā. By its power (even) a great sin perishes. It gives a (good) cause to the dead ancestors that have gone to (i.e. born in) a low stock. O king, listen attentively to the sin-removing great story. By hearing it a man would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya sacrifice. Formerly, O king, in Kṛtayuga there was a prince named Indrasena. He was the lord of Māhiṣmatī. That king, endowed with glory, righteously looked after (his kingdom). He possessed sons and grandsons and had wealth and grains. The king, the lord of Māhiṣmatī, was solely devoted to Viṣṇu. The king repeating internally Viṣṇu's names giving salvation, duly passed his time and meditated upon the Supreme Spirit. When the king, one day, was comfortably seated in his assembly, there came down from the sky the sage Nārada. Seeing him to have arrived, he, getting up with the palms of his hands folded, duly honoured him and seated him on a seat. The best king said to the sage seated comfortably:

The king said:

10b-11. O best sage, by your grace everything of me is prosperous. By seeing you all my sacrifices and rites have become fruitful. O divine sage, favour me and tell me the reason of your arrival.

Nārada said:

12-18. O best king, listen to my wonderful words. O best king, from Brahmā's world I had gone to the world of Yama. Devoutly honoured by Yama, I sat on an excellent seat. The religious, truthful son of the Sun (i.e. Yama) waited upon me.

In the assembly of the deity of Śrāddhas (i.e. of Yama), I saw your father, doer of many righteous acts, there as a result of a fault in a vow. He has told (i.e. given) a message (for you). Listen to it, O lord of people. "A king known as Indrasena is the lord of Māhiṣmatī. Tell him, O brāhmaṇa, that I am staying with Yama due to some hindrance, due to my former existence. O son, giving me the religious merit of the Indirā(-vow) send me to heaven." Thus addressed, I have come to you, O king. O king, for (the attainment of) heaven by your father, observe the Indirā(-vow). By the power of that vow your father will go to heaven.

The king said:

19. O revered one, favour me and tell me about the Indirā-vow. In what manner is it to be done? In which fortnight, and on which date?

Nārada said:

20-31a. O lord of kings, listen. I (shall) tell you the manner of this auspicious vow (i.e. in which way it is to be observed). On the auspicious tenth day in the dark half of the month of Āśvina, a man, with a devout mind, should bathe in the morning. Then, bathing in the mid-day he should be composed; and with faith he should perform the Śrāddha to gratify his manes. Then eating once only, he should sleep on the ground at night. When on the Ekādaśī day the bright morning has dawned, he should wash his face without cleaning his teeth; and should devoutly take up the vow of fasting. "Remaining without food and without all pleasures to-day, I shall eat tomorrow, O lotus-eyed one. O Viṣṇu, be my refuge." Having imposed such a restriction (upon him) he should at mid-day duly bath the tip of the Śālagrāma stone. Having worshipped Viṣṇu with incense, sandal etc., he should at night keep awake in the vicinity of Viṣṇu. Then, when the morning of the twelfth day comes, he should after worshipping Viṣṇu duly perform the Śrāddha. Endowed with faith, he should perform the Śrāddha to gratify his manes. That Śrāddha which is offered with the flour of wheat would be done (in a) pure (way). So also would be the Śrāddha offered with barley, rice, sesamum-seeds, beans,

wheat and grams. O king, having honoured brāhmaṇas with gifts, he should worship them. (Then) controlled in speech, he himself should eat with his kinsmen, daughter's son and sons etc. O king, being careful observe the vow in this manner. O king, your dead ancestors will go to Viṣṇu's world.

31b-36. Speaking thus to the king, the sage disappeared, O king. The king, along with (the inmates of) his harem, and with sons and servants, observed the excellent vow in accordance with the manner told (by the sage). O son of Kuntī, when the vow was observed, a shower of flowers fell from the sky. His father, mounted on Garuḍa, went to Viṣṇu's abode. The royal sage Indrasena too, having ruled his kingdom free from nuisance and having installed his son on the throne, himself went to heaven. I have told you the importance of the Indirā-vow. A man, on reciting or listening to it is free from all sins. After enjoying all pleasures here (i.e. in this world) he would live for a long time in Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

Pāpāṅkuśā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O Madhusūdana, be pleased and tell as to what would be (i.e. is) the name of the Ekādaśī falling in the bright half of Āśvina.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-10. O lord of kings, listen. I shall tell you about the importance of the Ekādaśī which would fall in the bright half of Āśvina—the importance which destroys sins. The great (Ekādaśī) is known as Pāpāṅkuśā and removes all sins. On that day a man should worship me named Padmanābha. That fruit which a man with his senses well-controlled for a long time gets, and which leads to the acquisition of all desired objects, and which

gives men heaven and salvation, is obtained by saluting the eagle-bannered god (Viṣṇu). A man, full of delusions, having committed many sins, does not go to hell after having saluted Viṣṇu, the remover of all sins. All those sacred places and holy abodes that are there on the earth, all of them are reached (by a man) by means of reciting Viṣṇu's appellations. Those men who have submitted themselves to god Śārṅgadhara Viṣṇu, never suffer from the torments of the world of Yama. A man, after having accidentally fasted on an Ekādaśī day, does not suffer from the torments of Yama even after having committed a fearful sin. A man who being a devotee of Viṣṇu, censures Śiva, does not go to Viṣṇu's world. He certainly goes to hell. A Pāśupata who being a devotee of Śiva, censures Viṣṇu, is roasted in Raurava (hell) till the (periods of the) fourteen Indras are over.

11-22. Like the vow of Viṣṇu which destroys sins, there is no other (vow) in the three worlds that purifies (men). O king, as long as a living being would not fast on the auspicious day of Viṣṇu, sins would remain in his body. Thousands of horse sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices do not equal to the sixteenth portion of the Ekādaśī-fast. There is no (other) vow like the Ekādaśī-vow. Even those who observe it under some pretext, do not go to Yama. This (vow) gives heaven and salvation. It gives good health of the body. This gives a wife sons; this gives wealth and friends. O king, Gaṅgā, or Gayā, or Kāśī, or Puṣkara, or Kurukṣetra is not more auspicious than the day sacred to Viṣṇu. O king, having fasted at night and fasted on the day sacred to Viṣṇu the position of Viṣṇu is obtained without trouble. A man would emancipate ten members on his mother's side, ten on his father's side, and ten on his wife's side, O lord of kings. Men (observing this) have four arms, divine forms, have banners of (Garuḍa) the enemy of serpents, and white garments, and go to Viṣṇu's abode. A man having fasted on an Ekādaśī (day) in his childhood, youth, or old age does not face a calamity, O best king. A man observing a fast on the Pāpāṅkuśā (Ekādaśī) in the bright half of Āśvina is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's world. A man having given gold, sesamum-seeds, land, a cow, food and water, so also

(a pair of sandals), an umbrella (to a brāhmaṇa) does not see Yama.

23-28. He whose days come and go without meritorious acts, does not, though breathing, live, like the bellows of a blacksmith. O best king, even a poor man should make his day fruitful by always, and according to his capacity, doing acts like a bath and (giving) gifts. The doers of meritorious acts like a sacrifice, a bath, muttering (of hymns etc.), meditation, sacrificial sessions do not see (i.e. suffer from) the torments of Yama. Persons doing such meritorious acts are seen to be living a long life, possessing wealth, born in a noble family and free from diseases. What is the use of talking much in this matter. People go to (i.e. suffer from) calamities by means of unrighteousness. By means of righteous acts they go up to heaven. No doubt should be raised in this case. O sinless king, I have thus told you about the importance of Pāpāṅkuśā, about which you had asked me. What else do you want to hear?

CHAPTER SIXTY

Ramā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O Janārdana, through favour and love for me, tell me what would be (i.e. is) the name of the Ekādaśī falling in the dark half of Kārtika.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-12a. O lord of kings, listen. I shall tell you. In the dark half of Kārtika falls the very auspicious Ekādaśī. It is called Ramā. It is great and removes great sins. O king, as the occasion has come, I shall tell you its importance. O king, formerly there was a king, Mucukunda by name. He had formed friendship with (Indra) the lord of gods. He also was fully friendly with Yama, Varuṇa, Kubera, and Bibhīṣaṇa, O king. That king was

a great devotee of Viṣṇu and was true to his word. When he was ruling over his kingdom from which troublesome persons were removed, a daughter Candrabhāgā, (resembling) the excellent river (Candrabhāgā) was (born) in his house. She was given (in marriage) to Śobhana, the son of Candrasena. Once he came to his father-in-law's house, O king. The very meritorious day of the Ekādaśī-vow (also) came. When the day of the vow came, Candrabhāgā thought: 'O lord of gods, what will happen? My husband is very weak. He is not able to put up with hunger, and my father's rule is strict.' When the tenth day comes, his drum is beaten: 'Do not eat, do not eat on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu.' Hearing the sound of the drum, Śobhana said to his wife: "O dear one, what should I do? Advise me, O beautiful one."

Candrabhāgā said:

12b-15a. O lord, today nobody in my father's house is to eat (anything). On the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu elephants, horses, (their) young ones, so also other beasts are not to eat grass or (drink) water. Then, O dear one, how would human beings eat on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu? O dear one, if you eat (anything today) then you will be censured. Thinking like this to yourself, make your mind strong.

Śobhana said:

15b-23. O dear one, these words are true. I shall fast (today). Whatever is laid down by destiny will just take place in the same way.

Thus resolving, he observed the vow. With his body oppressed with hunger, he became extremely distressed. While he was thinking like this, the sun went to the western mountain. That night enhanced the joy of Viṣṇu's devotees engaged in worshipping Viṣṇu, and with their minds attached to keeping awake. (But) it became very painful to Śobhana. At the time of sunrise, Śobhana expired. The king got him cremated with (pieces of) wood fit for a king. Candrabhāgā did not abandon her body with her husband. Having performed his funeral rites, she remained in her father's house. (And) O greatest king, due to

the power of the Ramā-vow, Śobhana reached the divine charming city on the peak of the Mandara mountain, which (city) was excellent with innumerable qualities. It was adorned with large houses with golden pillars, and gems and lapis lazuli, and with beautiful crystals of different shapes.

24-28. Being praised by gandharvas, and waited upon by celestial nymphs, Śobhana mounted upon the throne. He had very white umbrella (held over his head) and chowries (were waved). He had (put on) a crown and ear-rings. He was adorned with necklaces and bracelets. There Śobhana shone like a great king of kings. In the city of Mucukunda there was (a brāhmaṇa) known as Somaśarman. The brāhmaṇa, wandering for pilgrimage, saw him. Recognising him to be the king's son-in-law he approached him. Śobhana too, knowing that Somaśarman had come, quickly got up from his seat and saluted the best brāhmaṇa. He asked him about the well-being of his father-in-law, the king, and about his wife Candrabhāgā, and about the city.

Somaśarman said:

29-31a. O king, there is well-being in your father's house. Candrabhāgā is all right and in the city everywhere there is well-being. O king, tell me your own account. It is a great wonder. Such a wonderful and beautiful city has not been seen by anyone. O king, tell me this: How did you obtain this?

Śobhana said:

31b-32. In the dark half of Kārtika falls the Ekādaśī called Ramā. Having fasted on that day, I have secured this unstable city. O best brāhmaṇa, do that by which it will be stable.

The brāhmaṇa said:

33. O lord of kings, how (i.e. why) is it unstable? How will it be stable? Tell me the truth. Then I shall do it, not otherwise.

Śhobana said:

34-35. O brāhmaṇa, I observed this best vow without faith. Therefore, I think, it is unstable. Listen (by which) it will be

stable. The very beautiful Candrabhāgā is Mucukunda's daughter. Tell her this account. (Then) it will be stable.

Kṛṣṇa said:

36. Hearing his words, he went to the city of Mucukunda; (and) the brāhmaṇa narrated the entire account to Candrabhāgā.

Somaśarman said:

37. O auspicious one, I actually saw your beloved husband. I (also) saw his unconquerable city resembling (that of) Indra. He described it to be unstable. Do that by which it will be stable.

Candrabhāgā said:

38-45. O brāhmaṇa-sage, take me, desiring to see my husband, there. By means of the merit of my vow I shall make the city stable. O brāhmaṇa, do that by which we two shall be united. Great religious merit is obtained by bringing together the separated ones.

Hearing this, Somaśarman went with her to Vāmadeva's hermitage near the Mandara mountain. Vāmadeva listened to the full account told by them. He sprinkled (water over) the bright Candrabhāgā with Vedic hymns. By the power of the hymn recited by the sage, and due to observing the vow on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu her body became divine and she obtained a divine condition. With her eyes dilated due to great joy she approached her husband. Seeing his wife to have come, Śobhana was very much delighted. Calling her he made her sit on his left side. Then Candrabhāgā said (these) dear words to her husband: "O dear one, listen to the beneficial words: I have religious merit. When I crossed the eighth year (while living) in my father's house.

46-54. I have since then, observed the Ekādaśī vow in the manner as it was told and with my mind full of faith. By the power of that (religious merit) the city will be stable. It will be rich in all desired objects till the final deluge." O best king, in this way she, enjoying divine pleasures, of a divine form, and adorned with divine ornaments, rejoiced with her husband.

Śobhana, of a divine body, also rejoiced with her on the peak of Mandara mountain by the power of the Ramā-vow. This vow is like the desire-yielding gem or like the desire-yielding cow. O king, I have told you about the (Ekādaśī) called Ramā. O sinless one, you have heard its full importance. I have told you the sin-destroying importance of the vows of the Ekādaśīs of both the fortnights. As is the (one of the) dark (fortnight), so is the (one of the) bright fortnight. No discrimination should be done between the two. Ekādaśī, when observed, gives pleasures and salvation to men. As a white cow is like a black one—as their milk is similar, similarly the two Ekādaśīs are said to give a similar fruit. A man who listens to the importance of the Ekādaśī-vows is freed from all sins and is honoured in Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Prabodhinī Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O Kṛṣṇa, I have duly heard from you the importance of Ramā (Ekādaśī). O you who respect (others, now) tell me about the Ekādaśī falling in the bright half of Kārtika.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2. O king, I shall tell you about (the Ekādaśī) falling in the bright half of Kārtika, as it was told by Brahmā, the creator of the worlds, to Nārada.

Nārada said:

3. Tell me in detail the importance of the Prabodhinī (Ekādaśī) on which Viṣṇu, the propounder of righteousness, keeps awake.

Brahmā said:

4-11. O best sage, listen to the greatness of Prabodhinī which destroys sins, which increases religious merit, and which

gives salvation to men of good minds. Till the Prabodhinī of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu (falling) in Kārtika does not arrive, all the holy places including the oceans and the lakes roar. O best brāhmaṇa, Gaṅgā-Bhāgīrathī roars on the earth till the Ekādaśī awakening Viṣṇu (and falling) in Kārtika and destroying sins has not come. A man would obtain even through one fast on the Prabodhinī (day) (that which is obtained by means of) thousands of horse-sacrifices, and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices. The Haribodhinī (i.e. Prabodhinī Ekādaśī) gives, O son, even that which is difficult to obtain, which is difficult to reach, and which is not within the range of the three worlds, even though it is not asked for. The Haribodhinī, when fasted on, gives people splendour, wealth, intellect, kingdom, happiness and riches. This (Ekādaśī) that destroys sins, burns even when it is fasted on once the sins that are declared and have the size of Meru and Mandara. Keeping awake at night on this (Ekādaśī) burns like a heap of cotton the sin committed in thousands of former existences.

12-20. O best sage, he who, according to his nature, duly observes a fast on Prabodhinī, gets the fruit as declared (in sacred texts). O best among the excellent sages, a man who duly does the good act as enjoined, gets the fruit (as large) as Meru. He who without the proper manner does a good act as much (i.e. as big) as Meru, obtains its fruit just of the measure of an atom, O Nārada. The dead ancestors of those who will devoutly observe (the vow of) Prabodhinī, are delighted and live in Viṣṇu's world. A man, even after having committed a terrible sin like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, is freed from the hellish misery and goes to the highest place of Viṣṇu (on observing the Prabodhinī-vow). Having kept awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, the sins of a man are washed. O brāhmaṇa, that fruit difficult to obtain by means of the sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice, is easily obtained by means of keeping awake on Prabodhinī. A man obtains that fruit by keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, which he would get by bathing in all holy places and by giving gold or land. He who has observed the Prabodhinī in Kārtika, is alone born fortunate and has himself only purified his family. Though death is certain for men, wealth and body are uncertain.

21-25. Realising this, O best sage, the day of (i.e. sacred to)

Viṣṇu should be observed (as a fast-day). All the holy places that are there in the three worlds, are (present) in the house of the one who properly observes the (fast on) the Prabodhinī. What is the use of many (other) acts of religious merit for him who has observed (a fast on) the Prabodhinī (Ekādaśī)? This Haribodhinī (falling) in Kārtika gives sons and grandsons. He (alone) is wise, is a meditating saint, an ascetic, and has controlled his senses (who fasts on Prabodhinī). He (who) fasts on Haribodhinī, gets pleasures and salvation. This one, helping the essence of righteousness, is very dear to Viṣṇu. A man who devoutly observes (this vow) would enjoy pleasures. By fasting on Prabodhinī a man does not enter a womb (i.e. he is not reborn).

26-33. Therefore, giving up all other meritorious acts, a man should observe (this vow). All the sin committed through deeds, mind and speech is washed by Viṣṇu on a man's keeping awake on Prabodhinī. All that a man does like a bath, (giving) a gift, muttering (hymns), worship in honour of Viṣṇu on Prabodhinī is inexhaustible. Those men who devoutly worship god Viṣṇu on that day and observe a fast on that day, are free from sins incurred during hundreds of existences. O son, this is a great vow which destroys a stream of great sins. A man should duly fast on the day of Viṣṇu's being awake and should please Viṣṇu with this vow. Illuminating all quarters he goes to Viṣṇu's abode. Men desiring brilliance and wealth should carefully observe this. Viṣṇu worshipped on this day, washes men's sin which is accumulated (by them) in their childhood, in their youth, and in their old age, so also the sin committed during hundreds of existences, even if it is small or great. This one brings wealth and grains, is auspicious, is great and removes all sins.

34-41a. By fasting on it through devotion for Viṣṇu, there would be nothing difficult to obtain. The fruit which is obtained (on bathing) at the lunar or the solar eclipse, is said to be thousandfold by keeping awake on the Prabodhinī. All that—bath, (giving) gifts, muttering (hymns), sacrifice, self-study, Viṣṇu's worship, done on Prabodhinī becomes crorefold. All the religious merit that would be earned by a man from his birth, becomes fruitless if the vow in Kārtika is not observed. O Nārada, a man who would spend Kārtika without observing the vow of Viṣṇu, does not obtain the fruit of the religious

merit earned during his existence. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, with all efforts he should serve Viṣṇu, the god of gods. It gives all desired objects. A man devoted to Viṣṇu, should avoid others' food in Kārtika. By avoiding others' food, he would obtain the fruit of the Cāndrāyaṇa-vow. A man who would spend every day of Kārtika in (pursuing) sacred texts would burn all (his) sins, and would obtain the fruit of a myriad sacrifices.

41b-48a. Viṣṇu is not so much pleased with sacrifices, gifts, and Vājapeya etc. as he is pleased with the narration of stories from the sacred texts in Kārtika. Those who narrate Viṣṇu's account or listen to (his) auspicious accounts, or to half a verse or a quarter of a verse in Kārtika obtain the fruit of (having given) a hundred cows. Giving up all other righteous acts, sacred texts should be discussed and grasped in Kārtika before (the image of) Viṣṇu, O great sage. O best sage, he who, with (a desire for) the highest good and any (other) desire, narrates (or listens to) Viṣṇu's accounts in Kārtika, would emancipate a hundred (members) of his family. A man who regularly listens to Viṣṇu's account, especially in Kārtika, obtains the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O sage, he who listens to Viṣṇu's account on the day of his awakening (i.e. on the Prabodhinī Ekādaśī) obtains that fruit (which is obtained) by giving (the earth) with the seven islands. O best sage, eternal world (of gods) is said to be reached by them who, after hearing the divine account of Viṣṇu, honour according to their own capacity the knower (i.e. the reader) of the account.

48b-54. O Nārada, that man who would pass Kārtika in singing and in pursuing sacred texts, is not seen by me to be reborn. O sage, the man, a meritorious soul, who does (i.e. engages himself in) singing, dancing, (playing on) musical instruments, and (listens to) the auspicious account of Viṣṇu, remains above the three worlds. With many flowers, with many fruits and camphor, agaru and saffron, Viṣṇu's worship should be done on the Prabodhinī day in Kārtika, from which immeasurable religious merit is obtained, O best sage. At the time of keeping awake on the Prabodhinī (night) respectful offering with various kinds of fruits should be made after taking water in a conch. A crore-fold of fruit which (is obtained by bathing)

at all holy places, that fruit which (is had) by means of all gifts, is got by giving a respectful offering on the Prabodhinī day. After that the preceptor should be honoured with a meal, a covering etc., so also with gifts in order to please the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), O divine sage.

55-68. A man who listens to Bhāgavata, and a man who would listen to a Purāṇa, would obtain for every letter (of the text) the fruit due to the gift of a tawny cow. O best sage, for him who observes, according to his capacity, the vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu, as has been laid down, salvation is certainly secured. Madhusūdana, the eagle-bannered god, worshipped with one ketakī-leaf, becomes very much pleased for a thousand years. The fire of hell is put out by seeing him who would worship Viṣṇu with agasti-leaves, O divine sage. Viṣṇu, the greatest person, when worshipped with mango-leaves in Kārtika, gives desired objects, as at the lunar or the solar eclipse. He who, leaving all (other) flowers, devoutly worships Viṣṇu with mango-blossoms, would obtain the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. O child, all the sin of those, (even) of a myriad existences, who offer Tulasī-leaves and flowers to Viṣṇu in Kārtika, would burn. Tulasī is auspicious if it is always seen, touched, meditated upon, described, praised, planted, sprinkled and worshipped. O sage, those who everyday are devoted to Tulasī in (these) nine ways, produce religious merit lasting for thousands of crores of yugas. O sage, as long as Tulasī planted by men on the earth grows with branches, twigs, seeds, flowers and leaves, (the persons) that are born or will be born in their families, live in Viṣṇu's house for (many) thousand years till universal deluge. That fruit which exists in all flowers and leaves, is obtained by (offering) a Tulasī-leaf (to Viṣṇu) in Kārtika. Seeing that Kārtika has arrived, great Viṣṇu should be regularly worshipped with tender Tulasī-leaves. The religious merit obtained by the performance of hundreds of sacrifices and giving many gifts is obtained by worshipping Viṣṇu with Tulasī-leaves in Kārtika.

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

Kamalā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-4. O revered one, I desire to listen to the best of the vows (in honour) of Viṣṇu, which removes all sins and gives (its) fruit to those who observe it. O Janārdana, tell me the account of Viṣṇu's month; what is the manner in which it is observed? What is its fruit? Which deity is worshipped during it? O Janārdana, tell me about the vow that is observed when the intercalary month arrives. What is the fruit of what gift? What should be done by men, O lord? In what a bath (should be taken)? What (hymns) should be muttered? What is said to be the manner of the worship? Which best food should be eaten in this Puruṣottama-month?

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

5-18. Through love for you, I shall, O best king, narrate the sin-destroying greatness of the Puruṣottama-month. That Ekādaśī day which would come when the intercalary month has arrived, is called Kamalā, and is the best of days. By the power of that vow Lakṣmī would be favourable. One who observes (this) vow, should get up in the early part of the day, and having remembered Viṣṇu, he should duly bathe and should observe the vow. Muttering (of his names) in the house has one-fold effect, while that of doing it in a river has double that effect. (The effect) is more than a thousand-fold (if the muttering is done) in a cow-pen; and is a hundred-fold (if it is done) at auspicious, holy places and in the proximity of deities. (The effect) is a lakh(-fold if the muttering) is done near Tulasī and is infinite (if it is done) near (the image of) Viṣṇu. In Avantī there was an excellent brāhmaṇa, Śivaśarman (by name). He had five sons. The youngest one was hurtful. Then (i.e. so) he was abandoned by his father and forsaken by kinsmen and relatives. Due to the power of his bad deeds he went to a very distant forest. Once fortunately he went to the best holy place. Emaciated with hunger, having a melancholy face, he bathed in Triveṇī. Oppressed by hunger, there he looked for sages' hermi-

tages. In the Puruṣottama month and the gathering of people, there he saw the excellent hermitage of the sage Harimitra. From the mouth of the brāhmaṇas, telling a sin-destroying tale, he devoutly listened to the account of Kamalā in the hermitage. The Ekādaśī is most auspicious, and gives pleasures and salvation. Having duly heard about this Kamalā day—that the Ekādaśī is most auspicious and gives pleasures and salvation, Jayaśarman at that time observed the vow with them in the lonely temple. When it was night, Lakṣmī came there. (She said:) "O brāhmaṇa, due to the power of Kamalā I (shall) grant you a boon."

Jayaśarman said:

19-20. O beautiful one, who are you? To whom do you belong? How are you pleased with me? Are you Indrāṇī (the wife) of the lord of gods, or Bhavānī (the wife) of Śaṅkara? Or (are you) a female gandharva, a female kinnara or the spouse of either the Moon or the Sun? O you of a beautiful face, I have neither seen nor heard about the like of you.

Lakṣmī said:

21-24a. Now I am pleased. Being urged by the god of gods due to the efficacy of (the vow of) Kamalā, I have come from Vaikuṇṭha. At Prayāga, near the sages, you have observed the vow of that (Ekādaśī) which would fall in the bright half of the Puruṣottama month. O best brāhmaṇa, there is no doubt that by the power of this vow in your family will be born (those) men (who) will, through my favour, obtain (good position). I have told the truth.

The brāhmaṇa said:

24b-25a. O Lakṣmī, if you are pleased, then explain the vow in detail, which those brāhmaṇas that are good introduce in tales.

Lakṣmī said:

25b-30a. This is the best (account) for the listeners to listen. It is the most holy. It is auspicious and removes bad dreams.

Therefore, it should be carefully heard. The best man who reads devotedly a verse or half a verse, is instantly freed from crores of great sins. As Garuḍa is among the birds, this is the best among months. This Dvādaśī day is among the days as the Gaṅgā is among the rivers. Even now all the gods desiring to be born in Bhārata, duly worship that Nārāyaṇa Anāmaya. The groups of deities like Brahmā always worship those who devoutly worship the lord, god Viṣṇu.

30b-43. Those who are engrossed in (muttering Viṣṇu's) names, so also those who are engaged in the narration (of the virtues of Viṣṇu), so also those who are intent upon worshipping Viṣṇu are fortunate in the Kali age. There would be the couple of Ekādaśīs: (the one) in the bright half, (the other) in the dark half. The householders should observe (a fast on) the former, and for the ascetics the latter is prescribed. (The three days—) Ekādaśī, Dvādaśī and Trayodaśī partly in the night (after Dvādaśī, are auspicious). If the fast is broken on Trayodaśī, the religious merit is that of a hundred sacrifices. "O Puṇḍarīka, fasting on the Ekādaśī day, I shall eat on the next day. O Acyuta, be my refuge." Uttering this hymn of (i.e. sacred to) the god of gods, the Disc-holder, he, with his mind pleased, should devoutly observe a fast. The restrained observer of the vow should keep awake in front of the deity with songs, musical instruments, dances and Purāṇa-recitals. Then the observer of the vow, having got up (early) in the morning, having bathed and with his senses controlled should duly worship Viṣṇu. By bathing (the image of) Viṣṇu with pañcāmṛta[1] on Ekādaśī, and with water on Dvādaśī, a man gets assimilation into Viṣṇu. O Keśava, favour me, and be (well-)disposed through this vow to me who am blinded by the darkness of ignorance, and give me the sight of knowledge. Having thus prayed to the lord of the god of gods, the Mace-holder, he should devoutly feed brāhmaṇas and give them gifts. Then, controlled in speech and solely devoted to Viṣṇu, he should offer the five great sacrifices[2] and eat along with his relatives. He who, being controlled,

1. Pañcāmṛta: A collection of five sweet things, viz., milk, sugar, ghī, curd and honey used in worshipping a deity.

2. Mahāyajña: See Manu. 69.71. They are: the sacrifices offered to Brahma, deities, manes, human beings and beings.

observes in this way the auspicious Ekādaśī-vow goes to Viṣṇu's abode, return from which is difficult.

Speaking thus, and granting him a boon, Lakṣmī disappeared. The brāhmaṇa too, being rich came to his father's house.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

O king, he who would in this way observe the excellent vow of the Kamalā (Ekādaśī), and would listen to (Viṣṇu's account) on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu is freed from all sins.

CHAPTER SIXTYTHREE

Kāmadā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-9. O lord of the world, I have heard about vows having many virtues. But, O Janārdana, I have heard nothing like the Ekādaśī(-vow). Again tell about the Ekādaśī(-vow) which destroys sins and gives religious merit and observing which a man would obtain the highest position in the world.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

O lord of the world, whether the Ekādaśī would be in the bright or the dark fortnight, it is not to be omitted, as it (gives) salvation and enhances happiness. O king, in the Kali-age, Ekādaśī frees a man from the bonds of the mundane existence, gives all desired objects, and destroys all sins on the earth. O best king, the Ekādaśī (falling) on a Sunday or a Tuesday or on the day of the passage of the Sun or a Planet through a Zodiacal sign should always be fasted on. It increases (the number of) sons and grandsons. Those to whom Viṣṇu is dear, should never give up the Ekadāśī-vow. It always gives a (long) life, fame, progeny and health. The Ekādaśī-vow always gives salvation, (handsome) form, kingdom. O king, those men who, endowed with great faith, observe it in the manner as is laid down, are of the form of Viṣṇu. O king, undoubtedly they are seen to be liberated while living.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

O Kṛṣṇa, how is it that those who are seen to be of the form of sin (i.e. who are sinners), are liberated while living, and are of the nature of Viṣṇu? I have a great curiosity.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

10-22. O king, how are they who in the Kali-age observe devoutly and according to the acts as are laid down in the sacred texts, the excellent Ekādaśī-vow without (drinking) water, not of the form of Viṣṇu or not liberated while living? There is no other auspicious vow like that of Ekādaśī which removes all sins and gives all desired objects to men. Having eaten once only on the Daśamī day, and observed the vow without drinking water on the Nandā (Ekādaśī day) and having broken the fast on the Bhadrā (day), men become similar to Viṣṇu. A faithful man who observes the auspicious vow of the Kāmadā (Ekādaśī) obtains his desired (objects) in this and in the next world. This (vow) is pure, purifying, and destroys great sins. O best king, this one gives pleasures and salvation to those who observe it. A man should duly worship Viṣṇu on Kāmadā with flowers, incense etc., so also with offerings of food. A devotee of Viṣṇu, who observes the vow, should avoid these ten (articles) on Daśamī: bell-metal, flesh, beans, grams, kodrava, vegetables, honey, food offered by others, eating food and sexual union. On the Ekādaśī day he should avoid gambling, sport, sleep, tāmbūla, brushing his teeth, censuring others, wickedness, harming (others) and sex, (so also he should avoid) anger, false words on the Ekādaśī day. On the Dvādaśī day he should avoid bell-metal, flesh, beans, oil, false speech, exertion, journey, food and sexual union, (mounting upon) a bull's back, others' food, and vegetables. O king, those who have observed the Kāmadā (Ekādaśī) in this manner, and having after keeping awake at night, worshipped Viṣṇu, are freed from all sins and go to the best position. O king, by reciting (about) or listening to this vow (a man) would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows.

CHAPTER SIXTYFOUR

The Importance of Cāturmāsya

Nārada said:

1-2. O great god, I desire to hear about the restraints to be observed during the four months that are well-known on the earth. (Please) tell them. O lord, tell me what should be done during the four months (from the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Āṣāḍha to the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Kārtika) when Viṣṇu, Janārdana has gone to sleep? (Tell me) the fruit (obtained) on giving up the six flavours and keeping (i.e. not cutting) hair and nails, and (the fruit obtained) through other restraints.

Sūta said:

3-7. Hearing these words, the god with his eyes dilated, laughed, and said to Nārada, the best brāhmaṇa and treasure of penance:

Mahādeva said:

Now, O divine sage, listen. I am telling in detail. A man should observe a fast on the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Āṣāḍha. He should devoutly observe the Cāturmāsya-vows. When Viṣṇu is asleep, the wan should lie on the bare ground and should pass the four months till Kārtikī (Ekādaśī) would come. No installation (of an image) or rites like sacrifices take place. So also marriages, thread ceremonies, other auspicious ceremonies, royal journeys and processions do not take place (in Cāturmāsya).

8-15. Listen to the fruit of the vow of him (i.e. that he gets) who would observe vows (and practise) rites when the Garuḍa-bannered, Acyuta, Jagannātha is asleep. A man would obtain that fruit by observing the vows in Cāturmāsya which he would obtain by means of thousands of horse-sacrifices. He should make Viṣṇu sleep when the Sun is in Gemini; and should awaken Viṣṇu, when the Sun is in Libra. When the intercalary month comes, the order of the rite is like this: He should install Viṣṇu's image holding a conch, a disc, and a mace. O

Nārada, he should place the auspicious (image) wearing a yellow garment on a bed covered with a white (piece of) cloth and a pillow. And the Viṣṇu devotee, knowing (accounts in) history and Purāṇas, should bathe it with curd, milk, honey, fried grains and ghee. O brāhmaṇa, he should smear it with auspicious sandal, incense and lovely flowers, and should worship it with white flowers with (the accompaniment of) this sacred prayer: "O Jagannātha, when you are asleep, this world would be asleep. When you are awake, the world with the mobile and the immobile would be awake."

16-29. Thus (i.e. with this prayer), O Nārada, having installed that image of Viṣṇu, he should, in front of it, take up the vow: The person (taking up the vow) may be a male or a female devotee of him, according to the division between righteousness and unrighteousness. For four months, till the awakening of the god, he should take up these restraints preceded by brushing the teeth. Then he should observe a fast. When it is the bright morning, he, having conquered his self, should do his daily acts. I shall separately tell the fruits of the doers of the acts: A man, by avoiding jaggery, would secure sweetness. A man would obtain a long(-lived) progeny by avoiding oil. O brāhmaṇa, a man becomes handsome-bodied by avoiding ghee. He would secure his enemy's destruction by avoiding bitter oil. He would secure matchless good fortune by avoiding fragrant oil. He who avoids enjoying flowers, would be a vidyādhara in heaven. A man who practises abstract meditation, would obtain Brahmā's position. He who would avoid the six flavours, viz. acrid, sour, sweet, saline, pungent, and astringent, would avoid deformity and a bad smell. By avoiding tāmbūla he becomes an enjoyer and has his throat red. By avoiding ghee he (secures) handsomeness and his body would always be glossy. O best brāhmaṇa, by giving up fruits he gets many sons. By eating from a palāśa-leaf he would be handsome and would get pleasures. One who illuminates would become bright and actually the lord of wealth. He who avoids curd and milk, obtains Goloka.[1] The order of him who observes the vow of silence, is never futile.

1. Goloka: 'Cow-world', a part of heaven, or (in later mythology) Kṛṣṇa's heaven.

By avoiding a dish of barley or rice boiled in milk he secures Indra's seat. He, abiding in religious practices and taking delight in them, would, after muttering the hundred-fold fruitful (prayer) 'Salutation to Nārāyaṇa', be the only lord of vidyādharas in heaven.

30-41. He who always enjoys the fruit of a bath in Gaṅgā by merely bathing at Puṣkara would be the lord of the earth. O wise one, he who would anoint and bathe Viṣṇu in his house would live for a kalpa in Vaikuṇṭha. There is no doubt about this. That man who goes round (the image) keeping it to his right, goes with (i.e. in) a divine aeroplane to which swans are yoked. He who sings and plays upon musical instruments would go to the world of gandharvas. O wise one, one who eats the five products of a cow, would obtain the fruit of the Cāndrāyaṇa(-vow). He who would amuse people every day with recitations from sacred texts, gets the form of Vyāsa before Viṣṇu, and then would obtain Viṣṇu's position. By worshipping (him with) the Tulasī-leaf he would go to Viṣṇu's city. Having done sprinkling, he would obtain the divine place of the celestial nymphs. By bathing with cold water in his house he would obtain a spotless, body. By avoiding a bath with hot water he would get the fruit of a bath at Puṣkara. A man who eats from leaves would obtain the fruit (of a bath) at Kurukṣetra. He who everyday sleeps on a slab of stone gets the merit due to (a bath at) Prayāga. By avoiding (drinking) water for three days he is not overcome by diseases. He who eats from copper vessels would obtain the fruit of (a bath at) Naimiṣa. Avoiding bell-metal he should use the remaining vessels. If no (other) vessels are available, he should use an earthen pot or vessels made by him of palāśa leaves or taken from others. The wise man who for one year keeps the sacred fire and the wise one who eats from the vessels—both these are said to be equal.

42-49. The eating from the vessels made of lotus-leaves is said to be equal to the Cāndrāyaṇa-vow. O brāhmaṇa, each of the meals taken from the lotus-leaves is said to to equal to (the vow of) three nights. The fruit which is said (to accrue) from the Ekādaśī-fast is (the same as) the fruit of giving everything. He would get the fruit of (visiting) all holy places. He would not see hell on eating from lotus-leaves. A brāhmaṇa goes to

Vaikuṇṭha. The others would obtain heaven. This great divine tree is sin-destroying and gives all desired objects. O best king, a śūdra should avoid the (use of) the middle leaf. If he eats from that he would get (i.e. live in) hell for a period of fourteen Indras. He should avoid the middle leaf and eat from others. O brāhmaṇa, that śūdra who eats his meal from the middle leaf, would be purified by giving a tawny cow to a brāhmaṇa, not otherwise. A śūdra who would get a cow milked in his house, and would drink (that milk), would be born as an insect in the feces (and remain like that) for ten thousand years. And being freed from the insect-stock, he would get the beast-stock (i.e. will be born as a beast).

50-63. That man (belonging to the) śūdra (caste), who would drive a tawny bull, is, O Nārada, roasted in the Kumbhīpāka (hell) for as many years as are the hair (on his body). There is no doubt about it. If especially the śūdra has a shegoat in his house, he, drinking her milk goes to Raurava (hell). That śūdra who deals with a brāhmaṇa, is said to be belonging to a noble family, and the brāhmaṇa would be cast out (of the fold of) the Vedas. A brāhmaṇa who, prompted to doing trade, obeys a śūdra, becomes the resident of hell for as many years as he walks the steps. If a brāhmaṇa is sent by a śūdra for getting water to his house, he would go to hell by drinking that water which is like liquor. A śūdra should always give gifts to a brāhmaṇa. He should especially be devoted to him (i.e. a brāhmaṇa). Enjoying pleasures here, he goes to the next world. This (world) fashioned with the five elements is said to be useless. Therefore, he should give (gifts) to his preceptor. By that he would obtain inexhaustible fruit. O best brāhmaṇa, in this fearful Kali-age, full of sinful conduct, the wicked ones censure men of meritorious deeds. Due to censure (of others) a man becomes unhappy till the universal deluge. O wise one, there are many practices in the Kali-age. The religious practice giving merit, fulfilling desires and giving salvation is rare. A man who sleeps on the bare ground on the earth, is not troubled by diseases for ten thousand years. The man endowed with many sons and wealth, becomes free from leprosy. A man who eats (only) at night, would obtain the fruit of a pilgrimage. Without asking he gets the fruit of constructing wells and tanks. So also he who,

averse to taking (someone's) life, would avoid treachery. It is told in the Vedas that non-violence is a great virtue.

64-80. I have heard that everywhere giving gifts, kindness and restraint (are great virtues). Therefore, even by the great these should be done with a great effort. He who gives his body, sons and grandsons to his preceptor, would by the efficacy of the gift, become dear to Viṣṇu. He who is initiated by a śūdra, and the śūdra who initiates him—both are said to be sinners till the universal deluge. That most sinful śūdra who would advise harm, drops twentyone (members of) his family into hell. O brāhmaṇa, in the Kali-age many śūdras who are heretics are seen. Even for conversing with them hell is (visited by a man). By merely seeing the śūdras who are engaged in (getting) sacred knowledge and who mutter the Gāyatrī (hymn), (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa comes (to him who sees them). The brāhmaṇas having (marks of) conches and discs and accepted in the Vaiṣṇava sects, and always engaged in duties enjoined by the Vedas, purify (even) the respectable brāhmaṇas. This should always be done in the Cāturmāsya. What is the use of telling others things again and again, O brāhmaṇa? Those men who are Viṣṇu's devotees are blessed on the earth. Their family is most blessed, and their caste is said to be most blessed. The sin of him who would eat honey when Viṣṇu is asleep, would be great. Listen to what happens on avoiding it. He would obtain that fruit which he would get by all various sacrifices. He should avoid pomegranates, citrons and coconuts. Becoming a deity and moving in an aeroplane, he would go to Viṣṇu's position. The fortunate one, being rich, is born in an affluent family. That man who would pass the four months by eating once only, is honoured in Viṣṇu's world for as many thousand years as the muhūrtas after the sun have passed. That man who would avoid rice, barley and wheat (in the Cāturmāsya), would get that fruit which is declared by the sages to be the fruit of a horse-sacrifice duly performed with gifts. He possesses wealth and grains and has many sons. The fruit of offering with Tulasī(-leaves), sesamum-seeds and darbhas, is especially crore-fold in Cāturmāsya, when he would do it with the three articles (like Tulasī-leaves) when Viṣṇu is asleep.

81-94. They too rejoice near Viṣṇu for crores of yugas. Those who sing a line or half a line, half a ṛk or ṛks in front of Viṣṇu, are undoubtedly released. He who avoids sexual union when god (Viṣṇu is asleep, i.e. during the Cāturmāsya) is honoured in Viṣṇu's world for the period of a Manu. By avoiding curd, milk, so also butter milk, jaggery and vegetables, a man gets release. There is no doubt about it. O sage, those men who, day after day, bathe (with water mixed) with āmalaka, obtain great religious merit, (for) the wise say that the dhātrī (i.e. āmalaka)-fruit destroys sins. (Dhātrī) was formerly created by Brahmā for the emancipation of the three worlds. He who practises sandhyā and silence for the four months, rejoices in Vaikuṇṭha for the periods of four Manus. A man who cooks for himself and eats the food (cooked by himself) for four months is honoured in Indra's world for ten thousand years. A man should resort to silence during the four months of the rainy season. He would go to Viṣṇu's world, and after that to Brahmā's (world). A man who observes silence while eating, never perishes. The demons observing silence while eating, went to heaven. A man would be impure (due to) food with (i.e containing) worms and insects. Such food should be known as equal to cow-flesh, O best brāhmaṇa. That food should be known to be impure. If a man eats that, that is said to be the food which is always dear to the demons. Formerly Brahmā was pleased. That magnanimous one gave it. (Men) having eaten silently, have undoubtedly gone to heaven. If a man eats food while talking, then by that it would become impure. He just eats sin. Therefore, he should observe silence. O Nārada, eating silently should be known to be like (observing) a fast.

95-110. There is no doubt that the five (great) sins of him who, the best man, eats after giving the five oblations to the five breaths[1], are destroyed. O brāhmaṇa, a garment that has joints should be worn at the time of a rite (in honour of) the manes. That garment remaining on an impure body would be impure. A man who, with a garment put around his waist on his back, passes excrement or urinates, or has sexual union, should avoid that garment (while doing holy rites). O brāhmaṇa, the rite

1. Prāṇāhuti: Oblations offered to the five vital breaths, viz. Prāṅa, Apāna, Vyāna, Udāna and Samāna.

especially in honour of the manes should be avoided (when such a garment is put on). O sage, at all times the worship of god (Viṣṇu), the disc-holder, should especially be done by those who have controlled their senses. When Viṣṇu is asleep, grassy vegetables and safflower (should be avoided). So also garments having joints should be carefully avoided. He who avoids these in Cāturmāsya, when Viṣṇu is asleep, would not go to hell till the universal deluge. One should not (drink) liquor, should not eat flesh of a rabbit or a pig. That man also, on being engaged in harmlessness, when, especially in Cāturmāsya, god Viṣṇu is asleep, obtains godhead. O best brāhmaṇa, he who has given up uselessly getting angry or harsh, so also sexual union on the parvan days, would obtain the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. On celibacy (being observed) the progeny grows, so also life. He should avoid flowers, leaves, fruits, a couch, rubbing his body with unctuous substances and anointing (it), so also (taking) milk for no reason, flesh and liquor. Whatever is given up in Cāturmāsya when Viṣṇu is asleep, should first be given to a brāhmaṇa. There is no doubt about this. That wealth which is given to a brāhmaṇa, is, O wise one, inexhaustible. O brāhmaṇa, thereby he gets crorefold merit. There is no doubt about this. O best brāhmaṇa, with whatever vow Viṣṇu is worshipped, he gives Viṣṇu's abode. No doubt should be raised in this matter. He who, in the Cāturmāsya when Viṣṇu is asleep, does not have a vow, goes to hell, (and) his life has passed in vain. That man who everyday observes the excellent vow as told by a brāhmaṇa, so also the restraints that have been told, goes to the highest position. The gift given without the three things (viz. Tulasī, sesamum-seeds and darbhas) becomes useless.

111-112. Therefore, the best man, should according to his capacity and with all efforts please with vows and gifts Viṣṇu, the god of gods. All that gift (that is given) and that honouring of the brāhmaṇas done without bathing are useless till the regimes of fourteen Indras last.

Nārada said:

113. O lord, O master of the universe, tell me what kind of celibacy is that, having practised which human beings would pleased Viṣṇu.

Mahādeva said:

114-121. He who is devoted to his wife is said to be a celibate by the wise. O wise one, he who would forsake his wife, is inferior to a cāṇḍāla. Approaching the wife during her menses is said to be celibacy. The man who abandons his devoted, faultless wife, is a sinner in the world, and would obtain the (sin of) causing an abortion. Thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Vājapeya sacrifices are not equal even to a sixteenth part of the Ekādaśī-fast. All (such things as) bathing, (giving) gifts, muttering (hymns), sacrifices, self-study and worship of deities done in the Cāturmāsya are inexhaustible. He who listens to the Purāṇa one time or two times, gets free from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's world. O best brāhmaṇa, he who, when Viṣṇu is asleep, recites or mutters his name, gets a crorefold fruit of it. A brāhmaṇa devoted to Viṣṇu, who worships (Viṣṇu), he alone, the soul of the entire religion, is worthy of respect. There is no doubt. On hearing this auspicious, pure, sin-destroying (account of) Cāturmāsya, a man obtains religious merit, and would obtain the fruit of a bath in Gaṅgā.

CHAPTER SIXTYFIVE

Cāturmāsya Vow to be Concluded Properly

Nārada said:

1. O lord, tell me about bringing to the conclusion the vows in the Cāturmāsya. (For) when the vows are (properly) concluded, everything certainly becomes complete.

Mahādeva said:

2-20. If, O magnanimous one, he who observes a vow, does not bring it to the (proper) conclusion, then he would not get the proper fruit. He, having had a deficiency in the vow becomes a leper or blind. For this reason, (a man) should bring the vow to (proper) conclusion. Having accepted these vows and

observed them duly, he should go to a brāhmaṇa after Viṣṇu who had slept, gets up. He should, duly and in detail, apologise to the god of gods. If he had avoided (the use of) oil during the Cāturmāsya, he should give ghee (to a brāhmaṇa); and if he had avoided (using) ghee (during the Cāturmāsya) he should offer milk (to a brāhmaṇa). After observing silence he should give sesamum-seeds to a brāhmaṇa. If (he had avoided) meal (in the Cāturmāsya) he should offer a meal rich in curd and rice to a brāhmaṇa. He should especially give food along with gold. O best sage, by giving food (to a brāhmaṇa) he is honoured in the world of Viṣṇu. The man who eats from the pot (i.e. plate) made from palāśa(-leaves) for the four months, should give (to a brāhmaṇa) a pot full of ghee, O brāhmaṇa. When he has eaten only at night (during the four months), he should give a meal with the six flavours to a brāhmaṇa. He should give a bull with gold to a brāhmaṇa who does not ask for it. He who had abandoned beans should give (a brāhmaṇa) a cow with her calf, O best sage. On having bathed (with water mixed) with dhātrī, he should give gold of the weight of a māṣa. If he had observed the vow of (not eating) fruits, he should give fruits. For the vow of (not eating) grains, he should give grains. Or rice is said (to be given). Similarly for (his vow of) sleeping on the ground, he should give a cotton-bed with a pillow. O best brāhmaṇa, he who had observed celibacy during the Cāturmāsya, should devoutly give food to a brāhmaṇa couple with objects of pleasure, dakṣiṇā, with vegetables and salt. If a man has bathed every day without (having applied) oil (to his body), he should give ghee and barley. If he had observed the vow of (growing) his nails and hair, he should give a place. If he had avoided (the use of) sandals, he should give sandals. On having avoided flesh, a cow with a calf is said to be given. He who has offered a lamp every day, should offer a golden lamp. And he should give that lamp with ghee to a brāhmaṇa. For the vow of (avoiding) vegetables, and for that of (avoiding) beans, he should (respectively) give vegetables and gold weighing a māṣa to a brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu's devotee, if he desires fulfilment of his vow. For the vow of (avoiding) sexual unions he should give silver to a brāhmaṇa; and for that of nāgavallī (i.e. a tāmbūla), (he should give) camphor along with gold. O best brāhmaṇa, that which is from

time to time done for the vow should especially be given with a desire to go to heaven to a brāhmaṇa. Having first bathed, he should observe the vows before Viṣṇu. The god, holding a conch, a disc and a mace is without a beginning and an end. Who do not observe (a vow) before him, since Viṣṇu destroys sins?

CHAPTER SIXTYSIX

Propitiation of Yama

Nārada said:

1-4. O best god, for my well-being, tell me about the propitiation of Yama. O god, how (i.e. by doing what) a man does not go to hell? It is heard that in Yama's world there is the river Vaitaraṇī. She is unapproachable, boundless, difficult to be crossed, and contains much blood. How can she, difficult to be crossed by all beings, be easily crossed? O lord, this is just the great fear about Yama's world? O revered one, having favoured me, tell me the entire act to be free from that (fear).

Mahādeva said:

5-6. O brāhmaṇa, formerly I had bathed in the salty ocean at Dvārāvatī. O brāhmaṇa, I (there) saw a sage named Mudgala who came there. He was blazing like the sun. His body was shining with penance. Having saluted me, the sage Mudgala, being amazed, said:

Mudgala said:

7-21. O god, suddenly I fainted and fell on the ground. My limbs are burning. I am seized by Yama's servants. I, this soul of the size of the thumb, was dragged forcibly, was bound tightly by Yama's soldiers and taken near Yama. In a moment I saw in the assembly Yama of tawny eyes, of a dark face, very fierce, and possessing hundreds of fatal diseases, and waited upon in person by (the three humours in the human body viz.) wind, bile, phlegm—the (three) deficiencies—so also by

diseases like fever parching up the body, by boils and cuts etc. (He was also served by) crushing of the body with burning (sensation), head-ache, by fistula in the anus, (all) destroying the strength; by inflammation of the glands of the neck, eye-diseases, strangury, fever and sores. (He was also waited upon) by (diseases like) swooning, throat-disease, heat-disease, by goblins and thieves. Thus he was (served) by many that were fierce, terrible and of various forms. (He was served) by fiends, demons having skulls and heads in their hands in the battle as well as in hell, who were fierce and who were seated and who stood before him. (He was waited upon) by superintendents of religious affairs, so also by scribes like Citragupta, by tigers, lions and pigs, so also by serpents with locks of hair on their hoods and very difficult to catch. (He was waited upon by) scorpions, fanged beings, insects like bugs, wolves and dogs like (i.e. in the form of) spotted leprosy, herons, vultures and jackals. (So also he was waited upon) by thieves, poor beings, plagues, by female and male imps with their hair loose, and by asthmas with knitted eye-brows and crooked faces. They were of a mighty valour, were not timid, and punished the sinners. Yama, being waited upon by his attendants, shone in the assembly, as the Vyālāñjana mountain shines with fearful wild animals. Then Yama, the lord of all, said to his servants: "How have you, being confused about the name, brought this sage insted of Bhīmaka's son named Mudgala, (living) in the village of Kauṇḍinya? The life of that kṣatriya has come to an end. He should be brought. Free this one." Hearing this they went from him and again came (back to him). All those servants of Yama again said to Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). "We who had gone there, did not see a man whose life had come to an end. O Sun's son, we, with our minds somehow confused, do not know (what to do)."

Yama said:

22-23. Generally those men who have observed the auspicious Dvādaśī and are told about the Vaitaraṇā river, are invisible to you, (my) servants. So also they who die at Ujjayinī, Prayāga, or in Yamunā, or who have offered sesamum-seeds, an elephant or gold, or cows, and (have performed) daily rites.

The messengers (i.e. the servants) said:

24-26. O brāhmaṇa, tell us fully what kind of vow it is. O god, what should be done in that vow which would please you? O best man, how is he who has observed the Dvādaśī(-vow) of the dark half and observed a fast, freed from a sin? Tell (us), in what manner the vow is to be observed. O treasure of pity, be pleased, show compassion, and tell (about it).

Śrī Mudgala said:

27. Hearing the words of the messengers, he spoke sweetly: "O messengers, I (shall) tell (you) as I have observed and seen (it)."

Yama said:

28-43. On these foremost (Dvādaśīs) falling in the dark half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, the Vaitaraṇī-vow should be duly observed, O messengers. Till the year ends, this should be certainly duly observed. Having done it, O messengers, (a man) is undoubtedly freed. The vow of a fast, pleasing Viṣṇu, should be observed. 'O great god of gods, today will be my fast.' He should, on the Dvādaśī day, devoutly worship Viṣṇu; and should pray to him, 'All that (sin) of mine, committed due to the defect of my indolent senses should be pardoned by favouring me.' Having made such a restraint, he should go to a holy place in the mid-day. Taking with him clay, cowdung, sesamum-seeds, he should duly go there. For the fulfilment of the vow he should bathe there. He should bath particularly with (the accompaniment of) the hymn *Aśvakrānte*. 'O earth, you who are trampled by horses and chariots and by Viṣṇu, remove my sin accumulated by me formerly.' When she removes the sin, he is freed from all sins. The sesamum-seeds, of the form of Viṣṇu, have sprung up in Kāśī. By means of the bath with sesamum, Viṣṇu removes all sins. 'O goddess, you are born from Viṣṇu's body. You remove great sins. You remove all sins of all. Salutation to you.' All the meritorious ones have said that bath, with the utterance of Viṣṇu's names, and by holding Tulasī-leaf, should be duly taken. Having bathed like this, and having come out, and having put on good garments, he should gratify his manes, and then worship Viṣṇu. Then he should put a jar which

is scratchless, which contains leaves, which has five gems in it, and which is perfumed with divine fragrances, which is full of water, which contains coins, and which is accompanied by a copper-vessel. O king, a man should offer a great worship to god Viṣṇu, god of gods, treasure of penance residing in it, with the full rite. He should also get fashioned an auspicious circle with clay, cowdung, etc. Or he should get it fashioned with white, washed rice, and powders of stone. He should (also) get fashioned (an image of) Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) having limbs like hands etc.

44-54. Then having placed before it, (the representation of) the reddish river Vaitaraṇī, he should separately but duly worship it with invocation. 'I am invoking Yama, lord of gods and of a universal form. O noble Viṣṇu, come here and give your proximity. O lord, Lakṣmī's dear husband, this is water for washing your feet. You who always are engaged in going out into the universe, show me favour.' (He should touch) the feet (of the image saying) 'Salutation to Bhutidā'. (He should touch) the knees (saying 'Salutation) to Aśoka.' (He should touch) the thighs (saying) 'Salutation to Śiva.' (He should touch) the waist (saying) 'O Viśvamūrti, salutation (to you).' (He should touch) the penis (saying) 'Salutation to Kandarpa.' (He should) in the same way (touch) the testicle (saying) 'Salutation to Āditya.' (He should touch) the belly (saying) 'Salutation to Dāmodara.' (He should touch) the breasts (saying) 'Salutation to Vāsudeva.' (He should touch) the face (saying) 'Salutation to Śrīdhara.' (He should touch) the hair (saying) 'Salutation to Keśava.' (He should touch) the back (saying) 'Salutation to Śārṅgadhara'. (He should touch) the feet (saying) 'Salutation to Varada'. (He should touch) the head, (uttering) his own name (and saying) 'Salutation to you, the soul of all, and having in your hands a conch, a disc, a sword, a mace and an axe.' Thus it is told. 'Salutation to you, Matsya, Kūrma, and Varāha, Narasiṁha and Vāmana, (Paraśu-)rāma, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and Kalki. For the destruction of the streams of all sins, I am worshipping you. My repeated salutations to you.' Having by all means meditated upon Viṣṇu with these hymns, he should worship him. 'O Dharmarāja, I salute you. Salutation to you, O Dharmarāja. Salutation to you, O lord of the Southern

direction, O you, whose vehicle is a buffalo. O Citragupta, salutation to you. Salutation to Vicitra (i.e. the lovely one) for the cessation of suffering in hell. Give me my desired objects.'

55-77. He should always salute Yama, Dharmarāja, Mṛtyu, Antaka, Vaivasvata, Kāla, and Sarvabhūtakṣaya (destroyer of all beings). (He should always salute) Vṛkodara, Citra, Vicitra, Citragupta, Nīla, and Dadhna. Thus with these twelve names the lord Dharmarāṭ should be worshipped. 'O Vaitaraṇī, very difficult to be crossed, sin-destroyer, granting all desired objects, come here, O noble one. Accept the respectful offering made by me.' The well-known river Vaitaraṇī (flows) by the fierce gates of Yama. Beings going beyond birth, death and old age (bathe) in her for emancipation. She is difficult to cross for the sinners and removes the fears of all beings. In her, beings suffering from great pangs bathe through fear. 'O Jayādevī, desiring to cross that fierce one, I repeatedly salute you.' That is the Vaitaraṇī river in which the gods live. She too is devoutly worshipped for pleasing Viṣṇu. She, to whose bank sages and men come, and who removes sins, is also worshipped in the form of a river. I shall give you (a vow) to cross her in order to be free from all sins. For religious merit I shall tell you (about) the river Vaitaraṇā. 'You are devoutly worshipped by me and also for pleasing Viṣṇu. O Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Jagannātha, emancipate me from the mundane existence. Merely by means of my uttering your name, remove all my sin. I have made a great sacred thread with nine strands. Accept it, O lord of gods, and being pleased, grant my desired (objects). This is the very charming tāmbūla for you, prepared according to my capacity. O lord of gods, accept it (and) emancipate me from the ocean of the worldly existence. This is the lamp with five wicks (offered to you) for being waved before you. O you the sun (removing) the darkness of illusion, be attached (to us) and remove (our) misery. I have offered you with devotion good food, well cooked food having all the (six) flavours. O lord, accept it. By means of the hymn of twelve letters (viz, *Om namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya*), and the muttering done according to the number, may the lord of Śrī be pleased with me, and grant me my desired (object). When the great ocean was churned, five cows sprang up. Repeated salutations to the cow Nandā which is among them.' Having duly worshipped the cow, and being com-

posed, one should offer the respectful offering. 'O Nandinī, O you granter of all desires, O you goddess, removing all destructive (elements), always give me good health and a long (line of) progeny. O Kapilā, worshipped by the intelligent Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra, remove my sin accumulated in former (existences). May golden-horned milch-cows, like Surabhi, and those born from her, always remain, like rivers and oceans, in front of me, behind me. May they stand by me in heaven, O goddess, full of all gods, very auspicious, and loving your devotees.' Having thus worshipped he should offer the daily rite to the cow. 'May the daughters of Surabhi, pure, sin-destroying and beneficial to all, may the mothers of the three worlds accept the food offered by me. Salutation to Gaṅgadā, the auspicious one, for the destruction of all sins.'

78-85. With this hymn only the wise one should hold the mace. (Saying) 'Paṁ, salutation to Padmanābha', the very intelligent one should have the lotus. (He should say) 'Caṁ, salutation to the Cakrarūpin Viṣṇu'. Its having said to be due to the disc. 'Śaṁ, salutation to him of the form of the conch. Salutation to you, who bring about happiness.' O messengers, the having (the mark of) the conch said to be done with this hymn. The putting on (of the marks) of the four weapons is declared by the sages. This having the marks burnt (on the skin with red-hot iron on the body) for a brāhmaṇa is as obligatory as the maintenance of the sacred fire and the study of the Vedas. The brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas should especially have (the marks made) by fragrant sandal or gopīcandana. By having (the marks) even a cāṇḍāla would be purified. Even if a cāṇḍāla, one who would have the vertical, soft, pleasing (sectarian) mark, would be purified, and is always respected by brāhmaṇas. When, in a house of cāṇḍālas a Tulasī (-plant) is seen, the Tulasī from there should be taken with a devoted heart.

CHAPTER SIXTYSEVEN

The Importance of Gopikācandana

Maheśvara said:

1-13. That best brāhmaṇa, having heard like this from the mouth of Yama told it to me and the independent sage went (his way). O best brāhmaṇa, that house where there is gopīkācandana is of the nature of a holy place. This has indeed been told by Viṣṇu. In the house of that brāhmaṇa where there is gopikācandana, grief and delusion do not stay. Nor is there any inauspicious (event). The ancestors of him (or them) are happy and his (or their) progeny grows in whose house gopikācandana is present day and night. The clay from Gopīpuṣkara is pure and purifies the body. By rubbing (one's body with it) physical and mental diseases that are there, perish. Therefore, it giving salvation and fulfilling desires is put on their bodies by men. The holy places and sacred places roar till that time, O brāhmaṇa, as long as gopikācandana is not seen or heard about. It should be meditated upon, it should be worshipped; it destroys dirt and sins. Merely with its touch a man becomes as pure as a god. It gives salvation and is highly purifying at the time of (one's) death. O best brāhmaṇa, what should I say? Gopīcandana gives salvation. A wise man should rub his body with the mixture of Tulaśī-wood of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, so also the clay at the root (of the tree) and gopikācandana and haricandana also. He who puts on a mark with the fluids (i.e. pastes) of gopikācandana has always visited all holy places in Jambū Dvīpa. Freed from all sins he goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu. He has also performed the Śrāddha after having gone to Gayā. So also the man who has put on (the mark with) gopīcandana, (even though) he is a drunkard, or has murdered a brāhmaṇa or a cow or a child, is freed that moment only due to having (the mark of) gopīcandana.

CHAPTER SIXTYEIGHT

The Greatness of Viṣṇu's Devotees

Maheśvara said:

1-9. O Nārada, listen, I shall tell (you) the characteristic(s) of the devotees of Viṣṇu, hearing which people are freed from such sins as the murder of a brāhmaṇa. O best sage, listen. Now I shall tell you of what kind their characteristics are and what their nature is. O best sage, listen. I shall describe to you a man of that kind. Since he belongs to Viṣṇu, he is called Vaiṣṇava. Of all the castes Vaiṣṇava is said to be the greatest. A Vaiṣṇava is (born) in the family of those whose food is excellent (i.e. who eat excellent food). O brāhmaṇa, by merely seeing them, in whom forgiveness, kindness, austerities and truth reside, sin perishes like cotton. He whose mind, free from doing harm, has settled upon Viṣṇu, (so also) he who would always put on (the marks of) a conch, a disc, a mace, a lotus, so also he who would put round his neck the rosary of Tulaśī-wood, and would always put on the marks of twelve kinds, so also he who knows (the difference between) righteousness and unrighteousness is called a Vaiṣṇava. He is always engaged in (reciting) the Vedas and sacred texts and always performs sacrifices. So also the family of them is blessed, and glory is said to belong to them who repeatedly celebrate the twentyfour festivals.

10-20. In the world those devotees of Viṣṇu in whose family only (i.e. at least) one devotee of Viṣṇu is born, are most blessed. He has repeatedly emancipated that family, O brāhmaṇa. All the stocks like the oviparous, sprouting, viviparous beings should be known as having conches, discs and maces. By merely seeing him the killer of a brāhmaṇa is always purified. But, O divine sage, I shall tell you that more blessed than those are the Vaiṣṇavas seen on the earth, O great sage. Those knowing the truth should look upon them as equal to Viṣṇu. I have heard that they are undoubtedly most blessed in the world in the Kali age. He who has worshipped Viṣṇu, has worshipped all. He who has honoured Viṣṇu's devotees has given a large gift. Those who give fruits, leaves, vegetables, food or garments to Viṣṇu's devotees, are always blessed on the earth. Those who

have worshipped Viṣṇu's devotee, have worshipped all. Those who have worshipped Viṣṇu, are said to be most blessed. Merely by seeing them a man is absolved of sins. O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of telling other things repeatedly? Therefore, seeing and touching them gives joy. As is Viṣṇu so is this devotee (of him). There is no difference between them. O child, realising this, a wise man should always honour (a devotee of Viṣṇu). There is no doubt that he who feeds but one brāhmaṇa devotee of Viṣṇu, has fed a thousand brāhmaṇas.

CHAPTER SIXTYNINE

The Vow of Śravaṇa Dvādaśī

Nārada said:

1. O best god, the able ones always have fasts. O sinless one, tell me about one Dvādaśī (only) which is auspicious.

Śiva said:

2-10. The Dvādaśī in the bright half of Bhādrapada, along with the Śravaṇa (lunar mansion) gives everything, is auspicious, and (if) a fast (is observed on that day), it gives great fruit. Having bathed at the confluence of river(s) and fasted on Dvādaśī, a man obtains the fruit of Dvādaśī(-vow) without any effort. That Dvādaśī which is connected with (the rise of) Mercury and Śravaṇa (lunar mansion) is very great. Everything that is done on that (day) becomes inexhaustible. O Nārada, a man having bathed at the confluence of rivers when Dvādaśī is conjoined with Śravaṇa, would obtain the fruit of the gift of a cow. A wise man having placed a pitcher full of water, should put upon it a vessel, having installed (the image of) Viṣṇu in it. Then before it the wise one should offer eatables cooked in ghee. He should also devoutly give, according to his capacity, nine pitchers full of water. Having thus worshipped Viṣṇu, he should keep awake there. (Then) having got up in the spotless morning, and having worshipped Viṣṇu with flowers, incense, offerings of

eatables, fruits and very beautiful garments, he should offer him a handful of flowers and recite this hymn: 'Repeated salutations to you, O Viṣṇu, conjoined with Mercury and Śravaṇa. Destroying the stream of our sins, give us all pleasures.'

11-19. He should duly give pure food to a brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, and especially to him who knows the Purāṇas. With his mind concentrated, the best man should accomplish all this in this manner on the bank of a river. In this case also they narrate an old account which took place in this great forest. O brāhmaṇa, listen to it. Hearing it a man is freed from great grief. There was a country named Daśāraka, and to its west, O wise one, there was the Maru country, fierce due to all (kinds of) beings. The land there had the sand very much heated. There were also great serpents. (The land there) was full of trees with scanty shadow, and crowded with dead animals. (It was crowded with trees) like śamī, khadira, palāśa, karīra, and pīlu. There were fearful groups of trees full of strong thorns. It was full of men whose vitality was exhausted (i.e. who were very weak). Such region was at places seen there. Yet all beings bounded by karma lived (there). O wise one, there was neither water nor were there clouds, the receptacles of water. O brāhmaṇa, (there) best birds were seen dead, along with their thirsty young ones remaining between their wings.

20-34. Into that country—Marujāṅgala—like that, a merchant missing his caravan through (ill,) luck, entered. With his mind confused and oppressed with hunger, thirst and exhaustion, he did not know as to where a village was, where water was, or where he (himself) stood. Then he saw evil spirits with their senses overcome with hunger and thirst. They were large, wicked, fierce; were fleshless (i.e. very weak) and they were fearful to look at. He saw one (of them) looking ugly and mounted upon the shoulders of an evil spirit and surrounded by many evil spirits. It was not moving, was very fierce, and was accompanied by the sounds of evil spirits. The evil spirit also, having seen the man who had come to that fierce forest, got down from the evil spirit's shoulder and approached him. Having saluted the best merchant, it said these words: "How did you enter this very fearful region?" To it the intelligent merchant said: "I who

missed my caravan, (un-)fortunately entered this forest due to my former deeds. Thirst oppresses me, so also hunger oppresses me very much. My end has come. My words are faltering. I now do not see any remedy by means of which I would live." When this was said by him, the evil spirit said these words to the merchant: "Wait for a while after resorting to a blossomed śamī. Then being offered a hospitable reception by me you will go at will." Thus addressed, the merchant, oppressed by thirst, did like that. When it was the mid-day the evil spirit came to that region of the blossomed tree and brought down a beautiful pitcher of water, full of cold water, along with curd and rice and he himself offered it to the guest. Then merely by eating it, he was very much satisfied. And in a moment he became free from thirst and torment. Then the evil spirits came there. He gave a portion from the curd and rice (to all) one by one. The evil spirits were highly satisfied with the curd and rice along with water.

35-42a. Having gratified the guest and all the evil spirits, he himself ate at will, whatever was left of (what they had) eaten. When he was eating the good food and water were exhausted. Then the merchant said these words to the chief of the evil spirits: "This strikes me as a great wonder in this forest. Wherefrom did you secure the excellent food and drink? So also, how did you satisfy with just little food so many of these who are fleshless (i.e. weak) and have their sides broken? How is it that you have made your abode in this very fierce forest? Remove this doubt of me. I have a great curiosity (to know it)." Thus addressed by the merchant, the evil spirit spoke these words: "O sinless one, in my former birth, like me who was devoted to trade, there was no other wicked man in the entire city. Due to greed for wealth, I never gave alms to any one then. Then there was a virtuous brāhmaṇa friend of mine.

42b-54. On the twelfth day of Bhādrapada, when the Śravaṇa (a Zodiacal sign) appeared, he some time went with me to the Tāpī river to bathe. Her confluence with Candrabhāgā was holy. Candrabhāgā is the Moon's daughter, and Tāpī is the Sun's daughter. With the brāhmaṇa I got into the lukewarm water of them. Men fasted on the occasion of the Śrāvaṇa-dvādaśī, and gave pitcher of water full of the good Candrabhāgā

water to Brāhmaṇas. I also gave Viṣṇu's image, with curd and rice, with lids, with an umbrella, a pair of sandals, and a garment to principal brāhmaṇas, O very intelligent one. Then for the preservation of my wealth, I, on her bank, and in (keeping with my) vow, gave, after fasting, a charming pitcher of water. Having done that, I came home, and after some time, I expired, and due to my heresy I was reduced to the state of an evil spirit in this terrible forest like the family of snakes. On the occasion of Śravaṇa-dvādaśī, I gave a pitcher of water. The same is received by me at mid-day every day. All other brāhmaṇas who were sinful, who had sexual union with other's wives, and who had plotted against their masters, became evil spirits. Here, in this Maru region, the men were born as goblins and evil spirits; and they have become my friends here. The eternal highest soul, revered Viṣṇu is imperishable. That which is offered with reverence to him is said to be inexhaustible. Though they are repeatedly satisfied with inexhaustible food, they do not at all give up their state of evil spirits and weakness.

55-61. I, after having honoured with food a guest (like) you who have come (here), have become free from the state of an evil spirit, and will obtain the highest position (viz. salvation). But these, abandoned by me, will experience terrible suffering due to their acts in this very fearful forest. O noble one, with a desire to favour me, take down the names and their lineage which are (given by me). There is an auspicious box in your upper garment. Then reaching the Himālaya mountain, you will then obtain a treasure there. O very intelligent one, then go to Gayāśīrṣa, and perform a śrāddha." Having thus instructed the merchant as he liked, he dismissed him. He (too) being eager went away. Having reached his house first, he (then) later went to the Himālaya mountain. Then taking the treasure seen there he came (to Gayāśīrṣa). Taking one-sixth portion of it he went to Gayāśīrṣa.

62-75. The very intelligent one went to Gayā, performed a śrāddha, (so also) a śrāddha offered to the evil spirits duly and as indicated. Taking (i.e. uttering) the names and (mentioning) the families, he offered a piṇḍa to everyone. He whose śrāddha the merchant would perform by day, showed him his body in his dream and said: "O noble one, O sinless one, by your

favour I have abandoned the state of an evil spirit, and have reached the highest condition." In this way the noble-minded one having duly performed (the śrāddhas) at Gayāśīrṣa, later went, repeatedly meditating upon Viṣṇu, to his own house. The very intelligent one, in the bright fortnight of Bhādrapada when it was the occasion of Śravaṇa-dvādaśī, with all necessary things went to the confluence of the rivers. Having bathed at the confluence of the rivers, he observed the Dvādaśī fast. Then he bathed there, gave (gifts to brāhmaṇas) and worshipped Viṣṇu. Then he with a concentrated mind gave presents to a brāhmaṇa according to the manner specified in the sacred texts. Then the intelligent merchant returned. When every year the month of Bhādrapada arrived, on the occasion of Śravaṇa-dvādaśī (he bathed) at the confluence of rivers. Thus dedicating everything to Viṣṇu, he performed all (the rites). After a long time he died. He obtained a great position which is difficult to be obtained by men. Even now he being waited upon by Viṣṇu's servants, plays in Vaikuṇṭha. O brāhmaṇa, thus you observe the Dvādaśī-vow. It gives all good fortune in this world and the next. It produces good ideas, it is great, and removes all sins. He who, on the occasion of the Śravaṇa-dvādaśī observes such a vow, goes to Viṣṇu's world due to the efficacy of this vow.

CHAPTER SEVENTY

The Vow of Nadī-trirātra

Nārada said:

1. O lord of gods, O lord of the Universe, O you who give pleasures and salvation, O you greatest god, tell me (that) due to which (a man) does not experience grief.

Maheśa said:

2-10. Listen, O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you the vow of the river observed for three nights, having observed which, men do

not go to hell. A man, having obtained (long) life, (good) health, matchless good fortune, happiness and wealth, so also inexhaustible (i.e. continuous) progeny, is honoured in heaven. When the month of Āṣāḍha comes the river is full of water. She is well-known in the Purāṇa to be constantly full of water. In the rainy season, when (the sky) is full of clouds, she should be (served) with a vow. When the river is full with all (kinds of) water, the vow intended for three nights should be carefully observed. As is liked by one*, one should see her for three days. On the bank of a water place, when the river is flooded (he should bathe); or should carry home that water in a black pitcher. O brāhmaṇa, a wise man, having gone to the river in the morning, should bathe there, if he is able to fast for three nights. If he is unable (to fast), he should fast by eating once a day. He should offer lamp regularly, and worship (Viṣṇu) in the morning and evening. Uttering the name of the great river and of Varuṇa, and placing (mentally) Viṣṇu, lying in water,

11-25. (he should say:) "Salutation to the deity, O Gaṅgā, O Gautamī; O river, O Sindhu, Kāverī, Sarasvatī, Salutation to you. Repeated salutations to Tāpī, Payoṣṇī, Pūrṇā, Mehendrasukhadā (delighting Indra), Kāśyapī, Gaṇḍakī and to river Sindhu. Salutation to (you), O Varuṇa, living in water and dear to Viṣṇu. O lord of the aquatic animals, O lord of water, always grant me well-being. Accept the respectful offering made by me. Give me the desired fruit." He should also make offering of food with pumpkin gourds, coconuts, and other auspicious fruits produced in the season. (He should say:) "Salutation to you, O Keśava, O Ananta. Salutation to you lying in water. O lord, protect me. O Govinda, grant me a boon." Thus he should, in proper order, and at proper time, worship (the deity). He being pure, and having observed the three-night vow, should break the fast after worshipping the deity and should use a vessel full of water, with fruits, flowers. O learned one, he should, along with women, children and men, with songs, musical instruments and pitchers full of river (water) and placing it at every watery place worship it with fruits and flowers.* So also with various kinds of grains and sprinklings of water. Having carefully come home laugh-

*The reading is obscure.

ing, singing and dancing, he should worship bamboo-baskets filled with seven (kinds of) grains. According to his capacity he should fill seven, five or three (baskets). Desiring his well-being, he should not drink river water for three nights. At the time of breaking the fast food to be eaten during certain holidays or days of fast should be procured. After bath is taken or worship is done the water of the river should not be used. Give pure food and eatables in three groups. So also (give) seven bamboo-baskets and seven water-pitchers also. He should eat food eaten on days of fast and without acrid or sweet taste. He should carefully avoid food with beans and ground with stone. O best brāhmaṇa, thus the vow should be observed for three years. When the three years are over, he should conclude it in this way:

26-32. O Nārada, he should give a (brāhmaṇa) couple a black cow, with a black (piece of) cloth and sesamum-seeds. Having thus given (these) to a (brāhmaṇa) couple he should also give gold (to the couple) according to his capacity. O Nārada, he should fashion golden image of Varuṇa, as the form of a river, and a fully auspicious circle (in honour) of Varuṇa. He should place there a pitcher along with presents. Having worshipped it that is placed there, he should duly and devoutly worship it and then give it to a brāhmaṇa. He should in accordance with his wealth and capacity feed the brāhmaṇas, so also his preceptor who is of respectable character and who is engaged in (the study of) all sacred texts. When this is done, the vow would be complete, O learned one. He would have unending good fortune, happiness, wealth and children. He never meets with a calamity, and is, for a long time, honoured in heaven. This (vow) was observed by wives of gods and of sages also. Formerly, the nāga-women and siddha-women had observed this vow. This vow of the Nadī-trirātra is matchless. What else do you wish to hear? He certainly always obtains good fortune and children.

CHAPTER SEVENTYONE

Viṣṇu's One Thousand Names

The sages said:

1-2. O Sūta, O good one, live long. You, of a kind heart, have told us the wonderful dialogue which took place between Nārada and Śiva.O preceptor, tell us who are listening devoutly, how the noble Nārada heard the importance of the lord's names.

Sūta said:

3-5. O best brāhmaṇas, all you sages, listen. I am telling an old account, having heard which devotion to Kṛṣṇa enhances. Once Nārada, quite calm, went to see his father to the peak of (the mountain) Meru which was resorted to by siddhas and cāraṇas. O brāhmaṇas, Nārada, the best sage, having saluted Brahmā, the lord of the worlds, who was seated there, said to him:

Nārada said:

6-8. O lord of the universe, O master, tell me how much power there is in the name of him, and of what kind is the greatness of the name of the noble one, who, the lord of the universe, is actually Nārayaṇa Hari, the highest soul, Hṛṣīkeśa, united with all beings. All foolish men, being deluded by illusion, do not at all know lord Viṣṇu in this Kali age which is worthless.

Brahmā said:

9-22. O child, please listen, how in this Kali age worship is especially to be done by reciting (his) names. The recollection of Viṣṇu, the conqueror, with an effort, is seen to purify untold sins, and it destroys sins. Knowing everything (else) to be false, a man who recites and mutters Viṣṇu's names, is freed from all sins, and goes to Viṣṇu's highest position. There is no doubt that those men who always utter the two letters *Ha-ri* become free just by uttering them. All expiations consist in remembering Kṛṣṇa repeatedly. A man who

remembers Kṛṣṇa in the morning, at night and at mid-day, etc. instantly reaches Nārāyaṇa, the destroyer of sins. When just by remembering Viṣṇu all the suffering perishes, he attains salvation; he obtains heaven due to his reciting Viṣṇu's name. A man should know that it is an eternal (state for him) whose mind is (engaged) in muttering his names, sacrifices and (his) worship, and the state continues for (the periods of) fourteen Indras. What a great disparity is there between going to heaven which is characterised by returning (i.e. by rebirth), and muttering the names of Viṣṇu, the excellent seed (i.e. source) of salvation? That mouth is a great holy place where Prācī Sarasvatī filling the eddy (as it were) with the words *Namo Nārāyaṇāya* (salutation to Nārāyaṇa) appears. Therefore, the best man, by remembering Viṣṇu day and night, and with his sins in the Kali age destroyed, does not go to hell. O you of the best vow, I have told (you) the truth and the truth (only). Merely by uttering (Viṣṇu's) name a man is free from a great sin. There is no doubt that even that cāṇḍāla who mutters 'Rāma, Rāma, Rāma' has his mind purified. Or he who mutters and recites 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa', has merely by the utterance of that name, visited all holy places like Kurukṣetra, Kāśī, Gayā and Dvārikā.

23-29a. O brāhmaṇa, he who always mutters or recites 'Nṛsiṁha' with joy, abandons this world and rejoices near Viṣṇu. A devotee of Viṣṇu is freed from a great sin in the Kali age. A man obtains by repeating the names of Viṣṇu in the Kali age, what he obtains by meditation in the Kṛta age, by performing sacrifices in the Tretā age, and by worshipping Viṣṇu in the Dvāpara age. Realising this men are plunged into Viṣṇu, the soul of the world. With all their sins destroyed they go to the highest position of Viṣṇu. Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Nṛsiṁha, Vāmana, so also (Paraśu-)rāma, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, and after him is said to be (the incarnation of) Kalki. These ten are said to be (Viṣṇu's) ten incarnations on the earth. Merely by (uttering) their names, (even) the killer of a brāhmaṇa is always purified. He, by reciting, muttering, meditating upon Viṣṇu's name in any manner, is freed. There is no doubt that he would be Viṣṇu himself.

Sūta said:

29b-36a. Hearing this Nārada was greatly amazed. He then said to his father: "O best god, why is it said: 'There are thousands of gods; there are thousands of Rudras. There are hundreds of manes, so also yakṣas and kinnaras. So also goblins, evil spirits, fiends, and those that belong to the species of deities. The greatness of their name is not heard or seen, as I have heard about the greatness of Viṣṇu's name. There is no doubt that merely by uttering his name, one is freed.' O god, what is the use of visiting the holy places or wandering over the earth? By (merely) hearing the greatness of his names, one would obtain salvation. That mouth is a great holy place, that mouth is a sacred place, in which the words 'Rāma Rāma' are (found). That mouth fulfils all desires. O you of a good vow, which are the names of him (i.e. of Viṣṇu) that should be recited? O grandsire, tell me all that in detail."

Brahmā said:

36b-44. This Viṣṇu always pervades (everything), is the ancient, highest soul. He has no beginning or end. He is glorious, the soul of beings, the creator of beings. May this Viṣṇu, from whom I am born, always protect (you). This one is the death of death. He is my ancestor. He is imperishable, has lotus-like eyes, and is an intelligent, immutable (great) person. Viṣṇu always lies on Śeṣa. He has a thousand heads. He is a great lord. He occupies all beings and he, Viṣṇu, is actually of the form of the universe. This Viṣṇu is the enemy of Kaiṭabha, is the creator; (this) god is the lord of the world. O best man, I do not know his name, and (about) his family (also). O dear one, though I am the propounder of the Vedas, I never know (this). Therefore, O divine sage, go there where the lord of the universe is. O best sage, he will tell you the entire truth. He, the lord of Kailāsa, is alone the ever-prosperous person. He is the best among all the devotees of Viṣṇu. He is greater than the great. (This) lord of Umā has five faces, and he destroys all miseries. He is the lord of the universe; he is the master of everything; he always loves his devotees. O best among the gods, go there; (that best god) will tell you everything.

45-55. Hearing the words of his father, Nārada proceeded to go there, to the abode (of Śiva) on Kailāsa, where that god, the granter of well-being, always stays, to learn the importance of Viṣṇu's names. There Nārada saw the god honoured by deities, seated on the peak of Kailāsa, the god of gods, the preceptor of the world, having five faces, ten arms, and having the trident in his hand, having a skull, having a staff with a skull at the top,[1] holding a sharp spear and a sword, holding the trident, fearful, granting boons, and having the bull (i.e. Nandin) as his vehicle, with his body (smeared) with ash, having charm due to serpents, and having the (crescent-)moon on his head, resembling a dark cloud, and having the lustre of a crore of suns, and sporting there. (Prostrating himself) like a staff he (i.e. Nārada) saluted the lord of gods. Seeing him, the great god, the best among the devotees of Viṣṇu, and with his eyes dilated due to amazement, said to the best brāhmaṇa (i.e. Nārada): "O best among divine sages, why have you come here?"

Nārada said:

O god, some time I had approached Brahmā. There I heard about the excellent greatness of Viṣṇu. It was told there to me by Brahmā, O best of gods. I heard from Brahmā's mouth how much the power of the names of him (i.e. Viṣṇu) is. Then I first asked about the thousand names of Viṣṇu. Then Brahmā said to me: "O Nārada, I do not know (them). This great Rudra knows (them). He will tell you all." Being very much amazed, I have come to you.

56-67a. In this terrible Kali age men are short-lived. They are engaged in impious acts. And they do not have faith in (Viṣṇu's) name. Similarly brāhmaṇas are heretics and always engrossed in impious acts. They are void of (i.e. do not perform) the Sandhyā (prayer), have fallen from vows, are wicked, and of dirty figures. As are the brāhmaṇas, so are also the kṣatriyas and so also vaiśyas. So also are śūdras and others, but not Viṣṇu's devotees. O lord, the śūdras are out of the fold of the twice-born in the Kali age. They do not know what is righteous, what is unrighteous, and what is beneficial and what is not.

1. Khaṭvāṅga – A club or staff with a skull at the top considered as the weapon of Śiva and carried by ascetics and yogins.

Realising this, O master, I have approached you. And I have also heard the importance of (Viṣṇu's) names from Brahmā's mouth. You are the god of all gods, and are always my lord. You are the enemy of Tripura, the universal soul and the creator, again and again. Favour me, and narrate the thousand names of Viṣṇu, which produces good fortune of men, and always produces great devotion in them. It gives Brahman (the Supreme Spirit or the Vedas) to the brāhmaṇas. It gives victory to the kṣatriyas. It gives wealth to vaiśyas and always gives happiness to śūdras. O Maheśvara, I desire to hear it from you. Among all the devotees of Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu) you are the (most) capable. O you of a good vow, favour me, and tell it to me if it is not a secret. It is very pure. It is always full of all holy places. Therefore, I desire to hear it. O lord, O master of the universe, (please) tell it.

Hearing the words of Nārada, (Śiva) had his eyes dilated with wonder. He was horripilated while recollecting Viṣṇu's names.

The lord said:

67b-68. These thousand names of Viṣṇu are to be kept secret. Hearing these, O child, a man would never have a miserable position. Sometime in the past Pārvatī said to me:

Pārvatī said:

69-71. O lord of Kailāsa, O lord of gods, O you who are endowed with great prosperity, tell me truly what you are muttering. How is it that your body is always smeared with ash, you wear the hide (of an antelope)? How are you having matted hair? O master of the universe, O lord, tell it (to me). You are the god of all gods; you are the superintendent of all rites. You are the lord, O master of the universe, O lord of the universe, O lord of the world.

Mahādeva said:

72-75a. Thus, O brāhmaṇa, I was repeatedly asked by Pārvatī. Then I told everything especially to her. O Nārada, listen. I shall tell (you) what I told Pārvatī, and by which the

lord, giving salvation, will be undoubtedly pleased. He is actually my father, and always my brother. I am always his devotee; and he is always my lord. Therefore, I shall tell (it) to you. Listen to me who am telling (it).

Sūta said:

75b-83. O brāhmaṇas, having thus spoken to Nārada, he told him the thousand names of Viṣṇu, which he had formerly told to Pārvatī. (Thus) they are received by Nārada on the Kailāsa (mountain). Sometime, by chance, he came from Kailāsa to the very wonderful holy place called Naimiṣāraṇya. All the sages residing there, seeing Nārada, the best sage, honoured the noble Nārada. Those best brāhmaṇas, Viṣṇu's devotees, seeing Nārada to have come, had their eyes dilated due to amazement. They showered flowers on him. They offered him water for (washing) his feet, offered him respectful offering, so also waved light before him, offered him fruits and roots and prostrated on the ground like a staff. And they said: "O great sage, we are blessed, since in this region we have had your presence which is pure and which destroys sins. O lord of gods, by your favour we have heard the Purāṇas. O brāhmaṇa, in what way would all (one's) sins perish? How is salvation obtained without giving (gifts), without austerities, without (visiting) holy places, without penance and sacrifices, without (giving) gifts, without meditations, and without curbing the senses, and without (studying) the groups of sacred texts?"

Nārada said:

84. Umā, having saluted (her) dear (lord), the god of gods, the preceptor of the world, i.e. Mahādeva, seated on the peak of Kailāsa (mountain) asked him:

Pārvatī said:

85-88. O highest god, you are the omniscient great lord, revered by all. Even gods like Indra and Sūrya very much adore you. All, having worshipped you, the giver of boons, obtain desired success. You are without birth and death. You are self-born, and are all-powerful. O lord, you, having the quarters as your garment (i.e. naked), the destroyer of Madana,

what do you always meditate upon ? Why do you having matted hair and dusty with ash, practise penance? O lord of gods, what are you muttering? I have a great curiosity (to know it). If I deserve your favour, then tell me (about) that good vow.

Mahādeva said:

89-109. I have not told this to anyone. It is to be kept secret by me. But O good one, I shall tell (to you since) you are devoted (to me) and dear to me. O goddess, formerly, in the Satya-yuga all had pure minds; and knowing Viṣṇu alone to be the lord of all gods, they worshipped him (alone). O dear one, they got great prosperity in this world and in the next. They who were indeed determined, secured that position which all gods and sages suffering pain, did not obtain. Even after having heard from my mouth, gods led by Viṣṇu, did not, through Vedas and various Purāṇic doctrines, understand for certain what the truth is, or which the highest position is, as their minds were confused. O dear one, by means of gold, jewels etc. equal to their weight (given to a brāhmaṇa as a gift), by means of sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice, and by means of bathing at holy places like Vārāṇaśī or Prayāga, so also by means of offering śrāddhas to their dead ancestors at Gayā etc., by means of Vedic recitals and mutterings, severe austeritiets, restraints and checks, by means of kindness etc., by means of serving the preceptors (and elders), by means of duties of the castes and stages of life that are to be observed, so also by means of knowledge, meditation etc. duly practised during crores of existences, they do not reach Viṣṇu, the god of all gods, the supreme bliss. Even all religious men do not reach that position which those mortals who with all their thoughts and having no other course resort to that ancient 'best person' Viṣṇu, who even enjoy themselves, who do not have knowledge or detachment, who are without celibacy etc., who have given up all (other) religious acts, but who mutter only Viṣṇu's names, happily reach, O you who subdue your enemies. That Viṣṇu should always be remembered. He should never be forgotten. All sacred injunctions and prohibitions are his commandments. Nevertheless all gods like Brahmā and all innocent sages have, by means of (uttering fearlessly) Viṣṇu's names, reached the position that was

desired by them. I desiring greater than this, and being blessed, did not accept worship offered to me, but properly propitiated Viṣṇu. Then the lord of the world, to whom his devotees are dear, was actually pleased, and he, Keśava, worshipped these as his portions. He, full of pity (worshipped) deities, manes, brāhmaṇas with oblations offered to gods and dead ancestors. Since then in the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile all gods like Brahmā are worshipped by the favour of the holder of the Śārṅga bow. He also said to me: "You would be superior to and more venerable than me. O Śambhu, I shall also propitiate you and will always receive a boon from you. Being born in the ages like Dvāpara and among men in the Kali age make the people averse to me with the sacred texts prepared by you. So also censure me so that the world become better and better. I shall produce this delusion which will delude people. You too, O mighty-armed Rudra, produce sacred texts that would delude people. O you of great arms, produce (the texts) that are false and spurious. Manifest thyself and keep me hidden."

110-116. Then having saluted the highest lord, I said: "How would the sin of the murder of thousand brāhmaṇas perish? Even after hundreds of crores of kalpas you cannot be forgotten. So I vied (with you). O Viṣṇu, how would I be pure? Therefore, O Govinda, tell me the expiation you desire." Then the lord, being pleased, told the truth about himself, by which, O daughter of the (Himālaya) mountain, I became superior to him. Everyday I adore him with penance, I eulogise him and think of him. Viṣṇu alone is the highest one. Knowledge about him is the means of salvation. This is the verdict of the sacred texts. Anything other than that causes delusion. All that is said like: 'salvation is attained without knowledge', 'my equivalence with Viṣṇu', 'knowledge is obtained by visiting holy places', 'my superiority over Viṣṇu', or 'identity of devotees like me with Viṣṇu', leads to delusion (only and) to nothing else, O chaste lady. Due to that my greatness has become matchless, and I am honoured by the world, O Pārvatī.

Pārvatī said:

117. Then O Śaṅkara, O master, O lord of gods, tell me how I would be the ruler of all and matchless like you.

Mahādeva said:

118-139. O dear one, you have asked well. I shall tell you the principal names of lord Viṣṇu, which would bring about salvation from the three worlds. Of this hymn called *Viṣṇusahasranāma* ('the thousand names of Viṣṇu') Śrī Mahādeva is the poet; the metre is anuṣṭubh; the seed (the cause) is *Hrīṁ*; the power is *Śrīṁ*; the pin is *Klīṁ*. Its application is in the muttering of the names for the attainment of the four goals, viz. moral merit, sensual enjoyments, worldly prosperity and salvation: 'Om, we know Vāsudeva. We think of (that) supreme Brahman; so that Viṣṇu should urge us (on).' When the various assignments of (the parts of) the body, hands would be recited duly, the fruit of that is crorefold. There is no doubt about it. He (should touch his) heart (saying), 'Śrī Vāsudeva is the highest Brahman'. He (should touch his) head (saying), '(He) is the original source'. He (should touch) the tuft of hair on his head (saying), '(He) is Mahāvarāha'. He (should utter) the mystical syllable 'Hūm-Hūm' (saying), 'He is the banner (i.e. the scion) of the solar dynasty'. He (should touch) his eyes (saying), 'Infancy causing wonder to the world by means of the desired sports of Brahmā etc.' He (should touch) the astra, (saying), 'Yathārtha-khaṇḍita-aśeṣa.' Saying, "Salutation to Nārāyaṇa the noble 'man'," he should have the nyāsa everywhere. 'We think of the supreme Brahman, of a pure, good, abode. Om, hrāṁ, hrīṁ, hruṁ, hraiṁ, hroṁ, hraḥ; Klīṁ to Kṛṣṇa, to Viṣṇu. Hrīṁ to Rāma. We think of him, so that the god will urge us on. Kṣrauṁ, we know Nṛsiṁha. Śrīṁ, we think of Śrīkaṇṭha, so that Viṣṇu should prompt us. Om, we think of Devakī's son, Vāsudeva, so that that Kṛṣṇa should urge us on. Om, hrāṁ, hrīṁ, hrūṁ, hraiṁ, hrauṁ, hraḥ. Klīṁ, svāhā (i.e. offering) to Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, dear to the cowherdesses.' Reciting this hymn he should mutter (prayers in honour of) the immutable Viṣṇu, Śrinivāsa and the lord of the world. The wise one should recite the hymn (in honour) of him. Om, Vāsudeva is the highest Brahman, he is the highest soul, he is greater than the great. He is a great lustre, a great light, the great first principle, the highest position. He (is) great Śiva, the great (object) to be pondered over. He is the highest knowledge and the best recourse. He is the highest truth, the highest bliss, the highest joy and

rise. He is greater than the Invisible; he is the highest sky; he is the highest prosperity, the highest lord; he is full, immutable, admitting no alternative, and without a prop. He is unstained, free from fear, unsmeared, unrestrained. He is qualityless; he is whole; has no end; is fearless; is inconceivable; and is fit for the weak. He is beyond the scope of the senses; he is immeasurable; unlimited; he has no lord; has no desire; is immutable and indestructible. He is omniscient; omnipresent; he is everything; he gives everything; and creates everything. He is the ruler of all; he sees everything; he is adorable to all; and observes all things. He is all-powerful; has all the vigour; is the soul of all; and has faces on all sides. He stays everywhere; has all forms; is the source of all; and removes the misery of all. He has all the wealth; he is auspicious on all sides; he is the cause of all causes. He excels all; he is the head of all, is the lord of all gods. He is Ṣaḍviṁśaka (the twenty-sixth principle?); is Mahā Viṣṇu; a great secret; and a great ruler. He is always lofty; always diligent; he is always joy; he is ancient. He is the lord of illusion; the lord of abstract meditation; lord of beatitude; and self-born. He is beyond birth, death and old age. He is beyond time and has gone beyond the worldly existence. He is full. He is truth; he is of a pure and enlightened nature. He is always full of intelligence. Abstract meditation is dear to him. He can be known by abstract meditation. He alone frees (the beings) from the bonds of the worldly existence. He is the ancient soul, he is inwardly the spirit. He is Puruṣottama (highest person). He is to be known from the Upaniṣads. He is difficult to be known. He is free from the three kinds of miseries.[1] Knowledge of the Vedas is his resort. He is without a beginning. He is self-illumined and the master of himself. He can be approached by all. He is neutral. He is Oṁkāra. He is equal on all sides. He is the fourth state of the soul (i.e. Brahman). He is beyond darkness. He is the supreme soul. He has touched everything. He is beyond the scope of speech or mind. He is Saṁkarṣaṇa. He drags everything (unto him); he is death. He is fearful to all. He

1. Tāpatraya—The three kinds of torments: caused by the mind (Ādhyātmika), caused by fate (Ādhidaivika), and caused by animals (Ādhibhautika).

cannot be overcome. He has a wonderful gait. He is Mahā Rudra; he is unconquerable. He is the root cause (of the world). He is joy. He is Pradyumna. He deludes everyone. His divine power is great. He is the only place of happiness. He is desired by all. His pastimes are unending. He subjugates all beings. He is Aniruddha. He is the life of all. He is Hṛṣīkeśa. He is the lord of the mind. The guileless are dear to him. He is Brahman. He directs everything. He is the lord of the life of Brahmā. He supports all beings. He is the lord of the body. He is the soul. He is the origin. He is the lord. He is the Supreme Being. He holds all the threads (of the conduct of the universe). He is the internal soul. He has three abodes. He is the internal witness (i.e. the soul). He has three constituents (viz. sattva, rajas and tamas). He is the lord. He is known by meditating saints. He is Padmanābha (having a lotus arising from his navel). He lies on Śeṣa. He is the lord of Lakśmī.

140-155. His lotus-like feet are always served by Lakṣmī. He always has Śrī (i.e. Lakṣmī or affluence). He is the abode of Śrī. Śrī (i.e. Lakṣmī) always rests on his chest. He is the treasure of Śrī. He is Śrīdhara (i.e. possesses Śrī). He is Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu). He controls Śrī. He is steady. He gives wealth. He is Viṣṇu (literally, one who enters). He has his abode in the Milky Ocean. His chest shines with the Kaustubha (gem). He is Mādhava (the husband of Mā, i.e. Lakṣmī). He removes the afflictions of the world. On his chest is the (mark of) Śrīvatsa. He is the abode of unbounded auspicious qualities. He wears a yellow garment. He is the lord of the world. He is the father of the world. He is the kinsman of the world. He is the supporter of the world. He is the treasure of the world. He is the only one of a sparkling vigour in the world. He is not an egotist. He is full of all wonders. He has accomplished all objects. He is entertained by all. His exertion is never unfailing. Brahmā, Śiva are his excellent consciousness. He is Śiva's grand-father. He is Brahmā's father. He is the superior lord of Indra and others. He is dear to all gods. He is the image of all gods. He is excellent. He is the only resort of all gods. He is the only deity of all gods. He enjoys the sacrifice. He is the creator of the sacrifice. He is the protector of the sacrifice. He is the (chief) man (i.e. deity) of the sacrifice. He wears the garland of wood-flowers.

He is dear to brāhmaṇas. He alone honours brāhmaṇas. He is the family-deity of brāhmaṇas. He is the destroyer of the demons. He destroys all the wicked. He is the only protector of all good men. He is the only belly of the seven worlds. He is the only ornament of the seven worlds. He is the creator, the sustainer and the destroyer (of the world). He holds the disc. His bow is Śārṅga. He holds a mace. He holds a conch. He has the Nandaka (sword). He has a lotus in his hand. Garuḍa is his vehicle. His body cannot be pointed out. He is adored by all. He purifies the three worlds. His fame is endless. His virility is boundless. He is all-auspicious. He resembles crores of suns. He is unconquerable like crores of Yamas. He is the creator of the world like crores of Mayas. He is very powerful like crores of winds. He delights the world like crores of moons. He is a great god like crores of Śambhus. His loveliness is like that of crores of Cupids. He is inaccessible and a destroyer of crores of enemies. He is deep like crores of oceans. He has the appellations of crores of holy places. He is rich like crores of Kuberas. He has amorous pleasures like those of crores of Indras. He is steady like crores of Himālayas. His body contains crores of universes. He destroys sins like crores of horse-sacrifices. He is adorable like crores of sacrifices. He is the cause of satisfaction like crores of (i.e. very large quantity of) nectar. He grants desired objects like crores of desire-yielding cows. His form is of crores of Vedic lores. He is Śipiviṣṭa (i.e. is pervaded by rays). He is Śuciśravas (literally, of pure ears or hearing).

156-168. He supports the universe. His feet are like a holy place. Hearing and talking about him is meritorious. He is the first god. He is the conqueror of the world. He is the killer of Kālanemi. He is Vaikuṇṭha. His greatness is infinite. He is the great joy of the masters of abstract meditation. He is always content. He is of bright thoughts. He is fearless. He is the destroyer of Naraka. He is the only refuge of the poor and the helpless. He alone removes all calamities. He is always capable of favouring the world. He is kind. He is the resort of the good. He is the master of abstract meditation. He is ever grown. He is free from increase and decrease. He has controlled his senses. He is Viśvaretas (i.e. Brahmā). He is the lord of hundreds of the lords of created beings. His feet are worshipped by

Indra and Brahmā. His lustre surpasses that of Śiva and Brahmā. The Sun and the Moon are his eyes. He enjoys everything. He has mastered everything. He has controlled illusion. He has controlled the universe. He is Viśvaksena (i.e. he, on seeing whom even the mighty army of gods retreats and scatters away). He is the best of gods. He is the lord of all bliss. He is adorned with divine, invaluable ornaments. He is characterised by all (good) characteristics. He has destroyed the pride of all demons. He is the all-in-all of all gods, and the leader of all deities. He is the armour of all gods. He is the crest-jewel of all gods. He is the fortress of all gods. He is the adamantine (protective) cage of all that have resorted to him. He is called 'the remover of the fear of all'. He is Viṣṭaraśravas (i.e. of beautiful and efficient ears). He is the supreme ruler. He is the end of the good of all. He has killed (his) enemies. He gives (one) a position in heaven. He is the lord of the life of all deities. He appoints the brāhmaṇas etc. His life is longer by a parārdha than that of Brahmā and Śiva. He is older than Brahmā. He is a child. He is the supreme Being. He is Virāṭ (i.e. the first progeny of Brahmā). He is dependent on his devotees. He is fit to be praised. He accomplishes the object of (i.e. to be had by means of) a hymn. He obliges others. He knows what is fit to be done. He has always given up acts for his self-interest. He is always glad. He is always auspicious. He is always calm. He is always propitious. He is always dear. He is always content. He is always nourished. He is always adored.

169-188. He is always pure. He is the best among those that purify. He is (to be) concealed by the Vedas. He is Vṛṣākapi. He has a thousand names. He is the three yugas. He has four forms. He has four arms. He is the lord of the past, future and present. He is the ancestor of great men. He is Nārāyaṇa (i.e. having the water as his abode). His hair is like the muñja grass. He has spread out by means of all abstract meditation. He is the essence of the Vedas. He is the essence of sacrifices. He is the essence of Sāmans. He is the treasure of penance. He is a Sādhya (i.e. a celestial being). He is the highest. He is an ancient sage. He is solely devoted to steadiness and calmness. He is the destroyer of Śiva's trident. He is the only giver of boons to Śiva. He is the 'man'. He is Kṛṣṇa. He is Hari. He is delighted in righteousness. Righteousness is his life. He is the

first agent. He is all-truth. He removes the pride of all women-gems. He has conquered Madana for all the three times. He is the chief of the sages who produced Urvaśī. He is the first poet. He is Hayagrīva. He is the lord of all the masters of speech. He is full of all gods, Brahmā, and Guru, and the lord of the goddess of speech. He is the source of endless lores. He is the destroyer of the root-ignorance. He knows and gives everything. He destroys the dullness of the world. He is the killer of (the demon) Madhu. He is the master of many crores of hymns. He alone has mastered the Vedas. He is the first learned (being). He is the author of the Vedas. He is the soul of the Vedas. He is the ocean of the holy texts. He has snatched the Vedas (from the demons) for Brahmā. He is the land of birth (i.e. the source) of all worldly knowledge. He is the king of lores. He is the form of knowledge. He is the ocean of knowledge. His intelligence is uninterrupted. He is the fish-god (i.e. the Matsyāvatāra). He has large horns. Being the seed of the world, he looks out. He has easily occupied the entire ocean. He is the propounder of the four Vedas. He is the first tortoise (i.e. the Kūrmāvatāra). He is the prop of everything. He has made the burden of the world (as light) as grass. He has made a stream of gods immortal. He is the cause of the production of ambrosia. He is the support of the soul. He is the support of the earth. He is not a portion of the sacrifice. He holds the earth. He destroyed Hiraṇyākṣa. He is the lord of the earth. He has fashioned śrāddha etc. He removes the fear of all dead ancestors. He is the life of all the dead ancestors. He alone enjoys the oblations offered to gods and dead ancestors; and he alone gives the fruit of the oblations offered to gods and to dead ancestors. The ocean is concealed in his bristles. He has agitated the entire ocean. He is the great Boar (incarnation). He is the destroyer of those who (try to) destroy the sacrifices. He is the refuge of those who perform sacrifices. He is Śrī Nṛsiṁha (incarnation). He is a divine lion. He destroys all undesired things and miseries. He is the only hero of a wonderful might. He alone destroys (evil) forces and charms. His lustre is unbearable (even) to Brahmā etc. He, the foremost in ending a yuga, is extremely fearful. His nails are (sharper) than crores of thunderbolts. He has a form which is unbearable for the world to see. He is the lord of

the group of the great(divine) mothers. He is endowed with inconceivable and unfailing power. He is the destroyer of all demons. He is the destroyer of Hiraṇyakaśipu. He is Death. He is the lord of Saṁkarṣaṇī. He is unbearable even for Yama's vehicle. He destroys all fears. He puts an end to all obstacles. He is the giver (of all kinds) of prosperity. He fulfils all (desires). He is the destroyer of all sins. He is called Siddhimantrādhika (i.e. superior to a hymn giving prosperity). He is the lord of Bhairava (i.e. Śiva). He removes the affliction of Śiva. He is inaccessible to crores of Deaths. He is called Daityagarbhasrāvin (i.e. one tearing asunder the demon-embryos). He roars like the bursting universe.

189-198. He protects everyone that just remembers him. He has a wonderful form. He is great Viṣṇu. He has a body with celibacy as the head. He is the ornament of the upper part of the bodies of the regents of the quarters. He has a string of twelve suns on his head. His anklet is just one head of Rudra. He is the protector of Pārvatī possessed by the Yoginīs (her attendants). He threatens Bhairava. He is the lord of the host of heroes. He is very fierce. He is the enemy of the ecliptic[1]. He is the death of Śambara. He is lord of anger. He is the devourer of the wicked (troubling) the retinue of Rudra and Caṇḍī. He is not (at all) agitated by any one. He is the death of death. He keeps off Kāla, the Death. He destroys all incurable diseases. He softens all evil Planets. He destroys the pride of crores of the chiefs of (Śiva's) attendants. He is unbearable to every Indra. He is difficult to be looked at by gods and demons. He is terrible, causing fear to the world. He protects (beings) from all miseries. He devours the devourer of the world. He is Śiva. He is the cat in the form of the sky, the devourer of the rat in the form of Kāla (Time or Death). His staff-like arms hold endless weapons. He is Nṛsiṁha. He is the conqueror of Vīrabhadra. He is the lord of the secret bevy of witches. He is the eater of the flesh of Indra's enemy. He is Rudra. He is Nārāyaṇa. He is the vechicle of Śaṅkara in the form of a goat. He is the protector of Śiva in the form of a goat. He enjoys a thousand wicked powers.

1. Apama—ecliptic (the sun's apparent orbit).

He is dear to Tulasī (or Tulasī is dear to him). He is a hero. He is the giver of all desired objects to the Vāmācāra (devotees of Śiva). He is Mahāśiva. He has Śivā (i.e. Pārvatī) mounted upon him. He is having a bird. He is the master of the disc. He gives a divine and attractive form to Indra. He gives good fortune to Pārvatī. He is the treasure of illusion. He removes the fear due to illusion. He is full of the lustre of Brahman (or of Vedas). He is full of the glory of Brahman (or of Vedas). He is full of triad (of the Vedas).

199-212. He is Subrahmaṇya. He is Vāmana, the destroyer of Bali. He is Upendra, the remover of Diti's grief. He is the King. He is Viṣṇu. He is the ornament of Kaśyapa's family. He is the giver of his kingdom to Bali. He is the giver of food to all gods and brāhmaṇas. He is Acyuta (i.e. Imperishable). His strides are wide. The holy places are at his feet. He stays at Tripada (i.e. in heaven). He is Trivikrama (i.e. Viṣṇu in his dwarf incarnation). His feet are in the sky. He has purified the three worlds with the water (flowing) from his feet. His feet are fit to be saluted by Brahmā, Śiva etc. He runs quickly with the feet of Dharma. His expanse is inconceivable and wonderful. He is a very strong universal tree. He has cut the upper part of Rāhu's head. He took off the head of Bhṛgu's wife. He is afraid of sins. He is always meritorious. He always cuts off the hope of the demons. He has fulfilled the desires of all gods. He has descended (i.e. has had his incarnations) only for the (good of) the universe. He has always concealed his soul by means of his illusion. He is always the desire-yielding gem for his devotees. He, the sinless one and the giver of boons, has given kingdoms to kings like Kārtavīrya. His unlimited acts are fit to be praised by all. He is Dattātreya. He is the lord of sages. He is always in close contact with the highest power. He delights in abstract meditation. He is always furious. He has removed the lustre of all the enemies of Indra. He drinks the best nectar. He is the gem of an embryo of Anasūyā. He gives enjoyments and salvation. He is the sun to the family of Jamadagni. He produced wonderful power in Reṇukā. He is unstained by (the sin of) matricide. He is the conqueror of Skanda. He gives a kingdom (even) to a brāhmaṇa. He puts an end to all bodies. He destroys the pride of heroes. He is the conqueror of Kārtavīrya.

He is the giver of (the earth consisting) of seven islands. He gives glory to Śiva's worshipper. He is Bhīma. He is Paraśurāma. He is a good preceptor and the enjoyer of everything. He is the encyclopedia of all auspicious knowledge. He is Bhīṣmācārya. He is Agni's deity. He is the preceptor of Droṇācārya. He has a bow that conquers the universe. He is the conqueror of Yama. He is a matchless form of penance. The present of (i.e. received by) him is celibacy only. He is the greatest Manu. He is a bridge for the good (to cross the mundane existence). He is great. He is a bull. He is Virāṭ. He is the first King. He is the father of the earth. He is the only one who has milked (i.e. taken) out all gems. He is great. He is exceptionally diligent from the beginning of his existence. He is Speech. He is Wealth. He is Fame. He is self-chosen. He gives courage to the world. He is the greatest among the sovereign emperors. He holds a unique weapon.

213-218. He is to be secured by sages like Sanaka and increases devotion for the lord. He is the author of the duties of the castes and the stages of life. He is a speaker. He is a propounder. He is the banner (i.e. the scion) of the solar dynasty i.e. Rāma, a descendant of Raghu, and the ocean of virtues, (so also) the descendant of Kakutstha, the king of heroes (or the heroic king), the king, and the leader in the kingly duties. He always has an independent abode. He accepts all auspicious things. He sees only auspicious things. He is a gem among men. He is the sea. He is the superintendent of Dharma. He is a great treasure. He is the abode of all the greatest. He has the vitality of the host of the truths of all sacred texts. The world is under his control. He is Daśaratha's son. He is a king, the resort of all gems. He has produced all modes of conduct. He observes all ways of conduct. He destroys all sins. He is superior to Indra. He is beyond metaphysical and profane knowledge. He is the ocean of forgiveness. He is liked by all excellent, eminent people. He is not perturbed by joy or sorrow. He gave up his empire at the behest of his father. He is not afraid of the rise of his rivals. He gave wealth to the country of Guha. He wears matted hair in emulation of Śiva. He got the mountain of gems from Citrakūṭa. He is the lord of the world. He moves in the forest.

219-228. He performs a sacrifice as he likes. All his missiles

are infallible. He destroyed the eyes of the son of the lord of gods. He is the lunar month of Pauṣa[1] having the days like Brahmā and Indra. He is the killer of Mārīca, and the destroyer of Virādha. He purified the entire Daṇḍakāraṇya that was harmed by the curse of Brahmā. He alone is the holder of the only arrow that killed fourteen thousand fierce demons. He is the enemy of Khara. He is the killer of Triśiras. He is the killer of Dūṣaṇa. He is Janārdana. He performed the last ceremonies of Jaṭāyus, and helped him obtain heaven. He is the king of the hymn which is the all-in-all of Agastya. He scattered away the great heap of the bones of Dundubhi with the end of his sportive bow. He destroyed the demon in the nether world dragging and striking him with a saptatāla (tree). He is the giver of the kingdom to Sugrīva. He grants fearlessness with a large mind. He takes up the form of all the monkeys with Hanūmat and Rudra as the chief lords. He agitated the ocean with one arrow, along with the serpents and the demons. He dried and parched the ocean with the tip of just one arrow along with mlecchas. Formerly he built a wonderful bridge over the sea. He is the treasure of glory. He accomplishes what is impossible to be accomplished. He is dexterous in pulling upwards Laṅkā along with its root. He cut off the family of Rāvaṇa, haughty due to a curse, and a cause of poignant grief to the world. He killed Rāvaṇa's son. He cut off (i.e. killed) Prahasta. He pierced (i.e. killed) Kumbhakarṇa. He is the killer of the pierced ones. He is the only one to cut off Rāvaṇa's head. He has given a kingdom free from fear to Indra. He cuts off (the difference between) what is heavenly and unheavenly. He removes the non-Indra-hood of Indra. He removes the godhead of the demons. He destroys unrighteousness. He is praised by many. He, the enemy of Rāvaṇa, gave the kingdom (of Laṅkā) to Bibhīṣaṇa by means of just being saluted.

229-243. He brought back to life his entire army that was dead by the shower of nectar. He is the only supporter, just by (means of) his name (being uttered), of gods and brāhmaṇas. He is honoured by all gods. He loves Satī offered by the host of

1. Taiṣī—The lunar month of Pauṣa.

Brahmā, Sūrya, Indra, Rudra etc. He is the all-ruler of the kingdom of Ayodhyā. He is charming to all the beings. He favours and punishes like a master. He loves only the good whether low or high. He shows (ways of) justice to those who belong to his side and others. He accomplishes more with a small object. He is the protector of him who behaved improperly under the pretext of a hunter. He does all equal (i.e. impartial) things. He is a free soul due to the superiority of Pārvatī. He is not abandoned by his dear ones. He is the conqueror of Madana's enemy. He is actually the father of Indra etc. in the guise of Kuśa and Lava. He is never conquered. He is the lord of Kośala. His arms are like those of a hero. He abandoned his brothers for truth. He shook the bright globe of the earth by taking an aim with his arrow. He made the deities possessed of a guardian by his proximity desired by Brahmā and others. He has the host of all beings like the cāṇḍālas, who have reached Brahmā's world. He himself led donkeys and horses. For a long time he protected Ayodhyā. He is Sumitrā's son, Lakṣmaṇa, who was accompanied by Rāma and who killed Indrajit. He (i.e. Bharata) a devotee of Viṣṇu, was delighted with the kingdom on getting the sandals of Rāma's feet. He is Bharata who killed a crore of the unbearable gandharvas. He is Śatrughna, the destroyer of Lavaṇa. He is the lord of physicians. He is the master of the herbs (mentioned) in Āyurveda. He always has the rays of nectar (or he always produces nectar). He is Dnanvantari. He is sacrifice. He uplifts the world. He kills Sūrya's enemy. He supports the gods. He is the lord of Dakṣiṇā (south, or the fee given to a brāhmaṇa). He is dear to brāhmaṇas. With his head cut, he is the sun, the lord of those who give good fortune. He gives everything. His form is unhurt, though with the head cut off with a missile(?). He is the fire of the name of Vājapeya etc. He is intent upon following the practices laid down in the Veda. He is the lord of the Śveta Dvīpa. He is the propounder of the Sāṁkhya (system). He is the lord of all accomplishments. He has destroyed the darkness of delusion by the knowledge manifested in the universe. He is the son of Devahūtī. He is Siddha. He is Kapila and the son of Kardama. He is the master of abstract meditation. He reduced to ash Sagara's sons, due to his meditation being disturbed (by them). He is Dharma. He is

the lord of virtue. He is the lord of Surabhi. He is meditated upon by a pure soul. He is Śiva. He obtained stability only after burning Tripura, and carries the chariot of the universe. He is won over by his devotee Śambhu. He is like a well of nectar to the demons. He is penance.

244-264. He is the universe with the great deluge, and the second king of all serpents. He is god Śeṣa. He has a thousand eyes. He has a thousand mouths, heads and arms. He has joined with the drop-like gems of his hood the ocean, the clouds and the earth. He produces death like fire and Rudra. He has a pestle as his missile. He has a plough as his weapon. He has put on dark-blue garments. He looks charming with the spirituous liquor. He removes the blemishes of the speech and the body. He is discontent. He knocked down Rāvaṇa by merely casting a glance at him. He restrained Bali. He is fierce. He is Balarāma. He is the killer of Pralamba. He is the killer of Muṣṭika. He is the killer of Dvivida. He is Bala(-rāma) who dragged Yamunā. He is the husband of Revatī. Due to the lassitude in former devotion he is the elder brother of Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu). He is the son of Kaśyapa and Aditi, called Devakī and Vasudeva. He is (Kṛṣṇa) the descendant of Vṛṣṇi. He is the greatest among the Sātvatas. He is Śauri. He is the perpetuator of the Yadu family. He is of the form of a man. He is the Supreme Brahman. He is Savyasācin (i.e. Arjuna). He is the giver of boons. His grace is desired by Brahmā etc. and his childhood is a wonder to the world. He killed Pūtanā. He broke Śakaṭa, Yamala and Arjuna. He is the enemy of Vātāsura. He is the killer of Keśin. He is the enemy of Dhenuka. He is the lord of cows. He is Dāmodara. He is the god of the cowherds. He is the giver of joy to Yaśodā. He crushed Kāliya. He is dear to all the cowherds and cowherdesses. He easily held the Govardhana (mountain). He is Govinda. He is a joy to Gokula. He is the destroyer of Ariṣṭa. He is the giver of salvation to the cowherdesses mad with lust. He instantly kills him who hurts the earth. He crushed Cāṇūra. He is Kaṁsa's enemy. He is the great one who put Ugrasena on the throne. He made the earth characterised by auspiciousness. He put an end to Jarāsandha's power (or army). He threw and broke Jarāsandha. He gave glory to Bhīmasena. He gave (back making it alive) Sāndīpani's child. He is the conqueror of Kālāntaka and others. He is

the emancipator of all hellish beings. He is the conqueror of crores of all kings. He is the husband of Rukmiṇī. He punished Rukmi. He killed Naraka. He is loved by all beautiful women. He is the enemy of Mura. He is Garuḍa-bannered. He, the lord of all, all alone conquered Rudra, Arka (the Sun), Maruts and others. He removed the pride of the lord of gods. He has adorned the earth with the desire-yielding trees. He is the conqueror of the crores of attendants (of Śiva) like Nandin, pierced along with Bāṇa's arms. He easily conquered Śiva. He is worshipped by Śiva only. He is the giver of victory of Arjuna from a total fall, for Indra. He has cut off the head of Kāśirāja. He is the only one who crushed Rudra's power. He, the lord of the universe, casts a favourable glance. He troubled the son of Kāśirāja. He broke the pledge of Śambhu. He is the leader who totally burnt Kāśirāja. He is the killer of the crores of the attendants of the lord of Kāśī. He honours brāhmaṇas instructing the world. He is subjugated by bevies of young women. Formerly he granted a boon to Śiva. He is the only giver of stability to Śaṅkara. He worships Śiva, his portion. He is the lord of the vow of lucky maidens. He, in the form of Kṛṣṇa, is the killer of Śiva's enemies. He has the body of Mahālakṣmī. He is the protector of Gaurī. He is the killer of Vaidala Vṛtra. His lustre alone is Mucukunda. He did a desired thing for Kālayavana. He is the lord of Yamunā. He is a brāhmaṇa's son led near and devoted.

265-278. He brought down to the earth Indra's splendour for his poor devotee Śrīdāman. He is the only one giving salvation to the wicked Śiśupāla. He is the lord of Dvārakā. He fashioned the crores of treasures at Dvārakā to be reached by (everyone up to) a cāṇḍāla. He alone gave, as he willed, salvation to his principal devotees Akrūra and Uddhava. He turned the ocean into a well of nectar while sporting (there) with children and women. He gave life to Parīkṣit who while in the womb was burnt by Brahmā's missile. He led the daughter of the brāhmaṇa devoted to him. He removed Arjuna's pride. He seized all Kauravas like Bhīṣma with a mysterious figure. He duly cut off all the divine missiles and removed Arjuna's delusion. He removed the fear of the gods and the earth under the guise of a curse to be conceived. He is the enemy of old age and physical diseases, and gives a good condition (to his devotee).

He gives everything that is desired merely when he is remembered. He is god Madana, the lord of Rati. He is Manmatha, and the destroyer of Śambara. He is bodyless (i.e. Madana). He conquered Gaurī's lord (i.e. Śiva). He is the husband of Rati, and is always desired. His arrows are made of flowers. He is Smara (i.e. Madana) who vanquishes everyone. He is dear to Kāmeśvarī (i.e. Rati). He is Uṣā's lord. He is Viśvaketu (i.e. Aniruddha). He is proud everywhere. He is a superior 'man'. He has four souls. He has four modes. He is the author of the four ages. He is the only universal soul of all the four Vedas. He is in crores the portion of everything that is excellent. He is the ancient sage Vyāsa, the author of a thousand branches (Vedic knowledge). He is the creator (i.e. the author) of the Mahābhārata. He is the lord of poets. He is Bādarāyaṇa. He is Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana (i.e. Vyāsa) who is the only teacher of all the (four) goals (of human life). He is the author of the Vedānta. He alone has manifested Brahman. He is the cause of the Puru race. He is Buddha (literally, enlightened). He has won over through meditation the god of all gods. He is without a weapon. He has conquered the world. He is Śrīdhara. He deludes the wicked. He has outcast the demons from the Vedic (fold). He has preserved the meaning of the Vedas and the sacred texts. He is the son of Śuddhodana (i.e. he is Buddha). He is seen and shown. He gives happiness. He is the lord of the assembly. He shows favour to all as they deserve it. He is all void. He gives all that is desired. He has four crores of various principles. He is the lord who has gone beyond intelligence. He is the lord showing the path of the Veda to the heretics. He is the preserver of the texts sacred to the heretics.

279-293. He is Kalki. He is the child of Viṣṇu's glory. He ends the Kali age. He kills all the wicked mlecchas. He has fashioned all the distinguished brāhmaṇas. He propounds the truth. He removes the prolonged hunger of gods and brāhmaṇas. He is Aśvavārādirevanta(?). He destroys the bad condition of the earth. He instantly gives unending glory to the earth. He knows all the ways of life that have perished. Due to his contact with unending gold he is the only brāhmaṇa with entire gold. He is the only ruler of the world that cannot be controlled. He is adorable to the world. He is the banner of victory. He is

the lord of the principle of soul. He is the best doer. He is Brahmā. He is (Śiva) the lord of Umā. He is the best lord. He is the first among the lords of beings. He is Marīci. He is a leader like Janaka. He is Kaśyapa. He is the chief lord of gods. He is Prahlāda, the king of demons. He is the Moon, the lord of stars. He is the Sun, best in lustre. He is Śukra, the lord of the wise. He is the chief of great sages, i.e. Bhṛgu. He is Viṣṇu, the chief among the Suns. He is Bali, and the Supreme Being. He is Vāyu. He is pure fire. He is the greatest. He is Śaṅkara, the chief of the Rudras, and the preceptor. He is the wisest one. He is the chief gandharva, Citraratha. He is the excellent Indestructible (one). He is the first caste. By means of power she is Gaurī, the first lady. He is the best blessing. He is Nārada, the chief divine sage. He is the chief Pāṇḍava, Arjuna. He is the chief discussion and discourse. He is Pavana (Wind). He is the lord of Pavana. He is Varuṇa, the lord of the aquatic animals. He is the best of the sacred places on the Gaṅgā. He plays with dice, the principal among tricks. He is food, the excellent medicine. He is Sudarśana, the best among the missiles. He is the thunderbolt, the best weapon. He is Uccaiḥśravas, the lord of horses; Airāvata, the lord of elephants. He is the lord of those having a wife like Arundhatī. He is Aśvattha, the chief among trees. He is metaphysical knowledge, the chief among the lores. He is Om, the best of the sacred texts of the Vedic hymns. He is Meru, the chief of the mountains. He is the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, the first among the months. He is the best of times. He is the soul, accomplished in ancient times, of a day etc. He is Kapila. He is the master of Sāma Veda. He is Garuḍa, the first among the birds. He is the desire-yielding cow. He is the best friend, removing affliction. He is the desire-yielding gem. He is the best preceptor. He is the mother. He is the most kind father. He is the lion, the lord of beasts. He is Vāsuki, the lord of serpents, and the king, best among men. He is brāhmaṇa, the chief of the castes. He is the mind, best due to compassion. Repeated salutation (to him). These are the thousand names of Vāsudeva, Viṣṇu. It (i.e. *Viṣṇusahasranāma*) puts an end to all faults.

294-312. It very much enhances devotion. It is an inexhaustible means of the worlds like those of Brahmā, and the only

means to heaven. It is the only staircase to Viṣṇu world. It destroys all griefs. It gives all pleasures. It instantly gives the highest salvation. It fully purifies the dirt of the mind like lust and anger. It gives peace. It purifies even men with great sins. It gives all the desired fruits to all beings. It removes all obstacles. It destroys all evils. It destroys terrible pain. It destroys acute poverty. It removes the three debts. It is a secret. It gives wealth, grains and glory. It gives all affluence. It gives all (kinds of) success. It gives all kinds of auspiciousness. It gives the fruit of a crore of (visits to) holy places, sacrifices, austerities, gifts and vows. It puts an end to the dullness of the world. It is the promoter of all lores. It gives a kingdom to those who are deprived of their kingdom. It removes all the diseases of the sick persons. It gives a son to the barren women. It gives life to those whose (span of) life is diminished. It destroys the (ill effect of) being possessed by ghosts and of poison. It destroys the oppression caused by a Planet. It is auspicious. It is meritorious. It enhances (the span of) life by means of being listened to, being recited and being muttered. The religious merit of him (is as much) as all the Vedas with the Vedāṅgas, crores of hymns, the Purāṇas, sacred texts, Smṛtis (would give) when heard and recited. O dear one, if a man mutters or recites a letter, a verse or a line every day, then all one's desired objects are soon achieved. Then (what would be obtained by listening to or reciting) the entire (text)? Such certainty is not seen in all (other) acts. O good one, this is to be secretly preserved by you and is to be recited only for your own interest. It is not to be given to a non-devotee of Viṣṇu, whose mind is overcome with doubts, who lacks devotion and faith and who looks upon Viṣṇu as an ordinary (deity). It should be given to the son, to a disciple, to a friend with a desire of their good. Those of a dull intellect will not grasp it without my favour. It gives instant fruit in the Kali age. Nārada will take it to the community in (the various) kalpas, by which the misery of unfortunate persons will come to an end. In the Āryāvarta it will live with two or three devotees of Viṣṇu. There is no better abode than Viṣṇu. There is no greater penance than Viṣṇu. There is no greater religious merit than Viṣṇu. There is no hymn that does not pertain to Viṣṇu. There is no greater

truth than Viṣṇu. There is no greater sacrifice than Viṣṇu. There is no greater meditation than Viṣṇu. There is no better recourse than Viṣṇu. For him who has devotion to Viṣṇu, what is the use of many hymns, and very extensive sacred texts and thousands of Vājapeya sacrifices? Viṣṇu is full of all sacred places. The lord is full of all sacred texts. Viṣṇu is full of all sacrifices. I am telling the truth and the truth (only). I have told (you) this which is the full essence of everything up to Brahman.

Pārvatī said:

313-330. I am lucky. I am favoured. I am blessed, O lord of the world, since I heard from you this hymn, this secret which is very difficult to be secured. Oh! how very painful it is that the fools suffer in the mundane existence, when Viṣṇu, the destroyer of all miseries and the lord of gods is present (everywhere), and due to dedication to whom Śiva is seen by people to be naked, having matted hair, with his body smeared with ash and an ascetic. Which (other) god is there who is superior to (Viṣṇu) the lord of Lakṣmī and the enemy of Madhu? Which better position is there than that Viṣṇu, that principle which is every day thought of by you the lord of abstract meditation? Whom, ignoring him, do the fools, proud of their knowledge, worship? O lord, you have for a long time deprived me, that you have not manifested to me this lord, having the divine powers like you. Oh, Viṣṇu, the lord of all, the best among all excellent gods, the first preceptor of you, is looked upon as an ordinary god! The greatness of the great is that they worship those who deserve worship. Those having forgiveness ignore even those who have become their enemies without any cause. I too, in my childhood saw my father's starving subjects. Unable to nourish them due to difficulty they were supported after having propitiated Lakṣmī. Gods like you, Indra and others with kind-hearted friends and kinsmen shine, due to the subjects in whose proximity she stays. Without her where can godhead remain? Where can glory and possessions remain? All living beings live in anguish. Without her there can be no righteousness, no worldly desires, no (satisfaction of) lust. (Then) salvation too is (far) away. How can the hungry and the unfortunate ones have concentration through abstract meditation? He who controls Lakṣmī, is alone the

essence of the worldly existence, and the only leader of the entire world. Śaṅkara even abandoned her. He, the magnanimous one, is full with humility, purity, handsomeness, wealth, of uprightness and valour surpassing that of all (others). Who can equal that Viṣṇu, god of gods, without whose partial incarnation all this world gets dissolved? But the deluded ones call this to be a fault. He has no birth, no death. Nor has he any desired object to be obtained. But, O lord due to my mind attached to lust etc., due to my having been one with you, due to an error, if I am unable to recite every day these thousand names of Viṣṇu, then tell me, O bull-bannered god, that name, by which I shall get that fruit (obtained by the recital of Viṣṇu's thousand names).

Mahādeva said:

331. O you beautiful one, O you charming one, (recite) 'Rāma, Rāma, Rāma'. The thousand names are equal to that.*

CHAPTER SEVENTYTWO

Merit of Reciting the Viṣṇusahasranāma

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-8. O daughter of the Himālaya mountain, if brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas or śūdras recite this especially every day, they, having wealth and grains go to the highest position of Viṣṇu. By reciting a verse, half a verse, a line, or half a line a man goes to salvation (and stays there) till the universal deluge. O goddess, those best men who recite the thousand names of Viṣṇu with a special commitment, go to the imperishable position (of Viṣṇu). The wealth and the (span of) life of him who recites it once, twice or thrice (a day), increase till the (end of the regime of) fourteen Indras. He would obtain sons, grandsons, and large wealth and affluence. O you beautiful one, what is the use of repeatedly saying other things? The thousand names of Viṣṇu

*Verses like 219b, 239, 260, 261a, 264 are not sufficiently clear.

give the highest bliss. A man who has first offered him worship fully, has offered him worship (every day) for a year, when Viṣṇu is worshipped(?). There should be no distraction especially while reciting (the hymn). If a distraction is had while reciting it, (the span of) the life and wealth (of the reciter) decrease.

9-17. As many sacred places as there always are on the Jambū Dvīpa, (all) those are (present) just there (where) the thousand names of Viṣṇu (are recited). Just there is Gaṅgā. There is Yamunā. There is Veṇī; there is Godāvarī; there is Sarasvatī. (Thus) all sacred places exist there where are (recited) the thousand names of Viṣṇu. This (hymn) is very pure; it is always dear to the devotees. With the mind full of the feeling of (being Viṣṇu's) servant and with devotion it should always be called to mind. Those wise ones who recite (this hymn) called *Viṣṇusahasranāma* ('the thousand names of Viṣṇu'), reach, after being free from all sins, Viṣṇu's proximity. The (span of the) life, strength and wealth of those who every day recite it at dawn, increase. A devotee of Viṣṇu, keeping awake during the night in the Kali age, obtains salvation as long as fourteen Indras (rule). That worship offered to Viṣṇu, for Tulasī, with (the utterance of) each name of Viṣṇu, should be known to be the worship superior to a crore of sacrifices. O Pārvatī, those brāhmaṇas who recite it while going along the way, have indeed no sins of the journey. O goddess, listen, I shall tell (you) the greatness of Viṣṇu. Those best men who listen to it are meritorious and are of the form of merit.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTHREE

Rāmarakṣā Stotra

Mahādeva said:

1-12. Om, the great sage Viśvāmitra is the seer of the hymn called *Rāmarakṣā*. Śrī Rāma is the deity. The metre is anuṣṭup. Application of the muttering of this hymn (is) for pleasing Viṣṇu.

I meditate upon the imperishable Viṣṇu, Śrī Rāma, having lotus-like eyes, resembling atasī flower, wearing a yellow garment and infallible. May Rāma protect (my) heart. May Śrīkaṇṭha protect my throat. May the protector of the sacrifice protect my navel. May the protector of the universe protect my waist. May Daśaratha's son protect my hands. May he, of a universal form, protect my feet. May the excellent god, the lord of Sītā protect my eyes. May the universal soul protect the tuft of hair on (my) head. May he who gives desired objects, protect (my) ears. May the protector of gods protect (my) sides. May he, inaccessible to a crore of deaths, and eternal lord of the universe always protect (my) body. May he who destroys sins and propagates instruction in the world, protect (my) tongue. May Rāghava protect this. May Keśava protect (my) hair. May he, the creator of the universe and called Dattavijaya, protect (my) thighs. A man who would recite this (hymn called Rāma-)rakṣā, endowed with Rāma's power, would have a long life; would be happy, learned, and get divine wealth. (This hymn) the Rakṣā, sacred to Viṣṇu, always protects all beings. A man who would remember 'Rāma, Rāmabhadra, Rāmacandra' is free from sins and obtains eternal salvation. This (hymn) was told by Vasiṣṭha to his preceptor of the form of Viṣṇu. Then from Brahmā it came to me; and I told it to Nārada. Nārada brought it down among the good people on the earth. Those best men who, while resting at home or going along the way, recite this, enjoy religious merit.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFOUR

Merit Earned through Gifts

Mahādeva said:

1-9a. O goddess, listen. I shall explain to you righteousness (*dharma*) (the excellent way of life), hearing which a man is never born on the earth. From righteousness a man would get the triad of material welfare (*artha*), satisfaction of desires (*kāma*)

and salvation (*mokṣa*). Therefore, that learned man who would desire righteousness through penance, gifts, vows and restraints, is said to be wise. Similarly by means of sincere penance heaven is obtained. He who has come here (i.e. is born on the earth) and is free from anger and greed, would have salvation after an existence and obtains Viṣṇu's position. He becomes passionate (*rājasa*) by means of penance practised through passion (*rajas*). By means of vicious (*tāmasa*) (or ignorant) penance he becomes hard-hearted (*tāmasa*) and does cruel deeds. That is said to be the penance of the demons, giving salvation to those who are of a vicious nature. That penance which is righteous (*sāttvika*) is permanent. Even in a forest blemishes do occur in the case of the passionate one, desiring wealth etc., being controlled by (*rajas*) and ignorance (*tamas*), living in a solitary forest, and subsisting on air. Control over the five senses (practised) even at home is (also) a penance. For him who is not engaged in condemned acts and who is detached from passions, his house is a penance-grove. The householder's stage is said to be (a man's) own duty. It is very difficult to be overcome by (even) those who have restrained their senses. That best auspicious stage (of life) is affected.

9b-15. O you daughter of the (Himālaya) mountain, the householder's stage of life is said to be excellent for the wise ones by Brahmā and others. An ascetic after practising penance in a forest and being oppressed by hunger, comes to the house of a food-giver. With devotion he (i.e. the food-giver) gives him food and gets a portion (of the fruit) of his penance. There is no doubt that the man who properly follows the householder's stage, the best on the earth, enjoys human pleasures here (i.e. in this world) and goes to heaven. O goddess, how can sin come to them who always practise (the duties of) a (householder)? The householder's stage is most meritorious. A house is always like a sacred place. In this meritorious stage of a householder gifts should be especially given. In it worship of deities is practised, food is given to guests; it is the refuge of guests. Therefore, it is said to be most blessed. Those men who having resorted to a house(-holder's stage) honour brāhmaṇas, never lack in (long) life, wealth, so also sons. O beautiful lady, listen. I shall tell (you about) a gift which cleanses all great sins,

which brings about every (kind of) wealth, and which gives fruit in this world and in the next.

16-26. When an auspicious time has come, a man, after having duly worshipped his deity, and having performed his obligatory and occasional (duties), should give a gift according to his own capacity. He who having snatched another's wealth would give it to brāhmaṇas and deities, would after seeing (i.e. having gone to) hell, go to the highest position, as Śatānīka was emancipated along with his sons due to having given gifts. So also after having given (gifts) to brāhmaṇas, he will go to heaven as a result of his righteousness. The religious merit of those who have given (gifts) at holy places, has been told. O goddess, listen. I shall tell (you) in brief about the gift of wealth. (Such) a gift purifying the body was never there, nor will be there. Due to it a man becomes free from sins. There is no doubt about it. Having enjoyed pleasures, he then goes to the ancient Viṣṇu. Formerly it was narrated by Brahmā to the magnanimous Bhārgava Rāma, full of sin. During the Sun's passing through Libra and Taurus, the king was engaged in a sinful act. He indulged in killing and binding (men). He was engaged in eating what ought not to be eaten. He caused abortions and violated his preceptor's wife. These and a liar are born in bad stocks. They perform sacrifices for those for whom they should not be performed; they ask for (gifts) from the censurable ones; they are always angry; and are always engaged in troubling the good. They are destroyed through faith, and with their life condemn righteousness. They are full of sins and know that they are dead (i.e. they would soon die). Knowing this, O goddess, they should especially give gifts. On the earth many devotees of Viṣṇu practising righteousness are well-known on the earth.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFIVE

The Greatness of Gaṇḍikā

Mahādeva said:

1-11. O goddess, I shall properly tell you the greatness of Gaṇḍikā. O daughter of the (Himālaya) mountain, as Gaṅgā is, so she is. Similarly many Śālagrāma stones are found there. So also her greatness is told by the best sages. There are birds, plants, insects and viviparous beings that are meritorious just on account of seeing her, O Pārvatī. That great river Gaṇḍikā rises in the north. O daughter of the (Himālaya) mountain, she, being remembered again and again destroys sins. There god Nārāyaṇa, causing welfare, always exists. Those, holders of conches and discs, who live near him, have, after reaching Death, had four arms and divine forms. Sages stay there, and especially gods, Rudras, serpents, so also yakṣas. No doubt should be raised in this matter. Near it is a place of raised ground, having the form of Viṣṇu. At this place, there is an image of many forms, giving salvation. There are twentyfour species of beings there. One is of the form of a fish and another, a black figure, the giver of salvation, is said to be there at the place called Viṣṇu by the wise. There is (another figure) called Kalki and tawny (in colour), (as is) told by me. Many other figures of various shapes are also seen there. All these various figures, of different forms stand there. She is Gaṅgā. She is great. She is auspicious. She gives merit, desired objects and salvation.

12-26. In that land, Viṣṇu, accompanied by me, definitely stays even now. There is no doubt about this. A man is free merely by her touch from all sins like causing an abortion, killing a child, and especially killing a cow. Brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras, so also (men of) other castes—all of them are freed on seeing the water of Gaṇḍikā. This (river) is holy like (the river) Veṇī—especially so for the sinners. (Even) the killer of a brāhmaṇa is freed there, what, to say about others! O Pārvatī, always, at all times I go (there). Brahmā has indeed said that this is the king of holy places. Sages have bathed and given gifts there. O beautiful lady, in Āṣāḍha, on an auspicious occasion, I go there. For a month I duly bathe there; I also continuously mutter (the

hymn) which emancipates (a being). Therefore, since I had gone to the place holy to Viṣṇu, I became a devotee of Viṣṇu. This very great holy place was formerly fashioned by Viṣṇu. It gives a good position to Viṣṇu's devotees. It is said to be very purifying. O goddess, it is always very difficult to be born as a human being in this mundane existence. The holy place on (the bank of) Gaṇḍikā is not easily accessible. To reach the place holy to Viṣṇu is (still) more difficult. Therefore, the best brāhmaṇas should go (there) in the month of Āṣāḍha. Having gone there, the best brāhmaṇas should especially put on the marks of conches, discs etc. That is said to be (a) very pure (act). The holy mark of a conch should be (put) on the left (arm), the mark of a disc should be (put) on the right arm. This is said to give salvation to brāhmaṇas. (The marks) should be carefully put on. Especially the brāhmaṇas should put on the marks of conches and discs. When the mark is put on, those men belong to Viṣṇu. O you beautiful lady, there is no other holy place like Gaṇḍakī. There is no other vow like Dvādaśī. There is no other god like Viṣṇu. (I am) repeatedly (telling this). Those best men who listen to the greatness of Gaṇḍikā, enjoy happiness in this world, and (after death) go to Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSIX

The Hymn Causing Prosperity

Mahādeva said:

1-6a. O beautiful lady, listen. I shall tell you the hymn and the rise due to that. There is no doubt that on hearing it a sinner—killer of a brāhmaṇa, is freed. The Creator told it to Nārada. I am (now) telling it to you. The self-born god of unlimited lustre had told it to him after holding his charming arm. (At the time of) obsequies one should cause (Viṣṇu) to be remembered. (He is:) the revered Nārāyaṇa, with Śrī. The god Viṣṇu has the disc as his weapon. He holds the Śārṅga (bow). He is Hṛṣīkeśa. He is the ancient Puruṣottama. He is Ajita (i.e.

unconquered). He holds a sword. He is Jiṣṇu (i.e. one desiring to conquer). He is Kṛṣṇa; he is eternal. He is the Boar having one horn. You (O god) are of the nature of the past, the future and the present. Rāghava is the immutable Brahman; is the truth and is there in the beginning and at the end. He is the great Dharma of the people. He is Viśvaksena. He has four arms.

6b-19. He is the general of the army. You (O god), are the protection. You are Viṣṇu, the lord of the world. You are the source. You are immutable. You are Upendra; you are Madhusūdana. You are Pṛṣnigarbha. You are Dhṛtarcis. You are Padmanābha. You destroy (your enemies) in a battle. Indra and great sages call you to be the refuge of those who seek your shelter. The great sages (also describe you) as the soul of the Vedas, the greatest of Ṛk and Sāman. You are the sacrifice. You are the Vaṣaṭkāra (exclamation). You are Oṁkāra. You torment your enemies. You are Śatadhanvan (literally, having a hundred bows). You are Vasu. You are the predecessor of Vasus. You are the lord of beings. You are the first creator of the three worlds. You are the self(-born) master. You are the eighth of the Rudras and the fifth of the Sādhyas. Aśvins are your ears. The Sun and the Moon are your eyes. O you who torment (your) enemies, you are seen at the end, in the beginning, and in the middle. They do not know the beginning or the end of him (i.e. of you). (They do not know) who you are. You are seen in all worlds, so also among cows and brāhmaṇas. (You are seen) in all directions, in the sky, on the mountains and in the cages. You have a thousand eyes. You possess Śrī, you have a hundred heads, you have a thousand feet. You support the beings and the earth with the mountains. You are in the (interior of) earth, in water, a great surpent with all beings. You remain supporting the three worlds, the gods, the gandharvas and the demons. O Rāma, I am your heart. Goddess Sarasvatī is your tongue. Gods are the small hair on your limbs. You have created them with your divine power. The night is said to be the closing of your eyes; and the day to be the opening of your eyes. Your body would be (i.e. is) perfection. The entire world is not without you. There is that stability in your body. You are the earth. Fire is your anger. Śeṣa, the glorious Lakṣmaṇa, is your favour. With your ancient strides

you have crossed over the three worlds. You made Indra the king (of gods). You bound (down) the great demon Bali. Having withdrawn all the worlds unto you, you the Death, have just put them in yourself.

20-28. You turn the visible and the invisible into one fierce ocean, and in no other way. You took up an excellent, great, divine body. You killed Hiraṇyakaśipu who created fear among all beings. Being of the form of one having the face of a horse you resorted to the bottom of the nether world. The great oblation was brought together, so also repeatedly the secret (*obscure*). That which is heard to be the greatest one, which is greater than the great, is said to be the highest soul. You alone are said to be the highest hymn, and the highest lustre. You are the pure oblation offered to the gods and to the manes. You are the attainment of heaven and salvation. They describe you who are beyond Prakṛti as the maintenance, the creation, and the destruction (of the world). You are sung by the Vedas to be the sacrifice, the sacrificer, the sacrificial priest reciting the prayers of Ṛgveda at a sacrifice, and the officiating priest, and to be the enjoyer of the fruits of sacrifices. Sītā is Lakṣmī. You are Viṣṇu, god Kṛṣṇa and the lord of the created beings. To kill Rāvaṇa you entered a human body. O you, best among those who uphold righteousness (*dharma*), this should be (i.e. was) done by you. O Rāma, you killed Rāvaṇa, and delighted the deities. O god, your power is infallible. Your valour is never fruitless. Rāma, seeing you is fruitful. Your praise is never fruitless.

29-42. O god, those men who on the earth are attached to you, the ancient, best 'man', will be successful and devout. Those men who will narrate this holy hymn of praise—the old account—are never defeated. How would the best men, devoted to Puruṣottama, be defeated here? O god, (except you) there is none in the world who is a distinguished giver of boons. Even he who is a great sinner should recite thrice (a day) this hymn of praise of the magnanimous Rāghava, which is the best of hymns. At the time of the sandhyā (prayer), and especially at the time of a śrāddha, this hymn should be carefully and with a devout heart, recited by the best brāhmaṇas. This is a great secret; it should never and at no place be told (to anyone). By

reciting it he would obtain salvation, and he would certainly be Viṣṇu. The best brāhmaṇas should recite this hymn first at the end of the worship of the piṇḍas. (A man doing so) would obtain the eternal (fruit of the) śrāddha. It is very pure, and gives salvation to men. He who, after having written it, would preserve it with profound meditation, has his life, wealth, and power increased day by day. The ancestors of an intelligent man who after writing it, would sometime give it to a brāhmaṇa, are free and go to the highest position of Viṣṇu. A man who mutters or recites this hymn obtains the fruit which is obtained by the recital of the four Vedas. O great goddess, the holding of a conch, disc etc. at the time of a śrāddha by brāhmaṇas proficient in the Vedas, would surely be inexhaustible. He should put round his neck a garland sacred to Viṣṇu and should have the marks of a conch, a disc etc. (on his body). Then, muttering and reciting this hymn, he should duly and devoutly perform the śrāddha. Then it becomes perfect, not otherwise. Therefore, a devout man should carefully recite it. A man obtains everything by reciting it, and gets happiness.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSEVEN

The Vow of Ṛṣipañcamī

Mahādeva said:

1-11. I asked the lord of the world about the vow best among the vows, leading to the prosperity of sons and grandsons, and giving pleasure and good fortune. Now, O beautiful lady, I shall tell it to you. Listen. This account of the excellent vow of the sages is divine. A woman in her menses, a great sinner, is necessarily freed from great sins after observing this vow. O goddess, it becomes inexhaustible to the dead ancestors, and is the means of righteousness, worldly welfare and satisfaction of sexual desires.

Śrī Viṣṇu said:

Formerly there was a brāhmaṇa named Devaśarman, of great arms, master of the Vedas, and always devoted to study. He maintained the sacred fire; he was always engaged in the six[1] duties (of a brāhmaṇa). He was well honoured by all castes; and had sons, animals and kinsmen. The wife of that chief brāhmaṇa was in her menses when the month of Bhādrapada came, and it was the fifth of the bright half. He, with his mind controlled and senses restrained, performed śrāddha of his father. At night he would invite (i.e. he invited) brāhmaṇas, giving happiness and good fortune. When it was the bright morning, he would make (ready) other vessels. He made his wife cook food in all the vessels. It had eighteen flavours, and gave delight to the manes. Then he separately gave invitations to brāhmaṇas. All the brāhmaṇas, the reciters of the Vedas came at mid-day. The best brāhmaṇa gave them respectful offering and water for washing their feet etc. Polluted by the menstrual flow he duly washed (their feet etc.) at that time. All they went into the house, and (sat) upon the seats indicated to them.

12-20. He specially offered them food with sweets. He performed the śrāddha duly and after offering the piṇḍas. He, engrossed in meditating upon his dead ancestors, gave everything to the brāhmaṇas like tāmbūla, gifts and various garments. (Then) he dismissed all the brāhmaṇas, intent on (giving) blessing. Then to his hungry relatives and kinsmen, he duly gave food at the time of the meal. When he had sat at the door of his hut at night, the brāhmaṇa's wife brought water and washed his feet; then the bitch and the bull talked to each other. (The bitch said:) "O dear one, listen to my words—as to how the daughter-in-law acted towards me. I shall tell (just) like that. I shall not tell otherwise (i.e. in a different way). Some time by chance I went into (our) son's house to protect the milk that was there. It was not seen by the daughter-in-law. The milk was drunk by a serpent; and it was seen by me. Then I drank it all. The daughter-in-law saw it. Due to that fault (of me) of touching the milk, my waist was broken for good. O lord,

1. Ṣaṭkarma—The six duties of a brāhmaṇa are: studying, teaching, sacrificing, acting as a priest at a sacrifice, giving gifts, and accepting gifts.

due to that grief, I have been miserable, My waist is broken. I do not relish food."

The bull said:

21-30. O bitch, listen. I shall tell you the cause of my misery. When this day came, my son gave food to brāhmaṇas, but did not care for me. He did not at all, at any time, give me water and grass. I, a sinner, conceived to be so, have been tied without food. O bitch, this has undoubtedly happened due to my former sin.

O goddess, at that time the words were heard by the wise son. "This is actually my father who has been an animal in my house. And undoubtedly this is actually my mother. Due to (ill) luck she became a bitch. What should I definitely do?" Thinking like this, the brāhmaṇa did not get sleep. At night he became very thoughtful and remembered the highest lord. "I have sincerely practised many righteous acts. How shall I have auspicious (things)?" Thinking like this, he again slept at night. When it was the bright morning, he went to the sages. Among them Vasiṣṭha offered him a good welcome. (Vasiṣṭha said to him:) "O best brāhmaṇa, tell the reason of your arrival." The brāhmaṇa who was thus asked, then saluted (Vasiṣṭha). "Today my existence is fruitful. My acts are fruitful today; my dead ancestors are pleased on (my) having had your sight which is difficult to be had.

31-41. I performed the śrāddha as told (in the sacred texts). I well fed the brāhmaṇas. I gave food to all members of my family. After the meals, the bitch came there and spoke (to the bull, as) we have a bull in our house. O brāhmaṇa, hear from me the words which she spoke to him. "The milk-pot in the house was polluted by a serpent. I saw it, and was undoubtedly very anxious: 'When with this milk itself, food would be cooked, then due to that food, all brāhmaṇas will die'. O lord, having thought like this, I drank (all) the milk. The daughter-in-law saw it and beat me. Due to that I becoming lame am moving. Being very grieved what do I do?" Knowing her grief, the bull said to the bitch: 'O bitch, listen. I shall tell (you) the cause of my misery. O bitch, I am actually his father in the former

existence. Today he fed brāhmaṇas, and gave them much food. But he did not place grass or water before me. Due to that grief at that time, I have become miserable.' On hearing this account, I did not get sleep during the night. O best sage, my anxiety started just then only. I am given to Vedic studies. I am proficient in Vedic rites. The two are very miserable. So thinking 'What shall I do?' I have come to you. Remove my grief."

The sage said:

42-47. O Ugrajanman, listen to what you did in the former existence. This one was the best brāhmaṇa in the auspicious city of Kuṇḍanagara. In the month of Bhādrapada, the vow of Pañcamī that fell then, was neglected by him due to the śrāddha of his father etc. On that śrāddha day, O innocent one, his wife had menstruation. She did all like giving food to the brāhmaṇas. The most sinful and wicked one did not know it and performed (the śrāddha). On the first day she is a cāṇḍāla woman; on the second the killer of a brāhmaṇa. On the third she is said to be a washerwoman, and is purified on the fourth day. Due to that sin his wife became a bitch; and O you of good vow, this one was born as a bull due to that act.

Ugrajanman said:

O you of a good vow, tell me especially that vow, gift, sacrifice or (visit to a) holy place, due to which my parents would have salvation.

The sage said:

48-62. In the bright half of Bhādrapada, there is Ṛṣipañcamī. By doing (the vow of) it the sin of the menstrual flow, perishes. It gives sons and grandsons and gives salvation to the dead ancestors. In a river (i.e. on the bank of river), or a well, a tank, or in a brāhmaṇa's house, a circle with cowdung should be fashioned. He should put a pitcher there. On it he should put a vessel which is full of grains used by the sages. So also (he should put) a sacred thread, a fruit with gold. He should also install seven (images) of sages, causing happiness and good fortune. Those who have kept the vow, should invoke all of them and worship them. He (who observes the vow) should, eating once a day, offer eatables

made from the corn used by the sages, and should eat that food (after) worshipping the sages. He should properly, very devoutly and with hymns, worship them. Then with ghee and gifts he should offer the libation. He should duly give (these) to a brāhmaṇa, (saying), 'May this please the sages'. Having listened to the account properly, having gone round (the images), he should separately offer incense, ghee, eatables of five kinds, and a respectful offering. "May the sages always abide by me. May they complete my vow. May they accept the worship offered by me. Repeated salutations to sages. May Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, so also Prācetasa, Vasiṣṭha, Marica, Ātreya accept my worship. Salutation to you." With incenses and charming lamps he should thus offer the worship. By the power of this being done the dead ancestors are at once released. O child, due to the ripening of the former acts and the power of the blemish of menstruation this was done. There is no doubt that he will get release.

For the salvation of his dead ancestors he observed the vow. They, intent upon giving him blessings, went along the path of salvation. Those best men who observe the vow of Ṛṣipañcamī, as told to the brāhmaṇa, should be known as meritorious. Those best men who observe this excellent vow of the sages, enjoy many pleasures in this world, and go to Viṣṇu's position.

CHAPTER SEVENTYEIGHT

The Hymn Called 'Apamārjana'

Mahādeva said:

1-2. I shall hereafter tell you about the excellent vow of the sprinkling with water, as told by Pulastya to the magnanimous Dālabhya. It destroys all faults caused by diseases. It gives auspiciousness. I shall tell it to you. Listen, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain.

Śrī Dālabhya said:

3-4. O revered one, please tell me that by which all beings

can avoid suffering from the troubles caused by poison, diseases etc; they are overcome with leprosy and (evil) Planets, and are always troubled. There are many severe diseases brought about by magic or by female deities[1] having destructive powers.

Pulastya said:

5-13. O best sage, those men who have pleased Viṣṇu with vows, fasts and restraints, will not be afflicted by diseases. Those men who have not observed an auspicious vow, have not given gifts, have not practised penance, have not visited a sacred place, have not worshipped a deity, have not given food in large quantities, are known to be afflicted by diseases and (similar) faults. He who attends upon Viṣṇu, especially obtains undoubtedly whatever he mentally desires like good health or great wealth. He does not suffer from physical or mental disease and is not afflicted by poison or a Planet. He does not have the fear of the contact of the deities having destructive powers. All his sins perish; and the Planets are always auspicious (i.e. favourable) to him. He who has pleased Viṣṇu and looks upon all beings as himself, is invincible even to gods. He has pleased Viṣṇu with a fast etc. When he (i.e. Viṣṇu) is pleased, desires of men are fully satisfied. O best sage, they are free from diseases, are happy. They enjoy pleasures. They have no enemies. Nor do they suffer from diseases and effects of magical forces. No evil act like (the evil influence of) a Planet or a disease takes place in their case. The weapons of Kṛṣṇa, like the disc etc. which are unobstructed, protect him who has waited upom Viṣṇu from all calamities.

Śrī Dālabhya said:

14-15. Tell me especially what the kind persons who see the ancient Vāsudeva in all beings, who look equally upon all, should do for the miserable persons who have not propitiated Govinda and are overcome with grief.

1. Kṛtyā—A female deity to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes.

Śrī Pulastya said:

16-29. O best sage, I shall tell it. Listen with an attentive mind. It removes the evils like diseases and blemishes and destroys fever etc. Having assigned (i.e. supposing that) Śrīdhara (is) in the tuft of hair on the crest of the head, and Śrīkara below it, Hṛṣīkeśa in the hair, and the highest Nārāyaṇa on the head, one should assign Viṣṇu above the ears and him who lies in the water on (i.e. to) the forehead. Having assigned the lord to the two eyebrows, and Hari between them, (having assigned) Narasiṁha to the tip of the nose, and Arṇaveśaya (i.e. he who lies in the ocean) to the ears, and the lotus-eyed one to the eyes, he should assign Bhūdhara below them. He should assign Kalkinātha to the cheeks and Vāmana to the roots of the ears. Having assigned the conch-holder to the bones on the forehead, and Govinda to the mouth, and Mukunda to the row of teeth, Vākpati to the tongue, Rāma to the chin and Vaikuṇṭha to the neck, Balaghna to the root of the arms, the destroyer of Kaṁsa to the shoulders, Aja to the two arms, and Śārṅgapāṇi to the two hands, Saṅkarṣaṇa to the thumb of the hand, Gopa to the rows of fingers, Adhokṣaja to the chest, Śrīvatsa in its middle, (he should assign) Aniruddha to the breasts, and Dāmodara to the belly, Padmanābha to the navel, and Keśava below it. (He should assign) god Dharādhara to the penis, and Gadāgraja to the anus, the wearer of yellow garments to the waist and (should assign) Madhu's enemy to the pair of thighs, the enemy of Mura to the calves of the legs, Janārdana to the pair of knees, Phaṇīśa to the ankles, and (he should assign) Trivikrama to the two feet. The wise man should assign Śrīpati to the toe, Dharaṇīdhara below it, and Viśvaksena to all the pores of the hair. Having assigned Matsya to the flesh, he should assign Kūrma to the marrow, Varāha in the fat and (should assign) Acyuta to all his bones. (He should assign) Dvijapriya (i.e. dear to the brāhmaṇas, or to whom brāhmaṇas are dear) to the marrow of the bones and flesh, Śvetapati to the semen, the sacrificial Puruṣa to the entire body and the highest soul to his soul.

30-43. Having thus made the rite of assignment, he would actually be Viṣṇu. As long as he would not talk anything, he would remain merged in Viṣṇu. He, being calm and creator of

tranquillity here, should take pure darbhas with their roots and tips, and should sprinkle all his limbs with the tips of the darbhas. A devotee of Viṣṇu especially brings about this auspicious tranquillity to a person afflicted by a disease, a Planet or poison. O brāhmaṇa, due to that all diseases are destroyed. (He should pray:) "Om, salutation to Śrī Paramārtha (i.e. the highest truth), to the magnanimous Puruṣa. (Salutation to the) formless one, and to him of many forms, to the pervader, to the Supreme Soul, to Varāha, to Narasiṁha, to Vāmana who gives happiness." Having meditated and saluted Viṣṇu, he should assign Viṣṇu's names to the parts of his body. "Having saluted the spotless one, the pure one, the one who removes bodily diseases and sins, Govinda, Padmanābha, Vāsudeva, Bhūbhṛt (i.e. the supporter of the earth), I shall utter words. Let them be successful. (Salutation to) Trivikrama, Rāma, Vaikuṇṭha, Nara, Śrī Varāha, Nṛsiṁha, (and) to the magnanimous Vāmana; to Hayagrīva, to Śubhra; O Hṛṣīkeśa, remove the inauspicious, that which torments others, that which is not beneficial, that magic which is discharged (at me). O ageless one, destroy the employment of the poisonous touch of a great disease. Salutation to Vāsudeva. Salutation to Kṛṣṇa, the holder of the sword. Salutation to Puṣkaranetra, Keśava, Ādicakrin, to you having a yellow spotless garment, O Kiñjalkavarṇāgrya. Salutation to you who has held Mahādeva on his body, so also a disc, and to cakrin. Salutation to the Trimūrtipati who held the earth on his fang. O Śrīvallabha (i.e. dear to Lakṣmī, or to whom Lakṣmī is dear), salutation to you, to the great sacrifice and (great) Varāha, O you whose ends of hair are like heated gold, and whose eyes are like burning fire. Salutation to you, O divine lion, the touch of whose nails is more (sharp) than that of the thunderbolt. O you having the characteristics of Ṛg, Yajus and Sāman, salutation to Kaśyapa, to Atihrasva.

44-65. Salutation to you, of the form of Vāmana, and going over the earth. O Varāha, destroy all miseries, the fruits of sins. O you of large fangs, destroy that fruit (of sins) O you, Nṛsiṁha, having a thunderbolt-like touch and bright tips of the teeth and nails. With your sound remove his miseries, O you destroyer of affliction, and taking up any desired form through the utterances of the Ṛg (Veda), Yajus (Veda) and Sāma (Veda). May

Janārdana pacify all his sorrows. May Govinda, having broken and cut off his agony (remove) his fever lasting for a day, two days, three days, so lasting for four days, very severe, constant fever, so also fever arising from the vitiated state of the three humours of the body, and accidental fever. (May he remove) the pain in the eyes, headache and stomachache. (May he remove) lack of breath, severe asthma, all round heat (i.e. fever), shivering, diseases of anus, nose, feet, so also leprosy and consumption. (May he remove) diseases like jaundice, so also severe urinary diseases, so also those diseases due to (the humour of) wind (in the body), cuts, boils etc. May they, wiped off by Vāsudeva, perish. (Even) by uttering the name of Viṣṇu, (may) all of them perish. May all of them, struck with Viṣṇu's disc, perish. By means of the medicine of the utterance of the names, viz. Acyuta, Ananta, Govinda, all the diseases vanish. I am telling the truth, (and) the truth (only). May Viṣṇu, when (his names are) uttered, destroy the poison which is immobile, mobile, artificial, so also that which is due to teeth, nails or from the sky (i.e. air), which is due to beings, and which is extremely unbearable. (May he destroy) the imps, the deadly demons, so also demonesses[1] attending upon Durgā, severe (disease of) white round spots[2] on the face, (divine mothers like) Revatī and Vṛddhirevatī, the imps called Vṛddhika and Mātṛ also. May the account of Viṣṇu in his childhood remove (the influence of) young imps. All the seizures (by imps etc.) of the old and of children perish that moment only when Viṣṇu is seen. Viṣṇu has his mouth fierce due to the fangs, and is fearful to the demons. Seeing him those imps especially go away. O Śrī Nṛsiṁha, O great lion, O you having a row of flames, O you of a bright face, O you bright one, destroy all the imps (etc. affecting) him. (Remove also) those diseases, great portents, enemies, great imps, and those cruel beings, severe afflictions due to Planets, the diseases in the wounds caused by weapons like diseases of the skin, so also the boils etc. and the imps etc. settled on the limbs, O you, who are the protector of the three worlds, and who ward off wicked demons. O Sudarśana of great lustre, cut off (i.e.

1. Sākinī—A kind of female being attendant on Durgā, and supposed to be a demon or fairy.

2. Maṇḍalaka—White leprosy with round spots.

destroy) the severe fever. Remove the (effect of) wind, cuts, and severe, great poison. (Remove) the very severe, undoing pain, and the flame of poison with the skin disease Om, Hāṁ, Hāṁ, Hūṁ, Hūṁ; kill the enemies with your very sharp axe.

66-84. Salutation to the revered Sudarśana, you having the body destroying miseries. (May) Viṣṇu, the Supreme Soul (remove) all those other wicked (forces) which give pain to beings; salutation to you, O Vāsudeva (who has) taken up some form. O god, O excellent Acyuta, having thrown the Sudarśana disc, fearful due to rows of flames, destroy all the wicked. O you Sudarśana, great disc, O you excellent weapon of Viṣṇu, O you of a sharp edge, O you of a great speed, O you having the brilliance of a crore suns, O you Sudarśana, having great flames, and of a great sound, cut off all calamities, demons, and sins, O you fearful one. O Sudarśana, destroy sins, make (us men of) good health; in the east, in the west, south and north, may Narasiṁha, the universal soul, protect (us) with his roars. On the earth, in the atmosphere, behind (us), by (our) sides, in front of us, may Viṣṇu, of many forms, protect (us). Since it is a fact that everything consisting of gods, demons and human beings is full of (i.e. pervaded by) him, may the entire misery of this one perish. Since it is a fact that Viṣṇu, the lord of abstract meditation is sung (i.e. praised) among gods, may the entire misery of this one perish. Since it is a fact that the highest soul Viṣṇu is sung (i.e. praised) in the Vedāṅgas, may Viṣṇu, the universal soul give him happiness. May there be peace. May there be auspiciousness; may unhappiness perish, (since) I have sprinkled with darbhas springing from the body of Vāsudeva. O Govind, O you who have cleaned (everything by sending) away (the evil forces), salutation (to you). You are Viṣṇu like that. Yet all miseries perish due to utterance of Hari's (names). When Viṣṇu is remembered, all blemishes, imps (or Planets) and all poisons and ghosts are destroyed. These darbhas have sprung from Viṣṇu's body. I am Viṣṇu myself remaining in front. I have destroyed all his misery. He should be comfortable, since such are Viṣṇu's words. May there be peace, auspiciousness and happiness. Whatever[1] is his misery is thrown into the

1. *Prāṇaśyatu sukham* etc. seems quite incongruous.

salty ocean. Let it perish. May he always have comfort due to the recital of (the names of) Viṣṇu. Let the sin go wherefrom it has come." A devotee of Viṣṇu, desiring the good of beings, should do this great sprinkling of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu at the time of diseases. Due to this all miseries completely vanish. For the purification of (i.e. from) all sins, the sprinkling of Viṣṇu is effective. Whatever (blemish), wet, dry, small or big, like the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc. (there is) all that quickly perishes like darkness at the appearance of the sun.

85-91. As small animals perish from the lion ('s attack), so diseases and blemishes flee away. May imps, fiends, goblins etc. perish on merely hearing the name of Viṣṇu. Those who are very greedy for money should never do it. Having done the sprinkling a man, desiring his good, should not accept (any money etc.). Those who are desireless, and who know the beginning, the middle and the end, and who are always calm, should do it. Otherwise it would not give success.

This sprinkling (in honour) of Viṣṇu is a matchless success of men, a great protection of men; it is a great weapon. It was formerly told by Brahmā to his son Pulastya. Pulastya himself told it to Dālabhya. It is publicised by Dālabhya for the good of all beings in the three worlds. The (narration of) Viṣṇu's sprinkling is over. O goddess, I have told it to you, since you are always devoted to me. A person listening to this devoutly destroys all blemishes and diseases.

CHAPTER SEVENTYNINE

The Importance of Apamārjana

Mahādeva said:

1-16. The sprinkling (called *Apamārjana*) is divine and very wonderful. It (i.e. the hymn) should be recited especially for fulfilling the desire of having a son. A wise man should recite this hymn for fulfilling all his desires. The life, wealth and

strength of those twice-borns who recite it once, twice or thrice a day, increase. A brāhmaṇa obtains knowledge; and a kṣatriya gets a kingdom. A vaiśya obtains wealth and prosperity, and a śūdra gets devotion—others also get devotion by reciting, listening to, and muttering it. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, he gets the fruit (of the recital) of Sāmadeva. Just at that moment only the entire multitude of his sins perishes. O goddess, knowing this, people, being calm, should recite it. Certainly they have sons and full wealth. That devotee of Viṣṇu who, writing it on a birch-leaf, has it (on his person), goes to Viṣṇu's highest position after having enjoyed happiness in this world. He who, having recited one verse, would offer it to Tulasī, has visited all holy places on his having worshipped Tulasī. This great hymn belongs to Viṣṇu and gives salvation. Being recited it resembles the gift of land, and the person (who recites it) goes to the world of Viṣṇu. He should especially recite the hymn with a desire to go to Viṣṇu's world. Men, being composed, should recite it for the (long) life of the children. It brings about peace to the children who are overcome by diseases and imps (or Planets). Being possessed by a ghost, so also (the influence of) poison, perishes just on its recital. That brāhmaṇa who, having put a Tulasī-garland round his neck, would recite it, should be known as a devotee of Viṣṇu, and he goes to the world of Viṣṇu. That brāhmaṇa who has (on his body) the marks of a conch, a disc etc., who has the (Tulasī) garland round his neck, and who always recites this hymn, is said to be a devotee of Viṣṇu. On leaving this world he goes to Viṣṇu's world. He is free from delusion, illusion, hypocrisy and thirst (i.e. desires). A man should recite this divine hymn. He would obtain the highest bliss. Those brāhmaṇas who are known to be the devotees of Viṣṇu are blessed on the earth. There is no doubt that they have emancipated themselves with their family. They, highly devoted to Viṣṇu, are most fortunate in the world. They should always be devoted (to Viṣṇu). They are the followers of the lord (i.e. Viṣṇu).

CHAPTER EIGHTY

The Greatness of Viṣṇu

Śrī Prāvatī said:

1. O lord of the universe, tell me the greatness of lord Viṣṇu, on hearing which greatness a man is never born again.

Mahādeva said:

2-6. O beautiful lady, I shall narrate the excellent importance of Viṣṇu. By hearing it one would obtain salvation in the end. Yudhiṣṭhira, having saluted with his head put on the ground Bhīṣma, Devavrata who was very wise, who was greatly devoted to acquiring spiritual knowledge, who was the resort of all sacred books, who had conquered his senses, and who was sinless, who, the noble one, was invincible even to gods along with Indra, who was true to his word, who had conquered anger, who was firmly settled in equanimity, who had great faith in Nārāyaṇa, the lord of the world, the refuge, to whom his devotees were dear, by means of his acts of speech, mind, and body, who was the abode of virtues, who was calm, and who was the grandsire of the Kurus, asked him this:

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

7-13. Some speak about Dharma (i.e. righteousness) to be great. Some say wealth is great. Some speak approvingly of gifts. Others (recommend) exertion. Some approve of Sāṁkhya, others of the great Yoga. Some speak approvingly of knowledge; some describe the sacred texts to be great; some say detachment is excellent. Some look upon the rites like Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice) as great. Some to whom clods, stones and gold are alike, look upon the knowledge of the self as supreme. Some wise men say that curbs and restraints are great (i.e. important). Some others (say that) kindness is great. Some ascetics look upon harmlessness as supreme. Some say purity is supreme, some men say worship of deities is great. Men who are stupefied by sinful acts, are perplexed in this matter. O you who know the way of life, O you the best among those who wield weapons, please tell me

which of these is the supreme act that should be done by the noble.

Mahādeva said:

O chaste lady, for the good of the people I shall tell you that account which took place between Bhīṣma and Yudhiṣṭhira on the earth. Hearing these questions, Bhīṣma then said to Yudhiṣṭhira:

Bhīṣma said:

14. O you son of Dharma, listen to this great secret which releases (a human being) from the worldly existence. You should listen to it properly and understand it well.

15-28. In this matter only they narrate this old, auspicious dialogue that took place between Puṇḍarīka and Nārada, the great sage. Puṇḍarīka was a very intelligent brāhmaṇa endowed with (the knowledge of) scriptures. He was in the first stage of life, and was always under the control of his preceptors. He had conquered his senses, controlled his anger. He was greatly devoted to performing the sandhyā (prayers). He was proficient in the Vedas, Vedāṅgas and expert in all sacred texts. With good oblations and sacred fuel he offered oblations to fire in the evening and morning. Having properly meditated upon lord Viṣṇu, he worshipped the lord of the world. He was engaged in penance and studies actually like Brahmā's sons. With water, sacred fuel and flowers etc. he again and again worshipped his preceptor. He served his mother and father. He lived on alms. He was free from jealousy. He studied the Vedic lore. He was greatly attached to prāṇāyāma (suspension of the breath). He who was the soul of all, who had no desire for the mundane existence, who was noble, had a thought to cross over the ocean of worldly existence. Having abandoned like (blades of) grass his mother, father, brothers, friends, friendly persons, maternal uncles, relatives and kinsmen, his possession like that of Indra, rich with wealth and grains, very costly fields where crops of all kinds grew, the very wise, very happy one, eating only vegetables, roots and fruits roamed over the beautiful earth. He went to Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Gomatī, Gaṇḍikā, Śatadru,

Payoṣṇī, Sarasvatī, Prayāga, Narmadā, and the great river Śoṇa; so also to Prabhāsa, sacred places on the Vindhya and the Himālaya. He went to those hermitages that are situated in the Naimiṣa (forest) or (holy places) like Puṣkara, so also those (situated) in Kurukṣetra, and on Govardhana etc. The great contemplative saint went (to these) properly and at a proper time.

29-41. Once that noble, self-possessed, wise Puṇḍarika, led by former acts, went to Śālagrāma. It was resorted to by sages knowing the truth and having penance as their wealth. It was a charming abode of sages, and was well-known even in the Purāṇas. It is adorned with discs etc. and the stone slab is marked with a disc. It is charming, solitary, extensive; and always pleases Viṣṇu. Moreover, the beings there are marked with discs and are meritorious-looking. Exhibiting the auspicious, holy places, they move there. That (Puṇḍarīka) of a good vow bathed in the Devahrada holy place on (the bank of) Sarasvatī in that very meritorious place viz. Śālagrāma. (He also bathed) in the Jātismaryā, Cakrakuṇḍa, and places situated on Cakranadī. There were other holy places in that village only. There also he wandered. Then the mind of that noble-minded one, due to the power of the holy place and the lustre of the holy places was delighted. That Puṇḍarīka too, with his mind purified by the holy place, devoted to the path of abstract meditation and having penance as his wealth stayed there only. He, all alone, indifferent in regard to opposite pairs of feelings (pleasure or pain), with his senses curbed, eating (i.e. subsisting on) vegetables, roots and fruits, content, viewing everything equally, desiring success, worshipping Garuḍa-bannered god (i.e. Viṣṇu) with great devotion and according to the precepts as told in the sacred texts, lived there only for a long time. By means of restraints and checks, so also (various) postures, suspension of the breath, (visiting) holy places, and constantly restraining his organs, steady abstraction of his mind, contemplation, profound meditation, he, free from blemishes, always properly studied Yoga. He propitiated the lord of all with (rites told in) the Vedas, Vedāṅgas and Purāṇas, and then he obtained purity.

42-51. Free from anger and hatred, as it were being Dharma incarnate, he propitiated the lord of gods with his mind fixed on him. The lord Viṣṇu with his eyes long (i.e.broad) like lotuses

was pleased. The lord (said to) Nārada: "I am pleased with this intelligent one." Then, sometime, Nārada, resembling actually the Sun, and knowing the truth, and very lustrous, went to the lord of gods. The revered one, with his mind full of devotion for Viṣṇu, engaged in the good of Viṣṇu's devotees, desired to see Puṇḍarīka, the treasure of penance. The very intelligent and very generous one saw Nārada adorned with an orb of lustre and the only repository of all Vedas, to have come to him. With his palms joined, he, with his mind pleased, bowed down, and duly offering materials of worship, again saluted (him). 'Who is this of a wonderful form, bright, having put on a charming dress having a musical instrument in his hand, and decorated with an orb (indicating) victory? Is he the Sun, or Fire, or Indra, or Varuṇa?' Remaining thinking like this he spoke to him of great lustre.

Puṇḍarīka said:

Who are you, of a great lustre? Where from have you come? O revered sir, seeing you on the earth is generally very difficult. O Lord, I have never seen a man like you. O sinless one, please tell fully (about) what I have indicated.

Nārada said:

52-55. I am Nārada. Always curious to see a powerful devotee of Viṣṇu like you I have come (here), O brāhmaṇa. The lord's devotee, an excellent brāhmaṇa, or even a cāṇḍāla, purifies (one) if he is remembered, gratified or worshipped by chance. I am the servant of Vāsudeva, the god of gods, the holder of the Śārṅga (bow), having in his hands a conch, a disc, a mace, and the only eye of the three worlds.

Thus addressed by Nārada, with his mind full of devotion, he, very much amazed at his sight, spoke sweetly to the brāhmaṇa.

Puṇḍarīka said:

56-62. I am (most) fortunate among the human beings; I am fit to be very much honoured even by gods. My dead ancestors are happy. Today I have got the fruit of my existence.

O divine sage, especially favour me, your devotee. O learned one, wandering (everywhere), I shall, with my acts, do (what you tell me). Please advise me about the great secret (act) fit to be done by me. You are the asylum of all the beings—especially of Viṣṇu's followers.

Nārada said:

O brāhmaṇa, here (i.e. in this world) there are many sacred texts and many acts. There are many kinds of duties (of men), so also are many minds. O best brāhmaṇa, the diversity in the world is due to that only. Otherwise all beings have either pleasure or pain. Some have understood the world to be just of the nature of intelligence, momentary, having no soul, and not depending upon external objects. Others say that this world springs from the Unmanifest, the eternal one; is eternal and merges into him only.

63-71. The souls are said to be many, eternal and omnipresent. (So say) others, the best among the intelligent, and always greatly devoted to observing it. Others think that the soul lasts as long as the body (lasts). Even in the body of an elephant or an insect the great primordial Brahman exists. Some say, the world will exist at other times as it exists today. This is an eternal stream. Who is the Creator? Others who have conquered their minds say: "That which is perceived by the senses does not exist. Whence can there be heaven etc.?" Some say this (world) has no controller. Others say it has. (Thus) averse to the truth there are extremely varied opinions. In the same way, other cheats, presenting their own logic, according to their intelligence and knowledge, speak with (i.e. about) many differences. O you treasure of penance, being attentive to logic, I shall tell you the meritorious truth, destroying the fierce mundane existence. The gods and men know its source. They are known through a proof. The deluded ones do not (know) the proof. They have not, in accordance with their capacity, understood the future, the past, the very remote, and that which is settled (i.e. dependent) upon the present objects.

72-77. The sages have explained the sacred texts, as they have come down in order in the former form. Those (texts) accomplishing the highest truth should be known as an authority.

O best brāhmaṇa, that knowledge which, removing blemishes like anger and hatred, springs from the power of study is called *Sacred Scripture.* Fruit, action and truth are knowledge, vision and the soul. The characteristic of other sacred texts is that it is without the concept of origin etc. It is the eternal ancient feeling of the self and is beyond the cognizance (i.e. reach) of the senses. It is just intelligence, and should be known as immortal, unending, unborn and immutable, spotless, that has manifested itself and has remained in a manifest and an unmanifest form. It is known to be pervaded by Viṣṇu, and is (also) known to remain separate from him. It is reflected upon by the meditating saints, is not known by those averse to the truth; it is noticed to be different from the minds, separate and so not existing in the soul. O child, O you innocent one and of a good vow, listen. I shall tell you who have asked me what Brahmā formerly said.

78-80. O child, O you innocent one and of a good vow, listen. I shall tell you who have asked me what Brahmā formerly said. Once having duly saluted Brahmā, the grandsire, staying in his world I asked the unborn and the immutable one: "O grandsire Brahman, tell me properly what is said to be the highest knowledge, and what is thought to be the highest Yoga."

Brahmā said:

81-87. O dear one, listen attentively to the acquisition of true knowledge, ample significance of which has sprung up from a few treatises, and the act of adoration of which involves no trouble. It is told by him that the twentyfifth (principle) traditionally described as *Puruṣa* is the soul of all beings. He is Viṣṇu, the resort of the world, the highest, ancient soul. He is engaged in the creation, destruction and maintenance of the world. The ancient one is the supreme god of the three souls. O brāhmaṇa, he should always be propitiated. They (who propitiate) the lord of the world (alone) see him as the support of the world, and after some time as the past, the future, the great and so also separated (from the world). With the eye of knowledge they see him to be gross, subtle, and different. Their mind is fixed on him. Their life has gone to him, and they are highly devoted to Viṣṇu. To those who are dull of intellect, who are wicked, who are

vicious due to their knowledge (based on) wrong logic, who say he is separated from the senses, he appears differently.

Nārada said:

88-89. O sinless one, listen also to something else being told by me. It was formerly told by Brahmā, the lord of the world, himself. Brahmā told about their welfare to gods led by Indra, and to sages who had asked him, O you of a good vow.

Brahmā said:

90-98. Dharma is solely devoted to Viṣṇu. The eternal worlds, sacrifices, so also the various sacred texts are solely devoted to him. So also the Vedas with the Vedāṅgas and other (texts). O wise ones, Viṣṇu, Hari is the lord of the universe. There are the five elements like the earth, and he is immutable. The wise should know the entire world to be full of Viṣṇu. Yet sinful men who are deluded, do not realise that the entire mobile and immobile world is full of his illusion only. (But) he who has his mind fixed on him, his life gone to him, and knowing the truth, realises (this). Viṣṇu, the guardian of the three worlds, is the lord of all beings. In him all this world dwells and (from) him it springs up also. Rudra destroys the world. While maintaining the world he is called Viṣṇu. I am in (i.e. look after) the creation. So also there are other regents of the worlds. He is the support of all. He has no (i.e. he does not require any) support. He is full and without parts. He is subtle and gross. He is higher than the highest—the other one. Submit only to him, doing all the work of annihilation. That Viṣṇu is delared to be our father and procreator.

All gods, thus addressed by Brahmā having the lotus as his source, saluted god Viṣṇu, Janārdana, the lord of all worlds.

99-116. Therefore, O you brāhmaṇa sage, you too become greatly devoted to Viṣṇu. Who else but he, very generous one, would, when solicited, give (to him who solicits)? Accept that Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, the god of gods, only as the father and the mother. One should everyday carefully please the preceptor, the lord of gods with a sacrifice, or with austerities or with study. Inexhaustible pleasures should be had in heaven.

(For that) O brāhmaṇa sage, accept that Puruṣottama only. For him what is the use of many hymns? What is the use of many vows for him? The hymn *Om Namo Narāyaṇāya* ('Om, salutation to Nārāyaṇa') accomplishes all (desired) objects. A man may put on rags. He may have matted hair. He may have a staff. He may be clean-shaved, O brāhmaṇa. Or O best brāhmaṇa, he may be adorned. No distinguishing mark is the cause of (i.e. represents particular) way of life. Even those who are always cruel, wicked or given to sinful acts, go, on being greatly devoted to Viṣṇu, to the highest position. And Viṣṇu's devotees, free from sins, are not smeared with streams of sins. They, with their minds conquered with harmlessness, purify the entire world. A king known as Kṣatrabandhu, who harmed beings, reached, from Keśava's abode the highest place of Viṣṇu. A very energetic king, Ambarīṣa, knower of the highest truth, obtained Viṣṇu's position after propitiating Viṣṇu. Many other brāhmaṇic sages, calm, and with their vows fulfilled, obtain great success after meditating upon the highest soul. Prahlāda, the great joy, formerly waited upon, worshipped and meditated upon Nārāyaṇa Hari, and was protected by him only. A bright and very religious king named Bharata, having waited upon him for a long time, obtained highest salvation. A celibate, a householder, a recluse or a mendicant, does not at all reach the highest position without propitiating Viṣṇu. He who has, during many existences, a thought like this: 'I am the servant of Viṣṇu's devotees', has all his desired objects obtained, and such a man obtains residence in Viṣṇu's heaven. There is no doubt about this. Then what about those whose life is devoted to him, and who have fulfilled their vows? Those who reflect upon the (highest) principle and have their mind concentrated should meditate upon that ancient Nārāyaṇa, the highest soul, who has pervaded the world.

Bhīṣma said:

117-136. Speaking like this, Nārada, the divine sage, knowing the highest truth, and engaged in obliging others, vanished there only. Puṇḍarīka too, who was religious-minded, who had devoted himself to Viṣṇu, muttering the eight-syllabled hymn *Om namo Narāyaṇāya*, always uttering the words, 'O universal

soul, be pleased with me', establishing Govinda of the nature of nectar in the lotus of his heart, the ascetic free from the pairs (of pleasure, pain etc.), having no possessions, lived all alone for a long time in the pure and pleasing Śālagrāma (village). The very intelligent one does not see anything except Viṣṇu even in a dream. He too did not have sleep obstructing the goals of human life. By means of penance, celibacy, and especially purity, and when the impression of many existences had taken a root in one way or the other, he whose sins had gone away by the grace of the god of gods, and the witness in all the worlds, obtained great success as a devotee of Viṣṇu (would get). He saw Viṣṇu, dark, lotus-eyed, having a conch, a disc and a mace in his hands, wearing a yellow garment and of a good form. Lions, tigers and other beasts harming beings, gave up their natural enmity, and gathered near him; and O son of Pāṇḍu, with the functions of their senses kindly disposed, moved as they liked; and they pleasingly secured one another's welfare. Like that the water of the lakes and rivers was clear; and the seasons also were full of pure force and very pleasing. The breezes had a pleasing touch, the trees were full of flowers and fruits. All objects became favourable to the intelligent one. When Viṣṇu, the lord of the god of gods, who loved his devotees, was pleased with him, the mobile and immobile world was pleased with him. Then, at some time, the lord, the master of the world, having long eyes like lotuses manifested himself before the intelligent Puṇḍarīka. He had a conch, a disc and a mace in his hands. He wore a yellow garment. He was very bright. His eyes were large like lotuses. His face was like the orb of the moon. He had (on his person) bells, ear-rings, necklaces, armlets, and had a thread round his waist. He had the mark of Śrīvatsa, wore a yellow garment, and was adorned with Kaustubha. His body was surrounded with (i.e. he had put on) a garland of wood-flowers; his crown and ear-rings were shining. He shone with a bright sacred thread and with a hanging necklace of pearls. The god of gods was waited upon with chowries and fans by gods with Indra, siddhas, gandharvas, excellent sages, yakṣas, best nāgas, and groups of celestial nymphs. The sinless Puṇḍarīka having seen the lord of gods recognized the noble Viṣṇu; and bowing with folded palms, and with his mind pleased praised him.

Puṇḍarīka said:

137-146a. Salutation to you, O Viṣṇu, (to you) who are unstrained, eternal, qualityless and noble, and the only eye of the world. You are the lord of all beings, and you have no lord (who controls you). You are Govinda, you are Garuḍa-bannered, and destroy fear and affliction by favouring the beings. They say that all this rests in you who take up many forms. Everything is full of you. You are different from this world. You have created the world. O you having produced a lotus from your navel, salutation to you. Salutation to the mighty soul known from all the Upaniṣads. O destroyer of Kaiṭabha, O lord of all gods, you alone are the cause (of everything). Be pleased, O you living in my heart and holding a conch, a disc and a mace. Salutation to him who was the origin of all beings and who supports the earth. (Salutation to him) who takes up many forms, (to him) the strong Viṣṇu whose greatness gods, lords of gods, like Brahmā etc. do not realise, and which can be measured (only) with penance. I salute you, the greatness of whom, not being within the scope of words, is not had (i.e. known). You are not touched by birth etc. You are always to be truly reflected upon; in the same way, due to compassion for your devotees, you, O Puruṣottama, are seen in forms like Matsya (the Fish), Kūrma (the Tortoise) etc.

Bhīṣma said:

146b-148. O hero, Puṇḍarīka praised that Puruṣottama, the lord of the world, whom he desired to see for a long time—Padmanābha, Trivikrama, Viṣṇu. Trivikrama Viṣṇu spoke to Puṇḍarīka, the noble one, in a serious voice:

The lord said:

149-150. O child, O very intelligent Puṇḍarīka, I am pleased with you. Well-being to you. Ask for a boon. I shall give you whatever you have in your mind.

Hearing these words spoken by the lord of gods, the very intelligent Puṇḍarīka requested him like this:

Puṇḍarīka said:

151-153. What a great disparity between you (always) wishing the good (of all) and me of a wicked intellect? O Mādhava, O lord of gods, order that which is beneficial to me.

Thus addressed, the lord, being much pleased, spoke to the noble Puṇḍarīka standing by him with folded palms. "May you be happy. O you of a good vow, come along with me. You, helping (others), and an eternal soul, will always be with me."

Bhīṣma said:

154-169. When Viṣṇu, loving his devotees, spoke like this, drums sounded in heaven, and a shower of flowers fell down. Similarly gods like Brahmā said, 'Good, good'. Siddhas, gandharvas and especially kinnaras sang. There only the lord of gods, the lord of world took him, and mounting on Garuḍa, and being saluted by all people went. Therefore, O best king, you too, full of devotion to Viṣṇu, setting your heart and soul on him, engaged in doing good to his devotees, resort to him, after having duly worshipped him. Listen to his account which destroys all sins. O best king, adopt that means in great detail, being full of devotion to Viṣṇu, by which the universal soul will be pleased. Men averse to Viṣṇu do not reach him even after having performed hundreds of horse-sacrifices and Vājapeya sacrifices. He who has (but) once uttered the two letters *Ha-ri* has girt up his loins (i.e. is ready) for going to salvation. They in whose heart Viṣṇu, dark-blue like a lotus, abides, profit and succeed. Whence would they be defeated? He who, being composed, would listen to or recite this everyday, is free from all sins, and goes to Viṣṇu's world.

O you daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, having heard this greatness of the names (of Viṣṇu), religious merit, worldly prosperity and salvation undoubtedly accrue (to him). A brāhmaṇa who is born in a pure family and who is greatly devoted to the Vedas, who is Viṣṇu's devotee is of the nature of Viṣṇu and never any other brāhmaṇa. That man who utters the name (of Viṣṇu) in (i.e. with) his mouth, who is intent upon meditating upon Viṣṇu in his heart, who has (the marks of) a conch and a disc, wearing Tulasī-garland, should be known, O learned one, to be liberated while living. Having enjoyed many

pleasures, he delights, along with twentyone (members of) his family, in Viṣṇu's world. Undoubtedly Puṇḍarīka, according to his capacity, got salvation. Due to devotion Viṣṇu is permanently pleased. At the time of the worship of a deity and penance, the singing of (the praise of) Viṣṇu, especially in one's own house in the Kali age, is said to be equivalent to the chanting of Sāmans.

CHAPTER EIGHTYONE

The Importance of Gaṅgā

Pārvatī said:

1-2. O you very intelligent one, tell (me) again the importance of Gaṅgā, having repeatedly heard which, all the sages are free from attachment. O lord, O master of all, what kind of greatness is of her? I have formerly learnt about her origin. I have (however) not heard about her greatness. You are the first among all beings and the ancient god.

Mahādeva said:

3-11. The sages came to see Bhīṣma, resembling Bṛhaspati in intelligence, Indra in valour, and lying on the bed of arrows. (The sages were:) Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Aṅgiras, Gautama, Agastya, and Sumati, the wise one; Viśvāmitra, the omniscient Sthūlaśiras, the chief of the Pramathas, Raibhya, Bṛhaspati, Vyāsa, Pavana, Kaśyapa, Dhruva, Durvāsas, Jamadagni, Mārkaṇḍeya, Gālava, Uśanas, Bhāradvāja, Kratu and Āstīka also, Sthūlākṣa, Sarvalokākṣa, Kaṇva, Medhātithi, Kuśa, Nārada, Parvata, Sudhanvā and the brāhmaṇa, Cyavana, Matibhū, Bhuvana, Dhaumya, Śatānanda, Kṛtavraṇa, Jāmadagnya Rāma, Ṛcīka and others. Dharma's

son, along with his younger brothers duly saluted him, and duly honoured them, venerable to the world. The noble ones, with penance as their treasure, when honoured, were seated comfortably, and had talks about Bhīṣma and divine way of life. At the end of the talks of the sages of purified souls, Yudhiṣṭhira, having saluted Bhīṣma by (bowing) his head, asked this:

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

12. O grandsire, tell me which countries are very holy, which mountains and hermitages should always be resorted to by those who seek religious merit.

Bhīṣma said:

13-23. In this matter only they relate the history—the dialogue between (Śibi) gleaning ears of corn and a siddha, O king Yudhiṣṭhira. A siddha having walked about this entire earth, reached the house of the noble Śibi, (living by) gleaning ears of corn. He knew the essence of metaphysics; he had always curbed his senses. He had given up attachment and hatred, and was proficient in wise acts. He was always the best among the devotees of Viṣṇu. He was very much devoted to holy acts about Viṣṇu. He did not censure Viṣṇu's devotees. He was always devoted to righteousness. He was always engaged in yogic practices. He wore (the marks of) a conch and a disc. He knew the truth of worshipping the deity three times a day, and he was always devoted to Viṣṇu. He deliberated about what is right and what is wrong with those learned in Vedic lores. He always recited the Vedas; and always honoured (his) guests. Thinking of (visiting) a holy place, he always subsisted on gleaned corn. That brāhmaṇa having the form of Viṣṇu, knew all that was reflected upon and sung by the self-born one. He was proficient in the significance of various ways of life, and was always inclined to the Immutable. Once he went to Śibi's house. The noble-minded (Śibi) seeing him, offered him due hospitality. (Then) Śibi asked him the cause of the auspiciousness of the regions. (Śibi) who gleaned ears of corn, said: "O best brāhmaṇa, please tell me affectionately (i.e.

due to your affection for me), which countries, regions, mountains, and hermitages are auspicious."

The siddha said:

24-42. Those countries, regions, mountains, and hermitages in which the best river Gaṅgā is always present, are auspicious. That good position (i.e. obtaining heaven) which one would get by resorting to Gaṅgā is not obtained by penance, celibacy, sacrifice and gifts. That pleasure which is had by those self-governed people bathing in Gaṅgā, is not had by means of hundreds of sacrifices. A man swimming (i.e. bathing) in the water of Gaṅgā shines after removing his sins, as the sun shines at his rise by dispelling darkness. O brāhmaṇa, as a heap of cotton having reached (i.e. come in contact with) fire perishes, similarly a dip in Gaṅgā removes all sins. He who would drink the Gaṅgā-water heated by the sun's rays, is equivalent to one free from mist and is superior to fire. The man who has bathed in Gaṅgā is superior to the man who has observed the Cāndrāyaṇa vow standing on one foot. The best man who uses the Gaṅgā-water for a month (is superior to) the man who stands with his head down for a myriad years. Being free from (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder he goes to Viṣṇu's (position). This Gaṅgā destroys sins like the confluence of Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī. By merely remembering her, the killer of an infant is freed in a moment. That Prayāga, the lord of the holy places, is difficult to be secured by the devotees of Viṣṇu. Having bathed there a man would quickly go to Vaikuṇṭha. He does not know (i.e. care for) what is dear and what is not dear. He does not obtain religious merit or sin. Having bathed in Gaṅgā, one is freed from a great sin. He who would say 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā' even from hundreds of yojanas (away from Gaṅgā), is free from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's world. A killer of a brāhmaṇa, of a cow, a drunkard, a killer of an infant is free from all sins and quickly goes to heaven. He also sees excellent Viṣṇu. He who bathes at the confluence of Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī goes to Vaikuṇṭha. As darkness vanishes when the sun rises, in the same way sins perish just by bathing in her. By bathing at

Gaṅgāvarta, Kuśāvarta, Gallika, Nīlaparvata, at the holy place of Kanakhala, there is no birth. O king, the best man, knowing like this, and repeatedly bathing in Gaṅgā, is freed from sin. Viṣṇu is always the best among gods, horse-sacrifice among sacrifices, Aśvattha among all trees, similarly Gaṅgā is always (the best among rivers).

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PART VIII

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

But he has neither the means nor the leisure to embark on that course. We have, therefore, planned to help him acquire knowledge by an easier course. We have started the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology in English Translation. Our goal is to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium of expression. The publication of the Purāṇas in English Translation is a step towards that goal.

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It is our pleasant duty to put on record our sincere thanks to Dr. R.N. Dandekar and the UNESCO authorities for their kind encouragement and valuable help in the publication of the volumes in this series.

EDITORIAL

We are happy to add one more to the already published forty-five volumes of the AITM series. The present one, being the eighth part of the Padma Purāṇa in English translation, comprises chapters 82-184 of the sixth, Uttarakhaṇḍa, Section which is big enough to occupy the next part and part of the tenth and last one.

As an analysis of the contents reveals, out of the 103 chapters of the Uttarakhaṇḍa included here as many as 42 deal with the Holy Places of the Jambū Dvīpa, highlighting their efficacy, with the help of illustrative stories, in the riddance of both major and minor sins, not only of a person who actually visits them with faith and takes a holy bath there but also of his forefathers of a varying number of previous generations. The reader will notice that each and every such place is praised as if it were the holiest of holy places—a tendency akin to what Max Müller has termed 'henotheism' in the case of the Vedic gods.

Next comes the devotion to god Viṣṇu, to which about 30 chapters are devoted narrating the various celebrations, festivals, rites, vows and modes of worship to be performed to propitiate the god. Devotion to Viṣṇu is said to be of three kinds, viz. Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa. In Sāttvikī Bhakti, which is the best of the three, the devotee merges his heart in Him, dedicates himself to Him, practices compassion and is always intent upon duties sacred to Viṣṇu; he worships the Lord three times a day and subsists on fruits, roots and water, and imprints his body with marks of a conch and a disc. Ths second type, i.e. Rājasī Bhakti, is the one motivated by a desire to get objects of sensuous enjoyment, glory and affluence. The Tāmasī Bhakti which is the most inferior of the three types, is characterized by egoism, hypocrisy, deceit and destructiveness. In the practice of meditation and devotion the deity with a form is preferred to a formless one, and this may be treated as an argument in favour of idol-worship. The Purāṇa argues: "How can a man go along a

vacant path without a support?...The one (Lord) having a form is easily seen. The formless one is not seen. There is pleasure of service of the one having a form; no (such) pleasure in the case of serving a formless one" (ch. 132).

One of these chapters (ch. 90) contains the story of a demon Śaṅkha who, attributing the invincible power of gods to their possession of the Vedic hymns, snatches the Vedas from Satyaloka when Viṣṇu was asleep, how he was killed by the Lord assuming the form of a big fish and then how the Vedas were recovered from waters by the sages at the behest of the Lord. Several things are indicated by this mythical account, viz. mainly that though Brahmā, the god residing in the highest Satyaloka is the custodian of the Vedas, the real keeper of a vigil and the protector of them is Lord Viṣṇu; and that the sages who recovered the different portions of the Veda from water are the seers of their respective portions, not their authors. This account most probably points to the historical fact that the Vedas were at some time not known to recorded history thrown by some foreign invaders from across the seas into the sea and were later recovered and restored to their original shape by some brāhmaṇa sages. It may as well be surmised that in some remote antiquity a master copy of the Vedas was kept in the custody of a super-priest of Brahmā category, and was stolen by some heretics, but was fortunately recovered in time, and then started the practice of committing the Vedas to memory and passing them on through oral tradition only for security reasons.

Incidentally, chapter 88 of this part reiterates that Lord Kṛṣṇa had sixteen thousand wives, and recommends the gift of Tulāpuruṣa (articles equal to the weight of a person) for obtaining a husband like Kṛṣṇa from birth to birth.

The last ten chapters of this part praise the first ten chapters of the Gītā and show how a recitation of each wholly or partly, intentionally or accidentally elevates a wretch to the highest spiritual position. While praising chapter sixth for its efficacy the famous Chāndogya story of king Jānaśruti and sage Raikva is reproduced with a slight variation in these names making them Jñānaśruti and Raikya respectively.

Next comes the story of Jalandhara which has already been narrated in detail in chapters 3-18 of this Khaṇḍa (vide Pd. P.,

Part VII). Here it, very strangely, reappears in nine chapters, viz. 96-104 without any new feature at all. We have already hinted at the multiple authorship of this Purāṇa in our Preface to Part VII and may only add here that it was a sensless act on the part of the author of this repetition.

Lastly, one long chapter (122) is devoted to the details of Dīpāvalī celebration, which gives a sort of religious sanction to the practice of gambling during the festival. It is said that Pārvatī defeated Śiva in the game of dice and sent him away naked, and further that he who gets victory first (in gambling) passes the whole year happily.

Some more observations of the Purāṇa may be noted here:

In chapter 112 it has been stated that religious merit or sin of one person can pass to another person through contact, e.g. due to being paired together, going together, eating from the same pot etc., followed by a long list of what fraction of it passes under what circumstances. The arithmatic involved here, if not arbitrary, would pose a serious juridical problem for one wishing to find a rational basis for the calculation.

The Purāṇa has introduced two technical terms in chapter 114, viz. *śuṣka* for non-deliberate sin and *ārdra* for a deliberate one, and two more in chapter 132, viz. *śukla dravya* for money earned through performance of one's duty, which is equivalent to the current term 'white money' earned through rightful means, and, by implication, *kṛṣṇa dravya* for 'black money'.

In chapter 117 it has been declared that one having no faith, a sinful person, an atheist, one with a split mind and a disputant —these five do not get the benefit of a visit to a holy place.

At the time when this Purāṇa was composed very early marriage was in vogue, as is indicated by the injunction of the Purāṇa (vide ch. 118) that a man should marry his daughter before she has attained puberty, with this further remark that wise men recommend a girl's marriage when she is eight years old.

Finally, the Purāṇa (ch. 126) gives a list of a few apparently good practices which become worthless under certain circumstances: e.g. religious practices accompanied by hypocrisy are worthless; penance becomes worthless by anger; knowledge without practical application is worthless; a gift given to a brāhmaṇa who is not learned in worthless, etc. —G. P. BHATT

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ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)—Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, v—verse, vv—verses, Ftn—Footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo.—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S.M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F. E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series, MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch.S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Maṇḍal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, MLBD, Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgītā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha)
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka, Com. by Mahīdāsa
DB	*Devī Bhagavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N.L. De, Oriental Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* by Hastings
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa*, ed. R. S. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P.V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇī*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradīya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣīya Prācīna Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd. P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Maṇḍal, Aundh
Śat. Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

CHAPTER EIGHTYTWO

The Greatness of Viṣṇu's Devotees

Pārvatī said:

1. O lord of the universe, O master, tell what are said to be the characteristics of Viṣṇu's devotees, and what is their importance.

Mahādeva said:

2-9. Since he belongs to Viṣṇu, he is looked upon as a follower (or devotee) of Viṣṇu. Brahmā should be known as the source of all and as one who has taken up a form. From him brāhmaṇas, masters of the Vedas, are born. They should be known as Viṣṇu's devotees and never the others. He who possesses purity, truth, forgiveness, who is free from attachment and hatred, who knows the ideas contained in the Vedic lore, is known as a devotee of Viṣṇu. He who is always engaged in keeping the sacred fire, who always honours his guests, who is devoted to his father and mother, is called a devotee of Viṣṇu. He who is having the virtue of compassion, who is averse to sins, who is marked with a conch and a disc, is called Viṣṇu's devotee. He who wears a garland round his neck, who always utters (the name of) Rāma with his mouth, who would always devotedly sing (Viṣṇu's praise), is said to be Viṣṇu's devotee. Those men who are always devoted to the Purāṇas, who are always engaged in (performing) sacrifices, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees, and are dear to all sects. Those sinful men who censure them, repeatedly go to (i.e. are born in) bad stocks after their death.

10-17. Those brāhmaṇas who always honour the image named Gopāla, fashioning it from a metal only with four hands, and well decorated, worship it, are known to enjoy religious merit. Those brāhmaṇas who after having fashioned an image (of Viṣṇu) from stone and called Kṛṣṇa and beautiful in form, worship it, should be known to be of meritorious forms. Where there is the Śālagrāma stone, where there is the stone from Dvārakā, or where there is the combination of these two, there is salvation. There is no doubt about this. If after install-

ing the image with (i.e. to the accompaniment of) a hymn, one worships it, then that worship gives a crorefold merit. It leads to religious merit, acquisition of worldly prosperity, satisfaction of sensual desires and salvation. Devotion of nine kinds[1] should be shown for Viṣṇu. Therefore, you should make the image of stone or metal. Devotees should meditate upon it and worship it. A devotee should offer to the image worship with kingly attendance. One should always remember lord Viṣṇu, the soul of all, the only refuge of the helpless and the poor, and the cause of the existence of the worlds. One should always remember (Viṣṇu), destroyer of great sins, (as present) in that image and say 'This is Gopāla, so also Kṛṣṇa, and Rāma.'

18-30. He who worships (the lord) properly, is a man of the lord. The best men, the followers of Viṣṇu, should fashion the form (of the image) like that as was taken up by Keśava (i.e. Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu) in Gokula. A wise man should fashion his form for self-gratification. By (doing) this, ample devotion is produced. There is no doubt about this. In that image should be fashioned especially a conch, a disc, a mace and (other) weapons of Viṣṇu according to (proper) measure. One should get fashioned an image having four arms, two eyes, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, wearing a yellow garment, beautiful, very large, wearing a garland of wood-flowers, and with bright ear-rings of lapis lazuli, having gems on the crown, and always shining with Kaustubha. (It should be) of gold, silver, copper or brass. (He should) get it installed especially by best brāhmaṇas with Vedic hymns as given in the sacred texts. After that it should be worshipped according to the (injunctions in) holy texts. The worship should be duly offered with hymns and in sixteen ways[2] of doing homage. When Viṣṇu is worshipped, all deities are worshipped. Therefore, the great lord should be worshipped in this way. The god without beginning and end,

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1. Navadhā Bhakti—Listening to the praise of Viṣṇu, narration of his virtues, remembering him, serving his feet, worshipping him, saluting him, servitude to him, his friendship, and offering oneself to him.

2. Ṣoḍaśopacāra—Sixteen ways of doing homage to a deity etc: Offering a seat, reception, offering water for washing feet, for rinsing the month, respectful offering, giving water for sipping, madhuparka, bath, garments, ornaments, sandal, flowers, incense, lamp, eatables, salutation.

holding a conch, a disc, a mace, and the lord of all gives everything to his followers, of the nature of merit. As is Viṣṇu, so is Śiva. There is absolutely no difference between the two. O goddess, knowing like this, the fashioning of the images of both should be done. There is no doubt that he who worships Śiva and is given to censuring Viṣṇu, lives in the Raurava hell. I am Viṣṇu, I am Rudra, I am Brahmā, the grandsire. I repeatedly and constantly live in all beings.

Pārvatī said:

31. O Maheśvara, tell me properly about the characteristics of those who are said to be the servants and followers and devotees of Viṣṇu?

Mahādeva said:

32-39. Śūdras are his servants, Nārada and others are his followers, and O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, Prahlāda, Ambarīṣa and others are his devotees. He who is always engaged in a rite in honour of the Supreme Being, who recites the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, and has the marks of a conch and a disc is said to be a Vaiṣṇava. That śūdra who is always engaged in serving brāhmaṇas, who always worships Viṣṇu, and listens generally to the Purāṇas that are acceptable to the Vedas, is said to be Viṣṇu's servant, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. He who resorts to (i.e. looks upon himself as a child of) five years and is devoted in many ways, is called Viṣṇu's devotee, and is approved of among (i.e. by) all good men. O you beautiful young lady, Dhruva and others, so also Ambarīṣa and others are said to be devotees of all times by the sages. In the Kali age śūdras very much devoted to meditation on Viṣṇu, are most blessed. They enjoy happiness in this world, and go to the eternal (position) of Viṣṇu. That śūdra who has the marks of a conch and a disc, and who is devoted to Viṣṇu, and who celebrates especially the four festivals, is the servant of Viṣṇu, as it is seen and heard.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTHREE

The Swing Festival

Pārvatī said:

1-3. O Maheśvara, tell me about the rites (performed) in all months. A great festival is to be celebrated (in these months). Which is the accepted manner (in which the festival is to be celebrated)? O lord of gods, tell me which the deity is who is to be worshipped, what his greatness would be, and on which day (of the month) it is to be performed. What is told to the devotees of Viṣṇu of meritorious deeds about the month? I am blessed, I am fortunate, I am lucky on the earth, that I (shall) hear the story of Viṣṇu (from you) by seeing you and coming in your contact.

Śiva said:

4-18. I shall, O sinless one, tell you the mode of the festivals, hearing which you will be delighted as by songs and musical instruments. First, especially on the Ekādaśī of the bright fortnight of the very auspicious month of Caitra one should worship (Viṣṇu) mounted on a swing. O goddess, one should always devoutly celebrate the festival according to the rule. They (who) see Kṛṣṇa, remover of the blemishes of the Kali age, mounted upon the swing, are, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, free from thousands of offences. The sins committed during crores of existences remain as long as one would not swing god (Viṣṇu), the lord of the universe, the master of the universe. Those who in the Kali age see Janārdana mounted upon the swing, are freed even though (they have committed) the sin of killing a cow. What then can be said about others? Gods, along with Rudra, being delighted at the swing festival, jubilantly dance, sing, and play upon musical instruments in the courtyard. Sages, the attendants of Śiva, gandharvas, the groups of the celestial nymphs like Rambhā, so also the serpents led by Vāsuki, so also deities and chief gods, desiring to see Viṣṇu come to the swing (festival). On the swing (festival) day in the vernal season beings are present for (i.e. at the time of) the swing festival, and O great goddess, those

belonging to a heavenly stock also certainly go (there) when (the image of) Kṛṣṇa is (placed) on the swing. Seeing Viṣṇu on the swing, there is a festival for the three worlds. Therefore, giving up a hundred other occupations celebrate a festival on the swing (festival) day. Prahlāda comes there. Viṣṇu mounts on the swing, O great goddess. Remembering him who grants a boon (one should celebrate the festival). Those who keep awake (on that night) remembering Kṛṣṇa on the swing, receive the fruit of all their religious merit in a moment. Those who see Viṣṇu on the swing in the spring, being saluted by the god of gods, play with Viṣṇu. One seeing (the image of) the god facing the south and mounted on the swing, O goddess, is free from (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa on seeing Viṣṇu (just) once. 'Om, we know the god mounted on the swing. We think of Mādhava. May that god urge us on'. This is the worship with the Gāyatrī (hymn).

19-34. 'Repeated salutations to Mādhava, Govinda, Śrīkaṇṭha'. The worship should be done to the accompaniment of the hymn and according to the rule. Being composed he should give a gift to his preceptor according to his capacity. He should devoutly sing (the praise) of Viṣṇu; then the (worship) will be complete. O you beautiful lady, what is the use of repeatedly saying other things? Viṣṇu remaining on the swing removes all sins. He, worshipped properly by men, always gives everything. Where (Viṣṇu) remains on the swing, gods, and kinnaras with gandharvas come there. There is no doubt about this. There he should worship Viṣṇu with the hymn, *Om, Namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya* ('Om, Salutation to the lord Vāsudeva'). With this hymn he should worship (Viṣṇu). He should do the worship according to the rule and in sixteen ways of doing homage (to Viṣṇu) . All his desires for virtue, material welfare etc. would certainly get fulfilled. O you of a good vow, all that like the assignment of (the various parts of) the body, hand etc., should be done with (i.e. to the accompaniment) of this hymn. The festival should be celebrated with the hymn as told in the holy text. He should keep (the image of) the deity (Viṣṇu) along with Lakṣmī on the swing. In front of (the image of) the deity he should install (the images of) Nārada etc.—the divine sages. So also the devotees like Viśvaksena should always be installed in

the front. The wise one should wave the light with the sound of five musical instruments. O goddess, in every watch he should be carefully worshipped. He should offer him respectful offering with coconuts and white banana plants. He should be carefully worshipped, O goddess. 'O god of gods, O lord of the world, O holder of a conch, a disc and a mace, accept the worship. Favour me.' The remnants of the offering should be given to Viṣṇu's devotees. The devotees of Viṣṇu should play upon musical instruments and dance there. Then especially the swinging (of the swing) should be done. O goddess, all the holy and sacred places that are there on the earth, come there to witness (the festival) on that day. Knowing like this, O goddess, the great festival should be celebrated. O you daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras and all other castes should be looked upon to be holding a conch, a disc, a mace.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFOUR

The Damanaka Festival

Mahādeva said:

1-19. In this month of Caitra itself, the Damanaka festival should be celebrated; and especially on the twelfth day the rite should be properly performed. (This festival) meritorious and enhancing the joy of the people, should be devoutly celebrated by the devotees of Viṣṇu. The blossom of Damanaka that has originated from the joy of gods should be offered by the devotees, the followers of Viṣṇu, desiring the fruit of the entire worship on the twelfth day of the bright half of Caitra, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. With the mind fixed on the great festival a man should celebrate it with great devotion. O you sinless one, having first gone to a grove, (a man) should worship (the deity) with Rati, according to the preceptor's order (saying), 'Salutation to you, O Kāmadeva, deluding all. I shall look out (for you) for Viṣṇu. (Please) favour me.' He (i.e. his image)

should be brought home to the accompaniment of the sounds of singing and musical instruments. O best among the gods, Viṣṇu's devotees should devoutly worship him at night after preliminary consecration of his image at night. Then before him (i.e. his image) an auspicious circle should be drawn all round. Then he should install him there with Rati. The wise one should (then) cover the image with a white (piece of) cloth; and should place damanaka. The best brāhmaṇas, the devotees of Viṣṇu, should perform the worship there only. 'Klīṁ, salutation to Kāmadeva. Hrīṁ, salutation to Rati also.' A wise man, after installing (the image of) Kandarpa in the quarter of Indra (i.e. the east), should worship (the image). O chief among gods, at night offering of sandal, flowers, so also incense, lamp, waving of lights should be devoutly and in the proper manner done. (Saying) 'Salutation to Madana' (he should) worship in the east. (Saying) 'Salutation to Manmatha' (he should) worship in the south-east. (Saying) 'Salutation to Kandarpa' (he should worship) in the south. (Saying) 'Salutation to Anaṅga' (he should worship) in the rakṣa (i.e. the south-west) direction. (Saying) 'Salutation to him whose body was reduced to ash' (he should worship) in the west. (Saying) 'Salutation to Smara' (he should worship) in the north-east. (Saying) 'Salutation to Īśvara' (he should worship) in the north. (Saying) 'Salutation to Puṣpa-bāṇa' (i.e. having arrows of flowers) (he should worship) in the north-east. In all the four directions he should worship (the image of) him. Then worshipping damanaka with sacred rice grains, incense, lamps, offerings of eatables, tāmbūlas, he should salute damanaka after consecrating it with the recitation done one hundred and eight times of the Kāma-Gāyatrī (hymn): 'We know that Puruṣa, Kāmadeva. We reflect on him. May that Anaṅga urge us on'. (Then he should say:) 'Salutation to Puṣpabāṇa giving joy to the world; (salutation) to Manmatha, the eye of the world, and to him who delights Rati. Salutation to you, O god of gods. O Śrī Viśveśa (i.e. the lord of the universe), salutation to you. Salutation to you, O lord of Rati; salutation to you, O ornament of the universe. O lord of the world, salutation to you. Salutation to you, O origin of everything.' With such various types of hymns, especially with those that are told in the sacred texts, Janārdana, along with Lakṣmī, should be carefully worshipped. Then the

wise (man) should report the act (to the lord), and keep awake. (He should say), 'O god of gods, O lord of the world, O you who give the desired objects, O you dear to Kāmeśvarī, O Viṣṇu, fulfil the desire in my heart'. Śrīnivāsa, Jagannātha (i.e. Viṣṇu) who desires the good of his devotees, should be carefully worshipped with many such hymns. He should offer damanaka to deities like Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu. Then (he should offer) a great worship with incense etc. And a great festival should be celebrated with songs, musical instruments, dancing etc. A pitcher is placed before the deity. Having poured water from the pitcher on the feet of the deity, he should have water-sport on that day. Then he should devoutly worship his preceptor with garments, ornaments and money. Then he should eat along with his kinsmen —the devotees of Viṣṇu.

Mahādeva said:

20-31. Then he should worship Viṣṇu with damanaka-sprouts. When Viṣṇu is worshipped, I am always worshipped. O goddess, on seeing the damanaka festival, he who has killed a brāhmaṇa, or snatched away gold, or is a drunkard, or eats flesh, is freed from the sin. O goddess, those good devotees of Viṣṇu who have worshipped the deity with damanaka, with damanaka-sprout, have visited all the sacred places. He who has worshipped Viṣṇu with a (damanaka-)sprout, has studied the Vedas, all holy texts, and maintained the sacred fire. His family—whether of a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya, śūdra or (of) any other (caste)—is lucky, is said to be very lucky. Being born in a family in which the damanaka festival is celebrated, is blessed. So also he who has worshipped Viṣṇu. O goddess, having worshipped (Viṣṇu) with damanaka when spring has arrived, he gets the fruit of the gift of a thousand cows. He who would with great devotion worship Viṣṇu with jasmine flowers in the spring, would obtain salvation. Maruka and damanaka instantly pleased Viṣṇu. Therefore, the best men, Viṣṇu's devotees, should worship (Viṣṇu with these). When he has worshipped Viṣṇu, he has made (a gift of) a thousand cows, has given his daughter (in marriage to a worthy groom), has given the gift of the earth. Of him who, having taken but one damanaka-sprout, worships the lord of gods when spring has come, O daughter

of the (Himālaya) Mountain, I do not know the measure of his religious merit. He having four arms enjoys the fruits of merit, worldly objects, sensual desires here (i.e. in this world) and in the next world, and enjoys Viṣṇu's position.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFIVE

The Śayana Festival of Viṣṇu

Mahādeva said:

1-11. A devotee of Viṣṇu should devoutly and with joy worship and celebrate the festival of the lord of the world lying in water on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. Having had songs, (having played upon) musical instruments, having danced and celebrated the auspicious great festival, he should, being delighted, see the best god on the Ekādaśī (day). Devoutly singing a song in praise of Viṣṇu, he should celebrate the auspicious festival. 'O lord of gods, lie in this water. When, O lord of gods, you are asleep, the world also is asleep.' On the advent of the rainy season, those men who put Viṣṇu in water, have no torment in hell, O best goddess. The bed called Viṣṇu, should be made in a golden vessel, or a silver vessel, or a copper vessel, O best goddess. Or it should be made in an earthen vessel. Having put there cold water made fragrant, the wise man should install in that water (the image of) Viṣṇu. The image should have the name of Gopāla or of Rāma. Or especially a Śālagrāma stone should be installed. Or an image of that stone (should be put). Its merit is unending. As long as the earth, the people on it, the moon and the sun are there, no one in his family would be a hellish being. Therefore, O great goddess, he should worship Viṣṇu in water. The man, free from torment, would exist till the final deluge. During the time of Jyeṣṭha and Āṣāḍha he should worship Viṣṇu covered with a Tulasī leaf in very cold water.

12-20. Those who worship Viṣṇu remaining in water with various flowers during the time of Jyeṣṭha and Āṣāḍha, are free

from Yama's torment. As water is most dear to Viṣṇu, as he lies in water, as he likes water, so, especially in summer, (a man) should worship Viṣṇu remaining in water. He who, after making the image of Śālagrāma stone of the deity lie in water, has worshipped it, would emancipate his family. He, O beautiful one, who has devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu in water when the Sun is in Cancer (the fourth sign of the Zodiac), or especially when he is in Gemini (the third sign of the Zodiac), and he who has offered worship to the lord remaining and lying in water, has performed crores of hundreds of sacrifices. Those men who in the month called Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) worship (the image of) Viṣṇu after putting it in water are gods on the earth. He who having prepared (the mixture of) sandal and water in a pot, would put (into it the image of) Viṣṇu, and worship it at night on Dvādaśī, would get salvation. These five—one who has no faith, one of a sinful mind, an atheist, one whose doubt has not been removed, and one who acts from a (selfish) motive—do not enjoy the fruit of the worship. In the same way, O great goddess, a man who everyday worships the lord of the world while he is in water, is freed from great sins.

21-30. O chief goddess, the worship to him is said to be offered with (i.e. to the accompaniment of) the hymn, 'Om, Hrīṁ, Hrīṁ, salutation to Rāma. Om, Klīṁ, salutation to Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, dear to the cowherdesses'. With this hymn, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, he should consecrate the water. (He should say:) 'O god of gods, O noble one, O you having the mark of Śrīvatsa, O great god, salutation to you. O cause of the world, salutation to you. O god, accept the respectful offering and always give me salvation'. With flowers of various kinds he should worship Viṣṇu. Free from all troubles he would be absorbed into Viṣṇu. Being very much concentrated he should keep awake on Dvādaśī. He should devoutly worship the immutable and inexhaustible god, Viṣṇu. Those who are intent on devotion and desire devotion should celebrate the festival called Viṣṇu(-festival) in the month of Vaiśākha. He should perform the rites in it as told in the holy texts. When this is done, O great goddess, it is equal to the fruit of a crore of sacrifices. He being free from attachment and hatred and turning away great delusion, goes to the eternal (position) of Viṣṇu

after having enjoyed happiness in the world. A brāhmaṇa who on the earth devoutly celebrates (this) festival, gets free from sins, and certainly goes to Vaikuṇṭha. A man deprived of Vedic studies and without the study of holy texts gets Viṣṇu's position on having devotion for Viṣṇu. He would be delighted in self, would always be free, and would have conquered his self. He goes to Viṣṇu's position (and remains there) as long as the Moon and the Sun (exist).

CHAPTER EIGHTYSIX

The Investiture of the Sacred Thread

Mahādeva said:

1-19. When the month of Śrāvaṇa comes the rite of the investiture of the sacred thread should be performed, having done which divine devotion is produced. O Pārvatī, the wise ones should perform, with faith, Viṣṇu's investiture of the sacred thread. (By doing that) his worship in the rainy season becomes complete. On Viṣṇu's investiture of the sacred thread one gets pleasure. One would get various pleasures on having always properly worshipped Viṣṇu. Having brought a thread, a garment spun by a brāhmaṇa woman (he should do the rite). Or he should use there (i.e. for this rite) thread spun by himself. Or similarly he should get a thread spun by a good śūdra woman. Or he should properly have one through sale. The rite of the investiture (of the thread) should be done with silken cloth only. So also (the sacred thread for) god Viṣṇu should be made of silver. Or, O chief goddess, it should be especially made of gold according to the rule. In the absence of all metals the wise ones should take (a cotton) thread. The thread reaching the feet is said to be the best. The one up to the knees (is said to be) middling. The one reaching the navel (is said to be) inferior. A wise one should have the investiture (of any one of these threads). The thread should have the knots numbering the days of the year, or half the number, or one hundred and eight. O

Pārvatī, it is also proper (to have one) having half the number. On the phallus it is known as liṅga, and should be accompanied by Gaṅgā and the serpents. O goddess, on the image the sacred thread should be of wood flowers. It should be prepared beautifully, by which Viṣṇu is pleased. One good sacred thread called *gandha* should always be prepared by men, Viṣṇu's devotees, and it should have only one strand. In the same way the thread sacred to the deity Viṣṇu is also said to be (so) for the gods. So also (for) the devotees like Ambarīṣa and Dhruva. Then, O Pārvatī, sacred threads should be offered here (i.e. in this rite). The first day is recommended for investiture with the sacred thread of Kubera. The second is said to be the best of days for goddess Lakṣmī. The third for you, and the fourth for Gajānana. The fifth is for the Moon, and the sixth for Kārtikeya. The seventh is said (i.e. recommended) for the Sun; for Durgā the eighth is told, the ninth for the divine mothers and similarly the tenth is (recommended) for Yama. The eleventh is (recommended) for all (deities), and the twelfth for Viṣṇu. The thirteenth is for Madana, and the fourteenth is said to be for Śarva. Similarly the fifteenth (day of the fortnight) is recommended for Brahmā's worship.

20-27. These are said to be the proper days of investiture with the sacred thread. Twelve is said to be inferior. Double (the number) is said to be middling; and thrice the number (i.e. thirtysix) is said to be the number of knots on the sacred thread. Have it dyed with camphor and saffron, sandal and turmeric. Having dyed all this, and having put it in a new casket, all those should be placed like a deity (at the place) where the worship of the deity (is to be performed). First, worship of the deity should be done. (Then) garment with the thread (should be put on). After the sacred thread is put on, the worship is said to be done. In the sacred threads the deities would be in proximity. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Rudra are the three deities of the sacred thread. Kriyā, Pauruṣī, Vīrā, the fourth (being) Aparājitā, Jayā and Vijayā, Muktidā, so also Sadāśivā, the ninth (is) Manonmanī, and the tenth Sarvatomukhī—these are the deities of the knots. He should install them on the threads. Then with (appropriate) finger position according to the rule of

the holy texts, he should invoke them. This is said to be properly placing them in proximity.

28-35. The placing in proximity is done by the finger position (called) *sannidhi-mudrā*. Then having protected them with (the finger position called) *rakṣā* (i.e. protection)-*mudrā* and having immortalised them with (the finger position called) *dhenu-mudrā* he should bring them before the deity. Taking water from the pitcher he should sprinkle them with hymns from the sacred texts. The sprinkling (should be done) with the hymn: 'Klīṁ, to Kṛṣṇa'. Then having offered sandal, incense, eatables, having given tāmbūla etc., having worshipped the deities of the sacred thread in the sixteen ways of doing homage, having incensed the fragrant sacred thread, and facing the deity he should consecrate it with (the finger position) called *namaskāra-mudrā* (i.e. mudrā of salutation): 'O Mahādeva, with the goddess and attendants etc. you are invited by means of these hymns. O lord Viṣṇu, come along with the regents of quarters and attendants for the fulfilment of the rite. In the morning we shall worship you. Be constantly in the proximity.' Having put in the morning that sandal and sacred thread at the feet of god Rāghava, Viṣṇu, and having performed his rite(s) and with the repetition three times of the words, 'This is an auspicious day' and with the preliminary religious rite and with words of victory and with the auspicious sounds of bells, musical instruments and of drums he should offer the worship. He should worship in the proper order: first the seniormost, then the middling and (lastly) the inferior. With the hymn 'We know Vāsudeva, we think of god Viṣṇu; may the god urge us on', or with his own hymns he should offer the great delightful worship, having offered which Viṣṇu, the soul, is pleased. All round illumination should be done according to the rule. The wise man should also get prepared four kinds of food. O beautiful one, then the sacred threads that are worshipped should be given (to brāhmaṇas). Then he should especially worship his teacher with devotion. The great preceptor should be worshipped with the rite (of offering) garments and ornaments. After having worshipped his preceptor he should wear the sacred thread. Then having given tāmbūlas to those who are Viṣṇu's devotees and a full oblation to Agni, he should report the act to Śrīnivāsa, Śrī

Kṛṣṇa. (He should say:) 'O Viṣṇu, may that (act of having) worshipped you without the (proper) hymns, the (proper) acts, and without devotion, be certainly well completed'. Then having called (his relatives) he should eat the cooked food with his dear relatives, Viṣṇu's devotees, and brāhmaṇas. Those best brāhmaṇas who listen to this divine worship are free from all sins and go to the highest position of Viṣṇu.

36-41. There is no doubt that as long as the Moon shines, the Sun shines, he who has investiture of the sacred thread shines like them. On having the investiture with the sacred thread all the gifts and restraints that there are on the earth, become perfect. This rite of the investiture of the sacred thread is the king of festivals. A killer of a brāhmaṇa is purified by it. No doubt should be raised about this. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, what is said is the truth, the (absolute) truth. The religious merit that is said (to result) from the investiture of the sacred thread is also said (to be had) from seeing it. O noble one, the śūdras who have devoutly performed this rite of the investiture of the sacred thread, are said to be most fortunate. I am lucky, I am blessed, I am fortunate, (as) the devotion I had for Viṣṇu, gives salvation.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSEVEN

Monthly Offering of Flowers to Viṣṇu

Maheśvara said:

1-13. In Caitra Viṣṇu who removes sufferings should be carefully worshipped with campaka or jasmine flowers. One should worship the lord of the worlds, the lord of the lords of all, viz. Viṣṇu, with damanaka, maruka, and bilva flowers. Or (one) being very calm, should (worship him) with divine, red lotuses. O chief goddess, men worship Viṣṇu in the month of Caitra. O goddess, and in Vaiśākha the great lord should always be worshipped. He who has devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu, taking (i.e. with) a ketakī-leaf, when the Sun is in the sign

Taurus of the Zodiac, is pleased for a hundred ages of Manu. When the month of Jyeṣṭha comes, he should worship (Viṣṇu) with various flowers. When the lord of gods is worshipped, all gods are worshipped well. They too, (even) after having committed thousands of (minor) sins and hundreds of major sins, will go there where Viṣṇu dwells with Lakṣmī. When the month of Āṣāḍha comes, they should especially worship (Viṣṇu). Those men who always worship Viṣṇu with (flowers of) karavīra, red flowers and lotuses, are meritorious. Those who will worship Viṣṇu with gold-like flowers and kadamba flowers, have no fear from (Śani) the Sun's son. Viṣṇu worshipped with kadamba flowers at the advent of the rainy season, gives desired objects as long as the fourteen Indras (last). Viṣṇu, the creator of the world, becomes as pleased on having kadamba flower(s) as by obtaining Lakṣmī. O best goddess, Viṣṇu worshipped with Tulasī, black Tulasī and aśoka flowers, always removes (the devotee's) affliction. (Viṣṇu is pleased with them) who worship him when the month of Śrāvaṇa comes with hemp-flower or dūrvā-blade.

14-27. He should especially be carefully worshipped with various flowers. He gives many desired objects till the final deluge. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, listen. When the month of Bhādrapada comes, he who worships Viṣṇu with campaka flowers, white flowers and red sindūra flowers, with white lotuses, O great goddess, would obtain the fruit of all his desires. In the auspicious month of Āśvina worship to Viṣṇu should be offered with jasmine flowers, so also with various kinds of flowers. (Viṣṇu) should be carefully and devoutly worshipped by all people. Those men who by bringing lotuses only worship Viṣṇu, obtain on the earth religious merit, worldly prosperity, sensual enjoyments and salvation. When the month of Kārtika comes, the great lord should be worshipped. As many seasonal flowers as are there should be offered to Viṣṇu. With sesamum and sesamum flowers he should offer worship. When the lord of gods is pleased, the man obtains unending fruit. Those who worship Viṣṇu in Kārtika with bakula flowers, punnāga and campaka flowers are gods, and not men. In Mārgaśīrṣa the lord should always be worshipped with various flowers, offerings of eatables, incense and waving lights. In

Mārgaśīrṣa he should worship Viṣṇu especially with divine flowers. O great goddess, in the month of Pauṣa good worship with various Tulasī leaves and water mixed with musk should be done, and when the month of Māgha has come, he should worship Viṣṇu with various flowers. When the supreme lord of the gods is worshipped, a man certainly gets his desired object. The worship should be done with camphor or various eatables like sweetmeats. When Phālguna comes, Viṣṇu's worship should be done. He should fully perform the vernal worship after bringing flowers, or, O chief goddess, he should worship him with new flowers. When the lord of the world is worshipped, a man gets the eternal position of Viṣṇu by Viṣṇu's favour.

CHAPTER EIGHTYEIGHT

Dialogue Between Satyabhāmā and Kṛṣṇa

Hereafter (the narration of) the importance of the month of Kārtika is commenced.

Sūta said:

1-17. Once the sage (Nārada) came taking with him divine flowers and (those) of the desire-yielding tree to Dvārakā to see Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa welcomed and honoured Nārada. Offering him a seat, he said: "This is a respectful offering; this is water for washing your feet." And Nārada offered those flowers to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa distributed them among (his) sixteen thousand wives. The lord, forgetting Satyabhāmā, gave them to all (other wives). Then getting angry Satyabhāmā entered the anger-chamber. Calm Kṛṣṇa knowing that went there and bringing Satyabhāmā, he mentally recollected Garuḍa. By merely being remembered, Garuḍa, coming there, stood before him. Having quickly mounted on the bird, the lord said to his dear (wife Satyabhāmā): "O Satyā, do not be angry; for you, opposing the lord of gods with the deities, I shall plant the desire-yielding tree in your courtyard. O noble

one, pardon my fault." Making a pledge like this with Satyabhāmā, he quickly went to the world of deities (i.e. heaven) where that god (Indra), the killer of Vṛtra, was. Being solicited for the desire-yielding tree, (Indra) replied to the lord: "O god, O lord, it is not proper for you to take this tree to the earth." Then the large-armed (Kṛṣṇa) took out the tree from (i.e. with) the root, and the very strong one put it on his vehicle (i.e. Garuḍa). Then the wielder of the thunderbolt (i.e. Indra), the strong (god), speedily raised the thunderbolt and struck Garuḍa (with it saying:) "Leave the desire-yielding tree". Then Garuḍa, to honour the thunderhold, dropped one feather. Due to that stroke of the thunderbolt, three birds (animals?) sprang up: the peacock, the mongoose and the blue jay. Kṛṣṇa went to Dvārakā. Having come, he planted it in Satyabhāmā's house. Then only Nārada came and was very much honoured by Satyā.

Satyabhāmā said:

(Please) tell me how I should get such a desire-yielding tree and such a husband as the lord in every existence.

Thus asked, Nārada, the best sage, then said: "O Satyabhāmā, he is obtained by means of the gift of tulāpuruṣa." Then Satyabhāmā having weighed Kṛṣṇa according to the precept in the holy text, gave (the articles equal to his weight) along with the desiring-yielding tree to Nārada. Taking all the articles, Nārada went to heaven.

Sūta said:

18. When Nārada had gone after bidding farewell to Kṛṣṇa, Satyā with her face blooming with joy said to Kṛṣṇa:

Satyabhāmā said:

19-25a. I am blessed; I am fortunate. My existence is fruitful. My parents who certainly produced me as the (most) favourite wife in the three worlds, are lucky in being the cause of my birth, as I am (most) dear to you among (your) sixteen thousand wives. (I am lucky) since I duly gave, according to the rite as told (in the holy text), (the articles equal to the weight of) the

lord of creation with the desire-yielding tree to Nārada. That desire-yielding tree whose account the beings on the earth perhaps know, now stands in my house(?). I am also very dear to Kṛṣṇa, the lord of the three worlds. Therefore, O Madhusūdana, I desire to ask you something. If you are my benefactor, then tell this in detail. Hearing that I shall again do what is beneficial to me, so that, O god, I shall never be separated from you till (the end of) the kalpa.

Sūta said:

25b-27. Hearing these words of his dear (wife), Kṛṣṇa, with a smile on his face, put his hand into that of Satyā, and went with pleasure to the foot of the desiring-yielding tree with his beloved after having forbidden his attendants (to follow them). Having laughed and called Satyā, the lord of the worlds with the hair on his body bristling and with horripilation spoke (to her) to please and delight her.

Kṛṣṇa said:

28-30. O dear one, out of my sixteen thousand wives no beautiful lady other than you is dear to me. You are (just) like my life. For you I had a quarrel with (Indra) the lord of gods along with the (other) deities. Listen, O dear one; (I shall give you) whatever is solicited by you, whether it is small or big, even if it cannot be (easily) given, done, or expressed. Then, O dear one, how shall I not tell (i.e. give the answer to) the question put by you? Ask everything that is in your mind. I shall tell (i.e. answer) it.

Satyā said:

31-33. Formerly (i.e. in my previous existence) which gift (did I give), which vow (did I observe), or which penance did I practise, that I, a mortal, have become like Pārvatī in this mortal (world), and that I always occupy half (the portion) of your body, always ride Garuḍa, and went with you to the abode of deities like Indra? Therefore, I desire to ask you, what auspicious (act) I did in the other (i.e. previous) existence, what (kind of) character I had, and whose daughter I was.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

34-45. O dear one, listen attentively. I shall tell you all about the auspicious vow you observed in your former existence. At the end of the Kṛta age in Māyāpurī there was an excellent brāhmaṇa of Atri's family, Devaśarman by name, who had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He was hospitable. He attended (sacred) fire. He was greatly devoted to the vow (in honour) of the Sun. Actually being like another Sun, he everyday propitiated the Sun. The old man had a daughter, Guṇavatī by name. Being sonless, he gave his daughter to his disciple named Candra(śarman). He (i.e. Devaśarman) looked upon him as his (own) son, and he who had controlled his passions, looked upon him as his father. The two, desiring to collect kuśas and fuel, once went to a forest. The two then roamed in the forest at the foot of the Himālaya mountain. Then they saw a fierce demon coming (to them). With their entire body overcome by fear, and unable to run (away), they were killed by the demon with Death-like form. My attendants, moving with me, took them to Vaikuṇṭha-abode due to the efficacy of the region and their religiousness. I was indeed very much pleased with them by virtue of just that act of them, viz. they, as long as they were alive, worshipped the Sun etc. As the rain-water goes to the ocean, the followers of Śiva, the Sun, Gaṇeśa, Viṣṇu, so also the worshippers of Śakti come to me only. I am one, born in five ways, and play with names—as one Devadatta calls his sons etc. with (various) names. Then the two lived in my house; moved in an aeroplane; had the brilliance of the Sun; resembled me in form; were near me; enjoyed divine beautiful women and pleasures like (being smeared with) sandal.

CHAPTER EIGHTYNINE

An Account of Satyabhāmā's Former Birth

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

1-4. Then Guṇavatī, after hearing that the two were killed by a demon, being overcome by grief for her father and husband, lamented piteously: "O lord, O father, where have you gone leaving me (and) without me? Today without you what should I, a young helpless girl, do? Who will affectionately look after me who am adept in nothing, who am grieved, who am living in the house with food, covering etc.? I am unlucky; my happiness is destroyed; my lord is killed; my life is doomed. To whom should I, a helpless young (woman), resort to today?"

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

5-14. Thus having very much lamented like a much afflicted osprey she, being dispirited, fell on the ground like a plantain tree struck by (stormy) wind. Having revived after a long time and lamenting on the ground very piteously, she plunged into the ocean of grief and was overcome by it. She, doing auspicious acts, sold all domestic articles and performed the rites beneficial to the two in the next world. She, highly devoted to Viṣṇu, calm, truthful, pure and with her senses controlled, lived in that city only and sustained her life. From birth till death she properly observed two vows: the vow of Ekādaśī and the vow of (i.e. relating to) Kārtika. O dear one, this couple of vows is very dear to me. It properly brings about pleasures and salvation, and sons and wealth. Those, even being great sinners, who, in the month of Kārtika, when the Sun is in Libra, bathe everyday in the morning, are released. Those men who sweep their house and present (the auspicious sign of) svastika etc. to Viṣṇu and worship Viṣṇu, are liberated while alive. Those men who bathe, keep awake, offer lights, resort to the Tulasī-grove in Kārtika are the forms of Viṣṇu. Those who do like this even for three days in Kārtika, are venerable even to gods. What to say of them who have done it from birth!

15-30. In this way Guṇavatī, always devoted to Viṣṇu's followers, and having fixed her mind on him, passed every year.

O dear one, once she who was emaciated due to old age and was tormented by fever, slowly, somehow, went to Gaṅgā to bathe. When, after she got into the water, she trembled and was oppressed by cold and frightened, she saw an aeroplane that came from the sky. From the sky it approached with (beings) having Viṣṇu's form, having conches, discs and maces in their hands, and properly marked with banners having (the pictures of) eagles. She got into the aeroplane served by a bevy of celestial nymphs. The attendants took her being fanned by chowries, to Vaikuṇṭha. Then she, like the flame of a blazing fire, who was in the aeroplane, obtained my proximity due to the religious merit of the Kārtika vow. Then all the attendants went with me coming to the earth by the request of the deities like Brahmā. O beautiful young lady, all these Yādavas are my attendants only. Your father became (i.e. was born as) this king Satrājit. He who was Candraśarman (became) Akrūra, and you are that Guṇavatī, O auspicious one. Due to the merit of the Kārtika vow, you very much enhance my love. At my door you had formerly made this Tulasī grove. From that this desire-yielding tree has come up in your courtyard, O auspicious one. Since formerly in Kārtika you made illumination, therefore, this Lakṣmī living in your house, has become steady. Since you offered all that vow etc. to Viṣṇu of the from of your husband, therefore, you have become my wife. Due to that vow only which you formerly (i.e. in the former existence) observed in Kārtika, from birth till death, you will never be separated from me. Thus, those men who are highly engrossed in the Kārtika vow, also come near me, as you, causing delight to me (have come). Men performing sacrifices, giving gifts, observing vows, practising penance do not indeed get even a portion of the merit which one gets by the Kārtika vow.

Having thus, at that time, heard (the words) of the lord of the world, Satyā, delighted due to the grandeur produced in the former meritorious existence, saluted the lord of the universe, Kṛṣṇa, who was the only cause of the three worlds, and spoke (those) words.

CHAPTER NINETY

Kārtika Best among Months and Ekādaśī among Days

Satyā said:

1-2. To him of the nature of time, all the parts of time are equal. Then how is Kārtika the best among the months? O lord of the god of gods, how is it that to you Ekādaśī among days and Kārtika among months are dear? Tell (me) the reason for this.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

3-4. O Satyā, you have asked well. Listen with a concentrated mind a dialogue between Vena's son Pṛthu and the divine sage Nārada. What you have asked, O dear one, formerly Nārada was also asked by Pṛthu. The omniscient sage told the reason for the superiority of Kārtika.

Nārada said:

5-17. Formerly there was a demon, the son of the Ocean, named Śaṅkha. He was able to destroy the three worlds and had great power and valour. The great demon, having vanquished the gods, drove them out of heaven. He also snatched the powers of the regents like Indra. Due to his fear gods along with the ladies in their harems and with Indra went to the cave of the Meru mountain and lived there for many years. When the gods who lived in the cave of the Meru mountain, could not be subjugated by the demon, he thought: 'Even though the gods have been vanquished and their powers snatched by me, yet they are full of power. What should I do now? Today it is known (i.e. realised) by me that the gods are endowed with the power of the Vedic hymns. I shall snatch them. Then all of them will be powerless.' Then the mighty demon thinking like this and noticing Viṣṇu to be asleep, quickly snatched from the Satya world the group of the Vedas. He took the Vedas. Due to his fear they moved out, and with the sacrifice and hymns they entered the water (of the ocean). Śaṅkha also, looking for them and wandering in the interior of the ocean, did not notice them

anywhere seated at one place. Then Brahmā with the gods sought the shelter of Viṣṇu. Taking the materials of worship he went to Viṣṇu's house. There the gods performed acts like singing, playing upon musical instruments, and repeatedly (offered him) sandal, flowers, incense and lights. Then the lord devoutly pleased by them, got up. He, having the lustre of a thousand suns was seen there by all the gods. The gods then having worshipped him in sixteen ways fell (i.e. prostrated themselves) on the earth like a staff. Then Viṣṇu said to them:

Viṣṇu said:

18-31. O groups of gods, by means of the auspicious (acts) like singing and (playing upon) the musical instruments, I (am pleased and) will grant you boons. I shall give you all objects desired by your mind. From the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Āśvina till the Udbodhinī Ekādaśī men will daily do as you did with the auspicious (acts) like singing, (playing upon) musical instruments etc. They (will) do what is dear to me, and will ever remain in my vicinity. Since what you did—(offering) water for washing the feet, respectful oblation, and (offering) water for sipping,—has had wonderful effect, it has become the cause of your happiness. O gods, all the Vedas snatched by Śaṅkha remain in water. Having killed the Ocean's son, I shall bring them (back). May the Vedas with the basic hymns and sacrifice always rest in water from today in the month of Kārtika every year. From today I (shall) also remain in water. Along with the chief sages you may also come with me. There is no doubt that those best brāhmaṇas who during this period bathe (daily) in the morning, have well performed the ablution at the end of a sacrifice. O Indra, those men who everyday properly observe the vow in Kārtika, should be always brought by you to my house on their death. And by my order they are always to be protected from dangers. O Varuṇa, you should give them progeny—sons and grandsons etc. O Kubera, you have to increase their wealth by my order. Those men, liberated while alive, actually have my form. Those (men) who have from birth to death observed this best vow according to the rule laid down (in the holy texts), should also be honoured by you. Since you awoke me on the day of Ekādaśī, therefore, this day is always

venerable and gives me joy. This couple of vows, properly observed by men, always gives Kṛṣṇa's proximity. No other vow (does it). O best gods, gifts, (visits to) holy places, austerities, sacrifices, do not always give (i.e. lead to) heaven.

CHAPTER NINETYONE

The Greatness of Prayāga

Nārada said:

1-4a. Saying so, Viṣṇu taking up a form resembling a small glittering fish fell into the hollow of the hands of Kaśyapa at his residence on the Vindhya (mountain). The sage kindly and quickly put him into (his) water-pot. When it could not contain itself there, he put it into a well. When it could not contain itself there, he put it into a lake. In this way it was (in the end) put into the sea. It grew there also. Then Viṣṇu, having the form of the fish, killed Śaṅkha. Then taking him in his hand he came to the Badarī-forest. Calling all the sages there, he ordered them (like) this.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

4b-6. Remove the Vedas dropped into the water. Quickly bring them with the Upaniṣads from the interior of the water. Till then I, with the group of deities, shall live at Prayāga.

Nārada said:

7-11. Then all the sages, endowed with the power of penance, lifted the Vedas with the six Vedāṅgas and with sacrifices. Since then that sage who got a portion of them (i.e. the Vedas) became the seer of that (much portion), O king. Then all the sages together went to Prayāga. They presented the Vedas obtained by them to Viṣṇu with the Creator. Brahmā, obtaining the Vedas with the sacrifices was delighted; and with the group of deities and sages he performed the horse-sacrifice. At the end of the sacrifice lords of gods, siddhas, serpents,

yakṣas fell (i.e. prostrated themselves) like a staff, and requested (Viṣṇu).

Gods said:

12-15. O god of gods, O lord of the world, O master, listen to our request. This is time for our joy. Therefore, be a giver of a boon. O Ramā's lord, the sages themselves have brought to this place the lost Vedas. Due to your favour we have received shares in the sacrifice. May this place always be, by your grace, the best one on the earth. It should increase religious merit and give pleasures and salvation. May this time also be highly meritorious, and may it purify the killers etc. of brāhmaṇas. May it give inexhaustible (objects). Grant us this boon.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

16-28. O gods, I think in the same way as you have said. Let it be so. May this (place) be famous as *Brahmakṣetra*. A king born in the solar dynasty will bring Gaṅgā here. She will be here united with Yamunā, the daughter of the Sun. All of you, Brahmā and others, (should) live here with me. This holy place will be well-known as *Tīrtha-rāja* ('king of holy places'). May acts like (giving) gifts, (practising) penance, (observing) vows, (offering) a sacrifice, muttering (hymns), and worship give inexhaustible fruits. May they always give proximity with me. May sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa committed during many existences perish the very moment at the sight of this holy place. Similarly the wise cast their bodies in my vicinity. Those men enter my body only and not a new existence. May the groups of the dead ancestors of those who come here and offer a śrāddha intended for the dead ancestors, have the same world as mine. May this very auspicious period also be always fruitful to men. The sin of those who bathe (here) when the Sun has entered Capricornus, perishes. Merely on seeing those who bathe (daily) in the morning in Māgha when the Sun is in Capricornus, sins go away, as darkness on (the appearance of) the Sun. As a result of the (daily) bath in Māgha when the Sun is in Capricornus, I grant men the triad, viz. the same world, the same form (as mine), and proximity (with me) in this order. O best sages, listen all of you. I am the giver of boons to you. I,

the omniscient one, always live in Badarīvana. That fruit which you get after ten years by (practising) penance at other place, is always got here by you within a day. Those best men who see that place, are liberated while alive. Then no sin resides in them.

Sūta said:

29-30. Having spoken like this to the gods, the god of gods vanished there only with Brahmā. All gods also lived there in portions. And those (gods), Indra and others, vanished. That best man of a pure heart who would listen to this religious verse or make others listen to it (i.e. tell it to others), would obtain the fruit which is obtained in the lord of holy places, Badarīvana, and (would) also (obtain) me[1].

CHAPTER NINETYTWO

Rules for the Vow of Kārtika

Pṛthu said:

1. O sage, you told me the great fruit of the vows of Kārtika and Māgha. O Nārada, you also (told me) properly about the rite of bathing and about the restraints. (Now) please tell me in due order the bringing to completion (of that rite).

Nārada said:

2-15. You are born from a portion of Viṣṇu. (Therefore) nothing is unknown to you. Yet, O son of Vena, listen properly to the importance from me who am telling it. A man, being careful, should observe the rule about the vow of Kārtika, when it would be the Ekādaśī of the bright half of the month of Āśvina. When a quarter of the night is left, he, the observer of the vow, with a vessel containing water should go out of his house in the south-west direction. By the day and in the evening

1. 'Me' here standing for Sūta obviously has no relevance.

after having placed his sacred thread on his ear, after having covered the ground with grass, after having covered his head with a garment, having carefully controlled his mouth, without spitting or panting, he should pass urine or feces after facing the north. If it is night he should face the south. Having held his organ of generation he should get up. Taking pure clay, he should carefully make purification (i.e. wash) by which the smearing and odour will vanish. He should apply (clay) to his organ of generation once, to the anus five times, to the left hand ten times, to both the hands seven times, and to the feet thrice (and then wash them with water). Twice this (number) is told for a celibate, and thrice for a hermit, four times for an ascetic. Half (the number should be used for) purification at night. Half of it (should be employed when he is) travelling. Half of it is (recommended) for women and śūdras. All the acts of him who does not go through the act of purification, are useless. The hymns of one not having his mouth pure, are said not to give the (desired) fruit. After that he should carefully cleanse his teeth and tongue, 'O tree, give us (long) life, power, success, vigour, progeny, animals and wealth.' Uttering this hymn, (he should take a piece of) wood of the length of twelve fingers of the kṣīra tree[1] without fasting on the diminutive day (*obscure*) (and he should cleanse his teeth). He should not cleanse his teeth on the first day, the new-moon day, the ninth day, the sixth day, a Sunday and at the time of the lunar or solar eclipse. He should avoid cleansing his teeth with (a stick of) the kaṇṭakī tree, cotton tree, nirguṇḍa tree, palāśa tree, bilva tree, castor oil plant, and iṅgudī tree.

16-30. Then he, with a pleased mind and devoted, should go, taking with him sandal, flowers, good tāmbūlas to the temple of Viṣṇu and Śiva. Then having separately offered articles (and modes) of worship like water for washing the feet, respectful oblation etc., and bowed again, he should do auspicious things like singing. He should also honour the good dancers having musical instruments made of bell-metal, lutes, tabors etc., so also he should honour the singers with fragrant flowers and

1, Kṣīravṛkṣa—Name of the four trees, viz. Nyagrodha, Udumbara, Aśvattha and Madhūka.

tāmbūlas, since they are the forms of Viṣṇu. In the Kali age penance, sacrifice, gifts made with devotion to the good lord of the world, always give delight. O king, I asked, "O lord of gods, where do you live?" Viṣṇu, pleased with my devotion then spoke to me thus: "I do not live in Vaikuṇṭha, nor in the heart of the yogins. O Nārada, I stay there where my devotees sing (my praise). Those foolish men who, after hearing a good narrative from a Purāṇa or the singing of my devotees, do not long for me, are hated by me. Men (should) worship them (devotees) with sandal, flowers etc. By that I am so much pleased as I am not pleased with my worship," Viṣṇu should not be worshipped with the flowers of śirīṣa, dhattura, hill-plantain, jasmine, śālmali, sun-plant, karṇikāra and with sacred rice grains. So also Śiva should not be worshipped with the flowers of japā, kunda, śirīṣa, jasmine, white jasmine, ketakī. One should not worship Gaṇeśa with Tulasī-leaves and Pārvatī with dūrvās. A man desiring wealth should not, in the same way, worship the Sun with damanaka flowers. Always he should use fragrant and best flowers for worship. Having thus offered the worship, he should apologise to the god of gods: 'O lord of gods, may whatever I have offered as worship without hymns, rites and without devotion, be complete. Then having gone round (the deity by keeping the deity) to his right, he should salute (i.e. prostrate himself) like a staff. He should again apologise to the deity and the singers etc. Those men who, on a night in Kārtika, properly worship Viṣṇu or Śiva, have their sins completely destroyed, and their ancestors go to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER NINETYTHREE

The Bath Rite

Nārada said:

1-10. When the night is left as much as two nāḍikās (i.e. fortyeight minutes), he, being pure (i.e. having purified himself),

should (taking) with (him) sesamum-seeds, sandal, sacred rice grains, flowers, lights etc., go to a pond. The bath in an artificial pond, a natural pond, in a river or at a confluence of two rivers, is said to be giving tenfold merit in (the succeeding) order. (A bath taken) at a holy place is said to give unending fruit. Having remembered Viṣṇu, he should take the solemn vow of bathing. He should offer respectful oblations to the holy places, deities etc. in (proper) order. (He should say): "Om, salutation to Kamalanābha. Salutation to him lying in water. Accept (this) respectful offering. Salutation to you. Since Viṣṇu moved in Vaikuṇṭha, Prayāga and Badarikāśrama, he planted his foot in three ways. With all those sages and deities, may gods protect me for this reason that from here Viṣṇu moved on. In Kārtika, to please (you), O best god, Dāmodara, lord of the god of gods, I shall bathe in the morning (everyday). (Be) with me. O lord of gods, O Dāmodara, I am eager to bathe in this water after having reflected on you. May my sin perish due to your grace. O Hari, with Rādhā accept the respectful offering made by me at (the time of) an obligatory or occasional (rite) in the sin-destroying Kārtika in the Kali age. O Hari, with Rādhā accept the respectful offering given by me who observe a vow in the month of Kārtika, of me who have bathed duly."

11-19. After having remembered Gaṅgā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, the Sun, he should enter the water. He who observes the vow, should, standing in water deep up to the navel, bathe duly. A householder should bathe with (i.e. after applying) the powder of sesamum-seeds and āmalaka. For the hermits and ascetics the clay at the root of Tulasī (is recommended). He should not bathe with (i.e. after applying) āmalaka fruits and sesamum-seeds on the seventh, the new-moon day, the ninth of both (fortnights) and on the tenth day. First he should bathe with dust (i.e. applying clay etc.). Then he should bathe with the (recital of) hymns. For women and śūdras (the bath is) not (recommended) with (the recital of) Vedic hymns, (but only) with the Purāṇic ones. (Now follow) the hymns at the time of bathing: "May Viṣṇu, the destroyer of all sins, who formerly for the mission of the gods divided himself into three due to devotion for them, now protect me compassionately. For this Kārtika vow may all gods having

received Viṣṇu's order, always protect and purify me. May all the Vedic hymns along with their seeds, secrets and power, so also sages like Kaśyapa, always purify me. May all rivers like Gaṅgā, the big rivers giving water, all tanks with the seven seas, purify me. May chaste women like Aditi, yakṣas, siddhas with serpents, herbs, mountains, beings in the three worlds quickly purify me."

20-32. Having bathed with (the recital of) these hymns, the observer of the vow, putting a ring of kuśa grass on (the fourth finger of) his hand, should properly offer libations of water to gods, sages, human beings and (his) dead ancestors. Then the observer of the vow, having come out of the water and having covered himself with a pure garment, should, after having finished rites proper for the morning, again worship Viṣṇu. Being diligent and with his mind fixed on him (i.e. Viṣṇu), he should, after remembering the holy places etc. and deities, again offer worship with sandal, flowers and fruits. The prayer at (the time of making) the respectful offering is: "O destroyer of the lord of demons, accept the respectful oblation given by me—(oblation) of me who have properly bathed (in the morning) in the month of Kārtika." Then devoutly (honouring) the brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas with sandal, flowers and fruits, he should feed them and salute them again and again. By worshipping the brāhmaṇas, the holy places residing in the right foot, the Vedas residing in the mouth, and the deities residing in the entire body, would be worshipped. The brāhmaṇas are the forms of the unmanifest Viṣṇu on the earth. By one desiring (one's) good they should never be humiliated; they should never be opposed. The observer of the vow should worship Tulasī, dear to Viṣṇu. With a concentrated mind he should go round and salute Tulasī. "O Tulasī, you have been formerly created by gods. You have been worshipped by the best sages. Salutation, obeisance to you, O Tulasī. O you dear to Viṣṇu, remove my sin." Then the devout observer of the vow, of an affectionate mind, should listen to Viṣṇu's account (as told) in the Purāṇa, and should honour that brāhmaṇa, the brāhmaṇa sage (who reads or tells the account). A devout man who properly performs the complete rite which is told before, obtains the same world as of Viṣṇu. On the earth

there is no vow other than that of Kārtika and dear to Viṣṇu, which removes diseases, which destroys sins, which is great, which gives good thoughts, which is the means of sons, wealth etc., and which is the cause of salvation.

CHAPTER NINETYFOUR

Restraints during the Kārtika Vow

Nārada said:

1-17. O king, listen fully to the restraints told for men observing the Kārtika vow, which (will) be told by me. The observer of the Kārtika vow should not at all eat any kind of flesh and meat, honey, jujube fruit and beans etc. The observer of the Kārtika vow should avoid corn (whose seeds have) two portions, sesamum oil, so also food polluted by tears, polluted by (bad) thoughts, polluted by (bad) words. The observer of the Kārtika vow should not accept others' food, should not hate others, should not be an adulterer, should not accept gifts at a holy place. He who observes the vow in Kārtika should avoid the censure of the god of gods, brāhmaṇas, (his) preceptor, (another man) observing the vow, of women, kings, and great (men). The limb of an animal, meat, powder, jambīra among the fruits, flesh, masūrikā (a kind of pulse) among corns, and stale food, are said to be avoided. So also milk etc. other than that of a goat, a cow, a buffalo, āmiṣa, all liquids purchased by a brāhmaṇa, and rock salt. Gavya (i.e. milk, curds etc.) kept in a copper-vessel, water collected in a small pool, and food cooked for oneself is said to be 'āmiṣa' by the wise. The observer of the (Kārtika) vow should observe celibacy, should sleep on the ground, should eat from a plate made of leaves. He should eat during the fourth part of the day. He should always do this. On the Naraka Caturdaśī day the observer of the Kārtika vow should smear his body with oil. He should not smear his body with oil on any other day (than the Naraka Caturdaśī day). The observer of the Kārtika vow should

avoid onions, garlic, pot-herb, mushroom, small red variety of garlic, lotus-stalk, radish, so also asafoetida. The observer of the vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu should avoid bottle-gourd, egg-plant, pumpkin-gourd, and the fruit (of the plant) of bṛhatī, so also śleṣmātaka fruit and wood-apple. The observer of the Kārtika vow should not talk with a woman in her menses, a man of the lowest caste, a non-Aryan, a fallen person, an outcast, and those out of the fold of the Vedas and the (three) twice-born castes. The observer of the Kārtika vow should avoid the food seen by dogs and crows, food prepared by a woman who has recently delivered, and food cooked twice, and burnt food. He who avoids smearing his body with oil, (sleeping on) a bed, others' food, eating from a bell-metal vessel in Kārtika, would be one who fully observes the vow. The observer of the vow should also observe the Kṛcchra vow etc. according to his capacity. (From the first day) he should avoid in order pumpkin gourd, egg-plant, root of bṛhatī, bilva-fruit, kaliṅga fruit, dhātrī, coconut, large-sized bottle-gourd, (species of cucumber called) paṭola, badarī fruit, bhūrja-fruit, vikataka-fruit, lotus-stalk and vikaṭa-fruit.

18-28. From the first day (onwards) these vegetables are to be avoided in the order (given here). Similarly, a householder should always avoid (eating) dhātri-fruit on Sunday. From among these also the man should avoid what pleases Viṣṇu. Having given that to a brāhmaṇa, the man should always eat. In the same way the observer of the vow should have restraints in Māgha also. He should keep awake and observe the rite as is told. Seeing the man observing the Kārtika vow as told (in the holy texts), Yama's messengers run away like elephants tormented by a lion. This vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu is superior to a hundred sacrifices. The performer of a sacrifice goes to heaven; the observer of the Kārtika vow goes to Vaikuṇṭha. All the holy places giving enjoyments and salvation, that are there on the earth, remain in the house of the observer of the Kārtika-vow. A bad dream, or whatever bad deed is done through mind, speech and body, goes away that moment only on seeing the observer of the Kārtika vow. Like the servants of a king, Indra and others urged by Viṣṇu's words protect the man who observes the Kārtika vow. Imps, ghosts, goblins etc. do not

remain there where the observers of the Viṣṇu vow are always honoured. Even Brahmā, with his four mouths, would not be able to describe the religious merit of him who observes the Kārtika vow as told (in the holy texts). (If) a man observes, along with restraints, the vow in Kārtika, which is dear to Viṣṇu, which destroys all sins, which gives sons, wealth, grains and prosperity everywhere, (then) what is the use of visiting and paying homage to sacred places for him?

CHAPTER NINETYFIVE

Bringing the Vow to Conclusion

Nārada said:

1-9. O king, now listen properly to the rite of bringing to conclusion—what the rite is—being told by me in brief. The observer of the vow should bring to conclusion the vow on the fourteenth of Kārtika for pleasing Viṣṇu. Above the Tulasī he should put up an auspicious pavilion with a good arched doorway and beautified with flowers and chowries. At the doors he should separately honour the door-keepers. He (should have) Jaya and Vijaya, meritorious and of good character. At the root of the Tulasī he should draw (an) auspicious (circle) all around. It should be properly beautified and ornamented with four colours. Above it should be a covering (decked) with five jewels. Having placed there a pitcher with a big fruit, he should worship there the god of gods holding a conch, a disc, a mace, having put on a silken yellow garment and with Lakṣmī. The observer of the vow should also honour in the circle the regents of quarters like Indra, since he was awakened by the gods on Dvādaśī along with Trayodaśī. He was seen to be honoured on the fourteenth. Therefore, he is more venerable. A man, calm and of a restrained mind, should devoutly fast on that day.

10-24. With his preceptor's consent he should worship the golden (image of) the lord of the god of gods in sixteen ways of worship with several eatables. By means of auspicious (acts

like) singing and (playing upon) musical instruments, he should keep awake at night. Those who on (the night of) keeping awake in honour of the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), sing devoutly, are free from heaps of sins due to hundreds of existences. That fruit (which is obtained) by those keeping awake on the day of Viṣṇu, and singing and dancing, is said to be the fruit of those who give a thousand cows. He should sing, dance etc. and should present spectacles. Of him who keeps awake on the night of keeping awake for Viṣṇu, in front of Viṣṇu, he who amuses Viṣṇu's devotees by reciting Viṣṇu's accounts, who produces the sounds of musical instruments with his mouth, and who presents free talks, who with these dispositions keeps awake in honour of Viṣṇu, his religious merit everyday is said to be equal to (a visit to) crores of holy places. Then on the full-moon day he should invite thirty or more brāhmaṇas with their wives according to his capacity. Since having given boons Viṣṇu took up the form of fish, therefore, whatever is given, offered into fire or muttered is said to be of an inexhaustible fruit. Therefore, the observerer of the vow should feed those brāhmaṇas with sweetened milk etc. He should (saying) *Ato deva*, offer sesamum-seeds and sweetened milk to two separately for pleasing the god of gods and deities. Having then worshipped the god (Viṣṇu), Tulasī and (other) deities, he should give them presents according to his capacity and salute them. Then the observer of the vow should duly worship there a tawny cow. Having honoured his preceptor instructing him in the vow with garments, ornaments etc. and having honoured him with his wife, he should give the cow to him. 'Due to your grace may the lord of gods be always pleased with me. May all that sin committed by me during seven existences, perish due to this vow, and may my progeny be stable. Due to the worship may my desires be always fruitful. On death may I obtain Viṣṇu's position very difficult to be secured.'

25-31 Having thus apologised to and pleased the brāhmaṇas, he should dismiss them. Then the observer of the vow should give (the materials of) the worship with the jewels to his preceptor. Then the devoted one should eat with his friends and elders. The rite is said to be like this in Kārtika or Māgha. A man who thus duly observes the Kārtika vow, is free from

sins, and getting release he would go into Viṣṇu's proximity. The fruit due to the proper observance of this vow should be known to be a crore times more than that of all vows, (visits to) all holy places and all gifts. Those who are engrossed in devotion to Viṣṇu and who observe the Kārtika vow are lucky and very meritorious, and get all the fruits. Sins remaining in his body have deliberation through fear of him. They say, 'If this man observes this vow, where shall we go?' Those devotees who in this way listen to the restraints, and those who narrate them before Viṣṇu's devotees, would obtain the fruit due to their having properly observed the vow, and have all their sins destroyed.

CHAPTER NINETYSIX

The Birth of Jalandhara

Pṛthu said:

1-3. O brāhmaṇa, (after listening to) the vow of Kārtika that you told in detail, and the worship of Viṣṇu at the Tulasī root that you told, I desire to ask about the greatness of Tulasī. How is she so very dear to the god of gods, Viṣṇu, Śārṅgin? How and at what place has she sprung up, O Nārada? (Please) tell this in brief. I look upon you as omniscient.

Nārada said:

4-11. Formerly when Rudra hurled down the Ocean's son, the lord of demons, gods like Brahmā bowed to Rudra with their heads (bent). O king, listen. I shall tell you the greatness of Tulasī. I shall tell you all the old account with its history. Formerly, Indra surrounded by all deities and waited upon by celestial nymphs, went to Kailāsa mountain, to see Śiva. When he went to Śiva's house, he quickly saw there a man of fearful deeds and fierce due to his fangs and eyes. He asked him: "O, who are you? Where has the lord of the world gone?" When asked repeatedly like this, he did not speak. O king, Indra got

angry, reproached him, and said (these) words, "O, though asked by me you have not given a reply. Therefore, I shall kill you with the thunderbolt. O you wicked one, who is your protector here?" Speaking like this, then Indra struck him hard with his thunderbolt. Due to that (stroke) his throat became dark blue and the thunderbolt was reduced to ash. Then Rudra blazed, as it were burning with lustre. Seeing (this), Bṛahaspati quickly joined the palms of his hands. And Indra prostrating like a staff on the ground started praising (him).

Bṛhaspati said:

12-14. Obeisance to Devādhideva (i.e. god of gods), to Tryambaka (i.e. having three eyes), to Kapardin (i.e. having braided and matted hair), to Tripuraghna (i.e. the destroyer of Tripura), to Śarva; salutation to the killer of Andhaka. Salutation to Virūpa (i.e. the deformed one), to Atirūpa (i.e. having a superior form), to Bahurūpa (i.e. the multi-formed one), to Śambhu, to the destroyer, and the giver of the fruit of the sacrifices. (Salutation) to the destroyer of Death, to Kāla (i.e. Death), to him, having a deadly snake; salutation to him who destroyed Brahmā's head; repeated salutations to the brāhmaṇa.

Nārada said:

15-16. Thus praised, Śiva, withdrawing the flame capable of burning the three worlds, said to the best brāhmaṇa (i.e. (Bṛhaspati): "O brāhmaṇa, ask for a boon. I am pleased with this praise of (i.e. done by) you. Be famous as (i.e. by the name) 'Jīva' as you gave back (i.e. saved) Indra's life."

Bṛhaspati said:

17. If, O god, you are pleased, (then) go to Indra who has sought your refuge. May this fire, risen from the (third) eye on your forhead be quelled.

The lord said:

18. How can this (fire) enter the eye on the forehead? I shall cast it (far) away so that it would not trouble Indra.

Nārada said:

19-24a. Saying so, and holding it in his hand, he threw it into the salt Ocean. It fell at the confluence of the river Gaṅgā and the Ocean. Then it got a child's form and wept. Due to the sound of its weeping the earth repeatedly trembled. Heaven and Satyaloka became deafened due to that sound. Hearing it, and being very much wonderstruck, Brahmā went there (saying): 'What is this?' Just then he saw the child on the lap of the Ocean. Seeing Brahmā coming, the Ocean too, joined the palms of his hands, and bowing to him with his head (bent) put the boy on his lap. Then Brahmā said (these) words: "Whose wonderful child is this?" Hearing (these) words of Brahmā, the Ocean said (these) words.

Brahmā said:

24b-25a. O you lord of the rivers, wherefrom did you get this very strong boy, by whose sound gods, demons and great serpents are frightened?

The Ocean said:

25b-27. O Brahman, this is my boy born on the river Gaṅgā. O lord of the world, perform for him the ceremonies (performed) at the birth of a child etc.

Ocean's son seized Brahmā's beard, and repeatedly shook it. From the eyes of him whose beard was (thus being) shaken, tears came (out). Somehow getting his beard freed, Brahmā said to the Ocean.

Brahmā said:

28-30. Since he held these tears from my eyes, therefore, he will be famous by the name 'Jalandhara'. Now only he will be a youth, master of all weapons and sacred books and will not be killed by any being except Rudra; and he will go where a born one goes.

Nārada said:

31-33. Speaking like this and calling Śukra he consecrated

him on the throne. Taking leave of the lord of rivers, Brahmā vanished (from there). Then, the Ocean, with his eyes blooming with joy on seeing him, solicited Kālanemi's daughter Vṛndā for (being) his wife. Those demons, led by Kālanemi, were glad and gave that daughter to him (i.e. to Jalandhara). He, the mighty and powerful one, aided by Śukra, getting them as best friends, ruled over the earth.

CHAPTER NINETYSEVEN

The Conquest of Amarāvatī by Jalandhara

Nārada said:

1-6a. Those demons living in the nether world and formerly vanquished by gods, became fearless and came to the earth to serve him. Some time seeing Rāhu with his head cut off, the lord of the demons asked the brāhmaṇa, viz. Śukra: "O lord, who has done this?" Bhārgava told him (the account of) the cutting off of Rāhu's head and the churning of the ocean for nectar done by gods. So also the snatching of the jewels and the defeat of the demons. Hearing about that churning of his father, his eyes were red with anger. He sent a gluttonous messenger to Indra. The messenger, going to heaven, quickly reached the assembly of gods, (and) with his head not bent due to pride, said to the lord of gods.

The messenger said:

6b-8. The Ocean's son Jalandhara is the lord of all demons. I am the messenger sent by him. Listen to what he has said: "Why did you churn my father with a mountain? Give back quickly to me all those jewels taken (by you)."

Hearing these words of the messenger, the lord of the gods was amazed. And with fear and anger he spoke to the fearful, voracious (messenger):

The lord said:

9-12. Listen, O messenger, since the mountains afraid of me were put by him to his side, I formerly churned the Ocean. He also protected my other enemies, the sons of Diti. Therefore, I took away all that collection of the jewels. Formerly Śaṅkha, the Ocean's son, hated gods. He too, struck by my younger brother (i.e. Viṣṇu), entered the interior of the Ocean. So go and tell him fully the reason of the churning (of the Ocean).

Nārada said:

13-23. The messenger, thus dismissed by Indra, came home. He then told the words (i.e. the message) of Indra to his king. Hearing it, the demon, with his lips quivering with anger, quickly exerted (himself) with a desire to conquer the gods. In that exertion of (conquering) Indra, the sons of Diti came in hundreds and crores from the directions and the nether world. The demon (Jalandhara) with crores of generals of the army like Śumbha and Niśumbha, went to heaven and stood for the war. Gods, furnished with armours for the war, went out of Amarāvatī. Seeing the demon-army, they stood surrounding the city. Then the war between the armies of gods and demons took place with (the use of) pestles, iron clubs, arrows, maces, axes and (the weapons called) śakti. Rushing to one another, they struck one another. In a moment the two armies were wet with the stream of blood. The battlefield appeared like the evening with the cover of clouds, due to the elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers that had fallen and that were being knocked down. Bhārgava brought back to life the demons killed in that war with drops of water consecrated with the magic formulas bringing back the dead to life. In the same way Bṛhaspati also brought the gods back to life in that war after repeatedly bringing the herbs from the region of Droṇa (mountain). Seeing gods again coming back to life in that war Jalandhara, being angry, said (these) words to Bhārgava:

Jalandhara said:

24. How is it that the gods killed by me in the war again come back to life? It is well-known that your science of bringing back (the dead) to life does not reside anywhere else (i.e. is not known to anyone else).

Bhṛgu said:

25. Bṛhaspati, bringing herbs from the Droṇa mountain, brings back the gods to life. Quickly snatch away the Droṇa mountain.

Nārada said:

26-33. The lord of the demons, thus told, quickly took the Droṇa mountain and threw it into the ocean and again came back to the great battle(field). Then seeing the gods killed, Guru went to the Droṇa mountain. He, honoured by the gods, did not see the lordly mountain there. Knowing that Droṇa was snatched by the demon, he was sad and overcome by fear. He with his body overcome by breathlessness (i.e. panting), spoke from a distance: "Flee, flee; he cannot be conquered. He is born of the portion of Rudra. Remember Indra's act." Hearing his words, gods, overpowered by fear and being killed by the demons, ran in the ten directions. Seeing the gods rent, the demon, the Ocean's son, entered Amarāvatī with the sounds of conches, drums and shouts of victory. When the demon entered the city, gods led by Indra and tormented by the demons, reached a cave in Meru and lived there. Then having separately made the excellent demons like Śumbha in-charge of Indra etc. he (i.e. Jalandhara) again went to the cave on the golden mountain (i.e. Meru).

CHAPTER NINETYEIGHT

Viṣṇu Promises not to Kill Ja landhara

Nārada said:

1. Seeing the demon to have come again, gods with Indra trembled with fear and started praising Viṣṇu.

Gods said:

2-4. Obeisance to you who are always ready for (serving) the purpose of the devotee by (taking) many forms like that of the

Fish or the Tortoise; (to you) who remove affliction, who are the author of the Creator etc., the creation, maintenance and destruction (of the world); who have in your hands a mace, a conch, a lotus etc. We bow to you, lord of Ramā (i.e. Lakṣmī), the killer of the demons, the lord of the first among the serpents (i.e. Śeṣa), (to you) wearing a yellow garment, maturing the rites like a sacrifice etc., the great author (of everything), fit to be resorted to. Salutation to that Viṣṇu, the thunderbolt of Indra for destroying the mountain of the grief of the gods tormented by the demons, (to Viṣṇu) lying on the bed of the lord of serpents, having two eyes in the form of the Sun and the Moon. We salute him.

Nārada said:

5-7. He who would everyday recite (this) hymn, destroying calamities, is never troubled by calamities due to Viṣṇu's grace. When the gods thus praised (Viṣṇu) the enemy of the demons, Viṣṇu came to know about the calamity of the gods. The enemy of the demons, getting up quickly with his mind dejected through pity, quickly mounted upon Garuḍa, and said (these) words to Lakṣmī.

Viṣṇu said:

8. Your brother Jalandhara has played havoc among the gods. Invited by them, I shall quickly go to fight.

Lakṣmī said:

9. O you treasure of compassion, O my lord, if I am always dear to you and your devotee, then how should my brother be killed by you in a battle?

The lord said:

10. Due to his being born from a portion of Rudra, due to Brahmā's statement (about him), and due to your love (for him), Jalandhara shall never be killed by me.

Nārada said:

11-19. Speaking like this, Viṣṇu holding a conch, a disc, a mace and a sword, mounted upon Garuḍa, and went there

where the gods were praising him. The demons tormented by the wind (produced) by the very strong wings of (Garuḍa) whose younger brother is Aruṇa wandered like the clouds in the sky turned round by a storm. Then Jalandhara, seeing the demons tormented, did not utter a word, (but) angrily came to Viṣṇu. Then a great fight took place between Viṣṇu and the lord of demons, making the sky having no room in it with their arrows. With volleys of arrows Viṣṇu cut off the demon's banner, umbrella, bow and horses and struck him on his chest with one arrow. Then the demon having a mace in his hand, jumped quickly, struck Garuḍa on his head and knocked him down on the ground. Viṣṇu laughed and cut off the mace with his sword. (Just) then he struck on Viṣṇu's strong heart (chest) with his strong fist. Then the two very strong ones had a hand-to-hand fight, resounding the earth with their arms, fists, and knees. Having thus fought for a very long time, the brave Viṣṇu spoke with a deep-sounding voice to the king of the demons.

Viṣṇu said:

20. O lord of demons, ask for a boon. Due to your valour I am pleased with you. I shall even give you what cannot be given—(ask for) whatever is in your mind.

Jalandhara said:

21. O brother-in-law, if you are pleased with me, then grant me this boon—with that my sister (Lakṣmī) and with your attendants, you stay in my house.

Nārada said:

22-29. Saying "Let it be so", the lord with all his divine attendants went with Lakṣmī to the city named Jalandhara. Jalandhara also putting the gods in the custody of the demons, gladly again came back to the earth. The Ocean's son brought under his control whatever jewels belonged to the gods, gandharvas and siddhas. The strong one having placed the very strong Niśumbha in the Pātāla-abode took Śeṣa and others to the earth. Making the multitudes of gods, gandharvas, siddhas, yakṣas, demons and human beings the residents of his city, he ruled over the three worlds. Having thus subjugated the gods he righteo-

usly looked after his subjects like his own sons. When he was (thus) ruling righteously, no one was sick, no one was afflicted; similarly no one was weak, no one appeared helpless. When thus the lord of demons was righteously and properly ruling over the earth, some time, by chance, I went (to that city) to see his prosperity and to serve (Viṣṇu), Lakṣmī's husband.

CHAPTER NINETYNINE

Rāhu Acts as Messenger of Jalandhara

Nārada said:

1. O best king, that lord of demons having duly and very devoutly honoured me, laughed and said (these) words.

Jalandhara said:

2. O sage, tell me why have you come here, O brāhmaṇa; so also what you have seen and where, and why you have come here.

Nārada said:

3-16. O lord of demons, I had, by chance, gone to the peak of Kailāsa (mountain). There I met Śiva seated with Umā in the great forest of desire-yielding trees extended over a myriad of yojanas, crowded with hundreds of desire-yielding cows, and well-lit with the desire-yielding gem. Seeing the great wonder a thought then arose in my mind. Such abundance may or may not be anywhere in the three worlds. O lord of demons, great opulence is collected by you. With a desire to see that I have come here to you. Seeing this prosperity, except the jewels in the form of women of you, I certainly think that there is none else (as) rich as Śiva. Though celestial damsels and nāga damsels are under your control, yet they are not certainly like Pārvatī in beauty, in whose ocean of beauty formerly Brahmā got murged and lost his fortitude. Who else can be compared with her? Formerly by her in the form of a bhilla woman was subjugated

by means of penance (Śiva) who was without any attachment, who was Madana's enemy, on whom the universe depends at his pleasure, (but) who wandered in the forest of her beauty. On repeatedly seeing her form at the time of creation, the Creator created the celestial nymphs. (But) no one resembled her. Therefore, she, the best one, is the prosperity of him, the enjoyer of the gems of women. O you lord of demons, you, the lord of all gems, (do) not (have a gem) like that.

When, having talked like this, I took his leave and left, the lord of the demons had his body tormented with the 'fever' of love on hearing about her beauty. Then he sent Siṁhikā's son (Rāhu) as his messenger to Śiva. Then being deluded a little by Viṣṇu's Māyā (illusory power) Rāhu went to Kailāsa, having the lustre of the moon in the bright half. But he obtained the lustre of the moon in the dark half through the totality of (the lustre) from his body (i.e. he fully resembled the moon in the dark half of the month). Śiva was informed (of his arrival), and by his order he was taken in by Nandin. Urged by the indication of the creeper-like brow (of Śiva), he said (these) words.

Rāhu said:

17-19. O bull-bannered god, listen to the command of the lord served by serpents, master of the three worlds, master of all gems. "How can you, the naked one living in the cremation ground, wearing a string of heads, have this charming wife, the daughter of the Himālaya Mountain? I am the lord of jewels; and she is called a gem among women. Therefore, she is proper for me and not for you eating (i.e. subsisting on) alms."

Nārada said:

20-26. When, at that time Rāhu was speaking like this, a fierce man, with a voice like that of the violent thunderbolt was produced from the space between the eye-brows of Śiva. His face was like that of a lion; his tongue was moving; his eyes were fiery; he was great; his hair was erect; his body was dry; he was, as it were, another Nṛsiṁha. He set about to eat him. Seeing him Rāhu overcome by fear, speedily ran out; but he

seized him (i.e. Rāhu). Then that Rāhu of big arms said to the lord of the god of gods with a grave voice like (the sound of) the clouds: "Protect me who have sought your refuge. He has come to eat me, a brāhmaṇa, O Mahādeva. O you, who love those that seek your refuge, protect me from him." Hearing the words of that brāhmaṇa, Mahādeva then said: "He should not be killed, since, being a messenger, he is dependent upon another. Leave him" The man hearing these words, left Rāhu in the sky. Leaving Rāhu the man respectfully said to Mahādeva.

The man said:

27. O master, hunger oppresses me. I am fully emaciated with hunger. O lord, order what I should eat.

The lord said:

28a. Quickly eat the flesh of your hands and feet.

Nārada said:

28b-30. When the man thus ordered by Śiva ate up the flesh of his hands and feet, and when he remained with the head only, Śiva, seeing him with the head left, was very much pleased, and with amazement said to that man of fierce acts:

The lord said:

31. Having the name of 'Kīrtimukha' always remain at my door. Those who do not honour you, do not do what is dear to me.

Nārada said:

32-34. Since then Kīrtimukha remains at the door of the lord. The worship of those who do not honour him would be in vain. That Rāhu who was left by him fell on the Barbara region. Therefore, on the earth he is known as *Barbarodbhūta* Then Rāhu, thinking that he was reborn here, told all this done by Śiva to Jalandhara after approaching him.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED

Śiva's Attendants Fight the Demons off

Nārada said:

1-4. Hearing that Jalandhara with his body overcome by anger went out surrounded by crores of (soldiers in the) army of the demons. Śukra went before him. Rāhu remained within (the range of) his sight. His crown quickly slipped and fell on the ground. The entire sky shone with hundreds of aeroplanes occupied by the army of the demons as with clouds in the rainy season. Then seeing his exertion, gods led by Indra and with their hurry unnoticed, respectfully said to Śiva:

The gods said:

5. O master, how do you not know that the gods are respectfully speaking to you. For our protection kill the Ocean's son.

Nārada said:

6. Hearing these words of the gods Śiva laughed and calling the great Viṣṇu said these words to him:

The lord said:

7. O Viṣṇu, how (i.e. why) did you not kill Jalandhara in the battle? Afraid of him, you left your Vaikuṇṭha and went away.

Lord (Viṣṇu) said:

8. In the battle I did not kill the demon, since he was born from your portion, and since he is also Lakṣmī's brother. (Now) you (please) kill that demon.

The lord said:

9. He, of a great lustre, cannot be killed by me with these weapons and missiles. All the gods should give me a portion of their lustre.

Nārada said:

10-17a. Then gods, led by Viṣṇu, gave their own lustres.

The lord saw a great lustre (formed) by their coming together suddenly. Mahādeva fashioned an excellent weapon, the disc (called) Sudarśana, very fierce(-looking) because of a series of flames (issuing forth). Then Śiva fashioned the thunderbolt with the remaining lustre. (Just) then Jalandhara was seen at the region at the foot of Kailāsa (mountain).

He was surrounded by crores of elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers. Seeing him as he came there, the gods being delighted went (to fight). (Śiva's) attendants hurriedly got ready to fight. All the attendants led by Nandin, Gajānana, Kārtikeya, and maddened to fight, got down from Kailāsa by Śiva's order. Then on the land at the foot of Kailāsa a war between the lordly Pramathas (Śiva's attendants) and the demons took place. It was fierce, and full of weapons and missiles. The earth that resounded with the sounds of multitudes of drums, tabors, conches, giving joy to the heroes, so also with the sounds of elephants, horses and chariots, trembled.

17b-26. With the multitudes of śaktis, iron clubs and arrows, with pestles, barbed missiles and sharp-edged spears, the entire sky shone, as if it was covered with meteors. The entire land shone with the chariots, elephants and horses that were struck down. (The ground) was as it were covered with the tops of mountains struck by thunderbolt. The ground was inaccessible due to the multitudes of demons killed by Pramathas (attendants), and with marrow, blood, mire of flesh etc. Bhārgava brought back to life the multitudes of demons killed by Pramathas. Seeing (Bhārgava) bringing repeatedly back to life by the power of the Sañjīvanī-vidyā those that died in the battle, all the attendants (of Śiva) were perplexed and struck by fear. They told the lord of the god of gods all that Śukra had done. Then from Rudra's mouth a destructive, very fearful deity was produced. Having shanks like tāla (trees), fat, crooked, and pressing the trees with her breasts, she reached the battlefield, and ate the great demons. Seizing Bhārgava in her hand she went and vanished. Seeing Bhārgava seized the divisions of the demon-army had their faces dejected; (but) maddened for fighting, they struck through pride. Struck by the fear of (Śiva's) attendants, the demon army was dispersed

like the scattered heap of grass struck by the speed of wind. (Śiva's) attendants seeing the demon army broken, rejoiced.

27-32. The three very powerful ones—the two generals viz. Niśumbha and Śumbha and the brave Kālanemi—warded off the army of the attendants. They discharged arrows as clouds (discharge water) in the rainy season. Then the volleys of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) the demons, like swarms of locusts, blocked the sky and all directions, and they made the entire army of (Śiva's) attendants tremble. The attendants pierced by hundreds of arrows and shedding showers of blood appeared like kiṁśuka (trees) in spring season. Nothing could be clearly seen. Then (Śiva's) attendants fell, were knocked down, cut off and pierced. Leaving the battlefield, they all turned back. Then Gajānana, lordly Nandin and Kārtikeya, overpowered for long, seeing their army broken and unable to stand (the demon-force) forcibly warded off the excellent demons.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ONE

The Fight Goes On

Nārada said:

1-19. Those demons on seeing the chiefs of the attendants like Nandin, Gajānana and Kārtikeya, impatiently ran (to them) for duels. Kālanemi, Śumbha and Niśumbha, (each) equipped with an armor, speedily ran (respectively) to Nandin, Gajānana and Kārtikeya. With five arrows Niśumbha pierced Kārtikeya's peacock on his chest with speed and he fell down unconscious. Then, when the angry Kārtikeya took his (missile called) śakti, Niśumbha forcibly knocked him down with śakti. Then Nandīśvara pierced Kālanemi with arrows. With seven he pierced his horses and banners, and with three his charioteer. Kālanemi who was angry, cut off Nandin's bow. Throwing it off, he firmly struck him on his chest with a spear. He, with his chest pierced by a spear and with his horses and charioteer killed, took off

the mountain's peak and threw it at Nandin. Then Śumbha and Gajānana, having a chariot and a rat as their vehicles, fighting with each other, pierced each other with volleys of arrows. The lord of the attendants (i.e. Gajānana) struck Śumbha in his heart with an arrow and knocked on the ground his charioteer with five arrows. Then Śumbha, being extremely angry, pierced Gajānana with sixty arrows, (his) rat with three, and thundered like a cloud. The rat, with his limbs pierced with arrows, walked painfully. Gajānana got down (from the rat) and became a foot soldier, O king. Then Gajānana, having struck Śumbha on his chest with a spear, knocked him down on the ground, and again mounted the rat. Kālanemi and Niśumbha both simultaneously struck Gajānana through anger with arrows, like a great elephant with a goad. Seeing him being troubled, the very strong Vīrabhadra, along with a crore of imps, speedily ran (to him). Kuṣmāṇḍas, Bhairavas, vampires, goblins, bevies of witches and (other) attendants followed him. Then the earth, resounding with kilakila sound (expressing joy), roars like those of lions, growlings, (beatings of) drums, trembled. Then the imps ran and devoured the demons. They jumped and fell and danced on the battlefield. Nandin and Kārtikeya hurriedly came (there) and struck the demons with continuous volleys of arrows in the battle. The army, cut off and broken with the demons killed, knocked down and threatened (by the attendants) was perplexed, and had a dejected face at that time.

20-31. Seeing (his) army destroyed, the strong son of the Ocean, in a chariot with a superior banner, marched against the attendants. Then in both the armies there were loud noise, sound of conches and drums, and roars like those of lions. Then with volleys of arrows, as with covers of mist, Jalandhara blocked the space between heaven and earth. Piercing Gajānana with five (arrows), Nandin too with five, and Vīrabhadra with twenty, he thundered like a cloud. Then Kārtikeya quickly pierced the demon with his (missile called) śakti. Pierced with the śakti he, with his mind a little agitated, rolled about. Then, with his eyes full of anger Jalandhara struck Kārtikeya with a mace. He too fell on the ground. In the same way he speedily knocked down Nandin on the ground. Then the angry Gajānana cut off his mace with his axe. Vīrabhadra pierced the demon on his chest with

three arrows, and cut off with seven (arrows) his horses, banners and concealed bow. Then the very angry lord of demons raising a fierce śakti, knocked down Gajānana and got into another chariot. Then, full of anger, he speedily marched against Vīrabhadra. Then the two, resembling the sun, fought with each other. Vīrabhadra knocked down his horses with arrows. The lord of demons cut off (his) bow, and with an iron bar as his weapon, fought. That demon, quickly attacking Vīrabhadra, struck him on his head with an iron club. The demon too, with his head pierced, and ejecting blood, fell on the ground.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWO

Jalandhara Plays a Trick

Nārada said:

1-12. Seeing that Vīrabhadra fallen, Rudra's attendants leaving the battle through fear and crying came to Śiva. Then hearing the uproar of his attendants, Śiva having mounted on his bull and laughing a little, came to the battle. Seeing Śiva coming, the attendants roaring like lions, again returned (to the battlefield). In the battle they struck the demons with showers of arrows. All the demons, seeing the fierce Śiva, ran away as sins run away through fear on seeing him who observes the vow of Kārtika. Then Jalandhara, seeing the demons fleeing on the battlefield, angrily ran to Śiva and discharged thousands of arrows. Śumbha, Niśumbha, Aśvamukha, Kālanemi, Balāhaka, Khaḍgaroman, Pracaṇḍa and Ghasmara went (i.e. rushed) to Śiva. Śiva, seeing the army of his attendants covered with the darkness caused by the arrows (of the demons), cut off the volley of arrows and with his own arrows covered the sky. He then troubled the demons with the hurricanes of his arrows. With fierce and continuous volleys of arrows he knocked (them) on the ground. Similarly he angrily cut off the head of Khaḍgaroman with a battle-axe. With a club having a skull at the top he also cut into two Balāhaka's head; and binding the demon

Ghasmara with a noose, he knocked him down on the ground. Some were struck by the bull; some were driven away by the arrows. The demons, like elephants tormented by lions, could not stand (before Śiva). Then Jalandhara with his mind full of anger and a voice sharp like (the sound of) thunderbolt, quickly challenged (Śiva) in the battle.

Jalandhara said:

13. Fight with me today. What is the use of striking these? O you having matted hair, show me whatever might you have.

Nārada said:

14-27. Speaking like this he struck Śiva with seventy arrows. He, laughing a little, cut them off before they reached (him) with sharp arrows. Then with seven (arrows) he cut off his horses, banners, umbrella and bow. He the powerful one, with his bow cut off and without his chariot, took a mace. Śiva ran (to him) and cut into two his mace with arrows. Yet, raising his fist he went to kill Śiva. (Just) then Śiva drove him away up to a krośa with the volleys of arrows. Then the demon Jalandhara, thinking Śiva to be stronger, created a gāndharvī illusion which was wonderful, and deluded Śiva. Then gandharvas and bevies of celestial nymphs sang and danced. They sounded musical instruments made of bell-metal, lutes and tabors with one another. Seeing that great wonder Rudra was deluded by the sound, and he did not even notice weapons dropped from his hands. The demon seeing Rudra concentrated, was overpowered by sexual desire, quickly went where Pārvatī was seated, after putting the very strong Śumbha and Niśumbha in (charge of) the battle. That Jalandhara became one having ten staff-like arms, five faces, three eyes, matted hair, and mounted upon a mighty bull. Then seeing Rudra coming, his beloved came from among her friends, and remained within the range of his sight. When the lord of demons saw Pārvatī of a charming body, he ejected his semen and his body became dull. Then Pārvatī, recognising him to be the demon, was overcome by fear, and vanished and went to Uttaramānasa. Not seeing her in a moment like a streak of lighting, he again quickly went to the battle(-field) where god Śiva stood. Then Pārvatī also

mentally recollected the great Viṣṇu. Then the goddess saw him seated by her.

Pārvatī said:

28. O Viṣṇu, the demon Jalandhara has done a great wonder. Do you not know the act of that wicked-minded (demon)?

The lord said:

29. We are following the path shown by him only. Otherwise, he well-protected by (his wife's) chastity would not be fit to be killed.

Nārada said:

30-32. Speaking like this, Viṣṇu again went to Jālandhara city. And Śiva, followed by gandharvas remained in the battle. Seeing the illusion to have disappeared, he awoke. Then Śiva, with his mind amazed, again angrily went to fight Jalandhara. The demon too seeing Śiva to have come back again, covered him with volleys of arrows in the battle.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THREE

Vṛndā Curses Viṣṇu

Nārada said:

1-12. Viṣṇu having gone to Jālandhara broke through his cover and decided to break (i.e. spoil) the vow of chastity of Vṛndā. Respectable Vṛndārakā saw in her dream her husband mounted upon a buffalo, smeared with oil, naked, adorned with black flowers, and waited upon by groups of eaters of raw flesh, (saw him as) having gone to the southern direction clean-shaved and covered with darkness. (She saw) her city plunged into the ocean with herself. Then the young lady, (trying to) ascertain (the meaning of) her dream, awoke. She repeatedly saw the sun that had risen, as having holes and steady. Know-

ing it to be undesirable, she, overcome by fear and weeping did not find pleasure at the principal gate and upper story. Then with two (of her) friends she went to the city-garden. The young lady, even after having gone there, did not get pleasure anywhere. Going from forest to forest, she was not at all aware of herself. Then the young lady who was wandering, saw two demons very fierce, having lion-like faces, and fierce fangs and eyes. Seeing them, she being extremely alarmed, became wholly engaged in running. She saw a calm ascetic observing silence with his disciples. Then putting, through fear, her creeper-like arm round his neck she said: "O sage, protect me who have sought your shelter." The sage, seeing her alarmed and followed by the demons, angrily turned away the fierce demons just with a *hum* sound. Vṛndā, seeing them to have gone to the sky due to his *hum* sound, fell (i.e. prostrated herself) on the ground like a staff and spoke (these) words:

Vṛndā said:

13-14. O you treasure of compassion, you have protected me from a terrible fear. So I desire to say something respectfully. Kindly listen to it. O lord, O you of a good vow, my husband Jalandhara has gone to fight with Rudra. Tell me how he is (faring) in the battle.

Nārada said:

15-18. The sage having heard the words looked about with compassion. Just then two lordly monkeys came and saluting him stood before him. Then ordered by the indication of his creeper-like brows, they went to the sky. Having gone, the monkeys returned within half a moment and stood before him. Seeing them having in their hands the head and trunk of the Ocean's son, she, afflicted by the grief for her husband, fell unconscious on the ground. She was sprinkled over with the water from the pitcher and was brought back to consciousness by the sage. Putting her forehead on that of her husband, she, being dejected, wept.

Vṛndā said:

19-20. O lord, how is it that you who formerly amused me

with pleasing news, are not talking to me, your innocent beloved. How is it that you, the conqueror of the three worlds, who vanquished gods with gandharvas and Indra, were killed by an ascetic (i.e. Śiva)?

Nārada said:

21a. Thus weeping, Vṛndā said (these) words to the sage.

Vṛndā said:

21b-22. O you treasure of penance, O best sage, his life is very dear to me. I think you alone are capable of bringing him back to life.

Hearing her words the sage laughed and said:

The sage said:

23. It is not possible to bring back to life him who is killed by Śiva in a battle. Yet full of pity for you, I shall revive him.

Nārada said:

24-26. Speaking like this, when he just vanished, just then the Ocean's son, with his mind pleased, embraced and kissed Vṛndā. Then Vṛndā too seeing her husband, delighted in mind; she lived in the forest with him, and enjoyed with him for many days. Once, at the end of the coitus seeing him to be Viṣṇu only, Vṛndā getting angry censured him and spoke (these) words:

Vṛndā said:

27-31. O Viṣṇu, fie upon the conduct of you, molesting another's wife! I have recognized you to be actually an illusory ascetic. The two door-keepers of you whom you showed me through your Māyā (illusion), shall become demons and kidnap your wife. You too, afflicted with the grief due to your wife and assisted by the monkeys wander in the forest with him, the lord of all who has become your disciple.

Speaking like this, Vṛndā, though prohibited by Viṣṇu, not having any mental attachment for him, entered fire. Then Viṣṇu,

repeatedly remembering her, and having covered himself with the ash of Vṛndā's funeral pyre, remained there only; and though advised by the groups of sages and siddhas, did not obtain peace.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOUR

The End of Jalandhara

Nārada said:

1-15a. Then Jalandhara seeing Śiva having wonderful valour, fashioned (an) illusory (form of) Pārvatī to delude Śiva. At that time Śiva saw her mounted upon the chariot, weeping, and being killed by Śumbha, Niśumbha and other demons. Seeing Pārvatī like that, Śiva too, with his mind dejected, remained silent with his face hung down and forgetting his valour. Then Jalandhara speedily pierced Śiva in his head, chest and belly with arrows plunging up to their feathered ends. Then being instructed by Viṣṇu, he realised the illusion. He became one having a fierce form, very fierce due to a series of flames. Seeing his extremely fierce form, the demons could not stand before him and took to the ten directions. Then the god gave a curse to Śumbha and Niśumbha: "After having gone away from the battle with me, you will be killed by Pārvatī." Again Jalandhara speedily showered (Śiva) with sharp arrows, so that a great surface of the earth was covered with darkness due to the arrows. While Rudra quickly cut off his arrows, the mighty one quickly struck the bull (Nandin) with an iron bar. Due to that stroke, the bull turned away from the battlefield. Though dragged by Śiva, he did not remain on the battlefield. Then Śiva having a fierce form, and very angry, speedily discharged the Sudarśana disc, bright like the sun. Reaching Jalandhara speedily, it burnt heaven and earth. It took (i.e. cut) off his head with big, long eyes from his body. Resounding the earth his body fell from the chariot; and from his body a lustre came out and merged into Śiva's body. Seeing the lustre coming

out from his body and merging into (the body of) Śiva, gods like Indra with their eyes blooming with joy, saluted Śiva with their heads (bent down) and told him about Viṣṇu's act.

The gods said:

15b-16. O Śiva, you have protected the gods from fear of the enemy. Something else has come up. What should we do there? Deluded by Vṛndā's beauty, Viṣṇu is stupefied.

The lord said:

17. O gods, to remove Viṣṇu's delusion resort to the fascinating Māyā, fit to be resorted to. She will do your work.

Nārada said:

18. Saying so, the god along with the imps and attendants vanished; and gods praised the Mūlā Prakṛti (literally, the original source) to whom the devotees were dear.

The gods said:

19-21. We bow to that pure (cause called) Prakṛti, from which the constituents, sattva (goodness), rajas (activity) and tamas (darkness or ignorance) have come up, which is the primary cause of creation, maintenance and destruction (of the world), by whose desire all this existence and non-existence is spread. O lady with benumbing missiles, the twentythree divisions (principles), that formerly remained in the entire world, are the forms and acts of that (i.e. of you). We bow to her. We bow to that nature of Viṣṇu, which always loves the devotees, and men devoted to whom never meet with poverty, delusion, defeat etc.

Nārada said:

22-29. To him, who, with a concentrated mind, recites this hymn thrice a day, poverty, delusion, difficulties never touch (i.e. come). Those gods who were praising like this, saw in the sky, (Māyā) abiding in an orb of lustre and pervading the atmosphere with a series of flames. They all saw Bhāratī moving in the sky from its midst: "I alone, divided in three ways, remain

with the three constituents. (My three forms are) Gaurī, Lakṣmī and Svarā (respectively endowed) with sattva, rajas and tamas. Go there, O gods; they will do your work."

Nārada said:

O king, when the gods with their eyes blooming with joy due to amazement, were hearing like this, the lustre disappeared. Then all the gods prompted by those words went and, greatly devoted, saluted Gaurī, Lakṣmī and Svarā. O king, then they, loving their devotees, saw the gods bowing down (to them), gave them seeds and said (these) words:

The goddesses said:

Sow these seeds in that place where Viṣṇu remains. Then your undertaking will succeed.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIVE

The Greatness of Dhātrī and Tulasī

Nārada said:

1-15. O best king, from the seeds that were thrown (i.e. sown) there, three plants came up: Dhātrī, Mālatī and Tulasī. Dhātri is said to have come up from Dhātrī (the earth), Mālatī from Lakṣmī, and Tulasī from Gaurī (having) the qualities (constituents viz.) sattva (goodness), rajas (activity) and tamas (darkness, ignorance). O king, Viṣṇu, deluded by the excellence of Vṛndā's beauty, seeing the herbs in the form of women got up in confusion. Then, with his mind attached to (i.e. full of) passion, he saw them. Tulasī and Dhātrī also looked at him with love only. Since formerly Lakṣmī gave the seed deceptively, therefore, the woman who came up from it, became jealous of him. Therefore, she is called Barbarī (i.e. low), and is very much condemned by Viṣṇu. Due to his love for them Dhātrī and Tulasī have always delighted him. Then Viṣṇu, forgetting his grief, went to Vaikuṇṭha with them. He was delighted and

was saluted by all gods. Therefore, Viṣṇu's worship is ordained at the time of the conclusion of the Kārtika (vow), since it is said always to cause delight (when done) at the root of Tulasī. O king, the house of him in whose house stands a Tulasī-grove, is of the nature of a holy place. Yama's servants do not come (there). Those best men who plant a Tulasī-grove which destroys all sins, which is auspicious, which satisfies desires, never see (Yama) the Sun's son. The three, viz. seeing (i.e. visiting) Narmadā, bathing in Gaṅgā, and contact with Tulasī-grove, are said to be equivalent. Due to men's planting, protecting, sprinkling, seeing and touching Tulasī, Tulasī removes their sin committed through speech, mind and body. He who would worship Viṣṇu with Tulasī-blossoms, does not go to the abode of embryo (i.e. is not reborn), and gets salvation. There is no doubt about this. In the Tulasī-leaf live holy places like Puṣkara, so also rivers like Gaṅgā and gods like Viṣṇu. O best king, if a man dies with a Tulasī-leaf (on his person), he obtains absorption with Viṣṇu. This is the truth (and the only) truth.

16-29. Even Yama cannot look at him, even though he is full of hundreds of sins, who dies with Tulasī-clay smeared (on his body). He who would put on the sandal from Tulasī-wood, great sin, though committed by him, does not touch his body. O king, a man should offer śrāddha wherever there would be the shade of a Tulasī-grove. (Śrāddha) offered there becomes inexhaustible for the manes of the dead ancestors. The dead ancestors in hell, of him who offers piṇḍas under the shade of a Tulasī-plant, are gratified, O best king. He who keeps the Dhātrī-fruit on his head, in his hand, in his mouth, on his body, should be known to be Viṣṇu himself, O best king. He on whose body the Dhātrī-fruit or clay (from the root) of Tulasī from Dvārakā always remains, is called 'liberated while alive.' The fruit for that man who bathes with water mixed with Dhātrī-fruits or with Tulasī-leaves, is said to be like that of a bath in Gaṅgā. The man who would worship the deities with Dhātrī-leaves or Dhātrī-fruits, would obtain the fruit of worshipping them with various flowers (made) of gold. In Kārtika when the Sun has resorted to the Libra sign of the Zodiac, holy places, sages, deities, sacrifices always remain resorted to the Dhātrī. One who plucks a Tulasī-leaf on the twelfth day, and a Dhātrī-

fruit in Kārtika, would go to very condemned hells. The sin due to contact with (prohibited) food, of the man who eats under the shade of a Dhātrī plant in Kārtika, perishes for the (whole) year. One who worships Viṣṇu (while sitting) at the root of a Dhātrī plant in Kārtika, has always worshipped at all places sacred to Viṣṇu. Even the god (Brahmā) having four mouths would not be able to narrate the greatness of Dhātrī and Tulasī as of god Viṣṇu. One who devoutly listens to or causes (others) to listen to the cause of the origin of Dhātrī and Tulasī, has his sins shaken off, and he, seated in an excellent aeroplane with his ancestors, goes to heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIX

The Kalahā Episode

Pṛthu said:

1-2. O brāhmaṇa, you told me properly the greatness of Tulasī along with its history. I have listened to this great, very wonderful (account). Tell (me) what great fruit a man gets, who observes the Kārtika vow; (tell) its greatness again. (Tell) also who observed it? and in what manner (did he observe it)?

Nārada said:

3-10. Formerly in the region of Sahyādri in the city of Karavīra there lived a brāhmaṇa known as Dharmadatta, a knower of Dharma. He always observed Viṣṇu's vow and was always engaged in worshipping Viṣṇu. He was fond of muttering the hymn of the twelve syllables and guests were dear to him. Once in the month of Kārtika he went to Viṣṇu's temple for keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, when the fourth part of the night had remained. When he was taking the materials for Viṣṇu's worship, he saw a demoness of a terrible voice, that had come there. Her fangs and face were crooked; her tongue had gone down; her eyes were red; she was naked; the flesh (in her body) was dry (i.e. she was emaciated); her lips were long

(i.e. protruding); her voice was purring. Seeing her, he, afflicted with fear and with limbs trembling, quickly struck her with the materials of worship and water. She was (thus) struck (by him) after remembering Viṣṇu's name and with Tulasī-water. Therefore, all her sin perished. Then she, remembering her former existence due to the maturity of her acts, told him her entire condition, after saluting him (by prostrating before him) like a staff.

Kalahā said:

11. I have been reduced to this condition as a result of my deeds in the former (existence). O brāhmaṇa, how shall I again attain excellent and auspicious condition?

Nārada said:

12. Seeing her bowing down before (him) and narrating those acts of her, the brāhmaṇa, extremely amazed, then said (these) words:

Dharmadatta said:

13. As a result of which act are you reduced to such a condition? Wherefrom (do you come)? Who are you? What is your disposition? Tell all that to me.

Kalahā said:

14-18a. O brāhmaṇa, in a city in Saurāṣṭra there was a brāhmaṇa named Bhikṣu. I was first his very cruel wife named Kalahā. I never did good to him even by words; I who broke his command and who always liked to quarrel, never gave sweet food to my husband. Then the brāhmaṇa was dejected through grief; that my husband thought of marrying another woman. Then, O brāhmaṇa, taking poison, I cast off my life. Then Yama's followers bound me and took me away. And Yama seeing me then, asked Citragupta.

Yama said:

18b-19. O Citragupta, see what act she has done. Let her obtain good or bad fruit of her act.

Then Citragupta, censuring her, said (these) words:

Citragupta said:

20-25. She has not done any good act at all. She (herself) ate savoury food, (but) did not give it to her husband. Therefore, let her be (born) in her own feces in the stock of a cockroach. Then, O Hari, she, who hated her husband and always quarrelled, will be (born) in the stock of a female pig eating feces. Since she always ate from the pot in which the food is cooked, (let her be born) among female-cats eating her own young ones. Since she killed herself with reference to her husband, therefore, let this extremely censured one live among ghosts and goblins. Then with the demons she should be taken to the Maru country. Let her, having a ghosts' body, stay there for a long time. Thus having undergone (i.e. passed through) three stocks (i.e. existences) (she will be) doing auspicious acts.

Kalahā said:

26-31. That I (i.e. like that I) remained for five hundred years in a ghost's body. Everyday I was oppressed by hunger and thirst and was afflicted due to my own act(s). Then I, oppressed by hunger everyday, (resorted to) a merchant's body and came to the confluence of Kṛṣṇā and Veṇī in the southern country. When I resorted to that bank, I was forcibly thrown away from that body(?) by the attendants of Śiva and Viṣṇu. Then, O brāhmaṇa, I who was emaciated with hunger, who was wandering, and whose sin had gone away due to the contact of the Tulasī-water thrown (by you), saw you. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, have pity on me. How shall I be free from the three very fearful existences, and from this ghost's body?

Hearing like this the words of Kalahā, the brāhmaṇa, full of affliction and amazement due to the maturity of her acts, and with his mind restless due to having seen her misery thought for a long time, and sorrowfully spoke (these) words:

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVEN

Kalahā Is Emancipated

Dharmadatta said:

1-5. By means of (visits to) holy places, gifts and vows etc. sins perish. But you, remaining in an imp's body are not entitled to them. My mind dejected at seeing this misery of you will not be pleased without emancipating you who are unhappy. Your sin, giving you the three existences as a result of its maturity, is very grave. It cannot be exhausted by other meritorious acts. The state of an imp is very censurable. Therefore, obtain a good condition by means of half the merit of the Kārtika vow observed by me from my birth. Sacrifices, gifts, (visits to) holy places and vows certainly do not at all have the equivalence to the merit due to the Kārtika vow.

Nārada said:

6-8. Speaking like this, when Dharmadatta sprinkled her with water mixed with Tulasī, repeating the twelve-syllabled (hymn), (just) then she was free from imphood, resembled the flame of a blazing fire, had a divine form, and brightened up the directions with her beauty. Then she saluted the brāhmaṇa (by prostrating herself) like a staff on the ground, and in a voice stammering with joy, said (these) words:

Kalahā said:

9. O you best brāhmaṇa, due to your favour I have been free from hell. Certainly you have been (the emancipator) of me who was drowning in the ocean of sin.

Nārada said:

10-13. She who was talking like this to the brāhmaṇa saw a bright aeroplane with attendants having Viṣṇu's form coming from the sky. Then two righteous door-keepers of good conduct put her into that excellent aeroplane attended upon by a band of celestial nymphs. Dharmadatta saw that aeroplane and was amazed. Seeing the two meritorious ones he fell on the ground like a staff. The two righteous ones of good conduct, raised the

brāhmaṇa who had bowed down, and praising him spoke (these) words:

The two attendants said:

14-26. It's good, O best brāhmaṇa, that you are always devoted to Viṣṇu, you are kind to the helpless, you know Dharma and are very much engrossed in Viṣṇu's vow. From your birth you observed this Kārtika vow. By giving half of (the religious merit due to) it her sins collected formerly in hundreds of existences, have perished. Due to your keeping awake in honour of Viṣṇu etc. this aeroplane has come; so also (have come) the residence in Vaikuṇṭha, proximity of Viṣṇu, and absorption into him. Those who have devoutly propitiated Viṣṇu as you have done, O Dharmadatta, are lucky and contented. Their existence is fruitful. What will Viṣṇu who formerly put Uttāna's son (Dhruva) at a fixed place, and by merely remembering whose name human beings get good position, not give to human beings, when he is properly propitiated? Formerly the lordly elephant seized by a crocodile became free by (merely) remembering his name, obtained his proximity and became one called 'Jaya' (i.e. came to be called Jaya). Therefore, Viṣṇu worshipped by you will give you with your two wives his proximity for many thousand years. Then, after your religious merit is exhausted, when you will go to the earth, you will be a famous king born in the solar dynasty named Daśaratha with your two wives and with this one as the third (wife) sharing half of your religious merit. There on the earth also Viṣṇu doing the work of the gods, will give you his proximity after having made himself (i.e. born as) your son. For you sacrifices, gifts, visits to holy places are not superior to this your vow (taken) from your birth and pleasing Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, you are lucky that you have observed this vow pleasing the lord of the world, due to the fruit of the half portion of which this one is being taken by us to the same world as of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHT

King Cola and Brāhmaṇa Viṣṇudāsa

Nārada said:

1. Hearing her words like this, Dharmadatta, being amazed, bowed on the ground (i.e. prostrated himself) like a staff and said these words:

Dharmadatta said:

2-3. By means of sacrifices, gifts, vows, (visits to) holy places, austerities, all devotees properly propitiate Viṣṇu who removes affliction. (Tell me) that which pleases Viṣṇu and which brings about proximity of Viṣṇu and having done which all those are done.

The two attendants said:

4-13. O brāhmaṇa, you have asked well. Listen with a concentrated mind to a story, with its history, which took place in olden times and which is being told (by us). Formerly in Kāntipura there lived an emperor Cola after whom, it is said, the country was called Cola. While he was ruling over the globe, no man was poor, unhappy, of a sinful design or diseased. Of him, performing many sacrifices (i.e. while he was performing many sacrifices), both the banks of the Tāmraparṇī (river) were full of beauty with golden sacrificial posts resembling Caitraratha (Kubera's garden). Once, O brāhmaṇa, that king went to Anantaśayana where this lord of the three worlds resorts to sleep. There the king having duly worshipped god Viṣṇu with divine gems, pearls, and beautiful golden flowers, saluted him (prostrating before him) like a staff and sat (there). When he was seated he saw a brāhmaṇa called Viṣṇudāsa, who had come with Tulasī-water in his hand for worshipping the god and living in his own city. Having come there, the brāhmaṇa-sage worshipped the god of gods after having bathed him with Tulasī blossoms and leaves and with (the recital of) the Viṣṇu-hymn. Seeing that the worship done (by him) with jewels (etc.), was covered with Tulasī (-leaves) etc. the got angry and spoke (these) words:

The king said:

14-16. O Viṣṇudāsa, how is it that the beautiful worship done by me with rubies and gold is covered with Tulasī-leaves by you? Since you cover this very beautiful worship offered by me, I think you do not know devotion to Viṣṇu and you are wretched.

Hearing these words, the best brāhmaṇa got angry, and transgressing (i.e. not caring for) the greatness of the king, said (these) words then:

Viṣṇudāsa said:

17. O king, you do not know salvation; you are proud of your wealth. Tell me which Viṣṇu-vow you have observed before.

The two attendants said:

18-22. O brāhmaṇa, hearing those words of the brāhmaṇa the best king laughed and proudly said these words to Viṣṇudāsa: "O brāhmaṇa, if, being very proud, you are telling like this, (tell me) how much devotion to Viṣṇu you poor and indigent one have. O brāhmaṇa, you have not offered sacrifices or gifts. Nor anywhere have you put up a temple before. If the pride of you who are like this persists due to your devotion, then may these best brāhmaṇas today hear my words. This dispute will go (i.e. cease). I shall have actual perception of Viṣṇu so that all these and you will realise our devotion."

The two attendants said:

23-30. Speaking like this, O brāhmaṇa, the king went to his palace; and making Mudgala the preceptor he commenced a sacrificial session (in honour) of Viṣṇu, at which hosts of sages had come and many presents were given, which was rich like the one offered formerly by Brahmā at Prayāga. Viṣṇudāsa, observing the vow, remained just there in the temple, always observing these five restraints pleasing Viṣṇu: observing properly the vow in Māgha and Kārtika, maintaining a Tulasī-grove, observing the Ekādaśī-vow, and muttering the twelve-syllabled hymn. So also everyday he worshipped Viṣṇu in the sixteen ways with auspicious (acts) like dancing and singing. (Thus) he observed these

vows. He, viewing all equally, always remembered Viṣṇu while walking, eating and even while sleeping, and saw Viṣṇu remaining (i.e. as present) in every being. He daily observed the special restraints in Māgha and Kārtika for pleasing Viṣṇu, so also their proper conclusion. When king Cola and Viṣṇudāsa, who were observing that vow, who had devoted their senses and acts to deeds for him (i.e. Viṣṇu), were thus propitiating (Viṣṇu) the lord of Lakṣmī, much time passed.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINE

King Cola and Viṣṇudāsa Become Attendants of Viṣṇu

The two attendants said:

1-13. When once the brāhmaṇa Viṣṇudāsa cooked (food) after having duly performed his daily rite, someone unnoticed took away (the food). The brāhmaṇa, not (being able to) see him, did not at all cook again through fear of violating the vow of his evening worship. On the next day, when he, after having cooked, was about to offer it to Viṣṇu, somebody again took it away. In this way, for seven days somebody (daily) took away the food, O brāhmaṇa. He was amazed and thought in his mind thus: 'Oh, who comes daily and takes away my food? This place of the holy ascetics is not at all to be abandoned by me. If, having cooked again, I eat (the food), then how can I give up the evening worship (of the deity)? I shall not eat after cooking some food. A devotee of Viṣṇu does not eat without offering everything to Viṣṇu. How can I again remain in (i.e. observe) this vow by fasting? Today I shall properly guard the food.' Thinking thus he cooked the food and remained there unnoticed. Just then he saw a cāṇḍāla ready to take away the cooked food. He was emaciated with hunger, his face was melancholy, and only bones and skin were left (in his body). Seeing him, the best brāhmaṇa had his mind distressed with pity. Seeing the (cāṇḍāla) stealing the food, the brāhmaṇa said, "Wait, wait. How do you

eat the dry food? Have this ghee." Seeing the best brāhmaṇa speaking like this and coming (near him), he, through fear, ran fast, and dropped down unconscious. That best brāhmaṇa, seeing the cāṇḍāla frightened and unconscious, speedily approached him and fanned him with the ends of his garment through compassion (for him).

14-21. Viṣṇudāsa saw him who got up, to be actually god Viṣṇu holding a conch, a disc, and a mace, (and) wearing a yellow garment, having four arms, having the mark of Śrīvatsa, wearing a crown, and having his chest marked with Kaustubha resembling atasī flower. Seeing him, the best brāhmaṇa was full of good thoughts. At that time he was unable to praise and salute him. Then gods like Indra came there at that time; and gandharvas and celestial nymphs gladly sang and danced. At that time the place was crowded with hundreds of aeroplanes and it resounded with the sounds of songs and musical instruments. Then Viṣṇu, having embraced his virtuous devotee, gave him absorption into himself and took him to Vaikuṇṭha. King Cola who was initiated (for a sacrifice) saw Viṣṇudāsa seated in the excellent aeroplane in the vicinity of Viṣṇu. Seeing Viṣṇudāsa going to Viṣṇu's abode, he quickly called his preceptor Mudgala and thus spoke to him:

Cola said:

22-25. That brāhmaṇa vying with whom I performed that sacrifice etc., is, after taking up Viṣṇu's form, going to Viṣṇu's abode. I who was initiated for this sacrificial session, offered oblations into fire through you and made the brāhmaṇas completely (happy) in their minds through gifts etc. That god yet does not certainly become pleased. (But) that Viṣṇu actually presented himself (before the brāhmaṇa) by his devotion. Therefore, Viṣṇu is not at all pleased by means of gifts and sacrifices. Devotion alone is the means of seeing that lord.

The two attendants said:

26-32. Saying so he consecrated his sister's son on the throne. Since from his childhood he was initiated for the sacrifice, he was sonless. Therefore, even now in his kingdom sisters' sons only, continuing the convention followed (previo-

usly) become heir to the kingdom. Then going to the place of the sacrifice, and standing before the hole made for receiving the sacrificial fire, addressing Viṣṇu, he loudly spoke (these words) three times: "O Viṣṇu, give me a stable devotion through acts of mind, speech and body." Saying like this he fell into the fire, when all were watching. Then Mudgala angrily extracted the tuft of hair on the crown of his head. Since then, even up to this day the Mudgalas are without the tuft of hair on the crowns on their heads. Just then Viṣṇu, loving his devotees, appeared in the fire in the hole made for receiving the sacrificial fire. Viṣṇu embraced him and put him into an excellent aeroplane. Having embraced him and assimilated him into himself, the lord of gods, surrounded by gods, went to his abode in Vaikuṇṭha with him.

Nārada said:

33. That Viṣṇu dear to Lakṣmī, made the two having similar forms, his doorkeepers. He who was Viṣṇudāsa became Puṇyaśīla (by name), and he who was king Cola became Suśīla by name.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TEN

The Story of Jaya and Vijaya

Dharmadatta said:

1. I have heard that Jaya and Vijaya are Viṣṇu's doorkeepers. (But I do not know) what they did due to which they had these forms.

The two attendants said:

2-14. Due to just being seen by Kardama, Devahūtī, Tṛṇabindu's daughter, formerly gave birth to two sons, O brāhmaṇa. The elder one was Jaya by name, and the younger Vijaya. On (i.e. from) the other wife was born Kapila, a knower of yoga, and Dharma. Jaya and Vijaya were always engrossed in devotion

to Viṣṇu. Controlling their senses, they were disposed to virtue. Everyday they both recited the eight-syllabled hymn and observed the Viṣṇu-vow. Viṣṇu always presented himself at their worship (of him). Sometime Marutta invited them for a sacrifice. They, skilled in performing a sacrifice, went there, being waited upon by divine sages. Jaya became the Brahmā priest and Vijaya the sacrificing priest. Then they fully accomplished the sacrificial rite. Marutta, after having bathed at the end of the sacrifice, gave them much wealth. Taking that wealth they went to their hermitage. O sage, then for worshipping and gratifying Viṣṇu they vied with each other and they divided the wealth. Jaya said: "Let it be divided into equal parts." Vijaya said: "Whatever is received by one is one's (share)." Then Jaya angrily and with his mind agitated, cursed Vijaya; "Since having received (the wealth) you are not giving it, therefore, be a crocodile." Vijaya too, having heard that curse of (i.e. pronounced by) him, cursed him: "Be an elephant", since he, erring due to arrogance had cursed him. Seeing lord Viṣṇu at the time of the daily worship, they told him like that. They solicited Lakṣmī's lord for rendering the curse ineffective. "O god, how shall we, your devotees, go to the stock of a crocodile and an elephant? O ocean of kindness, turn away that curse."

The lord said:

15-29. The words of my devotees shall never be untrue. I too can never change it. Formerly due to Prahlāda's words I appeared in a pillar. In the same way due to Ambarīṣa's words I arose on the way(?). Therefore, having certainly undergone these two curses pronounced by yourselves, obtain my eternal position.

Speaking like this, Viṣṇu vanished.

The two attendants said:

Then the crocodile and the elephant were (born) on the bank of Gaṇḍakī. Even in that state they remembered their (former) birth, and observed Viṣṇu-vow. Some time in Kārtika the elephant went to Gaṇḍakī to bathe. Just then, the crocodile remembering the cause of the curse seized him. The elephant

seized by the crocodile remembered Viṣṇu. Just then Viṣṇu, holding a conch, a disc, a mace appeared (there). Then the lord, throwing his disc, emancipated the crocodile and the elephant, and absorbing them into himself, took them to Vaikuṇṭha. Since then the place is known as Harikṣetra, where even (now) the stones bear the mark of the disc. Those two, O brāhmaṇa, known as Jaya and Vijaya, and dear to Viṣṇu, are his doorkeepers. Therefore, you too, O you who know piety, always observing Viṣṇu's vow and having given up jealousy and hypocrisy, view all equally. Always bathe in the morning (when the Sun is) in (the signs of) Libra, Capricornus and Aries, and maintaining a Tulasī-grove observe the Ekādaśī-vow. Always worship brāhmaṇas, cows, and Viṣṇu's devotees. Do not eat masūra (pulse), gruel made from fermentation of boiled rice and egg-plants. O Dharmadatta, by devotion to him (i.e. Viṣṇu) you too, on your death obtain that highest position of Viṣṇu, as we (have obtained). Sacrifices, gifts and (visits to holy places) are not superior to your vow (commenced) from birth and pleasing Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, you are lucky that you have observed this vow which gratifies the lord of the world, having got the fruit of which this meritorious one is taken by us to the world of Viṣṇu.

Nārada said:

30-32. Having thus instructed that Dharmadatta, the two, getting into the aeroplane, went with Kalahā to Viṣṇu's abode. Dharmadatta also, being convinced, observed the vow and on his death went, accompanied by his two wives, to that place of the lord. One who duly listens to his account which took place in ancient times, his mind, by the favour of the lord of the world, becomes disposed to reach Viṣṇu's proximity.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ELEVEN

The Greatness of Kṛṣṇā and Veṇī

Pṛthu said:

1-2. You told (me) that formerly Kalahā came out of the body of the merchant on the bank (of the confluence) of Kṛṣṇā and Veṇī (and went) with the attendants of Śiva and Viṣṇu. (Now) O you who know Dharma, tell me about the greatness of the two rivers and that place. I have a curiosity about it.

Nārada said:

3-8a. Kṛṣṇā is actually the dark-bodied one, and Veṇī is god Śiva. (Even) the Four-faced (Brahmā) is not able to describe the greatness of their confluence. Yet, I shall tell you about their origin. Listen to it. Formerly in the age of Cākṣuṣa Manu, Manu's grandfather (i.e. Brahmā) was ready to perform a sacrifice on the charming peak of the Sahya mountain. Surrounded by hosts of all gods, and with Viṣṇu and Śiva, he after making the preparation for the sacrifice, went to the peak of that mountain. At the time (sacred to) god Brahmā (i.e. the early part of the day) the hosts of sages like Bhṛgu gathered there to initiate him. Then, through the brāhmaṇas Viṣṇu called the elder wife Svarā. When she was coming slowly, Bhṛgu said to Viṣṇu:

Bhṛgu said:

8b-9a. O Viṣṇu, you called Svarā; but she is not coming quickly. This is the transgression of the auspicious moment. How can the rite of initiation be done?

Viṣṇu said:

9b-10a. If Svarā is not coming quickly, then put Gāyatrī here (i.e. in her place). Can this wife of him also not join him in the meritorious deed?

Nārada said:

10b-13. Rudra also, in the same way, approved of Viṣṇu's words. That Bhṛgu, hearing those words, seated Gāyatrī to the right of Brahmā, and performed the rite of initiation. O king,

while they were duly performing the rite of initiation of Brahmā, Svarā came to the place of the sacrifice. Seeing Gāyatrī initiated with Brahmā, Svarā due to jealousy for her co-wife, angrily said (these) words:

Svarā said:

14-16. (When) those that do not deserve to be honoured, are honoured, and those that deserve to be honoured are ignored, three (inauspicious things) take place there: famine, death, fear. You have seated this younger one on my seat. Therefore, all of you, being devoid of consciousness will have various forms. Since she has sat on my seat, on the right (of Brahmā), therefore let her have a body of a river invisible to the people.

Nārada said:

17-18. Then hearing that curse, Gāyatrī trembled; and getting up, she, though restrained by gods, cursed that Svarā. "As Brahmā is your husband, so he is also mine. You have in vain cursed me. You too (will) become a river."

Nārada said:

19. Then all gods led by Śiva and Viṣṇu felt grief; saluting (by prostrating) like a staff on the ground, they requested Svarā:

The gods said:

20-21. O goddess, since you have cursed all of us like Brahmā, if we all become devoid of consciousness and turn into rivers, then these three worlds will certainly perish. You have acted imprudently. Therefore, withdraw this curse.

Svarā said:

22-24. O best gods, since at the commencement of the sacrifice you did not worship the lord of the attendants (i.e. Gaṇeśa), therefore this obstacle, due to my anger, has indeed come up. Nor again, these words of me will be untrue. Therefore, with your portions dulled, turn into rivers. We, the two co-wives, shall become two rivers, flowing into the west, by means of our portions, O gods.

Nārada said:

25-31. O king, then hearing her words Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva became dulled and turned into rivers just by means of their portions. Viṣṇu became Kṛṣṇā, and god Śiva Veṇī. Brahmā then separately became Gaṅgā having humps (of waves). The wise gods also, having dulled their portions, became good rivers separately (flowing) from the peaks of Sahya mountain. The best rivers, (formed) with the portions of gods, flowed into the east. Gāyatrī and Svarā joined together, flowing westward, came to be called Sāvitrī. Both Viṣṇu and Śiva appointed at that sacrifice, became (known) by the names Mahābala and Atibala. O king, I am not able to describe the greatness of the two rivers. Gods like Brahmā went (from the place) and remain, through their portions, as rivers. Every act of him who listens with devotion to this great (account of) Kṛṣṇā, removing sins or causes (others) to hear it, would become meritorious, and gets the fruit due to seeing her and bathing in her (water).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWELVE

Portions of Merit and Demerit That Go to Others

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

1-5. Hearing these words of him, Pṛthu, with his mind amazed, devoutly honoured Nārada and allowed him to go, O dear one. Therefore, this triad of vows—the two in Māgha and Kārtika, and the one of Ekādaśī—is very dear to me. To me Tulasī among plants is dear, Kārtika among months is dear, Ekādaśī among days is dear, and Dvārakā among the holy places is dear. He who with his senses conquered resorts to these, becomes dear to me; not like that (i.e. so dear) with sacrifices etc. He who is devoted to these, should not, due to my grace, he afraid of sins as a rule.

Satyabhāmā said:

6-8. O lord what you told me, viz. that Kalahā was emancipated by the religious merit given by others, causes wonder. This month of Kārtika having such efficacy, is dear to you, since due to bath and (giving) gifts (in that month) sins like cheating one's master have gone (i.e. go). O lord, if one gets the religious merit given by another person, then in what way does a man get the religious merit not given to him?

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

9-29. Listen properly with which act men receive religious merit and sins not given to them. The region, the village and the families should have the portion of (the fruit of) acts etc. But in Kali-age only the doer gets the fruit of the religious merit or the sin. This arrangement is said (to obtain) even when no contact takes place. Know as to how religious merit and sins pass (to another person) through contact. Due to being paired together, going together, eating from the same pot, a man would duly get half the portion of religious merit or sin. A man always gets one-fourth portion of the religious merit or sin (of another person) through teaching, acting as a priest at a sacrifice, or eating (after sitting) in the same line. A man gets one-sixth portion of the religious merit or sin (of another) through (sitting on) the same seat, same vehicle, and due to the contact of (another man's) breath with his body. A man always gets one-tenth portion of the religious merit and sins (of another person) through touching (him), talking (to him) or praising (that) other person. A man would obtain one-hundredth portion of the religious merit or sin of another person by seeing, listening to, or thinking in his mind about him. He who censures another person, acts wickedly towards him or disregards him, gets (the fruit of) the sin committed by him, and gives him his own religious merit. A person, except the wife, a hired servant and a disciple of the man who does meritorious acts, serving him, and not getting the money in accordance with his service would also share the religious merit of him (who is served) in lieu of his service. A waiter at meals who ignores serving a man taking food after sitting

in the same line as others, would share one-sixth of his sin. He who, while bathing or performing sandhyā prayer etc., would touch or speak (with another person), would very certainly give one-sixth of his religious merit to that person. Another person who gives money to a person who asks for it for a religious purpose would get the fruit due to his (i.e. latter's) religious merit. He who performs a religious act after snatching another's wealth, incurs sin, and the fruit due to that (religious act) goes to the person having money (and giving it for the religious purpose). A rich man shares in proportion with his wealth the religious merit of the man who dies without repaying the money (borrowed from the rich man for the religious act). One who gives an idea, one who approves of it, one who gives the implement, one who compels, would obtain one-sixth portion of the religious merit or sin. A king would take out from his subjects one-sixth portion of their religious merit or sin. A preceptor would obtain half the portion of the religious merit from (i.e. of) his disciple; a husband (would obtain half the portion of the religious merit) of his wife, a father of his son, and a wife also (would obtain half the portion of the religious merit) of her husband. She, pleasing him, always behaves according to his mind (i.e. desire). The giver of a gift for the man who gives gifts with the hand of (i.e. through) another person, except a hired servant or his son, would extract one-sixth portion (of the religious merit of the donor). He who gives subsistence would extract one-sixth of the portion of him to whom the subsistence is given, provided he does not make him serve himself or any other (person).

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

30. In this way, the religious merit and sins earned by others, always go, though not given (to others). Listen to this excellent account, which is old, and which gives great religious merit.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN

Dhaneśvara's Story

Śri Kṛṣṇa said:

1-12. Formerly there was a brāhmaṇa named Dhaneśvara who lived in the city of Avantī. He had fallen from the status of a brāhmaṇa, was addicted to sins, and was very wicked. He sold liquor, blankets, hide, and behaved falsely. His mind was addicted to stealing, prostitutes, drinking and gambling. That Dhaneśvara, going from one region to another for selling (these articles), sometime went to Māhiṣmatī city. It was fashioned formerly by Mahiṣa. By its rampart shone Narmadā that destroyed sins. Seeing there men observing Kārtika-vow and coming from different directions, he, selling (his articles) stayed there for a month. He, everyday wandering on the bank of Narmadā for selling (his articles), saw brāhmaṇas who bathed (in the river) and were engaged in muttering hymns and worshipping deities. Everywhere Dhaneśvara, full of curiosity saw some men reciting a Purāṇa, someengaged in listening to it, some engaged in eulogising Viṣṇu with dancing, singing and musical instruments, some having marks (like a conch etc. in honour) of Viṣṇu, and some having on their persons garlands and Tulasī. He, wandering there everyday, due to seeing and coming in contact with Viṣṇu's devotees, heard the name of Viṣṇu etc. On his way he who resided there for a month, saw (people) keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu at the time of the concluding rite of Kārtika-vow. On the full-moon day he saw the worship of two kinds, so also presents and meals and offering of lights done by the observers of the vow. Then at the time of the sunset he saw the ceremony of illumination done for pleasing the enemy of Tripura (i.e. Śiva).

13-17a. Since on that day Śiva burnt the three cities (of Tripura), therefore, a great festival is celebrated by the devotees on that day. All the religious rites of him who would discriminate between me and Śiva, would undoubtedly be fruitless. That Dhaneśvara, seeing dance etc. there, wandered. Just then he was bitten by a black serpent and deprived of strength he dropped. Men seeing him fallen, and full of pity, surrounded

him. Then they sprinkled his face with water mixed with Tulasī. Then, when his body dropped (i.e. he died), Yama's servants bound him, and angrily tormented him with strokes of whips, and took him to Saṁyaminī (Yama's city). Seeing him Citragupta chided him and told Yama the bad deeds done by him from his childhood.

Citragupta said:

17b-19a. No good deed of (i.e. done by) him since his childhood is noticed. O Sun's son, his bad deeds cannot be described even in many years. O lord, this one appears to be just sin incarnate. Therefore, till the time of the final deluge he should be roasted in hell.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

19b-20a. Hearing these words, Yama showing his form resembling the fatal fire, angrily said to his servants:

Yama said:

20b-21a. O you who look after the dead, take him tormenting him with your iron clubs. Quickly put him into Kumbhīpāka (hell) having the sound of the boiling of oil.

21b-25a. When he was thrown there, Kumbhīpāka became cool, as when in olden times Prahlāda was thrown into it. Seeing that great wonder, the official looking after the dead was amazed. He speedily came and told it to Yama. Yama heard the curious thing told by the official looking after the dead. Saying, "Oh, what is it?" he thought (over it) properly. Just then Nārada, smiling, came there quickly. He was properly honoured by Yama after seeing him. He said these words:

Nārada said:

25b-34. O Sun's son, he is not fit to suffer in hells, since his acts are those that keep away hell. That man who would see, touch or talk to those who do meritorious acts, obtains one-sixth of the merit of those doing meritorious deeds. Since he had innumerable contacts with the observers of the Viṣṇu vow in Kārtika for a month, therefore he shares a portion of their

religious merit. Since he served them, he enjoys the entire religious merit of the vow. Therefore, his religious merit due to the Kārtika-vow cannot be measured, (since) Viṣṇu, to whom good devotees are dear, does destroy even the major sins of those who observe the Kārtika-vow. Since in the end (i.e. at the time of his death) he was favoured by Viṣṇu's devotees by repeating the names (of Viṣṇu) and by sprinkling water mixed with Tulasī (-leaves), therefore he is not be roasted in a hell. Therefore, with his sins destroyed, he deserves to get a good position. As due to deliberate or non-deliberate sins one has to suffer from torment in hell, in the same way one has to enjoy pleasures in heaven. Therefore, he who unintentionally got the religious merit, would, living in the stock of yakṣa, see all hells and would undergo the fruit of his sins.

When Nārada, after speaking like this left, Yama, realising his religious merit on hearing his (i.e. Nārada's) words, again took the brāhmaṇa through his servant showing him all groups of hell.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOURTEEN

The Seven Hells Shown to Dhaneśvara

Śri Kṛṣṇa said:

1. Then Yama's servant, the official looking after the dead, took Dhaneśvara and showed him all hells.

The official looking after the dead said:

2-24. O Dhaneśvara, see all these very fearful hells into which sinners are always roasted by Yama's servants. This hell, appearing fearful, is called Taptavāluka in which those sinners whose bodies are burnt, cry. Those men who do not honour the guests emaciated with hunger, who have come to their house after having made an offering to all deities, are roasted here due to their acts. Those who have kicked the preceptor, fire, brāh-

maṇas, deities, those that are crowned, have their feet burnt. This hell has six divisions, and is reached by those who have committed various sins. Similarly this is the great hell (called) Andhatāmisra. O brāhmaṇa, see the body (of a man) due to his sinful act, is being pierced by insects of fierce mouths that have come in contact with him. This also has six divisions. In them sinful human beings are roasted with their vitals pierced by horses, crows, beasts and birds. The third hell is Krakaca, appearing fierce, where the sinful human beings are cut with swords. It has six divisions like (the one having) the Asipatra-grove. Those men who separate (others) from their wives, sons etc., so also with other beloved persons, are roasted here. The sinners, crying and running here and there through fear of being cut with blades of swords, are roasted here. See (them). This fourth hell is called Argala. See. Those sinners, being bound by Yama's servants with various kinds of nooses, and being killed with iron clubs, are crying here. Those sinful men who oppose good men and brāhmaṇas in this world are roasted here after their necks etc. are seized by Yama's servants. This also is a hell having six divisions like Vadha, etc. See this fifth hell called Kūṭaśālmalī, where, O brāhmaṇa, there are śālmalī and other trees resembling charcoal, where those men who are always engaged in adultery, snatching others' wealth and treachery, are roasted cruelly in six ways. See this sixth wonderful hell (called) Raktapūya where men committing sins are roasted with their faces turned down. These have eaten prohibited articles, and were engaged in censuring others and wickedness. Being pierced and killed, they are crying in fearful tones. This also is having bad smells of six kinds. O Dhaneśvara, see this seventh hell appearing fierce and called Kumbhīpāka. It is divided into six by means of articles like oil. Here great sinners are, for many thousand years, boiled by plunging them and taking them out (of the oil) by Yama's servants. These Raurava hells are said to be forty plus two. See them. A non-deliberate sin is called *śuṣka*, and a deliberate one *ārdra*. The hells are of two kinds depending upon the two varieties, ārdra and śuṣka. They have eightyfour separate divisions. That which is of a non-specific or general nature, resulting in a person's not being allowed to dine in the same line, and arising from pollution, and

resulting in one's exclusion from his caste is said to be a minor sin.

25-26. A very heinous sin[1] is a major sin said to be divided into seven divisions. One by one they are roasted in these seven (hells). Due to your collection of religious merit as you had contact with the observers of the Kārtika-vow, you were taken out of them.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

27-29. Thus showing him the hells, the official looking after the dead, took Dhaneśvara to the Yakṣa-world; then he lived there. He is the follower of Kubera, and is known as Dhanayakṣa, and after him Viśvāmitra has fashioned a holy place at Ayodhyā. This Kārtika-vow is having such an efficacy, gives pleasures and salvation. By seeing an observer of this vow even he who has committed many sins, gets salvation.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN

Aśvattha and Vaṭa Praised as Gods in Disguise

Sūṭa said

1-4. Speaking like this to Satyabhāmā, very dear to him, Vāsudeva went to his mother's house to offer evening prayer, etc. This Kārtika is said to be powerful like this, destroying sins, always making one dear to Viṣṇu and always giving pleasures and salvation. Keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, bathing in the morning, using Tulasī (leaves etc.), concluding the vow, and offering light—these are the vows (to be observed) in Kārtika. The Kārtika-vow is complete with these five vows. The fruit that one gets is said to be pleasures and salvation.

The sages said:

5-7. O Raumaharṣaṇa, this religious act of Kārtika is said

1. Mahāpāpa—a great, or heinous sin. Murder of a brāhmaṇa, drinking liquor, stealing, violating the preceptor's bed (i.e. his wife), and company of those who commit these sins are great sins.

to be dear to Viṣṇu, giving great fruit, properly purifying and destroying sins. When it comes, it should be necessarily observed duly by men desiring salvation, or desiring enjoyments. If this is so, how should a man observing a vow, who is in a difficulty, who is in an impervious forest, or is suffering from diseases, observe the auspicious Kārtika vow?

Sūta said:

8-20. O best sages, listen. I shall tell all about it as to how it should be observed, since it is extremely fruitful. In a temple of Viṣṇu or Śiva, or in any other temple in the absence of a temple of Viṣṇu or Śiva, a man should keep awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu. If a man is in an impervious forest to which he might have gone by day, he should observe it under the root of an Aśvattha tree or even in Tulasī-groves. A man, by singing (songs) mainly containing Viṣṇu's names, near Viṣṇu, obtains the fruit of presenting a thousand cows. A man playing upon a musical instrument will obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya (sacrifice), and a dancer that of bathing at all holy places. A man who gives wealth will obtain all this religious merit of them. He would get one-sixth portion by praising and seeing (the deity). O (sages), if one who is in a calamity, does not get a watery (place) for bathing, or one is diseased, he should purify himself with (the recital of) the names of Viṣṇu. He who after observing the vow is unable to conclude it (duly), should, according to his capacity, feed brāhmaṇas for the (proper) completion of the vow. Since it gives great fruit, it should never be abandoned by men. Brāhmaṇas are the form of Viṣṇu whose form is not manifest on the earth. By their being pleased he is well pleased on the earth. If he is not able to present a lamp, he should light others' lamps. Or he should carefully protect them from wind etc. In the absence of Tulasī he should worship a brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu's devotee, since Viṣṇu is always present in his devotees. In the absence of all (this) the observer of the vow should serve brāhmaṇas, cows and worship Aśvattha and Vaṭa trees for the completion of the vow.

The sages said:

21. How do you equate Aśvattha and Vaṭa trees with a cow

and a brāhmaṇa? How do you take them to be more venerable than all (other) trees?

Sūta said:

22-23. There is no doubt that lord Viṣṇu is of the form of Aśvattha, Vaṭa is Rudra's form, and Palāśa has taken up Brahmā's form. Seeing, worshipping and serving them is said to remove sins. These certainly destroy grief, diseases and the wicked.

The sages said:

24. O you omniscient one, tell (us) how Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva became trees. We have a great doubt about it.

Sūta said:

25-26. Formerly, it is said, gods sent Agni in a brāhmaṇa's form to create an obstacle when Śiva and Pārvatī were cohabiting. Then that Pārvatī, trembling and angry due to being deprived of the sexual pleasure, angrily cursed the gods.

Pārvatī said:

27-29. Even these worms and insects know the sexual pleasure. O gods, you will obtain the condition of plants due to having obstructed it.

Thus that Pārvatī of an angry mind, cursed the gods. Therefore, all hosts of gods have become trees. Therefore, O chief sages, both these Viṣṇu and Śiva have become Aśvattha and Vaṭa (trees). Aśvattha has become fit to be touched on a Saturday and not fit to be touched (on other days) due to contact of Śani with Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN

Alakṣmī's Episode

The sages said:

1. O Sūta, how has this Aśvattha tree become untouchable, and similarly how has it become fit to be touched on a Saturday? Please tell us all this in detail.

Sūta said:

2-3. Out of the gems that the lordly gods obtained after churning the ocean, the gods gave Lakṣmī and Kaustubha to Viṣṇu. When he accepted Lakṣmī as his wife, she respectfully said to him having the disc in his hand.

Lakṣmī said:

4-5. How will you marry me, the younger one, without getting this elder one married? Therefore, O Viṣṇu, having first married this Alakṣmī, my elder sister, take me. This is an old practice.

Sūta said:

6-10a. Hearing these words of her, Viṣṇu, the creator of the world, gave according to his own words, to sage Uddālaka who had practised penance for a very long time, that Alakṣmī, of a big face, white teeth, having a bright body, tall, having red eyes, and having rough and tawny hair. That sage, in accordance with Viṣṇu's words, accepted her and he, knowing Dharma, brought her to his hermitage full of sounds of (the recital of) the Vedas, rich with the fragrance of sacrificial fire, and resounding with the sounds of (the recitals of) lores. Seeing that hermitage, she who was afflicted, said these words:

Jyeṣṭhā said:

10b. This abode full of Vedic sounds is not proper for me. O brāhmaṇa, I shall not come here. Take me somewhere else. Do not delay.

Uddālaka said:

11. Why do you not come? What is here that you don't

like? Tell me at which place an abode proper for you would be (found).

Jyeṣṭhā said:

12-15. I shall not stay there where the sound of (the recital of) the Vedas is heard, guests are honoured, and sacrifices etc. are (performed). So also I shall not stay there where a pair of lovers live, and where the dead ancestors are honoured. I love a place where there are men engaged in gambling and taking away others' wealth, and where there live adulterers. I am interested in that place where cow slaughter takes place, drinking is indulged in, so also where sins like the killing of a brāhmaṇa take place.

Sūta said:

16-17. Hearing these words of her, sage Uddālaka's face was dejected; and recollecting Viṣṇu's words, he did not say (anything). He went here and there. Seeing his worship she said, "I will not come". Then through confusion, he too became very much afflicted. Then Uddālaka spoke these words to that Alakṣmī:

Uddālaka said:

18. O Alakṣmī, stay for a moment at the root of this Aśvattha tree till I return after finding a place for (our) stay.

Sūta said:

19-21. Thus keeping her there, Uddālaka went (away). When she who was waiting for him for a long time did not see him, she, afflicted due to being forsaken by her husband, wept piteously. Lakṣmī, in her abode in Vaikuṇṭha heard her weeping there. Then with her mind dejected, she respectfully said to Viṣṇu:

Lakṣmī said:

22. O lord, O kind one, my elder sister is afflicted due to being forsaken by her husband. If I am dear to you, then go to console her.

Sūta said:

23. Then Viṣṇu, full of compassion, came there with Lakṣmī, consoled that Alakṣmī, and said these words to her:

Śrī Viṣṇu said:

24-25. O Alakṣmī, being in possession of this Aśvattha tree, be stable. I have made from my portion this abode for you. May this younger sister of you be stable with those householders who everyday worship you, the elder one.

Sūta said:

26-28. Those who listen to and recite this (account of) the greatness of Kārtika, would live in Viṣṇu's city till the final deluge. There is on the earth no other (vow) than that of Kārtika, dear to Viṣṇu, which removes diseases, which destroys sins, which is a great giver of intelligence, which is a means of getting sons, wealth etc., which is the cause of salvation. What is the use (the need) for going to and resorting to holy places for the man who, with restraints, observes the Kārtika vow which is dear to Viṣṇu, which destroys all sins, which brings about prosperity in the form of good sons and grandsons, wealth and grains?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

The Importance of Bathing in Kārtika

Sūta said:

1. Hearing all these words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, that noble Satyā, daughter of Satrājit, then said:

Satyā said:

2. O lord, I have not heard the greatness of Kārtika in detail. How is Kārtika (said to be) the best of all months?

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

3. You have well asked with respect about the vow of Kārtika. It was formerly told to Śaunaka by very noble Sūta.

Sūta said:

4. Listen, I shall give the auspicious answer to this question. Formerly the lord told it to Kārtikeya who had asked about it.

Kārtikeya said:

5-15. O lord, I, a devotee of Viṣṇu, have heard many secrets of Viṣṇu told by you. Men have come to the ocean of mundane existence, covered with large waves of unhappiness. Carefully tell (some story) for their emancipation. So also, O you best among speakers, tell about the rite of Kārtika and the bath (in it), by which men will cross over the ocean of unhappiness, O father. Tell me about the greatness of illumination, of offering mango-sprouts, O you of a good vow, and the greatness of gopīcandana and Tulasī, O lord. Tell me also about the greatness of jasmine flowers; so also of lotuses; so also tell about the greatness of dhātrī-fruits and damanaka. O lord, tell about the greatness of ketakī-flowers; so also of the offering of eatables, the greatness of a holy place, and the fruit of the bath in Māgha. O best god, tell about the fruit of eating from palāśa-leaves, the fruit of waving the light by setting right the wick of another's lamp, O Śiva. (Tell me about) the greatness of the holy place (called) Puṣkara, so also of Śūkara, O lord; so also the greatnecs of Śālagrāma, and the arrangement of the Svastika (symbol). Tell me also about the fruit of gifts, avoiding others' food, the fruit of the fast for a month, and of giving away a couch. O you of a good vow, (tell me) about the greatness of Dīpāvalī, and of the Prabodhinī (Ekādaśī); so also tell me in detail the importance of the five days from the eleventh to the fifteenth of the bright half of the month of Kārtika.

The lord said:

16-21. O child, you have asked well for emancipating the people. I shall undoubtedly tell it. There is no other Viṣṇu devotee

like you. O child, there is no doubt that I am emancipated by a good son (like) you. You always have a firm devotion to Viṣṇu. The best brāhmaṇa who gives (i.e. tells) the Vaiṣṇava practice to people gets the religious merit obtained by giving the earth with the ocean. That is not equal even to a croreth part of (the merit got from the vow of) Kārtika. On one side are all gifts, gifts of cows, all sacrifices with presents, the residence at Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra, Himālaya, the residence at the holy place of Mathurā, at Vārāṇasī, at Śūkara, and on the other side is Kārtika always dear to Viṣṇu, O child.

Sūta said:

22. Speaking like this, O best sage, Śiva again spoke these words: "I shall tell you in great detail the importance of bathing (daily) in (the month of) Kārtika".

The lord said:

23-32. The Kṛta age is said to be of brāhmaṇas, the Tretā age is said to be that of kṣatriyas, Dvāpara is said to be of vaiśyas and Kali is said to be of Śūdras. O child, people show slackness in taking a bath in the Kali age. Yet I shall tell you about the bath in Kārtika and Māgha. A man whose hands, feet, speech, mind are controlled, and who has knowledge, penance and fame (to his credit) enjoys the fruit of (the visits to) a holy place. These five—one having no faith, a sinful person, an atheist, one with a split mind, and a disputant—do not enjoy the fruit of (the visit to) a holy place. That brāhmaṇa who, getting up in the morning, would always bathe in a holy place, is free from all sins, and obtains (i. e. goes to) the highest Brahman. O Kārtikeya, those who know about a bath, have said that a bath is of four kinds: Vāyavya, Vāruṇa, Divya and Brāhmya. A bath in the evening is Vāyavya; a bath in a sea etc. is Vāruṇa; a bath with hymns recited by brāhmaṇas is Brāhmya; and a divine bath is the one bright with the water (directly falling) from the clouds. Of all the baths Vāruṇa is the best. A brāhmaṇa, a kṣatriya, a vaiśya should take a bath with the (recital of) hymns. O Kārtikeya, a śūdra, so also women, should bathe silently. A girl, a young women, an old woman, a man, a woman, a eunuch are free from all sins due to

a bath (everyday) in Kārtika and Māgha. Having bathed in Kārtika, they obtain the desired fruit.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN

Śiva Answers Kārtikeya's Queries

Sūta said:

1. Having approached the listener, viz. Kārtikeya, full of devotion, the bull-bannered lord Śiva spoke again.

The lord said:

2-15. Kārtika is Viṣṇu's month and the best of all months. In the Kali age all the thirtythree gods come together in this month. In the very prosperous month of Kārtika men will give to a brāhmaṇa a cow, gold, silver, land, residence, cows with full devotion, O you of a good vow. Of all gifts the gift of a daughter is the best. Men will duly give their daughter to a brāhmaṇa of the Atri-family. They (will) live in Vaikuṇṭha as long as the fourteen Indras (rule). When small hair appears (on the private parts), Soma enjoys a daughter. When she attains puberty, gandharvas (enjoy her); and when the breasts appear (prominent), Fire (enjoys her). A man should marry his daughter as long as she has not attained puberty. Wise men recommend a girl's marriage when she is eight years old. She should be duly given to a brāhmaṇa who is well-versed in sacred learning, possesses moral virtue, has actually studied the Vedas, and has observed celibacy. This is said to be the rule regarding a daughter to be given (in marriage). He is honoured in Rudra's heaven for as many thousand years as the number of hair on the daughter's body. (The gift of) a thousand cows is equal to that of ten bulls. (The gift of) a vehicle is equal to that of ten bulls. (The gift of) a horse is equal to that of ten vehicles. The gift of an elephant is superior to the gift of thousands of horses. The gift of gold is equal to the gift of thousands of elephants. Giving knowledge is equal to the gift

of thousands of bhāras of gold. The gift of (a piece of) land is a crorefold superior to giving knowledge. The gift of cows is superior to thousands of gifts of land. Giving food is superior to thousands of gifts of cows. All this immobile and mobile world has food as its support. Therefore, O Kārtikeya, one should with an effort (i.e. should make an effort to) give (gifts) in Kārtika. (These) three are equal gifts, and have equal fruits—a cow fulfilling all desires, earth (i.e. land) and Sarasvatī (i.e. knowledge).

Kārtikeya said:

16. O great god, please tell me other (religious) practices doing which one having got rid of all (one's) sins, would be a god.

Sūta said:

17. O you treasures of penance, what is the use of praising it in many ways? Thus asked Śiva again commenced speaking:

The lord said:

18-46. He who, observing restraints, avoids others' food in Kārtika, gets the fruit of the Cāndrāyaṇa (vow). The man who, noticing that Kārtika has arrived, would avoid others' food day by day, obtains the fruit of the Kṛcchra vow. A man should avoid oil in Kārtika; a man should avoid honey in Kārtika; one should avoid (the use of) bell-metal in Kārtika; and one should especially avoid food prepared for a group. By eating flesh (but) once (in Kārtika) he obtains (i.e. goes to) a demonish stock and is cooked in feces for sixty thousand years. Freed from that the sinner is born as a village-pig eating feces. When foods (generally) indulged in are restricted in Kārtika (by a man), he surely obtains Viṣṇu's form and a position giving salvation. There is no (other) month like Kārtika and no deity superior to Viṣṇu. There is no (other) sacred knowledge like the Vedas; there is no (other) holy place like Gaṅgā; there is no (other) practice like (that of) truth; there is no (other) age like the Kṛta (age). There is no (other) satisfaction like that of the tongue; there is no (other) pleasure like that due to giving gifts. There is no (other) friend like righteousness; there is no (other) luminary

like the eyes. He who would spend (Kārtika), the month dear to Viṣṇu, without (observing) a vow, should be known to have fallen from duty and he is born in low stocks. Kārtika is the best month, always dear to Viṣṇu's devotees. A holy river flowing into the sea is difficult to be had for a bath by those given to bathing (everyday). An unmarried girl belonging to a noble family and of good character is difficult to be found. A couple of human beings (of an amiable nature) is difficult to be found. In the world a (good) mother and especially a (good) father are difficult to be found. Honour to the good is rare. A virtuous son is rare. Residence at Dvārakā is difficult to be accomplished. Kṛṣṇa's sight is difficult to be had. A bath in Gomatī is had with difficulty. The Kārtika vow is difficult to be had. O child, the fruit that a man gets by giving (pieces of) land to brāhmaṇas at (the time of) lunar and solar eclipses is had by one who sleeps on the (bare) ground. He should feed a brāhmaṇa couple and should honour them with unguents. Blankets, gems, various garments, mattresses filled with cotton should be given along with bed-sheets. Give a pair of sandals or an umbrella in the purifying (month of) Kārtika. He who everyday eats from leaves in Kārtika, does not meet with a calamity as long as the fourteen Indras are ruling. He gets the fruit of all his desires, and would get the fruit of (visiting) all holy places. By eating from palāśa leaves a man does not see (i.e. have) a residence in hell, since this palāśa is actually known to be Brahmā granting all desired objects. O Kārtikeya, in Kārtika (a man) should avoid the middle (palāśa) leaf. In the three leaves (of palāśa), Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva (reside). He should avoid the divine leaf, (since) Brahmā is excellent Viṣṇu (*obscure*). By eating from the remaining leaves he obtains all religious merit. O best sage, by eating from the middle leaf (of palāśa) and by drinking the milk of a tawny cow a man would go to hell. A śūdra who ignorantly drinks the milk of a tawny cow, is purified by giving a cow to a brāhmaṇa in Kārtika. Giving sesamum, bathing in a river, always seeing the good, eating from palāśa leaves in Kārtika give salvation. He who observes silence, eats from palāśa leaves, bathes with (river-) water, always forgives, sleeps on the (bare) ground in Kārtika would destroy sin earned during (many) ages, O Kārtikeya, one who keeps awake before Viṣṇu

at dawn in Kārtika, would obtain the fruit of (giving) a thousand cows. The fruit which men get by offering food in pitṛpakṣa (i.e. dark half of Bhādrapada), and by offering water in Jyeṣṭha and Āṣāḍha, is obtained by them in lighting others' lamps. By lighting another's lamp and by serving Viṣṇu's devotees in Kārtika a man gets the fruit of Rājasūya and horse sacrifices. He who does not bathe in a river, does not (tell) tale(s) of Viṣṇu, does not see Viṣṇu's devotees in Kārtika would lose the religious merit (collected during) ten years. O best sage, (the religious merit of) that wise man who would remember Puṣkara through (physical) act, mentally, or through speech, would be a lakh of crore times more.

47-60. Prayāga in the month of Māgha, Puṣkara in Kārtika, so also Avantī in Vaiśākha-month would destroy sin earned during ages. O Kārtikeya, those men are blessed especially in the Kali age, who by all means serve Viṣṇu everyday. (For him,) O sage, what is the use of having offered many piṇḍas by means of (offering) srāddhas etc.? There is no doubt that he has emancipated his dead ancestors from hell. Those who for (i.e. in honour of) their dead ancestors give a bath with milk etc. to Viṣṇu, go to heaven and live there with gods for a crore of kalpas. O best brāhmaṇa, Lakṣmī does not stay for crores of existences in the houses of them who have not worshipped the lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) in Kārtika. Those who have not worshipped Viṣṇu with black or white lotuses are stung, snatched, have perished and have fallen into the cave of Kali. He who (even) with one lotus worships the chief of gods, the lord of Lakṣmī, destroys sins (collected during) a myriad thousands of years. The lord of gods, saluted and worshipped with (just) one lotus would forgive seven hundred thousands of sins. O best sage, he who would worship Viṣṇu in Kārtika with a lakh of Tulasī-leaves would obtain a pearl on (i.e. for) every leaf as the fruit. Viṣṇu, O (my) son, is pleased for crores of thousands of kalpas with whatever is done (i.e. offered) after being mixed with (i.e. having) the fragrance of Tulasī. O Kārtikeya, Kali does not touch him who carries in his mouth, on his head or body a Tulasī (leaf) taken down from (the image of) Viṣṇu (after it was offered to him). O Kārtikeya, he who would sprinkle his body with the offerings like flowers after taking them down from (the image

of) Kṛṣṇa, becomes free from all diseases and sins also. O (my) son, undoubtedly the sins of him perish, and diseases of him come to an end, whose body touches (i.e. is smeared) with the remaining of the (burnt) charcoal etc. (offered) to Viṣṇu. The water in a conch, devotion to Viṣṇu, the remains of offerings like flowers, water (flowing from) the feet (of the image of Viṣṇu), sandal, the remains of incense remove (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETEEN

In Praise of a Fast for a Month

The lord said:

1-3. O best of Viṣṇu's devotees, listen to the importance of the (daily) bath in Māgha. O you very intelligent one, there is no (other) devotee of Viṣṇu like you in this world. A man gets that fruit by a (daily) bath in Māgha, which he gets on seeing Viṣṇu at Cakratīrtha or Mathurā. He who, with his senses conquered, with his mind tranquil, and endowed with moral conduct, bathes (everyday) in Māgha, does not again come to this mundane existence.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

4. To you I shall tell about the greatness of (the holy place called) Śūkara, by merely knowing which (a man would) always have my proximity.

Sūta said:

5. Saying so, lord Kṛṣṇa spoke to Satyā in many ways. I shall tell it (to you). O you (sages) having penance as your treasure; listen to it.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

6-13. A being, even a donkey, that lives in Viṣṇu's temple at Śūkara extended over five yojanas, becomes the Four-armed

(Viṣṇu). The measure of Śūkara is laid down to be three thousand cubits, three hundred cubits and three. O goddess, a man gets that fruit in half a watch (i.e. three hours), (which he would get when) he practises penance for sixty thousand years at another place. The (same) fruit is said (to be obtained) by tulāpuruṣa dāna[1] in Kurukṣetra when the Sun is seized by Rāhu. It is said to be tenfold in Kāśī, and would be hundredfold in Veṇī, and said to be thousandfold at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean. It is said to be endless in Viṣṇu's temple at Śūkara. A man gives duly a lakh (of gifts) at another place. (The fruit) would be similar by giving one only at Śūkara. By bathing but once at Śūkara, in Veṇī, and at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean, a man removes (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Alarka formerly got (the kingdom of) the earth with the seven islands after hearing the greatness of Śūkara, O Kārtikeya. (O son, go there on the Dvādaśī of the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa.)

Kārtikeya said:

14-16. O lord, I desire to listen to (the description of) the best of vows; so also the proper manner and the fruit of a fast for a month. (So also I desire to hear) how it should be observed by men, what would be (the way of) observing the vow, (how) it is duly commenced and duly completed. O Maheśvara, tell me in detail how many times this vow, giving happiness and wealth, is to be observed, O sinless one.

Śrī Rudra said:

17-29. O Kārtikeya, since you have asked all this with devotion, listen to me explaining it, O best among the intelligent. As Viṣṇu is the greatest of the gods, as the Sun is the greatest of the luminaries, as Meru is (the greatest) of the mountains, as Garuḍa is the greatest among the birds, as Gaṅgā is (the greatest) of the holy places, as vaiśya is (the greatest) of the subjects, similarly observing the fast for a month is the greatest among the vows. He who observes the fast for a month

1. Tulāpuruṣa—Gift to a brāhmaṇa of as much gold or silver as equals the weight of one's body.

would obtain the religious merit due to all vows, all holy places and gifts. A man does not get that religious merit by means of various sacrifices like Agniṣṭoma in which many presents are given as he gets by observing the fast for a month. That man who observes the fast for a month according to the rule has (indeed) muttered (hymns), has offered oblations (into fire), has given (gifts), has observed penance, has made oblations to his dead ancestors. Dedicating a sacrifice to me, Viṣṇu, and worshipping me, and then receiving an order from his preceptor he should observe the fast for a month. Having observed all vows (in honour) of Viṣṇu and observed the auspicious (vow) of Dvādaśī etc. he should observe the fast for a month. O brāhmaṇa, after having observed the vows like Atikṛcchra, Pārāka,[1] and Cāndrāyaṇa he should fast for a month by the order of his preceptor. Having observed a fast on the Ekādaśī of the bright half of Āśvina, he should take up this vow for thirty days. A man who worships Viṣṇu and fasts for the entire month of Kārtika would enjoy the fruit in the form of salvation. In the temple of Viṣṇu he should three times a day devoutly worship Viṣṇu with the fragrant flowers of mālatī (jasmine), blue lotuses, arka flowers, lotuses, (other) flowers, uśīra-roots, camphor etc. and with the offerings of eatables, cakes, lights etc. after smearing (the lord's image) with excellent sandal.

30-43. A man, a woman or a widow, having great devotion and with his/her senses conquered, should worship the Garuḍa-bannered god (Viṣṇu) with mind, deeds and words and should day and night utter the names of Viṣṇu. He should devoutly and without false words utter Viṣṇu's praise. Full of compassion for all beings, of a tranquil temperament, harmless, sleeping and sitting on a seat outside he should narrate (the praise of) Viṣṇu. He should avoid recollection, sight, enjoying fragrant articles and talking of food, and should give up (taking) morsels. He should avoid smearing his body with oil, smearing his head with oil, (chewing) tāmbūla, smearing his body when he is observing the vow, and should avoid everything that is prohibited. While observing the vow he should not touch any-

1. Pārāka—Name of a vow of religious penance said to consist in fasting for twelve days and nights, keeping the mind attentive and organs subdued.

thing and should not disturb anyone doing a deed. A householder, remaining in a temple, should certainly observe the vow. A man, a good woman or a widow, having duly observed the fast for a month, should worship Viṣṇu properly. With his mind controlled and senses conquered, he should observe this vow without anything wanting or adding for thirty days and should observe the fast for a month, and then on the Dvādaśī (day) he should worship the auspicious Garuḍa-bannered (god). He should worship him with garlands of flowers, sandal, incense, and by besmearing (his image). A man should please Viṣṇu with clothes, ornaments and (by playing upon) musical instruments. With water (from) holy (places mixed) with sandal he should devoutly bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu. He should (worship) the image besmeared with sandal and adorned with incense and flowers. Having fed best brāhmaṇas (and pleased them) with gifts of garments etc. he should give them dakṣiṇā (i.e. presents), and saluting them he should apologise to them. Having thus fasted for a month, and having worshipped Viṣṇu, and having fed the brāhmaṇas, he is honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven. Thus he should engage thirteen brāhmaṇas. Listen to the manner in which he should dismiss them at the end of the fast for a month. Fasting on the Ekādaśī day he should perform a sacrifice (in honour) of Viṣṇu.

44-53. Having with the permission of his preceptor worshipped the lord of gods, he should, according to his capacity, worship the preceptor. Then saluting the brāhmaṇas of a pure family and character and devoted to Viṣṇu's worship, he should feed them. Then he should honour them all. Having fed thirteen brāhmaṇas, he should salute and honour the best brāhmaṇas with tāmbūla, pairs of garments, food coverings, yogapaṭṭas, threads, sacred threads, and then he should get fashioned a bed furnished with a cover, well-covered, beautiful, excellent, with pillows and decorated. Then, having according to his capacity got fashioned his golden image, he should put it on the bed after worshipping it with garlands etc. On the bed he should put a seat, wooden sandals, an umbrella, a pair of garments and shoes, and pure flowers. Having thus made the bed, and having saluted those brāhmaṇas, he should request the brāhmaṇas for their consent and say: "I am going to Viṣṇu's

world." Then the best man would go to Viṣṇu's healthy abode. He should repeatedly say to the brāhmaṇas seated in the pavilion: "O best brāhmaṇas, may all that is without the (proper) hymns and (proper) acts, be fully accomplished due to the favour of your words." I have (thus) properly told (you) the manner of (observing) the vow of the fast for a month.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTY

The Greatness of Śālagrāma

Sūta said:

1. Hearing these words, Kārtikeya again asked about the worship of Śālagrāma. O you having penance as your wealth, listen to it again.

Kārtikeya said:

2. O lord, O greatest among the meditating saints, I have heard about all religious practices. O lord, tell me in detail about the worship of Śālagrāma.

The lord said:

3-23. Well, well, I shall tell you what you ask, O you very intelligent one; O dear to me, listen to it. O you noble-hearted Kārtikeya, on a Śālagrāma stone the three worlds with the mobile and immobile always stay together. He who has seen, saluted, bathed and worshipped it, would get religious merit as the fruit, a crorefold more, of sacrifices, and that of the gift of a crore of cows. O child, he who has always drunk the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's Śālagrāma, has cut off the very tormenting stay in the embryo. O son, even he, always attached to passion and without devotion, would become Viṣṇu after worshipping a Śālagrāma stone. The round Śālagrāma stone, when remembered, glorified, meditated upon, worshipped and saluted, destroys a crore (of sins). As the herds of beasts in a forest go (away) through fear on seeing a lion, so sins in large numbers go

(away) on seeing a Śālagrāma stone. A man saluting with or without devotion a Śālagrāma stone at the time of its worship would obtain salvation. A man who everyday worships the Śālagrāma stone, has no fear of Yama, so also of death and birth. A man who, in the Kali age greatly devoted, everyday worships the Śālagrāma stone with sandal, water for washing the feet, respectful offerings, offerings of eatables, lights, incenses, unguents, songs, musical instruments and hymns, enjoys for thousands of crores of kalpas in the abode of Viṣṇu. How can those men, my devotees on the earth, have manhood (i.e. birth as a human being) who have devoutly saluted Śālagrāma? Those of my devotees, the most sinful ones, who do not salute my lord, Viṣṇu, are not my devotees, being deluded by sins. Even he, being my devotee, who eats on the Ekādaśī day, harms me, and goes to the Andhatāmisra hell. One should touch my (symbol, the) Phallus. No other purification is told for him. That day which is dear to Viṣṇu, is dear to me. That mortal who would not fast on that day, is a sinner and worse than a cāṇḍāla. O son, I always live in the Śālagrāma stone. The god, being pleased, has given me that place. That fruit which is obtained by worshipping me with thousands of lotuses is obtained, a crore times more, by worshipping a Śālagrāma stone. Those men who have not worshipped a Śālagrāma stone in the mortal world, have not worshipped and saluted me. O Kārtikeya, he who worships me before a Śālagrāma stone, has worshipped me for twentyone yugas. What is the use of worshipping hundreds of Liṅgas (i.e. my symbols) without devotion to Viṣṇu? If the round Śālagrāma stone is not worshipped, then, O son, offerings of eatables, leaves, flowers, fruits, water, offered to me, is not fit.

24-51a. Everything in front of a Śālagrāma stone is purified. A man eating the eatables offered to another deity would observe the Cāndrāyaṇa(-vow, i.e. would get its fruit). (But) by eating the eatables offered to Viṣṇu, he would obtain the fruit of a crore of sacrifices. There is no doubt that by means of the water flowing from the feet of god (Viṣṇu), so also by means of the water in a conch, (men) having committed a crore of murders are purified. He who being a devotee of Śiva, would not honour a devotee of Viṣṇu, so also his hater, goes to (and lives

in) hell as long as the fourteen Indras (rule). He in whose house a householder rests for a while, drinks nectar for eight ages of Brahmā. Mean men, avoiding Kṛṣṇa's worship, perish in the painful forest of the mundane existence for thousands of crores of years. By means of worshipping the Liṅgas coming up from Śālagrāma stones, through love, men devoid of Sāṁkhya or Yoga, obtain salvation. That fruit which would be got by seeing crores of my Liṅgas, worshipping or eulogising them, would be (obtained) (just) on (worshipping) the Śālagrāma stone. There are twelve stones coming up (i.e. formed) from the Śālagrāma. Listen to the religious merit of him who worships them daily. The religious merit (obtained by) worshipping thousands of crores of Liṅgas on the bank of Jāhnavī, by living for eight yugas at Kāśī, would be had in one day (by worshipping the Śālagrāma). Then (what would be the religious merit) of a man who would worship it for many (days)? I or deities like Brahmā do not endeavour to measure it. Therefore, O son, my devotees should do devoutly, to please me, the worship of a Śālagrāma stone. At that place where Viṣṇu in the form of a Śālagrāma stone lives, live gods, demons, yakṣas, and the fourteen worlds. That fruit which a man would get by means of all the crores of recitals (of the names) of deities, would be got by the good deed, viz. recital (of the names) of Viṣṇu, in the Kali age. His dead ancestors once gratified with a piṇḍa in front of the Śālagrāma stone live (in Vaikuṇṭha). They cannot be counted. For those men who devoutly drink the water dropping from the Śālagrāma stone, what is the use of drinking thousands of the pañcagavyas (i.e. the five products obtained from a cow)? When an expiation has succeeded after having drunk the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, what is the use of (giving) gifts, observing fasts, and properly practising Cāndrāyaṇa vows? What is the use of worshipping crores of other deities for him who fashions an image of Viṣṇu lying in water in a tank? They say 'Gods have Viṣṇu as their chief'. O son, for the fruit of every religious act, there is a limit. (But) there is absolutely no measure of the fruit of the worship of the Śālagrāma stone. He who gives a stone of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu originating from Śālagrāma to a brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu, has performed hundreds of sacrifices. Even though he stays at

home, he has everyday bathed in Gaṅgā. He has bathed at all holy places, and is initiated for all sacrifices. One should do sprinkling with water flowing from a Śālagrāma stone. O Kārtikeya, there are stones in heaven, in the mortal world, and in the nether world. But there is no (other) stone like the Śālagrāma stone. The life of him in the world of human beings, difficult to obtain, who everyday gives a prastha of sesamum is fruitful. He gets that fruit by worshipping a Śālagrāma stone. A leaf, a flower, a fruit, water, a root or so also a blade of dūrvā offered to the Śālagrāma become equal to Meru. A man may be without a rite or having no (religious) act or hymns; but if he has a mark of the disc on his arm, he gets the proper fruit as is told in the sacred texts. All that I have seen in Viṣṇu as destroying affliction, I shall tell you, O son. "O Viṣṇu, where do you stay? What is your prop? What is your resort? O god, how are (can) you (be) pleased? Tell me all that."

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

51b-73. O Śiva, I always stay in the stone produced in Śālagrāma. Listen to my names which are there on the chariot-wheel mark. If on the wheel resembling an opening, there is no hole, then that should be known as Viṣṇu, pure and very handsome. That which has a long size, a cavity and many holes, is Pradyumna, having the Sun's face and of bright lustre. Aniruddha has a yellow lustre, is round and very beautiful, is marked with three lines at the opening, and has a mark of a lotus. God Nārāyaṇa is dark, has a raised wheel of the navel, has long lines, and has a cavity on the right side. One should know that a stone having an opening above, and beautiful, is of the form of Viṣṇu, giving desired objects, salvation, and especially wealth. The highest lord has a white lustre and is endowed with a lotus and a disc. On its surface are a round figure and very many holes. Similarly Viṣṇu is of a dark complexion on the basic, very beautiful disc (like figure). Similarly on the opening, in the middle part, a line is noticed. Kapila, Narasiṁha has a large disc and is very beautiful. He should be worshipped with celibacy; otherwise he creates difficulties. Varāha has strength as his symbol, the two discs are said to be uneven. He resembles a sapphire, has three lines, and is beautiful from (i.e. due to) the

navel. That stone which is long, has a golden complexion, and adorned with three lines, is known as 'Matsya', and gives the fruit like enjoyments and salvation. Similarly Kūrma is raised, round on the surface, and is filled with a disc (like figure). Marked with Kaustubha, it has a green colour. Hayagrīva has the shape of a horse, and is adorned with five lines, is full of many marks, and on the surface has a blue sign. Vaikuṇṭha has an undivided body, and has mark of a disc and a banner. Similarly on the hole there is a very beautiful line, of the shape of a guñja-fruit. Similarly god Śrīdhara is marked with a garland of wood-flowers; has the form of a kadamba flower, and is adorned with a group of five lines. The round and small one is called Vāmana. It is like the atasī flower, and is adorned with a mark. Similarly the handsome god is dark-complexioned and very lustrous. On its left side there are a mace and a disc, and on the right side of it there is a line. Similarly Dāmodara is big; in its centre is a disc. It resembles dūrvā, is crowded with openings, and has yellow lines. Ananta has many colours, and is marked with various circuits. It is of various forms, and grants all desired objects. He whose face is seen in all quarters and intermediate quarters and above, should be known as Puruṣottama who grants the fruit in the form of pleasures and salvation. That whose Liṅga is seen on the top of a stone coming up from Śālagrāma, is god Yogeśvara (i.e. the lord of abstract meditation), and removes (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder. Padmanābha is reddish. A lotus is in contact with his face. Due to worshipping him daily a poor man would become rich.

74-83. One should point out one that is marked with a disc, having a golden body, and a collection of rays, full of many golden lines, and adorned with crystal-lustre. A very glossy (stone) gives success; a black one gives fame; a white one burns sins, and gives a father long life and sons. A dark blue one gives wealth; a red one diseases; a rough one gives dejection; and a crooked one causes poverty. One (disc on a stone) should be known to be the Sudarśana; the second (i.e. having two discs) the couple Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa. One should know the third one (i.e. having three discs) to be Acyuta; the fourth one (i.e. having four discs) to be Janārdana; the fifth one (having five discs) to be Vāsudeva; and the sixth one (having

six discs) to be Pradyumna; the seventh (having seven discs) to be Saṁkarṣaṇa; the eighth one (having eight discs) to be Puruṣottama; the ninth one (having nine discs) to be the nine modes; the tenth one (having ten discs) of his own nature; the eleventh (having eleven discs) to be Aniruddha; and the twelfth one (having twelve discs) is of the twelve forms. Discs more than these are seen on the stone called Ananta. A broken, cut or broken Śālagrāma does not have a flaw. He should carefully worship that image which is liked by him. He who carries the lord of stones after placing him on his shoulder, would subjugate the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. Viṣṇu resides there where there is the Śālagrāma stone. The gift (given) there or the muttering of hymn or bathing done there is hundred times superior to that at Vārāṇasī, Kurukṣetra, Prayāga, Naimiṣa and Puṣkara.

84-92. The religious merit there is a crore times more. It gives great fruit at Vārāṇasī. All (such) sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa that a man commits, are quickly burnt by the worship of Śālagrāma stone. Where there is the deity coming from Śālagrāma stone, and where there is the (deity) from Dvārāvatī, and where there is the union of the two, there is salvation. There is no doubt about this. Celibates, householders, recluses and mendicants should eat the eatables offered to Viṣṇu. No doubt should be raised about it. For its worship no hymns, no muttering, no faith are (necessary). For the worship of a Śālagrāma stone, no eulogy, no formality is needed. The auspicious circle drawn before a Śālagrāma stone, especially (the one drawn) in Kārtika purifies the family up to the seventh (descendant). He who would draw an auspicious circle even of a size of an atom before (the image of) Viṣṇu, with clay or metal-products, and he who observes the worship of the sacred fire for a full year, (the latter) being equivalent to drawing an auspicious circle in Kārtika, come to me. The sin due to cohabiting with a woman not fit to be approached, due to eating what is prohibited, perishes by means of decorating Viṣṇu's temple. That woman who draws an auspicious circle before (the image of) Viṣṇu everyday, never obtains widowhood for seven existences.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYONE

The Importance of Offering Lights etc.

The Lord said:

1-25a. O Kārtikeya, of him who, resorting to the shade of dhātrī, offers piṇḍas, the dead ancestors obtain salvation through Viṣṇu's grace. O child, a man who, being adorned with dhātrī-fruits, holds a dhātrī fruit on his head, in his hand, mouth, on his body, and who eats dhātrī-fruits becomes Viṣṇu. O Kārtikeya, he, the devotee of Viṣṇu, who has a dhātrī-fruit, becomes dear to gods; then what to say of human beings? A man should not abandon a Tulasī-garland and especially a dhātrī-garland. As long as the dhātrī-garland remains round the neck of a man, Viṣṇu, till that time, remains in his body. The life of him in whose house these three, viz. dhātrī-fruit, Tulasī, and clay from Dvārakā are (found), is fruitful. A man would live in Vaikuṇṭha for as many thousands of yugas as the days he wears a dhātrī-garland in the Kali age. He who would wear a pair of garlands of dhātrī and Tulasī round his neck would live in heaven for a crore of kalpas. A man who, having controlled the group of his senses, devoutly worships Śālagrāma stone, has the religious merit of a horse sacrifice in (i.e. from) each flower. As is Viṣṇu among gods, so is Tulasī among flowers. He who everyday would worship the Garuḍa-bannered god with Tulasī, becomes free from birth, grief, old age and diseases, and would obtain salvation. In case of him who has worshipped Viṣṇu in Kārtika, Viṣṇu rubs off the row of letters written by Yama. Śrīcandana with camphor, agaru sandal with saffron, so also offering ketakī flowers and lights is always dear to Viṣṇu. He who has offered ketakī flower or light in Kārtika in the Kali-age would emancipate a hundred (members) of his family, O Kārtikeya. On the days of Kārtika, offering of lotuses, Tulasī, ketakī-flowers and mango-blossoms, and lights as the fifth (should be done). O child, he who has made in Kārtika a bower with ketakī-garlands for Viṣṇu, obtains residence in heaven. Viṣṇu, the Garuḍa-bannered god, worshipped with a ketakī-flower only, is much pleased for a thousand years. O Kārtikeya, by worshipping Viṣṇu with ketakī-

flowers, one goes to Viṣṇu's auspicious and happy abode. So also having worshipped the lord of gods when Vaiśākha has come with damanaka, he obtains a fruit due to that worship, O best of sages. O brāhmaṇa, by the sight of him who worships Viṣṇu with agasti-flowers, the fire of hell perishes. O brāhmaṇa sage, Viṣṇu, pleased by penance, does not do that which, O Mahāsena, he does, when he is adorned with mango-flowers. He who, abandoning all (other) flowers, devoutly worships Viṣṇu in Kārtika with mango flowers, would obtain the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. About him who offers Viṣṇu a garland made of mango-flowers, even the lord of gods speaks good words. O Kārtikeya, the fruit which is obtained by the gift of a myriad cows, is obtained by offering (just) one mango-flower in Kārtika. As Viṣṇu is pleased with the Kaustubha gem, or with the garland of wood-flowers, so is he pleased with a Tulasī-leaf in Kārtika.

Sūta said:

25b. Seeing Kārtikeya bowing with politeness and full of devotion, Śiva, the Bull-bannered god spoke again.

The lord said:

26-37. O Kārtikeya, listen to the importance of lights in Kārtika. The dead ancestors, always surrounded by hosts of (other) dead ancestors, desire: 'A good son, devoted to his dead ancestors, will be born in our family, who will please Viṣṇu by offering lights in Kārtika'. O Kārtikeya, to him, whose lamp burns with ghee or oil, what is the use of a horse-sacrifice? He who has offered lights in Kārtika before Viṣṇu, for five days especially in the dark half, has performed all sacrifices, and has plunged into the water at a holy place. He who offers a light on these days, would eternally obtain religious merit. A female rat, having brightened the lamp offered by others, obtained the existence of human beings difficult to obtain, and got the best position. A hunter also who, going without food, worshipped the great lord on the fourteenth day, got the highest (place) and went to Viṣṇu's world. A prostitute Lilāvatī who, due to her resorting to a cāṇḍāla, caused (to burn more) a lamp lighted by others, became pure and went to the eternal heaven. A certain

cowherd who, seeing on the new-moon day the worship of Viṣṇu again and again said, "Victory (to Viṣṇu)," became the great lord of kings. Therefore, at night, after sunset, lamps should be offered in houses, all cow-pens and all abodes, temples of gods and cremation grounds and lakes. Due to its religious merit the offering of lights with ghee for a good purpose should be done for five days. The dead ancestors who were sinful and who had missed the rites (of the offering) of piṇḍas and water, get the highest salvation due to the religious merit of offering lights.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYTWO

The Celebration of Dīpāvalī

Kārtikeya said:

1-2. O lord, now tell me in particular the fruit of Dīpāvalī. Why is it celebrated? What would be its deity? O lord, tell me what should be and should not be given during the festival. What (kind of) exultation is indicated during it? What sport is mentioned?

Sūta said:

3. Hearing these words of Kārtikeya, the lord who had burnt up Cupid, said, 'Well' and laughed and said these words, O Brāhmaṇas.

Śrī Śiva said:

4-20. O Kārtikeya, on the thirteenth day of the dark half of Kārtika, a man should offer a light to Yama outside (his house). Thereby untimely death is avoided. "May the Sun's son, with Death having a noose in his hand and with his wife, be pleased due to this offering of the light" Those who are scared of sins, should necessarily bathe at moon-rise on the fourteenth day of the dark half of Kārtika. He, being careful, should bathe early in the morning on the fourteenth day pierced

(i.e. mixed) with the previous day of the dark half of Kārtika. Lakṣmī (resides) in oil and Gaṅgā in water. He who would bathe in the morning on Caturdaśī in Dīpāvalī does not see Yama's world. To destroy (i.e. to avoid) hell, he should whirl (round himself) apāmārga, tumbī, prapunnāṭa, vāhvala (twigs) while bathing. "O Apāmārga, being with a clod of furrowed land and with thorn and leaf, remove my sin, when repeatedly whirled." He should whirl over his head apāmārga and prapunnāṭa. Then with (i.e. by reciting) Yama's names, he should offer libations of water. "Salutation to Yama, Dharmarāja, Mṛtyu, Antaka, Vaivasvata, Kāla and Sarvabhūtakṣaya (Destroyer of all beings), Audumbara, Dadhna, Nīla, Parameṣṭhin, Vṛkodara, Citra, Citragupta." Having worshipped the deities, he (i.e. the king) should offer a light to Naraka. Then at the break of night he should offer pleasing lights at the temples of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva etc., and especially at apartments on the tops of the houses, sanctuaries, assembly halls, rivers, ramparts, gardens, wells, streets, pleasure-groves near houses, stables and abodes of elephants also. O Kārtikeya, having, like this, bathed in the morning on the new-moon day, and having devoutly worshipped and saluted deities and dead ancestors, and having offered the pārvaṇa śrāddha with curd, ghee, milk etc., he should feed brāhmaṇas with various kinds of food, and apologise to them. Then, O dear one, in the afternoon the king should gratify the citizens. Having chitchatted with them, honoured them he should converse with them. O Kārtikeya, for one year love is generated among those who talk. Before Viṣṇu has got up, he should awaken Lakṣmī through the women.

21-32. When a man has awakened Lakṣmī at the time of her getting up through a good woman, for one year Lakṣmī does not leave him. The haters of gods (i.e. the demons) scared of Viṣṇu obtained fearlessness from the brāhmaṇas, after knowing (that Viṣṇu) was asleep in the Milky Ocean, and Lakṣmī had resorted to the lotus. "You are the lustre, Śrī Ravi (i.e. the Sun), the Moon, the Lightning, the Golden Star; the lustre occurring in the lustre of the lamp is the lustre of all the lustres. That Lakṣmī that lives on the earth, in the cowpen on the auspicious day of Dīpāvalī in Kārtika, may grant me a boon." Śiva and Bhavānī

took to playing with dice as a sport. Lakṣmī, propitiated by Bhavānī remained in the form of a cow. Formerly Pārvatī vanquished Śiva in the game of dice, and sent him away naked. So this Śiva is unhappy. Gaurī always remains happy. He who gets victory first (passes) the year happily. When the night passes like this, and people have their eyes half-closed, Alakṣmī is driven out of the courtyard of the house by the joyful city-women by means of sounding the musical instruments and drums. In the case of a defeat (in the game of dice) opposite will be the case. On the first day, when the sun has risen, Govardhana should be worshipped in the morning and one should play the game of dice at night. Then cows should be decorated; and they should not be used to carry (loads etc.) or should not be milked. "O Govardhana, O support of the earth, O protector of Gokula, O you who were lifted by the hand of Viṣṇu, give (us) crores of cows. That Lakṣmī who remains in the form of the cow of the regents of the quarter, and that carries ghee for the sacrifice, may remove my sin. May cows stand before me. May cows be behind me. May cows be in my heart. I live among cows." Thus worship of Govardhana (should be done).

33-42. Having pleased with sincere devotion deities and good men, he should please others by giving food and (should please) the learned men by offering (i.e. speaking gentle) words. (He should please) the inmates of the harem by (giving them) garments, tāmbūlas, lights, flowers, camphor, saffron, food and eatables of superior and inferior quality. The king should please the chief of the village with gifts and vassals with wealth, and the hosts of foot soldiers good neck-ornaments and bracelets. The king should also please his ministers and his own people separately. Then having properly gratified wrestlers and actors, so also the bulls and large oxen fighting with one another and other soldiers and foot soldiers who are well-adorned being seated on a raised seat, he should see the actors, dancers and bards, and should cause to fight and roar the cows and buffaloes etc. which (he possesses). By means of sounding words (of calls) and responses he makes the cows attract their calves. Then, O Kārtikeya, he should put up a divine arch over the path in the eastern direction in the afternoon, tied to a pillar of the

fort or a tree; (it should be made) of kuśa (grass) and should have many hanging strings of flowers. Observing many horses and elephants, he should take them and bulls with cows, so also he-buffaloes and she-buffaloes furious with bells to the base of thearch. Through the best brāhmaṇas who have offered a sacrifice, he should put up the arch. Then, he, of a good vow, should make obeisance by (reciting) this hymn:

43-57. "O mārgapāli, salutation to you who give happiness to all the world." O Kārtikeya, at the base of the mārgapāli cows and great bulls go. Kings, princes and especially brāhmaṇas on crossing the mārgapāli, become free from disease and happy. Having done all this, at night he should actually worship Bali, the lord of demons, in a circle made on the ground. Having drawn, with five colours, (the picture of) Bali, the lord of demons, complete with all ornaments, accompanied by Vindhyāvali, surrounded by the demons Kūṣmāṇḍa, Maya, Jambhāru, Madhu, and with his entire face delighted, and with a crown and bright earrings, and again (drawing the picture of) the lord of demons with two arms in a small or big chamber in his own house, he should then worship it. The lord of kings, who, being pleased and with his ministers and priests, and with his mother, brothers, and kinsmen, worships (the demon-lord) with lotuses, red lotuses, flowers, white lotuses and blue lotuses, with sandal, flowers, offerings of eatables with milk, jaggery and sweetened milk, with liquor, flesh, wine, things eaten by licking or by sucking, (other) eatables and offerings, and by (reciting) this hymn, gets happiness during that year: "O king Bali, O lord, O son of Virocana, salutation to you. O future Indra, O enemy of gods, accept this worship." Having thus offered the worship and keeping awake at night, he should make (others) keep awake at night with actors, dancers, singers, and make people place (the image of) king Bali with white rice inside the house on a couch, and should worship him with fruits and flowers. O Kārtikeya, everything there should be done with reference to Bali. The sages, the seers of truth say that all those (objects) that are inexhaustible (come to him). Whatever small or big gift is made here, all that would be inexhaustible, auspicious, and would pleaseViṣṇu. May all the untractable practices of those men who do not worship you, Bali, at night, come to you.

58-69. O child, Viṣṇu himself, being pleased, has granted this great festival to Bali who had obliged the demons. O Kārtikeya, since then (this festival of) Kaumudī has commenced (for) ever. It melts all troubles and destroys all difficulties. It removes the grief of people, it fulfils desires, and brings about wealth, nourishment and happiness. The word 'ku' stands for the earth, the word 'muda' stands for joy. Due to the root (meaning) of the two (words coming together) the festival is said to be (i.e. called) Kaumudī, since the people mutually rejoice (during it) on the earth. They are glad and pleased, are happy, so it is called Kaumudī. O son, since during it red lotuses are offered to Bali by kings for (removing) their sins, therefore it is called Kaumudī. To the king who every year gives the earth, (clean) like a mirror, for a day and night to the king of demons, how can there be fear from diseases? He has plenty of corn, happiness, health, excellent wealth. All people are free from diseases and free from all calamities. So, to spread devotion on the earth, the Kaumudī (festival) is celebrated. O Kārtikeya, he who lives with a (particular) feeling during it (i.e. the festival) passes the year with that feeling of joy, sorrow etc. If he weaps, the year makes him weep; if he is delighted, the year is delightful. If he enjoys (the festival) he enjoys the year; if he is happy, the year will be happy. Therefore, good men should joyfully celebrate Kaumudī. This day in Kārtika is said to be sacred to Viṣṇu and demons.

70-73. Of the families of the intelligent ones, having happiness due to (giving) gifts and enjoyments, who celebrate the light festival pleasing all, and who worship Bali, the entire year giving the lord(?), passes happily. O Skanda, these dates beginning with the second are well known. For four months and then in the rainy season they cause well-being. The first is in the month of Śrāvaṇa; the second is in the month of Bhādrapada; the third is in Āśvina; the fourth would be (i.e. fall) in Kārtika. Kaluṣā falls in the month of Śrāvaṇa, Amalā in Bhādrapada, Pretasaṁcārā in Āśvina, and Yāmyakāmyatā in Kārtika.

Kārtikeya said:

74. Why is the one (in Śrāvaṇa) called Kaluṣā? Why is the one (in Bhādrapada) said to be Nirmalā? Why is the one (in

Āśvina called Pretasaṁcārā? And why is the fourth called Yāmyā?

Sūta said:

75. Hearing these words of Kārtikeya, the Bull-bannered lord, the cause of the beings, laughed, and spoke (these) gentle words.

Maheśa said:

76-88. Formerly when Vṛtra was killed and Indra obtained the kingdom, a horse sacrifice was commenced to remove the sin of the brāhmaṇa's murder. Indra angrily killed the brāhmaṇa (Vṛtra) with his thunderbolt. The (sin of the) killing was thrown down on the earth in six ways: in a tree, in water, on the land, in a woman, in one who causes abortion, and in fire after dividing it in due order. Due to hearing about that sin, with the day previous to the second, a woman, a tree, a river, the land, fire, and one who procures an abortion are polluted. For this reason it is called Kaluṣā. Formerly the earth merged into the blood of Madhu and Kaiṭabha. Therefore (to the measure of) eight fingers she is impure. The menstrual flow of women is impure. All the rivers in the rainy season are impure. Fire (going) up is impure due to soot. Trees are impure due to exudation. Those that cause an abortion are impure due to contact. Filth moves on this day. Therefore, she is said to be Kaluṣā. There are the wicked atheists who censure the good practices of gods and sages. The second one is pure from the filth of their words. Therefore, it is Nirmalā. The Sāṁkhyas, Tārkikas (i.e. logicians) teach and study the sacred texts on days forbidden for study. On the second (i.e. Amalā) day the Śruti-followers are purified from the filth of their words and bad words. Therefore it (is called) Nirmalā. O child, the three worlds would be purified due to the birth of Kṛṣṇa in Śrāvaṇa. The wise ones have indicated it as Nirmalā. The Pretasaṁcārā is (so called) because of movements of the dead ancestors, grandsires like the Agniṣvāttas, the Barhiṣads, the Ājyapas, and the Somapas also. The dead ancestors are called departed spirits. They move on that (day). They are worshipped with Svadhā hymns by their sons, and the sons of their sons and daughters. They, moving

departed spirits, leave after being gratified by means of śrāddhas, gifts and sacrifices. The spirits are seen to move on the earth on the Mahālaya.

89-103. Therefore, O Kārtikeya, it is called Pretasaṁcārā, Since, O Kārtikeya, on this day worship is offered to Yama by men, therefore, it is called Yāmyakā. I have told the truth and the truth (only). Those best men who listen to the importance of Kārtika, certainly get the religious merit due to the (daily) bath in Kārtika. A man, having bathed on the Bhānujā on the second day of Kārtika, should worship Yama in the morning. (Thereby) he does not see Yama. O Śaunka, formerly, on the second day of the bright half of Kārtika, Yama was fed and honoured by Yamunā in her house. On the second day a great gift (is given). Denizens of hell are gratified. They, separated (i.e. freed) from sins, are free from all bondage. They all, being praised, remain pleased as they like. This great festival, giving pleasure to Yama's region, takes place for them. Therefore, this Yamadvitīyā is well known in the three worlds, and so the wise should not eat at home (on this day). They should affectionately take a nourishing meal at their sister's hand; gifts should duly be given to sisters. Then along with the gift of golden ornaments and garments and honouring (their sister) they should eat from the hand of their sister of whole blood. The meal from the sister's hand should be taken on all (these days). It is nourishing. Yama is gratified on the second day of bright half of Kārtika. Yama is mounted upon the seat (i.e. back) of a he-buffalo. The lord holds a staff and a mallet. He is surrounded by his jubilant servants. Obeisance to him of the nature of Yāmyā. For those who have pleased their sisters whose husbands are alive, with gifts of garments etc. there is no quarrel (with anyone), nor any fear from their enemy during the year. O sinless one, O my son, I have told you the entire account along with its secret. It is blessed, gives success, increases the (span of) life, and is the means of righteous acts and enjoyments. Since on this day god Yamarāja was well-fed by Yamunā with a sister's affection (for her brother), therefore he who, on this day, eats from the hand of his sister, gets wealth and excellent riches.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYTHREE

Instructions Concerning the Fast

Kārtikeya said:

1-3. O lord, I wish to listen to the vow which is best among the vows; so also the mode of observing the fast for a month and the fruit of it as is told; and also how the vow is to be commenced, and how it is to be duly completed. O lord, tell me in detail the number (of days) for which this vow is to be observed, O best of the gods.

Śrī Rudra said:

4-17. Well, O kārtikeya, hear from me who am telling you, all that you have devoutly asked, O best among the intelligent. As Viṣṇu is among gods, as the Sun is among the shining ones, as Meru is among mountains, and Garuḍa among birds, as Gaṅgā is among holy places, as the trader is among the subjects, so is this fast for a month the best of all vows. He who observes the fast for a month would obtain the merit of all vows, and all holy places, and the fruit due to all gifts. A man does obtain that merit by means of sacrifices like Agniṣṭoma (performed) with profuse gifts, which he obtains by fasting for a month. A man who duly observes the fast for a month, has (indeed) muttered (hymns), has offered oblations into fire, has given (gifts), has practised penance, and performed svadhā (i.e. pleased his dead ancestors by offering them oblations). Dedicating a sacrifice to Viṣṇu, and having worshipped him, and having secured his preceptor's order, he should fast for a month. Having observed all the auspicious vows as prescribed for the devotee of Viṣṇu, such as Dvādaśī, he should then observe the fast for a month. Having observed Atikṛcchra, Pārāka and Cāndrāyaṇa (vows) he, considering his physical strength and weakness, should observe the fast for a month. An anchorite or an ascetic or a widow should observe the fast for a month with the preceptor's—brāhmaṇa's—order. Having bathed and fasted on the eleventh of Āśvina, he should take up this vow for thirty days. That man who, worshipping Viṣṇu, would fast for the entire month of Kārtika, would enjoy the fruit of salvation.

In the temple of Viṣṇu he should devoutly worship Viṣṇu three times (a day) with jasmine flowers, blue lotuses, lilies and lotuses, camphor and besmearing (the image) with saffron, sandal, and excellent sandal, (should worship him) with offerings of eatables, incense and lights.

18-29. A man, a woman or a widow, having great devotion and with his senses conquered, should worship the Garuḍa-bannered (god Viṣṇu) with mind, deeds and words, and should day and night utter the names of Viṣṇu. He should devoutly and without false words utter Viṣṇu's praise. Full of compassion for all beings, of a tranquil temperament, harmless, sleeping and sitting on a seat outside, he should narrate (the praise of) Viṣṇu. He should avoid thinking, seeing, enjoying fragrant articles, and talking of food, and should give up (taking) morsels. He should avoid smearing his body with oil, smearing his head with oil, (chewing) tāmbūla, smearing his body when he is observing the vow, and should avoid everything that is prohibited. While observing the vow he should not touch anything and should not disturb anyone doing a deed. A householder, remaining in a temple, should certainly observe the vow. A man, a good woman or a widow, having duly observed the fast for a month, should worship Viṣṇu properly. With his mind controlled and senses conquerred, he should observe this vow without anything wanting or additional for thirty days, and should observe the fast for a month, and then on the Dvādaśī (day) he should worship the auspicious Garuḍa-bannered (god). He should worship him with garlands of flowers, sandal, incense, and by besmearing (his image). A man should please Viṣṇu with clothes, ornaments, and (by playing upon) musical instruments. With water from holy places and mixed with sandal he should devoutly bath the image of Viṣṇu. He should (worship) the image besmeared with sandal, and adorneed with incense and flowers. Having fed best brāhmaṇas and pleased them with dakṣiṇā (i.e. presents), and saluting them he should apologise to them. Having apologised to the brāhmaṇas, he should dismiss them after having honoured and worshipped them.

30-42. In this way having observed the fast for a month and worshipped Viṣṇu according to his monetary capacity, with

devotion, and having fed the brāhmaṇas according to his capacity he is honoured in the heaven of Viṣṇu. Now listen to the manner in which at the end of the fast for a month, having chosen thirteen brāhmaṇas, he should dismiss them. Observing a fast on the Ekādaśī day, he should perform a sacrifice (in honour) of Viṣṇu. Having, with the consent of his preceptor, worshipped the lord of gods, and having, according to his capacity, honoured his preceptor, he should salute his preceptor. Then he should feed after saluting the brāhmaṇas of a pure character and family and greatly devoted to worshipping Viṣṇu. Then having worshipped and fed all the brāhmaṇas and having given the best brāhmaṇas tāmbūlas, pairs of garments, food and coverings, so also yogapaṭṭas (i.e. cloths thrown over the back and knees of ascetics during abstract meditation), threads and sacred threads and then having saluted them, he should devoutly honour them. He should prepare a bed furnished with a cover, well-covered, beautiful, excellent, with pillows and decorated. Then, having according to his capacity, got fashioned his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) golden image, he should put it on the bed after worshipping it with garlands etc. On the bed he should put a seat, wooden sandals, an umbrella, a pair of garments and shoes, and pure flowers. Having thus made the bed, and having saluted those brāhmaṇas, he should request the brāhmaṇas for their consent and say: "I am going to Viṣṇu's world." Then the best man would go to Viṣṇu's healthy abode. He should repeatedly say to the brāhmaṇas seated in the pavilion: "O best brāhmaṇas, may all that is without the (proper) hymns and (proper) acts, be fully accomplished due to the favour of your words." I have (thus) properly told (you) the manner of (observing) the vow of the fast for a month.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYFOUR

Haribodhinī, Bhīṣmapañcaka etc.

The lord said:

1-15. O best god, also listen to the greatness of Prabodhinī which destroys sins, enhances merit, and gives salvation to those who comprehend the truth. O Kārtikeya, Gaṅgā Bhāgīrathī roars on the earth till the time the Haribodhinī (Ekādaśī) in Kārtika has not come. The holy places and the lakes up to the ocean roar till the time the Prabodhinī (Ekādaśī) in Kārtika has not arrived. Thousands of horse sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices are equal to one fast on the Prabodhinī (Ekādaśī). O brāhmaṇa, Prabodhinī gives even that which is desired but which is difficult to be got or reached in the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. O brāhmaṇa, Haribodhinī when fasted on, easily gives affluence, union, knowledge, kingdom, happiness and wealth. Just by means of one fast Haribodhinī burns the sins resembling Meru and Mandara committed (by a man). O best among men, he who naturally observes a fast on the Prabodhinī (day), according to the rule, gets the fruit as is told (in the sacred texts). The sin committed during thousands of former existences is burnt like a heap of cotton by keeping awake on the Prabodhinī (day). O Kārtikeya, listen; I shall tell you the characteristic(s) of the vigil, by merely knowing which Viṣṇu is not difficult to be secured. O noble one, a man should sing, play upon musical instruments, recite the Purāṇas, offer incense, light, eatables, flowers, besmear (the image) with sandal, offer fruits, respectful offerings, have faith, give gifts, control his senses, be truthful, without sleep, full of joy and (religious) acts, (offer worship) with energy and without laziness etc. by going round (the image), and preceded by obeisance, so also accompanied by waving of lights. With a mind free from dejection he should wave lights before Viṣṇu in every watch. He who, with a concentrated mind, keeps vigil accompanied with these characteristics, and without dishonesty regarding money, for the lord, is not reborn on the earth.

16-26. He who thus devoutly and without deceitfulness keeps awake on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, is taken to the

highest position. He who, everyday in Kārtika, worships Viṣṇu with the recital of the Puruṣa-sūkta (hymn) has worshipped Viṣṇu for thousands of crores of years. The man who would everyday worship Viṣṇu in Kārtika according to the prescribed manner for five days, would enjoy salvation. He who would worship Viṣṇu (saying) 'Salutation to Nārāyaṇa', is free from torments in hell and goes to an auspicious position. He who recites in Kārtika (the hymn containing) the thousand names of Viṣṇu, and (the account of) the release of the lord of elephants, does not have rebirth. He who keeps awake on the Dvādaśī in the month of Kārtika lives in heaven for thousands of crores of yugas and hundreds of Manu's periods. And hundreds and thousands (persons) born in his family obtain Viṣṇu's position. Therefore, one should keep awake. O beautiful lady, he who eulogises and sings (songs about Viṣṇu) in the last watch (of a day) in Kārtika, lives in Śvetadvīpa with his dead ancestors. He who offers eatables to Viṣṇu at the end of a day in Kārtika lives for so many yugas in heaven, O best sages. O best sage, he who would continuously worship the lord of gods with jasmine flowers and lotus, goes to the highest position. A man who observes (fast on) the Ekādasī of the bright half of Kārtika, and gives auspicious pitchers (to brāhmaṇas) in the morning, goes to my abode.

Kārtikeya said:

27-28. O lord, tell me about the virtuous vow, best among the vows, viz. Bhīṣmapañcaka to be observed in the month of Kārtika. Through favour to me and the sages, tell me, O grandsire, about the manner in which it is observed, and its fruit, O best god.

The lord said:

29-45. O you best among the believers in vows, I shall explain to you the very meritorious vow which lasts for five days. Since Bhīṣma got it from Viṣṇu, it is called Bhīṣmapañcaka. Who, except Viṣṇu, is able to tell the merits of this vow? Listen to the ancient practice. In the bright half of Kārtika it was observed by Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu, Garga etc. in the ages like Kṛta. In the yugas like Tretā it was observed by Ambarīṣa with

(offerings of) food etc. and by brāhmaṇas observing celibacy, muttering hymns and performing rites like sacrifices. So also (it was observed) by kṣatriyas and vaiśyas highly devoted to truth and purity. It is difficult to be observed by those who are void of truth (i.e. are not truthful) and cannot be observed by those of foolish hearts. They say it is difficult to be observed, (that is, it is) 'Bhīṣma'. It cannot be observed by ordinary men. O best brāhmaṇa, he who observes it, has (indeed) observed every (vow). This Bhīṣmapañcaka vow gives great merit, destroys great sins. Therefore, men should carefully observe it. Having properly and according to the precept bathed on the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Kārtika one should take up this vow lasting for five days. The observer of the vow should especially bathe in the morning and at mid-day in a river or a spring, and having obtained cowdung with rice and barley he should in due course gratify his dead ancestors. One of a strong vow, having bathed and observed silence, and having put on washed garments, should carefully offer water and make respectful offering to Bhīṣma. He should carefully worship Bhīṣma and give gifts. He should carefully and especially give five jewels to a brāhmaṇa. Lord Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī should also be always worshipped. By means of worshipping (Viṣṇu) during the group of five (days) Viṣṇu is pleased for crores of kalpas. Whatever (image etc.) is made, he should fashion it with five metals. By giving water and making a respectful offering, a man gets the entire fruit of vows (lasting) for a year. One who makes (the offering) with (the recital of) this hymn: 'I am offering this water to Bhīṣma who has Vaiyāghrapāda gotra and Sāṁkṛta pravara' would enjoy salvation. 'I make the respectful offering to Bhīṣma, the incarnation of the Vasus, the son of Śantanu, and a life-long celibate.' This is the hymn of the respectful offering.

46-56. He, who, in this way, finishes the group of five (days), undoubtedly gets religious merit equal to that of a horse sacrifice. For five days he should carefully observe restraint. O son, the practice of a vow is not possible without restraint. Viṣṇu gave (the highest position) to Bhīṣma who departed in the Uttarāyaṇa; he became[1]....Then he should get Viṣṇu, the

1. This part is unintelligible (Tr.)

destroyer of all sins. Then he should devoutly bathe (the image) with water, honey, milk and ghee; so also with the five products of a cow and water mixed with sandal. Then he should besmear (the image of) Viṣṇu, the Garuḍa-bannered (god) with fragrant sandal, with saffron, and with camphor mixed with uśīra (sandal). He should worship (the image) with charming flowers along with black aloewood and incense. He, with devotion, should burn guggulu (a fragrant gum resin) with ghee before (the image of) Kṛṣṇa. During the five days he should offer light day and night. He should offer excellent food as offering of eatables. Having thus worshipped, remembered and saluted the god, he should mutter one hundred and eight times the hymn *Namo Vāsudevāya*. He should make an offering with sesamum, rice and barley smeared with ghee, with the utterance of the hymn of six syllables, along with the utterance of the exclamation *svāhā*. The observer of the vow, having offered the evening sandhyā prayer, having saluted Viṣṇu, having muttered the hymn as before, should sleep on the (bare) ground.

57-69. All this should be done for five days. Listen to the speciality of and that which is superior in this vow. On the first day the observer of the vow should worship Viṣṇu's feet with lotuses. On the second (day) he should worship his knees with bilva-leaves. Then, with his mind directed to him, he should devoutly worship the head of the Disc-holder, the god of gods, with jasmine flowers on the full-moon day of Kārtika. Having succinctly worshipped Viṣṇu on the Ekādaśī, he, after having eaten cowdung, should duly observe fast on the Ekādaśī day. The observer of the vow should drink cow's urine on the Dvādaśī, milk on the Trayodaśī and curd on the Caturdaśī with (the recital of) the hymn. Having eaten (and drunk these) for the purification of his body and having fasted for four days, he should, after bathing, worship Viṣṇu according to the sacred precept. Giving up sinful thoughts the intelligent one, observing celibacy, should devoutly feed brāhmaṇas, and give presents to them. The man, avoiding liquor and flesh, so also sinful coitus, subsisting on vegetables and sages' foods, should be deeply engaged in worshipping Kṛṣṇa. Then having first (sipped) the five products of the cow, he should eat at night. He would

obtain the fruit of the vow thus duly concluded. (Even) a drunkard who would drink liquor from birth to death obtains the highest position by observing this Bhīṣma-vow. By the words (i.e. order) of a brāhmaṇa, women should observe it, which enchances religious merit. Widows also should observe it for salvation, and an increase in their happiness. O Kārtikeya, men observe the Kārtika(vow) by bathing everyday and (giving) gifts for abundance of (the fulfilment of) all desires and for (obtaining) religious merit. O child, greatly engrossed in meditation upon Viṣṇu, they should also perform the Vaiśvadeva sacrifice (in honour of all deities), which gives health and sons and destroys great sins.

70-78. O Kārtikeya, with all efforts he should observe the Kārtika (vow) at holy places. The conclusion of all the vows (observed) during the year is observed in Kārtika. An image of Sin should be fashioned. It should have fearful clothes and should be very fierce. It should have a sword in its hand; it should have come out (i.e. should be prominent); it should have iron fangs and be dreadful. Covered with a black piece of cloth it should be put on a prastha (i.e. a particular measure) of sesamum seeds. Its wreath should be made of red flowers; its golden earrings should be bright. Having, with great devotion, worshipped it with (the utterance of) the names of Dharmarāja, he taking a handful of flowers, should recite this hymn: 'Due to the grace of your feet may the sin committed in another (i.e. previous) existence or in this, perish.' Having duly worshipped that golden image, and having, according to his capacity honoured the brāhmaṇas, expounders of the Vedas, he should, to please Kṛṣṇa, god of gods, of unimpaired acts, give it to a brāhmaṇa (saying) 'May Dharma be pleased with me.' According to his capacity he should give presents to the reader (of the next). Saying, 'May Kṛṣṇa be pleased with me', he should give gold and cows also. Having done his deeds, and being detached, he should be controlled. According to his capacity he should give excellente gifts to others also.

79-83. (Such) a man, of a tranquil mind, and guiltless, would obtain the highest position. He should reflect upon Mahādeva who is dark green like the petal of a blue lotus, who has four fangs and four arms, who has eight feet, and one eye,

who is spike-eared and has a rough voice, who is cold, who has two tongues, whose eyes are red, who has a lion-like thin cover. He has no form. Bhīṣma, being on the bed of arrows told this to me. This vow known as Bhīṣmapañcaka on the earth, is confined to five days beginning with Ekādaśī. There is no prohibition for him who is intent on taking food. Due to that vow Viṣṇu gives an auspicious fruit.

Sūta said:

84-88. This has more religious merit than all (other) vows. It is difficult to be done on the earth. This secret, the collection of the essences of the sacred texts, is told by me. It is a secret of the gods. It is a great secret. It at once gives salvation even to those who are engaged in illicit intercourse. It would free one from both the sins of selling one's daughter or one's sister. This sacred text leading to salvation should not be revealed to other people. A man hearing it at once goes to salvation. It should be carefully preserved. This auspicious (vow) is not to be told to them who give it up. This is the truth and the (only) truth, O Kārtikeya. Thus all the fruit that Kārtika has is told.

Śrī Viṣṇu said:

89-96. The god of gods told it to his son for his welfare. Hearing those words of his father, Kārtikeya was full of joy. All those, with the palms of their hands joined, said to the god, the life of the world: "We are blessed by hearing the fruit due to Kārtika. Nothing else is to be heard. I have obtained the fruit of my existence." That man who, having heard (this description of) the greatness (of the vow), would honour the reader (of it) with (the grant of a piece of) land, gold, garments, is equal to Viṣṇu, since when the reader is honoured, Viṣṇu is worshipped. Like that he should always give to the reader if he desires the auspicious religious texts, Purāṇa, or Vedic texts, etc. to be fruitful. One who desires religious merit should give the book to the reader only. Those who give the Purāṇic texts, enjoy inexhaustible fruits. He who would devoutly read this, or would retain it after having heard it, is freed from all sins, and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. There is no doubt that merely by listening to the (account of this) importance, he gets wealth, grains, fame, sons, (long) life, and good health.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYFIVE

The Importance of Māgha As Told by Bhṛgu

The sages said:

1-3. O Sūta, O noble Sūta, you, desiring the well-being of the world have narrated the account of Kārtika giving pleasures and salvation. O Lomaharṣaṇi, now tell us about the importance of Māgha, hearing which the great doubt of people diminishes. Tell us who formerly revealed the greatness of the bath in Māgha along with its history, O noble one.

Sūta said:

4-9. Good! good! O best sages, you are greatly devoted to Kṛṣṇa. Since you with joy and devotion repeatedly ask Kṛṣṇa's story, I shall tell you the greatness of Māgha that increases the religious merit and destroys the sin of those who have bathed at dawn. O brāhmaṇas, once Pārvatī, touching the lotus-like feet of Śaṅkara with modesty, asked him, the benefactor of the world:

Pārvatī said:

O god of gods, O great god, O you who grant fearlessness to your devotees, be pleased, O lord of the universe. Tell me what I ask you now. O master, formerly I heard from you many kinds of religious practices. Now I desire to hear the greatness of Māgha. Tell it. Since you love your devotees, tell me who observed it formerly, what is the mode (of observing it), which is the deity. Tell (me) all that in detail.

Śiva said:

10-24. King Dilīpa, best among kings, whose auspicious rites were performed by the sages after the ablution after a sacrifice, who was honoured by all citizens, went out of his city. The king was interested in hunting. He was full of curiosity, and was surrounded by an assemblage for hunting. He had put on his shoes, a blue turban and had covered his chest. He had a leathern fence fastened round his left arm to prevent injury

from the bow string, had a finger-protector, and a bow in his hand and a sword. (He was accompanied) by archers with small swords, so also foot soldiers like that. The young (king), brave like a lion, gladly sported with them in the bowers, looking for game in very charming large thickets in Gandhāra. He crossed great streams. 'Kill him, kill him; this deer is fleeing.' Speaking like this to his servants, he himself jumped and killed it. Again he moved here and there observing at places the forest-ground which was crowded with groups of frightened peacocks, that flew to the trees and hid themselves. It was full of fear of the herds of (frightened) female deer. In its various directions young ones of deer were running. It was fierce due to the sharp howls of jackals at places. The forest at places bore the beauty of elephants due to the groups of young rhinoceroses (*obscure*). At places it was resounding with the hooting of owls resorting to the hollows of trees. At places it was marked with the impressions of the paws of lions. At places it was red due to the blood of the rohita deer, torn apart by the nails of tigers. At places it suggested to the mind (that it was) the ground in the courtyard of the harem due to the groups of the Mahiṣīs (buffaloes/queens) troubled by the burden of their stout (udders) breasts. At places it was covered with dense trees, and was fragrant with wild flowers. It at places had doors in the form of creepers, and was very charming with the humming of bees. It had large holes fearful due to serpents whose sloughs had partly come out. It was fearful due to the large serpents hiding in it, and spreading sloughs. It at places had the flames of wild fire, and very beautiful due to lustre from stones; it was full of the hissing sounds; it was crowded with deer and tigers. At places he let loose the group of his dogs against rabbits. Having rested at the (banks of) ponds he went to another forest.

25-39. When the lord of kings was going like this, and the group of hunters was swaggering, he saw a deer making a loud noise and moving out of a thicket. With hasty strides it crossed the ground having inaccessible paths. At times it jumped into the air, and at times it was seen on the ground. The king, following its footsteps, entered an impassable forest very imperious due to crooked streams and full of thorny trees. The king, going further and further away and from one solitary region to

another, had his neck and throat dry due to the excitement caused by (his) not (being able) to see the deer. His palate and face had become red. He was perspiring. His footmen were tired; his voice was wavering. After having passed over long ways, he, oppressed with thirst, saw, when the sun had gone to the middle (of the sky, i.e. at noon), before him a lake that vied with the ocean, on the bank of which there were dense trees, which was a holy place, was clean and auspicious. It was large; the lotuses in it had bloomed; the bees were intoxicated with honey. It was covered with green lotus-leaves like emeralds. The fish in it was leaping at will like the clean mind of a good man. It was full of moving aquatic animals. It was adorned with the rows of waves. Like the mind of the wicked, it was rough inside due to the groups of crocodiles; at places, it was, due to moss, inaccessible like a miser's house. Day and night it pacified all the afflictions of various birds. Like donors with all their belongings it destroyed the afflictions of those that resorted to it. With its water it gratified the wild beasts like its own dead ancestors. Like the moon it removed all the heat of the day. Seeing it, he was free from languor like a cātaka on seeing a cloud. Having drunk water there, and having performed the mid-day rites, the king ate, with his companions, the flesh of the game. He, telling charming stories, stayed on its bank, and keeping his arrow fixed to the bow (string), he rested on the bank at night. The hunters, fixing their arrows to the bow strings, blocked the paths of the directions. When the warriors remained like this, having spread the nets, at night on every bank a herd of hogs moved out, and having eaten the bulbs in the lake, jumped (before) the crowd of the hunters.

40-48. The king pierced the hogs; and many were killed by the hunters. In a moment, the hogs that were pierced, fell on the ground. Seeing them, the very proud hunters made an uproar, and running with great joy, gathered where the king stayed. Bringing them through his soldiers, he left the bank of the lake. Desiring to go (back) to his city he saw an ascetic on the way. (He saw) the brāhmaṇa, old Hārīta, well adorned with a conch and disc, with his body emaciated due to restraints difficult to observe and intense. He remained only in bones (i.e. had become skeleton-like), he was highly restrained, and his skin

had become rough. He wore a deer-skin, and put on a soft-bark-garment. He was muttering hymns from the Vedas. He had long nails and hair and matted hair. Seeing that hermit, and giving him passage, the king, with respect saluted him with his head (bent) and the hollows of his hands resembling a lotus joined. The brāhmaṇa (i.e. Hārīta), taking him to be a king from his ornaments, and with a desire for obliging others, and for bringing about his welfare said (to him): "At this meritorious and auspicious time, for what purpose are you going, O king, avoiding (i.e. not taking) a morning bath in the month of Māgha?" Then the king replied, "O best brāhmaṇa, I do not know.

49-57. Tell me in detail what kind of fruit the Māgha bath has." Hearing these words of the king, the ascetic said: "O king, the glorious sun, removing the darkness, is quickly rising. This is the time for our bath and not the time for a talk. After bathing, go to Vasiṣṭha, and ask him, the master of your family." Saying so the anchorite, observing silence, went for his morning bath. The hero Dilīpa too, turning back, and bathing there with the proper rite, and full of joy went to his own city. In his harem he again told the account of the anchorite. Having got into a chariot having white horses, and with a white umbrella and white chowries (he went to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage). Being adorned, having put on good garments and surrounded by his ministers, and repeatedly hearing the cries of victory made by the panegyrists and bards, he remembering the words of the sage, went to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage. There only he saluted the brāhmaṇa sage with politeness. Being given a seat, he accepted the respectful offering, and was adorned with blessings; and when the sage asked the king about his well-being, the king, delighting the sage's mind spoke the words. He of a sweet form asked (Vasiṣṭha) about what the anchorite had told him.

Dilīpa said:

58-60. O glorious one, by your grace I have, in detail, heard (from you) about the practices, administration of justice, and the great duties of a king, so also the duties of the four castes and stages of human life; so also gifts, and the manners in which they are given; so also sacrifices and rites; so also the

vows told by him, and about Viṣṇu's worship. Now I desire to know the fruit to be had from Māgha bath along with the manner in which it is done. O brāhmaṇa, O sage, tell it to me.

Vasiṣṭha said:

61-71a. That sage, living in the forest, has properly told the highest bliss, bringing about the good of the three worlds, and removing the sin. Those not defeated by the glances of beautiful women (though) in proximity, desire to bathe in the stream when the Sun is in Capricornus. O dear one, those who desire beatitude without (offerings into) fire, sacrifices, without performing sacrifices and digging wells and doing other acts of charity, go out to bathe every morning in Māgha. O king, those who desire (salvation) without giving (a piece of) land, a cow, gold, rubies, cows fashioned with gold etc. bathe in Māgha. Those who desire (to go to) heaven without parching their bodies with the vows lasting for three weeks, the Kṛcchra and Pārāka, always bathe in Māgha. Viṣṇu's worship in Vaiśākha, penance and worship in Kārtika, and the three, viz. penance, sacrifice and gifts, excel (everything else). A man having a planned conclusion (of these) would certainly become the lord of the earth, due to which there would again be no idea leading to salvation (*obscure*). That worship (including) fasting, penance and (giving) gifts in the month of Māgha, O best king, was laid down by those having divine eyes. For (fulfilling) a desire, or for progeny, or for Viṣṇu or (even) without (any of these) one observing the vow of purifying his body (has) four kinds of fruit obtained by bathing. For twelve years Aditi without taking food bathed (daily) in Māgha and obtained twelve sons illuminating the three worlds. Rohiṇī became a favourite wife; Arundhatī became exceedingly liberal; Śacī was endowed with beauty.

71b-86. Those who bathe when the Sun is in the Capricornus sign of the Zodiac, happily live in a palace which has seven storeys, is endowed with beauty due to being cleaned, the courtyard of which is charming with dancers, crowded with beautiful women, which is resounding with singing and musical instruments, which is charming with auspicious practices, which

is pure due to the sounds of (the recital of) the Vedas, which is adorned by learned brāhmaṇas, which is constantly used in worshipping deities, which is charming, which is always resorted to by guests. For those who have given much in Māgha, have worshipped and praised Viṣṇu, Māgha always produces religious merit due to their abandoning dear objects and observing restraints. Māgha cuts off the root of their sins; it is the root of desired objects through giving fruits; it without a desire and always gives knowledge. Those worlds which are secured by those disposed to (securing) knowledge, by those living in forests (i.e. anchorites), by devotees of Viṣṇu, are always secured by those who bathe in Māgha. O hero, due to having (exhansted) religious merit, other men return from heaven; but men given to bathing in Māgha never return. A man who, having bathed in Māgha, gives a milch cow (to a brāhmaṇa), is honoured in heaven for as many thousand years as are the small hair on her entire body, O best king. A man who bathes in Māgha and would give sesamum seeds with jaggery, shines spotless, having washed his sin. Of all the heaps of grains sesamum seeds destroy the sins. Therefore, O best king, sesamum seeds should be given with (every) effort. A man bathing in Māgha should feed brāhmaṇas. He, of a pure soul, after gratifying his dead ancestors, goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu. Therefore, with all efforts Māgha is passed in giving gifts (by men). O best king, a man should not pass Māgha without (giving) a gift. Knowing his (i.e. according to his) wealth he should always give gifts in Māgha. He who would bathe in Māgha and who gives sandals and pitchers to brāhmaṇas, certainly lives in heaven. A man practising the excellent penance of bathing in Māgha, should never pass it without (giving) a gift. Heaven is obtained through charity.

87-89. O king, heaven is obtained through giving (gifts). Happiness is obtained through giving (gifts). Blemish due to great sin perishes due to giving (gifts). Penance without giving (gifts) does not shine like the sky without the sun, or a family without progeny, or a house without good practices. There is nothing superior to this, that is pure and that destroys sins. (This) was related to a vidyādhara by Bhṛgu on Maṇi mountain.

The king said:

90. O brāhmaṇa, when did that brāhmaṇa Bhṛgu give him the instruction in the religious practice on the mountain. Tell it to me, (as I am asking it) through curiosity.

Vasiṣṭha said:

91-94. O king, formerly the clouds did not shower (water) for twelve years. People being afflicted and emaciated, went into all the ten directions. When, O king, at that time the region between Himālaya and Vindhya had become barren, was devoid of the utterances of *svāhā*, *svahdā* and *vaṣaṭ*, and the study of the Vedas, when the world was in distress, when piety had disappeared, and when the world had become lustreless, when the globe was void of fruits, roots, food and water, Bhṛgu, along with his disciples, moved out of his hermitage on the charming bank of Revā covered with trees of Vindhya mountain, and went to the Himālaya mountain.

95-110. There, to the west of Kailāsa mountain, stands a mountain, known as Maṇikūṭa—a heap of gold, gems and red arsenic. The mountain is crystal-like white in the lower parts, has dark blue slabs in the middle; and surrounded by grandeur on all sides, and white, it shone like Śiva. It is dark-blue everywhere, and has golden lines in between. It shines like a cloud with the streak of lightning flashing. At the top the mountain has dark blue rocks. Below (it) it has a golden girdle. It shines like Viṣṇu wearing a yellow garment. Appearing very dark green without the girdle, it has white rocks (at places) in the middle. The mountain shone like the sky with stars. It shone like another moon that had secured his own white body, that bore divine herbs, and that diffused great light. The mountain always shone with the music of kinnarīs on its table-lands, with bamboos, and with the banners in the form of the leaves of plantain trees. The mountain was as it were covered with rainbows due to the circles of the rays of lustre of the sharp rocks of green stones, lapis lazuli, and rubies. It was well adorned with gold, full of all minerals, various gems; it was covered everywhere with lofty peaks like flames of fire. Vidyādhara women overcome with sexual desire come to its slopes having grass and

big rocks and serve their husbands. The detached ones, having restrained their breath, and having overcome anger, day and night meditate upon Brahman in its caves. Siddhas, with rosaries and (sacred) threads in their hands, with their eyes half-open, propitiate Śiva in the beautiful caves. This (mountain), having rendered fragrant the quarters with the fragrance of the mandāra flowers, is always noisy with the murmuring sound of the water of the mountain torrents. The mountain is always charming due to the young ones of the elephants and the elephants in the forest playing in the lands at its foot, due to herds of musk-deer and charming spotted antelopes, so also due to the sporting flocks of camaras and strange wild beasts, cooing pigeons, cakoras and cuckoos also, so also due to royal swans and peacocks. It is always resorted to by gods, guhyakas and bevies of celestial damsels.

The king said:

111-117. The mountain is full of many wonders; it is the resort of all (kinds of) prosperity. O revered one, what is its height? What is its length? How extensive is it?

The sage said:

At (i.e. up to) its top it is thirtysix yojanas in height. Its length and expanse are ten yojanas. At the foot it is sixteen yojanas. It is adorned with the rows of yellow sandal (trees), mandāra (trees) and mango (trees). It is crowded with devadāru trees, and is adorned with sarala and arjuna (trees). The best mountain, always giving flowers and fruits, shines with kālāgaru trees, clove trees, so also with arbours and bowers. On seeing that beautiful mountain, Bhṛgu who was oppressed with famine, was mentally delighted and lived there only. (On the charming mountain, in its caves and thickets) Bhṛgu well-engrossed in penance, practised penance for a long time. Getting down from the mountain a vidhyādhara couple came (there). Approaching the sage, saluting him, it very much grieved, and stayed there.

118-130a. Seeing them like that the brāhmaṇa spoke sweet words: "O vidyādhara, tell me in a friendly way why you are so much unhappy." Hearing the sage's words, the vidyādhara said

to the brāhmaṇa: "O best among the ascetics, listen to the cause of my unhappiness. Having obtained the fruit of my religious merit, I reached heaven. Though I got a deity's (i.e. a divine) body, my face was like a tiger's. I do not know of which deed (of mine) this effect came up. Again and again thinking like this, I did not obtain pleasure. O brāhmaṇa, listen to this another (thing) due to which my mind is afflicted. This my wife is auspicious, of a sweet voice and beautiful. She is proficient in the arts of dancing and singing; she possesses all good qualities. When she was a maiden, she, the spotless one, playing upon the lute, very much delighted, with the seven strings, sage Nārada skilled in playing upon the lute. This one, having a lovely voice, pleased, even in her childlike state, the lord of gods, conversant with charming tunes. Hearing the fifth note, sweet due to many winding modes (of singing) of her with her body horripilating due to eagerness while playing upon the lute, Śiva nodding his head, and horripilated, was delighted. No other beautiful woman having the grace of good character, generosity, (other) hosts of virtues, beauty and youth, like her, is (to be found) in heaven. 'What a great disparity is there between this divine-faced female and a tiger-faced male like me?' O brāhmaṇa, always thinking like this in my mind, I am burning." Hearing these words, Bhṛgu, Ikṣvāku's son, having a divine eye, and knowing the three times, laughed and said:

130b-138a. "O best vidyādhara, listen to the strange fruit of (one's) deeds. Having obtained it, the wise are not deluded, but the ignorant are deluded. As poison, just of the measure of the wing of a bee is dangerous, similarly even a small act, not enjoined, is dangerous in its effect. Having fasted on Ekādaśī, you smeared your body with oil. Due to that you have become tiger-faced in the body of the previous existence on Dvādaśī. Formerly Purūravas, having fasted on the auspicious Ekādaśī but having used oil on the Dvādaśī obtained, like you, an ugly body. Seeing his ugly body, he was pained by that affliction. He went to the lord of mountains on the lake of the deities, and staying there with great joy, he bathed, and being pure, (sat on) a darbha-seat. The king, fasting, and, having controlled all his senses, and reflecting in his mind on Viṣṇu, dark green like a fresh cloud, having large lotus-like eyes, holding a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus,

covered with a yellow garment, shining with Kaustubha, wearing a garland of wood-flowers, practised a very severe penance for three months.

138b-151. Pleased with the small penance, Viṣṇu, remembering his being worshipped by the king during the (previous) seven existences, himself appeared before him on the Dvādaśī of the bright half of Māgha when the Sun was in Capricornus. Having quickly sprinkled that emperor with water from his conch, Viṣṇu, reminding him of his having used the oil, gave him an extremely handsome, lovely, charming form, due to (i.e. seeing) which goddess Urvaśī, the divine lady, loved him. The king who had obtained the boon, being blessed, went to his city. "Knowing the way of one's acts to be like this, why are you afflicted, O vidyādhara? If you too desire to give up this ugliness of a demon, then, on my words only, quickly take bath in the water of the river Maṇikūṭa which removes old sins, and which is resorted to by sages, siddhas and gods in the month of Māgha. I shall tell you its manner. Due to your (good) luck, Māgha is near, (commencing) on the fifth day (from today). Beginning with the Ekādaśī of Pauṣa, and sleeping on a bare ground, and going without food, bathe three times (a day) for a month and worship Viṣṇu three times (a day), giving up pleasures and restraining your senses till the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Māgha, O best vidyādhara. Then, O god, O sinless one, having sprinkled you with auspicious water purified with hymns, I shall make the face of you who will have completely burnt your sins, resembling the face of Cupid on the holy day of Dvādaśī. O best vidyādhara, then having the face like that of a god, sport as you like, with this (lady) of an excellent complexion. You who have known the prowess of Māgha, always bathe in Māgha, so that your desires will be always fulfilled." That noble and omniscient Bhṛgu, having thus spoken to him, recited to him the (following) verse:

152-164. "By means of baths in Māgha, calamities perish. By means of baths in Māgha sins perish. Māgha is superior to all sacrifices, and gives the fruit of (all kinds of) charity. Māgha roars (louder) than sacrifices. Māgha roars (louder) than abstract meditation. And O vidyādhara, Māgha roars (louder) than severe penance. The fruit which men obtain by (observing) restraints

for ten years at Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra, Brahmāvarta having profuse water, at Avimukta, Prayāga, confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean, is obtained by bathing for three days in Māgha. There is no doubt. Those, in whose mind there is, for a long time, interest in heaven, should bathe in water anywhere when the Sun is in Capricornus. Those who desire to have qualities like (long) life, (good) health, wealth, handsomeness, good fortune, should not give up bathing in Māgha. So also those who are afraid of hell, of poverty that is heaped, should by all means bathe in the month of Māgha. O best king, for washing off the mud of poverty, sins and bad luck, there is no other remedy than a bath in Māgha. Acts done without faith give small fruits. (But) a bath in Māgha gives the entire fruit. He who, with or without a desire, bathes anywhere outside (his house) in water, does not have sorrows in this or in the next world. As in the two fortnights the Moon waxes and wanes, in the same way in Māgha sins decrease and the heap of religious merit increases. As various gems come up from a mine, so religious merit of men springs up due to a bath in Māgha. As the desire-yielding cow fulfils the desire, or the desire-yielding gem gives the desired object, so a bath in Māgha fulfils all desires in the world.

165-166. Penance is the best in Kṛtayuga, knowledge in Tretāyuga, sacrifice in Dvāpara, knowledge (devotion?) in Kaliyuga, and Māgha in all the ages. The bath in Māgha, O king, showers with the streams of merit all the castes and the stages of life."

Vasiṣṭha said:

167-171. Having heard these words of Bhṛgu, that divine being along with Bhṛgu only bathed according to the manner told (in sacred texts) with his wife in that hermitage on the mountain on the bank of a river in Māgha. Then having secured, through the grace of Bhṛgu, whatwas desired by his mind, he having a divine face, rejoiced on the Maṇi-mountain. Bhṛgu, having favoured him (and so) delighted came (back) to Vindhya. The vidyādhara, merely by bathing on the lord of mountains full of gems in Māgha, had his face and form like those of Cupid. Bhṛgu too, having his body emaciated due to restraints, got down at the foot of Vindhya and came to Revā along with his disciples. O

king, this importance of Māgha, the essence in the world, was told by the excellent brāhmaṇa Bhṛgu to the vidyādhara. He who listens to it, wonderful due to various fruits, would always secure all his charming desired objects like a deity.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYSIX

The Importance of Māgha As Told by Dattātreya

Vasiṣṭha said:

1-2. O best king, now I shall tell you the importance of Māgha told by Dattātreya to Kārtavīrya who had asked (him about it). The king, the lord of Māhiṣmatī, went to that brāhmaṇa Dattātreya (who was) actually Viṣṇu, who lived on the Sahya mountain, and asked him (about the bath in Māgha).

Sahasrārjuna said:

3. O revered one, O best among the meditating saints, I have heard (about) all practices. O you of a good vow, favour me and tell me about the fruit of the bath in Māgha.

Dattātreya said:

4-18. O best king, listen to the auspicious answer to this question. This was formerly told by Brahmā to the illustrious Nārada. I shall tell you the great, entire fruit of the bath in Māgha according to the region, holy place, manner and rites. In this Bhāratavarṣa, especially in the land of religious rites the existence of those who do not have the bath in Māgha is said to be fruitless. A good act does not shine without the bath in Māgha, as the sky without the Sun or the cluster of stars without the Moon, O king. Viṣṇu is not so much pleased with vows, gifts, austerities as he is pleased just with a bath in Māgha. No (other) lustre resembles the Sun's lustre. Similarly the sacrificial rites do not resemble the bath in Māgha. A man should (daily) take a bath in Māgha to please Viṣṇu, to remove all sins, and for obtaining heaven. What is the use of preserving the well-nourished,

strong, uncertain, and impure body, if it would be without a bath in Māgha? The body is supported by bones, bound by sinews, besmeared with flesh and blood, covered with skin, has a bad smell and is a receptacle of urine and feces. It is pervaded by old age, affliction and calamities. It is an abode of diseases; it is sick; it is covered with dust. It is perishable. It is the abode of all blemishes. It torments others and is afflicted by torment. It deceives others. It is a great (i.e. strong) poison. It is greedy; it is wicked, cruel; it is ungrateful and momentary also. It is difficult to be filled, difficult to be borne, wicked, and is attended by the vitiation of the three humours. It is impure, exuding; it has cavities, and is deluded by the three humours. It is naturally engaged in impious acts. It is full of hundreds of desires. It stands at the gates of hell due to sexual desire, anger and great greed. It is full of worms and feces. It is reduced to ashes. It is, in effect, an oblation to dogs. Such a body is useless without (i.e. if it does not have) the bath in Māgha. Those who go without the bath in Māgha are born to die only like bubbles in water or pus in beings.

19-25. A brāhmaṇa not devoted to Viṣṇu is doomed. A srāddha without a meditating saint is worthless. A place which is unholy is worthless. A family without (good) practices is accursed. Religious practices accompanied by hypocrisy are worthless. Penance is doomed just by anger. Unstable knowledge is worthless. Learning is doomed by errors. A woman not devoted to the elders is wretched. A celibate is spoilt by her. Sacrifice into a fire that is not blazing is worthless. Enjoyment without a witness (i.e. companion) is worthless. A daughter affording a livelihood is condemned. Cooking for oneself is condemned. A sacrifice depending upon (articles) begged from a śūdra is worthless. Knowledge without practice is worthless. One opposing the king is doomed. A holy place (resorted to) for livelihood is worthless. A vow (undertaken) for livelihood is condemned. Speech void of truth is worthless; so also is calumny. An ambiguous hymn is worthless. Muttering prayers with a distracted mind is worthless. A gift (given) to a brāhmaṇa who is not learned, is worthless. Atheists are condemned. All that is done without faith for being useful in the next world is accursed.

26-39. O king, as this world is of no use for the poor, so the existence of men without the Māgha bath is accursed. How would he who does not bathe before sunrise when the Sun is in the sign of Capricornus, be freed from sins, or would go to heaven? A killer of a brāhmaṇa, he who would steal gold, a drunkard, he who violates his teacher's bed (i.e. wife) and the fifth one—their companion (i.e. abettor), become free from sin by bathing in Māgha. In the month of Māgha the waters shout somewhat (like this): We shall purify the killer of a brāhmaṇa, so also a drunkard who is trembling. When a man takes the Māgha bath, all his minor sins, so also all his major sins are reduced to ash. At the (time of) the union with the Māgha bath all sins tremble: 'This is the time of our destruction if he will bathe in the water.' Seeing a man ready to bathe (in Māgha) the sins cry like this. The best men shine like fires due to Māgha baths. They are free from all sins like the Moon from the clouds. The Māgha bath would burn sins—deliberate, non-deliberate, minor, major, and committed through speech, mind or (physical) act. The Māgha bath would burn sins as the fire (burns) the sacred fuel; so also a sin due to error committed knowingly or unknowingly. That would perish just by a bath when the Sun is in the (sign of) Capricornus. The sinless ones go to heaven; the most sinful are purified. O king, no doubt should be entertained about this Māgha bath. O king, all are entitled to (a bath) in Māgha as they are to the devotion to Viṣṇu. Māgha (bath) gives heaven to all; removes the sins of all. It is in itself a great hymn. It is in itself a great penance. That excellent bath in Māgha is a great expiation. Men have an inclination for Māgha bath after a practice for many existences, as, O king, proficiency in metaphysical knowledge (comes) after practice for many existences. O king, the Māgha bath is efficacious in washing off the smearing by mud in the form of the worldly existence.

40-41a. O king, the Māgha bath is the most purifying of all the purifying (objects). O king, how can those (men) who don't bath in Māgha which gives the fruits of all desires, enjoy pleasures like the planets Sun and Moon?

41b-52. O king, listen to the great wonder due to the Māgha bath. A good brāhmaṇa lady, Kubjikā by name, belong-

ing to the Bhṛgu family, was afflicted by widowhood since her childhood; she practised a very difficult penance. At a great holy place, at the confluence of the Revā and Kapilā at the foot of Vindhya, observing a vow, and being highly devoted to Viṣṇu, she was always engaged in good practices, and always (living) without any company, had subdued her senses, her anger, spoke the truth, and talked little. She was of a good character, was given to charity and to parching up her body. Having offered oblations into the fire to her dead ancestors, deities and brāhmaṇas, she took food at the sixth time (i.e. once in three days), and always lived by gleaning grains; and by means of such vows as Kṛcchra, Atikṛcchra, Pārāka, Taptakṛcchra and others, she passed the auspicious months on the bank of Narmadā. In this way the lady, practising penance, wearing bark-garments, of a good character, of an extremely good disposition, and endowed with courage and contentment, bathed for sixty Māgha months at the confluence of Revā and Kapilā. O king, then she, emaciated due to the penance, died at that holy place. (And) due to that religious merit from the Māgha bath she lived in joy for four thousand yugas in Viṣṇu's city. Then, for the destruction of Sunda and Upasunda, she was again born from Brahmā's heaven, as Tilottamā. Due to the religious merit that was left, she was the sole object of beauty (i.e. was most beautiful). She, not born from the womb, the gem of a lady, deluding even the gods, the pool of beauty, slim, was the best among the celestial nymphs.

53-67a. She indeed caused wonder to the skilful creator Brahmā. The creator, having created her, was delighted; and then ordered her: "O you having (bewitching) eyes like those of a young one of a deer, quickly go for the destruction of the demons." Then that beautiful lady took a lute, went from Brahmā's heaven along the path by Puṣkara, to the place where the enemies of the gods (stood). Having bathed there in pure, clean water of Revā, she put on a red garment bright like the Badhūka flowers; her bracelets were jingling, and her girdle and anklets were sweetly tinkling. The necklace of pearls round her neck was moving; she was beautiful due to the unsteady earrings; she had worn the wreath of spring flowers; she stood by an aśoka tree. She sang with sweet tunes; she struck (the strings

of) her lute; she passed from one key to another of the six (keys of gamut), with smoothness, delicacy and with low and inarticulate tones. Thus that young Tilottamā stood in the Aśoka-grove. She, giving pleasure like a digit of the Moon, was seen by the demon-soldiers. Seeing her, the soldiers being delighted and without (properly) observing her, very quickly went to Sunda and Upasunda. Describing her again and again, they told about her in confusion: "O demons, we do not know whether she is a goddess or a demoness, or whether she is a nāga lady or a yakṣa lady, but she is by all means a gem of a lady. You two enjoy gems in the world, and that lady is a gem. She who removes sorrow, is under the aśoka tree, not far (from here). Go and quickly see her, deluding even Cupid." Hearing these charming words of their generals, the two abandoned their glass of liquor, gave up sprinkling with water, left thousands of excellent ladies, and from that lake they went, each one taking a separate mace that weighed a hundred bhāras, that was made of iron, that was hard, that resembled the staff of Death, speedily by jumping to that place where the passionate lady ready with a dress suited to amorous interviews had stood, as it were inflaming the fire of the passion of love of the two demons, O king.

67b-80. The two villains, infatuated by her beauty stood in front of her (and) especially being intoxicated due to liquor, said to each other: "O brother, wait, let me have this lady of an excellent complexion as my wife." "O good one, leave her—my wife—of bewitching eyes." Thus inflamed with strong attachment, and furious like elephants they, ordered by Death, struck each other with a mace, and by the strokes of each other fell down dead on the earth. Seeing them dead, the soldiers made a great noise: "Who is this, resembling the night of Death? What is this that has come up?" When (the soldiers in) the armies were speaking like this, Tilottamā, dropped Sunda and Upasunda on the peak of the mountain, and illumining the ten quarters she quickly proceeded to the sky. Having done the mission of the gods, she came to Brahmā. Then the delighted god approved of her (mission). "O you moon-faced one, I have allotted you a place on the Sun's chariot. Enjoy many pleasures as long as the Sun remains in the sky." O king, that brāhmaṇa lady

having thus become an excellent celestial nymph, even now enjoys the great fruit of the Māgha bath in the other world. Therefore, O king, men having faith (and desiring) to go to the best position, should always through effort bathe when the Sun is in Capricornus. There is no goal of human life not attained, there is no sin that is not destroyed of the man who bathes in Māgha. All sacrifices with presents are not equal to the Māgha bath, and especially at a holy place, O king, since, on the earth there is no other act giving heaven, or destroying sins, or giving salvation like the Māgha bath.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYSEVEN

The Release of a Demon

Kārtavīrya said:

1-2. O brāhmaṇa of a good vow, tell me for which reason great efficacy is said (to exist) in Māgha. Also I wish to know the religious merit (collected) of a bath in Māgha by one of which the merchant was free from his sins and by another he went to heaven.

Dattātreya said:

3-26a. O best among men, water is naturally holy, clear, undefiled, whitish, removing dirt, causing (things) to melt, removing heat; it preserves all beings, nourishes them and is their (very) life. In all Vedas water is spoken of as the god Nārāyaṇa. As among the planets the Sun is the greatest, as among the stars the Moon is the best, so is Māgha among (all) months for all rites. In Māgha, when the Sun is in Capricornus, a morning bath in clear water even in a small puddle gives heaven even to sinners. In Māgha, O king, this combination is rare in the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. During this combination even a weak person should bathe (in the morning) for three days and, even if incapable, should, with a desire for freedom from poverty, give something (to a

brāhmaṇa). Rich men live long by bathing thrice in Māgha. Or (they should bathe) for five or seven days. The fruit increases like (the waxing of) the Moon. When, the auspicious time of the Sun being in Capricornus, which gives religious merit to men, has come, all the days should be equally valued for acts like a bath or giving (gifts). To the doer (of the acts) they cause to give an eternal, inexhaustible position. Therefore, for the desire of his own good, a man should bathe outside (his house) in Māgha. Hereafter, I shall tell (you) about the great rite of bathing in Māgha. The best men should take up some religious observance of the nature of a vow. A wise man should give up some eatable for getting excellence in the fruit. He should sleep on the bare ground. He should offer into fire ghee mixed with sesamum. He should worship the ancient Vāsudeva, Viṣṇu, three times (everyday). He should offer a lamp (burning) continuously, dedicating it to Viṣṇu. (He) should (also) give fuel, a blanket, a garment, sandals, saffron and ghee. (So also) oil, heap of cotton, cotton bed, cotton wicks, cloth, so also food, according to his capacity in Māgha, O king. Similarly he should give gold weighing a rati to (a brāhmaṇa) proficient in the Vedas. Like the ocean the gift is always inexhaustible. He should not eat others' food (i.e. food offered by others). He should give up receiving gifts; at the end of Māgha he should feed brāhmaṇas according to his capacity, O king. Desiring his own good, he should offer them presents. He, having faith, should, by observing the Ekādaśī rite, conclude (the vow) of Māgha with a desire (to live) eternally in heaven, to get unending religious merit, and to please Viṣṇu. In Māgha, when the Sun is in Capricornus, he, having uttered the prayer, 'O god Govinda, Acyuta, Mādhava, give me the fruit as is told (in the holy texts) as a result of this bath', should silently and being calm bathe and should again remember Vāsudeva, Hari, Kṛṣṇa, Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu). Even in his house he should keep a pitcher full of water touched by air (i.e. kept in the open) at night. A bath with that (water) is like one at a holy place, giving all desired objects. With (i.e. by taking) a vow he should give (articles) with food and condiments. Due to the efficacy of that bath a man would not go to hell. That bath which men take with hot water at home when the Sun is in Capricornus, gives

fruit for six years. But a bath outside (the house), in a well etc. is said to give fruit for twelve years. A bath in a lake gives double the fruit, (while a bath) in a river gives four times the fruit. (A bath) in a natural pond gives hundred times the fruit, (so also) a hundred times in a great river; and a bath at the confluence of a great river has four hundred times the fruit.

26b-40. O king, a man merely by bathing in Gaṅgā gets a thousandfold fruit of this, when the Sun is in Capricornus. O best king, those who bathe in Gaṅgā in the month of Māgha, do not fall from heaven for (a period of) a thousand aggregates of the four ages. O king, a man who bathes in Gaṅgā in Māgha, has given a thousand (coins) of gold everyday. O best king, the sages have ordained that the bath in Māgha at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā is a hundred thousand times (fruitful). O king, the lord of beings, engaged in the welfare of the worlds, fashioned Prayāga for burning the great burden of heaps of sins. Listen properly. This place having black and white water is formerly made for the beings in the form of sins (i.e. sinful). He, though full of hundreds of sins, who would bathe at (Prayāga having) black and white water in Māgha when the Sun is in Capricornus, does not sink in a womb (i.e. is not reborn). Even that man engaged in killing at a slaughter house, who would bathe at Prayāga, goes to the highest position, O best among men. The creator created that, viz. the black and white stream, filled with Sarasvatī, as a path to Viṣṇu's world. Viṣṇu's illusion is difficult to cross. It is not easily overcome even by gods. But, O king, it is burnt at Prayāga in Māgha. By bathing at Prayāga in Māgha men, after having many pleasures in lustrous worlds, merge into the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu). Even Citragupta is not able to measure the religious merit of him who bathes in the black and white water at Prayāga in Māgha when the Sun is in the Capricornus. Even Brahmā is not able to describe the greatness of the religious merit of him who bathes at Prayāga in the black and white water in Māgha when the Sun is in Capricornus. That fruit which is had by fasting for a hundred years is had by bathing for three days at Prayāga in Māgha. That fruit which is obtained by the gift of gold weighing a thousand bhāras at Kurukṣetra is had by bathing daily at

the place where Gaṅgā joins Yamunā and receives underground Sarasvatī in Māgha when the Sun is (in Capricornus).

41-51. O king, the fruit of a thousand Rājasūya sacrifices is not so complete as that of the baths in Māgha at Prayāga (where the water) is black and white. O best king, all the holy places that there are on the earth, so also the seven (holy) cities, come to bathe at the confluence of the three rivers (Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī) in Māgha. Due to the blemish of the contact with the sinners all holy places are darkened. Due to bathing in Māgha at Prayāga they get a white complexion (i.e. are purified). The sin collected from the beginning of the kalpa, and during (many) existences of those bathing at Prayāga is reduced to ash, O kiṇg. The sin of a man due to speech, mind and body, who has bathed for three days at Prayāga in Māgha would certainly perish. A man who bathes for three days at Prayāga in Māgha, sheds off his sin as a serpent does his slough, and goes to heaven. Gaṅgā bathed in anywhere is like Kurukṣetra. When it is united with Vindhya it is ten times more meritorious. Gaṅgā flowing northwards in (i.e. by) Kāśī is hundred times superior. Gaṅgā in confluence with Yamunā is hundred times superior to Kāśī (i.e. to what she is at Kāśī). She flowing westwards would be a thousand times superior to those, which, O king, merely by her sight removes the sin of the murder of a brāhmaṇa. O king, that (stream of) Gaṅgā flowing westward and joining Yamunā destroys sins committed in crores. It is difficult to have (a bath in) her in Māgha. That which is called nectar is said to be the confluence of the three rivers on the earth. (To bathe) in it even for a short time in Māgha is difficult even for gods.

52-58a. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Rudras, Ādityas, the host of Maruts, Gandharvas, Regents of Quarters, Yakṣas, Kinnaras, Pannagas (i.e. serpents), so also those who are endowed with the supernatural powers like aṇimā (i.e. reducing the body to an atomic size), those who are the expounders of the true nature (of things), so also Brahmāṇī, Pārvatī, Lakṣmī, Śacī, Menā, Aditi and Diti—all these wives of gods, so also the Nāga females, similarly the hosts of the celestial damsels like Ghṛtācī, Menakā, Rambhā, Urvaśī and Tilottamā, and the hosts of the dead ancestors—all these come to bathe at the confluence of

the three rivers in Māgha, O king. (They come to bathe) in their own forms in Kṛtayuga, and with their forms concealed in Kaliyuga. That fruit which is obtained by a man by means of bathing in Māgha at Prayāga for three days, is not obtained by (performing) a thousand horse-sacrifices on the earth. Formerly Kāñcanamālinī gave the fruit of bathing in Māgha for three days to a demon, O king. The sinner got free (from sins) due to that.

Kārtavīrya said:

58b-59. O revered one, who is that demon? Who is that Kāñcanamālinī? How did she give him her religious merit? What good position did he have? If you think it is fit to be heard by me—for I have a great curiosity (to hear it)—then, O best of the meditating saints, O sun to the progeny of Atri, tell it (to me).

Dattātreya said:

60-68. O king, listen to this wonderful, ancient account by merely recollecting which a man would get the fruit of a Vājapeya. Kāñcanamālinī, a celestial nymph endowed with beauty, (used to) bathe at Prayāga in the month of Māgha and go to Śiva's temple. That old demon, standing in the form of a huge rock in a bower on the lordly mountain, saw her to have gone up into the sky. She was bright, resembled bright gold (in complexion); her buttocks were round; her eyes were long (i.e. large); her face resembled the moon; her hair was good; her breasts were raised and plump. Seeing her endowed with beauty, the demon said to her: "O you having eyes like lotus-petals, wherefrom do you come? Why is your garment wet? Due to what is your braid wet? O timid one, whence do you come? Due to what can you move in the sky? O good one, due to what religious merit is your body lustrous, endowed with great beauty, and charming? O you of fine eyes, due to the drops (of water) having fallen from your garment on my head my mind which is always cruel has become tranquil (just) in a moment. Please tell me, what great efficacy the water has. You appear to me of a good character. A (fine) figure is never without virtues."

The celestial nymph said:

69-86. O demon, listen. I am a celestial nymph taking any form I like. I have come from Prayāga. My name in Kāñcanamālinī. The cloth worn round my loins is wet, since I have well-bathed at Prayāga. O demon, I have to go to Kailāsa, the best mountain. There lives Pārvatī's lord, well-worshipped by gods and demons. O demon, your cruelty has gone due to the efficacy of the water at the confluence of the three rivers. I shall tell you all that religious merit by means of which I was born as the daughter of a divine form to the gandharva, Sumedhas. I was a courtesan of the king—the lord of Kaliṅga. I was endowed with a good form and beauty; I was madly proud of my good fortune. In his city I was the crest-jewel (i.e. best) of other young ladies. O demon, in that existence, I enjoyed pleasures as I liked. Due to the excellence of my beauty I deluded the entire city. I, having a bewitching form, obtained all this—gems, beautiful ornaments, and wealth; so also garments of various kinds, camphor and agaru sandal. O demon, in my house I did not know end (i.e. limit) to gold. Youths, oppressed by passion of love, shampooed my feet. All those were fraudulently duped by me (and deprived) of their wealth. Some lustful ones died as a result of vying with one another. In this way I moved in that entire beautiful city. But when old age came, my heart grieved. I had not given (gifts). I had not offered oblations into fire. I had not observed any vow. I had not propitiated any god giving the four goals (of human life). I had not worshipped Durgā who destroyed misery. I, greedy of enjoyments, had not remembered Viṣṇu who destroyed all sins. I had not gratified brāhmaṇas. I had done no good to beings. Through carelessness I did not practise merit even of the size of an atom. But, O good one, I had committed sins. Therefore, my mind burnt. Having moaned like this in many ways, I sought the refuge of a brāhmaṇa, the priest of the king, who was pious and was proficient in the Vedas. O demon, I asked him: "How would I atone for this sin? O best brāhmaṇa, how would I go to (i.e. obtain) the best position (i.e. salvation). You, seizing the hair of me who am tormented by my own acts, who am helpless, whose mind is afflicted, who am sunk into the mud of sins, lift me up. Oh!

shower on me a pleasing look, the water of pity. All are good to a good man. But a good man is good (even) to a bad man." Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) me, he favoured me. The brāhmaṇa spoke pleasing words, full of all piety.

The brāhmaṇa said:

87-97. O you beautiful lady, I have understood all your behaviour which was (really) prohibited. Do quickly what I say. Go to the holy place of Brahmā. Having gone there, have a bath. Thereby your sin will perish. O good lady, all your thoughts have pained me. I do not see any other expiation, destroying sins (than) a bath at a holy place which is said to be excellent by the sages. One should give up at a holy place even an impious act done mentally. Purified by a bath at Prayāga you will surely go to heaven. There is no doubt that men obtain (i.e. go to) heaven merely by means of a bath at Prayāga. O beautiful young lady, the sin committed at any other place than a holy place perishes at Prayāga. O timid one, listen. Formerly Indra had approached the wife of (the sage) Gautama. Seeing her he was overcome with passion; the libidinous one approached her secretly. Due to that severe sin the same fruit was produced. The body of Indra, going to (i.e. cohabiting with) the sage's wife, became, in her presence, censurable, condemnable and shameful. Due to the efficacy of her husband's curse it was marked with pudenda muliebre. Then, with his face hung down (in shame), the king of gods went from that place. He, subdued and ashamed, condemned his act. Having gone to Meru's peak, full of water and extending over a hundred yojanas, he entered the bud of a golden lotus. Remaining there he censured himself and Cupid.

98-113a. Fie upon that lust, which at once gives (i.e. produces) sin, and due to which, a man condemned by the entire world, goes to hell! So also it destroys (a man's) life, fame, glory, piety and courage. Fie upon Cupid, of a bad conduct, and the sure place of calamities, living in the body, an enemy difficult to be vanquished, not contented, and always uncontrollable!. Thus Indra, concealed in the lotus-abode, talked. O timid one, heaven did not look charming without Indra. Therefore, gods with Gandharvas, regents of quarters with Kinnaras,

came with Śacī to Bṛhaspati and asked him: "Revered sir, we do not know (where) god Indra (has gone). Where does he stay, where has he gone, where shall we look for him? With the gods (but) without him, heaven does not look charming, as a virtuous family without a good son. Immediately think about a remedy by which heaven will look charming. He, the lord, is endowed with great glory. Delay is not proper here." Hearing these words of them Bṛhaspati said (these) words: "I know where he stays as a result of his own guilt. That Indra undergoes the fruit of his act done rashly. Terrible effects would take place due to men's giving up the right course. Oh, being mad with pride of (possessing) a kingdom, he, not thinking what ought not to be done, did (this) censurable act, destroying the (effects of) visible and invisible (acts). The childish ones, with their minds impaired do (acts) due to which fault the existence in this world and in the next would be fruitless. We shall now go to the place where Indra is." On his speaking like this, all led by Bṛhaspati set out. Seeing the grove (i.e. bed) of golden lotuses in a vast lake, they praised the king of gods in such a way that he would awake, Then due to the awakening done by Bṛhaspati, he came out of the lotus-bud. With a melancholy face, and deformed, with his eyes contracted due to shame, he seized the feet of Bṛhaspati who was elder (brother). "O Bṛhaspati, protect me; tell me the atonement for this sin."

113b-131a. Hearing the words of the king of gods, the brāhmaṇa, Bṛhaspati, spoke: "O lord of gods, listen, I shall tell you a remedy destroying your sin. By taking a bath only in Prayāga you will be instantly free from the sin. O lord of gods, with you only we shall go there." Then coming with the priest, Indra bathed at the holy place, Prayāga, and was instantly freed from sins. The preceptor of gods, being pleased, gave him a boon: "O sinless one, merely by a bath at Prayāga, your sin has vanished. O Śakra, due to my grace, you whose sin has perished, will have a thousand eyes in place of these thousand vulvas." Just then, by the words of Bṛhaspati the lord of Śacī shone (there) with the thousand eyes like the Mānasa lake with lotuses. Then all the deities and sages worshipped him. And being praised by Gandharvas, Indra went to Amarāvatī. Thus Indra became free from sins at Prāyāga. O auspicious one, you

too go to Prayāga, resorted to by gods for instant destruction of sins and certainly going to heaven.

Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him along with the account and auspiciousness, then only I was confused, and saluting the feet of the brāhmaṇa, and leaving all my kinsmen and male and female servants and the house, so also all objects of senses like poisonous morsels, and, O demon, clearly noticing that the body is perishable after a moment, I went out. O best demon, being tormented in the heart with a terrible fire of falling into the ocean of hell, I went to (Prayāga) where the water is white and black, and bathed there. O old demon, listen to the greatness of that bath. Within three days the sins perished, and after the remaining twentyone days the religious merit had been (formed) due to which I obtained godhead. I enjoyed on Kailāsa as Pārvatī's dear friend. Due to the prowess, I remembered my birth also. Remembering the greatness of Prayāga, I go there in every Māgha. O demon, I have told you the entire account, which you with an amazed mind had asked, to please you. O demon, to please me (now) tell me your account. Due to which act have you become deformed and terrible, having moustache, long fangs, and eating raw flesh in the mountain-cave?

The demon said:

131b-137. A good person affectionately gives a desired thing or takes it, tells or asks a secret. O good lady, all that exists (i.e. is found) in you. O you lady of beautiful eyes, honoured by you I think the atonement (of the sins) of me, doer of cruel acts, will instantly take place. Therefore, O good lady, I shall tell you the bad act which I myself did. A man would be completely happy after reporting his grief to a good man. O beautiful lady, listen. I was formerly born in Kāśī as an excellent brāhmaṇa having (studied) many ṛks, and proficient in the Vedas, in a great and very pure family. O timid one, I received gifts, from the wicked—which act was fearful—from sinful kings, śūdras and vaiśyas also. I was prevented in many ways and many times, and was very much censured. Wicked gifts were not refused by me even from a cāṇḍāla. There was another sin

of (i.e. committed by) me of a foolish mind. There was no sinful act which I did not do.

138-150a. O you of an excellent complexion, listen to another drawback of that holy place. The sin of the size of an atom (committed) in Avimukta would attain (the size of) Meru. During that existence, I did not collect any (kind of) religious merit. Then, O beautiful lady, I died after a period of many days. Due to the power of Avimukta I did not go to hell. No sinner dying at Avimukta goes to hell. Any sin committed at Avimukta certainly becomes adamantine. Due to that adamantine sin I was born as a demon—fearful, very cruel, and sinful—on the snow mountain. Formerly I was twice born in the stock of vulture, thrice as a tiger, twice as a serpent, once as an owl, and after that as a hog. O you beautiful lady, this my birth as a demon is tenth. Of (this) my birth thousands of years have passed. O good one, I am not escaping from this ocean of misery. Here I have made (the region up to) three yojanas devoid of beings. I have destroyed many sinless beings, O you of beautiful eye-brows, due to that act my mind is constantly burning. My mind, sprinkled with the nectar of your sight, has become cool. A holy place gives its fruit after (some) time; (but) contact with the good (gives fruit) instantly. Therefore, O beautiful lady, the wise recommend the company of the good. I have told you all this affliction lurking in my mind. O you beautiful lady, a good man whose mind is not afflicted, is rare. You know what is proper here. What more should I say? I am thinking as to how I can cross over this ocean of misery. The prosperity of the good is the source of livelihood to all; does the Milky Ocean give milk to a swan (only) and not to a crane also?

Dattātreya said:

150b-163. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, Kāñcanamālinī having her mind melted with compassion, and deciding to give (him) her religious merit, said: "O demon, I shall make atonement (for your sin). Do not be grieved. Making a firm vow, I shall try to release you. Year after year I have duly taken (bath) in the month of Māgha. O good one, (I have bathed) with faith in the holy place of Prayāga. I am unable to tell the amount of that religious merit, O demon. The wise men

have said that piety should be secretly praised. The sages, proficient in the Vedas praise giving (gifts) to the afflicted. O good one, what fruit would there be for cloud showering (water) into the ocean. O demon, I have myself experienced the fruit due to that religious merit. O friend, I shall give you that (merit) which instantly destroys sin." Then she squeezed her (wet) garment, and took the water in her lotus-like hand. She gave the old demon (her) religious merit due to (the bath in) Māgha. O king, listen, strange is the prowess due to the religious merit (of bathing) in Māgha. Having thus received her religious merit, he was free from (i.e. he got rid of) the demonish body. He became one having the body of a deity, lustrous like the sun's form. With his eyes blooming with joy, he got into a divine vehicle. He then shone in the sky, illuminating the quarters with his lustre. He, having a divine form, shone like another sun. Then he congratulated that Kāñcanamālinī: "O good one, the powerful god who gives the fruit of acts, knows that obligation done by you to me, where no acquittal was possible. Even now, kindly be pleased and favour me. O respectable lady, give me auspicious instruction, full of morals, and causing all religious acts, so that I shall not commit a sin. Hearing that I, permitted by you, shall later go to the abode of gods."

Dattātreya said:

164-177. Having heard these words full of righteousness, uttered by him, Kāñcanamālinī told him very affectionately about the religious practice, O king: "Always practise a good course. Give up harming beings. Serve good men. Kill the enemy (in the form) of passion. Quickly giving up praising and censuring the virtues and vices of others, speak the truth. Worship Viṣṇu. Go to the world of gods (i.e. heaven). Give up your longing after the body full of bones, flesh and blood. Give up the sense of mineness for your wife, sons etc. Mark ceaselessly that this world is perishable. Being firm in abstract meditation, be interested in detachment. Through love for you, I have told you the path of piety. Bear all (this) in mind. Be one of a good character. Giving up your demonish body, taking up a divine body full of lustre, quickly and happily go to heaven." Hearing

about the religious practices, the demon, being pleased, said: "Be always joyful. May you always have well-being. As long as the Moon and the Sun last, enjoy at Kailāsa in Śiva's proximity. O you of an excellent complexion, may you have Pārvatī's constant love. O mother, always be devoted to piety and penance. May you not have longing after your body. Always remove the misery of the afflicted." Speaking like this to and saluting Kāñcanamālinī, that demon, praised by many gandharvas went to heaven. Then daughters of gods, full of joy, came and showered flowers on the head of that Kāñcanamālā. The girls embraced her and spoke sweet words: "O good one, you have done a wonder freeing the demon. Due to the fear of this (demon) no one entered the forest. Now, we, being fearless, shall move here as we like." O king, hearing their words, that Kāñcanamālinī, pleased with the gift (she gave) became (i.e. regarded herself as) blessed. Kāñcanamālinī, the best daughter of a gandharva, having quickly freed him, and full of obligations, went, playing with them, to Śiva's abode.

A man who would devoutly listen to the dialogue of that excellent girl (and the demon) is never troubled by demons, and has a great liking for piety.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYEIGHT

The Hymn Yogasāra in Praise af Viṣṇu

Vasiṣṭha said:

1-15. I have told you the importance of Māgha as narrated by Dattātreya. I shall now tell (you) which fruit Māgha bath has. O hero, Māgha bath is the best of all sacrifices; it gives the fruit of all gifts; it is equal to all vows and austerities. Men, due to Māgha bath (taken) with a pure mind, put the dead ancestors of both (the mother's and the father's) families in heaven, and themselves go to heaven in aeroplanes going according to the desire (of the occupants) along with ladies

of bright faces. Even those men who always commit sins, who are alwaysengaged in bad practices, who go astray, but who bathe in Māgha and worship Viṣṇu, abandon a collection of great sins (committed) in this world. Even those men who are void of truth, who make their father and mother unhappy, who do not remain within (the limits) of the stages of life, who avoid the family practices, who are hypocrites, also get the position of the good due to the Māgha baths in this world. It is very difficult for men to get (an opportunity to have) a bath in the month of Māgha at holy places, since by that men obtain the position of the knowers of Brahman. No doubt should be raised about this. O king, in Māgha (practising) penance, (giving) gifts, muttering (hymns) and continuous worship of Viṣṇu and his temple is inexhaustible (in giving fruit). Therefore, men should strive to bathe and give garments, food and gold according to their capacity. A giver of food in Māgha drinks nectar in heaven. A giver of gold goes near Indra. A man who offers a lamp-fire, garments, is full of lustre, and always lives in the world of the Sun. Sinners are not so much purified in this world by sacrifices, good gifts, severe and bright austerities, following proper celibacy, worshipping (deities) and resorting to abstract meditation as by Māgha baths causing religious merit. Those sinners who bathe at holy places when the orb of the Sun has half come up in the month of Māgha, do not suffer from the torment of a series of miseries and the unbearable torment inflicted by Yama. Those who, after having bathed in Māgha, worship Viṣṇu, become, after falling from heaven, kings who are excellent, handsome, fortunate, sweet-speaking, righteous, very wealthy, and living for a hundred years. As a heap of pieces of wood offered into fire is reduced to ash just that moment, in the same way, due to Māgha bath the heap of great sins and a series of sins, though vile, melt away. The bath in Māgha would, like Viṣṇu existing in the heart, burn all that sin committed by men through body, speech or mind, so also the sin that is known (i.e. deliberate) or unknown. O king, when the Māgha bath is taken, the fruit of the sin (committed) inadvertently, which is being undergone, certainly perishes just at that moment. Formerly, O king, the gandharva-maidens undergoing suffering due to the

sin, were freed from that as a result of Māgha bath (taken) at the words of Lomaśa. It was wonderful.

Sūta said:

16-33. Hearing these words, the king joyfully saluted his lotus-like feet, and polite due to great faith, asked that priest: "O revered sir, tell me whence the maidens got the curse, whose children they were, what their names and ages were, how they were freed from the suffering due to the curse by Lomaśa's words, where did they bathe, and in what number?

Vasiṣṭha said:

O best king, listen to the great story full of religious merit, which is like the araṇi (i.e. the piece of wood used for kindling sacred fire) pregnant with fire and producing religious merit and fire. There was a gandharva (named) Sukhasaṅgīti. His daughter was Pramodinī. Suśīlā was Suśīla's (daughter); Susvarā that of Svaravedin; Sutārā of Candrakānta and Candrikā of Suprabha. O king, these were the excellent names of those celestial nymphs. All the five maidens were of the same age; they had, as it were, come out from the Moon, and were bright like moonlight. Their faces were (lovely) like the Moon. They had good (i.e. long) hair; their lips contained the ambrosia from the Moon. They gave delight to the eyes as moonlight to the water-lily. They were born with profuse beauty; they had charming forms; they were attractive; their pitcher-like breasts had come up (i.e. were raised) like the lotus-plants in spring. Like a creeper with fresh foliage they had charming youth spreading out. They were yellowish like gold; had golden lustre; were adorned with golden ornaments. They had put on garlands of campaka flowers; they had golden complexion; had put on good garments; they were skilled in notes of the musical scale, and scales in music, in various melodies, in beating time and amnsements, in playing upon the flute and the lute which accompanied the sound of the drums, in dances, in hobbies like drawing pictures and (other) arts. The maidens who were like this loved sporting in a grove. Fondled by their parents they moved in Kubera's abode. Once (all) the five coming together through curiosity in the month of Vaiśākha, collected mandāra flowers

from one grove and another and to propitiate Pārvatī some time went to the Acchoda lake. They took from that (lake) excellent golden lotuses along with excellent blue lotuses. Having bathed in the lake which was bright with lapis lazuli, clear like crystal and having corals, and having put on garments, they with the golden sand fashioned, observing silence, a solid image of Pārvatī with an altar. The maidens, full of devotion, honouring Pārvatī with sandal, camphor and saffron, and worshipping her (image) with excellent lotuses etc. and with various modes of worships, danced by beating time. Having resorted to the excellent note of gandhāra (i.e. the third note) with sweet sounds of strings and with good modulations, the deer-eyed sang a song, having sweet letters, charming theme, and sweet tunes due to turns.

34-50. To that excellent holy place of Acchoda which had sweet-sounds (of music), which gave sprinkling of delight and joy, Agnipa, the son of a sage, the treasure of Vedas, came to bathe when the maidens were dancing very freely. He was matchless in form; had an excellent face: his eyes were long like lotus-leaves; he was young; his chest was broad; his arms were good; he was very handsome; he had a darkish complexion. He was as it were another Cupid. That celibate, with a tuft of hair on the crown of his head, shone with his staff like Cupid with his bow. He had covered himself with deer-hide, had worn a good sacred thread, and had his girdle of muñja grass resembling gold. Seeing that brāhmaṇa, the maidens, full of curiosity, were delighted (asking themselves): 'who is this (welcome) guest to our eyes on the bank of the lake?' Leaving dancing and singing, they, pierced by Cupid with his arrows like female deer pierced with arrows by a hunter, were engrossed in looking at him. The five innocent ones, saying, with great excitement (to one another), 'See (him), see (him)' mistook that youth, the excellent brāhmaṇa, for the god of love. Again and again propitiating him (i.e. gazing on him) with their eyes like lotuses, the maidens then debated with one another: 'If he is the god of love, how would he go without Rati? Is he the (twin) deities Aśvins? But they indeed move as twins. Is he a gandharva, or a kinnara, or a siddha, taking any form at will? Or is he a son of a sage or some excellent man?

Whosoever he may be, he has been created for us by the Creator. As for the lucky ones a treasure is fashioned by (means of) their former deeds, in the same way this excellent bridegroom is brought for us—the maidens, by Pārvatī whose mind is moistened due to the flood of the large waves of the water of compassion. 'I have chosen him; you have also chosen him. As you have chosen him, so have I.' O best king, when the maidens were talking thus, he, having heard their words, performed the mid-day rites, and thought in his mind (i.e. to himself): 'This obstacle has come up. It is a wonder that gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, so also the ancient sages and siddhas, powerful in abstract meditation, were easily deluded by women. Whose deer in the form of his mind, struck by the archer Cupid with the sharp arrows in the form of the eyes (i.e. glances) of women and going out from the very strong bow in the form of their creeper-like brows, does not fall? Men's morality shines, men would be afraid of people, the great strength of the mind would persist, the consideration of (their) family would be done, the maturity due to penance would persist, the maintaining of the vows of men would be done till men are not deluded by the arrows of the glances of women, with ardent passion.

51-53. Let women delude and madden the passionate ones with their charming amorous gestures. (But) by means of which qualities do these women delude and madden me, highly devoted to piety? May the passionate ones, with their hearts very much deluded, not take delight in the immodest, impure bodies of women, produced from flesh, semen, feces and urine, imagining them (to have) charm? The wise ones of pure minds have declared the contact of women to be fearful. Till they do not approach me, I will go home?'

54-67. Till the excellent maidens did not come (i.e. before they came) near him, the brāhmaṇa disappeared by means of his prowess due to Viṣṇu. Seeing that amazing act of the intelligent son of a sage, who had disappeared due to his magical power, the maidens with their eyes frightened, and afraid like female deer, and with their eyes confused and vacant, looked into the ten directions. To one another they said: "He clearly knows magic, or knows māyā, (since) though seen, he again disappe-

ared." Just then their hearts were pervaded with the fire of separation, like a very glossy, dense forest with blazing wild fire. 'O dear, giving up your practice of magic, quickly present yourself, united with our minds, and like a fly (falling) into a morsel before (it is put into the mouth), to us. Alas! why did the Creator show you to us? Why did he fashion you? Oh! we have understood it: You have been created to give (us) great torment. Is your heart cruel? Have you no mind (i.e. interest) in us? O dear, are you cunning? Are you stealing our mind? Do you have no faith in us? Are you testing us? Are you given to the art of joking? Are you proficient in trickery? Do you know the skill to enter into (other's) hearts? And do you not again know to get out of it? Are you angry with us without (our) fault? Do you know the affliction caused to others due to deception? O lord of (our) hearts, we won't now live without seeing you. And if we live, it is through the hope of seeing you again. Take us there where you have quickly gone. The Creator, depriving us of your sight has cut (our desire) just when it was a sprout. By all means appear (before us). By all means resort to pity. Good men do not at all see (i.e. do not go to) the extreme.'

68-70. Having wailed like this, and having waited for him for a long time, they quickly started moving towards home through the fear of their fathers. Bound by the chains of his love, very much afflicted due to separation from him, they somehow mustered courage and came home. All they came (home) and dropped (themselves) near fountains. They were asked by (their) mothers: "What is this? Why were you late?"

The maidens said:

71-80. As we were gladly sporting and singing with the kinnara-maidens at the lake, we were not conscious of (the particular time of) the day etc. O mothers, we were tired on the path, therefore, there is torment in our bodies. Due to great insensibility we are not able to speak.

Speaking like this the maidens rolled there on the jewelled floor. The perplexed ones concealing the expression of the face as giving a clue to their inward thoughts spoke with their mothers. Some one did not make the pet peacock dance with joy. Some other did not

teach the parrot in the cage through curiosity. Another one would not fondle the mongoose, or did not delight the sārikā. Another one, very much perplexed, did not play with cranes. They did not resort to amusements; they were not delighted at home. They did not much talk to their kinsmen. They did not play on the lute. They did not drink the juice of the flowers of desire-yielding trees, which was tasty like nectar, which was sweet, and fragrant with mandāra flowers. The maidens with their eyes fixed on the tips of their noses, remained like female devotees continuously concentrating on the Unknown and having Viṣṇu in their minds. For a moment they remained at the window, covered with the moon-stones and oozing drops of water, and at (another) moment they remained at the fountain. For a moment they arranged their beds with the petals of lotuses from the lakes. They were fanned by their friends with cold leaves of plantain trees.

81-91. Thus those excellent maidens thought one night to be equal to a yuga. Somehow they showed courage, (but) they were afflicted as if suffering from fever. Seeing the sun in the sky they thought of their life. Each one informing her own mother, they went to worship Pārvatī. Having bathed according to the rite, and having worshipped (Pārvatī) with flowers and incense as was proper, they remained there singing. In the meanwhile that brāhmaṇa also came from his hermitage to the Acchoda lake to bathe. The maidens seeing the celibate had their eyes bloomed, as the lotus plants (have the lotuses bloomed) on seeing the sun at night's end. Just then the maidens went near the celibate and bound him with the bonds of their left and right hands. "O cunning one, yesterday you had gone (i.e. you could go). You cannot go today. We have surrounded you. About this you should have no doubt." Thus addressed, the brāhmaṇa who was (caught) in the noose of their arms, laughed and said: "You are talking good, favourable, sweet words. But the vow of me staying in the first stage of life and devoted to Vedic studies in my preceptor's house, has not been completed. The wise should stick to the practice which (is prescribed) for a particular stage of life. Therefore, O maidens, I do not think that marriage would be a (proper) way (for me)." Hearing his

words, they, with a sweet but indistinct voice, like the cuckoos in spring, and with curiosity, spoke to him (these) words:

92-106: "The wise ones say that the sacred rule is fixed like this: Worldly prosperity (*Artha*) is born of righteousness (*Dharma*). From *Artha* springs *Kāma*. And the fruits of righteousness (*Dharma*) spring from sensual enjoyments (*Kāma*): That sensual enjoyment has stood before you due to the abundance of your righteousness. Enjoy it through various pleasures. This will then be heaven (only)." Hearing these words of them he spoke in a serious voice. "Your words are true; but having finished my vow in this (stage of life) and having obtained (my) preceptor's consent, I shall go through the complete rite of marriage. Not otherwise." They thus addressed, again said, "O handsome one, you are certainly ignorant. Excellent women are a divine medicine, are Brahmā's elixir, accomplishment of a treasure, excellent arts. They are a hymn, they (produce) a liking for success, and when they have approached, an intelligent man should not keep them off according to law. If an act is succeeding through (good) luck, the virtuous one does not ignore it. Since ignoring it is not fruitful, so, procrastination also is not recommended. (Only) fortunate men, and not others obtain maidens who have intense love, who are spotless due to being born in a (noble) family, whose hearts are soft with affection, who speak sweetly, who choose their grooms, who are beautiful, and whose youth is charming. What a great disparity there is between us—beautiful maidens—and this chap? I think the Creator is very clever in doing a difficult job. Therefore, do an auspicious thing now by accepting us in the gāndharva form of marriage. Otherwise we will not live." Hearing these words, the brāhmaṇa who knew well the customary observance said: "O you deer-eyed ones, how should men whose wealth is religious merit, abandon the customary observances? Righteousness, worldly prosperity, sensual enjoyment and salvation—these four (when practised) in (due) order are said to give (their) fruit. Opposite of this is fruitless. Therefore, I who have taken up a vow, would not marry at a wrong time. He who does not know the time of an act (i.e. the time when the act should be done) does not obtain its fruit. Since, O maidens, my mind is attached to religious thought, therefore, listen—I do not long after a self-choice

marriage." Having thus known his intention, and looking at one another, they left one another's hands, (and) Pramodinī seized his feet. Suśīlā and Susvarā seized his arms; Sutārā embraced him, and Candrikā kissed his face.

107-117. Yet the celibate remained uninterested; and resembling the fire at the time of the final deluge, and filled with great anger, he cursed them. "You clung to me like female imps. Therefore, you will be (i.e. turn into) female imps." Thus, they, quickly cursed by him, left him and stood (as) before. "O sinful one, what have you done this to innocent persons? Fie upon your righteousness, since you did an undesirable act when a desirable act should have been done. We have heard that the happiness of the man who bears malice against adorers that are attached and his friends, perishes in both worlds. Therefore, by our curse you too quickly become an imp." Speaking like this, those maidens, heaving sighs, smit with hunger, ceased (speaking). Then due to the anger towards one another all the maidens and that celibate became imps in that lake, O king. The female imps and the male imp, waiting ruthlessly, put an end to the fruit of the acts they had obtained formerly. O king, auspicious or inauspicious acts done before do give their fruit unavoidably even to gods, like one's (unavoidable) shadow. Their fathers and mothers, so also his (father and mother) wept there, (saying): "The children have not erred; destiny is difficult to be overcome." After that (i.e. since then), the imps, greatly pained in securing food, and running here and there, lived on the bank of the lake. When many days passed like this, Lomaśa, the best sage, came to the Acchoda lake to bathe on the fourteenth of Pauṣa.

118-128. Seeing that brāhmaṇa (i.e. Lomaśa), all the imps coming together and (thus) being in a group, and overcome with hunger, and desiring to kill him, ran (to him). Being burnt by his very bright lustre, they were unable to stand before him; and all of them remained away (from him). Just then there came the brāhmaṇa Vedanidhi. Having seen Lomaśa, O king, he saluted him touching the ground with the eight limbs of his body. Having put his folded palms on his head he spoke true and pleasant words: "O brāhmaṇa, (one) would have the company of the good, when there is (a possibility of) the dawn of good

fortune. Between the two, viz. a man who always bathes in holy places like Gaṅgā and who always keeps the company of the good the company of the good is better. O brāhmaṇa, the company of the venerable gives unseen and seen fruit on the earth. It gives (i.e. leads to) heaven; it removes diseases; but is said to be troublesome." Speaking like this, he told him the former, wonderful account. "These are gandharva-maidens. This chap is my son. O best sage, all deluded by cursing one another, stand in the form of imps with melancholy faces in front of you. By seeing you the children will be freed; does not the mass of darkness hide in a cave on sunrise?" O king, Lomaśa of great lustre, having heard it, had his mind moistened with pity and spoke to the sage, grieved for his son: "Due to my grace may the children's memory be revived at once. I am talking (words full of) virtue. The mutual curse would end."

Vedanidhi said:

129. O great sage, describe the virtuous practice due to which the children will be free. This is not time for delay, since the fire of the curse is fearful.

Lomaśa said:

130-145. Let them duly have Māgha bath with me. At the end of Māgha they will be free from the curse. Otherwise there would be no atonement. O brāhmaṇa, the fruit of the curse is sinful. The destruction of men's sin would take place by Māgha bath at a holy place. Thus I certainly think. Māgha bath, especially at a holy place, would burn all the sin committed during the seven previous existences and the present sin also. Even that sin for which the best sages do not see an expiation, would perish by the Māgha (bath) at holy places. Māgha (bath) at Mānasa produces knowledge. Due to that it gives salvation. It destroys all sins at the holy places on the Himālaya. The teachers of the Vedas have mentioned (Māgha bath) as giving (i.e. taking one to) Indra's heaven. Māgha (bath) at Badarī-vana destroys all sins and gives salvation. (At a holy place on the bank) of Narmadā Māgha (bath) destroys sins and misery, fulfils all desires, gives (i.e. takes one) to Rudra's heaven and destroys sins. A Māgha bath in Yamunā would lead to the

Sun's world and destroy sins. One in Sarasvatī destroys sins and gives the fruit in the form of Brahmā's world. O best brāhmaṇa, the Māgha (bath) in the Viśālā (river) gives a large fruit. It is a wild fire to the fuel of sins, (and) destroys the effect of the cause of being conceived. A Māgha bath in Gaṅgā is said to lead to Viṣṇu's world and to salvation. Rivers like Śarayū, Gaṇḍakī, Sindhu, Candrabhāgā, Kauśikī, Tāpī, Godāvarī, Bhīmā, Payoṣṇī, Kṛṣṇaveṇikā, Kāverī, Tuṅgabhadrā and other rivers are there. A man bathing in any of them in Māgha quickly goes to heaven, after being free from sins. Māgha bath in Naimiṣa gives absorption into Viṣṇu, (and one) at Puṣkara takes a man near Brahmā. Due to (a bath) in Māgha at Kurukṣetra a man goes to Indra's world. A Māgha bath at Devahrada gives the fruit in the form of the divine powers obtained through abstract meditation. A man would be an attendant of Rudra by bathing at Prabhāsa when the Sun is in Capricorn. A man gets a divine body by bathing at Devakī in Māgha. O brāhmaṇa, by a bath in Gomatī, at Hemakūṭa, Mahākāla, Oṁkāra, Amareśvara there is no rebirth (for a man). A man is honoured in Rudra's heaven due to a bath in Māgha at Nīlakaṇṭha and at the confluence of all rivers when the Sun is in Capricorn.

146-155. By means of (such) a bath all the desires of human beings are fulfilled. O best brāhmaṇa, only the fortunate get an opportunity to bathe in Māgha at Prayāga, since the white and black water there gives freedom from rebirth. Gods dwelling in heaven always sing: 'We shall have a bath in Māgha at Prayāga, by having a bath at which place, men to do not see (i.e. experience) the pangs of (being conceived in) a womb and remain near Viṣṇu.' Those men, clothed in (i.e. full of) many sins, who bathe on a new-moon day at the holy place of Prayāga, are meritorious, do not go to hell, but gladly move like gods in an auspicious heaven. Formerly the Creator weighed the bath in Māgha at Prayāga with holy places, religious vows, gifts, austerities, and Māgha proved to be greater and therefore superior. That (highest) position which men get by bathing in Māgha, is not obtained by means of parching up their bodies through eating (i.e. subsisting on) air, water, or leaves, or through severe austerities collected over a long period, or by means of abstract

meditations. Does not a row of bees, struck by (the flappings of) the ears of elephants, adorn the doors of the houses of those who have bathed at the holy place of Prayāga at the confluence of the divine rivers (i.e. Gaṅgā with Yamunā) when the Sun rises (after entering) Capricorn? How is that Prayāga which after having easily destroyed the sins, gives greater fruit after a bath there, than the Rājasūya sacrifice or the horse-sacrifice, not resorted to by (men)? In the country of Avantī formerly there was a king (named) Vīrasena. Having come to the bank of Narmadā he performed a Rājasūya sacrifice. He duly performed sixteen horse-sacrifices adorned with golden courts, and rich in golden ornaments and tying posts. He gave heaps of grains resembling mountains to brāhmaṇas. He was liberal, a devotee of deities, a giver of cows and of gold.

156-167. There was a foolish brāhmaṇa of a mean family named Bhadraka. He was a farmer of wicked acts, and was excluded from all religious rites. He was fed up with agriculture; and his brothers had not performed any purificatory rites for him. Wandering here and there, he, being oppressed by hunger, went out (of the city). Luckily he got into (i.e. joined) a caravan, and came to Prayāga. He bathed there for three days in Māgha. Once both the king and the brāhmaṇa died. I saw that their condition was similar in the proximity of Indra. They had similar power of the form of lustre, similar group of ladies (attending upon them), similar divine vehicles, similar ornaments, a garland of pārijāta flowers, similar dance, and similar music. Such is the greatness of the holy place. How can it be described? The Māgha bath at Prayāga is said to be equal to (many) Rājasūya sacrifices, O brāhmaṇa. A man bathing in Māgha at (Prayāga), at the confluence of (Gaṅgā and Yamunā having) white and dark green water, is not reborn, (but) the performer of Rājasūyas would be reborn. Even the breezes in Māgha would touch the white and dark green water. They would not touch inauspicious things, for they indeed destroy great sins. O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of talking much in this case? O brāhmaṇa, listen for certain. Māgha would destroy the sin, the fruit of which has sprung up. In this (context) I shall tell you. Listen attentively. (Let the young celestial damsels listen to the ancient account of the liberation of the imps. Let your son also

listen to it. The imps, desiring salvation have obtained recollection through my grace.) Formerly, the brāhmaṇa Devadyuti, a devotee of Viṣṇu and master of the Vedas, with his mind flooded with kindness, liberated the imps.

Dilipa said:

168-169. Where did he stay? Whose son was he? What was his vow? What prayers did he mutter? Due to what did he become a devotee of Viṣṇu? Which imps were liberated? O great sage, tell all this in detail; due to your grace we are hearing an interesting and very auspicious (account).

Vasiṣṭha said:

170-185. On the auspicious bank of Sarasvatī there is a holy pool called Plakṣa. His hermitage resorted to (i.e. was by) a charming mountain. (O king, the hermitage was beautiful due to) groves of good trees like śāla, tāla, tamāla, bilva, bakula, pāṭala, tintidī, ciri, bilva, mango, campaka, karañja, kovidāra, kesara eaten by elephants, tilaka, karṇikāra, kumbha, khadira, tinduka, vānīra, sālva, jambīra, pīlu, udumbara, reeds, śakota, atarupa, kārahāta and fig trees, ghoṇṭa, kūṭaja, palāśa, aśoka (trees) that removed sorrow, jambu, nimba, kadamba, kṣīrika, karamardaka, and bījapūra, nāriṅga, and adorned with rows of plantain trees, so also jack-fruit trees, and coconut trees always having tasty fruits; saptacchada, tripatra, śirīṣa, and auspicious āmalaka (trees), karkandhu, lakuca, akṣa, pāribhadra and others: ketaka, sinduvara, tagara, kunda, mallikā, white, red, blue lotus (creepers), (creepers of) mālatī and yūthikā (jasmine) mālati, mogara, jāti fruit, punnāga, kiṁśuka, barvari and tulasī-trees. O king, the hermitage was always charming due to trees of various kinds. Through the forest flows the river Sarasvatī of auspicious water. Cranes always warble there softly, sweatly and indistinctly due to ardent passion. Cuckoos coo there, and bees hum (there). O king, the forest is very noisy due to parrots and sārikās. Many wild beasts move in that best forest. The forest always has fruits and flowers, and has a dusty colour due to pollen, and is covered all round with aśoka trees. The charming forest is embraced on all sides by creepers with new foliage and sprouts that have

sprung up like a lover by his beloveds. Wind afraid of his curse blows on all sides. Clouds do not shower hail stones; the Sun does not dry up (the water). That forest is free from harm; it is inhabited by siddhas and non-siddhas; it always gave delight like the forest Caitraratha.

186-203. In that (forest) lived the pious, best brāhmaṇa, Devadyuti. The brāhmaṇa's son was Sumitra, obtained through the boon of Lakṣmī's husband. Listen to the vow of him who was always controlled. In summer he observed the vow called Pañca (-agni), and fixed his eyes on the Sun. He remained in the open space in the rainy season when the row of clouds showered; and when there was stormy wind blowing, he remained steady like the Himālaya (mountain). O brāhmaṇa, in winter he lived in a pool of Sarasvatī—in water; and during the season he sipped the pure water thrice a day. He everyday gratified his dead ancestors, deities and sages with faith. He always taught the Vedas, spoke the truth, and had curbed his senses. Resting on the (bare) ground, he, appealing to Viṣṇu, meditated on him. He offered oblations to fire with sylvan articles, and honoured guests with reverence. He always spent his time by practising Cāndrāyaṇa vow. He desired to subsist on leaves and fruits fallen on their own. He was not dejected; he was devoted to penance; he had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He was frightful due to his veins (very much strained), and his body had just bones (left in it). In this way he passed a thousand years in the forest. Then the mountain was blazing due to the lustre of his penance. The beings could not bear the lustre of the noble one. O brāhmaṇa, blazing with penance he shone like fire. In that forest beings were free from enmity. Deer, tigers, mice and cats, free from fear, played with one another. Listen also to another vow of him difficult to be secured. Everyday he worshipped Viṣṇu three times with a thousand fragrant flowers that had bloomed. He was very much engrossed in meditating upon Viṣṇu according to the Vedic hymns. The brāhmaṇa performed every act to please Viṣṇu. Due to a boon given to him by Dadhīci he became an excellent devotee of Viṣṇu. Once on the Ekādaśī in the month of Vaiśākha the great sage after worshipping Viṣṇu offered a charming and lovely (hymn of) praise to him. Then only Viṣṇu mounted

the bird (i.e. Garuḍa), and being very much pleased by the praise, himself came before him. Seeing him mounted on Garuḍa, with the colour of his skin like the cloud, having four arms, large eyes, decorated with all ornaments, actually standing before him, the brāhmaṇa, with horripilation appearing (on his body) and with tears of joy, with his mind satisfied, (saluted him) with his head going down to (i.e. touching) the ground.

204-216. Due to that joy he could not contain himself even in the interior of the universe. He did not remember (i.e. was not conscious of) his body. He felt, as it were, he was one with Brahman. Then Viṣṇu affectionately spoke to the sage, Viṣṇu's devotee: "O Devadyuti, I know you are my devotee. You have sought my shelter. You have given up all acts. You are devoted to me. You always have me in your mind. I am pleased with this praise. Ask for a boon." Hearing these words of Viṣṇu, the ascetic replied: "O god of gods, O you lotus-eyed one, O you who have taken up a body through your divine power, there is no more difficult boon than (being able) to see you. All gods like Brahmā, and meditating saints like Sanaka, so also siddhas like Kapila, desire to see you in person. All bonds like ego, sense of mineness, so also delusion and greed—auspicious and inauspicious, entertained with a purpose, are burnt on seeing you, the highest one. I have obtained the fruit of my existence and deeds, and the fruit of my intellect has become manifest in that, O you lord of the world, you are seen by me. What other than this should I ask for? O lord of gods, I do not have your lotus-like feet in my heart for (securing) a boon. With my mind gone (i.e. devoted) to you, I always think of you with devotion. I ask for this boon only that my devotion to you should be steady. Let it be so, O lord of Lakṣmī. I do not ask for any other boon." Hearing these words of him, Viṣṇu, with his face bright, and with his mind pleased replied: "Let it be so, O best brāhmaṇa. The other (boon is): There will be no impediment to your austerities. Those men who will recite this hymn composed by you will have a firm devotion to me. Whatever religious act they (perform) will be complete. They will have a great unswerving faith in knowledge."

217. Speaking like this, Viṣṇu, the god of gods, vanished there only. Since then Devadyuti became extremely devoted to Viṣṇu.

Dilīpa said:

218-221. O great sage, I am favoured by you. I am purified by this account like Gaṅgā in company with Viṣṇu. Tell me that hymn of (i.e. composed by) the sinless brāhmaṇa, with which Viṣṇu was pleased. I have a great curiosity (to know it). O brāhmaṇa, I think, by your favour I have obtained my desired object. To whose greatness does the company of the great not lead? Favour me and tell me the excellent hymn of Viṣṇu, due to which the lord was pleased and obliged him by his appearance.

Vasiṣṭha said:

222-261. I shall tell you the secret, excellent hymn that is muttered. It was formerly received by Garuḍa and from him it came to me. It contains the essence of metaphysics; it causes great prosperity; is auspicious. It removes all sins, and is the great cause of the knowledge about the self, O king. (The hymn is as follows:) "Oṁ, obeisance to Vāsudeva; salutation to Viśva, to Cakrin (i.e. the Disc-holder), to Kṛṣṇa to whom his devotees are dear, to Jagannātha and to Śārṅgin. One who praises, the one that is praised, the praise—when all this is Viṣṇu himself, by whom is he praised? The devotion of men pleases (him). Which praise would delight that god whose breath are the Vedas with the Vedāṅgas and the Sūtras? Due to my devotion I have become talkative. All the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile, revolve like a wheel. Therefore, O god having a disc in your hand and best weapons, are sung (your praises). (When) actually the Veda cannot describe him, or speech or mind does not know him, then how can one like me praise him, or would be his devotee? You are the first Brahman; you are Brahmā-Viṣṇu. You are the refuge of all. You are the Creator, the cause of Brahman. You yourself are pure Brahman. (O lord, which is this body of you that touches the one having a body after breaking it. Salutation to you who are not touched by blemishes of the body.) O Viṣṇu, there is no doubt that you are that thought—the mass of happiness—which keeps awake as god, and does not sleep in one's soul. The Great Principles like Mahat, so also the guṇas that give rise to modifications (of Prakṛti)—all that is you, O lord; diversity is a foolish idea.

Through the three concepts like Keśa, Keśava, you are conceived, O brahman, as a man by sons etc. The entire world having some form without faults and with particular qualities appears to the poets. That truth, that pure Viṣṇu, I praise. I salute that Brahman, knowing which, the friends of the world having no desire, perform acts prescribed by the scriptures. I praise that Viṣṇu who is just existence, free from destruction, whom the meditating saints resort to after awakening, and who exists in all beings. I praise that Viṣṇu, seeing whom equal to you the best brāhmaṇas sing (i.e. praise) 'I am Brahma', after knowing him. Salutation to him, of the nature of pure intelligence, who destroys the variety of delusions through his divine power, so also the ego and sense of mineness of men and heaps of sins. Salutation to him, of the nature of pure intelligence, by remembering whose name the heaps of men's sins instantly perish at the time of setting or not setting out, always getting into the shadow of whose lotus-like feet a man is not burnt in the worlds burning with the blazing flames of the fire of delusion. I salute that Ananta, by remembering whom there is no delusion, no misery, no diseases and griefs. The beings that sprang up from the intellect do not at all desire (any thing). People moving in one (way), knowing him see him as their soul. If the meaning of a word or of a sign has Viṣṇu as its objects, then due to that fact may not the worldly existence touch (me). If Viṣṇu, pervading the world, is highly honoured by the Vedas etc., then due to that fact may I have uninterrupted devotion to Viṣṇu. May that Viṣṇu who is not a seedless seed, who is caused by a seed, cut off with the sword of bright knowledge the seed of the worldly existence. May that Viṣṇu who becomes one having three bodies like an actor, due to the (three) constituents in acts like creation, maintenance and destruction, favour me. May that Viṣṇu who, merely for protecting righteousness, descended on the earth in ten ways, and who was requested by all gods, favour me. May that god Viṣṇu who, the pure one, lives all alone in the abode of the heart (of objects) beginning from Brahmā up to a clump of grass, favour me. In front of the gods, that god who was one and many entered the deities. May that Viṣṇu, the Creator, favour me. He is a bird in the sky in the form of the heart. He is like the sky. He is the origin of the

sky. He is beyond the sky. His acts are (infinite) like the sky. He goes to the sky. The sky is Brahmā. He enjoys the sky etc. In the end he is of the form of the sky. You enjoy the sacrifice. Due to your lustre, your joy, your illusion (Māyā) the world becomes united. You are of the form of lethargy, misery and truth also. The universe created by you delights. Forsaken by you, it would be impure. Though in contact with it, you are detached; and due to that you become changed. You are the consciousness born of combination of physical elements, whom the Cārvākas worship. The Saugatas (i.e. the Buddhists) call you a transitory idea with their logic. Those who look upon the Jina as their deity (i.e. the Jainas) look upon you as having the size of the body. The Sāṁkhyas meditate upon you, beyond the Prakṛti, as the Puruṣa. The Upaniṣads think between themselves that you alone are Brahman, free from birth etc., the ancient one, and having bliss as its characteristic. You are the (five) elements like the sky, the body, the mind, the intellect, the senses, knowledge and ignorance. There is nothing else but you. You are the Creator of all beings; you alone are my refuge. You are the fire, the oblation; you are Indra; you are the hotṛ priest; you are the hymn: you are the act and the fruit. O Viṣṇu, you are existence and non-existence; I have sought your refuge. You are the giver of the fruit of (one's) act. You are the fruit of the rite of the initiated. You are the cause of all the beings. You are my refuge. May my love take delight in you as that of the young women in the young men, and as of the young men in a young woman. The servants of Yama do not see even a sinner who has bowed to you, as the owl does not see the sun. The three torments trouble a man through masses of sins as long as he does not, with devotion, remember your lotus-like feet.

262-269. I offer obeisance to that revered Viṣṇu whom the qualities, birth, bodily characters, so also the movements of the sense do not touch; (but) whom, the sages free from the delusion of attachment, touch. Wailing like—he is gross as a means, a (gross) means in a cause, is their cause, is without means and cause, the sages enter him. Salutation to that Viṣṇu waited upon by sages. Salutation to that Viṣṇu who is waited upon by sages and who having embraced Lakṣmī in the form of happiness and salvation, that is having the charming quality like affluence, and

that is subjugated by his meditation, shampooing and shaking, sleeps here in self-pleasure. I bow to Viṣṇu in my heart, in whom of a detached nature due to the modification like being born etc., the group of the six waves (of passions) shakes, and whom the faults like Cupid (i.e. love) etc. do not torment. I salute that Viṣṇu whose pure company of his meditation removes ignorance, the world in having fallen into the fire of whose knowledge perishes, the bright sword of whose knowledge cuts off the enemy of doubt, and who is the mass of pure knowledge. Since all the mobile and immobile beings are under the control of Viṣṇu, may he due to this fact remain before me. Since Viṣṇu is the entire immobile and mobile world, may he, due to this fact, manifest his form to me. If I have the same best devotion for my preceptor as for Viṣṇu, may he, due to this fact, manifest himself (to me).

270-293. Thus thinking about (my) devotion for him, due to true oaths, Viṣṇu who was pleased, showed himself to me." Then having given him a boon, and having fulfilled his desire, Lakṣmī's lord (i.e. Viṣṇu), pleased by the brāhmaṇa with the hymn, left. The brāhmaṇa also being satisfied and highly devoted to Viṣṇu, and muttering the hymn remained in the penance grove with his disciples. A man who narrates this hymn or he who listens to it, obtains the abundant fruit of a horse-sacrifice. A brāhmaṇa always gets awakening due to his knowledge. He has no mind for (committing) a sin; he does not see anything inauspicious. By narrating this hymn all men have peace of intellect, tranquility of mind, and peace of senses also. A man who, after having pondered over the meaning, devoutly mutters this hymn, shakes off his sins in this world and gets Viṣṇu's position. He who always recites it, gets his desired objects, so also sons, grandsons, beasts, long life, strength, power. He who narrates this hymn gets that fruit which is obtained by giving a thousand pots full of sesamum, or a thousand cows. A man soon obtains, by means of this hymn, whatever he desires from among righteousness, worldly prosperity, sensual enjoyment and salvation. Men who hear this hymn have always a mind for (good) conduct, modesty, piety, knowledge, penance and morality. By reciting it (just) once a man having (committed) major or minor sins, has his mind purified instantly. It increa-

ses intellect, wealth, glory, fame, knowledge, righteousness. It pacifies evil Planets; it destroys all that is inauspicious. Brāhmaṇas should recite this hymn removing all diseases, wholesome, destroying all dangers, helping to cross misery. It should at once be recited at the time of trouble from Planets and Stars, and fear from the king and thieves, calamities from fire and thieves. (Due to the recital of this) there is no fear from lions, tigers, so also from magic, spirits, imps and so also from demons. When this hymn is recited men have no fear at all from demonesses, big miseries, and dangers. He who worshipping Viṣṇu would recite this hymn, is not contaminated by sins like a lotus-leaf by water. A man gets the same position by reciting this auspicious hymn as is obtained by baths at holy places like Gaṅgā etc. He, who recites it once, twice or thrice a day, always and in all seasons obtains inexhaustible happiness. A man reciting this hymn (just) once obtains the same fruit as is obtained by reciting thrice even the four Vedas. He who remembers Viṣṇu with devotion, obtains inexhaustible wealth, becomes dear to women and is honoured in the world. He who daily recites this hymn, is always endowed with wealth, never meets with a calamity, and is not deprived of cows. Poverty, misfortune, bad dreams, bad thoughts of the devotees who listen to this hymn, at once perish.

294-297. He who, getting up in the morning, and being pure and greatly devoted to Viṣṇu, recites this, obtains inexhaustible happiness in this and the next world. This hymn called *Yogasāra* is accompanied by divine lustre, gives delight to Viṣṇu, is auspicious, produces Viṣṇu's favour, and gives his direct vision. It is highly purifying. He who always recites it goes to the heaven of Viṣṇu. Thus I have told you the secret hymn, destroying sins. Hereafter I shall tell you about the release of the imps.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYNINE

The Deliverance of the Five Gandharva Maidens and Vedanidhi's Son from Imphood

Vasiṣṭha said:

1-9. Hear as to how many imps were liberated by him in the forest. Formerly in the Drāviḍa country there was a king named Citra. (He was born) in the Soma family, was a great hero, brave and had mastered the science of weapons and missiles. He, the brave one, was always possessed of streams of elephants, horses and chariots. His treasury was full of gold and many kinds of gems. He was very rich. He, with fondness, always sported in the midst of a thousand women. Being excessively fond of women, passionate, always greedy, quick-tempered, the king did not do (i.e. obey) the pious words uttered by his ministers. He very much censured Viṣṇu, and always hated Viṣṇu's devotees: (He said:) "Who is that Viṣṇu? Where is he seen? Where does he stay? Who tells about him?" In this way, the king, deluded by destiny did not put up with Viṣṇu. He, being angry, troubled those who worshipped Viṣṇu. Remaining in the condition of the heretics he did not honour brāhmaṇas, the Vedas, Vedic rites or a vow, and did not think of giving a gift. He harassed his subjects by inflicting severe punishment immorally. He was cruel, pitiless, wicked, and averse to auspicious acts. He was fallen from (good) conduct; he hated Viṣṇu; he had fallen from (maintaining sacred) fire and from (religious) acts. The king, as it were, of the form of another Yama, ruled over his subjects.

10-14. Then after a long time the king died. But he did not receive obsequies as enjoined in the Vedic texts. The king, then, being very much troubled by the hosts of (Yama's) servants, went to Yama's world along the path full of iron nails, covered with heated sand, heated by the rays of the hot sun, having no shadow of a tree, spread over with burning charcoals, and full of flames of fire, (and was) being struck by very ferocious serpents with iron-faces and being eaten (i.e. gnawed) by wolves with fierce fangs and fierce dogs while hearing the wailing of other men who had committed sins.

15-32. O king, hear about his unbearable condition in that world. The king went in succession from one hell to another. First he went to the (hell called) Tāmisra, fearful and giving great agony. Then (he went to) Andhatāmisra, where there was constant misery. Then he went to the very fierce Mahāraurava, then to Kālasūtra, Mahānaraka. Then the king, insensible due to grief, sank into Sañjīvana, Mahāvīci, Tapana, Sampratāpana, difficult to cross. (Then) the king, with his mind burnt by pain, went to Sampāta, Kākola, Kuḍmala, Pūtimṛttika, Lohaśa, Mṛgīyantra, and Panthāna, and to the river Śālmali. Then he entered a hell, very fierce, difficult to see, and inaccessible. (Then to) Asipatravana, Lohacāraka. In this way the sinful king, having fallen into all these (hells), met with terrible torment full of pangs. Then the king, due to his proclamation of great hatred of Viṣṇu, having experienced the torment inflicted by Yama for twentyone yugas, crossed the hells, and after (proper) time, he became a great evil spirit. Being hungry, he wanders in all directions in this forest. Even on the Meru mountain he does not come across food or water. The evil spirit oppressed by grief, while wandering, entered Plakṣaprasravaṇa forest (as a result) of the future good fruit. Extremely grieved he resorted to the shade of a bibhītaka tree. He loudly and fiercely cried again and again: "Oh! I am lost. How will this unhappy existence of me who am being carried by hunger and thirst, who have sought to hurt all beings, come to an end? Who will today first give a hand to me who am plunged into this ocean of sins, having a series of billows of miseries?" Devadyuti who was studying, heard this piteous wailing of the goblin of a helpless mind. Having then come there, he saw the imp, of a fierce face, fearful, of tawny eyes and weak, with his hair raised up, of a dark body, and as it were another messenger of Yama, with his tongue lolling, with long (i.e. protruded) lips, with long shanks, and full of veins, having long toes, with his mouth parched up, with his eyes like cavities, and with his skeleton (i.e. body) dry. Then the best sage, full of curiosity, asked him:

Devadyuti said:

33-35. Who are you of a fierce form? Why do you weep fiercely? Due to what are you reduced to this condition? Tell me

what can I do for you? Beings who have entered my hermitage never experience grief. All just rejoice as in the abode of Viṣṇu. O good man, quickly tell me the cause of this misery. The wise do not delay when the (desired) object has come (near).

Vasiṣṭha said:

36. Hearing these words, the evil spirit giving up (i.e. ceasing) weaping, bowing with politeness, spoke in a melancholy voice:

The evil spirit said:

37-46. Your words have removed the torment covering my entire body, as the showering cloud removes (the heat) due to a wild fire on a mountain. O brāhmaṇa, you are seen by me due to the religious merit that I have. Those who have not collected merit, do not meet the good.

Speaking like this, he told him his former account. "I have been reduced to this condition due to great hatred for Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, I entertained the most sinful hatred for that Viṣṇu, remembering whose name a dead person would go to his position. I hated him who protects the beings, who maintains piety in the three worlds, and who is the innermost soul of beings. He who gives here the fruits of acts, who is sung (i.e. praised) in all Vedas, who is worshipped with penance, was hated by me. O brāhmaṇa, that Viṣṇu who is fit to be meditated upon in the Upaniṣads by ascetics who have given up (ordinary) acts, to whom forests are dear, and who move all alone without company, was hated by me. That Viṣṇu, whom all gods like Brahmā, (all) meditating saints like Sanaka worship for salvation, was hated by me. The ancient supporter of the universe in the beginning, middle and end, who has no beginning, middle or end, was hated by me. All those good acts done by me in my former existence, were burnt by my hatred for Viṣṇu, and were reduced to ash.

47-51. If somehow I see the limit (i.e. the end) of this sin, I shall not worship any other deity except Viṣṇu Having, due to my hatred of Viṣṇu, experienced for a long time the torment (inflicted) by Yama, I have come out of the hell, and have come to (i.e. am born in) the stock of an evil spirit. Now due to which active charms am I brought to your hermitage where due to

the sun of your sight the darkness in the form of (my) misery has perished? A man is taken by his own compulsive act to that place where he obtains death, bondage, happiness, wealth or a bride. Now tell me the proper act destroying my imphood. The blessed ones do not move slowly in the act of obliging others."

Devadyuti said:

52-60. Oh, this Māyā steals the memory of gods, demons and men. Due to it a hatred, destroying piety, is produced even among gods. Which fool hates, and in what way, the great lord, the creator, protector and destroyer of the worlds, and the soul of all beings? Which man, averse to devotion for him, due to offering whom all acts are fruitful, would not meet with misery? All the four castes, always worshipping Nārāyaṇa, should practise the acts laid down by holy texts, codes of laws and practices of the good. Otherwise, without resorting to the holy texts men go to hell. Therefore, a man should abandon a deed laid down in religious texts which is opposed to the import of the Vedas. Those, deceiving childish people in this world by means of self-composed religious texts, mar the path to bliss, thus harming the world. They censure Viṣṇu, the Vedas, austerities, good brāhmaṇas; therefore, due to their following wrong religious texts, they go to hell, as this very king of the Draviḍa country, hating god Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, and the master of the world, went to hell. Therefore, one desiring religious merit, should give up hatred for especially deities and brāhmaṇas, and should abandon an act outside (i.e. not enjoined by) the Vedas.

61-71. Speaking like this, the sage told the goblin (what was) good (for him): "O good one, go to Prayāga. Think of the month of Māgha. There you will undoubtedly be free from (this) imphood. This is (what) the ancient holy text (says): 'Those bathing there go to heaven.' A man casts off there (the fruit of) his former bad acts. There is nowhere any greater expiation in the form of penance, in the form of gifts, in the form of rites than a bath at Prayāga. Know that there is no sacrifice or abstract meditation superior (to that). It is a gate to heaven and salvation that is (kept) open on the earth. There is no other axe barring Prayāga having white and

black water (of Gaṅgā and Yamunā) on the earth, which cuts off (the fetters of him) who is bound by the fetters of sin. What a great disparity there is between the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, Viṣṇu, Sun's lustre and fire, and the poor, despicable, oblation of the grass (i.e. hay) in the form of a heap of sins of men! A man who has bathed at the confluence shines, after his sin is destroyed, like the moon in the autumn, after the mass of impurity is destroyed. I am not able to tell you the importance of Prayāga, by touching a drop of which a brāhmaṇa from Kerala got released." Hearing these words of the sage, the evil spirit was delighted at heart. Free from grief, he affectionately asked the sage: "O great sage, how was the inhabitant of the Kerala country released? Being kind to me, tell the account to me."

Devadyuti said:

72-77. O evil spirit, listen to the meritorious, auspicious tale from me who am telling it. In Kerala lived a brāhmaṇa named Vasu, a master of the Vedas. He was robbed of his wealth by his relatives; he was poor; he was abandoned by his kinsmen. Grieved due to great agony, he left his motherland. He, suffering slightly from a disease, moved from one country to another, and after a long time entered a great forest. While going to another holy place, he, being tired, and emaciated due to hunger, died due to scarcity of provisions on the Vindhya mountain and did not have (proper) funeral and obsequies. Due to that ripening of his acts he became a spirit in the cave of that mountain only and lived in the solitary forest for a long time. He was troubled by cold and heat, was without food and water, was naked, was bare-footed, and sighed and uttered (the words) 'Oh, Oh!'

78-96a. Wandering here and there that Keralite brāhmaṇa, turned into a spirit, obtained happpiness nowhere. Afflicted by grief he wailed and did not find a happy state. He experienced the fruit of his act of having never given a gift. All those who do not make offerings into fire, who do not worship Viṣṇu, who do not resort to knowledge of the self, who turn away from holy places, who do not give gold, garments, tāmbūla, gems, food, fruits, water to the distressed, are without any aim

(in life). All those who snatch away the wealth of a brāhmaṇa or another person, or of women, through force or fraud – all such rogues who deceive others, hypocrites, cheats, thieves, who subsist on fire, who are cruel to children, old persons, patients, women, and are without truthfulness, who set fire (to others' property), who administer poison, who stand as false witnesses, who practise illicit intercourse, who act as priest at vulgar sacrifices, who abandon their fathers, mothers, daughters-in-law, children, wives, who are miserly, greedy, atheists, and censurers of religious practices, who forsake their master, and abandon those who have surrendered to them in a battle, who snatch away cows and land, and who defile others' gems, who censure others, who are sinful, who reproach deities and preceptors (or elders), who are always engaged in accepting gifts at great holy places, who are engaged in deceiving others, so also those who harm beings, who accept bad gifts, are born again and again in the vile stocks of spirits, demons, imps, birds and beasts and trees. They do not get the slightest happiness in this world or in the next. Therefore, one should give up a prohibited act and perform one that is laid down (in sacred texts). One should resort to sacrifices, (giving) gifts, penance, holy places, hymns, deities, preceptors. Even all the four castes, having realised the effect of their acts in crores of stocks, difficult to cross, should constantly practise piety. The brāhmaṇa, having thus seen his condition as an evil spirit due to his sins, advised him about piety and again spoke to him. That evil spirit of the Keralite, thus living on the mountain, passed a long time, and saw a traveller on the path. He was carrying two bamboo-boxes (containing pitchers) with water, and was singing (the glory of) the chief god Viṣṇu of good fame. Seeing him the evil spirit suddenly obstructed his way. He presented himself (to him), and said: "Do not get frightened. O best pilgrim, I desire to drink water from you. If you do not give me water to drink, my life will certainly depart." Hearing these words of the evil spirit the traveller spoke through curiosity to him:

The pilgrim said:

96b-99. Who are you overcome with grief, emaciated, melancholy, naked, (remaining) with just your life left, about to

die, deformed, increasing (others') fear, having the form of a fresh smoke, fierce, of fickle eyes. You have not touched the ground with your feet. You are not having (much) flesh (in your) belly and arms.

Hearing these words of him, the evil spirit said (these) words:

The evil spirit said:

100-118. O most pious one, listen, I (shall) tell you the reason why I have become like this. I am a brāhmaṇa who never gave gifts, who am greedy, and whose acts are dirty. I always ate others' food. I ate all alone, and ate sweets. I did not give alms. I did not make any offering to guests. I did not perform the Vaiśvadeva (i.e. an offering to all gods); I never threw (i.e. kept) an oblation outside. I never quenched with water the thirst of beings that were oppressed with thirst. I, wandering over the earth, never gratified my dead ancestors. I never offered a śrāddha and did not at all worship deities. I never gave (anyone, an umbrella) a protection against rain or heat; nor any (sandals) to protect the feet. I never gave a water-vessel, or a tāmbūla, or a medicine (to anyone). I never offered a residence in my house (to anyone), nor did I show hospitality to anyone. I did not satisfy the blind, the old, the poor, the forlorn, the helpless with drink or food. I never gave a mouthful (of grass) to cows; I never gave relief to a patient. I never offered, or gave into fire (the oblation of) pure sesamum-seeds, O brāhmaṇa. On the earth, there are not givers of sesamum-seeds like me(?). At the time of a portentous calamity I did not give any gold having great fruit. I did not give (any gift) on a Saṁkrānti day and on the days of the solar or lunar eclipse. O brāhmaṇa, I passed the parvan days also void (of any gift). All the important days in Kārtika were always fruitless for me. On the Aṣṭakā[1] days or Maghā[2] days I did not offer anything to the dead ancestors. I did not bathe (at a holy place) in Māgha which gives (good) form, fortune and desired objects. When Jupiter enters Leo, I did not give anything to a brāhmaṇa learned in the Vedas on

1. Aṣṭakā—A group of three days (7th, 8th and 9th) beginning from the seventh day after the full moon.

2. Maghā—Name of the tenth lunar mansion containing five stars.

the bank of Gautamī, in my former existence. Similarly I did not bathe in Kṛṣṇaveṇī, when the Jupiter entered Virgo. I never controlled the cold of brāhmaṇas afflicted by cold, who had bathed after kindling fire with heaps of wood in Pauṣa and Māgha. I did not give cold water (to people) in months like Vaiśākha. I did not plant an aśvattha tree, nor did I rear a fig-tree. I never released beings from a prison. I never protected one who was afflicted through fear of (other) beings and who had sought my shelter. I have not gratified Viṣṇu by fasting for three nights. O brāhmaṇa, vows like Kṛcchra, Atikṛcchra, Pārāka, and so also Cāndrāyaṇa, another vow like Taptakṛcchra, so also Sāntapana vows—all these auspicious vows were observed by gods like Indra. I did not observe them and parch up my body formerly. O best brāhmaṇa, my former existence was fruitless in this way.

119-133. O brāhmaṇa, mark the very cruel and wonderful fruits, very difficult to understand, of my former acts, (which I am having) in this existence. On this mountain there are (pieces of) flesh (of animals) killed by wolves and tigers, so also of fruits abandoned everywhere by parrots. There are good, fragrant and juicy fruits, so also soft, and roots very fit to be eaten. There are honeys of very many kinds. Everywhere there is water of streams and springs. Even though all these things are easily available on the mountain, I do not find any food (as it is) destroyed by destiny. I subsist on air, as do the serpents. O brāhmaṇa, I am alive due to the prowess of the divine stock. (Even) with power, intellect, hymns, valour, brave acts, companions and friends, a man cannot obtain the unobtainable. In this world destiny alone is the cause of acquisition or non-acquisition, pleasure or pain, marriage, death, life, enjoyment, disease or separation. The ugly, those coming from bad families, fools, those of abhorred conduct, the censured ones, those that are without bravery or valour, enjoy kingdom due to (good) fortune. The squint-eyed ones, the lame, the unworthy, the immoral, the vicious, eunuchs, are seen to be enthroned due to (good) fortune. In front of those who have given sesamum-seeds, cows, gold and garments, af air girl (in marriage), who have given (a piece of) land, a bed, seats, tāmbūla, houses, wealth, eatables, food, sandal and agaru (sandal), stand enjoy-

ments in a forest, at the top of a mountain, in a village, or even in a city, with great care. On this mountain also stay more powerful demons, so also very fierce demons, goblins and female goblins. At some time, somehow, somewhere, they, wandering in the forest, get food and drink in every forest.

134-142. Having heard this you should not be afraid of them. They are not capable of even looking at you, a pure devotee of Viṣṇu. Demons, evil spirits and demonesses neither touch nor see him whose body is protected by devotion for Viṣṇu and who depends upon Viṣṇu. Ghosts, goblins, gandharvas, female attendants of Durgā, respectable Planets, Revatīs, Vṛddharevatīs, Mukhamaṇḍīs, so also (other) Planets, Yakṣas, young Planets, cruel, wicked, old Planets, so also Mātṛgrahas, fierce Planets, other Vināyakas also, Kṛtyās, serpents, Kūṣmāṇḍa, so also other wicked beings, do not look at a pure great brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu's devotee, O brāhmaṇa. Imps protect a pure and the most religious person, and do not trouble him. The Planets, Stars and deities always protect a pure person. On the tip of your tongue is Viṣṇu's name. In your heart remains the Veda. You are pure and devoted to giving gifts. You have fear from nowhere. O brāhmaṇa, thus I remain undergoing the fruits of my acts. Thinking and deliberating like this again and again, I do not wail. Similarly I am not pained as long as I remember the words of the crane, which I, when I was wandering, heard on the bank of the Jambālinī.

The brāhmaṇa said:

143. What kind of (i.e. which) words uttered by the crane did you hear? I desire to hear them. O evil spirit, tell them quickly.

The evil spirit said:

144-153. I shall tell you the words of the crane. O best pilgrim, listen to them. In the interior of this forest there is a river Dhūsarā by name, rising from a mountain. She is always violent due to fish, and full of intoxicated elephants, rich with the beauty of great arjuna trees, and charming with glossy jambū fruits. Roaming in the dense forest, I reached her bank. When I remained there with a desire to eat fruits, a crane,

along with a female crane, flew from another forest and came there to resort to the sand-bank with many birds. Having drunk water and sported just there with his mate, and putting the top of his head (i.e. his beak) into the cavity in his left wing, he slept. In the meanwhile was seen a monkey, getting down from the tree. His face was red. His eyes were very red. He was proud, and had strong rows of nails. He had (profuse) hair on his body, had a long tail, was quick in his movements. He speedily came there where the crane had slept. Coming (to the crane), he, with both his hands cruelly seized tightly the leg of the crane even as many birds were watching. All the birds, flew and flew and went elsewhere. The female crane remained (there) frightened and crying. The crane, with his sleep disturbed, with his eyes trembling due to fear, raised his neck quickly and saw (the monkey).

154-160. Seeing the wicked and very fierce monkey, desiring to kill him, the bird spoke to him in a sweet voice: "O monkey, why do you trouble me without any fault (of mine)? In the world, even the kings punish guilty persons. Good persons (i.e. beings) like you do not trouble harmless good birds averse to other (means of) subsistence, eating the moss in water, living in a forest, always bent upon sporting with their own mates, and avoiding others' mates. O best monkey, (beings) like you do not trouble birds free from censuring others and from wickedness, and the best servants. O monkey, quickly leave me who am fully innocent. I remember your (former) existence. But you do not know mine." Having heard these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the quick monkey left him and remaining away quickly said to him:

The monkey said:

161. Tell me how you know my former existence. You are a bird having no knowledge, and I am an animal moving in the forest.

The crane said:

162-172. I know your (former) existence (due to my) clearly remembering your condition in your former life. In the former life you were Parvateśvara, the king of the Vindhya region. I

was the most respected priest in your family. Therefore, O best monkey, I know (the former life of) you. While protecting this land, you, without discrimination, and collecting much wealth, harassed all (your) subjects. O monkey, you were first burnt by the flames of fire due to the torment inflicted on the subjects, and then were thrown into the very fierce Kumbhīpāka. Being repeatedly burnt and being born, you, uttering fierce words, and weeping again and again, and experiencing, with your hellish body, a terrible agony due to the fire in the Kumbhīpāka passed thirty years. After you again crossed (i.e. went out of) the hell, you have obtained this existence of the monkey due to the remaining sin, due to which you now desire to kill me. Formerly through your valour you took away bananas from the grove of a brāhmaṇa without being permitted by him. Note that the ripening of that act is giving its fruit. Therefore, due to it you are still a monkey, and are now living in the forest. The undergoing (of the fruit) of a good or bad act done previously plays among (i.e. is effective on) beings. Even gods cannot pass over it. Thus I know your (former) life properly and with its cause. Not being deluded by my knowledge, I too obtained this crane's body.

The evil spirit said:

173. O brāhmaṇa, hearing this account the monkey too said to the crane: "You know (everything) properly, (then) how were you born as a bird?"

The crane said:

174-187. I shall tell you about that act due to which I met with misery and due to which I went to (i.e. was born in) the stock of a bird. Please listen to all that. To give it to many brāhmaṇas on Carmadā at the time of a solar eclipse you had laid aside (stock of) grains measuring a hundred khāris. Through my arrogance of (being your) priest and through greed, I, deceiving the brāhmaṇas, gave them a little and all (the remaining) I look (for myself). Due to the sin springing from taking the wealth (to be given) in common to the brāhmaṇas, I fell into the Kālasūtra hell, full of mire of blood, which was quite full of moving insects, having a bad odour, foamy with pus; with my

face down and licking the pus, I was plunged into it up to my navel. Similarly from above my body was being constantly eaten up by great vultures and crows, and was being cut off by insects. In that mire of blood I became breathless; and even a short time there was as much as a kalpa for me. For three myriad years I experienced the agony. O monkey, I am not able to describe that misery (I had) in the hell. Priesthood is very fearful and naturally causes sin. In it the living of a brāhmaṇa is like that of a god. Acceptance of gifts from a king is fearful. Due to it brāhmaṇas were burnt. The priest would snatch away even their wealth. Due to that he becomes a hellish (being). The wise declare that the sin which a king first physically commits, is fixed on the priest. Luckily somehow I crossed the ocean of hell. Due to luck I first reached the stock of a bird. I got this condition (i.e. existence) of a crane, as, formerly, after taking a brass-metal pot from my sister, I gave it to a gambler. And this was a very fearful brāhmaṇī, who stole brass-metal. Due to that she has become my lawful wife, the female crane.

188-201. O monkey, I have thus told you the entire fruit of (my acts). Now listen to the past, the present and the future. I shall be (born as) a swan; and you will also be (born as) a swan. This my wife, the female crane, will be (born as) a female swan. We shall live happily in the Kāmarūpa country. After that we shall go to a female devotee, (who will be) good (to us) in future. Then we shall obtain existence as humans, difficult to get, where virtue and its opposite are secured by beings. Śiva, having thus deluded all beings with his Māyā, rejoices by giving pleasures and pains not only to us but to all beings. This is the way created variously in the world, which is full of virtue and vice and the nature of its fruit is pleasure and pain. It is always or repeatedly followed by all beings, gods, demons, human beings, tigers, worms, insects and aquatic animals. Without thinking about detached meditating saints who have mastered the Upaniṣads, no one has crossed this path having thorns of misery. Maheśvara, considering the place and time gives in this world the fruit of virtuous or vicious deed of the size of an atom or a big one. Very intelligent persons, knowing the Māyā of the lord, knowing what is to be done according to the sacred

laws, do not grieve, nor are they tormented, nor are they troubled. O monkey, the effect of the former deeds cannot be changed with means or intelligence even by gods. Formerly you were born as a king, then were born as a hellish being. Now being born as a monkey, you will get an existence like that (i.e. according to your former deeds). Thinking like this, O monkey, being free from grief, and enjoying in this forest, wait for your death. I, too, bound by the Māyā of the Lord, and mustering courage, will pass my existence as a crane in forest after forest.

The monkey said:

202-203. I honoured you before. Even now I praise you. You remember (our) former existence. (Now) I know everything about our former life. O crane, live with the female crane. May you always have well-being. I whose illusion has gone due to your words, will (now) always move.

The evil spirit said:

204-216. O brāhmaṇa, when, on the bank of the river I heard this charming, wonderful, highly purifying dialogue between the bird (i.e. the crane) and the monkey, I too was enlightened, and due to that my grief disappeared. Seeing the very wonderful greatness of the water of Gaṅgā, I, O best brāhmaṇa, now ask you for the water of Gaṅgā. I desire to be emancipated from this state of the evil spirit. I am oppressed with severe thirst. O brāhmaṇa, on this mountain only I saw a great wonder of the water of Gaṅgā. (Therefore,) I desire to drink that water. A brāhmaṇa, born on Pāriyātra, acted as priest at the village-sacrifices. Due to acting as a priest at the sacrifices of those who were incompetent to offer sacrifices, he was born as a brahmarākṣasa on Vindhya. Due to his desire for my company, he stayed there for eight years. O best brāhmaṇa, his good son collected his bones (after burning his corpse). Bringing them to the pure holy place of Kanakhala, he cast them into Gaṅgā. That moment only he became free from the very fierce demonhood. Thus, I actually saw the wonderful greatness of a bath in Gaṅgā. Therefore, I asked (you) for this water of Gaṅgā. Since, formerly I procured many possessions at the holy place, and did not counteract (the

effect of) them in the form of muttering (of hymns) etc., therefore, I, of the form of an evil spirit am not getting water and food easily. On this Vindhya mountain a thousand years have thus passed. Giving up great shame (i.e. being very shameless), I have told you everything. O most religious one, now quickly gratify my life being in the throat (i.e. about to depart), by giving me water. In this world life even in the condition of an evil spirit is difficult to be obtained by beings. By all means men should always protect their body. Even those suffering from leprosy etc. do not desire to abandon their bodies.

Devadyuti said:

217-227. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the pilgrim was much amazed, and feeling compassion for the evil spirit, thought: 'In the world the fruit of sin or religious merit is actually seen as birth as a god, a demon, a man, a lower animal, an insect or a worm—thus birth in many stocks and being troubled by many diseases. So also death of children or old persons, blindness and hunch-backedness. So also affluence, poverty, wisdom, folly. These affects take place. How can they be otherwise? Those who in their place of work give to worthy recipients money earned through just ways, and (thus) accomplish their own well-being, are blessed. Land, gems, gold, cows, grains, a house, elephants, chariots, horses, garments, villages, ready food, fruits, water, so also one's daughter, a divine medicine, food, umbrella, sandals, an excellent seat, a bed, a tāmbūla, flowers, a fan, excellent seat—all this should be given by those desiring to win the three worlds. What is given is received in heaven; what is given is alone enjoyed. Umbrellas, chowries, vehicles, excellent horses, excellent elephants, mansions, excellent beds, cows, buffaloes, and excellent women, food, ornaments, pearls, sons, maid-servants, a noble family, (long) life, (good) health, affluence, skill in arts and lores—all this is obtained by men on the earth as the fruit of giving (gifts) only. Therefore give carefully. That which is not given does not stand by one.'

228-239. This verse was sung by the most religious traveller. Hearing thus, the evil spirit, with his mind afflicted, spoke again: "O traveller, I think you are almost like one coversant

with Dharma. There is no doubt about it. Give me jīvana (life/water) as the cloud (gives) water to a cātaka. Do not much delay in giving me the gift of my life." Then the traveller replied in words pregnant with justice. "O evil spirit, listen. My parents stay at Bhṛgukṣetra. For them I have brought the water from (Prayāga) the lord of holy places. (But now) in the middle (i.e. on my way) you have asked for that white and black water (i.e. from Prayāga). I do not know whether any doubt on my part for a religious act is proper now. For the strength or weakness (of this act) I shall do (i.e. follow) the great order from the Vedas and the religious texts. (I will) not (do anything) through pride only. The sages and deities have looked upon the protection of the life of beings as superior to all the sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice. Thus giving you that excellent water and protecting you, the evil spirit, I shall again bring the purifying water and take it (to my parents). This appears to me to be a powerful act giving me religious merit. The wise have said that all else except obliging others is inferior. Men, obliging others, have gladly offered even their (own) life. By giving water there would be an obligation. Then what is not gained by me? This verse, formerly sung by Dadhīci is heard (i.e. well-known) on the earth: 'Benevolence even with (i.e. at the cost of one's) life or wealth, which is full of all piety and is its essence, is approved by all those who are conversant with Dharma. The religious merit due to obliging others is equivalent to hundreds of sacrifices'."

240-249. Speaking like this, that excellent, most religious brāhmaṇa gave to the evil spirit, the water (from the confluence of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā for the protection of his life. The evil spirit drank the water and sprinkled his head with it. That moment only he abandoned his body of evil spirit, and became one with a divine body. Seeing that great wonder, the Keralite said: "Oh, due to the drops of the water from Veṇī (i.e. Trivenī), I am freed from the condition of an evil spirit. I think even Brahmā cannot describe the merit of the water. Otherwise, why does Śiva have the water of Gaṅgā on his head? He who would drink the water of Gaṅgā as much as the size of a sesamum (i.e. even a small drop), whose power is inconceivable, would be a god or a siddha. He would not enter the womb (i.e. would not be born

again). There is no accomplishment like Gaṅgā, no knowledge like Gaṅgā, no salvation like Gaṅgā, since Gaṅgā is superior to all. Therefore, O religious one, final beatitude is in the hand of him who, with all efforts and great devotion, always resorts to Gaṅgā. O traveller, live long, do not desist from piety. By giving me a drop of the water of Gaṅgā, you have instantly emancipated me." Saying so, that evil spirit from Kerala, after having congratulated that excellent brother, the traveller, with blessings, proceeded to hevaen. That traveller also again brought the water, and bringing to his mind the wonder (caused by) the water from the holy place, went the same way (as he had come).

Vasiṣṭha said:

250-258. Thus hearing the greatness of Prayāga and saluting the sage, the evil spirit at once and quickly went to Prayāga in Māgha. O best brāhmaṇa, that evil spirit too, having bathed at Prayāga in the month of Māgha, and with his sins destroyed, gave up that body of the evil spirit. Then that Draviḍa king, being one with a divine body, devoutly praising god Viṣṇu, and free from blemishes, being praised by gandharvas, being honoured by divine ladies, went in an excellent aeroplane, to the city of Indra. O brāhmaṇa, I have thus told you, the former, wonderful historical account which instantly destroys sins. You have thus heard (the account) giving knowledge, giving salvation, and destroying misery. I have thus told you the wonderful old account; O best brāhmaṇa, you have heard the old account destroying misery. Now, with me these girls, this your son, and you—all desiring felicity, should come to Prayāga. There we shall have the Māgha bath difficult to be had even by gods. There they will instantly give up their goblinhood caused by sin.

Śiva said:

259-286. Having thus gladly drunk the sweet juice of the story from the lotus-like mouth of Vasiṣṭha, all were much delighted, and they crossed the ocean of hell. Being delighted they proceeded with him in the sky. O Dilīpa, hear all (about) that holy place Sitāsita (i.e. Prayāga). They who were irresistible, having secured their desired object, quickly came

there, and that time they were happy in their heart. Then Lomaśa kindly said in the courtyard of the sky: "Let all see this lord of holy places on the earth. All beings are freed at this Prayāga, (even) without knowledge. The Creator, desiring to create, performed a sacrifice here only. (Then) he obtained the power to create and then created (the universe). Viṣṇu, desiring a wife, bathed here at Prayāga. Therefore, he obtained Lakṣmī as his wife at the time of churning (out) the nectar here (only). Having lived here for six months, and having bathed at Veṇī at will, the Trident-holder killed with three arrows Tripura. These three ponds are blazing with perpetual fires. This fire is satisfied, and is nourished with even water. Here the thirtythree gods, being contented, were much delighted. Śiva, Nīlakaṇṭha, Kapālabhṛt (literally, holder of a skull), the chap served constantly by gods, came here (to offer) a handful (of water). This is that Viṣṇu, of the form of abstract meditation, in whose fit mouth, the son of Mṛkaṇḍa, having entered when the world was full of flames, stayed. This is that Śiva's Bhāgīrathī which removes all misery, For perfection she is served by siddhas, and gives enjoyment and salvation. She who always gives bliss, is excellent on the path to heaven. This is that river Bhāgīrathī, the goddess, that is the cause of (i.e. that leads one to) heaven. This is that river Yamunā herself, by merely bathing in whose water, beings obtain the same world as that of the Sun. O sage, the confluence of these two auspicious rivers gives happiness. Those who have bathed here, being sanctified by knowledge, are not roasted in hell. All beings, (even) without (having) knowledge, are liberated at this Prayāga. O brāhmaṇa, listen to another old historical account which destroys all sins and diseases of the listeners. Formerly a gandharva, cursed by Ṛcīka, became a crow. He at once got rid of the curse when he bathed here, that is at Prayāga only. Due to Indra's curse the celestial nymph Urvaśī dropped from heaven. She, desiring (to go to) heaven, bathed (here) and soon obtained heaven. O sage, Nahuṣa's son Yayāti obtained a propitious son after he, longing for a son, bathed at Prayāga having the holy white and black water (of Gaṅgā and Yamunā). O best brāhmaṇa, formerly Indra, longing for wealth bathed well here. Through deceit he snatched all the treasures of Kubera. Kaśyapa intent on propitiating Śiva, practised penance

here. At this holy place Bharadvāja obtained perfection in abstract meditation. O brāhmaṇa, formerly at this holy place, Sanaka and others, masters of abstract meditation and of tranquil minds, obtained the fruit—the object of their abstract meditation. Those who have bathed here at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā in (the month of) Māgha, have become of the form of Stars and have pervaded the entire world. Those desiring (some objects) obtain their desired objects, and those desiring salvation obtain salvation. Those desiring perfection obtain it at Prayāga, O best brāhmaṇa. Now these maidens and your son long for salvation. On my word let all of them bathe here at Prayāga. Due to the efficacy of the water of the Veṇī (i.e. the confluence of Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī), may they obtain the entire wealth, the great fruit of the curse received by them*." Hearing these super-sensible**, true and unsurpassable words of the sage all they, with eager minds, were ready to bathe. Having reached Prayāga, difficult to get, they, in a moment, gave up their goblinhood.

287-289a. Freed from the agony of the curse, they obtained their respective bodies. Vedanidhi, seeing his son and those girls of divine forms, and with his mind pleased, affectionately praised Lomaśa. "Due to your favour only, this great ocean of sin has been crossed. O best sage, now speak what is proper for (these) children."

Lomaśa said:

289b-298. This young boy has studied the Vedas and has completed his vow. Let him accept the lotus-like hand of these, full of love (for him).

Then by Lomaśa's words and those of his father, that pious celibate had the auspicious rite performed by the sages with auspicious articles and hymns. According to the religious rule he accepted the hand of all the five girls. All the girls were then delighted and had their desires satisfied. The boy also was pleased. That sage Lomaśa, having granted them permission, and being saluted by them, went to his hermitage, the Meru mountain, resorted to by gods. Then, O king, Vedanidhi, taking with him his five daughters-

*प्राप्तशापमहाफलां(?) **अतीन्द्रिय(?)

in-law and his son, and being delighted, went to Kubera's city. O best king, due to the religious merit arising from the bath in Māgha at the lord of holy places, Prayāga, and due to the words of the excellent sage, the five gandharva girls got free from all sins, and due to having got the desired object had their desires fulfilled. He who everyday listens to this great historical account, which is purifying, which has become an object of veneration, which is the cause of the destruction of sins, becomes complete with all desired objects, and being rare and endowed with religious merit goes to the world of gods. He who, having heard this historical account, would honour the reader with cows, gold, garments,—since the reader is like Brahmā—(obtains religious merit). Since the reader is honoured, Viṣṇu is worshipped; therefore, a man who would desire his worldly existence to be fruitful, should everyday honour him.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTY

Kinds of Devotion to Viṣṇu

Pārvatī said:

1-2. O lord, I have heard about the greatness of Kārtika, so also of Māgha. Now I desire to hear about the best act, giving salvation. O mighty lord of the universe, tell me what is called the best devotion, by merely knowing which men would obtain happiness.

Mahādeva said:

3-19. A man should have his heart merged in Him. That devotion is said to be the greatest. He should also be given to practising compassion. He should always be intent upon duties sacred to Viṣṇu. He should subsist on fruits, roots and water. He should have the marks of a conch, a disc (on his body). He should worship Viṣṇu three times a said. That is supposed to be virtuous devotion. Virtuous (*sāttvikī*) devotion is said to be the best. The passionate (*rājasī*) one is said to be intermediate.

The vicious (*tāmasī*) one is said to be the lowest. (Thus) devotion is said to be of three kinds. Those who desire the fruit of salvation should have (devotion) for Viṣṇu. That devotion which people have through egotism, hypocrisy or deceit is declared to be vicious. So also that devotion for the god which is had for the destruction of another (person), or with hypocrisy in mind, is declared to be vicious. That separate (i.e. another type of) devotion in which a man would worship me at the beginning of an act of worship with the aim of (getting) objects of senses, glory or affluence is passionate. Brāhmṇas intent on knowledge should practise virtuous devotion which is said to consist in the sense of dedicating oneself to Viṣṇu. Therefore, O goddess, Viṣṇu is always to be served. Vice is earned through vicious devotion, passion through passionate (devotion), and through virtuous (devotion) virtue is secured. A brāhmaṇa engaged in Vedic studies, wealthy, free from attachment and hatred, having (the marks of) a conch and a disc (on his person) is always said to be pure. He who is engaged in ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites, who always censures Viṣṇu and his devotees is said to be a great cāṇḍāla. O chief goddess, those who are always engaged in Vedic studies, who are always acting as priests at sacrifices, who are always engaged in maintaining the holy fire, who are averse to Vaiṣṇava religion, are out of (the fold of) the Vedas. The wise, being pleased cause tranquillity in those men, the grandsire etc. bring about happiness, and the best sages give well-being to those men who have devotion for Viṣṇu. Auspicious Planets and evil spirits and goblins, hosts of gods like Brahmā are pleased, and Lakṣmī is steady in the houses of those men who have devotion for Viṣṇu. Holy places like Gaṅgā, Gayā, Naimiṣa, Puṣkara, Kāśī, Prayāga, Kuru, Jāṅgala, live devoutly in the bodies of those men who have devotion for Viṣṇu. Thus a wise man should everyday worship the lord with Lakṣmī; and should thus be blessed everyday. He is undoubtedly a brāhmaṇa. The man—a kṣatriya, a vaiśya or a śūdra—devoted especially to the best god, goes to (i.e. secures) salvation.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYONE

Worship of the Śālagrāma Stone

Pārvatī said:

1-2. There are the pure images of the Śālagrāma stone on the earth. In how many ways is the worship of those image said to be done? Tell (me), O lord of gods, how many (images) are to be worshipped by brāhmaṇas? (How many) by kṣatriyas? How are they to be worshipped by vaiśyas, śūdras and women?

Mahādeva said:

3-18. The Śālagrama stone is auspicious, pure and leads to religious merit; even by seeing it a man, (even if he is a) killer of a brāhmaṇa, is purified. That house where this auspicious image of the Śālagrāma stone exists, is said to be the best of all by all holy texts. Brāhmaṇas should worship five, kṣatriyas four, similarly vaiśyas should worship three, or one with care. A śūdra would obtain salvation just by seeing it. O goddess, those men who worship the (Śālagrāma) according to this rite, enjoy all pleasures and go to the eternal (position) of Viṣṇu. This is the great image which always removes sins. For, O goddess, the fruit beginning with Kailāsa is produced by worshipping (it). Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Godāvarī, Sarasvatī are there where the stone is. There is no doubt about this. O beautiful lady, what is the use of repeatedly saying much? Men, desiring salvation, should properly worship it. A man is purified by seeing them who, O chief goddess, worship Viṣṇu devoutly. O chief goddess, Brahmā and others are not aware of the religious merit of the śūdras who as their servants, worship them well. Twentyone (generations of) the family of those brāhmaṇas who devoutly worship Viṣṇu are emancipated in those existences. The brāhmaṇa having marks of a conch and a disc (on his person), who would worship (Viṣṇu), has, by means of having worshipped Viṣṇu, worshipped the entire world. The dead ancestors speak with one another: 'Viṣṇu's devotees are born in our family. Till the final deluge they have emancipated that family. They will, after emancipating us, take us to Viṣṇu's abode. That day alone is lucky. The mother is blessed. The relatives are blessed. So also

his father is blessed, and his relatives also.' All intent upon Viṣṇu's devotion should be known to be most lucky. Merely by seeing them one gets freed from a major sin. By seeing Viṣṇu's devotees, all minor sins, so also all major sins perish.

19-29. Those men who are Viṣṇu's devotees, shine on the earth like fires and are freed from all sins like the moon from clouds. All the sins, deliberate, non-deliberate, small, big, committed through speech, mind, (physical) act, perish on seeing Viṣṇu's devotees. On seeing a devotee of Viṣṇu all the sin due to having done harm (to others) knowingly or unknowingly, perishes. On just seeing the good the sinless go to heaven; the most sinful become purified. I have told you the truth. A devotee of Viṣṇu, skilled in washing the smearing of the mud of the mundane existence, is undoubtedly the purifier of the purifiers. Those devotees of Viṣṇu who everyday remember Viṣṇu, should be known to be full of Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu is undoubtedly there (i.e. in them). Those brāhmaṇas who meditate upon Viṣṇu as dark like a fresh cloud, having long (i.e. big) lotus-like eyes, holding a conch, a disc, a mace, a lotus, covered with a yellow garment, shining with the Kaustubha, wearing a garland of wood-flowers, with the lustre of his ear-ring being brightened up by the grace of the face, adorned with a crown and bracelets, armlets and anklets, with his lotus-like face pleased, endowed with the grace of four arms (i.e. with four graceful arms), are of the form of Viṣṇu. There is no doubt about it, O Pārvatī. One certainly obtains Vaikuṇṭha by just seeing them, being devoted to them, feeding them or honouring them, O chief goddess.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYTWO

Remembering Viṣṇu

Pārvatī said:

1. (Tell me) how is Ananta Vāsudeva (i.e. Viṣṇu) remembered, hearing which there would be no delusion produced in human beings?

Mahādeva said:

2-23. O chief goddess, human beings always remember Viṣṇu on realising the truth. I remember Viṣṇu, as one oppressed with thirst (thinks of) water. Gods and others remember Viṣṇu in the same way as the world distressed with cold remembers (i.e. thinks of) fire. They remember Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, the lord of the master of the universe, as a loyal wife always remembers her husband. I remember Viṣṇu, as one afflicted with fear remembers a refuge, a greedy person thinks of wealth, or one longing for a son thinks of a son. I remember Viṣṇu, as one away (from one's house) remembers one's house, as cātaka thinks of spring, as theologians think of the knowledge of the supreme spirit. Swans long for the Mānasa (lake), sages for the recollection of Viṣṇu, devotees for devotion. In the same way I remember Viṣṇu. The body where the soul exists is dear to the beings. Those that live long for a (long) life. In the same way I remember Viṣṇu. As bees remember a flower, cakravākas the sun, those loving the soul think of devotion, so I remember Viṣṇu. As people distressed with darkness long for a lamp, in the same way men long for the recollection of Viṣṇu. As those afflicted with exertion think of rest, as the addicted ones think of sleep, as those free from laziness think of knowledge, so I remember Viṣṇu. Those who are afraid of sins should remember Viṣṇu, as the elephants think of a mountainous region, or the lions of a forest or elephants. As fire is produced in the sun-stone due to contact with (the rays of) the sun, in the same way devotion is produced (in the minds of men) for Viṣṇu by the contact of good people. As the moon-stone would resort to (i.e. give out) water by the contact (of the rays) of the moon, in the same way eternal release takes place by the contact of a devotee of Viṣṇu. As the lotus-plant on seeing the moon has its flowers bloomed, similarly, devotion entertained for the good always gives salvation to men. As a frightened bee would remember a lotus, and would, due to that recollection, have identity of form with it, as the cowherdesses remembered Viṣṇu (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) as their paramour and they were absorbed (by him), so I remember Viṣṇu. Those who think of Viṣṇu with a wicked mind, with

a deceitful mind, with greedy thoughts, without any desire, with devotion, affection or hatred, those who remember him as their lord, those who remember him deliberately or non-deliberately with whatever feeling enjoy happiness in this world and go to the eternal (position) of Viṣṇu. Oh, the greatness of Viṣṇu is wonderful and thrilling. Even his recollection by chance gives salvation in three ways (i.e. *sālokya* etc.). Not by abundant wealth, nor by great knowledge, is he seen as he is seen through devotion alone in a moment. Though near he stands away as collyrium in the eyes. The ancient one would be seen by his devotees through devotion (alone).

24-44. A man deluded by the lord's Māyā thinks as: 'This is the truth, this is the truth'. When the truth of devotion is obtained, then the (entire) world becomes full of Viṣṇu. O beautiful one, for getting happiness Indra and others secured nectar; but without devotion for Viṣṇu, they were unhappy. Having obtained the nectar in the form of devotion, no unhappiness comes again. Obtaining the position called Vaikuṇṭha he rejoices there in the vicinity of Viṣṇu. As the swan abandons water and always drinks milk (only), in the same way one should, abandoning (other) practices, resort to devotion for Viṣṇu. Giving up devotion for (any) other (deity) one should resort to devotion for Viṣṇu. How would one succeed in binding (i.e. putting) water with (i.e. in) a (piece of) cloth? That stage of life passed without devotion after having obtained the (human) body is in vain. Those men who advise (people) about religious practices without devotion for Viṣṇu, always fall into a fearful hell. There is no doubt about it. As a fool desires to cross (i.e. swim over) the ocean with his arms, so a (foolish) man desires to cross the ocean of the mundane existence without devotion for Viṣṇu. Even if they (i.e. Viṣṇu's devotees) are thrown down due to (the effect of) their deeds, they preserve devotion for Viṣṇu. As a penniless person, full of longing, desires (to get) the Meru (mountain), in the same way, O god, I long for devotion for you, since that devotion of me in the other (i.e. previous) existence, causes it. As in this world even a small fire burns various forests, so the devotion of the size of an atom which I have (i.e. resorted to will destroy my sins). Hundreds hear about devotion. Thousands understand it. But, O goddess, among them, only

one becomes a devotee. Various people will give (i.e. instruct) people (in) devotion. But a man himself practising it is seen to be one among crores. Worship laughs at devotion; success ridicules devotion. He who has such a (strong) feeling for the lord of gods alone takes (to) devotion. As from a fall into the ocean and entering into a tank there is a protection, similarly one takes to devotion according to his thoughts. The leaves of a tree sprinkled at its root are seen on the branches. O goddess, the fruit later proceeds by resorting to (Viṣṇu) only. As one who carries water fixes his mind (i.e. attention) on the pot (containing the water), similarly one should fix his mind on Viṣṇu and get salvation. In his childhood his mother gives (a child) a little jaggery. But the child, through greed, again asks for (more) jaggery. Due to Viṣṇu's grace they do not notice the difference as when water is put into water, milk into milk, or ghee into ghee. As the sun is everywhere, or the fire is everywhere, similarly one remaining in devotion, is never troubled by (fruits of his) acts(?). Ajāmila, giving up his duty and practising sin, certainly got salvation on remembering his son (called) Nārāyaṇa. All those devotees who, day and night, subsist on (Viṣṇu's) name only, live in Vaikuṇṭha. In this case, the Vedas are the anthority.

45-64. The fruit of the sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice is seen in heaven. Enjoying all that fruit they fall (from heaven). Similarly the devotees of Viṣṇu enjoy many pleasures. Having reached Vaikuṇṭha when will they return (to the earth)? He who is devoted to Viṣṇu, lives in Viṣṇu's heaven. See the example, O goddess. Due to devotion to Viṣṇu, he made hundreds of stones float on the water. The mind of Viṣṇu's devotee is the moonstone without water. A frog lives in water; a bee lives in a grove and perceives the fragrance of a lotus-plant. In the same way Viṣṇu's devotee lives in his devotion. Some live on the bank of Gaṅgā. Some (at a distance of) a hundred yojanas. One gets the fruit due to Gaṅgā; the other devotion for Viṣṇu. Those that have turned away their faces from Viṣṇu are like the camel that always carries the camphor and agaru (sandal) but does not know their fragrance. Those that are averse to Viṣṇu are like the deer that smell a tree, when they desire a fragrance, but do not notice the musk in their navels. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, as (giving) advices to fools is useless, similarly advice

to one averse to Viṣṇu-devotion is in vain. Water drunk by a serpent becomes poison. Similarly devotion to Viṣṇu for devotees of other deities is poison. Those who are near a lamp or a mirror do not see it without sight, similarly those averse to Viṣṇu (do not see him). As fire is covered by smoke, a mirror by dirt, an embryo by amnion, similarly Kṛṣṇa is covered in (i.e. by) the body. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, as ghee always remains in milk, oil in a sesamum-seed, similarly Viṣṇu exists in the mobile and the immobile (objects). As many gems are held (together) by a thread, similarly the universe including Brahmā and others is woven in Brahman of the form of intelligence. As fire existing in wood is seen after friction only, similarly omnipresent Viṣṇu is seen by means of meditation only. At first there is one lamp. Then thousands are produced (i.e. lighted) from it. Similarly one Viṣṇu alone exists after having pervaded everything. A flash always remains in water at sunrise, and is seen in various ways in the pond. That Viṣṇu is like that in the world. Wind even in its natural state always carries various fragrances. Similarly the god, dwelling in all beings, enjoys the constituents of Prakṛti. As sugar due to its contact with water, turns into water, similarly the soul, being like them (i.e. the acts) enjoys the fruits of his acts. The earth, due to its contact with water, has many trees. Similarly (the soul) due to the contact with Prakṛti's constituents, is born in many stocks.

65-75. He, the steady one, lives in (the body of) an elephant or a gnat, a deity or a human being and is neither superior (in one) nor inferior (in another). As the moon is noticed in water, in the same way he is seen in all those beginning with Brahmā to a clump of grass, men, gods, sacrifices, and serpents that are there on the earth. He that is seen is existence, intelligence, bliss and Śiva (auspicious). He is the great lord. He is also said to be Viṣṇu. He is omnipresent Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu). He is known from the Upaniṣads; he is the master of all; he is beyond time; and is sound. O goddess, he who knows him to be like this is undoubtedly (his) devotee. Though one, he should be known to be many; and though many, to be one. Due to his various names and forms he is said to be many on the earth. The sun's lustre does not grow due to the eyes, but the sight

grows due to the sun. The supreme soul (as the individual soul) is always present in every body, as in every jar there is space. (And even) when the jar is broken, it (still) exists. In every form he is like that (i.e. has that form); and when it (i.e. the form) is broken, he remains very stable. As a form made of wood drops (down) without a master, in the same way the body, having differences like an insect, falls without the soul. The various kinds (of forms) of gold, become as before (i.e. gold) due to (being heated by) fire. In the same way the devotees attain the former form. Fools see (i.e. think) the sun to be lustreless due to being screened by a cloud. In the same way fools of ignorant minds do not know that lord who is described by the Upaniṣads as not admitting an alternative and as formless.

76-90. In accordance with his will he becomes one having a form, from his (condition of being) formless. From him ether without sound and quality is produced. Air was produced from ether. Then it had a sound. From air sprang up light, and from light water was produced. In that water was Virāṭ, having a universal form and of a bright interior. In the lotus of his navel there were crores of universes. From it (arose) Prakṛti (and) Puruṣa and then the world of three kinds was produced. From the union of the two arose the combination of the elements. The product of Viṣṇu in *sāttvika*. Brahmā is said to be endowed with the quality of *rajas*. Śiva is said to be endowed with the quality of *tamas*. They have urged all this. In the world there is one condition called Brāhmī (i.e. of Brahmā) due to the seed of the act (of a being). Viṣṇu completely withdraws the world due to it. This immutable lord Viṣṇu then remains there. Thus Viṣṇu is present everywhere – in the beginning, middle and end. People determined by (the effects of) their acts do not know (the truth) due to ignorance. He would cause (people) to do the acts that are proper for the castes at (different) times. That act which is intended for god Viṣṇu is not the cause of (i.e. does not lead to) conception (i.e. birth). This is always thought over by all the sages in the Upaniṣads and holy texts. This knowledge of Brahman is in the body. I shall tell it. Mind alone is the cause and effect of good and bad (acts). Everything is purified by mind. Then it is the ancient Brahman. Mind alone is always

the kinsman and the foe (also). Some are emancipated by mind; some are troubled by mind. Everything is renounced in it, but they have done acts outwardly. Acts when done in this fashion alone, do not taint (the doer), as a lotus-leaf is not tainted by even drops of water, (or) as fire when put into (another) fire. What is the use of devotion? When the flavour of devotion is known, then salvation is not liked. By means of the Yoga of eight kinds[1] Viṣṇu is not reached in this existence. Viṣṇu is reached by devotion and would always be easily accessible.

91-100. Knowledge is obtained through the Upaniṣads. That which is to be known is obtained by means of knowledge. When that which is to be known is obtained, then the world is a void. Viṣṇu is reached through (mental) power. What is the use of the eightfold Yoga? Of all dispositions purity of disposition is commended. When the beloved is embraced by one, one gets the effect as is one's disposition. One having sandals on one's feet feels the earth to be full of hide. One looks upon the world as one's mind is. The nimba tree, though sprinkled with milk, would not give up its bitterness. Beings go to (i.e. behave in conformity with) their nature. Advice is useless. How would one obtain the fruits and the leaves of the (mango) tree after having cut it off? Why should one pass one's life with a desire for the pleasures of senses? As medicine is cooked in a pan of lapis lazuli and then the drug is burnt, in the same way, how would the existence be in vain? How would a good man, after putting the treasure in his house, do service? How would one rejoice on another path (by) leaving the lord of Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu)? What is the use of the recital of the Vedas by those who are without devotion? A cāṇḍāla having devotion is worshipped even by gods. What is the use of mirrors for him who has put on a bracelet on his hand? The servants (i.e. the devotees) to whom affluence is given by gods like Brahmā, Rudra, do not take anything that is offered to the lord.

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1. Aṣṭavidha Yoga—The eightfold means of Yoga consists of the disciplines of: (1) restraint (yama); (2) culture or cultivating good habits like purification of the body, contentment etc; (3) posture (āsana); (4) breath-control (prāṇāyāma); (5) withdrawl of the senses (pratyāhara); (6) attention (dhāraṇā); (7) meditation (dhyāna); and (8) concentration (samādhi).

101-109. It is better to give to a devotee who is poor. How can there be meditation on Kṛṣṇa having no body? Many (devotees) seeing him of a form, have, through devotion, gone to his position. How can worship or devotion be possible in the case of one that is non-existent? The wise ones recommend (worship and devotion) in the case of one that has a form. How can a man go along a vacant path without a support? This master has a form. That lord is formless. The one having a form is easily seen. The formless one is not seen. There is pleasure of service of the one having a form; no (such) pleasure in the case of serving a formless one. The formless one himself is known through him who has a form. When the body is horripilated by the grace of the recollection of Viṣṇu, when tears of joy are in the eyes, then salvation becomes a slave. How does the sin committed in childhood, perish? (It perishes) by means of worship, gifts, vows, (visits to) holy places, mutterings (of hymns), sacrifices dedicated to you. How should one, giving up one's duty, practise severe penance? It is better to die in (i.e. while doing) one's duty. Another's duty is fraught with fear. How should one, giving up the practice laid down by holy texts, practise severe penance? A fool without (remaining in) the stage of human life, would not obtain success. The castes are made by Brahmā, and they have been assigned their respective duties.

110-124. Wealth that comes through the performance of the duty of one's own caste is said to be white. That little gift, given with devotion, made with white wealth, gives great religious merit and it cannot be reckoned. The gift given by men with the wealth brought for domestic rites through contact with mean people, would not be fruitful. They would not share its fruit. A fool, weak in knowledge, obtains that kind of stock which (is in conformity with the) kind of acts he performs with a desire for pleasure. The (fruit of the) act done in this world is had in the otherworld. If in the case of a man doing righteous acts, pain is produced, then he should not be distressed. That is (the result of) the deeds of the former body (i.e. existence). Grief alone is produced in the case of the man committing sins. O chief goddess, at that time one should not be delighted. As the master leads the beasts tied with a rope, men also are similarly led by the bond of their deeds on the earth. A monkey

dwelling in forest dances in every house; in the same way the beings are taken through all stocks by (their) deeds. As the master while playing sends forth a ball according to his desire, similarly a being is taken to happiness or unhappiness by his deeds. The being bound by (the effects of) his deeds, is unable to remove the bond. Gods and other sages also are bound by (the effects of) their deeds. Even the serpents remaining on Rudra's body consume poison on Kailāsa. They are unable to enjoy nectar. The effect of deeds (Karmayoni?) prevail. The charioteer or the Sun, who is said by the wise to give a sound body is a cripple. The effects of deeds (Karmayoni?) pravail. A royal sage Iadradyumna became an elephant due to his deeds. The result of deeds in that case was made ineffective by the powerful lord (?) All gods like Rudra, Brahmā, men and demons, being bound by (the effects of) acts, move on the earth. Viṣṇu formerly created the entire world, (and is) influenced by acts.

125-139. Those acts, dependent on Viṣṇu, perish by means of (repeating) the name of Rāma. Water is present everywhere; but that one at Prayāga gives salvation. To those who do the acts like this, worship of Keśava gives salvation. The being who does an act for the pleasure of senses, and would, through egotism think of the body, should go through an expiation, remembering (Viṣṇu). He undergoes the fruits of his past acts (only). The (fruit of) his acts does not grow later. Some praise the Planets; some evil spirits and goblins. Some praise deities; some have talked about the herbs. Some talk about a hymn, about a super-human power, about intellect or valour. So also about exertion, boldness, courage and prudence. All follow their desires talking about acts resulting from egotism. This is my definite idea. This is what is told by the former wise men. When a being is full of religious merit and there is no sin (in him), and when he has the two-fold knowledge, then his merit would be pleasant. When his sin and religious merit are equal, he remains in (i.e. doing) acts. When he has attained the equanimity of mind, he would reach the place of joy. Of him, who has discarded everything outwardly, but would long for (every thing) mentally, such a behaviour is useless and he will have to undergo (fruits of) his sins. A man does acts outwardly; but mentally he is desireless. Such a sacrifice is mediocre. He would not obtain

its complete fruit. Discarding acts outwardly, and mentally depending upon (i.e. looking upon everything as) void – such a sacrifice is said to be the best – difficult to be had even by the meditating sages. Some abandon everything through anger; some through the power of discussion. Some discard everything with difficulty. All (such) sacrifices are mediocre. A man endowed with devotion through good mind, and not influenced by anger etc., obtains a good position, though smeared with (the effects of) acts. He who is dropped from abstract meditation, would be born in the house of the pure and the rich or in the family – chief being that of a brāhmaṇa – of the intelligent meditating sages. In a short time he acquires complete abstract meditation.

140-153. Due to abstract meditation, devotion (to) and grace (of the lord), he would reach the position of Brahman of the nature of) intelligence and joy. How can one wash off (the effect of) one's act with a harmful act as mud with mud or blood with blood? How can a sacrifice full of a harmful act be capable of destroying (the effect of one's) acts? Sacrifices performed with a desire for (going to) heaven give little happiness in heaven. Even though many, the pleasures there are transitory. Without devotion for Viṣṇu, there is no eternal happiness in (i.e. from) them. (Except) a sovereign empire giving pleasure and happiness in heaven, I do not desire anything else. I am afraid of living in a womb (i.e. of rebirth). With (hammers of) iron a stone alone is broken, and not a ruby. A crane eats aquatic beings, (but) would avoid frogs etc. Similarly, Yama, the destroyer of everything, would avoid Viṣṇu's servants. He who protects is the one that removes difficulties, and is said to be the guardian. He lodges at his place him who has (committed) hundreds of faults; since Kṛṣṇa favours him who has committed an offence. He gets the fruit today. What does the protector do? In the same way, the soul in this body, shows favour to them depending upon others.[1] Along with the strong, he does not slowly go to the other end.[2] He gave salvation to the hunter, and himself emancipated Kubjā. He is difficult to be had (i.e. seen even) in a dream by Brahmā and others, but is easily accessible in a cowherd's house. When he ate what was left over

1, 2. verses 148, 149 etc. and many others in this chapter are not clear.

by the cowherds, he himself emancipated them. O goddess, the highest soul, Viṣṇu, is always praised by the meditating sages. The immutable Puruṣa, along with Lakṣmī, is amazing. Those who everyday recite this narration, are freed from all sins, and go to the eternal position of Viṣṇu. One who recites it with this devotion near (the image of) Viṣṇu, would obtain the highest position after enjoying happiness in this world.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYTHREE

The Holy Places in Jambūdvīpa

Pārvatī said:

1. O you of a good vow, tell me about the holy places that exist on this island. This island is fashioned by the lord as the king of all islands. O lord, favouring me, tell me about them with (i.e. counting) their number.

Mahādeva said:

2-12. The Omnipresent (lord) should be seen in all beings on the earth. Whatever primary substance, with the mobile and the immobile, is seen in the seven worlds, is not seen or heard by me to be without him. Therefore, the great god Viṣṇu, Keśava, who removes affliction, would live in the form of a holy place on this island, O chief goddess. I shall certainly tell you about all the holy places. First is the holy place (called) Puṣkara, auspicious and best among the holy places. Second holy place is Vārāṇasī, giving salvation. Third sacred spot is Naimiṣa, said to be purifying by the sages. Fourth is Prayāga, said to be the best among the holy places. Fifth is said to be Kārmuka that has sprung up on Gandhamādana. Sixth is the holy place called Mānasa, pleasing to the gods. Seventh is Viśvakāya on the auspicious Avara mountain. Eighth is called Gautama, formerly fashioned on Mandara. Ninth is Madotkaṭa; tenth is Caitrarathaka. Eleventh is Kānyakubja where Vāmana (i.e. Viṣṇu) dwells. Twelfth is Malaya; then there is Kubjāmraka. (Then there are) Viśveśvara, Girikarṇa, Kedāra, giving a good

position (i.e. leading to salvation). Bāhya is on the surface of Himālaya; similariy there is Gopaka on Gokarṇa. On the Himālaya is Sthāneśvara; and Bilvapatrika on Bilvaka. The holy place Mādhava is on Śrīśaila; and Bhadra is on Bhadreśvara. Vijaya is said to be on Vārāha, and Vaiṣṇava on Vaiṣṇava mountain. On Rudrakoṭa is Raudra; and on the Kāliñjara mountain is Paitrya. The holy place Kampila is on Kampila, and Karkoṭaka on Mukuṭa.

13-30. O Chief goddess, the place holy due to Śālagrāma is on the bank of the Gallikā. On (the bank of) Narmadā is one called Śiva, and on (the bank of) Māyā is Viśvarūpaka. On the Raivata mountain have come up (the holy places, namely) Utpalākṣa, Sahasrākṣa. On (the bank of) Gaṅgā is Pitṛtīrtha, so also is Viṣṇupādodbhava. On (the bank of) Vipāśā is Vipāpā, and Puṇḍravardhana is at Pāṭala. Nārāyaṇa is on Supārśva, and Viṣṇu temple on Trikūṭa. On Vipula is one named Vipula, and Kalyāṇa is on Malaya mountain. At Koṭiṭīrtha is Kaurava, and Sugandha is on Gandhamādana. Trisandhyā is at Kubjāmraka, and Haripriya at Gaṅgādvāra. In the region of Vindhya is Śaila, and Sārasvata is said to be on Badari. On (the bank of) the Kālindī is Kalparūpa, and Sāyaka is said to be on Sahya. Cāndra is in Candra region, and Ramaṇa is the chief among the holy places. On (the bank of) Yamunā is (the one) called Mṛga; and Kurūdbhava is on Karavīra. The holy place called Umā is on the Vināyaka mountain. Ārogya is in the Bhāskara country. Maheśvara is at Mahākāla. A holy place is named Abhayada. On Vindhya is one called Amṛta. Viśvarūpa is in Maṇḍapa. In Īśvara city is one called Svāhā. On (the bank of) Pracaṇḍā is Vaigaleya, and Cāṇḍika in Amarakaṇṭaka. At the holy place of Prabhāsa is Someśvara, and there is also Puṣkara. Devamātra is situated on the bank of Pārāvata on Sarasvatī. At Mahāpadma is Mahālaya, and Piṅgaleśvara on (the bank of) Payoṣṇī. So also is a holy place on (the bank of) Siṁhikā, and at Saurava one called Ravi. In the Kṛttikā-region is the holy place Kārtika; and Śaṅkara on mountain Śaṅkara. Similarly at the confluence of Subhadrā and Sindhu is a divine holy place called Utpala. Then there is Gāṇapatya on the mountain called Viṣṇu. Then on Jālandhara is the holy place which is called Viṣṇumukha. At Tāra is one called Tāraka on the mountain

called Viṣṇu. Pauṇḍra is in the Devadāruvana, and Pauśka in the Kāśmīra region. The snowy Bhauma is on Himālaya, so also are Catuṣṭika and Pauṣṭika. Similarly the holy place Kapālamocana has come up at Māyāpura. Then is the holy place Śaṅkhoddhāra (of) the god holding the conch. At Piṇḍa is one named Piṇḍa, and Vaikhānasa at Siddha. On (the bank of) Acchoda is Viṣṇukāma, giving religious merit, sensuous enjoyment, worldly prosperity and salvation. On the northern bank is Auṣadhya, and Kuśodaka is at Kuśadvīpa. Manmatha is on Hemakūṭa, and Satyavādana on Kumuda. At the bank of Vadantī is the holy place called Āśvaka, and Mātṛka is said to exist on Vindhya.

31-40. On Citta is the holy place (called) Brahmamaya which is said to be (the most) purifying of all holy places. O beautiful lady, listen to the description of the holy place best of all these. A holy place (like) Viṣṇumaya never existed (before) nor will be there. Merely by uttering (its) name, one who has killed a brāhmaṇa, or snatched gold, or has killed a child or a cow, is freed (from the sin) due to Viṣṇu's grace. In the Kali age Dvāravatī is charming, and god Viṣṇu is excellent. The salvation of those men who see (the image of) the lord, is certain. O great goddess, I, remaining among the wise, thus think of that blessed lord Viṣṇu, the master of all. These hundred and eight holy places are told here. He who mutters their names or hears them is free from all sins. He who, after bathing in these holy places, sees (the image of) Nārāyaṇa Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), is freed from all sins and goes to the ancient Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, said to be the holy place purifying the worlds. Those best men who go to (these holy places) go to the highest position (i.e. salvation). One should get this to be heard (i.e. recited) at (the time of) a rite in honour of the dead ancestors. Enjoying pleasures in this world, one goes to the eternal (position) of Viṣṇu. (By reciting these names) at the time of the gift of a cow, or the gift at the time of a śrāddha, or (by reciting it) everyday, or at the rite of worshipping a deity, one attains the highest Brahman.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYFOUR

The Greatness of Vetravatī

Mahādeva said:

1-10. I shall tell (you) the greatness of Vetravatī. Listen, O beautiful lady. By bathing there (i.e. in the river) men are free till deluge. Vṛtra made a tank called Mahāgambhīra. That divine one, destroyer of heaps of great sins, came out from that tank. O best goddess, like Gaṅgā this is the best river. Merely on looking at her heaps of sins come to an end. O goddess, I shall tell you an old account, hearing which sinners are freed from faults and bondage of (their) acts. A king (named Vidāruṇa) ruled in the city of Campaka. He was always wicked, of a wicked form, and he very much harassed people. He was impious, the (very) form of impiety, and given to censuring Viṣṇu. He disregarded deities and brāhmaṇas, and was a great hater of the (four) stages of human life. He was rich, and was given to condemning the Vedas; he was foolish and cruel. He was a rogue, was interested in heterodox doctrines and outraged others' wives. His name was Vidāruṇa, and he was a fool. Once, by chance, he came to that river (Vetravatī). O chief goddess, he, intent on hunting, himself became a leper due to his censuring brāhmaṇas. He talked nonsense, was wicked-hearted, a rogue and a cruel beast. He was always engaged in censuring the Vedas and polluted cows and holy texts.

11-31. The king, surrounded by his friends, who was like this, was wandering in a forest; being oppressed by thirst, he got down from (his) horse, drank water and went home. Due to the drinking of the water, his leprosy certainly disappeared. Especially the mind of the king became clear. O chief goddess, at that time in (the mind of) him devotion for Viṣṇu sprang up. From that time he always bathed (in Vetravatī). O chief goddess, he became spotless and endowed with handsomeness. Having enjoyed pleasure in this world and having performed many sacrifices, he gave gifts to brāhmaṇas and went to the position of Viṣṇu. Knowing this, O goddess, those brāhmaṇas who bathe especially in Vetravatī, are freed, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. The brāhmaṇas—or a kṣatriya, or a vaiśya or a

śūdra—who bathe here are freed, O best goddess. O goddess, an outcast or a censurer of the Vedas, who, in the month of Kārtika or Māgha, bathes at the confluence of rivers, is free from sins. Especially a killer of a brāhmaṇa who bathes there where her confluence with Sābhramatī is seen, is always freed. O sinless one, the village there is a divine city, of the form of heaven. O goddess, Brahmā practised many abstract meditations there. No rebirth is (had by one) who has bathed and eaten there. O goddess, she is said to be another Gaṅgā, especially in the Kali age. Those men who desire happiness and wealth, who desire heaven, bathe there repeatedly, enjoy happiness in this world, and go to the eternal (position) of Viṣṇu. Those born in the solar race and the lunar race, who came here and bathed in Vetravatī obtained bliss. She removes misery when seen, and mental sin when touched. O goddess, one who bathes in and drinks (her) water undoubtedly enjoys salvation. By bathing (in her), muttering hymns and performing sacrifices (on her bank) one gets infinite fruit. One should go to the holy place of Vārāṇasī, and practise Cāndrāyaṇa-vow. O best goddess, the religious merit on having gone there is great. If a man dies especially on (the bank of) Vetravatī, he becomes four-armed, and goes to the highest (position) of Viṣṇu. O best goddess, all the holy places, deities, dead ancestors that are there on the earth, live here in Vetravatī. O you beautiful lady, what is the use of talking much about other things repeatedly? O you ancient one, there is no other holy place like Vetravatī on the earth. O great goddess, I, Viṣṇu, so also Brahmā, gods and great sages, deities all stay in Vetravatī. Those who bathe in Vetravatī, once, or twice or especially three times (a day) are freed. There is no doubt about it.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYFIVE

The Greatness of Sābhramatī

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-9. O goddess, I shall aptly describe the greatness of Sābhramatī. The best sage Kaśyapa practised severe penance. For many years he practised severe penance on the charming Arbuda mountain full of various trees. Having gone there where the charming, sin-destroying Sarasvatī flows, the sage Kaśyapa practised penance. O goddess, one day he went to the Naimiṣa (forest where) all the sages were narrating stories in many ways. Then the sages properly asked that sage Kaśyapa: "O Kaśyapa, for our pleasure, bring Gaṅgā here, O lord. That best river will pass by your name." Having heard their words, and having saluted those brāhmaṇas, he came to the Arbuda forest, near the bank of Sarasvatī. He practised there very severe penance. That brāhmaṇa Kaśyapa propitiated me. I then appeared in person in front of that excellent brāhmaṇa. "Well-being to you; ask for a boon that is in your mind."

Kaśyapa said:

10-14. O lord of the world, you are capable of granting a boon. Give me specially that Gaṅgā which is on your head and which is pure and destroys sins. O great god, I salute you.

Then, O goddess, I said: "O best brāhmaṇa, take (her)." Then taking off a hair from my matted hair, I gave him the Gaṅgā. Taking her, the best brāhmaṇa gladly went to his place. The holy place named Keśarandhra is the abode of Kaśyapa. Surrounded by sages, O chief goddess, he went there. That excellent river Kāśyapī was brought by Kaśyapa, on merely seeing which, (even) a killer of a brāhmaṇa was freed.

Pārvatī said:

15-16. Tell me about the religious merit acquired by just a bath, O lord of the world. You are kind. Show compassion to me. What would be the religious merit due to seeing her, and what due to the bath? Tell me (that), O lord of gods. O Brahman, please tell me what kind of greatness (she has).

Mahādeva said:

17-35. I have heard about many holy places and sanctuaries. Due to the grace of lord Viṣṇu many rivers flowing into the ocean (like) Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Revā, Tāpī, so also Mahānadī, Godāvarī, Tuṅgabhadrā, Kauśikī, so also Gallikā, (and) Kāverī, Vedikā, Bhadrā, Śarayū, Pāpahāriṇī (destroyer of sins), so also other various rivers, all instant sin-destroyers (are heard about by me). The king of holy places – Prayāga, Kāśī, and Puṣkara, so also the one called Naimiṣāraṇya, so also the holy place Amarakaṇṭaka, the excellent holy place of Dvārakā, the excellent Arbudāraṇya – such divine and other various holy places, I have heard about due to Viṣṇu's grace. Formerly, Bhagīratha, desiring (to go to) Viṣṇu's heaven, had solicited me. Then, O Pārvatī, I gave him this Gaṅgā. On the words of the sages I again gave her to Kaśyapa. This Kāśyapī Gaṅgā always removes diseases and blemishes. O beautiful lady, I shall tell you. Listen, what she is called in each age. In Kṛta (age) she was called Kṛtavatī and Girikarṇikā in Tretā. She is named Candanā in Dvāpara, and she is known as Sābhramatī in Kali (age). Those men who everyday (go to her for bathing) are freed from all sins and go to Viṣṇu's (eternal position). O goddess, that fruit which men get by bathing at the holy place Plakṣa, and in Sarasvatī, is got by a daily bath in Sābhramatī everyday. There is no doubt about it, since Vyāsa's statement is to that effect. A man gets that fruit by bathing in Sābhramatī which he gets by bathing in the later half of Śrāvaṇa or everyday, or by properly offering a śrāddha on the new-moon day. A man gets that fruit by bathing in Sābhramatī which he gets in Kārtika when (the Sun) is joined with the Kṛttikā (constellation) at Śrīsthala in front of (the image of) Mādhava. O goddess, this is the greatest (river). It is purifying in all worlds. She is most blessed, is pure, and destroys sins, O goddess. On (the bank of) Sābhramatī always live those connected with the east (i.e. the Easterners), the Northerners. The Westerners and the Southerners all go to Kheṭaka everyday near Brahmā, under the pretext of a pilgrimage only. O goddess, there is no doubt that they come there on the full-moon day of Kārtika. There they offer a śrāddha and feed brāhmaṇas.

36-50. (There) men perform various religious rites daily, so also various sacrifices. They make various gifts everyday in all the four ages. No doubt should be entertained in this matter. Yavakrīta, and Raibhya, Kakṣīvat, so also Uśija, Bhṛgu, Aṅgiras, so also Kaṇva, and the intelligent Punarvasu, Bandin, endowed with virtues, (all) have resorted to the Eastern direction. So also the magnanimous ones (living) in the north—like Madhumat, so also the noble Subandhu, and the powerful Dattātreya, similarly Śikhin, Dīrghatamas, so also Gautama and Kaśyapa, in the same way Śvetaketu, Kahoḍa, Pulaha and Devala, and Viśvāmitra and Bharadvāja, and powerful Jamadagni, Ṛcīca's son Garga, so also the sage Uddālaka, and Devaśarman, Dhaumya, Āstika, so also Kaśyapa, and Lomaśa, Nābhiketu, and Lomaharṣaṇa, so also the sage Ugraśravas, Bhārgava Cyavana, Vālakhilya and others, all go there. Bathing (there), fasting and very highly devoted to Viṣṇu holding conches, discs and maces, they always stay on the bank. Pitṛtīrtha, named Gayā, is auspicious and best among all holy places. There the grandsire, the lord of the gods, himself lives. The dead ancestors, desiring a portion (of the offerings) of a śrāddha, have sung a verse: Many sons should be desired; even one of them would go to Gayā, or would perform a horse-sacrifice, or would let loose a black bull. In the same way Vārāṇasī is auspicious, and is always dear to the dead ancestors, which due to my proximity, gives enjoyments and salvation. By my order the lord of gods called Bindumādhava, always especially dwells at Vārāṇasī, O chief goddess. Therefore, this my city is always the most blessed and the greatest. Vimaleśvara is auspicious, and is a holy place dear to the dead ancestors. Pitṛtīrtha—Prayāga—is endowed with all holy places.

51-60. They come into the water of Sābhramatī on my words. The noble Vaṭeśvara is endowed with Viṣṇu. O chief goddess, Daśāśvamedha and the auspicious Gaṅgādvāra always live in Sābhramatī by my order. Nandā, Lalitādevī and the holy place with seven streams; so also the (holy place) called Mitrapada and Śaṅkara's abode Kedāra; and Gaṅgāsāgara as they call it; all this, being full of holy places, is auspicious. Like this there is the holy place called Brahmasaras in the pool of Śatadru. So also the holy place called Naimiṣa. All these, O

goddess, undoubtdely live in the water of Sābhramatī. The auspicious river Śvetavalkalinī, (the river) Śvetahiraṇmayī, (the river) Hastimatī, or Arthaghnī, flowing towards the ocean – all these are dear to the dead ancestors, and give the fruit of a crore of śrāddhas. Śrāddhas should be offered there by sons for the good of their dead ancestors. There is a city named Pāṭala or Vāḍava, O beautiful lady. All these rivers have always especially reached (i.e. flowed into) Sābhramatī. Those men on the earth who bathe there and offer gifts, enjoy happiness in this world and go to the eternal (place) of Viṣṇu. Jambūdvīpa is very meritorious, where religious merit grows. There is a very meritorious (region), called Ārya, fulfilling all desires.

61-81a. (Then) there is a holy place called Nīlakaṇṭha; (then there is) Nandahrada; so also the holy place Rudrahrada, and the auspicious Rudra-mahālaya. Presenting themselves, the very auspicious Mandākinī, so also the great river Acchodā – these two flow into Sābhramatī. Due to offering piṇḍas (i.e. oblations to dead ancestors) into Gaṅgā, the wise say that these – Dhūmrā, Mitrapada, similarly Vaijanātha, Dṛśadvara, river Kṣiprā, Mahākāla, so also the mountain Kāliñjara, Gaṅgodbhūta, Harodbheda, Narmadākāra – are equal (in religious merit). O chief goddess, these places sacred to Brahmā are on the northern bank of Sābhramatī, are protected by gods led by Brahmā. O great goddess, they destroy people's sins merely by their being remembered. Then what to say of those men offering śrāddhas, O chief goddess? Oṁkāra, a holy place of the dead ancestors, the water of Kāverī, Kapilā, the union of Caṇḍavegā.—bathing in this would be a hundredfold more meritorious than (at) Kurukṣetra. O goddess, formerly (Śiva's) attendants took the holy place Kadamba, along with the chief of the attendants, to the confluence of Vātaghnī. This congregation of the holy places is narrated by me by way of illustration. Even the lord of speech cannot correctly (describe) the expanse of the holy places. Truth, pity and control of senses are holy places. One should certainly bathe in her holy place with effort. The morning is of the three muhūrtas (i.e. periods) up to saṅgava[1]—a bath at this time is dear to the gods. Mid-day

1. Saṅgava—Name of a particular part of day, said to be three

consists of three muhūrtas (i.e. period); after that is afternoon. Bathing, offering piṇḍas causes delight to the dead ancestors. Evening has three muhūrtas. One should not perform a śrāddha etc. at that time. That time is called demonish, and is censured for all (religious) acts. Always the fifteen muhūrtas of the day are well-known. Among them the eighth one is said to be *kutapa*. Since at mid-day the sun becomes dull (in lustre), therefore, it gives infinite fruit by offering piṇḍas to the dead ancestors. Mid-day, a vessel made of buffalo's horns, so also a Nepāla-blanket, silver, darbhas, so also cows, daughter's son, and sesamum-seeds are *kutapa*. Sin is said to be mean. Since all these eight cause remorse for it, they are known as *kutapa*. That group of four muhūrtas subsequent to *kutapa*, and the group of five is desired as the time for a śrāddha. Darbhas and sesamum-seeds are said to have sprung from the body of Viṣṇu for the protection of śrāddha. Thus the residents of heaven say. Those living at the holy places should offer water with sesamum-seeds to the dead by standing in water and with darbhas in their hands. Thus the śrāddha is not harmed.

81b-94. Giving the holy places these names and putting them into Sābhramatī, O goddess, I gave (the river) to Kaśyapa. This Kaśyapa is my devotee, and he is always dear to me. Therefore, I gave (him) this pure Gaṅgā destroying sins. O noble one, having placed myself—I am having Śaṅkara as my name there—at the holy place, viz. Brahmacārika, I, called Īśa, remain there for the good of the world, and am named Brahmacārīśa. When in the vicinity of Sābhramatī, one devoutly worships especially Brahmacārīśa in the Kali-age, one enjoys pleasure in this world and goes to the great position of Śiva. Even if a man suffering from severe diseases goes there, his disease quickly vanishes on merely seeing the deity, O great goddess. When the man with his senses controlled, and fasting, and being very steady, devoutly worships (the lord), then I appear before him in the form of a meditating sage. I give him the desired objects. O you beautiful lady, I am telling the truth and the truth only. I quickly remove the disease of those

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muhūrtas after Prātastana or early dawn and to form the second of the five divisions of day.

persons who especially come to my place. I have described diseases to be of eightyfour names. Each one of the diseases would perish merely on seeing (the image). O daughter of the (Himalaya) Mountain, my phallus would not be there. My place is only there. There is no doubt about it. On one occasion the powerful king Brahmadatta of the solar race, of a severe penance, once practised penance there for a long time, O chief goddess. There he practised in many ways the (vow called) Pañcāgnisādhana.[1] He practised many austerities like fasting for a month etc.

95-113. In this way the king practised a severe penance for a long time. Then I appeared before him in person for (granting him) a boon, O beautiful lady. "O Brahmadatta, listen to (these) great (i.e. important) words. I shall undoubtedly grant you everyday whatever you desire." He said: "O lord of gods, if whatever I desire is (to be) given, then always grant me one boon. May the lord be born by my name on the earth, O lord of gods." O sinless one, being pleased with those words, I granted him the boon. (Since) then, O chief goddess, I stay with him. (To him) who remaining here, fasts and is fully devoted, I grant the desired objects as long as the fourteen Indras rule. Listen to what I give to the brāhmaṇas who, having come here, especially mutter the Rudra hymn etc. A man obtains quickly all that is desired in the Kali-age, like pleasure from his wife, pleasure from his son; it increases wealth. It gives glory and affluence, and destroys diseases etc. O Pārvatī, my devotees on the earth come here and perform rites like bathing, giving gifts in this terrible Kali-age. O chief goddess, I give the desired objects. This is the truth and the truth only. The king, having posted there another celibate named Gaṅgādhara, and having lived there for five days, then went to his own kingdom. The very great Brahmadatta, famous in the world, who knew piety, ruled for five myriad years. Then the king, having enjoyed the kingdom for some time, went to Śiva's world, (and) to the excellent position called Brahmā. The two gods having my name stay there— one is Brahmācāriśa, and the other one is said to be

1. Pañcāgnisādhana—A kind of penance in which one has to bear five fires: one in front, one at the back, one on the left, and one on the right, and the fifth fire is the sun.

Gaṅgādhara. To those men who worship especially at my place, I certainly give everything wanted by them in the world. The place itself is always the Phallus. Men should always go there. That wise man who offers there flowers, incense, eatables of various kinds, certainly obtains everything. I give all to them who worship at my place with bilva-leaves, flowers and sandal etc. He who everyday listens to the account of Brahmacārin, obtains happiness in this world, and goes to the vicinity of Śiva, where god Gaṅgādhara, Bhūtida (i.e. giver of happiness) always dwells.

114-135. The other one called Brahmacārīśa always lives (there). From them one certainly obtains the position of Śiva by means of meditation. A disease perishes on seeing him. By worshipping (him) a man would obtain (long) life. O chief goddess, there is no doubt that by bathing there a man would enjoy salvation. O beautiful lady, listen. I shall describe a very wonderful holy place, known as Rājakhaḍga, especially on the Sābhramatī. King Vaikartana, born in the solar race, was of a bad conduct, sinful, and censured brāhmaṇas. He bore malice against his preceptors; was always angry; censured all (religious) acts; he was always interested in others' wives; and he always harmed Viṣṇu. He always harassed his subjects in many ways. Such a wicked one, as he was, lived on the earth always. O beautiful lady, listen properly. When some time passed, leprosy was produced in (i.e. overcame) him due to his sin (and) his (ill) luck. Observing his body, and thinking repeatedly as to what to do, he was full of anxiety. Once, by chance, he went into a forest for sport. Having reached the bank of Sābhramatī there, he remained there. He bathed there, and drank excellent water. Due to the bath there, his body instantly was seen to be divine. His figure was seen to be of good gold, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. Just then the king certainly became (like that). Having got the divine form, the king enjoyed the kingdom there for some time, and then went to the highest position of Śiva, O chief goddess. Then this holy place, called Rājakhaḍga, came up. He who bathes here and gives gifts, enjoys happiness in this world, and goes to the eternal (place) of Viṣṇu. They have no disease and never have grief. A man who everyday bathes in this (holy place) called Rājakhaḍga, would obtain

heaven, and is honoured by Brahmā and others. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, he was called Satyeśvara in the Kṛta age, Bhuvaneśvara in the Tretā age, and Rājeśvara in the Dvāpara age. In this Kali age, the lord of the universe has vanished. Therefore this holy place, called Rājakhaḍga, has come up. Those men who devoutly offer oblations to their dead ancestors here, are declared to be of religious acts on the earth. The killers of brāhmaṇas or of children, who bathe here, get free from blemishes, and go to the vicinty of Śiva. The dead ancestors of them who offer a dark (cow) on (the bank of) Sābhramatī, are pleased till the deluge. O goddess, there is no fear for those men who listen to this divine account called Rājakhaḍga. In the same way diseases and blemishes vanish by listening to and reciting it.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYSIX

The Greatness of Nanditīrtha

Pārvatī said:

1. Tell me which regions that Sābhramatī, having flowed out from Nandikuṇḍa, purified, and which holy places she, crossing the Arbuda mountain, brought about.

Sūta said:

2. When the goddess spoke this, Śiva, the lord of the universe, spoke (these) words to Pārvatī who fascinated the world.

Mahādeva said:

3-19. The sages first got fashioned the holy place called Kapālamocana, after the very purifying holy place Nandikuṇḍa. The holy place is more lustrous than all (others), and is extremely purifying. Here I had dropped the skull called *Kapāla*. Therefore, O Pārvatī, it became the holy place (called) *Kapālamocana*. It clearly purifies all the beings, and is well-

known in the world. That holy place, the lord of holy places, is called Kapālakuṇḍa, at which pure and auspicious holy place the noble ones (like) gods, so also nāgas, gandharvas, and kinnaras etc. live. The holy place is known in the three worlds and gives knowledge and salvation. Having bathed there and having purified oneself, one should fast for a night, worship Kapāleśa and feed brāhmaṇas. Even by giving (a piece of) cloth (to a brāhmaṇa) there, one would get the fruit of an Agnihotra. One who, at that holy place, has resorted to the vow of seeing (the lord), would certainly go to Śiva's heaven after having cast one's body. O chief goddess, formerly Saudāsa, on bathing at this holy place, was freed from (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder, and obtained knowledge. The very powerful Sudāsa was born in the family of Bhagīratha. His son Mitrasaha was also known as Saudāsa. Due to the curse of Vasiṣṭha Saudāsa obtained the body of a demon. After having bathed in Sābhramatī, he became free from the sin due to the curse. Here, at this holy place called Nandi, are always present the pure rivers giving religious merit like Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Godāvarī and Sarasvatī. Learned men should especially make the gift of a cow, land, bed, daughter. A bath in Sābhramatī is said to be like this gift. Here even all the fallen are purified merely by means of the touch of the water. The dead ancestors of the man who, being greatly devoted, performs a śrāddha here, are pleased, and go to the highest position.

Those men who always listen to this divine account, are freed from all sins and would obtain absorption into Viṣṇu. For them who praise Maheśvara by means of their acts, mentally and by words, there is no grief till deluge.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYSEVEN

Vikīrṇatīrtha and Śvetodbhava

Mahādeva said:

1-14. The river Sābhramatī, (flowing) from the region of Nandi(tīrtha), came to the Vikīrṇa forest resorted to by brāhmaṇas and sages. Due to the great speed of her water and the resistance of the mountains she was divided into seven (streams) and flowed toward the southern sea. The first (stream) is the auspicious Sābhramatī. The second one is Setikā. The third auspicious one is Valkinī, and the fourth Hiraṇmayī. The fifth one, Hastimatī, is said to remove all sins. The sixth one, Vetravatī, was formerly fashioned by Vṛtra. This highly divine one moved (i.e. flowed) out from the pool of Vṛtra. So she became (i.e. came to be known as) Vetravatī, destroying great sins. The seventh one, Bhadramukhī purifying the world, is rich in auspiciousness. She, purifying those regions with these seven streams, has proceeded with the seven streams. He who offers a śrāddha at Vikīrṇa-tīrtha to the dead ancestors, gets that fruit which will be (i.e. is) the fruit of a bath at Gayā. Those who have violated their vows, who are fallen, who missed the piṇḍas with oblations of water, get freed when piṇḍas and water are offered to them at Vikīrṇa. He who would offer a śrāddha there, would certainly be one of Śiva's attendants. Therefore, one should devoutly offer a śrāddha there as is laid down in the three Vedas. "O brāhmaṇas, especially take a bath at this (place of) rise of the seven rivers, O best brāhmaṇas, longing for the world of sages." Kaśyapa especially spoke thus to brāhmaṇas. If a bath is taken here, it always removes all griefs. This holy place (Vikīrṇa) is best among holy places, is best among the best. This holy place Vikīrṇa gives auspiciousness and removes diseases and blemishes. Those men who especially always bathe here in the Kali age, become meritorious. There is no doubt about it. Vikīrṇatīrtha is very purifying like Gayā-tīrtha. It always gives religious merit to the dead ancestors, and destroys people's misery. Thus Vikīrṇa-tīrtha is described.

15-23. A holy place superior to this, and an excellent one, is called Śvetodbhava, wherefrom the river Śvetā has sprung up

due to the ash (applied) to my back and belly. She, the destroyer of all sins, is well-known in the three worlds. She has been produced due to the contact with the ash applied to Śiva's body; and is honoured by gods. A man who has bathed in it, has become pure and controlled, has lived there for three nights, is honoured in Rudra's world after seeing Mahākāleśvara. There is no doubt that the dead ancestors of him who offers (them) a piṇḍa with darbhas and sesamum-seeds on her bank, are very much gratified. Śvetagaṅgā is very auspicious, and frees one from misery and poverty by bathing in which, O goddess, great happiness is obtained. O Pārvatī I always stay at its confluence. The bath which men take here, and the gifts they give, would undoubtedly be for them infinitely fruitful. On the confluence at that place god Bhūteśvara certainly lives. Those best men who offer incense, lamp, flowers and wave lights are meritorious. He who, getting a bilva-leaf, offers it on (the Phallus of) Śiva, always obtains the desired object in the vicinity of Śiva on (the bank of) Śvetā.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYEIGHT

The Greatness of Gaṇatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-15. One intent on a pilgrimage to holy places, should then go to Gaṇatīrtha. It is called Triviṣṭapa by Śiva's attendants and is on the bank of Candanā. A man bathing on the full-moon day at Triviṣṭapa, and being composed, is freed from (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. No doubt should be entertained about this. He too, the noble and meritorious one, who stays at Triviṣṭapa during the four months of the rainy season, is also honoured in Rudra's world. A man, having bathed at Gaṇatīrtha and fasted on the Aṣṭamī (day), and having bathed at the confluence of Bakulā, goes to heaven. A man, having bathed at that holy place and having seen Bakuleśa, would obtain the position of the chief of Śiva's attendants due to the grace

of the lord of Śiva's attendants. A man hearing (about) this which is pure, very meritorious, increasing religious merit and (span of) life, obtains religious merit equal to (that obtained from) a bath in Gaṅgā. Having stayed here, a man, observing a fast, with his senses controlled and composed, who thus mutters the names of the charming lord of Śiva's attendants, obtains all pleasures. This is the truth and the (only) truth, O you of a beautiful face. (There was) the powerful king, Viśvadatta, of the lunar dynasty. He practised penance here for a long time, O chief goddess. Then due to Śrī Gaṇeśa's grace he obtained the position of the chief of Śiva's attendants. All the meritorious sages like Vasiṣṭha, Vāmadeva, Hoḍa, Kauśītaka, Bharadvāja. Aṅgiras, Viśvāmitra and Vāmana, everyday serve (the lord) due to Gaṇeśa's grace, O great goddess. A sonless man obtains sons, a poor man gets wealth, an ignorant man obtains knowledge, and a man desiring salvation would obtain salvation. O you beautiful lady, what is the use of repeatedly talking profusely about any other thing? He who would bathe here and offer worship, is freed from all sins, and goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu, (and reaches) Śiva of the form of Viṣṇu, and Viṣṇu of the form of Śiva. Due to Viṣṇu's grace, O goddess, I do not see any difference (between the two of us).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYNINE

The Greatness of Agnipāleśvara

Mahādeva said:

1-19a. On the northern bank of Sābhramatī (the holy place called) Agnitīrtha is known. The holy place Tīrthapāleśvara is situated not far away in the north-eastern direction from her, where Caṇḍī has settled. That seat of the Yogamātṛs brings in complete welfare. There the great mothers have stayed with great effort and for favouring the world. A man of a firm vow, having stayed there for three nights, should go to that god Caṇḍikeśvara, the lord of gods. Having bathed in Sābhramatī

near Mātṛtīrtha, he being fully concentrated, should go to Mātṛmaṇḍala. A man obtains the fruit of the gift of a thousand cows after having bathed at Agnitīrtha and seen Cāmuṇḍā. For him there is no fear from demons, evil spirits and goblins. O chief goddess, at the place where river Gokhurā has joined Sābhramatī, there are thousands of holy places. O Pārvatī, there a srāddha should be offered with sesamum powder. (A man) having offered piṇḍas and fed brāhmaṇas, would obtain an undecaying position. There was a king Kukardama, who was most sinful, irresistible, wicked, foolish, who possessed ego, who censured brāhmaṇas, killed cows and children, who was most sinful and always indomitable. O chief goddess, when he was ruling in the city called Piṇḍāra, he died at an auspicious time. He who was dead, was born here as an evil spirit, O great goddess. He, of a yellow face, with his mouth parched up, having yellow hair, and harsh, very tall, having profuse hair, oppressed by hunger and thirst, subsisting on air, moved here and there. Accompanied by many evil spirits he wailed 'Hā, Hā'. The evil spirits near him also said: "What should be done?" Those other wicked evil spirits also crying and oppressed by hunger, thirst etc., came in contact with the king. With the king they moved to many uninhabited countries. On the way neither water nor food was ever seen (by them). Those evil spirits of wicked forms moved on the earth. They ate the flesh of corpses and always drank blood. King Kukardama was thus always surrounded by them. Some time by chance he went to the hermitage of (his) preceptor. He had done religious acts in the former existence. Due to that he came in contact (with the preceptor).

Pārvatī said:

19b-20. O master, O lord of the universe, tell (me) what religious deeds he did. This was a sinner, a wicked one, and troubled brāhmaṇas. How did he have good company. Tell it to me (though) difficult.

Mahādeva said:

21-29a. I shall tell (you) all that this king had done in the previous existence. Listen (to it), O daughter of the (Himālaya)

Mountain. O goddess, in his previous existence, he was a brāhmaṇa who recited the Vedas. Having everyday worshipped Mahādeva, and honoured guests, this best brāhmaṇa took his food. Due to the prowess of that religious merit, he became a king in the city of Piṇḍāra, and was known as Kukardama. Through his body and mind, he did not perform religious acts. Due to that (ill) luck, he died and became the king of the evil spirits. His face was dry, his figure was dry, his complexion was yellow, and he was fearful. O chief goddess, (the effect of) the religious deeds done in a former existence does not perish. Due to that religious merit he came in the company of the preceptor in the (latter's) hermitage. Kahoḍa lived there. He saw the king of the evil spirits, whose face was dry, figure was dry, complexion was yellow, and who was fearful. His eyes were deep, he was a great sinner, and was accompanied by wicked evil spirits. His hair was raised, he had matted hair, he was of the nature of death, and was fierce. Seeing him like that at that time, the brāhmaṇa (Kahoḍa) was afflicted.

Kahoḍa said:

29b-31. At this charming, very wonderful place, viz. at the holy place of Agnipāleśvara, I always live. O king, you are our patron. How have your become the king of the evil spirits? On this auspicious earth, due to the result of which deeds have you become a wicked one, of a wicked form, of the nature of death, and fierce?

The evil spirit said:

32-39. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the sin I committed in the previous existence. I was king Kukardama in the city called Piṇḍāraka O divine one, listen to what I, living there, did. Formerly, (I indulged in) killing brāhmaṇas, telling lies etc. I harassed my subjects, always killed beings. I harmed the cows, and destroyed brāhmaṇas' vows. O brāhmaṇa, I always remained without a bath. I hurt the good. I was always given to censuring Viṣṇu, and blamed the devotees of Viṣṇu. My conduct was bad, I was wicked, and was always accompanied by śūdra females. I ate anywhere, and was never intent on being pure. Due to that (evil) deed, O lord of brāhmaṇas, I died and reached

the stock of an evil spirit and have become unhappy in many ways. The preceptor alone is the kinsman, the preceptor, the mother, the father of him who does not have a mother, a father, relatives and kinsmen. Realising this, O brāhmaṇa, please relieve me.

Kahoḍa said:

40-46. Listen, O best king. I shall do as you tell me. You will instantly attain salvation. There is no doubt about it. Even the pre-eminent evil spirits who are in your company, will also get release, especially at this excellent holy ploce.

Then, O chief goddess, that brāhmaṇa, having gone to the holy place, made them perform rites like offering water with sesamum-seeds. There is no (restriction as to) month or date. Repeatedly going to a holy place, one should perform rites like a śrāddha as formerly told by Brahmā to me. O goddess, when the (śrāddha-)rite was performed at the chief holy place, they were released and seated in an aeroplane they went to my city. O chief goddess, bathing and giving gifts at the place where Gokhurā has joined Sābhramatī, would secure the fruit of a crore of sacrifices. Salvation is said to be obtained there, where there would be (i.e. is) the holy place Agnitīrtha called Kapāleśvara. It would certainly be true (and) true (only).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTY

Hiraṇyāsaṅgama Tīrtha

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-16. O goddess, I shall tell you about the great confluence of Hiraṇyā (with Sābhramatī). When that Sābhramatī Gaṅgā formerly had seven streams, then she—the daughter of Brahmā—was known as Saptasrotā. The seventh stream is known as Hiraṇyā. A sinful man having bathed at that holy place would obtain heaven. The mountain Satyavān is between Ṛkṣu and

Mañjuma. To its east is the auspicious confluence of Hiraṇyā (with Sābhramatī). Having bathed there and drunk (water) one would obtain an auspicious course. Having seen Nārāyaṇa Hari at Vanasthalī, one should then go to Hiraṇyāsaṅgameśvara, a holy place, auspicious for celestial nymphs, where Urvaśī, (the most) beautiful among the celestial nymphs, was formerly born. There Nara and Nārāyaṇa practised excellent penance. At the charming and auspicious confluence of Hiraṇyā (with Sābhramatī), which removes great sins, all sages, with their sins gone, bathe. O goddess, the brāhmaṇas like Vasiṣṭha and like Vālakhilya, bathe there at the confluence of Hiraṇyā (with Sābhramatī). By bathing there one's form certainly becomes golden. A mortal always obtains that fruit (by bathing) at the confluence of Hiraṇyā (with Sābhramatī) which is equal to the fruit of the gift of a thousand cows. And at Hiraṇyāsaṅgama the fruit is said to be infinite times more than the one obtained at the time of lunar or solar eclipse at Daśāśvamedha. Hiraṇyākṣa was a great demon. He practised severe penance (here). His body formerly became like gold there. When king Janamejaya bathed at that place, his (sin due to the) murder of a brāhmaṇa vanished. The royal sage Viśvāmitra came here for a bath. Having especially bathed here he went to my city. O chief goddess, brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras, who bathe here, go to Śiva's abode.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYONE

Madhurāditya

Mahādeva said:

1-11. O goddess, then I shall, after the description of Hiraṇyāsaṅgama, describe the holy place where the river Dharmavatī joins (Sābhramatī). There is no doubt that a fortunate man bathing there goes to heaven. He who sees there the holy place fashioned by Yama is meritorious. Those who perform a śrāddha there are free from the debt of their dead ancestors. Then

there is the Madhurā-tīrtha, which destroys all sins. One should bathe at Madhurā-tīrtha, and see Viṣṇu, the killer of Madhu. Here, Kṛṣṇa, full of the fear of Jarāsandha, had rested. After the murder of Kaṁsa demon had taken place, he, desirous of going to Kuśasthalī, lived for seven nights on the bank of Candanā, surrounded by Bhoja, Vṛṣṇi, Andhaka and Yādava heroes. He reached Madhurātīrtha and bathed as per rules. There Viṣṇu established (the image) by name Madhurāditya. He settled (there) eighteen thousand brāhmaṇas performing sacrifices, and left after giving them various vehicles. O chief goddess, there are thousands of holy places. One desiring the good of the dead ancestors, should perform a śrāddha there. "You who are staying in my holy place, should never be afraid of Jarāsandha." Having thus told those brāhmaṇas Kṛṣṇa went to Dvārakā. A man having bathed in that holy place, should worship Madhurārka. Due to the gift of a tawny cow on the seventh of the bright fortnight of Māgha, a man after enjoying pleasures here for a long time, would go to the position of the Sun.

12-23. O beautiful lady, listen, I shall tell you an ancient account, hearing which people are free from such sins as the murder of a brāhmaṇa. O goddess, on one occasion, the best sage Māṇḍavya practised very auspicious and severe penance at Gaṅgā-dvāra. He ate leaves and fruits and always ate (i.e. subsisted on) air. O goddess, day and night he was always greatly devoted to meditating on Viṣṇu. He was engaged in the practice of abstract meditation, and was always given to religious practices. O goddess, king Viśvamohana lived in that country. He had abundant wealth (consisting) of elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers on the earth. His son, of auspicious marks, was Soma-candra by name. O goddess, once he went for hunting in the forest. Having gone there, and having had the sports of hunting, he, surrended by his own people, amused himself. When he was engaged in sports, it was night, O goddess. During the night the king stayed in the forest for hunting. When the night passed, and when it was the period (of the day) called Brāhma, his horse was stolen by a wicked thief. Then there was a cry, 'Hā, hā' 'Where has the horse gone?' Then all of them desirous of going away and eager, through the fear of the king, said to

one another: "The horse is specially stolen by a thief." Looking for (it), they all came to Haridvāra. There the sage Māṇḍavya always practised penance. At that time the soldiers saw him lost in meditation: 'This thief, always a sinner, remains in meditation'.

24-32. Suspecting that he had come (there) after having tied the horse, the king's soldiers thought like that and seized the great sage They reported to the king about the thief, viz. the best sage. "O king, this snatcher of the horse is brought. O king, he is always a thief." Then he gave an order to transfix him on a stake. Then all the soldiers came together, and tied him. Then in a moment he was transfixed on a stake. He did not notice that act of being transfixed on a stake. Since he was engaged in abstract meditation and highly devoted to meditation on Viṣṇu, he noticed being transfixed on a stake after some time. "I am Māṇḍavya, the best of sages. Who has done this act?" The revered, omniscient one, who knew (the events of) the three times, thought: 'This must be the act of Dharma, and of none else'. Engaged in abstract meditation, the pious one went to Dharma. Having gone there, he spoke these (words): "O Dharma, listen now. You are always known as Dharma in the world and the Veda. How did you do the act of transfixing (me) on the stake? O sir, I certainly desire to know all that from you."

Dharma said:

33-39a. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to the cause of your fall in the previous existence. I shall tell (you) that. Please favour me. In your childhood you did this act—the sin—in your previous existence. O very wise one, listen to the cause of your fall in this existence. O brāhmaṇa, once you had gone to a solitary forest. O brāhmaṇa, having gone there, you put a living moth on a stake. Due to that act it was pained. O you of a good vow, due to that act, you were transfixed on a stake by the king. By all means (the effect of) an auspicious or inauspicious act done by one has to be undergone. You have undoubtedly suffered (the fruit of that) very small act. O best brāhmaṇa, be happy. Go at your will." Having heard these words, that best brāhmaṇa,

Māṇḍavya, with his eyes reddish due to anger then spoke (these words):

Māṇḍavya said:

39b-45. O most sinful one, O you of a bad conduct, what great sin had I committed, having done which, I was (thus) transfixed on a stake? Due to the wrath (contained) in my words, be a śūdra by all means.

After some time, he was born in the family called Candra, was known as Vidura, and was highly devoted to Viṣṇu. O chief goddess, for a pilgrimage he went to the river Sābhramatī, where there is (her) confluence with Dharmavatī. Vidura, of the form of Dharma, bathed there only. He certainly cast his śūdrahood in Dharmavatī. Therefore, O goddess, those meritorious men who bathe here, go to the highest position. Those men who offer a śrāddha and gifts here on the earth, get great prosperity in this world, and rejoice in heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYTWO

Kambutīrtha and Kapitīrtha

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-6. A man having bathed at Kambu-tīrtha, and having offered oblations to his dead ancestors, should worship Anāmaya Viṣṇu. By giving various gifts to brāhmaṇas according to the precepts he obtains Viṣṇu's heaven due to the efficacy of this holy place. O beautiful lady, formerly the intelligent royal sage Viśvāmitra, desiring progeny, especially practised penance here. He ate (i.e. subsisted on) air, fasted, and had air as his food. He was always intent on Viṣṇu's worship and engrossed in meditation on Viṣṇu. Due to this penance he obtained progeny. A man who desiring progeny, goes to Kambutīrtha, always obtains progeny, O you of a beautiful face. This is the truth and the (only) truth.

This is the greatness of Kambutīrtha.

7-13. Then, O best goddess, a man should go to the holy place Kapīśvara by name, which, the destroyer of great sins, is near Raktasiṁha. Formerly, during the war between Rāma and Rāvaṇa, when the bridge was being built, the monkeys took the best mountain and particularly fashioned the excellent holy place, Kapīśvarāditya by name. Here a man, after bathing and offering oblations to his dead ancestors and seeing Kapīśvarāditya is freed from (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Especially on Aṣṭamī a man should bathe there. Hanūmat and others bathed there on three days. I have told you this efficacy of Kapitīrtha. There is no doubt that a man, having bathed here and having worshipped Kapīśvara, becomes handsome and very fortunate. A man who desires strength or piety or a son in the world, would obtain all (that) due to the efficacy of Kapitīrtha.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYTHREE

Ekadhāra and Saptadhārātīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-5. Then a man should go to the very purifying holy place (called) Ekadhāra. A man, having bathed at Ekadhāra and fasted for a night, and worshipping the master, the lord of gods, would emancipate a hundred (members) of his family. The bath here should be regarded as equal to (a bath in) Svāmitīrtha. Due to the efficacy of this holy place a man would go to Rudra's heaven. By bathing and drinking (water) here he goes to Brahmā's heaven. Those doing meritorious deeds in the three worlds, live on this bank. They do not have a fear that is due to the sword's edge etc. All that would quickly perish at this holy place Ekapradhāraka.

Thus is the description of the holy place Ekadhāra.

6-19. Then he should go to Saptadhāra, the best among sacred places, to which the sages have given the name Saptasārasvata. The great sage Maṅki made the Maṅkitīrtha in the Tretā age. In the Dvāpara age the sons of Pāṇḍu set up the Saptadhāra. The holy water that dropped from Śiva's matted hair had seven streams. All those seven auspicious forms of Gaṅgā which flow in the seven worlds are here in Saptadhāraka. The śrāddha offered at Saptadhāra gives satisfaction to the dead ancestors. O goddess, listen to an ancient account I shall tell, hearing which, O chief goddess, a man would certainly go to Brahmā's world. The son of Kaupītaka was well-known by the name Maṅki. He was always engaged in meditating upon Viṣṇu, and honoured Viṣṇu's men. He studied the Vedas, and was interested in maintaining sacred fire. In his house he had two wives: Sarūpā and Viśvarūpā. Seeing them childless he feared; worried as to what to do, he was very much thoughtful. 'Due to a son the family is stable. Otherwise the man would go to hell'. Thinking like this he never obtained pleasure. Then leaving his house, he went to the vicinity of his preceptor. "Salutation to you, O preceptor, who obliged gods. You are the lord of all the worlds, and protector of brāhmaṇas. You are the performer of sacrifices. O lord of brāhmaṇas, I salute you. O brāhmaṇa sage, I am sonless. O lord, what should I do? Tell me everything by which I shall certainly have a son. 'A sonless man does not at all get a good position in heaven. He should, by this or that means, beget a son'. Having remembered this statement I have come to you."

The preceptor said:

20-26. O best sage go there where the river Sābhramatī is. O best sage, having bathed there you will certainly obtain sons.

Having heard his words, and having saluted him (by prostrating himself) like a staff, the lord of brāhmaṇas went to Sābhramatī. The brāhmaṇa sage Maṅki, having gone there, then practised severe penance for fourteen years. There Maṅki, the teacher of Vedas, made in the Tretā age, a very wonderful holy place, O goddess. All that proved to be the giver of a son and as fulfilling his desires. Even till today there was or there will

not be a holy place like Maṅkitīrtha. That best brāhmaṇa Maṅki, having obtained sons comfortably, and having enjoyed pleasures of various kinds, went to my abode. This is a divine, pure, and very great account. By listening to it a man gets everything like sons and grandsons.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYFOUR

Brahmavallī and Khaṇḍatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-10. O chief goddess, a man should then go to the great holy place (called) Brahmavallī. O best goddess, listen to the actual nature of that holy place. That Brahmatīrtha where the water of Sābhramatī joins the water of Brahmavallī, is said to be equal to Prayāga. By offering piṇḍas there the dead ancestors are gratified for twelve years—as this is the statement of Brahmā. Knowing that the religious merit due to a śrāddha offered there is equal to that of a śrāddha at Gayā, men offer it, and the dead ancestors would (thereby) be pleased. A gift particularly at Brahmavallī has religious merit equal to that due to the gift of a cow, of land or of food also. Here only Sanaka and others having bathed according to the precept, obtained Viṣṇu's world by meditating upon the position of the highest Brahman. O chief goddess, a man obtains particularly that fruit at Brahmavallī which he obtains by going to Puṣkara, (bank of) Gaṅgā, and the holy place Amarakaṇṭaka. Men obtain that fruit at Brahmavallī which (they get when) they give gifts at the lunar or solar eclipse, O chief goddess. Those who have divine forms and hold conches, discs and maces, also go to heaven on bathing (here), O chief goddess. A man, holding a rosary made of Tulasī(-wood), and remembering Viṣṇu, goes to the divine Vaikuṇṭha, the highest position (full of) bliss.

Thus is the greatness of Brahmavallī-tīrtha.

11-12. From there a man should go to Vṛṣatīrtha well-

known as Khaṇḍatīrtha. Having formerly bathed there the cows went to Goloka. The cows, the mothers of the world, that had fallen due to a curse were protected by Dharma in the form of Khaṇḍa; therefore it is called Khaṇḍatīrtha.

Pārvatī said:

13. Who formerly gave a curse to the cows, the mothers of the world? How did they fall from (their) world? How were they protected by Dharma?

Mahādeva said:

14-29. Formerly Vṛṣa, playing with the mothers in Goloka, discharged feces and urine. That fell on the head of Hara. So, due to their fault Hara gave a curse: "O cows, losing your intellect, you will go to the earth." The cows cursed by the lord, again went to Hara, and requested the god: "May we obtain (i.e. go back to) our world." "When you will bathe in the pool called Khaṇḍa near Brahmavallī at the holy place on (the bank of) Sābhramatī, you will certainly obtain heaven." Then the cows having bathed with the lord of cows in the pool, (became) most pure (and) went to heaven near Mahādeva. A man having bathed in Gohrada, and having offered oblations to his dead ancestors, obtains Goloka free from heat and destruction The man, who, living there without food, offers piṇḍas to cows, would obtain happiness as long as the fourteen Indras (rule). There is no doubt that a man obtains that fruit at Khaṇḍatīrtha which he certainly gets by the gift of a crore of cows. Taking a bull's urine, one who drinks the holy water gets purified at that moment only. There is no doubt about it. There was not and there will not be a holy place superior to Khaṇḍatīrtha. Those men, O best goddess, who go there, are meritorious. Having gone there, a man should worship cows, O best goddess. Then having bathed and being composed he should worship Vṛṣabha. Undoubtedly by worshipping him he would live in Goloka for a long time. Those men who, having gone there, particularly offer a golden (image of a) cow enjoy happiness as long as the fourteen Indras (rule). A man, who having fashioned (golden images of) ten cows gives them to a

brāhmaṇa at Khaṇḍatīrtha—that is said (to give) infinite fruit, O best goddess. Having gone there the wise should plant a pippala tree. Having done so, O chief goddess, he goes to the world of the dead ancestors. Those who plant five āmalakī trees, enjoy happiness in this world and go to Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYFIVE

Saṅgameśvara

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-16. Then (a man) should go to the great, excellent holy place called Saṅgameśvara, where the auspicious Hastimatī has joined Sābhramatī. Having received a curse from the sage Kauṇḍinya, the river became dry and came to be known in the world as Bahiścaryā. I shall describe to you that auspicious holy place, well-known in the world. It is auspicious, removes all sins, and is well-known in the three worlds. Having bathed at that holy place, and having seen Maheśvara, a man being free from all sins, goes to Rudra's heaven. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you the reason for this curse, due to which curse she became dry. At that place where that auspicious, great river Sābhramatī, named Gaṅgā (also) is, Hastimatī joined Gaṅgā. There the sage commenced a very severe penance. When so much time passed like this, the noble sage worshipped Nārāyaṇa Nirañjana (i.e. Viṣṇu). On her bank, O chief goddess, the sage particularly passed many years. O Pārvatī, sometime by chance the rainy season arrived. In course of time, O you of a good vow, the river was full (of water). Then at night the sage Kauṇḍinya abandoned that place. At night, he was very unhappy, and crying 'Hā, Hā', he wept piteously. Thinking what to do, he was very much anxious. The very divine hermitage with (i.e. occupied by) the sage, went (i.e. collapsed) into Sābhramatī, due to the flood, O best goddess. O beautiful lady, many fruits, roots, and even books, went (i.e. fell) into the river, due to the flood. That best sage Kauṇḍinya cursed the

river: "In the Kali-age you will be without water." Having thus given a curse to Hastimatī, O great goddess, the best brāhmaṇa went to the ancient heaven of Viṣṇu. Even today that holy place called Saṅgameśvara exists. Seeing that a sinner is freed from such sins as the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYSIX

Rudramahālayatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-8. O chief goddess, then a man should go to the holy place Rudramahālaya resembling Kedāra, and actually fashioned by Rudra. There he should offer a śrāddha causing delight to the dead ancestors. By offering a śrāddha there, the dead ancestors, along with the grandsires are gratified and go to the highest position of Rudra. He who lets loose a bull there in the great abode of Rudra on the full-moon day of Kārtika or Vaiśākha rejoices with Rudra. On drinking water at Kedāra, there is no rebirth. Having bathed here, a man undoubtedly enjoys liberation. O goddess, on one occasion, having left Kailāsa, I came to Sābhramatī, knowing her to be Gaṅgā for the well-being of the world. Having bathed there, and drunk (her water) and having made (the place) an excellent holy place, I then went to Kailāsa, my abode, O beautiful lady. Then the Mahālaya (the great abode) became a great holy place, and will be known in the world as Rudra-Mahālaya. Those who go to (i.e. visit) it on the full-moon day of Kārtika or Vaiśākha, do not have the misery due to the entire mundane existence.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYSEVEN

Khaḍgatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-7. O goddess, listen to (the description) of the holy place, difficult to be reached even by gods. It is called Khaḍgatīrtha, and it desrtoys all sins. A man, having bathed at Khaḍgatīrtha, and having seen Khaḍgeśvara Śiva, would not meet with misery, (but) goes to heaven; (so also he) who sees the god Khaḍgdhāreśvara. One should especially worship (the god) there on the full-moon day of Kārtika. O dear one, this god, the lord of the universe, the lord of all, always gives everything in the world. He gives the desired objects. A man who, desiring a kingdom, sees the lord in Vaiśākha, gets that object quickly due to the grace of Viśvanātha. He should especially worship him with flowers, incense, eatables, or lamps, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. So also with the offerings of fruits and bilva (-leaves). There is no doubt that wealth, grains, sons, grandsons, riches are obtained due to the worship of Śrī Viśveśvara.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYEIGHT

Mālārkatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-9. On the bank of Sābhramatī is the excellent Gayā-tīrtha, called Citrāṅgavadana, auspicious and occupied by Mālārka. It is adorned with kalpa trees, santāna trees, and mandāra trees, and with mango, nimba, kadamba, kāśmarī, aśvattha and tinduka trees. Even by remembering it from a yojana leprosy would be cured. Mālārka would remove the leprosy of him who suffers from it. That woman whose child is dead, or who is barren, who bathes there according to the Vedic precept, soon obtains a son. The muttering (of a hymn), a sacrifice, self-study, worship of a deity done (there) by the Sun's devotee would be inexhaustible.

O chief goddess, having gone to this place a man should observe the vow of Śrī Ravi. Having enjoyed pleasures here, he goes to the Sun's world. A royal sage whose child was dead, went there and practised penance. The king obtained a son due to the grace of Śrī Mālārka. He who, particularly observing a fast, and with his senses controlled, would worship Mālārka, would certainly enjoy salvation. O best goddess, brāhmaṇas led by Vasiṣṭha and gods like Indra always stay at Mālārka near the Sun.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYNINE

Candaneśvara

Mahādeva said:

1-11. From this holy place Mālārka a man should come to Candaneśvara, an excellent place of joy near Mālārka. Having drunk the blood of Duśśāsana, the very mighty Bhīma, fulfilled his very fierce pledge fully, and he tied Draupadī's hair with his hands smeared with blood, and having given (gifts to) brāhmaṇas, he went on a pilgrimage. With his brothers he went to the charming bank of Sābhramatī. That candana tree which was brought to Sābhramatī from heaven, had become a Phallus due to the power of the auspicious holy place. A man, by bathing there and drinking (water there) and gratifying his dead ancestors would not go to hell (but) would obtain Rudra's heaven. Then having seen Candaneśa, the lord of the universe and the cause of the well-being of the worlds, he should worship him according to his capacity; having gone there he does not repent. King Kaivartaka, having many times worshipped (the lord) here, went to that Śiva's world having gone where one does not regret. The sages bathe here; the ancient god, the highest soul Viṣṇu, causing welfare, always actually stays here. This Sābhramatī is blessed. Blessed is the lord, the ruler of the universe. O Pārvatī, here many holy places have come up on the earth. Here is Āmardakī with auspicious fruits of many kinds. O beautiful lady, respectful offering should be made there.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTY

Jambūtīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-14. From there a man should go to Jambūtīrtha, the destroyer of sins, for a bath, which has become like a staircase in the Kali-age. Here formerly Jāmbavat established on Daśāṅga—the best mountain—Phallus Ṛkṣarājeśa, worshipped by hosts of gods. When formerly Rāma killed the demon Rāvaṇa, Jāmbavat proclaimed with the sounds of drums 'Rāmacandra has won; Rāvaṇa is killed in the war. Sītā is (re-)secured.' Having proclaimed like this, he bathed in the auspicious holy place. O chief goddess, with his own name he installed a Phallus there. A man having bathed there and instantly remembering Rāma with his younger brother is honoured in Rudra's heaven. O goddess, wherever Rāma is remembered, there freedom from the bondage of the worldly existence is noticed in the mobile and immobile (world). I should be known to be Rāma, and Rāma as Rudra only. Having realised like this, O goddess, no difference exists between (Rāma and me). In every age they who mentally mutter 'Rāma, Rāma, Rāma', obtain all objects. O goddess, I always remember Rāma, having heard (the name of) whom, there would never be rebirth. O goddess, living in Kāśī, I always remember the lotus-eyed Rāma with devotion and according to the sacred precept. Formerly Jāmbavat remembered that very handsome Rāma, and installed the lord of the worlds known as Jāmbavat. Having bathed, eaten and worshipped the deity there, a man obtains (and lives in) Śiva's heaven till the fourteen Indras (rule). Merely by bathing here a man obtains strength like that of Jāmbavat due to the grace of Śrī Viśveśvara. A man who having gone here, makes a gift of land, gets a thousandfold fruit on seeing Jāmbavateśa.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYONE

Dhavaleśvara

Mahādeva said:

1. A holy place superior to this is known as Indragrāma, having bathed where formerly Indra became free from a terrible sin.

Pārvatī said:

2. Due to which act did Indra acquire that terrible sin? How did he become free from that sin? Tell it (to me) in detail.

Mahādeva said:

3-19. Formerly Indra, the lord of gods, and Namuci, the lord of demons, mutually agreed to kill each other without a weapon. Due to being ordered by a divine voice, Indra took foam and killed Namuci. Then it was the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Indra asked Bṛhaspati the means of destroying the sin. And by the order of Bṛhaspati the lord of gods came to this place on the northern bank of Sābhramatī, and fashioned (there) a (holy) place. Due to his having bathed here he became free from the sin instantly. On his body was produced lustre white like the full moon. The killer of Vṛtra (i.e. Indra) installed the (representation of) the god (called) Dhavaleśvara. The Phallus is well-known in the world after Indra. When a śrāddha is offered on a full-moon day, a new-moon day, saṁkrānti (day), at an eclipse, the dead ancestors are satisfied for twelve years. He who, having reached Dhavaleśvara, would feed brāhmaṇas, for him, having fed one brāhmaṇa a thousand brāhmaṇas would be fed. A man should give (to a brāhmaṇa) gold, land, garments according to his capacity. A white milch-cow with a calf should be given to a brāhmaṇa. The muttering (of the names of) Rudra etc. which a brāhmaṇa would do after coming here, becomes a crorefold (in merit) due to Śrī Maheśa's grace. A man who would observe a fast etc. at this holy place, certainly is endowed with all his desired objects. There is no doubt about this. A man who, having brought bilva-leaves, worships the lord, obtains on the earth religious merit, worldly objects and sensual

pleasures. Dhavaleśvara will remove the disease and blemish of those best men who go (to this holy place) especially on a Monday. O goddess, I have not at all understood the greatness of those who especially offer worship to the lord on a Sunday. Those men who worship (the lord) here with a dūrvā, arka-flowers, white lotuses, (other) lotuses or petals, are meritorious. A man, having brought a flower of śvetārka and having worshipped Dhavaleśa, always gets his desired (object) by the grace of Dhavaleśa. In Kṛta (age) he was (called) Nīlakaṇṭha who always brought about the well-being (of his devotees). The revered lord was known as Hara in Tretā (age). In Dvāpara he was named Śarva, and Dhavaleśvara in Kali (age).

20-31. O chief goddess, listen to the old account in this regard. Formerly a vaiśya named Nandin lived in Indragrāma. Intent on meditating upon Śiva, he worshipped Śiva. There always stood in the penance grove, the Phallus called Dhavala. He to whom Śiva was dear, having got up everyday at dawn, was very much engrossed in worshipping Śiva. He was engaged in the worship (of the lord) with flowers according to the rite laid down in the holy texts. Once a greedy hunter, a killer of beings, a sinner of sinful acts, wandered on the bank of Sābhramatī, crowded with beasts of prey, and killed the deer with arrows. The hunter, the killer of beings, wandering like this, came, by chance, where the Phallus was well worshipped. He saw the Phallus – the well-known Dhavaleśvara, full of many wonders – well worshipped with many flowers and fruits. Having embraced the Phallus, he went to the bank of Sābhramatī. There he drank water and had his mouth full with water. With one hand he carried the flesh of deer, and in the other hand he carried bilva-leaves for worship. Quickly coming near the Phallus he struck with his foot the worship (offered by Nandin). All the flowers were scattered here and there. With the mouthful of water he bathed the Phallus. With one hand he offered the bilva-leaves for worship. With the other hand he offered the flesh of deer. With a salutation by prostrating himself he made a mental resolve.

32-48. 'From today I shall carefully offer worship. O Śaṅkara, from today you are my master, and I am your devotee.' Taking such a vow, the hunter came home. (When) in the morning

Nandin came to the temple, he saw all that the hunter had done. Seeing those misplaced (i.e. scattered) and impure things near Śiva, (and seeing) all those (things) disturbed by the wicked one, Nandin was anxious (thinking) 'what strange (thing) has today happened to me. Due to my ill-luck the obstacles that are told in the case of one who is engaged in Śiva-worship, have approached.' Having thus thought for a long time and having washed the Śiva-temple Nandin went home along the same way as he had come. Seeing Nandin dispirited, his family-priest said (these) words to him: "Why are you despondent?" Then to the family-priest Nandin said (these) words: "O brāhmaṇa, today I saw impurity near Śiva. I do not know who has done it there". Then the priest said (these) words to Nandin: "He who disturbed the worship of (i.e. offered with) flowers etc. is certainly a fool. He is dull-witted in what to do and what not. Therefore, O lord, you should not worry. In the morning go to the temple with me to catch the wicked one. I shall punish him." Hearing these words of the priest, Nandin remained at home at night with a pained mind. When the night Passed, he called the family-priest, and with the noble one Nandin went to the Śiva-temple. Having washed (the Phallus) he worshipped it with brāhmaṇas, covering it with many jewels and doing the five ways of homage. When Nandin was eulogising like this two watches passed. He (hunter), Great Death of that form and very strong, came there. He was of the form of death, very fierce, brave with a bow in his hand. Seeing him, Nandin being frightened, hid there. The family-priest also then bacame suddenly scared.

49-61. The hunter did there as before and without making any mistake he disturbed the worship with his foot and offered bilva-leaf. The hunter worshipped with the eatable of meat. Having fallen on the ground like a staff, he got up and went home. Seeing the great wonder, he (Nandin) thought for a long time along with the family-priest. Then he with his mind afflicted, asked the brāhmaṇas: "Tell the truth." All the brāhmaṇas together thought and spoke, according to the holy texts, to Nandin who had a fear: "Danger to the lord has come up. It is difficult to be warded off even by gods. Therefore, O best vaiśya, take the Phallus to your house." Agreeing to do so

Nandin uprooted the great (Phallus) of Śiva, brought it to his house and installed it in the proper manner. He fashioned a golden seat, well-adorned with fresh plantain-trees. With many offerings he worshipped (it). The next day the hunter came to the Śiva-temple. When he looked (for the Phallus) he did not see it. Breaking his silence he suddenly said these words with a wailing: "O Śambhu, where have you gone? Show yourself to me, today. If I do not get your sight I shall cast my despicable body today. O Śambhu, O Jagannātha, O Tripurāntaka, O Śaṅkara, O Rudra, O Mahādeva, show yourself (to me)." Having thus scolded Śiva with taunting (but) sweet words, the courageous hunter pierced, with a knife, his belly. Then having quickly pierced his arm he loudly and angrily said: "O Śambhu, show yourself (to me). Where will you go having abandoned me?"

62-70. With these words the hunter threw his intestines, and took out flesh from everywhere (i.e. every part of his body), and threw it suddenly with his hand into the pit (where the Phallus was). Having purified his heart, he plunged into Sābhramatī. Similarly having brought water and bilva-leaf, he quickly worshipped (the lord) properly, and fell on the ground like a staff. When the hunter remained in meditation near Śīva, then Rudra, surrounded by his attendants appeared there. He was fair like camphor, had braided and matted hair, and had the (crescent-moon) on his crest. Seizing him by his hand, and consoling him, Rudra said: "O brave one, O very wise one, O very intelligent one, you are my devotee. O devotee, ask for a boon which you have in your mind". Thus addressed by Rudra the very fierce (hunter) was full of joy. With great devotion he fell like a staff on the ground. Then he said to Rudra: "I do not ask for a boon. O Rudra, I am your servant, and you are my master. There is no doubt about this. Give this—the most praiseworthy (condition) in the world, in existence after existence. You are my mother, my father, my brother, my friend. You are my preceptor, a great hymn, always known through hymns."

71-78. Having heard the words of the hunter without (i.e. expressing) any desire, Śiva made him the chief of his attendants and his doorkeeper. Then the three worlds were resonant with the sound of small drums, so also with the sound of kettle-drums and of conches. Large drums then sounded, so also hundreds of

tabors sounded. Being amazed at hearing that sound Nandin quickly went to the penance-grove where Śiva was surrounded by his attendants. Then Nandin also saw the hunter, and the modest Nandī, full of amazement, said many words; he desired to praise the hunter with a great concentration: "You have brought here Śambhu; you are a devotee (of Śiva), and a tormentor of enemies. I who am your devotee, have come here. (Please) report me to Śaṅkara." Having heard those words of him, the hunter quickly held his hand and (with him) approached Śaṅkara. Revered Rudra laughed and said (these) words to the hunter: "Tell me who this one is, whom you have brought near the attendants."

The hunter said:

79-80. This is your devotee, so he is engaged in your worship. Everyday with gems, rubies and with diverse flowers, so also with his life and wealth you are undoubtedly worshipped. Therefore, O master, to whom your devotees are dear, know this to be Nandin.

Mahādeva said:

81-89. O you noble one, I know Nandin, living as a vaiśya. O very intelligent Mahākāla, you are my devotee and friend. Those best men who are not deceptive, whose mind is free from fraud – such distinguished devotees are dear to me.

Śambhu accepted the two as his attendants. Then there arrived many very bright aeroplanes. That very lustrous, excellent hunter emancipated the excellent vaiśya. The two reached Kailāsa-world in very speedy aeroplanes, and obtained absorption into the magnanimous god. Girijā (i.e. Pārvatī) waved lights before the two attendants as before her sons, and the goddess with a stately elephant-like gait laughed and spoke: "O Mahādeva, there is no doubt that they are (dear to me) as you are. You are identical, have same gait, similar laughter and well honoured." Hearing those words of the goddess, the hunter and the vaiśya also instantly turned away their faces, and in the presence of Śaṅkara the two attendants quickly

spoke: "O Śiva, you should pity both of us. We shall always stand at your door. We repeatedly salute you."

90-100. Lord Śiva, knowing their sincerity, spoke to them with great attachment: "May you get your desired object." Since then the two have become doorkeepers (of Śiva). O goddess, they remain at Śiva's door, and see him at mid-day. One is Nandin, (the other is the hunter) Mahākāla. The two are dear to Śiva. Those sinners, irreligious men, blind men, dumb men, crippled men, who are abandoned by their families, the wicked men, and men like cāṇḍālas, or men of whatever types, who have gone (back) after having worshipped Dhavaleśvara, will also go (to Śiva). No doubt should be raised in this case. A bath (taken) here, and a gift (given) here (lead to the) proximity of Śaṅkara. Those who have bathed in Sābhramatī and have worshipped Dhavaleśvara, go to Rudra's heaven. No doubt should be raised in this case. Those best men who bathe and give gifts here, enjoy moral merit, worldly prosperity and sensual pleasures and go to Śiva's abode. A man certainly obtains that fruit which he gets (by bathing etc.) on the day of the lunar or solar eclipse, and on the (death) anniversary day of his dead ancestor. The desire-yielding cow everyday comes there by all means. And having come (there) she Properly worships god Śiva. O best goddess, she undoubtedly goes to heaven. Due to the contact with that milk (of her), the Phallus is whitened. Since then its name has always come to be Dhavaleśvara. O goddess, the beings that die there being urged by Death, go to the position of Śiva (and stay there) as long as the moon and the sun (remain in the sky).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYTWO

Bālāpendratīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-11. On the bank of Sābhramatī is the holy place, best among the holy places, known as Bālāpa, which gives enjoy-

ment and salvation. The holy place is supported by ascetics and is the resort of the wise. There a maiden, of a very strong vow, practised a severe vow. She, the virtuous one, matchless in beauty on the earth, was the daughter of the sage Kaṇva, was an unmarried religious student named Bālāvatī. With many restraints the beautiful girl observed the vow of Sāvitrī with the resolve: 'The Sun should be my husband'. Devoutly observing those restraints very difficult to practise, she passed ten years on the bank of Sābhramatī. By that vow of her, penance, and devotion, the lord was pleased; and due to that abundance of her devotion, god Divākara (i.e. the Sun) came to the hermitage. The large-hearted one entered (the hermitage) after taking the form of a brāhmaṇa sage. Seeing the brāhmaṇa, the best due to his penance, the best among those who knew the Vedas, she honoured him in the manner of an anchorite. She, the auspicious devotee of the Sun, said to the ascetic: "O revered best sage, O lord, what is your order? I shall give you everything according to my capacity except my body. I am the Sun's devotee. I shall never give you my hand. O ascetic, by means of vows, restraints and austerities I have to propitiate the Sun, the lord of the three worlds."

12-23. When she spoke like this, Bhāskara, smiling and observing her who remained in the vow, spoke to her as it were consoling her: "O auspicious one, you are practising a severe vow, very difficult to practise. O maiden, your undertaking is as it should be. Everything is obtained by penance. Everything subsists in penance. O good one, by means of penance godhead, so also salvation, is obtained. O fortunate one, take these five badara-fruits from me." Giving her the badara-fruits, and telling her "Cook (these)" the Sun left. He, of a great glory, taking the form of a brāhmaṇa, left that auspicious one, and waited not far away at Indragrāma without being seen by her. The Sun desiring to know her devotion remained as a brāhmaṇa. Bhāskara (i.e. the Sun) fashioned a grove of badara trees. Then the restrained girl, with the palms of her hands joined, and free from fatigue, resorted to (i.e. took) fire to cook the badara fruits. O goddess, the great one, very lustrous, cooked the badara fruits. O chief goddess, very long time passed when she was cooking (them). A great heap of ash formed

there, and the day came to a close. A great heap of wood was burnt by the fire. With a desire to please the brāhmaṇa, she, after washing her feet, put them into the fire, looking charming, and burnt them for the badara(-fruits). O sinless one, again and again burning her feet, she held them up. Seeing that act of her, the Sun was pleased. Then he manifested his form to the maiden; and being very much pleased, he spoke to the girl of a severe vow:

The Sun said:

24-32. O girl, I am pleased with your devotion, penance and observance of the vow. Therefore, O girl, may your desired object be accomplished. Endowed with penance, you will stay in my abode at this holy place. This excellent holy place will be known by your name.

It is known as Bālāpa. It stands on the bank of Sābhramatī. It is well-known in the three worlds, and was formerly praised by brāhmaṇa sages. A pure man who stays at Bālātīrtha for three nights and having bathed at sunrise looks at the reddish Sun, goes to the Sun's heaven. No doubt should be raised in this matter. On a Sunday, or on a Saṅkrānti day, especially on the seventh, during the Sun's equinoctial passage, so also on the lunar and solar eclipse day, he should bathe and gratify gods, dead ancestors and grandsires. Then he should give a cow made of jaggery to brāhmaṇas, and rice mixed with jaggery. Those men who worship the reddish Sun with karavīra and japā flowers, live in the Sun's world. A man should give a red cow and a bull also. That man obtains the fruit of a sacrifice, and would not go to hell. A sick man is free from his disease, and a man that is bound becomes free from bondage. By offering piṇḍas at this holy place, grandsires are pleased.

Mahādeva said:

33-45. O ascetic lady, like this there is another greatness of this holy place. Listen to an old, great account, narrated by Vyāsa. Formerly there was an old buffalo disabled due to old age. He was unable to carry loads. (So) the trader abandoned him. In the summer he went to the great river to drink water.

Due to (ill) luck, he plunged into the mud and died. Due to the glory of this holy place his bones were washed away into the holy water. He became (after rebirth) the son of the king of Kānyakubja, and remembered his former birth. Remembering his own account, and the great glory of the holy place, he came (there), and after bathing (there), gave many gifts. He installed there (the representation of) Maheśvara, the god of gods. A man having bathed at this holy place, having worshipped Mahiṣeśvara, and having seen the red Sun, is freed from all sins. The water of Sābhramatī, which flows there from the east to the west, is holier than even that at Prayāga, is great, and fulfils all desires. The gifts given here to best brāhmaṇas, the oblations offered into fire here, the śrāddha offered here, and the muttering (of a hymn done) here would be inexhaustible. (By giving) the gift of a cow, land, sesamum seeds, gold, garments, grains, a bed, a seat, a vehicle, an umbrella, a man obtains whatever object he desires. Due to the grace of Śrī Maheśa and the glory of this holy place, this holy place Bālāpendra is auspicious, and always removes sins. Seeing it the sages are always free from attachment. There the holy place named Mahiṣa (and) Śveta gives great religious merit. O chief goddess, having bathed there a man is not reborn. O goddess, there is no doubt that a man gets that fruit (by bathing) at this holy place, which a man gets by bathing in Godāvarī.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYTHREE

Durdharṣeśvara

Mahādeva said:

1-6. I shall (now) describe another excellent holy place Durdharṣeśvara, by merely remembering which even a sinner would become meritorious. When the war between gods and demons had taken place, and when the demon had died, Uśanas (i.e. Śukra), the son of Bhārgava, had observed here a vow difficult to practise, had propitiated Mahādeva, not easily

accessible and the cause of the world, and obtained the formula (called) Mṛtasañjīvanī (bringing the dead back to life) from Śiva, for the demons. It is well-known in the world. A man who has bathed at Kāyatīrtha and worshipped Maheśvara called Durdharṣeśvara, is freed from all sins. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, in this respect listen to an old account. Formerly when the battle between Vṛtra and Indra took place, the gods were vanquished by the demons. Indra, the lord of gods, thinking what to do, went to Bṛahaspati.

Indra said:

7-8. You are our preceptor. You are always actually the guardian of gods. You are famous, the best of sages. O treasure of kindness, favour me. I am vanquished by Vṛtra, O you of a good vow, where shall I go?

Bṛhaspati said:

9-12. O lord of gods, listen. I shall tell you (that) by which you (will) always (be) happy. If you desire your well-being, then do as I tell you. Go to Sābhramatī, and having gone there be happy. The god called Durdharṣa, causing well-being, always dwells there. O lord of gods, he gives desired objects. This is the truth and the truth only.

Having heard Bṛhaspati's words, he went to that river. Having bathed there, the lord of gods worshipped that Maheśa. Due to the bath and worship Śrī Maheśvara was pleased.

Mahādeva said:

13. I will always give every object that you desire.

Hearing (these) words, the lord of gods said (these) great (i.e. important) words:

Indra said:

14-15. You are the lord of all the worlds. You are the cause and the (highest) position. You are always perceived by me to be god Viśveśvara. O Viśveśvara, O master of gods, if you are pleased, then, O Mahādeva, kill Vṛtra. This is my great desire.

Mahādeva said:

16-17. O lord of gods, at your words, this Vṛtra is (i.e. will be) killed by me. O lord of gods, take the weapon which will be given by me. Due to its contact with (his) life, you will certainly kill him.

Indra said:

18. O lord of the universe, what is that missile with which I shall kill Vṛtra? What is that which you have fashioned as superior to the thunderbolt? When have you fashioned it?

Mahādeva said:

19-23. This is the Pāśupata missile which I have formerly fashioned. It was not given to anyone (else). O Indra, I have preserved it for you. O god, you have bathed here and worshipped (me) here. Therefore, take this weapon from me, with which you will kill Vṛtra.

Due to Śrī Maheśa's favour, Indra obtained it; and with that he killed the very mighty Vṛtra. All that took place here by the grace of Durdharṣeśa. That was secured merely by a bath and worship, O goddess. It was secured due to the glory of the holy place. O beautiful lady, this is the truth and the (only) truth. Realising this, O chief goddess, a man should bathe there. Seeing Mahādeva destroys all sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYFOUR

Khaḍgadhāreśvara

Mahādeva said:

1-5. On the bank of Sābhramatī is a very great purifying secret holy place. Known as Khaḍgadhāra, it will be concealed in the Kali age. A man who happens to bathe here and drinks water here occasionally, is freed from all sins and is honoured

in Rudra's heaven. Here that meritorious, auspicious Sābhramatī, following Kaśyapa, and going to the nether world, was held in his matted hair by Rudra. Rudra, with the name Khaḍgadhāra, dwells there only. O chief goddess, sinners having bathed here, have gone to heaven. In this case they narrate this old account about the very difficult vow practised by a mountaineer.

Pārvatī said:

6-7. What was the name of the mountaineer? Which vow did he practise? I desire to hear all that. Tell it to me properly. O best among speakers, there is none else but you. Therefore, O god, tell me all that (as) it is beneficial to hear.

Mahādeva said:

8-22. Formerly there was a very fearful, wicked (man) named Caṇḍa. He, the cruel one, was a rogue, was of a bad conduct, and fearful to beings. The wicked one constantly killed the fish with a net. He would cause to fall down deer, beasts, black antelopes and porcupines, so also many kinds of birds and pierce them with spear. The angry one killed birds and especially peacocks. The fowler was very sinful, wicked, and dear to wicked people. His wife was of that sort(only)—unchaste and suffering from severe diseases. When he was amusing himself like this, much time passed. Once the sinful one remained on a bilva tree at night with a bow in his hand to which an arrow was fixed to kill a boar. Thus he, without winking his eyes, passed the night. Even though he was angry, he cut off (i.e. plucked) many leaves of the bilva tree on the Caturdaśī of the bright half of Māgha, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. Those (leaves) fell on the Phallus that was at the root of that bilva tree through (his good) luck. All that became the worship of Śiva. By throwing mouthfuls (on the Phallus) the ignorant, wicked fowler gave it a grand bath. That wicked fowler became free from sins at the time of moonrise in the bright half of the month of Māgha. His impetuous wife devoid of hope and without food, also came near him—i.e. at the place where the fowler remained. He had not secured any hog, or deer or buffalo (as his hunt). So that woman had brought (for him)

food to eat. He saw his impetuous, cruel-eyed wife coming (to him). That wife of him fell into water—into a river. Just then she said to Caṇḍa: "Come on, eat quickly the flesh of fish that I have now brought for you. O fool, what did you do the previous day? Flesh is not seen by your side. You have ruined your family (as) it (will have to) fast (now)."

23-31. Having heard these words of Caṇḍā, he of a fierce form, had become one of a pure heart due to the Śivarātri-fast and keeping awake at night. He of a pure vow (went) to the river to bathe. When the wicked one was bathing, a dog came there. O chief goddess, the dog ate all that flesh there. Caṇḍā was very angry, and approached the dog to strike him. Then that angry Caṇḍā was warded off by Caṇḍa: "Do not hit him. What evil has he done?" She said: "This wicked one has eaten the food. O fool, what will you who are hungry, eat today?"

The mountaineer said:

I am pleased with (the fact) that the dog has eaten the food. What is the use of this transient and infirm body? O passionate woman, those who with full sincerity nourish their bodies, should be known as sinners, outcast from both the worlds. Therefore, giving up pride, passion and wickedness be composed by considering the truth; and be steady with the knowledge of the truth. O you beautiful lady, with the vow of Khaḍgadhāra I shall today abandon this my body. What is the use of my living long?

32-36. Saying so, when he drew his sword and (was about to) cut off his head, many attendants prompted by Śiva came (there). Many aeroplanes also came near him. The mountaineer having seen those aeroplanes and the attendants also, spoke with great devotion to them: "Why have all of you, wearing (rosaries of) rudrākṣa, come (here)? All of you resemble crystal; all of you have the crescent moon on your crests; all of you have braided and matted hair; you have your garments covered with hide; you have adorned yourselves with the necklaces of serpents' hoods. You are endowed with majesty. Your valour is like that of Rudra. O tell me the proper truth." The attendants of Rudra, asked at that time by the mountaineer, spoke:

The attendants said:

37-41. O Caṇḍa, we are sent by Śiva, the highest lord. Accompanied by your wife, come quickly, and get into the carriage. Due to the effect of the act, viz. your having worshipped the Phallus on Śivarātri, you have obtained the highest position.

Thus addressed by Vīrabhadra, he, laughing a little said: "What meritorious act have I, a sinful, foolish, wicked mountaineer, interested in hunting, done? I am always acting sinfully. How shall I live in heaven? Tell (me) how I have today worshipped the Phallus. I, having a great curiosity, am asking (you). Please tell (it to me)."

Vīrabhadra said:

42-47. O Caṇḍa, Mahādeva, god of gods, called Gaṅgādhara, lord of Umā, is today pleased with you and with your wife. Today you did what was proper for the occasion and worship also. While looking for a boar, O Caṇḍa, you plucked the bilva leaves; they fell on the top of the Phallus at that time. Therefore, O lord, you are meritorious. On the great (bilva-) tree you certainly kept awake. Due to that keeping awake the lord of the universe was pleased. Under the pretext of watching the boar, O glorious hunter, you observed a fast on the Śivarātri day, though by chance. Due to that fast and keeping awake the magnanimous best god was pleased. The very dignified giver of boons gives all boons to favour you.

48-53. Thus addressed by the intelligent Vīrabhadra, the mountaineer also got into an excellent aeroplane, while the attendants, deities and all beings were watching. At that time large drums, kettle drums and musical instruments sounded. There were the sounds of lutes, flutes, tabors, with dancing and acting. Chief gandharvas sang, and bands of celestial nymphs danced. He, being fanned with chowries, and with various umbrellas (held over his head), was taken with great ceremony near Śiva. Even the mountaineer reached (Śiva) due to a bath at a holy place and worshipping Śiva. Then what to say of those men who in this world offer flowers etc., fruits, sandal,

tāmbūla and sacred grains with faith and devotion to Śiva, the highest soul? They are Rudras. There is no doubt about this.

Mahādeva said:

54-57. Since then that holy place is well-known as Khaḍgadhāra. O chief goddess, in the Kali age, it will be hidden. O you daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, those who bathe (here) in the month of Māgha or Vaiśākha, and especially on the full-moon day of Kārtika, are released. Vasiṣṭha, Vāmadeva, Bharadvāja and Gautama come here to bathe and to see god (Śiva) the Trident-holder. The Phallus remained there in the (first) three ages. O Pārvatī, it does not remain (there) in the Kali age. At that time the sage Viśvāmitra had cursed me.

Pārvatī said:

58. I certainly desire to hear from you, O lord of gods, how that curse was pronounced upon you by the sage.

Mahādeva said:

59-72. O goddess, on one occasion the great ascetic Viśvāmitra came to this very wonderful sacred place, Khaḍgadhāra. Having bathed in the Sābhramatī, he paid me visit. Worshipping (me) in various ways he always remained there. O beautiful lady, there was at that time a very wicked hunter of a sinful form. He put flesh on (the Phallus of) Śiva. Seeing that flesh (there) again, Viśvāmitra then said: "Oh! the sinner has done a wicked deed. The highest soul, Śiva, has not punished him: Therefore, I shall, having determined, certainly curse him." Having thought like this, he then cursed me, O goddess. "In this terrible Kali age you will remain completely hidden." Having thus cursed me, that best sage left. Since then, O goddess, due to the sage's curse, I am hidden. If they especially offer a worship at my place, their sin perishes at that moment only. Those who having fashioned a clay image of me worship it, especially live at this place of (i.e. sacred to) me. In this Kali age it is called Khaḍgadhāreśvara. In Kṛta (age) it was (known as) Mandira; in Tretā (age) it was known as Gaurava. In Dvāpara (age) it was known as Viśva, and Khaḍgeśvara in

Kali (age). O chief goddess, my place lies on the southern side. Knowing this, a wise man, fashioning (my) image there, worships (it) everyday. He would obtain the desired fruit. The man obtains, on the earth, religious merit, worldly prosperity, sensual pleasures and (ultimately) salvation. O chief goddess, there would come no misery to those who offer incense, light, articles of food, so also sandal etc., to Maheśvara, the lord of the worlds; this is the truth, the (only) truth, O beautiful lady.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYFIVE

Dugdheśvara

Mahādeva said:

1-4. To the south of Khaḍgadhāra is a highly purifying holy place called Dugdheśvara, which destroys all sins. One who bathes and sees Śiva (called) Dugdheśvara at this holy place, gets instantly relieved of the pain due to sin. Dadhīci practised penance at the auspicious bank of Sābhramatī since it is meritorious as Candrabhāgā has joined Gaṅgā there. Everything like a bath, gifts, muttering (of hymns), worship and penance (done) there, becomes inexhaustible by the power of Dugdhatīrtha.

Pārvatī said:

5. O lord, I desire to hear about the origin of Dugheśvara. O lord of gods, tell (me about) the greatness of Dugdhatīrtha.

Mahādeva said:

6-26. Formerly in the war between gods and demons gods were defeated by demons. Intent on fleeing they came to Dadhīci's hermitage. Having abandoned their weapons there only, the gods went to the ten directions. Then having heard the uproar of the demons, Dadhīci Bhārgava, after having submerged the weapons in water, drank them. After (some) time the gods, eager to take the missiles, (came there) with Bṛhas-

pati. In the hermitage serpents sported with mongooses with pleasure. Seeing many such wonders in that hermitage, all the gods were very much amazed. At the place where the auspicious Sābhramatī has joined Candrabhāgā, they saw the excellent sage seated on a seat shining with great lustre like the sun, accompanied by fire and by his wife Suvarcā. All the excellent gods saw after salutation the best sage like Brahmā with Sāvitrī. Then the gods led by Bṛhaspati said: "It is already known in the three worlds that you are a donor. We have approached you with a request. All of us are full of fear. Please give us our missiles." The best, very intelligent sage, thus addressed, said to the gods: "O gods, submerging them with a hymn, I drank them (up)." Then the gods said to the brāhmaṇa: "To kill the demons quickly give your bones." The brāhmaṇa said, "(Here) they are given." Speaking like this to them he sent his wife to the hermitage. Then the delighted, very intelligent brāhmaṇa smiled and said to the gods: "O gods, I have drunk them. Take them (back) properly." Saying so, O goddess, the brāhmaṇa, proficient in abstract meditation resorted to it. Then with deceitful words the gods said to the smiling brāhmaṇa: "O brāhmaṇa, how can we get them as long as you are alive?" The brāhmaṇa sage laughed and said: "Wait for a moment. O gods, I myself shall abandon my body today." Speaking like this, O goddess, that brāhmaṇa, proficient in abstract meditation, resorted to it, and instantly went to heaven, whence he does not return even today. Then all the hosts of gods, seeing him dead, thought: 'How shall we cut up (his body)?' Then Indra called Surabhi and said to her: "By my words lick up the body of the best brāhmaṇa." Saying "all right" and honouring his words, she licked it at that moment only. The cow instantly made that body fleshless. Gods took those bones, and fashioned weapons (with them). The missile (made) from his backbone was Brahmaśiras.

27-40. Having fashioned weapons and missiles, the very powerful and brave gods, intent on destroying Vṛtra, quickly went (to him). Then Suvarcā, Dadhīca's wife, who was sent for the accomplishment of the mission of gods, having come (there) saw her dead husband and (his) body cut up. The chaste lady, knowing that entire deed of the gods, was angry. Then Suvarcā,

the very angry wife of the excellent sage, pronounced a curse: "O very wicked gods, you were cursed many times, and (yet) you are greedy. Therefore, may all of you with Indra, be childless from today." Thus she spoke. That female ascetic thus cursed the gods. Sitting at the root of the aśvattha tree, she stayed on the bank of Sābhramatī. That pregnant chaste lady cut off her belly. From her womb the child of noble Dadhīca came out. That great lord Pippalāda was actually the incarnation of Rudra. The mother Suvarcā laughed, and said (these) important words to the child Pippalāda: "Live near this aśvattha tree, O illustrious one, and be auspicious to all." Talking just like that to her son, that chaste lady Suvarcā went to her husband through profound meditation. Thus that wife of Dadhīca followed her husband to heaven. Those gods, having fashioned the weapons and missiles, who were very powerful and brave, who were led by Indra, and who were eager (to fight) came to the demons. The desire-yielding cow poured out milk at the place where the brāhmaṇa (Dadhīca) had perished. By the power of the sage the milk became of the form of a Phallus. O goddess, it is known as Dugdheśvara (situated) on the bank of Sābhramatī. Since then the holy place is well-known on the earth by that name. Its greatness is matchless, and destroys sins merely by being heard. Those men too, who devoutly listen to the (greatness of) Dugdheśvara, getting free from sins, go to the great position of Rudra.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYSIX

Candreśvara

Mahādeva said:

1-15. To the east of Dugdheśvara where the river named Candrabhāgā has joined (Sābhramatī), there is a highly purifying holy place. There god Candreśvara, always giving religious merit dwells. He is Śiva who is always all-pervading and who, the great one, gives happiness to people. Those who always

bathe and meditate here, would get the fruit of that due to worshipping Śiva on (the bank of) Sābhramatī. Soma (i.e. the Moon) practised penance here for a long time. Therefore, (the Phallus of) Maheśvara called Candreśvara was installed here. Śukra also practised penance near Candrabhāgā. Therefore, the holy place is superior to (other) holy places on the earth. O chief goddess, the Phallus fashioned by the sages is concealed in Kali(-age). Undoubtedly a golden Phallus is seen there. Those men who, coming here, bathe and drink (water) and worship Śīva, obtain religious merit and worldly prosperity. Those who especially do the act of giving a bull etc. enjoy (in) heaven, and then go to Śiva's abode. O goddess, those men who will everyday come for a bath near Candrabhāgā, should be known as meritorious. Those men who go to the other bank and worship Śiva, Śrī Hara, named Candreśvara who cuts off sins (are meritorious). Those best men who, having come here, especially do the muttering (in honour) of Rudra etc., should be known to be of the form of Śiva. O best goddess, those men who always bathe here, should be known to be Viṣṇu's forms. There is no doubt about this. Those who again offer here a śrāddha with sesamum-piṇḍa, also go to Viṣṇu's position due to the efficacy of the offering of the piṇḍa. Here gifts should be given and a bath should be taken according to the proper rite. Having bathed here men are absolved of (the sins) like killing a brāhmaṇa. Those who especially plant a fig-tree on this bank, go, after death, to Śiva's position (and stay there) as long as the Moon and the Sun (remain there in the sky).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYSEVEN

Pippalādatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-5. Near Dugdheśvara there is a charming, highly purifying, holy place, well-known in the world by the name of (i.e. after) Pippalāda. Formerly the sage desiring acquittal from

the debt of his father, the noble Dadhīca, practised penance here, and by the words (i.e. the order) of his mother, he produced a Kṛtyā[1] (i.e. a fearful female deity) resembling the submarine fire. A man having bathed and drunk (water) here, destroys (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Pippalāda, the lord of gods, is concealed on the bank of Sābhramatī. O goddess, by bathing there a man would enjoy salvation. The planting of fig trees should be done properly. Having done this, O great goddess, a man is free from the bondage of his deeds.

Pārvatī said:

6-7. Explain to me why that Kṛtyā was produced. O lord, tell me what that Kṛtyā did formerly. Which son brought her for the acquittance of the debt of his father?

Mahādeva said:

8-11. That excellent sage Dādhīca (i.e. Dadhīca's son) came (here) for (practising) penance. The great-souled sage practised a great (i.e. severe) penance here. A demon named Kolāsura came there to create an obstacle. He certainly caused many obstacles. That was noticed by his (i.e. Pippalāda's) good son, the intelligent Kahoḍa. O chief goddess, for the destruction (of the demon) he produced the Kṛtyā there. She killed the great demon named Kola. Therefore, O Pārvatī, the holy place is concealed in Kali(-age).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYEIGHT

Nimbārkadevatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-11. Next to Pippalāda is an excellent holy place called Picumandārka on the bank of Sābhramatī, destroying disease

1. Kṛtyā: A female deity to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes.

and bad odour. Formerly in the war with (the demon) Kolāhala, the demons vanquished gods. (Being) subtle, they entered trees with a desire for (saving) their life. There Śambhu remained in the bilva (tree), the immutable Viṣṇu in aśvattha, Indra in śirīṣa, and god Sun in nimba (tree). Thus the gods properly remained like that in the trees. Till the powerful Viṣṇu killed the demon Kolāhala, they remained resorting to the trees. The god that resorted to a particular tree, became one with it. Therefore, one should not destroy it. Thus due to the Sun's taking rest (here), Picumandārka is an excellent holy place which removes a disease after a man takes bath in it, and which is on the bank of Sābhramatī. After going there, if a man would especially worship the Sun, he gets the desired fruit by worshipping (him). Those men who after having gone there, recite the twelve names, are meritorious till they live. There is no doubt about this. An intelligent man who would recite these twelve names, viz. Āditya, Bhāskara, Bhānu, Ravi, Viśvaprakāśaka, Tīkṣṇāṁśu, Mārtaṇḍa, Sūrya and Prabhākara, so also Vibhāvasu, Sahasrākṣa and Pūṣan, obtains, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, wealth, sons and grandsons.

12-14. A brāhmaṇa who, resorting to (i.e. reciting) each name would worship (the Sun) on the earth, would be endowed with wealth and mastery of the Vedas for seven existences. A kṣatriya obtains a kingdom. A vaiśya would get wealth. A śūdra secures devotion. Therefore, a man should recite (this) great hymn. There never was, nor there will be, a holy place superior to Nimbārka; having bathed and drunk (water) here a man would certainly enjoy salvation.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYNINE

Koṭaratīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-13. A little away from it is the excellent Siddhakṣetra, O goddess. Formerly Aniruddha was chosen by Citralekhā for

Uṣā. He was taken to Bāṇāsura's city formerly and he stayed in his (i.e. Bāṇāsura's) house. Checked by nooses and arrows, he then remembered Koṭarākṣī. She is actually the power of Viṣṇu, always engaged in protecting (the devotees). Kṛṣṇa installed (the image of) this goddess here on the bank of the river. Due to the hymn of Aniruddha, returning to Dvārakā, after having vanquished Bāṇāsura in a battle, she actually came near (him). A man having carefully bathed for one year at that holy place, and having seen Koṭarākṣī's face, obtains much wealth. A man bathing at Siddha-tīrtha, and seeing (the goddess) living at Koṭara, is honoured in Rudra's heaven (after being taken) in a vehicle of (i.e. to which) lions (are yoked). O beautiful lady, even by remembering her, he too is freed. Therefore, those men who go here, enjoy salvation. A man, after having gone there, should especially bathe, and should deliberately recite the hymn of Koṭarākṣī, O Pārvatī. Koṭarākṣī has a universal form. She has great divine power. She is superior in strength. She in Tripurā, is the destroyer of Tripura; is Śiva and of the form of Śiva. She is said to be the daughter of Sarasvatī. She is Durgā. She removes misery. She is Bhairavī, Bhairavākṣī, and Lakṣmī, to whom the people (i.e. devotees) of the goddess are dear, O Chief goddess. Thus various names (of her) are mentioned. Those who recite them go near Śiva. O beautiful lady, those wise men who mutter the hymn composed by Aniruddha, get freed from troublesome bondage. This is the truth, and the (only) truth. The holy place fashioned by Koṭara on the earth is best among holy places. Merely on seeing it the heaps of sins (of a man) perish.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTY

Vāmanatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-5. A holy place superior to this holy place is well-known as Tīrtharāja. Here seven rivers with their water mixed with

sandal flow. A bath here is especially a hundred times superior (i.e. more meritorious) to one at any other holy place. Here, Vāmana (i.e. Viṣṇu), the greatest among gods, himself dwells. He who, on the Dvādaśī of the month of Māgha would give a cow made of sesamum, is free from all sins, and would emancipate a hundred (members) of his family. A devout man, who would give here even water mixed with sesamum-seeds to the dead ancestors, has (indeed) offered śrāddha for thousand years. The dead ancestors say this. If a man feeds brāhmaṇas at this holy place with jaggery (and) sweetened milk, then, when one brāhmaṇa is fed, a thousand would be fed (by him).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYONE

Somatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-7. A man (then) should go from there to Somatīrtha which is hidden on the bank of Sābhramatī. Bhava having come out from the nether world, became Kālāgni there. When a man bathes at Somatīrtha and sees Someśvara Śiva, he undoubtedly obtains the fruit of drinking Soma. The man becomes handsome, fortunate, enjoys (pleasures), is proficient in all sciences in this world, and would go to Śiva after death. O beautiful lady, in this matter I shall tell you an old account; listen to it; hearing it one is free from the sins like that of the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Sage Kauṣītaka especially practised a penance. He gave up food, and was very much engaged in eating leaves (only). Then he subsisted on air and was devoted to meditation on the self. Thus for many ages he practised severe penance there. Some time, fortunately (for him) Maheśvara was very much pleased. "O brāhmaṇa, I shall (give) you all that you ask for."

Kauṣītaka said:

8-11. O lord of gods, let a Phallus spring up here by your grace. Let there certainly be here the god called Someśvara,

Having bathed and eaten here, may a man obtain his desired fruit. If the best men especially mutter hymns of Rudra etc. at this place, they obtain religious virtue and worldly objects. A sonless man gets a son, and a poor man obtains wealth. One desiring a kingdom undoubtedly gets that kingdom. O lord, if you are pleased, give all that to me.

The lord said:

12-17. Then the lord of gods gave everything to the twice-born. Since then the holy place is well-known as Somaliṅga. Those who worship Sadāśiva with sandal or bilva-leaves, obtain happiness due to the birth of a son etc. in the human body (i.e. existence). Similarly, he who, on a Monday, goes to Śiva's temple, always gets his desired objects due to the grace of Somaliṅga. O goddess, having gone there, with whatever desire a man offers a fruit etc. all that desire is surely fulfilled. Those who worship god Śrī Maheśa, Pinākin with karavīra flowers or pārijāta flowers, obtain, O best goddess, the best position of Śiva.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYTWO

Kapotatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-7a. Thence, O goddess, one should go to Kāpotikatīrtha where the water of Sābhramatī flows to the east. That man who always offers a piṇḍa there, after dedicating it to his dead ancestors, and along with wild fruits and flowers on every parvan day, and who offers portions of food to the crows, dogs, etc., would very happily cross over Yama's path. A man having bathed at that sacred place with white mustard seeds on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, should worship the excellent deity Prācīneśvara. He would emancipate himself, his dead ancestors and grandsires. Here a pigeon, having gladly offered himself to a guest, was praised by hosts of gods who had gone to heaven

in aeroplanes. Since then the holy place is known as Kāpota. Having bathed and drunk (water) there, a man removes (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

Pārvatī said:

7bc. O lord, tell me, how the pigeon offered his body. What was the cause? O lord of gods, I do not know (all this).

Mahādeva said:

8-18. O chief goddess, at this holy place there is a great fig tree. Its innumerable large branches are seen on the ground. Many beings lived there, so also birds. O chief goddess, a pigeon had built his house (i.e. nest) there. The lord of birds, always greatly devoted to Viṣṇu, verily lived along with his family on its branch. O goddess, once on the Dvādaśī day, the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, a hawk came there as a guest, O beautiful lady. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, he said: "O pigeon, give me the flesh of your body. Otherwise I shall curse you. Today on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, I, oppressed with hunger, have come (here). Therefore, O lord give the flesh to me who am afflicted with hunger." O goddess, the pigeon, a great devotee of Viṣṇu, having heard the words of the falcon, offered his body without hesitation. O best goddess, due to the power of the gift this place became a holy place called Kāpotaka, which is a great holy place and is the (most) purifying among the purifying places. O best goddess, a man who, having bathed here and worshipped Śiva, offers desired food to guests, enjoys happiness in this world and goes to the eternal (place) of Viṣṇu. The pigeon, having offered his body to the noble one went to the heaven of Viṣṇu (and will live there) as long as the Moon and the Sun (are there in the sky). Therefore, O goddess, having gone there, a man should always worship a guest. Having worshipped a guest there, he certainly obtains everything.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYTHREE

Gotīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-5. The best holy place among the holy places is the well-known Gotīrtha, destroying great sins and situated near Kāśyapa-pool. There is no doubt that whatever sins, like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, are there, they perish on bathing at Gotīrtha. Cows that had become dark due to some former sin, again became white on having bathed at that sacred place. Having bathed there, a man on offering grass etc. to cows, is free from the debt of Mātṛs by the grace of the cow-mothers. A man who, having gone to and bathed at Gotīrtha, gives a milch cow to chief brāhmaṇas, goes to the position of Brahmā.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYFOUR

Kaśyapatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-9. O chief goddess, here there was another holy place called Kaśyapa, where there was a great pool made by Nāgadeva. The god named Kuśeśvara shines there; so also there is a charming pool fashioned by Kaśyapa. O goddess, a man having bathed there would not go to hell. O great goddess, brāhmaṇas maintaining the holy fire and devoted to the daily recital of the Veda and very learned, live on (the bank of) Kāśyapā. As is Kāśī, so is this city built by sages. Kaśyapa practised severe penance here, and brought Gaṅgā springing from the matted hair of the lord. O goddess, that Gaṅgā is (called) Kāśyapī, destroying great sins, merely seeing which men are freed from a wicked sin. They recommend (here) the gift of a cow, so also the gift of a chariot. Having performed a śrāddha a man should, with effort, give a gift there. A holy place destroying a great sin like Kaśyapa was never there, nor will be there, in the

fearful Kali age. O chief goddess, all deities and sages with their sins vanished, always remain (here) by the grace of the chief of holy places.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYFIVE

Bhūtālaya, Ghaṭeśvara, and Vaidyanātha

Mahādeva said:

1-5. From there a man should go to the holy place Bhūtālaya which is a place removing sin. A fig tree called Bhūtālaya and (the river) Candanā (flowing) towards the east are there. A man who, having bathed at Bhūtālaya observes a fast on the Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī, and offers black sesamum, is not born as an evil spirit. He who offers a pitcher of water with sesamum, dedicating it to the dead ancestors, frees them from the state of an evil spirit. The man by uttering whose name a man bathes is freed from the state of an evil spirit. A man should bathe in the pure water at the holy place of Bhūtālaya and should see the fig tree called Bhūtālaya. By the grace of Bhūteśvara he would not have fear from evil spirits.

This is (the description of) Bhuteśvara-tīrtha.

6-8. A holy place superior to this is known as Ghaṭeśvara. Having bathed there and seen him, a man would surely enjoy salvation. There is that great holy place on the (bank of) Sābhramatī, (known as) Ghaṭa. Having seen Mahādeva there, a man is liberated. There is no doubt about it. The man who, having gone there, especially worships the fig tree, secures on the earth desires entertained by his mind.

This is (the description of) Gaṭeśevara-tīrtha.

9-10. Thence a man should devoutly go to the holy place well-known as Vaidyanātha. A man, having bathed at the holy

place and engaged in worshipping Śiva, and gratifying his dead ancestors, would obtain the fruit of all sacrifices. Vijaya, born from the god, and destroying all sins (is there), seeing whom a man always gets his desired objects.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYSIX

Pāṇḍurāryā-tīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-8. A greater holy place than Vaidyanātha, giving all kinds of supernormal powers and best of all holy places, is said to be excellent. Dharma's son, having powerfully taken a tax from Bibhīṣaṇa, the lord of demons, commenced the great sacrifice Rājasūya. When the southern quarter was conquered (i.e. regions of the south were conquered), Nakula, Pāṇḍu's son installed with great devotion Pāṇḍurāryā, giving enjoyment and salvation. A man, having bathed in the water of the Sābhramatī and having saluted Pāṇḍurāryā, obtains the eight superhuman (yogic) powers like the one of becoming as small as an atom[1] and great intelligence. No doubt should be raised in this case. If a man with a pure mind salutes Pāṇḍurāryā, it should be regarded by those who know the truth, to be a worship offered for a year. A man, having cast his body near Pāṇḍurāryā at that holy place, reaches the peak of Kailāsa and would be an attendant of Caṇḍeśvara. Formerly, Hanūmat practised there a very difficult penance. Due to the prowess of the holy place, the power to jump over the ocean was produced (in Hanūmat).

1. Aṇimā—One of the eight supehuman powers or siddhis. The eight powers are: (1) Aṇimā—The power of becoming as small as an atom. (2) Laghimā—The power of assuming excessive lightness at will. (3) Prāpti—The power of reaching anything e.g. touching the moon with a finger-tip. (4) Prākāmya—Irresistible will. (5) Mahiman—The power of increasing the size at will. (6) Īśitva—Superiority, greatness. (7) Vaśitva—The power of subduing passions. (8) Kāmāvasāyitva—Suppression of desires.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYSEVEN

Caṇḍeśa, Gaṇatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-2. The holy place superior to this holy place is known as Caṇḍeśa, where god Caṇḍeśa, giving prosperity, dwells perpetually. Having seen him a man is freed from the sin done through ignorance. All the deities coming together erected a city. O great goddess, it is known by the name Caṇḍeśa.

This (is the description of) Caṇḍeśa-tīrtha.

3-8. A holy place superior to this is Gāṇapatya well-known on the earth; it is fashioned near Sābhramatī (bank), O goddess. Having bathed there, O goddess, a man is released; there is no doubt about it. I think all the holy places on the earth including the ocean, abandoned (their places) and came to this very wonderful holy place for the good of the people. A man of a pure heart who has controlled his senses, performing a śrāddha there, obtains the fruit due to all sacrifices. Whatever is offered after dedicating it to the dead ancestors at the Gaṇa-tīrtha, all that is reqained quickly by the grace of the Lord of Gaṇas. A man, having bathed at the holy place, should give a bull to a brāhmaṇa; he, going beyond all the worlds, would go to the highest position.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYEIGHT

Vārtraghnīsaṅgamatīrtha

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-4. Thence, O great goddess, a man should go where Vārtraghnī has joined Sābhramatī and where Śakra got a contact with that auspicious one. Men with their minds controlled bathe there. A man, bathing there, would obtain that fruit which

is that of ten horse-sacrifices. A man who performs a śrāddha there, (and offers) piṇḍas of powdered sesamum, purifies seven preceding and seven succeeding generations. A man after bathing at the confluence and worshipping Gaṇanāyaka, is not overcome by dangers, and is not abandoned by glory.

Pārvatī said:

5-6. Please tell (me), to commence which mission Indra had come to this world from heaven; so also what is the etymological explanation (of the name of) the river Vārtraghnī. Tell me also about the confluence which continuously makes the city of Indra full of the sound (made) by gods and brāhmaṇas.

Mahādeva said:

7-15. In this world, this question had come in old days. There was a great, righteous, well-known king Yudhiṣṭhira. He asked righteous Bhīṣma who was but knowledge incarnate. I shall tell you what he had said, O goddess. The thrilling war between Vṛtra and Indra took place for ten thousand and ten hundred years. Then, Indra who was defeated, entered into an agreement with Vṛtra and abandoned the proceeding, and sought my shelter, O innocent one. On the auspicious confluence of Vārtraghnī (with Sābhramatī), he pleased Śaṅkara (i.e. me), O goddess. I then appeared to him in the sky. From the ash that fell from my body on the bank of Kāśyapī, a Phallus named Bhasmagātra was fashioned. Brahmā has installed Bhūteśvara, Bhasmagātra. Merely by its sight, (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder would perish. Having performed a śrāddha there (a man) gets freed from all sins in the (various) ages. Then I was very much pleased with the veay noble Indra. (I said to him:) "O god, I shall give you all that you desire. By means of this thunderbolt you will quickly kill Vṛtra."

Indra said:

16-20. O best god, in your very presence I shall kill the unconquerable son of Diti, by your grace.

Saying so, Indra went to (i.e. marched against) the demon. At that time drums sounded, especially in the army of gods. Tabors, small drums, kettle-drums, musical instruments (were sounded) in

many ways. All the demons had a great longing for existence. In a moment Indra became powerful. Seeing him intent (on killing Vṛtra) the sages and serpents praised Indra, the lord, with the praise: "Be victorious, be victorious." The form of that Indra going near (Vṛtra), desiring to fight, and being praised by the sages, was quite unbearable.

Mahādeva said:

21-37a. O goddess, hear from me the marks that suddenly appeared in Indra's body in the battle. He was fearful with his mouth blazing; there was great paleness; his body was much trembling; his breath became hot. There was severe horripilation; breathing was heavy. Very fearful meteors fell; and vultures, hawks, herons crying fearfully, came near him, and revolved like a wheel round him. Then that Indra, mounted upon an elephant, came there. Indra, with his hand holding the thunderbolt raised, approached the demon. That lord of gods gave out a superhuman cry. Indra dropped the thunderbolt on the demon Vṛtra who was exerting. The thunderbolt was great, very bright and resembled the destructive fire at the end of the world. Indra knocked down Vṛtra on the shore of the ocean. Then all around there was a great sound; Seeing Vṛtra fearful to all gods killed, a large shower of flowers fell on Indra's head. Then the lord, having killed the fearful lord of demons, being praised and accompanied by gods, entered his capital. Then from Vṛtra's body an excellent lustre came out. It was Brahmahatyā (i.e. the embodied form of the sin due to a brāhmaṇa's murder), that was very fierce, fearful and scaring the worlds. Her face was terribly deformed, black and tawny. She wore a string of skulls, was very emaciated, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. She was smeared with blood, most sinful, smelling like fish, and very dreadful. O great goddess, O best goddess, having moved out, she having a form like that and fearful, then looked for Indra. Running out, she, on seeing the very lustrous Indra seized him by his neck, and clung to it at that time. Confounded due to the fear caused by that Brahmahatyā he hid in a lotus-fibre, and remained there for many hosts of years. Seized by her, he became motionless, O goddess.

Indra tried to destroy her. (But), O great goddess, he was not able to destroy her.

37b-42. Due to being seized by her, Indra, reduced to an undesirable form, went to Brahmā, and worshipped him with his head (bent down). Knowing that Indra was seized due to the sin of the murder of an excellent brāhmaṇa (viz. Vṛtra), Brahmā then thought, O best goddess. She, thinking of Brahmā, approached Brahmā and spoke (these) words to him: "O revered god, O you who cut off the pride (of the arrogant), I have approached you. Please tell me what I should do, O god." "O young lady, release this king of gods. Do what is dear to me. Tell me, what I should do for you today. What desire do you have?"

Hatyā said:

43. O best man, by your words, I shall go away from Indra. O god of gods, salutation to you. Give me an abode. You, desiring the preservation of the worlds, have set this limit.

Mahādeva said:

44-45. Having promised that Hatyā like that, the grandsire thought of a means to remove Indra's sin due to a brāhmaṇa's murder. Then calling Fire, Brahmā spoke (these) words: "O Jātavedas, accept the fourth portion of (the sin due to) a brāhmaṇa's murder."

Agni (Fire) said:

46. O lord, what is the cause of my release, when this murder of a brāhmaṇa is done? I like to know this properly (from you), O you who are worshipped by the worlds.

Brahmā said:

47-53. Brahmahatyā will just then abandon you, and shall live in that man who, finding you blazing, does not offer into you seeds, herbs, sesamum-seeds, roots, sacred fuel and darbhas. O Havyavāha, let your mental torment go away.

Then Fire accepted it, and the revered grandsire obtained what was dear to him. O noble one, then having called trees,

herbs, grass the grandsire started speaking (words of) this import: Then the trees, herbs, grass somehow said: "All right." They, afflicted like Fire, spoke (these) words to Brahmā: "We being told about Brahmahatyā are naturally killed. Therefore, please do not kill us again. O god, we always suffer fire, cold, rain urged by wind, so also being cut and broken."

Brahmā said:

54. This (Brahmahatyā) will go after the man who will cut or break you without any reason.

Mahādeva said:

55-57. Then the noble, great herbs and grass said, 'Yes', and after worshipping Brahmā also, they went as they had come. O best one, then the grandsire, having called the celestial nymphs, and comforting them with sweet words said (to them): "O you excellent ladies, this Brahmahatyā has come from Vṛtra. Accept her fourth portion as told by me."

The celestial nymphs said:

58. O grandsire, the time of the release of us who, by your order, have decided to take (the fourth portion of Brahmahatyā), should be thought about.

The grandsire said:

59. She will quickly come to the man who copulates with women in their menses. Let your mental torment go away quickly.

Mahādeva said:

60-63. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, the bevies of the celestial nymphs, with their minds delighted, then said, "All right", went to their respective places, and rejoiced. Then the grandsire, the god—the author of the worlds—thought of waters, and they arrived. O goddess, all of them, having come to Brahmā, of unlimited lustre, and having saluted the grandsire, said (these) words: "O god, O you who curb your enemies, O lord of gods, here we have come by your order. So order us what to do."

Btahmā said:

64. This dreadful Brahmahatyā has come to Indra from Vṛtra. Accept the fourth portion of her.

The waters said:

65-66. O lord of the worlds, let it be as you say. You will please think about the time of our release. O lord of gods, you are the highest recourse of the entire world. Which favour from others can there be, that will emancipate us from peril?

Brahmā said:

67-68. She will quickly go to that man and stay in him only, who having a small mind, and with his intellect deluded, will throw phlegm, urine and feces into you. Then you will be liberated. I am telling you this truth.

Mahādeva said:

69-71 Then, O chief goddess, Brahmahatyā left the lord of gods, and went (away). The lord of gods became very much delighted due to the direction of the god (i.e. Brahmā). In the former age, Indra met (i.e. faced) Bramahatyā. Having practised penance here, and with his mind purified, he went to heaven. Then having performed a horse-sacrifice, he became sinless. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, such is (the importance of) Vārtraghnī at the holy place (on the bank) of Sābhramatī.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYNINE

Varāhatīrtha

Maheśa said:

1-6. Then the divine river after her confluence with Vārtraghnī, has entered with Bhadrā into the ocean, the abode of Varuṇa. The ocean also, having come there with a desire to do what is dear to her, and due to his affection for Sābhramatī,

brought about the pleasing union. Bhadrā who was the friend of Subhadrā formerly, actually taking the form of Śrī, helped her on the way. Their confluence on the northern shore of the ocean is meritorious. A man who, after bathing (there) offers pure water, after saluting Varāha, would obtain Varuṇa's place. Lord Viṣṇu entered the ocean along that path, vanquished all the demons, the enemies of gods, then the god, Yajñavarāha, agitated the ocean, sported there, for a very long time, and came out through Kardamāla.

Pārvatī said:

7. O god, tell me in detail the entry of Yajñavarāha into the Sābhramatī and his exit through Kardamāla.

Mahādeva said:

8-11. I shall tell you about this sport of Viṣṇu (in the incarnation of) Varāha, in the interior of the earth, done formerly. O daughter of the Himālaya Mountain, listen. He who is actually the lord, took up the form of a boar. Having taken up the form for the success of the mission of the gods, the lord of gods, holding the divine earth (on his tusks), came out of the place (called) Kardama. O beautiful lady, a great holy place has come about there. A man who bathes there, enjoys salvation. There is no doubt about this. A man should perform a śrāddha here for the release of his dead ancestors. Freed with them, he goes to the great world giving happiness.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY

Saṅgamatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-5. A holy place superior to this holy place is called Saṅgama. Here that Sābhramatī Gaṅgā has joined the ocean. A man should bathe and give gifts there. Having bathed here,

even those who are great sinners, get salvation. One desiring the good of his kinsmen, should offer a śrāddha there. When a śrāddha is performed here, the man would certainly live in the world of the dead ancestors. At that place where god Sāgara (i.e. the divine Ocean) always joins Gaṅgā, (even) the murderer of a brāhmaṇa is freed. Then what to say of other sinners? When dull-witted men do not know about the holy place there, then a holy place in my name should be fashioned.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYONE

Ādityatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-4. Near the confluence is a good holy place (Sattīrtha) well-known in the world, called Āditya. There was not and there will not be a holy place superior to it. One should visit it, and bathe. Worship should be done with a blue lotus, an arka flower and also with karavīras. Men should always perform a śrāddha and offer gifts there. This Ādityaka-tīrtha is pure and destroys sins. This holy place gives religious merit even to great sinners who visit it.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYTWO

Nīlakaṇṭha

Mahādeva said:

1-4. A holy place superior to that holy place is well known as Nīlakaṇṭha. One desiring salvation should always visit it. By (offering) bilva-leaves, incense, lamps and on seeing Nīlakaṇṭha a man gets the desired object. In a secluded place he

(i.e. the deity) highly devoted to fasting, always dwells. He gives to people whatever they long for. O great goddess, that Kāśyapī is well-known in Kali (age).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYTHREE

Durgāsaṅgamatīrṭha

Mahādeva said:

1-6. One should bathe there where that river Sābhramatī has joined Durgā and the ocean, O goddess. (Such men) become free from blemishes in this Kali age. There is no doubt about this. A man should perform a śrāddha at the confluence of Durgā. Having gone there, one should especially feed brāhmaṇas and offer (them) cows, buffaloes. This (river) is blessed, most blessed, pure and destroyer of sins, seeing which, O goddess, a man is freed from sins. This river Sābhramatī should be known as Gaṅgā. O goddess, in the Kali age she especially gives fruits for a long time. Even if there were hundreds of tongues in my mouth I shall not be able to describe her merits.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYFOUR

The Rise of Nṛsiṁha

Mahādeva said:

1-4. O goddess, listen to a vow difficult to be had in the three worlds, having heard about which men are free from sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. The becoming visible of the self-manifested one is for the happiness of the devotees. A day or a group of days has become meritorious. O goddess, he, by uttering whose name a man gets eternal salvation, is the highest

soul, and the cause of causes. He is the universal soul; has the form of the universe; the revered one is the lord of all. That Nṛsiṁha, the noble one, who has held twelve suns, has become manifest with a desire for the good of (his) devotees.

Pārvatī said:

5. O best god, innumerable incarnations are enumerated. O master, O lord of the universe, tell me about the greatest abode called Nṛsiṁha, by merely knowing which one would obtain a world (full) of happiness.

Mahādeva said:

6-7. Prahlāda, the best among the wise, spoke (these) words to the best one who had killed his father, and who, after killing Hiraṇyakaśipu, was seated comfortably, and on the lap of whom, the god of gods and the lord of world, Prahlāda was seated.

Prahlāda said:

8-9. Salutation to you, O revered Viṣṇu having the wonderful form of Nṛsiṁha. O greatest god, I am your devotee; and am really asking you. O lord, in me unbroken devotion is produced in many ways. Tell me, O lord, how (i.e. why) I have become dear to you. (Tell me) its cause.

Nṛsiṁha said:

10-13a. O very wise one, I shall tell it to you. Listen with a concentrated mind, the cause of your devotion and of your being dear (to me). In olden times you were born (as the son) of a brāhmaṇa. You did not study. You, Vasudeva by name, were addicted to prostitutes. Greedy for the company of prostitutes, you enjoyed honey and ghee, and did not do any good deed in that existence. Due to the power of my vow, devotion (for me) in you was produced, O sinless one.

Prahlāda said:

13b-14. O lord of gods, tell me in detail, what was the vow and of whose son? What bad deeds did I, addicted to a prostitute, do? Favouring me, now tell all that (to me).

Nṛsiṁha said:

15-27. Formerly Brahmā observed this excellent (vow) for the sake of creation. Due to the power of my vow he created the mobile and the immobile. God (Śiva) observed this vow for killing Tripura. Due to the power of this vow Tripura was knocked down. Many other ancient deities, sages, and very wise kings practised this excellent vow. Due to the efficacy of this vow all got success. They became dear to me. Having enjoyed many pleasures in heaven, they merged in me. O Prahlāda, enter me: since for (some) mission you had a form separate from my body. Even after hundreds of kalpas, they will not be reborn. A poor man obtains wealth like that of a rich man. One desiring an object will get it; one desiring a kingdom will obtain an excellent kingdom; one desiring a (long) life will get it (as long) as that of Śiva. It makes women free from widowhood; gives sons and prosperity. It brings about wealth, grains, and destroys grief. To those women or men who practise this excellent vow I give happiness, and the fruit of enjoyment and salvation. What is the use of talking much about the fruit of this vow? Neither I nor Śaṅkara is able to tell the fruit of my vow.

Prahlāda said:

O revered one, by your favour I have heard (about) this excellent vow; have heard about the fruit of this vow. Now I desire to hear about the cause of my devotion for you, and the excellent manner of this vow. O lord, in which month and on what day would it take place? O god, please tell it in detail, (tell also about) the manner, having performed in which, one would obtain its fruit.

Nṛsiṁha said:

28-33. O child Prahlāda, listen attentively to the vow. One should observe it on the Caturdaśī of the bright half of Vaiśākha. It should be observed with my manifestation, giving me pleasure. O son, listen to my becoming visible for the happiness of my devotees. For (some) other reason, this pure holy place, destroying sins and known as Maulistāna, came up in the

Western direction. In that holy place (lived) a well-known brāhmaṇa, master of the Vedas, Hārīta by name, and highly devoted to knowledge and meditation. O lord, his wife was very meritorious and always of virtuous nature. Her name was Lilāvatī and she was always under the control of her husband. O son, for a long time they practised a severe vow. Surely twenty-one yugas passed (while they were practising penance). Then at that holy place the lord appeared in person before the two.

Nṛsiṁha said:

34-46. O brāhmaṇa, I shall undoubtedly give you whatever you desire.

Then the two said to him: "If a boon is to be given to me, then let a son like you be (born) to me now only. "O son", I had then said, "I am certainly your son. But as I am eternal, I shall not remain in the womb. I am the Creator of all beings; I am actually the Supreme Spirit, and greater than the great; since I am eternal, I shall not stay in the womb." Then Hārīta said: "Let it certainly be so." Since then I have stayed at (this) holy place for my devotee. The best devotee, after coming here, should see me. I shall always destroy his entire suffering. And for this reason to those best men who observe this vow in the proper manner, there is no fear. A man who meditates on and worships him in a child's form especially along with the two, at night, would become Viṣṇu. He should always worship him, having four arms, large fangs, of the nature of Death, and unassailable, resembling a crore of suns, and unconquerable for a crore of Yamas; (he should always worship him who has a face like that of a lion, and has the body of a man, who is Nṛsiṁha, a divine lion, and of the nature of Death. Knowing this in particular, he would go to my place, and would observe the vow which is very pure, which gives a large mass of wealth, which undoubtedly gives the devotees salvation in the end, and which, being practised gives the fruit of a thousand Dvādaśī (vows). My vow should be observed on a Saturday when the Sun is in conjunction with the Svātī constellation,

when there is the siddhiyoga[1] of Planets and in a division of the day[2] (a karaṇa) known as Vaṇija. Knowing that this my day destroys crores of Hatyās, is associated with all auspicious conjunctions of stars, destroys sins (he should observe the vow). He who would pass my day (without the vow) is a sinner.

47-61. He who does not observe it goes to hell (and lives there) as long as the Moon and the Sun are (in the sky). When the day of (i.e. sacred to) me has arrived, O child, my devotee, after brushing his teeth and having subdued his senses, should (declare) before me the intention to observe this vow: "Today I shall practise your vow. Make it free from difficulties." He who observes the vow should not talk wicked words etc. Then at mid-day, with the accompaniment of a Vedic hymn, the wise one should bathe in pure water in a river etc., at home or in a natural pond or an auspicious lake. For the appeasement of all sins, he should bathe in the proper manner (after smearing his body) with clay, cowdung and dhātrī-fruit, so also with sesamum seeds. After putting on two auspicious garments, he should begin the daily rite. Then having smeared his house, he should draw an auspicious octagon. Having placed on it a pitcher with jewels, he should put on it a vessel full of rice. Then having fashioned, according to his (financial) capacity, my golden image along with that of Lakṣmī, he should install them there. Then having bathed them with (the collection of five sweet things called) pañcāmṛta[3], he should invite å brāhmaṇa preceptor, not very greedy, and knowing the holy texts; keeping him in front (i.e. in his presence) he should worship the deity. He should erect there a pavilion adorned with bunches of flowers. And with flowers of the season, I should be worshipped in the proper manner. Then I should be worshipped in the sixteen ways of doing homage to a deity, with hymns and restraints. Then I should be especially worshipped with the Purāṇic hymns. He who would then offer sandal with camphor, mixed with thick saffron and flowers of the seasons, so also Tulasī-leaves to Nṛsiṁha, becomes free. There is no

1. Siddhiyoga—A particular auspicious conjunction of Planets.
2. Karaṇa—A division of the day. These Karaṇas are eleven.
3. Pañcāmṛta—A collection of five sweet things used in worshipping deities. They are: milk, sugar, ghee, curd and honey.

doubt about this. He should offer incense of kṛṣṇa agaru, always dear to Viṣṇu, to the preceptor and to Viṣṇu for accomplishing all his desired objects. A great lamp, destroying the darkness of ignorance should be offered. Then he should wave the great light with the sound of bells. "O lord of Lakṣmī, I am offering you eatables, sugar along with articles of food and meal. Destroy all (my) sins." This is the hymn for offering of eatables:

62-73. "O Nṛsiṁha, Acyuta, Deveśa, on this auspicious day of your birth, I, giving up all enjoyments, will observe a fast. O lord, be pleased with that. Keep away (from me) a sinful existence." With the sounds of songs and musical instruments, he should keep awake during the night. Everyday a Purāṇa containing stories about Śrī Nṛsiṁha should be read. Then, in the morning after having bathed he should, gratifying me, worship me in the manner told before. With his mind steady, he should make an offering to Viṣṇu before me. Then gifts, to be told hereafter, should be given to worthy brāhmaṇas for winning (i.e. enjoying) both the worlds. The golden (image of) the deity pleases me. He (also) gives a cow, land, sesamum-seeds, gold etc. to a brāhmaṇa. A bed along with a mattress filled with cotton and with seven (kinds of) grains should be given. Other (articles) also should be given to his capacity. He should not indulge in dishonesty with regard to wealth, with the desire for the fruit as mentioned (before). Then he should feed brāhmaṇas, and give them good presents. Even the poor should observe (this vow) according to their capacity. All the castes are entitled to (observing) my vow. It should be especially observed by my devotees highly devoted to me. Then (follows) the hymn containing the prayer: "O lord of gods, emancipate from the painful ocean of the mundane existence those men who are born in my family and also those men who will be born therein. O you lord of the world lying on Śeṣa, give the support of your hand to me who am plunged in the ocean of sins, overcome by diseases and beings moving in water, and who am in a great misery. O lord of gods, by means of this vow, give me enjoyment and salvation."

74-97. Having thus appealed to the deity, and having dismissed the deity in the proper manner, he should offer all the

presents etc. to the preceptor. Having pleased the brāhmaṇas with presents etc. he should dismiss them. Engaged in meditation upon me, he should eat with his relatives. He who, though poor, certainly fasts (on) the Caturdaśī, certainly gets freed from sin committed during (the previous) seven existences. He who would devoutly listen to (the account of) this vow, would remove the sin (even) of the murder of a brāhmaṇa by merely hearing it. A man who would narrate this pure, great secret, would obtain all his desired objects. That is always the fruit of this vow. He who, according to his capacity, observes this vow at the time called madhyāhna (mid-day) and would, with great devotion, worship Līlāvatī along with the sage (Hārīta) and Śrī Nṛsiṁha also, would obtain eternal salvation. He who, having gone to that holy place, would worship Śrī Nṛsiṁha, obtains his desired fruit due to the grace of Śrī Nṛsiṁha. "O Śrī Nṛsiṁha, O you of a great form, O you unconquerable for a crore of Deaths, O Bhairaveśa, O Hara, O you destroyer of misery, O you of the form of a child, salutation to you. Salutation to Śrī Nṛsiṁha of the form of a child, and to the child, to the all-pervading, to Sunanda, to him manifesting his own form, of the nature of all beings, to the lord of all, of the nature of the heaven. Salutation to you, O ocean of pity, dwelling in the orb of the Sun, of the form of twenty-four, and of terrible fire at the time of the deluge, to Nṛsiṁha, fully of the form of the world. That god Nṛsiṁha, conqueror of Vīrabhadra, held the very much heated orbs of twelve Suns on his forhead." There is especially very auspicious and charming Sindhu river. O beautiful lady, near her even now there is a city, always known as Maulistāna, and fashioned by gods. There is the residence of the noble Hārīta. Līlāvatī also certainly stays there only. There would be an echo near the river Sindhu. But when Kali age has arrived, many sinful mlecchas certainly live there. If a man loudly utters the word 'Nṛsiṁha, Nṛsiṁha', like the word 'Nṛsiṁha' which, great and wonderful, came up at the time of the birth of Nṛsiṁha, then, O you daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, a similar echo is produced. Those men—a killer of a brāhmaṇa, one who has stolen gold, a drunkard, or one who has violated one's preceptor's bed (i.e. his wife)—after having gone to Sindhu, and bathed in her (water), are

undoubtedly liberated by the grace of Śrī Nṛsiṁha. Those men who stay there for ten nights, should be known to be of meritorious acts. (These) my words are not false. Those castes, led by brāhmaṇas, that stay there in the Kali age, should be known to be like the mlecchas, cast out of the fold of the Vedas by the best gods. They ate flesh there, and always drank liquor; therefore, they are certainly irreligious and most sinful. O chief goddess, like brāhmaṇas not performing sandhyā, they, outside the fold of the Vedas, live there in the West. Only one sacred place called Nṛsiṁha, is very extensive, having heard about which a man is undoubtedly free from sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYFIVE

The First Chapter of the Gītā: The Anecdote of Suśarman

Pārvatī said:

1-2. O revered one, O you knowing the entire truth, through your grace I have heard various duties about Viṣṇu, which are the causes of complete crossing (of the worldly existence). Now I also desire to hear the greatness of Gītā, having heard which devotion to Viṣṇu enhances. Now tell it, O god, if I am dear to you.

The lord said:

3-4. We worship great Viṣṇu, Acyuta, resembling the hemp-flower, having the lord of birds as his seat, and lying on the bed of Śeṣa. Once Lakṣmī, delighting the three worlds, respectfully asked (Viṣṇu) enemy of Mura, comfortably seated on a charming seat.

Lakṣmī said:

5. O revered one, with what purpose are you sleeping in the Milky Oceon—you, like one who is neutral, having instituted glory in the world is it were? (*obscure*).

The lord said:

6. Hearing these words, proud through knowledge, of Lakṣmī, the destroyer of Mura, with his eyes doubting and smiling, spoke with soft words.

The lord said:

7-13 O you of a beautiful face, I am not sleepy. With my sight turned inside and pursuing the truth, I see my own body of Śiva. O goddess, that which the contemplative saints see within with their sharp intellect, which produces a continuous mass of joy and which is without a second, is the immutable light, of the nature of the self, and unharmed, resorting to which the world subsists, and which is experienced by me, and without which there is no element in the world, mobile or immobile, and having secured which, Dvaipāyana (i.e. Vyāsa) produced the holy text of the Gītā; after having thought in many ways the very intelligent one churned the holy texts of the Vedas. O chief goddess, having resorted to it, a great joy, I, with my mind delighted, appear to be sleepy in the Milky Ocean.

Having heard these limited delightful words of the enemy of Mura, Lakṣmī, with her rolling eyes full of joy, was amazed.

Lakṣmī said:

14-20. O Hṛṣīkeśa, you alone are always to be meditated upon by the self-controlled ones. Therefore, I have a great curiosity to hear from you about that which is greater than you. O Acyuta, tell me if there is someone different from you who are the lord, the creator and the destroyer of the worlds.

The lord said:

O goddess, this my body is illusory and not real, and is augmented with the mass of the acts of creation, maintenance and withdrawal. O dear one, the nature of the soul is different from this. It is without duality and unity. It is free from existence and non-existence; and without beginning or end. It is pure consciousness, has acquired lustre, is beautiful due to great joy, is the form of lord, can be known only through the oneness of the soul, and is told in the Gītā.

Hearing these words of him of an unlimited lustre, she having doubt due to contradictory statement said: "If you are highest joy, and not known through speech and mind, then how does Gītā make you known. Remove this doubt of me."

The lord (Śīva) said:

21-26. Having heard the proper words of Lakṣmī, the lord told her the Gītā, the view leading one to the self, along with an old account. "O greatest goddess, I am the soul (looked at) in two ways as higher and lower. The higher is a (mere) witness, qulityless, partless and auspicious. The lower one, I am Pañcavaktra; it also remains in two forms. I, Maheśvara, the soul, am to be explained through the difference in words and meanings, as, through the words of the Gītā, my strong bond, of the nature of the objects in the mundane existence, is completely cut off; since (my two forms) Pañcavktra and Maheśvara, are dependent on its study." (*obscure*). Hearing these words of him, of the great ocean of the essence of Gītā, those afraid of the mundane existence know it through the difference between this and that. Lakṣmī asked this to him. He told her the entire greatness along with its account, remaining in major and minor parts. (*obscure*).

The lord (Viṣṇu) said:

27-31. O you beautiful lady, I shall tell you about my firm existence in the Gītā. The five faces are the five chapters in order. The (next) ten chapters are the arms; one is the belly, and the (remaining) two are the lotus-like feet. Thus the eighteen chapters are the divine forms of words. It, destroying great sins, should be known through knowledge only. Therefore, he, the very intelligent one, who studies a chapter, or half of it, or a verse or half a verse is liberated like Suśarman.

Lakṣmī said:

O lord, who was he named Suśarman? What caste did be belong to? How was his nature? Whence was he liberated? Due to which cause did his liberation take place?

The lord said:

32-47a. There was a wicked (man) named Suśarman, who was the limit of sinners (i.e. the worst sinner). He was born in the family of brāhmaṇas, who did cruel deeds, and had not realised the self. He did not meditate (upon the god), did not mutter (hymns), did not perform a sacrifice, did not honour his guests; but due to his possessing strength he indulged in sensual objects only. He was always engaged in husbandry, subsisted on leaves, loved liquor, ate flesh; for a very long time he passed his time like this. Desiring to fetch leaves, he moved into a sage's orchard. The dull-witted one was bitten there by a deadly serpent. Having died, and having gone to many hells, he came (i.e. was born) again and was born as a bull. A lame man bartered him for his subsistence. With a great difficulty, he, carrying him (i.e. the lame man) on his back, passed seven or eight autumns. He was maimed, his eyes rolled, and vomited foam continuously. He neither lived nor died due to his own acts. Some time the lame man made him revolve speedily. He suddenly fell on the ground and fainted. As this world is attracted by curiosity, in the crowd (around him) a meritorious man gave his religious merit to him. Some others also, remembering their own deeds, gave (him their religious merit). There was (in the crowd) a courtezan also, leading the course of the worldly life; and not knowing her religious merit, she gave (him) some religious merit. By the servants of Death he was taken to the city of the dead. He was released due to his being meritorious as a result of the religious merit given by the courtezan. Again he came to the earth and was born in the house of noble persons—brāhmaṇas. He remembered his (former) existence; after a long time he, desiring to know religious merit removing his ignorance, approached the courtezan, and proclaimed himself; he asked her. She told (him): "This parrot, living in the cage daily tells me. My heart was purified due to that, and I divided my religious merit." The parrot, asked by the two, started narrating an account that had formerly taken place, after remembering his former existence also.

The parrot said:

47b-55. Formerly I was a learned man, deluded by the pride of my learning. Due to my hatred for loveliness I was jealous even of virtuous persons. After (some) time, having departed from life, I then reached abhorred worlds. Then, I who very much censured (my) good preceptor, was born in the stock of a parrot. In the summer season, I, the wicked one, was also separated from my parents. In the summer, in which the roads were heated, I was brought by best sages and was dropped in a cage in the hermitage, the resort of the great. Hearing from the sons of the sages revising with great care the first chapter of the Gītā, I repeatedly recited it. In the meanwhile, a fowler indulging in stealing, snatched and sold me.

Thus the account was told.

The lord said:

This chapter was enunciated before. Due to that he dispelled his sin. With his heart purified by that the best bird was released. Thus talking to one another, and telling its greatness, they, the wise ones, constantly muttering it, obtained salvation in the house. Therefore, for him who recites or listens to the first chapter, or would remember or study it, the ocean of the mundane existence is not difficult to cross.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYSIX

The Second Chapter of the Gītā

The lord said:

1-17. The excellent account of the first chapter has been narrated. O Lakṣmī, also listen to the importance of the other chapters. In the southern direction, in the city called Purandara, (a city) of the teachers of sacred texts, there lived a rich man, well-known as Devaśarman. He honoured guests; he was a learned person; he was proficient in the Vedas and (other)

sacred texts; he offered hosts of sacrifices and was always dear to the ascetics. Offering oblations into fire, he pleased the gods for a long time. The religious-minded one did not obtain conclusive peace. Desiring beatitude, he everyday waited upon ascetics with truthful intentions, with not a few rites. When he was doing like this, and when a long time had elapsed, some Muktakarman formerly appeared on the earth. He had direct knowledge (of the supreme spirit); had no desire; had fixed his gaze on the tip of his nose; his mind was tranquil; he meditated on the highest Brahman; and was full of joy. The learned one, having held (i.e. touched) his feet with an humble mind, offered him reception due to a guest in the proper manner. Bowing to the ascetic, pleased with his pure disposition, he asked him about his final beatitude. The sage told him about a teacher, a goatherd, named Mitravat, (living) in the city named Saupura. He, having saluted his feet, went to the prosperous Saupura and saw a large forest in the region to its north. It was charming with the fragrance of many flowers tossed by the wind. It had filled the quarters with the sound of the humming of the intoxicated bees. In that forest on the bank of a river, he saw Mitravat with his eyes fixed and seated on a stone-slab. He was surrounded by animals which, though mutually hostile, had given up their natural hostility, in the garden, resplendent with slow breezes. He was as it were sprinkling nectar on the earth, with (his mind) full of pity and charming with the delight of destiny, when the herds of deer were peaceful. He, excited and with his mind pleased, and with his head slightly bent, politely approached him too and honoured him. Then the learned one, with his mind concentrated, remained by the side of Mitravat. He, being composed, asked him whose time of meditation was over.

Devaśarman said:

18. I desire to know myself. So, regarding this desire, please teach me the means that has secured success.

The lord said:

19a. Having thought for a while, that Mitravat also spoke like this:

Mitravat said:

19b-38. O learned one, know an old account being narrated by me. On the bank of Godāvarī, there was a city named Pratiṣṭhāna. There was (a man) Durdama by name (born) in the family of the learned. There was king Vikrama, being served (by people); everyday he accepted gifts, and (thus) fed his belly. Binding him with the noose of Death, Death took him to Yama's abode. Having experienced torments in all hells, he was born in a family of brāhmaṇas of a bad character. He was attended by learning (obtained) in the previous birth. He married a haughty girl from a mean family. In course of time, she abandoned childhood and entered youth. Her breasts were stout, buttocks fine, eyes perturbed with passion; she did not put up with her husband of a bad character; and loved other men as husbands. Desiring to earn her livelihood, she went out of the city. For a long time she was sexually united with a lustful man born as a cāṇḍāla. As a result of union with him she conceived, and a daughter was born. She was his wife only due to a former sinful attachment. The same, (getting) old, was born as a female imp. Due to bad company and attachment to bad women she became wicked-minded. Having an ardent desire for tasting blood she ate a diseased fowler. She roamed in the fearful forest, and was outcast by people, on seeing her. Having reached the world of the dead, the fowler became a tiger, due to the efficacy of the killing, after having stayed in fierce hells. She too, of a wicked mind, died in course of time. Having gone to dreadful hells, she was born as a female goat in my house. O learned one, I, not noticing a fearful tiger, as it were devouring everything, looked after her and others. Seeing him to have come, I, afraid of death, left the flock of the female goats, and ran (away) due to fear. The tiger, remembering former hostility came near. The female goat quickly went near him having plough-like fangs. She giving up her fear and abandoning her hostility, stood there unrestrained. The tiger too, free from hatred, was quiet. Seeing him like that, she started speaking: "O tiger, lift me up carefully and eat me as desired by you. You are not having this intention. How did you give up your hostile intention?" Hearing these words the tiger, free from

hatred, then spoke these words: "At this place my hatred has gone (away); my hunger and thirst have passed (away). Therefore, I do not long for you who have stood by me."

39-55. Thus addressed, she spoke again: "How did I become fearless? What do you know to be the cause of this? If (you know), please tell (it) to me". The tiger, thus addressed (by her), again spoke to the female goat: "I do not know it". Then they moved out to ask the great one who had gone ahead. The two having come to me, asked me who was much amazed. With the two I asked the lord of monkeys. The monkey, O brāhmaṇa, (on being) asked by me, respectfully said to him these words: "O goatherd, listen; about this I shall tell (you) an old account. See, this great abode was formerly in a forest. Here Druhiṇa had installed Śiva's Phallus. An itntelligent (person), Sukarman by name, practising penance, worshipped Śiva honoured by gods after having brought wild flowers. Having bathed (the Phallus) with the river-water, he lived there just by that deed (of worshipping Śiva). After a long time a guest came to him. Having fetched fruits, he offered them to him. Being pleased with that hospitality, he said to Sukarman: "What is the root of the act, enjoying the fruit of which you are staying here? Why do you just desire to live in the way of servile imitation?" He, thus addressed by the sage who was mostly pleased, spoke in reply clear words, most beneficial to himself: "O learned one, I really know the fruit of this act. Śambhu is served merely for the desire of enjoyment. The fruit—the result—of this service of Śiva is that you will favour me, knowing my desire." Having heard these true and pleasant words of him, the ascetic, being pleased, wrote the second chapter of the Gītā on the stone-slab and ordered the brāhmaṇa to recite and study it quickly: "Your desire will easily bear fruit everywhere." The intelligent one, speaking like this, disappeared (even) when he was watching. He, being amazed, constantly remained (reciting the Gītā) by his order. Then, after a long time, wherever the devout one, of a pleased mind, went, the penance grove became quiet. There was no antagonism, no hunger, no thirst, no fear due to the penance of him, muttering the second chapter.

Mitravat said:

56-62. Thus addressed by him, and having heard a great story, I, allowed by the pleased one, went with the female goat and the tiger. Having gone to the stone-slab I saw the chapter that is written (there). One should recite it. By its revision only, he reached the excellent, concluding limit of penance. O good one, therefore, you should everyday recite that chapter. Due to that your salvation will not be a remote occurrence.

Devaśarman was (thus) advised by Mitravat himself. Bowing down and honouring him, he went to the city of Purandara. Having met there in a temple certain wise man, he told him this account, and then recited this chapter. Taught by him, the pure-minded one carefully recited the second chapter and obtained the blameless, highest position. I have thus told you the account of the second chapter. Now listen, O Indirā, I shall tell you the importance of the third chapter.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYSEVEN

The Story of Jaḍa: The Importance of the Third Chapter

The lord said:

1-11. A brāhmaṇa, named Jaḍa, of the family of Kauśika (living) in Janasthāna, abandoned the acts proper for his caste, and fixed his mind on living as a merchant. He was addicted to others' wives; he played with dice; he drank liquor; he was always engrossed in hunting. Thus he passed his time. When his wealth was exhausted, he started stealing. He seized the wealth of those who desired to perform sacrifices. For trading he went away and having secured musk, kṛṣṇāgaru (sandal), and chowries bright like the moonlight, brought them from (a place) at a distance of five or six yojanas. The next day he, having crossed a great distance, was overpowered by robbers when the sun was setting and darkness was spreading, and was quickly killed by them. Due to his loss of religious merit he

was born as a very fierce goblin. He was thirsty; he was oppressed by hunger; he licked the corners of his mouth; his hair was raised; he had big shanks; his mighty belly had sunk into his back. His body was one in which only bones were left. He very much turned his eyes wickedly. In the meanwhile, his son who was religious-minded and conversant with Vedas, very much guarded (piety) and desiring to see him, went (to look for him). Everyday he sought for news from the travellers, but did not get (any). Then, a man, his companion, arrived. Having learnt the account from him, he very much lamented for his father.

12-21a. Then the wise one, having thought, desiring to perform the obsequies, set out, with necessary materials, to go to Vārāṇasī. Having passed seven or eight nights on the way, he began offering the sandhyā prayer at the root of the tree where his father was killed. There he muttered the third chapter of the Gītā. Then a terrible sound was heard in the middle of the sky. He then saw his fierce father falling from the sky. With his mind overcome with wonder and fear, he saw before him in the sky, (his father) full of great lustre. With a concentrated mind he saw in the sky a divine aeroplane which was full of a crore of small bells and which had pervaded the quarters with its lustre. There he saw his father who had got into it and who was surrounded by divine damsels, who was being praised by sages and who had put on a yellow garment. Seeing him, he bowed down, and he (the father) blessed him. Then he asked him this account, and he too told it to him: "O son, due to the religious merit of my body, you, muttering (the third chapter of Gītā) near (me) have fortunately released me from the (effects of) acts, difficult to be abandoned. Then now desist from muttering, since that for which you did (the muttering after going) to Vārāṇasī, has come to you."

The lord said:

21b. Thus addressed, he said to his father, of a blazing lustre:

The son said:

22a. Advise me about my well-being. What else should I do?

The lord said:

22b-26a. Then the father said to the son: "O innocent one, do this. My brother has done the same act as I have done. He has gone to a terrible hell. Please release him (from th ere). My desire is: You should release others in my family who have gone to hell." Thus addressed, the son, with the palms of his hands joined, said: "Tell me, by (doing) which act I shall release them all." The father who was thus addressed, said to his son:

The father said:

26b-47. O son do that, by (doing) which I was liberated. Do that and give the religious merit springing from it. Then, they, giving up (i.e. free from) pangs like me, will soon go to that highest position of Viṣṇu.

The son, who was advised, said: "O father, if you like my words, I shall release all those denizens of hell." "Let it be so; may happiness come to you. A great dear thing has come up." Having thus directed his son, the father went to the highest position of Viṣṇu. He too, having returned from him, and having gone to Janasthāna, spent his time in the abode of the beautiful city of Śauri. For years he did what his father had told him. He gave the religious merit which he had got, and liberated the denizens of hell. In the meanwhile the servants of Viṣṇu, freeing the denizens of hell, going to the place of torture came there. He honoured them in various ways with acts of hospitality. Asked about their welfare, they spoke about complete happiness. Having thus honoured them, the wise lord of the world of dead ancestors asked them the reason of their arrival, and they told it to him: "O lord Yama, know that Śauri (i.e. Viṣṇu), lying on the bed of Śeṣa, has sent us to you to direct you. Through our mouth (i.e. through us) the god asks about your well-being. He directs (you) to release all the beings in hell." Having heard the order of Viṣṇu of unlimited lustre with his head bent down, having honoured it, he thought about something in his mind. Seeing all of them released and proud, he, followed by all of them, then went to Viṣṇu's abode. By an excellent vehicle he went where the Milky Ocean was.

Near it he saw the lord of the world, whose lustre was like many crores of suns that had risen, who was dark-blue like a blue lotus, whose lustre was mixed with that of the rays of the jewels on the hood of the serpent (Śeṣa) that was his bed, who was being seen with his mind full of joy and pleased, who was repeatedly and affectionately seen by Lakṣmī with glances full of devotion, who was served by meditating saints around him with the pupils of their eyes steady due to meditation, who was being praised by Indra in order to vanquish his antagonists, who, the heap of virtues, was being sung by words embodied, issued from the mouth of Brahman at the end of (the utterance of) the Vedic words, who was pleased and also neutral, who saw himself simultaneously with the mobile and the immobile in all beings in all stocks having their merit collected, who delighted himself with glances full of lustre, who had a body, all-pervading, and brightened by the lustre of the serpent (i.e. Śeṣa), who was dark-blue like the petal of a blue lotus or like the sky seen in the moonlight. Seeing him, he extolled him with many prayers.

Yama said:

48-60. O creator of all, salutation to (you) whose mind is pure, from whose mouths the Vedas were emitted, who are of a universal form, who are the creator. O you dreadful one due to the force of your strength, salutation to (you) Viṣṇu who destroyed the pride of the lord of demons; salutation to the excellence in preservation(?), and to the prop of the universe. Salutation to (you) who conquered the multitude of sins of all living beings, from whose eye on the forehead, that is slightly opened, lustre has sprung up. You are the lord, the soul of all the worlds and the great god. Therefore, having sent forth all devotees of Viṣṇu, you pity them. You pervade the entire world nourished by Māyā but you are not overcome by it by qualities born of it. Though you are within them, you are not overcome by the two (i.e. Māyā and its qualities). With your mind controlled, you rest within yourself in spite of your eyes turning to the objects of senses and moving towards the fruit. As you are limitless, your greatness also has no end. In this case silence alone is proper for me. How can you be the object of words?

Having praised him like this, he with the palms of his hands folded, said these words: "These vicious beings were fastened by me in pursuance of my duty. O lord of the world, order if I have to do some other piece of work." Thus respectfully addressed by him, Viṣṇu spoke, as if sprinkling (him) with nectar, with a voice deep like (the thundering of) the clouds: "I, acting as is proper for the occasion, emancipate people from sins. Having entrusted the responsibility to you, I am not sorry for the embodied beings. So do your duty. Go home." (Thus) spoke the lord. And speaking like this, the god vanished. He too came to his city. He too, having emancipated all those kinsmen of him living in various hells, himself went to Viṣṇu's heaven by an excellent vehicle.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYEIGHT

The Fourth Chapter : The Story of Two Girls

The lord said:

1. Now I shall tell (you) the greatness of the fourth (chapter) also. Listen (to it), due to which the two girls, giving up their condition as badari trees, went to heaven.

Lakṣmī said:

2-3. How did the two girls, giving up their state of being the badari trees, go to heaven? O god, who were they formerly? How did they attain prominence? I desire to hear this. O lord, please tell it. Hearing this great story I am not satisfied.

The lord said:

4-22. On the bank of the Bhāgīrathī there was a city (named) Vārāṇasī. A saint named Bharata lived there in the temple of Viśveśvara. Always absorbed in the soul, he muttered the fourth chapter carefully. Due to that study, the good one was not overcome by couples (of opposite qualities). Some

time, he, sporting, went out of the city. The ascetic saw gods who were nearby. Using one as a pillow and resting on the other with his foot, he took rest at the root of the two badari trees from which fruits fell. When the ascetic went from there, the couple of the badari trees became dry, leafless and branchless within five or six days. The two (trees) then were born somewhere in the house of brāhmaṇas. The pair, growing for seven years, (while) sporting saw an ascetic who had come from distant regions. Seizing his feet, they spoke words that were true and pleasant. "O sage, due to your favour only we two were liberated. Abandoning our condition as badari trees, we have obtained human birth." The sage, thus addressed by them, having forgotten (what he had done) replied: "O girls, when, and for what reason, were you liberated by me? I do not know the cause of your being reduced to the condition of badari (trees). (Please) tell it." The two girls told him the cause of their being the badari trees, and also of their liberation from that condition, difficult to give up. "On the bank of Godāvarī there is a holy place giving religious merit to men. It is known as Chinnapāpa and had reached great excellence. There (a man) named Satyatapas practised a very severe penance. In the severe summer he remained in the midst of blazing fires. In the rainy season his hair was continuously sprinkled with showers; in winter he remained in water having his body horripilated. The restrained one, always pure and practising penance in (every) season, deriving great joy, fixed his mind on the (highest) soul only. He bore great love for trees always bearing fruit and having thick shadows, and for beings free from jealousy. Even Brahmā himself everyday enquiring of him who was endowed with wisdom while aiming at the fruit of the penance, remained by his side. Due to lack of fear, that penance of him expressed in meditation upon Brahman who everyday approached him, increased. Then Indra, thinking that he was almost unseated from his prosperous position, and being afraid, put in a hundred obstacles. Calling us two, equal (to each other) from among the celestial nymphs, he ordered:

23-37. 'Create an obstacle in the penance practised by this one who, displacing me from my position, desires to enjoy (my) kingdom.' Having received this message, we two went from the

presence of Indra to Godāvarī where the sage stayed. Along with slender-bodied women, sweet and indistinct music was commenced there with deep-sounding tabors and sweet-sounding lutes. We had large buttocks, stout and large breasts, lotus-like smiling faces, and a little curly hair, shoulders on which jewelled rings were seen, eyes bright like lotuses. Our waists were slim, we had round thighs, our steps were even. Following tunes, rhythm and time, we danced; we showed our full gait conforming to the emotion. When we two danced the circle of the quarters (i.e. all the quarters) roared after first mildly starting and then increasing (the sound). Then due to the speed of the movement of our bodies there was a fragrant and very cold breeze. With the ends of our upper garments slightly blown, we manifested our breasts. Our excessive movement intensified (the passion of) love. It produced anger in the sage whose mind was unchanged. Then throwing water with his hand, he angrily cursed us: 'On the bank of Gaṅgā turn into badari-trees.' (We), being polite (said to him): 'Due to our being dependent, we acted badly. Pardon us for that behaviour.' (Thus) the sage was later propitiated. Then he, of a pious mind, brought about (our) freedom from the curse. The sage (said): 'It would last till the arrival of Bharata. You will be born among the mortals, and will have the recollection of former existences; on his having come near you, and on his remembering the fourth chapter (of the Gītā), you shall have acquittal.' We salute you, not only because you freed us from the curse but also from this dreadful worldly existence."

The lord said:

38. The sage thus addressed and honoured by them was pleased, and went as he had come. The two girls would always recite the fourth chapter.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYNINE

The Fifth Chapter: The Story of Piṅgala

The lord said:

1-17a. O goddess, I shall now narrate in brief the importance of the fifth chapter, respected by the world. O dear one, listen attentively. There was a brāhmaṇa named Piṅgala, born in the city of Purukutsa in the Bhadra country. He was born in a pure family of brāhmaṇas, expounders of the Vedas. Having abandoned (the study of) holy texts proper for his family and the Vedas, he took to instrumental music, song, dance etc. and played upon a tabor etc. Having exerted himself in (mastering) singing, dancing and instrumental music, he obtained great fame and entered the king's house. (Thus) formerly he stayed with the king. He approached others' wives and enjoyed them with an undivided mind. Then he, puffed up with pride and unrestrained, always told him in private the weak points of others. His wife was Aruṇā by name, who was born in a mean family. She moving with a lover and looking for (paramours), took him to be a hindrance, and in her house at night she killed him by cutting off his head and buried him in the ground. Deprived of his life, he went to Yama's abode. Having lived in invincible hells, he was born as a vulture in a solitary forest. She too, casting her body due to fistula of the pudendum went to dreadful hells, and was born as a female parrot in that forest. The vulture remembering his former enmity, tore her wandering here and there with a desire to take grains, with his sharp talons. Then the vulture ran after the female parrot falling into a human skull, and he too was killed by bird-catchers. His wife (i.e. the female parrot) died there in the water in the human skull. The very cruel vulture having gone there, got drowned into that only. The two, taken by Yama's servants, went to the world of the manes. The two, entertaining fear, remembered the wicked deeds formerly done by them. Then Yama noticed their censurable deeds, and suddenly also noticed their great auspicious deed in bathing in it (i.e. in the human skull) and dying. Then he permitted the two to go to their

desired world; though their minds were unassailable, they were amazed at remembering their own sins.

17b-24. Approaching and bowing they said to Yama: "We have collected censurable sins before. (Then) what is the cause for our (going to the) desired worlds? (Please) tell it to us." Thus addressed by them, Yama then spoke these words to them: "On the bank of Gaṅgā there lived an excellent brāhmaṇa Baṭu by name. He was alone, without the feeling of mineness, tranquil, free from attachment and jealousy. He always repeated the fifth chapter of the Gītā. With his soul purified due to that religious merit, he, though a sinner, realised the eternal Brahman on hearing it after he cast his body. His soul, whose body was purified by the Gītā, was purified. Having reached that water in his skull, you two became pure. Therefore, you go to the worlds desired by you who are purified by the fifth chapter of the Gītā." Thus advised by him, the impartial one, they got into a divine car and went to the position of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY

The Sixth Chapter: The Story of Raikya

The lord said:

1-20. O you of an excellent face, I shall tell you the importance of the sixth chapter, hearing which men have salvation on hand. On the bank of Godāvarī there is a great city Pratiṣṭhāna where, O you of smiling eyes, I, named Pippaleśa, dwell. There swans remove the fatigue of the self-controlled ones with cold sprays from the cavities in their wings on the bank of Godāvarī. The Godāvarī-water made fragrant with the pollen from the cups of throbbing lotuses is praiseworthy as it makes people free from old age. Fie upon the nectar of the lord of herbs (i.e. the Moon), destroying sins! There the best sages touch the faces of the Mahārāṣṭra women bathing (in Godāvarī), misunderstanding them to be fully bloomed lotuses. There the sporting Mahārāṣṭra beauties snatch (by surpassing) the humming of the

bees the ascetics' minds also. There the Moon everyday wanes on seeing the face of a woman sporting on the top of a very high mansion. The sloping roof of a very high mansion is touched by sages and gandharvas with rays of great gems unsteady due to breezes (blowing) over dūrvā and sandal(?). In it the horses of the Sun's chariot when he is going, are free from fatigue due to the breezes from the banners that are tossed. In it the Malaya mountain appears to be left with stones, when the hosts of merchants collected innumerable (pieces of) sandal wood. In it even pearls are seen to be accumulated everywhere like the bunches of the laughter of the city-deity. There lived a king named Jñānaśruti. When he, of a strong lustre, lifted the earth like a gem, even Śeṣa, resembling the Sun in radiance, was (just) a snake in general (*obscure*). The desire-yielding trees were as it were darkened through shame on seeing his matchless generosity (manifested) by the continual smoke of the sacrifices. Gods greedy of eating the sacrificial oblations did not at all leave the city of Pratiṣṭhāna. Clouds, constantly well-nourished by the streams of water used for gifts and the moonlight of his valour and the smoke of sacrifices offered by him, showered in time. Calamities did not find even the smallest place anywhere. Right courses prevailed when he ruled the earth. He everyday looked upon wells, tanks and lakes as the treasures remaining in the heart of the earth. His palace shone with white banners, like the Himālaya mountain with the multitude of the ripples of Gaṅgā. The residents of heaven (i.e. the gods) pleased with his gifts, austerities, sacrifices, protection of his subjects, came (there) to give him a boon.

21-39. Then, tossing their masses of wings, divine female and male swans, white like lotus-stalks, went out along the path in the atmosphere. Two or three of them, led by Bhadrāśva, going quickly, and talking to one another, speedily moved ahead. All of them said together to them moving ahead speedily: "Why do you go speedily? Why do you remain ahead? Along this difficult path we should go together. Do you not see very clearly before you a mass of lustre, shining brightly of king Jñānaśruti, of a virtuous form? Hearing these words of those that lagged behind the swans that were ahead laughed and contemptuously uttered (these) words loudly: "Is the lustre of this

king Jñānaśruti more severe than the dreadful lustre of Raikya, the teacher of the Vedas?" King Jñānaśruti, comfortably seated on the top of his very lofty mansion, heard these words of the swans. Then, he, full of amazement, called his charioteer, and the noble one ordered him: "Bring Raikya". The charioteer, Maha by name, having understood (these) words of the king containing nectar, manifesting joy, went out to the city Vārāṇasī, giving salvation, where god Viśveśvara, the lord of the world and the preceptor dwells. Then to the holy place called Gayā where god Gadādhara, of blooming eyes, lives to emancipate all people. Then near Śiva. Having moved many times to all holy places he went to (the holy place) Kedāra destroying sins, seeing which (even) once mortals undoubtedly are released. Enjoying desired pleasures they are freed from great sins. Then he went to the Gauḍa country where Puruṣottama dwells, by just seeing whom men go to heaven. From there he went to the city of Dvārāvatī, giving salvation, where Kṛṣṇa, dear to Rukmiṇī, lived. A mortal, having bathed at the holy place of Gomatī and having seen the five Kṛṣṇas (there), obtains salvation after having enjoyed pleasures as desired. Then the wise one having reached the sea and seen Somanātha, the god giving enjoyments and salvation, proceeded further. He reached the city of Avantikā giving pleasures and salvation, where Mahākāla Śaṅkara dwells happily sporting with Umā. Then having reached Oṁkāra, giving happiness and granting enjoyment and salvation on the bank of Narmadā, he quickly set out from there.

40-52. Then he travelled to the city named Aśvamedhakara where Lakṣmī's lord Viṣṇu, holder of Śārṅga, actually lives. Then he reached in Viṣṇugayā a tank called Loṇāra, having bathed where and drunk (water of which) a man is released from bondage. Then he went to (a city) named Kolhāpura in Rudragayā, where revered Lakṣmī, giving (i.e. causing) devotion, dwells. A man having bathed in Pañcanadī and seen Lakṣmī, enjoys pleasures as desired, and also obtains devotion. Then having visited the city named Amalagiri, and having seen Somanātha who dwells after mounting on (i.e. on the top of) Nandikeśvara, who is auspicious, has four hands, and is ready to give gifts, he would undoubtedly have salvation. Then he saw, on the bank of

Tuṅgabhadrā, Harihara, whose arms fall on the globe of the earth in every yuga. All men seeing the charming Hariharabody, enjoy pleasures according to their desire and are freed from bondage. Having remained in heaven for a hundred kalpas and being free from the bondage of the worldly existence, they see the mighty lord of the worlds, seeing whom men never see hell. Having stayed in heaven for a hundred kalpas and being free from the desire for worldly existence, they obtain salvation. No doubt should be raised about this. Then a man should reach Śrīśaila resorted to by siddhas and gandharvas, where Girijā's lover (i.e. Śiva) called Mallinātha (lives) to draw out all people from the ocean of worldly existence. Having lived in heaven for a hundred kalpas and being free from the bondage of worldly existence, they obtain salvation. No doubt should be raised about this.

53-67. Then he reached Śrīśaila resorted to by siddhas and gandharvas, where Girijā's lover named Mallinātha (lives) to draw out all people from the ocean of this worldly existence and at every opportune time shows his own lustre. Afflictions and tortures in hell of those men who see or even remember him, keep away. There is no doubt that men free from the bondage of the mundane existence enjoy happiness in heaven and obtain salvation. Here Rāma with his younger brother and accompanied by Sītā (dwells). Having bathed and drunk (water) there a man is certainly free from hell. Men having enjoyed happiness in heaven for crores of kalpas, men freed from the path of worldly existence undoubtedly go to salvation. Then returning from there, he came, seeing on the bank of Bhīmarathī the two-armed god Viṭṭhala, giving enjoyments and salvation, (to the place) where the source of Godāvarī, the great Brahmagiri, is situated. By reaching Gautamālaya where the three-eyed Śiva dwells and after bathing and drinking (water) there where there is river Godāvarī between Aruṇa and Varuṇa, (sin due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa perishes. Men, seeing Brahmagiri, rich in many holy places, obtain salvation only (after) being freed from the agony of the worldly existence. Then the charioteer, delighted by seeing holy places on both the banks of Gautamī, went to Mathurā, destroyer of sins. There gods and men worship the self-born god. It is the first great place of the lord, which gives

salvation. It is the birth-place of the lord of the three worlds, and is well-known to the Vedas and holy texts. It is resorted to by many hosts of gods and of brāhmaṇa sages. It is charming due to the bank of Kālindī; has the form and lustre of the crescent moon; being full of the residence of all holy places it is delightfully beautiful. It is known as Govardhanagiri, Dviṣadvana, and is covered by auspicious trees and creepers. It is very holy. It has the essence of the holy texts resting (there).

68-86. Then to the north he saw the city of Kāśmīra, after seeing on all sides the holy place Kururkṣetra, foremost in piety, where the lines of houses white like conches and touching the sky, have become as it were the fringes of the distinct laughter of Śiva. It is covered with golden pitchers of the garlands of devotion and grace which are as it were golden lotuses fallen from the divine river due to wind. There the banners of blue straps like rings of moss on the tops of mansions appear like the strings of pearls of the divine river. There, resorting to Kāśmīra, Sarasvatī always lives. Otherwise, how does she simultaneously write the (entire) Vedic literature? These swans that are dull due to intoxication, that have lotus-stalks in their beaks and that are the vehicles of Sarasvatī, resting there for a long time, are moving. There the swans sent by Brahmā to know a special art, shone like stars and went on all sides. The land-growing lotuses, pleasing to the touch by hand, are seen (to be used) by the enemy of the demons for the bed of the beautiful lady. There due to the statements (*upanyāsaiḥ*?) of the brāhmaṇas distinct hearing was not possible. Even a dumb man, fresh in talk, had a mass of joyous words (*obscure*). There the sky pervaded by the smoke of sacrifices, though washed by clouds, did not give up its darkness. There the place of the nectar dropped due to the great lustre of the sacrifices was seen to be distinguished by its mark. There boys resorting to the vicinity of the preceptor recite all arts by themselves due to the practice right from their birth. There the 'hum' sound of the bracelets of the brāhmaṇa wives and the humming of the wandering bees got confused. There the breeze touching again and again the cheeks of the brāhmaṇa wives, blows gently as it were through the fear of a curse. There, this god Śiva called Māṇikyeśvara, lives to give boons to men day by day. Maṇikeśa, having conquered kings,

worshipped and honoured him. Since then he took the name Māṇikyeśvara, as he was well worshipped with many majestic rubies by the Kāśmīra-king, desirous of conquest of the world. The charioteer saw at his door Raikya seated on a cart and enjoying shade and scratching his limbs. Having recognised him by the respective marks told by the king, the charioteer quickly bowed down to him and after having bowed down spoke to him.

The charioteer said:

87-98. O brāhmaṇa, in which (family are you born)? What is your name? You are constantly self-willed. Why are you resting here? What do you desire to do?

Hearing these words of him, he, full of great joy, remembered the charioteer, and said: "My desires are fulfilled. But there must be (something) as you, offering great adoration to me, are (trying to) know my mood." Taking (i.e. understanding) respectfully the intention of Raikya remaining in his mind, the charioteer slowly set out to the place where the king was. Then the charioteer with his arms folded and delighted to see his master, bowed down, and told the king the account as it took place. Then hearing his words, the king with his eyes smiling (i.e. blooming) with wonder, had a strong desire to honour Raikya. Taking a cart to which a pair of female mules was yoked, a necklace, silken garments and a thousand cows, he went to the Kāśmīra country where the meditating saint lived. Offering those (articles) to him, the king fell (prostrate) like a staff on the ground after bending with great devotion. Raikya was angry with the king. (He said:) "O bad king, O śūdra, do you not know my conduct? Take (back) this cart; lift it to which female mules are yoked; so also (take back) the garments, pearl-necklaces and the milch cows." The king, thus ordered, was afraid of Raikya. Then the king, afraid of a curse, devoutly seized the pair of his lotus-like feet, and himself said, "O brāhmaṇa, favour me."

The king said:

99. O revered one, wherefrom is this very wonderful greatness of you? Being pleased, O illustrious one, tell me accurately.

Raikya said:

100-104. O king, everyday I mutter the sixth chapter of the Gītā. Therefore, I have a heap of lustre, difficult to be borne even by gods.

Having carefully learnt from Raikya the sixth chapter of the Gītā, the wise king Jñānaśruti then suddenly became free. Raikya too, muttering near Māṇikyeśvara the sixth chapter giving salvation, obtained happiness. Gods also, who had come there, after having disguised themselves as swans for (getting) gifts, were amazed, and went out at their free will. There is no doubt that a man who constantly mutters this chapter only goes to Viṣṇu's position.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYONE

The Seventh Chatper: The Story of Śaṅkukarṇa

The lord said:

1-20. I shall tell you the greatness of the seventh chapter, having heard which the ears are filled with a flood of nectar. There was a city Pāṭaliputra by name, difficult of access, having high town-gates. A brāhmaṇa Śaṅkukarṇa Dayārṇava by name lived in it. Resorting to the profession of a vaiśya he earned much wealth. He did not gratify manes, did not worship gods. Intent on earning wealth, he fed kings. Once for auspiciousness, the fourth marriage started in another house along with his sons and kinsmen(?). On a night fit for religious acts a serpent having come from somewhere bit the forearm of him who was asleep. He who was just bitten, could not be cured with gems, spells or herbs, and in a few moments died. Covering his body with nimba leaves and stalks and putting it on a large bough of a tree the sons came home. Then after a long time he was born as a serpent. With his mind fixed on the desires (of the former birth), he remembered his former birth. He had thought: 'Having deceived these sons, I shall cover (i.e. bury) this wealth, a crore in amount, where my (other) wealth is placed.' Then, full

of great faith, the sons of the brāhmaṇa made an offering to Nārāyaṇa. Once, the father, troubled by the birth as a serpent, came in the dream of his sons, and told them his intention. Then they, greatly deluded by amazement got up in the morning, and being unrestrained, told each other the account. One of them, due to his love for his father, desired to emancipate him. The other son through greed for the wealth, desired to kill the serpent. The other (i.e. the third) son, with his mind fascinated by the affection for his father, (thought:) 'Maybe he is (turned) into a serpent'. Thinking like this, he simply lamented. But the middle son, deceiving his two brothers, got up under some pretext and went to his own house. Then he gently called his virtuous wife. With a spade in his hand he went where his father (turned into) a serpent was. He who was not told about (the place of) the wealth, decided accurately about it through (certain) marks. Through greed, he came to that place to strike (down) the anthill. He made his wife take out the earth, and he himself dug the ground. From the anthill that was being dug, a very fierce serpent came out. Then the serpent with mouthfuls of poison and hissing, told him (these) words:

The serpent said:

21. Who are you? Why have you come (here)? Why are you digging the hole? O, fool, who has sent you? Tell that to me.

The son said:

22. I am your son, named Śiva. I have a strong desire to take gold. Being very much amazed by the dream I had at night, I have come (here).

Śiva said*:

23. Having heard these words of the son, censured by the world, the serpent, laughing loudly, started speaking clearly:

The serpent said:

24. If you are (my) son, quickly free me who am born as a serpent for (the preservation of) the deposit of the former birth, from bondage.

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*I.e. Lord Śiva.

The son said:

25. O father, tell me how you can be freed, since leaving the entire world, I have come (here) at night.

The father said:

26-34. O son, except the seventh chapter of the Gītā, which is full of nectar, and which is the cause of the removal of the old age, death and agony of a living being, the holy places, gifts, austerities, sacrifices are not at all capable of releasing me. O son, feed devoutly a brāhmaṇa studying the seventh chapter on the day of a śrāddha offered to me. Due to that I shall be undoubtedly released. O son, also feed other brāhmaṇas proficient in the Vedic learning according to your capacity and with great devotion.

Having heard these words of the father turned into a serpent, all the sons did as he had told (them, and even) more than that. Then that wealthy Śaṅkukarṇa, having cast off the serpentine body, divided (the wealth) among his sons, and obtained a divine body. All the sons, of a good behaviour, were delighted at the wealth which their father gave after dividing it and which amounted a crore. They, of pious minds, constructed wells, tanks, lakes, performed sacrifices to please the god, so also opened free boardings. Then, muttering the seventh chapter, they with their eyes fixed on final bliss, obtained release, knowing the eighth one (also) the most desired one.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYTWO

The Eighth Chapter: *Bhāvaśarman's Story*

Śiva said:

1-6. O Pārvatī, listen. I shall tell you the greatness of the eighth chapter, by merely listening to which you will get great joy. A city named Āmardaka is well-known in the southern

country. There was a brāhmaṇa named Bhāvaśarman, the husband of a courtesan. He, very fierce, ate flesh, drank liquor, stole the wealth of the good, dallied with others' wives, had a strong desire for hunting, carried out his strong desire. Drinking the nectar-like juice of tālī-fruit up to his throat (i.e. excessively), he was very much troubled by indigestion. The sinful one died (in due course) of time, and became a great tāla tree. A couple turned into brāhmaṇa-ghosts, lived there resorting to its shadow, dense and very cold.

The goddess said:

7. Tell me, O god, what was their caste? What was their nature? What was their profession? Due to what deed were they turned into brāhmaṇa-ghosts?

Śiva said:

8-17. There was a brāhmaṇa, Kuśīvala by name, who knew the essential nature of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas, who was proficient in all holy texts, and whose conduct was good. His wife, named Kumati, was of a wicked mind. He along with his wife, was very greedy and accepted great gifts like a buffalo, a Kālapuruṣa(?), horses etc., day after day; (but) he did not give (even) a chowrie to brāhmaṇas. As time passed, the two evil spirits, of the form of brāhmaṇa-ghosts, with their bodies oppressed by hunger and thirst, roamed over this earth. They then rested after having come to the root of the palm tree. "How will this great agony of ours go away? When will there be freedom from this stock of brāhmaṇa-ghosts?" Thus asked by the brāhmaṇa female, the brāhmaṇa (male) spoke (to her): "How can we be free from this calamity without instruction in the knowledge of the supreme spirit, metaphysical consideration, and the knowledge of the manner in which a deed is done."

The wife said:

O best man, what is that Brahman; what is metaphysics? What is an act?*

Listen to the wonder that took place, when his wife spoke

*Cp. BG VIII. 1a: किं तद्ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम ।

this much. That tree listening to half a verse from the eighth chapter gave up its form of the palm-tree and became an excellent brāhmaṇa. With his mind suddenly shaken by knowledge, he was free from the garb of sins. The couple became free due to that greatness (of the Gītā).

18-25. When these words luckily went out of his mouth, then from the atmosphere an aeroplane appeared, which had small bells tinkling, which was auspicious, which was adorned with faces resembling the orb of the moon, of celestial damsels, which was crowded with bees hovering round the lotuses in the form of the faces of the celestial nymphs, which was adorned with chowries white like the foam on the shore of the Milky Ocean being churned, and charming like the ripples of Gaṅgā, lovely with the singing gandharvas, and with hundreds of young divine damsels dancing. The couple got into the divine aeroplane and went to heaven. The entire occurrence of this place was amazing. Then the wise one wrote this half verse carefully. He went to the city named Vārāṇasī, giving salvation, seeking to propitiate Viṣṇu, god of gods. The generous-minded one started to practise a great penance there. In the meanwhile, (Lakṣmī) the daughter of the Milky Ocean, after joining her hands, asked Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, and the god of gods: "How is it that you are wakeful after having abandoned sleep? Tell me".

The lord said:

26-28. An intelligent brāhmaṇa named Bhāvaśarman, full of a flood of devotion, is seriously practising penance on the bank of Gaṅgā at Kāśī. With his senses controlled, he is muttering half the verse from the eighth chapter of the Gītā. O goddess, due to that penance I am very much pleased. Thinking for a long time desiring to give a fruit like (i.e. suitable to) his penance, I am now wakeful (like this).

Pārvatī said:

29. O lord, if Viṣṇu, though pleased, became thoughtful, what fruit did Bhāvaśarman, the devotee of Viṣṇu, get?

Śrī Mahādeva said:

30-32. Then that best brāhmaṇa, Bhāvaśarman, having received the grace of (Viṣṇu) the enemy of Mura, got endless happiness. Those born in his family who had formerly experienced torture, also obtained the (highest) position due to his acts. O you fawn-eyed one, I have told a little about the greatness of the eighth chapter. It should be always noted.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYTHREE

The Ninth Chapter: A Goat's Story

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-8. Hereafter I shall carefully explain (this importance of) the ninth chapter. Being steady (i.e. attentive) listen to it, O daughter of the Himālaya Mountain. On the bank of Narmadā, there was a city named Māhiṣmatī. There lived an auspicious brāhmaṇa named Mādhava, who knew the true nature of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas, who every time loved the guests. The pure-minded one, having earned much money by means of his learning only, some time commenced to perform a great sacrifice. He brought a goat, for killing him at the sacrifice after worshipping his body. He (the goat), laughing loudly, uttered (these) words: "What is the use of these many sacrifices, though performed in the proper manner, (but) having perishable fruits, and causing birth, old age and death? O brāhmaṇa, see my condition like this." Men staying in the pavilion, were amazed at hearing these words of the goat, that greatly excited curiosity. Then the brāhmaṇa, with his eyes motionless, saluting him devoutly and with the palms of his hands joined, respectfully asked the goat:

The brāhmaṇa said:

9. Which caste do you belong to? What is your nature? What is your mode of life? Tell (me that). Due to what act (of yours) you obtained the birth as a goat?

The goat said:

10-24. Formerly I was (born) in a very pure family of brāhmaṇas. I was proficient in the Vedic lore and offered hosts of sacrifices. Once my wife, modest with devotion to Caṇḍikā, asked for a goat from me for appeasing the disease of (our) son. Then when the goat was being killed in the pavilion of Caṇḍikā, the goat's mother, expounder of the Vedas, cursed me: "O mean brāhmaṇa, O you who are performing a sacrifice that is not approved by the holy texts, since you are killing my innocent son, you will get the stock of (i.e. will be born as) a goat." Then, O best brāhmaṇa, I, after dying after (some) time, was born as a goat, after having crossed (i.e. gone through) torment and torture of many kinds of existences. Even though I had gone to the stock of (i.e. was born as) a beast, I had (retained) the recollection of (former) births.

The brāhmaṇa said:

My mind is curious, is intent on hearing about your birth due to curiosity. Tell all (about) that to all these brāhmaṇas.

The goat said:

Some time I was (born as) a monkey. Children saw me dancing in every courtyard due to instruction given to me by a juggler. Seeing the generous sons, and my wife also, I became averse to any act and gave up the going round in dancing. Then the juggler, with his eyes red due to anger, severely beat me with round sticks, difficult to bear. Then I bleeding continuously, fainted. Smelling at food and water, I died. Then I became a dog wandering in every house. I, eating food that was abandoned and that was left after eating, filled my belly on the way. Sometime I entered the kitchen of my own house. Being hungry, I started eating the boiled rice placed in a plate. I smelt the ground, looked into the ten directions slowly and through fear. Being afraid of the sound of people, I licked my side. Then my sons came and saw me at some time. And my old wife beat me with clubs etc. Then, I, with my waist broken and discharging much blood fled.

25-33. Overcome with swoon, I somehow went out of the house. In course of time my limbs were stinking with pus and

full of insects. Then I obtained the state of (i.e. was born as) a horse. O learned man, I became a horse in the house of a distiller and died in course of time. Some time he brought me, with my teeth falling due to old age, in a square crowded with people, for sale. My wife intent on going on a pilgrimage to Dvārakā, trying to buy me for a small price, bought me and tied me, the old one, with a rope, and mounting on me along with her two or three sons, started going. Slowly I got plunged into deep mud on the bank of a lake. There I, with my neck turned, and falling into the mud, was again and again being beaten by (my) sons having clubs and stones in their hands. Being repeatedly raised I died. Then having decided that I was dead, the sons who gave up their exertion, wailed, and having surrounded their helpless mother, they went home. Then having died there I went to the stock of (i.e. was born as) a goat. I passed through many stocks, low and high, giving torment and agony.

The brāhmaṇa said:

34. O great goat, what is the use of this collection of miseries everyday? (Tell me) properly and uprightly, by what I would have endless happiness.

The goat said:

35-48. I shall, O brāhmaṇa, tell another wonder comfortably to you who are asking me, if you have curiosity. There was a city named Kurukṣetra, giving salvation. There lived king Candraśarman of the solar dynasty. At the time of the solar eclipse he, endowed with great faith, started giving gift of Kālapuruṣa. Having called a brāhmaṇa, master of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas, he went with his priest to bathe with auspicious holy water. Then Kālapuruṣa, laughing, said: "O brāhmaṇa, at the time of the solar eclipse, at this holy place called Kurukṣetra, others do not accept anything. How do you desire to receive a gift? Knowing that all this certainly causes sin, how do you proceed to do it with a mind blinded by greed of wealth?" Having heard these words of him, causing wonder to the world the brāhmaṇa said: "What is the use of this fear of

great gift? I do know the means properly to cross the unfathomable ocean of the sin due to a great gift like this." Then the king, having bathed, having put on two garments, being pure, pleased in mind, having put on white flowers and having anointed his body, having held the hand of the priest, being served by persons proper for the occasion, came (there). The king, having come there, gave the brāhmaṇa, Kālapuruṣa, according to the proper rite. Having pierced the heart of the Kālapuruṣa, a sinful cāṇḍāla, with red eyes, of a cruel appearance went out. So also, at the joy due to interest in censuring others, a female cāṇḍālikā, viz. Censure, came to the side of the brāhmaṇa whose death was brought near.

49-60. This couple of the cāṇḍālas of ruddy eyes, going out, forcibly moved into the body of the brāhmaṇa. While the king was looking on, the brāhmaṇa stood muttering the ninth chapter of the Gītā in his mind, trembling a little and remaining silent like the ocean with Viṣṇu sleeping inside trembling due to the movements of the wind. Then the cāṇḍāla-couple that was near the brāhmaṇa, was troubled by Viṣṇu's (attendants) appearing due to (the recitation of) the letters of the Gītā, and with its efforts rendered futile, and (deciding to) flee, went away. The king who actually noticed the happening like this, with his eyes smiling (i.e. dilated) due to wonder, asked the brāhmaṇa: "How—by muttering what hymn, or remembering what god—did you go over this calamity? Who was that man? Who was that woman? How did they approach (you)? How were they appeased? O brāhmaṇa tell it to me."

The brāhmaṇa said:

I know the couple: Strong sin had assumed the form of the (male) cāṇḍāla. Censure took the form of the female cāṇḍāla. I remembered the series of the verses of the ninth chapter of the Gītā. O king, know that all this is its virtue. O king, everyday I mutter the ninth chapter of the Gītā. Due to that the calamities caused by my accepting bad gifts were overcome by me. The king learnt the ninth chapter from the brāhmaṇa. Both obtained highest joy.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYFOUR

The Tenth Chapter: A Swan's Story

The goddess said:

1-5a. O you omniscient one, the life of all, the lord of all, the master of speech, O Śiva, I am lucky since you, respectable and visible, have explained this auspicious grandeur of the ninth chapter, the honey, full of many wonderful and sweet accounts. O lord of gods, I, hearing it, was not content. O Śiva, my desire to hear it is not dulled. (On the contrary) it increases. My life is listening to the Gītā, O you ocean of greatness. Even in that (Gītā) the sages declare the tenth chapter to be the principal. Tell me an account relating to that great chapter.

Śiva said:

5b-17. O beautiful one, listen to this ladder to the inaccessible heaven difficult to get. It is, as it were, the limit of grandeurs, highly purifying account. In the city of Kāśī, there was a brāhmaṇa devoted to pious fame. His mind was tranquil, free from mischief, cruelty and violence. With his senses controlled, he was always engaged in bliss. He was known as Dhīradhī, and was devoted to me like Nandin. He had crossed the ocean of the Vedas, and was proficient in the meaning of all holy texts. Once while he, subservient (i.e. given) to meditation, with his mind plunged in (the thought of) the internal soul, having the eyes of (i.e. perceiving) the Supreme Spirit, was going, I, through affection, ran, and gave support to his hand, causing wonder. The absent-minded one, having sipped water, having fixed his eyes full of great joy on the tip of his nose, remained, with his senses as it were sleepy. When he, of long (broad) eyes, slept for a while, without fear, at night, using as a pillow the large threshold of the door, O broad-eyed one, Bhṛṅgiriṭi, saluting my lotus-like feet, asked me: "Due to which rite has he secured your sight? What (kind of) penance has this noble one practised, what oblations has he made, what (hymns) has he muttered, that the god supports his hand at every step? Why is he not able to go out of this city? If, by chance, he crosses the boundary of Kāśī, he does not see even these people that are by his

side. I wish to know the cause of this—(I wish to hear) the words of my master. If I deserve to be favoured then tell me what is proper." Hearing this question of Bhṛṅgiriṭi, I said:

18-26. Once I was in the Punnāga forest which was near Kailāsa, the forest which was full of the hosts of the beautiful divine women making sounds, in which the quarters were joyful with the multitudes of the cooings of the cuckoos, which was full of the notes of (birds) like the eagle and the cātaka, which was bristling with the drops shining on the rotating, wooden machine for raising water, which was full of the bulbs of the plantain trees (growing) on the sides of the drains, which was full of musk-deer, which was stupefied with the sounds of kinnaras, which was at places resorted to by deer with the outer corners of their eyes dull due to rumination, which was full of parrots, where the swans showed their cleverness among them, which was stirred by the thick wind, with joyful sounds, in which the bees were intoxicated by the rum exuding from the Mādhavī flowers, which was full of the fragrance of the clusters of blooming trivalī flowers, in which the bees were slow due to the intoxication caused by the fragrance of blooming bakula flowers, in which the region of the earth was washed with the nectar oozing from the moon. Having sat on a seat I remained there for a while. The wind, by way of the churning sticks in the form of terrific branches breaking due to friction, blew under the pretext of a trembling mountain. Then there was a great sound which resounded at the sides of the valley.

27-38. Then from the cave of the sky a bird descended. He was like the autumnal cloud, and was as it were the mass of collyrium. He was as it were the mass of darkness, or a mountain with its wings cut off. Having rested on the earth, the bird saluted me. Having brought a fresh flower, he put it at my feet. Then the bird uttered (my) praise with distinct words: "Victory to you, O god, O Brahman, O joy, O ocean of nectar, O lord of the world, O billow of the continuous contact with good feelings, O you having infinite bodies, O you who are free from the three kinds of dirt due to your thought full of the feeling of uniqueness, O you who have conquered your senses, O you who are dependent, O you, whose body can be secured (only) by means of concentration, O you free from adjuncts,

O you who are free, O formless one, O pure one, O limitless one, O you free from egotism, O you having no obstruction, O you qualityless one, O you protector of those who have submitted themselves to you, O you with skilful lotus-like feet, O you of a terrible garland, O you great tiger, O you who burnt Cupid with flames, O you who pierced the lord of demons with an axe, O you great lord, O you who wiped the sindūra on the forehead of the wife of Tripura, O you who applied excellent saffron to the lotus-like breasts of Kātyāyanī, salutation to (you), who are away from proofs, to (you) of the form of great intellect, to (you) the lord of life, to (you) of the form of the three worlds. I salute your lotus-like feet which are touched by the excellent meditating saints and which are wonderful in going to the other end of the unlimited ocean of the worldly existence. Even the lord of speech (i.e. Bṛhaspati) is not able to praise you. Even (Śeṣa), the lord of serpents, does not have the skill in describing you, O great god; then what to say of me, a bird, with a small intelligence?"

39-54a. Having heard this praise made by the bird, I said to him: "O bird, who are you, wherefrom do you come? Your body is like that of a swan, and your colour is like that of a crow. Tell me for what purpose you have come here." The bird, the best among speakers, thus asked by me, with his neck slightly bent in respect spoke with a soft voice: "O lord of gods, O Dhūrjaṭī, know me to be Brahmā's swan. (Know) due to which this blackness has recently come up, O lord. O you omniscient one, listen to what is said (in reply to) what is asked by you. When I came to the earth from the Mānasa lake, I landed into a danger. Near the Saurāṣṭra city, I, having taken mouthfuls of lotus-stalks, white like the young crescent moon, from a lake where the lotuses were blooming, resorted to my strength and quickly went into the sky. Then from the sky I suddenly fell on the ground. Then with my mind covered with swoon, with my senses fully weakened, with my body trembling, I, being touched by cool breezes, regained consciousness. I did not ascertain the cause of my fall. 'Oh, what has this come? How had I a fall today due to which I have this blackness on my body, white like perfect camphor?' Thus when I, full of wonder, thought (to myself), I heard, from the lotus, words like these: 'O swan, get

up; I shall tell you the cause of your fall and blackness.' Then I got up and came to the middle of the lake. I saw a charming lotus-plant, having five lotuses. I commenced asking (it) the cause of (my) blackness and fall. Then I saw, in the sky, six myriad men who were dark like clouds, who had covered themselves with gold-coloured garments, who had four arms (each), the weapons (of each) of whom were a mace, a conch, a disc and a lotus, who were variegated with crowns, necklaces, armlets and ear-rings. Having saluted and gone round, keeping it to my right, the lotus-plant, I asked her everything beginning with my fall".

The lotus plant said:

54b-63a. O swan, you moved in the sky passing over me. Due to that sin you have fallen on the ground. O best bird, due to that only blackness is seen on your body. Sixty thousand bees, smelling the fragrance, produced by the middle lotus that was talking on seeing you falling with its mind full of compassion, went to heaven. Those whom you saw having a lustre like that of a blue lotus, were the sons of a sage in the seventh existence that has passed. On the bank of this very lake, they practised a very severe penance. Sometime, a beautiful lady, having breasts like clusters of campaka-flowers, with the outer corners of her eyes unsteady and charming due to wavy hair, with the brightness of her smile being kissed by the moonlight released from the pearl of her nose, having put the lute between her breasts, sang in the forest. Hearing the sound of her who was singing, the brāhmaṇas, like deer, went to her, and saw her simultaneously. They said to one another: "I saw her (first), she is mine." Then a pugilistic encounter took place among the brothers. With their chests pounded with one anothers' fists, they died.

63b-82. Having enjoyed various fearful hells, they became cranes on the earth. Then they killed wild beasts and were burnt by wild fire. Then being born as cāṇḍālas they killed travellers on the way. Having drunk poisonous water in the forest, they went to Yama's abode. One by one they got the stock of an ass, a camel, a monkey, and a cat. Then they be-

came bees, and are (now) in the lake. Today having smelt my fragrance they have gone to the position of Viṣṇu. O best bird, listen, I shall tell you (that) by which there is grandeur in me. In the third birth that has passed (from this birth), I was a daughter of a brāhmaṇa named Sarojavadana. I was devoted only to fidelity, and was engaged in serving the elders. Once, while I was teaching a sārikā, there was a delay. My husband, who got angry, cursed me: "O sinful one, be a sārikā." After death I got sārikāhood (i.e. was born as a sārikā), (but) due to the propitiousness of my fidelity, a girl in the sages' house nourished me. It is well-known that the tenth chapter (of the Gītā) is power(-ful). The brāhmaṇa recited it in the morning; I listened to it removing sin. O bird, after (some) time, I cast the body of the sārikā, and became, due to the greatness of the tenth chapter, a celestial nymph in heaven. I was known as Padmavatī; and was the dear friend of Lakṣmī. Once when I was going in an aeroplane through the sky, I saw this charming lake containing spotless lotuses. After descending, when I started sporting in its water, Durvāsas came (there) and saw me without clothes. Then I myself took up this form of a lotus plant. I have five lotuses, two lotuses with my two feet (turned into them), two lotuses with my hands (turned into them) and the fifth lotus with my face (turned into that). The lord of sages looked at me with eyes blazing with anger. "O sinful one, with this form only stay for a hundred years." Giving a curse like this, he vanished in a moment. Due to the greatness of the tenth chapter my (power of) speech has not vanished. By just going over me, you fell on the ground. O best bird, today, when you remain (by me) my curse will cease. Listen to the best chapter recited by me; by just hearning which you will be free from the curse today only.

Saying like this, she recited the tenth chapter in a soft voice. Having heard it, and having taken the lotus given by her, I offered it, the best lotus of the lotus plant, to you.

Speaking like this, he cast his body. It was wonderful.

Bhṛṅgiriṭi said:

83-99. Who was he in his former birth? How did he be-

come Brahmā's swan? With what intention did he cast his body in front of you?

Hearing these words of Bhṛṅgiriṭi, I said to him: "He was born in the former birth in a brāhmaṇa's house. He was well known as Sutapas, was a celibate and had his senses controlled. Living in his preceptor's house, he studied the Vedas everyday. He devoutly and properly served his preceptor. (Once) he while asleep touched, with his foot, his preceptor who was asleep. Due to that sin he obtained the state of a lower animal even in heaven. Then the brāhmaṇa was born among the swans of the Lotus-born (Brahmā). In this existence, when I was watching, the tenth chapter of the Gītā was narrated before him. Having heard it, the bird obtained excellent knowledge. Due to the grandeur of the tenth chapter he was born in a brāhmaṇa family. Due to practice from birth, from the lotus-like face of him even when a child the tenth chapter of the Gītā always flashes. As a result of its meaning he always sees the god holding a conch, a disc, living in all beings. He on whomsoever and whenever, he casts his affectionate glance, is released even though he is a drunkard or killer of a brāhmaṇa. Knowing that I, of the form of the Supreme Soul, brought the brāhmaṇa to this city which is naturally a holy place giving salvation. Salvation is (just) on the palm of people living here. Therefore, due to his seeing (them) no other special effect is produced. I do not allow his knowledge very difficult to get, which he formerly obtained due to the greatness of the tenth chapter, to go out of him. So also this sage obtained salvation while living. Therefore, I give him my hand when he moves and walks along the road. O Bhṛṅgiriṭi, such is the great importance of the tenth chapter.

Thus I have told the same account destroying sins as was told before (i.e. to) Bhṛṅgiriṭi. A man or a woman, whosoever (he or she may be) would obtain the fruit of all the stages of human life by merely listening to it.

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THE

PADMA-PURĀṆA

PART IX

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY
Dr. N.A. DESHPANDE

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

But he has neither the means nor the leisure to embark on that course. We have, therefore, planned to help him acquire knowledge by an easier course. We have started the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology in English Translation. Our goal is to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium of expression. The publication of the Purāṇas in English Translation is a step towards that goal.

Acknowledgements

It is our pleasant duty to put on record our sincere thanks to Dr. R.N. Dandekar and the UNESCO authorities for their kind encouragement and valuable help in the publication of the volumes in this series.

EDITORIAL

We are happy to offer this forty-seventh *Āhuti* ('oblation') in the *Jñāna-Yajña* ('Knowledge-Sacrifice') that we have undertaken in the form of the *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology Series*. The concept of *yajña* has certain noble implications, the foremost one being that it is a selfless venture fraught with difficulties and motivated not by any selfish gain or profit but by universal good in view. In this present *yajña* dissemination of knowledge and popularization of the Purāṇas is our sole aim and this is our apology for calling it '*Jñāna-Yajña*'.

So far the *Padma Purāṇa*, of which this is Part IX in English, has been the biggest one and one still bigger is yet to follow. The last part of this Purāṇa, that is Part X, also is almost ready and thus the complete set of the Purāṇa will be made available to our readers within the next three months.

This part comprises chapters 185-245 of the sixth section, viz. Uttarakhaṇḍa, of the Padma Purāṇa. The reader will find here also, as usual, a rich variety of interesting themes.

The first eight chapters eulogize the saving power of the last eight chapters of the great Bhagavadgītā supported by illustrative stories. The next six chapters show the efficacy of reciting and listening to the Bhāgavata. It has been claimed that this Purāṇa is capable of removing misery, poverty, ill-luck and sins, of overcoming passions and anger in this Kali age. The listening to it is prescribed for seven days (*Saptāha*) at a time only on account of lack of self-control, disease, shortening of life and other blemishes characteristic of the present age. The *Bhāgavata Saptāha* has been praised as better than performing a sacrifice, observing a vow, practising penance, visiting a holy place etc. This is a form of devotion to Kṛṣṇa, which is said to be the only means of salvation fit to be resorted to in this age of unrighteousness. In an allegorical representation Bhakti (Devotion), Jñāna (Knowledge) and Vairāgya (Detachment) are depicted as a woman with two sons. She is said to have been born in the

Draviḍa country, brought up in Karṇāṭa, then to have lived in Mahārāṣṭra and become old along with her sons in Gurjara due to contact with heretics who persecuted them. This is just a figurative way of saying that the devotional movement originated in Tamil Nadu, reached its height of development in Telugu and Marathi speaking regions and declined in Gujarat, probably because of its proximity to the first entry points of Muslim raiders from the Arabian countries. It is further stated that she again became a beautiful young girl in Vṛndāvana, though Jñāna and Vairāgya remained grey-haired and old, thus showing their unpopularity and ineffectiveness in this age.

In our previous Editorials we have reiterated that in view of obviously corrupt readings, obscure passages and wrong words frequently encountered in the existing Purāṇa versions, there is a great need of bringing out thoroughly edited versions of the Purāṇa texts. A clear and convincing case is cited here. In a number of chapters of the text beginning with ch. 199 a name in the vocative case occurs very frequently as 'Śive' and sometimes as 'Śibe'. Now both the names 'Śivā' and 'Śibi' have broadly the same form in the vocative, except a difference of 'va' and 'ba' which is very likely to be ignored and has actually been ignored by some translators, though the person is different in the two cases, one being the consort of god Śiva and the other an ancient king, son of Uśīnara. The dialogue in which this occurs and that runs into several chapters is between Nārada and king Śibi but a reader who is not cautious enough may get the wrong idea that the dialogue is between Nārada and Pārvatī. It is learnt that All India Kashiraj Trust in Varanasi has been doing a laudable work in editing the Purāṇas but apparently the progress is very slow. One would wish that more bodies could come forward in the field.

One more confusing situation is found in chapters 200-209 and further up to ch. 222, where a number of holy places, viz. Prayāga, Kāśī, Śivakāñcī, Gokarṇa, Dvārakā, Kośalā, Madhuvana, Badarikāśrama, Haridvāra, Puṣkara and Naimiṣa which actually have a distance ranging from a few to hundreds of miles, are jumbled up together in a small place named Indraprastha! This obviously needs some researcher to come forward and clear this geographical mix-up.

In chapters 224 and 225 the characteristic sectarian marks are prescribed for the Vaiṣṇavas. One should compulsorily have a mark called *Ūrdhvapuṇḍra* on the forehead and imprint other parts of the body also with disc, conch and other emblems of Viṣṇu heated in fire. Viṣṇu's *Vibhūtis*, *Vibhavas* and *Vyūhas* are the topics of chapters 227-229.

Chapters 235 and 236 contain very interesting observations of the author of the Purāṇa on the birth of heretics, the measures adopted for bringing about their downfall and destruction and the grouping of the sages, doctrines and texts into *Sāttvika*, *Rājasa* and *Tāmasa*. In the list of heretics those who have on their body skulls, ash, bones and other inauspicious things are prominently included, thus casting aspersions on god Śiva himself. But in the case of Śiva it is justified as deliberately done to delude and destroy demons and heretics. Not only this but Śiva is also further said to have deliberately composed vicious scriptures like those of Pāśupatas and other Śaivite sects for the purpose. Preaching of the Buddhist doctrines and Śaṅkarite *Māyāvāda* etc. also is shown as part of the same divine conspiracy. Among the Purāṇas Matsya, Kūrma, Liṅga, Śiva, Skanda and Agni are condemned as Tāmasa (vicious). Ten vicious sages include names such as Durvāsas, Kaṇāda, Gautama etc.

In the last few chapters the incarnations of Viṣṇu in the forms of the Boar, Nṛsiṁha, Vāmana, Paraśurāma, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa are described.

—G.P. Bhatt

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ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)—Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, v—verse, vv—verses, Ftn—Footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo.—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S.M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F.E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series, MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch. S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Maṇḍal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, MLBD, Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgītā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha)
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka, Com. by Mahīdāsa
DB	*Devī Bhāgavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N.L. De, Oriental Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* by Hastings
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa*, ed. R.S. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P.V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇī*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradīya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣīya Prācīna Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd. P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R.C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Maṇḍal, Aundh
Śat. Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYFIVE

The Greatness of the Eleventh Chapter: Sunanda's Story

The goddess said:

1-2. O god, this history is a great means of accomplishing the good. O merciful one, my desire is further aroused on hearing it. O Virūpākṣa, O the first (i.e. greatest) one among speakers, explain to me the importance of the eleventh chapter (of the Gītā) supported by a story.

The lord said:

3-17. O dear one, listen to a story resting on the description of the Gītā. Even the greatness of the chapter (called) Viśvarūpa (-darśana) is purifying. O you of large eyes, (the greatness of) the chapter cannot be told. There are thousands of stories. One of them will be told by me. On the bank of the river Pragītā there was a city known as Meghaṅkara. It had a heavily laid foundation, lofty ramparts and gates. It had big (sacrificial) halls of hermitages adorned with golden pillars. Rich, happy, calm, well-behaved men with their senses controlled and speedy in their actions lived there. It was charming with the places where four roads met. It was adorned with markets and quadrangulars where gold in the jewelled pillars was shining. In it the sweet and indistinct sound of the multitude of (moving) banners and jingling bells was (heard). The atmosphere was shaken with the loud noise of Vedic recitation. The vast sky was full of the loud sounds of musical instruments. It won battles with the breezes due to flags and foliage (*obscure*). It appeared splendid with the jingling sounds of the anklets of women on the royal path and at the excellent gates, and with (sounds of) lutes, flutes, songs and the neighings of excellent horses. It constantly appeared to be equal to the cities of the regents of the quarters. There the lord of the world, Śārṅgapāṇi, shone. He was the embodiment of the highest Brahman, and the life of the sight of the world. His great form was worshipped by the lotus-eyes of Lakṣmī (*obscure*). His body was that of Trivikrama; he was dark like a cloud. His lustre was mild; he had Śrīvatsa (mark) on his chest; and was adorned with lotuses and garland of wood-

flowers. He was having (i.e. had put on) many ornaments and was, as it were, the ocean full of jewels. His lustre was like that of a cloud with the flashing of the streak of lightning. On his (?) crown dwelt the highest soul Śārṅgapāṇi himself. On seeing him a living being is freed from the bondage of the worldly existence. In that city there was a great holy place called Mekhalā. By bathing there men always obtained the position of Viṣṇu. Having seen Narasiṁha, the lord of the world, the ocean of pity there, a man is free from a terrible sin committed during seven existences.

18-27. A man who sees the lord of gaṇas at Mekhalā always overcomes dangers, even though they are difficult to be overcome. In that Meghaṅkara (city) there lived an excellent brāhmaṇa who practised celibacy and self-control, who was free from the feeling of mineness and from egotism. He was well-known as Sunanda, and was proficient in the Vedas and in (other) holy texts. He had subjugated the group of his senses; he was highly devoted to Vāsudeva. O dear one, by the side of god Śārṅgin he recited this eleventh chapter (of the Gītā called) Manifestation of the Cosmic Form. The ascetic obtained knowledge of Brahman due to the power of the chapter. The meditating saint, enjoying liberation (even) while alive, desiring to reach a steady condition, always remained in profound intellectual meditation, praiseworthy due to the mass of great joy. Once that great meditating saint set out on a pilgrimage to Godāvarī when Jupiter was in the Zodiacal sign Leo. Having, on the first day, come to the excellent holy place Viraja, and having begun with the centre among the holy places, he bathed again and again, and saw Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī), the prop of the world. Having worshipped her, the great divine power, giving the fruit of all desires and then bathing at Tārātīrtha, then at the confluence of Kapilā, he visited the eight holy places. Then having offered oblations to the dead ancestors, having bowed to the lord of Kumārī, Śiva, he came to Kapilādvāra.

28-40. Having bathed there, and washed off the sins of former existences, having worshipped, saluted and heard (about) god Viṣṇu and having lived there for that night, he went with the brāhmaṇas from it in the morning. In the forest Narasiṁha there is at the holy place a well sacred to Rāma. Narasiṁha wor-

shipped by Prahlāda himself dwells there. Having seen that lord of gods, having devoutly worshipped him, and having passed the day there, he went to the city of Ambikā. Ambikā, showering grace on her devotees, dwells there. She fulfils all the desires of men. Having devoutly worshipped Ambikā with flowers and unguents, with various hymns, and salutations also, the brāhmaṇa then reached the city called Kaṇṭhasthāna in olden times. There the great power, Mahālakṣmī, of great lustre, dwells. Having seen her, having the orb of the brightness of nectar and the sun, the river of the nectar from lotuses cutting off the torment of the worldly existence, and served by royal swans of the lotuses of the hearts of best meditating saints, full of the sound produced without beating, and of the form having no second, having worshipped with a devout heart that revered Mahālakṣmī, giving desired objects, the lord of sages reached along with the brāhmaṇas, the city called Vivāhamaṇḍapa. In every house in the city he asked for taking shelter. The brāhmaṇa could not get lodging in any house. The head of the village showed to him a big temple to stay in. The brāhmaṇa entering it with his companions stayed there. Then when it was bright morning he saw from his place of lodging his body, where by chance all travellers were produced. When he was going, the village-head saw him coming (to him).

41-50a. The village-head said to him: "You are by all means a long-lived one. You are (the best) among the lucky, and (most) auspicious among the auspicious also. O child, you have some extraordinary power. Where have your companions gone? How did they get out of that house? See that, O best sage, I shall tell you. But I do not see here any other ascetic comparable to you. Do you know a great spell? Which science do you practise? Due to the kindness of which god have you this uncommon power? O best brāhmaṇa, then please stay in this village. O revered one, I shall render you every service." Speaking like this, he made the best sage stay in the village. He devoutly served him day and night. When seven or eight days passed, he came (to him). Having come to him in the morning, he, much grieved, wept before him. "The devout son of me who am luckless today, was eaten at night by a demon having bright fangs." When the protector (of the village) said like this, the restrained one

asked him: "Where is the demon? Tell me how your son was devoured."

The village-head said:

50b-59. In the city there is a terrible demon eating human beings. Everyday he comes and eats men frequenting the city. All the citizens formerly requested him: "O demon, protect us all. We shall arrange for your food. O demon, eat those travellers who sleep (here) at night." For protecting his life, he devoured the travellers that were ushered into this house by the village-head. You had slept in this house accompanied by other unlucky persons. They were eaten by him, and you were abandoned, O best brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, you know your own power. Today a friend of my son has come. I, being ignorant, (i.e. unknowingly) put that dear (friend) of my son in the (same) house along with other travellers. Hearing that he was put into it, my son went to bring him at night. He too was eaten by the demon. I who was afflicted, said to the demon in the morning: "O wicked-minded one, at night you ate my son also. O demon, tell me if there is a means by which my son gone down into your belly will be revived."

The demon said:

60-63a. Through ignorance I devoured your son that has gone into (my belly). This your son was eaten by me through ignorance along with the travellers. Brahmā has also laid down (the way) in which he who has entered my belly, will be revived. By the power of the brāhmaṇa who constantly recites the eleventh chapter, I shall get salvation and the dead will be revived.

The village-head said:

63b-73. "How does the eleventh chapter have such wonderful power?" O brāhmaṇa, thus asked by me, the demon said: "Formerly some vulture going along the aerial path dropped from its beak a piece of bone somewhere in the water. Someone, best among the wise, having come to that lake, and taking it to be a great holy place, had offered oblations to the dead ancestors. All people said to him: 'Tell (us) how this is a holy place'. The restrained one muttered the eleventh chapter thrice a day.

The brāhmaṇa who had observed silence, was killed by thieves on the way. A piece of his bone fell from the vulture's beak into water. Due to that this has become a divine holy place destroying sins. Then all those men bathed there in that lake. Due to their being free from sins, they obtained the highest position. Owing to the power of the eleventh chapter, I too will get salvation, and the travellers will again come back to life. The brāhmaṇa spat out by me, will stay here only. If he constantly muttered the eleventh chapter, and if that best brāhmaṇa throws on me the water that is consecrated by the hymn of the eleventh chapter, then, undoubtedly I shall be free from the curse." Thus told by him, I have come to you.

The brāhmaṇa said:

74-89a. O protector (of the village), tell (me) due to what sin he had become a demon, eating men in the house at night.

The village-head said:

Formerly in this village there was a brāhmaṇa farmer. Once he was busy with the protection of the paddy-field. Not far from him, a great vulture devoured a traveller. An ascetic at a distance took pity on him to free him. Just then the bird ate up the traveller and went by the aerial path. Then the ascetic, through anger, said to the farmer: "O you wicked-minded, harsh-hearted, cruel ploughman, fie upon you who are selfish, averse to protecting others, and of an accursed life. One who though capable, ignores men being struck by thieves, wild boars, serpents, enemies, poisoned water, vultures, demons, evil spirits, goblins etc., would obtain the fruit of their murder. He who being capable, does not free a brāhmaṇa seized by thieves etc. goes to a horrible hell, and is again born as a wolf. He who (seeing one) being killed (or) harassed by a vulture or a tiger in a forest, says 'Leave (him), leave (him)', goes to the highest position. Those also who are killed while (protecting) cows by tigers, hunters or wicked kings, go to Viṣṇu's position, difficult to be obtained even by meditating saints. Thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Vājapeya sacrifices are not worth even a sixteenth part of the protection of one seeking shelter. Even a meritorious person, by ignoring a helpless and a fright-

ened person, is roasted in the Kumbhīpāka (hell) after (some) time. Since you were unkind, as you on seeing the traveller (being) eaten by the wicked vulture, did not ward off (the vulture) though you were capable of warding it off, you will be (born as) a demon." Having heard this curse of the sage, the ploughman, with his body trembling, saluted the brāhmaṇa and said (these) piteous words: "With my eyes cast on protecting the field here, I did not notice this man being killed by the vulture. Therefore, please favour me who am helpless."

The brāhmaṇa said:

89b-91. When the water consecrated by him who knows the eleventh chapter (of the Gītā) and mutters it everyday, falls on your head, then you will be free from the curse.

Speaking like this the ascetic left, and the ploughman became a demon. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, come on; consecrate him with (the recitation of) that chapter. Drop with your (own) hand the holy water on his head.

Mahādeva said:

92-108b. Having heard this request of him, the sage, full of pity, saying 'All right' went with the head of the village near the demon. The brāhmaṇa, the meditating saint, dropped on his head the water consecrated with (the recitation of) the eleventh chapter (called) Viśvarūpa (-darśana). By the power of the chapter of the Gītā, he obtained freedom from the curse. Abandoning the body of the demon he became one having four arms. Those men, the travellers who were ejected, were in thousands. They became four-armed ones holding conches, discs and maces. They got into aeroplanes. At that time he said to the demon: "O demon, which is my son. Show him (to me)." Thus addressed by the village-head, the demon of divine intellect said: "Know your son to be four-armed like these and having dark lustre like the tamāla tree and having a crown of rubies, and adorned with divine, jewelled ear-rings, with great shoulders charming due to a necklace, and adorned with a golden armlet, having lotus-like eyes, affectionate, and holding a lotus in his hand, having got into a divine aeroplane, and having obtained godhead." Hearing

these words of him, and seeing his son like that, he started taking him home. Then the son laughed (and said): "O protector (of the village), for how many times have you become my son? Formerly I was your son, (but) now I am a god. Due to the brāhmaṇa's favour I shall go to Viṣṇu's abode. See this demon also has secured a four-armed body. Due to the greatness of the eleventh (chapter) he will go to heaven with (these) people. Learn the chapter from this brāhmaṇa and constantly mutter it. There is no doubt that you will obtain the same position. Therefore, O father, the company of the good is always difficult to be had by men. That too has come up for you today. Accomplish your desired object. What is the use of wealth, enjoyment, gifts, sacrifices, penance, acts of pious liberality? Final bliss is obtained by the recital of the (chapter called) Viśvarūpa(-darśana). By hearing the chapter (men see) that form of Viṣṇu which is the highest, which came out of the mouth of Kṛṣṇa, the Brahman, the mass of complete joy, which—the nectar of salvation—was spoken by him to his friend Arjuna on Kurukṣetra, which removes maladies, diseases and fears of men afraid of the mundane existence, which destroys the misery of many existences. I do not see any other (hymn) like that. Remember it."

Śiva said:

108c-110. Speaking like this, he went to Viṣṇu's highest position with them. The village-head learnt that chapter from the brāhmaṇa. Due to its greatness both of them went to Viṣṇu's position. Thus I have told you the account of the eleventh chapter, by merely hearing which great sins perish.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYSIX

The Greatness of the Twelfth Chapter: Siddhasamādhi's Story

Mahādeva said:

1-11. In the southern country there is a city named Kolhāpura. O good one, it is the abode of pleasures, and the source of accomplishment of superhuman powers for the good ones. It is a great seat of the Parāśakti (Supreme Power), and is resorted to by all gods. It is well-known in the Purāṇas as giving enjoyments and salvation. There are crores of holy places there, and crores of phalluses of Śiva. There is Rudragayā. It is large and well-known in the world. The ramparts are like high mountains, and the banners on the gates are shining. On the top of the palace there is a high golden banner. The city is adorned with a row of high mansions and topmost of the houses resembling the moon. The quarters were made fragrant with the smoke of the incense coming out of the holes of windows. It has a great shadow due to the moving banners. It is endowed with temples. It is inhabited by clever, handsome, affectionate, rich, pure men, of good conduct and having many ornaments. Women live there, whose eyes are like those of deer, whose faces resemble the moon, whose hair is curly, who resemble the blooming campaka, whose breasts are stout and high, who are adorned with deep navels and three folds (on their bellies), whose hips are large, whose pairs of shanks are charming, whose feet are excellent, whose girdles are making sounds, whose jewelled anklets are jingling, whose lotus-like hands have bracelets that are tinkling, and the rays from whose nails are flashing, and that fascinate even sages. The city is endowed with all objects, and full of all enjoyments. It possesses all auspicious things, and has Mahālakṣmī (living in it).

12-33. There came some young, fair man of charming eyes. His neck was conch-like; his shoulders were broad; his chest was large; his arms were long. He was endowed with all (good) marks; was fair and handsome in all limbs. Entering the city he saw the beauty in all the high mansions. His mind was eager to see Mahālakṣmī, the chief goddess. He bathed in Maṇikuṇḍa and offered oblations to his dead ancestors. Having seen Mahā-

lakṣmī, Mahāmāyā, he devoutly praised her. "The mother of the world, the protector, having infinite pity, brings about by her glance the existence and protection of the world. Lord Brahmā ordered by that Power creates (the world). Viṣṇu depending upon that Power, maintains the world. Śiva being entered by that Power destroys everything. I worship that great Power, mighty due to her creating, maintaining and destroying (the world). O you whose lotus-like feet are meditated upon by meditating ascetics, O Kamalā, O you having a lotus as your abode, You grasp all our innate properties within the range of the senses. You alone are the mass of thoughts. You make the mind fit for that. You are of the form of desires, knowledge and acts. You are of the form of the highest consciousness. You desire no fruit; you are spotless; you are eternal; you are formless; you are unstained. You are constant; you are free from agony; you are independent; you are free from disease. Who is capable of describing your greatness like this? I salute you, moving in the twelve (months) after disclosing the collection of the six (seasons). You are of the nature of anāhata śabda* (sound produced without beating); you are of the nature of nāda*, bindu* and kalā*. O mother, you are the river of the nectar oozing from the full moon. O affectionate one, you nourish children like Sanaka etc. who are naked. You are auspicious, consciousness attached to (the states of) waking, dream and deep sleep. You are in the fourth state; you are in the combination of pity and courteous language. To all living beings the entire wealth of Brahman is given by you who are beyond the fourth state after having withdrawn the group of all the reals. By you who are indeterminate, identity with bimba (?) is granted to the yogins. I salute the Parā, Paśyantī, Madhyamā and Vaikharī (the four kinds of vāc—speech) also. O goddess, for the proper protection of the world you take up (various) forms. You are Brāhmī, Vaiṣṇavī, Māheśī, O mother. O Vārāhī, you are Mahālakṣmī, Nārasiṁhī and Aindrikā. You are Kaumārī, Caṇḍikā, Lakṣmī, the purifier of everything; you are Sāvitrī, the mother of the world, Śaśinī and Rohiṇī. You are Svāhā, Svadhā; you are the divine nectar. You are Durgā; you are adorned

*These terms are highly technical in Tantra.

with a mass of clubs and staff-like arms. O you with your eyes reeling due to drinking blood dropping from the body of Raktabīja (a demon), O you having the strong pair of arms taken out from the neck of an intoxicated he-buffalo, O you who put in great valour in tearing the great demon called Śumbha, O you having unlimited acts, O you mother of the three worlds, I salute you. O you wish-fulfilling tree to your devotees, O you goddess, favour me." Thus praised by him goddess Mahālakṣmī then took up her own form and spoke to that man.

Śrī Lakṣmī said:

34a. O prince, I am pleased, ask for an excellent boon.

The prince said:

34b-40a. My father, a king, while performing a great horse-sacrifice, was unfortunately overcome by a disease and died. Having dried his body with heated oil, I have kept it. The sacrifice continued as before. The horse that had wandered over the earth, (was tied) to a post. Someone at night cut off the bond and took him somewhere. When (my) men after not finding him, came back, I, addressing all priests, have sought your refuge. O goddess, if you are pleased, then may my horse of the sacrifice be seen, so that the sacrifice will be completed and my father, the king, will be free from debt. O mother of the world, O you who love those who seek your refuge, do like that.

The goddess said:

40b-42. A brāhmaṇa, known as Siddhasamādhi, is at my door. By my order he will accomplish all your work.

Thus addressed by Śrī Mahālakṣmī, the prince then came to the place where the sage Siddhasamādhi was. Having saluted his lotus-like feet, he stood there with his palms joined.

43-60. Then the brāhmaṇa said to him: "You are sent by Ambā. See, I shall accomplish all that is desired by you." Speaking like this, the māntrika (knower of spells) drew (to his presence) all gods. The son of the king then saw the gods having joined their palms and with their bodies trembling. Then the best brāhmaṇa spoke to all the gods: "This prince's horse

meant for a sacrifice was snatched and taken away at night by the lord of gods. O gods, bring (back) his horse, do not delay." Having heard the sage's words, the gods gave him (back) the horse. He allowed the gods (to go). Having seen the gods drawn (by him), and having received the lost horse, the king's son bowed to the sage, and said to him: "O best sage, this your power is a wonder. You have done a marvel by drawing on the gods in a moment. Having drawn the horse give me (back) my horse meant for the sacrifice. There is nothing else which is difficult to be done even by gods. You alone, and none else, will be capable of doing it. O brāhmaṇa, listen. My father was king Bṛhadratha. He commenced a horse-sacrifice, but died through (bad) luck. Even now his body lies, dried with heated oil. O best one, please bring him back to life again." "We shall go there where (the body of) your father is, and where your sacrificial hall is." Having come (there) along with that Siddhasamādhi, he consecrated water and threw it on the head of the dead body. Then the king got (back) consciousness, and saw (the people there). The king asked him: "O Dharma (i.e. pious one), who are you?" Then the prince told everything to the king. The king saluted the brāhmaṇa who had given (back) his life again. He said: "Due to which religious merit have you this uncommon power by means of which you gave (back) my life and called the gods, and also by means of which (power) you rescued the sacrifice? Tell (me) that". Being thus addressed, the brāhmaṇa spoke in soft words. "I carefully mutter the twelfth chapter of the Gītā. Due to that (I have) this power by means of which you (re-)gained life."

61-62. Hearing these words the king learnt the excellent twelfth chapter from that brāhmaṇa sage along with brāhmaṇas. Due to the greatness of that chapter all of them obtained good position. Other living beings also, after having recited it, obtained great salvation.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYSEVEN

The Thirteenth Chapter: Durācārā's Story

The goddess said:

1. You told me the greatness of the twelfth chapter. Tell me the very beautiful greatness of the thirteenth chapter.

The lord said:

2-22. O Pārvatī, listen to the greatness—a treasure—of the thirteenth chapter, by merely hearing which you will get great joy. In the southern country there is the great river Tuṅgabhadrā. On her bank is a charming city named Harihara, where, O goddess, revered god Harihara himself dwells. By seeing him (a man) gets great happiness. In that city lived a brāhmaṇa named Hari Dīkṣita. He was engrossed in penance and sacred study. He was learned and had mastered the Vedas. His wife was Durācārā (literally 'of bad conduct') both in name and deeds. She who used abusive language, never slept with her husband. She, wandering wantonly, did not remain in her house even for a moment. At the door of the brāhmaṇa she drank liquor (filling her belly up) to her throat (i.e. too much). She repeatedly threatened her husband's relatives. Always intoxicated, she constantly dallied with her paramours. Sometime seeing the city full of citizens here and there, she herself made a rendezvous in a forest. The clever one, proud of her youth, passed a long time there only dallying with her paramours. When she was (thus) living in the city wantonly, the spring season, the friend of Cupid, set in. It was full of foliage from roots (of trees); it had brought back to life Cupid by means of the cooings of the cuckoos in the fifth note (of the Indian gamut) due to the mango tree liable to change(?). It had tossed the forest-trees with breezes coming from the Malaya (mountain) carrying the fragrance of campaka flowers and blowing very gently. It was beautified all around by sound due to hummings of the swarms of bees breaking their fast with the fragrant spirituous liquor of the blooming jasmine flowers. It was smiling with the pleasing, charming, fragrant lakes. It was manifested by lakes with hosts of swans collected (there). In it the earth was

beautified with trees having dense foliage and having (under them) young ones of deer seated comfortably in their dense shade. In that spring season that lady going to meet her lover (*Abhisārikā*), being delighted, saw, at night the moonlight, giving joy to the world. It had thin drops of nectar dropping from the ends of the beaks of the moving cakoras. It was full of springs of nectar oozing from the melting moon-stone. In it the mass of hail was clustering together in the expanding middle parts of the flowers; the billows of the mass of water that were flashing, embraced the sky. It was a knife cutting the throats of unchaste women of the great lion of Cupid. It was clever in tearing off the mass of dense darkness. It was full of snow (or coolness) for others like the Himālaya mountain that had whitened Satī. It gave joy to the young people, due to the closing of withered lotuses. It was the witness to the piteous wailings of the female cakravākas. It had brightened the atmosphere with pure rays like a row of pearls.

23-33. When the moonlight became profuse and filled the ten quarters, the lustful woman became blind with passion, and she, amusing herself in the high mansion, not seeing her paramours on the way at night, and breaking the bolt of (the door of) the house, went out of the city, to the place of appointment. She, with her mind deluded by passion of love, looking for one of her lovers, did not see any (lover) in any bower or under any tree. At every step she heard the gentle words of her lover. Then she playfully went to that place where there was a destructive sound. Having heard the notes of the cakravākas, she, misunderstanding them for the words of her lover, again and again moved to all lakes. Through error (that it was) her lover, she awakened the flocks of deer asleep at the root of a tree, saying, with encouragement, 'I have come'. Taking a branchless trunk for the lord of her life she embraced it, and kissed a blooming lotus mistaking it for his face. Everywhere her exertion was futile. She did not see her lover. Swooning, she lamented in the grove with various words. 'O you of a charming fortune, O you treasure of fortune and handsomeness, O you having a face like the full moon, O you having eyes like lotuses, O dear one, O you full of virtues, O you who are a celestial tree where fulness relaxes, if, through anger, you are remaining somewhere in dis-

guise, I propitiate you, O dear one, even by offering my dear life.' Thus through separation (from her lover) she lamented in all directions.

34-49. Having heard her words, a tiger, who was asleep, awoke. He growled, and angrily looked in every direction along the path. Striking the ground with his nails and roaring in the sky-cavern, he speedily raised his tail suspended from the back. The tiger jumped and went where the abhisārikā was. She too, mistaking him, who was coming (to her), for her lord (i.e. paramour) went with her mind full of love to stand by him. Then blinded by the cruel sport of his nails, she gave up the idea of his being her lover on hearing his loud roar. Even though the woman was (reduced to a condition) like that, she quickly gave up her wrong notion (and said): "O tiger, for what purpose have you come here to kill me? Tell me all this for which you wish to kill me." Hearing these words of her, the tiger of violent strides, for a moment left the food (in the form) of her, laughed and said: "In the southern country there is a river named Malāpahā. On her bank is a city called Muniparṇā. There Maheśvara Pañcaliṅga actually dwells. In that city, I, being the son of a brāhmaṇa, lived. I acted as a priest for those not entitled to performing a sacrifice. On the bank of the river I ate (food) at a śrāddha performed for one definite individual. With a desire for (obtaining) wealth, I always sold the fruit of the recital of the Veda. Through greed I condemned other mendicants with bad words. I always accepted wealth not fit to be given and that was not given. Through the desire to seize the opportunity, I deceived all people. Then after some time I became old. I had wrinkles (on my body), grey hair, and being blind, stumbled and fell. My teeth had fallen, (but) again I was absorbed in accepting gifts. Through greed of getting wealth, I, wandering on the parvan days, and with darbhas in my hands, went near a holy place. Then I, with my limbs having become loose, went to the house of a brāhmaṇa to ask for food, but in the middle (i.e. while on my way) I was bitten on my leg by a dog. Fainting I fell on the ground in a moment. Then losing my life, I went to the stock of a tiger.

50-61. Remembering my former sin I live in this forest. I do not eat religious sages and good men and chaste women. But

I devour sinners, wicked ones, and unchaste women. Therefore, I shall really eat you, O unchaste woman." Saying so, he, cutting her limbs into pieces with his cruel nails, devoured her who had resorted to a sinful body. Yama's servants took her to Yama's city, and there by Yama's order quickly dropped her many times into the fierce yellow pools full of feces, urine and blood for crores of kalpas; and again and again bringing her from there, they put her into Raurava hell for a period of hundreds of periods of Manu. Even after dragging her from there, they threw her, fully helpless, weeping, with her hair loose, limbs broken, into fire. Thus, having experienced the fierce torment in the hell, wholly sinful, she was again born on the earth in the stock of cāṇḍāla. Then, in the cāṇḍāla-house also, she growing day by day, was as before due to (the effect of) her former deeds. Then after some time she went to her house, where, goddess Jṛmbhakā of Śiva, the goddess of the city, was. There she saw a pure brāhmaṇa, Vāsudeva by name, constantly reciting the thirteenth chapter of the Gītā. Then merely on hearing it, she was free from the body of cāṇḍāla, and getting a divine body, she went to heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYEIGHT

The Fourteenth Chapter: Story of a Bitch and a Hare

The lord said:

1-9. O Bhavānī, for freedom from the worldly existence, I shall hereafter narrate (the importance of) the fourteenth chapter of the Gītā. O you of a pleasing smile, listen to it. On the earth there is a large region of Kāśmīra; it is the charming capital of goddess Sarasvatī. After staying there the goddess of speech goes to Brahmā's world after mounting her swan. There the quarter attains importance after serving Sarasvatī's lotus-like feet with saffron sent by Sāvitrī and rising from the folds of the wings of the swan. Due to having no interruption the langu-

age of gods is in a moment got by men who speak Sanskrit. In the morning the orbs of the moon and of the sun have a tawny tinge due to saffron rising from the courtyard of the house. There was king Śauryavarman, a heap of lustre, who had cut off the circle of his enemies with volleys of bright arrows that were ready. In Siṁhaladvīpa there was a king, brave like a lion, named Vikramavetāla, also a treasure of arts. Gradually they increased the friendship of each other by means of heaps (of) excellent (presents) produced in their respective countries.

10-17. Once, king Vikramavetāla saw a perfect pair of bitches sent with love by Śauryavarman. He sent to his friend Śauryavarman intoxicated excellent elephants, horses, jewelled ornaments and chowries. Once, the king, eager for hunting having got into a palanquin, being fanned by charming chowries, taking the pair of the bitches tied with golden chain, and with a collection of musical instruments and small drums went with the princes to a forest. A hare was taken as a prey for the wager. There was a great noise made by the princes. Then the king laying a high-priced wager with a prince of his age sported with eagerness. Then the king, having taken down the bitch from the palanquin, set her after the hare, running fast. The prince, of great arms, also released his object of love. Having loudly repeated the panegyric or laudatory poem he stopped the bitch.

18-28. While all the kings were witnessing, the pair of the bitches was running with a speed that could not be perceived and was jumping. Due to great exertion the hare fell into a great ditch. Though fallen the hare could not be overpowered by the bitch. Then the hare, slowly getting up, vomitting foam, was angrily overpowered and seized by the king's bitch. Then the hare who somehow jumped and was going, tumbled and was seized at the neck by the king's bitch. In the din of the people, talking 'We have won' the hare got out of the mouth of the bitch that was frightened. Then the hare, having blood (on his body) that was dropping and that was caused by the line of the wounds (made) by the teeth (of the bitch), hid in a place rustling (with leaves etc.) and remained (there). He who, being just seen by the king's bitch, smelling that part of the land with great anger, was frightened, and went (from there to a distance)

of just a cubit, to a place where the wind coming from the camphor and plantain trees and the bottom of the tiger's caves and kissing the cheeks of the Cola-ladies, blew. There the deer, with their eyes partially closed due to the pollen from the cups of the ketakī flowers that had opened up, confidently resorted to the shade. There the monkeys also, satisfied with the ripe mangoes, fell down along with the coconuts. There even lions played with the young elephants; serpents entered fearlessly into the peacocks' tails.

29-36. There in a hermitage a brāhmaṇa named Vatsa, who had curbed his senses and was tranquil, lived, constantly muttering the fourteenth chapter. (The hare) going here, with his life just sustained and repeatedly panting, fell into the mud caused by the water (poured) by his disciple while washing his lotus-like feet. The hare, having crossed the mundane existence just due to the contact with that mud, got into a divine aeroplane and went to heaven. Then that bitch also, with her body besmeared with a few drops of mud and free from hunger and thirst, abandoned her canine form, got into a celestial aeroplane charming with divine ladies and adorned with gandharvas, went to heaven. Then his intelligent disciple named Svakandhara, amazed after thinking about the cause of the enmity in the former existence, laughed. The king, an ocean of modesty alone, with his eyes smiling, also saluted him with great devotion and asked him, "O brāhmaṇa, tell me the story, how the two ignorant ones, the bitch and the young hare, that had resorted to a mean stock, went to heaven."

The disciple said:

37-39. In this forest there is a brāhmaṇa named Vatsa, with his senses curbed. He always mutters the fourteenth chapter. O king, I am his disciple, proficient in every (branch of) knowledge. Everyday I mutter the fourteenth chapter, O king. O king, the hare along with the bitch, rolling in the water (used) for washing my feet, went to heaven.

The king said:

40. O best brāhmaṇa, with what intention did you, thinking carefully that it has some meaning, laugh?

The disciple said:

41-45. There was a great city named Pratyudaka in Mahārāṣṭra. There was a brāhmaṇa named Keśava, a leader of gamblers. His wife was Vilobhanā, a wanton woman. He through anger, and remembering the enmity of the (former) birth, killed her. Then due to the sin of the murder of a woman, the brāhmaṇa was born as a hare, and she due to her birth (full) of deceit, was born as a bitch. They, taking different births, never forgot the enmity practised in the former birth, and each other also.

The king, full of faith, having understood all this, studied the entire Gītā, and got the highest position.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYNINE

The Fifteenth Chapter: *The Story of King Narasiṁsha*

The lord said:

1-11. O you large-eyed one, O you daughter of the Himālaya mountain, I shall tell (you) the importance of the fifteenth chapter of the Gītā. Listen to it. In the Gauḍa country there was a kind king named Narasiṁha. In the war by the edge of his sword the divine groups were killed. The earth could bear the agony due to the heat of the sun, even in summer, by means of the water of the stream of rut of his intoxicated elephants. Intoxicated elephants, frightened due to being challenged and seeking his refuge, shone like moving mountains. The mountains respectfully echoed the trumpets of the intoxicated elephants of him, the kind protector. It was a wonder how the earth was not reduced to pieces, when it was shattered with the multitudes of (the strokes of) the hoofs of his running horses. When he, a friend of Indra, emancipated the earth, Phaṇīśvara (Śeṣa; Patañjali) again brightened Mahābhāṣya. He had an intelligent soldier named Sarabhaberuṇḍa, who was an abode of weapons, holy texts and arts, and had large round arms. By means of his trea-

sure, horses, brave soldiers, and very inaccessible forts he was equal to the king. Some time the sinful one made up his mind to rule over the kingdom after having forcibly killed the king together with the princes. With a desire to do like this he was determined (to kill the king with the princes). Due to the disease of cholera he died.

12-26. O you of a thin belly, after death the sinful one was born, due to that act, as a bright horse in Sindhu country. A certain vaiśya-son, knowing the facts about horses, bought him at a great price and took him (to his place) with great effort. After his death the king got old in course of time and looked after his kingdom with (the help of) his grandsons. The vaiśya-son came to give the horse to the king. He remained at the king's door waiting to meet him. Though the vaiśya was already known, he was presented (before the king) by the doorkeeper. "Speak why (you have come)." Thus asked by the king, he told (everything) clearly. "Thinking that this horse is a gem of the three worlds, I (bought) this horse of auspicious marks at a price of a million coins." Then looking at the faces of those seated by his side, the king ordered the vaiśya: "Bring the horse here." The great horse made the heads of those knowing the marks of a horse, nod, and exciting the minds of the brave, ejecting hisvery bright fame earned by many speedy runs across, the entire earth, as it were, in the form of saliva and foam, he actually became comparable to Uccaiḥśravas by means of the similarity in virtues (with him). The very bright one bent his neck, as it were, through bashfulness. Constantly being fanned by chowries, white like the moon, he was like Uccaiḥśravas, unsteady like the Milky Ocean. Like the beauty of the clouds he had a pair of blue umbrellas, and the beauty of the peak of the Himālaya, with clouds touching it. Repeatedly raising his handsome neck, he was, as it were, turned into fire by the contact with the earth. He tore all the enemies; he brought prosperity in the form of victory with his loud neighing; he declared glory in (all) quarters. He was a very high heap of vitality; was, as it were, the treasure of gaits. He was actually the abode of beauty; he was the ocean of (auspicious) marks.

27-40. The vaiśya brought the horse; and the king saw him. The ministers knowing the (auspicious) marks described him in

various ways. Giving the merchant as much gold as desired and aked for by him, the king, full of extreme joy, quickly took the horse. Then having called the horsegroom, and carefully instructing him the king dismissed the assembly and went into his house after being taken leave of in many ways by (the members of) the assembly. He (took) the king, having the ornaments in the form of rows of scars of wounds made in battle, and resembling sattva (energy?). Once, the king, full of curiosity, having the sport of hunting (in mind), mounted him, and entered a forest. Leaving his soldiers behind, all of whom were running around, the king, being attracted by deer, was oppressed with thirst. Then the king got down from the horse, and looking for water, tied the horse to the branch of a tree, and ascended a rock. He saw half the verse from the fifteenth chapter of the Gītā written, and fallen where he looked into a fissure. When the king was reading the line of letters, the horse, hearing it, obtained salvation, and quickly fell. Then having cut off the knot, and dropping the saddle, he, being lifted by the king did not get up, (but) was dead. Then Sarabhaberuṇḍa, talking to the king in a sweet tone, got into a celestial aeroplane, and went to heaven. Then going up the mountain, he saw an excellent hermitage. It was full of the trees of punnāga, plantain, mango and coconut. It had groves of grapes and sugarcanes, and trees like nuts, nāgakesara and campaka. It had young elephants and deer playing in it. It had the flocks of peacocks dancing. The king, being free from the desire for worldly existence, saluted the brāhmaṇa who was in the hut, and asked him with great devotion:

41-46. "(Please) tell me, with what purpose the horse went to heaven." Having heard these words of the king, the brāhmaṇa said: "Due to his sin, he became a horse after a long time. Having heard half a verse from the fifteenth chapter of the Gītā written somewhere, when you read it, the horse went to heaven." Then the king, surrounded by his attendants who had come there, with horripilation due to joy, saluted the brāhmaṇa and left. The king, with his eyes dilating due to joy, read that writing having (half the verse from) the fifteenth (chapter) of the Gītā and he, along with the ministers, the counsellors, consecrated his son powerful like a lion, on the throne, and he of a pure mind, obtained salvation.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETY

The Sixteenth Chapter: Khaḍgabāhu's Story

The lord said:

1-9. Hereafter I shall narrate the greatness of the sixteenth chapter. Hear it, O fawn-eyed one, O you showering joy and eagerness. In the Gurjara country there was a city by name Saurāṣṭrika. There lived a king Khaḍgabāhu by name. He was, as it were, another moon. The ocean is made fragrant by the string of the fragrance of his flowers and Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī sleeps comfortably in it. The particles of the camphor of his fame shine in the sky, under the pretext of stars, after they were scattered there by the sighs of his enemies. Kings among his enemies who had bathed in the holy place of the edge of his sword, (though) fascinated by the words of divine women, even now turn back from heaven. He had an elephant named Arimardana. He was unrestrained due to rut. He had swarms of bees (hovering round and) humming in the water of the flowing ichor. It shone like mount Añjana with the springs rising, turbid due to being the water in the form of the stream of ichor crossing his large temples. In the interior of the forest the chowries bright like the moonlight shone on his limbs like the rays of the moon falling on them. He looked splendid with his temples shining with the cover of the particles of red lead. He was like a portion of the sky pervaded with the evening clouds.

10-22. Once, at night, he freed himself from the chains and fetters and forcibly broke the iron pillar (to which he was tied) and went out. Angrily ignoring all the hosts of drivers flashing the goads by his side, he broke his abode, though he was being struck in various ways with bamboo sticks to which goads were fixed, and though the drivers frightened him much. Then on hearing this wonder came there the king with those adept in the art of (the marks of) elephants and with princes. Having come (there) the king saw the mighty elephant stupefying the pride of brave heroes and taking away rows of lofty mansions. The citizens, turning away from any other curiosity and through fear guarding their children, looked at the very fierce elephant by keeping themselves at a distance. The paths were made fragrant

by the drops of his rut and blocked by people intent on fleeing. Then a brāhmaṇa, after having bathed and muttering certain verses from the sixteenth chapter of the Gītā, came along the path, though he was prohibited in many ways by the citizens and the drivers of elephants. Not caring for those who were scared of the elephant, he walked on. The elephant covered the people with hissings and crushed them. The brāhmaṇa touched his ichor and went happily. Even when the citizens were watching, there arose a great wonder in the mind of the king which cannot be grasped by words. Then getting down from his horse, saluting the brāhmaṇa. the king asked him:

The king said:

23-24. O brāhmaṇa, today you have done a great, uncommon thing. How did you pass by the elephant resembling Death? Which god do you worship? Which hymn do you mutter, O lord? Which divine power do you possess? Tell it, O brāhmaṇa.

The brāhmaṇa said:

25-34. O king, everyday I mutter a few verses from the sixteenth chapter of the Gītā. All these divine powers are due to that.

Then leaving the elephant, the interesting object of curiosity, the king, taking the brāhmaṇa with him, came home. Having pleased the best brāhmaṇa at an auspicious time with golden coins numbering a lakh, he received from him the Gītā-hymn. The curious king also studied with reverence, a few verses from the sixteenth chapter of the Gītā. Once, with his soldiers, he went out of the city. Clearly not caring for the pleasures of the kingdom, he let loose the intoxicated elephant from his driver. The king offered his life like grass before the elephant. The king, the leader of the daring ones, took him, of large temples and unrestrained due to the line of the rut, and due to his confidence in his ministers came there. The king got away from the elephant as the moon would come out of Rāhu's mouth or a righteous person from the mouth of Death or a good one from that of a wicked one. Having come to the city, the king consecrat-

ed his son (on the throne), and due to the muttering of the sixteenth chapter, obtained the best position.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYONE

The Seventeenth Chapter: Duḥśāsana's Story

The lord said:

1-9. I told you the power of the sixteenth chapter. Now listen clearly, O Śiva, to the greatness of the seventeenth chapter. Duḥśāsana was a servant of Khaḍgabāhu's son. He came to seize that elephant and was killed by the elephant. With his mind fixed on that desire, he obtained the stock of the elephant, (but)obtained the highest position on listening to the seventeenth chapter of the Gītā.

The goddess said:

I have heard that Duḥśāsana became an elephant and was released. O auspicious lord, tell me that only in detail.

The lord said:

There was a certain wicked-minded man. He laid a high-priced wager with the feudal princes and then mounted upon an elephant. The fool named Duḥśāsana, having gone a few steps only, (though) warded off by people, uttered audacious words. Then the elephant, hearing them, was blind with fury. With the princes trembling, he, with his steps stumbling, fell down. Then the elephant, unrestrained like death, angrily uprooted something panting and fallen. The mad elephant separating his bones, even though he was already dead, scattered them.

10-17. Then having died in course of time, he obtained the stock of elephant. He passed a long time (like that). The king of Siṁhaladvīpa had a close friendship with king Khaḍgabāhu. Then the honoured elephant was sent by the water-route by Jayadeva to Khaḍgabāhu. That king also took him with joy. Remembering his previous existence, and seeing his kinsmen and

his brothers, he passed a few days with great grief. Not showing (any recognition) he quietly lived in Khaḍgabāhu's house. He, some time being pleased by the completing of an incomplete stanza (in a contest) (by a poet) gave the poet the elephant as a present. The poet, being afraid of a harm from a disease, sold the temple-elephant to the Mālava king for a hundred (coins). After some time had passed, the elephant suffering from fever due to old age difficult to be enjoyed, was on the point of dying. The elephant did not smell cold water, nor did he take a morsel; he did not sleep comfortably, but shed tears only.

18-27. Then hearing the account told by the elephant-driver, the king came where the elephant suffering from fever, lay. The elephant too, seeing the king, gave up the agony due to the fever, and spoke in a voice causing wonder to the world. "O king, O you who know all sacred texts, O you ocean of the science of politics, O you who have vanquished the host of your enemies, O you to whom Viṣṇu's feet are dear, what is the use of medicines, shoots, and mutterings of hymns? Bring a brāhmaṇa who would mutter the seventeenth chapter of the Gītā. There is no doubt that my disease will end due to that." The king did as was told by the elephant. Then Duḥśāsana gave up his state as an elephant, and got release. When the brāhmaṇa had thrown consecrated water on the excellent one, the king saw that Duḥśāsana, lustrous like Indra, got into a divine aeroplane.

The king said:

Tell me what your caste is, who you are, what your livelihood is. Due to what act did you become an elephant? How did you come here?

Asked by the king, Duḥśāsana who was freed, remaining in the aeroplane, told in definite words his account. Then the lord of Mālava, muttering the seventeenth chapter of the Gītā, was released after a short time.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYTWO

The Eighteenth Chapter: A Brāhmaṇa Becomes Indra

Pārvatī said:

1. O Śiva, you have told me the greatness of the seventeenth chapter. (Now) tell me the importance of the eighteenth chapter.

The lord said:

2-15a. O you daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, listen to the greatness of the eighteenth chapter which is holy, which is the essence of all holy texts, which is the elixir that has come to the ears, which is intent on tearing off the mass of pangs in the worldly existence, which is the great secret of the siddhas, which is capable of uprooting ignorance, which is vitality, which is the best, the highest position of Kaiṭabha's enemy (i.e. Viṣṇu), which is the root of the creeper of discretion, which removes the dirt of passion and anger, which gave repose to the hearts of gods like Indra, which amused the minds of the great meditating saints like Sanaka, which has given a setback to the roars of Yama merely by its being recited, which is the cause of uprooting the roots of one hundred and eight diseases. O you whose gait is like that of an elephant, there is no greater secret than this. It removes the three (kinds of) torments and destroys major sins. As I am eternal among times, as the desire-yielding cow is among the beasts, as Vyāsa is among the best sages, or as he who knows Brahman is among the Vyāsas, as Indra is among gods, as Guru (i.e. Bṛhaspati) is superior to Śukra, as among the liquids nectar is the best and well-known in the world, as Kailāsa is among mountains, and as Indra is among gods, as Puṣkara is among the holy places, as lotus is among flowers, as in the worlds Arundhatī is among the chaste and virtuous wives, as the horse-sacrifice is among the sacrifices, as Paradise is among the gardens, as among all Rudras is my follower Vīrabhadra, as a gift of land is among gifts, as Godāvārī is among rivers, as Harikṣetra is recommended for all religious rites, so is the greatness of the eighteenth chapter excellent in the world. About it, O Pārvatī, listen devoutly to this auspicious

account, so that by merely listening to it a being is free from sins.

15b-28. On the peak of Meru there was a beautiful city (named) Amarāvatī. It was formerly fashioned for my amusement by Viśvakarman. It is always full of virtues, and resorted to by crores of gods. There, palaces giving desired objects and built with desire-yielding stones, excel. It (spread) up to the city of Brahmā. It possessed a mass of lustre, and is well-known like the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit. There happily sitting under the shade of the desire-yielding tree Śacī enjoyed the song sung by gandharva women. The divine river there turned bloody due to the billows of the blood of the demons whose lives were crushed by gods. There the gods, repeatedly remembering the ancient sweet ambrosia, and being emaciated with hunger, everyday drank the digit of the moon. In it, resembling final beatitude, formerly lived Indra. The prosperous one was accompanied by Śacī, and was waited upon by all gods. When once he was seated comfortably he saw a great man having a thousand eyes, waited upon by Viṣṇu's messengers, coming (to him). Then due to his lustre Indra was overpowered. He quickly fell into the hall from his jewelled throne. When he went away from the throne, Viṣṇu's soldiers tied him with the strap of the sovereignty over the gods. Pulomajā quickly sat on the left lap of that great Indra who was consecrated to the accompaniment of sounds of drums. Then gods along with their wives sang divine songs. The celestial ladies waved lights before him. Then sages gave him blessings with (hymns from) the Vedas. The bands of celestial nymphs like Rambhā danced before him. Gandharvas sang charming songs with auspicious desires.

29-44. Thus they served the new Indra who had not performed a hundred sacrifices. Seeing that old Indra was amazed. "By me (him?) lakes were never fashioned on the path; trees giving rest to travellers were never planted. God Tripurabhairava (i.e. Śiva) was never seen. Goddess Madālasā living in the place of treasure was never worshipped. Śārṅgadhara residing at Meghaṅkara was never seen. A bath was never taken at Viraja. The city of Kāśī was never visited. Narahari himself residing at the divine grove was never seen. Eraṇḍa Viṣṇu Heramba(?) was never contemplated upon. Mother Reṇukā living in the city was never seen. The

goddess living at Dānāpura was never devoutly worshipped. Tryambaka with three phalluses was not devoutly seen at Tripura. Somanātha living at the Śārdūla lake was never seen. Ghuśṛṇeśa living at Revāpura was never seen. Nāganātha, well known in the city of Nāgadanta, was never seen. Great Amṛteśvara residing at Parṇagrāma was never seen. Harihara himself living on the bank of Tuṅgabhadrā was never seen. Śrīnivāsa residing on Veṅkaṭādri was not properly seen. Śrīraṅga residing at Kāverī Karṇikā was not at all seen. Poor and helpless and wailing people were not released from gaol. Beings were not honoured with (i.e. by giving them) food during a famine. On no night a water-fountain was erected at a place without water. A bath was not taken in Godāvarī. Hariṇeśvara was not seen. A bath was not taken in Kṛṣṇaveṇī, when Jupiter was in the Zodiacal sign Libra. Not a piece of land was given. Poets were not at all honoured. A sacrificial session was never performed at the holy places. Sacrifices also were not performed in villages. Water places containing much water were never made on the path. At no place temples of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva were built. Those that were overcome with fear and sought my shelter were never protected. Due to one act of religious merit how such a divine gift was got?"

45-46. Being full of thought like this, Indra, being dejected, hastily went to ask Viṣṇu to the cave in the Milky Ocean. Having entered there that Indra saw Viṣṇu who was asleep. All of a sudden he told him of his being deprived of sovereignty.

Indra said:

47-49. O Viṣṇu, in order to please you I formerly performed a hundred sacrifices. Due to that religious merit I obtained the position of Indra. Now some new person has become Indra in heaven. He has not done religious acts, nor has he performed sacrifices. O Acyuta, how is my throne ascended by him?

Mahādeva said:

50. Having heard the words of him who was speaking like this, Viṣṇu, with his eyes dilating due to smile, spoke sweet words.

The lord said:

51. What is the use of gifts, giving small fruits? What is the use of austerities or sacrifices? Remaining on the earth, he formerly pleased me.

Indra said:

52. O lord, by means of which act, did the brāhmaṇa please you, due to which being pleased you gave him Indra's position?

The lord said:

53-63. He mutters five verses from the eighteenth chapter of the Gītā. Due to that religious merit, the crown gem of all (kinds of) religious merit, he obtained your excellent sovereign empire. Be steady.

Hearing these words of Viṣṇu, Indra, who had (thus) known the means, took the guise of a brāhmaṇa and went to the bank of Godāvarī. There he saw the very auspicious and excellent Kālikāgrāma. There god Kāleśvara, crushing Death, resides. There on the bank of Godāvarī, he saw a very religious, kind brāhmaṇa who had mastered the Vedas, who everyday muttered the eighteenth chapter and whose mind was controlled. Then having rolled at his feet with great joy, he recited the eighteenth chapter taught by him. Then due to that religious merit he secured union with Viṣṇu. And knowing the position of gods like Indra to be small, he abandoned it, and went to Viṣṇu's city. Therefore, only this is a great truth for the sages. I have told you the divine importance of the eighteenth chapter, by just hearing which one is free from all sins. Thus I have told you the importance of the Gītā, which destroys sins, which is meritorious, purifying, which gives (long) life, which leads (one) to heaven, and which is a great means of securing prosperity. O noble one, a man who devoutly listens to it, obtains the fruit of all sacrifices and would obtain absorption into Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYTHREE

The Greatness of the Bhāgavata

Pārvatī said:

1-3. O Mahādeva, O god of gods, O omniscient one, O you giving all (kinds of) wealth, showing great compassion for me, tell me what I ask you. I heard the greatness of the Gītā, containing many wonderful tales. Therefore, an eagerness to listen to the great account of Kṛṣṇa has arisen in me. Among all the Purāṇas, Bhāgavata is the best, in what by every word Kṛṣṇa is sung in various ways by the sages. Now tell me its greatness properly and along with the historical accounts.

The lord said:

4. Śaunaka, adept in tasting the sweetness of the nectar of a story, said to the highly intelligent Sūta seated in the Naimiṣa (forest), after having saluted him:

Śaunaka said:

5-10: Narrate (to us) the account of Śrīmad Bhāgavata which is an elixir, which destroys the darkness of ignorance and the sins of a crore of (past) existences, O Sūta. How does discrimination rich with devotion, knowledge and detachment grow? How do Viṣṇu's devotees remove illusion and delusion? Here in this Kali-age a being has almost attained demonhood. What is the elixir to purify him who is overcome with affliction? Now tell (us) that which is the (highest) felicity of (all) felicities, which is the most purifying of (all) purifying objects, and which is the means to please Kṛṣṇa. A preceptor who is pleased gives (to his disciple) the desire-yielding gem, happiness in the world, the wealth of the position of the lord of gods, and also Vaikuṇṭha, which is extremely difficult to obtain.

Sūta said:

11-21. O best brāhmaṇas, I am pleased with you. (Therefore) I shall tell you that as I have heard it which is better than the best, which destroys the fear of the mundane existence, which increases devotion, which is the cause of pleasing Kṛṣṇa. Listen

attentively when I am telling it. In the Kali-age Kṛṣṇa has told the holy text of Śrīmad Bhāgavata, which brings about the protection of the world which is held in the mouth of the tiger of Death. There is nothing superior to this that would purify the mind. It is obtained by good men by means of religious merit earned in many (previous) existences. Knowing the salvation of king Parīkṣit, the lotus-born one compared the holy texts and the great Purāṇas. Among them Śrīmad Bhāgavata came to be greater on the earth. The talk of Bhāgavata is difficult to be had even by gods. Thinking like this many good, pure sages looked upon Śrīmad Bhāgavata as a form of lord (Viṣṇu). By reciting and listening to it a man goes to Viṣṇu's position. Listening to it for a year gives great happiness. O best brāhmaṇa, devotion to it for a month earns splendour. Listening to it for a week gives salvation at all times. O good one, what is the use of talking too much? The good men should everyday drink the nectar of Śrīmad Bhāgavata which records the sports of Kṛṣṇa. Sanaka and others, full of compassion, formerly told it to Nārada who had (already) heard it from Brahmā. The manner of listening to it for a week (was also told).

Śaunaka said:

22-23. Having obtained excellent knowledge called Śrīmad Bhāgavata from his father, Nārada who knows the facts about the worlds, always roams over the earth. Where did Nārada meet those noble ones from whom the divine sage heard the manner of listening to it for a week?

Sūta said:

24-26. About this I shall tell you an account full of devotion, which formerly kind Śukra told me. Once the sages Sanaka and others saw at (the bank of) Viśālā, Nārada with his mind dejected. The sages, given to thinking about the Supreme Spirit and full of amazement, seeing their brother, the divine sage, thinking (like that) asked him.

Kumāras said:

27. O brāhmaṇa, what are you, very much helpless and afflict-

ed, thinking about? This is not proper for you who are associated with bliss. Tell (us) its cause.

Nārada said:

28-42. Knowing the earth to be the best of all the best, having various kinds of holy places, of an auspicious nature due to these auspicious places, I wandered here and there, at these holy places like Puṣkara, Prayāga, Kāśī, the bank of Godāvarī, Harikṣetra, Kurukṣetra, Śrīraṅga, Setubandhana, (but) nowhere did I find happiness, giving delight to my mind. Now the earth is afflicted by Kali, the friend of unrighteousness. On the earth truth, purity, pity, charity exist nowhere. People are selfish, miserable and are false witnesses. They are lethargic, dull-witted, and resort to highly heretical men. Householders attach importance to women; religious students are without (i.e. do not observe) vows. Anchorites are living in cities; those who have renounced the worldly ties are given to enjoyment. Through greed they sell their daughters; they are engaged in agriculture; they have fallen from (good) behaviour; they are hypocrites; they show wanton (behaviour). The hermitages, holy places, rivers, pools are besieged by Yavanas. The temples at other places are destroyed by the wicked. A meditating saint, a siddha or a wise man doing good deeds is not seen. Today fulfilment (of vows) is reduced to ash due to the wild fire in the form of Kali. Communities are everywhere seen to sell food; brāhmaṇas to use an auspicious object as a commodity; and beautiful ladies to use their hair as commodities. Once I reached the auspicious bank of Yamunā. There I saw Vṛndāvana where Viṣṇu had sported. O best sages, listen to the wonder that I saw there. A young lady, with her mind dejected, was seated there. Two old men, breathing and senseless, lay by her side. Weeping before the two, she was nursing and waking them up. I saw her looking into the directions, as it were, looking for her protector. Repeatedly she was fanned and advised by many women. Seeing her from a distance, I approached her through curiosity. Seeing me, the young lady got up and spoke these words:

The young lady said:

43-44a. O good man, stay here for a moment; remove my

anxiety. O good one, the sight of (good) men completely destroys streams of sins. I have had your sight due to my deeds in former existences. Therefore, O you who respect others, please remove my mental agony.

Nārada said:

44b-46. Thus addressed by her, I with my heart affectionate through pity, and full of curiosity, asked the beautiful lady: "O good one, who are you? Who are these two? Who are these lotus-eyed ones? Tell me the entire cause of your grief." Thus asked by me, that young lady, with her mind afflicted, told me her entire agony (and) the cause of the agony.

The young lady said:

47-52. I am known as 'Bhakti' (Devotion). These two are my excellent sons named 'Jñāna' (Knowledge) and 'Vairāgya' (Detachment). They are hurt due to contact with destiny. These rivers like Gaṅgā have come (here) to serve me. O Nārada, by these I am everyday served with respect. I am not getting any felicity; I am emaciated all round, O sage. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to my former account, due to which I became unhappy and am getting happiness nowhere. I was born in the Draviḍa country and brought up in Karṇāṭa. For a little (time) I lived in Mahārāṣṭra, and became old in Gurjara. There due to contact with heretics, I got my limbs cut. For a long time I have become weak, and become dull along with my sons.

53-66a. O Nārada, through luck I have reached this Vṛndāvana: I have, as it were, again become a beautiful young girl. Here these two sons have their minds greatly afflicted. Now I am unable to go leaving them who are very old. How have I become a young girl? Why have my sons become old? Due to what is this difference among us who were of the same condition? The old mother exerts herself when the sons are young. So I, with my mind full of wonder, am worried. O you who know religious practices, O kind one, O protector of the helpless, tell me truly the cause that might be there.

Thus asked by her, I, having thought for a moment, again spoke to Bhakti who was emaciated for a long time: "O sinless

one, through my wisdom I see all your account. Do not be sad, O wise one; Viṣṇu will make you happy. O child, this is Kali age, fearful and destroying all goodness. Due to it good conduct, the path of Yoga and penance are violated. Sinful men, doing dishonest and bad acts, become deities in this (age), and the good are much afflicted with grief, and the bad are delighted at heart. No strong-minded, or wise man is seen. This earth having the burden of the groups of the wicked is not fit to be touched or seen. This is the order every year; everyday auspiciousness is given up. O beautiful lady, no one will either see you or these your sons. Men, full of great attachment, have abandoned you; (therefore) you have become infirm. Due to your contact with Vṛndāvana you have again become young. This Vṛndāvana where Bhakti has become young, is blessed. These two, for want of receivers, have not become young. It appears that they are asleep here due to a little joy to them."

Bhakti said:

66b-81. How did king Parīkṣit install this impure Kali? Why did Viṣṇu, given to kindness, ignore impiety? Remove this doubt of me. I am happy with your words.

O brāhamaṇa, having heard her words, I spoke again. "O girl, if you have asked affectionately, then listen. Since the day Viṣṇu, leaving the earth, went to his own place, Kali, obstructor of the truth, has proceeded. A king saw him in his conquest of the world, and he yielded like a helpless person. The seer of His virtues is not killed. This is common to all. In the Kali age an intelligent man gets that fruit by narrating the account of Viṣṇu, which he does not by means of penance, abstract meditation or concentration. Seeing Kali like this, giving substantial fruit from the unsubstantial, Viṣṇu established this for the good of those born in the Kali age. Due to bad actions, now all excellence has gone away from every place. Objects lie on the ground like husk without seeds. The brāhmaṇas have told the Bhāgavata story in every house out of greed for wealth. Therefore, the excellence has gone. Men doing very cruel deeds, atheists, and hypocrites stay at all holy places. So the excellence has gone. With their minds overtaken by passion, anger, great greed, desire they

commence (religious) acts. Therefore, the excellence of the acts has gone. The fruit of abstract meditation has gone because of non-restraint of mind, greed, hypocrisy, resorting to heretics, want of the study of holy texts. The wise dally with their wives like he-buffaloes. They are expert in producing sons and not in accomplishing salvation. Devotion to Viṣṇu is (found) nowhere. All are led by tradition. All are given to censuring gods; all are fond of condemning the good. This is the practice of the age. Who should be blamed? Therefore, remembering the lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu) you will get happiness." Hearing these words uttered by me, she was amazed. O best brāhmaṇas, having praised me, she spoke again:

Bhakti said:

82-84. O divine sage, you are blessed. Due to my (good) luck you have come (here). The sight of the good gives all prosperity in the world. Now advise me in such a way that I will have a means for my happiness. O brāhmaṇa, in this world there is nothing to be accomplished by you. I salute Brahmā's son, having heard whose one sentence (Prahlāda) the son of Kayādhū (wife of Hiraṇyakaśipu) subdued the Māyā of (Viṣṇu) the unborn one, and due to whose grace Dhruva attained to an undecaying eternal position.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYFOUR

Śrīmad Bhāgavata, the Destroyer of All Miseries

Sūta said:

1. O kind sages, listen to what was told by Nārada when he was thus requested by that extremely helpless Bhakti.

Nārada said:

2-10. O girl, do not be sad in vain. Having placed your mind in your heart, remember Śrīkṛṣṇa's lotus-like feet. (By that) you will obtain happiness. That Kṛṣṇa who protected Draupadī from

ignominy from the Kauravas, who looked after the beautiful cowherdesses, has not gone anywhere (else). O Bhakti, you are dear to him, (cared for) even more than his own life. Called by you, the lord will come to even mean houses. In the three ages like Satya knowledge and detachment accomplished salvation. In the Kali age Bhakti (devotion) alone brings about absorption into Brahman. Deciding like this he, of the nature of consciousness, of the form of highest bliss and consciousness, delighted in mind, produced you from his own body. With your palms joined you then asked Hari: "What do I do (now)?" Kṛṣṇa then ordered you: "Nourish my devotees." You accepted to do so. Hari was then pleased. He gave you Salvation as your maid, and Knowledge and Detachment as your sons. Remaining in Vaikuṇṭha you always nourished your devotees. To nourish your devotees you resorted to the form of your shadow (i.e. semblance). Salvation, Knowledge and Detachment came here (i.e. to the earth) with you. From the Kṛta (age) to the Dvāpara age, Mukti (salvation) stayed (here).

11-22a. But in the Kali age, she became emaciated, and suffered from the disease due to the heretics. By your order she again went (back) to Vaikuṇṭha. On merely being remembered by you, she quickly comes (to this world). Looking upon these two as your sons, you have protected them by your side. Due to being ignored in the Kali age both these your sons have become dull and old. Yet you give up anxiety. I shall think of a means. O you beautiful lady, there is no (other) age like the Kali age. In it I shall make you known in every house. If by obscuring other practices and putting forward great festivals, I shall not (be able to) promote you, then I am not Hari's servant. Those living beings, even though sinful, who are endowed with you in the Kali age, will, being fearless, go to Hari's abode. Those of pure forms, who are devoted to you, always of the form of love, will not see Yama even in a dream. An evil spirit, a goblin, a demon or an asura is not capable of touching or seeing those whose minds are full of devotion. Hari is not obtained by means of austerities, Vedas, knowledge or (religious) acts. He is obtained by devotion (only). The proof thereof are the cowherdesses. Men of righteous act might have devotion after a thousand existences. In the Kali age devotion alone (excels). By means of

devotion Kṛṣṇa stands before (the devotee). Those who offend Bhakti, perish in the three worlds. Formerly Durvāsas who condemned Bhakti, suffered misery. Enough of virtuous conduct; enough of (visiting) holy places; enough of abstract meditations; enough of sacrifices; enough of narrations of wise tales; Bhakti alone always gives salvation.

22b-30. Thus addressed by me, and having heard her own greatness, she, with her entire body full of joy, again said these words (to me): "O Nārada, you are blessed. You have a steady affection for me. I shall never let go your attention to me. O good one, by you, kind (to me), my suffering is destroyed in a moment. My two sons do not have understanding. Rouse these two." Hearing those words of her, I, having pity, touching (them) with my hand, proceeded to rouse (them). Bringing my mouth near their ears, I loudly uttered the words: "Jñāna, rise quickly. O Vairāgya, awake." Though repeatedly being roused by the sounds of the Vedas, by the recitals of the Gītā, they did not somehow get roused. Not seeing (anything) with their eyes, and languidly yawning, both were grey-haired like cranes, and had their bodies mostly dry like wood. The two, emaciated with hunger, having observed (me), again went to sleep. Then I was full of thought: 'What should I do (now)? Oh, how will their sleep go (away)? Their old age is severe.'

31-42. O best brāhmaṇas, thinking like this, I constantly remembered Govinda. Just then there was heard a divine voice: "O sage, do not be dejected. Your exertion will be fruitful. There is no doubt. For this purpose, O divine sage, do a good deed. Good men, ornaments of the virtuous, will tell you that good deed. When that good deed is done, the sleep and the old age of these two will disappear in a moment. Bhakti (devotion) will spread everywhere." O brāhmaṇas, even after having distinctly heard this divine voice, I could not make out as to what was told by the voice in a secretive manner. What is that deed due to which the two would be endowed with understanding? Where would be the good ones? How will they tell that good deed to me? Now what should I do (about) what the divine voice told me? Then, O brāhmaṇas, having placed them there, I went out of Vṛndāraṇya, and asked the best brāhmaṇas here and there.

Having heard the entire account and with their minds amazed, they, not understanding the divine voice, did not give a reply. Some said: "It cannot be comprehended". Others said: "It cannot be understood." Others, thinking again and again, kept mum. The triad, though being roused with the sounds of the Vedas, and Vedāntas, and also by repeated recitations of the Gītā, did not rise. 'Oh, (how cruel) is fate! How can other human beings do that which the meditating saint Nārada himself could not understand?' Then being thoughtful I came to Badarivana. I determined to practise penance for that purpose. Just then I saw the best sages, Sanaka and others, bright like a crore of suns. I spoke to those best sages:

43-48. "I saw you due to great luck. Therefore, O noble ones, with your minds pleased, you may (please) tell me the means. You are the greatest among the meditating saints. You are intelligent. You are very learned; you, Kumāras, five years old, are the ancestors of the ancient people. You always live in Vaikuṇṭha; you are always engaged in narrating (the glory of) Viṣṇu. You are intoxicated by the account—the nectar—of (Viṣṇu's) sports. You are devoted to remembering Viṣṇu. Therefore, (old age,) the Daughter of Time does not trouble you. Due just to the knitting of your eye-brows, formerly the two door-keepers of Viṣṇu became demons for three existences, and again came back to their places. (Please) tell the means which is told by the heavenly voice. O kind ones, (please) tell me what should be done and in what way in this matter. The wise ones should well tell (me) how Bhakti, Jñāna and Vairāgya would secure happiness, and how they would attain fame in all the worlds".

Kumāras said:

49-57. O divine sage, do not be anxious. Have delight in your mind. There is a means in this matter, which can be easily had, and which gives happiness to the world. O Nārada, you are blessed. You are the crest-jewel of the detached ones. You are the foremost among those who are fit for Śrīkṛṣṇa's love. You are the best among speakers. O divine sage, it is no wonder for you, engrossed in the means of devotion, to spread devotion properly on the earth. For (securing) divine faculties the sages have designed various means. They could be secured with exertion; and

all of them mostly give heaven as their fruit. The path leading to Vaikuṇṭha is hidden in the worlds. A good man, teaching it, is generally not found. O best sage, that good act which the divine voice indicated to you, is known by the ancients to be jñānayajña (knowledge-sacrifice). We feel that the talk (i.e. the recitation) of Śrīmad Bhāgavata is a knowledge-sacrifice, told by Śuka, and would give happiness to Bhakti, Jñāna and Virāga. All these sins of Kali, afraid of the sound of Śrīmad Bhāgavata, run away like wolves at the roar of lion. Bhakti, along with Jñāna and Vairāgya, producing the feeling of joy in each house, in each person, will sport happily.

Sūta said:

58. Having heard Kumāras' words, revered Nārada, with his mind delighted, looking to their prosperity, spoke again.

Nārada said:

59-62. The triad, covered by Kali's noxious qualities, is not rising (though) roused by sounds of Vedas and Vedāṅgas, and recitations of the Gītā. How (then) will it rise now by the recitation of Bhāgavata? You, whose sight is fruitful should (please) remove this doubt. O you who are affectionate to those who seek your shelter, (please) do not tarry in this matter.

Then Sanaka and others, detached and living in perpetual celibacy, the ancient brāhmaṇas, who had supernatural faculties, respectfully said to Nārada:

Kumāras said:

63-71. The Bhāgavata-account has risen from the quintessence of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. Therefore, it appears to be the best, and the rise of fruit is different. As the taste is present in a mango fruit from the bottom to the top, but is different when separated and drunk, and delights all, as ghee present in milk is not thought to be pleasant, but when separated is divine, and increases the joy of gods, as sugar remains pervading the bottom, the middle and the end (i.e. the top) of a sugarcane, and is sweet when separated, so is Bhāgavata-story. The Purāṇa

named Śrīmad Bhāgavata is relish itself; it is manifested for the happiness of Bhakti, Jñāna and Vairāgya to Brahmā, remaining in the lotus born from his navel, by Kṛṣṇa. The four-versed (summary) of it appears to be the entire Brahman. That account was narrated to you by Brahmā. You also narrated it to Vyāsadeva, to destroy torment. By remembering it Bādarāyaṇa (Vyāsa) instantly became depressed; and in a manner delighting the soul, composed (the work of) the great name. Due to what are you amazed, that you are asking again and again? The holy text of Śrīmad Bhāgavata is capable of attracting Kṛṣṇa.

Sūta said:

72. Having heard these desired words spoken by the foremost ones like Sanaka, the best meditating saints, Nārada devoutly seized their feet, and saluting them by bowing his head, said to them who destroy the misery of the world.

Nārada said:

73-74. Your sight destroys the stream of sins. It gives bliss to those who are afflicted by the wild fire in the form of the misery of the mundane existence, by drinking it when fully sung by Śeṣa's mouth. I have sought your shelter for the manifestation of love. If due to the rise of religious merit earned in many existences a lucky person gets the company of the good, his great darkness of delusion caused by ignorance would perish, and great discrimination springs (in him).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYFIVE

The Rule of Reciting and Listening to the Bhāgavata for a Week

Sūta said:

1. Then the divine sage, having asked for leave of the Kumāras, and bending down, showing respect for knowledge-sacrifice, said:

Nārada said:

2-4. With care I shall perform knowledge-sacrifice, highlighted by the narrative of the holy Śuka-text for establishing Bhakti, Jñāna and Virāga. O brāhmaṇas, tell me the place where I should perform the sacrifice. I have chosen you four only as the conductors of the sacrifice. O you proficient in knowledge-sacrifice, for how many days should the Bhāgavata-story be heard? What rite should be performed at that time?

Kumāras said:

5-12. O Nārada, listen. We shall tell you the place, being heard at which the story would destroy the heaps of sins of men, and increase their religious merit. Near Gaṅgādvāra there is a great city called Kāmada. To the north of the divine river there is a bank called Ānanda. It is resorted to by many hosts of sages and deities and siddhas. It is full of many trees and creepers, clean, soft sand. It is charming, is in a lonely region, and is adorned with golden lotuses. In the minds of the beings living near it and having in their minds love for one another, there was no enmity due to the power of this place only. You should carefully perform there knowledge-sacrifice. The story (of Bhāgavata) recited there will give unprecedented delight. Bhakti will come there followed by her two sons remaining on the street of Vṛndāvana and with their bodies worn out due to old age. Bhakti with her sons will become a young lady after drinking the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's glory at the place where there will be recitation of Bhāgavata.

Sūta said:

13-20. Having spoken like this, the Kumāras, along with Nārada, went quickly to Gaṅgādvāra for (performing) the knowledge-sacrifice. O best among Bhārgavas, when they reached the bank of Gaṅgā, there was a great din in the seven worlds like Bhū. The residents of the seven worlds, desirous of (enjoying) the flavour of Bhāgavata came there running, so also the devotees of Viṣṇu like Bhṛgu, Vasiṣṭha, Cyavana, Gautama, Medhātithi, Devala, Devarāta, Rāma, Viśvāmitra, Śākala, sons of Mṛkaṇḍa, of Atri, and Pippalāda, masters of abstract meditation, Vyāsa, Parāśara, Śuka and others, the chief among the followers of

Viṣṇu, who were accompanied by their disciples, who knew many holy texts, who were chief among those relishing Kṛṣṇa's account. The Upaniṣads, the Vedas, the hymns, the religious treatises teaching magical formulas for the worship of the deities, the digests, the ten and seven Purāṇas, the six Śāstras (philosophical treatises) also came there. So also rivers like Gaṅgā, lakes like Puṣkara, all holy places, all quarters, forests like Daṇḍaka, mountains like Himālaya, gods, gandharvas, kinnaras, islands, seas, regents of quarters, and residents of the nether world came there.

21-25. Nārada gave an excellent seat at the time of the initiation. All the Kumāras, highly devoted to Kṛṣṇa, who were saluted, sat (there). Devotees of Viṣṇu, those who were very much detached and had renounced the world, celibates, were the chief; they remained at the fore; and Nārada sat before them. On his left were the hosts of sages, on his right were the residents of heaven. O descendant of Bhṛgu, Vedas, Upaniṣads, so also the Holy Places were (seated) elsewhere. Echoing in the ten quarters the shouts of victory, words of salutation and the sound of conches touched the sky. The residents of heaven, being pleased, got into aeroplanes and showered flowers of desire-yielding trees over the assembly.

Sūta said:

26. When those Bhṛgu and others were seated as they deserved, they narrated the importance of Bhāgavata to Nārada.

Kumāras said:

27-48. O Nārada, listen. We shall, according to the rule, tell you the wonderful greatness of the holy text called Śrīmad Bhāgavata. Righteous people should always resort (i.e. listen) to the Bhāgavata-story, by hearing which they become contented. The treatise called Śrīmad Bhāgavata comprises eighteen thousand verses and twelve skandhas(sections), and is (in the form of) a dialogue between Parīkṣit and Śuka. As long as the text of (i.e. narrated by) Śuka does not reach the ears of a man, he, being deluded by ignorance, moves in the circle of the mundane existence. If men purified by devotion have not listened to Bhāgavata, what is the use of their having listened to many holy texts,

Purāṇas, digests and scriptures? The houses of those men, in which the Bhāgavata-story is always (narrated), are of the nature of holy places and destroy sins. Thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices are not worth even a sixteenth part of the Bhāgavata-story. O best sage, sins remain in this body as long as Bhāgavata is not properly listened to by a man. In the meritorious fruit, Gaṅgā, Gayā, Kāśī, or Puṣkara is not equal to the Bhāgavata-story. If you desire the destruction of the mundane existence, then recite everyday with your own mouth a half or a quarter verse from Bhāgavata. Bhāgavata is the origin of the Vedas, the mother of the Vedas, so also of the Puruṣa-sūkta. The triad of the Vedas is Bhāgavata; so also the two formulas—twelve-syllabled and eight-syllabled. The Sun, Prayāga, Time of the form of years, brāhmaṇas maintaining sacred fire, (the desire-yielding cow) Surabhi, the twelfth day (of a month), Tulasī, spring season, Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu)—among these, O best sage, there is actually no difference. O Nārada, the sin of that brāhmaṇa, committed during crores of existences, who would everyday expound Bhāgavata, perishes. To men, the listening to, reciting or thinking about Bhāgavata and waiting upon Tulasī and fire, give salvation and devotion. He who, being full of devotion, free from pride, eating limited (food), with his senses restrained, gives Śrīmad Bhāgavata along with a golden throne on the full-moon day of Bhādrapada to the best brāhmaṇa and listens to it from the beginning would obtain the world where absorption into Kṛṣṇa is had. He who, when his time of death has approached, abandoning fear far away, would devoutly listen to Bhāgavata, obtains salvation. He, the wicked one, who, right from his birth, has not, after properly controlling his mind, drunk (i.e. listened to) the account of Kṛṣṇa, has in vain led his life like a cāṇḍāla or a beast on the earth, and has very much tormented his mother. The life of those men who have not listened to Bhāgavata, have not worshipped the Ancient Man (Viṣṇu), have not offered oblations into the mouths of brāhmaṇas has become fruitless. The sages, the ancient siddhas, say: "Fie upon that man resembling a beast, a burden on the earth, whose mind, wicked due to the contact with the bad, does not take delight in the story of Bhāgavata." The story of Bhāgavata is

quite difficult to be had (i.e. heard) on the earth. It is had by means of the religious merit due to crores of existences.

49-56. Therefore, O treasure of abstract meditation, O good man, the story of Viṣṇu should be heard everyday. O brāhmaṇa, there is really no rule about it (i.e. about listening to it). Since listening to it is believed to be done with truthfulness and celibacy, therefore, in the Kali age there is a special rule about it of the nature of (its being listened to for) seven days. The listening to it is prescribed for seven days on account of the lack of the control of a man's mind, a disease, or shortening of his life, and due to many blemishes of Kali. It is possible to control the mind and follow a prescribed course for seven days (only). Therefore, this rule is formed. That fruit which is had by devoutly listening (to it) everyday from the beginning to the end for seven days is laid down by Śuka. That fruit which is not had by means of penance, abstract meditation or concentration, is easily had by listening to it for seven days. The rule of (reciting or listening to) Bhāgavata for seven days is said to be better than performing a sacrifice, observing a vow, practising penance and meditation, acquiring knowledge and visiting a holy place. When Kṛṣṇa was ready to go to his own place after having left the earth, intelligent Uddhava, knowing it, said (these) words to Govinda:

Uddhava said:

57-63. O revered one, after having accomplished the entire mission of the gods, you now desire to go to your own place, beyond darkness. Therefore, O lord, worry due to fear of separation from you has arisen in me. O lord of gods, remove it. I have sought your refuge. This terrible Kali age has come. In it all people will be wicked. Therefore, O lord, tell (me) what should be done. Whose shelter will this earth, full of burden, seek? O Yadunandana, no other protector like you is seen here. Therefore, O treasure of compassion, showing pity on us, stay here only. O lord, you have manifested (yourself) only for the protection of the good. Even though you are qualityless, formless, and only of the form of the good, consciousness and bliss, your devotees will not remain on the earth in separation from you. There is difficulty in worshipping the qualityless. Therefore, do what is good for us.

Sūta said:

64-68. Having heard these words of Uddhava, Viṣṇu thought for a moment and being full of great compassion, gave him Bhāgavata, after having deposited his own lustre into it, O brāhmaṇa. Having given it to Uddhava, the lord entered his own place. Due to that this image of Viṣṇu in the form of words is here (in the world). By constantly resorting to it the sin of men would perish in a moment. Therefore, listening to it for seven days is said to be the best. O brāhmaṇa, its listeners, speaker or questioner become one with him. Bhāgavata is capable of removing misery, poverty, ill luck and sins, of overcoming passion and anger in the Kali age. Otherwise, how can, Viṣṇu's Māyā, difficult to be overcome even by gods, turn away from men without (the help of) Bhāgavata?

Sūta said:

69-73. Having thus told the greatness of Bhāgavata, they commenced narrating the divine story of Bhāgavata. When (the narration of) Bhāgavata, the essence of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, was commenced by the brāhmaṇas, Bhakti in a moment manifested herself there only. She was full of love, of a charming body, and had held her two sons, full of joy, by her hands; and was uttering the names (like) Śrīkṛṣṇa, Govinda, Hari, Murāri, Nātha (lord). The members of the assembly saw her, the ornament of Bhāgavata and of a very fine dress; and with wonder in their eyes all of them thought: 'How (has she come)? Wherefrom (has she come)? Who is she?' Then the blessed Kumāras said: "Now she has come out from the contents of the story." Having heard words like this, she, along with her sons, politely said to the sons of Brahmā:

Bhakti said:

74. Though perished in the Kali age, you have today nourished me with the elegance of the (Bhāgavata) story. Where shall I sit with these two? Show me a favourite seat.

Sūta said:

75. Having heard these words, Brahmā's sons having thought and properly reflected in their minds, spoke to Bhakti, who

removes the disease in the form of the mundane existence, who gives love alone to those who have devotion for Viṣṇu.

Kumāras said:

76-78. When there are good devotees, having controlled their mind from going astray and having concentrated it on the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu, after being devoted to Viṣṇu, these blemishes due to Kali, though powerful in the world, will not be able to see you. Led by Nārada, you alone will bring about the welfare of the world. In the entire world, those poor people in whose heart remains devotion to Viṣṇu alone, are, extremely blessed. Even Viṣṇu, tied by the bond of love, leaves his own world quickly and enters their heart.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYSIX

Dhundhuli's Story

Sūta said:

1-7. Seeing extra-ordinary devotion in the minds of Viṣṇu's devotees, Viṣṇu left his world, and went to the earth. He was having a garland of wood flowers; was dark like a cloud; had put on yellow garments; was wearing a crown; his group of girdles was dishevelled; his ear-rings in the shape of crocodiles were shining. He was charming due to three folds; was adorned with the beautiful Kaustubha; he was handsome like a crore of Cupids; he was besmeared with (the yellow sandal called) haricandana. He was the image of great joy and consciousness; he was sweet; and had held a flute. He entered the pure hearts of his devotees. Those followers of Viṣṇu, who lived in Vaikuṇṭha and were of tranquil minds, and of concealed forms, came to listen to Viṣṇu's tale. Then there was a shout of victory mixed with the sound of conches, due to which (everything) inauspicious, very fierce due to Kali, perished. Seeing that the people there had forgotten their houses and themselves, Nārada knowing the truth about the Supreme Soul said to the Kumāras:

Nārada said:

8-11a. O best sages, this greatness due to the seven days' (reading of or listening to the Bhāgavata) which I saw is uncommon. Even the fools, the wicked, so also the beasts and birds do reach the position known to be the highest. No other holy text so pure is laid down for the purification of the heart in the world of men. O Kumāras, in the Kali age, the abode of blemishes, it destroys the stream of sins, and brings about blessedness. (Please) tell me who are not purified by the devotional act (of reading of or listening to the Bhāgavata) for seven days, full of the stories (from it). You, the kind ones, have shown a new path for the good of the people.

Kumāras said:

11b-15. Those men who are sinners, very wicked, engaged in doing bad acts, are jealous, burnt by fire in the form of anger, crooked, passionate, go to Viṣṇu by means of the devotional act for seven days. Those who are without truth (i.e. are not truthful), who censure their father and mother, who are full of thirst (i.e. desire), who are out (of the fold) of the (four) stages of human life and castes, who are hypocrites, who are hurtful, go to Viṣṇu by means of the devotional act (of reading or listening to the Bhāgavata) for seven days. Those, who have committed the five terrible sins, who are deceitful, cruel, who are pityless like goblins, who have fed themselves with others' wealth, who are adulterous, go to Viṣṇu by means of the devotional act extending over seven days. Those wicked ones who violently always commit sins with their body, words or mind, who are mean, ungrateful, impure, wicked-hearted, go to Viṣṇu by means of the devotional act extending over seven days.

Sūta said:

16. Then, when Nārada, honoured by gods, was thus pleased in heart, the Kumāras who were pleased, again said to Nārada:

Kumāras said:

17-31. About this I shall tell you an old historical account, by merely hearing which, destruction of sins takes place. Formerly

in the city called Kohala, full of the practices (proper) for the castes and the stages of human life, and of wealth and grains, (situated) on the bank of Tuṅgabhadrā, there was the best brāhmaṇa known as Ātmadeva, who was proficient in Vedic learning and rites, and engaged in daily duties. His dear wife was Dhundhulī by name. She was always engaged in her own welfare. She regulated (everything) with her words; she was beautiful, and was born in good family. Generally she talked much as a result of her former acts. She was valiant in domestic duties, cruel, and was quarrelsome. When the couple, having no child, was staying there, they crossed the age of the measure of fifty years. They, being childless, lived unhappily in their house. For the birth of a child they gave wealth etc. (to brāhmaṇas). So also they gave many cows, (pieces of) land, (coins of) gold and garments. (But) due to (the effect of) their former deeds, neither a son nor a daughter was born (to them). And once that best brāhmaṇa Ātmadeva, dejected and unhappy due to not having a child, left his house and went to a forest. With his mind overcome by grief, he, emaciated by hunger, and encompassed by thirst, wandering here and there, luckily reached a lake. That best brāhmaṇa, having drunk water in (i.e. from) that lake, sat after resorting to the shade of a tree, O Nārada. By chance, just then, a siddha, roaming over the earth, came (there); he too, drinking the water in (i.e. from) the lake, came there only. Having seen that tranquil anchorite, the noble-minded Ātmadeva honoured him and touched his feet as of his own preceptor. The two who were seated (there), being of very affectionate minds, asked questions to each other like a preceptor and his disciple in a hermitage. That anchorite, the ocean of pity, seeing him of an afflicted heart and sighing, asked that Ātmadeva, seated before him:

The siddha said:

32-33. O best brāhmaṇa, what great worry is there in your heart causing grief? O you who know religious practices, tell me that, tormenting you.

Hearing those words of that very noble siddha, Ātmadeva then told him the cause of his grief.

Ātmadeva said:

34-37. O sage, what should I tell you about the grief accumulated due to former deeds? My ancestors are drinking tepid water. My ancestors, so also deities, are not at all accepting the offerings made by me. Dejected due to that grief, I have come here to cast my life. Fie upon my life, my house without progeny, my wealth and family! Even the cow protected by me becomes barren. Even the tree planted by me becomes barren. What is the use of the life of me who am luckless and childless?

Kumāras said:

38-39. Speaking like this when he, oppressed by grief, wept loudly before him, great compassion arose in the heart of the sage. The wise one seeing the line of letters on his forehead and understanding it, spoke again in detail to the brāhmaṇa Ātmadeva:

The siddha said:

40-42. O brāhmaṇa, listen. Today I have read your fate. Your having a son is not seen till the seventh existence. Give up your persistence for a child. The course of fate is most powerful. Taking to right knowledge, be happy, O very intelligent one.

Hearing these words of the siddha, the best brāhmaṇa, with his heart fixed on having a child, and being very unhappy spoke to the siddha:

The brāhmaṇa said:

43-50. What would happen with right knowledge? Give me a son even by force. Otherwise, I, filled with grief, will cast my life before you.

Seeing this persistence of the brāhmaṇa, the ascetic said: "Sagara, king of Aṅga, obtained misery. Citraketu became miserable due to wiping out the writing of fate. Therefore, O you who know religious practices, you will not be happy with a son, for fate is very powerful." Saying so, that siddha, honoured by the good, gave a fruit to the best brāhmaṇa, who persisted for a son. "O brāhmaṇa, I have given this fruit to you for obtaining a

son. Give it to your wife. By that a son will undoubtedly be born to you. The wife should, for a year, resort to truthfulness, purity, kindness, charity, eating once a day only. The son would be pure due to that." Speaking like this the meditating saint left, (and) the brāhmaṇa came home. Having given the fruit to his wife, he told her what the siddha had said. Then that cruel Dhundhulī was always eager to have her say.

51-59. She told her friend all that the siddha had said: "If I would eat the fruit given by the siddha, then I would be pregnant. How shall I be able to bear it? I shall have little food, and will not have strength to move or for domestic work. If the foetus would be slanting, then it would be my death. How can I, so delicate, bear the pangs of delivery? When I shall be dull my sister-in-law would take away all my possessions. I am worried. O you of bright smile, what do (i.e. should) I do?" She, O brāhmaṇa, for fear of breaking the friendship, with her face smiling affectionately said: "It is just so." Due to this wrong reasoning she did not eat the fruit at all. When her husband asked her: "Have you eaten the fruit?", she told him, "I have eaten it." Once her sister came to her house of her own accord. She told all that to her (saying): "This is my great anxiety. By being pregnant what shall I do? Tell me what is proper." She said: "I am carrying. After delivery I shall give my foetus (i.e. child) to you. Till that time live happily in your house, as if you are pregnant, concealing (the fact). I shall always nourish the child in your house only. O you of an auspicious face, today give the fruit to the cow to test (the siddha's words)."

60-69. Speaking like this, she went home with a pleased mind. Dhundhulī also did as her sister had told her. She, after having delivered a child, quickly gave it to Dhundhulī. She too told her husband: "The son is comfortably born." Due to a child born to Ātmadeva, people became happy. He gave gifts to best brāhmaṇas, and performed the ceremony at the birth of the child. In his house there was the auspicious sound of songs and musical instruments. Ātmadeva, the very intelligent one, was joyful. Then she said to her husband: "There is no milk in my breasts. How shall I now nourish the child born recently, O lord? My sister also has delivered; but soon her child died. Bring her and keep her in (our) house. She will nourish the child." Hearing the

words of that Dhundhulī, the confused Ātmadeva, the best brāhmaṇa, full of joy, did just like that. The mother significantly named him Dhundhukārī. The boy obtained nourishment from the milk of his mother's sister. After three months had passed, the cow gave birth to a child. He was handsome in all limbs, was divine, spotless and had lustre like gold. Having seen him, the brāhmaṇa was pleased, and himself performed the sacraments. All people that had come with a desire to see him were very much amazed.

70-78a. (They said:) "Due to the rise of great good luck of the brāhmaṇa Ātmadeva a boy, of a divine form, is born of the cow. It is a great wonder." Due to destiny nobody knew the secret. Seeing the boy to have ears like those of a cow, he called him Gokarṇa only. After some time both of them attained youth. Gokarṇa was learned and wise. Dhundhukārin was very wicked. He was without a bath or purity or rites, ate prohibited food, and was full of anger. He was a thief, hated all people, and kept the company of wicked cāṇḍālas. He forcibly seized the children that were playing and threw them into a well. In the same way, being addicted to prostitutes, he diminished (i.e. squandered) his father's money. Like a helpless person, his poor father wept. "A childless person is happy. A bad son causes grief. Now I have experienced that the siddha's words are true. Where should I go? Where should I stay? Who would remove my misery? I shall cast my life in water or fire; or I would fall from a precipice." To him, his father who was thinking like this and whose face was hung down, the wise Gokarṇa came and properly advised him.

Gokarṇa said:

78b-84. O father, the mundane existence is worthless; it causes misery and delusion to men. O father, who is a son? What is wealth? Who is whose wife? Who is the husband? The helpless world, tied by delusion, suffers, and not due to any other cause. Indra does not have any happiness; a sovereign emperor has no happiness. O father, only a detached sage, given to seclusion, has happiness. Give up your ignorance, the delusion of the form of progeny, the cause of hell. Being free from the couples (of opposite qualities) and from pride, and giving up everything, go to a forest.

Hearing these words of him, the brāhmaṇa said to Gokarṇa:

The brāhmaṇa said:

O good one, tell me in detail what should be done in the forest. O you treasure of pity, emancipate me who am tied down by the chains of delusion, who am wicked and of a mean mind, and who am fallen in the ditch of the worldly existence.

Hearing these words of his father Gokarṇa, learned due to knowledge and with his mind pleased, spoke to his helpless, dejected father:

Gokarṇa said:

85-86. Quickly give up the feeling of mineness for this (your) body which is a collection of flesh and bones, and for (your) wife, sons etc. Note that this world is momentary. Be a wise man, taking interest in detachment, and be firm in devotion. Always resort to religious practices. Give up the practices of (common) people. Serve good men. Give up desire for pleasures. Quickly give up thinking about the faults and virtues of others, and drink deep the juice of the stories of Viṣṇu.

Kumāras said:

87. Having thus known the experience told by his son, he who was of a firm mind and free from desire, and who had crossed sixty years, abandoned his house; and the magnanimous one, always followed by people dear to Viṣṇu, and living in a forest, obtained Viṣṇu's position.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYSEVEN

The Seven-day Bhāgavata Recitation

Kumāras said:

1-10a. O Nārada, when the father had thus gone to the forest, the very wicked Dhundhukārin came and threatened his mother. O Nārada, (he said) to his mother: "Tell me where the wealth is. If you do not tell me about the grains, by all means I shall kill you. She, frightened by his words, and with her mind afflicted, fell at night in a well and died. After knowing it people took her out. Gokarṇa took out the dead body with the help of brāhmaṇas, her relatives. O sage, the wise one, to whom pleasure and pain were alike, went on a pilgrimage. Dhundhukārin lived in his house, and was surrounded by harlots. Due to his practice of very fierce deeds, he did not know how to feed them. The harlots, desiring ornaments, said to him: "O dear one, all of us have been associated with you, our protector, and have stayed (with you). O you who respect others, here there is no other giver of wealth. Therefore, give us fine garments and bright ornaments. Otherwise, we shall go to another man from (i.e. leaving) you." Hearing these words of them, he thought for a moment, and then he, blind due to desire for sensual enjoyment, and not being aware of death, went out of his house at night, stole from someone's house garments and ornaments, and O Nārada, he, full of joy, gave those to them to please them.

10b-22. Seeing those priceless garments and ornaments, the women thought: 'He has brought these by stealing them'. Deciding like this, they consulted one another. Everyday he commits thefts. The king will arrest him. Having snatched his wealth, he will certainly beat him. Then, why should we not secretly kill him committing thefts, and collecting much wealth go to another place? (Deliberating) like this, those wicked ones were intent on killing him, when asleep, binding him at the neck with very strong cords. When he did not die even after his neck was pressed, they threw many burning charcoals on his face. Being oppressed by the great affliction due to the flames of fire, he died. The almost rash women threw his body in a ditch. O best sage, nobody knew his whereabouts. When asked by people,

they said, "Our lord has gone away. After getting wealth he will come (back) after a long time." Therefore, the best learned men should not trust women. They always hurt the one that trusts them, and go to newer and newer (men). Their words are full of nectar, increasing the interest of the passionate; (but) their heart is like the edge of a razor. Who indeed is dear to women? Then those prostitutes, taking the large wealth, much perturbed by the fear of the king, quickly went to another village. Dhundhukārin, doing bad deeds, became a big evil spirit. Taking up the form of a storm, he everyday ran (away) into the directions away from wicked death. He was troubled by cold and heat, was without food, and thirsty.

23-29. Repeatedly crying loudly "Ha! ha!" he did not get happiness anywhere. Knowing, after some time, that he was dead, Gokarṇa performed a śrāddha at Gayā during his pilgrimage. After completing his pilgrimage, he came (back) to his village. The villagers, his kinsmen and relatives honoured him. The brāhmaṇa stayed at home for a few days. Knowing that Gokarṇa was asleep in the yard of his house at night, wicked Dhundhukārin showed him his fierce form. For a moment he became an elephant; in a moment he became a camel; in a moment he became a buffalo; in a moment he became fire; in a moment he became a serpent; and a man in a moment. Seeing this inauspiciousness, the intelligent Gokarṇa, very much amazed, mustered courage and thought: 'What is this? This is some mean man, reduced to a miserable condition.' Deciding like this to his mind, he, full of pity, said:

Gokarṇa said:

30-36. Who are you so fierce, that have come at night to frighten me? Are you an evil spirit or a goblin? Due to what are you reduced to this condition? O glorious one, tell me what I should do for you now, since you, of a fierce form, have approached me at night.

Hearing these words of his brother, that very wicked Dhundhukārin who was reduced to the condition of an evil spirit, and who was very much afflicted, wept. Confused by his condition of an evil spirit, he was not able to speak with

words. Being thirsty, he indicated with signs (that he wanted) to drink water. Then that highly virtuous Gokarṇa, esteemed by the good, took water in the hollow of his hands, and raising it, threw it (on him). That water thrown by the noble Gokarṇa, his brother, came to satisfy the evil spirit, Dhundhukārin. Then having obtained consciousness due to the water given by his virtuous brother, Gokarṇa, he spoke, O Nārada:

The evil spirit said:

37-47a. I am your brother named Dhundhukārin. Due to the fault of my deeds, I have been reduced to the condition of an evil spirit. My mother, terrified by me in many ways, died through grief. Then eager to feed the prostitutes, I, for getting money, committed prohibited acts like stealing, through greed of money. Once they asked me for excellent ornaments. Stealing them from a rich man's house at night, I brought them. Then through greed of wealth, O you who give respect (to others), they forcibly tied me at the neck, and killed me by throwing fire on me. Taking that abundant wealth, all of them, having given up the goodness of heart, ran away from this town through the fear of the king. I was reduced to the condition of an evil spirit. O brother, today being sprinkled by you, the kind one, with water due to (my) religious merit, I regained consciousness. I live on air. Due to my luck, the desired thing has come up. I saw you, my brother, asleep in the yard of your house. Then I suddenly exerted to attack you who did not know me. O good one, now I have been recognised by you. O my brother, O brother of the helpless, O ocean of pity, quickly free me from this condition of an evil spirit. There is no doubt that you are blessed.

Hearing these words of his brother, the wise, very intelligent Gokarṇa, with his mind dejected, spoke to his brother Dhundhukārin, who was afflicted:

Gokarṇa said:

47b-51. Hearing from the people's mouths that you were dead, I offered you a piṇḍa at Gayā. How have you been reduced to the condition of an evil spirit, O brother? Even one reduced to a miserable condition secures an auspicious course by means

of a piṇḍa offered to him at Gayā. There is no doubt about this. How is it that you did not go to heaven?

Hearing these words of Gokarṇa, the noble one, Dhundhukārin who was in front of him and whose mind was afflicted, said: "Even by the śrāddha at Gayā I shall not be liberated. You should think of a means for my emancipation." Hearing these words of him Gokarṇa was amazed.

52-57a. He said: "If by means of śrāddhas you are not getting liberation, then your reaching heaven is impossible. O evil spirit, now, being fearless, resort to your own place. After having thought I shall adopt a means for your liberation." Having heard these words, Dhundhukārin went from there to his place, the bibhītaka tree in thecremation ground. Then, O Nārada, the remaining night Gokarṇa remained there thinking about his liberation. He did not find a means for that. In the morning that Gokarṇa told the account of the night to his relatives and members of his family, so also to brāhmaṇas who knew sacred treatises. When after having pondered over the matter (consulting) sacred treatises, they did not find the means, they eulogized the Sun.

The brāhmaṇas said:

57b-70a. Salutation to you, O Bhāskara, Āditya, Tamohantā (Dispeller of darkness), Gabhastimat (Possesser of rays), Lokasākṣin (Observer of the world), Jagaddhāman (Resort of the world), to you who are saluted by gods and demons, O Dvādaśātman, Harihayabhāsvan (Shining with bay horses), Lokaprabodhaka (Awakener of the world), you always are the resort of the people of pious nature. You are Brahmā; you are Viṣṇu; you are Śiva—the authors of creation, maintenance and destruction. O lord, except you there is no refuge of the living beings in the world. You are Śarva, of the form of the earth, and Bhava, taking up the form of water. You are of the form of fire; you are Rudra; you are air, taking up a fierce form. You are fearful, having the sky as your body. You are the sacrificer, and the lord of beings. You are Mahādeva, Īśāna, the form of the moon, so also the sun. Eight divine images of you pervading the three worlds are offered oblations by the teachers of the Vedas for accomplishing all desires.

You are the Fish, holding the Vedas. You are the excellent Tortoise, supporting the mountain. You are Varāha, supporting the earth; you hold the three worlds; you are Trivikrama (i.e. Viṣṇu); you are Bhārgava (i.e. Paraśurāma) destroying the harmers of brāhmaṇas. You are Rāghava killing those who harm the world. You are Kṛṣṇa removing the burden of the earth. You are Buddha deluding the demons. You are Kalki, the killer of the Mlecchas in every age when piety is declining. You, taking up the form of Brahman, are the creator of gods, demons, men, beasts and birds, of beings moving in the water, of beings of many kinds. O Lord of the host of senses, you are Indra, Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), Varuṇa, Kubera. You live in the form of the regent of a quarter. You are of three forms; you are to be offered oblations three times (a day); you are having three abodes; you are of the nature of three constituents. You, the Sun, separated in three ways, are alone worshipped by people. O lord of the world, you alone cause the lotuses to bloom.

O best sage, when, having spoken like this, the best brāhmaṇas stood (there), (the Sun) moving in the sky spoke distinctly when they were listening:

Śrī Sūrya said:

70b-84. O best brāhmaṇas, since you extolled me for pacifying the major sin of Dhundhulī's son, listen. This Gokarṇa, a calf, will emancipate him by means of (the reading of) the Bhāgavata for seven days, due to the religious merit of Ātmadeva. By eulogizing (me) with the hymn composed by you, and describing my glory, a man will obtain a divine vehicle, O brāhmaṇas. A man desiring sons, wealth, piety, salvation, will obtain it surely by reciting the Vāñchācintāmaṇi hymn.

Saying so, god Bhāskara, remaining in the sky, ceased (speaking). The brāhmaṇas, with their minds delighted, said 'Well (done)' to Gokarṇa. Then to the assembly of the brāhmaṇas on the auspicious bank of Tuṅgabhadrā, the citizens went to see the very great wonder. Gokarṇa, who had known the truth, who was the reciter, was seated on a high seat. Having saluted Nārāyaṇa and others, he commenced (the reading of the Bhāgavata

for) seven days. 'If the holy text, the word of Viṣṇu is truly a holy place, springing from his lotus like feet, then may the son of Dhundhulī obtain heaven.' Mentally resolving like this, he recited (the Purāṇa) called Bhāgavata, beginning with *Janmādyasya yataḥ* and ending with *Dhīmahi*. Then the evil spirit, having come there, and looking for a seat here and there, took up the form of air and entered a bamboo having seven knots. O Nārada, while the brāhmaṇas, the foremost among the best brāhmaṇas were listening, the son of Dhundhulī, remaining in the hole of the knot everyday listened (to the Purāṇa). When, O Nārada, on the first day the narration came to an end, one knot of the bamboo bursted. It was a great wonder. On the second and other days also the knots bursted like this. When the seventh (knot) bursted he instantly abandoned his condition of an evil spirit. Being one having a divine form, and being adorned with a garland of Tulasī (leaves), wearing yellow garments, dark like a cloud, and full of ornaments, he shone. Saluting his brother Gokarṇa, he, seeing the entire truth, said:

85-95. "O brother, you have kindly freed me from the foulness of an evil spirit. The account of the lord is indeed blessed, which is known to remove the condition of an evil spirit. The (recitation of the Bhāgavata for a) week is also blessed, leading one to Viṣṇu's world. Due to its power, I who was much afflicted, am freed from the condition of an evil spirit. The (recitation of the Bhāgavata for a) week would reduce to ash deliberate, non-deliberate, minor or major sins of speech, mind or act, as fire reduces the fuel to ash. Listen to the holy text of the Bhāgavata in this Bhārata liked even by gods. (Your) position (thereby) would be excellent. The body is said to be an aggregate of sinews, bones, marrow, flesh, blood. It is said to be pure due to relishing the Bhāgavata; and impure otherwise. The body, polluted due to the blemishes of acts, is the recipient of hell. To remove the blemish due to that, it alone is the means. Those (who live) without (reading or listening to) the divine holy text, are born to die only like bubbles in water or gnats among beings. The knot of the heart is broken. All doubts are cut off (i.e. removed). The (effects of his) deeds diminish, when the Bhāgavata is listened to, O brāhmaṇas." When he was speaking like this, an excellent aeroplane came there from Vaikuṇṭha; getting into it, he went to

Viṣṇu's abode. When he went to Viṣṇu's heaven, the minds of all were amazed, and they asked Gokarṇa, the best brāhmaṇa:

The brāhmaṇas said:

O glorious one, all of us, that have gathered here, have listened to the Bhāgavata. For what reason has your brother alone gone to Viṣṇu?

Gokarṇa said:

96-104. Listen. I shall tell (you) the reason for the good course of my brother, hearing which you will also go to Goloka. For a week (the Bhāgavata) should be heard (by you) intent on (observing) a fast, and with (your) minds concentrated upon Kṛṣṇa. That gives an access to Goloka. O brāhmaṇas, again listen to the Bhāgavata for a week, with concentrated minds. It always gives the nectar in the form of Kṛṣṇa's love.

Hearing these words of that Gokarṇa, the best brāhmaṇas settled to listen to the Bhāgavata for a week. O Nārada, with restraint, and with their minds concentrated on Kṛṣṇa, all the brāhmaṇas again listened to the Bhāgavata. At the end (of the narration) of the story, O best sage, lord Kṛṣṇa appeared there. He was lotus-eyed; he held a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus. He had put on a crown and ear-rings; he was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers. He had put on yellow garments; he was dark like a cloud. He was adorned with bracelets and armlets. Seeing him accompanied by the excellent companions like Viṣvaksena, the sages, gathered on the earth, being delighted, saluted him. O sage, at that the shouts of victory and salutation prevailed everywhere. Then, Viṣṇu, delighting the brāhmaṇas made the sound of (i.e. blew) his conch.

105-114. Then, when the brāhmaṇas were looking on, many aeroplanes, with excellent attendants, came there from Vaikuṇṭha. (Viṣṇu) having embraced Gokarṇa, gave him similarity of his form. At that moment only, he made other listeners dark like clouds wearing yellow, silken garments and crowns and ear-rings; (made them) charming, and wearing garlands of wood-flowers. There was a great wonder also. By Kṛṣṇa's order all the people up to (i.e. including) the cāṇḍālas got into the aeroplanes and went

to heaven. Kṛṣṇa, dear to the cowherds and the cowherdesses, went, along with Gokarṇa, to Goloka, situated above all (other) worlds. There is the charming Vṛndāvana, covered with a hundred peaks. Outside it shines a very wonderful forest covered with hemp. There are many pavilions, wells like Acchoda and pools. There are desire-yielding cows, resorting to the shades of the celestial trees; the son of Nanda, surrounded by young cowherds, with their minds intent upon sporting, plays there. In the midst of this excellent grove is fixed a great fig tree, brightening the charming rampart, decked with masses of gems and gold according to the desire of the Lord of Vṛndāvana. Then shines Śrī Gokula of a wonderful form, resorted to by cowherdesses and adorned by calves in every direction. In it the bright house resided in by Hari (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) shines, in which house of Nanda, they, the lofty ones, are propitiated by Rādhā. The great fortune of the child of a charming figure, meditated upon by (gods) led by (Śiva) the lord of Umā, with their minds, shines more by means of the rays of the lustre of the worlds. By means of the commencement of the seven-day rite called (Bhāgavata) Saptāha, he (i.e. Gokarṇa), born of a cow, obtained the world impossible to be got by means of subsisting on air, water, leaves, parching up one's body, severe austerities, mutterings and sacrificial rites. He who would read or listen to this holy account, goes to Goloka. Then what to say of (him who would read or listent to) Śrī Bhāgavata!

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYEIGHT

Procedure to be Followed during the Saptāha

Kumāras said:

1-7. Now we shall tell you the manner of listening to the (Bhāgavata recitation during a) week, by which Bhāgavata would accomplish success for those men who have dedicated their minds to Kṛṣṇa. A devout man, after having called an astrologer, and after having honoured him with wealth and garments, should first ask him about the auspicious time. The commence-

ment (of narrating the Bhāgavata) should be made at the auspicious time which he would tell. The months of Śrāvaṇa, Bhādrapada, Āśvina, Kārtika, Mārgaśīrṣa, Jyeṣṭha (and Āṣāḍha) are best for the commencement of the narration; so also the Pūrṇā tithi (i.e. 5th, 10th, 15th lunar days) is auspicious. Tuesdays and Saturdays shall be excluded and the constellations Dhruva and weak ones. The commencement is always recommended on an auspicious conjunction (of planets) and an auspicious lagna (i.e. the moment of the Sun's entrance into a Zodiacal sign). O best sage, when stories from the Purāṇas are (to be read) daily, a wise man should avoid Dvādaśī (the twelfth day) due to the impurity caused to Sūta. For the (reading of) Śrīmad Bhāgavata for a week there is no prohibition. Thus said those who know the past, O divine sage. The wise ones have said that (the reading of) Bhāgavata for a week is a great sacrifice.

8-16. Therefore, invitation should be extended to devotees of Viṣṇu all round: 'There will be a gathering during the week, O best devotees of Viṣṇu. Devotees of Viṣṇu desiring to listen (to the Bhāgavata) should come for it.' For those who come he should carefully make arrangement for their lodging at a holy place, in a grove, or in the village. He should erect a pavilion on the land that is purified. The pavilion should have four pillars with plantain trees, and should have banners in the four directions. A raised seat at its front is recommended for the speaker (i.e. the reader), O sage. The seats of the listeners are to be arranged on both the sides of him. The speaker, the most learned one, should face the north in the gathering. A speaker who knows the meaning and essential nature of the Vedas and holy texts, who is an excellent brāhmaṇa and a devotee of Viṣṇu, who is proficient in (telling) illustrative stories, who is patient, eloquent, free from desire, should be appointed. One removing all doubts should not be appointed. By the side of the speaker there should be another learned wise man. He should remove the doubts of the listeners and should enlighten the ignorant. To avoid any obstacle in (the narration of) the story, he should first worship Gaṇeśa. Then having, in the proper manner, worshipped Durgā, Śiva, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, the Sun and the brāhmaṇas, he should devoutly gratify the deities and the dead ancestors.

17-29. Then the chief listener should worship Viṣṇu repre-

sented in the book. Then having gone round, and having held in the hollow of his hands money, garments and fruits he should, O sage, request Viṣṇu (represented) in the book: "O divine one, you, Kṛṣṇa, have established yourself in this world. O lord, I have resorted to you for freedom from the ocean of the mundane existence. You should by all means make my desire fulfilled without any obstacle. O Keśava, I am your servant." Speaking like this and putting the money before the book, he should also, with his palms folded, salute and request the speaker (i.e. the reader): "O you best brāhmaṇa, of the form of Śuka, O you proficient in all holy texts, remove my ignorance by means of explaining the Bhāgavata." Having thus requested the speaker, he should select five brāhmaṇas for the recitation of the twelve-syllabled formula, O best sage. Having honoured those knowing the rules about singing and instrumental music with money, garments etc., he should at the end of the narration of the story appoint them for the recital (i.e. singing) of the glory of the lord. He who, having given up the anxiety about his wife, wealth, house, sons, listens with a concentrated mind, would obtain the entire fruit. For three watches and a half, beginning from sunrise, it—a sentence or a chapter, should be read and its meaning explained. O Nārada, he should take rest even for a ghaṭikā at mid-day. At the end of the (narration) of the story, the glory of Viṣṇu should be sung. A fast should be observed by the listeners desiring its fruit. A man incapable of doing it, should eat the food fit to be eaten during fast or should a little once (only). The body should be sustained without difficulty with water, or fruit, or milk or ghee only. O Nārada, listen to the rules to be observed by those who take the vow for seven days.

30-44. Those who are not initiated into (worship of) Viṣṇu, are said to have no right for this vow. O best sage, during the week one should observe celibacy, should sleep on the bare ground, and eat from a plate made of leaves everyday. He who is observing the vow, should avoid pulses, honey, oil, others' food, sugarcane juice, food polluted by thought, polluted by act, and stale food, so also onion, garlic, asafoetida, radish and gṛñjana (a kind of garlic). So also a man observing the vow of (reading or listening to the Bhāgavata) story should not eat lotus

stalks and pumpkin gourd. He should not indulge in sexual pleasure, anger, pride, greed, hypocrisy, and jeolousy, so also infatuation, hatred and harm. He who is observing the vow of (reading or listening to the Bhāgavata) story, should avoid censuring Vedas, Viṣṇu's devotees, brāhmaṇas, preceptors, those observing the vow of (serving) a cow, so also women, kings and great men. The wise one who is observing the vow of (reading or listening to the Bhāgavata) should practise truthfulness, purity, kindness, silence, straightforwardness, politeness, and graciousness of mind. A man desiring wealth, desiring a son, desiring victory, or thinking of salvation, should listen to the Bhāgavata. He, having no desire, would obtain Śrī Hari. For its completion, he should fast on the seventh day. He should honour the reader with a cow, land, gold, garments etc. He should cause to give remnants of the food offered to the deity, garlands of Tulasī (leaves) to the listeners. So also with the (help of) those skilled in singing and playing upon musical instruments a festival should be celebrated. The wise one should also listen to the meaning of the Gītā on the next day. Or after every verse with the Gāyatrī hymn, he should make offerings (to Viṣṇu) according to the rules. He should also offer sweetened milk, honey, ghee, sesamum-seeds, rice, barley grains, sugar, priyāla, grapes, dates, lotuses, camphor, sandal, agaru (a kind of sandal), cloves, a thousand leaves of bilva separately. He should recite the (hymn called) Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma for removing obstacles, removing deficiencies and excesses, and for purifying himself. He should devoutly offer sweetened milk to twelve, eighteen or more brāhmaṇas, and (should give them) gold or a cow as a present.

45-52. On this day or the day of Pūrvā Bhādrapadā or Uttarā Bhādrapadā (constellations) he should fashion (the) golden (image of a) lion, should place the Bhāgavata (text) on its back, and writing on it (his name etc.) should give it to the reader. When this is done according to the rule, the Bhāgavata that is listened to would remove all the sins of the listener and would give him good fruit, be the means of religious merit, of the fulfilment of the desire for sensual enjoyments, acquisition of worldly objects and salvation, and would give (i.e. produces) devotion. There is no object in the world that is not secured by this. Therefore, in the world, the Bhāga-

vata is regarded as superior to (other) Purāṇas. The reader is said to be free from eighteen blemishes, and the listener is supposed to be free from thirty-two faults by the wise. The Purāṇa named Śrī Bhāgavata gives men their desired objects. Yet listening to it produces devotion only in a person free from desires. The divine tree called Śrīmad Bhāgavata has starlike shoots; has a good origin; it shines with twelve large boughs (i.e. sections); it grows in the basin of devotion; it has three hundred and thirty-two bright branches (i.e. chapters); it has eighteen thousand leaves (i.e. verses); it gives desired objects; it is easily accessible; and it stands above all. Thus I have told you everything and have done what was desired by you. The youth of Jñāna, Vairāgya and Bhakti gives salvation to people.

Sūta said:

53-54. Having spoken like this, the Kumāras, inundated with the nectar (flowing) from Kṛṣṇa's feet, devotees of the lord, and intent on emancipating the helpless, ceased (speaking). Hearing their words, Nārada, dear to the lord, and with his palms joined, said to them in a voice faltering due to love:

Nārada said:

55-62. I am blessed; I am favoured by you highly devoted to compassion, since at the end of the Bhāgavata-saptāha (i.e. reciting or listening to the Bhāgavata for a week), you have presented Viṣṇu near me.

While Nārada, the best devotee of Viṣṇu, was speaking like this, Śuka, the chief among the meditating saints, (while) roaming, came there. His form was that of a youth of sixteen years; he was lotus-eyed; he was Vyāsa's son; he was the moon to the ocean of knowledge; he was content at heart with whatever (given) at the end of (the narration of) the story, and constantly recited Bhāgavata. The members of the assembly, seeing him of a great lustre, got up and gave him an excellent seat. When he comfortably sat on the seat, lotus-eyed Viṣṇu appeared (there). Śiva with Pārvatī and Brahmā with his sons came there to glorify and see him. Gods among whom Indra was the chief, came there in aeroplanes. The sky was covered by

them. Prahlāda did the beating of time with a quick speed; Uddhava took the cymbals; the divine sage (Nārada) took the lute; Arjuna, through his skill in tunes, formed the musical modes. Indra played upon the tabor; the Kumāras uttered the loud shouts of victory. Vyāsa's son, of unsurpassed virtues, was a (versatile) speaker and of good sentiments. The triad of Jñāna etc. having new forms, just danced in the middle. Seeing the extraordinary glorification Viṣṇu, with his mind pleased, spoke as follows: "O devotees of Viṣṇu, ask for a boon from me who am very much pleased with the narration of the story." Hearing those words, they who were pleased, and with their heart flowing with love, said:

Kumāras said:

63-67. O Murāri (i.e. O Viṣṇu), you will be instantly pleased with the worship (in the form of reading or listening to the Bhāgavata) continued for a week in the very fierce Kali age by men having a short life and overcome by hundreds of obstacles. From you, the soul of everything and the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe, we, resorting to your lotus-like feet, ask for this boon and not any other (boon).

Saying, "Let it be so", Viṣṇu vanished there only. Nārada with his mind pleased, saluted Kumāras. Then those Sanaka and others, Bhṛgu and others and Śuka and others, delighted by drinking the nectar of the story went to their own hermitages. O Śaunaka, since then, Nārada propagated Bhakti along with her two sons over the entire earth.

Śiva said:

68. O dear one, having heard the great story, Śaunaka whose heart was pleased, again asked Sūta who removed all doubts:

Śaunaka said:

69. O you respecting (others), tell me when Śuka told it to the king, when Gokarṇa told it, and Brahmā's sons to the divine sage (Nārada).

Sūta said:

70-72. Śuka commenced (the narration of) the story on the ninth of the bright fortnight of Bhādrapada when the period of three hundred years of Kali after the departure of Śrīkṛṣṇa had passed. Gokarṇa told the story on the 9th day of the bright half of Jyeṣṭha (or Āṣāḍha), after two hundred years had passed from the time Parīkṣit had heard it. O brāhmaṇa, now a thousand years of the Kali age have passed from the time of Parīkṣit. (So) conclude the sacrifice.

The lord said:

73-81a. Hearing these words of him, the best sage Śaunaka completed the sacrifice that continued for a thousand years. These Purāṇas: Brāhma, Pādma, Vaiṣṇava, Kaurma, Matsya, Vāmana, Varāha, Brahmavaivarta, Nāradīya, Bhaviṣyaka, and half of Āgneya were formerly heard by excellent sages like Śaunaka from Sūta Lomaharṣaṇa up to the end of the Dvāpara age. When Baladeva came on a pilgrimage to (the forest) called Naimiṣa Miśrikā, he was called by the best sages. There seeing Sūta seated on an excellent seat, revered (Bala-)Rāma was agitated like the great ocean on a parvan day. O Pārvatī, on the Dvādaśī day of the bright half of Āṣāḍha, at the time of its earlier half, he, Rāma, being stupefied due to what was decided by Kṛṣṇa's Māyā, having darbhas in his hand, struck Lomaharṣaṇa. Then all the hosts of the sages did loud wailing, and their hearts were overcome by sorrow and grief, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. Then they, full of forgiveness, said humbly to Rāma, the lord of the world:

The sages said:

81b-87a. O Rāma, Rāma, O you of great arms, you, the author of the world, have ignorantly committed harm greater than that due to the murder of a brāhmaṇa. This is actually Vyāsa's disciple, an ancient sage, having a great penance (to his credit). We who had invited him, the narrator of the eighteen Purāṇas, gave him an excellent seat at this sacrificial rite. On (hearing) the story of the lord of the world one obtains long life, O you who honour (others). Therefore, you who promoted the bridge of piety, who are capable of curbing and favouring, who

are the lord of the world, have manifested yourself for the protection of the world.

Speaking like this to Baladeva, O dear one, the sages, remembering the force of destiny, suddenly became silent. Then revered Rāma, killer of his enemies, following the path of the world and the Vedas, pleasing those brāhmaṇas, said:

Śrī Rāma said:

87b-89. O brāhmaṇas, may well-being come to you; listen after casting far away your anger. I know what you like and what gives success to your undertaking. Due to my blessing his son will be very wise. He will narrate to you the holy text desired by you. Tell me the work for which you have invited me.

The lord said:

90-100. Hearing these words of the very noble Rāma, they prompted the lord to murder Balvala. Then, having killed Balvala and pleased the pre-eminent sages and saluting them, he went on a pilgrimage after being permitted by them. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, when Rāma left for the pilgrimage, the chief sages like Śaunaka called Laumaharṣaṇi, and after honouring him placed him in his position for the narration of the remaining (part). With their minds delighted, they listened to seven Purāṇas and a half (beginning with) the greatness of the later part of Āgneya up to Bhāgavata. O you beautiful lady, Satyavatī's son (Vyāsa) was not mentally pleased after having composed seventeen Purāṇas and Bhārata also. Knowing that his heart was sad, revered Nārada, looking like a god, came to the excellent hermitage of Vyāsa. Seeing him, the son of Vāsavī (i.e. Vyāsa) hospitably received Nārada, offered him a seat, and honoured him with a rite according to the rules. Then Nārada said to him: "Tell me fully the cause of your doubt. What do you, with an afflicted mind, think of?" Thus asked by the sage, (Vyāsa) the son of Parāśara, said: "I really do not know the cause of the disturbance of my mind. You are proficient in knowledge. Understand it (i.e. the cause) and tell it to me." Thus requested by him, Nārada, proficient in the knowledge of the

Supreme Spirit, told him the highest truth obtained by him from Brahmā.

Nārada said:

101-110. O son of Parāśara, hear from me the cause due to which the mind of you, the master and the origin of holy texts, has become miserable. O innocent one, having descended on the earth, you have divided the Vedas into parts. You have also composed the Purāṇas along with the Itihāsa, in which, having observed in course of time the practices of the castes and of those living in the four stages of life, you have told them from the three Vedas. All women, śūdras, the twice-born fraternity, those prone to the company of the good, are entitled to listening to it. Religious practices, as are lasting, have been described in them by you. But you have not at all prominently described therein the greatness of Viṣṇu. O sage, in the Kali age, void of all religious practices and rites, and the reservoir of all blemishes, the sinners have no other course than the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's story. This alone is the merit in this terrible Kali age that men are freed from the bondage of their acts by means of narrating the glory of Kṛṣṇa only. Sacrifices, gifts, penance, rites, knowledge, meditation gave success in (ages) like Kṛta. In the same way, O brāhmaṇa, the narration of (Viṣṇu's) name (leads to success) in Kali. Therefore, for the emancipation of men born in the Kali age, you should relate Śrīmad Bhāgavata, by composing which, O dear one, your mind will be pleased and people will be blessed.

The lord said:

111-121. Having thus ordered Vyāsa of unlimited lustre, he, O dear one, constantly singing the virtues of Viṣṇu, went as he desired. After Nārada had gone, Vyāsa who saw everything, composed this great text, viz. Śrīmad Bhāgavata. Having taught the four Vedas to Paila and others according to the rule, he gave all the Purāṇa-texts to Sūta. That text of the Bhāgavata was heard by the son of Lomaharṣana, when it was being told to the king Parīkṣit by Śuka. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, he properly told it to sages like Śaunaka. It is above all Purāṇas

and best among them. Men whose heart is attached to it find interest in nothing else. In their minds, Kṛṣṇa, son of Nanda, shines. O you mother of the chief of (my) attendants, I have told you the entire greatness of Śrī Bhāgavata, which you had asked me to narrate for crossing over the (mundane) world. A man who devoutly listens to or he too who reads with approval the greatness (of Śrī Bhāgavata) along with many historical accounts leading to devotion and salvation, obtains the highest position. Having studied it, a brāhmaṇa would obtain (the knowledge of) the Vedas, a kṣatriya would get victory, a vaiśya (would obtain) wealth, and a śūdra gets the best position by just listening to it.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYNINE

The Glory of Yamunā

The sages said:

1. O Sūta tell us the glory of Yamunā in detail—to whom it was spoken, and by whom it was spoken—along with a story.

Sūta said:

2. Once Pāṇḍu's son, desiring to hear auspicious knowledge from Saubhari, went to his place, and having saluted him, asked him like this:

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

3. O brāhmaṇa, tell me about that holy place which is (the best) among the holy places on the bank of Yamunā, and which is (even) superior to the land of the birth of Viṣṇu.

Saubhari said:

4-8. Once the two pre-eminent sages, Nārada and Parvata, moving in the sky, (while) looking (here and there), saw the very beautiful Khāṇḍava forest. From the sky they descended there and sat on the auspicious bank of Kālindī, and having rested

awhile, entered her water to bathe. King Śibi, son of Uśīnara, hunting in the forest, saw the two, and waiting for them to come out, sat on the bank of the river. The two who after having duly bathed had put on garments, who were saluted by the king with his head (bent down), sat on the bank. Seeing thousands of golden sacrificial posts there, Śibi, free from pride, spoke to Nārada and Parvata:

Śibi said:

9-10. O pre-eminent sages, tell me, whose sacrificial posts these are. Who performed a sacrifice here—(was it) a god or a man? Leaving holy places like Kāśī, which man performed a sacrifice here? What peculiarity, O treasures of knowledge, does it have (in a greater extent) than other holy places?

Nārada said:

11-14. Formerly Hiraṇyakaśipu, having conquered deities like Indra, secured the kingdom of the three worlds, and entertained great pride. His son was Prahlāda, highly devoted to Nārāyaṇa. The wicked (Hiraṇyakaśipu), whose auspiciousness had perished, bore a great malice against him. Due to that malice, Viṣṇu, taking up the body of Nṛsiṁha, instantly killed the lord of demons, and gave the kingdom of heaven to (Indra) the lord of heaven. Having obtained his own position, the lord of gods, remembering the virtues of Viṣṇu, and saluting Bṛhaspati's feet with his head (bent down) said to him:

Indra said:

15-16. O preceptor, Viṣṇu, the supporter of the world, taking up the form of Nṛsiṁha, gave me the kindom of deities. I desire to worship him with sacrifices. O Guru, tell me (about) a pure place and also (about) the brāhmaṇas. You, doing good to us, should not delay in this matter.

Bṛhaspati said:

17-19. For you there is the charming and extremely holy Khāṇḍava forest which contains (the trees like) ketakī, aśoka, bakula and (also) bees intoxicated by honey. There is Yamunā, auspicious, holy and purifying the three worlds. On remember-

ing her she gives heaven, and on death Brahmā's position. O lord of gods, if you desire the continuous well-being of your relatives, worship Viṣṇu with many sacrifices on her bank.

Nārada said:

20-27. Having heard Bṛhaspati's words, and quickly getting into a vehicle, Indra came to this forest of him which caused happiness, along with Bṛhaspati and the materials of sacrifice. Having come here, and having seen this forest, he obtained great joy. Prompted by Guru, Indra, choosing the seven sages, the sons of Brahmā, the brāhmaṇas, worshipped the lord of the world with sacrifices. The lord, pleased with him, came, along with Brahmā and Śiva, to Indra's sacrifice, where there was a great festivity. That Indra, of a crooked mind, seeing the triad of gods, quickly got up from his seat, and along with the sages, saluted them. Quickly getting down from their vehicles, they sat near him on seats of excellent gold, and shone like fires on altars. With Śiva and Brahmā who had white and red bodies, Viṣṇu, of a dark complexion, wearing yellow garments, shone like a cloud on two peaks. Indra washed their feet and took that water on his head. Being full of joy, he spoke sweet words:

Indra said:

28-37. O gods, this sacrifice performed by me has become instantly fruitful, since you, difficult to see even by meditating saints are seen (by me). O Viṣṇu, you alone have taken up the three forms. Yet as in a crystal, the appearance of multiplicity in you in respect of qualities is false. As fire concealed in pieces of wood does not manifest itself without friction, in the same way you remaining in the hearts of your devotees (do not manifest yourself) without deep devotion. Devotion to you alone, would be helpful to all beings. By that (devotion) entertained by Prahlāda, gods became happy. O god, we, given to sensual pleasures, have our hearts screened by your Māyā. We, the servants of your feet, do not know your nature correctly. O Brahman, O Mahādeva, since you two also are the preceptors of the world due to his greatness, you are not different from him. Whatever is said with words, thought of by the mind is his Māyā only. So all are away from that pair(?). He who sees this entire visible world to be

unreal, would not think of (sensuous pleasures). O Śiva, those who resort to Viṣṇu's feet, cross the water held by you on your head. O Brahman, may I have, in existence after existence, a great liking for his feet, resembling lotuses. Due to it being agitated by her (Māyā's) glance, the entire world, Mahat etc. springs up. There is none else given to kindness like you who give happiness (even) to your enemies. That which is described as your kindness, that removes the misery of your people is (just) (due to) ignorance, O Nṛhari.

Nārada said:

38-46. Having thus praised Viṣṇu, the lord of gods remained bent before him. He who had applied (i.e. concentrated) his mind with a desire to hear his words, looked great.

The sages, having thus heard the praise of Ramā's lord, done by Indra in the assembly, said: "Well (done), well done." (They said:) "O Indra, (even) the devotion of those who practise severe penance for a hundred years is not like your devotion to Viṣṇu. The Yoga with eight parts, by means of which glory is obtained, is not easy. The refuge of men is renunciation with equanimity of mind and devotion to him. When the dedication of that act which is performed with the wealth earned in pursuance of the duties of one's own caste is made to Viṣṇu, that is devotion, giving happiness. He should not censure other deity, (and) him who salutes (the deity) with Viṣṇu in his mind. He should not ignore Vedic words. Such a devotee is dear to those who everyday listen to the virtues of Viṣṇu, who sing his glory, who remember him, resort to him, worship him, who salute him with servitude, who form friendship with him, who offer him their possessions, who do not desire salvation etc. O Indra, you also devoutly propitiate the lord of the world. Do not desire anything from him. Then you will be blessed."

Nārada said:

47. When Indra was thus advised by the sages, Viṣṇu, the lord, having heard about the devotion that was done to him, that could be resorted to by all, and that would cause the crossing of the three worlds, spoke sweet words to Indra in the assembly.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED

The Episode of a Bhilla and a Lion

The lord said:

1-15a. O lord of gods, it is no wonder that these very wise sages respect and honour my devotion, (leading to) my position, since these who teach knowledge to those living in the three worlds, always propagate the Vedic path that has perished. You, though attached to the enjoyments in heaven, have devoutly approached me. What wonder is there, since Bṛhaspati is your preceptor. O best of gods, free from desires, worship me with sacrifices with many gifts. You will quickly reach my position which is near. At every sacrifice present many prasthas (particular measures) of jewels. This place will be called Indraprastha. O Brahmā, having brought Sarasvatī and Gaṅgā purifying the world, fashion here the best holy place (called) Prayāga. O Śiva, you establish here Kāśī and Śivakāñcī and Gokarṇa. Always live here along with Gaurī. O sons of Brahmā, proficient in metaphysical and worldly knowledge, fashion here seven holy places by means of the power of your abstract meditation. O Guru, you set up the holy place Nigamodbodhaka. Here the knowledge of Vedas would be had even without studying (them). The two highest souls would have the recollection of their former existence. I shall found here very beautiful Dvārakā, where Gomatī has joined the sea. O Indra, I shall also fashion here Kośalā and Madhvaraṇya, where I shall descend through the bodies of Rāma (i.e. Balarāma) and Kṛṣṇa. I shall also fashion here Badaryāśrama, the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa, where, O chief of gods, I shall always live. With a desire for your good only, I shall found the two excellent holy places, Haridvāra and Puṣkara. I shall found here all the holy places that are in Naimiṣa, on the Kālañjara mountain and the bank of Sarasvatī.

Nārada said:

15b-26. O Śibi, having heard those auspicious words of Viṣṇu, and having done and seen that, Brahmā, Śiva and others did as was said (by him). That lord of the gods again worshipped

Lakṣmī's lord with many sacrifices in this place full of all holy places. In front of Kṛṣṇa, he gave prasthas of jewels to brāhmaṇas. 'May this Nārāyaṇa, the soul of all, be pleased with me.' Since then this holy place is called Indraprastha. One who dies at this holy place full of all holy places, is not reborn. The brāhmaṇas, having received those prasthas of jewels given by Indra, gave him there, in the assembly, a blessing that would not be fruitless: "O Indra, may Govinda be pleased with this gift of you. May you also have steady devotion for him. O lord, in this land of (sacred) rites formerly you, having a desire, performed a hundred sacrifices. Due to that religious position you obtained a place among the gods. Now you, without any desire, have worshipped Viṣṇu with sacrifices. Falling from your position, you will be (born) as the best brāhmaṇa. There (i.e. in that existence) also, you, worshipping Viṣṇu in accordance with your (caste-)duty, will remember the act like the sacrifice that you did. On remembering that, you, abandoning your house and going to holy places with your father, will come to this Śakra-tīrtha. Resorting to the fourth stage of life you will caste your body here. Then you, having a divine body, will get into an aeroplane brought by the attendants and bright like the sun, and will reach the position of Śrī Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu)."

Nārada said:

27-32. Having heard this blessing of the brāhmaṇas and their words indicative of the future, the lord of gods was extremely delighted, O Śibi. Having honoured with (gifts of) wealth etc. Brahmā's sons, the priests at the sacrifice, Indra, honouring Bṛhaspati, went to heaven. O Śibi, Indra, full of devotion for Viṣṇu, having ruled there, with his religious merit exhausted, came down to Hastināpura. There was a brāhmaṇa, Śivaśarman (by name), who had mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. His wife was Guṇavatī, of a very significant name. To her was born Indra, who served Viṣṇu, at an auspicious time. Astrologers were called. Seeing the auspicious time they said:

The astrologers said:

33-36 O Śivaśaraman, this your boy will be dear to Viṣṇu. He wlll emancipate your family. We are telling the truth and

not a lie. When he will have the body of thirteen years (i.e. when he will be thirteen years old), he, rich with knowledge learnt (i.e. got) by him, will marry. Then having produced a good son he will be an anchorite. The wise one, wandering to holy places, will renounce the world. There is the excellent river in Indra's Khāṇḍavavana. On her bank is Hariprastha. He will die there.

Nārada said:

37-44. Having heard the auspicious words uttered by the astrologers, he then named his son Viṣṇuśarman. Having dismissed them by (giving them) wealth, the intelligent one thought: 'I whose son will be Viṣṇu's devotee, am blessed. This son will accomplish for me the four stages of human life. He will die at the holy place. Who else is lucky like me?' Thinking like this in his mind, Śivaśarman got performed the ceremony to be performed at the birth of a child through the brāhmaṇas on an auspicious day. And when the son completed seven years, the best brāhmaṇa performed, in his eighth year, his thread ceremony in the month of Caitra. O king, after having imparted him education till the twelfth year he united the son with a wife, O Śibi. The intelligent Viṣṇuśarman having produced a son on his wife made up his mind, free from carnal desire, for visiting holy places. Having approached his father, and having saluted both his feet, the very wise Viṣṇuśarman, remembering the sages' words, said:

Viṣṇuśarman said:

45-49. O father, allow me. Having resorted to the third stage of life, causing good company, I (shall) worship Viṣṇu. Wife, house, wealth, children, friends are perishable. A wise man is not attached to them like bubbles on water. By means of Vedic study and progeny I have paid off the two debts (of the sages and forefathers). I, free from desires, (now) desire to offer a sacrifice to Viṣṇu. Having given up attachment for the constituents of nature I desire to stay at an excellent holy place, as long as my destiny allows.

Thus address by the son, the very intelligent father, remembering the words of the astrologers, and being desireless for (i.e. disugsted with) the mundane existence, said:

Śivaśarman said:

50-54. This is the time for resorting to the fourth stage of life for me also who am free from egoism. Having abandoned objects of senses like poison, I shall resort to the nectar in the form of Viṣṇu. O son, in this old age, my mind does not find delight in the house like an elephant brought from a forest and tied. Your younger brother Suśarman will support the family left by us two, like knowledge supporting a man forsaken by wealth and family. Your mother, a loyal wife, will (like to) follow me, renouncing the world, as brilliance follows the sun at the end of the day. Therefore, we too, not known by (i.e. without the knowledge of) your mother and thinking of Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet, (shall) go, O dear one.

Nārada said:

55-78a. Thus thinking, the two, desiring salvation, leaving (the members of) the family (that were) asleep, moved out of the house, and went. O Śibi, the two, free from egoism, wandered, and came to the excellent place, Śakraprastha, causing auspiciousness. Viṣṇuśarman who had come here, having seen the sacrificial posts laid by him in his former birth, remembered his contact with Viṣṇu. And the intelligent one said to his father: "Formerly (i.e. in my former birth) I was Indra. With a desire to please Viṣṇu, I performed sacrifices here. Here only, Viṣṇu, loving his devotees, was pleased with me. The brāhmaṇas, the seven sages, were pleased by me with prasthas of jewels. They only gave me devotion to Viṣṇu, salvation and birth. All, Viṣṇu and others, have put up holy places elsewhere. This holy place, Indraprastha, is full of all holy places. The best sages had told that I would die here only. After that I would obtain Viṣṇu's feet. I remember all this. These two, Gaṅgā and Sarasvatī, were brought from his own world by Brahmā; due to their contact this is called Prayāga. This is Kāśī, Śiva's city, in the eastern region of Prayāga. At the distance of four hastas there is an island. A man dead on it is not reborn. At the western region of Kāśī, at a distance of eighty four hastas, there is Śivakāñcī founded by Śiva and giving salvation to the dead. This holy place called Gokarṇa, is very dear to Śiva. It is established on a portion of land measuring eight hastas. To the west of the chief

holy place is this auspicious Dvārāvatī. A man dead within a distance of two hundred and eighty hastas from here gets four arms. Then to the eastern region of this is Kośala, dear to people. It measures seventytwo hastas and its sight is meritorious. This is Madhuvana, O dear one, founded by Viṣṇu himself, which is to the west and which measures forty hastas. O dear one, to the north of this is the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa. It stands on a piece of ground measuring fortyfour hastas. This holy place is Haridvāra, situated in the south of it. It is seen on a piece of land measuring one hundred and twenty hastas. This is the holy place Puṣkara, the crest-jewel of holy places. O dear one, it is situated on a piece of ground measuring forty-eight hastas. At a distance of one krośa from Prayāga, in the eastern direction, are seven holy places of the seven sages. This is the group of seven holy places. Near the seven holy places there are many other holy places, in which at every step a dead man becomes one with four arms. At a distance of one krośa from Prayāga, in the western region, is the holy place named Nigamodbodhaka, formerly founded by Guru. The distance between the seven holy places and Nigamodbodhaka is great. O dear one, this is the holy place Indraprastha, formerly founded by deities. It is extended up to a yojana in the east and the west. The great sages have said that four yojanas to the south of Yamunā is the limit of Indraprastha. He who casts his body here in (the confluence of) the three deities, is unborn."

Nārada said:

78b-79a. O Śibi, hearing these words of his son, the brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman having a doubt, said to his son, truthful of words.

Śivaśarman said:

79b-82. How should I know that formerly you were the lord of gods; you performed sacrifices here; you pleased the brāhmaṇas with (presents of) jewels? O son, do that by which I would have the truth of what is told by you. Wherefrom did you hear about this limit of Indraprastha, since from the time you had understanding you did not leave the house? From me only you have studied the four Vedas with the Aṅgas. How did you have the knowledge of the acts done in the former birth?

Viṣṇuśarman said:

83-85. Formerly the sages had given me a boon causing the recollection of the former existence. This recollection of this holy place is had by me from them only. O father, bathe here in this holy place, viz. Nigamodbodhaka. You will obtain knowledge difficult to obtain, giving you the ability to recollect your former birth. You will recollect even my behaviour in myformer existence by touching the water of this holy place. I tell you the truth, O father.

Nārada said:

86-101. When the best brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman, after having heard this was ready to bathe in the holy place Nigamodbodhaka for the recollection of his former birth, there came running a bhilla followed by a lion. His limbs were full of great fear; he was panting; he was overcome by fatigue. He was of a harmful nature; he killed (people) on the way; he always robbed merchants. His body was dark. His hair was tawny. He was short. His eyes were like those of a cat. He had a lance in his hand; his figure was fearful. The man existed as it were by sin. Then seeing at a distance after him a lion the father and son quickly climbed a nearby tree, and remained (on it), saying, 'O Kṛṣṇa, free us from this untimely death.' O best king, the bhilla, seeing the lion (pursuing him) faster to seize him, was afraid, and proceeded to climb up the tree. The impetuous lion seized him, climbing (up the tree) at his feet, knocked him down with his back on the ground, and mounted on him. The bhilla too, who was pained and was under (the lion), tore the lion's belly with his lance in such a way that the mass of his entrails, smeared with a stream of blood came out. The lion, with a piteous roar, pounded the bhilla's head, and he died instantly. When the two died, there came down, O king, attendants with a group of two aeroplanes, that were fashioned with crystal stones, that were decorated with multitudes of jewels, that had charming pictures (painted on them), that were adorned with snow-walls, that had windows (decked) with rubies, the bells of which were tinkling, that had charming raised seats, that had cushions, that shone with lofty flags, that had high arches, that looked beautiful due to a hundred doors, that were clear like mirrors due to their

floors resembling new corals, along with (i.e. in which were seated) two attendants whose complexion was like fresh clouds, on whose ears were charming rings, who had in their hands conches, discs, maces and lotuses, who had put on yellow garments, whose eyes resembled fully bloomed lotuses, the anklets round whose feet were making a deep (tinkling) sound, who had rows of bracelets round their forearms, whose chests looked charming due to pearl necklaces, whose faces had curly hair over them, whose couples of eyebrows had cast down the bow of Cupid.

102-111a. The bhilla and the lion, even before life left them, gave up their bodies and remained in a natural state due to the power of this holy place. The attendants of Viṣṇu, bringing the aeroplanes near them, who were having no dress or form, said to them: "O bhilla, best of men, O lion, the lord of beasts, know us to be Viṣṇu's attendants who have come from Vaikuṇṭha (or from Viṣṇu). We shall take you to his place. It is true. There are no distresses there. Getting into your respective aeroplane, go quickly. Do not tarry." The bhilla and the lion, got into their respective aeroplanes, and full of amazement, spoke to the attendants of (Viṣṇu), the lord of Lakṣmī: "O best deities, listen to our words. Due to your sight knowledge of the highest truth is produced (in us). In this existence we have not done the slightest good act. By your favour we are having the recollection of our former deeds. We ate flesh; we were engaged in killing animals; our mind and senses were cruel; we were born in sinners' families; we cause fear when looked at. In such a world, we were sinners. Due to what religious merit, we have seen (you)? Due to what religious merit shall we have absorption into Śrī Hari?"

The two attendants said:

111b-117. Indeed due to your dying at this holy place, formerly fashioned by (Bṛhaspati,) the preceptor of gods, you saw us, and (would get) the wonderful absorption (into Viṣṇu). You will soon obtain (i.e. reach) the position of the lord of Lakṣmī. Sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa roar till the time this holy place of Bṛhaspati is not seen. As darkness perishes on sunrise, in the same way sins perish on seeing Nigamodbodhaka.

This holy place, called Indraprastha, purified Indra. Here he worshipped Viṣṇu with sacrifices with many presents. Viṣṇu pleased (by them), gave him a boon. Hear (it): "O Indra, those men, even killers, who cast their bodies at your holy place, full of all holy places, are equal to me."

Nārada said:

118. Speaking like this, the two best attendants took the two and went to Viṣṇu's place, having gone to which a man does not get drowned in the ocean of the world (i.e. the worldly existence).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED ONE

Śarabha's Story

Nārada said:

1-2. The two, the father and the son, got down from the tree, and seeing that even sinners got the position of Viṣṇu, were very much amazed. The best brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman, having heard the praise, expressed by the (two) attendants, of the holy place, spoke to Viṣṇuśarman, his son:

Śivaśarman said:

3-6. The bhilla and the lion have easily reached that position which is not easy to be reached by the brāhmaṇas even with penance practised. Observe the greatness of the holy place. It is not possible to praise in appropriate terms this best holy place, due to the power of which those who had committed sins from birth to death have obtained identity of form with Viṣṇu, O son? What a great disparity there is between the divine birth of Brahmā, which is from pure Sattva and difficult to be had even by gods on the one hand, and the Tamas-born lion and bhilla on the other! But this holy place is having a wonderful efficacy. O dear one, a being after having reached the end (of the fruits) of his actions. falls from the position of Brahman. (But) a being

meeting death here (in this holy place), fashioned by (Bṛhaspati) the preceptor of the gods, has no fall from Viṣṇu's position.

Nārada said:

7-16. O king, the best brāhmaṇa, having actually seen the greatness of this holy place of Bṛhaspati, proceeded to bathe there. Having washed his face, teeth, feet and purified his mind, and having put on a garment with five hems, and having tied his tuft of hair, he remembered Viṣṇu, with the recitation of the verse *Aśvakrāntā* . . . He touched the clay on the bank, made a mark (on his forehead) with it, and again got into the water. There, plunging into the water and facing the current, he again got up. Remembering Viṣṇu and Gaṅgā, purifying the people, he again plunged. Again getting up he remembered the seven cities[1] like Ayodhyā; again dedicating his mind to Govinda, he plunged into the water. Having bathed duly he put on garments that were washed; and having come out the best brāhmaṇa put a mark (on his forehead). The restrained one put darbhas into his hands, on his feet and tufted hair. He duly performed the sandhyā (prayer) and offered oblations of three kinds. The honoured one made a respectful offering to the Sun with flowers, and the best brāhmaṇa, putting his folded palms on his head, saluted (the Sun). The best brāhmaṇa offered worship to Viṣṇu whose feet are revered by the world, beginning with an invocation and ending with an offering of eatables. Having performed the rites and seated comfortably, he, remembering fully the acts of his former birth, said to his son like that:

Śivaśarman said:

17-26. O Viṣṇuśarman, O dear one, your words are not false, since due to a bath here I had the recollection of my deeds in the former birth. O glorious one, listen to what I tell you. Formerly I was born in the family of wealthy and religious merchants. My father named Śarabha lived in the city of Kānyakubja. Resorting to the wealth of piety he obtained much

1. Saptapurī—The seven cities that are said to be so sacred that death at any one of them is the giver of eternal happiness. They are: Ayodhyā, Mathurā, Māyā, Kāśī, Kāñcī, Avantikā, and Dvārāvatī.

wealth by trade. He, with his body seized by old age and his mind afflicted by anxiety, passed a long time, (but) a son was not born to him. The best merchant day and night thought like this: 'My wealth, though collected to a large extent, is in vain without a son. Even a rich person having no son is indebted to his dead ancestors, as a cloud full of water but not showing (it), is to the cātakas. A man conquers the three worlds by means of progeny having piety as the foremost (virtue), as a king conquers an enemy difficult to conquer by means of power[1] of three kinds. Pure progeny pleases parents of good minds as sweet and true words that are spoken please friends and foes. The glory of the father enhances by means of the son's prosperity, as the pure water of the ocean by means of the moon. Therefore, a man should strive with his body or wealth to beget a son. Without him the two (i.e. the body and wealth) of men, having (momentary) life like that (of a flash) of lightning, are useless.'

27-34. When he was thinking like this, the excellent sage, Devala, having suprasensual knowledge, came there to give (him) a boon. Seeing him coming (my) father got up from (his) seat, and giving him a respectful offering and water to wash his feet with, saluted the sage with his head (bent down). Having made him sit on the seat offered with his own hand, my father asked the best sage Devala, of divine appearance: "O best sage, welcome to you. (I hope) there is happiness in your family, and the religious observances like penance and study of the Vedas are free from obstacles. I hope, guests come to your hermitage at the (proper) time. I hope, the trees in your hermitage bear fruits as desired by you. I hope, tigers etc. coming to your hermitage do not entertain hostility towards deer etc. as brothers towards their brothers. Your moving about on the earth gives joy to the householders. How (can it be) otherwise? How can they, engaged in (the affairs in) their houses, have your sight? O sage, granted that you, having your mind fixed on the dust particles on Viṣṇu's feet have absolutely no desire for anything; but quickly tell me about the purpose of your arrival."

1. Śakti: regal power. It has three parts or constituents: Prabhu-śakti or Prabhāva-śakti (the majesty or pre-eminent position of the king himself); Mantra-śakti (the power of good counsel); Utsāha-śakti (the power of energy).

Śivaśarman said:

35. Thus addressed that sage Devala, honoured by gods, desiring to know the thought in his mind, said to the great trader:

Devala said:

36-41. O best merchant, you have righteously collected much wealth, with which, O you knowing piety, perform obligatory and optional rites. A man gets respect in the king's assembly due to wealth, as a good (i.e. brave) warrior gets success in a battle due to valour. A householder, getting wealth, makes a great advance, as a bull, getting grains ripe in autumn, gets nourishment, O chief merchant. Relatives and other people do not leave the wealthy persons as bees do not abandon a tree with flowers containing honey. Due to want of wealth, the householders are fully reduced to feebleness, as the lakes without water in summer. O chief merchant, that ample wealth is there in your house. Why then, are your limbs feeble? (Please) tell me, if it is not a secret.

The merchant said:

42-45. You are like the fathers specially engaged in instructing (people) in their welfare. What is there to be concealed by men like me, who are (just) like your sons? O best sage, due to your favour I am fully happy. I am unhappy only due to want of a son in my old age. Know that the feebleness of my limbs is due to that, O best sage. I am afraid (of the repayment) of the debt to my dead ancestors, and of falling down (due to the non-repayment). O sage, suggest an expedient by which I shall have a son. For people like you there is nothing that cannot be done on the earth.

Śivaśarman said:

46-47. Having heard these words of the best merchant, Devala, having made his mind steady for a moment, and with his eyes closed, thought. Devala, having suprasensual knowledge, saw the obstacle in my father's having a child, and recollecting (it) said:

Devala said:

48-62. O vaiśya, I shall tell you what beautiful idea this your religious wife formerly had in her mind. 'O Gaurī, O you dear to Śambhu, when I shall be pregnant, I shall please you with foods having the six flavours;[1] (so also) with incense, rows of lights, tāmbūlas, dances, songs coming out of lutes, and smearings of various kinds.' Your wife having promised like this in front of her friends remained devoutly waiting for the time (of pregnancy). This your wife conceived in that month only. Then all her friends of affectionate hearts spoke to her: "O fortunate one, the pregnancy longed for by you, has been bestowed on you. Therefore, do what is promised to the goddess. Otherwise, there would be an obstacle due to the change wrought by her. Goddesses give boons or curses when they are (either) propitiated or angered." Thus addressed by her friends your highly virtuous, loyal wife, full of joy, modestly said to you: "O lord, I desire to worship Gaurī fulfilling all desires, due to whose grace I have had my desired object." O best merchant, hearing these auspicious words of your wife, you took her to be pregnant. Being delighted with great gaiety you instantly ordered your servants to bring the requisites of worship. You then gave her all the things brought by them, so also honey, food, grapes, perfumes, etc. Then she, calling all her friends, said to them: "O friends, taking the collection of materials brought for the worship of Ambikā, you, taking the requisites of worship, go to the temple of Ambikā, and please the goddess with worship laid down by the rules. In our family a pregnant woman does not move out of the house. Therefore, I shall not come. You (please) go to worship her."

63-81. Thus ordered, the friends, taking the materials (of worship), went to the temple of Ambikā, which was the abode of intoxicated bees moving (here and there). It was crowded with groups of mango trees on which flocks of cuckoos were sporting. It was adorned with swans, cranes and geese. There were spotless lotuses. It was surrounded by parrots and (other) birds talking about the virtues of Mahādeva. There were the friends of Umā engaged in sprinkling garlands and creepers. There the ground was purified by light plantings of the steps

1. Ṣaḍ-rasa: The six flavours: pungent, sour, sweet, saltish, bitter, and astringent.

of the lord of Umā. There were celestial trees on the boundary of the water bound by crystal stones. It was resounding with (the sound of) the gandharvas that were singing, accompanying the dance of Pārvatī's lord. There the mango tree, campaka trees, koraka trees were slightly tossed by gentle breezes. The bowers of creepers had the echoes of the notes of the dancing peacocks. It was brightened by her sports, and had flashing brightness like that of jewels. Those (friends) whose husbands were alive went there and saluted the daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain; and going round her (image) keeping (it) to their right, they said with devotion: "O Jagadambā, salutation to you. Give us happiness, O you who are dear to Śiva. Accept this offering brought for your worship. There is a merchant Śarabha by name. He has a charming wife. She longed for pregnancy. This worship of you is for having had it. Due to your grace, O you dear to Śambhu, she had that foetus (i.e. she became pregnant). We have laid before you this offering to worship you. In her family a pregnant woman does not move out of the house. Therefore, O goddess, she has not come; be pleased and accept this (offering)." O vaiśya, having said like that to her, the friends of your wife offered the offering duly and worshipped her with sandal etc. Not receiving any reply from Gaurī, they returned home. They told their friend that Śiva's beloved was dejected. Hearing these words of them, the vaiśya woman, being uneasy, thought: 'Why was Gaurī not pleased? She knows my devotion for her. She knows the worship I offered to her. How can the internal (thoughts) and external (behaviour) of men be not known to (deities) like her? She also knows the reason for which I did not go there. Why was she not pleased by the offering made by me? I do not see any other reason for her dissatisfaction, except my not having gone to that charming temple. What has gone by cannot be changed. After I am delivered of the foetus, I shall go to her temple for worshipping her. Salutation to that wife of Mahādeva. May she cause happiness.' O vaiśya, speaking like this, your wife remained carrying the foetus.

Śivaśarman said:

82. O Viṣṇuśarman, the father, knowing this former account, asked the very wise, best sage, Devala:

The merchant said:

83-84. O sage, that your daughter-in-law offered the worship as promised. Tell me the cause of Pārvatī's dejection; since she herself knows the reason why she did not go there, and it was also told to her friends. Then why did she become dejected?

Devala said:

85-86. O best merchant, listen, I am telling you the reason for which Pārvatī's disappointment, destroying the foetus, took place. When her friends had returned after worshipping Skanda's mother, Vijayā full of curiosity, said to Pārvatī:

Vijayā said:

87-88. O Girijā, these ladies devoutly made an offering to you. Then, O you of an excellent face, why were you not pleased? To please you they worshipped you with incense, lights and offerings of food. (Instead of being pleased) why are you, on the contrary, disappointed?

Devala said:

89. O merchant, hearing these words of her friend, the goddess, honoured by excellent gods, told her friend Vijayā, the cause of her dejection.

Pārvatī said:

90-96. I know, O friend Vijayā, that the merchant's wife was unable to move out of the house through lack of discrimination for pregnancy (*corrupt reading*). Her friends, prompted by her, came to worship me. (Deities) like me do not accept the worship offered through others' hands. Had her husband come that would have been well. Her foetus neglected by me will fall out (immaturely). O friend, if a lady causes that vow which she herself cannot practise, to be practised by her husband, then the vow of the two does not fail. Or, after having asked (the permission of) her husband, she of a concentrated mind, (could get it practised) by a pre-eminent brāhmaṇa. Since she did not come herself and did not worship me, therefore, I have made her pregnancy void and

fruitless. If again, the couple will come and devoutly worship me then they will have a son.

Devala said:

97-101a. O merchant, that curse was not heard by you, or your wife or the friends, so also the favour granted by her. Due to this ignorance of you two, not knowing the counter-rite giving happiness in this world and the next, a son was not born to you. O merchant, I have told you this reason for your not having a child as formerly Vasiṣṭha had told king Dilīpa. As having heard that the king propitiated Nandinī, in the same way, along with your wife propitiate Gaurī, fulfilling desires. As she, being propitiated by king Dilīpa gave him a son, similarly propitiate Gaurī; she will give you a son.

The merchant said:

101b-103. O sage, who is that king Dilīpa, and who is that Nandinī, having propitiated whom that best king obtained a son? Why did the king, leaving the gods like Śiva, giving the fruits to the three castes, propitiate her only for (obtaining) a son? O sage, tell me all this that I ask you. Hearing it, I, with my wife, shall serve that daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain.

Śivaśarman said:

104. O Viṣṇuśarman, the sage, having heard these words spoken by the polite merchant, my father, commenced telling him Dilīpa's account, very holy in the world.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWO

The Story of King Dilīpa

Devala said:

1-16a. O very wise one, listen to the divine, wonderful account of king Dilīpa, which removes the sin of those who hear it. In Vaivasvata Manu's family was (born) the best king Dilīpa

like Prācīnabarhis in Svāyambhuva Manu's (family). That king, best among the religious, protecting the earth justly, pleased the people with his rich virtues. The queen, the wife of that king, the daughter of the lord of Magadha, named Sudakṣiṇā, was like Śacī to the lord of heaven. Even after a long time had passed, a son was not born to the queen. The sovereign, the lord of Kośala, thus thought in his mind: 'I have held (under my control) the earth adorned with the gems like the ocean, the great Meru mountain etc. There is nothing wanting that should lead to my disgrace. At the proper time I have practised the three objects of human life. I have not opposed it. Yet in the mind of me who am childless, there is no happiness. With sacrifices I have worshipped Viṣṇu; so also the best gods like Indra. Everywhere on the earth I have got fashioned tanks, groves and wells. I have, with devotion, satisfied brāhmaṇas and guests with (presents of) cows, land, gold, garments, and with meals having the six (kinds of) tastes. Having justly uprooted the kings in battles for the maintenance (of piety), I have increased my treasury with great wealth. Those who went astray, who were arrogant, who violated their duties, who were averse to their dead ancestors and deities, and who (therefore) deserved punishment, were punished by me. On the five parvan days, the day sacred to Viṣṇu, to the Sun, on a day on which a rite in honour of the dead ancestors is performed, on the tenth and eleventh days I have not waited upon my wife. I never ignored my wife who had bathed at (the end of her) menstrual period; so also (I approached her) even at other times when requested by her. At that time I had sexual intercourse with her who had a passion for it. Thus I have resorted to religious practices, worldly pursuits and carnal pleasures at the proper time. Due to what defect in my queen am I not having a child? Vasiṣṭha, my preceptor, who knows the past and the future will alone tell me the defect due to which a son is not born to me.'

Devala said:

16b-26a. Thinking like this, the king, deciding to go to his preceptor's hermitage, entrusted Kośala with rich treasures to his ministers. Then having worshipped God, the creator of beings, the couple, desiring a son, proceeded to the preceptor's hermitage on an auspicious day. The couple, seated in a chariot,

having gone over the path, reached after some days the holy hermitage of the preceptor. There the sage received the guests that had come there after the offering made to all deities. It purified the sages in it and the guests also with the rising mass of smoke of the material offered into the fire. It was dull due to the (slow-moving) deer whose bellies were full due to the mass of shoots of dūrvās. In the hall of the hermitage the flock of female deer was entering from all sides. It was full of noise of groups of birds gathering on the trees which they had turned into their abodes. There were tigers and (other) beasts, that had given up their mutual hostility. The sound of the recitation of the Vedas made by great sages engaged there in muttering (hymns) and meditation, had ceased for a while. There the boys were engaged in sports during intermission of study. In it the couple saw Vasiṣṭha performing the rites. He was seated on a holy seat and was steady, and was waited upon by Arundhatī. He (i.e. Dilīpa) saluted the preceptor's feet, and his wife saluted the ladies of (the family of) him. The preceptor gave him a blessing, and Arundhatī gave her one. Preceptor Vasiṣṭha, the greatest among the adorable, honoured the guest with respectful offerings, and asked him like this:

Vasiṣṭha said:

26b-30. O greatest among kings, I hope everything is all right in your kingdom, in your family and with the people following their respective practices. O hero, I hope you have protected the earth righteously. (I hope) your treasury is growing like a righteous thought for good practices. O king, I hope your excellent villagers and citizens are not transgressing their limit like the oceans. I hope due to love, due to moving together and association, the couples in your cities act like Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu. O best king, I hope, the voluntary vows of your subjects are fruitful like the Haricandana[1] tree in heaven.

Devala said:

31-33. Having asked like this, that greatest sage, Vasiṣṭha, pre-eminent among sages, fed the king with eatables procured

1. Haricandana: One of the five trees of Paradise. The five trees are: Mandāra, Pārijātaka, Santāna, Kalpa, and Haricandana.

through the power of his abstract meditation. That old Arundhatī, of a generous mind, and full of respect, fed the queen with various dishes of cooked food. The steady sage, having held the hand of the king who was fed and had saluted him and who was seated comfortably, again asked him.

Vasiṣṭha said:

34-46a. O king, what is the use of the kingdom of heaven to that king whose kingdom has the seven constituents,[1] in which the subjects are engaged in their duties, in which kinsmen and relatives are pleased, where the soldiers know the science of weapons and missiles, in which friends are obedient, where the enemies are subdued, where the minds (of men) are devoted to Kṛṣṇa's worship? O lord, the religious kings of the Ikṣvāku family, having produced sons, and having entrusted the kingdom to them, proceed to practise penance. You are young. You have not (as yet) seen the face of your son. Why have you, abandoning your kingdom like that, come here?

The king said:

O brāhmaṇa, with a desire for (going to) heaven, I, having abandoned my kingdom like that, have come to your hermitage to practise penance. O brāhmaṇa, you have told the truth that (kings) born in Ikṣvāku's family, entrusted their kingdom to their sons, and went to the penance-grove. As childhood has passed, so this youth that has come will also pass; and certainly old age will come. There is no doubt that a man meets death after old age. O brāhmaṇa, when I die, to whom will this kingdom, without a son's birth, go? Tell me that, O preceptor. Therefore, I who remain in the kingdom without a child, have no feeling of mineness for it, without it. O you my preceptor, you know the three objects of human life. O you treasure of penance, quickly tell me the defect after seeing it through meditation, due to which a son is not born to me. Having heard it, I shall adopt a remedy against it to obtain a child.

1. Saptāṅga: the seven constituents of a kingdom: king, ministers, friend, treasury, people, forts, and army.

Devala said:

46b-47a. Having heard these words of the king, Vasiṣṭha, seeing through concentration the cause of the obstruction in (the birth of) a child, spoke:

Vasiṣṭha said:

47b-53a. Formerly, O king, you, having waited upon the chief of gods, and remembering this your young wife who had bathed (after her menstrual period) started for your home. O king, on the way of you who, being eager to have a child, were hurriedly going, stood under a divine tree the desire-yielding cow. You produced great anger in her by not saluting and not doing pious acts like saluting the dust of her venerable feet. With great anger she cursed you: "A son will not be born to you till you do not serve my progeny." You desiring a son, and therefore going quickly to give her (your semen after) menstruation, and thinking of that only, did not hear the curse nor did your charioteer hear it due to the noise caused by the axles. With this your young wife propitiate her young granddaughter, the cow Nandinī, along with her calf. She will give you a son.

Devala said:

53b-54. While Vasiṣṭha, the sage, was speaking like this that Nandinī, with her udders having (milk) flowing from them through affection, came there. Seeing her, the best sage Vasiṣṭha, with his heart delighted, saw her, and showing her to the king, again said to him:

Vasiṣṭha said:

55-57. O king, this (cow) of an auspicious name has come just when remembered. Therefore, know that the accomplishment of your object is near. There is no doubt that when you propitiate her by going after her in the forest and your young wife propitiates her in the hermitage, she will, through her favour, give you a son. O best king, O archer, graze her in such a way that no wild ferocious animal would attack her.

Devala said:

58. Then the ascetic (Vasiṣṭha) gave the king who talked

little and to the daughter-in-law a good hut to pass their night in. There the king with his mind controlled along with his wife passed the night, sleeping on the ground covered with grass.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THREE

Dilīpa Obtains a Son by Propitiating Nandinī

Devala said:

1-19. Then in the morning, the king taking (with him) the cow Nandinī worshipped by the queen with flowers went to the forest. Like her shadow the king followed the divine (cow). He too ate roots etc. after she had eaten young grass etc. After she had sat in the shade of a tree, he sat there. He drank water after she had drunk. The king thus served the preceptor's desire-yielding cow by (offering her) soft grass, driving away flies and scratching her (body). Purifying the king's body with dust-particles raised by her hoofs, she returned to the hermitage in the evening. Nandinī, as it were, loaded with the great burden of the mission of the king, appeared to be going slowly bent by the great burden. The queen taking to her sandal, sacred rice grains, articles of food, incense etc. went forth to (greet) her near the harmitage in the evening. The queen after duly worshipping and repeatedly saluting her and having gone round her keeping her to her right, stood before her with the palms of her hands joined. She (i.e. the cow) remaining steady accepted that worship devoutly offered by the queen and went to the hermitage with the two. O vaiśya, when Dilīpa of a firm vow was thus propitiating her, twentyone days passed. Then, with a desire to know that king's devotion, she, of a fearless heart, entered Himālaya's cave containing young grass. A lion whose arrival was not noticed by the king observing the beauty of the Himālayan peaks, forcibly seized Nandinī. The cow, as it were, afflicted, wailed much with a piteous sound, (thus) producing pity in the heart of the king. Then hearing her wailing, the lord of the world withdrew his eyes from the peaks of Himālaya. The king seeing a

lion of sharp claws (seated) upon the cow with tears flowing on her face, was afflicted. Seeing her seized by the lion, the archer put his right hand (on his back) to take out an arrow from the quiver. The lord of the earth, taking out an arrow from the quiver, fixing the arrow on the string, fully drew the string to kill the lion. When the lion looked towards him, his entire body was paralysed. The king could not discharge the arrow. He, therefore, was amazed. Seeing the king like that, the lion, making him still more amazed, spoke in a human voice.

The lion said:

20-28. O king, I know you to be Dilīpa, born in the solar family. You too know me to be Śiva's attendant called Kumbhodara. O hero, this devadāru (tree) which is within the range of your sight is protected by Pārvatī of an affectionate heart like her (own) son. Once, O great king, the soft bark of this (tree) was very much torn by a wild elephant scratching his temples (against it). Noticing it like that, Pārvatī, full of pity, kept me, turning me into a lion, here, to protect it. And she said to me: "O Kumbhodara, listen. Living here you eat whichever animal would come here." Since then, O best king, I, obeying her order, obeyed by all gods, have been staying in this cave. You should not be amazed at your body being paralysed. On this Himālaya Mountain Śambhu's great Māyā prevails. You cannot strike me like another (ordinary) lion, as the lord (Śiva) mounts on Nandin after getting on my back. O hero, go back; protect this (your) body, the means of (accomplishing) all objects. This cow has come as my prey through destiny.

Devala said:

29. Hearing these words of him, along with the address as 'O hero', the king with his body paralysed replied to him:

The king said:

30-37. O lord of beasts, I salute Śiva, the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world, and Pārvatī, the mother of the world. O lord of beasts, as their servant you are respectable to me. Having heard the words which I (shall) speak,

direct me as to what I (should) do. You know, Vasiṣṭha, Brahmā's son, is our preceptor. This is his cow, Nandinī by name, accomplishing all objects. He has given (i.e entrusted) her to me to propitiate her for the birth of a child (to me). For a few days she has been properly propitiated by me. This mother of a young calf is seized by you in the mountain-cave. It is not possible for me to release her forcibly from (you), a servant of Śiva. How can I go to that sage without her? She is the granddaughter of the desire-yielding cow, fit to be served by the world. There is no other cow like this with which I shall please him. Therefore, release this best cow, and have me for your meal. I give you my body tarnished by infamy. (Having done) like this, there will not be the loss of the sage's religious rite, and you will also have your meal. I, giving up my life for the cow, shall reach an excellent position (i.e. salvation).

Devala said:

38-41a. O best merchant, when the lion, on hearing this, remained silent, the king, conversant with religious practices, lay, looking up, before him. On him who was expecting the very unbearable jump of the lion fell the shower of flowers dropped by best gods. Hearing the words, 'O son, get up', the king got up. He saw (there) the cow like (his) mother and not the lion. To him, who was amazed, Nandinī said:

Nandinī said:

41b-43. By means of the illusion in the form of the lion, I tested you. O king, due to the sage's power (even) Yama cannot think of seizing me; then what other animals can to do so? By offering your own body you were ready to protect me. Therefore, I am pleased with you. Ask for your desired boon.

The king said:

44-47. For (deities) like you there is nothing that is concealed in the (hearts of) beings. Therefore, O mother, you know it. Give it to me. Give me a son, continuing my family, born to the daughter of the king of Magadha. For pure ones like you, nothing is impossible.

Saying so the king with his eyes fixed stood before her in silence with his palms joined and expecting a reply from her.

Devala said:

Hearing these words of the king, Nandinī, accomplishing the objects of the manes, gods, sages, men and (other) beings said these words:

Nandinī said:

48-49a. From a cup made of leaves drink to your satisfaction my milk, O son. Ordered by the preceptor you will again drink the remaining in the hermitage. You will have a son, continuing your family and knowing (the use of) weapons and missiles.

Devala said:

49b. Thus addressed by that granddaughter of Surabhi, he politely said to her:

Dilīpa said:

50-53. O mother, I shall drink the remnant of your (milk) only after the completion of the rite. Having drunk the nectar of your favourable words I am satiated. I do not desire anything else like a cātaka desiring water from the row of clouds (only). Having served you I have had the source of everything as a dullard has due to learning honoured by all men. Even the curse given by your grandmother has become a boon for me. Wherefrom, except you, can I get a son? How could I havehad your sight? It has led to a boon only. O mother, (deities) like you are to be propitiated. Nobody would desire poison from Mahādeva, giving the three goals of human life.

Devala said:

54-58. Hearing these words, the cow, being pleased, said: "Well (said), well (said)", and being very proud, went with him to the hermitage. As on the previous day, the king's wife worshipped her on that day also. The cow, as it were, the accomplishment of (the king's) object embodied, became pleased. The lotus-eyed (wife) of the king, seeing the pleased face of the king,

knew that the object for which an effort was made, has been accomplished. Then the couple, along with the cow to whom worship was duly offered, went to the blessed preceptor. The best sage, the treasure of suprasensual knowledge, seeing them with their lotus-like faces pleased, delighting them, said:

Vasiṣṭha said:

59-64. O king, I know the cow is pleased (with you), for the lustre on your face today appears to be unprecedented. Surabhi (the divine, desire-yielding cow) and the divine tree are known to fulfil desires (of beings). Having propitiated her (grand-)child, if the object is accomplished, what wonder is there? The tree gives every desired (object). She (i.e. Surabhi), the innocent one, even though remembered from a distance (gives the desired object). Then, what will she not give like the divine river, when devoutly served (by remaining) in her vicinity only? Through my (supernatural) knowledge, I knew the test given to you by her. O king, you too preserve your righteousness as I am favourably inclined to you, as devotion is to the supreme soul, Lakṣmī is pleased with Viṣṇu, or Pārvatī is attached to Śiva. Highly devoted to the worship of the cow, you with your wife, pass the night here. O great king, you who have completed the rite will go to your city tomorrow.

Devala said:

65-68. O merchant, he, having, along with his wife, thus propitiated the cow, having obtained his desired object, having furnished his chariot, secured his preceptor's order, and went home. After a few days Raghu was born to that Dilīpa. The race of Raghu is well-known on the earth by his (i.e. Raghu's) name. O merchant, that man who will read this account of Dilīpa, will obtain wealth, grains, sons on the earth. O excellent Śarabha, you too, along with this (your wife), worship according to your own way and quickly propitiate Gaurī. She will also give you a son, the chief of your family, endowed with virtues, and sinless.

Śivaśarman said:

69. The sage, having narrated this very charming and aus-

picious account of Dilīpa to Śarabha, and having instructed him as to the manner of worshipping Ambikā, took to his desired path.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FOUR

The Story of a Merchant Śarabha and a Demon Vikaṭa

Śivaśarman said:

1-3. O Viṣṇuśarman, then Śarabha, taking the materials of worship went with his wife to the temple of Śrī Caṇḍikā. Having duly bathed there, they, full of devotion, worshipped Caṇḍikā with flowers, incense and lights with a desire for (getting) a son. Ambikā, devoutly propitiated by them for seven days, spoke with a clear mind (these) words directly addressed to them:

Pārvatī said:

4-7. O merchant, by means of your very firm devotion I am pleased with you. O good one, I shall give you a son for whom you are striving. Go to the Khāṇḍava (forest) of Indra. Do not delay. There is the excellent, very auspicious holy place called Indraprastha. There is the holy place, fulfilling all desires and fashioned by Bṛhaspati. With a desire to have a son, bath there. By means of a bath there, O dear one, you will have a son. O dear one, by bathing there, I obtained Skanda, the killer of foes.

Śivaśarman said:

8-14. Hearing these words of the goddess, my father, with his wife, came here and with a desire for (having) a son bathed (here). The intelligent one gave a hundred cows with household materials to brāhmaṇas after having gratified gods and the dead ancestors properly. After having stayed there with their minds controlled for seven nights, the couple with their lotus-like faces blooming due to having secured the desired object, went home. In the same month my mother conceived; and when, day by day,

nine months passed, I was born in the tenth auspicious month. O Viṣṇuśarman, the old account which I told you, was heard by me from my father when I was twenty years old. Once my father, seeing me capable of managing the household affairs and being detached from everything, handed over to me (the management of) the house. He, having his mind attached to Govinda and a religious nature, condemning addiction to objects of senses and repeatedly praising devotion for Viṣṇu, said to me:

The father said:

15-25. O you intelligent one, old age has come to me. My hair has grown grey. I shall resort to the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu, that are resorted to by the good. That man whose mind becomes clear and quite steady due to service to him, is self-contented, and does not long for anything. Having no desire for pleasure and aversion to pain, and experiencing the natural (results of) good or bad deeds, he, at the end of them, casts his body and becomes unborn (i.e. is not reborn). Wealth gives excessive pleasure till the bliss of self-realization is not obtained. When it is obtained, it (i.e. the former) is small like buttermilk as contrasted with nectar. This Māyā of Viṣṇu is strong. It deludes a man. He like one intoxicated by liquor, does not know what is beneficial and what is not. The lord causes, as he wills, active worldly life or its absence, through knowledge or ignorance; for his sport is like that of a child. O dear one, when an act as told in the Veda is done by one desiring its fruit, it is great active worldly life. They (i.e. the acts) should be dedicated to the lord. As burnt seeds do not grow in spite of effort, similarly acts dedicated through desirelessness to the lord of the universe do not (fructify). Salvation is the destruction of (the fruits of) acts that give pleasure or pain. Bondage is their origin. This is the verdict of the holy texts. Therefore, I doing acts as told in the Vedas and not desiring their fruits and having devotion for Viṣṇu in my heart, am moving in (i.e. visiting) the holy places. Thus experiencing the (fruits of) acts that were commenced, and not censuring others, I shall destroy the disease due to (the life in) the world by drinking the medicine in the form of the company of the good.

Śivaśarman said:

26. O Viṣṇuśarman, listen accurately to what I said to my father after I had heard these words of him:

The merchant's son said:

27-33. The people are difficult to please; they will not give you any credit. (They will say:) He has gone leaving the bad family being dejected with it. These feet of Viṣṇu purify the three worlds. (Even) when remembered from a distance they remove sins. Why do you leave them? O father, even a sinful person who dies in Magadha, has his sins washed in Gaṅgā. He goes to heaven. Do not give up the auspicious (Gaṅgā), (since) sixty thousand sons of the noble Sagara, who were burnt by Kapila's anger, went to heaven due to her touch. O father, do not go elsewhere after abandoning her; that is a series (of steps) leading to heaven, that even brings about salvation, and is resorted to by those who desire salvation. Do not disregard Gaṅgā honoured by gods, (which is) in your vicinity. O glorious one, she, when resorted to, will give you what you desire. Even if lower animals, through ignorance, would die in her water, they would become Brahman. How do you abandon her?

Śivaśarman said:

34-47a. Hearing these words my father to whom sacred law was dear, being averse to all objects of senses, lived in the house. Everyday he thrice bathed in Gaṅgā, and always went to the house where a Purāṇa would be (read). O son, once listening to the greatness of Yamunā-tīrtha, the wise one heard about the greatness of this holy place. The religious merit of this holy place full of all holy places is a hundred times better than holy places like Avimukta, Haridvāra, Prayāga, Puṣkara, Ayodhyā, Dvārikā, Kāñcī, Mathurā and others. My father, having heard what the learned son had told him, went, unnoticed by all, to this holy place, after abandoning the house. My illustrious father, serving the feet of Viṣṇu like us came here with a desire for salvation. Bathing thrice (a day) at the Nigamodbodhaka Tīrtha he, the wise one, doing his rites and being desireless, lived at this best holy place—the abode of the unborn—for a few months. Once he had very severe fever. Due to the great pain

(caused) by the fever he, losing his consciousness, fainted. For a while the father remained in the condition of unconsciousness. When later he regained his consciousness he thought like this: 'Oh! misery has befallen me. My very intelligent, religious son, who would console me, with my body hot due to fever, is away. I have not atoned for the very fearful sin of illicit intercourse. What would be my fate? (If) my son will come I shall give him the wealth which I have hidden in my house and which even I have not seen.'

Śivaśarman said:

47b-51a. While he was thinking like this, a traveller, troubled by rain, afflicted by cold, and with his body trembling, entered the hut. Seeing him asleep, the traveller again went near him, and knowing him to be an ascetic saluted him with (i.e. by bending) his head, and said to him: "O sage, why are you sleeping? The evening has come. This sun is setting. This is not the time for sleeping for you." When the traveller had just uttered these words, Śarabha, my father, with his body hot with fever, somehow spoke to him:

Śarabha said:

51b-58a. O traveller, listen to the words which I am speaking to you. Listening to the course of my fate you do (what is proper), O good one. I am a merchant named Śarabha. My house is in Kānyakubja. Though prevented by my wife, friends and son I came here on hearing the greatness of this holy place told by my son. O good one, some months have passed after I came here. Now for the last three days I have been suffering from fever. My life had departed. Today it has come (back) again. O good one, some portion of my life still remains (to be passed). I have come (back) after having seen Yama's place, and due to my good fortune you have come here. O friend, take me to my house; I shall give you much wealth after reaching home. O you treasure of kindness, favour me. Dig a portion of the land here and take my wealth.

Śivaśarman said:

58b-60a. Having heard this, the wicked-minded rustic, addic-

ted to sensuous pleasures and greedy of wealth, said to him: "I shall do as told by you." Speaking like this, and digging the wealth from that piece of land, the traveller placed it before Śarabha and said:

The traveller said:

60b-61. O chief of merchants, I have taken out this your wealth from the piece of land. Quickly give (some money) to me to bring a palanquin; having placed you, suffering from fever, in it, I shall take you to your place.

Śivaśarman said:

62-76. Thus addressed by him, he gave him three golden palas. He too took that money and went to the city of Lavaṇa. O son, having stayed there for a night, he, having paid a couple of palas, brought a palanquin with attendants and carriers. The wicked one took the two palas for himself only. Having put the excellent merchant, Śarabha, in the palanquin, the traveller, hastening the carriers, started for Kānyakubja. The traveller, repeatedly making him (i.e. giving him) who was oppressed with thirst, drink a small quantity of water collected from that holy place in a water-pot, proceeded. Then, on the way, they got to the bank of a lake to eat (food). Having bathed and eaten food, they hastily moved from that place. Having crossed some portion of the land, they were oppressed by thirst. (The traveller) drank the water from the water-pot and made Śarabha also drink it. Then a very fierce demon, Vikaṭa by name, moving in the solitary forest, saw them going. Seeing them, he, with his mouth open, and overcome by hunger, and causing the earth to tremble with the strokes (i.e. the plantings) of his feet, speedily ran (to them), and coming near them speedily, he seized the traveller and the carriers at their testicles and he, moving in the sky, whirled them. He dropped them who were dead due to being whirled only, on the ground. He ate their flesh and drank blood from their testicles. Thinking, 'Where will this man suffering from a disease go from my presence? I shall (first) eat him up, and then drink the water', that chief among the demons then threw water from the water-pot on his face. As soon as the water was thrown he had the recollection of his former birth. He turn-

ed away from killing that Śarabha. He also got the recollection of the sin committed by him in his former existence, due to which he obtained demonhood though he was born as a brāhmaṇa. The demon, having recollected his sin, and having got knowledge, quickly approached Śarabha (my father) and said to my father:

The demon said:

77-78. "O best man, who are you? And who are these men whom, I, a mean demon, of a fierce form. devoured? Of which excellent holy place is this water, due to whose power even a sinner like me had the recollection of my former existence?"

The merchant said:

79-86. O best demon, I am a merchant. My home is in Kānyakubja. Travelling to (various) holy places I came to Indraprastha. There I suffered from fever due to fate. O you having bad ways, then an idea to go home arose in me. Some traveller troubled by rain came there. I requested him to bring a palanquin and take me home. And this is that wise traveller who quickly brought a palanquin and having put me in it, had proceeded to my house. Now that traveller and the carriers of the palanquin have been eaten by you. Hear of which holy place this water is. In the Khāṇḍava Vana of Indra there is the excellent river Yamunā. On her bank is the best holy place called Hariprastha. The preceptor of gods lives there. The holy place accomplishes everything (and is called) Nigamodbodhaka, drinking the water of which you got the recollection. I have told you all this that you had asked me. O demon, I shall ask you something. Tell (i.e. answer) me quickly about it. Now (and) here you will recollect the deeds in your former existence. Tell me what sin you committed, due to which you became a demon.

The demon said:

87-100. Listen. I shall tell you everything. Formerly I was a brāhmaṇa (born) in the family of those proficient in the Vedas. I was wicked and sinful. While playing with dice everyday with those conversant with it, I lost much wealth, mine as well as of my father. My father having reported my act to the king,

formerly got me having no wealth, out of the house. I went to a village nearby. There was a friend, the best brāhmaṇa named Devaka. He, respecting me, allowed me to live comfortably in his house for a long time. When my friend had gone somewhere, I, afflicted by sexual urge, forcibly enjoyed his beautiful wife. At that moment only that very chaste lady, drinking strong poison, died. Seeing her (dead) I ran away at the dark night. I who was running (away) was arrested by the officers of the king. Saying, 'This is a thief', they cut off my head. Causing me to take up a body full of torment the servants of Yama threw me into the terrible Raurava hell by Yama's order. Having experienced severe torture there for sixty thousand years, I obtained demon-hood due to that sin only. O chief of merchants, I have passed a hundred years as a demon. I (shall) tell (you) that remedy due to which I (shall) get salvation. O good one, you gave me religious merit. I shall speak (i.e. tell) it. Listen carefully to that by which this water of the excellent holy place got into my mouth. O merchant, in that same existence I observed the vow of Viṣṇu's day (i.e. Ekādaśī) due to company and not (my) desire, and kept awake at night. Having bathed on the Dvādaśī-day I got ready to eat also. (At that time) some devotee of Viṣṇu, having Viṣṇu's form, came to my house. Seeing him I got angry and uttered abusive words: "O hypocrite, O wicked one, why are you going amidst the ladies?"

101-109. When, addressed by me, the wise one, who looked equally upon respect or disrespect, silently went out of my house, my loyal wife, coming towards him, fell at his feet and brought the good man to the house. Though insulted by me, the noble one did not get angry. He was delighted when honoured by her, since he was one to whom enemies and friends were alike. She, having seated him on a seat (said to me): "O lord of my life, make him enjoy (i.e. offer him) food. Conquer the three worlds." Thus addressed by the chaste one, I, with a gloomy face, spoke to the noble-hearted one, of a pleasing face, "(Please) get up, pacify your hunger." Speaking like this, I, prompted by my slender-waisted (wife), again seated him on a seat and washed his feet. To the judicious one I offered a plate full of food. My good wife gave (i.e. poured) water on his hand. I was repeatedly prompted by her. The virtuous one, free from perturbation, went

at will, muttering. 'Hare Rāma, Hare Kṛṣṇa.' O merchant, due to this religious merit which I, prompted by my wife, did in the previous existence, this water of the holy place was brought to me.

Śivaśarman said:

110. O Viṣṇuśarman, when the demon got up after saying these words, the traveller and the carriers, having divine bodies, spoke in the sky:

The traveller and the carriers said:

111-115. O chief merchant, O good one, though we met with death immaturely, we obtained godhead after drinking this water due to your favour. O chief of merchants, since we went with you through greed of wealth, our desire for wealth had not left (us) even at the time of death. By the power of the water of this best holy place in our belly, we secured at death the friendship of the lord of wealth. O lord, we salute you; we are going to the city of the lord of wealth in aeroplanes which are brought by his attendants, which are decorated with various jewels. Go to the holy place Nigamodbodhaka. Do not delay. O good one, along with you quickly emancipate him also.

Śivaśarman said:

116-117a. O dear one, speaking like this, they went, all around, to the northern direction, producing sound in the sky and on the earth with small bells of the aeroplanes. Then my father, the merchant, spoke to the demon:

Śarabha said:

117b-118. Get up. Quickly take me to the holy place Nigamodbodhaka. I, suffering from fever, cannot go there on foot. There is none else except you, who (would) take me to that holy place.

Śivaśarman said:

119-122. The demon, comforting the merchant with the words 'All right' put him on his shoulder, and speedily went to that purifying holy place. Both, the chief merchant and the demon, just bathing at the best of all holy places, stayed there. I having heard about the great agony of my father, and urged by

my mother (to go to him) moved from my house. Having come here, I saw him, suffering from severe fever. I saluted him with (i.e. by bending my) head. He blessed me and said:

Śarabha said:

123-125. O dear one, why have you come here along a distant (i.e. long) path? My friend, a demon by name Vikaṭa, has come here, and (is) staying here doing his own rites. Get up, and fall at his feet (i.e. prostrate before him) like a staff. You should not be afraid of him who has given up harmful acts. Now, having reached this holy place, he stays near me.

Śivaśarman said:

126-127. Thus told by my father, that noble Śarabha, I got up and fell at his feet (prostrating myself) like a staff. He raised me (seizing me) with my arms, and closely embracing me and giving me a blessing said, "Welcome to you, O my friend's son."

The demon said:

128-129. O dear one, you are fortunate that you have come here on hearing your father's very severe suffering due to fever. Performing the rite with water mixed with sesamum-seeds, you will be free from the debt of your dead ancestors. Having bathed perform your rites; (thereby) you will remember your former existence.

Śivaśarman said:

130-143. O dear one, thus told by him, I, remembering the auspicious and inauspicious acts of the former existence, entered the holy place having excellent water. Having duly bathed here, I came near my father. I asked him the account of the demon: "Why has he become religious-minded?" Having heard the account of the demon, the carriers and the traveller, I praised this best holy place. Thinking, 'I shall go home when my father will be free from the disease', I stayed there for ten days. Within (those) ten days, while I watched (i.e. before me) the death of my father occurred in the (half) quantity of the water of this best holy place. Then, Viṣṇu, having a body like a fresh cloud, and holding Lakṣmī close to his bosom, came after having mounted

Garuḍa. He had put on yellow garments; had four arms; his lotus-like eyes were tawny. He was served by the divine Brahmā and others along with Andhakārin, and by the kinnaras singing the hosts of his virtues. He was being praised on all sides by Hāhā, Hūhū and others. Giving my father identity with his own form, and putting him on Garuḍa, and surrounded by Brahmā and others, Viṣṇu went up to heaven. Seeing my father's sameness of form with Viṣṇu, I thought, when, at that time, there sprang the truth in my heart: 'It is the greatness of this crest-jewel of holy places that in half of its water a being that is dead becomes four-armed. I shall rightly not at all leave this best holy place having a strong efficacy urged by thirst for the disease in the form of wealth. I shall stay in this hut of my father till (I get) freedom from the (fruits of) acts that have been commenced on the earth.' Having thought like this and performed proper rites (in honour) of my father, I stayed (there) with a desire for salvation along with the demon.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIVE

The Efficacy of Nigamabodha

Śivaśarman said:

1-10. Once that best demon, having seen a milch cow plunged into mud, entered it to take her up. 'There is a great religious merit in (i.e. due to) protecting a cow. The protector would go to heaven.' He who was thinking like this was seized by a crocodile (literally, a water-elephant). He was taken down into the water. With his belly full of water, and with his body pressed by him, he died instantly. He resorted to a divine form; an aeroplane with an attendant was brought near him sent by gods led by Indra. I asked the chief of the demons, going (to heaven) after having died here in this great holy place, very difficult to be reached, and giving salvation, "O intelligent and divine one, how did you reach heaven?" Thus addressed, he said, "O innocent one, I longed for it." When that meritorious one had gone to

heaven, the place of the meritorious ones, I, remaining alone, was taken to Viṣṇu, the good resort. With a concentrated mind, I, while going, standing, sleeping, keeping awake, bathing, constantly meditated upon that lotus-eyed one only. "O Viṣṇu, I have sought lhe shelter of your lotus-like feet. I have no longing for the position of Brahmā, Śiva or Indra." O dear one, making my mind free from the (longing for) objects of senses, and soliciting that Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu) only, I lived at this great holy place.

Viṣṇuśarman said:

11-14. When, while staying at this great holy place, you died, then how did you get a birth again? This is my doubt. The traveller and the carriers, on their having ignored the restriction (laid down) at this holy place due to greed for money, met with death from the demon (and) went to heaven on drinking the water of this great holy place. So also the demon meeting with, at his will, death from the crocodile, went to heaven while you were looking on (i.e. in your presence). There is no (re)birth (for a man whose) death takes place there.

Nārada said:

15. O Śibi, having heard the auspicious words of his son, Śivaśarman told him the former account, the cause of his birth.

Śivaśarman said:

16-19. O Viṣṇuśarman, listen to this cause of my birth. I am telling it to you. Having heard it, be free from doubts. Once when I had resorted to meditation while worshipping Viṣṇu, Durvāsas, irascible by nature, came to my hermitage. Not aware of his having arrived (there), I, intent upon meditation on Viṣṇu, remained in that condition recollecting (Viṣṇu's) name for a long time. The sage, standing for a while, full of anger and with his eyes red, spoke loudly to himself these (words):

Durvāsas said:

20-25. Oh! I, Atri's son, born from the womb of Anasūyā, a portion of Śiva, am thus excessively neglected by this human

being: This wicked man even ignores me who caused Indra to fall from the kingdom of the three worlds! Who are you that are not afraid of me who am like the destructive fire at the end of the world, since I have the greatest worth barring (that of) the three gods? How is it that that deity whom he is meditating upon, does not advise him that Yama has come in an embodied form? Indeed he is meditating upon Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, being satisfied with the nectar of meditation upon whom he does not have the knowledge of his surroundings. Let him meditate upon Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Śiva, or any other (deity). He should be punished by me by all means. He has disregarded me.

Śivaśarman said:

26-45. Thinking like this, he roused me, and with his eyes red due to anger, cursed me who had become conscious. "How will that desire, which you, ignoring me, had in your mind at the time of meditation, come true at all?" O dear one, when, after having spoken like this, the sage born of Atri, moved (to go), I dreaded with fear, seized his feet, and said like this: "O best sage, forgive me; give up your anger. (People) like me do not properly know the deeds of (sages) like you. Now you have given a fearful curse to me who am innocent. Favour me who am polite. Show favour for the end of (i.e. ending) your curse." Thus addressed, Durvāsas, giving up his anger, became cool. O darling, is it not proper, since he is Śiva (himself)? The wise one said to me: "You, being the best brāhmaṇa, will meet with death here only, and will not be reborn." Having thus favoured me that Śiva (i.e. Durvāsas) left, after staying there that day and being honoured by me with a hospitable reception. I, having thought that the sage's words would not be untrue, and repenting in my mind, went home: 'Oh! to me, having my hermitage in a holy place, and constantly meditating upon (Viṣṇu) the sight of Lakṣmī's lord has become difficult to have in this existence, like that of a cloud to a cātaka in Caitra and Vaiśākha, causing heat? Wherefrom has this one, causing obstacle in my course to Vaikuṇṭha come like a cloud (coming in the way) of a man who has set out (on a journey)? It is not the fault of the sage. It is indeed the desire of that Viṣṇu only. Having well appeared before me, he has given me another (i.e. a new) existence. I, scared

of the worldly existence, should seize the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu, as a traveller heated by the heat of summer (takes to) the shade of a tree. What is the use of the transient wealth, children, wife and other relatives to me who am muttering 'Govinda, Paramānanda (the highest joy), Rāma.' Not censuring other acts, and resorting to Viṣṇu, and remaining like a neutral person among the members of my family, I shall enjoy what is destined.' O dear one, thnking like this, I, after having bathed in the water sacred to Viṣṇu, came home after a few days. I told my mother and relatives about the death of my father. Hearing (the news) they lamented; they did not know that this (worldly existence) is transitory. Having no longing for the worlds like Satya, I remained in the house and died on the bank of Gaṅgā, resorted to by the sages. Due to the curse of the sage Durvāsas, I was born in the family of Viṣṇu's devotees. Having died at this holy place, I shall reach Viṣṇu's feet.

Nārada said:

46-51. O noble one, thus the two best brāhmaṇas talking to each other about the sins committed by them in their former existence, and thinking about Viṣṇu's foliage-like feet, remained at the holy place fashioned by the preceptor of gods. Thinking about and remembering Viṣṇu, of lotus-like eyes, of four arms, having a body dark blue like a cloud, and shining with his weapons and ornaments, they got absorption into Viṣṇu. The story of this excellent holy place which is the one called Indraprastha has been told. O Śibi, listen to its fruit. A man obtains the same fruit by devoutly listening to it as is obtained by him on bathing in Gaṅgā or by giving away his daughter (in marriage). There is no doubt that that fruit which is produced on the earth at the birth of a son, or by a bath in the water of Godāvarī when Jupiter is in the Zodiacal sign of Leo, is obtained by listening to it. There is no other holy place giving all objects than this best holy place, by dying at which even lower animals become four-armed (ones).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIX

A Woman Should Never Desert Her Husband

Saubhari said:

1. That religious king, the wealthy Śibi, having heard those words of the sage Nārada, was pleased in his mind, and (thus) spoke to the best one:

Śibi said:

2-3. O sage, you have properly described the greatness of this excellent holy place Nigamodbodhaka. I have heard it; that removes sins. O sage, there are hundreds of holy places in this Indraprastha. Tell me the greatness of some other holy place, if there is any.

Nārada said:

4-17. O king, I shall tell you what formerly took place in this Dvārakā which is situated within Indraprastha. Listen to it from me. In Kāmpilya there was a certain brāhmaṇa, Cupid embodied as it were. He attracted the hearts of all women with his excellent amorous actions. He was skilled in the science of music. His voice was sweet like that of a cuckoo. Once, that very intelligent one, holding a lute in his hand, repeatedly playing upon it, singing, without an equal, with voice sweet like that of a cukoo, moved in the city. Having heard the sound of his song, full of melody and protracted tones, the wives of citizens abandoned their domestic work and went (to him). Fascinated by his handsome form, they could not bear the force of lust. Hearing the song actually they were disturbed. What other self-controlled and wise person than the two (viz. Brahmā and Śiva) is able to conquer Cupid who created a longing for Sarasvatī in the mind of Brahmā, or who made half of Śiva's body to be given to Pārvatī? And women are fickle by nature. Even the chaste ones were unable to put up with the excitement caused by Cupid. What could be said, O king? Cupid is difficult to be conquered in the world. They went everywhere he, singing with his throat and lute and fascinating with his tone, went. Their husbands, sons, brothers and fathers came there, and threatening them,

took them (back) to their own homes, O king. When they again looking for him, approached him, the citizens told the account to their king. The king too called the best brāhmaṇa and asked him in private: "O best brāhmaṇa, tell me by means of which charm you fascinated the women in the city. I shall give you much wealth. Othewise I shall drive you out of my kingdom. There is no doubt about it."

Nārada said:

18. Hearing these words of the king, the best brāhmaṇa, the ocean of handsomeness and virtues, spoke to him true words.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

19-21. O king, I, a beggar, have neither a charm nor a herb; but all the women in your city have no control over their senses. O king, the women in your city cannot put up with the force of lust on seeing my handsome form and hearing the sound of my songs. O great king, what can I do? O lord, what is my fault? The order of the king, like (the fruits of) former acts, can never be resisted.

Nārada said:

22. O king Uśīnara-Śibi, when the brāhmaṇa was telling like this all citizents, coming together, spoke thus to the king:

The citizens said:

23-27. O king, this brāhmaṇa has fascinated the wives of the citizens. They do not remain in their houses. They cannot be stopped by us. O lord, if this one who infatuates the women lives in the city, then today (only) we shall go to other countries. Our bull-god of the nature of havya and kavya (oblations to gods and dead ancestors) has gone(?). They have started going after him like a cow from the field of sinners. O lord of men, we, abandoned by glory, have no other shelter to seek. They will follow him as the female elephants follow their lord. How can Lakṣmī (wealth) remain in a vacant house? Since these three, viz. piety, worldly riches and house, depend upon the wife, one that depends upon

the wife's piety and wealth cannot remain, when the two are lost.

Nārada said:

28. When the citizens were speaking like this, their wives came to the king, sat there, and thus spoke to one another:

The wives of the citizens said:

29-31a. Our minds open excessively on seeing this brāhmaṇa of a charming form as lotuses in the water do on seeing the lord of the day and they close in his absence as the white lotuses close without the moon: come, together we shall seize (and take) him before the king. He is not fit to be killed, nor are we. What will the king do?

Nārada said:

31b-33. Saying so, they hurriedly seized the best brāhmaṇa, when their own husbands were watching and in front of the king himself; and they said to him: "O lord of our minds, come to our house, and quickly pacify (the agony) tormenting our hearts. Today we cannot remain (i.e. live) without you." Hearing these words of them, the brāhmaṇa replied:

The brāhmaṇa said:

34-40. I am your son; you are my mothers. Leaving your houses, why are you wandering? Propitiate your own lords, since, when the husbands are propitiated, wives certainly (enjoy) the two worlds, and Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, is pleased. (And) when he is pleased, what is difficult to be obtained? That woman who, forsaking her own husband, resorts to another (man) with a desire for enjoyment, invites censure and goes to a fearful hell. She, the deceiver of her husband, lives there till the end of the kalpa. Again having moved out of it, she reaches the state of an inanimate object. Even from there, she obtains beasthood for many existences. Then freed from that (stock) she is born as a crippled one. Knowing the sinful course to be like this, turn away from Cupid. Otherwise at the end (i.e. fall) of your body, you will go to a very fearful hell. You will not have the pleasure

that you desire to get from me. It is your sin, since it is a fall of a human being.

Nārada said:

41-43. Having heard his words like these, and seeing the faces of their husbands, they hung down their faces through shame like creepers struck by a (stormy) wind. The very terrible fire of lust of the women in the city went out due to the cold water in the form of the words of the chap. O king, all of them, condemning Cupid as one that fascinates even gods like Brahmā, Indra, got up, and walked (away).

The women said:

44-52. Fie upon this, committing sinful acts, an axe to the wood in the form of good character! He who has struck Cupid for the happiness of passionate beautiful women, is blessed. What should we say to Rukmiṇī, venerable to the world, who carried in her womb this Rāhu, named Pradyumna, eating the Moon of the good character of women? If that mean god comes within the range of our sight again, we shall throw him into the fire of the eye of the lord (Śiva) by meditating upon him. He, the sinful one, whom Viṣṇu, delighted in self, created, made Viṣṇu dear to (or the lover of) sixteen thousand women. Then what can be said about us?

Having thus censured that Cupid, the women praised that best brāhmaṇa who preserved his own character and that of them also, O king. 'Blessed is that mother of this (best brāhmaṇa) who gave, birth to this excellent brāhmaṇa who vanquished Cupid and preserved the virtue of others! Fie upon us who were laughed at by the king's men, who were vanquished by Cupid, and by whom great sin was committed through speech and mind!' All the women who were thus thinking, who were of the same view, being admonished by the brāhmaṇa's words, went to their respective houses. Then king Kāmpilya also, having honoured that brāhmaṇa with garments and ornaments, sent him to the house of that good man.

53-63. As time went on, the powerful lord of Kārūṣa besieged lord of Kāmpilya and his city with armies (i.e. a large army). A great war took place between the two. He (i.e. Kārūṣa king)

got him killed. He plundered the entire city and the brave ones were killed everywhere. Those women eating (i.e. drinking) Kālakūṭa (poison) died. They had not made any atonement for that sin. Due to that sin all those were born as demonesses with huge bodies and causing fear in the city of the demon called Bhīṣaṇa. All the women in the city were killed by Hanūmat, occupying the banner of the chariot of Viṣṇu relishing sacrifices. The same were again born as demonesses on the path to Maru. They were oppressed by hunger and thirst, and caused fear at their sight. Thus due to the sin committed by means of speech and mind, they obtained two existences, mixed with (i.e. along with) the existence as demonesses. Due to their sin the two cities along with their kings were destroyed. Therefore, O lord, women, fearing sin, should never resort to another lover even through speech or mind. Women desiring salvation should not desert their husband even though he is diseased, dull, poor or blind. O Śibi, I have told you in great detail about the sin produced through devotion to another lover by means of speech or mind, so also the fruit of it obtained by these (women). By the drops (of water) of the pious Dvārakā, seen by those going to Indraprastha, falling on their bodies, the women in the city reached heaven after abandoning the severe condition of corpse-eaters, which they had reached due to their having resorted to another lover, and obtained the form of divine ladies delighting gods.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVEN

The Story of Vimala

Saubhari said:

1. O son of Dharma, having heard these words of that noble Nārada, king Śibi politely spoke these (words):

Śibi said:

2. O best sage, how did those demonesses, moving on the path to Maru, get the water from this Dvārakā?

Nārada said:

3-9. O king, listen to the story, pure and destroying sin, of a brāhmaṇa named Vimala, living in the valley of the Himālaya (mountain). In the Himālayan valley lived a brāhmaṇa by name Vimala. He honoured gods, sages, his dead ancestors, and guests. He was engrossed in worshipping Viṣṇu's feet. He knew the Vedas, the Vedāṅgas and religious practices. His mind was (devoted to) listening to the Purāṇa containing the hosts of Viṣṇu's virtues. In his old age a son was born to him due to Viṣṇu's grace. The father then named him Haridatta (literally, given by Viṣṇu). He duly performed his (sacraments like) shaving etc. Haridatta received (the knowledge of) the Vedas from his teacher. Having duly studied the Vedas, having paid the fee of the teacher, he, being detached, took to renunciation, (having) completely (dropped) the two stages (viz. the second and the third) of human life. On coming to know that act of him, his mother who loved her son, bathing (i.e. making wet) her pair of breasts with tears due to separation from her son, wept.

The mother said:

10-16. O dear one, like a bee abandoning coarse grass, where are you going, leaving me who am helpless, and your father stricken with old age? Due to service of the feet of Viṣṇu, I got you in my old age. You have resorted to his feet for salvation after having abandoned me. O dear one, I was certainly a fool, since having propitiated that eternal Viṣṇu I longed for you, the unsteady one, for getting happiness. O child, you are intelligent since you are resorting to Viṣṇu, the all-in-all. You too are looking upon this transient world as permanent. What should I do? Where should I go? Māyā cuts off my understanding, as a strong person having a weapon cuts off a plantain tree producing good fruits (right) from its roots. Blessed was king Daśaratha who died due to agony (caused by separation) from Rāma. Fie upon me who am (still) sustaining my life (even) after separation from my son! Come, appear before me, emancipate me. O dear one, O ocean of virtues, speak to your father words consisting of (the words from) the Vedas.

Nārada said:

17-20a. Weeping like this, O king, the mother fell on the ground like a digit of the moon due to its being cut off (from other digits) given to Rāhu. O best king, the brāhmaṇa sage came there. Seeing her fallen on the ground, he said: "What is this? Why has she, with her hair dishevelled and garments and ornaments disordered, fallen on the ground? Is Haridatta well?" All those her friends said to that Vimala, O king:

The friends said:

20b-21. Your son, Haridatta, having studied the Vedas, having paid the teacher's fee, and being highly devoted to Viṣṇu, has renounced the world. Due to the grief caused by separation from him she has fallen on the ground.

Nārada said:

22. Having heard these words of them, the very wise Vimala roused his wife with this nectar of his words.

Vimala said:

23-26. O (my) wife, get up. Listen to the words spoken by me. Why have you fallen down and are dejected? Your son who, knowing this (world to be) transient, has resorted to Viṣṇu's foliage-like feet, is blessed. You too, his mother, whose son has served the feet of Viṣṇu, are blessed. He will also undoubtedly emancipate me, (our) family, and men born in our family, O auspicious one. What a lot of difference is there between this unsteady world, and the service of Viṣṇu's feet, giving an eternal world! Thinking like this kings like Bharata resorted to Viṣṇu. So (has) your son (done), O chaste one. Unless a wise man, free from lust, resorts to the foliage-like feet of Viṣṇu, in every existence (of him) his wife, wealth, house, body, relatives cause grief to him.

Nārada said:

27. Thus admonished by him, the wise one, she got up from the ground, and with a piteous voice spoke to her husband:

The wife said:

28-31. O darling, I understand all that you have said well. I am very much tormented since I do not see a leader for our family. What is the use of service to Viṣṇu, when there is the great holy place in the form of a son? Even if we meet with death in our house only, we shall have (the fruit of) both the worlds then (i.e. when we have a son). Men indeed should try to beget a good son; since sons emancipate their ancestors from the ocean of the mundane existence. O you very intelligent one, if you desire a son, the foremost in the family, then, with a desire to have a son, resort to the creator and supporter of all beings.

Nārada said:

32-36. Hearing these words of her Vimala, the brāhmaṇa, said: "With a desire to have a son, I shall go to Brahmakṣetra Prayāga." Saying so, the brāhmaṇa set out and went to Haridvāra. Having duly bathed there, he then went to Indraprastha after a few days. O brave one, having bathed there (at the holy place) giving (whatever is desired) to everyone that solicits, in the evening, and having eaten (food) he slept at night on the bank of Yamunā. Near that Vimala sleeping at night, the lord of gods along with all holy places quickly came after having mounted on a swan. Having come he raised Vimala, desiring a son; and the best got spoke sweet words.

Brahmā said:

37-43. I know the desire hidden in your mind. Since there is no way to fulfil it, listen to the reason. Once all gods, led by me and Śiva, gathered on the peak of Meru, and praised Viṣṇu for success. Being praised by gods like me lord Viṣṇu was pleased then, and said: "Choose (a boon)." Thus addressed by Viṣṇu, all gods, having received (from him) a boon as desired, went to their respective houses. I said: "O lord of gods, give me an excellent boon. May my holy place, Prayāga, give all the desired objects. May another holy place of me at Indraprastha be a hundredfold (meritorious). O sinless one, I have properly chosen it from you." Having heard these words of me, the lord then said to me: "Let it be so," and again spoke (certain) words. Listen to (those) words.

The lord said:

44-56a. In Indra's Khāṇḍava forest there is an auspicious holy place on the bank of Yamunā, called Indraprastha. Those who die there are equal to me. O Brahman, my own city of Dvārakā is a hundredfold more meritorious than when formerly it was at the shore of the ocean. A man who, having ignored it, resorts to another holy place, does not obtain the fruit of (a visit to) the holy place. This statement is not false. A man would obtain the merit said to be accruing from all holy places. The city of Dvārakā preserves another illusory holy place. He who, having bathed at other holy places, and having performed various rites, will come here, will certainly get the fruit of those holy places.

O best brāhmaṇa, having spoken these words, Viṣṇu disappeared. I too went to my world situated below Vaikuṇṭha. Kāśī is said to be a hundredfold more meritorious than Prayāga, my holy place. Similarly the hilly place Nigamodbodhaka is a hundredfold more meritorious than Kāśī. This group of seven holy places is said to have the fruit equal to the three. O brāhmaṇa, to him who goes to Prayāga without ignoring these three, I give his desired objects. Not otherwise. Some sages say that the seven, Ayodhyā etc., are equal in merit. Indraprastha is said to be hundredfold superior to those. O brāhmaṇa, having come to that holy place Śrī Dvārakā, which gives all the desired fruits, bathe there with the desire for a son. When the hundred names are uttered, unlimited religious merit accrues from them. This holy place will give you a son, the foremost in your family; and due to your bathing here, Viṣṇu will be pleased.

Nārada said:

56b-58. Speaking like this, Brahmā, the lord of the chief of gods, vanished. Vimala also then bathed, and offered oblations to gods etc. Thus said the pious one: "O Dvārakā, dear to Kṛṣṇa, give me a son, your devotee. Salutation to you." When the brāhmaṇa spoke like this, there was (heard) a divine voice.

The divine voice said:

59-60a. Due to the favour of this holy place, the crest-jewel

of all holy places, you will have a son, knowing the truth of religious practices and continuing your family. Go home; do not delay. The bath is well done.

Nārada said:

60b-69. Having heard that (divine) voice, he, trusting in the birth of a son (i.e. trusting he will have a son), took water of Dvārakā in a water-pot, and left (the place). On the way he met his friend living on the Malaya mountain. He was going (back) home after having visited all holy places. He told him all the account consisting of his dialogue with Brahmā. He too was amazed on hearing what had taken place at the holy place of Dvārakā. The pious one said: "O friend, listen to my words. I desire to visit all those holy places that are fashioned in Bhārata. O friend, take me to that holy place, granting all desired objects and show it to me. On the earth those friends who oblige their friends are excellent. In the world none is like them—(even) the father, the mother, or the son. All relatives desert a poor man. But friends, afflicted by his grief, do not leave the friend. A friend emancipates his friends plunged into the ocean of mundane existence. Having taught me the devotion to Viṣṇu, capable of destroying existences, you have become my best friend. O oblige me. O brāhmaṇa, show me the best holy place called Dvārakā."

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHT

The Greatness of Dvārakā

Nārada said:

1. Taking the brāhmaṇa (with him) Vimala came here to Dvārakā. And the two wise ones with a desire for devotion for Viṣṇu bathed there. In the sky there was again heard the divine voice, deep like that of clouds.

The divine voice said:

2. Listen, O best brāhmaṇas, this is Viṣṇu's holy place. You

will have, due to the grace of this holy place, devotion for Viṣṇu, due to which people abandon the strong infatuation due to Māyā.

Nārada said:

3-4. The two best brāhmaṇas having heard the incorporeal speech, said to each other: "This is Viṣṇu's favour." The two, having duly bathed there and obtained great devotion for Viṣṇu, saluting him and talking to each other walked.

The brāhmaṇas said:

5-7a. As we two, walking on the path came in contact with each other, as on the earth contact with a house and wife etc. takes place, so the future separation of us, being on the way, is (but) proper. So is (the contact and separation from) the wife, son etc. being in the mouth of tiger in the form of Death. That man who realising the contact with wife and sons to be transient, would ever resort to and worship Viṣṇu, is blessed.

Nārada said:

7b-11a. "(Please) remember me. I am your servant, resorting to your feet. You may send me a message." Saying like this, they went home. O king, listen, how that friend of Vimala, going along the path, brought about the liberation of the demonesses. The brāhmaṇa, while going, reached that place void of water, where the demonesses scorched by sins stood oppressed by hunger and thirst. Then they, seeing from a distance that brāhmaṇa with a pot containing water in his hand, said to one another:

The demonesses said:

11b-13a. Some traveller, holding a pot of water in his hand is coming. Our hunger and thirst will be at least partially satisfied. We shall eat him up and drink the water in the pot in his hand. We are oppressed by hunger and thirst for a hundred years.

Nārada said:

13b-21. One said: "Having first eaten his hot liver, then having drunk his blood, I shall gain life." The other said: "How

much material does he have, O Gajānanā? Even for me, Vyāghrānanā, it is not seen to be enough for drinking." Another one called Rathacakrā, (said): "Hear my words. From one I shall fashion an ear-ring, and a girdle from (other) intestine."Another one said: "I, skilled in gambling, will play dice in the gambling hall with his sixteen teeth, made black from one side." All of them, thus speaking among themselves, ran to the brāhmaṇa, with their mouths opened, tongues lolling and bright great arms. Seeing them coming, the brāhmaṇa was overcome by fear. O king, he protected himself all round, as told in the Vedas. The demonesses of fierce valour having come (to him), stood away from him. O king, they were repelled by his lustre and hymns. And they said: "Tell us, who are you? Wherefrom have you come? Seeing you our mind is delighted. O brāhmaṇa, what will be the fruit of touching your feet? Therefore, place your lotus-like feet on our heads."

Nārada said:

22a. Hearing their words Haridattaja (Haridatta's son?) said:

The brāhmaṇa said:

22b-23. I am a brāhmaṇa who has come after visiting holy places. Now I am going to Puṣkara. What do you desire? Since, if I am able to give it, I shall do so.

The demonesses said:

24. O brāhmaṇa, tell us in which holy places you bathed. All those are meritorious. Liberate us from this bad existence, giving terrible agony due to great hunger and thirst.

The brāhmaṇa said:

25-38. From my hermitage I went first to Haripura, Avantī. From there I went to Dvārakā. Having bathed in the water of Somodbhavā, I went to the holy place Prabhāsa situated on the shore of the sea. Then I bathed at the highly purifying Setunibandha. From there I came to the very holy Kiṣkindhā where Rāma had killed Vālin, the lord of the host of monkeys. From there I came to the Sarasvatī temple situated on the bank of Narmadā where Sarasvatī, served by all, dwells. Then I reached

Veṇī, saluted her and saw the two cities Śivakāñcī and Viṣṇukāñcī in the southern part of India, due to having died where a man becomes Śiva and Viṣṇu. From there I reached Utkala where lord Viṣṇu, actually giving the four ends of human life and the desired objects to his devotees dwells. Having duly worshipped him, and eaten the eatables offered to him, I went to Gaṅgā-sāgara which was his favour only. Then having duly gratified gods, sages and (my) dead ancestors, I came to that place where Gaṅgā had a hundred faces (i.e. flew in a hundred courses). Then having gone to Gayā and having duly offered piṇḍa, endowed with Tulasī blossoms, sandal and water to the dead ancestors, I came to Kośala, to Śarayū which by means of her touch cloudy due to the water, had purified all people. There is a holy place called Gopratāra difficult to be reached (even) by gods. O demonesses, there I did the acts like bathing etc. From there I reached Kāśī, the capital of the lord of Umā. Having saluted god Viśveśvara, so also Bindumādhava, I devoutly bathed in the Jñānavāpī at Maṇikarṇikā. Having stayed there for three nights, I again came to Prayāga where actually Brahmā (lives) on the fourteenth day of the bright half of Pauṣa.

39-49. At a dawn of Māgha, having bathed there, again from there I came to Naimiṣa on the bank of Gomatī, where all holy places, with their enchantment dwell. From there I reached Mathurā where there is the holy place called Viśrānti. Near it is a holy, excellent pool called Asikuṇḍa. There very holy Yamunā giving everything and having the holy places of Kṛṣṇagaṅgā, Dhruvā, Krūrakeśī, Kālī exists. On both her banks are forests shining with splendour and producing all holy places. Having bathed in them and drunk (their water) a man is not born again. From there I came to the holy, excellent city of Hastināpura. There is the best river Gaṅgā that rose from lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. Then coming to the place of Nārāyaṇa situated in the Himālayan region and seeing Mādhava (there), I came to Kedāra. Having worshipped Viśveśa (there) and having drunk the water of Haṁsā (lake), I came to the very holy Haridvāra, on the bank of Gaṅgā. Having bathed there and having gratified gods, sages and (my) dead ancestors, I came to Kurukṣetra where there is Prācī Sarasvatī. There too, I with my senses controlled, performed all rites, and having worshipped Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet I went to Puṣkara. On the way

my friend named Vimala, going from the holy place Indraprastha, met me.

50-60. O demonesses, the brāhmaṇa, causing me to return, took me to the holy place Śakra-(i.e. Indra-)prastha, giving all (desired) objects. There is holy Dvārakā fashioned by Viṣṇu himself. There I actually saw Viṣṇu, not in form but through words. There he and I bathed to obtain devotion for Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu, of the form of Kṛṣṇa, gave it to him and me. We heard Viṣṇu's words, but did not see his form. We secured devotion for him. From that place I came to Puṣkara. O demonesses, I tell you that this water in the water-pot is from that holy place called Dvārakā, the chief among holy places. I have told you what you had asked me. Seeing this bad plight of you, compassion is produced in my heart. Tell me what I should do. I am at your disposal. Let knowledge come to you.

Saying so, he sprinkled them with (that) water. Due to the touch of that water they remembered all the acts in their (various) existences, and gave up their powerful demonish bodies. Obtaining divine bodies, and turning into celestial nymphs, they got into an aeroplane that had come from heaven, and saluted the brāhmaṇa. And they said: "O best brāhmaṇa, due to contact with the water from Dvārakā we are freed from demonhood, and are (now) going to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, there is no other better holy place giving all desired objects than this Dvārakā situated in Indraprastha."

Nārada said:

61-68. Speaking like this, O king, they got into the aeroplanes. And ordered by the brāhmaṇa, they went by that (aeroplane) to the eastern direction. A man, hearing the greatness of this Dvārakā situated on the bank of Yamunā, is freed from sins, O king. The same fruit as is had by giving meals to a hundred brāhmaṇas as desired by them, is produced by listening to this greatness. O king, as happiness is experienced on worshipping Viṣṇu, similarly (it is had) by listening to the greatness of this Dvārakā. That fruit which is got by giving twenty palas of gold (to a brāhmaṇa) at the time of the solar eclipse and the lunar eclipse, is obtained by one hearing the greatness of this (Dvārakā). Having heard (the

account of) the acquisition of a son by Vimala, (a man) obtains a son; and hearing (the account of) the acquisition of his friend's devotion (a man) secures the best devotion. He who, endowed with devotion, listens to (the account of) the liberation of the demonesses, goes like them in an aeroplane to heaven. O best king, I have described to you the greatness of Dvārakā that should be resorted by men in the three worlds and that is situated at Śakratīrtha. Tell me, what other (account) more meritorious than this, I should relate to you. No delay should be done in (securing) one's bliss.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINE

The Story of Brāhmaṇa Mukunda

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-2. O Saubhari, of which holy place, situated at Śakratīrtha, did the sage Nārada describe the greatness to Śibi? Therefore, a desire to hear it is produced in me. Tell me who have bowed (to you) the meritorious dialogue between Śibi and Nārada.

Saubhari said:

3. O Dharmarāja, king Śibi, having heard the description (made) by Nārada, and also the greatness of Dvārakā, respectfully asked him only.

Śibi said:

4-5. O son of Brahmā, O greatest god, I have heard the excellent, wonderful greatness of Dvārakā situated on the slope of Indraprastha. O sage, if there is any sacred story (about someone) in Ayodhyā, then tell it to me who am thirsty of drinking the nectar of your words.

Nārada said:

6-24. As to this there is a holy account, destroying great sins, of a barber and Mukunda, a diligent brāhmaṇa. Both the barber,

the killer of a brāhmaṇa, and the king who died prematurely, went to heaven due to the favour of Kośalā. The city is situated on the bank of Candrabhāgā. There was a sinful, censurable barber, Caṇḍaka by name. The sinful one snatched the wealth of others through stealing. He killed the travellers with weapons and nooses etc. and robbed them (of their possessions). He was always engaged in gambling and (drinking) liquor, and hankered after others' wives. He broke the walls of temples, and sold the bricks and stones. Near his locality lived a brāhmaṇa, endowed with wealth, knowing the Vedic rites, and named Mukunda, O king. Once at night he with his limbs loosened after fatigue due to coitus had fearlessly slept, having embraced his young wife. That Caṇḍaka entered at night the house of that Mukunda to snatch away ornaments etc. (found) in the mansion. Taking whatever was (found) outside the mansion, he went home, and again entered the brāhmaṇa's house. He made a great effort to break the door; (but) he was blocked by iron bolts and was unable to open it. He then climbed (over the wall) and entered the brāhmaṇa's house. The cruel one, holding a sword in his hand, entered the mansion. There he saw the couple, asleep and alarmed. To snatch away the golden ornaments, he approached them. The barber, after having taken many ornaments lying on one side of the bed, extended his hand to snatch away ornaments (put) on his body. The brāhmaṇa was awakened by the thief's touch and was overcome by fear. He did not say anything; (but) closing his eyes remained there only. When the sinful thief took the ornaments from his body and moved, the brāhmaṇa unable to bear the loss of his wealth, came from behind him, and seized him with his hands. O king, the thief also struck the brāhmaṇa with his sword. With his pierced belly, he cried. 'O father, O mother.' People shouting "What (happened)?" came near him. They saw him with his entrails coming out and his body smeared with blood. And they asked Mukunda: "Who has done such an act?" With great difficulty he too spoke like this to his relatives:

Mukunda said:

25-26a. This is the result of my deeds done in the previous birth. None (else) gives pleasure or pain to a human being. These

are just (the results of) piety and impiety. Their root lies in one's former act(s).

Nārada said:

26b-28a. Speaking like this, he was troubled by great agony. O king, at that time, when his friends were looking on (i.e. in the presence of his friends) he cast his life. O kind, then his mother, a chaste brāhmaṇa-lady wept after putting his head, adorned with ear-rings on her lap.

The mother said:

28b-35a. O son, you, reaching the final stage (i.e. dying) have destroyed me, as the day's grace is destroyed by the sun going to the western mountain. O very intelligent one, this body (of you) which is fit for being smeared with sandal, has, having plunged me into the ocean of affliction and grief, been greyish due to dust. Your habit of chewing tāmbūla is certainly being perpetuated by its being mixed with emission of blood. Those very eyes of you which formerly surpassed the beauty of lotuses have now become, as it were, covered with a mass of darkness. O child, get up, get up. Teach your students. At the end of the Vaiśvadeva (sacrifice), honour the guest that has arrived. Your friends, standing at the door, have called you. Go to them. Give them whatever is to be given to them, and take from them whatever is to be received. Oh, Oh! Give reply to me. I fall at your feet. Otherwise, I shall cast my life near you.

Nārada said:

35b-36a. Saying so, the mother of Mukunda, then fainted. His wife, taking his head on her lap, wailed:

The wife said:

36b-41. O lord, O ocean of virtues, listen to my words. If for some reason you are angry with your mother, speak out to me. O good one, formerly you never resorted to silence like this. Some younger brother has insulted you. This parrot in the cage does not eat food without you. Give him well-cooked food, so also to the sārikā uttering indistinct but sweet words. Teach the

parrot and the sārikā the series of names of Viṣṇu (like) 'Rāma, Rāma; Hare Kṛṣṇa'. Get up. The two are very clever. What offence have I done to you, that you are not talking to me? I have well preserved the wealth which you have given to me. O lord, I will not wait till the delivery of your lustre (i.e. semen) that you have put into me. I shall follow you.

Nārada said:

42-44. Having thus lamented, that dear wife of Mukunda, desiring to follow him, stopped weeping. O king, then the ascetic, the preceptor of Mukunda, called Vedāyana, wandering over the earth went to his house. "Where has Mukunda gone? The mother and the wife of the intelligent one are not seen." Thus he then asked the female servant.

The female servant said:

45-47a. O preceptor, some thief killed my master at night. He took (away) all the ornaments and silken garments of the daughter-in-law. Falling dead, he (i.e. his body) is at the top of the mansion. His mother, the daughter-in-law, his brothers, fallen into the ocean of great grief, are weeping near him.

Nārada said:

47b-49a. Having heard these words uttered by the female servant, the ascetic, going up to (the top of) the mansion saw his dead disciple. Seeing his relatives weeping excessively near him, the wise one desiring to take them up from the ocean of grief, said to them:

Vedāyana said:

49b-59. O mother, tell me whether you are thus lamenting for his body or his soul. Tell me the truth. (Your) lamenting is not proper for both (the body and the soul). This body, an aggregate of the elements, is earned due to (i.e. as a result of) deeds commenced (by one in one's existences). When they are exhausted, the elements get separated from them. The coming together of them with the deeds is the birth of men. When they perish, the getting separated of them (i.e. the elements) is the death (of men). Since the coming together or getting separated of the

beings is due to their deeds, the wise should not lament for the dull body, dependent on (the deeds). Birth and death are seen in the soul due to the beginningless illusion. (A man) thinks them (to be there) due to his looking upon the body as the soul. (In reality) they are not there. When that (notion of identifying the body with the soul) is removed, he (becomes) that pure, formless Brahman which is self-illumined, the cause of the world, itself beyond a cause (i.e. having no cause), distinguished with virtues, which is eternal, which is knowledge, joy and which always illumines the world with its lustre. The tongue never licks it. The eyes never see it. The ears never hear it. The nose never smells it. The skin never touches it. It is beyond the senses. It is self-illumined; it is self-sighted. It is never the object. It is heyond the mind. It cannot be grasped even by the intelligence. Deities of pure sattva that are the forms of its incarnation serve it, but do not understand its form which is beyond the existent and the non-existent. Such is the nature of the (highest) soul. What man would be so foolish as to be angry with it, since it is neither produced, nor does it perish?

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TEN

Mukunda Goes to Heaven

Nārada said:

1-15. Having thus enlightened them with words expressing the highest truth, the ascetic got done his (obsequial) rites. The learned one stopped the young, pregnant wife of Mukunda, who insisted on following her husband. O king, having taken his bones, his brother, along with the anchorite, went to drop them into the water of Gaṅgā. O king, the brāhmaṇa (Mukunda's brother) and the ascetic reached along with the members of a caravan this holy place Indraprastha after a few days. O king, in this Kośalā which is in Indraprastha on the bank of Gaṅgā on earth, they slept at night. Keeping the bundle of the bones between themselves, the two, fatigued due to the journey, went

to sleep. When, at night the members of the caravan had slept, a dog came there to take away cooked food etc. The dog, repeatedly smelling the kitchen, licking the vessels, at times tolerating the stroke of a staff, moved in the entire camp. Then being struck by someone on the head, he ran from there like a hen-pecked husband struck by his wife but unable to retaliate. The dog again entered the same place with a desire to lick the vessels containing food, as he was struck with staffs and bricks, like a poor person loving a prostitute (enters her house) with a desire for enjoyment. Thus wandering, the dog (came) where the two were asleep, and took away the bundle of bones. Having carried it for a distance, he tore the bundle with his teeth and seeing the fleshless bones in it, threw them into the water of this Kośalā. The moment the bones were thrown into this water, O king, Mukunda, seated in a divine aeroplane, came there. Seeing his preceptor and younger brother asleep, he gently awakened them. O king, he, of a divine form, having saluted his teacher, said:

Mukunda said:

16-19. O my preceptor Vedāyana, I salute you. O my younger brother, my blessing to you. Due to your favour my bones have fallen into this holy place. This I, having died, having gone to hell and got its fruit, have secured a divine course due to the grace of this holy place. I have come here to salute you, my preceptor, who are a holy place. I, going to heaven in this divine aeroplane, saluted you, this holy place, and saw (i.e. met) my brother. (Please) allow me. I (shall) go to heaven causing happiness.

Nārada said:

20. Hearing these words of Mukunda, his preceptor Vedāyana with his amazement removed, said to him seated in the aeroplane.

Vedāyana said:

21-22. O Mukunda, tell me the truth. After your death, to which world did you go, from where you are now going to heaven, O dear one? O dear one, what happened there? Who is

the ruler of that world? What kind of subjects are there? What are the religious practices? Tell all that.

Mukunda said:

23-28a. O preceptor, I shall tell you what took place after (my) death. Now my recollection is revived due to the favour of this holy place. When that wicked barber Caṇḍaka killed me, Yama's very fearful servants came (there). They were tawny-eyed; their hair was red; their bodies, nails and lower lips were dark. They were short; had long feet, short noses and projected teeth. They said to one another: "Take him, take him, by the order of Yama, to (Yama's) city (called) Saṁyamanī only." Speaking like this, very angrily they put me into a body being tormented; fastening me by fierce nooses they struck me with iron mallets. I who was being taken by them, being overcome by grief, wept very much on the path having heated sand on it; and I was again beaten by them. And being firm, they, very much deriding me, said:

Yama's messengers said:

28b-33. Since you offended against your preceptor explaining (to you) the eternal Brahman, what will you do before Yama? You will have to see his fierce face. You will have to experience the fruit of that fearful sin. O sinner, due to that sin only you died prematurely.

Saying so, in a short time they took me to Saṁyamanī, Yama's city, situated in (an area of) many yojanas, where king Yama himself dwelt. Having saluted king Yama, and having placed me before him, they reported to him about me: "This sinful brāhmaṇa is brought." Seeing me, king Yama said to the members of his assembly:

Yama said:

34-35a. O members of the assembly, being well attentive, listen to my words. When Brahmā assigned me this charge, he, the grandsire of the worlds, spoke to me like this:

Brahmā said:

35b-37. You, the lord of Saṁyamanī, will punish impious

people. O son of the Sun, punish them in accordance with their offence. You should throw into hells these two, committing major sins, viz. one who does not support his parents and one who offends against his preceptor. The punishment would be staying in each hell for a myriad years. O you lord of the (Southern) quarter, you have not to show compassion to these two.

Yama said:

38-41. Therefore, O members of the assembly, by Brahmā's words I do not take pity on a man offending against his preceptor or not supporting his parents. This brāhmaṇa has offended against his preceptor. Due to that offence he met with an untimely death; and he, unfit to be seen, is brought (here) by my servants at my order. O servants, first throw him into the fearful Raurava (hell) for a myriad years; and taking him who has offended against his preceptor out of that (hell), throw him again into another (hell) for that much period. Then quickly let him stay for the proper period in all the hells.

Mukunda said:

42-51. O preceptor Vedāyana, O master, the servants, by Yama's order, took me to the fearful Raurava (hell), and fastening me with chains, threw me into it. There, O dear one, I experienced very severe, poignant agony, so that even a moment was passed as a yuga by me. Staying there I passed thirty days painfully. Today on this thirty-first day I have come out (of it), when (my) bones fell into this most excellent holy place. Due to the grace of this holy place my sin due to offending against my preceptor, perished instantly; and I went to heaven. I shall happily live in heaven as long as fourteen Indras (rule the heaven). The subjects that live in Yama's city cause fear to sinners, but are pleasing to the pious. The young women there have faces like those of lions, elephants, boars; have large fangs, plump bellies; have faces like those of cats; have tawny hair; and have long feet and long hands. When I became free from the sin due to the favour of this holy place, I saw in Yama's abode the subjects of divine forms. All of them were truthful in their speech, were full of modest behaviour, had worn divine ornaments, and were adorned with divine garments. O dear one, I have told this (in reply to)

what you had asked me. (Please) allow me to go to the city of the lord of gods.

Nārada said:

52. That ascetic, having heard these words spoken by his disciple at that time, again asked that brāhmaṇa, Mukunda, O king:

Vedāyana said:

53-55. From your childhood and with affection for your preceptor, you learnt everything from me—Veda with the Pada (-pāṭha) and Krama-pāṭha (the two ways of reciting the Veda), along with the science of words (i.e. grammar). You excellently served me with devotion. O good one, in you reside the virtues of the good like tranquillity, control etc. O dear one, tell me, so that I shall understand it properly, how you committed the sin of offending against your preceptor.

Mukunda said:

56-62. I have never disobeyed them who gave me birth, performed my thread-ceremony, those who supported their daughters and the Vedas, so also him who made me wear the sacred thread. I served my mother-in-law and my father-in-law like a servant. I did not also disobey you who taught me the holy texts. (But) I offended against him who was the family priest, the preceptor of my family, and who had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. (Please) listen to it. The settled rule of our family is: 'If a righteous son is born in our family, then his umblical cord is cut off after a cow, or a gift (equal to) her (value) is given to the family priest.' O dear one, when a son was just born to me only on an auspicious day, I, the foolish one, did not perform the rite of (i.e. befitting) my family. Due to my not performing it, I offended against my preceptor. I have told (you) all this as to how I committed a sin by offending against the preceptor. Now permit me. It (shall) go to heaven.

Vedāyana said:

63-64. Due to the favour of this auspicious Kośalā, situated within Indraprastha, the recollection of the previous existence

appears. O Mukunda, due to which religious merit were your bones dropped in this holy place? O sinless one, tell it (if) you have its recollection.

Mukunda said:

65-69. (One) evening a brāhmaṇa came to my house. I duly gave him a seat and food. He too, having eaten as he desired, slept on a good bed. At night his entire body suffered from a very severe fever. Troubled by it, the brāhmaṇa did not get sleep. In the morning only he died. When his death took place, O preceptor, I performed all the rites like cremation and dropped his bones, according to the sacred rule, in Gaṅgā. Due to that religious merit my bones fell into this auspicious holy place, named Kośalā, fashioned by Brahmā.

Nārada said:

70. O king, the brāhmaṇa, having thus told his account, and having a charming body like that of a god, quickly went to heaven in an aeroplane. It is told how he met his death at the hands of the thief and obtained heaven through the grace of this best holy place.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED ELEVEN

Caṇḍaka's Fate

Nārada said:

1-3a. O Śibi, I have told you the entire excellent account of Mukunda. Listen also to the account of the barber Caṇḍaka from me. O king, on the day when Caṇḍaka killed the brāhmaṇa Mukunda, the citizens heard that news. Hearing that they clearly reported like this to the king:

The citizens said:

3b-4. O king, Caṇḍaka has killed Mukunda, the best brāhmaṇa, and has taken (away) his ample wealth. Do what is pro-

per. You are the protector of us (your) subjects, and the chastiser of the bad.

Nārada said:

5-7. Hearing this, the king with his eyes red with anger, said to the minister who was by his side: "Listen to what these (citizens) say. Quickly bring that sinner. Otherwise I shall kill you. O most sinful one, get up, get up, (and) do (what leads to) the happiness of the good. A king in whose country his subjects are harassed by thieves and who does not protect them from them (i.e. the thieves), goes to hell."

Nārada said:

8-10a. O Śibi, having heard these words of the king, the minister quickly mounted his horse, and with a hundred foot-soldiers went to Mukunda's house, and asked his relatives: "Who killed Mukunda? Tell me the truth. By the order of the king I shall kill the sinner."

Nārada said:

10b. Hearing these words of the minister, the relatives of the brāhmaṇa said:

The relatives of the brāhmaṇa said:

11-12. O minister, Mukunda was killed by Caṇḍaka, the barber. This is his turban that had fallen when he was running away. The young wife of Mukunda herself has seen the sinner. What shall we do? We have plunged in the ocean of grief.

Nārada said:

13-19. Hearing these words of the relatives of the brāhmaṇa, the minister went to the house of that sinful barber. Quickly he got down from the horse and with some foot-soldiers went into his house and saw him asleep. Ordered by him the foot-soldiers seized him by his hair that moment (only) and they raised that sinful, mean barber from (his) bed. When the sinful barber saying, "What is this? what is this?" opened his eyes, he saw him (i.e. the minister). Recollecting his act—the sin that he had committed at night—he, for a moment, remained with his

face hung down and realising (that) Yama had stood over his head. Getting him arrested by his foot-soldiers, the minister took him to the king, and thus spoke to the king: "O king, this barber Caṇḍaka, the killer of the brāhmaṇa, has been brought. I shall quickly do what you order."

The king said:

20-22. O best minister, O you who know religious practices, O long-lived one, listen to my words. Here there is this clean, best river, Candrabhāgā. Those who cast their lives here go to the place of gods. Therefore, this wicked barber should not be killed here. If (he would be killed) outside the boundary of five krośas of this (place), he would go to fearful hells. Make no delay.

Nārada said:

23-30. Thus addressed by the king, the best minister prompted cāṇḍālas to kill him at the king's order, O king. The cāṇḍālas taking him up on the other bank of Candrabhāgā to a place at a distance of two yojanas, cut off his head. The sinner became a serpent having a deadly body, living in the hollow of a dhava tree, and with his mouth producing flames of poison. The dhava tree dried due to the fire from his hissing as a pool full of water dries due to the heat of the sun. Due to the sinner's going there the dhava tree and the land around it, with the grass etc. cut off, became a barren land. O Śibi, once there came a caravan from the southern region. It especially was going to Nārāyaṇa's hermitage, called Badara. On the way a brāhmaṇa had joined the caravan. O king, carrying on his shoulder a holeless wooden box containing the bones of his father and mother, he was going to drop them into the water of Gaṅgā giving the desired objects even to sinners.

31-41a. He too came there to the forest where the serpent was and kept the box made of red rods at a secluded place. Coming there the serpent raised a rod with his hood. When the box was partially opened, he entered the box. The rod returned to its original position. The serpent, dreadful due to poison, remained motionless there in the box only. Then in the morning all of them moved from that place, O king. The brāhmaṇa also taking the box covered with a blanket on his head, proceeded to Gaṅgā.

O king, the caravan of the pilgrims reached this pure Kośalā after some days. Then the brāhmaṇa, sick due to cold opened the blanket which covered the box there on the auspicious slope of Ayodhyā. The serpent too who had no food (for a long time) got his food, i.e. air, and throwing up a strong rod, moved out of it. Seeing the serpent to have moved out, all men, saying 'A serpent, a serpent', and with clods in their hands, went there. While the serpent was running (away) he was hit by one of them. While the pilgrims were watching he cast his life. Giving up his serpent-body, he obtained godhead, difficult to be obtained. Getting into a divine aeroplane, he spoke these (words) to the people:

The serpent said:

41b-44. O brāhmaṇas from the south, hear my words. Formerly I was a mean barber named Caṇḍaka who killed a brāhmaṇa. Due to the great sin of the murder of a brāhmaṇa, I became a serpent in (this) desert. Having experienced the miseries in the hell for five lakhs of years, I have passed two myriads of years in this existence as a serpent. Due to the favour of this holy place, I have obtained excellent godhead. Therefore, this sacred place giving all (desired) objects should not be abandoned; from it, I, a sinner, have reached heaven.

Nārada said:

45-50. Thus that sinful barber, having reached a censurable existence, went seated in an aeroplane to heaven. The southerners, becoming ascetics, lived at that sacred place—whose grandeur they had seen—only, with their minds (fixed) on the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. That best brāhmaṇa, noticing the greatness of this holy place and having developed faith in it, dropped his parents' bones there. When the pieces of the bones fell there, his parents, seated in a divine aeroplane, came there at that moment only. And, while (other) people were listening, they said to their son: "O son, live long; be happy in the world with wealth and grains. Due to your having caused the liberation of both of us, you will obtain salvation. This is not false." Due to the dropping of the bones, both—the fruit that the son would have by offering piṇḍas into Gaṅgā and the parents' going to heaven—took place.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWELVE

The Efficacy of Kośalā

Nārada said:

1-6a. Speaking like that, the brāhmaṇa's parents, of divine forms, got into the excellent aeroplane, and went to Viṣṇu's city. Their son, having lived there in Kośalā only for three days, went home, thinking about the grandeur of the holy place. This, O king, is called Kośalā by the wise. I shall tell (about) it to you whose mind has a curiosity to listen to it. Having gone to that Kośalā, the brāhmaṇa chaps from the south, desiring to die (there), lived in it giving proper objects. One of them going to Nārāyaṇa's place after ignoring it, was stopped by Viṣṇu in the guise of an old brāhmaṇa. He thus spoke to the brāhmaṇa:

The old brāhmaṇa said:

6b-15. O best brāhmaṇa, ignoring this auspicious Kośalā, where are you going? O brāhmaṇa, this holy place Indraprastha is the best of all holy places. O son, here is this Kośalā, dear to Viṣṇu, and giving salvation. Success will not come to you there, where you are going after ignoring this giving a position free from all desires; and Viṣṇu will be averse to you. O brāhmaṇa, if you desire salvation, then this holy place will give you that object, with the desire of which, you, after taking a pledge, will bathe at this holy place. O brāhmaṇa, even within the range of your sight (i.e. when you were seeing), a serpent became a god. Due to the favour of this the brāhmaṇa couple resides in heaven. How then do you, even after having reached it due to the dawn of good fortune, and even after being convinced on seeing its greatness, ignore it? O fool, you appear to be like one who, after being oppressed by thirst, leaves the ocean of nectar, and goes to muddy water. Your fate appears to be like that of him who, being deluded, throws into a well the desire-yielding gem that was in his hand. Your fate is that of a foolish man who, after having propitiated Viṣṇu, desires the worthless pleasure of senses. No man goes (to another place) after having ignored this Kośalā, giving all desired objects. One who bathes here, goes to heaven. One who dies here lives among the immortal.

Nārada said:

16. O king, having heard (these) words of Viṣṇu, upholding the welfare of brāhmaṇas, he spoke to the brāhmaṇa, "Badarikāśrama is the best."

The brāhmaṇa said:

17-21. O best brāhmaṇa, in me who have heard about the grandeur of the small village, faith is produced by means of these words of you. I have never heard about this holy place, Indraprastha. O old one, how is Kośalā (situated) in it, where actually Viṣṇu (lives), and where the meditating saints are liberated. How should I ignore that meritorious hermitage and stay here as Viṣṇu, having himself come (here), and telling me like this, would stop me? O brāhmaṇa, this holy place is superior to Badarī. So, though driven to that hermitage, I shall not proceed (to it). Desiring salvation (I have come here). Otherwise I would not have stayed here.

Nārada said:

22-23a. When the brāhmaṇa spoke like this, Viṣṇu, the four-armed one, giving up the ordinary form (of a man), and having a divine form, said to the noble brāhmaṇa, desiring salvation:

Viṣṇu said:

23b-28. This Indraprastha is best of all holy places. As Śiva is among all those who know Brahman, as Gaṅgā is among rivers, as Himālaya is among mountains, as Garuḍa is among birds, as Śakra is among gods, as Nārada is among Viṣṇu's devotees, as the Sun is among luminaries, as the Milky Ocean is among oceans, as brāhmaṇa is among castes, as the grandsire is among the created, as the son of Kausalyā is among the incarnations of Viṣṇu, so is this holy place Indraprastha the best of all holy places. A man, without or with a desire, sometimes goes to a holy place. At every place I myself am the giver of the fruit. A devotee who goes (to another holy place) by ignoring Kośalā situated in Indraprastha, does not obtain the fruit from the protector of the host of the givers of fruits.

Nārada said:

29-35. Having thus heard those words, and having seen that excellent form, and having saluted Viṣṇu, the brāhmaṇa left. The lord, the soul of the universe, instantly disappeared. He devoutly worshipped that brāhmaṇa as the supreme principle. Having come there to Kośalā the brāhmaṇa told the entire account to all his companions, O king. Those noble brāhmaṇas from the south, did not eat there and abandoned their ordinary bodies. Just then, Śrī Viṣṇu mounted upon Garuḍa came there with his attendants in those many aeroplanes shining with lustre. They, with divine forms, seeing him and the aeroplanes with attendants, fell prostrate like staffs on the earth. All the brāhmaṇas, having divine knowledge and bodies praised that god of divine form whose lotus-like feet are adored by gods.

The brāhmaṇas said:

36-44. Salutation to you who have a body shining like an atasī-flower, who have covered yourself with a yellow garment, who have various lotuses put on the bright ear-rings, who have put blue small lotuses on your ears. Devotion to you is indeed the desire-yielding creeper (tree) which, when resorted to, gives what is desired by the mind. Similar is this your Kośalā with objects of enjoyment. The two are secured through your grace. We salute your lotus-like feet saluted by respectable hosts of gods etc., thought of by delighted groups of meditating saints, and the root of salvation, the source of the highest joy. O lord of Lakṣmī, we have reached your form, distinguished with charming marks like Śrīvatsa etc.; yet we long for your service, secured and honoured by Nārada and others. (Even) Lakṣmī, residing within your chest (i.e. in your heart) does not have that happiness which is obtained by those who have become your servants. O lord of Lakṣmī, Śrī Maheśa knows it. He and none else has experienced it in the world. Among us, even having no attachment, he is to be honoured. The best sages like Nārada, your devotees, worship the lord of the worlds, due to him. Śambhu, though his heart is full of the joy due to Brahman, is satisfied only by serving you. Full of devotion to you he repeatedly dances excessively to receive your virtues. For this reason human beings who have secured your service, have no desires.

His two doorkeepers, with your marks on their bodies reach their own abode through delusion(?). Your desire is with reference to this world. Quick fall of your worlds never takes place. Who would know your Māyā which is difficult to be known by gods like Brahmā, Śiva etc.?

Nārada said:

45. That lord, eager to reach his place, being thus praised by them, said with a voice deep like that of clouds, to the southerners.

The lord said:

46-52. O brāhmaṇas, due to the grace of this Kośalā you have obtained absorption into me. You will also obtain my service. O brāhmaṇas, from today this excellent holy place of me will be known by the great name 'Dakṣiṇakośalā', where, Rāma, born as Daśaratha's son, will kill Rāvaṇa. That where a poor wise man goes up to Vaikuṇṭha is called Uttarakośalā by all excellent sages. Even he who would live here without that (i.e. knowledge) goes to heaven. They say that this Dakṣiṇakośalā is ten times superior to it. Some best sages describe it to be eleven times superior. I think the difference between that and this is: My attendants carry to Vaikuṇṭha one who dies there; while I myself take him who dies here; putting him on Garuḍa I absorb him into myself.

Nārada said:

53-55. O king, having thus spoken to those brāhmaṇas, and taking them (with himself) and himself praising the greatness of this holy place, Viṣṇu went to Vaikuṇṭha. O lord of the world, I have told you the reason for which the wise call her Dakṣiṇakośalā. O best king, I have described to you the greatness of Kośalā which destroys the sins of Kali, which is desired for reaching the feet of the Lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu); (now) I shall tell you the account that took place in Madhuvana.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTEEN

A Śrāddha at Madhuvana Is More Meritorious

Nārada said:

1-7. O dear one, O Śibi, Viṣṇu, who was pleased, established (this) city, this Madhuvana for Indra. Here is this holy place called Viśrānti, best in the three worlds, giving salvation to the very wise men, holy and resorted to by the good. O king, Viṣṇu, the universal soul, lives in the form of Śrī Kola (i.e. a bear) at this best, meritorious holy place called Viśrānti. O king, it is said that he who has always propitiated Viṣṇu during many existences, dies here. On the very bank of Kālindī (i.e. Yamunā) another holy place called Viśrānti, is fashioned by Viṣṇu himself, where Kaṁsa was hurled down. O king, the two are equal in merits giving Vaikuṇṭha. Due to the dawn of good fortune, it, giving all (desired) objects, is obtained. To you I shall tell the importance of this holy place, having heard which you will obtain the fruit of bathing in all holy places.

8-16. O king, there lived a poor brāhmaṇa named Kuśala in the auspicious city of Kirāta in the land at the foot of the Himālaya mountain. His wife of a bad conduct was fondly attached to a man of a bad character. The unchaste woman deluded her husband with her (bad) acts. Her husband deluded by her was unable to ward her off. He, the poor one, was intent on obeying her orders, and was (i.e. lived), as it were, bought (by her). People ridiculed the brāhmaṇa, the husband of the unchaste woman. He too, scared of the ridicule, did not stir out of the house. She put on very costly silken garments and ornaments given by her paramours. The wicked one, though ridiculed, was not ashamed. Due to his servile nature she, the wicked one, contemptuously gave her husband old garments taken off from the bodies (of others). That her own husband who was thus slighted by the unchaste woman, being very much afflicted by grief, ate (i.e. drank) poison at night and died. The wanton woman was then scared of the king due to her bad conduct. She spoke (these) false words: "I shall follow my husband." O king, her friends, tutored by her only, went near her, and speaking like this, stopped her.

The friends said:

17-22. O deer-eyed woman, why do you do this worthless act, that you are ready to destroy your body resembling gold? O friend, what happiness did you get from this poor, incapable (husband), not industrious, and filling his own belly? Nourish this young son? Except you, who is his guardian? O beautiful lady, all of us will die, if you die. O you beautiful lady, look after this your house; rise. Let this your son, who will give happiness later, be victorious. All the relatives desire your life (i.e. that you should live). Get up. Do what is desired in their minds by your relatives. O good one, all your friends due to affection for you, are weeping. Stop them who are much grieved (from weeping) by giving (i.e. speaking to) them your words.

Nārada said:

23. That wicked one, having thus heard their words flowing from righteousness, raised her face, and making her own relatives listen, said:

The friend said:

24-28. I know that the proper words that you spoke are indeed true. Yet women must respect their husbands, giving (the merit of) both the worlds. O friends, listen to words uttered by me and following the code of laws. If it is proper, permit me (to follow my husband). That woman, even though she is a sinner, who, devoted to her husband, follows her dead husband, lives with him for a long time in heaven. Women should never desert their husbands even though he is poor or diseased. He, alive or dead, should be followed (by them). This is (i.e. thus says) the ancient holy text. Thinking thus in mind, O friends, I am following my husband. He (i.e. son) will live by his fate. What shall I do to him?

Nārada said:

29. Thus addressed, her wicked friends, giving a wicked counsel, said to her, deluding all people by means of her righteous words:

The friends said:

30-33. O you lady of beautiful eyebrows, first desert us and then follow your husband, O dear one. All of us are unable to put up with separation from you. You, destroying us, and following your own husband, will have little religious merit and great sin. How can you obtain heaven? You well looked after this husband of yours, when he was alive. O friend, you have done what is laid down for a husband and his wife. As long as this your son is unable to have his livelihood, he will live by your fortune.

Nārada said:

34-45. Thus addressed, she turned away from following her husband. She got performed his obsequial rites by her son. Then after some time she thought of getting his thread ceremony performed, got it performed by brāhmaṇas after having given them the wealth given to her by her paramours. The boy born in adultery[1], whose thread-ceremony was performed, who knew the real nature of human soul, quickly went out of the house, and was highly devoted to Viṣṇu. Having secured the company of the good, and given up his trifling body, he went up to the perpetual world, not accessible to the meditating saints. When the son went out she was unhappy in her mind. O king, on the same day she again dallied with her paramours. When she was thus dallying with her paramours, in course of time old age, destroying the arrogance of beauty, came over to her. Seeing her body stricken with old age, she was abandoned by the paramours. She spoiling the character of the group of other (women), became a go-between. Then she snatched the cow, along with her calf, of one brāhmaṇa; and, O king, she sold it for some money. O king, thus she passed some time (working) as a messenger. Then her dry body became worthless. When leprosy overcame her body, her five limbs—hands, feet, and the nose as the fifth, dropped. When, she who was reduced to such a condition, did not get food, she was taken to the market by a maid servant. There she, appealing to people with piteous words, and being despised, filled her belly.

1. Kuṇḍa: A son born in adultery. A son born of a woman from someone who is not her husband, and when the husband is alive.

46-51. O king, a brāhmaṇa, knowing all the Vedas, a great orator, who lived near, seeing her, spoke these words: "Sin gives pain to people in this world and the next. Therefore, men, afraid of pain, should not commit a sin. A man who, having committed a sin, performs an expiation, has not committed the sin; so he would not get its fruit. He who, having repeatedly committed sins, does not perform an expiation, meets the same fate as this woman, in this world and in the next. In this world she committed a host of sins. She will suffer its fruit here only, and also in a hell. In the holy texts an expiation is seen for all sinners, but not for women averse to (good) deeds."

Nārada said:

52-63a. Speaking like this, the best brāhmaṇa, afraid of seeing her, again and again remembering Viṣṇu, and saluting the Sun, left. O king, she, thus suffering the fruit of her acts, obtained by herself, became miserable and died after a few days. No burning on funeral pyre of her, the sinful one, was done. Cāṇḍālas dragged her by (seizing) her hair, and took her out of the city. At the time of her death, Yama's servants came (there), and making her take up a body that caused torment, they took her to Yama's city. That god, gentle to the pious and actually hated by the sinners, seeing her again, turned away his face. Yama, thus turning away his face, ordered his servants: "As pronounced by me, throw her into the Raurava hell." Thus addressed, the servants remembering the acts which she had done, took her and threw her, with her face (turned) down, into that fierce Raurava. In that Raurava (hell) she remained for one period of Manu. Later she was born as an alligator eating the flesh of the dead in a cremation ground. There also, she, eating excessively the flesh of the dead, got the fruit, viz. misery. of her acts. Once that brāhmaṇa who was born from her womb in the stock of brāhmaṇas, and who was roaming came there to the cremation ground. The sage's son, seeing her eating the flesh of the dead, thought for a moment in his mind, and recognised her to be his mother. Recognising her to be his mother, he said to himeslf:

The sage's son said:

63b-66a. Today I shall emancipate her from the ocean of

misery. Oh, a being is not freed, except at (the end of) the period of suffering (the fruit of his sins), from the sinful deed done by himself. She passed in the hell the period called (i.e. that was equal to) the period of a Manu, and with men she has passed here a hundred years. How much has she to experience (the fruit of) her great sin hereafter?

Nārada said:

66b-67. Thinking like this, he, closing his eyes, again thought by means of his sacred knowledge. Having noticed the fearful condition, with his divine sight, of that sinner, the best brāhmaṇa again said to himself, O king:

The sages' son said:

68-71. Oh! her liberation is not seen (to be possible) even after a hundred kalpas, except her dying at a holy place, or submitting herself to (Viṣṇu) the lord of Lakṣmī. Or she will not obtain heaven except by my offering piṇḍas at Gayā, even for hundreds of kalpas. In this birth of her she will never have these two—death in the region of a holy place, or liking for serving Viṣṇu. The (only) cause of the emancipation of her, the sinful one plunged in the ocean of sins, will be a śrāddha performed by me at Gayā.

Nārada said:

72-73. Thinking like this, the pious one went to his father's hermitage. He told his father the entire cause of his mother's misery. Having heard the son's words telling (about) his mother's misery, the best sage spoke to his son who had bowed his neck (i.e. head):

The sage said:

74-82. As a king, knowing polity, takes the sovereignty of his enemy in a war, O dear one, quickly raise your mother from this miserable condition. If a son, capable of emancipating his mother or father from misery, does not emancipate them, he goes to hell. Having received water and piṇḍas from their sons at an excellent holy place, the dead ancestors go to heaven from hell, and from heaven to Viṣṇu's place. Therefore, get up quickly. Go

to Khāṇḍava-vana. There is the holy Yamunā, resorted to by the best sages. On her bank is Hariprastha, full of all holy places. Then there is the holy Madhuvana set up by Viṣṇu himself. Having duly bathed there, and having done your (usual) rites, offer a śrāddha to her, your mother, and (also) perform (other) rites. When a śrāddha is offered there by you desiring heaven for her, she abandoning the strong body of an alligator, will reach Viṣṇu's world. O dear one, the good have declared that the religious merit (due to offering a śrāddha) at Madhuvana, is a hundred times more than the one due to offering piṇḍas at Gayā. O dear one, now the Sun has entered the Zodiacal sign Libra. O son, go and offer a śrāddha to your ancestors.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FOURTEEN

The Greatness of Madhuvana

Nārada said:

1-9. O king, having heard these words of his father, he quickly went to the holy Madhuvana, a hundred times holier than Gayā. Then the learned brāhmaṇa spoke to the brāhmaṇas living at that holy place, and again having invited them after some time, spoke to them words of welcome. Then having washed their feet and worshipped them with sandal etc. he made respectful offering at their feet, and similarly himself sipped (water). Then taking the brāhmaṇas he seated them at the place of the śrāddha. And filling the pot (used) for the rite with darbhas, water, tulasī (leaves), flowers, sandal, sacred rice grains and sesamum-seeds, he remembered Viṣṇu. The brāhmaṇas thrice recited the verse: *Devatābhyaḥ*.... Then he tied it containing sesamum-seeds with darbhas that were purified, in the directions beginning with the east, in the proper order with (the recital of) the hymn *Agniṣvātta* ....With the hymn *Rakṣobhūta*...he tied the ends of the garment worn round the waist into a knot. Then taking the pledge, he gave darbha seat to the brāhmaṇas. Then the best brāhmaṇa invoked his dead ancestors. Then giving respectful offering into their

hands, he turned down the vessel and made it lie on its face. Having offered sandal etc. he, with his sacred thread hanging down over the left shoulder, sipped water. Then the brāhmaṇa gave the pots after having his sacred thread (once) hanging down over the left and (once) over the right shoulder.

10-24. Permitted by the brāhmaṇas, he offered oblations like ghee into the fire. Then he filled those vessels (with water), O king. With his hand turned up and down he took the vessels and taught by the brāhmaṇas he recited (the hymn) *Pṛthvī tvā*... With (the reciting of) the hymn *Asaṁskṛtapraṇītānām*... the brāhmaṇas offered seats with the darbhas strewn (there) with their points in the southern direction. O king, with (the reciting of) the hymn *Agnidagdha*... he put food mixed with ghee and along with water on the seats made by darbhas. Again, with his sacred thread hanging down over the left shoulder, he sipped a mouthful of water. He asked them, "Are you satisfied?" They replied, "We are satisfied." He took the permission of those brāhmaṇas to eat the remaining food. The brāhmaṇa made an altar of the measure of the length of twelve aṅgulas, and drew a line facing the south with a darbha. He laid the firebrand with (the reciting of) the hymn *Ye rūpāṇi*... in the direction of fire. O king, he duly offered darbha-seats and six piṇḍas only to them who were, in the former existence, his mother, father, so also to their parents, i.e. his grandfathers, so also, O best king, who were his maternal great-grandfather and paternal grandfather, along with their wives. Having worshipped them with sandal etc. and having cast off the middle piṇḍa and after having smelt the pot containing the piṇḍas, he put it on his left shoulder. Then taking the vessel containing water, and reciting (the hymn) *Vāje vāje*...again offering respectful oblation to their feet, he pleased them with presents etc. Having followed them up to the door, and having secured their permission, the brāhmaṇa dined along with his relatives, O king. O best king, when the best brāhmaṇa, after thus finishing the śrāddha of his ancestors in the pious Madhuvana, and with his mind tranquil, started for his father's hermitage, he met on his way those who had eaten at the śrāddha. They, seated in six aeroplanes, adorned with divine ornaments, wearing celestial garments thus spoke to the best brāhmaṇa:

The ancestors said:

25-26. O child, O best brāhmaṇa, ask for an excellent boon. You, performing a śrāddha at this holy place, have emancipated us. Due to your favour we have become Viṣṇu's attendants. O you very intelligent one, ask for what is desired in (i.e. by) your mind.

The sage's son said:

27. Who are you? Wherefrom have you come? How did you become (Viṣṇu's) attendants? Why do you grant me a boon without my having obliged you?

Nārada said:

28. Hearing these words of the son in his former existence, the father, who had died after taking poison due to grief, said:

The father said:

29-35. O brāhmaṇa, I am your father, a brāhmaṇa, in your former existence. I was very much troubled by your unchaste mother. Being extremely afflicted, I took poison at night, died prematurely, and, therefore, became a demon: O dear one, after being turned into a demon, I passed a period of Manu and one hundred and fifteen years (in that condition). Now in the (hundred and) sixteenth year, when you performed a śrāddha in this meritorious holy place Madhuvana, I attained godhead. This aeroplane sent by Indra along with attendants and a host of the celestial nymphs has arrived from heaven for me to get in. I, along with the attendants and the host of celestial nymphs, have, while going to the heaven after getting into the excellent aeroplane, come here to give you a boon. Ask for a boon. God bless you. We can't brook any delay. Indra, mounted upon the elephant Airāvata, is waiting for me.

Nārada said:

36-37a. O king, thus telling his son his own account, and giving him the devotion for Viṣṇu (as) asked by him, he went to heaven. Then his mother spoke to him, her son in the previous existence:

The mother said:

37b-41. Due to your favour I have become a goddess and am freed from sins. O best brāhmaṇa, I, though a sinner, have become the friend of Śacī, when you performed the śrāddha at this holy place called Viśrānti. O glorious one, ask for what is desired by your mind. I shall give it to you, since the words of us, the deities, are never falsified. O best brāhmaṇa, you know the sin due to which I, after staying in the hell for a long time, became an alligator in the cremation ground. O son, allow me (to go). Śacī, surrounded by hosts of celestial ladies is waiting for me in the sky.

Nārada said:

42-43. O king, his mother too, having thus spoken to him, her desireless son, went after being saluted by him with his head (bent down) to heaven. Then his grandfather, having similarity of form with Viṣṇu, again spoke (these) words to his grandson, the best brāhmaṇa.

The grandfather said:

44-46. O child, O child, live long. Obtain what is desired by you. Due to your favour we have crossed over this ocean of mundane existence, difficult to cross. O child, I am your grandfather, and this is your grandmother. The chaste lady followed me who had died, and soon obtained residence in the same heaven (as of Viṣṇu). When today you performed the śrāddha-rite at Viśrānti, we have obtained similarity of form with Viṣṇu in his heaven.

Nārada said:

47-48. O best king, the brāhmaṇa, after having spoken like this, went along with her, his wife, to Vaikuṇṭha after having crossed Brahmā's world. O best king, listen attentively to the words, the brāhmaṇa, his great-grandfather spoke to him, which I am telling you.

The great-grandfather said:

49-54. O child, O glorious one, I am your great-grandfather. As a result of my causing an abortion, I obtained the stock

of (i.e. was born as) a pig. Then I went out of it, and being oppressed by my sin, became a dog. Then I became an inanimate object on the best mountain, Vindhya. Then I who for a long time remained in that condition of an inanimate object, was forcibly uprooted by an elephant. Then at that time only you performed the śrāddha at this excellent holy place. And therefore I was freed from that inanimate condition and got an excellent residence in the city of the lord of yakṣas. O best brāhmaṇa, permit me. Due to your favour I (shall) go. With the desire to see you I have come here, and have seen you of a pious appearance (and) the Madhuvana, the best of all holy places.

Nārada said:

55. Thus addressed by him, the sage's son, knowing religious merit, asked, after saluting his great-grandfather with (having bent) his head to him, his great-grandfather:

The sage said:

56-57. O dear one, you were born in a great brāhmaṇa family. How did you, O great one, commit the sin of causing abortion, due to which you obtained (i.e. were born in) a series of censurable stocks? O illustrious one, tell me that if you recollect (it).

The great-grandfather said:

58-66. O best brāhmaṇa, formerly, in the existence of a brāhmaṇa, I maintained myself by the employment of spells and amulets. Due to greed of wealth, I, with my understanding destroyed due to (ill) luck, gave them (clients) medicine for conception and abortion; for greed would take away the understanding of those having no wealth, as the sun takes away the water of the canals in the hot season. O dear one, when a man's understanding perishes, he certainly commits a sin. Due to the sin he gets (into) a hell, and from there goes to (i.e. is born in) a bad stock. In that existence, one pregnant woman asked me: "O brāhmaṇa, shall I give birth to a son or a girl?" Then I said to her: "A daughter will be born to you. (Therefore) I shall give you a medicine for the birth of a son." Thus addressed, the woman, the crest-jewel of the foolish, seized my feet and gave me a pala

of gold. She said to me: "I have given birth to six daughters. You have now told (i.e. predicted) the seventh. After her birth I shall not live. O brāhmaṇa do that by which I shall not give birth to another daughter destroying my life."

67-79. Hearing these words of her, I again said to her: "At the time of your delivery I shall give you a medicine (capable of) generating a son." Saying, "All right" and having heard me she went home and believing in my words, remained waiting for that time. When she had gone, I became anxious like this. Listen as to how I became so. I (shall) tell it. 'She convinced of the birth of a son, gave me a pala of gold. I did not know what (i.e. a boy or a girl) would be born to her. What should be done in this case? How would that (gold of) a measure of a pala remain in the house of me who am poor?' Thinking like this, I handed over to her maid that medicine causing abortion and made her give it to her. Due to that medicine she aborted in the third month (of pregnancy). The sign of either a boy or a girl was not noticed. She, dejected due to the abortion, came to my house, and having no hope for the birth of a son, demanded (back) the gold. Then I showed her powder of bricks (mixed) with ash, and mixed with turmeric powder and with water. "O mother, for the birth of a son to you I have prepared this powder. For preparing that I required double the money that you had given me." Thus addressed by me, she ignored the powder, and went home, saying to me, "O brāhmaṇa, I shall take it from you at the proper time." O dear one, I have thus caused a very fearful (sin of) abortion, due to which I roamed in three very censurable stocks. Now due to your favour I am freed from the state of an inanimate object. O best sage, permit me. I (shall) go to the auspicious Alakā.

Nārada said:

80-82. O king, his great-grandfather, speaking like this, and saluted by him with his head (bent down), went to the northern direction in a beautiful aeroplane having rows of small bells with gandharvas dancing (in it) and charming with jewelled ramparts. Then the great-grandmother of the brāhmaṇa seated in an excellent aeroplane, spoke to her great-grandson, O great king:

The great-grandmother said:

83-85. O you of a good vow, due to this religious merit you have not to go anywhere else except the temple marked with Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet. O sage, this my sinful husband is your great-grandfather. He, of a very wicked mind, though warded off by me, committed a sin. He too, of a very sinful mind, is liberated by you from the ocean of misery. Who is able to describe your virtues?

Nārada said:

86-96. Speaking like this, she too went to her husband's world, O best king. With that same husband she rejoiced in Alakā for a long time. Then all those—grandfather etc.—got into the aeroplanes along with their wives and went to heaven. The best brāhmaṇa went from that holy place to his father's hermitage. And he described to his father the full account. He also went along with his family to Madhuvana and prepared a hut of leaves near Viśrānti. The best sage, bathing three times (a day) at the holy place called Viśrānti, did not even long for Viṣṇu's world. O king, once, while bathing in the water he wondered: 'When shall I see Viṣṇu?' O king, when the excellent sage was wondering like this, Viṣṇu, seated on the king of birds, hastily came (there). He came along with Lakṣmī (close) to his chest; he had four arms. The complexion of his body was like a fresh cloud. He was covered with a garment with the colour of lightning. His large chest was shining with the Kaustubha (jewel). He held a conch, a disc and a lotus. His neck shone with a garland of wood-flowers. His earrings had the shape of crocodiles. His eyes resembled the blooming lotus-flowers. His hands were tawny, and feet had good soles. Covering the directions with the mass (of lustre) like that of the moon, he spoke to the best brāhmaṇa, illumining him with his lustre:

The lord said:

97-99. O best brāhmaṇa, this is the meritorious place known as Viśrānta, and sacred to me. It gives all desired objects on one's bathing in it. Today at the time of your bath you longed for my sight. I have presented it, difficult to be obtained by

gods, to you. O brāhmaṇa, give up this human body. Take up a divine one. Mounting on the lord of birds, come to my place along with me.

Nārada said:

100. O king, having heard these words of the lord of Lakṣmī, the chief of sages, bowing down, praised him (by remaining) in the water only.

The sage said:

101-107. O lord of Lakṣmī, your beautiful lotus-like feet have lovely lotuses offered to them. They destroy the torment of the mundane existence and are saluted by gods. O lord, those beings that are deluded by your Māyā here, can never be liberated without your grace. O lord, due to their resorting to holy places, and their company with the good, devotion (for you) in (these) men is produced due to your grace. O Viṣṇu, he who, having heard the narration of your merits uttered (i.e. made) by many good people and destroying all sins, repeats it, would not fall into the cavity of a mother's womb. O lord of Lakṣmī, the mind of your man (i.e. devotee), (though) fallen into the great going (of the mundane existence) and covered with dust (i.e. passion), does not, like an excellent gem, give up its purity. The man who having horripilation on his body falls (prostrate) like a staff at your lotus-like feet, takes his family to your place, longed for by all meditating saints. O lord, this very soul, deluded by your Māyā roams along all paths, (but) by means of the glances of your charming eyes, crosses the ocean in the form of the world.

Nārada said:

108-111. Praising Viṣṇu like this, the best sage, saying, 'Victory to you', fell at his feet (prostrating himself) like a staff. Lakṣmī's lord, raised the best sage fallen at his feet like a staff, and the universal Soul put him and (the members of) his family on Garuḍa and went to Vaikuṇṭha. O Śibi, I have told you the greatness, destroying all sins, of Madhuvana, O king. What else do you desire to hear? A man who listens to this (account) is freed from all sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTEEN

Budha Infuriated and Appeased

Saubhari said:

1. O Yudhiṣṭhira, having heard these auspicious words of Nārada, modest Śibi Auśīnara said to him:

Śibi said:

2-4. O sage, from your mouth (i.e. from you) I have heard about the greatness of Madhuvana; but there is some doubt in my mind. How was he, of a pious mind, who liberated all his kinsmen, the son of a wanton woman, in two existences? O revered one, tell this. You virtually know everything—the past, the present, and the future also, O Nārada.

Nārada said:

5-9. Once all sages gathered at Haridvāra on the tenth of the bright half of Jyeṣṭha connected with all festivals. There they having duly bathed and performed their (respective) auspicious rites, rested on the surface of Himālaya with their hearts at ease. Into the company of the sages, there came Budha, Tārā's son, full of excessive handsomeness and, as it were, another Cupid embodied. Seeing him coming all the sages got up. Saluted by him with his head (bent down), they again sat down. Seeing the regard shown to Budha by the pre-eminent sages, the sage's son thus asked his father, O lord:

The sage's son said:

10. O father, who is this that has come (here), who is another Cupid in handsomeness and very much respected by sages like Vyāsa?

Nārada said:

11. The pious, best sage, having heard these words of his son, said to him who had insisted (on knowing who Budha was):

The father said:

12. This is the intelligent, great son of Bṛhaspati, the pre-

ceptor of gods, and born of Tārā, and the perpetuator of the family of the Moon.

The son said:

13-15. O father, how have you spoken irrelevant words? How is he the son of Bṛhaspati as well as the perpetuator of the family of the Moon? O father, the Moon was born of Anasūyā from the chief of the sages, viz. Atri. How can this son of Bṛhaspati perpetuate his family? O father, this is a great doubt lurking in my mind. O best brāhmaṇa, remove that doubt of your child who is confused.

The father said:

16-24. O dear one, formerly Bṛhaspati's glorious wife named Tārā was forcibly kidnapped by the powerful Candra (i.e. the Moon). Kidnapping Bṛhaspati's wife the Moon took her to his house and dallied with her for a long time. O dear one, after some time she conceived. Then Bṛhaspati appealed (to Candra to return) his wife. Candra too, overcome by pride and puffed up by his power, did not give her (back). Then, O dear one, Bṛhaspati, getting ready along with gods like Indra, started fighting with the powerful Candra. To help Candra Śukra then came there to the battle that was commenced with the demons. Then a great war for Tārā took place. All people will look upon (that battle called) Tārakāmaya as important. In that very terrible war (both) gods and demons were killed. O dear one, no one was victorious or defeated. Then Brahmā came there, and stopping that fierce battle, gave, after admonishing the Moon, Tārā to Bṛhaspati. Bṛhaspati, seeing Tārā to be pregnant, was angry, and in the presence of Brahmā (said to) Tārā in the gathering of the gods and demons:

Bṛhaspati said:

25. O Tārā of unsteady eyes, listen to my words. Whose child do you bear—of Candra or of me?

The father said:

26-27. O dear one, when that beautiful (Tārā) who was abashed and was thus repeatedly asked, did not say anything to

him, then he (i.e. Budha), who was born (of her) and was angry, said to his mother when the gods and demons were looking on (i.e. in the presence of the gods and the demons).

Budha said:

28. Why do you not, giving up your sense of shame, declare my father? See the power of my curse.

The father said:

29-32. When, speaking like this, he was on the point of cursing her after taking water, she gently said: "Candra is your father." When the chaste lady spoke like this, Candra gladly took this Budha, his own son, and went home. Bṛhaspati also took that Tārā and went home. Brahmā, (other) gods, and demons also went home. I have told you all this that you had asked me as to how he, born of Bṛhaspati's wife, perpetuates Candra's line.

Nārada said:

33-34. Hearing these words of his father, the sage's son laughed loudly and said to his father: "This is the son of a wanton lady, born in adultery."

The father said to the son:

O son, don't speak (like) this. He, knowing (what is going on in) the heart of every being will, understanding your words, curse you.

Nārada said:

35. O king, when the sage had spoken like this, the son of Candra understood what he had said, and while all the sages were listening, he said:

Budha said:

36-46. O best sages, may you listen to my words; and think whether they are good or bad. Do not delay. To see you who know the truth, I have come here. I have not in the least offended anyone. (Then) why do the infatuated ones insult me through jealousy? I long to see you to make my life fruitful. It is the very nature of the wicked that they, like the cuckoos with sweet notes,

sometimes upset the good though innocent. The wicked do not abandon their wicked nature even in the company of the good, as the ocean becomes saline even in the company of the water of Gaṅgā. Oh! (see) the wickedness of the hunter that he kills the deer leading life like sages, moving in the forest, and knowing their own songs(?). What offence have the fish done to the wicked fishermen that they kill them moving in the water at a sacred place? It is their very nature. The good also do not give up their nature in the company of the wicked, as the sandal trees, though surrounded by serpents, do not abandon their coolness. The good dance (with joy) even at the prosperity of their enemy. Then what to say of (the prosperity of) one belonging to their own party? The best sages are eager as the peacocks are (at the sight) of a cloud. The good sustain even their bodies for the good of others, as my father bears the digits for the sake of manes, gods and men. To the good the continual rise (of others) causes joy, as the cool rays of my father (the Moon) cause joy to the white water lilies.

Nārada said:

47-51. Angrily speaking these words, Budha cursed that sage's son: "You too quickly become, like me, a son born in adultery on the earth." Having heard the curse given by Budha, the father made his son fall at his (i.e. Budha's) feet, saying, "(Please) forgive (him)". And he said, "This boy does not know your grandeur. It is not proper for (persons) like you to be angry with this boy. Forgiveness is the nature of a good man who is angry for some reason, as coolness in the nature of water heated by fire. Therefore, having forgiven him quickly favour this child having no discrimination, for forgiveness is the essence of the good."

Nārada said:

52. (Budha,) the son of Candra, thus addressed by him, gave up his anger, and with a cool mind favoured him.

Budha said:

53-58. O sage, this your son after being born in adultery on

the earth, will obtain the perpetual place after a sacred thread is given to him (i.e. after his thread-ceremony).

O best king, due to the curse of Budha the sage's son obtained birth as a son born in adultery, and liberated his dead ancestors. Having heard this purifying greatness of Madhuvana, a man gets the entire fruit of a horse-sacrifice. The mind of those men who keep in it the excellent significance of this greatness, is not overpowered by objects of senses. There is no doubt that those highly intelligent ones who will recite and listen to this (description of the) greatness will go, after casting their body, to Viṣṇu's world. I have described to you this ceaselessly pure account of Madhuvana, which delights the lord of Lakṣmī, which promptly cuts off the mass of blemishes due to Kali, which is the cause of warding off the senses going astray (and of leading to) the pious form (of Viṣṇu).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTEEN

The Greatness of Badarikāśrama

Nārada said:

1-12. O king, this Badarikāśrama is situated in the region of just eleven dhanus (i.e. forty-four hastas) from this Madhuvana. To you I shall describe the wonderful greatness of this excellent holy place. One listening to it is free from fear. O king, there was in Magadha a truthful, restrained brāhmaṇa named Devadāsa, who was, as it were, another Dharma. Proficient in all lores he was, as it were, another Bṛhaspati. Like Prahlāda, the king of demons, he pleased Viṣṇu. Though he had a wife, he had conquered, like Śiva, Cupid. Like the sage Viśvāmitra he was always engaged in good acts. He was honoured in the house of Magadha's lord, as Droṇa in Kuru's house. Like Bali, lord of demons, he was disposed to giving gifts to worthy recipients. His wife by name Uttamā was excellent with virtues like Lakṣmī. She was engaged in serving her husband like Janaka's daughter (Sītā). He had one intelligent son named Aṅgada; and he had

one daughter Valayā by name, having excellent marks. Of them the son was elder, the daughter was younger, O king. The best brāhmaṇa got them married in due course. O king, that daughter, endowed with auspicious marks, who was married, went to her father-in-law's house after some time. The very intelligent Aṅgada who knew all holy texts and who was adorned with the splendour of youth, bore the burden (i.e. the responsibility) of the household. Once that best brāhmaṇa, seeing his son to be capable of managing the duties, said to his wife, O best king:

Devadāsa said:

13-21. O good lady, listen to my words proper for this time; (and) then quickly do what is fit, O good one. This old age has come. Causing the limbs to tremble as a storm causes to tremble a ripe fruit, it will cause the body to fall. O you of a good vow, it will also make dull the brightness of the eyes, as the morning time makes dull the brightness of the stars along with the moon. Like an iron fetter this old age will lessen the speed of the stumbling feet at every step. Therefore, O auspicious one, as long as this old age does not become advanced, we should quickly do what is good to us. O fortunate one, a house, sons, friends, brothers, parents are perishable. So also is wealth etc. A wise man is not attached to them. Therefore, I, with my senses controlled, will wander, in the manner of an anchorite, about all holy places and will see Viṣṇu. Then, O auspicious one, taking to renunciation at an excellent holy place, I shall cast my body at the end of the fructification of my karmas. If thus I would be free from life, salvation would be (possible) for me who have properly placed my mind at the lotus-like feet of Lakṣmī's lord.

Uttamā said:

22-25. What man or woman (except one) having no sense would take delight in the perishable mundane existence, leaving Viṣṇu (i.e. and leave Viṣṇu), the perpetual abode? Therefore, O lord of my life, take me, serving your lotus-like feet with you, and quickly lift me up from the ocean of the worldly existence. This (our) glorious son Aṅgada has become capable of sustaining the burden of the household. This auspicious daughter-in-law will help him. That foolish man or woman, who, when his or her son

is capable (of looking after the household), would not be detached, is deprived of bliss.

Nārada said:

26. Having thus talked to each other, that couple called their son Aṅgada on the same day and told him:

The couple said:

27-33. O Aṅgada, know us to have our limbs drooping due to the appearance of old age. At some holy place we shall strive for our spiritual good. Devoutly worshipping Viṣṇu is said to be the highest good. For that only the desireless good people strive on the earth. They who have no attachment for objects of senses, who look equally upon all beings, who are neither delighted nor dejected due to pleasure or pain, are alone the good men, serving the feet of Viṣṇu. By merely seeing them a man is blessed. A wise man, eager to see him (i.e. Viṣṇu), and wandering about the holy places, would see him by good luck. Therefore, O Aṅgada, having placed on your two long arms the burden of (maintaining) the family, allow us to go on a pilgrimage. O son, if, in course of our pilgrimage, we may see a good man, then we would be blessed.

Nārada said:

34-36. Thus addressed by the parents, the son spoke good words: "You have told this to be the emancipation of the entire family. Quickly order me what beneficial thing to you I should do. I always obey the orders of you whose feet are respectable (to me). Take with you the excellent wealth stored by you for giving gifts at holy places. So also take me with you as a servant to serve you."

Nārada said:

37-41a. Speaking like this, and taking money (with him) he went with them for a couple of krośas; and somehow sent back by them, he came home. They took some money with them, and thinking, 'May Viṣṇu come to us' lived there for three days, eating bulbs, roots and fruits. O king, when the couple set off from that place, they met a siddha on their way.

Saluted by both of them with their heads (bent down) he sat down. When the chief of siddhas was seated, they asked him thus: "Tell (us) who you are, wherefrom you have come, what you desire to do".

The siddha said:

41b-46. O best ascetic, I am a siddha. My house is at Kalpagrāma. I have come from Indraprastha. There I saw a great wonder. There is the siddha Kapila resembling Viṣṇu in merits. Learning Sāṁkhya from him I lived in his hermitage. Once my celebrated teacher, Kapila, went from his hermitage to the very holy (place) called Badarī, to bathe in the water of Yamunā. There one wild buffalo, oppressed by thirst, entered the water of Yamunā, and having drunk it, recollected his former existence. The wild buffalo, having recollected his past deeds, quickly came out of the water and saluted (my) teacher, Kapila; and when I was listening, the buffalo spoke with a human voice, which I (shall) tell you today. Listen to it, (which is) very wonderful.

The buffalo said:

47-48. O you Kapila, O you who are a portion of Viṣṇu, O you lord of the siddhas, tell me who have bowed to you, what the name of this great holy place is. Due to the touch of the water of this excellent holy place, I got (the recollection) of my deeds in the past existence, O illustrious one.

The siddha said:

49. Having heard these words of the buffalo, the great sage, though he knew his account, laughed and said these words:

Kapila said:

50. O best of buffaloes, who were you in your former existence? What deed did you do then, due to which you obtained (i.e. were born in) the stock of the buffalo?

The buffalo said:

51-61. O best sage, listen to the account of my former existence. Formerly I was a king, the mighty chief of Kaliṅga.

Deluded by passion I did not know (i.e. discriminate between) my wife and that of another. I took away the wealth of sinless merchants of good conduct. O king(?), I, being fearless, wandered at night in the city to dally with beautiful wives of others. I, deluded by Cupid, at night lived in that house in which I saw a beautiful woman, as an elephant lives in a field. Sporting there fearlessly, and snatching wealth from that house, I returned to my house after a few days. By day I seated in my assembly made two city-lads fight a base duel in front of me. Regarding the boy who put down (the other boy) as rich, I forcibly took the wealth, little or much, of his father. Saying, "This one due to his cowardice is not fit to live in my city", I killed him who was defeated, O sage. The citizens seeing the king to have begun behaving like this, abandoned the city, and went to another country. Durvāsas, the great sage born of Rudra, while roaming over the earth once came to my city. Then all citizens, gathering together approached him. Saluting him, they spoke to him these words acquainting him with their misery:

The citizens said:

62-71. O son of Atri, O best sage, O treasure of pity, favour us. Turn to piety this king, engrossed in doing unrighteous deeds. Due to the dawn of our good fortune you have come (here). Rescue us like a raft from this ocean of misery due to the king who is transgressing its limits. O best sage, the greedy one took away our wealth. The passionate one spoilt chaste and innocent ladies. Many children aged about ten years were killed by him. O great sage, this king is the store of innumerable faults.

The buffalo said:

Having heard these words of the citizens, that sage, the son of Atri, thinking, 'He must be punished', came to my assembly. Seeing the naked sage coming, I stopped him through my servants, saying, "He is not fit to be seen." I many times ordered my servants: "Stop him whose figure is like that of a buffalo, with his entire body smeared with dust." Then the servants quickly went to stop him. Just by means of a 'hum' sound the sage reduced all of them to ash, as you did Sagara's sons, protecting the sacrificial horse of their father. Seeing the servants to

be completely reduced to ash, I quickly got up and was about to enter my house. The best sage, addressing me as "O sinner", cursed me:

72-77. "Now become a buffalo in a great forest." Thus cursed by him, I gave up the royal body; I became a buffalo in a great forest in the Maru country, O sage. O best sage, I lived there for a long time. Hear due to which religious merit I have come here. I had got constructed many reservoirs of water, wells, and tanks. I had (also) planted many mango trees on (the sides of) the path. O god, due to that religious merit, I did not fall into a hell. And I got the contact of the water of this holy place. I have thus told you about the righteous and unrighteous deeds in my former birth, due to which I reached this holy place, and due to which I had reached the buffalo's stock. Due to the touch of the water of this excellent place, I remembered my former existence. O sage, tell me how I shall be free from this miserable stock.

Kapila said:

78. This holy place of Lakṣmī's lord called Badarī is very meritorious. Bathe here, you will quickly obtain what is in your mind.

The siddha said:

79-80. O great sage, having heard these words of the king, he, desiring heaven, entered (the water of) the holy place to bathe. When, having bathed there with a desire (to go) to heaven, he came to the bank from the water, Indra came there just at that moment from heaven.

Indra said:

81. O lord of Kaliṅga, give up your body of the buffalo. Receiving a divine body come to my heaven. You bathed (here) with a desire to (reach) heaven; you have secured that abode of gods.

The siddha said:

82-83. Thus addressed by him, he then abandoned his body of buffalo, and securing a divine body, he mounted upon the lord of elephants. Having mounted upon the lord of elephants, and remaining in the air for a moment, and saluting the god with his head bent down, he praised the sage Kapila.

The Kaliṅga-king said:

84-92. O highest lord, salutation to you, the cause of absolute knowledge, the bridge to all Vedic sciences, and an enemy of those who oppose them. The flow of the Sāṁkhya (principles) causing the knowledge of the absolute truth among the human beings whose minds are overpowered by illusion, is due to you, O lord. O sage, you punish and throw into stocks of lower animals those who give up what is laid down in the Vedas and behave as they like. All regents of quarters like Indra are under your control. Afraid of you, the chastiser, they do what you desire. You, the soul of all, caused the gods to incarnate in each former yuga to destroy those opposing the practices laid down in the three Vedas. O lord, those enemies of gods who were killed by you, gave up their sorrowful bodies and reached Viṣṇu's heaven. O lord of the world, order me to go to heaven. Also favour Indra, with your nectar-like glances, who is bowing to you. O lord of gods, by the favour of you and (the holy place) called Badarī, I have given up my miserable body, and have got a virtuous body. O you treasure of grace, by your favour, I am, after mounting upon the lord of elephants, going to heaven willingly.

The siddha said:

93-96. Thus praising Kapila, the lord of gods, and saluting his feet, the Kaliṅga-king went to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, I, attending upon my preceptor, saw this wonder and also liberation from sin at Badarikāśrama. In the three worlds there is no better holy place giving all (desired) objects. If you desire the highest good, go there with your wife. O brāhmaṇa, to take my old father desiring salvation (and) having no other yearning to Badarī, I am going home.

Nārada said:

97-101. O king, after having narrated the greatness of this excellent holy place called Badarī, the siddha went home. Then after some time that brāhmaṇa (Devadāsa) along with his wife, visiting (various) holy places, reached Indraprastha where the two were taken to his own abode by him (i.e. Vāsudeva) (appearing) in his own body (*corrupt reading*). The siddha also, having quickly brought his father from his house, bathed him,

desiring salvation, there only at that excellent holy place. The old father of that siddha, saluted by gods, was also taken to his own abode by Śrī Viṣṇu. This (holy place) called Badarī, is in Indraprastha. The lord would give all the objects desired by the minds of those bathing here. O king of a modest mind, I have described to you its holy greatness. Having heard it, a man will never fall into a mother's womb (i.e. he will bever be reborn).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

The Greatness of Haridvāra

The king said:

1-5. O good one, you have described to me the greatness of Badarī, having heard which my mind has become pure, O sage. O best sage, this excellent, wonderful greatness of Śakraprastha gives all the four goals of human life. O Nārada, there is no other holy place than this, which is the best, which gives salvation even to lower animals, which destroys sins just when it is seen. O Nārada, from you, giving delight, I really desire to hear about the greatness of Haridvāra which is in it. O sage, by the description of this holy place situated in Śakraprastha, emancipate me who am a poor person due to wanton deeds indulged in because of ignorance.

Nārada said:

6-19. O illustrious one, listen. I shall describe to you the greatness of Haridvāra, giving the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. I shall tell you today how a sinful cāṇḍāla went to heaven. O lord, listen to it attentively. In Dharmakṣetra Kurukṣetra there lived, outside the city, a sinful cāṇḍāla known as Kāliṅga. He cheated the citizens' boys, five or six years old, forcibly took them to a forest, and killed them there, O king. Having killed them, the mean one took away silver, golden ornaments, and jewels etc. from their bodies. At night he entered the houses of the good to snatch away wealth. Aiming at the wealth of travellers, he killed

them in a lonely forest. Once, on the day of a solar eclipse, people desiring to make various presents came to Kurukṣetra from many quarters, O king. O king, having, on that solar eclipse day, duly bathed there, and having duly given presents, the people went home. One, best among merchants, having much wealth, proceeded towards his house after all men. He, seated on a horse, had twenty foot-soldiers in front of him. That great sinner Kāliṅga proceeded after him for (snatching) his wealth. After having traversed (the distance of) a few camps, the mean man, the cāṇḍāla could not wait (as) he did not get an opportunity to rob his wealth. Even with force he was unable to seize his wealth. The merchant was accompanied by twenty men, while he was alone. O king, the sinful (cāṇḍāla) came for (snatching) the merchant's wealth. At night he entered his camp to take away his wealth. But one of the merchant's men keeping a watch, noticed the sinner while entering.

20-25. Seeing him about to give a blow, the man keeping the watch, even while lying, seized him by both his feet, O king. The man, keeping the watch, seizing his feet, and awakening other people, was struck by the thief just with his hand. Other people, hearing (the sound) seized him who was running away. Again striking him who had seized him, he ran away. O king, one of the (merchant's) servants having a bow, struck the mean one who was quickly running, from a distance only. As soon as he was struck by the arrow, he quickly gave up his life. The thief killed two followers of the merchant, O king. The three, getting into excellent vehicles brought by the attendants, remained in the sky, and spoke these words to the merchant.

Kāliṅga and the merchant's servants said:

26-27. O chief merchant, O good one, this Haridvāra is an excellent holy place in Indraprastha which is propitious even to sinners. O merchant, we three who died at this excellent holy place, will now go to heaven. Good luck to you.

Śrī Nārada said:

28-30. O Śibi, speaking like this the three went to heaven, the place of those who do good deeds and where many things of enjoyment are obtained according to (one's) desire. O king,

when the night had passed, the merchant burnt the dead bodies of his two servants and dropped their bones here. O king, when the bones were being dropped at this holy place, the two servants came back here from heaven, and said these words to the merchant:

The two servants said:

31-36. O chief of the merchants, O good one, due to death at this holy place on the earth, even sinful beings undoubtedly go to heaven. O merchant, if the bones of a being who dies on a dry land, fall into the water of his holy place, he would stay in Satyaloka. Due to the bones of us who died on a dry land being dropped in the water (of this holy place) we have reached Brahmā's world, and will stay here as long as Brahmā lives (here). Since the bones of the thief who died on a dry ground did not fall in the water of this holy place, he went to heaven, O king. Finding out his body also quickly drop it into (the water of) this place, so that, O best god, he too will obtain our state. Good men should always oblige others. They should never mind even a very bad turn done by the bad.

Nārada said:

37-49. Speaking like this the two illustrious ones went to Viṣṇu's city(?) due to their bones being dropped into the water of the holy place of Haridvāra. O illustrious one, the merchant looked for the thief's body to burn it; but, O king, he did not find it. Again returning to that crest-jewel of all holy places, viz. Haridvāra, O great king, he bathed there only with the desire: 'Having produced good sons, having pleased brāhmaṇas and my kinsmen by (giving them) wealth earned righteously, and having propitiated Viṣṇu by serving him, and having died at you (i.e. at this holy place) only, I shall go to Viṣṇu's abode. O lord of the holy places, salutation to you. You must do this.' With this desire, O king, the merchant bathed with all his servants at that holy place giving all desired objects, and then went home. Having gone there the intelligent one produced sons on his wife and pleased his kinsmen by (giving them) wealth earned righteously. O king, having propitiated Lakṣmī's lord with great devotion, he died at this holy place, due to which he would reach

Vaikuṇṭha. O king, I have thus described to you the greatness of this holy place Haridvāra. Listen to the fruit (obtained) by listening to it. A man would obtain that fruit which he would obtain by giving a droṇa (approximately 30 kilograms) of sesamum seeds (to a brāhmaṇa) in Māgha. The fruit due to listening to (the account of) the greatness of this (holy place) is the same as by giving gopīcandana, and eating from brahma-leaves(?). The same fruit as is obtained on keeping awake in the last watch of the Prabodhinī Ekādaśī would be obtained by listening to (the account of) the greatness of this holy place. There is no other holy place on the earth, giving the fruit of the four goals of human life, like this Haridvāra in Indraprastha.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHTEEN

The Greatness of Puṣkara: Puṇḍarīka's Story

Nārada said:

1-2. O illustrious one, listen to the very wonderful greatness, causing propitiousness, of the holy place Puṣkara, situated here. Viṣṇu, the lord of all gods, being pleased due to the grace of that holy place would live in Puṇḍarīka's house for a month. His younger brother, though engaged in committing sins, obtained salvation here only.

Śibi said:

3-5. Who is that righteous Puṇḍarīka? What act did he do, due to which the lord, being pleased, lived in his house? O sage, tell me all that how his sinful younger brother reached Śrī Hari's place due to the grace of this holy place. Listening to its greatness I am not being satisfied.

Nārada said:

6-9. In the Vidarbha-city, there lived a brāhmaṇa called Mālava, who was very famous, who knew the Vedas, who was tranquil, learned and highly devoted to Viṣṇu, who worshipped

deities, sages, dead ancestors, and fed beings and men. He was not addicted to the objects of senses, and was free from greed and folly. Once that illustrious one went to bathe to the very holy Godāvarī, when Jupiter had entered the Zodiacal sign Leo. To offer (to brāhmaṇas) there he took ten thousand palas of gold from his house. The righteous one going along the way thought in his mind:

Mālava said (to himself):

10-16. From my house I have taken ten thousand palas of gold to be given (to brāhmaṇas). They are not to be given to anyone. They are to be given to a respectable good man. That which is given at the proper place and time to a worthy brāhmaṇa who has not rendered any service (to the giver), would be inexhaustible. The righteous sage, himself living by gleaning corn, having given what was obtained by gleaning corn to Durvāsas, gave up his own position, and went to the highest one. King Bali, the lord of the demons, knowing Vāmana to be a worthy recipient, gave him, even his enemy, the three worlds earned with his own arms (i.e. power). Therefore, to please Viṣṇu, I should give my wealth, earned righteously, to a worthy recipient. I should not long for its fruit. My sister's son, the pious Puṇḍarīka, who is the crest-jewel of all worthy recipients, will come when called from (the city) called Gaja. Half of the wealth brought by me I shall give to that worthy recipient, my sister's son. The remaining I shall duly give to learned brāhmaṇas.

Nārada said:

17-21. O king, then that best, pious brāhmaṇa Mālava, reached after a few days the holy Godāvarī. His sister's son, Puṇḍarīka, the pious one, joined him. O king, he had come there before that Mālava. Having duly bathed there, on the day when (the Sun) entered Leo, he gave half of his wealth to Puṇḍarīka, saying, "May Viṣṇu be pleased with me." That pious Puṇḍarīka also, having bathed in the water of Godāvarī, gladly gave the fourth part of his wealth to learned brāhmaṇas. He (i.e. Mālava), having bathed there and given gifts according to his capacity, spoke to his sister's son who was going home, O king:

Mālava said:

22-27. Tell (i.e. convey) my salutation to the elders and blessings to the younger, since, our union here has become (i.e. proved) to be momentary. Similarly our union with our sons, wife is momentary. Therefore, that wise man who gets detached from the mundane existence, where the union is momentary, would certainly be fit for Viṣṇu's favour. Due to viṣṇu's grace, a being would be interested in good company. Then in him is produced a desire to hear about Viṣṇu's playful acts. Having heard Viṣṇu's playful acts narrated by the good, he with a strong desire narrates them and then merely remembers Viṣṇu. Then he has love for serving Viṣṇu's feet. Then a man quickly crosses (the mundane existence) as a great ocean with a raft. For this reason, the good, the wise exert in deeds. O pious one, therefore, you also exert.

Nārada said:

28-34. Thus speaking, he, with his face bedewed with tears, dismissed his sister's son, with his eyes full of tears and went (home). The pious Puṇḍarīka also proceeded to his house. O king, after a few days, he came to this auspicious place. He saw his younger brother called Bharata, fallen on the ground, breathing, and smeared with blood flowing out of his wounds. Weeping loudly, he asked his brother: "Due to what are you reduced to this condition? For what purpose have you come here from (your) house?" O lord of kings, when Puṇḍarīka was asking like this Bharata afflicted by great pain, instantly died. O king, while men and his preceptor were watching, a wonderful vehicle with attendants descended from the sky. Having got into it, that Bharata, though he had committed sins, became one of a divine body, saluted his elder brother, and said these words to him:

Bharata said:

35-44a. O very intelligent Puṇḍarīka, due to the grace of this holy place, Puṣkara, I, though a sinner, secured a position in heaven. O brother, though you know my fierce deed, yet I shall today tell it (again), (because) some (part of it) is unknown to you. I dallied with the prostitute Prabhāvatī, and spent much

money on liquor in her house. I lost in gambling whatever wealth I had earned by stealing. I ate the remnants of the offering to Śiva on Śivarātri, for which you blamed a brāhmaṇa named Jebuka. O Puṇḍarīka, you know this deed which I did. O brother, you do not know the deed which I did when you went to Godāvarī. I shall tell you that also. When you had left, and a fortnight had passed, I learnt from people words difficult to be borne by a man, viz. that the maternal uncle had called Puṇḍarīka to give him wealth. 'Having killed Puṇḍarīka, my uterine brother, I shall snatch away the wealth taken by him which (our) maternal uncle has given him; and with that great wealth I shall please Prabhāvatī. I shall play with a gamester and those who know it (i.e. gambling).'

44b-47. Thinking like this I remained blocking your way, to kill you and to take much wealth from you, O you very intelligent one. When the wealth was (to be) taken possession of (by me), O brother, from somewhere a caravan of merchants came, where I had slept at night, O very intelligent one. Then at night a thief entered the place full of the men of the caravan to snatch the wealth of the merchants. When the thief, after having taken some wealth, ran away the servants, crying, suddenly ran after him.

The servants said:

48. Catch him, catch him. He is a thief going away hurriedly after having snatched much wealth in the midst of us (though) many.

Bharata said:

49-54. O brother, having heard these words of them, I suddenly ran after him in front of them with a desire to seize whatever he had snatched. Then the merchants' servants with swords in their hands, taking me to be his protector, and having a sword in my hand, struck me quickly. I, a sinner, killed an excellent brāhmaṇa among them (though he was) saying, 'I am a brāhmaṇa', with a sharp-edged sword. The merchants' servants killed me with edges of swords (i.e. sharp-edged swords). In the morning the merchants went to the kingdom where they wanted to go. Then you came here and saw me breathing and with my body smeared with blood flowing (from the wounds),

and dead due to unconsciousness caused by the injury. O brother, I have thus told you what for I had come here, and I have also told you how I met with a premature death.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINETEEN

The Greatness of Puṣkara; Puṇḍarīka Attains Absorption into Viṣṇu

Nārada said:

1. Hearing these words of him, the noble-minded Puṇḍarīka spoke to his brother, when his companions were listening:

Puṇḍarīka said:

2. O Bharata, tell me if you know due to which religious merit you died at this holy place. Your sin is quite well-known.

Bharata said:

3-7. O Puṇḍarīka, listen. I am telling you which religious merit I did in this existence, which gave (i.e. brought) me (to) this holy place. Once, after having snatched wealth, I, while coming back to my house, saw a dead, helpless child of someone in the market. Putting it on my head, taking it to the auspicious bank of Gaṅgā and adorning it with a garment etc. I performed his funeral rites like burning his body. I spent all the wealth I had obtained through gambling. Due to that religious merit I secured (i.e. I reached) this holy place, bringing auspiciousness. Perform funeral rites of my body after burning it.

Śrī Nārada said:

8-16. O king, when the funeral rites were performed, even the sinful Bharata went to heaven by the favour of this holy place. Now listen as to how Viṣṇu, Hari, lived for a month in Puṇḍarīka's house by the favour of this holy place. The pious one seeing that Bharata got felicity at this holy place, thought in

his mind that this holy place gives desired objects. That wise Puṇḍarīka bathed at this holy place with this desire: 'May Viṣṇu in his original form live in my house during the month of Māgha'. Having bathed with this desire he went home. O best king, Puṇḍarīka told his brothers about the death of Bharata at this holy place giving all (desired) objects. They too, with their minds covered by Māyā, having heard it, lamented. Then Puṇḍarīka, doing his (usual) rites at home, and being highly delighted, lived in his house thinking that Viṣṇu would come due to his penance. On the full-moon day of Pauṣa he celebrated a great festival, thinking that Hari would certainly come to his house the next day. He adorned his house by sprinkling it with sandal mixed with water, smearing it with cow-dung, and by arranging the quadrangle with pearls. He fed two hundred brāhmaṇas with various kinds of food. He gratified them with profuse presents.

17-21. Singing at night with those skilled in playing on various musical instruments and singing sweet songs, he kept awake with his kinsmen. In the morning having dismissed all those singers etc., he with his mind longing for Viṣṇu's arrival sat in his house. Then sending back his vehicle from the vicinity of his (i.e. Puṇḍarīka's) house, he (i.e. Viṣṇu) entered his house to do what was desired by his man. That Puṇḍarīka, having seen that Viṣṇu to have arrived, quickly got up from his seat, and saluted him by (bending down) his head, O king. That pious one, delighted to see Viṣṇu, having worshipped him by offering him materials of worship etc. said to him, seated on a seat:

Puṇḍarīka said:

22-29. You have very clearly done what removes the torment of the mundane existence. O Viṣṇu, you, causing preservation, stay here, till this pure penance would come to an end. Your Vaikuṇṭha, free from all blemishes, exists there only where all your servants, serving (you) live. We have heard from the mouths of the good that, O lord, Viṣṇu lives in that house where your deeds are described. They indeed are the good, in whose speech remains your name, in whose hearts remains your handsome form, and in whose ears remain your virtues. They indeed are the good whose heart (longs) for your service, and on whose heads are the remains of an offering to you. O lord of Lakṣmī, they

alone are the good whose mind (views equally) their enemy and their friend, so also their gain and loss. O lord of Lakṣmī, they alone are the good whose mind is not affected by emotions. The good live where you live; you live where the good live. So knowing (me) to be good live in my house during (the month of) Māgha.

Nārada said:

30. Viṣṇu, having heard these words of that Puṇḍarīka, and brightening the quarters with the lustre of his teeth, said (these) words:

The lord said:

31-33. O you very intelligent one, you are the best among the virtuous men on the earth, since with a desire for my company you bathed at the holy place. O brāhmaṇa, get up. Bathe in the water of Gaṅgā in Māgha. At the end of Māgha, on the full-moon day, I shall bathe you at Puṣkara. All that entire fruit due to bathing in the month of Māgha at Prayāga, would be (obtained) due to bathing (just) on one day at the holy place, Puṣkara.

Nārada said:

34-42a. That best brāhmaṇa, Puṇḍarīka, thus addressed by Viṣṇu, bathed in the water of Gaṅgā, when the sun had slightly risen. Puṇḍarīka actually worshipped the lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu) with tulasī(-leaves), blooming flowers, barley, saffron, sandal, and he waved five lights of camphor before the lord of Lakṣmī, whose body was made fragrant with incenses of agaru. Having fed the lord of the world with four kinds of food, he fanned him lying on a jewelled bed with chowries. He shampooed the feet of the lord of Lakṣmī. He gave him a tāmbūla with camphor. Taking a mirror in his hand the best brāhmaṇa stood in front of Lakṣmī's lord when he was tying the turban. Thus the brāhmaṇa passed the entire month of Māgha in worshipping (Viṣṇu) destroying the mundane existence and living in his house. Then on the full-moon day at the end of Māgha, he saw Garuḍa waiting in front of him, who had come there on merely being remembered by the lord of Lakṣmī. Seeing him, the lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu) said to Puṇḍarīka:

The lord said:

42b-46. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to the words which I am speaking to you. I have given you—viz. that I lived (in your house) for a month—(what was desired by you), when you had by chance gone to the holy place Puṣkara situated in Indraprastha for a bath. O you very intelligent one, today having mounted upon the lord of birds with me go to that Puṣkara (again) which is the crest-jewel of all holy places. O brāhmaṇa, since I am at your disposal, I shall give you, bathing at the place giving the four goals of human life, whatever you desire. Your brother Bharata, though a sinner, desiring heaven got it when he died there. What else can be spoken about him?

Nārada said:

47-52. O lord of kings, having thus spoken to the best brāhmaṇa and putting him on the lord of birds, he came to that best holy place. From Puṇḍarīka's body a flash went out along with his vital breath and reached Viṣṇu's position. O king, Puṇḍarīka, by means of a bath at the holy place Puṣkara, situated in Indraprastha, obtained absorption into the lord. Thus by the solicitation of the holy place, even Viṣṇu happily lived in his house like his relative. Who can describe the greatness of Puṣkara situated in Indraprastha? I have described only a part equal to one fraction of a crore. O king, by devoutly listening to or by reciting the greatness, a man obtains the fruit of a horse-sacrifice.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTY

The Greatness of Prayāga: Mohinī's Story

Nārada said:

1-4. To you I am describing devoutly the very meritorious greatness of the auspicious Prayāga, the principal among holy places. O king, there was a gandharva (named) Viśvāvasu, well-known in the world. Once he went to Brahmā's assembly on Sumeru to sing. Viśvāvasu saw there the lord of gods resorted to

by all hosts of gods, seated on an excellent seat, O king. O king, near the seat of Brahmā he saw Indraprastha, as if it was another lord of the world, seated on an excellent seat.

5-8. He saw the lord of gods and the chief of holy places waving chowries on the heads of Brahmaprastha and Indraprastha, O king. O king, he also saw there other divine holy places, standing with the palms of their hands joined in obeisance, at a distance from the two. In front of the two he sang an excellent Gāndharva-rāga. Leaving the gods he went to Satyaloka with the holy places. Then, O lord of kings, the intelligent Viśvāvasu, seeing the grandeur of the holy place Indraprastha, spoke these words to Hāhā.

Viśvāvasu said:

9-13. O best of gandharvas, in the world this holy place called Indraprastha is very wonderful among the heaps of (i.e. many) holy places, since he was seated on a seat near that of Brahmā who is the lord of the movable and the immovable, and whose lotus-like feet are saluted by the gods. Even the chief of the holy places standing behind, waved chowries on his head, (thus) becoming his servant. Then what can be said about other holy places? (All) the holy places that are there grant as a fruit (of a visit to them) the three goals of human life; but this holy place Indraprastha grants (all) the four goals. The holy places stationed here are Dhruva in merits. Their great merits cannot be described even by Śeṣa.

Nārada said:

14. O king, the intelligent Viśvāvasu, seeing the grandeur of Indraprastha like this, which was purifying and giving all desired objects, went home.

15-20. As Śakra, lord of Śacī, is the greatest among gods, and Brahmā is superior to him, so is this Prayāga the best of all holy places. Indraprastha is superior even to that, O great king. O king, I shall tell you the account of the prostitute Mohinī, which took place at Prayāga which is seen within it. O king, on the bank of river Narmadā there is the city Māhiṣmatī. In it was a prostitute named Mohinī, who had ample wealth, was endowed with beauty and youth, and skilled in dancing and singing.

She, greedy of wealth, committed many sins. She killed seven brāhmaṇas and many maid servants. She, the sinful one, also many times caused their abortions. In this way she passed her good (i.e. valuable) youth in sinful acts.

21-28. Then after some time old age came to her body. She with her body afflicted by old age and with her desire for sensual objects gone, did not have a longing for young men, nor did they have (any longing) for her, O king. About her wealth, earned sinfully, she did not confide in anyone. She did not give it (to anyone); she did not enjoy it herself; she did not deposit it somewhere. Once, at night, she being awakened, thought like this: 'Whose will this wealth earned sinfully be when I am dead? It will take me to a dreadful hell. The maid servants and their husbands will enjoy that wealth of me. Then now, why should I not make a good use of it?' Thinking like this, she resolved upon doing righteous acts and constructed gardens, tanks, wells, reservoirs of water and temples. Near the city she fixed a place where water is distributed to travellers in summer; and she gave them food (also), O great king. Near her house she put up a guest house for foreigners to stay in. And she also gave them excellent food.

29-37. O king, when that Mohinī was thus engaged in righteous acts, in course of time old age came to her, and sometime she thought: 'Though I have spent much money on righteous acts, yet I still have much more wealth in (the form of) gold, silver etc. I shall voluntarily give it to learned brāhmaṇas.' Thus she thought. Thinking like this Mohinī invited the brāhmaṇas of the city. O king, when they, realising that the acceptance of the wealth from her was fearful, she divided her wealth into two parts. O king, she gave one part to her maid servants and the other to foreigners. She herself became destitute. Knowing that her death was imminent, her maid servants left her, took the wealth, and went (away) as they liked thinking that wealth which would be given by her when she would be free from fever (was already with them). She, after having observed eighteen fasts, was then free from fever, as (a part of the span of) her life was still left, O king. O king, she had one maid named Jaradgavā. Being careful, she actively waited upon her with (i.e. by giving her) salutary diet etc.

38-43. After a few days she was fit to take full diet. With (a sense of) shame she ate in the house of that Jaradgavā. 'Here (i.e. in the world) I have lived happily. Now misery has come to me. I shall not live in poverty.' Thinking like this, she went elsewhere. While she was going to a forest, the thieves of the city, thinking 'This is Mohinī, going after taking wealth', struck her. O king, not finding wealth with her, they left her breathing in that very forest. Then, O king, some anchorite, carrying water from Prayāga in a water-pot came to the forest. Then seeing her fallen with her body wounded by weapons and asking for the water by means of signs made by her hand,

The anchorite said:

44-50. Who are you? Who has wounded your body with sharp weapons? Why have you, all alone, come to this lonely forest? O auspicious one, with a desire to do good this water of Prayāga, situated in Indraprastha, is brought by me due to good luck.

Thus addressed by him, she, unable to speak, opened her mouth to drink water, with the desire, 'May I be a queen'. O king, when this water of Prayāga was dropped into her mouth, that prostitute Mohinī gave up her life. At the time of her departure she longed for the status of a queen. Therefore, she, being born in the house of the lord of Kerala, became due to drinking the water of the holy place, the wife of king Vīravarman endowed with (good) family, (good) character, wealth, prosperity, in the Draviḍa country. The lotus-eyed one had a body yellowish like gold. Therefore, her father named her 'Hemāṅgī'.

51-53. Once that Hemāṅgī, adorned with golden ornaments, went to the house of Kalā, her friend and the minister's daughter. There she was bathed (after being smeared) with barley oil, was fed with various foods, and was seated on an excellent seat. With her braid tied with flowers, and adorned with thin silken garments, and having a tāmbūla in her mouth, she said to Kalā:

Hemāṅgī said:

54. O Kalā, speaking sweetly but indistinctly like a cuckoo, understand my words. Show me the thing which is wonderful in your house.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYONE

The Greatness of Prayāga: Hemāṅgī and Vīravarman Go to Vaikuṇṭha

Nārada said:

1-3. O king, that Kalā, thus addressed by the king's wife, got brought a golden box from her treasure, and put it before (her). She said, "O queen, O wife of the great king, this is a very wonderful book. There are pictures in it. Having opened the book a little, see what it contains. By seeing the pictures in it your mind will be delighted."

4-12. Thus addressed by her, the queen got the box opened by her maid and took with her hand the book that was in it. In it she first saw succinctly (the pictures of) the incarnations. Then she saw the globe having an expanse of fifty crores of yojanas. In it she saw a region full of darkness. Between the two stood the Lokāloka mountain, O king. Then she saw the seven islands surrounded by seven seas. So also in them, she saw rivers, mountains and continents, O very wise one. The wife of the king saw this Bhāratakhaṇḍa. She saw the chief rivers like Yamunā, Gaṅgā. O king, the illustrious one saw this auspicious Indraprastha along with Vraja on the bank of Yamunā. O king, the high-minded one seeing in it the holy place fashioned by Brahmā, recollected the act(s) done by her in her former birth. Then silently getting up she, determining, 'I shall not eat (food) till I leave for the holy place', hurriedly went home. Then only, that Hemāṅgī, loving the chief holy place, said to king Vīravarman, dear to her like her own life:

Hemāṅgī said:

13-19. O lord of my life, listen to my righteous words, and carry them out quickly, O illustrious one. (My desire) will be fulfilled. Formerly I was a prostitute. I committed many sins in my youth and in my old age I had a mind to do pious acts. I spent righteously the wealth I had earned sinfully. O king, when I who was penniless, went out of my city and was going in a forest, thieves who were sinful, who were tormented by improper poverty, struck me, with a desire to grab (my) wealth. The

thieves, with their desires frustrated, leaving me, with my body wounded with sharp weapons, and breathing (but) unconscious, there, went (away). Then an anchorite carrying the water of Prayāga situated in Indraprastha, came into that forest. The ascetic seeing me lying in that condition there asked me: "Who are you? Wherefrom (have you come)? Why and by whom were you hit?"

20-24. I then did not say anything, but asked for that holy water. He put it into my mouth, and I abandoned (my) body. Hearing that that water fulfils all desires, I desired, O lord, at the time of the departure of my life: 'May I be (born as) a queen.' Due to the grace of that holy place I became your wife practising acts of a good family and of a very good character. O king, now I desire to see, along with you, that chief holy place Prayāga situated in Indraprastha and giving all desired objects. O king, I have taken this pledge that I shall eat food only when I proceed to that chief holy place, O lord.

The king said:

25. O you of unsteady eyes, how would I know (to be true) what you said? Convince me, O good one; I would do what you said.

Nārada said:

26a. When the king said like this, there was a voice in the sky.

The divine voice said:

26b-27. O king, your wife has spoken the truth. Having gone to the auspicious Prayāga, the best of all holy places situated in Indraprastha, bathe there; you will get whatever you desire.

Nārada said:

28-33. Having heard the words coming from the sky the king prostrated himself on the ground like a staff, and said, "I salute him who spoke those words." Then having called his minister, and having entrusted the kingdom to him, he, getting into an excellent chariot, went with her to the excellent holy place. After a few days the king came here with Hemāṅgī. The king with his wife drank the water at the chief holy place. The

couple bathed there at that auspicious holy place, giving all desired objects, desiring 'May I reach Vaikuṇṭha with this body.' When the couple had just bathed there, the best gods (Brahmā and Viṣṇu) having the swan and the eagle respectively as their vehicles arrived there. Seeing them who had come there, that king Vīravarman, with a concentrated mind, saluted by (bowing) his head, and praised them.

The king said:

34-41. Salutation to you, O best gods, having dark and tawny bodies and wearing garments like gold and red lead. I salute you, having mainly (qualities of) sattva and rajas, the wonderful lords of Vaikuṇṭha and Satyaloka, having four and two hands, and carried by best birds. I salute by (bowing) my head bent through good thoughts, you, giving good liberation and pleasures to men having detachment and attachment, and with your lotus-like feet saluted by gods. O you whose lotus-like feet are saluted by gods, nobody knows your original form, since you are beyond Prakṛti and transcend the mind and speech of man. O you highest soul, that man is blessed who, thinking this world to be transitory, resorts to your lotus-like feet saluted by hosts of sages. This holy place, where your feet are resorted to, is indeed difficult to be reached by men worshipping you, and it gives all desired objects. Yet these two are to be resorted to for salvation, not secured through any other (means). He who resorts to it with any other desire (than salvation) is (indeed) duped. Desiring to conquer all worlds the good, resorting to you and to this place giving salvation, do not long for anything except it.

Nārada said:

42. When having thus praised the lord of gods and the lord of the worlds, the king remained (silent), then that Hemāṅgī spoke, O king:

Hemāṅgī said:

43-46. O lord of Lakṣmī, O you having eyes like lotus petals, O Brahman having a high seat, and venerable to Sarasvatī, I salute you; if you favour me of a mean heart, then (help me to) cross this ocean of the mundane existence. O lord, due to the

grace of this holy place I became a queen. I had your view difficult to be had even by gods. You two know the hearts of all; you have given us the best, which we two had longed for at the time of bathing.

The best gods, thus praised by both, had their faces pleased, and they said to the couple:

Viṣṇu and Brahmā said:

47-48. O Hemāṅgī, you are blessed since you, due to the contact with this holy place, have emancipated your husband whose mind was attached to the pleasures of the kingdom. Such a salvation is difficult to get for kings attached to objects of senses. Your husband has a wife like you due to the grace of this holy place.

Nārada said:

49-53. Speaking like this, and looking at Garuḍa, the best of birds, the two best gods (and the couple) went to Satyaloka, O lord of men. There they (the couple) were all duly honoured by Brahmā, O king. Then they stayed there for some time at the request of him. O king, then with the couple Viṣṇu, mounting on Garuḍa, went to Śrī Vaikuṇṭha. O king, I have thus told you the greatness of the chief holy place, which is meritorious, destroys all sins, leads to success and gives sons. A man who would listen to or read this account daily would go to his desired place. I have told the truth.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYTWO

Kāśī, Gokarṇa, Śivakāñcī, Tīrthasaptaka and Bhīmakuṇḍa

Nārada said:

1-8. O king Śibi, listen. I am describing to you the excellent, meritorious greatness of Kāśī giving success and long life. O king, formerly in the auspicious Kṛtayuga there was a tree called

śiṁśapā in Kāśī situated on the slope of Indraprastha. There was a crow that had made its nest on the tree; and below it in the hollow (of the tree) lived a great serpent. Once his wife laid a couple of eggs in the nest and went somewhere. She did not come back to her nest. O king, that crow took care of the couple of eggs; lived high up on that śiṁśapā tree only. Once at night a great storm came and it broke the śiṁśapā tree from its root though strong. Then at the root of the śiṁśapā tree shattered by the storm, the crow and the serpent were crushed and died. The tree, śiṁśapā tree, (the serpent and) the crow etc. had divine bodies, and getting into three aeroplanes, went to Viṣṇu's abode.

Śibi said:

9. O divine sage, due to what religious merit did they reach the city giving salvation? Who were they before that? Tell (me) all that, O Nārada.

Nārada said:

10-14. There was a brāhmaṇa named Śravaṇa in the Kurujāṅgala country. His wife was Kuṇḍā by name, and his brother was Kuraṇṭaka. That Śravaṇa ate, without having bathed (first), sweetmeats. Due to that sin he became (i.e. was born as) a village crow. His brother Kuraṇṭaka was a strong atheist. He stopped (following) the path laid down by Śrutis and Smṛtis, and censured deities. Due to that fault he became a deadly serpent after his death. Śravaṇa's wife Kuṇḍā shared the sins of both (of them). Therefore, she got the condition of an immobile object (viz. the tree) which was resorted to by both (Śravaṇa and Kuraṇṭaka). O king, I have told you this that happened in their former existence.

15-20. Hereafter I shall tell you about their religious merit due to which they reached the charming city of the lord of the world, viz. Kāśī, O king. Once they were returning home from another village. Seeing the cow of a traveller fallen into a well and being urged by him they took her out. Hearing what they told, Kuṇḍā said: 'Well (done).' Due to that religious merit they met with death at Kāśī, on the slope of Indraprastha, which is difficult to have, and went up to Vaikuṇṭha. O king, I have told you this excellent greatness of Kāśī. Tell me what else you desire to hear.

Śibi said:

21-22. O sage, you mentioned three holy places of Śiva: Kāśī and Śivakāñcī, and the other (i.e. the third) one, viz. Gokarṇa. O great sage, you have told me the greatness of one viz. Kāśī, Tell me, if there is any, the greatness of Gokarṇa and Śivakāñcī.

Nārada said:

23-30. O king, Gokarṇa is a very purifying holy place of Śiva only. A man dying there would be Śiva; there is no doubt about it. If a being would die there on land, in water or in the air, he after becoming Śiva, shines on the peak of Kailāsa. One dying here at the holy place of Gokarṇa is not born again. Shining like Śiva, one obtains salvation at any time. O king, O lord, O very intelligent one, I shall describe to you the greatness of this Gokarṇa also, which I had heard from Brahmā's mouth. This frontier mountain of a meritorious appearance is seen near Gurutīrtha at a distance of two miles from Prayāga. On it was a very cruel bhilla named Karkaṭa. His wife was Jarā by name. She had killed (her) five husbands. That Jarā prepared a sweetmeat (mixed) with poison to kill Karkaṭa, (her) sixth husband. The noble bhilla heard about it from the mouth of his sister. That very cruel Karkaṭa set about killing that young woman.

31-39a. When the king of the bhillas, with a sword in his hand, came to kill her, she, realising that he was ready to kill her, went (away). Being frightened and desiring (to save) her life she ran to a forest. That Karkaṭa, with a sword in his hand, seized her here at the holy place of Gokarṇa. Having cut off her head with the sword, and having dropped her body into the water of the holy place Gokarṇa, he went to his place. That sinful Jarā also met with death there at Gokarṇa. She became the friend of Pārvatī on the peak of Kailāsa. I have told you this glory of Gokarṇa. I shall describe to you the holy greatness of Śivakāñcī. O lord, the same bliss which I told (is obtained) in Gokarṇa is also obtained in Śivakāñcī situated on the slope of Indraprastha. Here god Śiva, on propitiating Viṣṇu, the lord of all gods, obtained the status of the chief devotee and metaphysical knowledge.

Therefore, we all, the sons of Brahman, always propitiate him, with a desire to get good devotion and knowledge.

39b-48. O king, here the demon Bāṇa, observing a fast, propitiated Maheśvara for a hundred years with a desire to have qualities like him. The god was pleased with him and gave him the status of his attendant. And he himself became forever the protector of his city. O king, this city formerly belonged to the magnanimous Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu, pleased with the penance of Śiva, gave it to him. Here formerly a very wonderful event took place. A brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Śiva, reached Vaikuṇṭha here. O king, there was a religious brāhmaṇa by name Heramba. With his body, mind and words he was always engaged in worshipping Śiva. O king Śibi, once the noble one, Śiva's devotee, while visiting places holy to Śiva, came here to Śivakāñcī. The intelligent one did not leave this charming (holy place). Later he died in its water. There only the attendants of Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva) took the best brāhmaṇa and proceeded to the Kailāsa mountain by his (i.e. Śiva's) order. In the middle came the attendants of Viṣṇu from Vaikuṇṭha. They forcibly set out to take that best brāhmaṇa from them. There was a great battle between the attendants of Viṣṇu and Śiva.

49-56. In that battle none got victory or defeat. Viṣṇu, seated on Garuḍa, came there from Vaikuṇṭha. Śiva, the supporter of the three worlds, seated on his bull, also (came) there from Kailāsa. Then the two looking at each other's face, laughed (i.e. smiled) and only watched the great battle waged by their attendants in the sky. Then Viṣṇu warded his own attendants and those of Śiva off the battle in the sky, and putting the brāhmaṇa on Garuḍa, Viṣṇu went to Śiva's abode, surrounded by Śiva, Śiva's attendants and his own attendants. The glorious one while going along the way was saluted by gods. Led by Śiva he entered his abode, showing the brāhmaṇa the beauty of it. Then from that Kailāsa, Viṣṇu, saluted by Śiva with great devotion went to Vaikuṇṭha. The glorious brāhmaṇa also obtained the sight of Viṣṇu due to the grace of this holy place and enjoyed in the vicinity of Viṣṇu. O king, I have told you this grandeur of Śivakāñcī.

57-64. Listen very attentively to (the holy place) named Tīrthasaptaka. O great king, this holy place gives the fruit of the

four goals of human life (to one who) visits it, comes in its contact, thinks about it or even (merely) remembers it. O king, great sages like Vasiṣṭha stayed there and practised severe penance for the creation. The religious Marīci also bathed here for (getting) a son; and the glorious one obtained an excellent son, viz. Kaśyapa. Atri also pleased here the best gods by his penance, and obtained three sons from them—Soma, Durvāsas and Datta. The pious Aṅgiras also obtained, due to the favour of this holy place, sons. They, the brāhmaṇas, viz. the Āṅgirasas, were born in his family. Pulaha also got a son, Dambholi, of excellent virtues, who was, O king, Agastya in olden times. By bathing in this holy place Pulastya, practising penance, got a son, the glorious Kubera, Śiva's friend. Kratu too had thousands of sons (called) Vālakhilyas.

65-67. Due to the favour of this holy place they were perpetual celibates. Vasiṣṭha too, practising severe penance, got seven sons, Raja and others. O best king, I have described its greatness. O king, there are many other holy places also, like Kapilāśrama, Kedāra, Prabhāsa. O king, their greatness cannot be described even by Ananta even during a million years; then how (can it be described) by (persons) like me?

Saubhari said:

68-71. Having spoken like this, Nārada, the best sage, extolling Viṣṇu's virtues went to Śiva from the sky. O king, Auśīnara Śibi, having heard about the grandeur of Indraprastha from the sage's mouth, regarded himself blessed. The king, having duly bathed there at Indraprastha, and having performed all auspicious rites, went to his city. O lord, I have described to you the greatness of Indraprastha, the holy place purifying people and situated on the bank of Yamunā.

72-77. O best king, in Kali (age), people, void of faith, will not have regard for this Indraprastha, the crest-jewel of all holy places. That fruit which is obtained by listening to the eighteen Purāṇas and Bhārata is produced by (listening to) the greatness of Indraprastha. That fruit which is obtained by means of a lakh of baths at dawn in the month of Māgha would be had by devoutly listening to (the description of) the greatness of this (holy place). O king, he who devoutly listens to (the description of) its

greatness, would gratify his dead ancestors, gods and sages. That fruit which is had by means of the vows like Kṛcchra, Atikṛcchra, Parāka, and Cāndrāyaṇa, would be had by devoutly listening to (the description of) its greatness. O king, that fruit which is due to all sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice would be had by devoutly listening to (the description of) its greatness.

Sūta said:

78-80. King Yudhiṣṭhira having thus heard the greatness of Indraprastha from Śaunaka Saubhari, went to Hastināpura. Then having instructed his brothers led by Duryodhana, he went to the auspicious Indraprastha with a desire to perform a Rājasūya sacrifice. Having brought from Dvārakā, Kṛṣṇa, his family-deity, the king performed the Rājasūya sacrifice.

81-85. Thinking that this holy place could give salvation even to the abusive (Śiśupāla), Kṛṣṇa killed Śiśupāla there. Śiśupāla too, due to dying at that holy place only, got absorbed into Kṛṣṇa, giving all (desired) objects. Bhīma fashioned a very extensive pool at the place where Śiśupāla was killed, and the (Rājasūya) sacrifice was performed. Bhīma fashioned there a very extensive pool with his mace. It is known as Bhīmakuṇḍa, and has become purifying on the earth. There is no doubt that that fruit which is had by bathing in Yamunā at Indraprastha is had (by bathing) in that pool.

Sūta said:

86-90. That holy place will forgive the faults of a living being who stays there by practices like going round it for a year. The man who goes round it every year, would not be tinged with the evils (committed) at the holy place and sins. He who does not go round (it) does not get sanctification at the holy place. Therefore, those who desire a fruit should go round it. He who reciting Viṣṇu's names goes round it, obtains at every step the fruit of presenting a brown cow. The man who goes round Indraprastha on the fourteenth day of the dark half of Caitra, is blessed, and is freed from all sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYTHREE

Gem of a Formula

Śaunaka said:

1-2. O glorious Sūta, you are blessed that you make us, plunged very much in the ocean of the mundane existence, drink a large quantity of nectar. O good one, tell us, desiring to cross the worldly existence, the gem of a formula, pure due to devotion, of which the mobile and the immobile are full.

Sūta said:

3-4. O Śaunaka, listen. I shall tell you the very wonderful gem of a formula, which the noble Vasiṣṭha spoke to Dilīpa. Once Dilīpa having saluted Vasiṣṭha, the best brāhmaṇa, his preceptor, asked him as you did (now).

Dilīpa said:

5-9. O revered one, you have particularly told me all the practices, so also practices with those of castes and the stages of life and the daily and occasional obligatory rites. O best sage, I have also heard the kingly duties, sacrifices, gifts (to be made) at holy places and vows etc., which give inexhaustible pleasures in heaven. Now I desire to hear about the ancient path leading to salvation. Tell me about it along which I can luckily go. What is the best of all sacred formulas, the only medicine for all the diseases in the worldly existence? What is the best formula giving salvation to all human beings? Tell all that truthfully and for the love and regard (that you have) for me.

Vasiṣṭha said:

10-11. O king, you desiring the good of all the world, have asked well. I shall, in private, tell you a great secret, emancipating (you) from the worldly existence. Formerly all holy sages intent on (performing) sacrifices and (giving) gifts, asked Nārada, Brahmā's son, the best sage:

The great sages said:

12. O revered one, by what formula shall we go to the

highest position? O glorious one, tell that to us. Please favour us.

Nārada said:

13. Formerly all meditating saints—Sanaka and others—asked in private Brahmā about the path to salvation, very difficult to be obtained.

Brahmā said:

14-20a. O meditating saints, listen to this wonderful secret. All gods and sages having penance as their wealth do not know it. The immutable god Nārāyaṇa told it to me at the beginning of the creation. He, along with the great goddess was worshipped by me. Then the immutable Nārāyaṇa was pleased with me. He gave me the status of the creator and all the literature having its origin in the Veda, so also illuminating formulas, pervasive and non-pervasive. Then I spoke to the god, the ancient Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu): "O revered one, by what formula (can) men cross the mundane existence? Tell me about it truly for the good of all people. Which of all formulas, is the one without (i.e. not requiring) initiatory rite, which gives men the highest place (even) by being uttered once (only)?"

The lord said:

20b-27. O glorious one, you, desiring the good of all the people, have asked well. Therefore, I shall tell you the secret by means of which men would reach me. Of all the formulas the gem of a formula is auspicious. It gives the highest position even when it is remembered just once. The two gems of (i.e. in) the formula (are: Lakṣmī, Nārāyaṇa). *Nyāsa* (assignment?), *Prayati* (purification?) and *Śaraṇāgati* (approaching for shelter?) are necessary. The formula 'Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa' gives all fruits. Understand in succession the names of the gem of a formula(?). Merely by its utterance I am always pleased. A man born in a (noble) family, an ascetic, one who has mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas, one who is given to (performing) sacrifices and (giving) gifts, one resorting to all holy places, so also one who has taken a vow, one who speaks the truth, or even an ascetic having knowledge—is not entitled to the formula. He should carefully avoid it.

Brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, women, and others—all are entitled to it if they are my devotees.

28-33. The excellent formula should be given to those who do not seek the shelter of any other (deity than Viṣṇu), who do not serve any other (deity than Viṣṇu), who do not (try to) reach any other (deity than Viṣṇu). Even if recited once it gives a quick fruit to the afflicted. It keeps away another (i.e. re-)birth even of haughty beings. (If) an afflicted person, or an inquisitive person, or one longing for wealth, or a wise person or a king seeks my shelter (but) once, he would obtain all his desired objects. It should not be told to him who is not initiated, to him who is not a devotee, to a proud person, to an atheist, to a greedy person, to one who is averse to (i.e. who has no) faith. It should not be told to him who has no desire to listen (to it); to him who does not abide by Śiva, to him who is free from lust, anger, hypocrisy, greed, so also to him who resorts to me with steady devotion, this excellent gem of a formula should be duly told.

34-37. (The devotee should observe) rules with regard to place and time, (should have) exact determination of foes and friends, (should know) the nyāsa,[1] mudrā[2] etc., along with the initiatory rite; he should have his body marked with (the impression of) my disc, so also do my worship, should dedicate his actions to me, should seek my shelter only. With great confidence in me he should assign all fruits to me. He should not possess anything. He should avoid talking to non-devotees of Viṣṇu or saluting them. He should also avoid saluting or worshipping other deities than (me).

38-44. Rules like this are declared for him who submits himself (to me). To a man endowed with such qualities, the excellent gem of a formula should be told. I, Nārāyaṇa, ancient Viṣṇu, am its seer; so also I, the ocean of affection, am its deity, along with Lakṣmī. I, Nārāyaṇa, the lord of the entire world, the glorious one, of a good character, fortunate, omniscient, omnipotent, with my desires always fulfilled, omnipresent, having every-

1. Nyāsa: Assignment of the various parts of the body to different deities which is usually accompanied by prayer and corresponding gesticulations.

2. Mudrā: Certain positions of the fingers practised in devotion or religious worship.

one as my relative, ocean of the nectar of pity am with Lakṣmī said to be its deity. Its metre is said to be the goddess Gāyatrī, having twentyfive syllables. He should twice assign seven, six, three, five, two or six limbs(?) He should meditate upon me, along with Lakṣmī not separated from me, of the form of the universe, having in my hands a disc, a conch, a mace, and a lotus, and of a divine form. He, being restrainted and pure, should worship me along with Lakṣmī seated on my left lap, with this gem of a formula, and with sandal, flowers and offerings. O lord of the beings, even if I am worshipped once I am pleased.

Brahmā said:

45-48. O lord, you have properly told this excellent secret, so also the power of the gem of a formula, which gives every success to men. You are the father of all the worlds, so also their mother and preceptor. You are the master, friend, brother, recourse, refuge and friend. O lord of gods, I am your servant, disciple and friend. Therefore, O you ocean of pity, you told this excellent (formula) to me. Now with the desire for the good of all people, tell fully accurately the initiation of this gem of a formula for its proper practice.

The lord said:

49-54. O child, listen, I shall tell you the great rite of the initiation of this gem of a formula. To secure my resort, a man should first resort to a preceptor. The preceptor (should be) endowed with (the knowledge of) the Veda, (should be) Viṣṇu's devotee, free from jealousy, (should) know the formula, (should be) devoted to the formula, (should) always resort to the formula and (be) pure. He should belong to a good school; he should be proficient in the science of Brahman. He should not follow any other (deity than me); should not have any other aim (than me). He should be a brāhmaṇa, free from anger, attachment, and greed. He should teach good behaviour, should long for salvation, and should know the highest soul. A preceptor, a friendly one, having these qualities, who would teach (good) practices is called a preceptor. He who depends upon his preceptor when taught good behaviour, is steady in (obeying the preceptor's) order, is said to be a disciple by the good.

55-64. A preceptor should teach the excellent gem of a formula to a disciple having these characteristics, and endowed with all virtues. On a Dvādaśī day, or when the Sun is in the Śravaṇa constellation or on some day holy to Viṣṇu, a good preceptor should initiate the pleased (disciple). He should get fashioned the Sudarśana disc or the Pāñcajanya conch out of gold, silver, copper or bell-metal. Having bathed it with pure pañcāmṛta,[1] he should worship it before me. He should duly worship it with sandal and flowers, with (the utterance of) the formula. There he should establish fire in accordance with statements from his own Gṛhya (sūtras). The preceptor, the best brāhmaṇa, should offer ghee (into the fire) to the accompaniment of the formula. He should make oblations one thousand and eight times, or one hundred and eight times with the repetition of this gem of a formula or other auspicious formulas sacred to Viṣṇu. With (the recitation of) the hymns like the Puruṣasūkta he should offer ghee and milk into fire. The best brāhmaṇa should drop the disc and the conch into that fire. The preceptor, to the accompaniment (of the formula) of six letters should offer ghee into the fire twenty times. The preceptor, taking a heated disc, should make a mark (with it) and with the conch, to the accompaniment of the formula, on the left and the right arms. Having finished the remaining rite, he should again perform the worship. Then having brought a pitcher full of pure water, having consecrated it with (that) formula only, he should sprinkle (the water) on his head.

65-67. The preceptor should teach the formula to the disciple who has put on a white garment, has sipped water, is polite, has put on the sectarian mark. He should explain the meaning of the formula, and especially its operation. The disciple who has received the formula, should honour the preceptor with ornaments etc. O best god, he who, in this manner, learns the formula from a preceptor, Viṣṇu's devotee, goes to (the place) of Viṣṇu, not otherwise.

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1. Pañcāmṛta: The collection of five sweet things used in worshipping deities. They are: milk, sugar, ghee, curd and honey.

Nārada said:

68-70. The father, Viṣṇu, having thus spoken to the Creator, marked him with his own disc, and he himself gave (i.e. taught) him the formula. O best sages, the god, that lord Brahmā, my father, the lord of all worlds, duly gave (i.e. taught) the formula to me also. Therefore, O best sages, O brāhmaṇas, you too, putting on (the mark) of the Sudarśana (disc), seek the shelter of Viṣṇu's couple of feet.

Vasiṣṭha said:

71-80. All the sages, thus addressed by Nārada, the divine sage, and entitled to the two (feet of Viṣṇu) went to the highest position of Viṣṇu. Therefore, O royal sage, you too desire absorption into Viṣṇu after putting on (the mark of) Sudarśana according to the proper rule of initiation. Seek the shelter of the two feet of Viṣṇu alone. Brahmā, the lord of all the people and the three worlds, himself told me and Nārada also this excellent formula. Nārada taught the formula, exclusive devotion (to) and seeking refuge (of Viṣṇu) to the great sages like Śaunaka living in Naimiṣāraṇya. O king, the great sages, deities, siddhas, sādhyas and demons do not know this most secret formula. I too gave to Parāśara, Śakti's son, this formula. O king, I shall tell you also this great secret—the couple of Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu, exclusive devotion (to) and seeking the refuge (of the two). There is no greater formula than the couple. I tell you the truth. In the worlds there is no practice superior to this. Formerly Brahmā told the truth, repeatedly (told) the truth that there is no other god than Viṣṇu who gives salvation to men. Service to him alone would be salvation, which would cut off (the fruits of) all acts.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYFOUR

Bearing the Marks of a Disc etc. Essential for a Brāhmaṇa

Dilīpa said:

1-3. O revered one, tell me all about (it) full of the nectar of devotion to Viṣṇu. Listening to (the account of) devotion to Viṣṇu, that brings happiness, I am not at all satisfied. O best sage, except the ocean of the nectar of devotion to Viṣṇu, what else is the refuge in the fearful forest of the mundane existence to men who are always tormented by the fires with huge flames in the form of the three torments? O great sage, tell (me) in detail the varieties of devotion to the highest soul that are constantly practised by the sages.

Vasiṣṭha said:

4-5. O lord of kings, you ask well about the means of emancipation of men from theworldly existence, viz. devotion to Viṣṇu, the highest lord, which always brings happiness. Formerly goddess Pārvatī asked the same great question to Śiva, worshipped by the world, on the peak of Kailāsa.

Pārvatī said:

6-10. O god of gods, Mahādeva, O killer of Tripura, O lord of gods, tell me about devotion to Viṣṇu, which gives salvation to all human beings. So also the different deities that are worshipped, the hymns, and the various ways of the worship, and the nature of that Viṣṇu, and his qualities like splendour, the nature of his heaven, reaching which (a devotee) does not return (to his world), and due to which the lord Viṣṇu brings about creation, maintenance and destruction. That is the great abode of Viṣṇu reaching which (men) do not return (to this world). With this or that act or means, sinful men, with their minds addicted to objects of senses, reach the highest place. Due to your love for me tell all that to me in detail.

Vasiṣṭha said:

11. Mahādeva, the killer of Tripura, thus asked by the great goddess, saluted Viṣṇu, and with great affection said (to her):

Rudra said:

12-17. Well, O great goddess, O you desiring the good of all people, you ask me well (to tell you) the excellent greatness of (Viṣṇu) the lord of Śrī. O Pārvatī, you are blessed; you have earned religious merit; you are Viṣṇu's devotee. O good one, I am always pleased with your (good) character, beauty and virtues. I shall, O Girijā, tell you about the best devotion (to Viṣṇu), the manner of (reciting) his hymns, and about his form. Viṣṇu, the ancient Vāsudeva is the truth. He is the highest soul, the highest Brahman, the highest light, and greater than the great. He is Acyuta, Puruṣa, Kṛṣṇa, the eternal one, the benevolent lord, the eternal and omnipresent one, the stable one, Rudra, the witness of everything, and the lord of created beings. He is the sacrifice, the lord of sacrifice, and actually the lord of the Veda. He is Hiraṇyagarbha, the sun, the lord creating and sustaining the worlds.

18-28. He is to be described by the letter *A*, is the lord, and the lord of Śrī, the Earth and Nīlā. He is the lord of immortality, and of that which grows with food. He has a thousand heads; he is the soul of all; he has a thousand eyes and a thousand feet. Having touched the earth on all sides, he has stood above it by ten fingers. He is Ananta, the lord of Lakṣmī, Ramā; he possesses qualities and is without them, and is great. He is the lord of all worlds, he has splendour, is omniscient, and is unlimited. O Pārvatī, I shall tell you as I can, the greatness of that Vāsudeva, the chief in the worlds, and the lord of the worlds. With Brahmā and the deities it is impossible for me to describe it, the meaning of all Upaniṣads determined in the Vedānta. I shall also tell you the kinds of his worship. Listen, I shall tell them separately. The marking with Viṣṇu's conch and disc is said to be the first (worship) of Viṣṇu. (Other varieties are:) putting on rectangular marks, accepting hymns of (i.e. holy to) him, worshipping (him), muttering, meditating (on him), recollecting his names; so also narration (of), listening to his (accounts), saluting (him), serving his feet; so also taking the water (flowing) from his feet, and taking food after offering it to him. (So also) serving those who belong to him, faith in the vow of Dvādaśī, planting the Tulasī (plant). (Thus) the devotion to Viṣṇu, the holder of the Śārṅga bow and the god of gods is said to be of

sixteen kinds for freedom from the bondage of the mundane existence. Viṣṇu is always venerable to all gods, so also to me, and especially to brāhmaṇas. Therefore, a brāhmaṇa should everyday duly worship Viṣṇu.

29-37. Having marks of his signs he doubtlessly reaches the feet (or the position) of the lord of Lakṣmī. A brāhmaṇa should have the marks of a conch and a disc at the roots of his arms, (and) for removing all sins the marks should be made after these are heated in fire. Having duly put on the mark of a disc or a conch and a disc or of the five weapons (of Viṣṇu), he should begin his religious duties. Having worn the mark of the disc heated in fire at the roots of his arms, he avoids the fearful city of Yama, and goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu. All that worship, hymns, muttering (of hymns) of him who worships Viṣṇu without (having on his body) the mark of a disc perishes. The brāhmaṇa who having marked (his body) at the roots of arms with a disc heated in fire, (then) mutters the hymn, would obtain salvation. The best brāhmaṇa having put on the mark of Sudarśana disc heated in fire and having duly made offerings should appoint (a brāhmaṇa) for the rites. All the śrāddha (offered) by him who feeds (a brāhmaṇa) without the mark of Viṣṇu on his body, becomes fruitless, and his dead ancestors leave disappointed. One should honour at a śrāddha a brāhmaṇa having (on his body) the mark of Viṣṇu's disc, and should carefully avoid one without the mark of Viṣṇu's disc (on his body). One should present a cow, land, gold to him having a mark of the disc (of Viṣṇu on his body).

38-46. Whatever is given to (a brāhmaṇa) not having the mark of a disc (on his body) is given to a demon. Those who have marks made with a disc heated in fire at the roots of their arms, get freed from all sins, and go to the highest position of Viṣṇu. To him whose body is marked with a disc heated in fire, all holy places and sacrifices have come. There is no doubt about it. A brāhmaṇa, not having (the mark of) the disc (made) duly, would be unrefined. Nothing would come to him even if he performs a thousand sacrifices. A brāhmaṇa, having knowledge not easily obtained, but not (having the mark of) the disc made duly, is condemned among all people, and would fall from the status of a brāhmaṇa. As Viṣṇu, holding the conch and disc is worshipped

by the souls (i.e. men), similarly a brāhmaṇa, having (on his body) the marks of the disc etc. deserves to be honoured by all. A brāhmaṇa, even though he knows all the Vedas, or is proficient in all holy texts, would fall without having (i.e. if he does not have) (the mark of) the disc duly made (on his body); if he is without the mark or the marks of a conch or a disc, he should be put on a donkey and be driven out of the city. Vāsudeva Janārdana is untouched by the primordial matter (Prakṛti). O goddess, a brāhmaṇa having the mark of Viṣṇu's disc is just like that. Therefore, a man should have, at the roots of his arms, the (marks of) heated disc and conch of Viṣṇu, which burn the stream of sins (produced) due to the contact of matter.

47-50. He should have, at the roots of his arms, the marks made with heated disc and conch. Women and śūdras should always have those made with scented sandal (-paste). At the root of the arm of a brāhmaṇa the mark of the disc should be made with a heated (sign). Marks with heated (signs) must be duly made (on the body) of a brāhmaṇa. For the success in (rites prescribed by) the holy and the Smṛti texts, so also for being entitled to worshipping Viṣṇu, (the mark of) the disc should be duly had. For accomplishing the status of Viṣṇu, and for getting knowledge, a man should burn his body with (i.e. have marks of) heated conch and disc, after duly having offered oblations into fire.

51-53. A brāhmaṇa should not mark his body with any other symbol than that of Viṣṇu—with other symbols than the conch, disc, mace, sword and the Śārṅga (bow) of Viṣṇu. He should burn his body with marks (made with Viṣṇu's symbols). He, whose body is burnt with (i.e. has) other marks, is not entitled to (performing) rites. One should avoid a brāhmaṇa not having the disc (-mark) from a distance. In the world one should not look at a brāhmaṇa who is not a devotee of Viṣṇu as (one does not look at) a cāṇḍāla. Viṣṇu's devotee, even if he is outside the castes, purifies the three worlds.

54-59. Therefore, O you of a charming face, brāhmaṇas should duly have marks (on their bodies). Brāhmaṇas (with their bodies marked) with Viṣṇu's disc are refined and noble for acquiring mastery of hymns, knowledge and for salvation. Brāhmaṇas without (marks of) Viṣṇu's disc are not refined. As

it is urged by the holy texts, especially brāhmaṇas, living in all stages of life, should duly have (the mark of) Viṣṇu's disc. Those who know the Vedas consider that a brāhmaṇa should have (the mark of) Sudarśana on his right arm, and (that of) the conch on the left. The wearing of (the mark of) the disc etc. is told in the Mahopaniṣad (the great Upaniṣad texts); so also in the Sāman (Veda), Yajur (Veda) and the Ṛg (Veda), O you of a beautiful face. O Viṣṇu, the other ancients have the marks of your pure lotus, disc for crossing the ocean of existence, at the roots of their arms. Others have other marks of you.

60-64. The extensive disc is known as Caraṇa. Pavitra is an old and auspicious word. Burnt by the disc they would cross the ocean of sins. Viṣṇu's disc is the lord of the hymns (brāhmaṇa-spatyam?) and has always pervaded the world. Those whose bodies are not burnt (with it) do not go to the highest position. Those whose bodies are burnt with (it) go to the highest position. Know from me the names of Viṣṇu's disc in succession: Pavitra, Caraṇa, Nemi, Sudarśana, Haricakra, Sahasrāra (having a thousand spokes), Prākṛtaghna (killer of the mean), Lokadvāra (a gate to the good world), Mahaujasa (very bright). Purify us with the Brahmanhood, pure and burnt in fire. Purify us with that Pavitra, having flames of you, O Agni.

65-69. May the Pāvamānya (hymns) purify me with the thousand-edged disc with which they always protect themselves. The disc of the Creator is bright with metal plates and golden. We knowing the hymn purify it (already) purified by it. The unaging disc with the felly is the eye of the noble one. Having put it on gods reached a high position. Therefore, (the marks of) the weapons should be duly put on particularly by brāhmaṇas, especially by Viṣṇu's devotees. The noble one of a pure heart, who having the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra (perpendicular marks of sandal on the forehead) and the mark of the disc, meditates on Viṣṇu's position, by means of singing the hymn always reaches (god Viṣṇu) higher than the highest always remaining in his heart.

70-74. Those devotees of Viṣṇu, having stuck to (i.e. round) their necks the garland of Tulasī or lotuses or a rosary, having the marks of conch or disc at the roots of their arms, or those having the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra (the vertical lines) on their foreheads, quickly purify the world. Beings are not sorry for those who pre-

serve (but) do not properly carry (the mark of) the extensive disc of the lord of heaven. Those who carry the disc very firm(-ly marked) with (the proper) rite on their arm(s), quickly occupy, by means of their lustre, a high place in the sky. He who has at the root(s) of his arms the disc mark of Viṣṇu, the highest soul (made) by heating (the disc) in the sacrificial fire, crosses the great ocean of the mundane existence, and goes to the pure world of the highest lord. A man should make at the roots of his arms the marks with the heated discs etc. He should also get such marks put on (the bodies of) his wife, children, servants and beasts etc.

75-80. O you of an excellent face, all holy texts tell this. In the history (books) and the Purāṇas the same thing is told. The mark of devotion to Viṣṇu is said to be of two kinds: external and internal. The external (mark) is (produced) by means of a conch, a disc etc. The internal (one) is freedom from attachment. One having similarity between the external and the internal is said to belong to Viṣṇu. Therefore, the disc etc. are said to be the first (external) mark pertaining to Viṣṇu. The internal (mark) is realising the soul after being free from the faults due to Cupid (i.e. passion of love). So also showing compassion to all beings, tranquility and absence of greed for the objects of senses. So also having no attachment for sons, wife etc.; and delight in the study of Yoga; serving the highest lord by means of undistracted application to devotion. Therefore, marking with (Viṣṇu's) weapons like the disc is said to pertain to Viṣṇu. Vaiṣṇavatva (the status of belonging to Viṣṇu) cannot be had without the marks of the disc etc.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYFIVE

The Efficacy of Ūrdhvapuṇḍra

Śaṅkara said:

1-4. O you of an auspicious appearance, I shall tell you the greatness of the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra (vertical Vaiṣṇava mark on the

forehead). The best brāhmaṇa would be free from the bond of the worldly existence just on having it. Within the large and very charming space in the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra, Viṣṇu, god of gods, is seated with Lakṣmī. Therefore, the body of him, on which there would be the mark, is the clean, auspicious temple of the lord. That devotee of Viṣṇu, who has the mark made with white clay, has bathed at all holy places, is prepared for all sacrifices.

5-8. The brāhmaṇa having the mark is honoured among all people, (and) getting into an excellent aeroplane, goes to the highest place of Viṣṇu. The best brāhmaṇa should put on the mark thrice (a day), for purification of all sins, and for obtaining the fruit of performing sacrifices and digging wells and doing other acts of charity. (A man) seeing one having the mark, is freed from all sins. By saluting him devoutly he would obtain the fruit of all (kinds of) charity. The dead ancestors of him who will feed a brāhmaṇa having the mark are undoubtedly pleased for crores of kalpas.

9-14. O you of an auspicious face, he who, having the mark, performs a śrāddha, would obtain, for crores of kalpas, the fruit of the śrāddha (performed) at Gayā. The religious merit of the sacrifices, gifts, penance, muttering (of hymns), sacrificial rites etc. of one having the mark is endless. All the sacrifices performed, wells dug, and other charitable acts done by him who does any act without having the mark, are useless. That human body which is without the mark should not be seen at all. It would be like a cremation ground. All the rites etc. which a man without the mark would do, are taken (away) by demons; and he goes down to hell. A brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Vedas, should have the mark with white clay. The wise one should never have it in an oblique manner even in a misery.

15-18. Brāhmaṇas should have the mark. The mark of kṣatriyas should be round; that of vaiśyas should be strip-like; that of śūdras should have three lines. The mark should be made with clay; the round one with musk; the strip-like one with sandal; and the three-lined one with sacred ash. The vertical mark is recommended for all. It is not prohibited. A kṣatriya etc. also, if he is Viṣṇu's devotee should have it. Brāhmaṇas are not to have the oblique or the strip-like mark. And they are not to worship any other (deity) than Viṣṇu, the highest lord.

19-23. O goddess, if a brāhmaṇa, learned and born in a noble family has put on (the mark of) sacred ash, one should avoid such a brāhmaṇa, as a pot in which liquor is left as the remnant. The mark of three lines is the practice for those who are śūdras and like śūdras. There is no doubt that a brāhmaṇa having the mark of three lines, falls. The very noble ones, interested in the good of all living beings, should have a puṇḍra with a gap like the shape of Viṣṇu's foot. A man should have the mark in accordance with the precept, resembling the foot of Viṣṇu and having a gap in its centre; for that is Viṣṇu's temple. He should have the mark which is good, pleasing, has the shape of a staff, good sides, which is very charming, very beautiful, and which has a gap at the centre.

24-27. Therefore, O you of an auspicious appearance, brāhmaṇas and women should always have the mark which has a gap, has the shape of a staff, and is very beautiful. In the large and very beautiful gap at the centre of the vertical mark, Viṣṇu is seated with Lakṣmī. That mean brāhmaṇa who would have a gapless vertical mark, expels Viṣṇu along with Lakṣmī seated there. There is no doubt that there always is a dog's foot on the foreheads of those mean brāhmaṇas who have a gapless vertical mark.

28-40. Therefore, in order to attain the same world as of Viṣṇu, a brāhmaṇa should always have a mark with a gap, with turmeric, and having auspiciousness. For securing absorption into Viṣṇu one should, with great devotion, bring the clay from the pool on the Veṅkaṭa mountain, and make the vertical mark (with it). A devoted person should bring the clay from the root of Tulasī of (i.e. dear to) Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and should make the vertical mark (with it). Viṣṇu is pleased with him. Or the best brāhmaṇa, having brought the pleasing clay from the auspicious, charming pool (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu at Dvārāvatī, should make the mark (with it) in order to secure all desired objects. He who, having brought with great devotion, clay from the banks of Gaṅgā, makes the mark with it, would obtain the fruit of all sacrifices. Due to having the mark (with) sandal, turmeric, so also (with) ash from the sacred fire one is said to control everything. He should bring the clay from that place which is sacred to Viṣṇu. One should get the clay from the top of a mountain, the bank of a river, the root of a bilva (tree), a reservoir of water, the coast of a sea, an anthill,

especially from a place sacred to Viṣṇu, and from the place where the water used for Viṣṇu's bath always flows, for having the mark. A man, taking clay with water flowing from Viṣṇu's feet, and having puṇḍra marks on the limbs of his body at Śrīraṅga, Veṅkaṭagiri, Śrīkūrma, the auspicious Dvārakā, Prayāga, Narasiṁha mountain, Varāha, a Tulasī-grove would get absorption into Viṣṇu. For having the mark clay should be taken from that place wherefrom the noble devotees of Viṣṇu take it. A dark mark is said to cause peace. So also a red one is said to bring about control. They say that a yellow one leads to riches. The white one leads to salvation and is auspicious.

41-50. They say that a round, oblique, gapless, short, long, protracted, thin, crooked, ugly mark, one with its top closed or with its root cut off, with a line missing, inauspicious, rough, fixed, one that is not drawn with the finger, not having fragrance, or inadequate is unfortunate. One should draw it with clay beginning with the root of the nose. Starting it from the middle of the eye-brows, he should have a gap in it. The gap should be of the measure of two fingers, and the sides of the size of a finger. With white clay he should draw a better and auspicious mark. He should meditate upon Keśava (as staying) on his forehead. (He should meditate) upon Nārāyaṇa (as staying) in his belly, Mādhava (as staying) in his chest, and Govinda (as staying) in his throat. (He should meditate) upon Viṣṇu (as staying) in the right side of his belly and Madhusūdana (as staying) in his right arm. (He should meditate) upon Trivikrama (as staying) in (the right side of) his neck, and Vāmana (as staying) in his left side. (He should meditate) upon Śrīdhara (as staying) in his left arm, and Hṛṣīkeśa in (the left side of) his neck. (He should meditate) upon Padmanābha (as staying) in his back, and place Dāmodara in the lower part of his spine. And with the water for washing it (he should meditate) upon Vāsudeva (as present) in his head. He should draw the mark of the measure of four fingers on his forehead, both the arms, on both (the sides) of the back, and on the neck. On the belly and near its sides a long one of the measure of ten fingers is recommended. On the arms and chest a mark of the measure of eight fingers is recommended. Thus a brāhmaṇa should always have twelve marks.

51-59. He should, after meditating upon those images with

their respective hymns, have the marks (on those respective limbs of his body). In the gap he should have (i.e. put) auspicious turmeric. They say, kṣatriyas should have four marks and vaiśyas should have two. One mark is laid down for women and śūdras. He should have four marks on the forehead, on his chest, and on the arms. Two are laid down for the forehead and the chest and one for the place where the hair is separated. Of all the marks, the vertical one is said to be the first (that should be put) on the forehead. As laid down, it should be had in the order of the forehead first. One should have the images of Vāsudeva etc. in the four vertical marks. In two he should have the two (images of) Govinda and Kṛṣṇa and one of Nārāyaṇa. O Girijā, I have thus told (you) the manner in which the puṇḍra is had. The triad of one resembling the aśvattha-leaf, the reed-leaf, or the lotus-leaf, is said to be 'Mohana'. A pure, great devotee of Viṣṇu, should, in case of a controversy, have a vertical mark of the shape of a staff. Those, the roots of whose arms are marked with Sudarśana, so also all of whose limbs are marked with the vertical puṇḍra, who have lotus garlands and rosaries, protect the people from contact with heaps of sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYSIX

The Meaning of the Mantra (Formula)

Śaṅkara said:

1-5. At (the time of) a nyāsa or worship, one should resort to Viṣṇu's formula (mantra). The highest position is not had by means of a formula not sacred to Viṣṇu. If the former couple of sacred names (i.e. the one mentioned above) is imparted by one who is a non-Vaiṣṇava, then one should again receive it from a follower of Viṣṇu. Even if a man has studied a thousand branches (of the holy texts), even if he was initiated into all (kinds of) sacrifices, even if he is born in a good family, he should not be a preceptor if he is not a follower of Viṣṇu. That follower of Viṣṇu who properly imparts the two sacred names, should be

known as the preceptor, tearing off the bond of the mundane existence. A brāhmaṇa should, after resorting to a preceptor, live (with him) for a year. The preceptor, knowing his behaviour, should impart him the formula.

6-9. Having first done the sacraments as burning his body (i.e. putting sectarian marks on it), he should then utter the formula, after burning, putting the sectarian mark and giving a name (to him). Then he should teach his disciple of a pure heart. The rite of burning with (i.e. putting marks like) the (heated) disc (etc.) is called tāpa (or burning). The sectarian mark is said to be vertical and the name (accepted by) the Vaiṣṇava sect is pronounced. Then in accordance with the rule (about the mantra) the teacher should teach the formula to the disciple. (He should teach him) nyāsa, the eight-syllabled or any other formula sacred to Viṣṇu. O you of an auspicious face, here nyāsa is of a high value to the followers of Viṣṇu.

10-12. Therefore, for them nyāsa is said to be superior. A brāhmaṇa highly devoted to nyāsa is said to be the best. There is no greater mantra than a nyāsa. I am telling you the truth. Nyāsa and the couple of mantras are synonyms for devotion. Learn it from me. After having instruction in the two, he should practise all rites. He who is not entitled to both does not deserve to perform all rites.

13-16. Therefore, the best brāhmaṇa, having studied the two, should study the eight-syllabled formula properly. The formula is said to be eight-syllabled due to the inclusion of (the syllable) Om. The wise say that that is a sacred formula which naturally has Om at its beginning. Except at the beginning of all formulas Om is not naturally there. One should use it before (i.e. at the beginning of) all formulas. O you of an auspicious face, the sacred syllable Om is Brahman. It is the chief of all formulas. One should use it at the commencement of all formulas.

17-21. At the root-formula Om is naturally settled. The first (syllable) is *Om*, having one letter. Then is (the word) *namaḥ* having two letters. Then in proper order are the five letters *Nārāyaṇāya*. Thus the formula, accomplishing all objects, should be known to be eight-syllabled. It removes all sorrows; it is glorious; it contains all formulas; it is auspicious. Its seer is Nārāyaṇa, and (he) himself, the lord of Śrī, is its deity. Its metre

is the divine Gāyatrī and origin is Om. The power of the formula is goddess Śrī who is never-failing. The first foot is said to be the letter *Om*; the second to be *Namaḥ*, and the third to be *Nārāyaṇāya*. Thus the three feet are told.

22-26. The letters *a*, *u*, and *m* form the syllable *Om*, which is Brahman's word, and is of the nature of the three Vedas. Viṣṇu is expressed by the letter *a*, Śrī by the letter *u*; the letter *m* is the servant of these two, and is said to be the twentyfifth (letter). It is said by the wise that *a* expresses Viṣṇu's form. The sages say that *u* expresses the form of the goddess Śrī. The letter *m* expresses the soul, the puruṣa, the twentyfifth (principle of the Sāṁkhyas). The elements are expressed by the class of letters beginning with *ka*; and the senses are denoted by the class of letters beginning with *ca*. The class of letters beginning with *ṭa* and that beginning with *ta* denote knowledge, so also the letters like *dha* (indicate the same). The mind is expressed by the letter *pa* only; and ego by the letter *pha*.

27-30. Mahat (i.e. Intellect) and Prakṛti (Primordial Matter) (the principles enunciated in the Sāṁkhya System) are (respectively) expressed by the letters *ba* and *bha*. The soul is said to be the letter *ma* and is said to be the twentyfifth (principle). It is different from the body, the senses, the mind, the vital breath; and has no other means. He is the remnant of the lord, is denoted by *ma* and is sentient. Some say that *ma* indicates just the emphasis. According to them the principle of Śrī is expressed by the letter *va* (*ma*?) only. As the sun's lustre does not go away from him, so Lakṣmī does not go away from him. Viṣṇu, the ocean of auspicious qualities, is expressed by the letter *ā*.

31-36. The lord of Śrī is the remnant of all souls, is the seed (i.e. source) of the world, and the highest person. He is the author and the sustainer of the world, the lord, and people's kin. (Lakṣmī) always controls the worlds, does not go away from Viṣṇu. She is mother of the entire world and Viṣṇu's charming wife. Here (i.e. in the mantra) the letter *u* expresses Śrī, who is the support of the world. The wise say that the letter *ma* expresses the soul, the servant of the two (i.e. Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī). He is the support of knowledge, has knowledge as his quality, is sentient, and is beyond Prakṛti. He is not insentient; he is without any modification; is uniform in nature and has (no other form than)

his own form. He is subtle, eternal, pervading, of the nature of intellect and joy, is of the nature of ego, immutable, the soul, of different forms, and eternal. He cannot be burnt, cannot be cut off, cannot be made wet, cannot be dried, and is indestructible; he is (thus) endowed with such qualities and is an effect of the highest (soul).

37-42. The letter *ma* expresses the individual soul, always dependent. He is the servant of Viṣṇu only and of none else. Thus is determined his servitude to be mediocre. O sinless one, the meaning of *Om* should be known like this. I have explained it (to you). O auspicious one, the exposition of *Om* (is done) by means of the remnant of the meaning, the formula(?). In this world, he who is the servant of another, does not get freedom. Therefore, with (the help of) the mind one should turn away Mahat and Ahaṁkāra (i.e. Intellect and Ego). That act which is done by the knowledge of one's means, is also prohibited. The letter *ma* is (i.e. stands for) ego, and the letter *na* prohibits it. Therefore, with his mind only he gets freedom from the ego. Every accomplishment is due to the mind. Otherwise he would perish. Whatever is with the mind is said to be the ego.

43-46. One having egotism has absolutely no happiness. He whose mind is deluded by egotism sinks in the blinding darkness. Therefore, his freedom through mind is not prohibited. He is dependent upon the lord and lives under his influence. Therefore, the sentient is not the author of the means. The mobile and the immobile exist due to the will of the highest lord. Therefore, he would completely give up the application of his own power. Due to the lord's power there is nothing that is not obtained by him.

47-53. Having placed the burden (i.e. the responsibility) on that lord of Lakṣmī, he should do acts of (i.e. sacred to) him only. The highest soul, Viṣṇu, is the master. I always belong to him. His mind should be employed according to the desire of that lord only. Thus it is noble when egotism and sense of mineness are abandoned by the mind. In the mundane existence the sense of mineness is the root of the bondage due to the deeds. Therefore, a wise man should avoid Mahat (Intellect) and Ahaṁkāra (ego) with (the help of) the mind. (Now) O you auspicious Girijā, I shall explain (to you) the word *Nārāyaṇa*. *Nārā* is the assemblage of the souls. This Puruṣa (Nārāyaṇa) is their refuge. And they

are his abode; therefore he is said to be *Nārāyaṇa.* The entire world—the sentient and insentient objects—is heard, is seen. He, who always remains after pervading it, is said to be *Nārāyaṇa.* The groups of all men are said to be *Nārā.* He is their refuge and support. Therefore, he is said to be *Nārāyaṇa.* The wise know the principles produced from *Nara* (i.e. the Supreme Spirit) as *nārā.*

54-59. They alone are his abode. Therefore, he is called *Nārāyaṇa,* by whom the world, after devouring it even at the end of the kalpa, is supported, and by whom it is again created. Therefore he is said to be *Nārāyaṇa.* The entire world consisting of the mobile and the immobile is called *Nāra.* To it he is connected; therefore he is said to be *Nārāyaṇa.* The *Nāra*—the host of men —is his abode or refuge. Therefore, he is always called *Nārāyaṇa* by the sages; from him spring the worlds, as the massive foam in the ocean. Since they again merge into him, therefore, he is said to be *Nārāyaṇa.* He is (residing) at the eternal position, is eternal, and is always free and alone enjoys; he is the lord of the entire world. Therefore, he is called *Nārāyaṇa. Nārāyaṇa* is the highest Brahman. *Nārāyaṇa* is the highest principle.

60-64. *Nārāyaṇa* has remained after pervading whatever is seen or heard within and without this world. Hari, Nārāyaṇa, Acyuta is the Supreme soul with the sins destroyed. He resides within all beings. He is divine, always (all) alone, and is eternal. He is the seer and is what is to be seen. He is the listener and is what is listened to also. He is the one that touches and is also what is touched. He meditates and is what is meditated upon. He is the speaker and what is spoken. He is the knower and what is known. He is the sentient and insentient world. All that is said to be Hari, the lord of Śrī, Nārāyaṇa. He, the Supreme Being, has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. Having pervaded all the worlds he stands above them by (the measure of) ten fingers.

65-69. All that was and will be is Nārāyaṇa Hari. And he is the lord of immortality and the Virāṭ; the Supreme Being (grows beyond) by the means of food. He alone is the Supreme Being, Viṣṇu, Vāsudeva, Acyuta, Hari, Hiraṇmaya, and the lord; he is immortal, eternal, auspicious (Śiva). He is the master of the entire world, is the lord of all people, and the master. He is Hiraṇyagarbha, the Sun, is Ananta (the endless) and the great

god. The word *Bhagavat*, so also the word *Puruṣa* and the word *Nirupādhi* stand for Vāsudeva, the soul of all. The god, the lord Viṣṇu, the highest soul, the friend of the world, the only ruler of the movable and the immovable is the greatest refuge of the ascetics.

70-73. That one who is naturally merged into the sound uttered at the beginning of the Veda and who is settled in the Vedānta (i.e. the Upaniṣads), who is the greatest, is the great god. That one, viz. Viṣṇu, who is (indicated by) the letter *a*, the one who is Nārāyaṇa Hari, is the eternal Supreme Being, the highest soul, the great lord. Sages use the word *Īśvara* (i.e. the lord) also for him in whom wonderful glory exists. Unconditional lordship exists in Viṣṇu. The ancient words of Veda have described him as the soul, the lord. Therefore, in Vāsudeva the great lordship exists.

74-88. Due to his splendour he is *Tripād* (literally, having three feet). He is the lord of sport. He, the soul of all, has two kinds of grandeurs and glory. He who is the lord of Śrī, Bhū and Nīlā is called the lord. Therefore, mastery over all exists in Vāsudeva. He is the lord of sacrifice, is the sacrifice, the enjoyer of sacrifice, the performer of sacrifice, the lord, the enjoyer of sacrifice, the Puruṣa (i.e. the deity) of sacrifice. He alone is the highest lord. He is the lord of sacrifice. He is the enjoyer of the oblations made to gods and all offerings to the dead ancestors. He is immutable. He, Hari, is the lord here. All goblins and demons go away from his vicinity. He, Viṣṇu, who became Virāṭ and Hari, is himself the highest lord, who pleases the three worlds. With him as the complete oblation gods performed a sacrifice. Those who have a double row of teeth are born from that sacrifice. From that sacrifice with all the oblations sprang *ṛks*, *sāmans*. From it sprang horses, cows, men etc. The entire world consisting of the mobile and the immobile sprang from the body of the Supreme Being consisting of everything. The castes were his face, arms, thighs and feet in due order. From his feet the earth came up and the heaven from his head. From his mind the moon was produced, and the sun from his eye. Fire with a thousand eyes (sprang) from his mouth, and the ever-moving wind from his breath. From his navel came up Brahmā, the sky, the movable and immovable world. Since the entire world came up from the eternal Viṣṇu, therefore, Viṣṇu full of all, is called Nārā-

yaṇa. Hari, having thus created the world again devours it, as a spider does the web produced from its saliva. Since, having curbed Brahmā, Indra, Rudra, Yama and Varuṇa, he subdues them, therefore, he is called Hari. This ancient Supreme Being having put the world in his belly, sleeps in the coating of (his) Māyā, which has become an ocean. (In the beginning) here this Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, Acyuta was alone.

89-93. Brahmā, Rudra, gods, great sages, this heaven, this earth, the moon, the sun, the stars, the world, the (cosmic) egg covered by Mahat (were) not there. O auspicious one, since the entire world was held by that Hari (in his belly) and was again created at the time of creation, therefore he is said to be Nārāyaṇa. O Pārvatī, service to him is described in the formula by the dative case. This entire world, beginning with Brahmā, is his slave. Knowing the meaning to be like this one should then use the formula. O you of an excellent face, without knowing the meaning of the formula, one would not get success, so also enjoyment, devotion and salvation.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYSEVEN

The Description of the Vibhūti of Tripād

Pārvatī said:

1-2. Tell me in detail, the importance of the meaning and the words of the sacred formula, so also the lord's *vibhūti* (divine properties) and his qualities. O lord of all gods, properly tell me all about that highest abode of Viṣṇu, and about the kinds of his *vyūhas* (divine manifestations).

The lord said:

3-7. O goddess, listen. I shall explain to you the nature of the highest soul; so also the *vibhūti* and group of qualities of that Viṣṇu. That great, Supreme Being who is mentioned as Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, is the lord of the worlds, and the eternal highest soul. The lord has hands and feet on all sides, has eyes on all

sides. Having all worlds and great abodes in it (i.e. his body) he stands above the minds of men. The lord of Lakṣmī, Puruṣottama, has thus a multiple nature. For enjoyment with the goddess he takes up divine and auspicious forms. His is a large body. His form is like that of fire. Viṣṇu took to the form of a youth and a boy. He enjoyed with Lakṣmī, the mother of the worlds, as the Moon with rays (producing) nectar (enjoys with) his moonlight.

8-13. This (lord) of the goddess of the world is a young boy, ever young. Having handsomeness like that of a crore of Cupids he remains at the highest place. For his enjoyment there is the highest sky; for his sport the entire world. The two kinds of Viṣṇu's vibhūti are due to his enjoyment and sport. He always remains enjoying. Sometime he withdraws his sport. Due to his having a (special) power, he has both enjoyment and sport. The pervading with his third step is done in the highest abode. One step of him was here also. His vibhūti with the third step is perpetual, (while) the step (on the earth) is non-perpetual. That eternal auspicious form of the lord has stayed in the highest abode. It is infallible, eternal, divine, and has always resorted to youth. It is always enjoying the goddess Lakṣmī and is surrounded by Lakṣmī and the earth. This Lakṣmī of Viṣṇu, the mother of the world, is eternal and imperishable.

14-21. O you of an auspicious face, as Viṣṇu is omnipresent so is Lakṣmī. This ever auspicious wife of Viṣṇu rules over the world. She has hands and feet on all sides. She has eyes and heads on all sides. This Nārāyaṇī, the mother of the world, is the resort of the entire world. The entire immobile and mobile world has resorted to (i.e. depends upon) her glance. The existence and the dissolution of the world is due to her opening and closing (her) eyes. This great Lakṣmī is the first of all. She has three constituents (viz. sattva, rajas and tamas). She is the greatest goddess. She of a visible and invisible form, remains after having pervaded everything. The great goddess having seen the entire universe void, filled that entire (universe) with her own lustre. That Lakṣmī is the Earth only, well-known as goddess Nīlā. Being the support of the world, she has resorted to the form of the earth. She herself would be of the form of Nīlā due to her liquid form of the nature of water etc. She has obtained

the form of Lakṣmī. She is of the nature of wealth and speech. Thus, she, the goddess of the world, has resorted to Viṣṇu. O you of an auspicious face, all the varieties of knowledge would be (i.e. are) her forms.

22-23. Everything that has a beautiful form is said to be her body only. It remains in women as beauty, good character and behaviour, and good fortune (in the form of having their husbands alive). O Girijā, her beauty is at the head (i.e. top of the beauty) of all women. By means of the glance of her, of a strong vision, Brahmā, Śiva, Indra the lord of heaven, the Moon, the Sun, Kubera, Yama, Agni obtain ample affluence.

24-28. He who, after getting up in the morning would recite these auspicious names of her, viz. Lakṣmī, Śrī, Kamalā, Vidyā, Mātā, Viṣṇupriyā (dear to Viṣṇu), Satī, Padmālayā (having a lotus as her abode), Padmahastā (having a lotus in her hand), Padmākṣī (lotus-eyed), Lokasundarī, Bhutānām Īśvarī (She who controls the beings), Nityā, Sahyā (literally, bearable), Sarvagatā (omnipresent), Śubhā (auspicious), Viṣṇupatnī, Mahādevī, Kṣīrodatanayā (daughter of the Milky Ocean), Ramā, Anantā (endless), Lokamātā (the mother of the world), Bhū, Nīlā, Sarvasukhapradā (giving all pleasures), Rukmiṇī, so also Sītā, Śubhā (auspicious), Sarvavedavatī (possessing all Vedas), Satī, Sarasvatī, Gaurī, Śānti, Svāhā (the oblations offered to gods), Svadhā (the oblations offered to dead ancestors), Rati, Nārāyaṇī, Viṣṇu's eternal beautiful wife never leaving him, obtains wealth and faultless riches and grains.

29-37. I here invoke Śrī who has golden complexion, who is attractive, who has a golden and silver chaplet, who is moon-like, full of gold, Lakṣmī, who does not go away from Viṣṇu, who is perceptible through her fragrance, who is haughty, always nourished, who is the goddess of wealth, who controls all beings. The great goddess thus praised in Ṛgveda gave all the pleasure of affluence to gods like Śiva. This ancient wife of Viṣṇu controls this world. The entire mobile and immobile world resorts to (i.e. depends upon) her glances. He, the indestructible, immutable Supreme Being, on whose chest the goddess like Agni's lustre, rests, is actually the lord of all. He is the affluent Nārāyaṇa, the ocean of the quality of love. He is the lord, is good-tempered, amiable, omniscient and all-powerful.

His desires are always fully gratified; he is a natural friend and companion. He is the ocean of the nectar of compassion. He is the shelter of men. He is the giver of heaven, salvation and happiness to his devotees. He is the mine of pity. I shall fully do service to that Viṣṇu. In all conditions like time and place the form of the lord of Kamalā is well-established. A man would easily obtain service to Viṣṇu.

38-42. Having thus known the meaning of the sacred formula, a man should properly practise devotion to him. All this immobile and mobile world is under his control. Lord Śrīmat Nārāyaṇa is the lord, the master of the worlds. He is the mother, the father, the son, the kinsman, the abode, the refuge and the shelter. The lord of Śrī has auspicious qualities; he gives the fruits of all desires. He is the lord of the world, who is described as qualityless in the holy texts. He is said to be so in the sense that he is devoid of Prakṛti-born qualities associated with what should be abandoned. The falseness of the display of which is (indicated) by passages found in Vedānta, i.e. all that is seen, consists in its being transient. In this case also, the Prakṛti-born form of the (cosmic) egg itself is perishable.

43-48. In the same way the transitoriness of the Prakṛti-born forms is explained. The meaning is: O great goddess, the Prakṛti has come up for the play of Viṣṇu, the god of gods, entitled to sport. This egg (i.e. cosmos) having Prakṛti as its source is charming as it is complete with the four and ten worlds, oceans with islands, four kinds of beings and mountains with very lofty peaks. It is endowed with qualities more than ten; it is covered with seven covers. By means of that time only which moves in the form of (the measures of time like) kalā,[1] kāṣṭhā,[2] the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world would be (i.e. take place). A day of Brahmā is of the duration of four thousand yugas. As many years' (duration) is a night of Brahmā, whose birth is not known. When the end of Brahmā comes, he would be destroying everything.

49-51. The worlds existing in the (cosmic) egg are burnt by the destructive fire at the end of the world. Then all the souls are

1. Kalā: A division of time variously computed as one minute, 48 seconds, or 8 seconds.

2. Kāṣṭhā: A measure of time, 1/30 kalā.

put into the Prakṛti (i.e. the personified will) of Viṣṇu. The cover of the egg, the beings, are merged into the primordial matter. That primordial matter is the support of the entire world, and has resorted to Viṣṇu. By means of her the lord always brings about the creation and destruction of the world. The lord has created the illusion in the form of the world for his sport.

52-54. She (called) Avidyā (ignorance), Prakṛti (primordial matter), Māyā (illusion), Guṇatrayamayī (consisting of the three constituents, viz. sattva, rajas and tamas), Sanātanī (the ancient one) is ever the cause of creation, maintenance and destruction. This Yoganidrā (Viṣṇu's sleep at the end of a yuga), the great illusion, the Prakṛti having the three constituents, unmanifest, Pradhāna is the sport of Viṣṇu that does not change. Due to Prakṛti only the creation and destruction of the world would always take place. The place of Prakṛti beyond calculation is imperishable, dense darkness.

55-59. On the boundary on the side above is Virajā; on the lower side the ancient one is limitless. She in her gross and subtle condition has subdued the entire world. Creation and destruction are said to be the two states of expansion and contraction of her. Thus all beings are within Prakṛti. Then all this great world within Prakṛti is void. Thus the excellent form of (his) vibhūti is of the form of Prakṛti. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, listen to the vibhūti of the Tripād (liberally, having three feet or steps). The river Virajā is between Pradhāna and the highest heaven. She, the auspicious one, is caused to flow with the water produced by the sweat of the Vedāṅgas. At the other side of her, in the highest heaven is the ancient vibhūti, viz. Tripād (i.e. Viṣṇu).

60-63. (The nature of the highest place of Viṣṇu is:) immortal, eternal, continual, endless, the highest position, pure, full of sattva (i.e. goodness), divine, immutable and Brahman's place. It is unchanging and has the lustre equal to that of many crores of suns. It is full of the Vedas, is pure, and free from creation and destruction. It is beyond calculation, unaging, continual, free from wakefulness and sleep etc. It is golden; it gives salvation; it gives bliss and happiness. It is without similarity or excess (i.e. nothing is equal or superior to it). It is without a beginning or

an end. It is auspicious. It is wonderful due to lustre; is charming; is always the ocean of joy.

64-67. Viṣṇu's highest place is endowed with these and other qualities. The sun, or the moon, or the fire does not illumine it. That is the highest place of Viṣṇu, after going to which (beings) do not return (to the earth). That is Viṣṇu's highest abode, which is eternal, continual and fixed. Even for hundreds of crores of kalpas Viṣṇu's place cannot be described by me, or by Brahmā, or by hosts of best sages. O dear one, the unfallen lord stays at that place; one may or may not know him. It is immutable; it is a mystery (even) to the Vedas (or it is a secret of the Vedas); in it all gods were seated. There is none who can describe it. What can one do with a ṛc? Those who know it are these, seated here.

68-75. O goddess, the wise ones always see that highest abode of Viṣṇu, which is indestructible, eternal, divine, and is like an expanded eye. It is not impossible for deities like Brahmā, Rudra to enter it. The best meditating sages see it through knowledge, the path of the holy texts. I, Brahmā, gods and great sages do not understand the significance of all the Upaniṣads. On understanding it I shall tell it, O you of a good vow. At that highest place of Viṣṇu, called good and auspicious, cows with many horns and very happy created beings live. They say here is the abode of Viṣṇu, dressed as a cowherd. With the cows and cowherds of pleasant appellations the great abode shines. It has the complexion of the sun. The unfalling lustre, viz. Viṣṇu's place is beyond darkness. It is Brahmā's prop. That is a pure, good ancient world. At this highest position, the eternal place, in which the vulgar do not find a place, the two, young Śrī and the ancient (Viṣṇu), being watchful, stayed.

76-80. Bhū and Nīlā, dear to Viṣṇu, are the two sisters from there. Here the old Sādhyas, and all the ancient gods dwell. Those of an auspicious appearance, and great ones sought out heaven. There the learned watchful brāhmaṇas kindle (the fire). The wise brāhmaṇas, desiring its contact, go to that place. That highest place of Viṣṇu is called Mokṣa (liberation). Those free from bondage obtain (i.e. reach) that happy place. Reaching it they do not come back (i.e. are not reborn). Therefore, it is called

Mokṣa (liberation). Mokṣa is the highest place (state); it is divine, immortal, the abode of Viṣṇu; it is indestructible; it is the highest abode; it is Vaikuṇṭha, the eternal place. It is nitya (eternal), the highest heaven, the best and the sanātana (ancient). These are the synonymns of the highest abode of Viṣṇu. I shall (now) explain in detail the form of the vibhūti of that Tripād.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYEIGHT

Description of the Highest Heaven etc.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-6. The worlds of the vibhūti of Tripād are said to be innumerable. All they are made of pure sattva, and are called bliss and happiness. All they are eternal, free from change, and void of attachment etc. that are worthy of being abandoned. All are golden, pure, and have the lustre of crores of suns. They are full of all Vedas, are divine, and free from lust and anger. They are resorted to by those who take joy only in devotion to the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. They are completely happy due to continuous chanting of the Sāmans. All are of the nature of the five Upaniṣads and have the lustre of the Vedas. All of them are covered with divine men and women full of the Vedas. They are adorned with lakes having water in the form of only the flavour of the Vedas. They have the immobile objects in the form of the holy texts, the codes of law and the Purāṇas. It is not possible for me to describe the full expanse of (these) worlds.

7-13. Only the distance between Virajā and the highest heaven is said (to be covered by them). That place should be enjoyed by those who resort to the unmanifest Brahman. That absolute position which gives joy and happiness due to the experience of one's own self is called *Niśśreyas*, *Nirvāṇa*, *Kaivalya* and *Mokṣa*. Those who are nourished by the happiness due to their interest in devoutly serving the lotus-like feet of the lord of Śrī, and whose intellect is small, desire mokṣa, void of happiness. (But) the high-souled, noble ones who serve the feet of the lord go to

that highest abode of Viṣṇu which gives pleasure (derived) from Brahman. That place of Viṣṇu (called) Vaikuṇṭha is crowded with diverse communities. It is covered with ramparts, splendid rooms and great mansions. In it is a divine city called Ayodhyā. It is covered with ramparts rich in gems, gold and pictures, and with portals. It has four gates and is covered with jewelled principal gates. It is protected by door-keepers like Caṇḍa and Kumuda. At the eastern gate there are Caṇḍa and Pracaṇḍa, and at the western there are Bhadra and Subhadraka.

14-18. Jaya and Vijaya are in the west, and Dhātṛ and Vidhātṛ are at the northern (gate). The other doorkeepers are: Kumuda, Kumudākṣa. Puṇḍarīka and Vāmana. (So also) Śaṅkukarṇa, Sarvanetra, Sumukha, Supratiṣṭhita. These are said to be the regents of the quarters in this city, O you of an auspicious face. It is covered with crores of rows of houses resembling fire (brightness). It is endowed with eternal divine women and men, who have mounted (i.e. stepped into) youth. In the centre of the city there is the charming harem of the god. It is possessed of jewelled ramparts, and adorned with jewelled arched doorways. It has many splendid rooms, principal mansions, and palaces. On all sides it is adorned with bevies of divine celestial nymphs and ladies.

19-24. In the centre is an open hall with a high royal place. It is furnished with a thousand pillars (decked) with rubies, is full of gems and is beautiful. It is full of divine pearls and is adorned with chanting of Sāmans. At its centre is a charming, beautiful throne full of all Vedas. It is always surrounded by deities like Dharma (i.e. Righteousness), full of the Vedas, and by Piety, Knowledge, Great Affluence and Detachment having shining bodies. It is also surrounded by Ṛg, Yajus, Sāman and Atharvan (Vedas) in (due) order, and in a bodily form. Śakti (i.e. power), Ādhāraśakti (i.e. supporting power), Cicchakti (i.e. power of mind) always auspicious, so also the powers of the deities like Dharma are called Śakti. In the centre of it live the rays of Fire, the Sun, and the Moon. So also (there live) Kūrma, the king of serpents, Vainateya (i.e. Garuḍa) and the lord of the triad (of the Vedas). All the Vedas and the hymns have resorted to the condition of a seat?

25. The divine seat, full of all syllables is known as the seat

of practice in abstract meditation. At its centre is an eight-petalled lotus, bright like the rising sun.

26-39a. In it in a bright pericarp the Supreme Being, the lord of gods, is seated with the goddess, O you of a beautiful appearance. He is dark like the petal of a blue lotus. He has the light like that of a crore of suns. He is a young boy, is glossy (or affectionate) and is covered with (i.e. has) delicate limbs. He resembles a full-blown red lotus. He has delicate, lotus-like feet. His eyes are like the full-blown lotuses; is marked with a couple of fine, creeper-like (arched) eye-brows. His nose is good; he is endowed with good cheeks; he has good ears and a lotus-like face. He has teeth resembling pearls. His coral-like lips have a smile on them. He resembles the full moon; his lotus-like face has a charming smile on it. He shines with ear-rings resembling the colour of the young sun. He is adorned with very glossy, dark and curly hair. His hair is tied into a braid having (the flowers of) mandāra and pārijātaka. He is adorned with the Kaustubha (jewel) resembling the rising, morning sun. He shines with a conch-like neck to which garlands and golden wreaths are attached. He shines with very high, large shoulders resembling those of a lion. He is adorned with four plump, round and long arms. He is adorned with rings, bracelets and armlets. His large chest is adorned with good ornaments like the Kaustubha, resembling crores of young suns. He is adorned with a garland of wood-flowers. He has a lovely navel which is the place of origin of the Creator. He is endowed with (i.e. has put on) a soft yellow garment resembling the morning sunshine. His feet are beautiful due to various gems. He shines with two bracelets. He has a row of nails resembling the moon with the moonlight. Acyuta is the treasure of the handsomeness and beauty of a crore of Cupids. He (i.e. his body) is smeared with divine sandal. He is adorned with a divine garland. He shines with his raised arms that have held the conch and the disc. So also (he shines) with the other two hands granting boons.

39b-46. On his left thigh is seated goddess Mahālakṣmī, the great deity. She has a golden complexion and is deer-eyed. She has (put on) a wreath of gold and silver. She is endowed with all (auspicious) marks; and her body has (just) the commencement

of youth (i.e. the body is youthful). She has (put on) jewelled ear-rings. Her hair is dark and curly. Her body is smeared with divine sandal, and she shines with divine flowers. Her fine hair is decked with flowers of mandāra, ketakī and jasmine; her eyebrows are good; her nose is fine; her buttocks are good (i.e. plump); her breasts are plump and raised. She resembles the full moon. Her lotus-like face has a charming smile on it. She is adorned with ear-rings resembling the colour of the young sun. Her complexion resembles gold purified with fire. Her ornaments are made of gold purified by fire. She is endowed with four hands. She is adorned with a golden lotus. She is abounding in various beautiful gems. She is also adorned with necklaces, armlets, bracelets and rings. She shines with a couple of big lotuses held in both her hands. Her hands are graced with golden ornaments called citrons.

47-50. In this way the lord, the great god, always shines in the highest heaven with Mahālakṣmī never leaving him. On his two sides are seated the auspicious Dharaṇī and Nīlā on an auspicious seat. And on the tips of the petals in the eight directions are seated the Śaktis (i.e. the powers embodied) like Vimalā. Vimalā, Utkarṣiṇī, Jñānā, Kriyā, Yogā, so also Prahvī, Satyā and Īśānā, are the (eight) powers of the highest soul. Endowed with all (auspicious) marks, they, holding divine chowries, having moon-like lustre, delight their lord, Acyuta.

51-54. (There are also) bevies of celestial nymphs, and five hundred women. They live in the harem and are adorned with all ornaments. All they have lotuses in their hands, and have lustre like that of crores of fires. They are endowed with all (auspicious) marks, and have faces resembling the moon. The king, the Highest Being, surrounded by them shines. He is also surrounded by Ananta, Garuḍa, and other principal gods like Kārtikeya. He is also surrounded by other servants, eternally liberated. The highest Being, fond of enjoyments and affluence, delights with Ramā.

55-57. O auspicious Girijā, in this way the lord of Vaikuṇṭha shines in the highest place. I shall explain to you his vyūhas (manifestations) and worlds. In the east of the Vaikuṇṭhaloka is the abode of Viṣṇu. In the southeast is Lakṣmī's abode. In the

south is Saṁkarṣaṇa's abode. In the southwest is (the abode) of Sarasvatī. In the west is the abode of Pradyumna. In the northwest is the place of Rati. The land of Aniruddha is in the north.

58. In the northeast is the Śānti-loka. This is the first covering. Then there are twentyfour worlds in a sequence beginning with Keśava.

59-65. The second covering of Vaikuṇṭha is called Śubha. The third auspicious covering consists of the worlds of Matsya, Kūrma, etc. The fourth auspicious covering has the worlds Satya, Acyuta, Ananta, Durgā, Viṣvaksena, Gajānana, Śaṁkha, Padma, Nidhi. In the great directions are the worlds of Ṛg, Yajus, Sāman and Atharvan. So also of Sāvitrī, Garuḍa, Dharma and Sacrifice. The fifth covering is said to be inexhaustible and full of all Speech. So also (there are) the conch, the disc, the mace, the lotus, the sword, the bow, the plough also, and the pestle. The worlds are (thus) equipped with all weapons and missiles. The sixth indestructible covering is said to be consisting of hymns and missiles. Then (there are those) of Indra, Agni, Yama, Nirṛti, Varuṇa, Vāyu, Soma, Īśāna. The seventh is said to be (occupied) by the sages. The Sādhyas, the hosts of Maruts, the Viśvedevas, all are eternal (residents) in the highest abode. So also are other gods.

66-71a. In the material world they are the transient gods. The holy text says: 'The great ones sought out the heaven.' Thus the highest place shines with those liberated, eternal ones fond of enjoyment. The powerful lord shines with the divine queens. The sun does not illumine it; nor does the moon, nor does the fire. Having reached it, the ascetics of acute vows do not return (to the earth). Those who are devoted to the formula consisting of two (divine names) only go to that immutable (place). (It is) not (reached) by means of Vedas, sacrifices, study, gifts, auspicious vows, austerities accompanied by fasts, and other expedients. That eternal, ancient place is to be reached by means of the formula of a couple of names only, so also by means of concentrated devotion or submission.

Pārvatī said:

71b-73. O lord, you have well explained the nature of heaven. How did he dwell in the highest heaven, in the whole territory? For what purpose did he dwell (there)? What is the pur-

pose of (his) sport? How did the lord, the highest god, living in the world consisting of pure sattva live with his vibhūti mixed with rajas and tamas?

Rudra said:

74-75. In his Tripād-vibhūti the glorious highest lord, living with the goddess, and always having his sole enjoyment, is delighted. That great illusion, Prakṛti, the resort of the world, having joined the palms of her hands, extolled the highest god.

Mahāmāyā (the Great Illusion) said:

76-90. Salutation to you, the dwelling-place of the three worlds. Salutation to you of the form of the universe. Salutation to you, the ancient one. Salutation to you, the cause of the origin of the world. Salutation to (you) the lord of Śrī, Bhū, Līlā; to Nārāyaṇa. Salutation to you the glorious one; to Viṣṇu, having the Śārṅga (bow). Salutation to you of the form of all gods, to Viṣṇu, to the triumphant one; to you of a thousand forms, and to you Ananta. Repeated salutations to Acyuta, the one having no modification, and of a pure, good form, and having a form that has no beginning, middle or end. Salutation to you, Hiraṇyagarbha, Yajña (i.e. Sacrifice), to the highest soul, to the soul of all beings, and to the refuge of all beings. Salutation to Brahman, to Light, to you of the form of the universe, to you of pure feet, to the supreme soul, the highest (being). Salutation to you, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Rudra, the prop of all beings, to Hayagrīva, to the blazing Kāla (i.e. Death), to Viṣṇu. Salutation to you, O man (i.e. the chief deity) of sacrifice, of the nature of the oblations made to deities and dead ancestors. Salutation to the lord of beings, to the Sun of auspicious lustre, to Agni, enjoying oblations offered to gods, and to him, the soul (or of the nature) of sacrifice. Salutation to the procreator, to the cause of creation, maintenance and destruction. Salutation to him who is to be known by the Upaniṣads, and of the nature of four souls. Salutation to you, Brahmā, Viṣṇu. Salutation to Śaṅkara (literally, doing good) also. Salutation to you having the three qualities and the cause of creation, maintenance and destruction. Salutation to you the qualityless one, living in the hearts of all. Salutation to that Viṣṇu, the unmanifest, watching

the worlds. Salutation to Nārāyaṇa, the lord of Śrī, of the form of six qualities, to him full of unending qualities, and the giver of all objects. Salutation to Vāsudeva having the form of five states. Salutation to you having the five and nine different vyūhas (manifestations). Salutation to Yajña-varāha; repeated salutations to Govinda, to the unchanging one, to the pure one, and to the adversary of what is fit to be abandoned. Salutation to you, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Narasiṁha. Salutation to you, Keśava, remover of the affliction of the worlds.

91-96. You, Viṣṇu, are the refuge of all the worlds. O lord of the god of gods, be pleased for the good of all worlds. All the sentient beings, having no support and shelter, stay in me. They are bodiless, formless and without all senses. They are without the practices of religious austerities, and always experience misery. O Keśava, please give them worlds and bodies. O omniscient one, create as before the vibhūti (glory) of your sport. O great lord, see, the entire sentient and insentient, mobile and immobile (world) is deluded by me for (your) sport. O Viṣṇu, create with me the material egg. Having put into the mundane existence, piety and impiety, pleasure, pain, and resorting to me, please indulge in sport. Do not tarry.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

97-101. The highest lord, thus addressed by the deity Māyā, entered her, and started creating the world. He who is called Prakṛti-Puruṣa (Matter and Lord), here is Acyuta. He alone is lord Viṣṇu. He entered the Prakṛti. In the Prakṛti he created Brahmā and (other) beings, resorting to Mahat (i.e. intellect). From this Mahat, Ahaṁkāra (Ego) sprang up. From that Ahaṁkāra, the triad of the constituents (guṇas) came up. From the three constituents the creator of the universe produced the subtle elements. At that moment only the gross elements sprang up from the subtle elements. From Brahman, of the nature of the three constituents, Oṁkāra (i.e. the syllable Om) first came up.

102-107. Vāyu (i.e. air) sprang from Ākāśa (i.e. ether); from Vāyu, Agni (i.e. fire) came up. From Agni, water sprang up; and from water the earth is said to have sprung up. The elements—ether and others—were created one after another. Their qualities—sound, touch, colour, taste and odour (were

produced). The great lord, having created and taken the guṇas one after another, and having mixed them up, created the very great egg of the world and those that merged there, which are fourteen in number. In it Viṣṇu created gods like Brahmā, divinities, lower animals, human beings and four kinds of immobile (objects). Then in him having lotus-like eyes he created the great creation. There, the former (souls) remaining in Prakṛti, are born from him in the stocks of gods etc. in accordance with their former deeds.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYNINE

A Description of Viṣṇu's Vyūhas

Pārvatī said:

1. Tell me in detail about the excellent creation of gods. How were the ancient ones like Brahmā, the best in heaven, were born? Tell me also in detail about the incarnations of the lord.

Rudra said:

2-7. Ether, Air, Fire, Water and Earth were created in due succession. Brahmā created the unfathomable ocean of water among them. In this which had become an ocean, Viṣṇu, taking all the beings, slept the sleep at the end of a yuga, on a leaf of a fig-tree in the water that was his Māyā. Desiring to create the world, he had the sleep at the end of a yuga. Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) enjoyed for a long time with that Māyā. On her he generated the excellent Time. So also the divisions of Time like Kalā, Kāṣṭhā, and of the form of a fortnight, a month etc. At that time the lotus in the form of Viṣṇu's navel, which was of the shape of a bud, began to expand. The very bright one was the origin of the world. There the very intelligent Brahmā sprang up. He, desiring to create the world, and impelled by the quality of rajas, praised the highest god having his sleep at the end of the yuga.

Brahmā said:

8-15. Salutation to you, Viṣṇu, the cause of creation, maintenance, and destruction, to you adorned with the ornament of the world, to you the affluent one and of the form of the universe. Salutation to god Brahmaṇya (i.e. the creator), beneficial to cows and brāhmaṇas and beneficial to the world; repeated salutations to Kṛṣṇa, to Govinda. Salutation to (you) of the form of Pradhāna (i.e. Prakṛti) and Time, to the Highest Being, the god. Salutation to (you) of the form of the visible world and not having the form of it. Repeated salutations to Nārāyaṇa, Viśva, the lord of the universe, to the lord of Śrī, Bhū, Nīlā, to Brahman, the highest soul. Salutation to Vāsudeva, of the form of the universe and having the Śārṅga bow, to the lord of the triad (of the Vedas), to Hari, of the form of the lord of the universe. Salutation to you, perfect with endless auspicious qualities. When you, full of the world, sleep, the entire world sleeps. O lord of the world, in the visible world, everything mobile and immobile is covered (by you). You alone are the cause, the agent, and the effect due to the three constituents (viz. sattva, rajas, tamas). You alone are the creator, the one who meditates, and the maker. You remaining in the pure sattva (quality) keep awake. Whence can you have sleep? O god, worlds, the ancient ones, have abided in you.

Śiva said:

16-19. Thus addressed by Brahmā, the highest god Viṣṇu, freed from his sleep at the end of the yuga, got up from that bed. The inconceivable Acyuta, the lord of the worlds, having controlled his sleep at the end of the yuga, commenced creating the world at that moment. Having thought, the Highest Being then created the entire world. Then the lord created in the lotus of his navel all the worlds, the golden egg lying in the water, the seven islands limited by oceans and having land and mountains, with the frying pan (like) egg.

20-24. The lord, Viṣṇu, took his place in the egg. Then with his mind devoted to the supreme spirit, Brahmā meditated upon Viṣṇu. At the end of the meditation a drop of perspiration was produced from his forehead. That drop, of the shape of a bubble, in a moment fell on the earth. O you of an excel-

lent face, I, having three eyes, a trident, and adorned with the crown of the matted hair, was born from that bubble. With modesty I asked the lord of gods: "What shall I do?" Then god Viṣṇu, with delight, thus spoke to me: "O Rudra, you will bring about a fierce-looking destruction of the world, (after) actually being (my) portion, viz. Saṁkarṣaṇa, O you of an excellent face."

25-29. O goddess, from that Nārāyaṇa, I, the fearful one, was born. Having entrusted me with the destruction (of the world), Viṣṇu just again produced from his eyes the moon and the sun, that remove darkness. From his ears he produced Vāyu and directions, and Indra and Agni from his mouth. The lotus-eyed one produced Varuṇa (and) Mitra from his nostrils, and all gods with the Sādhyas and hosts of Maruts from his arms. (He produced) gems and herbs from all the pores of his skin. On (i.e. from) his skin (he produced) mountains, oceans and beasts like cows. Brāhmaṇa was created from his face, and kṣatriya from his arms. Vaiśya sprang up from his thighs and śūdra from his feet.

30-39. Having thus created the entire world, remaining insentient, the lord of the universe remained in it in a universal form. As without the power of that Viṣṇu it did not have winking, therefore, the ancient Viṣṇu alone is the life of the entire world. He alone, the highest soul, being of an unmanifest nature settled down. Brahmā himself proceeds with creation, maintenance and destruction. That ancient Vāsudeva is full of six qualities. From himself having the qualities (of sattva, rajas and tamas) he made his form, the world, into four. The lord of the form of Pradyumna is endowed with all grandeur. He having obtained the position of the inner controller of the lords of creation, time, and people, properly brings about the creation. Then to the high-souled one he gave the Vedas along with the Itihāsas. Brahmā, the grandsire of the world, the portion of Pradyumna, (thus) born of the portion, brings about the creation and maintenance of the world. Lord Aniruddha, endowed with power and lustre, and having got the position of the inner controller of Manus, kings, time and people looks after the maintenance. Lord Saṁkarṣaṇa, Mahā Viṣṇu, endowed with knowledge and power, after assuming the position of

the inner controller of time, all beings, Rudra and Yama destroys the world.

40-44. Thus the state of the inner-controllership of self consists in his being the innermost soul. Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Narasiṁha, Vāmana, Rāma, Paraśurāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and Kalki are the ten Vibhavas (incarnations) of Brahman, the highest soul. The group of six qualities is said to exist in Nṛsiṁha, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. The highest state of the god is like one lamp being produced (i.e. lighted) from another lamp. O auspicious Girijā, that is the state of this Viṣṇu. Listen. The highest heaven Vaikuṇṭha, the excellent Viṣṇuloka, his own form Śvetadvīpa, the excellent Milky Ocean are said to be the four-fold Vyūha (manifestation of god) by the great sages.

45-50. The auspicious origin of Vaikuṇṭha is in the covering of water. It is (bright) like a crore of fires. All that is imperishable like Dharma. It is resorted to by fragrant trees like mandāra and fires. It is full of many gems, is divine, and contains crores of aeroplanes. That which is said to be the highest abode has characteristics like those. In that excellent city of Vaikuṇṭha, bright with various jewels there is a charming, excellent abode called Devajayārāma, which has four doors and has golden ramparts and arched doorways. It is guarded by doorkeepers like Caṇḍa and Kumuda and others. It is filled with divine residences full of various jewels. On all sides it is extended up to five thousand billion yojanas. It is filled with crores of mansions as lofty as thousand yojanas.

51-58. It is adorned with divine men and women who have entered youth. The women and men here look splendid with all good marks. They resemble Śrī Viṣṇu in form, and are adorned with all ornaments. They are covered with divine garlands and garments, and are adorned with divine sandal (paste). They, accomplished with eight syllables of the formula (mantra), through devotion for the lord of gods, of sixteen kinds, rejoice (there), O you naturally charming one. Entering his place, they rejoice as liked by their mind. Having gone into it, and remaining with Viṣṇu, they never return. With their souls intact, the auspicious ones in the company of Viṣṇu, the wise ones, always obtain happiness like that of him. (Those) ones of auspicious hearts having here and there entered Viṣṇu's worlds, again ob-

tain heaven, like the beings living in heaven. Like Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Saṁkarṣaṇa and others they are also born in Satyaloka according to their desire. Then by that (path) only they go to that eternal, highest place. The devotees of Viṣṇu do not have the bondage due to acts and birth.

59-66. The wise say that being Viṣṇu's servant is liberation. Being bound by the lord of gods is not described as a bondage. Viṣṇu's servants are free from all bonds and from blemishes. All worlds up to that of Brahmā are characterized by returning (i.e. one has to come back to the earth after residing there for some time). They are marked by karmabandha (bondage due to acts), have friends like (i.e. are accompanied by) misery, cause, fear, result in great exertion, and cause the destruction of birth, O goddess. The enjoyment of pleasures by men is (just) like food mixed with poison. The deities, getting angry on seeing men with (the effects of) their (good) deeds exhausted, drop them into the mundane existence, having the bondage due to deeds. Therefore, O goddess, the pleasures in heaven cause trouble in many ways. A meditating sage should avoid it which is transient, fraudulent and mixed with misery. He should always remember Viṣṇu, the medicine destroying the mass of all miseries. Merely by the utterance of (Viṣṇu's) name they obtain the highest position. Therefore, O Gaurī, a wise man should desire (to go to) the heaven of Viṣṇu. With undistracted devotion he should worship the lord, the ocean of pity. There is no doubt that he having all knowledge and virtues does protect him.

67-80. Therefore, having muttered the very pious, auspicious formula of eight syllables, he obtains Viṣṇu's world, giving all desired objects. The glorious Viṣṇu, seated on the jewelled couch (bright) like the rays of a thousand suns, (placed) in a divine hall, shone. The glorious Viṣṇu is seated on a divine lotus-seat, (placed on) a divine golden seat, which is held by Śaktis supporting it, which is full of many jewels, which has many colours; the seat is on the eight-petalled lotus, auspicious like the eight letters of the formula, having the auspicious mystical letter of Lakṣmī, and having the lustre like that of crores of young suns. To his right side is the world's mother, Hiraṇmayī (full of gold). She is holding the divine chowries. She is adorned with divine garlands. With her hands she has held a

pot of jewels, a citron, and a golden lotus. To his right is goddess Pṛthivī (the Earth), bright like the petals of a blue lotus. She is having various ornaments and is adorned with beautiful garments. In her upper hands she has held a couple of beautiful red lotuses. With the other two hands the goddess has held a couple of vessels of corn. Holding divine chowries, the Śaktis like Vimalā who are graced with all (good) marks, are seated on the tips of the petals. Among them is seated glorious Acyuta, Hari. He is adorned with hands having divine ornaments like the conch, the disc, the mace and the lotus, and ornaments like armlets and necklaces. He shines with ear-rings like the sun rising in the morning. The lord, enjoying (himself), served by the eternal gods mentioned before, lives in the eternal city of Vaikuṇṭha in the Satya (world). The rich, eight-syllabled formula takes the wise siddhas and never others to that Viṣṇu's world. O you of an excellent face, I have thus described to you the first Vyūha.

81-86. O you of a good vow, I shall explain to you the second world of Viṣṇu. This world of Viṣṇu is known as eternal and is said to be the best among the worlds. That large, meritorious, pure, auspicious world, full of goodness shines like a thousand mid-day suns (shining) simultaneously. Even at the end of the kalpa that very great world would not merge (into Brahman). It is not possible for me or the gods like Brahmā to see it. On all sides the whole of it is full of the groves of the desire-yielding trees. It is endowed with oblong lakes full of nectar-like water. It is graced with divine lotuses full of gold and jewels. It is covered with crores of divine ornaments resembling lightning. It is graced continually with Sāmans, cooings of cuckoos etc. and with trees and flowers carrying fragrance.

87-90. It is covered by divine women and men aged less than sixteen, rich with the grace of all (good) marks, and almost divine ornaments. Women, with their delighted husbands worship Lakṣmī's lord in charming regions in that land. They always obtain the happiness fit to be obtained through his grace. They sing the great deeds of Kṛṣṇa, giving great joy. Very beautiful, auspicious women, having lotus-like eyes, lotus-like feet, resembling Lakṣmī, having divine garlands and garments sport (there).

91-96. Men, holding conches, discs, maces and lotuses,

adorned with ornaments, having garlands, wearing yellow garments, are there. Due to mutual touch the pleasure of devotion for Viṣṇu and delight of the men and women sporting there, grow day by day. In it is the charming and graced harem of Viṣṇu. It is endowed with sandal, agaru-sandal, camphor, saffron and water. It is all around decorated with many flowers and halls. In it, on a divine, beautiful and soft bed which is covered with a bright cover, which is on the lotus-seat, and which is under the shade of the desire-yielding tree, and which has the covers of flowers, rich in the beauty of divine fragrance, the ancient Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, is seated with goddess Lakṣmī.

97-107. He is like crores of moons. He is adorned with divine ornaments. His face is adorned with a pair of soft nostrils of a fine complexion. He shines with glossy, large and beautiful cheeks. He has dark and curly hair. His eyes resemble petals of a red lotus. He has put flowers of mandāra, ketakī, jasmine and white lotuses on his head. His lips are like glossy bimba-fruits. His lotus-like face has a beautiful smile on it. He shines with rows of teeth that shine like priceless pearls. His body is smeared with haricandana. He is having a mark made with musk. He has lovely elevated shoulders and four long arms. He has beautiful sprout-like hands resembling the japā-flower. He has his broad chest adorned with Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha. He is adorned with very beautiful divine wreaths full of pearls. He is covered with a yellow garment like (the light of) the early morning sun and the moonlight. He is adorned with lotus leaves along with anklets decked with rubies. He is adorned with rows of nails like the moon without a spot. His feet and lotus-like hands are soft like red lotuses and fair. He is adorned with a couple of arms having a conch and a disc. With the other two he has clung Lakṣmī's body to his chest. With her he shines like a cloud to which lightning has clung. His couple of auspicious and soft feet is like gold purified by fire. Here the ancient Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, sports.

108-117a. (Lakṣmī is) like gold purified by fire. She is adorned with all ornaments. She is adorned with very glistening and curved sapphires like the row of the digits of the moon. She is adorned with the divine flowers of mandāra and pārijāta. The ends of her hair are beautified by ear-ornaments, and resemble

bees. With her stout and raised breasts she presses Viṣṇu's chest. She is adorned with ornaments like armlets and necklaces. She, the beautiful wife of the lord of all worlds, is always full of youth (i.e. she is ever young). There she eternally sports with the lord of the worlds. That Vāsudeva only, attracting the minds of all beings, and giving the desired objects to men, plays in this entire world. Around him are the eight powers—the eight bodies of Lakṣmī. (They are) Ramā, Rukmiṇī, Sītā, Padmā, Padmālayā, Śivā, Sulakṣaṇā and Suśīlā; they protect that place (lit. world) with weapons like conches, discs, maces, lotuses and śārṅgas (bows), and with lotus-like arrays formed around. Thus, O you of an auspicious appearance, I have properly and in brief described to you the form of the second (Vyūha). It is not possible to describe it in detail. Those who mutter the twelve-syllabled formula giving pleasure always obtain (this) eternal, auspicious, indestructible (world).

117b-123. The world of Viṣṇu can never be obtained by means of Vedic studies, sacrifices, vows and fasting, except by serving (Viṣṇu). Therefore, a devotee should worship Viṣṇu with an undistracted mind. He obtains the highest divine power, freeing him (self) from the bondage of (i.e. due to) his deeds. O goddess, the second, indestructible Vyūha is said to be like this. O Pārvatī, listen. I shall describe to you the third great Vyūha. O you very intelligent one, on the northern shore of the ocean is the Śvetadvīpa. There Viṣṇu stays to allow his view to the meditating sages like the noble Sanaka. Sanaka, Sananda, the third, viz. Sanātana, so also Sanatkumāra, Jātas, Voḍhu, Pañcaśikha—these very bright meditating sages are the sons of Brahmā. They are detached from all enjoyments, are pure, and are always of pure qualities. They enjoy only the flavour of the pleasure due to seeing the lord.

124-133. Viṣṇu dwells there in the vicinity so that Nara, Nārāyaṇa, etc. who reside in the Śvetadvīpa, should (be able to) see him. In the Śvetadvīpa, resembling crores of suns, bright due to being full of various jewels, resorted to by great meditating sages, and free from fear, there are charming parks (having trees) like pārijāta. (The place is) crowded with santāna-creepers, adorned with sandal-trees containing blooming white and blue lotuses, and reservoirs of water. In it is an auspicious,

charming city called Airāvatī. It shines with many divine halls full of various jewels. It is occupied by divine women and men, and full of many mansions. In it is a harem crowded with jewelled trees. It is covered with many lofty mansions, resembling the young sun. In it is a pavilion which is divine, which is graced with gems and gold, and made fragrant with the fragrance of sandal, agaru-sandal, camphor and saffron. It is adorned with canopies rich in beauty with various flowers. It is crowded with celestial damsels, and graced with the chanting of Sāmans. At the centre there is a throne bright like the sun or fire. In it there is an eight-petalled lotus like another orb of the moon. In it, in the pericarp, is seated Viṣṇu. He is like pure gold, and is adorned with a necklace of pearl.

134-138. He has four powerful hands holding a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus. He is graced with a necklace, armlets, bracelets and rings. He has lovely feet resembling golden lotuses. He is graced with rows of white nails like santānaka (flowers). He is adorned with youth proper for the age and form of (a lad of) sixteen years. He is graced with an upright, fragrant mark (Ūrdhvapuṇḍra) made with saffron, and the parting line of hair. He is well covered with a white garment resembling the foam of nectar that was churned (out of the ocean). He is graced with white ear-rings made of pearls. He, whose body fascinates the world, is seated on the lotus-seat.

139-145. On his left lap is seated the goddess of a divine form. She, Lakṣmī, is worthy of him in character, good qualities etc. She resembles lotus-filaments, is graced with the advent of youth, is endowed with all (good) marks, and has ornaments of gold purified in fire. She has put on a divine garland and garment; her hair is dark and curly. She, shining with four arms, is adorned with armlets. She shines with pearl-necklaces; her hair is graced with mandāra (flowers). Her nostrils are soft; she is graced with rows of bright teeth. She has put on the mark of musk on her forehead. The tip of her nose is graced with pearls. She has stout and raised breasts like golden pitchers. Her body is smeared with divine saffron. She is graced with a divine garland. The goddess holds in her lotus-like hands a vessel containing garments, a citron, a mirror, a golden lotus. Around Viṣṇu there are these Śaktis (powers) of her, resembling her:

146-150. Īśā, Vāsyā, Mahādevī, Jāhnavī, Kamalālayā, Sāvitrī, Sarvagā, Padmā are said to be (her) Śaktis. Sraddhā, Medhā, Dhṛti, Prajñā, Dhāraṇā, and Śānti, (so also) Śruti, Smṛti, Dhṛti, Medhā, Vṛddhi, Buddhi, Manīṣiṇī, are said to be Lakṣmī's maids, doing all (pieces of) work. The deities like Ananta and Garuḍa are the usual servants. The eternal deities like the Sādhyas, the hosts of Maruts, pleased with enjoyments obtained through his (her?) favour, serve him (her?) in the palaces, mansions, groves and cities. The eternal ones avoiding what should be abandoned and what is fruitless, always and continually play there.

151-153. Those who, full of faith, constantly mutter Viṣṇu's formula, those who are engaged in the Dvādaśī-vow, go to his immutable position. O Girijā, the ancient world of Viṣṇu cannot be reached by means of Vedas, gifts, sacrifices or even by vows. The place of Viṣṇu can be reached by men with undistracted devotion. Therefore, one should always worship Viṣṇu with undistracted devotion.

154-155. One should narrate (his account), (should utter) just his name, should meditate upon him, should always mutter his formula, should devoutly offer oblations to, and propitiate the omnipresent one giving all desired objects. O you of beautiful buttocks (i.e. beautiful one), I have told you about the third Vyūha and nature of the highest soul as described by the ancient ones.

156-168. Hereafter I shall explain (to you) the excellent fourth Vyūha. To protect the gods, he, resembling crores of moons, lies on the extensive, auspicious bed of Ananta, in the Milky Ocean adorned by Indra, and covered by youths like Indra. Padmanābha, Acyuta, Hari is seated on a divine seat. He resembles a dark cloud. His eyes are large like lotus-leaves. He is graced with a crown resembling a crore of suns. He shines with two divine ear-rings, bright with various jewels. He is covered with a yellow garment resembling the early morning sun or the moonlight. He is graced with the palms of his hands and soles of his feet resembling bright red lotuses. He is graced with necklaces, armlets, bracelets and rings. He is adorned with hands having the conch, disc, mace, Śārṅga (bow) and sword. He is graced with the desire-yielding trees rich in good flowers, fruits

and branches. He is graced with the navel-lotus (the place) of the birth and death (i.e. the origin and destruction) of the universe. His body is smeared with yellow sandal. He is adorned with all ornaments. He has tied his very glossy, dark, curly hair into a braid with divine, charming flowers of mandāra, pārijāta etc. He is graced with a soft, high nose and a pair of high shoulders and knees. He is graced with feet having anklets and having gems and corals. He is graced with rows of nails like the spotless moon. His lotus-like face has lips resembling the aśoka-flowers. He is beautified with rows of teeth bright like priceless pearls. He is graced with a smiling face resembling the full moon. He has entered youth. He is glorious. He is bright with tender limbs. He is the refuge of all the people and gives the fruits to all the people.

169-175. The goddess is worthy of him in qualities like beauty, character etc. She resembles gold purified by fire, and has ornaments of gold purified by fire. She is young; has a beautiful form; she is endowed with charm, (good) character and qualities. She has covered herself with a white garment resembling the form of the Milky Ocean. Her hair is decked with the flowers of mandāra, ketakī and jasmine. She has the mark of musk on her forehead. The parting of her hair is graced with a gem. She has the beauty of many complexions. She is adorned with ear-ornaments. She smiles beautifully with her red lips having the light like the coral. She is well graced with glossy hair resembling intoxicated bees. Her waist is slender. Her eyes are large. Her breasts are stout and raised. She has four charming hands. She is adorned with all ornaments. The goddess has held a couple of auspicious golden lotuses in her raised hands. She has remained closely embracing her lord with the other two (hands). With her glances she is constantly looking at the gods.

176-180. O Pārvatī, the gods constantly looked at by the goddess are fortunate. There gods, siddhas, cāraṇas, kinnars, remaining in the hall, and with their eyes full of the tears of joy constantly sing to the goddess. The lord of gods, being praised by the gods like Brahmā, Rudra harassed by the demons, granted fearlessness to the gods. Hari, the lord of all gods, having granted fearlessness to gods, started killing the demons for the protection of the world. O you sinless one, I

have thus explained to you Viṣṇu's fourth Vyūha. O you of an excellent face, what else do you desire to hear? I shall tell it. You are fortunate; you are blessed. You are a devotee of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTY

The Fish Incarnation of Viṣṇu

Pārvatī said:

1-2. O venerable one, please tell me duly taking what form the lord of gods, Viṣṇu, killed the demons. O Śiva, tell me in detail the grandeur of the forms (i.e. incarnations) of the Fish, the Tortoise of (i.e. taken by) the Greatest (lord).

Mahādeva said:

3-11. O goddess, listen with an alert mind. I shall tell (you) the grandeur of Viṣṇu and the nature of his incarnations of the Fish, the Tortoise etc. As from one lamp another is produced (i.e. lighted), so would be the forms of the highest lord. The grand incarnations of the god are said to be auspicious and of various forms. There are also images of the highest lord that are worshipped. Brahmā, due to his being the Creator, is the universal lord and a great joy. Bhṛgu, Marīci, Atri, Dakṣa, and Kardama, so also Pulastya, Pulaha, Giriśa and Kratu are said to be the nine lords, in succession, of the created beings. Venerable Marīci generated Kaśyapa. O you of an auspicious appearance, Kaśyapa had four wives: (They were:) Aditi, Diti, Kadru and Vinatā also. Aditi gave birth to gods of shining appearance. Diti (gave birth) to demonic sons who were Tāmasa by nature. Some very great demons were: Śambūka, Hayagrīva, and the very mighty Hiraṇyākṣa; so also Hiraṇyakaśipu, Jambha, Maya and others. Makara, of a very severe penance, and very powerful, went to Brahmā's world.

12-14. The powerful one, having duped Brahmā, seized the Vedas. Having seized the holy texts he entered the great ocean. Then the whole world became a void, and religious practices got

mixed. There were no studies. There was no offering made to deities. The practices of the castes and the stages of human life were ignored. Then god Brahmā, surrounded by hosts of all gods, went to the Milky Ocean, and seeking refuge of god (Viṣṇu), praised him.

Brahmā said:

15-23a. Favour me, O god, O lord, O you seated on the serpent-couch, O lord of all gods, O soul of all gods, O you full of Vedas, O Acyuta. You are the first seed of the world-tree. In the middle (i.e. in its maintenance) you are superior to all. In the end (i.e. at the time of its destruction) you are Śiva. You move according to your will. You alone sustain the ancient world of the form of sentience. You are the unmanifest, the origin of the elements, the Pradhāna (i.e. the Primordial Matter) and the immutable Puruṣa. You, the Highest Lord, are the original, middle and the final form of the world. You, the Highest Being, are the refuge of all worlds. You are the origin of the beings. You are a great being. You are the cause of the group of the elements. You, possessing a soul and resorting to Ahaṁkāra, are divided into three. You are the origin and the end. You are the great Vāyu (air) that moves everywhere. You are, and you are not, the origin. You are fire, the treasure of lustres. You, the great lord, are the water, the life of all worlds. O you highly intelligent one, you are the earth, the support of the moving. You are the supporter of the earth. You are the rivers, the ocean, and you alone are the origin of everything. You are the divine sage; you are all the beings, O Highest Being. People urged by you only indulge in good or bad (acts).

23b-25. The Vedas, assaulted by the demon, have entered the great ocean. This entire world—immovable and movable—has the Vedas as its support. The Vedas alone are the limits on all sides of all (religious) practices. The gods are eternally satisfied with the Vedas. Therefore, O Keśava, please bring (back) the Vedas.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

26-31. Viṣṇu, the highest lord, thus addressed by Brahmā, resorted to the Fish-form and entered the great ocean. Resorting

to the form of a crocodile, he, honoured by the gods, killed that very fearful demon, after tearing him with the tip of his mouth. Having killed him, and taken all the Vedas, the Vedāṅgas, the Upāṅgas, he, of a great lustre, gave them to that Brahmā. The Vedas seized by the demon, were mixed up with one another. The intelligent lord, of the form of Vyāsa, made them distinct. By Vyāsa, the noble one, the Vedas were separated. Thus, he, with his Fish incarnation, protected all deities. Oh! at that time Lakṣmī's lord made the world free from affliction by giving (back) the Vedas. He, the venerable Vāsudeva, Hari, full of all gods, being extolled by groups of gods and siddhas, and with his feet worshipped by the meditating sages, vanished.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYONE

Durvāsas Curses Indra

Śrī Rudra said:

1-5. O dear one, I shall duly explain to you that grandeur of the Fish (incarnation) of Viṣṇu, that is saluted by all people. Listen with a concentrated mind. The very lustrous son of Atri, well known as Durvāsas, is wrathful, agitates all the world, and has (practised) severe penance. He, my portion, the brāhmaṇa sage, always causing fear to all, and the treasure of penance went to the Himālayan surface (i.e. region). He, worshipped by kinnara women, lived there for a year. (Then) the sage, desiring to see Indra, went to heaven. At that time he, of a great lustre, saw Śacī's lord, the great god, mounted on an elephant and being honoured by all gods.

6-9. Seeing that, that Durvāsas, having a severe penance (to his credit), with his mind delighted and full of modesty, gave him the garland of pārijāta (flowers). The lord of the deities, received that garland, and placing it on the head of (his) elephant, went to Nandana (garden). The intoxicated elephant, took the garland with his trunk, pressed it and threw it on the ground. Then that

Durvāsas of a great lustre got angry, and with the fire of his anger ablaze, cursed Indra.

Durvāsas said:

10. Since endowed with the entire prosperity of the three worlds, you are slighting me, therefore, the prosperity of the three worlds will surely he destroyed.

Rudra said:

11-18. Indra thus cursed went back to his city. Then Śrī, the mother of the worlds, vanished in a moment. When Lakṣmī vanished, the three worlds vanished. When she, to whose glance the entire world of the immovable and movable resorts, vanished, everything perished. All gods like Brahmā, gandharvas, yakṣas, kinnaras, fiends, demons, serpents, men and goblins, beasts, birds, insects, all immovable and movable objects, all of them were not looked at by Lakṣmī, that mother of the world. All of them were reduced to poverty and experienced misery. Gods, oppressed by hunger and thirst, and being dispirited, cried. Clouds did not shower. All reservoirs of water were dry. All the trees became dry, and were without flowers and fruits. Then gods, along with fiends, demons and goblins, being oppressed by hunger and thirst, went to Brahmā of unlimited vigour, and said to him, the grandsire, the lord of the god of gods and born in a lotus:

The gods said:

19-21a. O venerable one, the three worlds are oppressed by hunger and thirst. No oblations are offered into fire to a deity. The (three worlds) are without all religious practices. All gods, demons and human beings, oppressed by hunger and thirst, have sought the shelter of you, the protector, the lord of all worlds. O lord of gods, please protect the creatures oppressed by hunger and thirst.

Rudra said:

21b-22a. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) them he who respected others and who was the grandsire of all worlds, being very much pleased, spoke to them all:

Brahmā said:

22b-27. Listen, O all gods, demons, gandharvas and men. All this has come to (us) due to Indra's misdeed. This great, fearful fire of universal destruction has come up. O gods, since that very high-minded Durvāsas became angry, all the three worlds perished due to his anger. The silly one, with his mind full of anger, and excited by anger, has said: "Let the three worlds and Lakṣmī, disappear." Due to his curse goddess Lakṣmī, dear to Viṣṇu, the mother and the supporter of the worlds, the great goddess, disappeared. The mother of the worlds, due to being looked at by whose glance the worlds become happy, did not look at (i.e. cared for) the worlds experiencing misery.

28-32. Therefore, all of us will go to Viṣṇu, the excellent one, staying in the Milky Ocean, and will worship the eternal god. When the lord of gods is pleased, this world will be happy.

Deciding like this in his mind, Brahmā, accompanied by hosts of gods, went to the Milky Ocean with sages like Bhṛgu. On the northern coast of the Milky Ocean, the deities like Brahmā, Rudra etc. worshipped Viṣṇu according to rules laid down for worshipping the god. Muttering the eight-syllabled formula, and the Puruṣa-sūkta, and meditating on him with undistracted minds, they offered oblations to the highest god. They praised him with divine hymns and saluted him in various ways.

33-36. Then the venerable one, being pleased and being praised by great sages, stood within the sight of all gods (i.e. appeared before them). Seeing the mighty lord of all worlds, who was full of all gods, who had mounted upon Garuḍa, who had held a conch, a disc and a mace, who had worn a yellow garment, who had four arms, whose eyes resembled lotuses, who had Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha (marks) on his chest, who was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers, who was graced with a crown, a necklace, armlets and anklets, they praised him with shouts of victory and continually saluted him.

37-38. The revered one kindly said to all the deities: "I am a giver of boons. O gods, choose a boon." Thus he spoke (to them). Hearing these words, all gods led by Brahmā and with the palms of their hands joined, said these words to the god:

The gods said:

39-40. O venerable one, now all these three worlds, along with gods, demons and human beings, are afflicted by hunger and thirst. Therefore, O Viṣṇu, we have sought your shelter. Protect all this world. None else would ever be able (to protect it).

Rudra said:

41. Acyuta, the highest lord, thus addressed by all deities, thought and spoke to these gods led by Brahmā, these words:

The lord said:

42-46. Due to the curse of the son of the sage Atri Lakṣmī disappeared. The world will be endowed with grandeur due to her looking at it with (i.e. casting) her glance. Therefore, O gods, all of you led by Śiva and Brahmā, extract the Mandara mountain, and put it into the Milky Ocean. O gods, making the Mandara mountain encircled by the king of serpents, the churning rod, churn with the (help of) the fiends, gandharvas and demons, the Ocean. Then Lakṣmī will appear for the protection of the world. There is no doubt that you, looked at by her, will be very lucky. Concealed (in the Ocean) in the form of a tortoise I myself shall hold the (Mandara) mountain, and entering with my strength into all gods (I shall make them) stronger.

Rudra said:

47-48. O you of lotus-like eyes, when all the deities were thus addressed by Viṣṇu, they, led by Brahmā, spoke to the lord of gods: "Well, well." Being praised by best gods, and saluted by all the worlds, venerable, glorious Acyuta, the prop and the god of all, looking equally everywhere, vanished.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYTWO

The Rise of Goddess Lakṣmī

Śaṅkara said:

1-6. Then all the hosts of gods and the very powerful demons extracted the Mandara mountain and put it into the Milky Ocean. Then the powerful lord Viṣṇu, the creator of the beings, and of unlimited valour, supported, in the form of a tortoise, the mountain. The eternal, immutable, omniscient one, whose body has no beginning, middle or end, who is of a universal form, who is the lord of the worlds fit to be worshipped, supported the excellent mountain with one arm only. Then all gods and demons churned the Ocean, after encircling the Mandara mountain with the lord of serpents. Then when the Milky Ocean was being churned by the very powerful deities for generating (i.e. taking out) Lakṣmī, all the great sages fasted, observed restrictions and also muttered Śrīsūkta.

7-10. The divine excellent brāhmaṇas recited (the hymn Viṣṇu-) Sahasranāma. All the sages who desired to mutter (the formula of) Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu, fasted on the Ekādaśī day of the bright fortnight when the great ocean was being churned and muttered the excellent Śrī-hymn. The topmost brāhmaṇas, the best sages meditated upon and worshipped (the deity). Then at that time when the great ocean was being churned, at first there came up the very strong Kālakūṭa poison which was very painful, very fierce, and which was like the fire of universal destruction.

11-15. Seeing (it), all gods and demons, being frightened, fled away. O you of beautiful eyes, then seeing the best gods frightened and fleeing away, I said to them: "O you all hosts of gods, do not be afraid of the poison. I shall drink this strong poison, Kālakūṭa." Thus addressed by me, all the gods, led by Indra and bowing, very much praised me with the words 'Well, Well'. On seeing the strong poison, like a cloud, having come up I meditated in my heart upon the eagle-bannered god Viṣṇu, resembling the rising sun and holding a conch, a disc, and a mace.

16-21. Having meditated (i.e. when I meditated) with a concentrated mind upon that lord along with Śrī and Bhūmi, having

earrings of gold purified by fire, remover of all miseries, and on my having muttered the great hymn of the name and form (of Viṣṇu) along with Mahālakṣmī, all that poison, which was very fierce, which was the first one, which was fearful to all, which was (capable of) destroying all the worlds, was digested (by me) due to the three names of Viṣṇu, the omnipresent one. He who, being restrained, would devoutly mutter the three names of Viṣṇu, viz. Acyuta, Ananta, Govinda, beginning with Praṇava (i.e. Om) and (also) ending with Om, has no fear of death, so also the great fear due to poison, disease and fire. The wise, restrained one, who would mutter the great hymn—the three names—does not have fear of Death; then from where else (can he have it)? Thus with (the muttering of) the three names I drank that poison.

22-24a. Then the gods, pleased and very much amazed, praised me. Having saluted me the gods again churned the Milky Ocean. O beautiful lady, when the ocean was being churned by me and the gods, Jyeṣṭhā Devī, covered with gems, wreaths and garments came up. When the goddess came up, she said: "What should I do?" Then all the hosts of gods repeatedly said to the goddess:

Gods said:

24b-32. We give you the place in the charming interior of the house of those where quarrel takes place. Having inauspicious (qualities), live there. Giving misery and poverty to them who, being liars, always speak harsh words, and who of impure hearts, sleep in the evening, stay in their house. There is no doubt that you will always stay at that place where there will be potsherds, hair, ash, bones, fire of the chaff or charcoal. O you inauspicious one, always live, along with Kali, in that house which is marked by potsherds, bones, ash, hair etc. O great goddess, resort to him who, the stupid one, very much covered with sin, sips water without cleaning his feet. People cleaning their teeth with chaff, charcoal, potsherd, stone, sand, (a piece of) garment, (or of) hide, will be (i.e. are) mean. O goddess, causing poverty, always live in the house of those who eat sesamum, flesh of animals struck with a poisoned weapon, kaliṅga, pot-herb, garlic, mushrooms, viḍvarāha, bilva, kośātaki-fruit, bottle-gourd, and onions.

Rudra said:

33-45. Having thus ordered Jyeṣṭhā, dear to Kali, all the gods, well-composed, again churned the Milky Ocean. O you of an auspicious face, then goddess Vāruṇī came up. Ananta, the lord of serpents, took her of beautiful eyes. Then Surā (spirituous liquor), adorned with all ornaments, came up. She graced with all (auspicious) marks became the wife of Garuḍa. Then bevies of celestial nymphs and divine and very strong gandharvas endowed with handsomeness and engaged in sweet singing, came up. Then Airāvata came up. Then the horse Uccaiḥśravas came up. Then came up Dhanvantari, Pārijāta and Surabhi giving all desired objects. Indra with a pleased mind accepted all these. Then in the morning when the sun rose on the Dvādaśī day, and when the Ocean was again churned by gods led by Indra, Śrī, Mahālakṣmī, the auspicious goddess of all the worlds, being praised by great sages with pleasing faces, came up. She resembled a crore of young suns, and was adorned with golden armlets. She was seated on a golden lotus and was graced with all (auspicious) marks. Her eyes were large like lotus-petals. Her hair was dark and curly. Her body was smeared with divine sandal. She was adorned with divine flowers. She had (put on) all divine ornaments decked with various jewels. Her waist was slender. She was the mother of the world. Her breasts were stout and raised. She had four hands. Her eyes were large. Her face was like the full moon. She held with her lotus-like hands adorned with all ornaments, a pot of jewels, citron, and an auspicious couple of golden lotuses. On her bosom she wore a garland of unfaded lotuses. They saw that great goddess, desiring the good of all worlds.

46-54. Seeing her, the controller of all beings, the mother having a lotus-garland, Nārāyaṇī, world's mother, having a place in the heart of Viṣṇu, all the deities were pleased. In heaven groups of gods beat drums strongly. The sylvan deities continuously showered flowers. The chief gandharvas sang and bevies of celestial damsels danced. So also auspicious breezes blew. The sun was very bright. The fires burnt noiselessly; the ten directions were bright. Then from the Milky Ocean the Moon came up. He, Soma (i.e. the Moon), the brother of the mother (Lakṣmī), was pleasant. The Moon, the lord of the stars, became the maternal

uncle of the world. Then Tulasī, Viṣṇu's wife, purifying the world, and the mother of the world came up for the worship of Viṣṇu. Then all the gods, with their minds pleased and all desires fulfilled, put (back) the (Mandara) mountain as before (in its own place), and led by Śiva and Brahmā, approached the mother (i.e. Lakṣmī). Having praised her with the (hymn Viṣṇu-) sahasranāma, they recited the text of the Śrīsūkta. Then, O goddess, she, being pleased, said to all gods:

Śrī said:

55a. O best gods, ask for a boon. Well-being to you. I am a giver of boons.

Rudra said:

55b. With their figures bent and palms of their hands joined, the gods said to Lakṣmī:

The gods said:

56-59a. O Kamalā, O goddess, O you dear to all gods, be pleased. Always rest on Viṣṇu's chest. Never go away (from there). O goddess, always look after the three worlds. O highest goddess, you, to whose glances the entire immovable and movable world resorts, are eternal. Gods, looked at (with favour) by you, are powerful. You are the mother of gods like Rudra. (Their) splendour is due to your glance. We desire this, O goddess. Salutation to you, O mother of the world.

Rudra said:

59b-62a. Thus addressed by all deities, the great goddess, the mother of the world, the one dear to Viṣṇu, said to the gods: "Let it be so." Then Viṣṇu, lord of Śrī, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, manifested himself as before in the Milky Ocean. Then the gods, having saluted Viṣṇu, praised him. All the auspicious (gods) with their faces delighted and with the palms of their hands joined said:

The gods said:

62b-63a. O lord of all, accept the goddess Lakṣmī, never leaving you, as your dear queen for the protection of the world.

Rudra said:

63b-70. Having said like this, all gods led by Brahmā and along with the sages, and with their eyes full of tears of joy, placed the goddess and the god, adorned with divine garments, divine wreath and various jewels, on a divine seat, full of various jewels and resembling the young sun, and worshipped Viṣṇu seated with Lakṣmī. They also worshipped the goddess with sandal, incense, lights, and offerings of eatables full of nectar, and with extraordinary fruits. Goddess Tulasī, delicate and auspicious, came up from the nectar. With that they properly worshipped Lakṣmī's couple of feet. Gods overcome with tears full of joy, having gone round him, keeping him to their right, three times, and having saluted him, praised him with eulogies. Then venerable Viṣṇu was pleased. With Lakṣmī, the lord gave them boons desired (by them). Then gods, men and others were very much delighted. They were purified by Lakṣmī's glances. They had profuse grains and wealth. Being extremely healthy, they obtained great happiness.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYTHREE

Ekādaśī as a Day of Fast

Śiva said:

1. Then for the good of all the world the lord along with the goddess, delighted in heart, spoke to the gods and great sages:

The lord said:

2-8a. O all sages and deities having great power, listen. Ekādaśī is very meritorious and destroys all calamities. You have observed it as a day of fast in order to see Lakṣmī. Dvādaśī, dear to me, is always more meritorious than that. Since today all those men who observe a fast on the previous (i.e. Ekādaśī) day, and who, when the sun has risen on the Dvādaśī (day), worship with great faith and devotion me along with Lakṣmī and Tulasī,

are freed from bondage and reach my position. Those men who do not worship me, the Highest Being, on Dvādaśī, are sinners, and are deluded by my Māyā. My Māyā, difficult to cross, throws the sinners, the most sinful ones, bound by objects of senses, averse to my worship and going (i.e. fated to go) to hell, into the continuous mundane existence.

Rudra said:

8b-11. Speaking like this, the lord, the highest soul, the ancient one, being praised by the sages, went to Lakṣmī's place. The highest lord, along with goddess Lakṣmī of large eyes, remained near (the gods) on the bed of Śeṣa in a hall resembling the sun in the Milky Ocean for appearing before the gods. Then all the hosts of gods, devoutly worshipping the ancient Tortoise-form (of the lord), praised him with delighted minds. Then lord Viṣṇu, of the form of Tortoise, was pleased.

The lord said:

12a. O best gods, ask for a boon that is in your mind.

Rudra said:

12b-13a. Then all the hosts of gods, with their minds full of joy, and joining the palms of their hands, said to Viṣṇu of the form of Tortoise:

The gods said:

13b-14a. O you very powerful one, O lord of gods, to help Śeṣa and the quarter-elephants, please sustain the earth having seven islands.

Rudra said:

14b-19. Saying, "Let it be so", the lord, the creator of the worlds, with his mind pleased, sustained the earth covered by the seven islands. Then gods with gandharvas, fiends, demons and human beings, permitted by the great sages, went to their respective world. O you of an excellent complexion, since then all gods led by Brahmā, so also siddhas, human beings, meditating saints, best sages, honouring Viṣṇu's order devoutly fasted on the Ekādaśī (day) and duly worshipped Viṣṇu on the Dvādaśī

(day). O you beautiful one, I have told you all about the origin of goddess (Lakṣmī); so also about the splendour of Viṣṇu in his Tortoise-form. What else do you desire to hear?

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYFOUR

How to Observe the Vow of Dvādaśī

Pārvatī said:

1-2. O lord, I desire to hear about the rule about Dvādaśī, and about (how) the worship of Viṣṇu should be done on that (day). O great lord, due to your love for me (i.e. since you love me), tell me in detail the power of Ekādaśī that removes all sins of men.

Mahādeva said:

3-8. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you the rule about Dvādaśī. Merely by (one's) remembering it, Viṣṇu would be pleased. Men fasting on Ekādaśī when it has come, are freed from all sins, and reach the highest position of Viṣṇu. By worshipping Viṣṇu on Dvādaśī all the sin (of one) committed knowingly or unknowingly perishes in a moment. Thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Vājapeya sacrifices do not equal even a sixteenth part af Ekādaśī-fast. The excellent Dvādaśī (vow) gives merit, wealth, desired objects and salvation also. It fulfils all desires of men. O you of beautiful eyes, there is nothing else that saves (one) from sins like Ekādaśī. There is no other vow like that of Ekādaśī.

9-16. He who, ignoring Ekādaśī, would observe some other vow, asks for begging after abandoning great kingdom which is in his hand. O dear one, all the sin that is committed with the eleven (sensory and motor) organs would perish by means of a fast on the Ekādaśī (day). O you of an excellent face, the Purāṇas repeatedly announce: "One should not eat, one should not eat, when the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu has come." O you of an excellent complexion, there are always

certain articles of food prohibited for the castes and stages of life. The more so on the Ekādaśī of the bright half and the dark half (of a month). There is no doubt that the Ekādaśī-fast should be observed. If the anniversary day of the death of one's mother and father is on the day on which Ekādaśī falls, the presents should be given on the Dvādaśī day, but never on the Ekādaśī day. Dead ancestors and gods do not eat censured food. On an Ekādaśī day one should not eat, should never drink liquor, should not hurt a brāhmaṇa. These three (sins) are said to be equal (in gravity). Therefore, on a pure (i.e. unmixed) Ekādaśī (day), one should observe a fast. In the three conditions, with speech, body and deeds, an effort should be made (for observing a fast).

17-24. Ekādaśī mixed with Daśamī should be carefully avoided. (If Daśamī continues) at the time of dawn (on the Ekādaśī day), it (i.e. the Ekādaśī) would be mixed with Daśamī. Leaving it (i.e. that Ekādaśī day) he should, without (further) thought, observe a fast on the pure (i.e. unmixed) Dvādaśī. O goddess, if a part of Ekādaśī continues at the sunrise on the Trayodaśī day, then Dvādaśī remains on that day also. At dawn he should perform all rites. Even if a part of Dvādaśī is there, breaking the fast (on that day) is recommended. In this case one should ignore even a pure Ekādaśī. There is no doubt about it. Even if a part of the Ekādaśī continues on the Dvādaśī, when the sun has risen, one should ignore the entire Ekādaśī (on the previous day) and observe a fast on that (Dvādaśī) day. Having decided the rite like this, one should observe a fast on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. Avoiding four meals, one in the evening of the first day, another in the morning of the last (i.e. the third) day, and two on the middle (i.e. the second) day, one should observe a fast. On the Daśamī day he should eat once (only), avoid (sexual) union with his wife, sleep on the ground, and should remain pure on the next day.

25-32. With his body smeared with (the pulp of) the dhātrī-fruit, he should bathe and offer the sandhyā (prayer). Intent on (observing) a fast, he should worship Viṣṇu at night. A devotee of Viṣṇu should not see, talk with or touch a heretic, one doing a prohibited act, a fallen person or a cāṇḍāla. A brāhmaṇa who is not devoted to Viṣṇu is called a heretic. One who has given up

the tuft of hair on the crown of the head and the sacred thread is said to be one remaining (i.e. persisting) in (doing) prohibited acts. One having (committed) major and minor sins is said to be fallen. One belonging to the lowest caste is said to be *śvapaca*. This proper decision is taken by the Vedas. Having worshipped the lord of gods, one should keep awake. With sandal, flowers, lights, garments, ornaments, auspicious mutterings, hymns, salutations, one should devoutly worship (Viṣṇu) at night. Then in the morning having bathed according to the proper rule with water mixed with Tulasī, and having gratified the dead ancestors and deities, one should worship Viṣṇu, the lord of the world along with Lakṣmī, with tender Tulasī-leaves, and fragrant flowers. Then one hundred and eight times he should wave lights (before Viṣṇu's idol).

33-39. To both of them (i.e. Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī) he should offer a garland made of lotuses. He should also offer them incense, light, articles of food and tāmbūla. One should offer (them) charming food of rice boiled in milk along with sugar, and should offer a tāmbūla with camphor. He should devoutly salute (them) while going round them. One hundred and eight times he should offer oblations into fire with ghee, offering rice boiled in milk with the recital of every ṛc, with (the recital of) the Puruṣa-sūkta and Lakṣmī-sūkta. He should feed the brāhmaṇas, and controlled in speech he himself should also eat. He should pass that great day by the recital of the Purāṇas etc. That night he, observing celibacy, should sleep on the ground. That lord of Kamalā, being thus worshipped on the Dvādaśī day, is pleased in a moment, and the lord certainly gives all desired objects. O goddess, I have thus told you the excellent vow of Dvādaśī. What else do you desire to hear? I shall tell that to you.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYFIVE

The Birth of Heretics

Śrī Pārvatī said:

1-2b. O lord, you told me that one should avoid conversation with heretics, and that it is more censurable than (talking to) a cāṇḍāla. (Tell me) of what kind they are said to be, and with what signs they are marked.

Rudra said:

2c-12a. Those who, deluded by ignorance, describe any other deity as being superior to Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, are said to be heretics. Those who use skulls, apply ash, use bones, have non-Vedic marks, have matted hair and bark-garments though they do not belong to the hermit-stage of life are (said to be) heretics. Those brāhmaṇas who are without such marks dear to Viṣṇu as conches, discs, ūrdhvapuṇḍra (upright sectarian marks on the forehead) are said to be heretics. That brāhmaṇa who does not follow the practices laid down in the holy texts and codes of laws should be known as a heretic and is condemned among all people. Those that have no devotion for the lord are said to be heretics. He who is free in all acts (i.e. performs all acts as he likes) and offers oblations into fire and gives gifts directed to deities (other than) Viṣṇu, the enjoyer of the fruit of all sacrifices and the deity of the brāhmaṇas, and who independently does all great acts laid down in the Vedas, should be known as a heretic. He who looks upon god Viṣṇu as equal to other deities like Brahmā, Rudra, would always be (called) a heretic. That brāhmaṇa who, in the three conditions, does not recognise Viṣṇu by means of speech, body and acts, would be a heretic. What is the use of saying much in this regard? Those brāhmaṇas who are not devotees of Viṣṇu, should never be asked (any question), should never be talked to and should never be seen.

Pārvatī said:

12b-15a. O lord, O best of gods, I am asking (you) a secret. Through love for me tell it. There is a great doubt. The holy texts have condemned wearing (i.e. using) skulls, (applying) ash and

(wearing) hide. You wear (i.e. use) them. (Then), O god, for what purpose is it condemned? O lord of gods, O you highly intelligent one, through fickleness of (i.e. natural to) women I am asking it. It may be that due to your great power what is told ought not to be done by you. (But) you have not formerly told me in detail what ought not to be done. Therefore, O lord, please pardon me my question.

Vasiṣṭha said:

15b-17a. Thus by the goddess Śiva was asked in a lonely place, free from people. He told her the great secret, viz. whatever he did.

Śiva said:

17b-21a. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you that secret which is very wonderful. O goddess, you should not speak what I have told you among people. O you of a good vow, I shall tell it to you since your body is not separate from mine. In the age of Svāyambhuva (Manu) in olden times there were great demons like Namuci, who were very powerful, very valorous, very strong and great heroes. All of them were devoted to Viṣṇu, were pure, and free from all sins. They followed the practices (laid down) in the triad of the Vedas. All gods, being frustrated, led by Indra, and overcome by fear, approached Viṣṇu and sought his shelter.

Gods said:

21b-22a. O Keśava, you alone can conquer these great demons who cannot be conquered by all gods, and who have washed off their sins with penance.

Mahādeva said:

22b-25. Hearing these frightful words of the gods, Viṣṇu, Puruṣottama, consoled those regents of the quarters, and said to me:

The lord said:

O Rudra, O you of mighty arms, O you best god, for deluding the enemies of gods prepare a course of conduct to be followed by

heretics. Narrate to them the dark Purāṇas (i.e. Purāṇas that will take them astray). O you very intelligent one, also fashion confusing holy texts. There will be brāhmaṇas and great sages who have given themselves away to me.

26-33. Approaching them through devotion for me, tell the vicious ones: Kaṇāda, Gautama, Śakti, Upamanyu, Jaimini, Kapila, Durvāsas, Mṛkaṇḍu, Bṛhaspati, Bhārgava and Jāmadagnya are the ten (?) vicious sages. Desiring to do the good of the world, approach them with your power of suggestion (bhāvaśakti?). By your power increased in viciousness infused into them they will be vicious in a moment. There is no doubt about it. Those brāhmaṇas with greater viciousness caused by you, will narrate the vicious Purāṇas and doctrines in the three worlds. O god, you yourself, wearing the marks like a skull, hide, ash, bones, fully delude the people in the three worlds. So also you, Śiva, prepare the Pāśupata order with its divisions like Kaṅkāla, Śaiva, Pāṣaṇḍa and Mahāśaiva; so also properly prepare the doctrine having no particular marks and outside the Vedic fold. All the mean men will wear ash, bones etc. and will be insensible. The vicious ones will describe you as the highest (god).

34-36a. Taking to their doctrine all the ancient demons will be averse to me in a moment. There is no doubt (about it). O very powerful Rudra, in my incarnations I too shall worship you in every age to delude the vicious ones. Having upheld this doctrine, they will undoubtedly fall.

Mahādeva said:

36b-37. O you beautiful one, having heard what Viṣṇu had said, I, though having a very large mouth (i.e. though a good speaker) became helpless then. Then having saluted the highest god, I said:

38-43. "O god, if I do what you have said on the earth, it will certainly lead to my destruction. O Viṣṇu, it is possible for me to carry out this mission. Your command is not to be disobeyed. This is very painful." O goddess, when I spoke like this, Viṣṇu, having again cheered me up, said: "Let this not lead to your destruction. Do as I order you for the good of the deities. O best god, I shall also tell you about the means for your livelihood." Then with compassion he gave me his thousand names

(i.e. the hymn called *Viṣṇusahasranāma*): "Installing me in your heart, mutter my indestructible formula. The very great, six-syllabled formula is said to be Brahman, the emancipating one. Those who worship me with devotion obtain salvation. There is no doubt about this.

44-46. (Salutation to) him dark like the petal of a blue lotus, having eyes like lotus-petals, holding a conch, a disc, and the Śārṅga bow, and adorned with all ornaments. (To him) having put on a yellow garment, having four arms, the dear lord of Jānakī. 'Salutation to Śri Rāma': this excellent formula should be muttered. It removes all sins, and gives salvation even to sinners. Muttering this formula everyday you will be free from blemishes.

47-51a. All that sin produced in you due to having (applied) ash and having bones, has all become auspicious due to the auspicious utterance of my formula. O best god, being gratified I shall destroy all sin. O you of a good vow, devotion to other god than me will not come up. Worship me, the lord, the Supreme Being, mentally in your heart. Obey my order. Due to my love, all this will be auspicious for you." Having thus ordered me, O goddess, he dismissed the hosts of gods. The gods, dismissed by him went to their own abodes. Then gods, led by Indra, requested me.

Indra and others said:

51b. O god, quickly do that beneficial act as told by Viṣṇu now.

Mahādeva said:

52-56. O auspicious one, for the good of the gods, I took to the way of the heretics, and had skulls, hides, ash and bones. O auspicious one, as told by Viṣṇu, I prepared the vicious Purāṇas and the heretic Śaiva doctrines. O sinless one, having entered through my power, Gautama and other brāhmaṇas I proclaimed the texts outside the Vedic fold. Resorting to this doctrine, all the wicked demons became averse to the lord (i.e. Viṣṇu), and were enveloped in viciousness. Applying ash to their bodies, covered with (i.e. having) very severe penance, they worshipped me only with flesh, blood and sandal.

57-64. On receiving from me grants of boons, they were haughty with pride and power. They were very much attached to objects of senses, and were full of lust and anger. They, void of goodness and powerless, were then defeated by the hosts of gods. Fallen from all righteous paths, they will go to a mean position in (due) time. Those who, bereft of righteous paths, move on the earth by resorting to this doctrine of mine, always see (i.e. go to) hell. O goddess, (this) my course, that is censured, is thus (followed by me) (only) for the good of the gods. Following Viṣṇu's order I have (applied) ash and (use) bones. O goddess, this is an external mark intended for deluding the foes. In the heart however, I, always meditating upon god Viṣṇu, just mutter that emancipating formula, telling about Brahman. It is like the (hymn) Sahasranāma of Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa. O auspicious one, constantly muttering the great six-syllabled formula which increased the Raghu-race, we constantly obtain that Brahman which is filled with the nectar of constant joy, which is permanent happiness. O you of an auspicious face, I have told you all this that you had asked. What else do you desire to hear? Ask me that with affection.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYSIX

Characterization of Various Texts and Doctrines as Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa

Pārvatī said:

1. O sinless one, tell me about the vicious texts which were composed by the brāhmaṇas bereft of devotion to the lord. O lord of gods, tell me their names in a sequence.

Rudra said:

2-4. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you about the vicious texts in a sequence. By merely remembering them even the wise ones would be deluded, First I myself proclaimed the Śaiva, Pāśupata (texts) etc. Hear about the ones which were proclaimed

by the brāhmaṇas into whom my power had entered, after that: Kaṇāda proclaimed the great Vaiśeṣika text.

5-7. Similarly Gautama (proclaimed the doctrine of) Nyāya, and Kapila (proclaimed) Sāṁkhya. Dhiṣaṇa (Bṛhaspati) in the same way (proclaimed) the much censured Cārvāka (doctrine); Viṣṇu of the form of Buddha proclaimed the false Buddhist doctrine and those of the naked and wearing dark blue garments for the destruction of the demons. The doctrine of Māyā (illusion) is a wicked doctrine and said to be pseudo-Buddhist. I myself, of the form of a brāhmaṇa, proclaimed it in Kali (age).

8-12. It shows the meaninglessness of the words of the holy texts and is condemned in the world. In this (doctrine) only the giving up of one's own duties is expounded. And that is said to be religiousness by those who have fallen from all duties. I have propounded the identity of the Highest Lord and the (individual) soul. I stated this Brahman's nature to be qualityless. O goddess, I myself have conceived, for the destruction of the worlds, and for deluding the world in this Kali age, the great doctrine resembling the purport of the Vedas, (but) non-Vedic due to the principle of Māyā (illusion) (present in it). By my order formerly Jaimini propounded the great doctrine of Pūrva Mīmāṁsā, stating godlessness and making the Veda meaningless.

13-17. O Girijā, know from me the vicious doctrines. I shall also narrate the names of the vicious Purāṇas* in succession: Brāhma, Pādma, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, so also Bhāgavata. So also Nāradīya and Mārkaṇḍeya as the seventh. Āgneya is said to be the eighth, and Bhaviṣya to be the ninth. Brahmavaivarta is said to be the tenth, and Liṅga to be eleventh. Vārāha is said to be the twelfth and Vāmana the thirteenth. Kaurma is said to be the fourteenth and Mātsya the fifteenth. Gāruḍa is said to be the sixteenth, and Skānda to be the seventeenth. The eighteenth is Brahmāṇḍa. (These are) the Purāṇas in succession.

18-22a. Know from me that Mātsya, Kaurma, Laiṅga, Śaiva, so also Skānda and Āgneya are tāmasa (vicious). O you of

*The immediately following list is not actually that of the vicious Purāṇas but of the Purāṇas in general. The vicious six Purāṇas follow this list of eighteen Purāṇas. The word 'tāmasa' in this verse is not appropriately used. (Ed.)

an auspicious appearance, the Purāṇas, viz. Vaiṣṇava, Nāradīya, so also the auspicious Bhāgavata, similarly Gāruḍa, Pādma, Vārāha should be known to be sāttvika (or virtuous). Know from me that Brahmāṇḍa, Brahmavaivarta, Mārkaṇḍeya, Bhaviṣya, Vāmana and Brāhma are rājasa (endowed with the quality of passion). The sāttvika ones are said to give salvation and are always auspicious. Similarly, O goddess, the tāmasa are said to be the cause of (i.e. lead one to) hell.

22b-27. Similarly Smṛtis endowed with the three qualities are proclaimed by the sages. O you of an auspicious appearance, they are sāttvika, rājasa and tāmasa. Vāsiṣṭha, Hārīta, Vyāsa, Pārāśara, Bhāradvāja and Kāśyapa are said to sāttvika, giving (i.e. leading to) salvation and auspicious. Yājñavalkya Ātreya, so also Taittira, Dākṣa and Kātyāyana and Vaiṣṇava are rājasa, giving (i.e. leading to) heaven, and auspicious. Gautama, Bārhaspatya, Sāṁvarta, Yama, Sāṁkhya and Auśanasa are said to be tāmasa, and giving (i.e. leading to) hell. What is the use of talking much in the case of the Purāṇas and the Smṛtis also? The tāmasa do lead to hell. A wise one should avoid them. As the occasion has come, I have told you all the auspicious doctrines. Listen. I shall tell you about the nature of the remaining birth (i.e. of the other incarnations) of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYSEVEN

The Boar Incarnation of Viṣṇu

Śrī Rudra said:

1-3. Kaśyapa's two sons, Hiraṇyaka and Hiraṇyākṣa were very powerful. They, the two sons of Diti, were great warriors and the lords of the demons. In Śvetadvīpa they were with Viṣṇu (as his doorkeepers) named Jaya and Vijaya. O goddess, (once) the two very powerful ones prevented the greatest meditating sages who were eager to see Viṣṇu. The two best, very powerful gods, the doorkeepers were cursed by them.

Sanaka and others said:

4a. O servants of the god, leave (this place) and be gone to the earth.

Rudra said:

4b-6a. Having cursed them like this, the best sages remained there. The god (Viṣṇu) having come to know the affair called them (i.e. the sages) and the two (doorkeepers) also, to whom, after they had stood, the lord, the cause of the beings, said:

The lord said:

6b-8a. O you very powerful ones, you have done a great wrong to the noble (sages). O doorkeepers, you cannot pass it over. If you desire to have seven existences, then you will be my sinless devotees. If you want to remain as my enemy, then you will have three existences.

Rudra said:

8b. Thus addressed, the very powerful Jaya and Vijaya said to the highest god:

Jaya and Vijaya said:

9-10a. O you who respect others, we can't go to (and live on) the earth for a long time. Therefore, know that we shall go to (i.e. have) those existences causing enmity (for you). O god, killed by you only, we shall come near you.

Rudra said:

10b-14. Having spoken like this, the two very powerful doorkeepers were born from the womb of Diti, (the wife of) Kaśyapa. Hiraṇyakaśipu was the elder and Hiraṇyākṣa the younger. Both of them were well-known in the world. Both were very powerful and haughty due to their might. That Hiraṇyākṣa of an immeasurable body and very haughty removed, with his thousands of arms, the earth along with mountains, oceans, islands, and all living beings. Having removed it out and put it on his head he entered the lower world. Then all the hosts of gods, afflicted by fear, cried.

15-19. They sought the shelter of Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu. Then

knowing that wonder, he, Viṣṇu, the holder of a conch, a disc, and a mace, took up the Boar-form, existing everywhere and having no beginning, middle or end. The highest lord full of everything, having hands and feet on all sides, having large fangs and arms, struck the demon with one fang. The mean son of Diti, with his huge body pounded, died. Seeing the earth fallen (from the demon's head), he lifted it with his fang, and putting it on Śeṣa's head as before, took up the form of a Tortoise.* Seeing great Viṣṇu of the form of the hog, all deities and sages, with their bodies bowed with devotion, praised him.

The gods said:

20-25. Salutation to Yajñavarāha. Salutation to you of a hundred arms. Salutation to the god of gods. Salutation to you, the omnipresent. Salutation to you of an abiding form, to you of the form of all sacrifices. Salutation to you (of the form of the divisions of time like) kalā, kāṣṭhā and nimeṣa, to you of the form of time. Salutation to you, the soul of beings. Salutation to you having the Ṛgveda as your body. Salutation to you, the soul of the gods. Salutation to you, the Sāmaveda. Salutation to you, Oṁkāra. Salutation to you of the form of the Yajurveda, so also of the form of the ṛc and full of the four Vedas. Salutation to you of the (four) Vedas, the Vedāṅgas and the Upāṅgas. Salutation to you Govinda, having no beginning or end. Salutation to you knowing the Vedas, and having a peculiar form. Salutation to you the lord of Śrī, Bhū, Līlā and the father of the world.

Rudra said:

26-29. Having thus praised god Viṣṇu, the lord of the soul, and of the form of the boar, they worshipped him with sandal, flowers etc. He, being properly worshipped by the gods, gave them a boon desired (by them). Viṣṇu who (i.e. whose praise) was being joyfully sung by the gandharvas and celestial nymphs, and being praised by the great sages, vanished there only. A devoted man who, having got up in the morning, praises (the

*This is rather confusing. As is well known, Viṣṇu assumed the form of a tortoise in the second incarnation to give support to the mountain Mandara which served as a churning rod for gods who wanted to acquire Amṛta from the Milky Ocean. (Ed.)

lord) with these (hymns), gets a desired (piece of) land, full of corn and fruits for a long time. I have told you this splendour of the Boar (incarnation) of Viṣṇu. In the same way I shall describe (his) Nārasiṁha (incarnation). Listen, O you of an excellent face.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYEIGHT

The Emergence of Nṛsiṁha

Rudra said:

1-2. Having learnt that his brother was killed, the great demon Hiraṇyakaśipu practised a penance near Meru (dedicating it) to me. O auspicious one, he, the very powerful one, eating (i.e. subsisting on) air, muttering the five-syllabled formula, worshipped me for thousands of divine years.

3. Then with a pleased mind, I said to the great demon: "O demon, ask for the boon that is in your mind." Then the demon spoke to me, who was pleased, O you of an auspicious face:

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

4-5. Grant me exemption from death from gods, demons, human beings, gandharvas, serpents, fiends, beasts, birds, animals, noble siddhas and yakṣas, vidyādharas, so also kinnaras, so also all diseases, weapons, all principal sages.

Rudra said:

6-14. O you of a pleasing appearance, I said to the demon: "Let it be so." The very powerful demon, having got the great boon from me, conquered Indra and gods and became the lord of the three worlds; and he himself forcibly took all portions of sacrifices. Gods, vanquished by him, did not find a protector. All gandharvas, gods, demons, yakṣas, nāgas, siddhas and sādhyas were under his control. The very mighty king of the demons married, according to proper rites, Uttānapāda's daughter named Kalyāṇī. O you auspicious one, from her was born the

very lustrous Prahlāda, the king of the demons. Even while (he was) in (his mother's) womb, he was attached to Viṣṇu. He, of a delighted mind, never knew anyone else except the lord of gods in all conditions and deeds (done) with his mind, speech and body. The humble and very intelligent one stayed in his preceptor's house at a (proper) time. Having studied all the Vedas and various sacred texts, the demon's son sometime came along with his preceptor to his father and saluted him with humility. The lord of the demons, having embraced his son of auspicious marks with his arms, and having put him who was much amazed, on his lap, said these (words to him):

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

15. O Prahlāda, you stayed in your preceptor's house for a long time. O you of a good vow, tell me the knowledge given to you by your preceptor.

Rudra said:

16. Thus asked by his father, Prahlāda, a born devotee of Viṣṇu, affectionately spoke words removing sins to the lord of demons:

Prahlāda said:

17. After having saluted Viṣṇu, the Highest Being, the lord, who is the aim of all Upaniṣads, I shall tell you.

Rudra said:

18-20. The lord of demons, having thus heard Viṣṇu's praise, was amazed. He angrily said to the preceptor: "What have you taught my son? O you wicked one, why did you teach my son such praise of Viṣṇu, a stupid thing not fit to be done by a brāhmaṇa? O mean brāhmaṇa, due to your favour (only) this my son has told me the praise of my enemy, which is not fit to be heard."

21-24. Speaking like this and looking around, the demon-king, in a fit of anger, said to a demon: "Bind this mean brāhmaṇa." Hearing these words of the king, he bound (Śukra,) Bhṛgu's son. Seeing his preceptor being bound, Prahlāda, to whom brāhmaṇas were dear, said to his father: "O father, my

perceptor did not teach me this. I have learnt it through the favour of Viṣṇu, the speaker, the seer. The lord is omnipresent. Viṣṇu alone is the imperishable agent, the controller of all human beings. Therefore, O lord, This brāhmaṇa, my preceptor, who is innocent, should be released."

Rudra said:

25-29. Having heard the words of his son, Hiraṇyakaśipu then let the brāhmaṇa free, and with amazement said to his son: "O son, why do you thus go astray (influenced) by the brāhmaṇa's words? Who is Viṣṇu? What is his form? Where does this Viṣṇu stay? Since I am the lord in the world, the master of the three worlds, honour me only. Abandon this Viṣṇu, our enemy, difficult to be overpowered. Or worship lord Śaṅkara, god Śiva, Rudra, the father of the worlds, the chief of gods, giving all splendour. After putting on the mark of three lines on your forehead with ash worship Mahādeva worshipped by demons, in the manner as told in the Pāśupata sect.

Rudra said:

30-32. Hearing these words of the lord of the demons, the priest of the demons said: "O glorious one, do like this only as your father tells. Abandon (our) enemy, Kaiṭabha's enemy, and worship the three-eyed (god, i.e. Śiva). There is no greater god than Śiva, who gives everything to men. Your father also became the lord (of demons) because of his favour only."

Rudra said:

33. Hearing these words of them, Prahlāda, a born devotee of Viṣṇu, said:

34-42. "O greatest ones, since the world is deluded by the Māyā of the lord, even brāhmaṇas knowing Vedānta and honoured among all the people, being proud, speak like this through fickleness. Nārāyaṇa is the highest Brahman. Nārāyaṇa is the highest truth. Nārāyaṇa is the highest meditator and the highest meditation. He is the refuge of the entire world. Acyuta is the eternal good. Eternal Vāsudeva is the sustainer, the creator of the world. The Highest Being is all this. Everything depends upon

him. His body is all golden. He is eternal. His eyes are like lotuses. He is the lord of Śrī, Bhū and Līlā. He is pleasing, spotless and of an auspicious body. He alone created the two lords, Brahmā and Śiva, the two best gods. Brahmā and Śiva act by honouring (i.e. according to) his order only. The wind blows through his fear. The sun rises through his fear. Through his fear run fire, the moon and death as the fifth. The highest, divine god Nārāyaṇa Viṣṇu was alone there (in the beginning). Brahmā was not there; Indra was not there; Śiva was not there; the sun and the moon were not there. The heaven and the earth were not there; nor were the stars and the gods there. The wise men always see the highest abode of that Viṣṇu.

43-51a. O best brāhmaṇas, having ignored the significance of all Upaniṣads, why do you talk like this through attachment or greed before me? Abandoning that Viṣṇu, the god protecting all, and the god of all, how can I, resorting to heresy, worship Śiva? The noble meditating sages like Sanaka meditated upon Kṛṣṇa, the lord of Lakṣmī, the god of gods, Ananta, the Highest Being, dark like the petals of a blue lotus, having large eyes like lotus-leaves, with his chest marked with Śrīvatsa, adorned with all ornaments, always a youth, the lord of all, eternal joy, and giver of pleasures, whom the hosts of gods like Brahmā, Śiva, Indra and others worship, with half a glance of whose wife, gods like Brahmā, Indra, Rudra, Varuṇa, Yama, Soma and (Kubera) the lord of wealth, are looked at. Merely by recollecting his name, even sinful living beings quickly obtain salvation, very difficult to be secured (even) by Brahmā and others. That lord of Śrī alone is always the protector of even the gods. I shall worship only that Viṣṇu united with Lakṣmī. With great ease only I shall reach that highest place of Viṣṇu."

Rudra said:

51b. Hearing these words of him, Hiraṇyakaśipu, full of anger, burnt like another fire. Looking at the demons around him, he, in a fit of anger, spoke like this:

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

52-54. By my order kill sinful Prahlāda highly devoted to

worshipping my enemy, with multitudes of fierce weapons. His protector Viṣṇu alone will protect him through love. Today only I would see (if) his being protected by Viṣṇu is effective.

Rudra said:

55-59. Then by the order of the lord of demons, the demons, with weapons raised, stood round the son of the lord of demons to kill him. Prahlāda too, meditating upon Viṣṇu in the lotus of his heart, and muttering the eight-syllabled formula, stood like another mountain. On all sides the heroes struck him with lances, iron clubs and śaktis. O you auspicious one, due to Viṣṇu's inviolable power, Prahlāda's body very much became adamantine due to remembering Viṣṇu. Then the great missiles of the enemies of gods, having reached his body, and being cutt off, fell down on the ground like blue lotuses, O auspicious one. The demons were not able to pierce (i.e. hurt) his body even slightly.

60-67. The soldiers, being amazed and with their faces hung down, stood near the king. Seeing his very powerful son of that kind, the demon-king being very much amazed and full of anger, wrathfully ordered all the very poisonous, fearful snakes like Vāsuki: "Eat him (up)." Then the very powerful, very fierce snakes, with their mouths blazing, ate (i.e. started eating) the very powerful (Prahlāda). They, full of poison, bit the devotee of (Viṣṇu) the Garuḍa-bannered one. The (snakes) that subsisted on air became poisonless and had their teeth cut off. With their limbs cut off by a thousand sons of Vinatā, and very much afflicted and vomiting profuse blood, they ran into all directions. Seeing the great snakes (reduced to a condition) like that, the angry lord of the demons then ordered the very much intoxicated quarter-elephants. The quarter-elephants, haughty with rut, ordered by that king, surrounded him, and struck him hard with their very large tusks. Then the tusks of the quarter-elephants, with their roots cut off, fell on the ground.

68-73. The elephants, rendered tuskless, and overcome by fear, fled. Seeing the great elephants (fleeing) the mighty lord of demons got angry. And burning a great fire, he threw it at his son. Fire, seeing Prahlāda, dear to Viṣṇu, did not burn the wise one. Fire became very cool. Seeing the boy not being burnt, the king, who was very much amazed, gave him, good to all beings,

terrible poison. Due to the power of that Viṣṇu, the poison become nectar. Poison, due to one's offering (oneself) to that god, becomes nectar. Having thus deluded his son by means of such fierce and very terrible means, and seeing that he could not be killed, the king of demons, being full of amazement spoke mildly to his son:

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

74-78. You have properly described before me Viṣṇu's greatness. He is called Viṣṇu because (he stands) pervading all worlds. He who is the omnipresent god is alone the highest god. Actually show me his omnipresence. Having carefully and properly seen the splendour of qualities like supremacy, power, lustre, knowledge, heroism, strength, excellent form of him the highest one, I shall honour Viṣṇu from among the gods. There is no match for my power among the gods. O you who honour (others), as a result of grant of a boon from Śiva I have obtained immunity from death among all living beings and invincibility for living beings. Viṣṇu would receive the title of lord after having vanquished me with power and might.

Rudra said:

79. Hearing these words of him, Prahlāda, being amazed, spoke. He, of a good vow, told about the glory of Viṣṇu to the demon.

Prahlāda said:

80-84. Since that Nārāyaṇa, the glorious one, the highest soul, the ancient one lives in all beings, he is called Vāsudeva. He, the sustainer of the world, is called Viṣṇu. Nothing other than him is the immobile and the mobile. The sentient objects everywhere are Viṣṇu only and none else. The heaven he has pervaded himself with three steps and the pervasion with one step is wonderful(?). That Viṣṇu, having a disc and a mace in his hands, and wearing a yellow garment, is seen by meditating sages through devotion and never without it. Viṣṇu cannot be seen through anger or jealousy. Having pervaded (everything) among gods, lower animals, immobile objects, living beings and among all small and great (objects), he dwells.

Rudra said:

85-87. Hearing these words of Prahlāda, that excellent demon, with his eyes red due to anger, reproaching his son repeatedly, said to him:

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

If that Viṣṇu is omnipresent and the Highest Being, then actually show him to me. What is the use of much nonsensical talk?

Mahādeva said:

Speaking like this, Hiraṇyakaśipu struck a pillar of the palace with his hand, and said these (words) to Prahlāda:

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

88. If Viṣṇu would be (i.e. is) omnipresent, then show him (to me) in this (pillar). Otherwise I shall kill you, uttering false words.

Rudra said:

89-93. Speaking like this, the lord of the demons, suddenly drew out his sword, and angrily threw it at Prahlāda's chest to kill him. At that moment, a great sound was heard from the pillar. The interior of the sky was as it were broken with sounds of the destructive fire. Due to that big sound, striking the ears of the demons, all fell on the ground like trees with their roots cut off. The frightened demons thought that the three worlds were inundated. Then great Viṣṇu, of a great lustre, came out of the pillar. He made a very fearful sound, resembling (the one) at the time of the destruction of the world. Due to that great sound stars fell on the ground.

94-97. Having assumed the body of Nṛsiṁha, Viṣṇu manifested (himself) there only. He was covered with the lustre of crores of suns and fires. In his face he resembled a lion, and in (the other parts of) the body he had a human figure. His mouth was fierce due to fangs, and was raised up to the sky with his throbbing tongue. The ends of his hair were surrounded by flames. The lord had eyes like burning firebrands. Covered by a thousand long arms, full of all weapons, he appeared like (moun-

tain) Meru, with many trees having branches. He had worn a garland of divine flowers, and was decorated with divine ornaments.

98-107. To destroy all demons he remained in the form of a man-lion. Seeing very powerful, terrible-looking man-lion, the lord of demons, with his eyelashes burnt and body afflicted, fell (down). Then Prahlāda, seeing Viṣṇu like a man-lion, saluted Viṣṇu with the words 'Victory (to you).' On the limbs of that high-souled man-lion he saw worlds, seas, islands, gods, gandharvas, human beings; a thousand cosmic eggs were seen on the tip of his mane. Similarly in his eyes were seen the moon, the sun etc. In his eyes (were seen) gods Aśvinas, directions and intermediate directions. On his forehead (were seen) Brahmā and Rudra; in his nose (were seen) the sky and air. In his mouth Indra and Agni (were seen). On his tongue Sarasvatī (was seen). On his fangs (were seen) lions, tigers, śarabhas (i.e. the fabulous eight-legged animals), and great serpents. On his throat was seen Meru, and great mountains (were seen) on his shoulders. On the arms of the noble one (were seen) gods, lower animals and human beings. The atmosphere (was seen) in his navel, and the earth (was seen) on his feet. On his hair all herbs (were seen). On the rows of his nails trees (were seen). In his breaths, Vedas with Aṅgas and Upāṅgas (were seen). On all his limbs (were seen) Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, hosts of Maruts, gandharvas and celestial nymphs.

108-114. Thus were seen the splendours of the highest soul. The son of the lord of demons, seeing Viṣṇu having Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha (worn) on his chest, adorned with a garland of wood-flowers, endowed with weapons like a conch, a disc, a mace, a sword, the Śārṅga (bow), the goal of all Upaniṣads, had his body sprinkled with tears of joy and repeatedly saluted him. The lord of demons, who was under the influence of (i.e. in the clutches of) death, seeing Viṣṇu, and raising his sword, ran to Nṛsiṁha to fight with him. Then all the very powerful demons who had regained consciousness, took their own weapons, and hurriedly struck Viṣṇu. The weapons were reduced to ash on (reaching) the body of Viṣṇu, as straws thrown into fire (are burnt) in various ways. At that time Viṣṇu, seeing the armies of the demons, burnt them with his bright mane which was arranged with lines of

flames. The demons were very much burnt by the fire coming out of Nṛsiṁha's mane.

115-123. All the attendants (were thus burnt). The army had none left in it. Seeing that army, except Prahlāda with his followers, reduced to ash, the lord of demons angrily drew out his sword and moved (towards Viṣṇu). The lord of gods seized the lord of demons with a sword in his hand with one arm, and dropped him down, as a stormy wind (knocks down) a branch. Nṛsiṁha, taking the huge-bodied (demon), fallen on the ground, placed him on his lap. He saw Viṣṇu's face. At that time the sin due to censuring Viṣṇu, and due to the blemish of not being a devotee of Viṣṇu, was reduced to ash merely by Viṣṇu's touch. Then Nṛsiṁha tore off the huge body of the lord of demons with his sharp, hard nails resembling the thunderbolt. The lord of demons, with his soul purified, and with his heart torn off with the nails, actually saw the face of Viṣṇu, and being (thus) fortunate, gave up his life. Great Viṣṇu, having cut off his body into a hundred pieces, and drawn out his long entrails, put the dear ones round his neck (put them affectionately round his neck). Then all hosts of gods, sages having penance as their treasure, led by Brahmā and Rudra, slowly came there to praise (him). They were afraid to propitiate the blazing (Viṣṇu) having faces on all sides.

124-126. (Then) they brought before their mind the goddess, the mother, the supporter of the worlds, of a golden complexion, extremely beautiful (hariṇī)[1], and destroying all troubles. Having prought before their mind the auspicious Lakṣmī (wife) of Viṣṇu, always of a blameless body, with the hymns of the goddess (i.e. Lakṣmī), and devoutly saluted her, the eternal one, brought before their mind by them, that goddess, having four arms, large eyes, and adorned with all ornaments, appeared (there).

127-128. Seeing the beloved of the god of gods, who had put on silken garments, and a divine garland, all gods, with the palms of their hands joined, said to her: "Propitiate your husband. Act in such a way that the lord would give the three worlds immunity from fear."

1. Hariṇī—One of the four classes of women, also called 'Citriṇī', who is said to be a woman endowed with various talents and excellences. The four divisions into which writers on erotical science class women are: Padminī, Citriṇī, Śaṅkhinī, and Hastinī or Kariṇī.

Rudra said:

129-133. The goddess, thus addressed, suddenly went to her husband Viṣṇu and having bowed down before him and saluted him, said to him: "(Please) be pleased." Seeing his own dear wife, Viṣṇu, the lord of all, gave up his anger due to the demon's body, and in a moment became pleased. That ocean of pity, Viṣṇu, placing the goddess on his lap and embracing her, looked at the gods with eyes wet with the nectar of favour. Then there was a joyful agitation among them, praising him and saluting him, and seen by him with kind eyes. Then all the hosts of gods, with their minds full of joy, having saluted the god, the lord of the worlds, with the palms of their hands joined, said (to him):

The hosts of gods said:

134-135. O lord of the worlds, we are not able to see your very wonderful lustre, and your very wonderful form, marked with many arms and feet. We, all gods, are not able to see and put up with your very strong lustre that has filled the three worlds.

Mahādeva said:

136-146. Thus requested by the gods, the lord of gods withdrew that very fearful lustre, and became of a pleasing appearance, auspicious, resembling a crore of autumnal moons, having eyes like lotuses, resembling crores of flashes of lightning due to the mass of his mane full of nectar. The great lord was graced with four delicate, divine arms, endowed with divine armlets and bracelets full of various jewels, resembling the branches with fruits of the desire-yielding tree. The lord was decorated with lotus-like hands resembling japā-flowers. The man-lion was adorned with two raised hands holding a conch and a disc, and with other two granting boons and freedom from fear. His chest was (marked) with Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha; he was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers. He was also decorated with ear-rings resembling the rays of the rising sun. The man-lion, adorned with ornaments like necklaces, armlets, bracelets, shone with Lakṣmī sitting on the left (lap) of his body. The deities along with the great sages, seeing Lakṣmī and the man-lion, with their hearts full of joy, sprinkled them with tears of joy. They, plunged into the

ocean of joy, constantly saluted them. By offering divine flowers, they worshipped the lord of souls. Having sprinkled the ancient Nṛsiṁha with the nectar from jewelled pitchers full of nectar, having worshipped him with divine offerings of lights, they praised him with divine hymns, and repeatedly saluted him.

147-155. Then the lord of Lakṣmī, who was pleased, gave them boons desired by them. Then Viṣṇu, to whom his devotees are dear, along with all hosts of gods made the imperishable Prahlāda the king of all demons. Having cheered up Prahlāda, and having, with the best gods, consecrated him, he gave him the boons desired by him and faithful devotion. Then Nṛsiṁha, being praised by all hosts of gods, and his body scattered over with beautiful flowers, vanished there only. Then all the hosts of gods went to their respective abodes. And again, they, with their minds pleased, enjoyed the portions of sacrifices. Then the gods, along with gandharvas, became free from fear. When the great demon was killed, all were delighted only. Prahlāda, Viṣṇu's devotee, then righteously ruled over the kingdom. The best devotee of viṣṇu obtained the kingdom through Viṣṇu's grace. He having worshipped Nṛsiṁha with many sacrifices and gifts etc. obtained, at (the proper) time, Viṣṇu's eternal place, obtained by meditating sages. Those who everyday listen to Prahlāda's account, are all free from sins, and will obtain the highest state. O goddess, I have told you this grandeur of Viṣṇu as Nṛsiṁha. O goddess, listen to the remaining state of grandeur in due order.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYNINE

The Rise of Bali and Kaśyapa's Penance

Rudra said:

1-4. A son was born to Prahlāda, who was known as Virocana. His son, the large-armed one, was lord Bali, (like) fire. He was the best among those who knew the ways of the world; he was veracious; his senses were subdued; he was the dearest

devotee of Viṣṇu; he was always engaged in pious practices, and was pure. The very mighty one, having defeated all gods with Indra and hosts of Maruts, brought the three worlds under his control, and ruled. Without being tilled, the earth grew (corn). It gave much corn and many fruits. All cows were full-milking. Trees had fruits and flowers.

5-9. All men, free from sins, were engaged in their own duties. Free from torment they constantly worshipped Viṣṇu. In this way, Bali, the lord of the demons, ruled righteously. His servants, the gods like Indra, stood by him. Removing the pride of the might (of others) he enjoyed supremacy in the three worlds. Kaśyapa, seeing his son, deprived of his kingdom, and desiring his good, practised penance, along with his wife, in honour of Viṣṇu. Along with (his wife) Aditi, the pious one, took to the vow of (drinking) water (only). He worshipped Padmanābha, Viṣṇu, the lord of gods. Then for thousands of years he worshipped Viṣṇu.

10-13. The ancient one, with the goddess (Lakṣmī) appeared there only. He saw the lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu), holding a conch, a disc, a mace, dark like the jewel sapphire, adorned with all ornaments, graced with a bright crown, armlets, necklaces, and ear-rings, with his chest brightened with Kaustubha, covered with a yellow garment, and seated on a great round seat with Lakṣmī. Seeing the lord of the worlds, the best brāhmaṇa, with his heart full of joy, and with his wife, saluted and praised him.

Kaśyapa said:

14-23. Repeated salutations to you, O lord of Lakṣmī, O omniscient one, O lord of the world, O soul of all, O lord of all gods, O creator and destroyer of the world; O you having no beginning, death or end, salutation to you having a body supporting the universe, having the body of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, and seeing everything; salutation to you, the soul of all; salutation to you, very subtle one, full of auspicious qualities; to you whose soul is fit to be meditated upon by the meditating sages; salutation to you the youthful boy, the lord of Śrī, Bhū, and Līlā; to you who are eternally free and the only pleasure; to you who dwell in the highest abode; salutation to you, O you of four characters; salutation to you, O you of four

forms; salutation to you having five conditions, and of the nature of five. You are always worshipped by the meditating sages, devoted to the five-natured one. You remain in the five sacraments of those who know the five principles. O Viṣṇu, your form superior to the five (forms) should always be known. O you of a complete form, the wise certainly know you in four ways. Your servants purify the entire world, your creation. In a moment you cause the freedom from the bond of the mundane existence of those brāhmaṇas, full of (the knowledge of) the three Vedas, devoted to their duties, and loving (your) devotees. Salutation to the supporter of the three worlds, the self-supporting one, and the soul of all. Salutation to you the supporter, the creator, the universe, of the form of the universe; to Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva, Śārṅgin; to Viṣṇu, Jiṣṇu, of pure energy.

Mahādeva said:

24. The lord Janārdana who was thus properly being praised with such eulogies by the great sage, was pleased, and spoke with a grave voice:

The lord said:

25. O greatest brāhmaṇa, I, devoutly and properly worshipped by you, am pleased with you. Ask for a boon. Well-being to you. I shall do as desired by you.

Mahādeva said:

26. Then Kaśyapa, with his wife, thus spoke to Viṣṇu:

Kaśyapa said:

27-28. O lord of gods, being (born) as my son, do what is good to the gods. O god, Bali has forcibly conquered the three worlds. Being born as Indra's younger brother known as Upendra, and having, through your Māyā, vanquished Bali by whatever manner, give eternally the three worlds to Indra.

Mahādeva said:

29-31. Thus addressed by the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Kaśyapa), Viṣṇu said: "All right." Being praised by the gods, he vanished there only. In the meanwhile, the lord, the creator of beings,

came to the womb of Aditi, (the wife) of the noble Kaśyapa. At that time Bali, with (the help of) eight great sages commenced a long sacrificial session according to the rules.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTY

Viṣṇu Incarnates as Vāmana

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-5a. Then at the end of a thousand years Aditi gave birth to Vāmana, Viṣṇu, Acyuta, Hari, the lord, who was the great lord of all the worlds, who had Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha on his chest, whose lustre was like that of the full moon, who was handsome, whose eyes were like lotuses, whose body was very short, who was dressed like a lad, who could be known by means of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, who was marked with such signs as a girdle, a (piece of) deer-hide, and a staff. Seeing him of a great vigour, all deities led by Indra, along with great sages, praised and saluted him. Then the lord who was pleased, said to the best gods:

Vāmana said:

5b. O best gods, tell me what I should do today.

Śrī Śaṅkara said:

6a. Then the gods who were delighted, spoke to that highest lord:

The gods said:

6b-7. O Madhusūdana, Bali's sacrifice is going on now. O lord, this is the time for the lord of demons not to turn down (any request). Having asked for the three worlds from him, (please) give them to us.

Śaṅkara said:

8-10. Thus addressed by all gods, Viṣṇu went to Bali, seated

at the place of the sacrifice along with eight sages. Seeing him having come as a guest, the king of demons suddenly got up. Seeing (as if) Viṣṇu himself had come as a guest, he, with a smile, seated him on a seat of flowers and properly honoured him. Having bowed before him and saluted him, he said in a faltering voice:

Bali said:

11-12. I am fortunate, I am blessed. My life is fruitful. O best brāhmaṇa, having honoured you, what dear to you, should I do? O best brāhmaṇa, I shall give you that for which you have come to me. O best among those who know the Vedas, speak quickly.

Śaṅkara said:

13a. Then with a delighted mind (Viṣṇu) spoke to the king:

Vāmana said:

13b-18. O best king, listen. I shall tell you the reason for my arrival. O lord of demons, O you who remove the pride (of others, or you who respect others), give me (that much piece of) land measured by my three steps, for an enclosed place for keeping the fire-vessel. I do not desire anything else. Of all gifts, the gift of (a piece of) land is the best. That king who gives even that much piece of land measured by his thumb, to a poor brāhmaṇa, would be the lord of the world. In this world there is no other gift like that (of a piece) of land. Both of them—he who receives (a piece of) land and he who gives (a piece of) land—are meritorious and, after death, go to heaven. Therefore, O great king, give me that much piece of land measured by my three steps. O king, do not hesitate to give such a small (piece of) land. O king, that will indeed be (tantamount to) the gift of the three worlds.

Śaṅkara said:

19-20. Then the king, with his face delighted, said, "All right." He intended to make him the gift of land in the proper way. Seeing the king of demons, his priest, Uśanas, said to him (these) words, "O king, do not give him the land."

Śukra said:

21-22. O king, this is Viṣṇu, the highest lord, who was requested by the gods. He has come here to take the entire earth after deceiving you. Therefore, land should not be given to the noble one. O king, by my word, give him some other object.

Śrī Śaṅkara said:

23a. Then having laughed the king firmly said to his preceptor:

Bali said:

23b-25a. To please Viṣṇu, I have done all meritorious acts. Today I am fortunate that Viṣṇu himself has come (to me). Today I shall very happily give (even) my life to him. Therefore, I shall give him even the three worlds.

Śrī Śaṅkara said:

25b-27a. Speaking like this, the king devoutly washed his feet and first (offering him) water, gave him the land in the proper manner. Taking him round, and having saluted him he gave him wealth as a present. With his heart delighted, he again said to the brāhmaṇa:

Bali said:

27b-28a. O brāhmaṇa, I am fortunate, I am blessed having given you land. O best brāhmaṇa, take this land as desired by you.

Śrī Śaṅkara said:

28b-35. To the king Viṣṇu said: "Near you, in your presence, I shall get the land measured with my steps." Saying so, the highest lord abandoned his dwarfish form, and taking up the body of Viṣṇu, extending up to fifty crores (of yojanas) he seized the earth along with the seas and mountains, along with the oceans, islands, gods, demons and human beings. With one step of his body he crossed the entire earth. Then he said: "O best among the demon-kings, what do I do now?" It was the very powerful Trivikrama-form of the lord. It was good for the well-being of even the gods and the noble sages. It would not be possi-

ble even for Brahmā or Śiva to see it. O auspicious Girijā, having occupied the entire earth, that step became a hundred yojanas long. The ancient one gave the demon-king a divine sight. He showed him his Janārdana-form.

36-37. Seeing that universal form of the god, Bali, the lord of demons, got matchless joy, and was covered with tears of joy. Seeing the god, having saluted him, having praised him with eulogies, he, with his heart delighted, spoke in a faltering voice:

Bali said:

38. Seeing you, the highest god, I am fortunate, I am blessed. O highest lord, accept these three worlds.

Śrī Śaṅkara said:

39-48. Then Viṣṇu, Acyuta, the lord of all, spread up his other immutable foot along with stars and planets, and covering all gods, up to Brahmā's world. He was full of the foot of Acyuta, O you of an auspicious face. Then Brahmā, the grandsire, (seeing) that foot of the god of gods, which was marked with (the signs of) a disc, a lotus etc. saying, with his heart full of joy, "I am blessed," took his pot (of water), and with devotion washed the foot with the water from it. Due to Viṣṇu's majesty that water became inexhaustible. That pure holy water fell on the peak of Meru. For purifying the world it flowed in four streams: Sītā, Alakanandā, Cakṣu and Bhadrā in due order. Alakanandā is said to be (flowing) to the south of Meru in three streams; she, purifying the world, and having three streams is called Tripathagā. The auspicious river is called Mandākinī in heaven, Bhogavatī in nether world, and the speedy Gaṅgā in between (i.e. on the earth flowing) for purifying human beings. O you of an auspicious face, seeing her flowing over the Meru mountain, I held her on my head to purify myself. Having held (on my head) the auspicious water of Gaṅgā for a thousand divine years, I obtained bliss, and am adored in all worlds.

49-53. There is no doubt that he who would carry on his head the water of Gaṅgā rising from Viṣṇu's foot, or would drink it, would be respected by the world. He who would utter (the words) 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā' even from (a distance of) hundred yojanas, is freed from all sins, and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. Then

king Bhagīratha and Gautama having a great penance (to his credit) worshipped me with penance and asked for Gaṅgā. O goddess, then I affectionately gave that auspicious best river Gaṅgā, (rising from the foot) of Viṣṇu to them for the good of the entire world. Since she was brought by Gautama, she was called Gautamī. Since she was chosen by king (Bhagīratha), she was known as Bhāgīrathī.

54-60. I have in course (of the narration) told you the excellent greatness of Gaṅgā. Then that glorious lord Nārāyaṇa loving his devotees, gave the auspicious nether world to Bali, the lord of demons. He made Bali the king of all the demons, serpents and the aquatic animals till the (final) inundation (of the earth). In the guise of a lad the immutable Viṣṇu, the killer of demons, the son of Kaśyapa, affectionately gave the worlds to Indra. Then gods with gandharvas and the very powerful sages praised Viṣṇu with divine eulogies and worshipped him. For them to see his form, he contracted it; and being honoured by them Viṣṇu vanished. Viṣṇu, the mighty one, thus protected Indra well. The lord of the three worlds (i.e. Indra) obtained the three worlds and great affluence. I have thus told you the account of the auspicious splendour of Viṣṇu's incarnation as Vāmana. The rest of the splendour I shall narrate in due order.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYONE

Paraśurāma's Story

The lord said:

1-3a. Bhṛgu's son was the great, best brāhmaṇa (named) Jamadagni. He had mastered all Vedas and Vedāṅgas and had practised a severe penance. O you beautiful lady, on the auspicious sandy bank of Gaṅgā the religious-minded one practised penance (in honour) of Indra for a thousand years. Then lord Indra, being pleased, said these (words):

Indra said:

3b. O best brāhmaṇa, ask for a boon that is (i.e. that you have) in your mind.

The lord said:

4a. Then the brāhmaṇa sage spoke to Indra who was pleased:

Jamadagni said:

4b. O god, give me (the desire-yielding cow) Surabhi always fulfilling one's desires.

The lord said:

5-8. Then Indra, the lord of gods, being pleased, gave him the divine Surabhi fulfilling all desires. That Jamadagni of a great penance (to his credit), having obtained Surabhi lived with great grandeur like another Indra. Jamadagni, of a great penance (to his credit) married in the proper manner, Reṇukā, Reṇuka's daughter. The pious-minded one for many years enjoyed with her as Indra with Paulomī, his auspicious queen.

9-17a. Then the very pious one, with a desire for having a son, performed a sacrifice. With (that) sacrifice he pleased god Indra. (Indra) Śacī's husband, being pleased, (promised) him a very strong, very powerful, mighty-armed son, tormentor of all enemies. Then in course of time the best brāhmaṇa generated a very strong and powerful son with a part of a portion of Viṣṇu and having all (good) marks, on Reṇukā, O you of a bright smile. When the very powerful son (was born), his grandfather joyfully gave him a name indicating Viṣṇu's portion. He gave him a very auspicious name (Paraśu-)Rāma. Being born from Jamadagni he was called Jāmadagnya. The best brāhmaṇa of the family of Bhṛgu grew. His thread ceremony was performed; he was proficient in all sciences and arts. To practise penance he went to the Śālagrāma mountain. There he saw the brāhmaṇa-sage Kaśyapa of unlimited splendour. The brāhmaṇa, Marīci's son, was full of delight with (i.e. on seeing) him. In the proper manner he gave him the indestructible formula of Viṣṇu.

17b-23. Having received the formula from Kaśyapa, the high-souled one, (Paraśu-)Rāma, muttering day and night the

great six-syllabled formula, worshipped the lord of Lakṣmī. That pious Bhārgava (i.e. Paraśurāma) meditating upon Viṣṇu having eyes like lotus-petals and the omniscient one, practised penance for many years. He, with senses subdued and speech controlled, and (practising) great penance, remained (there). The brāhmaṇa-sage Jamadagni remained on the auspicious bank of Gaṅgā. He performed pious acts according to the precepts like sacrifices and gifts. By the favour of Indra's cow his wealth was full. Sometime the king, the lord of Haihaya, surrounded by his entire army, having conquered all countries, reached the hermitage of Jamadagni, the son of Bhṛgu. Seeing the glorious, best sage, he saluted him.

24-29. The king, having asked the devout great sage about his well-being, gave him garments and ornaments. He too honoured the king that had come to his house. Having honoured according to the precept the king with *madhuparka** the sage fed the best king along with his army. The very intelligent son of Bhṛgu (i.e. Jamadagni) solicited Surabhi. She, the cow of plenty, produced food, drink etc. at that time. The best sage, of a great penance, gave the inexhaustible food, drink etc. produced by her to the king along with his army. Seeing that cow of plenty, the king was full of curiosity. The very wicked-minded (king) longed for the cow. The best king then begged Jamadagni for Surabhi.

Kārtavīrya said:

30. O brāhmaṇa, give me this tawny cow of plenty, giving all desired objects. O you of a good vow, I shall give you thousands of other cows.

The lord said:

31-32. Thus addressed by the king, Jamadagni of a great penance (to his credit) said (to him): "O king, this cow of plenty cannot be given to you by me. This one was protected by Indra, the god of gods. O king, how should the wealth of deities be given by me?"

33-36. The king, thus addressed, was then excited with

*A preparation of curd, clarified butter, water, honey and sugar offered to guests.

anger. He, surrounded by the entire army, seized the cow of plenty forcibly. Then, O you of an excellent complexion, the glorious cow of plenty became angry, and with her horns and soles of her hoofs struck his huge army. Then that goddess, the cow of plenty, having, in a short time, struck that army, vanished, and in a moment went near Indra. Then (Kārtavīrya) Arjuna, seeing his army struck, was overcome by anger. With his fist he struck Bhārgava, the best brāhmaṇa.

37-39. Being struck by him in many ways, he was weakened. The best brāhmaṇa suddenly fell on the ground and died. The lord of Haihaya, the wicked-minded one, having killed there the best sage, and surrounded by a great army entered his own city. Rāma Bhārgava worshipped the god of gods. Pleased by his worship Viṣṇu said:

God Viṣṇu said:

40-41. O child, with the penance of you of a controlled mind, I am pleased. O brāhmaṇa, I shall give you a very auspicious power. Possessed of my power, kill the wicked great kings for destroying those who cause a burden to the earth and for the good of the deities.

Mahādeva said:

42-44. Speaking like this, the god gave him an axe capable of killing the enemies, so also the great bow of Viṣṇu and many divine missiles. Lord Viṣṇu, having given (these) to Jamadagni, said: "O best brāhmaṇa, you, the killer of the enemy's soldiers, having killed many arrogant kings repeatedly, take this entire earth bound by the ocean. Full of piety and great heroism you protect it. In course of time, you will reach my position by my grace."

The lord said:

45-50a. Having said like this, and having given the brāhmaṇa a boon, the god vanished. Rāma also suddenly went to his father's hermitage. Seeing his father killed, Bhārgava (i.e. Paraśurāma) was filled with anger. He desired to make the earth, crowded with kings, clear of kṣatriyas. He went to the city of the king of Haihaya, which was full of kings. With his

body burning with anger, he, with his weapons raised, stood at the gate. The citizens of his city seeing that very powerful Jāmadagnya, with a blazing body, looked upon him as the destructive fire at the end of the world. Being afflicted by fear, all ran to the king, the lord of Haihaya. They praised him of great energy and equipped with all weapons. Hearing their words, the king with an amazed mind, said:

King of Haihaya said:

50b-51. Who is that forcibly standing at the gate of my city with weapons? Even Indra, or Yama, or Rudra, or Kubera, can never stand with weapons at the gate of my city.

Mahādeva said:

52-55. Saying so, the lord of kings impelled his very strong servants to see him, and the wicked one said to them: "Arrest him." Having gone, they saw at the gate a very strong hero burning like the destructive fire at the end of the world, and difficult to be seen due to his lustre. The mighty ones were not even able to look at him. From all sides they, desirous of seizing him, often went to him. Seeing all those servants of the lord of kings with weapons, the very powerful best brāhmaṇa, Jāmadagnya, said laughing:

Paraśurāma said:

56-57. O mean men, I, Rāma, the son of Bhārgava, have come (here). I shall kill all best kings for (i.e. as a revenge of) my father's murder. To my (dead) father I shall offer Kārtavīrya's blood mixed with sesamum-seeds, and shall offer the piṇḍa with his lotus-head.

Mahādeva said:

58-62. Thus addressed, the very powerful servants of the king struck him with arrows as fire with straws. Then the very brave Rāma of genuine valour was angry, and drawing the bow of Viṣṇu made the sound of the bow-string. With that great sound the three worlds were filled. Even gods were frightened. (Such) was the great wonder. Then the very strong Paraśurāma struck the very brave, very powerful servants with arrows resem-

bling fire. Having killed the servants of the glorious king, he stood like the destructive fire at the end of the world, deadly to all beings.

63-68. Hearing that his servants were killed in the battle by the intelligent (Paraśu-) Rāma, the brave king of Haihaya, with his eyes red with anger, went out with his army to the place where Bhārgava stood. Seeing him appearing deadly and blazing with his own lustre, all the men there, suspecting the destruction of human beings were frightened. Then a very fierce battle took place between Rāma and the kings, with fearful strokes of weapons and missiles, as between two showering clouds. Then Rāma of a great lustre easily burnt the king's army in a moment with the missile of Viṣṇu. Then Rāma of unlimited valour cut off the thousand arms of the wicked Kārtavīrya with his sharp axe. The very brave king could not fight with (Paraśu-) Rāma in the battle.

69-74. The wicked-minded one lost his valour due to his own sin. The mighty son of Reṇukā, being angry, cut off his head, as mighty Indra did the peak of a big mountain, and he who was brave and angry, killed Sahasrabāhu and all the kings with his axe in the battle. Seeing Rāma, the very fearful one, all kings on the earth, struck by fear, ran away as elephants do on seeing a lion. The angry Rāma killed the kings even though they had fled due to the resentment against his father's murder, as the angry Garuḍa killed the serpents. The valorous Rāma made the entire (world) clear of the kṣatriyas, but protected (i.e. spared) only the very great family of Ikṣvāku, due to its being the family to which his maternal grandfather was related, and due to his mother's words.

75-78. Rāma, the destroyer of the families of kings, deprived the kings of the family of his maternal grandfather of their kingdoms, but did not kill them belonging to Manu's dynasty. But the brave one destroyed the families of all (other) kings. The brāhmaṇa, the mighty son of Jamadagni, having made the earth clear of the kṣatriyas, duly performed the great horse-sacrifice. He gave the earth with the seven islands to chief brāhmaṇas. That brave son of Jamadagni, having given the earth to the brāhmaṇas, went to the hermitage of Nara-Nārāyaṇa to practise penance.

79-81. O goddess, I have told you this account of the incar-

nation of lord (Viṣṇu), holder of the Śārṅga bow, who had entered Rāma with his power. Due to the entrance of the power this (form) of the noble one cannot be worshipped. The chief, noble, brāhmaṇas, the devotees of the lord, should worship the incarnations of (Dāśarathi) Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, perfect with virtues, worshipped by sages, and giving salvation to human beings.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYTWO

The Story of Rāma

Rudra said:

1-3a. Formerly Svāyambhuva Manu muttered the great formula of twelve syllables at Naimiṣa on the pure, auspicious bank of Gomatī. For a thousand years he worshipped Lakṣmī's lord. Lord Viṣṇu said to him: "Choose a boon from me." Then Manu Svāyambhuva joyfully said to Viṣṇu:

Manu said:

3b-4a. O Viṣṇu, be born as my son in three existences, O lord of gods. I am worshipping you with a desire for a son.

Rudra said:

4b. Thus addressed, Lakṣmī's lord spoke with very good words:

Viṣṇu said:

5-7. O greatest king, whatever is desired (by you) in your mind will take place. I too have a great pleasure in being your son. O best king, when you will be born in the period having stability as its aim, I shall also be born as your son, O you of a good vow. O sinless one, in every age I shall be born of you for protecting the good, destroying the wicked and establishing righteousness.

Rudra said:

8-14. Having thus given him a boon, Viṣṇu vanished there only. From Manu Svāyambhuva he had the first birth. He was born as king Daśaratha in the Raghu-family formerly. The second birth was that of lord Vasudeva in the family of the Vṛṣṇis. He will be born as a brāhmaṇa in the town of Śambhala in the last two quarters of the Kali-age of the measure of a thousand divine years. Kausalyā was born as the wife of king Daśaratha. Devakī was known (to be born) to serve the Yadu-family. Devaprabhā was born as the wife of a brāhmaṇa Harivrata. Thus they obtained the motherhood of Viṣṇu in three existences. O you of a good vow, I shall first tell you the account of Rāma, by just remembering whom even sinners get liberation. Hiraṇyaka and Hiraṇyākṣa, taking up second birth, will be born as the very strong Kumbhakarṇa and Rāvaṇa.

15-22. O you innocent one, pious Viśravas, a brāhmaṇa, was the son of Pulastya. His wife, a demon's daughter, was Viśālākṣī. She was the daughter of Sukeśī. And the demon Sumālin's daughter Kekasī (Kaikasī?) was his (another) wife of a firm vow. Being excessively full of lust, the slim, respectful lady of a charming appearance had sexual intercourse with the great sage in the evening. Due to her desire for sexual enjoyment in the evening two very powerful demons, Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarṇa, known in the world, were born to her. A daughter, Śūrpaṇakhā of a deformed face was also born to her. After sometime Bibhīṣaṇa was born to her. He was of a good character, devoted to God, veracious, pious and pure. Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarṇa were greatest like the Himālaya mountain. The two very much propitiated me with very severe penance. O goddess, that wicked Rāvaṇa worshipped me with just a wicked deed with his lotus-like heads. Then, I with my mind very much pleased said to him:

23-30. "Ask for a boon that is in your mind, O child." Then the wicked one said: "With a desire (i.e. as I have a desire) to conquer all worlds, let me not be killed by gods, demons or fiends." Then, O you of a beautiful face, I gave the wicked demon immunity from death from gods, demons or fiends. The very powerful demon, proud due to the grant of the boon, troubled the three worlds, gods, demons and fiends. Gods, troubled by him, full of fear, led by Brahmā, sought the shelter of god

(Viṣṇu), the lord of Lakṣmī. Understanding their anguish, the ancient one said, in order to grant them immunity from fear, to all gods led by Brahmā and Rudra:

The lord said:

I shall be born in the family of Raghu as the son of king Daśaratha. I shall kill the wicked Rāvaṇa with his relatives. Taking to a human body I shall kill the thorn (i.e. nuisance) to the deities. You too, born as monkeys due to Nandin's curse, help me, O best gandharvas and celestial nymphs.

Rudra said:

31-32. All deities, thus addressed by Viṣṇu, god of gods, were born on the earth after being turned into (i.e. as) monkeys. Bhārgava also gave the earth girt by the ocean. It was formerly given to the very noble Raghus by great sages.

33. There was Vaivasvata Manu's son, known as Ikṣvāku, the best among kings and very powerful, best among those who knew the ways of the world.

34-38. In his family was born the very brilliant and powerful king Daśaratha, king Aja's son, truthful, pure, and of a good character. The king protected the entire earth with valour. He installed all best kings on the kingdoms (i.e. thrones). That king married Kausalyā, king Kosala's daughter, beautiful in all limbs. His second wife was Sumitrā by name, Magadha king's daughter, of a bright smile. His third wife was Kekayī, having eyes like lotus-petals, and the daughter of Kekaya king.

39-44. With these three wives the Kākutstha king (i.e. Daśaratha) enjoyed while protecting the earth. There was a city named Ayodhyā situated on the bank of Sarayū. It was full of all jewels and wealth and grains. It possessed ramparts and town-gates. It had golden ramparts. It had excellent elephants and horses as Indra's city (had). In it lived the righteous king along with best sages and the noble brāhmaṇa Vasiṣṭha, his family priest. And he ruled over the kingdom in which the thorns (i.e. sources of nuisance) were destroyed. That city of Ayodhyā also was called holy, since the revered Supreme Being would be born in it. O auspicious one, the name of that city of the abode (of Viṣṇu) was great.

45-51. That is the highest place where revered Viṣṇu dwelt. There salvation, instantly cutting off (the bonds of) all acts, would take place. When Viṣṇu was born there, O you of an auspicious face, all men were delighted. That king (Daśaratha) having protected the entire earth, and longing for a son performed a sacrifice in honour of Viṣṇu (to propitiate) Hari, Acyuta. Worshipped with the sacrifice in his honour by him, Viṣṇu, the omnipresent king, the lord of Lakṣmī, giver of boons said. In the fire Viṣṇu of the form of sacrifice then appeared. He was like pure gold. He held a conch, a disc and a mace. He had put on white garments. He was glorious, and adorned with all ornaments. On his chest were Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha; he was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers. His large eyes resembled lotus-petals, he had four arms, and was of a generous mind. The lord of Lakṣmī, with Lakṣmī seated on his left lap, appeared there. He who loved his devotees, said to the king: "I am the giver of boons (i.e. I shall grant you a boon)."

52-54a. Seeing him, the lord of all worlds, the king full of joy and with his mind full of delight, with his wife (wives?) saluted him. With the palms of his hands folded, and bowing down, he spoke words faltering due to joy. He said to Viṣṇu, the lord of gods: "Be my son." Then Viṣṇu, the lord, being pleased, said to the king:

Viṣṇu said:

54b-55. O best king, for the good of the gods and the earth, I shall be born (as your son), for the protection of the good, for killing the demons, for granting liberation to the worlds, and for establishing righteousness.

Mahādeva said:

56. Viṣṇu gave the king bright rice boiled in milk, kept in a golden pot and held in the hand of Lakṣmī.

Viṣṇu said:

57. O king, O you of a good vow, give this rice boiled in milk to your wives. On them will be born sons from my body.

Mahādeva said:

58-60. Speaking like this, Viṣṇu, being praised by all sages,

presented himself, and vanished in the same way. The very calm king, seeing the eldest and the youngest queen, divided the divine rice boiled in milk, and gave it to them. In the meanwhile his beautiful-eyed middle wife, longing for a son, came near him.

61-62. Seeing her, Kausalyā and Kekayī of a beautiful waist, gave half (the portion of) their divine rice boiled in milk to her. Eating that divine rice boiled in milk all the queens with beautiful waists, conceived and they, of a bright lustre, shone.

63-68. Then Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, wearing yellow garments and holding a conch, a disc, a mace in his hands, appeared in their dreams. In this charming time, O you of a bright smile, in the month of Caitra, in the bright half of the month, on the ninth day, when the Sun was in the Puṣya constellation, in the noon, and at a time when all Planets were auspicious, Kausalyā gave birth to a son, Viṣṇu, the lord of worlds, who was dark like lotus-leaves, who resembled crores of Cupids, whose eyes were large like lotus-petals, and was adorned with all ornaments. On his chest were Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha. He was graced with all ornaments. He shone with two ear-rings (bright) like the rising sun, resembled many suns, was covered with great lustre. He, the charming one, was born from the body of the highest lord, as one lamp is produced (i.e. lighted) from another lamp.

69-70. He was the lord of all worlds, who was fit to be meditated upon by all meditating sages, was ancient, the goal of all Upaniṣads, endless and the highest god. He was Viṣṇu, the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world, the protector of all beings, the lord full of all beings.

71-75. When the lord of the world was born, in heaven divine drums were sounded; the best gods sent down showers of flowers. Gods led by Brahmā, seated in aeroplanes, and along with sages and with their entire bodies overcome by joy, praised (him). The chiefs of gandharvas sang and bevies of celestial nymphs danced. Holy, auspicious breezes blew. The sun became very bright. The fires burnt (after being) subsided; the ten quarters were clear. Then the king joyfully seeing his son, the ancient (god Viṣṇu), performed through Vasiṣṭha, the ceremony to be performed at the birth of a child. Then revered Vasiṣṭha also gave him a charming name.

76-79. "This great lord is the 'ramaṇa' or lover of Śrī, living

in a lotus. Therefore, his ancient name Śrīrāma is settled." It is equal to the thousand names of Viṣṇu (i.e. the hymn Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma) and gives salvation to human beings. Brought into existence by Viṣṇu, he is called Viṣṇu. The revered sage Vasiṣṭha, having named him, taken him round, having saluted him, having praised him with eulogies and having recited the thousand names (of Viṣṇu) for the good luck of the noble one, the very lustrous one, went from that most auspicious house.

80-82. Then the king gladly gave much wealth to chief brāhmaṇas. He also righteously caused to give the gift of a myriad of cows. The best of the Raghu dynasty gave a hundred thousand villages (to brāhmaṇas). With divine garments, and ornaments, and immeasurable wealth, he gratified the brāhmaṇas to please Viṣṇu.

83-87. Kausalyā with expanded hands saw him resembling a white lotus, having a lotus in his lotus-like hand. She saw, O you of an excellent face, (marks of) lotuses on his beautiful feet. On his body (she saw) (signs of) a conch, a disc, a mace, a lotus, a flag and garments etc.; on his chest (she saw) Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha along with a garland of wood-flowers. On his body she saw the entire world with gods, demons and human beings. The large-eyed (Kausalyā) saw the fourteen worlds on his smiling face. In the breath of the noble one she saw Vedas and Itihāsas (historical accounts). O you of an excellent complexion, on his buttocks (she saw) islands, oceans and mountains. In his navel (she saw) Brahmā and Śiva. In his ears (she saw) the bright quarters. In his eyes she saw fire and the sun and in his nose (she saw) the very speedy wind.

88. Seeing all his splendours, the goal of all the Upaniṣads, the beautiful (lady) was afraid, and having saluted him again and again, and with her eyes full of tears, she, with the palms of her hands folded, said (these) words:

Kausalyā said:

89. O lord of the god of gods, I am fortunate in having got you as my son, O master. O lord of the world, be pleased with me. Show towards me a son's affection.

The lord said:

90. Viṣṇu (i.e. Rāma), the omnipresent one, thus addressed

by his mother, obtaining illusory manhood, cried due to his being a child.

91-93. Then queen Kausalyā of a beautiful waist and auspicious characteristics, joyfully embraced her son and gave him (i.e. fed him with) milk from her breast. The eternal one drank (sucked) milk from her breast as a child; the great lord, the sustainer of the world remained on his mother's lap. Citizens and countrymen, being delighted, celebrated a festival in that auspicious, charming region, giving all desired objects of men.

94-96. Bharata produced from the Pāñcajanya (conch of Viṣṇu) was born to Kaikeyī. Sumitrā gave birth to Lakṣmaṇa of auspicious signs. The glorious one also gave birth to Śatrughna, the tormentor of his enemies. Lakṣmaṇa, the killer of the enemy's heroes, was born with a portion of (the snake) Ananta. Śatrughna, of unlimited valour, was produced from Sudarśana. They all grew there in the family of Vaivasvata Manu.

97-98. The sons were properly taught by the very vigorous Vasiṣṭha. The princes studied the Vedas and were proficient in general knowledge. They knew the essential nature of all branches of knowledge, and were skilled in archery. They were very generous and they increased the joy of people.

99. The princes Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa formed a pair. Similarly Bharata and Śatrughna formed a pair.

100-104. Then Lakṣmī, the chief goddess of the worlds, who was beautiful, who resembled a crore of young suns, whose hands were like red lotuses, who was endowed with all (good) characteristics, who was adorned with all ornaments, who, the beautiful one, had worn on her bosom a garland of fresh flowers, was born in Janaka's house, at the opening of a furrow, at an auspicious moment in an auspicious field dug up by Indra's plough. Seeing that girl, auspicious and full of all Vedas, the lord of Mithilā took her out and nourished her as (his) child. The chief goddess, dear to the lord of worlds, grew in the charming house of Janaka for the protection of the entire world.

105-110. In the meanwhile, O goddess, the great sage, Kauśika, well known in the world, commenced the performance of a sacrifice in the established hermitage on the auspicious, meritorious bank of Bhāgīrathī. When that sacrifice of the brāhmaṇa proceeded, the demons of Rāvaṇa destroyed his sacrifice. Pious Kauśika,

having thought, desired to bring for the good of the world, Viṣṇu (i.e. Rāma) born in Raghu's family. Having gone to the charming city of Ayodhyā protected by (Daśaratha, the descendant of) Raghu, the best sage saw Daśaratha, the best king. The king of a great lustre too, having seen Kauśika, got up, and with the palms of his hands joined, saluted, along with his sons, the best sage.

111-112a. The descendant of Raghu, saying, "I am fortunate" honoured the best sage with proper rite after seating him on an excellent seat. Having taken himself round him, and saluted him, he said to him: "What do (i.e. should) I do?" Then Viśvāmitra, with great penance (to his credit), and with his mind delighted, said:

Viśvāmitra said:

112b-113. O king, give me Rāma for the protection of my sacrifice. In Rāma's vicinity (i.e. presence) may my sacrifice be fruitful. Therefore, O king, please give (me) Rāma for the protection of (my) sacrifice.

The lord said:

114-116. Hearing the words of the best sage, he, the best among the all-knowing ones, gave the best sage, Rāma with Lakṣmaṇa. Taking Rāma (with him), that best brāhmaṇa Viśvāmitra with great penance (to his credit), and being pleased, went to his hermitage. When the best descendant of Raghu went (with the sage), gods were delighted. The very lustrous ones sent down showers of flowers, and praised (him).

117-118. Then the very powerful Garuḍa, delighted in heart, came there unseen by beings, and having approached (the best descendant of) Raghu (i.e. Rāma), gave the two (i.e. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) two bows, two quivers, and two inexhaustible arrows. The bird also gave them divine missiles, weapons, and left.

119-123. The two heroes, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, were informed of the fierce-looking demoness moving in the forest by the noble Kauśika. O goddess, her name was Tāḍakā, and she was the wife of the demon Sunda. The two great heroes struck her with arrows discharged from their divine bows. Struck (with his arrow) by Rāma, the fierce-looking demoness gave up her

fierce form, and became one of a divine form. She was glowing with her body, was adorned with all ornaments; having saluted the two (best descendants of) Raghu, she went to Viṣṇu's world. Having killed her the celebrated and very lustrous Rāma entered, with the noble Lakṣmaṇa, the auspicious hermitage of Kauśika.

124-126. Then the delighted sages, having gone forth to meet the best of Raghus, seated him, and worshipped the highest soul with materials of worship etc. The best sage Kauśika, being initiated along with the sages properly commenced the excellent sacrifice. When the great sacrifice proceeded, a demon named Mārīca, along with his brother Subāhu, came there to create an obstacle.

127-129. Seeing the two fierce demons, Rāma, killer of his enemy's heroes, killed Subāhu, the lord of demons, with one arrow. With a great wind-missile, he caused Mārīca to fall into the ocean as wind causes a dry leaf (to fall down). That best demon, seeing the great valour of Rāma, put down his weapons and went to a great hermitage to practise penance.

130-132a. Viśvāmitra, of great lustre, worshipped Rāma there with a pleased mind after the great sacrifice was over. The best sage, having embraced the noble one who had side-locks on his temples, who was dark like a lotus-leaf, whose eyes were large like lotus-leaves, and having smelt his head, praised him.

132b-141. In the meanwhile, the lord of lords, king of Mithilā commenced, with the (help of) best sages, the Vājapeya sacrifice. To see it all sages of auspicious hearts led by Viśvāmitra went along with best of the Raghus (to Mithilā). With the lotus-like foot of that Rāma who was going (to Mithilā), the land was purified, and the great stone was approached. That Ahalyā too, who was formerly cursed by her husband Gautama, became auspicious by the touch of Rāma's foot. Then the best sages having reached the city of Mithilā with the two descendants of Raghu (viz. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) were delighted at heart. The very powerful king of Mithilā having seen the illustrious ones to have come, went forth to meet them and honoured them. (He saw) Rāma whose eyes were large like lotuses, who resembled a lotus-leaf (in complexion), who had put on a yellow garment, was gentle, had tender limbs and was bright, who, the excellent

one, had slighted Cupid with his handsomeness, who was endowed with all (good) marks, was decorated with all ornaments, who, the slender Viṣṇu, was born in the heart-lotus of the highest god, with the highest virtues like good character, as one lamp would be produced (i.e. lighted) from another. Seeing that Raghunātha, Janaka was delighted at heart.

142-145a. He looked upon Rāma, Daśaratha's son, just as the highest lord. Saying, "I am fortunate" he honoured the descendant of Kakutstha. He took that to be the favour of Viṣṇu, Vāsudeva. The lord thought to his mind to give him (in marriage) his daughter. Knowing the two to be sons from Raghu's family, the best king honoured them in accordance with Dharma with bright garments and ornaments. With honour like *madhuparka* he worshipped the sages.

145b-148. Then at the end of the sacrifice, the lotus-eyed Rāma broke the divine bow of Śiva and won Janaka's daughter. The lord of Mithilā, very much pleased with the great purchase-price in the form of (Rāma's) valour, gladly gave her (in marriage) to him, as formerly the great Ocean gave Lakṣmī to Viṣṇu. The lord of Mithilā sent a messenger to (Daśaratha) the descendant of Raghu. The pious one entered Mithilā with his two sons.

149-153. That best descendant of Raghu stayed along with the delighted Vasiṣṭha, Vāmadeva, etc. in Janaka's charming city. The king properly honoured by king Janaka got Rāma married to the Earth's daughter (i.e. Sītā) at an auspicious time. The king got Urmilā, Janaka's daughter, married to Lakṣmaṇa, and the two daughters of good figures and having all (auspicious) marks, Māṇḍavī and Śrutakīrti to Bharata and Śatrughna respectively. Then having completed the nuptial rites the powerful, happy Daśaratha surrounded by citizens and (other) subjects started for Ayodhyā.

154-156. Receiving the wedding present, and honoured by the king of Mithilā, he, along with his sons, daughters-in-law, horses, elephants and attendants (left for Ayodhyā). On their way, the very strong and valorous son of Jamadagni, the destroyer of kings, taking an axe, like an angry lion desiring to fight, ran to the descendant of Kakutstha. Reaching Rāma, and seeing him, Bhārgava spoke (these) words:

Paraśurāma said:

157-159. O Rāma, Rāma of mighty arms, listen to my words. Having killed many very brave kings in battles, and having given the land to brāhmaṇas I went to practise penance. Having heard about your valour and power, I have come to fight with you. The Ikṣvākus born in the family of my maternal grandfather are not to be killed by me. Having heard (i.e. when I hear) about the valour of a kṣatriya and his power, I cannot bear it.

160-162. O prince, you broke the fierce bow of Śiva difficult to be assailed. Therefore, O best of Raghus, O liberal one, fight with me. O you who curb your enemies, this is Viṣṇu's bow which is like that (bow of Śiva). Fix (an arrow to it). Then I am vanquished (by you) with your valour. Or abandon your weapons before me, the powerful one. If you are afraid in your heart, then submit to me, O Kākutstha.

The lord said:

163-166. Kākutstha (i.e. Rāma), the brave one, thus addressed by Paraśurāma, took his bow and the power too of him (given to him) by Viṣṇu. Deprived of that power, that brave Paraśurāma became powerless and lustreless like a brāhmaṇa deprived of (holy) acts. Seeing Paraśurāma lustreless, the best kings repeatedly praised Rāma (with the words): "Well (done), well (done)." Rāma having easily raised the bow and fixed the arrow to it, spoke to Paraśurāma, who was amazed:

Rāma said:

167. O brāhmaṇa, what should I do to you with this best arrow? Do (i.e. should) I cut off this world, the nether (world) or heaven, or should I destroy your penance?

The lord said:

168. Bhārgava, seeing that very fierce arrow of Rāma and knowing him to be the highest self, was delighted, and said to Rāma:

Paraśurāma said:

169-176. O Rāma, Rāma of mighty arms, I did not know you to be the ancient (soul). Today only I knew you by means

of your virtues like valour. You are actually the first, highest soul. You are the highest Brahman. You are the highest, the immutable one. You are Ananta (the endless one), great Viṣṇu, Vāsudeva, higher than the highest. You are Nārāyaṇa. You are the lord of Śrī. You are full of the three (Vedas). You are the Time (or Death). You are the entire world. You yourself are the one called *A*. You are the creator, the supporter and the destroyer. You are the highest lord. You are inconceivable; you are of the form of a great being; you are a great hymn. You are the highest being having four, six, five qualities. You are the sacrifice. You are the vaṣaṭkāra (i.e. exclamation used on making an oblation). You are the *Oṁ* consisting of the three (Vedas). You are of a manifest and an unmanifest form. You possess qualities. You are qualityless and the highest one. I am unable to praise you who are beyond the scope of even the Vedas. O lord, you, the absolute one (should) please forgive me my rash behaviour towards you. Having conquered, due to your power, all princes and having given the earth to the brāhmaṇas, I obtain peace due to your favour only.

The lord said:

177-185. Having spoken like this, Paraśurāma of a great penance (to his credit) having gone round and saluted Rāma, the protector of the world, offered the heaven merited by having performed one hundred sacrifices to that missile. Rāma of a great lustre, then saluted the great sage. He duly worshipped him with water for washing his feet, materials of worship and water for being sipped. Paraśurāma, of a great penance (to his credit), honoured by him went to the hermitage of Nara-Nārāyaṇa, for practising penance. And the mighty king Daśaratha, along with his sons and wives, entered his own city at an auspicious moment. Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna, having approached their wives, amused themselves with their minds delighted. Rāma, the pious one amused himself with Sītā for twelve years, like Viṣṇu amusing himself with Lakṣmī. At that time only king Daśaratha affectionately desired to bestow his kingdom upon his eldest son (Rāma). His dear wife Kaikayī who was given (two) boons (by him) formerly, asked the best king for the coronation of Bharata and banishment of Rāma for fourteen years.

186-188. That king, with his mind struck by grief, (and) due to being veracious, banished his son. Rāma, the descendant of Kakutstha, though capable (of snatching the kingdom), righteously left it for him, and to (keep) the promise of his father, went, with Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā, to the forest to kill Rāvaṇa. That king (Daśaratha), afflicted by the separation from his son, died.

189-190. Pious Bharata, being appointed to the kingdom along with the ministers showing that he was a good brother, did not desire the kingdom. Having come to the forest, he requested (Rāma) his brother and the descendant of Kakutstha. Rāma who curbed his enemies, did not desire the kingdom as a result of his father's order.

191-193. He gave him his own sandals. He (i.e. Bharata) too received them with devotion. Bharata brought Rāma's auspicious sandals to the kingdom, and he, Kaikayī's son, everyday worshipped them with sandal, with flowers. And the best king, being engaged in the practice of penance, remained in it (i.e. the kingdom). Till the noble Rāma came (back to Ayodhyā) all the citizens remained engaged in vows.

194. Rāma with Sītā enjoyed himself on the mountain like Citrakūṭa, in the holy hermitage of Bharadvāja, and the holy water of Mandākinī.

195-202. Sometime the magnanimous Rāma was resting (with his head) on Sītā's lap. Indra's crow came there and went about him. He, seeing Jānakī there and being tormented by Cupid's arrow, tore her plump and raised breast with his sharp nails. King Rāma, seeing the crow, took a darbha with his hand and uniting it with the missile of Brahman, discharged it. The crow, seeing the fierce blade of grass, with its form full of flames, and crying with a distressed tone, ran away. Rāma's very fierce missile followed the crow. The crow, oppressed by fear, wandered in the three worlds. Wherever the crow, desiring shelter, went, the fearful missile of Rāma went after him. The crow, tormented by the missile and (therefore) seeking a shelter, quickly went to Brahmā, Indra, Rudra, Yama and Varuṇa. All the wise gods like Rudra and the demons, seeing the crow, said: "We are not able to protect (you)." Then Brahmā, the lord of the three worlds, said (to the crow):

Brahmā said:

203-205. O best of crows, submit yourself to him only. He, the glorious one alone, is the ocean of pity for all. He, the lord of beings, endowed with qualities like good character and affectionate to those who have sought his shelter, will certainly protect you. He is the father, the mother, the companion and the friend of the entire world. Seek the refuge of the lord of gods. O bird, there is no other refuge.

Mahādeva said:

206-208. Thus addressed by Brahmā, the crow, overcome by fear, suddenly approached Rāma and fell on the ground. Seeing the crow in peril of life, Sītā politely said to her lord, the mighty (Rāma), "Protect him, protect him." The respectable lady Sītā put the head of the crow that had fallen before her on Rāma's feet.

209-211. The virtuous Rāma, the ocean of the nectar of pity and afflicted by compassion, raised him with his hand and protected him. Rāma, the treasure of compassion, said to the crow: "Do not be afraid. I shall grant you protection from fear. Go as you please." He, protected by Rāma, repeatedly saluted Rāma and Sītā, and quickly went to heaven.

212-213. Then Rāma, along with Sītā and the intelligent Lakṣmaṇa, being praised by great sages, lived on the Citrakūṭa mountain. Rāma, the best of the Raghus, being worshipped on it by Bharadvāja, went to the very huge hermitage of Atri.

214-217. The excellent pious sage, seeing the best of the Raghus to have come, with joy went forth with his wife to greet him. Having seated him, along with Sītā, on a very auspicious and divine seat, he affectionately offered him materials of worship, water for washing his feet and for sipping, and various garments, *madhuparka*, so also ornaments and unction. His wife Anasūyā affectionately gave Sītā divine and excellent garments and bright ornaments. She fed Rāma with divine food, drink and eatables, etc.

218-219. Prince Rāma, along with Lakṣmaṇa, very devoutly honoured by him, lived there for a day. When it dawned, Rāma got up, took himself round the great sage, saluted him, and set about going.

220-221. Permitted by him the lotus-eyed Rāma went to the Daṇḍaka forest thronged by great sages. There he killed the very fierce demon named Virādha and then entered the auspicious hermitage of Śarabhaṅga.

222. He, on seeing Rāma, had his sins instantly destroyed and went, along with gandharvas and celestial nymphs to Brahmā's world.

223-224. One by one Rāma went to the hermitages of Sutīkṣṇa, of Agastya, of Agastya's brother also, and was honoured by them. Then Rāma lived very happily and for a long time in Pañcavaṭī, on the auspicious bank of Godāvarī.

225-227. On going there the greatest sages, the religious ascetics, worshipped the lotus-eyed Rāma, the lord of the souls. They acquainted him with the threat coming from the hosts of demons. Having comforted them, he gave them the gift of fearlessness. After being honoured by him they went to their own hermitages. Rāma passed thirteen happy years there.

228-229a. After sometime, the demoness, Rāvaṇa's unconquerable sister of a fierce form, entered the charming Pañcavaṭī on the auspicious bank of Godāvarī.

229b-235a. Having seen the excellent Raghu (i.e. Rāma) resembling a crore of Cupids, dark like lotus-leaves, having large, lotus-like eyes, a raised nose, large arms, a conch-like neck, and a large chin, resembling a red lotus, with his palms marked with lotuses, adorned with a row of nails like the spotless moon resembling glossy and tender dūrvā (grass), an auspicious treasure of delicacy, wearing a yellow silken garment, adorned with all ornaments, of the age of a youth, having a body deluding the world, the demoness, oppressed by Cupid's arrows, approached Rāma having lotus-like eyes, and said to him:

The demoness said:

235b-236. Who are you, dwelling in the Daṇḍaka forest in the guise of an ascetic? Why have you come to (this forest) difficult to be approached (even) by demons? Quickly tell the truth. (Please) do not tell a lie.

Maheśvara said:

237-240a. That Rāma, thus addressed, laughed and said:

Rāma said:

I am king Daśaratha's son, called Rāma. This archer is my innocent younger brother, Lakṣmaṇa. This is my dear wife Sītā, Janaka's daughter. By my father's order I have come to this forest. With a desire to do good to the sages, we are roaming in this great forest. O beautiful lady, why have you come to my hermitage? Who are you? In whose family are you born? Tell me the whole truth.

Maheśvara said:

240b. Thus addressed by Rāma, she said fearlessly:

The demoness said:

241-245a. O king, I am the daughter of Viśravas and the sister of Rāvaṇa. I am Śūrpaṇakhā by name, and am well-known in the three worlds. O lord, this Daṇḍaka forest is given to me by my brother. Eating groups of sages I roam in the great forest. Seeing you, an excellent sage, I, tormented by Cupid's arrows, and being very fearless, have come (here) with a desire to dally with you. O best king, please be my husband. O king, I desire to devour this Sītā (wife) of you. With you I shall dally in the forest with prominent mountains.

Maheśvara said:

245b-252a. Seeing the demoness, after having spoken like this, ready to devour Sītā, Śrī Rāma raised his sword and cut off her nose and ears. The demoness, with her face deformed, and weeping with fear, entered Khara's house, and told him Rāma's act. He, the killer of his enemies, surrounded by thousands of demons, and with Dūṣaṇa and Triśiras, came to fight violently with Rāma. Rāma easily killed those demons of huge bodies in the fearful forest with arrows resembling Death (i.e. with fatal arrows). With arrows resembling serpents he knocked down in the battle Khara, Triśiras and the very powerful Dūṣaṇa. Having killed all the demons living in the Daṇḍaka forest, and worshipped by hosts of gods and praised by great sages, (Rāma) lived in Daṇḍaka forest with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa.

252b-255a. Learning about the murder of the demons, Rāvaṇa, rendered violent with anger, came along with the wicked

Mārīca to Janasthāna. That demon Rāvaṇa came to Pañcavaṭī with Mārīca of an illusory deer-form, and when Daśaratha's sons were away from the hermitage he, desiring his own murder, kidnapped Sītā, the wife of Rāma.

255b-257a. The powerful Jaṭāyu, the king of vultures, seeing her being kidnapped, fought due to his affection for Rāma with the demon. Rāvaṇa who resisted his enemies, killed him with the strength of his arms and entered the city of Laṅkā.

257b-261. Having kept Sītā in the Aśoka-grove he, desiring death by Rāma's arrow, entered his house. And Rāma having killed the demon Mārīca who had taken up the form of a deer, again came there (i.e. to his hermitage) with his brother Lakṣmaṇa. Coming to know that Sītā was kidnapped by a demon, the very intelligent son of Daśaratha, being tormented by great grief, lamented. Looking for Sītā in the forest, he, on his way seeing a very mighty vulture fallen on the ground with his feet and wings cut off and with his entire body full of blood, was amazed.

262a. The glorious Rāma asked him: "Who desired to kill you and why?"

262b. The vulture, on seeing Rāma, very gently spoke:

The vulture said:

263. O Rāma, the mighty Rāvaṇa has kidnapped your wife. He, the chief of the demons, struck me in the battle.

Maheśvara said:

264-266. Having spoken like this, he suddenly cast his life before Rāma. Rāma performed his obsequies according to the Vedic precepts. And he gave him his own eternal abode, fit to be reached by meditating saints. The best bird, the vulture, attained salvation, the final position due to the common form of Viṣṇu. Then Rāma went to Mālyavat (mountain), to the auspicious hermitage of Mataṅga.

267-270. He went to the pious, glorious Śabarī. That best among Viṣṇu's devotees, seeing Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, went forth to greet them. Having saluted and seated them on a seat of *darbhas*, she washed their feet. With her mind full of joy she devoutly worshipped them with fragrant wild flowers. She, of a firm vow, then offered the two descendants of Raghu (viz. Rāma and Lakṣ-

maṇa) fragrant fruits and sweet roots. (Rāma,) the descendant of Kakutstha, gave her the highest liberation.

271-273. Then Rāma, killer of his enemies, having gone to the Pampā lake killed there the demon Kabandha of a fierce form. The very vigorous one, having killed him, burnt him. (Then) he (i.e. Kabandha) went to heaven. Then the lotus-eyed Rāma, having gone to Godāvarī, asked her, "O Gaṅgā, do you know my dear (wife) Sītā?" That Gaṅgā, covered with ignorance, did not tell him (anything).

274-275. Rāma angrily cursed her: "Be of red water." Then being dejected she through fear, led by great sages, and being helpless and with the palms of her hands joined sought Rāma's refuge. Then all great sages said to the eternal Rāma:

The sages said:

276. Gaṅgā, purifying the three worlds, has risen from your lotus-like feet. O lord of the world, you alone can free her from the curse.

Maheśvara said:

277a. Then the pious Rāma, affectionate to those who seek his shelter, said:

Rāma said:

277bc. May this Gaṅgā, destroying sins, be free from my curse merely by Śabarī's bath and united with auspicious water.

278-279. Speaking like this, the very powerful Rāma made, with the tip of his Śārṅga bow, the Śabari-tīrtha like Gaṅgā and Gayā. In its water was the holy place of great devotees of Viṣṇu. "Undoubtedly that form becomes venerable to the world."

280-282a. Speaking like this the descendant of Kakutstha went to Ṛṣyamūka mountain. Then on the bank of Pampā lake he was joined by the monkey Hanūmat. At his words (i.e. request) he came in contact with Sugrīva. At the words (i.e. request) of Sugrīva, Rāma, having bound Vālin, the lord of monkeys, consecrated Sugrīva on that kingdom.

282b-287. And the lord of monkeys desiring to find out

Sītā, sent heroes like Hanūmat. Hanūmat, the son of Wind, entered the city of Laṅkā and saw (there) the helpless Sītā emaciated due to fasting and being very much grieved, with her body smeared with dirt and mud, and wearing a dirty garment. The monkey, having shown her the token of recognition and having told her the news (about Rāma), having killed seven sons of the ministers, so also Rāvaṇa's son, after having uprooted the pillar of the gateway, and having cheered up Sītā, destroyed the grove, the garden-keepers, the servants and the chief leaders of the army.

288-291. By chance he was arrested by Rāvaṇa's son. Seeing the lord of demons and having also talked to him, the monkey burnt the city of Laṅkā with the fire from his (burning) tail. Having taken the token of recognition given by her (i.e. Sītā) he again came (back to Rāma). The very lustrous chief of monkeys, approached the lotus-eyed Rāma and reported to him that he had actually seen Sītā. Rāma, with Sugrīva, and surrounded by many monkeys, went to the shore of the great ocean, and kept his army there.

292-294. Rāvaṇa's younger brother called Bibhīṣaṇa, who was pious, veracious, and best among the great devotees of Viṣṇu, knowing Rāma to have arrived, abandoned his elder brother (Rāvaṇa), so also the kingdom, sons, wife, and submitted himself to Rāma. At the words of Hanūmat the lord accepted him, and granting protection to the gentle one, consecrated him on the kingdom (i.e. the throne) of the demons.

295-297. Then Rāma, the descendant of Kakutstha, desiring to cross the ocean, approached him, and he, the mighty one, seeing the very clean water, took up the Śārṅga bow and dried up the ocean with volleys of arrows. Then the ocean, the lord of rivers, yielded himself to the descendant of Kakutstha (i.e. Rāma), the treasure of pity. Then Rāma again filled the ocean with the Varuṇa missile.

298-299. Then on the ocean, the abode of alligators, Nala constructed a bridge with rocks brought by the monkeys. Then the great army entered the city of Laṅkā, and a great battle between the monkeys and the demons was fought.

300-306. Then Rāvaṇa's very mighty son Indrajit bound both Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with magical nooses (literally, serpent-

nooses). Garuḍa, having come (there), let loose the nooses. The very powerful monkeys killed all the demons. In the battle Rāma killed Rāvaṇa's younger brother, the very strong Kumbhakarṇa, with arrows resembling flames of fire. With the missile presided over by Brahmā the angry Indrajit knocked down the monkeys. The mountain having great herbs was brought by Hanūmat. And all got up (alive) by the touch of it that was brought. Then Rāma's brave younger brother (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa), knocked down with arrows Indra's conqueror (i.e. Indrajit) as Indra did Vṛtra. The very strong Rāvaṇa set out with his complete army and ministers to fight with Rāma on the battlefield. The battle between the monkeys and demons took place on all sides.

307-321. A battle took place between Rāma and Rāvaṇa; so also with Lakṣmaṇa. The lord of demons knocked down Lakṣmaṇa with (the missile called) Śakti. Then the angry Rāma, of great lustre and the destroyer of the demons, killed the demon soldiers with arrows resembling Yama, the god of death, and destroying eveything. Rāma very much covered the demon Rāvaṇa with thousands of blazing arrows resembling the rod of (Yama, the god of) Death. The demon, with his entire body pierced with missiles of Rāma, fled through fear from the battlefield to Laṅkā. Seeing the world full of Rāma, he entered his house through dejection. Then Hanūmat brought the great mountain with great herbs. Due to that Rāma's younger brother regained consciousness. Then with a desire for victory Rāvaṇa commenced a sacrifice. The chief monkeys then destroyed it of a magical form. Then Rāvaṇa again set out, after getting into a divine chariot and along with many demons, to fight with Rāma. Then the intelligent Indra sent to Rāma a divine chariot, yoked with bay horses and with a charioteer. The best of the Raghus, having got into the chariot brought by Mātalin (Indra's charioteer), and being praised by hosts of gods, fought with that demon. Then a great, very fierce battle, with weapons and missiles took place day and night for a week between Rāma and Rāvaṇa. All the gods, remaining in aeroplanes, witnessed the battle. The best of the Raghus cut off the heads of Rāvaṇa, which many times sprang up due to the boon of Śiva. Rāma quickly discharged a very fierce missile sacred to Brahmā and resembling the fire at the time of the deluge to kill the wicked one. That missile, dis-

charged by Rāghava, tore Rāvaṇa's chest, pierced the earth and went to the nether world, and being honoured by serpents (again) came back to Rāma's hand. That great demon losing his life, fell down and died.

322-325. Then all the hosts of gods with their minds full of joy, dropped showers of flowers on the noble lord of the world. The chiefs of gandharvas sang (his praise) and bevies of celestial nymphs danced. So also auspicious breezes blew, and the sun was very bright. Sages, siddhas, gods and kinnaras praised (him). The best of the Raghu-family consecrated the greatest demon Bibhīṣaṇa on the throne of Laṅkā, and looked upon himself as having accomplished his object. Having consecrated Bibhīṣaṇa Rāma then said these words to Bibhīṣaṇa:

Rāma said:

326-327. As long as the moon and the sun exist, as long as the earth exists, as long as my account exists, the kingdom (of Laṅkā) will rest with Bibhīṣaṇa. Being very powerful, reach, along with the host of your sons and grandsons, my divine, ancient abode accessible to meditating saints.

The lord said:

328-330. The very mighty one, Rāma, having thus given a boon to the demon and having approached Sītā, spoke many harsh and censurable words to her in the assembly of people. The chaste lady much censured by him entered fire. Then all the hosts of gods led by Śiva, Brahmā, seeing the mother (i.e. Sītā) entering fire, were afflicted by fear, and approaching the greatest of Raghus, said, with their palms joined, to him:

Gods said:

331-339. O Rāma, Rāma, O you of large arms and of a great valour, listen. Sītā is extremely pure. She never violates your norms of conduct. You should not abandon her wrongly, as the sun does not give up his light. She is the mother of the entire world, and is support of the whole world. Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarṇa were your former highly devoted servants. Due to the curse of Sanaka etc. they were born on the earth. For their liberation Sītā was seized (by Rāvaṇa) in the Daṇḍaka forest.

The two pre-eminent demons were killed by you. They are (now) liberated, and with their sons, grandsons and followers have gone to heaven. You are Viṣṇu; you are the highest Brahman; you are the ancient one meditated upon by the meditating saints. You alone, of all gods, are the immutable (god) without a beginning or an end. You are the glorious Nārāyaṇa. Sītā is the ancient Lakṣmī. She is the mother of all the worlds. You, O highest lord, are the father. This mother of the world is eternal and shall never abandon you. O best of the Raghus, as you are omnipresent, so also she is. Therefore, O you descendant of Kakutstha, O you gentle one, accept this chaste Sītā of a good conduct and a strong vow, as (Lakṣmī) from the Milky Ocean.

The lord said:

340. In the meanwhile Fire, the observer of the world, brought Sītā there, and handed her over to Rāma in the vicinity (i.e. the presence) of gods. Fire, present in all bodies, then said to the descendant of Kakutstha:

Fire said:

341. O lord, this Sītā is of a good conduct and is sinless. O Rāma, accept her quickly. I have told you the truth.

The lord said:

342-343. Then Rāma, the descendant of Raghu, having accepted Sītā at the words of Fire, (and) being worshipped by the best gods, was pleased. Those excellent monkeys who were killed in the battle by the demons, came back to life and got up due to the boon of the grandsire.

344-347. Then (Bibhīṣaṇa,) the lord of demons gave Rāma the aeroplane named Puṣpaka which resembled the sun, which belonged to Kubera, and which was seized (from Kubera) by his brother (Rāvaṇa). He (also) gave Rāma garments and ornaments. The brave, glorious Rāma, Daśaratha's son, honoured by him got into the excellent aeroplane along with Sītā and his brave brother Lakṣmaṇa, so also along with the hosts of bears and monkeys, the noble Sugrīva, the brave Bibhīṣaṇa, and the very mighty demons.

348-352a. All the bears, monkeys and demons got into the

aeroplane and the ever-liberated noble ones got into an aeroplane of Vaikuṇṭha. Rāma, being praised by best gods, proceeded to Ayodhyā. Rāma of a genuine valour went to Bharadvāja's hermitage, and sent Hanūmat near Bharata. The best monkey having gone to the fisherman's house, saw Guha, a devotee of Viṣṇu, and told him about Rāma's arrival. Then from there he went to Nandigrāma, saw Rāma's younger brother and told him about the joyous occasion of Rāma's arrival.

352b-357. Having learnt from the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat) about the arrival of Rāma, Bharata, along with his younger brother and friends, obtained incomparable joy. Having again come back to Rāma, Hanūmat, the son of Wind, told all that Bharata did. Rāma also along with his younger brother got down from the best aeroplane and saluted with his wife Bharadvāja, the treasure of penance. The sage honoured the descendant of Kakutstha along with his younger brother by (offering him) cooked food, fruits, roots etc. and garments and ornaments. Honoured by him, Rāma saluted the best sage, and permitted by him, again, along with his followers, and surrounded by his friends went to Nandigrāma in the Puṣpaka (aeroplane).

358-361. Kekayī's son (Bharata) with his younger brother and along with his ministers and chief citizens, so also strong best kings, gladly went forth to greet his elder brother (Rāma). Approaching the best of Raghus, he, surrounded by his followers, saluted him. Rāma, the tormentor of his enemies, got down from the Puṣpaka aeroplane, and embraced Bharata and Śatrughna. The very lustrous one, along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, saluted his family priest Vasiṣṭha, and relatives like his old mothers.

362-368a. Bharata embraced Bibhīṣaṇa, Sugrīva, Jāmbavanta, so also Aṅgada, Hanūmat and Suṣeṇa. After an auspicious bath along with his brother and attendants, he, having divine flowers and garments and smeared with divine sandal and being praised by gods, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, got into a divine auspicious chariot occupied by Sumanta. Bharata, Sugrīva, Śatrughna and Bibhīṣaṇa, Aṅgada and Suṣeṇa, Jāmbavat, Hanūmat, Nīla, Nala, Subhaga, Śarabha, Gandhamādana and other brave monkeys, so also Guha, the lord of the Niṣādas, very brave demons and very powerful greatest kings, mounted many auspicious elephants and horses.

368b-369. The highly lustrous one entered the indestructible city of Sāketa to the accompaniment of many auspicious musical instruments, many eulogies, and along with bears, monkeys, demons and excellent warriors of Niṣādas (i.e. fishermen). Prince Rāma, on seeing the capital, and thinking only of his father king (Daśaratha) on the way, entered the house purified by the movements of the meritorious feet of Sugrīva, Māruti and Bibhīṣaṇa.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYTHREE

Rāma's Consecration

Śaṅkara said:

1-17a. On that auspicious day at an auspicious moment people performed auspicious acts for the consecration of the pious one. These sages—Vasiṣṭha, Vāmadeva, Jābāli, and Kaśyapa, Mārkaṇḍeya, Maudgalya, Parvata, so also Nārada, performed the auspicious consecration of the best king there with muttering of hymns and sacrifices. Having seated Rāma along with Sītā on an auspicious golden seat full of (i.e. decked with) jewels, as Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī, the sages who had fulfilled their vows, muttered the auspicious Vedic hymns in honour of Viṣṇu and consecrated the descendant of Kakutstha and the lord of the world with pure water which was purified with hymns, was (brought) from all holy places, was holy, which had auspicious substances in it, was furnished with tips of dūrvā grass, tulasī-leaves, flowers and sandal. At that most auspicious moment gods beat drums in heaven and dropped showers of flowers from all sides. With his queen (Sītā) the descendant of Raghu adorned with divine garments, ornaments, divine sandal and unguents and with various kinds of flowers looked superb in the company of the sages, the masters of the Vedas. At that time Lakṣmaṇa held the divine umbrella and chowrie. By his side(s) Bharata and Śatrughna stood brilliantly with fans. Bibhīṣaṇa, the lord of demons, gave him the mirror. Sugrīva, the lord of the monkeys, held a pitcher full (of water), and the very lustrous Jāmbavat

(held) a charming garland of flowers. Vālin's son gave Rāma a tāmbūla with camphor. Hunūmat (held) many divine lamps, and Suṣeṇa (held) an auspicious flag. The ministers, surrounding the noble one, waited upon him. Sṛṣṭi, Jayanta, Vijaya, Saurāṣṭra, Rāṣṭravardhana, Akopa, Dharmapāla, and Sumantra are said to be (his) ministers. Kings, best men, lords of various countries, citizens, traders, old men waited upon the king. He was surrounded by bears, chief monkeys, ministers, kings, demons, principal brāhmaṇas and servants.

17b-23. As the lord of Lakṣmī completely united with deities in the highest heaven (shines), similarly the best glorious king then shone in Sāketa. The hosts of gods seated in aeroplanes and with their minds full of joy, so also gandharvas and hosts of the celestial nymphs, praised with shouts of victory the descendant of Kakutstha, the best of the Raghus, whose hands reached his knees, who had worn a yellow garment, whose neck was like a conch, whose chest was large, who had (put on) beautiful ornaments, who was seated with queen (Sītā), and who was consecrated. Then Rāma, consecrated by great sages like Vasiṣṭha, shone with Sītā like god Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī. Śiva afraid due to Rāma's being a great mortal, of waiting on his lotus-like feet, seeing Rāma was pleased and with delight praised him. He folded the palms of his hands, was full of joy, and had a faltering (voice). He delighted all gods, sages and monkeys also.

Mahādeva said:

24-30. Salutation to the original source, to the eternal highest soul, to the one having the nature of existence, consciousness and bliss, to the one identical with the universe, to the creator. Salutation to Viṣṇu the bulb, the root of continuous joy, to the form delighting the three worlds; salutation to the one venerable to Brahmā and Indra, to one bringing about the welfare and giving protection from fear. Salutation to the one of the form of Viṣṇu. O you of the form of everything, salutation to you. Salutation to (you) the cause of creation, sustenance and destruction (of the world), to (you) of three qualities, to you of the form having no limitation, to the great soul. (Salutation to you) causing Nescience in the form of this goddess Sītā as a limiting adjunct. Salutation to both of you, the Puruṣa (the soul) and the Prakṛti

(the primordial matter), the author of the worlds. Salutation to the mother and the father of the world, to the mother (Sītā) and to Rāghava (i.e. Rāma). Salutation to you, of the form of visible world, and of the form without the visible world. Salutation to you, of the form of meditation, to the form of the Supreme Soul fit to be meditated upon by the meditating saints. Salutation to both of you devoid of change and no-change.

31-40. Salutation to you the supreme soul, of the form of the seed, to Sītā and to Rāma. Sītā is Lakṣmī; you are Viṣṇu. Sītā is Pārvatī; you are Śiva. Sītā herself is Sāvitrī; you are the four-faced Brahmā. Sītā is Indrāṇī; you are Indra. Sītā is Svāhā (the oblation made to all gods); you are Fire. Sītā is the destructive goddess; you are of the form of Yama. Sītā is all wealth; you are Kubera, O best of Raghus. Sītā is goddess Rudrāṇī; you are very strong Rudra. Sītā is goddess Rohiṇī; you are the Moon giving pleasure to the world. Sītā is Saṁjñā; you are the Sun. Sītā is the Night; you are the Day. Sītā is goddess Mahākālī. You always are Mahākāla. In the three worlds whatever is of the feminine gender is Sītā. Whatever is marked with the masculine gender is you, O lord. O lord of all gods, Sītā is the supporter everywhere. Then you are also there to protect. Her power sustains the universe. Therefore, the merit marked (acquired?) by you two is a crore-fold. Your deeds marked (described?) by Śiva and Śakti, give peace. O Rāma, we two are venerable to the world. You two are always venerable to us. Gaurī mutters your name. I mutter your formula. To one desiring to die at Maṇikarṇikā and remaining in half of its water I give your emancipating formula, giving (i.e. leading to) Brahman.

41. Therefore, O lord of Jānakī, you are certainly the highest Brahman. All deluded by you do not know you truly.

The lord said:

42-50. Thus addressed by Śambhu, Rāma who had assumed a divine form and was of a wonderful appearance, became disposed to favour. Seeing him of that form, men, monkeys and deities were not able even to see that lustrous, great, wonderful (form). The best gods, through fear saluted him devoutly. Rāma, realising that men, monkeys and deities were frightened, took up the illusory human form and again spoke to the gods:

Rāmacandra said:

O gods, listen. That man who will everyday praise me with the hymn told by Śiva, will be equal to a god. Freed from all sins he obtains my nature. In a battle he gets victory and is never repulsed. He is not tormented by ghosts, vampires and female deities to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes. A sonless man obtains a son. A maiden gets a husband. A poor man obtains wealth and would become virtuous and of good disposition. The glorious one has the power equal to that of the (highest) soul. There is no doubt about it. In all acts and undertakings men have no obstacle. Whatever desire, difficult to be fulfilled, is entertained by a man is satisfied within six months due to the grace of this eulogy. By means of this hymn is obtained the fruit a crore times more than the religious merit obtained in all holy places and all sacrifices.

The lord said:

51-53. Speaking like this Rāmacandra dismissed Maheśvara. He (also) dismissed all gods like Brahmā that had come there. Rāmacandra honoured all men and dismissed with affection all men, monkeys and deities full of love. All of them thus dismissed by him, went very much delighted, reciting the great hymn uttered by the lord and remembering Rāma of a universal form.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYFOUR

Rāma Goes to Heaven

Śaṅkara said:

1-6. Rāma enjoyed with Sītā royal pleasures as desired while protecting directions on all sides for a thousand years. All inmates of the harem, so also the citizens, censured Sītā who had stayed in the demon's house. Rāma who warded off his enemies, through fear of public scandal, and exhibiting human behaviour, abandoned the princess (Sītā) who was pregnant, in the assembly of sages in Vālmīki's holy hermitage in a large forest on the bank

of Gaṅgā. Dependent upon her husband she stayed in the sage's house. Taken care of by the sage Vālmīki, she was honoured by sages' wives. There only she gave birth to twin sons named Kuśa and Lava. Educated and trained by the sage they grew there only.

7-13a. Rāma too, along with his brothers, protected the earth. He, the king, endowed with virtues like restraint, and free from all enjoyments, always worshipping Viṣṇu having no beginning or end, and highly devoted to celibacy, ruled over the earth. Śatrughna, the righteous descendant of Raghu, having killed Lavaṇa, ruled, along with his two sons, over Mathurā created by gods. Bharata, having killed gandharvas on both the sides of Sindhu, installed his two very mighty sons in that country. The very powerful Lakṣmaṇa, having killed the Madras in the western Madra country, consecrated his two brave sons, and again going back to Ayodhyā, touched Rāma's feet. (Rāma,) the descendant of Kakutstha brought back to life the son of a brāhmaṇa that had met death, and then killed a śūdra ascetic.

13b-17. Then Rāma, the killer of his enemy's heroes performed a horse-sacrifice in the Naimiṣa (forest) in the assembly of people on the bank of Gautamī. Rāghava, knowing the highest truth, fashioned a golden (image of) Jānakī, and with that the very mighty one performed many sacrifices. The lord performed various sacrifices, complete with presents, like myriads of horse-sacrifices, Vājapeya sacrifices, Agniṣṭoma, Viśvajit, Gomedha and Śatakratu. In the meanwhile, Vālmīki of a very great (i.e. severe) penance (to his credit) brought Sītā there, and said these words to Rāma:

Vālmīki said:

18. O you of a good vow, you do not deserve to abandon (i.e. please do not abandon) sinless Sītā. This chaste one is free from passion and is like light to the sun. O descendant of Kakutstha, she is identical with you. O sinless one, why did you abandon her?

Rāma said:

19-22. O brāhmaṇa, from your words I understand that Sītā is sinless. The chaste lady was formerly kidnapped by Rāvaṇa in the secluded Daṇḍaka (forest). Having killed him in

battle, and having properly taken Sītā who was purified and who came out of Agni's mouth, I came to Ayodhyā (again). There was a great public scandal among the citizens. Being afraid of it I abandoned her of a good conduct, near you. Therefore, for satisfying the people, Sītā who is highly devoted to me, must convince the kings and great sages (of her innocence).

Maheśvara said:

23-24. Thus addressed the chaste Sītā put forward a proof amazing the people in the assembly of sages and kings. Showing those people her sole devotion to Rāma, the chaste Sītā, with the palms of her hands folded, said in the assembly of all (people):

Sītā said:

25-26. Since I have not thought of anyone except Rāma, may goddess Earth give me a cavity. Since I spoke the truth that I do not know anyone else but Rāma, Dharaṇī (i.e. the Earth) would at once come to her daughter Vaidehī.

Maheśvara said:

27-32. Then the lord of birds, the hero, knowing the mother (had come) from below the earth, held a seat full of jewels. Then goddess Dharaṇī, holding Sītā with both her hands, greeted her with a welcome, and seated her on the seat. Seeing her seated on the seat, the hosts of gods in heaven profusely and continuously scattered a shower of flowers on divine Sītā. She too, the ancient one, being honoured by divine damsels mounted on Garuḍa, and went to heaven by that path. On her front the goddess of the world was surrounded by hosts of maids. She reached the highest ancient abode, accessible to the meditating saints. Seeing her entering the lower world, all men shouted loudly: "Well (done), well (done), This is Sītā."

33-36. Rāma, overcome by grief, took both his sons and along with sages and best kings entered Sāketa. Then after a long time, (Rāma's) mothers who had fulfilled their vows, died and went to the heaven of their husband (i.e. to the heaven where Daśaratha had gone). Rāma who had fulfilled his vows righteously, ruled over the kingdom for ten thousand and ten hundred

years. Sometime the god of death came to Rāma's abode in the guise of an ascetic and spoke (these) words:

Death (Kāla) said:

37-38. O Rāma, Rāma, O you of large arms, I am sent by the Creator. O best of Raghus, O very intelligent one, listen to what I say. We shall carry on a conversation (lit. wordy duel). He who enters in between (i.e. disturbs us) will merit death.

Maheśvara said:

39. Promising him with the words "All right" the lotus-eyed Rāma placed Lakṣmaṇa at the door. Then Death spoke (these) words: Yama (Death) spoke to Rāma, Daśaratha's son:

Kāla (Death) said:

40-42. O Rāma, listen to what led to my arrival. You descended on the mortal world, saying, after having killed the two best demons: "I would live in the mortal world for ten thousand and ten hundred years." Thus (also) told by the hosts of gods (you have stayed for that much period). Now the time for you to go (back) to heaven has come. O sinless one, let the gods today have the lord in you.

Maheśvara said:

43. To the great sage Rāma said, "Let it be so". In the meanwhile the great ascetic Durvāsas came to the gate of the royal palace and spoke (these) words to Lakṣmaṇa:

Durvāsas said:

44. O prince, O descendant of Kakutstha, go quickly and report to Rāma (about the arrival of) me.

Maheśvara said:

45. To him Lakṣmaṇa said: "O brāhmaṇa, (Rāma has ordered that) no person should be allowed near (him)." Then the best sage overcome by anger said:

Durvāsas said:

46a. I shall pronounce a curse if you do not present me to Rāma, the descendant of Kakutstha.

Maheśvara said:

46b-53. Due to the fear of the curse (Lakṣmaṇa) reported to Rāma (the arrival of) the sage. There only Death causing fear to all beings vanished. The king worshipped sage Durvāsas that had come (there). That best Raghu, Lakṣmaṇa, knowing that promise of his elder brother, gave up his human form in the water of Sarayū. Giving up the human form he entered his own body. He having a thousand hoods, and having a lustre of a crore of moons, having divine flowers and garments, smeared with divine sandal, surrounded by thousands of serpent-damsels, well-adorned, having got into a divine aeroplane, went to the abode of Viṣṇu. The best Raghu Kākutstha (i.e. Rāma) knowing Lakṣmaṇa's going to heaven, also desired to go to heaven. Then Rāma, having consecrated his sons Kuśa and Lava, having divided wealth along with chariots, elephants and horses gave it to them. The best of Raghus installed righteously on his kingdom (i.e. throne) Kuśa at Kuśavatī and Lava at Śarasvatī.

54-58. Knowing the intention of Rāma who had realised his soul all the very powerful monkeys and demons came there. (They were) Bibhīṣaṇa, Sugrīva, Jāmbavat, (Māruti) the Wind's son, Nīla, Nala, Suṣeṇa, and Guha, the lord of the Niṣādas. Śatrughna also consecrated his brave sons as kings, and all of them came to Ayodhyā protected by Rāma. Having saluted the noble one, with their palms joined they said to him:

The monkeys and others said:

O best of the Raghus, having come to know that you are ready to go to heaven, we have come (here) to follow you. O lord, O Rāma, we cannot live without you (even) for a moment. Therefore, O large-eyed one, with you we shall go to the abode of gods.

Maheśvara said:

59. Thus addressed by them the descendant of Kakutstha said: "All right." Then the very lustrous one said to Bibhīṣaṇa, the lord of demons:

Rāma said:

60. Rule over your kingdom righteously. Do not falsify your promise. Being well pleased enjoy as long as the moon, the sun and the earth remain. Then at the (proper) time come to my place.

Maheśvara said:

61-62. Speaking like this the lotus-eyed Rāma affectionately gave to him his ancient (image of) Viṣṇu, gentle and lying (on Śeṣa) and the family deity of the Ikṣvākus. To Hanūmat Rāma, the killer of his enemies, said:

Rāma said:

63. O lord of monkeys, as long as my stories go on (being narrated) on the earth, remain on the earth. At the (proper) time, O you of a good vow, go to me.

Maheśvara said:

64a. Speaking like this to him, Rāma said to Jāmbavat:

Rāma said:

64b-65. When Dvāpara (age) will come, I shall again be born on the earth in the family of Yadus for destroying the burden of the earth. O best of bears, I shall (then) fight with you.

Maheśvara said:

66-72. The very powerful Rāma, the descendant of Kakutstha, having thus spoken to him, said to all the bears and monkeys (these words): "(Please) go." Ministers, traders, Bharata, the son of Kaikayī, determined to follow Rāma, came (there). Then the celibate, wearing white garments, went to the Supreme Spirit. Holding kuśas in his hands the restrained one went to the Supreme Spirit. To Rāma's right side was Ramā (i.e. Lakṣmī) with a lotus in her hand. Similarly to the side other than the right (i.e. to the left side) was goddess Dharaṇī (i.e. the earth). O Pārvatī, in the same way Vedas with the Vedāṅgas, Purāṇas with Itihāsas, Oṁkāra, Vaṣaṭkāra, so also Sāvitrī purifying the world, followed Rāma. Missiles, weapons like bows etc., all having male

bodies followed Rāma. Bharata and Śatrughna, so also all citizens with their sons, wives and attendants went after Rāma.

73-78. Ministers, hosts of attendants, servants, traders, so also monkeys, bears along with Sugrīva and with their sons, wives went after the very intelligent descendant of Kakutstha. Beasts and birds, so also all immobile and mobile objects went after the noble one. So also the best men who saw the descendant of Kakutstha going to heaven. They who thus followed Rāma, did not return. Then having gone over three yojanas he saw Sarayū on the western side. With his followers he entered Sarayū of auspicious water. Then Brahmā, the grandsire, surrounded by hosts of all gods, and along with sages praised the best among Raghus with (suitable) words. He said to Rāma who had entered the water of the Sarayū (river):

Brahmā said:

79-81. O Viṣṇu, come, prosperity to you. O you who honour (others), you have luckily come (here). With your brothers, lustrous like gods, enter your own body of Viṣṇu, which is very bright, divine and ancient. O god, you are the refuge of the world; only few do not take cognizance of you who are inconceivable, noble, immutable, and comprising everything. O you of great lustre, enter that body which you desire (to enter).

Maheśvara said:

82-91. When he was full of the sun's rays, and when showers of flowers were dropped on him, he abandoned the human form and entered his own body. Both the noble Śatrughna and Bharata, endowed with divine lustre, were with him with the conch and the disc, his portions. He, the four-armed one, who had a conch, a disc, a mace, and the Śārṅga (bow) in his hands, who was possessed of divine ornaments, who had (his body) smeared with divine sandal, who had worn divine yellow garments, whose eyes were like lotus-leaves, who was a youth, whose body was handsome, who was bright with delicate parts, whose hair was very glossy, dark and curly, who had auspicious marks, who was dark like fresh dūrvā-sprouts, whose face resembled the full moon, got along with the two goddesses into an aeroplane,

and he, the lord, of a great lustre, praised by all gods, sat on the divine throne at the root of the desire-yielding tree. Those bears, monkeys and men, just on touching the water of Sarayū, happily cast their life. Due to Rāma's grace all they were handsome and had divine forms. They had worn divine flowers and garments; they had divine, auspicious lustre. There were innumerable men. Śrī Rāma, having lotus-like eyes, surrounded by all, worshipped by hosts of gods and siddhas, praised by all gods, got into the aeroplane.

92-95. The lord came to his own eternal, divine, imperishable place. O you of a beautiful appearance, one who would recite the (full) account of Rāma, or would listen to a verse or half a verse or would devoutly remember it, would, being free from sins committed knowingly or unknowingly during crores of existences, reach, along with his sons and wife, without any effort, Viṣṇu's world, to be reached (only) through abstract meditation. O goddess, I have narrated to you this great account of Rāma. Due to the narration (of the account) of Rāma, I am blessed along with you, O goddess. O you of an excellent face, what else do you desire to know? I shall narrate all that.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYFIVE

The Brave Deeds of Kṛṣṇa

Śrī Pārvatī said:

1-2. O lord, you have told well the story of Rāma. Having heard it through your grace, I am happy, O great god. O lord of gods, I desire to hear the great story removing sins, of Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vasudeva.

Rudra said:

3-8a. O goddess, listen. I shall narrate (to you) the story giving all fruits to men, of the noble Kṛṣṇa, Vasudeva's son. O goddess, in the family of Yadus was born the son of Devamiḍha,

called Vasudeva, the best among those knowing Dharma. The prince duly married Devakī of a divine complexion, the daughter of Devaka (Ugrasena's brother), in Mathurā. Kaṁsa was the brave and very strong son of Ugrasena. With the two (Vasudeva and Devakī?) the charioteer was driving the excellent chariot (*obscure*). When they came on a charming path bringing on auspiciousness, a divine voice gravely spoke from the air:

The heavenly voice said:

8b. O Kaṁsa, her eighth embryo (i.e. child) will take away your life.

Rudra said:

9. Having heard it, Kaṁsa set about killing his sister, Vasudeva, with presence of mind, said to him who was very much enraged:

Vasudeva said:

10. O glorious one, do not kill your legitimate sister. O very mighty king, just kill the embryos (i.e. children) that will be born.

Rudra said:

11-13. Saying "All right", Kaṁsa having arrested Vasudeva and Devakī, placed them in his charming house full of all pleasures. In the meanwhile, O goddess, goddess Dharaṇī (i.e. the Earth) very much troubled by the burden of sinners, suddenly went to Brahmā. Having gone to Brahmā, the lord of the world, Dharaṇī, the supporter of the people, said with a grave voice:

Dharaṇī said:

14-16. O Creator, O lord, I am unable to support these people. O you of a good vow, the sinful demons have put up on me. The very powerful ones destroy all good practices of the world. All men deriving their strength from unrighteousness are deluded by sin. In this world very little of religious merit is seen. O god, I have sustained (people) because of (their) religious merit, truth, purity and control. Therefore, I am unable to sustain the world springing from unrighteousness.

Rudra said:

17-18. Speaking like this goddess Dharaṇī vanished there only. Then all hosts of gods led by Brahmā and Rudra and great ascetics went to the lord of the world at the northern shore of the Milky Ocean, and praised him with divine eulogies. Then the lord who was pleased, said to all those best sages:

The lord (Viṣṇu) said:

19a. O hosts of gods, for what purpose have you come here?

Rudra said:

19b. Then the grandsire said to Viṣṇu, the god of gods:

Brahmā said:

20-22a. O god of gods, O lord of the world, the Earth is oppressed with burden. In the world many unconquerable demons are born, like Jarāsandha, Kaṁsa, Pralamba, Dhenuka and others. The wicked ones torment all old people. You are fit to take down the burden of the Earth.

Rudra said:

22bc. Thus addressed by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, the immutable lord of the world, spoke with a grave voice:

The lord (Viṣṇu) said:

23. O very powerful gods, descending (i.e. being born) in the family of the Yadus, I shall cooly remove the burden of the Earth.

Rudra said:

24. Thus addressed, all gods, having saluted Viṣṇu, went to their respective worlds, and thought of that highest god. Then the highest lord said to the Nārāyaṇī Māyā:

The lord said:

25-28. Taking the six sons of Hiraṇyākṣa to the earth, put them into (the womb of) Devakī, the wife of Vasudeva. The seventh one, a portion of Śeṣa, has already entered (Devakī).

Do not tarry. O you of an auspicious appearance, give it to Rohiṇī, her co-wife. Then in the eighth my portion will be born on Devakī. Then Mahānidrā, your ancient portion, will be born on Yaśodā, Nanda's wife. She will go to the great mountain Vindhya, and there being worshipped by gods led by Indra would kill the very powerful demons led by the demon Śumbha.

Rudra said:

29-38. Saying, "All right" Mahāmayā put the sons of Hiraṇyākṣa as the six embryos in (the womb of) Devakī one by one. The very powerful Kaṁsa killed them as soon as they were born. The seventh embryo was infused by a portion of Śeṣa. (Mahāmayā) took the growing embryo into (the womb of) Rohiṇī. Due to drawing out (saṁkarṣaṇāt) of the embryo, the immutable Saṁkarṣaṇa was born on her. On the eighth of the dark half of Bhādrapada (he was born) at an auspicious moment. Rohiṇī gave birth to a son, the lord Saṁkarṣaṇa. Then all hosts of gods seated in aeroplanes in the sky, and with their minds full of joy, praised Devakī. Then, O Pārvatī, in the tenth month (of her pregnancy) Viṣṇu was born on her at mid-night of the eighth of the dark half of Śrāvaṇa. He was dark like the petal of a blue lotus. His eyes were large like lotus-leaves. He had four arms. His body was handsome. He was graced with divine ornaments. On his chest were Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha (marks). He was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers. This ancient Vāsudeva (i.e. Viṣṇu) was born of Vasudeva. Seeing Kṛṣṇa, the lord of the worlds, Vasudeva with his palms joined saluted him, full of the world, and said:

Vasudeva said:

39-41. O lord, O desire-yielding tree to the devotees, O lord of the world, you are born of me (i.e. as my son). You, the highest being, are the one without a beginning or an end among the gods. O you inconceivable one, you are a great son. You are thought of by the meditating saints and are ancient. O you sustainer of the earth, you have become my son on the earth. The sinful demons, seeing this your wonderful majestic form will not bear the great vigour, O highest being.

Rudra said:

42-55a. Thus requested by him the ancient Viṣṇu withdrew his form possessed of four arms. He shone as a human being only with two hands. All the demons, his bodyguards, that were there, were deluded by his Māyā, and were covered by mental darkness. In the meanwhile Vasudeva, praised by all gods, took the god, and quickly went from that city. The very strong king of serpents devoutly covered him with a thousand hoods, and accompanied him, when it was raining. At that time the town-gates were opened due to the touch of his feet. Being broken they were wide open; and those (people) that were there, became unconscious. That river Yamunā, that was full, flowed with her water knee-deep only, when the noble one entered her (water). Having crossed Yamunā, the best of the Yadus, being praised by gods, entered (Vraja—the station of cowherds) situated on her bank. There, that wife of Nanda, delivered in the auspicious cow-pen. She who was asleep was deluded by Māyā and covered with Tamas (darkness). That Yādava (i.e. Vasudeva) having placed on her bed the god (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), and taking that daughter again went (back) to Mathurā. Having given that daughter to his wife (Devakī), he remained well-composed. She who was on Devakī's bed, wept due to her being a child. Having heard the voice of the girl in the house, the bodyguards informed Kaṁsa of the auspicious delivery of Devakī. Kaṁsa quickly came there, and seized the girl, and then threw her on a stone. She too quickly went to the sky. Placing her foot on his head, she stood with her full face (visible). The goddess with eight arms said to the lord of demons:

The goddess said:

55b-56. O dull one, what is the use of having thrown me? He who will kill you, is born. He, who is the creator, the sustainer and the destroyer of the world is born in this world. He will snatch your life.

Rudra said:

57-58. Having spoken like this, the goddess filling the sky with her lustre, and being praised by gods and gandharvas, suddenly went to the Himālaya mountain. Then Kaṁsa, with his

mind dejected, and oppressed by fear, called his demons led by Pralamba, Cāṇūra, and said to them:

Kaṁsa said:

59-61. All hosts of gods, through our fear, have gone to the Milky Ocean, and have told everything about the destruction of the demons to Viṣṇu. Hearing their words, the supporter of the earth, the immutable one is born on the earth as a human being. So today, all you demons, taking any form as you desire, kill, without any fear children of excessive might.

Rudra said:

62-63. Having thus ordered (them), and having comforted and freed Vasudeva and Devakī, he entered his own house. Vasudeva then went to the excellent cow-pen (Vraja) of Nanda. Honoured by him, he gladly kept his son there. The descendant of Yadu said to Yaśodā, Nanda's wife:

Vasudeva said:

64. O honoured mother, protect as your own son, this son of mine, born from Rohiṇī's womb, who has come (i.e. been brought) here through fear of Kaṁsa.

Rudra said:

65-70. Nanda's delicate wife, of a firm vow, said, "All right". And having received a son of the pair, nourished him with joy. Having kept the sons in the house of the cowherd Nanda, Vasudeva being confident, went to Mathurā protected by Kaṁsa. Then on an auspicious day, Garga, impelled by Vasudeva, went to the cow-pen (Vraja) of the cowherd Nanda. The brāhmaṇa was honoured by the (people) residing there. Having duly performed their birth-rites in Gokula of the god, he gave divine names to Vasudeva's sons. The brāhmaṇa gave the elder one such names as Saṁkarṣaṇa, Rauhiṇeya, Balabhadra, Mahābala, Rāma. (He named) the younger one as Śrīdhara, Śrīkara, Śrīmat, Kṛṣṇa, Ananta, Jagatpati, Vāsudeva, Hṛṣīkeśa etc.

71-87. "In this world they will be known by the names Rāma, Kṛṣṇa." The best brāhmaṇa, having said so, and having worship-

ped the dead ancestors and deities, and being honoured by the cowherds again came (back) to Mathurā. At night Kaṁsa sent Pūtanā, the killer of children. She gave her breast smeared with poison to Kṛṣṇa of unlimited lustre (for being sucked by him). Knowing her to be a demoness, Kṛṣṇa the very lustrous, the best of the Yadus, drank (i.e. sucked) her breast deeply and profusely along with the life of the demoness. She with her body afflicted, and with her sinews suddenly cut off, fell down trembling and making a loud sound died. With her loud sound the sky was filled. Then all the cowherds seeing the demoness fallen on the ground, and Kṛṣṇa playing on her large breasts, were frightened. Being dejected, they quickly took the boy, and due to the fear of the demon, sprinkled with the cow's tail cowdung on his head. O you beautiful lady, the cowherd Nanda came and took the son. Having sprinkled (water) on all the limbs of his body to the accompaniment of (the utterance of) the names of the lord, put that wicked, fearful (demoness) out of Vraja. The group of cowherds who were frightened burnt her in that Vraja. Once Madhusūdana, Viṣṇu, lying under a cart, and having spread out his feet wept. With the stroke of his foot, he turned over the cart. With the pitchers and pots scattered about, it fell upside down. Then the cowherds and cowherdesses, seeing that great cart, were very much amazed, being apprehensive of what it was. The amazed Yaśodā quickly took the boy. Within just a short time only the two boys, the best Yadus, nourished with Yaśodā's milk, and growing, shone while crawling on their knees and hands. A fraudulent demon, disguised as a lad, set out to kill Kṛṣṇa, moved on the earth. Kṛṣṇa, knowing him to be a demon, struck him with his foot. In the form of the demon only he fell down and died. Then Kṛṣṇa roamed in the entire cowshed.

88-94. In every house of the cowherdesses, he took away butter. Then Yaśodā who was angry, tied him with a rope to a mortar and went to sell milk etc. Kṛṣṇa, the supporter of the earth, tied to the mortar with a rope, dragged it, and went between two arjuna trees. With the mortar Kṛṣṇa knocked down the two trees. With their trunks broken, they fell on the ground making a sound. Due to (i.e. on hearing) that loud sound, old, very vigorous cowherds went there, and seeing it were very much amazed. Yaśodā also being dejected freed the lord of the earth

and taking him who was amazed gave the noble one her breast (i.e. breast-fed him). Since the lord of the world was tied with a rope (dāmnā) by his mother, therefore, he was called, *Dāmodara* by all the great sages. The two arjuna trees reached the status of kinnaras.

95-100. Then all the old cowherds, led by the cowherd Nanda, regarding it to be a great portent, went to another place. In the charming Vṛndāvana on the auspicious bank of Yamunā, they made an abode for the cows and the cowherdesses. Then the growing, very strong Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, accompanied by keepers of calves, looked after the calves. A great demon, named Baka, endeavoured in the form of a crane to kill Kṛṣṇa, the best of the Yadus, who was with the cows and the calves. Seeing him, Viṣṇu also easily raised a clod and struck on his wing. The great demon fell on the earth. Then after a few days, he, looking after the cows and calves in the forest, slept on the earth on sprouts under the shade of a jambū tree.

101-107. In the meanwhile god Brahmā surrounded by hosts of gods came to see Kṛṣṇa, and seeing the two best Yadus (i.e. Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa) asleep, snatched the calves and the children of the cowherds, and again went (back) to heaven. When they got up they saw that the children and the calves were lost. They were amazed as to where the cows, calves, and children of the cowherds had gone. Knowing that it was the act done by the Creator, Kṛṣṇa, the ancient one, created the children, the cows and the calves just like that. Madhusūdana, the protector and the lord of the worlds, quickly created the calves and the cowherds of the same form. In the evening the cows—the mothers—seeing their own calves having come (back) behaved as before. When thus the period of a year was passed by the noble one, the creator again gave him (back) the calves and the children. Brahmā, the lord of the three worlds, with his palms joined, taking himself round and saluting Govinda, spoke through fear:

Brahmā said:

108-113. Salutation to you, the soul of all; to you of the nature of true knowledge, of the nature of eternal joy; to the noble one, of a loving soul. You are minute, are of a big, gross

form. You are omnipresent, immutable. O you, the beginning, the middle and the end, salutation to you. Salutation to you of eternal knowledge, power and supremacy; to you full of valour and lustre; to you, O you of a great power; to you of the form of six qualities. O brahman, you are the Supreme Being (described) of the Vedas; you are the great Puruṣa; you are the embodied Supreme Being; you are the Supreme Being of the sacred texts. You are the four (great) men; you are the best ancient man. O Brahman, the earth, fire, air are your powers. Due to your words the earth and fire sprang up, O lord of the world. With your life, O lord, the atmosphere and air were created.

114-118. O you immutable one, in the same way, from your eyes were created the sky and the sun; and O sinless one, from your ears were created the quarters and the moon. From your mind, O great god, were created the flow of water and Varuṇa. That Brahman which is manifested in the Mīmāṁsā that is proclaimed, is also (manifested) in sacrifices or in a great vow, in the hymns that are sung, in the sky, in the heaven. It is also the air. It is also in the sky, so also in the herbs. It is also in the stars, all planets, and the sun also. In the same way it is in the beings. The holy texts call it 'Brahman'. That also is the highest Brahman, well known and immortal all round.

119-122. *Hiraṇmaya*, *Avyaya* (Immutable), *Yajña*, *Śuci* (Pure), *Śucipād* (of pure feet)—these are his epithets in the Vedas. Nowhere is his (likeness found). The holy text describes him as *Cakṣurmaya* (consisting of eyes), *Śrotramaya* (consisting of ears), *Chandomaya* (consisting of Vedas), *Manomaya* (consisting of mind), *Vāṅmaya* (consisting of speech), the highest soul, the highest god. O you lotus-eyed one, thus you are the (sole) aim of the Upaniṣads. This one is not able to praise you, who has mastered the entire Vedānta. It was a great offence that I snatched your calves. O you who are affectionate to those who seek your shelter, forgive me.

Maheśvara said:

123-130. The Creator, having thus praised Viṣṇu, and having repeatedly saluted him, gave him (back) the calves, and went home. He, delighted, nourished, and practising severe penance, always keeping in his mind Viṣṇu in the form of a

child, lived with the gods, O goddess. Kṛṣṇa created the calves and children as before. They became one with him, when the gods were observing (i.e. in the presence of gods). With the keepers of the calves Kṛṣṇa went to Nandagokula. Then after a few days the best of Yadus, Acyuta, Madhusūdana, went with the cowherds to the pool of Yamunā, and there having injured easily with his one foot the thousand hoods of the very strong serpent, made him face the risk to his life. That Kāliya, regaining consciousness, sought his shelter. Then revered Kṛṣṇa protected the serpent who had given up his poison. Having made marks with his foot on the hoods of him who was afraid of Garuḍa, the best of the Yadus banished him from the pool of Yamunā.

131-137. Then that Kāliya, along with his sons and wife, quickly left that pool. Having saluted Govinda he went (elsewhere). The trees on the bank that were formerly scorched by (Kāliya's) poison, on being seen by Kṛṣṇa quickly bore flowers and fruits. Madhusūdana, the lord, full of all gods, after having attained youth in (due) time, looked after the herd of cows. The best Yadu, with cowherds of his age and with Balarāma, moved in the charming Vṛndāvana. There having killed a very fierce demon of a huge body and of the form of a serpent and as big as Meru and Mandāra (mountains), he reached the forest of Dhenuka having the arbours of palm trees like tāla and hintāla; he entered that charming forest, full of fruits and having arbours of palm trees, and having lifted Dhenuka, of the size of a mountain, and always having the form of an ass (or a cruel form), by seizing his feet, he struck him against a palm tree. At that moment only his keepers rejoiced near him.

138-143. Quickly moving out from that forest they came to the Bhāṇḍīra forest. There they played children's sports with Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. A demon named Pralamba came there in the guise of a cowherd. Putting Rāma on his back he quickly went to the sky. Knowing him to be a demon Rāma angrily struck his head with his fist; then he, with his body afflicted, fell (down). Roaring with a loud voice in his demonish form only, he, with his head and body broken, and smeared with blood, died. Then Nanda's son (Kṛṣṇa) remained, in the evening, in Govraja (cow-pen), with the young cowherdesses, sporting in

Kaumodavarcasa. The best demon Ariṣṭa went there in the form of a bull; as he had come to kill Kṛṣṇa, he roared loudly.

144-149. Seeing him, all cowherds, oppressed by fear, ran away. Kṛṣṇa too, seeing the chief of demons to have come, uprooted a palm tree and hurt him with it between his horns. He, with his head and horns broken, and vomiting profuse blood, died while roaring. Thus having killed Ariṣṭa, the chief demon of a huge body, he called the young cowherds, and lived there only in Govraja (cow-pen). Then after a few days a great demon named Keśin came to Vraja taking up the body of a horse, to kill Govinda. Having gone to that charming Govraja, he neighed loudly. Due to that neighing all the three worlds were filled. All the hosts of gods, thinking it to be the end of the age, were frightened.

150-154. All the cowherds and cowherdesses living there were confounded and disturbed. Coming to senses they all ran on all sides. Saying "Protect (us)", the cowherdesses sought Kṛṣṇa's shelter. He who loved his devotees, said, "Do not be afraid, do not be afraid." Then he, the younger brother of Indra, having comforted them, easily and quickly struck with his fist on the head of the demon. With his teeth and eyes broken, he roared very loudly. He (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) lifting a great rock, dropped it on his body. The great demon with his entire body crushed, and roaring with a fierce sound, suddenly dropped on the ground and died.

155-156. Seeing Keśin killed, the hosts of gods in heaven profusely dropped showers of flowers and said, "Well (done), well (done)." Viṣṇu (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) having thus killed in his childhood very powerful demons, just happily rejoiced with Balarāma.

157-162. He was dark like the petals of a blue lotus. His eyes resembled lotus-petals. He wore a yellow garment. He had put on a garland. He was graced with a garland of wood-flowers. His chest shone with the Kaustubha (gem). He had a chaplet on his head, and smearing (of sandal etc.). He was (adorned) with lovely ornaments. He was graced with earrings. He had worn a tulasī-garland. He had put on the mark of musk. His very glossy, dark, curly hair was tied into a braid. He had the head ornaments of a peacock's plumage with various kinds of

flowers tied; the palms of his hands, the soles of his feet and his lips resembled red lotus. Between the sides (shone) his face with the eyebrows resembling the spot on the moon. He shone with necklaces, anklets, armlets and bracelets. The descendant of Yadu, sweetly playing upon the flute remained in the very charming Vṛndāvana, graced with fruits and flowers.

163-167. Seeing Viṣṇu who had despised the beauty of crores of Cupids, all the cowherdesses were tormented by Cupid's missile. Formerly all sages living in Daṇḍaka forest, seeing Rāma desired to enjoy Rāma of a beautiful body. All of them, turned into women, were born in Gokula. Having approached Viṣṇu with love, they were then freed from the ocean of the mundane existence. Since the demons angrily came to Kṛṣṇa, and met with death in the battle, they after being killed, obtained liberation. In the world lust and anger of people are the cause of (their falling into) hell. The cowherdesses, haters of gods (in their former existence), having devoutly approached him, were liberated.

168-173. Those who betake themselves to Viṣṇu (even) through lust, fear or hatred reach Vaikuṇṭha. Then what to say of those who do so through devotion! Having heard the sound of his flute at night the wives of the cowherds all got up from their beds with their garments and hair dishevelled. Tormented by Cupid's arrows, they left their husbands, sons, relatives, so also sense of shame and their own family; they came to the lord of the world. All the cowherdesses, having approached Govinda, embraced him with their arms, and enjoyed (i.e. kissed) his lower lip as the gods enjoy nectar. With all those, the lord of the self sported in Govraja. All those fearless women also sported with him in Vraja. Thus day after day they sported with Keśava in the charming Vṛndāvana and the bank of Yamunā.

Pārvatī said:

174. How would he, Janārdana, who had descended on the earth for the protection of Dharma, approach others' wives?

Rudra said:

175-177. O you of an auspicious face, he does not differ-

entiate between his own body and those of others. The entire world is his body. There is nothing different from it. Due to his naturally being the lord, the master of the soul and the lord of the world, the noble one does not recognise the difference between a male and a female. So also due to his power of removing sins the (all-) pervading lord, the highest soul, the god, is not at a fault, O fortunate one.

Vasiṣṭha said:

178. Having thus spoken to Pārvatī, Rudra, the destroyer of Śrī Tripura, commenced telling the whole life of Kṛṣṇa.

Rudra said:

179-183. When autumn arrived, the cowherds led by the cowherd Nanda started celebrating the festival of the lord of gods (i.e. Indra). But Kṛṣṇa stopped that festival of Indra, and he, the powerful one, got celebrated the festival of Govardhana, the lord of mountains. Then the angry Indra, continuously poured down very heavy showers for seven nights in Govraja of Nanda. Kṛṣṇa, having uprooted the great mountain Govardhana, easily held it for the protection of the cows. O you of a good vow, having got the protection of the mountain, the cowherds and cowherdesses lived happily only as if they were in a mansion.

184-186. Then the thousand-eyed Indra who was afraid, with his mind confounded, stopped that shower, and went to that Vraja of Nanda. Kṛṣṇa too put the great mountain as before. All those old cowherds, led by the cowherd Nanda, worshipped Govinda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) and were very much amazed. Then god Indra, having approached Kṛṣṇa, with his palms joined praised him with a voice faltering due to joy.

Indra said:

187-195. O lotus-eyed one, O omniscient one, O superior Viṣṇu, salutation to you. I salute you, O you who are beyond the three constituent qualities (of sattva, rajas and tamas), O lord of all, and the soul of the universe. You yourself are the sacrifice, the formula used on making an oblation to a deity; you are Oṁkāra, sacrifice (or power), oblation. O Keśava, you

are the father and the mother of all gods. Before the creation you, Hiraṇya garbha, existed. You alone are the lord, the Supreme Being, the Brahman. O god, you alone have supported this earth and heaven. O lord of the world, you thus give yourself (to your devotees) and give fruits (of devotion). O you, the lord of the worlds, gods have obtained light. O ancient one, your shadow is nectar as well as death. To that god, to you, we offer an oblation. From him these golden ones have come up. O Keśava, of him the oceans and the earth are the carrier. O you immutable one, these directions, intermediate directions and the air (Vāyu) belong to you. To that god, to you, who growing (in size) again got on the earth, we offer an oblation. O Brahman, O great lord, you supported heaven. In the atmosphere you remain in a mote of the sun-beam. You are omnipresent and immutable.

196-204. To that god we offer our oblation, to whom, shining, of a hot lustre and full of qualities, you cry.* Śri would always necessarily see him mentally. In the highest place (i.e. in him) the sun, that has risen, shines. To you, that god, we offer an oblation. Your great water conceiving at the time of creation create the streams of water. Who, the immutable lord of gods (but you) stood before the demon? To you, that god, we offer our oblation. The water saw Dakṣa Prajāpati. Having a sacrifice they first produce the oblation. You are, among the gods, the superior god, the greatest of the great. To you, that god, we offer an oblation. You the immutable Man, the creator of the world, (please) do not harm us. He, the lord, of a pious act, created heaven. He created the moon, profuse water and the entire world. To you, that god, we offer our oblation. O lord, all these created objects have been around you.

205-211. O lord, beings have sprung from you. You are Acyuta. The future and the past are due to you. Let that, desiring which we offer a sacrifice, come to us wholly. Due to your kind gaze, may we be the lords of the three (worlds). You are the Supreme Being called Hiraṇmaya, having golden beard and moustache. From the point of the nail everything is gold. The sun shares gold. This is omnipresent Brahman that has settled as

*Vv. 196, 198, 199, 200, 201 etc. are not clear.

the sun. That is the excellent, best lustre of god Savitṛ. May we always think of the form of you who always illumine our minds. O you lotus-eyed one, O you lord of Śrī, O you lord of all, O Keśava, salutation to you. O you fit to be known through Vedānta, O lord of sacrifices, O you of the form of sacrifice, salutation to you. Salutation to you, to Vāsudeva, dressed as a cowherd. I have offended (you) by destroying all that. Forgive it, O lord of the world, O you ocean of compassion, O Supreme Being. In a short time kill Kaṁsa who is unassailable. Having done good to the gods, live in happiness, settling on the earth.

Mahādeva said:

212-221. Indra, the lord of all gods, having thus praised Kṛṣṇa, crowned him with nectar and divine garments and ornaments. Having worshipped the lord of gods, he went (back) to heaven. The old cowherds and cowherdesses saw Indra there. And being honoured by him, they were very much delighted. The very brave Rāma and Kṛṣṇa adorned with divine ornaments, remained happily in Nanda's Govraja. O goddess, in the meanwhile, the best sage Nārada suddenly went to Mathurā, and entered Kaṁsa's vicinity. Being honoured by the king there, he was seated on an auspicious seat. He informed him of the acts of Viṣṇu, the active exertion of the deities and the birth of Viṣṇu (as Kṛṣṇa). So also (he told him about) Vasudeva's having put his son in Vraja, the death of the demons, and the expulsion of the king of the serpents; so also about (Kṛṣṇa's) holding up the best mountain (i.e. Govardhana) and the meeting with Indra. Having told Kaṁsa everything fully he, honoured by the demon, went to Brahmā's abode. Kaṁsa, with his mind dejected and surrounded by his ministers, deliberated with them about his death. There the very powerful lord of demons, Kaṁsa, told about the mission for his good to Akrūra, the best among the intelligent ones and loving Dharma.

Kaṁsa said:

222-228. Due to my fear all gods led by Indra, overcome by fear, approached Viṣṇu and sought his shelter. He, Madhusūdana, the revered creator of the beings, granted them exemption from fear and was born from Devakī's womb. The

wicked-hearted Vasudeva also deceived me and at night he, the very wicked one, put his son in Nanda's house. Even as a child he killed the unassailable great demons. There is no doubt that he is also ready to kill me. But even gods and demons along with Indra cannot kill him. So having brought him here, I must kill him with (some) stratagem. Through intoxicated elephants, wrestlers, or excellent horses—with this or that means he can be killed here. Therefore, O best of the Yadus, having gone to Govraja, fetch here to enjoy the ceremony of arrows, Kṛṣṇa, Rāma, so also all old cowherds led by Nanda, O descendant of Yadu.

Mahādeva said:

229-242. Saying "All right", the best of the Yadus, the powerful one, eager to see Kṛṣṇa, got into a chariot and went to the charming Gokula. Akrūra, the best among the great devotees of Viṣṇu possessed of politeness, saw the unafflicted Kṛṣṇa settled among the cows. (He was) like a dark cloud; (he was) adorned with all ornaments; his eyes (were large) like lotus-leaves; (he had) long arms, and (was) healthy. (He had) covered himself with a yellow garment; (he was) handsome in all limbs; (his) chest (was) shining with the Kaustubha; (he was) graced with jewelled earrings. (He possessed) the garland of tulasī (-leaves) and wood-flowers; (he had put on) ear-ornaments of wood-flowers. Seeing Kṛṣṇa surrounded by young cowherdesses, he, the descendant of Yadu, with his entire body horripilated and his eyes full of tears of joy, got down from the chariot and saluted him. Joyfully approaching Kṛṣṇa, taking himself round him, and saluting him, he put on his head (Kṛṣṇa's) feet resembling red lotuses and marked with the signs of Vajra, and repeatedly saluted him. That descendant of Yadu then saw Balarāma resembling the full autumnal moon and decorated with pearl-necklaces, and saluted him. The two heroes, best of the Yadus, raised him with joy, and having embraced him, came home with that Akrūra, a descendant of Vṛṣṇi. The cowherd Nanda, of a great lustre, seeing the best of the Yadus to have arrived (there), approached him, and having seated him on an excellent seat, gladly, duly and devoutly honoured him with materials of worship, water for washing his feet, divine garments

and adorations. Akrūra, a descendant of Yadu, gave garments and ornaments to Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, to the cowherd Nanda, and to Yaśodā. The intelligent one seated on a kuśa-seat asked the cool one about his well-being, and asked about all the stateaffairs, said to him:

Akrūra said:

243-251. This Kṛṣṇa of great lustre, actually the immutable Viṣṇu, requested by the hosts of gods and magnanimous sages for the good of the deities and the protection of the good, so also for the destruction of those who were a burden to the earth, and for establishing righteousness, was born in (i.e. from) the belly (i.e. womb) of Devakī at midnight in rainy season. Through Kaṁsa's fear Vasudeva brought the lord of gods, Viṣṇu, his son, and put him in your house in that night. At that time only, the glorious Yaśodā gave birth to a daughter of an auspicious face born from a portion of Māyā (of the lord). She had deluded this entire auspicious Vraja. (Vasudeva) having put the best Yadu (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) on the bed of unconscious Yaśodā took the daughter and went home. Having put her on Devakī's bed, he came out. She (i.e. the daughter), remaining in Devakī's bed then quickly cried. O you of a good vow, having heard it (i.e. her crying), Kaṁsa suddenly took the girl and the powerful one, having whirled her, dropped her on a stone. That girl, (then) got up; and she having eight hands and weapons, and remaining in the sky, angrily spoke to Kaṁsa in a grave voice:

The girl said:

252. O you mean demon, he who is the Supreme Being, the lord of all gods, the eternal one, has gone to Vraja (is born) to kill you.

Akrūra said:

253-261. Speaking like this that Mahāmayā (the Great Illusion) went to the Himālaya (mountain). Since then the wicked one, with his mind dejected through fear, sent demons to kill the noble (Kṛṣṇa). This intelligent boy alone easily killed them all. The highest god performed very wonderful acts. Having heard about (these acts like) holding the Govardhana (mountain),

expulsion of the king of serpents, meeting with Indra, death of all demons, which were told to him by the divine sage (Nārada), he, tormented by fear is eager to take from here the unassailable Rāma and Kṛṣṇa of mighty arms and to get them killed by intoxicated great elephants or by wrestlers. He has sent me here to fetch Kṛṣṇa. The wicked one has imprisoned Vasudeva. (I have) told you all these acts of that very wicked one. To enjoy the ceremony of arrows all you cowherds, inhabitants of Vraja please go tomorrow, taking with you curd, ghee etc., and with Rāma and Kṛṣṇa to him. There is no doubt that Kaṁsa will be killed by Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, giving up your fear go (to Mathurā) by the order of the king.

The lord said:

262-272. Speaking like this, that very intelligent Akrūra became silent. Hearing those fierce and awe-inspiring words of him all old cowherds led by the cowherd Nanda, stupefied by grief, were in an indescribable ocean of sorrow. Seeing them (like that) the lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa cheered them. The powerful one said: "Do not entertain any fear from the demon. Accompanied by Rāma and you, I shall go to Mathurā to destroy this wicked Kaṁsa. Having killed there that wicked Kaṁsa, the chief of demons, so also having killed all demons, I shall protect the earth. Therefore, giving up your grief, go to Mathurā." The cowherds led by the cowherd Nanda, who were thus addressed by Kṛṣṇa, repeatedly embraced him, and smelt his head. Having thought over the immeasurable acts of the very noble one, and on Akrūra's words, all the cowherds, were free from affliction. Yaśodā gave Akrūra many pure cooked foods—tasty, savoury, and sweet—so also sumptuous, agreeable meals. The best of the Yadus (i.e. Akrūra) enjoyed, along with Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, the best cowherds like Nanda, so also the young and the old people, the food given by Yaśodā, which was tasteful, removed foulness, diseases, which was good, in her (house) that was well decorated.

273-279. Having properly fed them and having given them water to rinse their mouths with, she of a firm vow, gave him a tāmbūla with camphor. When the sun had set, the Yādava, having offered the evening prayer, and having, along with Rāma

and Kṛṣṇa, enjoyed the excellent food of sweetened milk, went to sleep with them. Kṛṣṇa slept as Viṣṇu on the Śeṣa, in that best mansion that was charming, illumined with lamps, beautiful, that had lovely beds, and that was graced with various flowers. Seeing him, the excellent bliss, Akrūra, marked with tears of joy and horripilation, gave up his sleep of ignorance, and the best devotee of Viṣṇu shampooed the feet of Viṣṇu (i.e. Kṛṣṇa). "By (doing) this much my life is fruitful; I have lived well. This is the prosperity in the three worlds; this is the best happiness, this is the righteous kingdom; this is the best joy of liberation.

280-284. It is not possible to recollect it mentally by deities like Śiva, Brahmā, best sages like Sanaka, and great sages like Vasiṣṭha. That couple of feet of the lord of Śrī, bright like the autumnal lotuses, and touched by Indirā, Lakṣmī with her hands, gives great pleasure. Fortunately I have secured this auspicious lotus-like couple of feet of Viṣṇu." Due to that great joy of (having secured) Brahman, the night passed as a moment. Then when the morning dawned Viṣṇu, being praised in heaven by the best hosts of gods, got up from the bed. Having properly rinsed his mouth, the intelligent one, along with Rāma, fell at the feet of his mother and made the departure agreeable.

285-287. Having raised them, Yaśodā, full of grief and joy, and with her face full of tears, affectionately embraced her sons. The respectable lady of a firm vow conferred a blessing (on them) and after repeatedly embracing the great heroes, she allowed them to go. Akrūra also saluted Yaśodā and with his palms joined, said:

Akrūra said:

288-289. O glorious one, I shall (now) leave. O sinless one, favour me. This Kṛṣṇa of great arms will, after killing the very powerful Kaṁsa, be the king of the entire world. There is no doubt about it. Therefore, O you of an excellent face, give up sorrow and be happy.

The lord said:

290-297. Thus addressed she allowed Akrūra, the best of Yadus, to go. With Rāma and Kṛṣṇa he got into an excellent chariot. Being praised by groups of celestial nymphs he quickly

went to Mathurā. All old cowherds led by the cowherd Nanda, followed him. Seeing that Kṛṣṇa going the cowherdesses again took curd, ghee, various fruits, and followed Kṛṣṇa going out, seated in a chariot. Kṛṣṇa sent back all the cowherdesses. With their minds tormented by grief, they wept for the lotus-eyed one. They repeatedly wept saying, "O Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa, O Govinda." The helpless ones with their eyes full of tears, remained there weeping. Then Akrūra, the Yādava, along with Rāma and Kṛṣṇa drove that chariot from Govraja to Mathurā. Having quickly crossed Yamunā, and having placed the excellent chariot on the bank, having got down from the divine chariot, he set about to bathe there. Then to do the necessary (rites) he plunged in the auspicious water.

298-304. Muttering the expiatory hymn the best devotee of Viṣṇu saw in the water the bright Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. He saw Rāma like a crore of autumnal moons, the lord wearing a dark garment, with his body smeared with divine sandal, and having beauty due to ornaments of pearls, having eyes like red lotuses, and having ear-ornaments of white lotuses; and saw Kṛṣṇa like a dark cloud and wearing a divine yellow garment, having large lotus-like eyes with his body smeared with yellow sandal, and graced with various gems. Seeing (them) there the best Yadu was very much amazed. Getting up he saw the two very mighty ones in the chariot. Again plunging (in the water) and muttering the couple of hymns, he saw Viṣṇu in the ocean of nectar along with Lakṣmī being praised by Sanaka and others and waited upon by all gods. Seeing the god in the water there, he was highly amazed. The best of the Yadus praised the omnipresent god Viṣṇu.

Akrūra said:

305-315. Salutation to you of the nature of Kāla (time or death), to you without a beginning or an end; salutation to you who are unmanifest and unchanging. Salutation to you, the lord of beings; repeated salutations to you, O best being. Salutation to you, the controller of all beings and the highest soul. Salutation to you, the changing and the unchanging, the actual Highest Being; to the lord of qualities and to the restraining (one). Salutation to you who are without such differences as of place and time. Salutation to you, the endless one, and

the unfalling one. Salutation to you, to Govinda, to the lord of the three (Vedas), to the holder of the Śārṅga bow, to Nārāyaṇa, Viśva and Vāsudeva. Salutation to you, to Viṣṇu, of many forms; repeated salutation to you, the eternal one; to you, having lotus-like eyes, to the eternal one, to the holder of the conch and the disc. Repeated salutations to you whose brilliance is graced with ornaments resembling crores of rising suns; to Hari; to the lord of all worlds. Salutations to Savitṛ (the generator), to the seed of the worlds, to the highest soul, to Saṁkarṣaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Pradyumna. Salutation to you, Aniruddha, the supporter, the creator, the origin of everything, having a thousand forms, and having many heads, feet and hands. Salutation to you, having a thousand names, to the eternal one, to the Highest Being. Salutation to you shining on the bed of the serpent, to you of a pleasing form. Salutation to you, to Keśava, having put on a yellow garment, having a bright lustre while pressing in embrace the hard breasts of Lakṣmī, to you Śrīdhara, to the lord of Śrī, and to you having innumerable forms.

The lord said:

316-319. A man who at the time of bathing, meditating upon the ancient god, devoutly recites this hymn, is free from all sins. Having got the fruit of (visiting) all holy places, he would secure absorption in Viṣṇu. That best devotee of Viṣṇu thus praised the god (while remaining) in water and he, Akrūra, worshipped him with water and fragrant flowers. Being blessed, Akrūra then came out of the water of Yamunā and full of auspiciousness approached and saluted Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. Seeing him polite and amazed, Viṣṇu said to him:

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

320a. O Yādava, what wonder did you see in the water?

The lord said:

320b. Akrūra spoke to the greatest of the Yadus, Kṛṣṇa, of great lustre:

321-326. "What wonder is there, O lord, of the greatness of you, the omnipresent lord of the world? O Hṛṣīkeśa, you yourself are the entire world. You are the water, the sky, the fire, the earth

and the wind. You are this entire world of four kinds, the immobile and the mobile. O Vāsudeva, there is none other than you, as water from cloud only. You are the sacrifice, you are the exclamation on offering an oblation to a deity; you are the Oṁkāra; you are the oblation also. O lord of gods, you have taken up the form to protect righteousness. You obtained the grandeur (of the forms) of the Fish, the Tortoise, the Boar. O lord, you alone protect this entire world, full of you."

The lord said:

327-330. Having thus praised Govinda, and having saluted him, the best of the Yadus got into the divine chariot along with them. Then having quickly reached Mathurā created by gods, he, having kept Rāma and Kṛṣṇa at the city-gate, went into the harem. Then having informed the king of their arrival, he, honoured by the king, entered his own house. Then in the evening Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, holding each other's hands went into Mathurā.

331-335. The two very powerful, noble, best Yadus, while passing along the royal path, saw a washerman dyeing garments. Kṛṣṇa, the powerful one, along with Rāma, seeing him wearing divine garments and coming to the palace, asked for those garments. The washerman did not give them to him, and remaining there on the path spoke to him many caustic words. With the palm of his hand only Kṛṣṇa beat him. On the way itself, he, vomiting much blood, was struck down. Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, the two heroes, along with their relatives, put on those charming garments.

336-342a. The two best Yadus reached the house of a garland-maker. Seeing them he honoured them with fragrant flowers. Being delighted, the two best Yadus granted him his desired boon. Then they came to the path. There they saw a hump-backed lady of a happy face, whose body and back were crooked, and who had held a pot containing sandal. Seeing her they asked for the sandal. She, smiling, gave them excellent sandal. They took that divine sandal, and smeared (their bodies) as they liked. Giving her a beautiful form, they came to the path. Being observed by ladies, the two delicate noble ones of charming faces entered the sacrificial chamber with their followers. Keśava, Madhusūdana, seeing there a decorated, divine bow, easily took it and broke it.

342b-343. Kaṁsa, the chief of demons, seeing that bow being broken, was very much perturbed, called the principal, preeminent wrestlers and charioteers, and having deliberated with his ministers said to Cāṇūra:

Kaṁsa said:

344-345. Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, the destroyers of all demons, have come. In the morning kill them in wrestling without hesitation. With this or that means the two, proud of their strength, should be killed with endeavour by intoxicated elephants or chief wrestlers.

The lord said:

346-350. Having directed like this, the king with his younger brother and ministers, mounted, through fear, on the top of his divine palace. He put at all gates and on all paths intoxicated elephants. Everywhere he put wrestlers and intoxicated elephants. Knowing all that the intelligent Kṛṣṇa also, along with Rāma, stayed, with his followers, in the sacrificial chamber in the night. When at the end of the night, the day broke, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa got up from the bed, offered water, were well adorned, and having eaten (something) were eager and ready to fight. They went out of the house as two lions from a cave.

351-354. Kṛṣṇa saw at the gate of Kaṁsa's palace his elephant named Kuvalayāpīḍa who resembled the peak of the Himālaya mountain, bestowed prosperity on Kaṁsa, removed the pride of the elephant of god (Indra), whose body was huge, who was intoxicated. Seeing that great elephant, Kṛṣṇa the supporter of the earth, held his trunk with his hand, and jumping properly, easily whirled him round and threw him on the ground. That great elephant, with his entire body crushed, and crying with a fierce sound, suddenly fell on the ground, and died.

355-361. Having killed him, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa drew out his tusks, seized them and then entered the arena to fight with the wrestlers. The demons that were there, on seeing the valour of Kṛṣṇa were frightened; they fled and came to the harem. Having very securely closed the doors they remained there in thousands. Seeing the doors firmly closed, the mighty Kṛṣṇa easily struck them with his foot and caused them to fall down. The two

being broken were knocked down. The army and the troop were arranged. All remaining there were killed with bodies and necks crushed. O you noble one, then the two very strong, magnanimous fleshy ones, eager to fight, whirling the tusks, saw the wrestlers, Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika. Kaṁsa also, seeing the very strong Kṛṣṇa and Rāma, was frightened, and then said to his best wrestler, Cāṇūra:

Kaṁsa said:

362. O wrestler, kill the two young cowherds at this time (i.e. now). Dividing my kingdom I shall readily give you half of it.

The lord said:

363-370. At that time Kṛṣṇa appeared to be great to the wrestlers, like another great Meru mountain in the house and the battle. He, Acyuta, was another fire of destruction in the eyes of Kaṁsa. To women he actually appeared like Cupid, and to his parents like a child. He appeared like Viṣṇu to the gods, and to cowherds like their friend. They there saw the omnipresent Viṣṇu in many forms. Vasudeva, Akrūra, so also the very intelligent cowherd Nanda climbed upon another palace, and saw the great destruction. Devakī, along with ladies staying in the harem, remained there; and all the auspicious ones with their eyes full of tears saw the boy's face. The queen consoled by them entered the house. Then all the hosts of gods, seated in aeroplanes in the sky, praised the lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa with shouts of victory. The gods, and hosts of Maruts loudly said, "Kill Kaṁsa." In the meanwhile, when the musical instruments were sounded, the very strong, best Yadus attacked the two great wrestlers.

371-376. The magnanimous ones, resembling dark and white mountains fought with them—Kṛṣṇa with Cāṇūra, and Balarāma with Muṣṭika. Due to the fight between the wrestlers, so also to (strokes of) fists and kicks, there was a great havoc, causing fear (even) to gods. Kṛṣṇa, having sported with Cāṇūra for a long time, having crushed the body of the wrestler, easily knocked him down. That great wrestler who caused great unhappiness to gods and demons, vomiting profuse blood, fell on the ground and died. Similarly Rāma fought with Muṣṭika for a

long time. The powerful one struck him on his chest with fists. With his bones and sinews broken he fell on the ground. Then all the wrestlers seeing the valour (of Balarāma) ran away.

377-387. Kaṁsa suffering from agony, was very much frightened. In the meanwhile the invincible, magnanimous heroes, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa got upon the high palatial seat. Kṛṣṇa, Hari, striking with one foot Kaṁsa on his head knocked him down on the ground from the top of the palace. He, with all his limbs broken, (fell) dead on the ground. When Kṛṣṇa had killed Kaṁsa, very strong Rāma also struck his (Kaṁsa's) younger brother Sunāman with the fist only. The supporter of the earth (i.e. Balarāma) knocked him down on the ground. Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, having killed the wicked Kaṁsa along with his younger brother, approached their parents, and saluted them devoutly. Devakī and Vasudeva repeatedly embraced them and longing for sons, smelled the two affectionately on their heads. Over them the breasts of Devakī showered milk. Then having cheered up their parents, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa went out. O goddess, in the meanwhile divine drums were beaten, and the chief gods dropped showers of flowers. The divine hosts of gods having praised and saluted Kṛṣṇa, and being very highly pleased, went to their respective worlds. Kṛṣṇa, the pious one, along with Rāma saluted the cowherd Nanda and the old cowherds, and joyfully embraced them. He gladly gave them wealth with many gems.

388-392. Kṛṣṇa honoured all those old cowherds with garments, ornaments etc. and with much wealth and corn. Dismissed by that Kṛṣṇa, they, led by the cowherd Nanda, and full of joy and sorrow, went to the divine Vraja. Having approached their maternal grandfather, the invincible Rāma and Kṛṣṇa freed him from imprisonment, and having repeatedly consoled him, Kṛṣṇa consecrated him on the kingdom (i.e. as the king). Through best brāhmaṇas he got performed the obsequies of Kaṁsa. Having installed the chief Yadus like Akrūra on the kingdom (i.e. as kings) he made Ugrasena the (chief) king, and Kṛṣṇa, Vasudeva's pious son, ruled the kingdom righteously.

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THE

PADMA-PURĀṆA

PART X

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY
Dr. N.A. DESHPANDE

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

But he has neither the means nor the leisure to embark on that course. We have, therefore, planned to help him acquire knowledge by an easier course. We have started the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology in English Translation. Our goal is to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium of expression. The publication of the Purāṇas in English Translation is a step towards that goal.

Acknowledgements

It is our pleasant duty to put on record our sincere thanks to Dr. R.N. Dandekar and the UNESCO authorities for their kind encouragement and valuable help in the publication of the volumes in this series.

EDITORIAL

With the publication of this volume the translation of the *Padma-Purāṇa* is now complete. This Part of the Purāṇa comprises the concluding chapters 246-255 of Section VI: *Uttarakhaṇḍa* and chapters 1-26 of the last, Section VII: *Kriyāyogasārakhaṇḍa* plus Index to the whole of the Purāṇa.

The chapters of Section VI included here describe some important events of the life of Śrīkṛṣṇa from Jarāsandha's invasion of Mathurā to the wholesale destruction of the descendants of Yadu in a terrible in-fighting and the sad end of the golden era of Kṛṣṇa. The last Section deals mainly with the details of and the rites and rituals connected with the worship of god Viṣṇu as well as the formalities of the Vaiṣṇava sect. Some interesting features and events we note here in passing.

The founding of the city of Dvārakā by Śrīkṛṣṇa in the sea and its final submergence are allegorically described in chapter 246 of Section VI. Archaeologists have recently unearthed important evidence in this regard which supports the real existence of this city in the remote past. It was to save the population of Mathurā threatened by Kālayavana, a powerful and cruel ally of Jarāsandha, the father-in-law of Kaṁsa, that the city of Dvārakā was built by Śrīkṛṣṇa, where the citizens of Mathurā were shifted in a hurry. Kālayavana is described as a Mlecchа king with a huge army of ferocious barbarians approached by Jarāsandha to come to his help when his own army was routed and destroyed by Śrīkṛṣṇa and Balarāma. The word *Kālayavana* means a "black Greek or foreigner". He might have been a cruel invader from the Middle East or Africa. We could as well venture a guess that he might have been one from a Muslim country during the time when the Purāṇas were composed as the total shift of a population implies a fear of general massacre and looting for which the Muslim invaders were notorious.

In Section VI, chapter 249 Kṛṣṇa's eight wives are listed as

Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā, Kālindī, Mitravindā, Jāmbavatī, Nāgnajiti, Sulakṣmaṇā and Suśīlā. In addition he had to accommodate in his harem sixteen thousand maidens who were held in captivity by the demon Naraka who had terrorized the world and was killed by Kṛṣṇa. This huge number of females in Śrīkṛṣṇa's harem resulted in an abnormal proliferation of Yādava population in the city of Dvārakā, in which in course of time evil practices, such as drinking, set in and ultimately the whole of which was destroyed in a drunken feud. This series of sad events is described in chapter 252, Section VI. One noteworthy thing here is that the wives of Yādavas committed *Sati* after the destruction, showing a prevalance of this practice, if not in those remote times, at least at the time when the Purāṇas and the Epics were composed.

The Purāṇa condemns those who worship demons, vampires, spirits, ghosts, Bhairavas, Yakṣas and even deities enjoying liquor and flesh. Worship of these was current in pre-Aryan societies and later also under the influence of Tantric ideas.

Recent ecological concern and mobilization of public opinion against pollution are fore-hadowed in this Purāṇa when it declares that "there is no expiation for one who urinates or excretes on the bank of Gaṅgā and he would go to hell who drops phlegm, spittle, rheum, tears or dirt on the bank of Gaṅgā".

Speaking in highly exaggerated terms which is a characteristic feature of the Purāṇic style is very frequently seen here also. Ethically so insignificant an act as bathing the image of Viṣṇu with water from a conch is said to result in freedom from such heinous sins as murder of a brāhmaṇa, a cow, a woman, or causing abortion* or drinking liquor. And, "for as many thousands of Kalpas a man rejoices with Viṣṇu as the steps he would devoutly walk while going round Viṣṇu."

Since the ancient Vedic times the Brāhmaṇa in India enjoys the highest position, for he is said to be born from the mouth of the Cosmic Puruṣa, and the Purāṇas have carried this pro-brāhmaṇism to its extreme limit. This Purāṇa also is no exception as is evident from its declaration that "all the holy places that exist in crores of worlds exist in the right foot of a brāhmaṇa" and

*Control of population was no problem at the time.

also from the fact that it enjoins gifts of garments, food, cow, land, horse, elephant etc. always to a brāhmaṇa. However, this is not unconditional, as the Purāṇa says that all the brāhmaṇas are superior and always respectable, but those who are spoilt by such blemishes as theft, bad conduct etc. are not respectable and gifts should not be given to them. As compared to such brāhmaṇas śūdras with their senses curbed were deemed respectable. Further, "a brāhmaṇa who is not a devotee of Viṣṇu should be known to be inferior to a cāṇḍāla, while a cāṇḍāla who is devoted to Viṣṇu should be known to be superior to a brāhmaṇa." The Purāṇa has even gone to the other extreme by declaring that Viṣṇu is a cāṇḍāla in the city of Puruṣottama (i.e. Jagannātha Purī) and so food offered by cāṇḍālas should be accepted by brāhmaṇas at that holy place. Incidentally, this city is said to be situated on the shore of the "Lavaṇa Sea in the west", which may be taken as showing that the author of this Purāṇa or of this Section (VII) at least was probably a native of Bengal or Assam. As regards śūdras, this much is certain that the social problems connected with this lowest stratum of the Hindu society were not as acute at the time of this Purāṇa as they became in the later and modern period, as is evident from the remark: "The wise ones should honour like Viṣṇu brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras who have come to their house."

—G.P. Bhatt

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ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)—Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, v—verse, vv—verses, Ftn—Footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo.—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S.M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F.E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series, MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch. S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Maṇḍal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, MLBD, Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgītā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha)
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka, Com. by Mahīdāsa
DB	*Devī Bhāgavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N.L. De, Oriental Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* by Hastings
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa*, ed. R.S. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P.V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇī*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradīya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣīya Prācīna Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd. P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R.C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Maṇḍal, Aundh
Śat. Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYSIX

Jarāsandha Defeated

Śrī Maheśvara said:

1-7. Then Vasudeva performed the thread ceremony of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa according to the Vedic rite. The preceptor Garga performed the ritual for Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. The very strong Rāma and Kṛṣṇa whose purificatory rites were performed by the learned devotees of Viṣṇu, with clean, auspicious baths, went to the house of Sāndīpani. Having saluted him, and having learnt the Vedic texts and the scriptures from that noble best brāhmaṇa, they brought (back to life) his dead son, and gave that as the fee. Having received words of blessing from that noble preceptor, the two best Yadus saluted him and went (back) to Mathurā. Then the very mighty Jarāsandha, the father-in-law of that king (i.e. Kaṁsa), having heard that the invincible Kaṁsa was killed by Kṛṣṇa, came with a very great army having a strength of thousands of akṣauhiṇīs[1] to kill Kṛṣṇa and besieged the city of Mathurā.

8-16. The very powerful Rāma and Kṛṣṇa went out of that excellent city, and saw the flood of his army abounding in elephants and horses. Kṛṣṇa recollected his former, eternal form. Just by means of its recollection, Dāruka, Viṣṇu's charioteer brought the great chariot named Sugrīvapuṣpaka which was ancient and was drawn by ancient horses like Divyapuṣpa, which was equipped with divine weapons like the conch, the disc, the mace etc., was decorated with the flag (having on it the figure) of Garuḍa and was unconquerable (even) for gods. Viṣṇu's charioteer, on reaching the earth, saluted Kṛṣṇa and presented to him the bright chariot, possessed of weapons and horses. Kṛṣṇa too, seeing the great chariot with joy, took himself round it, and being praised by the hosts of gods, got into it along with his elder brother. He, being one with a body having four hands, holding the conch, the disc, the mace, wearing a crown, ear-rings, garlands, proceeded to fight. The strong Balarāma also, taking a pestle and a plough, started killing that army like an-

1. One akaṣuhiṇī = 21870 chariots + 21870 elephants + 65610 horses + 109350 foot-soldiers.

other Maheśvara. Dāruka too quickly drove the chariot to the battlefield, as wind (drives) fire in a forest covered with clusters of grass and creepers.

17-24. Then Jarāsandha's soldiers covered that chariot with maces, iron bars, (missiles called) śakti, and hammers. Viṣṇu quickly and easily destroyed them with his disc only, as a great fire destroys many (blades of) grass and (pieces of) wood with its flame. Then taking the Śārṅga (bow) (Kṛṣṇa) destroyed those troops with sharp arrows. Nothing was known about (the massacre). Some very strong ones had their lotus-like faces cut off with the disc. In the great battle some were crushed with the mace; some with (some) other (weapon). Some were cut off with the sword; others were struck with arrows. The necks of some were struck with the tip of the plough; the heads of some were struck with the pestle. Having, in a moment, killed that entire army, the best of the Yadus, Kṛṣṇa, blew his conch, sounding like the sound of the destructive fire. The great warriors, with their hearts rent by the sound of the conch, fell dead along with horses and elephants. Kṛṣṇa alone killed that army consisting of a thousand akṣauhiṇīs along with horses, chariots and elephants. The army had none left in it.

25-32. In half a watch Kṛṣṇa, the holder of the Śārṅga (bow) killed the army. Then all the hosts of gods with their hearts full of joy, dropped showers of flowers, and shouted, "Well (done), Well done!" The supporter of the earth having shed (i.e. removed) the entire burden of the earth, and being praised by gods, shone on the battlefield. The very mighty, wicked Jarāsandha, seeing his army killed, came to fight with Balarāma. The fight between the two not retreating from fights was very fierce. The brave Rāma, taking his plough, knocked down his chariot along with the charioteer on the battlefield, and seizing the very strong one, raised the pestle and set out to kill him. Lord Kṛṣṇa seeing that the powerful Rāma had made Jarāsandha, the best king, face the peril to his life as a lion would do to a great elephant, said to his elder brother: "(Please) let him not be killed." The righteous, very intelligent one got Jarāsandha freed. The immutable Saṁkarṣaṇa freed his enemy at the words of Kṛṣṇa.

33-37. He, along with his younger brother (Sunāman) got into a chariot and entered Mathurā (? Magadha). Having approached Kālayavana, the powerful one, endowed with might, he told him about the valour of Vasudeva's sons. He narrated to him the destruction of the akaṣauhiṇīs, so also his own defeat and the great deeds of Kṛṣṇa. Hearing that the very powerful, angry (Kāla)Yavana, surrounded by thousands of crores of arrogant, very strong and brave mlecchas, went quickly to Mathurā for the help of the king of Magadha.

38-39. Having covered the earth with many countries with his troops, and having placed a large army (outside the city), he besieged the city of Mathurā. Kṛṣṇa too, thinking of the welfare of his citizens then asked the Ocean for (some) land for the people to reside (on).

40-46a. The Ocean gave Kṛṣṇa (a piece of land) having an expanse of thirty yojanas. In the water he created the Dvāravatī city. It had many palaces; its ramparts and arched doorways were golden. It was covered with rows of divine houses having (i.e. decked with) various jewels. It also had many charming gardens and lakes. The lotus-eyed (Kṛṣṇa) fashioned it like Indra's (city) Amarāvatī. Janārdana (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) suddenly, at night, lifted the people that were asleep there, and put them in Dvāravatī. When the people along with their sons and wives got up, they (found themselves) placed in golden mansions and (so) were much amazed. Surrounded by principal houses full of such objects of enjoyments as much wealth, corn, divine garments and ornaments, they stayed there as the hosts of gods (live) in heaven.

46b-52. Then the very powerful Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, the lords of themselves came out of Mathurā to fight with (Kāla)Yavana. Rāma, the great warrior, taking a plough and a pestle, being angry, killed the great army of the Yavanas in the battle. Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, strung the Śārṅga (bow) with arrows resembling flames of fire, and burnt the entire army of the mlecchas. Seeing his army killed, that mighty Kālayavana, the lord of Yavanas, fought with Kṛṣṇa, with a mace. Seeing that great havoc (done) by him for a long time, the lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa too, turning away from the battle, retreated. (Kālayavana) very

speedily followed him, saying, 'Wait, wait'. The very intelligent Kṛṣṇa speedily entered a cave. There the great sage, the king Mucukunda, was asleep.

53-55. Lord Kṛṣṇa remained invisible to the king. The great hero, Yavana also, raising his mace with his hand, and set out to kill Kṛṣṇa, entered that cave. Seeing the king that was asleep, and taking him to be Kṛṣṇa, Yavana struck the great sage Mucukunda with his foot. Then the revered great sage, Mucukunda, woke up.

56-60. He, with his eyes red through anger, made a *hum* sound. Due to his *hum* sound, so also due to looking at (Kāla-yavana) angrily, the Yavana was completely burnt, was reduced to ash and (thus) gave up his life. Then in front of the royal sage was seen Kṛṣṇa, who was dark like the petals of a blue lotus, whose eyes were like lotuses, who had the conch, the disc, the mace in his hands, and who had put on yellow garments. Seeing him of an unlimited lustre, the great sage suddenly got up and said, "Oh, great luck, great luck (to me)!" With his entire body horripilated, and (his eyes) full of tears of joy, he praising him with shouts of victory repeatedly saluted him (i.e. Kṛṣṇa).

Mucukunda said:

61-66. O highest lord, seeing (you) I am today fortunate; I am blessed. Today my existence is fruitful; my life is fruitful. Salutation to Vāsudeva, Jagannātha (the lord of the world), Śārṅgin (holder of the Śārṅga bow), to Dāmodara, to the god, the treasure of lustres. Salutation to Adhokṣaja, to Hari, who had taken up the form of Man-Lion. Salutation to you, to Rāghava, the lotus-eyed one. Salutation to Acyuta (unfallen), to (A-)Vikāra (changeless) and Ananta (unlimited). Salutation to you, to Govinda, Viṣṇu, Jiṣṇu (conqueror). Salutation to Nārāyaṇa, to the lord of Śrī, to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, to the highest soul. Salutation to you, to Mukunda, to you having four forms. Salutation to you, the highest well-being, to the highest soul. Salutation to Vāsudeva, to Śānta (the peaceful one), to the lord of the Yadus.

Maheśvara said:

67. Having thus praised Govinda, he repeatedly saluted him. The lord, who was pleased, said to Mucukunda, the great sage:

The lord said:

68-70. O royal sage, ask for the boon which is in your mind.

Maheśvara said:

He too asked for liberation free from rebirth. Then Kṛṣṇa gave him the divine ancient world. The very intelligent king also having given up the human form, obtained the same form as of the god, the highest soul. Having mounted upon Garuḍa, he reached the eternal position.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYSEVEN

Rukmiṇī's Abduction

Rudra said:

1-3. After the intelligent Mucukunda had killed Yavana, the descendant of Yadu gave him a boon, and went out (of the cave). Having heard that Yavana was killed, the very wicked Jarāsandha, surrounded by his army, fought with Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa killed the entire army of that wicked one. The lord of Magadha, having fainted, fell on the ground.

4-7a. The lord of Magadha, having regained consciousness after a long time, and being distressed by fear and his body afflicted by fear, could not fight with Rāma in the battle. With his remaining army and followers killed, he, turning away (from the battle) ran away. Taking the (two) Rāma and Kṛṣṇa as unconquerable, he gave up hostility against them and entered his own city. Then the two sons of Vasudeva, along with their army left the city of Mathurā and entered the city of Dvārikā.

7b-10a. Vāyu, sent by Indra, affectionately gave Kṛṣṇa the assembly(-hall) of gods, which was fashioned by Viśvakarman, was decorated with diamonds and lapis lazuli, graced with many seats, which shone with divine golden umbrellas, full of (i.e. decked with) various gems. The kings like Ugrasena along with the traders, on arriving at the charming assembly(-hall), were delighted as hosts of gods (are delighted) in heaven.

10b-12. The king named Raivata, born in the Ikṣvāku family, affectionately gave Rāma his daughter named Revatī who was endowed with all (auspicious) marks. That Rāma duly married that Revatī and amused himself with her as Indra with Śacī.

13-19. Bhīṣmaka, the king of Vidarbha, was pious and virtuous. He had good sons like Rukma. (Bhīṣmaka's) daughter, their youngest sister was Rukmiṇī, of an excellent complexion. She was born with a portion of Lakṣmī and had all auspicious marks. She was Sītā in (the lord's) existence as Rāma, and was Rukmiṇī in his birth as Kṛṣṇa. She accompanied Viṣṇu in his other incarnations also. In the Dvāpara (age) Hiraṇyaka and Hiraṇyākṣa were again born with the names Śiśupāla and Dantavaktra. The two very mighty and brave ones were born in the family of the Cedi (king). His son desired to give Rukmiṇī (in marriage) to Śiśupāla. The beautiful-faced (Rukmiṇī) did not want Śiśupala as her husband. She, of a firm vow, was attached to Viṣṇu from her childhood. That virgin Rukmiṇī, dedicated to Viṣṇu, always worshipped the deities and gave various presents (to brāhmaṇas).

20-21. Highly devoted to practising vows, and thinking of Viṣṇu, the lord of the soul, as her husband, she lived in her father's house. Through his intelligent son Rukmin, the best king tried to get her married to Śiśupāla.

22-23. Intending to have Kṛṣṇa as her husband, she sent a brāhmaṇa, the son of her family-priest (to Kṛṣṇa). He quickly went to Dvārakā. Having approached Kṛṣṇa and Rāma and being duly honoured by them, he told them in private what Rukmiṇī had said.

24-26. Having heard it, the two best among men, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, along with that intelligent brāhmaṇa, got into the chariot full of all weapons and missiles and moving (even) in the sky along with the noble Dāruka, quickly went to the (capital) city of Vidarbha. All kings, led by Jarāsandha, from all countries had come to witness the marriage(-ceremony) of the intelligent Śiśupāla.

27-30. At the time of the marriage, Rukmiṇī, having put on golden ornaments, went out of the city with her friends to worship Durgā. At that time only Devakī's son (Kṛṣṇa) reached

(there). The strong Kṛṣṇa seized her who was in her chariot. Suddenly putting her into his chariot he quickly came home. Then kings like Jarāsandha, full of anger, went along with prince Rukmin, to fight (with Kṛṣṇa). With their army having the four-fold division, the angry ones pursued Kṛṣṇa.

31-35. The powerful Balabhadra, having got down from his excellent chariot, took the plough and the pestle and in a moment struck the enemies. With force he struck the chariots, horses, great elephants and foot-soldiers also with his plough and pestle in the battle. Due to the fall of his plough the rows of chariots were pounded. The elephants also fell on the ground as mountains due to (the fall of) the thunderbolt (on them). The heads of all were broken; all vomitted blood profusely. At that time, in a moment, Balarāma struck down the army along with the horses, the elephants and the chariots in the great battle. On the battlefield there rivers of blood flowed on all sides.

36-42. All the kings that were routed, being tormented by fear, fled away. The powerful Rukmin, through anger, fought with Kṛṣṇa. Raising his bow, he struck Kṛṣṇa with volleys of arrows. Then Kṛṣṇa laughed and taking his Śārṅga (bow) struck with one arrow the horses of his chariot and the charioteer. The supporter of the earth rent his chariot, flag and banner. He, deprived of his chariot, stood on the ground. The powerful Kṛṣṇa cut off his sword with one arrow. Then raising his fist, he struck Kṛṣṇa on his chest. Kṛṣṇa binding him, seized him on the battlefield. Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), the killer of (the demon) Madhu, smiled, and taking an arrow with a sharp horse-shoe-shaped head, shaved his head and left him. He, full of grief, and hissing like a serpent, entered his own city and stayed there only.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYEIGHT

Rukmiṇī Formally Married to Kṛṣṇa

Rudra said:

1-6. Then getting into the divine chariot along with Rāma, Rukmiṇī and Dāruka, Kṛṣṇa speedily went home. Then having entered the city of Dvārakā, (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) the son of Devakī, married princess Rukmiṇī decorated with (ornaments of) gold according to the Vedic rite on an auspicious day and at an auspicious time. At the time of that marriage divine drums were sounded, and the best gods dropped showers of flowers. Vasudeva, Ugrasena, so also Akrūra, the best Yadu Balabhadra of a great lustre, so also other principal Yadus married Kṛṣṇa to Rukmiṇī with great pleasure. The cowherd Nanda came (there) with young cowherds and hosts of (other) cowherds. Yaśodā also came there with well-decorated ladies.

7-10. All the wives of Vasudeva led by Devakī, Revatī, queen Rohiṇī, and other ladies from the city performed all the marriage-rites with great joy. Devakī there affectionately honoured all gods. She got done the entire nuptial rite properly with (the help of) old ladies, and also a celebration through best brāhmaṇas. She fed the brāhmaṇas and kings like Ugrasena were well honoured with auspicious garments and ornaments.

11-14. Cowherds like Nanda, ladies like Yaśodā were honoured with many ornaments of gold and jewels and with garments. They were also delighted in that marriage-celebration. The couple together saluted Agni. The two were congratulated with blessings by principal brāhmaṇas knowing the Vedas. On that marriage-altar the bride and the bridegroom shone. The kṣatriya (viz. Kṛṣṇa), the son of Devakī, with his wife saluted old brāhmaṇas, so also his elder brother.

15-19. Kṛṣṇa, having thus completed the entire nuptial rite dismissed all kings that had come there. The best kings honoured by Kṛṣṇa proceeded (homewards). The very noble brāhmaṇas went to their respective abodes. The pious, immutable son of Devakī, quite happily lived in that divine mansion. He, being praised by sages and hosts of gods in heaven, amused himself

with her as Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī. The eternal Viṣṇu, with his mind pleased day by day lived in the very beautiful Dvāravatī.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYNINE

Kṛṣṇa's Other Marriages

Śrī Rudra said:

1-6. The glorious daughter of Satrājit, named Satyā, born with a portion of the Earth, was another wife of Kṛṣṇa. The glorious daughter of the Sun, named Kālindī, was his third wife. She had come up as a portion of Līlā. Kṛṣṇa married Vindānuvinda's daughter Mitravindā of a bright smile, who had stood for self-choice marriage. He whose eyes were large like lotus-leaves, having bound with one noose the seven maddened bulls, took her with the dowry of his valour. King Satrājit gave to his younger brother, the noble Prasena, a great jewel called 'Syamantaka'[1]. Sometime Kṛṣṇa asked for that excellent gem. Then Prasena violently said to Vāsudeva:

Prasena said:

7. This gem everyday produces eight bhāras of gold. There-

1. Syamantaka—A kind of gem said to yield eight bhāras of gold and to protect the owner from all kinds of dangers and portents. Satrājit, son of Nighna, got it from the Sun, and always wore it round his neck. He afterward gave it to his brother Prasena, from whom it passed into the hands of the monkey-chief Jāmbavat who got possession of it after having killed Prasena. Kṛṣṇa, however, overtook Jāmbavat and vanquished him in fight after a long struggle. The monkey-chief thereupon presented it along with his daughter to Kṛṣṇa; Kṛṣṇa then gave the jewel back to its proper owner Satrājit who out of gratitude presented it along with his daughter Satyabhāmā to him. Afterwards when Satyabhāmā was at her father's house with the jewel, Śatadhanvan at the instigation of a Yādava named Akrūra who desired the jewel for himself, killed Satrājit and gave it to Akrūra. Śatadhanvan was afterwards killed by Kṛṣṇa, but when he found that the jewel was with Akrūra he allowed him to retain it with himself after having once shown it to the people.

fore, this gem called Syamantaka is not to be given to anyone by me.

Mahādeva said:

8-12. Having understood his intention, Kṛṣṇa remained silent. Sometime with all the best Yadus like very powerful Prasena, Kṛṣṇa went ahunting, and entered a great forest. Many in thousands followed, each one to hunt beasts. Prasena alone went far in the great forest. A lion on seeing him approached him, killed him, and snatched the gem. The very mighty Jāmbavat also killed the lion, seized the gem and quickly entered a cave resorted to by the divine women. When the sun had set, Kṛṣṇa along with his followers, entered his own city on seeing the moon risen on the fourth day.

13-18. Then all the citizens said to one another about Kṛṣṇa: "Kṛṣṇa having killed Prasena in the forest under the pretext of hunting, has definitely taken the Syamantaka gem." Kṛṣṇa, having heard those words of the people of Dvārakā, went to a dense forest through the fear of ignorant people. He showed to all of them (Prasena) killed by a lion. Having proved his innocence and having placed a great army there only, Kṛṣṇa alone went to a dense forest with Śārṅga-bow and his mace in his hand. Seeing a great cave, Kṛṣṇa entered it with a doubt. In it, in a clean house brightened with various excellent jewels, a maid having placed Jāmbavat's son on a swing and sportively holding the (Syamantaka) gem on its top, was oscillating the swing and singing with joy:

19-25a. "A lion had killed Prasena. The lion was killed by Jāmbavat. O good boy, do not cry. This Syamantaka belongs to you (only)." Hearing it, the brave Kṛṣṇa blew his conch. Due to that great sound Jāmbavat came out to the place. Continuously for ten (days and) nights a fierce fight, with fists like the thunderbolt, and frightening all beings, took place between the two. Jāmbavat, seeing the increase in Kṛṣṇa's might, and decrease in his own, realised the former words of the Supreme Being. 'This is that Rāma that has again descended for the protection of Dharma. That my master has come to grant me (the object of) my desire.' Knowing like this the lord of the bears desisted from the fight, and with great amazement, he, with his palms joined,

asked Śrī Kṛṣṇa: "Who are you?" Kṛṣṇa, stopping fighting said with a grave voice:

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

25b-26 I am Vasudeva's son, called Vāsudeva. You very fearless, have taken away my gem called Syamantaka. Give it (back) to me quickly. Otherwise you will be killed.

Mahādeva said:

27. Hearing those (words), Jāmbavat was delighted. He saluted (Kṛṣṇa) by (prostrating himself before him) like a staff. Having taken himself round Kṛṣṇa, and saluting him, he spoke to him politely:

Jāmbavat said:

28-29. I am lucky, I am satisfied after seeing you, O lord. O you son of Devakī, I am your servant due to (my being your servant in) the former existence. O Govinda, you have given the battle desired before. O you lord of the world, mine of pity, eternal one, forgive me this battle that I had with you through delusion.

Mahādeva said:

30-36. Speaking like this, and bowing and repeatedly saluting the lord he politely seated him on a seat full of (i.e. decked with) many gems. He washed his feet resembling fresh lotuses with auspicious water; worshipped the descendant of Yadu with a (respectful offering called) madhuparka; properly honoured him with (i.e. by giving him) divine garments and ornaments; he gave him, of unlimited lustre, as his wife, his daughter endowed with beauty, named Jāmbavatī, a gem among girls. He also gave him the great gem called Syamantaka, along with other gems. Kṛṣṇa, the delighted killer of his enemies, having married the girl there only, affectionately gave that Jāmbavat final beatitude. Gladly taking that girl, his (i.e. Jāmbavat's) daughter, he went out of the cave and from it went to the city of Dvārakā. The best Yadu gave the gem called Syamantaka to Satrājit; and to that daughter (of Jāmbavat) also he gave an excellent gem.

37-47. They say that seeing the moon on the fourth of the

bright half of Bhādrapada (leads to) a false charge. Therefore, one should avoid it. If a man sees the moon on that fourth day (i.e. of the bright half of Bhādrapada), he is freed from the false charge by listening to the account of the Syamantaka. The three beautiful bright daughters of the king of Madra, viz., Sulakṣmaṇā, Nāgnajiti, and glorious Suśīlā, standing for self-choice marriage, chose Kṛṣṇa (as their husband). On one day the descendant of Yadu married them. All these, beginning with Rukmiṇī, were thus the eight queens of the noble one: Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā, Kālindī of a bright smile, Mitravindā, Jāmbavatī, Nāgnajiti, Sulakṣmaṇā and Suśīlā, of a slim body, said to be the eighth one. A very powerful demon, the Earth's son, named Naraka, having conquered in a battle, Indra, the lord of gods, and all (other) gods, forcibly took away the very bright ear-rings of Aditi, the mother of gods, so also the various gems of gods. So also (he took away) the Airāvata elephant of Indra and his horse Uccaiḥśravas; and rubies etc. of Kubera, and his treasures Śaṁkha[1] and Padma. The Earth's son also kidnapped the (divine) and the celestial nymphs; so also he forcibly took away the gods' weapons like the thunderbolt; and with them only, he, having struck the gods remaining in the heaven, lived in the assembly-hall fashioned by Maya in that city in the spotless sky.

48-58. Then all hosts of gods led by Indra and overcome by fear, sought the rufuge of Kṛṣṇa, non-tormenting (one). Kṛṣṇa too hearing all those acts of Naraka, granted exemption from fear to gods and thought of Garuḍa. At that moment the very powerful Garuḍa, saluted by all gods, stood with his palms joined in front of that Viṣṇu. Keśava (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), having mounted on the best bird along with Satyā, and being praised by the sages, went to the demon's abode. It was shining in the sky like the orb of the sun. It was full of many demons and had many divine ornaments. Kṛṣṇa saw that city difficult to be broken through even by gods. The powerful lord, having observed its covers, cut them off with his disc, as the sun (removes) the darkness. Then all the demons, having raised their lances, went, in hundreds and

1. Śaṁkha and Padma are two of the nine treasures of Kubera. The names of the nine treasures are: Mahāpadma, Padma, Śaṁkha, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Kunda, Nīla, and Kharva.

thousands to fight. Then with divine iron clubs, small javelins thrown with the hand, and good spears with a sharp edge they struck Keśava, as fire with straws. Then the eagle-bannered lord took his Śārṅga bow, and with arrows resembling the flames of fire, he cut off the divine weapons. The powerful Supreme Being cut off, with his disc only, their necks, elephants and speedy horses also. Some were cut off with the disc; others were struck with arrows.

59-65. In that battle some demons were struck with the mace. Thus all the demons were knocked down on the ground, as the mountains are pierced with thunderbolt discharged by Indra. The lotus-eyed Viṣṇu, having struck down all the demons, blew his great conch called Pāñcajanya. Then that brave Naraka, taking a bow and getting into a divine chariot came to fight with Keśava. The battle between the two was terrific, piercing and thrilling with many thousands of arrows like two showering clouds. Then the ancient, powerful son of Vasudeva cut off the bow of the chief of demons with a crescent-shaped arrow. He discharged a very divine missile on the great chest of Naraka. The great demon, with his chest pierced with it, fell on the ground roaring like a great mountain pierced by Indra with his thunderbolt.

66-68. Then Kṛṣṇa, having gone near the demon (lying) on the ground, and entreated by him, said to the demon: "Choose a boon." The demon said to Kṛṣṇa seated on Garuḍa: "I have nothing to do with a boon, though I am Naraka. For the good of other people I am asking for an excellent boon. O lord of the lord of all beings, O Madhusūdana, O you who remove the fear (of your devotees), those men who take an auspicious bath on the day of my death (will) not obtain (i.e. go to) hell."

Mahādeva said:

69-75. Lord Govinda gave him the boon: "Let it be so." Then actually seeing Viṣṇu's feet resembling the autumnal lotuses, and decorated with diamonds and lapis lazuli, honoured by Brahmā, Rudra etc., so also by (other) gods and sages, the Earth's son gave up his life and obtained absorption into Viṣṇu. Then all the hosts of gods, with their minds full of joy, dropped showers of flowers, and the great sages praised (him). The lotus-

eyed Kṛṣṇa entered his city. He gave to Indra, the wielder of the thunderbolt, the various gems of the gods forcibly snatched away by him, so also the ear-rings of the mother of gods, and the horse Uccaiḥśravas, the best elephant Airāvata and the blazing Maṇiparvata (literally, the mountain of gems). All this the best Yadu gave to Indra. The powerful Naraka had, after vanquishing kings from all countries, taken away sixteen thousand maidens.

76-80. All of them were then confined in the harem of Naraka. Seeing Kṛṣṇa of great might, and resembling a hundred Cupids, all of them chose him, the omnipresent lord of the universe, as their husband. At this time only Govinda, of endless forms, and the Supreme Being, duly took their hand (in marriage). All the sons of Naraka, led by the Earth, sought the shelter of Govinda. He, the treasure of pity, protected them. Due to (his giving) importance to the words of the Earth, he installed them all on his kingdom. He, putting all those excellent women into the aeroplane of Indra, took them to Dvāravatī through noble messengers of gods.

81-90. Having mounted upon Garuḍa, Keśava, along with Satyā quickly went to heaven to see the mother of gods. Janārdana, the very powerful one, having entered the city of the king of gods, got down from the best bird along with his wife. There he saluted the mother of gods fit to be saluted. Aditi, affectionate towards her son, embraced him with her arms, and having seated him on the chief seat honoured him devoutly. Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, led by Indra, then worshipped the highest god as he deserved. The glorious Satyabhāmā came to the house of Śacī. Honoured duly by her she sat on a comfortable seat. At that time, her servants, directed by Indra, affectionately gave her the flowers of the Pārijāta (trees). Taking those flowers that slender-waisted goddess Śacī tied them on her own dark, clean hair on her head, insulting the glorious Satyabhāmā. 'This human female does not deserve the auspicious flowers fit for gods.' Thinking like this, she did not give the flowers to her. Going out of the city, Satyā, full of anger, went to her husband Kṛṣṇa, and the lotus-eyed one said (to him):

Satyā said:

91. O Govinda, O best of the Yadus, this Śacī being proud

of the Pārijāta put (the flowers) on her own head without giving them to me.

Mahādeva said:

92-100. Having heard the words of Satyā, the very strong Vāsudeva, Devakī's son, uprooted the Pārijāta tree, put it on Garuḍa, and having quickly mounted, along with Satyā, on the strong one (i.e. Garuḍa), he went to the charming city of Dvārakā. Then Indra, the king of gods, full of anger, got on the Airāvata, and along with Rudras, Vasus, Ādityas, Sādhyas and hosts of Maruts went to fight with Keśava. Then all the hosts of gods, having surrounded Viṣṇu (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), dropped showers of weapons on him as clouds drop showers of water on a great mountain. With his disc Kṛṣṇa cut off those missiles of gods. The angry Garuḍa made the gods fall down with the movement of his wings as the wind makes the straws (to fall down). Then lord Indra, the master of the gods, suddenly discharged his blazing thunderbolt to kill Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa easily caught that thunderbolt with one hand. Then the frightened Indra, getting down from his best elephant (Airāvata), stood, with the palms of his hands joined, before (Kṛṣṇa) and having saluted him, and after praising him with hymns, said in a faltering tone:

Indra said:

101. O Kṛṣṇa, this Pārijāta (tree) fit for the gods was formerly given to me and the gods. (Now) how can it remain in the human (world)?

Mahādeva said:

102-107a. Then the lord said to Indra standing by him: "O lord of gods, in your house Satyā was insulted. Your dear wife Pulomajā, instead of giving the Pārijāta (flowers) to Satyā, wore them on her own head. For her (i.e. Satyā) I took away the Pārijāta (tree) to give it to her as promised, O lord of the hosts of gods. I shall place the Pārijāta (tree) in your house. Therefore, O lord of gods, let the Pārijāta be not given today. For the good of the deities I shall send the Pārijāta to the earth.

Let it remain in my house till then. O Indra, when I go to heaven take it (back) as you like."

Mahādeva said:

107b-111. Speaking like this, the best of the Yadus, gave the thunderbolt (back) to him. Saying, "Let it be so", that wielder of the thunderbolt (i.e. Indra), went, surrounded by hosts of gods, to his divine city. Kṛṣṇa too, having mounted, along with Satyā, Garuḍa, and being praised by sages, entered Dvāravatī. (Then that) omnipresent Viṣṇu, having placed that divine tree, Pārijāta, near Satyā, enjoyed with all wives. That glorious Viṣṇu, taking all forms, and giving happiness, lived in the abodes of all of them during nights.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTY

Aniruddha's Marriage

Śrī Rudra said:

1-3. On Rukmiṇī was born Pradyumna, Madana's (Cupid's) portion, from Kṛṣṇa. He, the very mighty one born of Cupid, killed Śambara. Aniruddha was born from him on Rukmin's daughter.

4-10. He too married Bāṇa's daughter by name Uṣā. In her dream she, aged sixteen, having enjoyed properly (Aniruddha), dark like the petals of a dark lotus, having lotus-like eyes, of large arms, wearing beautiful ornaments, got up. Not seeing him after being awake, she, tormented by passion of love, with her mind confused, saying "O you having a face like a red lotus, where are you going?" lamented in many ways. Then her friend, named Citralekhā, seeing the girl reduced to that condition, asked her, "Why is your mind confused?" She too told her about the husband obtained in her dream. She too drew the pictures of all the best human beings and gods on a piece of cloth and showed them to her. She even properly showed her (the pictures of) Kṛṣṇa, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha,

born in the Yadu family. Having approved out of the pictures that of Kṛṣṇa, she, seeing Aniruddha after Pradyumna, embraced it, saying: "This is he."

11-15. Then with many illusory demonesses Citralekhā at night went to Dvāravatī. She saw Aniruddha sleeping in the harem. She enticed him, seized him, and put him on the bed of Bāṇa's daughter in the harem of Bāṇa, full of many sanctuaries and mansions. He too became awake and on seeing Uṣā who lay on the soft couch, was marked with all (good) characteristics, adorned with beautiful ornaments, garments, sandal, flowers, who had a golden complexion, fine hair, well-developed breasts, embraced her who was full of love, and happily dallied with her. Old demonesses residing in the harem, having come to know about Aniruddha thus confined and continuously dallying (with Uṣā) for just a month, reported it to the king. The king, with his eyes red with anger, being very much amazed, sent the city-servants ordering them: "Bring him here". They too quickly went up the king's palace to arrest Aniruddha lying on the bed of the princess.

16-20. He, seeing them agitated, easily took out a pillar of the palace and in a very short time only smashed the servants numbering a million with the pillar. Then the lord of the demons, seeing his servants destroyed, became curious, and deciding 'This is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's grandson as told by the divine sage', he took his bow and himself came near Aniruddha to arrest him. Aniruddha too, seeing the king with a thousand arms having come to fight, whirling his iron club, hurled it at Bāṇa. He cut off that iron club with an arrow discharged from his bow. Then having tightly bound Aniruddha with the missile of serpent he placed him in his own harem.

21-25. Then Kṛṣṇa too, having learnt through the royal sage that it was just like that, mounted upon the best bird (i.e. Garuḍa), and along with Baladeva, Pradyumna and his army came to cut off the cluster of Bāṇa's arms. Formerly Bali's son (Bāṇa) had adored Śaṅkara. He had said to (Bāṇa): "Choose a boon." Bāṇa had asked for this boon from that lord: "Always be seated at the gate of my city for (its) protection, and kill the army of the enemy that might come there." Śaṁkara too, saying, "All right" to him, remained at the gate of his city with weapons,

his sons and attendants. Just at that time, seeing Kṛṣṇa to have angrily come along with his army, he got on his bull, and equipped with all weapons, and surrounded by his sons and attendants went out to fight (with Kṛṣṇa). Kṛṣṇa too seeing that lord of beings, who had held elephant's hide, a skull, who was decorated with blazing serpents, was tawny, had three eyes, had held the trident, was (capable of) destroying the entire host of beings, caused fear to all beings, resembled the fire of destruction, who was accompanied by his two sons, was surrounded by all his attendants, and who had destroyed Tripura, kept his army far behind, and accompanied by Balabhadra and Pradyumna started with a smile to fight with Rudra.

26-38. First a fierce (battle) took place between Kṛṣṇa and Śaṁkara, with arrows resembling the fire of destruction discharged from (Śaṁkara's bow called) Pināka and (Viṣṇu's bow called) Śārṅga. Rāma too had (a fight) with Bāṇa, and Pradyumna with Kārtikeya. The two great heroes fought like two haughty lions. Gajānana struck Yādava on his chest with his tusk. Rāma took a pestle and struck at his tusk. (Gajānana) having the rat as his vehicle, with his tusk broken, suddenly fled. Since then the lord of the attendants has his tusk broken in the world. He is called *Ekadanta* by gods, demons and gandharvas. (Kārtikeya) having the peacock as his vehicle fought with Pradyumna. Balarāma caused (Śiva's) attendants to run away. Śaṁkara, with his eyes very red, having fought with Kṛṣṇa for a very long time, put on his arrow a very blazing great fever, and discharged it. Kṛṣṇa by means of cold fever warded off that missile. The two fevers discharged by those two, Kṛṣṇa and Śiva, speedily entered the human world by their order. Those men who listen to (the account of) the battle between Kṛṣṇa and Śiva, are free from fever (or torment) and reach (Viṣṇu) the infallible one. Then that Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), putting the deluding weapon on his arrow, discharged it at Śiva. Deluded by that missile, he yawned again and again; and he, Śaṅkara, the lord of gods, fell down on the ground in a swoon. Seeing his father unconscious, the powerful Kārtikeya, Ṣaṇmukha (literally, having six faces), raised the (missile called) Śakti and went to fight with Kṛṣṇa. Merely by the 'hum' sound, Kṛṣṇa turned him away.

39-45. Having thus vanquished the three-eyed god Śiva,

having the trident in his hand, the brave and the best of the Yadus blew his loud-sounding conch. Hearing that Śaṁkara, along with his sons, was vanquished by Kṛṣṇa, Bāṇa, getting into a chariot, himself came to fight with Kṛṣṇa. Suddenly seeing Kṛṣṇa seated on Garuḍa, he covered him with showers of many weapons and missiles, with maces, iron bars, lances, (missiles called) Śakti, iron clubs, swords, and discs continuously. Kṛṣṇa cut them off with his disc only. He discharged his (disc) Sudarśana to cut off his arms. The Sudarśana having a thousand spokes discharged at the king of demons quickly cut off the forest (i.e. the large number) of his arms in a thousand ways. In the meanwhile, O goddess, Pārvatī who had fulfilled her vow, came near Kṛṣṇa, and with the palms of her hands joined, said:

Pārvatī said:

46-49. O Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, O lord of the world, O Nārāyaṇa, O treasure of compassion, O best of the Yadus, O lord of gods, I was your female servant in a former existence. At that time you, the pleased noble one, had granted me a boon about the perpetual state of having my husband living, O gentle one. O lord, the sages have declared that one principal name of your thousand names has given good fortune to Gaurī. O Govinda, O eternal one mounted on Garuḍa, make it true. Therefore, please give life to my husband.

Rudra said:

50-51. Thus addressed by the goddess the lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa withdrew the missile with which her husband was made unconscious. Freed from the missile of Kṛṣṇa, Śiva, the lord of all beings, got up and joining the palms of his hands, praised the lord of the worlds.

Śaṅkara said:

52-56. O Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa, O lord of the world, O Supreme Being, O highest god, O highest lord, O you without a beginning and an end, O you immutable one, in the human beings there is a strong power. The action of taking up a body is due to you. It is the sign of honour. Be pleased with me. Salutation to you. O eternal one, be pleased with me. O lord of the world, favour me.

Be gracious to me, O Acyuta, Keśava. You are the creator, the supporter, the destroyer of the worlds. You are the father of the worlds. O lord of gods, you alone are the Brahman of the nature of intelligence and the lack of it. You are the origin. You are without an origin. You are the lord and Śeṣa also. You are Mahat; you are the highest Brahman; you alone are the individual soul.

57-61. O best of all gods, you are immortal; O lord of gods you are the lord of the mortals. Due to your extremely good character you have an origin. The two eternal highest souls have come up from your breath. So also the five elements (have come up from you) due to your great affection. You put yourself in the work of service (i.e. as a servant) in the perishable and the imperishable, in the highest abode resorted to by gods and the place of lustre, and in the universe. This is not otherwise. He who does not know you in the world, is a fool. You are the cause of everything. The wise ones know the abode of the lord of the low and high (to be good) for service (*obscure*!). They, the diligent ones rest at the position equal to the gods. The common man remains away to bow down to your eternal position.

62-69. That fourth stage (Turyā: the state of liberation of the soul) of charming rays of light is possible in your case. O you eternal superintendent, the couples talk about you. These best ones, O you beyond qualities, narrate your names, deeds, eternal qualities and grandeurs. O Keśava, in the former and latter learning full of action and knowledge, the two, along with their sons are singing the praise of you, the lord of young ladies (*obscure*!). You are wisdom; you are the highest Brahman; with your great knowledge only, O eternal one, you yourself, the wise one, give (him) life. Due to your grace only, he who knows the soul, obtains, in this world and the highest heaven, wisdom, proficiency, intellect, perception, so also courage, and all desired objects. Then he would be immortal. The self having this name is the heart. O lord, these ten are the names of the Wisdom, the treasure of compassion: (Ātman, Hṛd=heart,) mind, desire, reasoning, recollection, volition, penance, sacrifices, and love.

70-80. This you are the highest Brahman; this you are the creator. This you are Indra, Rudra, and all the deities. O highest lord, you are all these beings—sons, friends, (other forms) of

existence and others also, O eternal one. The viviparous, the oviparous, the beings generated by sweet sweat, plants, horses, cows, men, elephants and others, so whatever being there is, so also the movable beings, so also the immobile (objects)—all have sprung from you (only). The sacred texts describe you, Viṣṇu, as omnipresent. The people, impelled by you only act towards good or bad (things). Therefore, O ocean of pity, forgive by means of your most auspicious qualities this offence that I have committed. Salutation to you, O you lotus-eyed one, Govinda, Acyuta, Mādhava, Vāsudeva. O you fit to be saluted by the world, O Nārāyaṇa, salutation to you. O lord of the worlds, O Nṛsiṁha, O mine of pity, O lord of Lakṣmī, O omnipresent one, O glorious one, O highest soul, salutation to you. O lord, O you always worshipped by the liberated (souls) having Vaikuṇṭha as their dwelling place, O you lord of the three (Vedas), O Rāma, O you having lotus-like eyes, salutation to you. O you descendant of Yadu, salutation to you who destroy those that are a burden to the earth, who are of the form of Kṛṣṇa's mirth, who are Viṣṇu, who are Jiṣṇu (the conqueror).

Having thus praised and saluted Govinda, the lord of Umā, the lord of beings, having, joined the palms of his hands, spoke in a grave voice:

Rudra said:

81-90. O lord, this Bāṇa, Bali's son, is granted a boon by me. Formerly I had given him a boon that he had asked for, viz. immortality, O best of the Yadus. You deserve to do everything. Therefore, please protect this Bali's son, dear to me.

Saying "All right", the lord, Govinda, the ocean of compassion, withdrawing his disc, freed Bāṇa, Bali's son, who ran the risk to his life, had his arms cut off, and was covered with blood. Śaṁkara, the lord who had fulfilled his vow, after having freed Bali's son, having along with Pārvatī mounted the best bull (Nandin), went to his abode, the Kailāsa mountain. That Bāṇa, having saluted the very powerful Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, went with them to (his) city and freed (Aniruddha) Madana's son. Having honoured them, as they deserved, with divine garments and

ornaments, he gave Uṣā (in marriage) to Śauri, Kṛṣṇa's grandson. Then Rāma and Kṛṣṇa got Aniruddha duly married. They, along with Pradyumna, were then worshipped by Bāṇa. Then Kṛṣṇa, having placed Aniruddha with Uṣā in a divine chariot, went to Dvāravatī. Like Indra with the gods, Rāma with Pradyumna, and Kṛṣṇa with the army, entered the charming city. Aniruddha, full of joy, enjoyed day and night many pleasures in the company of Bāṇa's daughter in a house full of many jewels.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYONE

Destruction of Pauṇḍraka's Son

Śrī Rudra said:

1-6. Then Pauṇḍraka Vāsudeva, king of Kāśī, fasted in a solitary place, and worshipping Maheśa for twelve years, muttered the five-syllabled formula. At the time of the repetition of the name of the deity he worshipped Śaṁkara with (i.e. by offering) his own lotus-like eye. Then the lord of Umā having the trident in his hand, being pleased, said to him: "Choose a boon". Then he said to Śiva who had five faces, is the lord of all beings, and was pleased: "O giver of boons, give me a form similar to that of Vāsudeva (Kṛṣṇa)." Śiva (gave) him (a form with) four arms with a disc, a conch, a mace and a lotus (held in them), having eyes like lotus-petals, having charming hair with a crown (on it) resembling that of Vāsudeva. Solicited by him as "Give me also the marks like a yellow garment, and ornaments like the Kaustubha", Śiva also gave him all that. He enticed all people, saying, "I am Vāsudeva".

7-9. Sometime Nārada, having come from heaven to that king of Kāśī, who was haughty with pride and power, said: "You cannot have the status of Vāsudeva without conquering Vasudeva's son." That moment only he, having put himself into a chariot with Garuḍa-banner, reached Dvārakā with the army of four divisions, (numbering) an akṣauhiṇī. There he sent a messenger (to Kṛṣṇa to tell him) "I, Vāsudeva standing in a golden

carriage at the gate of the city, have come to fight (with you). Without conquering me you cannot have the status of Vāsudeva."

10-14. Viṣṇu (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) too, having heard it, mounted upon Garuḍa and on coming out to fight with Pauṇḍraka, saw at the gate Pauṇḍraka with an army (numbering) an akṣauhiṇī, and seated in a chariot, and having a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus in his hands. Kṛṣṇa took the Śārṅga (bow) and in a short time only completely destroyed that army (numbering) an akṣauhiṇī, consisting of horses, elephants and foot-soldiers with arrows resembling the fire of destruction in brightness. And with one arrow he easily chopped off the weapons in his hands like the conch, disc, mace etc. Having cut off his lotus-like head (adorned) with a crown, by means of his pure Sudarśana (disc), he caused it to fall into the harem in (the city of) Vārāṇasī. Seeing it all the residents of Kāśī, fearing 'What is this?' were amazed.

15-17. Daṇḍapāṇi, Pauṇḍraka's son, having heard that his father was killed by lord Vāsudeva, and directed by his mother, (as if) by Death, and told by his priest, offered a sacrifice, called Māheśvara, to Śaṅkara. He, being pleased, affectionately gave him a Kṛtyā (a female deity capable of destruction and proficient in magic) belonging to Maheśvara and capable of killing Kṛṣṇa. That Kāśī king, seeing that Kṛtyā of Maheśvara, that had a body full of a group of flames, had a blazing mass of hair, had tawny eyes, whose face was blazing and fierce, that had a trident in her hand, whose body was smeared with ash, who was adorned with the string of human heads, that caused fear to all gods, was presented by Rudra, impelled her to kill Kṛṣṇa along with his sons, wives and relations.

18-19. And she causing fear to the entire world, burning with her lustre the whole earth, and roaring with a sound strong like the fire at the time of deluge reached Dvārakā. All people staying there saw her and thinking it to be a great deluge, and wailing aloud, reported it to Kṛṣṇa.

20-24. Kṛṣṇa too told all of them not to fear, and seeing that very fierce Kṛtyā standing like that at the portal of the rampart, suddenly discharged that Sudarśana of a thousand spokes, capable of keeping off all weapons and missiles at the Kṛtyā. She, with lustre resembling that of a crore of suns at the time of the

end of a kalpa, seeing that great Sudarśana, going up a hundred yojanas, possessed of a thousand blazing weapons, made of gold, full of lustre, capable of making the entire world reduced to a condition at the time of deluge, saluted by all gods, the refuge of the entire world, lost her lustre, was overcome by fear, and crying (aloud) she ran to Vārāṇasī. Sudarśana too closely pursued her. She too, overcome by fear and crying entered that city of the king of Kāśī. Sudarśana also, reaching the city of Vārāṇasī, reducing to ash Pauṇḍraka's son, Daṇḍapāṇi, along with servants and army and elephants, so also the city of Maheśvara having many palaces and mansions, and being worshipped by all gods and great sages, again reached Kṛṣṇa's hand which was very soft, like a kalpa (sacred precept?). And about this the (following) verses are sung:

25-28. Having burnt with vigour that army discharging weapons and missiles and never decaying, reducing to ash the Kṛtyā, then the city of Vārāṇasī which had many chariots and elephants, and along with horses and men and women, and all stores and granaries, which was difficult to be seen even by gods, the houses, ramparts and courtyards of which were marked with doors, that disc of Viṣṇu burnt the entire city only. That disc, with its power of movement unexhausted, having accomplished what cannot be accomplished, with its lustre blazing, came to Viṣṇu's hand.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYTWO

Kṛṣṇa Goes Back to His Abode

Śrī Rudra said:

1-3. After the killing of Kaṁsa, the king of Magadha, hating Yādavas, always troubled them. They, being afflicted, told (about it) to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa called Bhīma and Arjuna and consulted them: "He has worshipped Rudra. Due to his favour he cannot be killed with weapons. But somehow he must be kil-

led." Then having thought he said to Bhīma: "Wrestle with him." He promised to do so.

4-8. Then Vāsudeva, fit to be saluted by all the mobile and immobile world, went along with Bhīma and Arjuna in the guise of a brāhmaṇa to his city and reached his harem. He too having vanquished in battle very powerful kṣatriyas and having confined them, killed one of them every month and with his blood only made an offering to Bhairava. Thus exerting to kill Jarāsandha who had killed many men and kings, he along with Bhīma and Arjuna entered his house in the guise of a brāhmaṇa. He, seeing them, saluted them (by prostrating himself) like a staff, seated them on proper seats, worshipped them with madhuparka, and said to them: "I am fortunate; I am blessed. Why have you approached me? Tell it to me. I shall give all that to you." Out of them Vāsudeva, smiling, said to the king: "We Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma, and Arjuna have come to fight with you. Choose one of us for a duel."

9-12. He too said, "All right." Then he chose Bhīma for the duel. Then a fierce, continuous duel took place between Bhīma and Jarāsandha (lasting for) twenty-five days. Then prompted by Kṛṣṇa only (Bhīma) the son of Vāyu, split his (i.e. Jarāsandha's) body into two, and dropped it on the ground. Thus Kṛṣṇa, getting Jarāsandha killed by Pāṇḍu's son (Bhīma), freed the kings confined by Jarāsandha. (Kṛṣṇa) the descendant of Yadu, getting Jarāsandha killed by (Bhīma) Vāyu's son, freed the kings confined in his house.

13-20. All those, protected by Kṛṣṇa, having saluted and praised Kṛṣṇa, went to their respective countries. Then, going to Indraprastha with the two (i.e. Bhīma and Arjuna), Kṛṣṇa made Yudhiṣṭhira perform the Rājasūya sacrifice. There, after the sacrifice was over, the chief honour was given to Kṛṣṇa with the consent of Bhīṣma. There Śiśupāla spoke many abusive words to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa too cut off his head with the Sudarśana (disc). He, after three existences, was assimilated into Viṣṇu. Having heard that Śiśupāla was killed, Dantavaktra came to Mathurā to fight with Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa, having learnt about it, got into his chariot, and came to Mathurā.

21-24. On the bank of Yamunā, at the gate of Mathurā, a fight lasting a day and night took place between Dantavaktra and

Kṛṣṇa; and Kṛṣṇa killed him with (his) mace. He with his entire body smashed dropped dead on the ground like a mountain broken through with the thunderbolt. He too obtained the eternal, highest position, the absorption into Viṣṇu, obtainable by the meditating saints. Thus Jaya and Vijaya, under the pretext of the curse of Sanaka and others, descended into the mundane existence merely for the sport of the lord, and in the three existences they were killed by him alone. They obtained liberation at the end of three existences.

25. Kṛṣṇa also, having killed him (i.e. Śiśupāla), having crossed Yamunā, having gone to Nanda-vraja, having saluted his old parents, and having consoled them and embraced by them with their throats (choked) with tears, having embraced all old cowherds, having cheered them up with gems, ornaments, etc. gratified the residents there.

26-30. On the charming sandy bank of Yamunā, covered with auspicious trees, Kṛṣṇa incessantly sported with the cowherdesses. Viṣṇu, dressed as a cowherd, lived here for a couple of months with (i.e. enjoying) pleasure of charming sport and steady love. Then all the cowherds like Nanda, all people along with their sons and wives, beasts, birds, and animals took up a divine form due to Kṛṣṇa's favour, got into an aeroplane, and reached the highest world of Viṣṇu. Kṛṣṇa, having given all the residents of Nanda-vraja his own pure, highest position, and being praised in heaven by hosts of gods, entered the glorious Dvārakā. There, he taking up an omnipresent form, and along with Vasudeva, Ugrasena, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Akrūra etc., and everyday worshipped by his sixteen thousand wives and his eight divine queens, enjoyed on very soft beds graced with flowers in many mansions.

31-35. Then a fellow religious student of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, a brāhmaṇa, their friend from childhood, very much oppressed by poverty, came, after having tied a handful of rice parched and flattened, obtained by begging, in an old piece of cloth, to the glorious city of Dvārakā to see Kṛṣṇa. He stood silent for a moment at the door of Rukmiṇī's harem. Kṛṣṇa too, knowing that a brāhmaṇa had come, went forth to greet him; and having saluted him and held him by his hand, seated him on an excellent seat in his house, and worshipped him who was trembling with fear with madhuparka after washing his feet with the water from

a golden pitcher in the hands of Rukmiṇī. Having gratified him with food, drink etc. resembling nectar, he himself took with his hand the parched and flattened rice that he had obtained by begging, and ate it with a smile. The moment Kṛṣṇa ate the parched and flattened rice, he had great affluence due to much wealth, corn, (many) garments and ornaments.

36-39. Dismissed by Kṛṣṇa, he, thinking that Kṛṣṇa did not give him a small piece of cloth, or wealth, entered his own city. Then seeing his own house full of much wealth and corn, he said: "Due to his favour I have got this." With his mind delighted by means of the divine garments and ornaments, he, along with his wife, enjoyed all pleasures, performed many sacrifices to please Viṣṇu, and due to his favour got the happiness of heaven. Then Dhṛtarāṣṭra's son Duryodhana, (having deceived) Pāṇḍu's sons under the pretext of gambling that was deceitful, took away their kingdom, and expelled them from his country. Those—Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva—along with their good wife Draupadī, went to a great forest. Having lived there for twelve years, and (having lived) *incognito* for a year, all of them lived in the house of Virāṭa, the king of Matsya (country); and came, with Kṛṣṇa's help to fight with the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

40-43. There took place a great war, causing fear even to gods, between the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and of Pāṇḍu at the very holy Kurukṣetra. Then Śrīkṛṣṇa also, acting as the charioteer of Arjuna, put his power into Arjuna, and getting all kings led by Bhīṣma, Droṇa etc. and along with an army consisting of eleven akṣauhiṇīs killed by him, he put the Pāṇḍavas on the kingdom (i.e. the throne). And having completely removed the burden of the earth, he entered his own city. After some time, on some day, a brāhmaṇa brought his five-year old dead son, and putting him at the gate of the palace, lamenting much, spoke many words of censure to Kṛṣṇa. Hearing that imprecation, Kṛṣṇa remained silent.

44-48. He (i.e. the brāhmaṇa) said: "My five sons have been formerly killed. This is the sixth one. If Kṛṣṇa does not bring him back to life, I shall die at the royal gate." At that time Arjuna had come to see Kṛṣṇa. He saw him lamenting like that due to the grief (caused by the loss) of his son. Arjuna too, seeing the five-year old boy dead, was full of pity, and granting the

brāhmaṇa protection, promised him: "I shall bring your son back to life." The brāhmaṇa, thus cheered up by him, was delighted. Then having consecrated the brāhmaṇā-child with life-restoring missiles, seeing him not regaining life, and finding himself of a futile promise, he, full of great grief, desired to give up his life with that only.

49-53. And Kṛṣṇa, knowing all that, came out of his harem, and said to that brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Vedas: "I shall give (you back) all your sons." Having cheered him, mounting upon Garuḍa, he, along with Arjuna came to Viṣṇu's world. Seeing Viṣṇu, along with the goddess (Lakṣmī) there, in a part of the jewelled pavilion, Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna saluted him. He embraced them with his arms, and asked them why they had come (there). Kṛṣṇa said: "O revered one, give me the sons of the brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Vedas." Then that Nārāyaṇa gave Kṛṣṇa those sons of the brāhmaṇa, who were of that age.

54-57. Srī Kṛṣṇa too, putting them on the shoulders of Garuḍa, and being full of joy, himself also mounted upon Garuḍa, and being praised by groups of gods, entered Dvāravatī. To that brāhmaṇa he gave the six sons aged five. He (i.e. the brāhmaṇa) too, extremely joyful, gave a blessing to Kṛṣṇa: "May you prosper." And Arjuna having had his promise fulfilled, saluted Kṛṣṇa and went to his own city protected by Yudhiṣṭhira. A myriad thousand sons were born to the sixteen thousand wives of Kṛṣṇa. It is not possible to tell the number of their sons and grandsons. Here (i.e. with regard to this) also there is a verse:

58-62. There were eight hundred thousands and a myriad of sons. Of all of them, Pradyumna, Rukmiṇī's son was the first. This earth was covered with those innumerable Yādavas. Fearing a burden to the earth again, Kṛṣṇa desired to destroy them under the pretext of a sage's curse. Sometime all the young boys came to sport in Narmadā. There, seeing the great sage Kaṇva practising austerity, they made Jāmbavatī's son put on the dress of a woman, and tying an iron pestle to his belly, they approached the sage, and placing Sāmba's son in the guise of a wife (husband?), said to him: "Tell us whether in (i.e. from) her womb a female or a male would be born."

63-67. He, knowing it mentally, and not tolerating it, said to them all: "Be killed with this pestle." All, with their minds

dejected, approached Kṛṣṇa, and reported to him what the sage had said, and that act (of them). Kṛṣṇa too threw the pounded iron pestle into a pool. From the seed of the iron (pestle) reduced to powder great kāśa (grass) resembling the thunderbolt came up. A fish ate a portion of the pestle, of the size of the small finger. A fisherman, catching that fish, took the piece of the pestle lying in the belly of the fish and fashioned (out of it) the point at the end of an arrow.

68-71. Sometime all the Yādavas like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Pradyumna became intoxicated after drinking the spirituous liquor sent by Indra. They took to fighting with one another, and shouting loud words fought (among themselves) and perished. Kṛṣṇa, tired of fighting, slept in the shade of a desire-yielding tree. A hunter, taking a bow and an arrow, took to hunting. Thus they who had fully abandoned their lives, went to their respective gods.

72-74. Having thus destroyed everything with the pestle, the god himself slept in the shade of a great tree surrounded by many clumps of trees. Thinking about himself of the nature of Vāsudeva having four forms, and putting (one) foot on (another) knee, he sat (there) to abandon his human form. In the meanwhile, the hunter, due to the urging of Death, saw Hari's very red foot marked with a disc, a vajra, a banner, a goad etc., and pierced it. Then recognising him to be Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and struck by great fear and trembling he joined the palms of his hands and saluted him (saying), "Remove all my faults."

75-77. Śrī Kṛṣṇa seeing him in that condition, made him rise with his hands full of nectar, and said to him (words) consoling him who was oppressed by great fear: "You have not committed a fault." Then he granted him the world of Viṣṇu, which is accessible to the meditating saints (only), from which there is no return, which is eternal and full of all secret things. He gave up his human form just at that moment only; and along with all his sons and wives got into a bright, divine aeroplane and went to Viṣṇu's world which resembled a thousand suns in brightness, was crowded with hosts of celestial nymphs and was golden, and which had Viṣṇu in it.

78-83. At that time, Dāruka getting into a chariot, approached Viṣṇu. Kṛṣṇa too sent him (back, telling him), "First bring

Arjuna of my nature." He, getting into a chariot having the mind's speed, came near Arjuna. O goddess, in the meanwhile Arjuna got into it, went round (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), saluted him, and with the palms of his hands joined said: "What do (i.e. should) I do?" And Kṛṣṇa said to him: "O Pārtha, I shall go to my own world. Going to Dvāravatī and bringing (my) eight wives like Rukmiṇī staying there, send them into my body." With Dāruka he came to the city.

84-86. In the meanwhile, gods seated in their aeroplanes and remaining in the sky, saw Kṛṣṇa going to heaven; and along with the sages praised him and dropped on him showers of flowers. Kṛṣṇa too gave up his human body, took up the body of the form of Vāsudeva, which was the cause of the maintenance and destruction of the entire world, which was all the individual souls, which was meditated upon by meditating saints checking their internal feelings, mounted upon Garuḍa, and being praised by great sages, went (to Vaikuṇṭha). Arjuna told it to all the queens like Rukmiṇī, along with Vasudeva and Ugrasena.

87-90. Hearing that all citizens and ladies abandoned Dvāravatī and all those ladies dear to Kṛṣṇa, went out of the harem, and along with Vasudeva and Ugrasena quickly approached Hari. All those old Yādavas like Vasudeva, Ugrasena and Akrūra, abandoned their bodies and came to the eternal Vāsudeva. Revatī also embraced Balabhadra's body and entered fire. Having obtained a (divine) body in it, she got into a divine aeroplane and went to the divine world of Saṁkarṣaṇa, the place of her husband. In the same way Rukmaputrī with Pradyumna, Uṣā with Aniruddha and all Yādava ladies honoured the bodies of their husbands and entered fire.

91-94. Arjuna performed the obsequies of all of them. At that time Dāruka also, getting into the divine chariot called Sugrīva, yoked with divine horses and full of all gems, came (there). The Pārijāta tree and the assembly of gods also came to the world of the lord of gods. At that time the city of Dvāravatī submergd in the great ocean.

95-97. Then the enemies of gods seized all the sixteen thousand wives (of Śrī Kṛṣṇa) going to Indraprastha along with Arjuna. Formerly the wives of gods and gandharvas had laughed at the great sage Aṣṭāvakra after seeing him. He cursed them:

"You will be prostitutes." Then he was propitiated and honoured by them. Due to his grace they, even after obtaining Vāsudeva saluted by all the worlds, as their husband, got into the hands of the enemies of gods due to that (curse) only. Arjuna too, vanquished by the enemies of gods was overcome by grief. He thought: "The strength of my arms and all my glory have gone away with Kṛṣṇa." And saying (to himself): "Today my fortune has perished", he, with his lustre entirely perished like that of the evening sun, came to his own city.

98. Thus, for the good of all gods, for destroying the burden of the entire earth, Vāsudeva descended into the Yadu-family. He destroyed all demons and removed a great burden of the earth. He freed all the residents of Nandavraja, Dvārakā and Mathurā and all the mobile and immobile from the bonds of death and mundane existence, and settled them in (Vaikuṇṭha) which is full of great splendour, is eternal, which is accessible (only) to the meditating saints, is golden, charming and pure, and always being waited upon by divine queens etc. he lived (in Vaikuṇṭha). In this connection there are these verses:

99-107. There might be all other incarnations. (But) the deeds of Kṛṣṇa are great. The lord of Ramā appeared for destroying those who caused burden to the earth. These deeds of Kṛṣṇa were for destroying the wicked. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the ocean of pity, always delights in Vaikuṇṭha. O goddess, these auspicious deeds of Kṛṣṇa are very wonderful. I told them to you in brief. They give all fruits. He who would recite, remember or listen to this life(-account) of Vāsudeva with devotion near (the image of) Hari, goes to the highest position. Even he who has (committed) major sins or minor sins, is freed after listening to the deeds of young Kṛṣṇa. He who remembers Hari seated with Rukmiṇī in Dvāravatī, undoubtedly acquires great power. He, after meditating upon him, the leader of all gods, while in a battle, a danger, a difficulty or while surrounded by his enemy, would be highly successful. He who would remember him sporting with the young cowherdesses in the auspicious Govraja, gets all the desired (objects) and also good fortune. So also he who, suffering from great misfortune and diseases etc., would remember the eternal one, the vanquisher of the very fierce Kṛtyā living in the city of Kāśī (would be happy).

108-115. O you desiring the fruits of all times, what is the use of speaking much in this regard? A wise man should only utter the formula: 'Salutation to Kṛṣṇa'. 'Repeated salutations to Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva, Hari, the highest soul. I, bowing down repeatedly salute Govinda for the destruction of my affliction.' O goddess, a man should, everyday, with devotion, mutter this formula. Being free from all sins, he would obtain Viṣṇu's world. This lord Janārdana assumes different form(s) for the protection of all gods and of the worlds. I, with a desire to kill Tripura, worshipped Viṣṇu. The glorious one, taking up the form of Buddha, deluded his enemies. Those who were deluded by that teaching gave up all religious practices. (These) enemies of gods were killed by me with Viṣṇu's missile. Viṣṇu, descending in a brāhmaṇa's house at the end of Kali, will kill all the cruel Mlecchas. I have described along with all those appearances, all the forms of the lord of the world. O you of an auspicious face, what else do you want to listen to? I shall narrate it.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYTHREE

Modes of Viṣṇu's Worship

Śrī Pārvatī said:

1-3. O venerable one, you have told me the very wonderful acts of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa in this (narration) of Kṛṣṇa's (deeds) in the state of grandeur. Oh, my heart, listening to the nectar of the tale of Hari—the acts of the noble Rāma and Kṛṣṇa—is not satisfied even for crores of kalpas, O lord of good, O lord of beings. Now I desire to listen to the excellent (account of the) greatness of Viṣṇu. O god, I also desire to hear about the manner of his worship.

Śrī Rudra said:

4-9. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you (the account) of the very noble Viṣṇu. The installation (of his idol) and his self-manifestation—these are the two aspects which it consists of. The

installation with (the accompaniment of) the rites as told in the Śrauta and Smārta texts, of the representation of Viṣṇu of a stone, clay, wood, iron etc., is said to be *Sthāpana.* Listen (as) I (tell you) to that which is called self-manifestation. That representation of Viṣṇu of stone or wood in which the lord of souls has placed himself for men is said to be self-manifest on the earth. One should worship Viṣṇu (whose representation is) either self-manifest or installed. Keśava, the lord of the world, the eternal one, himself approaches (the deities and the great sages) for their worship. Just that which was to be enjoyed in a (particular) body became manifest. One should always worship that only and take delight in that only.

10-16. Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, should be properly worshipped. Due to the penance of the Ikṣvāku lords, he himself appeared on the earth. That Mādhava, removing sins, is to be worshipped by me at Kāśī. I settling myself properly take delight in the charming house, after visiting it, where the old one is self-manifest. The lord of sacrifices is not obtained by men by means of Yoga of eight constituents, but in worship. Being the object of the eyes he gives the desired boon. Men easily attain him in (i.e. by means of) worship in all conditions. In the very meritorious, auspicious country of Bhārata, in Jambūdvīpa, on the earth, he is always present near even the ignorant. Viṣṇu is always near in a worship and never in other (modes of reaching him). Therefore, in the country Bhārata, he is, O goddess, always waited upon by sages and even by gods with rites like penance, sacrifice etc. In this country of Bhārata Viṣṇu is always near.

17-21. One should get rid of sin by purifying (oneself) at the Indradyumna (lake), Kaurmya, the Siṁha mountain, Karavīra, Kāśī, Prayāga or (the division of Bhārata called) Saumya, or the Śālagrāma mountain, Dvāravatī, Naimiṣa (forest), so also in Badarikāśrama, Pauṇḍarika and Daṇḍaka (forest), Mathurā, Veṅkaṭa-giri, Śveta mountain, Garuḍa mountain, Kāñcī, Anantaśayana, Śrīraṅga, Vāsava mountain, Nārāyaṇa mountain, Saumya, Varāha, Vāmanāśrama. These and others are self-manifest, and give all desired fruits. The good sages say that in that in which Viṣṇu himself is near, he is self-manifest.

22-26. The best among the great devotees of Viṣṇu should install the (idol of) Keśava according to the precept, and should

bring about his proximity by (muttering) a (sacred) formula. That installation is excellent. He should worship the god (installed) in it in villages and houses. The good recommend the worship in the house on a Śālagrāma stone. Praising, repeating the formula, sacrifice, abstract meditation on the magnanimous one, repeating his name, serving him, being marked with his signs (like the disc etc.) would be his worship. O auspicious one, it is divided into nine kinds. For a brāhmaṇa doing every act for him, is always laid down. A brāhmaṇa, a great devotee of Viṣṇu is the greatest teacher of men. He is venerable to all people as Viṣṇu is.

27-35. A brāhmaṇa who has gone through the five purificatory rites like being heated (with the Vaiṣṇava marks) and having five motives is said to be a great brāhmaṇa. The worship for a kṣatriya is laid down through the performance of the various acts. For vaiśyas the six types of worship are said to be: Marking (his body) with his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) marks, service, honouring those who belong to him, repeating the letters of the formula, repeating viṣṇu's names, and salutation to him. The worship for a śūdra (consists of) five (types): Repeating his names, service to him, worshipping and saluting him and honouring those who belong to him. O dear one, mental worship is common to all men. The worship of the lord of the world should be done according to one's fitness. Viṣṇu should always be worshipped by brāhmaṇas and others who are devoted to no other deity (than Viṣṇu), who do not wish to accomplish any other fruit (than securing him), who know the Vedas and the truth about Brahman, who are free from attachment, who desire salvation, who possess devotion for their preceptors, who are well-pleased, who are very good. Men should perform Viṣṇu's proper worship (i.e. the worship fit) for their castes. The good devotees of Viṣṇu should do (acts) proper for their castes and stages of life. An intelligent man should always properly perform the rites told in the holy texts and codes of law. He should never transgress the acts prescribed in the holy texts and codes of law.

36-39. That devotee of Viṣṇu, who does not practise the acts prescribed in the Śrutis and Smṛtis, becomes a heretic, and would stay in the Raurava hell. Therefore, a man should offer to the lord of the world a worship fit for his caste. One should always practise acts prescribed in the codes of law. O auspicious

one, the mental worship is common to all men. Only after considering his own fitness a man should carefully perform his duty. The means for all to acquire piety are: Tranquillity, control, austerities, purity, truthfulness, avoiding (eating) flesh, non-stealing, and harmlessness.

40-50. Therefore, one should worship Viṣṇu according to his caste and stage of life. Getting up at the end of night and having properly rinsed his mouth, and having saluted the elderly persons he should remember Viṣṇu in his heart. He being pure and controlled in his speech, should devoutly repeat the thousand names (of Viṣṇu). Having evacuated the bowels and discharged the urine[1] on the outside of the village, and having properly purified[2] himself, he, the restrained and pure one, should properly sip water and should properly bathe after having brushed his teeth. O auspicious one, taking the earth at the root of a tulasī along with its leaf, and having consecrated it with the principal formula and having smeared his body along with (the repetition of) the Gāyatrī hymn only, he should bathe after offering the expiatory formula. O you very pure one, having invoked there Gaṅgā rising from the feet of Viṣṇu, and having quickly dipped (into the water) he should repeat the excellent expiatory formula. Having sipped water, he should sprinkle his person with water in the order prescribed in the formula of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. Then the wise one having quickly dipped himself, should repeat the primary formula twenty-eight times or one hundred and eight times. The devotee of Viṣṇu having consecrated himself with the formula (to be repeated) in water, should offer his prayers. Having sipped water, he should gratify deities, sages and dead ancestors. Having pressed his garment, having sipped water, he, the alert devotee of Viṣṇu, and the best brāhmaṇa, having put on a washed garment should take pure, charming clay and having consecrated it with a formula only, have on his forehead etc. the proper number of the upright sectarian marks. The wise one should then perform (i.e. offer) the sandhyā prayer and recite Sāvitrī (hymn).

1. The reading is definitely 'Mala-mūtra' and not 'Mūla-mantra'.

2. Aghamarṣaṇa: Lit. expiatory, removing or destroying sin; usually applied to a prayer repeated by brāhmaṇas (the 190th hymn of the tenth Maṇḍala of the Ṛgveda).

51-55. He controlled in speech and mind, should go home and wash his feet. Having sipped water with a concentrated mind, he should enter the hall where worship is offered. Having placed (the idol of) the lord, the god Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa on a charming, very bright seat, adorned with a heap of flowers, he should worship him properly with sandal, flowers and sacred rice grains. The brāhmaṇa, with his mind controlled, should worship (the idol of) Viṣṇu—either installed or self-manifest—devoutly, properly and as deserved, according to the way told in Śrutis and Smṛtis. The devotee of Viṣṇu should do what is advised by his preceptor. The Śrauta way is Vaikhānasa and the Smārta is that of Vasiṣṭha.

56-59. What is laid down in Pañcarātra is called divine text. The rite should not be dropped; (for) the propitiation of Viṣṇu is the highest. He should gladly and according to his ability offer worship to Viṣṇu with invocation, seat, (offering) materials of worship etc., sandal, flowers, sacred rice grains, incense, lamps, offerings of eatables, tāmbūla etc. and salutations. The devotee of Viṣṇu should propitiate the deity with sixteen modes of paying homage to the accompaniment at every ṛc of the two hymns—Puruṣa-sūkta and the principal hymn. Again during the various modes of worship he should offer a handful of flowers.

60-70. With the (various) positions of fingers the devotee of Viṣṇu should invoke the lord of the earth. So also he should offer a seat with a flower and the finger-position. With the two principal hymns he should offer at every mode of worship lamp, materials of worship, (water for) sipping, a bath with pure water in vessels, and auspicious substances mixed with tulasī-leaves. Then with fragrant oil he should smear the idol. He should also rub and clean his body with musk and sandal. Having bathed with auspicious, fragrant water with (the accompaniment of) hymns, and having properly decorated (himself) with divine ornaments and garments, he should then offer madhuparka, so also sandal made fragrant. He should devoutly and properly offer fragrant, good flowers, incense, and very beautiful lamp having eight or ten limbs (i.e. wicks). He should also give various kinds of eatables, mixed with rice boiled with milk and cakes. He should also devoutly offer camphor with tāmbūla.

Having waved the lamps he should worship (i.e. offer) a garland of flowers. Having taken himself round (the idol) and having saluted and praised (it) with excellent hymns, he should offer auspicious materials of worship after making (the idol) lie on the lap of Garuḍa. Having repeated auspicious names, he should then perform a sacrifice. He should make an offering into the fire-circle with the remaining of eatables offered to Viṣṇu. He should (repeat) every ṛc (of) the Puruṣa-sūkta and the Śrīsūkta invoking auspiciousness. He should offer into the Vedic fire oblation mixed with ghee. He should devoutly offer (it) with the gem of a hymn as (already) mentioned.

71-81. Meditating upon great Viṣṇu of the form of sacrifice one hundred and eight times or twenty-eight times, he should offer the oblation. After meditating upon the lord (i.e. Viṣṇu) resembling pure gold, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, consisting of the entire Vedas, Vedānta, Aṅgas and Upāṅgas, seated with goddess Lakṣmī, he should perform a sacrifice. He should offer the oblation with (Viṣṇu's) names (uttered) after each offering. The best devotee of Viṣṇu should assign (offerings) to the eternal devotees. Then in due order, he should offer oblations to and particularly worship the Śaktis like Bhū, Līlā, Vimalā etc. first and then the deities like Ananta, Garuḍa etc. Then Vāsudeva etc. and deities like Śakti, so also images like that of Keśava, Saṁkarṣaṇa etc., Matsya, Kūrma etc. and the weapons like the disc, so also gods like Viṣṇu, and deities like the Moon, the guardians of the quarters like Indra, so also deities like Dharma should be offered oblations to and worshipped. The best devotee of Viṣṇu, being calm, should everyday, in his daily rite of worship offer the sacrifice to Viṣṇu. In the worship in the house, he, by offering properly the five sacrifices, should duly offer the oblation and then sip water. Seated on the white seat with the skin of the black antelope and darbhas placed on it he should bring about comfort for (being able to enjoy) pleasures by the use of hymns. Properly seated in the position of Padma he should purify the elements of the body.

82-90. With his senses controlled, he should, with a hymn, practise the three (kinds of) breath-control. Then facing the north he should bring about the expansion of the heart-lotus by means of the Sun of knowledge. The best devotee of Viṣṇu

should one by one, imagine in its pericarp, full of the three, the triad of the orbs of the sun, the moon, and the fire. On them he should imagine a seat full of many gems. He should (mentally) arrange at the end of the root of the heart-lotus a lotus with eight (kinds of) grandeur, having brilliance like that of the young sun, and full of the syllables of the mystic formula. Then the pure devotee, of a calm mind, should meditate upon lord Viṣṇu who is seated on it with goddess (Lakṣmī), who resembles a crore of moons, who has four hands, a beautiful body, who holds a conch, a disc and a mace, whose eyes are large like lotus-petals, who is distinguished with all (auspicious) marks, on whose chest are Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha, who has put on a yellow garment, beautiful ornaments, who is adorned with divine ornaments, whose body is smeared with divine sandal, who is graced with divine flowers, is adorned with the garland of wood-flowers and delicate leaves of tulasī, who resembles a crore of suns in lustre, whose body is embraced by Lakṣmī having all (good) marks, who is auspicious; having thus meditated, he should repeat the hymn.

91-96. Having with devotion mentally worshipped (Viṣṇu) a thousand or hundred times, or according to his capacity, he should stop. He should devoutly honour those who belong to him (i.e. his devotees), that have come at that time, and having pleased them by (giving them) food, drink etc., he should dismiss them after following them (a few steps). Having worshipped the dead ancestors he should duly gratify the deities. Having honoured the guests and servants, the couple should eat. He should always avoid the worship of yakṣas, demons and spirits. A brāhmaṇa who through folly worships them, would certainly become a cāṇḍāla. Resorting to yakṣas, goblins and deities enjoying liquor and flesh is said to be equivalent to drinking liquor. The worship of ghosts of brāhmaṇas, vampires, yakṣas and spirits is the means for men of reaching the very fierce hell, Kumbhīpāka.

97-106. Due to the worship of yakṣas and spirits all the religious merit earned during crores of existences by (performance of) sacrifices and (giving) gifts, is lost instantly. Due to the worship of yakṣas and spirits, a woman or a man becomes an insect for thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores

of kalpas and sinks in feces along with his dead ancestors. He who eats the food offered to yakṣas, goblins or vicious deities would be the eater of pus and blood. The brāhmaṇa (who eats food) assigned to yakṣas, hosts of spirits, cruel ghosts of brāhmaṇas, (would instantly become) a cāṇḍāla only. That woman who would worship yakṣas, goblins, serpents, demons, goes with her face turned down to the fierce Kālasūtra hell. One having lived there along with one's dead ancestors, and licking urine and feces till deluge, and with one's body being eaten by insects, is then born within ten days in hundred (śatasaṁkhyayā?) on the earth. Therefore, one should avoid the worship of yakṣas etc. and of (vicious) deities. One should even avoid an independent worship of brāhmaṇas well-versed in Vedas. Having worshipped god Nārāyaṇa Hari, venerable to the world, a man should worship the installation of the god covered on all sides. With the remnant of what is enjoyed by Viṣṇu, he should throw an offering to them.

107-115. The devotee of Viṣṇu should also perform a sacrifice with (materials) that have remained after it (i.e. Viṣṇu's worship). He should offer an oblation to the deities after having properly made an offering to Viṣṇu. He should also offer everything to his dead ancestors and should secure immortality. Harassing beings leads wise men to hell. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, know that which, without being given, is taken by men to be a theft and is the cause of hell. A man who eats prohibited articles of food like garlic, (drinks) liquor etc., (eats) radish, red garlic, sesamum-flour, pot-herb, bilva, kośātakī-fruit, bottle-gourd, egg-plant, bījāli-fruit, kavaca fruit, and other prohibited articles of food as noted in the holy texts, reaches a strange, inauspicious hell. The food of the non-devotees of Viṣṇu, that of the fallen, that which is not offered to Viṣṇu would be like the flesh of a dog. He who eats the food of (i.e. offered to) yakṣas, demons and spirits, so also (he who enjoys) wine, liquor and onion goes to a hell where the food is pus and blood. A man (goes to hell) by means of these—installing, touching or coming in contact with them. They too just go to a hell where the food is feces, urine and insects. So also a man (goes to hell) due to contact with the fallen and the heretics.

116-117. Knowing the ancient best Puruṣa (i.e. Viṣṇu), the

entire enjoyer of all sacrifices, a man should perform his daily and occasional obligatory rites, so also those that are performed through the desire for some object (optional). O goddess, those who desire heaven, should never worship yakṣas, demons, spirits, goblins and Bhairavas.

118-124. A brāhmaṇa should avoid worshipping yakṣas, demons and spirits. (For by doing so) for three hundred crores of kalpas he remains in the state of a goblin. Therefore, the worship of demons and spirits is prohibited. Due to the worship of yakṣas and groups of spirits he goes to the Raurava hell (and stays there) for thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas. He, being without the marks like the conch, the disc and other marks most dear to Viṣṇu, and fallen from all pious acts would go to hell. By means of illicit intercourse, harm (to others), snatching another's wealth, by eating prohibited articles of food, he would instantly reach hell. (If) a man abandoning the woman whose hand he has sought, goes to another woman, that is illicit intercourse; it is the cause of instantly going to hell. A man similarly goes to hell only due to the contact with the fallen, the heretics and also those who do impious deeds. He should even avoid the contact of those who come in contact with such persons.

125. The devotee of Viṣṇu should avoid a family full of sins. Seeking solitude, he should abandon the village mixed with (i.e. full of) great sins.

126-131. Similarly, he who desires absolute solitude, should even abandon that region. The means to attain Viṣṇu is said to be doing one's own duty, having knowledge, devotion etc. That brāhmaṇa who practises his duties and knowledge in accordance with Viṣṇu's order, and is highly devoted to Viṣṇu, would be the one who solicits solitude. The devotee of Viṣṇu should properly avoid a prohibited act with a sinful thought (i.e. by looking upon it as a sinful act). Soliciting solitariness he should even mentally abandon (acts according to) the holy text due to blemish. Similarly he who desires absolute solitude, should avoid (acts) looking upon them as fit to be abandoned. Acts are said to be of three kinds: daily, occasional (both obligatory) and (those which are) performed through the desire for some object (i.e. optional).

The sages have declared knowledge also to be like that in the world: the discrimination between what ought and ought not to be done; thinking about the other world; the means to accomplish it; the knowledge of Viṣṇu's nature only. A devotee should be full of devotion. It is said to be of nine kinds:

132-140. The auspicious marks of Sudarśana (disc); the upright sectarian mark on the forehead; repeating the formula of (i.e. taught by) the good preceptor; worshipping Viṣṇu properly; recollection of Viṣṇu; glorification of Viṣṇu; service of the highest soul; salutation before him; and honouring those who belong to him; resorting to his favour and a holy place. (Thus) devotion is said to be of nine kinds. That with which the devotee of Viṣṇu seeks the shelter of god Viṣṇu, should be known as pious resignation. It is declared to be of three kinds: It is said to be of three types in the world: tāmasī (vicious), rājasī (passionate) and sāttvikī (sincere). Fulfilment is also divided into three (kinds); it is common to all (human) beings. Looking upon these four as fit to be abandoned(?), the devotee of Viṣṇu should give it(?) up. Brahman only, being the means, would cling to Viṣṇu's devotee(?). The best among the great devotees of Viṣṇu should practise acts, knowledge through love for the lord, and abandoning (i.e. not looking upon) them as means. With devotion he should worship Viṣṇu three times (a day). O you auspicious one, he should especially worship him at the time of an occasional obligatory (rite). On everyday of the month of Kārtika he should worship him (i.e. Viṣṇu) with jasmine flowers. He of a controlled mind and a firm vow, should continuously offer a lamp. Having fed brāhmaṇas he would, in the end, attain absorption into Viṣṇu.

141-145. O goddess, in Dhanu-month, he should every morning continuously worship the lord of gods with lotuses and white and black karavīra flowers. He should offer incense, lamps and eatables according to his capacity. At the conclusion he should feed brāhmaṇas who are the best among the great devotees of Viṣṇu. He undoubtedly gets the fruit of a thousand horse-sacrifices. In the month of Māgha, (every morning) when the sun has risen, he should particularly bathe in a river, and worship Viṣṇu with flowers and lotuses, O you of an auspicious face. He should offer rice cooked in milk and eatables with ghee

(to Viṣṇu). Having bathed (every morning) he should continuously worship Viṣṇu (everyday) for a month. In conclusion he should offer sugar with water.

146-151. O you of an auspicious appearance, he should devoutly honour Viṣṇu's devotees at the end of the month. Similarly in the month of Caitra he should daily worship the lord of the world with campaka flowers and also with bakula flowers; and should offer food prepared in jaggery. Being well concentrated, he should feed brāhmaṇas at the end of the month. He would (thus) obtain (the fruit of) the worship performed for a thousand years. In Vaiśākha he should worship the god with great lotuses having hundred petals. O goddess, having worshipped him in the proper manner, he should devoutly offer him water mixed with molasses along with curd, food and fruits. O Pārvatī, the lord of the world, along with Lakṣmī, is pleased. In the month of Jyeṣṭha, he, having worshipped Hṛṣīkeśa with white lotuses, trumpet(-flowers), and blue lotuses, and having devoutly offered him food with mangoes, he would be the giver of a crore of cows.

152-157. Having fed Viṣṇu's devotees, he would obtain complete immortality. In (the month of) Āṣāḍha he should everyday worship devoutly Acyuta, Lakṣmī's husband, and the god of gods with clove-flowers, and offer him rice boiled in milk. At the end of the month he should feed brāhmaṇas, the best among great devotees of Viṣṇu. Undoubtedly he obtains (the merit) of the worship for sixty thousand years. In the month of Śrāvaṇa he should worship Viṣṇu with punnāga flower, and ketakī petals. Having worshipped Viṣṇu with devotion, he would not obtain birth again. Devoutly he should give cakes mixed with sugar and ghee. He should feed brāhmaṇas; similarly he would obtain full immortality. In Śrāvaṇa he should worship the lord with kunda and kurabaka (flowers). He should devoutly offer milk and food mixed with jaggery. Everyday he would obtain the fruit of the gift of a crore of cows.

158-170. In the month of Āśvina he should worship Viṣṇu with blue lotuses. He should devoutly offer him milk mixed with cakes. Being delighted and surrounded by his own people, he reaches Viṣṇu's world for thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas. O goddess, in the same way, in

the month of Kārtika he would obtain absorption (into Viṣṇu) on devoutly worshipping Acyuta with tender tulasī-leaves. With devotion, and in due order, he should devoutly and duly offer food with milk, ghee and sugar, so also rice boiled in milk and cakes. O you of an excellent face, one should, according to one's capacity, particularly worship Viṣṇu on the new-moon day, Saturday, constellation sacred to Viṣṇu, the Sun's passage, portentous calamity, and lunar or solar eclipse. The best brāhmaṇa should offer a sacrifice to Viṣṇu according to his capacity on the day of Jupiter's passage (from one to another constellation) and constellations of Viṣṇu's birth. He should offer a handful of flowers, approved by the Vedas, for every ṛc. He should also break the fast with the oblation of rice,[1] barley and pulse boiled for presentation to the gods and the manes, or with rice cooked in milk. He should feed Viṣṇu's devotees and give them presents according to his capacity. Having emancipated a crore of (the members of) his family, he would obtain Viṣṇu's position. If the best devotee of Viṣṇu is unable to worship Viṣṇu, he should, along with the repetition of hymns sacred to Viṣṇu,[2] everyday offer a sacrifice with a thousand handfuls of flowers. Or the wise man should worship the lord to please him (offering a handful of flowers) with every verse. Or continuously for seven nights he should (recite) the gem of a hymn one thousand and eight times, and should worship him with an offering. The wise man should especially honour the best among the great devotees of Viṣṇu. At the end he should, according to his wealth, take an ablution. A brāhmaṇa should take an ablution to the accompaniment of the repetition of hymns sacred to Viṣṇu.

171-174. The best brāhmaṇa, having duly and according to his capacity, bathed here, and having devoutly washed his feet in another vessel, should worship (Viṣṇu) with incense, flowers etc. and garments, ornaments etc; so also he should worship him with a tāmbūla, fruits according to his capacity. Having fed (a brāhmaṇa) with food, drink etc. and having repeatedly saluted him, he should follow him to the boundary (of the village), and having saluted him who is dismissed, he should again salute him

1. Caru: An oblation of rice, barley, and pulse boiled for presentation to the gods and the manes.

2. (Vaiṣṇava) anuvāka: repeating (hymns) sacred to Viṣṇu,

devoutly, and slowly return. With his mind controlled, he, having entered his house, should again worship the lord of beings.

175-179. Thus till he is alive, he should diligently worship Viṣṇu. O auspicious one, he should especially always honour those that belong to him. O goddess, of all worships that of Viṣṇu is the best. Therefore, honouring those that belong to him, is the best. He who would worship Viṣṇu, but would not honour those who belong to him should not be reckoned as Viṣṇu's devotee, but is known to be a hypocrite. Therefore, a man should always with (i.e. making an) effort honour those that belong to him. By means of honouring the best devotee of Viṣṇu, he overcomes the entire stream of difficulties. O goddess, thus I have described the excellent daily and occasional (obligatory) worship of Viṣṇu, so also that of those who belong to him.

180. O goddess, I have also described to you, his valour, nature, the accomplishment of the fruit, his residence, body so also the group of the four (kinds of) acts etc. What else do you desire to hear?

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYFOUR

One Hundred and Eight Names of Rāma

Vasiṣṭha said:

1. That goddess, thus addressed by her lord, the Trident-holder, saluted the noble one, and with the palms of her hands joined, then spoke:

Pārvatī said:

2-3. O lord, you have well described the excellent practices of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, and the nature of the highest lord Viṣṇu, which is the greater secret than a secret (i.e. the greatest secret). O you saluted by all gods, I am fortunate; I am blessed. Due to your favour I (shall) worship the eternal lord of gods.

Vasiṣṭha said:

4. Then hearing her words Śiva, the destroyer of Tripura, with his heart pleased, embraced the goddess (and said):

Rudra said:

5-7. Well (said), well (said), O great goddess, O you of an excellent face. Worship Hṛṣīkeśa, Acyuta, the lord of Lakṣmī. O good one, with you as my wife, devoted to Viṣṇu, I am fortunate. O you of a beautiful body, permitted by your intelligent preceptor, Vāmadeva, worship the ancient lord, Viṣṇu. O you daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, by worshipping Viṣṇu in the way of (i.e. according to) the advice of the preceptor, a man obtains every desire (object), not otherwise.

Vasiṣṭha said:

8-9. The goddess, thus addressed, and being delighted and desirous of worshipping Viṣṇu, then suddenly approached Vāmadeva, O king. The goddess, after approaching, honouring the preceptor and saluting the best sage with the palms of her hands joined, said (to him):

Pārvatī said:

10. O revered one, O best brāhmaṇa, by your grace I shall properly worship Viṣṇu. Please permit me.

Vasiṣṭha said:

11-12. Thus addressed by the goddess, the preceptor, the great sage Vāmadeva, duly gave her an excellent mystic formula. The best sage told (her) the thousand names of Viṣṇu. The preceptor, after telling her the manner of worship, also spoke with great love to Pārvatī who had fulfilled her vow.

Vāmadeva said:

13. O you of an excellent face, having everyday worshipped Viṣṇu in the morning, repeat the thousand names of Viṣṇu after that.

Vasiṣṭha said:

14-16. Pārvatī who was advised by that preceptor Vāma-

deva, thus addressed by that preceptor, worshipped (Viṣṇu) with her mind delighted, saluted (him), and again came to her abode. Then after a few days, the bull-bannered Śaṅkara, having worshipped Viṣṇu on a Dvādaśī-day, was seated on a charming peak of Kailāsa. He then spoke to Pārvatī to take food.

Śaṅkara said:

17a. O Pārvatī, saluted by the world, come to eat with me.

Vasiṣṭha said:

17b-18. Goddess Pārvatī said to him: "O god, I shall eat after I repeat the thousand names (of Viṣṇu). O lord, you may eat food." Then the highest lord, smiling, said to her:

Śaṅkara said:

19-22a. O Pārvatī, you are fortunate; you are blessed. You are Viṣṇu's devotee. O goddess, without good luck, devotion to Viṣṇu is difficult to have. O you charming one, O you of an excellent face, I, saying 'Rāma, Rāma', am interested in Rāma. Rāma's name is equal to the thousand names (of Viṣṇu). O Pārvatī, my mind, hearing the names beginning with (the letter) 'ra', becomes pleased, due to the expectation of their being Rāma's names. O great goddess, uttering (the word) *Rāma*, now eat with me.

Vasiṣṭha said:

22b-23. Then uttering the name *Rāma* Pārvatī ate with (Śaṅkara). Then the great goddess Pārvatī, seated with Śaṅkara, uttered the name *Rāma*, and with her mind disposed to love, asked god Śaṅkara:

Pārvatī said:

24. You said Rāma's name is equivalent to the thousand names (of Viṣṇu). The enemy of Rāvaṇa has other names (also). O lord of gods, tell them to me. Devotion (for them) has arisen in me.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

25-29. O Pārvatī, listen. I shall tell the names of Rāma. O

Pārvatī, whatever common and Vaidika words are there, they are Rāmacandra's names. Among them the (Viṣṇu-)sahasra (-nāma) is superior; and among them the hundred and eight names (told) below are chief. Just one name of Viṣṇu is said to be superior to all Vedas; so also are the thousand names equal to Rāma's names. O dear one, that fruit which one who recites the hymns of all Vedas, gets is obtained crorefold by Rāma's name only. O you of an auspicious appearance, listen to the principal names of Rāma. O dear one, I shall tell you those which are sung by the sages:

30-47. Om, Śrīrāma; Rāmacandra; the eternal Rāmabhadra; the lotus-eyed one; the glorious lord of kings; the best among the Raghus; the lord of Jānakī; the conqueror; the victorious one; Janārdana; the one dear to Viśvāmitra; the controlled one; the one who is exclusively devoted to the protection of those who have sought his shelter; the destroyer of Vālin; the eloquent one; the truth-speaking one; the one of genuine valour; the one true to his word; the one getting the fruit of his vow; always the resort of Hanūmat; the son of Kauśalyā; the destroyer of Khara; skilled in killing Virādha; the protector of Bibhīṣaṇa; the one who cut off the head of Rāvaṇa; the breaker of seven tālas; the one who broke Śiva's bow; the one who broke down the great pride of (Paraśurāma) the son of Jamadagni; the one who killed Tāḍakā; the one who mastered Vedānta; the soul of the Vedas; the only medicine for the bondage to the mundane existence; the enemy of Dūṣaṇa and Triśiras; the one having three forms; having three qualities and (of the form of the) triad (i.e. the three Vedas); the one having three strides; the soul of the three worlds; the one whose acts are said to be meritorious; the protector of the three worlds; the archer; the one who lived in Daṇḍaka forest; the one who sanctified Ahalyā; the one devoted to his parents; the one who grants boons; the one who has controlled his senses and anger, his greed; and who is the preceptor of the world; the one who associated himself with bears and monkeys; the one who resorted to Citrakūṭa; the one who gave the boon of protection of Jayanta; and the one who was served by Sumitrā's son; the one who is the superior lord of all gods; the one who brought the dead monkeys back to life; the killer of the deceitful Mārīca; the one who is illustrious; and who has

large arms; the one who is praised by all gods; who is gentle; who is friendly; who is the best sage; who is a great meditating saint; who is very generous; the one who gave a stable kingdom to Sugrīva; the one who is said to give greater fruit than (one due to) all religious merit; who destroys all sins; the one who is the first god; and also the greatest god; the one who is the dawn of good fortune; who has great strength; who is the ancient and best Puruṣa (the Supreme Being); the one who has a smiling face; who speaks measured words; who speaks first; (who is called) Rāghava; the one who is grave with infinite virtues; who is wise and uncommon due to the quality of control; who does human acts due to his Māyā (illusory power); the one who is honoured by Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva); the one who constructed the bridge; the one who vanquished the Ocean; who is full of all holy places; who is Viṣṇu; whose body is dark, handsome, brave; who wears yellow garments; who is an archer; who is the lord of all sacrifices; who (himself) is the sacrifice; who is free from old age and death; the one who installed Śiva's Phallus; who is free from primitive qualities; the one who is the highest lord; who is the highest Brahman; who has the body of consciousness and joy; who is the highest light; the one who is the highest abode; the highest sky; and the higher than the high; who is the highest lord; who has gone to the other side; who is the opposite bank; who is of the nature of all souls; is auspicious. These are the hundred and eight names of Śri Rāmacandra.

48-51. O goddess, I have told you this secret of secrets through love for you. He who would recite or listen to these (names) with a devoted heart, is freed from all sins (committed) even during crores of kalpas. Watery places turn into dry grounds, and foes become friends. Kings become servants, and fires become mild. Spirits become favourable, and unstable wealth becomes stable for the man who recites them devoutly; so also planets become favourable; calamities are removed, of the man who recites (them) devoutly, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain.

52-57. He who would recite it with great devotion, has the three worlds under his control. By narrating (them) he obtains whatever object he desires. With five ancestors and five successors, he always delights in Vaikuṇṭha for thousands of crores of

kalpas, and hundreds of crores of kalpas. Those men who praise Rāma who is dark like dūrvā-blades, who is lotus-eyed, who has put on yellow garments, with divine names, are not worldly spirits. Salutation to Rāma, Rāmabhadra, Rāmacandra, the Creator, to Raghunātha, to the lord, and the husband of Sītā. O goddess, a man, repeating this hymn day and night, is free from all sins, and would obtain absorption into Viṣṇu. O you having beautiful brows, through love for you I have thus told you Rāma's greatness contained in the Vedas and called auspicious.

Vasiṣṭha said:

58-59a. Having heard that greatness of the highest lord told by Śaṅkara, she, with her eyes full of tears of joy, obtained incomparable delight. Having saluted her husband, the bull-bannered, lord of gods.

Pārvatī said:

59b-60. Oh, matchless is the greatness of Rāma, the highest soul. Even (after hearing it) for hundreds of kalpas my ears would not be satisfied. I am fortunate: I am blessed. O sinless one, you have told me everything. May I have, through your grace, devotion for Rāma in every existence.

Vasiṣṭha said:

61-69. Speaking like this, Pārvatī, the best devotee of Viṣṇu, lived happily in all conditions with her husband on the Kailāsa mountain, repeating the formula: 'Salutation to Rāma, Rāmabhadra, Rāmacandra, the Creator, to Raghunātha, the lord, the husband of Sītā.' O king, I have told you all this topmost secret. O king the religious treatises proclaimed by Rudra are vicious (*tāmasa*). The bull-bannered (god) narrated them for deluding people. Lord Śiva told this one in private to the goddess. The lord, highly devoted to her, told the goddess this significant gist of the hymn, with a hidden meaning, through love for her, O king. He who would listen to or recite with a mind full of devotion, this wonderful dialogue between Umā and the great Lord, would be an omniscient and great devotee of Viṣṇu. Being free from all practices, he obtains the highest position. O very mighty lord of

kings, in your dynasty Viṣṇu, the propitious highest lord will be born as Daśaratha's son for the good of all people. Therefore, the Ikṣvākus, among whom lord Rāma, of lotus-like eyes, is born, are honoured even by gods, O king.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYFIVE

The Three Gods Subjected to Test by Bhṛgu

Dilīpa said:

1-6. O brāhmaṇa, you have fully told (me) about all the practices, and about the general and particular nature of the highest (lord) and the individual soul. O best brāhmaṇa, through curiosity I am asking you one other (question). Due to your great love (for me) properly tell (i.e. answer) that also. Rudra, the destroyer of Tripura, is the best among the great devotees of Viṣṇu. Due to what did he, along with his wife, have a condemned form? How did the very illustrious one have the form of clitoris? O best brāhmaṇa, how did the five-faced one, four-armed one, trident-holder and three-eyed one have a condemned form? O son of Mitra-Varuṇa, tell all this (to me).

Vasiṣṭha said:

7-13. O king, listen; I shall explain to you what you have asked me respectfully. In the pure hearts of men a thought for bliss is produced. Formerly on the best mountain Mandara Svāyambhuva Manu performed, along with sages, an excellent prolonged sacrificial session. There came all sages who had fulfilled their vows, who were proficient in various holy texts, whose lustre was like that of the young sun and fire, who, the brāhmaṇas, were well-versed in all Vedas, and who had mastered all religious practices. When the great sacrificial session took place, the sages whose sins had been exhausted, and who had penance as their wealth, spoke among themselves in order to find the truth about the deity. Which excellent deity should be honoured by brāhmaṇas proficient in the Vedas? Who, out of Brahmā, Viṣṇu

and Śiva, being praised, gives salvation to men? Water of (i.e. flowing from) whose feet should be resorted to? So also the purifying remnant of whose food should be enjoyed? Who, the immutable one, is the highest abode, the highest soul and who is eternal? Whose favour and holy place would gratify the manes?

14-20. Such a great discussion took place among those who were seated. Some great sages said: "Rudra alone (is the greatest deity)." Other best sages said: "Brahmā alone is fit to be worshipped." Other best one said that the Sun alone was fit to be worshipped among the souls. Other brāhmaṇas said: "The immutable lotus-eyed Vāsudeva, the highest one, the one without a beginning or an end (viz.) Viṣṇu alone is the highest lord. He, the best among the deities, deserves to be worshipped." To them, who were discussing, Svāyambhuva Manu said: "He, the lord, who is full of good nature, who has auspicious qualities, who is lotus-eyed, who is glorious, who is the lord of Lakṣmī, who is the highest Brahman, is the only lord adored by brāhmaṇas, proficient in Vedas. Others mixed with passion and vice are not fit to be worshipped." Having heard these words of him, all the great sages, joining the palms of their hands, said to the brāhmaṇa, Bhṛgu, the treasure of penance:

The sages said:

21-25. O you of a good vow, you are able to remove our doubt. Approach, O you of a good vow, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa. O sage, go near them and observe their bodies. Out of them, he who possesses the pure sattvaguṇa, is alone fit to be worshipped, and never anyone else. He, full of pure sattva, will be friendly to brāhmaṇas. To brāhmaṇas he will be a holy place and a favour. Even to deities and manes the remnants of his food will be purifying. Therefore, O best sage, go to the residence of gods. O lord, O best sage, quickly bring about the welfare of all people.

26-27. Thus addressed, the best sage, along with Vāmadeva, quickly went to Kailāsa where the bull-bannered (god) lived. Having gone near the door of the house of the magnanimous Śaṅkara and seeing very fierce Nandin with a spear in his hand, he said (to him):

28-34. "I, the brāhmaṇa Bhṛgu, have come to see Hara, the

best god. Quickly announce me (i.e. my arrival) to the magnanimous Śaṅkara." Hearing the words of him, Nandin, the lord of (Śiva's) attendants spoke harsh words to the great sage of an unlimited splendour: "The lord is not in the vicinity. Śaṅkara is sporting with goddess (Pārvatī). O best sage, go back if you desire to live." Thus repudiated by him the (sage) of a great penance remained there, at the door of the great lord, for many days. "Since he, arrogant due to the company of a woman, thinks lightly of me, he shall have the form of clitoris. Approached (i.e. overcome) by vice he slights me, a brāhmaṇa! Reduced to an impious state, he will not be adored by brāhmaṇas. Therefore, all the food, water, flowers and oblations offered to him will undoubtedly be useless."

35-40. The very lustrous one, having thus cursed Śaṁkara honoured by the world, said to the very fierce attendant, Nandin, holding a spear, O king: "May Śiva's devotees, having ash, phallus and bones be impious and out of the Vedic fold." The sage, having thus cursed Rudra, Tripura's killer, went to Brahmā's world, respected by all people. The very intelligent one, having seen Brahmā, saluted him by joining the palms of his hands. The great ascetic, having saluted him, remained silent before him. Seeing the best sage, Brahmā, possessed of an abundance of rajas did not honour him, the great sage that had approached him. He also did not rise to honour him, nor did he speak pleasing words.

41-45. The lotus-seated (Brahmā) remained there with great majesty. Seeing him with preponderance of rajas, the great sage, the grandsire of all worlds, who was very lustrous, said (these) words to Brahman: "Since you, having preponderance of rajas, are slighting me, therefore, be dishonoured by all people." Bhṛgu, the brāhmaṇa, having thus cursed the magnanimous Brahmā, respected by the world, suddenly went to Viṣṇu's residence. The brāhmaṇa, having entered Viṣṇu's world on the northern coast of the Milky Ocean, and being properly honoured there by the glorious ones remaining there, and not being stopped there, entered the inner apartment.

46-52. Having entered that spotless palace, resembling the sun, he saw Lakṣmī's lord lying on the bed of the serpent. Both his feet were being rubbed by the lotus-like hands of Lakṣmī.

Seeing him, the best sage Bhṛgu, full of anger kicked with his left foot Viṣṇu's chest. The lord, getting up quickly, and gladly saying, "I am fortunate", joyfully pressed his foot with his hands. Slowly stroking his feet he spoke (these) sweet words: "O brāhmaṇa-sage, I am fortunate. I am always blessed. Due to the contact of your foot, there will be propitiousness in my body. May the dust-particles from the foot of a brāhmaṇa, which are the cause of the acquisition of affluence, which are the comets to the host of calamities that have come up, which are bridges over the boundless ocean of the mundane existence, purify me. All the holy places like Gaṅgā etc. undoubtedly remain in the body of him, on whose body dust-particles from a brāhmaṇa's foot always remain."

53-54. Saying so and quickly getting up with goddess (Lakṣmī), Viṣṇu devoutly honoured him with divine garlands, sandal etc. Having seen him, the best sage, with his eyes full of tears of joy, got from the best seat, and saluted that treasure of compassion. The great ascetic, having joined the palms of his hands, gladly said:

Śrī Bhṛgu said:

55-64. Oh, what a (handsome) form! Oh, (great) tranquillity! Oh, (great) knowledge! Oh, (great) pity! Oh, his patience is spotless! Oh, the goodness of Viṣṇu! Similarly the ocean of virtues has natural, auspicious, goodness. It is not at all present in all other gods. You alone are hospitable to the brāhmaṇas. You alone are the protector. You alone are the highest Brahman. You alone are the lord of brāhmaṇas. No other god is respectable. O Puruṣottama, those who worship any other god than you, have become impious, and are censured by all the world. You, Janārdana, are alone fit to be worshipped by brāhmaṇas, well-versed in the Vedas. None else among the gods is ever venerable. Brahmā, Rudra and others, mixed with rajas and tamas are not fit to be worshipped. You, having pure sattva, are fit to be worshipped by brāhmaṇas. The water (flowing) from your feet should be resorted to by manes, gods, and all brāhmaṇas. It gives salvation, and destroys sins. Manes, gods, brāhmaṇas should take what is left over after you have eaten, and not what is left over after others have eaten. The food, flowers, so also water of

(i.e. offered to) other gods, would all be unfit to be touched. It is useless like liquor. Therefore, a wise brāhmaṇa should constantly worship you, the eternal one, everyday and should take water of (i.e. sanctified by) you and food eaten by you.

65-68. A brāhmaṇa should not see another god; should not worship him. He should not partake of another god's favour; should not enter the sanctuary of any other (god). (If) a man does not give in this world the food and holy water enjoyed by you in the rite of śrāddha offered to his ancestors, all that would be fruitless. His dead ancestors fall into (and live in) the hell of pus and blood for thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas. O master, when one offers an oblation (into fire) or gives (offerings) to deities and manes after offering them to you, there is satisfaction (of deities and manes), (i.e. he satisfies them) and he gets immortality.

69-78a. Therefore, you alone are adorable to gods, and none else. He who, through folly, would worship other (deities) will be impious. You are Nārāyaṇa; you are glorious; you are the ancient Vāsudeva. You are omnipresent Viṣṇu. You are eternal, highest soul and the great god. You alone are fit to be worshipped by brāhmaṇas. You are hospitable to brāhmaṇas. You possess pure sattva. Due to your being venerable to brāhmaṇas and due to your virtue of having pure sattva, obtain the status of a brāhmaṇa among all the gods themselves; for all brāhmaṇas will resort to you, the highest Brahman, alone. They were brāhmaṇas and not others. There is no doubt about this. Devakī's son is holy. Madhusūdana is holy. The lotus-eyed one is holy. Viṣṇu, Acyuta is holy. Lord Kṛṣṇa is holy. Vāsudeva, Acyuta, Hari (is holy). Narasiṁha is holy. So also is the immutable Nārāyaṇa. Śrīdhara, Śrīśa, Govinda, Vāmana is holy. The Yajñavarāha, Keśava, Puruṣottama is holy. Glorious, lotus-eyed Rāma, descendant of Raghu, is holy. Padmanābha is holy. So also Dāmodara, the lord, Mādhava, Yajña, lord Trivikrama is holy. Hṛṣīkeśa is holy; Janārdana, wearing yellow garments (is holy).

78b-87. Salutation to the holy god, to Vāsudeva, holder of the Śārṅga (bow); (Salutation) to Nārāyaṇa, Śrīśa, having lotus-like eyes. Salutation to the holy god, Vāsudeva, Viṣṇu. Salutation to the highest god full of auspicious qualities. Salutation to

the holy god, of the form of all gods. Salutation to you having the body of the Boar. Salutation to you, the lord of the triad (of the Vedas). Salutation to the holy god, lying on the bed of the serpent. Repeated salutations to Rāghava having eyes like lotus-petals. O lord, all gods and sages, deluded by Māyā, do not know you, the lord of all worlds and a great soul. O revered one, even all those proficient in the Vedas do not know you by your name, form and qualities and your acts difficult to be performed. I, capable of knowing your sattva, suggesting your superiority, have been sent by the great sages; (and therefore) I have approached you. O Keśava, in order to know your character and qualities, I put my foot on your chest. O Govinda, O treasure of pity, forgive it.

Speaking like this, and repeatedly saluting Viṣṇu, and being honoured there by the divine, magnanimous, great sages, Bhṛgu, with his mind delighted, again went to the place of sacrifice having an auspicious name.

88-93. The great sages, having seen the magnanimous one to have come back, rose, saluted him, and duly worshipped him. The best sage told them all that: "O best sages, Brahmā and Śiva, the best sages have preponderance of the qualities of rajas and tamas. They were cursed by me. They are not fit to be worshipped by brāhmaṇas. Śaṁkara enveloped by tamas was cursed by me on the peak of Kailāsa. Viṣṇu full of pure sattva is the ocean of auspicious qualities. Nārāyaṇa is the highest Brahman. (He i.e.) Viṣṇu is the deity of brāhmaṇas. Śrīpati, Viṣṇu, Vāsudeva, Janārdana is holy. Govinda, Hari, Acyuta of lotus-like eyes is holy. O best men, he alone is fit to be worshipped by brāhmaṇas, and none else.

94-97. He who, through folly, would worship another (god) will be impious. Even sinners get salvation just by remembering Kṛṣṇa. The water (flowing) from his feet should be taken. The remnants of the food (offered to) him are purifying. It gives heaven and salvation to men, especially to brāhmaṇas. (A man) should everyday offer an oblation which is (first) offered to Viṣṇu, to the gods. He should also offer it to his dead ancestors. (Then) he gets complete immortality. O brāhmaṇas, the dead ancestors of him who does not offer (food) enjoyed by Viṣṇu,

to them at a śrāddha-rite, always eat (and drink) feces and urine.

98-101. Therefore, brāhmaṇas should always eat the remnants of the food offered to Viṣṇu. The remnants (of food offered to other gods) are useless and (therefore) condemned. A brāhmaṇa, weak in knowledge, who even once eats the remnants of food etc. offered to Śaṅkara etc., would certainly be a cāṇḍāla. For thousands of crores of kalpas he is roasted in the fire in hell. O best brāhmaṇas, the remnants of offerings to gods like Rudra, are said to be equal to food offered to demons, yakṣas, goblins and like liquor and flesh. Brāhmaṇas should not eat that food, the offering enjoyed by (these) gods.

102. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇas, leaving another god, worship diligently, till you live, the ancient Viṣṇu only.

103-109. With your doubts removed, endowed with the five purifications like imprinting the body with heated marks, with good hearts, looking upon that as the highest abode of Viṣṇu, properly worship that extraordinary Viṣṇu, O best brāhmaṇas. The brāhmaṇas marked with the disc(-impression) are good and extraordinary. Those without the disc-marks are said to be ordinary and vicious. Therefore, a man should have the heated marks of a disc and a conch at the roots of his arms, which (marks) of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu burn the stream of sins due to contact with ordinary persons. Having had the upright sectarian marks on the body according to the manner prescribed in the holy texts, he should worship Viṣṇu according to the rules with the gem of the hymn (viz. Viṣṇu-sahasranāma). Being diligent he should also partake of the remnants of food offered to him. He should always worship gods at the time of finishing his worship. O brāhmaṇas, knowing him to be the highest lord enjoying all sacrifices, one should always offer (oblations into fire), give (presents to him) and mutter (his names)."

Vasiṣṭha said:

110. All the sages, thus addressed, and with their sins exhausted, saluted Bhṛgu and with the palms of their hands duly joined, said:

The sages said:

111-112. O revered best brāhmaṇa, you alone remove our

doubts. You are the refuge of the people. O brāhmaṇa, you are the highest asylum. You alone are the best piety. You alone are the highest penance. We shall exist due to your favour, and not otherwise, O brāhmaṇa.

Vasiṣṭha said:

113-117. All the great sages, having thus praised that brāhmaṇa Bhṛgu, and having got the hymn from him, worshipped Viṣṇu. O best king, I have told all this to you as the occasion has arisen. O best king, due to the touch of the lotus-like hand of Rāma the entire form condemned by the world will be spotless. Rāghava, the highest Brahman, is the purifier among all gods. Touched and seen by him all these, Śaṁkara and others, become spotless. Viṣṇu, the ocean of the virtue of affection, is the father, the mother of all gods. He is also the protector of all people. If you desire the highest position, then seek his shelter only.

118. O king, I have told you the entire Purāṇa, acceptable to the Vedas, and narrated by Brahmā in the age of Svāyambhuva Manu.

119-125. This account, (causing) liberation, of Viṣṇu should be told to the one modest due to devotion for Viṣṇu and having pure sattva, and not otherwise (i.e. to none else). The reader (or reciter) of this should have the marks of a conch, a disc, an upright sectarian mark etc. It should always be heard from his mouth. (Then only) you will have a son. Not otherwise. In him who, being well-composed, would recite to others or read (for himself) this (Purāṇa), is always produced undivided devotion for Viṣṇu. A student obtains knowledge; one seeking religious merit obtains it. One seeking salvation obtains it. One desiring enjoyment gets happiness. A man, full of devotion, should read it on the twelfth day, when the Sun is in the Śravaṇā (constellation), on a Saṁkrānti day, or at an eclipse, or on the full-moon day or the new-moon day. He who, being composed, reads half a verse or a quarter of it, undoubtedly obtains the fruit of a thousand horse-sacrifices. I have thus narrated to you this Purāṇa-text. Worship Viṣṇu if you desire the highest position.

Sūta said:

126-127. The best king (Dilīpa), thus addressed by his preceptor Vasiṣṭha, saluted and duly honoured him. Having properly received the hymn from the best brāhmaṇa, and having, till the end of his life, diligently worshipped Viṣṇu, he reached, in (due) time, the ancient position of Viṣṇu, fit to be reached by meditating saints.

VII KRIYĀYOGASĀRAKHAṆḌA

(Section on Essence of Yoga by Works)

CHAPTER ONE

A Dialogue between Jaimini and Vyāsa

Salutation to Śrī Gaṇeśa. Now is commenced the Kriyā-yogasārakhaṇḍa.

1. We devoutly, constantly salute the pair of the lotus-like feet of Lakṣmī's lord, which is crowned with the bees of the heads that are bowing down, of the line of the gods like Brahmā, which very much nourishes the mass of the exquisite beauty of the lakes of the minds of the meditating saints, which has the mass of the drops of the honey of the water of Gaṅgā, and which removes the afflictions of the mundane existence.

2. Salutation to that god Viṣṇu who, the lord, taking up various forms protects the entire world, those who are highly devoted to worshipping whose feet never plunge into the universal ocean, of whom, the residence is continuously in the lotus-like hearts of all living beings, and who takes up the form of a hog.

3. I salute this (Viṣṇu) along with Lakṣmī, who, the god, spoke in the form of Vyāsa in (i.e. through) the Purāṇa the practices after having taken them out from the Vedas for the good of the world.

4-6. Once all sages, desiring the good of the world, had an interesting chat in the very charming Naimiṣāraṇya. In the meanwhile, Sūta, the very lustrous and glorious disciple of Vyāsa, came there recollecting Viṣṇu. All ascetics like Śaunaka, seeing Sūta, master of the meaning of holy texts, coming there, rose and saluted him.

7-9. He, the best among those who know religious practices, also suddenly and devoutly saluted, (after prostrating himself) like a staff on the ground, the sages, the great devotees of Viṣṇu. Surrounded by all the groups of his disciples, the very intelligent

one sat among the sages on an excellent seat offered by the best sages. Śaunaka, the best sage, full of modesty and joining the palms of his hands, said these words to him, seated there:

Śaunaka said:

10-12. O Sūta, O revered one, O omniscient great sage, by what means would men have great devotion for Viṣṇu when the Kali age has arrived? In the Kali (age) all men will be engaged in doing sins; will be devoid of Vedic learning. How would they achieve their (spiritual) good? In the Kali (age) man's life is dependent on food. Similarly people are short-lived. So also they will be poor and troubled by various miseries.

13-16. O brāhmaṇa, whatever good act is told in the holy texts is accomplished with effort. Therefore, men will not at all do acts in the Kali (age). The wicked-hearted ones will, along with members of their families, meet with destruction when good acts have vanished (and) sinful acts have commenced. O best one, O son of Sūta, tell how great religious merit would be possible with very small exertion, little wealth and within a short time. It is decided in the holy texts that he, due to whose advice, men perform (acts of) sin or (of) virtue, would partake of (the fruits of) them.

17-20. The four—givers of good advice, the kind ones, those free from deceitfulness and those opposing the sinful way—are comparable to Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu of the form of knowledge does not look pleasingly at him who, having obtained knowledge in the mundane existence, does not give it to others. That man, delighting others by means of gems of knowledge and (other) gems, should be known as very intelligent and as Viṣṇu having a human form. O best sage, you have mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. There is no other teacher than you, since you are taught by Vyāsa.

Sūta said:

21-24a. O best sage, you are fortunate. You alone are the chief of Viṣṇu's devotees, since you always desire the good of the people. O Śaunaka, listen. For the good of all the people, especially for that of Viṣṇu's devotees, I shall tell you what you desired to hear. Listen to all that (Vyāsa) said when asked by

Jaimini. The great sage Jaimini, always engaged in the practice of abstract meditation, bowing his head, saluted Vyāsa.

Jaimini said:

24b-25a. O revered one, O you who know all religious practices, O son of Satyavatī, tell me from the beginning by what means salvation would be (obtained) in Kali (age).

Sūta said:

25b. O best sage, hearing the words of Jaimini, Vyāsa, with his mind pleased, commenced the propitious tale:

Vyāsa said:

26a-33a. O Jaimini, O best sage, O very intelligent one, you are fortunate, since you always desire to listen to the story of Viṣṇu. Whosoever has a mind to listen to a good story, would have knowledge; and they look upon knowledge as giving salvation. The creator has in vain made the earth to have a burden by creating him, the sinner, who does not like the story of Viṣṇu. The devotees of Viṣṇu are proud of narrating Viṣṇu's tale on the earth. O best sage, that day on which the story of Viṣṇu is not heard, is a bad day, and not that day which is covered with clouds. The lord never abandons being present there on whichever portion of the earth the story of Viṣṇu exists (i.e. is narrated). Having cursed the man who brings in an obstacle when the story of Viṣṇu is commenced, the lord, along with deities goes (away).

33b-38. Those men who are delighted on hearing the glory of Viṣṇu, should be known as portions of gods. They, the best ones, should be looked upon as fit to be honoured. Those men who on hearing the story of Viṣṇu, laugh at (it), should be known as portions of demons. They partake of (i.e. live in) hell. O best brāhmaṇa, at that place where Viṣṇu's story which removes the sinful ailments of the people that listen to it, is (told) everyday, all the holy places like Gaṅgā, the divine sages, deities, sages having penance as their wealth, stay. O sage, listen to this Essence of the Yoga by Works which is very significant and which destroys sins, along with the story of Viṣṇu and Itihāsa.

CHAPTER TWO

Characteristic Marks of a Vaiṣṇava

Vyāsa said:

1-7. At the beginning of the creation great Viṣṇu (Mahāviṣṇu), desiring to create the entire world, turned himself into three forms—creator, protector and destroyer. The Supreme Being produced from the right side of his body, himself, called Brahmā, for creating this world. O sage, then the lord of the world produced from the left portion (of his body), his portion viz. Viṣṇu, for the protection of the world. The lord who had taken his abode in a lotus, produced from the middle part of his body the imperishable Rudra for the destruction of the world. Some describe the god having the three qualities rajas, sattva and tamas as Brahmā, some as Viṣṇu and some as Śaṅkara. Viṣṇu (who is) one (only), dividing himself into three, creates, devours and protects (the world). Therefore, the best people should not differentiate among the three in the worlds. The original Prakṛti (Nature) of the great Viṣṇu, the highest soul, which is the cause of the universe of beings is described as (consisting of) Vidyā (knowledge) and Avidyā (ignorance).

8-9. She (Prakṛti), of the form of existence and non-existence, is eternal, and is the cause of the world. She suddenly had three forms, Brāhmī, Lakṣmī, Ambikā. O sage, then having appointed (this) original (Nature) to create, maintain and destroy (the world), the first Highest Being vanished there only.

10-17. By his order Brahmā then, with concentration, produced the five gross elements—earth, ether, air, water and fire. The lotus-seated one also produced (the seven worlds) like Bhūr, Bhuvar, Svar, Mahas, Jana, Tapas and Satya (above the earth). O brāhmaṇa, then Brahmā created the (nether) worlds in this order: Atala, then Vitala below it, Sutala below it, Talātala still below, Mahātala below it, then Rasātala below it, and Pātāla below it. At the centre of the earth he produced the great mountain (viz. Meru) with jewelled peaks and bright like gold for the residence of the deities. He produced Mandara, the western mountain, Trikūṭa, Udaya and also various other mountains. Then he produced the Lokāloka mountain; and the highest lord,

Brahmā, produced the seven oceans and the seven islands in between, O best brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, (there is) Jambūdvīpa, (then there is) the dvīpa called Plakṣa. It is double (the size of) it (i.e. Jambūdvīpa). (The dvīpa) Śālmalī is double (the size of) it (i.e. Plakṣa).

18-20. These dvīpas (islands) like Plakṣa etc. have all divisions, have all qualities and are forms of deities and divine sages. O brāhmaṇa, these seven islands are surrounded by seven oceans: I shall narrate the names of the oceans. Listen: Lavaṇa, Ikṣu, Surā, Sarpi, Dadhi, Dugdha and Jala. O divine sage, these oceans are to the east and west.

21-22. The mountains like Lokāloka should be known to be double (in size). O best brāhmaṇa, then Brahmā produced in every island trees, bushes, creepers etc., so also the lower animals, and gods, human beings, nāgas, and vidyādharas also.

23-28. Then in due order he created his sons, the sages like Dakṣa, so also brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras. The lord also produced their livelihood etc. They call that Bhārata giving auspicious and inauspicious fruits, which lies to the south of the Hema mountain and to the north of the Vindhya mountain. All the best men who obtain a birth in Bhārata country, and do religious practices are like Viṣṇu. O best one, people enjoy (or suffer) the fruit in the land of an auspicious or an inauspicious act performed in the land of actions. There is none else like him in the three worlds, who, having come to the land of actions, is engaged in pious acts. His birth is fruitful and he has well lived his life.

29-30. He who has no inclination to the service of Viṣṇu (has lived in vain). Firm devotion to Viṣṇu, the god of gods, the only lord of the mundane existence, is produced in men by means of religious merit earned during crores of existences. He is the giver of all happiness; he is praiseworthy and fearless.

31-33. That country where a devotee of Viṣṇu does not stay should be abandoned. A small or great sin committed during previous existence, perishes that moment only when the devotee of Viṣṇu is seen. What is the use of a bath in Gaṅgā to him who would devoutly have the water (flowing) from the feet of a devotee of Viṣṇu, that removes all sins, on his head?

34-40a. He who associates himself with Viṣṇu's devotees

even for a short time is freed from all sins among which a brāhmaṇa's murder is prominent. O best brāhmaṇa, all those religious acts that are performed before a devotee of Viṣṇu are protective. That place where Viṣṇu's devotees stay for a while is, to speak the truth, a holy place, a penance-grove. O brāhmaṇa, that gift like food, water, fruit, whichever is given to Viṣṇu's devotee would be inexhaustible. The devotee of Viṣṇu is said to be of the form of all deities. If a man has pleased him, then all deities are pleased in this very fierce worldly existence, full of various afflictions. A man who is a devotee of Viṣṇu never sinks. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, you too, having always devoutly propitiated Viṣṇu by the Yoga in the form of deeds, go to the highest position of Viṣṇu.

Sūta said:

40b-41a. Having heard these words of the magnanimous Vyāsa, Jaimini, putting the palms of his hands on his head, said:

Jaimini said:

41b-43a. O preceptor, you have repeatedly told the greatness of Viṣṇu's devotees. Now tell me everything—what are their characteristics, and, O best sage, how should Viṣṇu's devotees be recognised? Tell me all that from the beginning, if you favour me.

Vyāsa said:

43b-45. Listen to what the lord who was asked by the creator himself, had said when Madhu and Kaiṭabha were killed. I know it. Having, in the form of Rudra, destroyed the entire world at the end of a kalpa, the lord all alone slept by his magical power born of Yoga (Yogamāyā). When the lord had, under the influence of Yoganidrā,[1] slept, the entire earth, was plunged in the mass of water.

46-49. Then Brahmā, the creator of the world, with his mind devoted to him (i.e. Viṣṇu), meditated upon that first god and remained on his lotus-like navel. O brāhmaṇa, at that very fierce time two fierce, very great demons, named Madhu and

1. Sleep personified as a goddess and said to be a form of Durgā.

Kaiṭabha were produced from the excretion of wax from Viṣṇu's ear. The two very fierce demons moving in the air, saw Brahmā on the lotus-like navel of Śrī Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, the two very mighty and brave demons, with their eyes red with anger exerted to kill him.

50-51. Then Brahmā, the creator of the world, conceiving their murder, praised the revered Yoganidrā with soft words. Having heard the praise of (i.e. uttered by) Brahmā, the highest god, she spoke (these) words with affection: "Tell me what you desire."

Brahmā said:

52. These two very fierce demons have determined to kill me. Quickly delude them with trickery. Leave Viṣṇu, the protector.

53-56. Then that sleep of the lord abandoned that great Viṣṇu. Then he, affectionate to those who sought his shelter, and full of pity, fought a close fight with the two demons in the air. After having fought a very fierce fight for five thousand years, nobody became victorious or nobody was defeated. Then the two demons, who were then deluded by that great Māyā, said to Viṣṇu: "Choose a born from us." O brāhmaṇa, then Viṣṇu laughed and spoke these words:

57-60. "O demons, if you are pleased, then quickly get yourselves killed by me." Then the two fierce demons, having great wisdom, and deluded by that great Māyā said: "There is no doubt that just this boon is granted to you. O Viṣṇu, kill us at a place where there is neither water nor land." Then, O brāhmaṇa, bringing the two great demons up to his hip, he suddenly killed them with the wonderful edge of his disc. Seeing that (Viṣṇu) the Disc-holder had killed the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha, Brahmā, with his fear gone, praised the lord of the god of gods.

Brahmā said:

61-64. Salutation to the highest god who destroys all the pains of him who submitted himself to him. Salutation to him of the nature of the three guṇas, to Nārāyaṇa of unlimited valour. Men who have resorted to your lotus-like feet, never meet with

a calamity. O you of infinite fame, I have known this. You have instantly removed this great calamity of me. You are the lord of supernatural means. You are kind. O lord of the three worlds, O god of gods, O protector of those who seek your shelter, O god, though you protected me from being destroyed by the cruel host of demons, and killed these two demons, and though these two (demons) Madhu and Kaiṭabha are very ruthless, yet mentally I look upon them as our own kinsmen, since they pleased you, the god giving all auspicious (objects), by giving you the boon of the destruction of their own life.

65-69. O lord of gods, to that man, at whom you look with pity, the three worlds are charming; all his enemies along with (the members of) their families perish; his friends and all his kinsmen prosper. O bee to the lotus of the face of Lakṣmī, O god of gods, O you who destroy the fear and grief of the people in the worldly existence, always protect, with compassion, me who am resorting to the pair of your lotus-like feet. I salute you. O you lotus-eyed one, be pleased. O lord of Lakṣmī, be pleased. O lord of all beings, be pleased. O all-sustaining one, I salute you. Salutation to you who are pleased with your devotees. Salutation to you who give (i.e. produce) devotion. Salutation to you, of the form of knowledge. O faultless one, be my refuge. Salutation to you, salutation to you, salutation to you. (Repeated) salutations to you. O you full of the world, protect, protect (me).

Vyāsa said:

70. That revered god, praised with these and other hymns by Brahmā, creator of the worlds, was very much pleased.

The lord said:

71. O Lotus-seated (Brahmā), I am pleased with this hymn and devotion of you. Tell me what you desire. I shall give it to you on the earth.

Brahmā said:

72. O lord of gods, O ocean of compassion, O you full of the world, if you are pleased, then let there be no calamities to (i.e. befalling) your devotees. This is the boon of me (i.e. I ask for).

The lord said:

73-74. O best god, let it be so. I have granted this boon to you. On the earth let my devotee never face a calamity. I always live in the hearts of the devotees of Viṣṇu (i.e. me). Therefore, the devotees of Viṣṇu will never have calamities.

Brahmā said:

75-79. O lord of the world, you have undoubtedly given (me) everything, since you have knocked down these demons in a battle. O lord, you will protect him who, finding sometime, praises you with this hymn with great devotion. Oh, it is a great wonder that you who cannot be conceived by means of meditation by gods, roam in the bodies of the devotees of Viṣṇu (i.e. you). O master, what would happen when you are pleased even for a moment? (Then) it is a great wonder that such as you are, you move in the company of the devotees of Viṣṇu. O enemy of Kaiṭabha, who are the devotees of Viṣṇu? Or what are their characteristic marks? How are all of them to be recognised? O Keśava, tell that to me.

The lord said:

80-82. O best one, it is not possible for me properly to narrate the characteristic marks of Viṣṇu's devotee even for hundreds of crores of kalpas. Listen to them in brief. The mundane existence is dependent on Viṣṇu's devotees. Gods are looked after by Viṣṇu's devotees. I am also dependent on them. Therefore, Viṣṇu's devotees are the greatest. O Brahman, leaving Viṣṇu's devotee I do not stay elsewhere even for a moment. Viṣṇu's devotees are my kinsmen.

83-103. Those who are without lust and anger, who are free from harmfulness and hypocrisy, who are free from greed and folly, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who are not jealous, who are kind, who desire the good of all beings, who speak the truth, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who advise pious acts, who practise pious acts, who serve their preceptors (and elders), should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who look upon you, me and Śaṅkara as equal, and who honour a guest, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who have expounded the Vedic learning, who are always devoted

to brāhmaṇas, who are impotent to other women (i.e. women who are not their wives), should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who devoutly observe the Ekādaśī-vow, who sing my names, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who put up temples of deities, who wear tulasī-garlands, who wear lotuses and akṣa-seeds, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. O Brahman, those whose bodies are marked with (the signs of) my weapons like the conch, the disc, the mace, the lotus, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. O Lotus-seated (Brahman), those around whose necks are (worn) the garlands of dhātrī-fruits, and who worship me with the leaves of dhātrī, should be known as Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who put marks (on their body) with the clay from the root of the tulasī-tree and with the mud of tulasī-wood, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who are devoted to a bath in Gaṅgā, to (repeating) the name of Gaṅgā, and describe the greatness of Gaṅgā, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those in whose house the Śālagrāma-stone always remains, so also remains the holy text of Bhāgavata, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. O best one, those who everyday clean my places, who offer me lamps, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who again make new (i.e. repair) my shattered temple, and put there decorations, should be known as Viṣṇu's devotees. O you Four-faced (Brahmā), those who grant security to the timid, who give knowledge to the brāhmaṇas, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those whose heads are sprinkled with the water (flowing) from my feet, and who eat the offerings of eatables presented to me, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who offer food and water to those oppressed by hunger and thirst, and those who take to devout deeds, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who construct gardens and plant the pippala-trees, those who serve cows, should be known to be Vaiṣṇavas. O Brahman, those great devotees who make offering of libations of water everyday to the deceased ancestors, who serve the distressed, should be known to be Vaiṣṇavas. Those who construct lakes and put up villages, who are engaged in offering their daughters (in marriage), who serve their parents-in-law, should be known to be Vaiṣṇavas. Those who wait upon their eldest sister and eldest brother and who do not censure others, should be known to be Vaiṣṇavas.

104-111. All virtues are present in Viṣṇu's devotees. (Even) a particle of blemish is not present in them. Therefore, O Four-faced (Brahman), you now be a Vaiṣṇava. O lord of the beings, always propitiate me with the employment of devout deeds. Undoubtedly everything will be good for you. O four-faced (Brahman), those who look upon the wealth of a deity, the wealth of a brāhmaṇa, and the wealth of others as poison, should be known to be Vaiṣṇavas. Those who are free from devotion to heretics, who are highly devoted to Śiva, who are engaged in (observing) the vow of Caturdaśī, should be known to be Vaiṣṇavas. What is the use of speaking much again and again? Those who worship me, should be known to be Vaiṣṇavas. Create the world again as it was before.

Speaking like this, the highest god vanished there only. Then Brahmā created the entire world as before, and having worshipped Viṣṇu by means of the devout deeds, went to the highest position. Those who devoutly recite this chapter in front of (the idol of) Viṣṇu, become free from all sins, and in the end go to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER THREE

The Story of King Manobhadra

Jaimini said:

1. O very intelligent Vyāsa, tell me the truth about the yoga of devout deeds. From you I desire to know this yoga of devout deeds.

Vyāsa said:

2-6. It is difficult to obtain the human body (i.e. existence) on this earth, O brāhmaṇa. A wise man, after having got a body, should practise yoga for salvation. There are said to be two kinds of yoga: of acts and of meditation. The first of the two viz. that of acts, gives all desired objects to those who practise it.

Worship of Gaṅgā, of Śrī Viṣṇu, (giving) presents, so also devotion to brāhmaṇas and to the Ekādaśī-vow, similarly devotion to Dhātrī and Tulasī and honouring guests are in brief said to be the constituents of the yoga of acts, O best brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, without the yoga of acts the yoga of meditation does not succeed. One engaged in the yoga of acts goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu.

Jaimini said:

7-10. O lord, tell me the importance of those which are the constituents of the yoga of acts, if you favour me. What are the virtues of Gaṅgā? O brāhmaṇa, what is the fruit of Viṣṇu-worship? Which are the best presents? What is the devotion to the brāhmaṇas? What is the fruit of the Ekādaśī-vow? What kind of devotion is devotion to Dhātrī? What kind of devotion is Tulasī-devotion? What is honouring a guest? O sage, tell all this to me. I have got eagerness to hear all this. In the three worlds none else but you are able to tell it.

Vyāsa said:

11-16. Well, well, O best brāhmaṇa, your mind is certainly pure, since you have a strong desire and curiosity to hear this secret account. It is not possible to narrate thoroughly the merit of Bhāgīrathī. Therefore, I shall tell you in brief. Listen with an attentive mind. When one mutters the very soft couple of letters 'Gaṅgā', I think his sin would go away. It gratifies great beings. Gaṅgā is easily accessible everywhere. It is not easily accessible at (these) three places: Gaṅgādvāra, Prayāga, and at the place where Gaṅgā joins the ocean. O sage, all gods inclúding Indra, come to the charming Gaṅgādvāra, and bathe there, offer presents etc. O sage, those human beings, animals, insects etc. that accidentally die there, obtain the highest position.

17-21. O brāhmaṇa, listen to a historical account about this, being told by me. By properly listening to it (a man) gets freed from all sins. Formerly in this world there was a powerful king named Manobhadra, who knew the entire prescribed course of conduct and who was born in the family of Soma. His queen was Hemaprabhā who was a loyal wife, who spoke pleasing words, who was very fortunate, and who was endowed with all

(auspicious) marks. The very powerful king, having killed in battle one and all of his enemies, ruled over the entire earth along with the oceans and islands. That very glorious king once called all his ministers and in the assembly spoke (to them) these words with affection:

Manobhadra said:

22-25. O ministers, I have protected this entire earth. All enemies, with their sons, army and elephants have been killed by me. I looked after members of my family by means of all sacrifices with the accompaniment of presents (to brāhmaṇas). (But now) this power of me has been taken away by (this) mighty old age. I, being weak, am unable to perform certain acts. Royal glory like a lovely but an old woman, full of all ornaments, does not look splendid with a powerless person. As long as women of charming eyes do not desire a king to lose his power, all his enemies on the earth are afraid of him.

26-31a. The earth would abandon an old king, though he is endowed with all virtues, and though he has set his heart upon her, as a wanton lady (though) looked after (by a man leaves him). All virtues are obtained by means of devotion. Great glory is obtained through virtues. Bliss is obtainable through (giving) gifts. The Earth is obtainable through might. A man without might is helpless, and is not firm in taming his enemy. A king who accepts the words of a fool only, delights his enemies. Therefore, O excellent ministers, I, dividing my entire kingdom, desire to give it to my two sons, if you agree.

The ministers said:

31b-36. We agree to these words expressed by you, the wise one, O king. There is no doubt about it.

Then, by the king's order, his two young sons named Vīrabhadra and Yaśobhadra, who were the best, endowed with virtues, spoke pleasing words, were devoted to their father, always calm, strong, eagerly engaged in piety, came to the assembly. Then the king, the best among those who knew politics, suddenly divided his kingdom and gave it to them through curiosity. In the meanwhile, O best brāhmaṇas, a vulture along with his mate

came there and sat in the assembly. Seeing the two (princes) to have come, the two birds were very much delighted.

37a. The king said: "Tell (me), what is your auspicious arrival due to?"

The vulture said:

37b-39. O king, O conqueror, I am a vulture. I have gladly come to see the prosperity of your sons. These two have seen (i.e. faced) a great calamity in their former birth. To see their prosperity in this birth we have come (here).

Hearing the very wonderful words of the vulture, the king, with his mind full of wonder spoke again, O brāhmaṇa.

The king said:

40-41. O vulture, I have heard these very wonderful words from you. How do you know the former account of these two? O best among birds, if you know the former account of these two, then tell it in full.

The vulture said:

42-45. O king, in the age called Dvāpara these two were cāṇḍālas. They were the sons of Satyaghoṣa, and their names were Gara and Saṅgara. O king, once they died in their house. To take them from there Yama's servants with large teeth, having nooses in their hands and numbering thousands of crores came there and fastened these two, inflated with pride, with leather-nooses. And they took them to Yama's abode along a path very difficult to tread upon. Seeing these two, Yama said to Citragupta:

46-47a. "O Citragupta, take into account the entire conduct of these two." By his order Citragupta considered their auspicious and inauspicious acts from the beginning and said to Yama:

Citragupta said:

47b-51. These two large-armed ones, are really (men) of meritorious vows and a great heart. If there is any bad act seen among all acts, it is not giving a present to a brāhmaṇa, after

picking it on their own. O king, due to that act only, these two went to hell. The giver who after picking a gift does not give it to a brāhmaṇa, goes to a fierce hell causing fear to all beings. The giver would not remember the gift; the receiver does not ask for it. Both live in hell as long as the moon and the sun are (in the sky). Therefore, O lord, these two, snatching the wealth of a brāhmaṇa, are great sinners.

52. Let the servants quickly take them to a fierce hell.

53-58. O lord of the earth, then the messengers, with their lips bitten due to anger, threw these two into a fierce hell. O king, on the same day Yama's servants coming to me took me along with my spouse to Yama's abode. O king, listen to the act which I also had done. I shall tell it from the beginning. It causes amazement to the listeners. Formerly I was a brāhmaṇa named Sarvaga, belonging to a great family, living in the Saurāṣṭra country, and master of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. This my glorious, loyal, very fortunate wife named Mañjukaṣā, was born in a pure family. I was mad due to learning, age and means, O glorious one. I, a youth, once mentally disrespected my parents. (I thought:)

59-63. 'I am worthy of being praised in the assembly of many. I am a hermit. I perform all (good) acts. I am wealthy. I am handsome. I am wise. I am engaged in feeding my relatives. But the parents of just a man like me are attached to sinful acts. They are talkative. They are cruel, and strongly desire the company of heretics. My parents have rendered fruitless valour, life, wealth, so also the family, knowledge, fame and all (my) possessions.' O king, repeatedly thinking like this in my mind, I, through disrespect, gave up service to parents, which gives auspicious (results). Due to this act, O king, I was thrown by (Yama's) messengers, by Yama's order, into the hell where the two great sinners (lived).

64-67. O king, listen how long I, along with my wife, lived in this fierce hell with these two sinners. O best king, I experienced the great misery of hell for thousands of crores of yugas and hundreds of crores of yugas. Then, O king, my wife and I were born in the family of vultures, eating the flesh of dead bodies.

These two, O king, who desired to put an end to (their stay in) hell, were born in the family of locusts to experience the fruit of their deeds.

68-77. O king, listen to the deeds these two did in their existence as locusts. I shall tell them, which would amaze the listeners. O king, once a very mighty wind blew. It made the two fly up and dropped them into the very spotless interior of Gaṅgā. These two, of delicate bodies, having fallen into the water of Gaṅgā, instantly met with death removing all sins. Then messengers of charming eyes came to take them. So also aeroplanes endowed with all enjoyments came (there). These two, freed from all sins, and adorned with Tulasī and flowers, got into a divine aeroplane, and went to Viṣṇu's city. O king, they remained there till Brahmā's existence was manifested. Then by Brahmā's order they came to Indra's city. There they enjoyed pleasures difficult to be obtained even by gods. O king, they remained there till the time the very glorious ones were born in your family to enjoy the entire earth. For him who casts his body into Gaṅgā, there is no rebirth. Yet these two, very meritorious ones, were born to enjoy the earth. O king, these two, along with their sons and grandsons, will enjoy the earth for a long time, will meet with death in Gaṅgā, which is difficult to be had even by the meditating saints, and will be absorbed into Viṣṇu.

78-79. Due to my power of recollecting the former existences, I have told you all this former account. These two crest-jewels of the class of kings, have reached this state after having met with death in Gaṅgā. Who will protect the two of us, the wicked ones.

80-87. Disrespect for friends gives men the affliction (to be suffered) in hell. O king, it was seen just in my case. O best brāhmaṇa, absence of devotion to parents gives pain in this world and in the next. In this world it leads to the destruction of wealth and in the next world (i.e. after death) it leads to hell. O king, I think the sin like a brāhmaṇa's murder is better. There is at sometime acquittance from it. But this (misery) is eternal. On the earth men cut off, with the axe of disrespect for their parents, the tree of religious merit, destroying all afflictions, and secured with great trouble. O king, Viṣṇu himself eats whatever is presented into the mouth of the father (and mother), since, O hero,

Viṣṇu is of the form of the father (and mother). Parents are actually deities. Those who serve them day and night, have all fulfilments due to the grace of the lord of the world. Those men who remain (even) for a day without serving their parents live for a thousand kalpas in hell. Therefore, this great misery has come to me now. I do not know when I, along with my wife, go to (i.e. obtain) salvation.

Vyāsa said:

88. Having heard these words of him, and having grasped them, O best brāhmaṇa, the king became delighted and being amazed, spoke again:

The king said:

89-94. O vulture, I have heard these wonderful words from your mouth. But I and these (ministers) do not properly apprehend them.

Then, O best king (?) there was heard a loud voice in the sky: "This is true, true, true. There is no doubt about it." Then, O brāhmaṇa sage, the bird, along with his wife, became as he was before the narration of the greatness of Gaṅgā. Drums were sounded. Best gandharvas sang. Hosts of celestial nymphs danced. Shower(s) of flowers dropped down. A divine aeroplane, endowed with all enjoyments, arrived. The hosts of messengers, sent by (Viṣṇu) the enemy of Kaiṭabha, (also) came (there). Then (the bird) moving everywhere, along with his dear wife forthwith got into the aeroplane and went to Viṣṇu's abode.

95-96. O best brāhmaṇa, the king, having heard about the wonderful act, became, along with his sons and wife, exclusively devoted to the worship of Gaṅgā. In the three worlds there is no holy place like Gaṅgā, by merely uttering the name of which (one) moving everywhere would obtain salvation.

97-98. O best brāhmaṇa, I have narrated to you the greatness of Gaṅgādvāra, which destroys all sins. What else do you desire to hear? The sins of those men who listen to this chapter with great respect in a temple, and of those devotees of the class of brāhmaṇas, who listen to it, perish suddenly.

CHAPTER FOUR

Praṇidhi, Padmāvatī and Dhanurdhvaja

Jaimini said:

1-2. Through your grace I have heard about the greatness of Gaṅgādvāra. Now I desire to listen to the greatness of Prayāga. O sage, also tell me about the greatness of the union of Gaṅgā and the ocean. On the earth none except you is able to tell it.

Vyāsa said:

3-9. O dear, I cannot thoroughly tell about the fruit of (the bath at) Prayāga or at the place where Gaṅgā joins the ocean. O Brāhmaṇa, listen to it in brief. O sage, do all those crores of holy places in the universe attain similarity with Prayāga? All gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva praise (the bath) at the confluence of Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī. Those who bathe there in (the month of) Māgha, when the Sun is in (the Zodiacal sign) Capricornus, never return (to his world) from the world of Viṣṇu. The fruit, O brāhmaṇa, due to bathing at Prayāga in (the month of) Māgha would be a crorefold more than that obtained by the wise by (offering) thousands of crores of cows, (performing) sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice, (giving) gifts of gold of the measure of Meru mountain and other gifts, offering oblations into fire and giving gifts to brāhmaṇas at Kurukṣetra, Puṣkara, Prabhāsa and Gayā. Therefore, Prayāga is the best of all holy places.

10-13. Undoubtedly that inexhaustible religious merit which, O best brāhmaṇa, as told in Vedas, scriptures and Purāṇas, is had by practising a severe penance for a long time, by bathing, giving gifts and observing vows in (the water of) Godāvarī, when the Sun is in the Zodiacal sign Leo, is had by bathing at Prayāga in the month of Māgha. Hear from me who am telling it, about the fruit which a man obtains by fasting at Kāśī on Caturdaśī in the dark half of the month of Phālguna. He, freed from sins committed during crores of existences, and having every form, and emancipating a crore of men (of his family), delights with Śiva.

14-15. A brāhmaṇa gets the same fruit as he obtains by worshipping Viṣṇu for a hundred crores of kalpas at other places, by bathing just once at Prayāga in the month of Māgha and worshipping (Viṣṇu) even for a day, when the Sun is in (the Zodiacal sign) Capricornus. I am telling the truth (and) truth (only). All (that fruit) would be inexhaustible.

16-17. A man delights with Viṣṇu for as many hundred kalpas as many days a man stays there (i.e. at Prayāga) in the month of Māgha. He who has once bathed in the water of Gaṅgā and Yamunā is instantly freed from all sins by seeing it.

18-19. If men desire to cross this ocean of mundane existence very difficult to cross, they should devoutly see (the idol of) Viṣṇu after bathing in Gaṅgā and Yamunā. O brāhmaṇa sage, if men, by offering their body, worship him there, they instantly get whatever they desire. There is no doubt about it.

20-24. In this matter I shall tell you a historical account. Listen to it, hearing which a man is freed from all sins. There was a very wealthy vaiśya named Praṇidhi. He was solely devoted to worshipping deities and guests, O brāhmaṇa. His wife, Padmāvatī by name, was chaste, loyal wife, of a beautiful body, endowed with good character, born of a good family and speaking in a pleasant manner. O best brāhmaṇa, all those virtues which the highest god has produced as fit to be present in the bodies of women, were present in her. O brāhmaṇa, that vaiśya Praṇidhi, having taken much wealth, went for trade at an auspicious time and on an auspicious day.

25-27. Piety springs from wealth. Great glory springs from wealth. A man secures a (noble) family through wealth. What would take place without wealth? Even a friend runs away by seeing a man without wealth. In autumn a cloud without water would be reduced to big pieces. As long as relatives get to eat, they remain (with him). He who has wealth has (i.e. is born in) a (noble) family. He (alone) is intelligent (and) wise.

28-31. A man, without wealth, though living, is like a dead one. He whose mind turns away from attaining religious merit, material wealth and knowledge should be known to be a fool. Greater is the fruit of more (exertion). Piety should always be practised. Wealth should always be earned. Knowledge should always be learnt (i.e. got) by wise men. Wealth and knowledge

increase everyday by giving them (to others). Piety of men does not increase without its being preserved. A man should not abandon even (a piece of) wood or (a blade of) grass after having got them.

32-37a. A man given to storing never sinks. Then that vaiśya Praṇidhi skilled in domestic affairs, put his wife in his house, and went for trade. O brāhmaṇa sage, once his wife taking unguents to rub and cleanse the body with, went along with her friends for bathing. Then (a cāṇḍāla), the resting place of sins, Dhanurdhvaja by name, saw her who had the beauty of an expanding golden lotus, whose face was like a blooming lotus, whose eyes were like those of a young deer, whose breasts were charming, large and raised, bathing as she liked. Seeing the vaiśya-wife that cāṇḍāla, smit with love, and not considering his own figure, laughed and said (these) words:

Dhanurdhvaja said:

37b-40a. O auspicious one, O you having large hips, O you of a charming smile, O you beautiful one, who are you? O dear one, why do you take away my mind with charms of your exuberant youth? O you of large buttocks, O you slender one, you, who are virtuous, should enjoy full happiness with me who am (also) virtuous.

O brāhmaṇa, hearing Dhanurdhvaja's words, her friends, getting angry, and biting their lips, spoke (these) words:

The friends said:

40b-44a. O fool, O wicked one, O you born in the family of the wicked, she will not throw even her foot at (i.e. will not even kick) you. This lady is a loyal wife, highly devoted to religious practices. Those who desire their own happiness do not look at her with an evil eye. Those who are foolish and who are afflicted with the fire of the passion of love, are burnt on seeing the beauty of the face of the wife of another person and the wealth of others. O you of a sinful mind, go away. Do not speak words which are very unbearable. We shall not touch you even with our feet.

Dhanurdhvaja said:

44b-48a. Fie upon this word 'caste', since you have not honoured me knowing all virtues in my cāṇḍālahood (i.e. due to my being a cāṇḍāla)! On reaching gold covered with necklaces and remaining in a pitcher, which man, conversant with the collection of excellences, will not seize it? Therefore, O friends, act in such a way that I shall now secure this young lady. I submit myself to you.

O best brāhmaṇa, to the fool who was repeatedly speaking like this, the friends, with great curiosity produced in them, spoke these words (to him):

The friends said:

48b-53. O you very wicked one, if you indeed long for this young lady then quickly cast your body into the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā.

Looking at one another's face, and laughing, they then took the good man's wife, and entered their houses. Then that cāṇḍāla who had killed thousands of brāhmaṇas, longing for her died in the water of Gaṅgā and Yamunā. Then that cāṇḍāla, remembering his own account, became a strong person, resembling the figure of her husband, and having all his qualities. Then that vaiśya Praṇidhi, having carried out the trade came home on just that auspicious day. The cāṇḍāla also, O brāhmaṇa, entered his house.

54-56. He resembled Praṇidhi in form, age and qualities. Seeing the two, of the same (i.e. similar) figure, who were mines of virtues, she thought (to herself): 'Whose wife am I? Who is my husband?' Then that chaste woman, seeing the pair of husbands, was amazed, and praised god Viṣṇu with words having pleasing letters.

Padmāvatī said:

57-61. I salute Govinda who has endless forms, whose lotus-like feet are worshipped by deities like Indra, who is the lord of deep and abstract meditation, who is desireless among those who know deep and abstract meditation, who is the giver

of devotion, and who is fit to be worshipped by the meditating saints. Salutation to you, the destroyer of Kaiṭabha; salutation to you, the destroyer of Madhu; salutation to you who destroyed the demon Kaṁsa; salutation to you who knocked down Cāṇūra. Salutation to you who took out the Vedas; eternal salutation to you who lifted the earth; salutation to you who are capable of bearing the earth; salutation to you who are the destroyer of the demons. Salutation to you whose feet are washed by the water of Gaṅgā; salutation to you who destroy the kṣatriyas; salutation to you who killed Rāvaṇa's family; salutation to you who destroyed the demons. Salutation to you who denounced sacrifices; salutation to you who destroyed the Mleccha-families; salutation to you seated in the heart-lotus; salutation to you who are an ornament among your enemies (ripudhvaja?).

62-65. O lord, O dear to the cowherdesses, be pleased. O bee to the lotus-face of Lakṣmī, be pleased. O Viṣṇu, be pleased. I constantly salute you. O you lotus-eyed one, be pleased; O you who have the disc in your hand, O you who hold the mace called Kaumodakī in your hand, be pleased. O Viṣṇu, who has held (the conch called) Pāñcajanya, be pleased. I constantly, salute you who hold a lotus. I am constantly roaming, being deluded by you—Keśava, in the curious habitation of the mundane existence, having the darkness of ignorance and the lamp of knowledge. O enemy of the demons, Brahmā, Indra and other excellent gods do not understand your Māyā. (Then) how can I, a human being, understand your Māyā? Kindly remove (this) delusion (taking place) before (you).

Vyāsa said:

66-67. Having heard the praise of (i.e. made by) her, lord Viṣṇu, the master of the world, giving the fruits of the four goals (of human life), took notice of it, and he whose lustre was like that of a crore suns, suddenly manifested himself. She, having looked at (i.e. touched) the ground with her head, saluted the pair of his feet.

68. (She said:) O lord of Lakṣmī, O you who give enjoyment and salvation, salutation to you. Remove the confusion about my husband, of me who am without knowledge.

The lord said:

69-71. O beautiful-bodied one, give up your confusion. Both these are your husbands. O you lady of beautiful hips, always serve them devotedly. That who is your young, very intelligent husband Praṇidhi, has himself become two to enjoy the fruit of pleasure, O chaste lady. O you of beautiful buttocks, you too always enjoy pleasure with them, as Lakṣmī of infinite forms sports with me.

Padmāvatī said:

72. O god, men do not approve two husbands of one woman. O you full of pity, save me who am sunk under the billow of the ocean of shame.

The lord said:

73. O chaste lady, as you are certainly afraid of infamy on the earth, the refore, O you of a beautiful face, come to my city with them.

74-75. Then by the order of the lord, an aeroplane immediately came there and taking the two (with her) she got ready to go to Vaikuṇṭha. She too, while going with her husbands along the path, saw a magnanimous person along with a lady seated in a chariot, O Jaimini.

76-79. He was supported by hosts of messengers, having eyes like lotus-petals, resembling atasī flowers, having four hands, and seated on Garuḍa. That chaste, beautiful lady then asked those messengers of Viṣṇu, of the form of Viṣṇu, "Who is this man seated in the chariot? O magnanimous ones, who are you having lotus-like eyes, all resembling Viṣṇu, having in your hands conches, discs etc.?" Then all those messengers of Viṣṇu, very much delighted, resembling Viṣṇu in valour, laughed and said:

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

80. O chaste lady, we are Viṣṇu's messengers. Taking this man, a meritorious soul, we are going to the high, excellent world.

Padmāvatī said:

81-84. Due to the power of which merit has he acquired such a state? O magnanimous messengers of Viṣṇu, tell it to me.

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

This is a demon named Bṛhaddhvaja. He, causing affliction to the world, lived in a forest etc. He is very powerful and valorous. He kidnapped others' wives, snatched others' wealth, and was an active deceiver. He ate cow's flesh, spoke cruel words, and censured deities. He always did acts that were sinful. O you devoted wife, even in a dream he did not do a virtuous deed.

85-88. O you of large buttocks, this one always tormented by love, getting into a chariot, moves in the sky to kidnap the wife of another man. He, smitten by love forcibly embraces whichever very young woman he sees and wherever he sees her. Once he saw the beautiful wife of a king named Bhīmakeśa (engaged) in sport, and in the prime of youth. Then seeing her bright like a golden lotus, he affectionately said these words to her: "Who are you? What are you doing here?"

89-94. Then that wife of king Bhīmakeśa said: "I, adorned by the name Keśinī and knowing the art of sexual enjoyment, am the wife of king Bhīmakeśa. (But) the king does not even for a moment look at (i.e. care for) me who am conversant with all virtues, who am delighted in love, who am born in his own family, and who am blemishless. I, about whom inquiry is abandoned by the husband, who am grieving over my fate, who am tormented by the fire of separation, always stay here only. O best one, being pleased, please tell me everything: Who are you? How have you come to this garden?" Then he said these words: "O you having a face like the full moon, I am a demon using tricks, and have come here to embrace you. Abandon your angry husband who always finds fault with you. O slender one, resort to me. I shall give you excellent pleasure."

95-99. Then that virtuous (?) wife bound the demon with her creeper-like arms and put her mouth into his (i.e. kissed him). O you of fine hips, having embraced her who got perturbed due to discrimination and excitement, he got along with her into a chariot. With great eagerness they became (i.e. acted like a married) couple. Getting into a chariot with the wind's speed,

they went along the aerial path. Then he spoke these words to her: "O slender one, see, from your husband's country we have come to the place where Gaṅgā joins the Ocean". Then the lady in the chariot, seeing the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean suddenly died due to great fear.

100-102. The demon also seeing the good (?) lady dead, lamented much, and died instantly. By the order of the Garuḍa-bannered (Viṣṇu) we are taking these two, of meritorious deeds and free from sins, to Vaikuṇṭha. Even sinners casting their bodies in water, on ground, or in the air at (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, reach the highest position.

103-107a. The holy place at the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean is difficult to be found in the three worlds. Even a killer of a brāhmaṇa, who observes a fast there on the Ekādaśī day in the month of Māgha in winter becomes purified. There is no doubt about this. Having bathed at the place of the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, and having seen (the idol of) Hari, Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu), and having seen Kārtikeya, rebirth does not take place. Kārtikeya is actually Viṣṇu. The identity between the two is always established. All those who see Kārtikeya, go to (i.e. attain) liberation. Hear (i.e. note) that the holy place at the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean is superior to all (other) holy places. One who dies there in water, on ground or in the air, obtains liberation.

Vyāsa said:

107b-112. O Jaimini, speaking like this, all those messengers of Viṣṇu, taking the two, went, along the aerial path, to Viṣṇu's abode. That (Praṇidhi's) wife, the chaste Padmāvatī, along with the couple of husbands, became assimilated with Viṣṇu, the giver of the four goals of human life, enjoyed all pleasures there, difficult to be obtained; they obtained the highest knowledge and were assimilated with Viṣṇu. Gaṅgā is full of all holy places. Viṣṇu is full of all holy places. Therefore, devotion for Gaṅgā and for Viṣṇu is laid down. Formerly, a king named Mādhava, practised penance for a long time at (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, and along with his wife, got salvation.

Jaimini said:

113. Who is this Mādhava whom you have mentioned? What acts did he do? How did he practise penance? O best one, tell all that to me.

Vyāsa said:

114. Listen to the story of that magnanimous king Mādhava, O brāhmaṇa sage. O very intelligent one, I shall narrate it in brief.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Story of Mādhava and Sulocanā

Vyāsa said:

1-4. There was a city named Tāladhvaja. It resembled the city of gods. It was well-known in all the worlds and was crowded with the hosts of meritorious (persons). There was a king named Vikrama, born of a pure family. He was religious, truthful and devoted to the protection of his subjects. His wife named Hārāvatī was excellent in the world, who had vanquished the moon's lustre by means of her face. In a host of his wives she alone was dear to him, as Gaṅgā is to the Ocean in the host of rivers.

5-8. O dvija, due to fate a son endowed with all good marks was born to her after sometime. The sovereign emperor who knew all holy texts, named him Mādhava according to the rite told in the holy texts. O brāhmaṇa, then that powerful Mādhava, endowed with virtues, crossed, after sometime, the river of all learning. O brāhmaṇa, the king consecrated his son, the worshipper of the host of all deities, as the heir-apparent.

9-10. O brāhmaṇa, one day he, through curiosity, went along with an army of four divisions to a great forest for hunting. Having killed many animals there, he at mid-day strove to go to the city from the forest.

11-16. Mādhava gladly came to his city with his army. He

saw a young woman engaged in bathing in a lake. Her body was visible due to substances and garments fit for bathing. With the beauty of her face she had vanquished the moon. Her beautiful cheeks were shining by means of two golden ear-rings. Her hips were covered by her very long hair; she laughed charmingly. She was the bud of a golden lotus. Her breasts were charming and raised. Her waist was slender like that of a lion; her voice was sweet like that of a cuckoo in spring. The beautiful, charming one, was placed by Cupid as the banner in the kingdom of youths. Seeing her like that in the lonely forest, which man carrying his life (i.e. which living man) would not be influenced by the passion of love?

17-20. Then that son of Vikrama seeing that beautiful one like that, had his heart wounded by Cupid's arrows, and thought: 'I have not seen anyone else like this on the earth. I desire to make my life fruitful by embracing her here. Of all people I am the best due to my age, handsomeness and virtues. I shall today take her even though she is Indra's woman. Who can (publicly) speak about the fault due to kidnapping someone else's wife, since my father is the king?'

21-23. Having thus firmly thought in his mind, the passionate one kept his army away and went to (the place) where she was bathing. There is no wonder that in the world the three, viz. wealth, arrogance and desire of carnal gratification destroy the power of discrimination. His father is the destroyer of sins and protector of righteousness of people. It is pity that the god of love himself deludes the entire world!

24-27. Seeing him coming with a great speed, she who was sporting (all) alone, became very much anxious. 'I think that seeing me, the young one, alone in the forest, he speedily runs to me. All sages say: Righteousness when protected, protects (the people). What will happen here, cannot be known just now. Enemies run to the place where there is none to help (a person). In that case running away is commended. Staying there destroys life.'

28-29. That beautiful woman, thinking like this, and placing the pitcher on the left (side of her) waist, decided through fear to run away from the lake. Then that Mādhava also came in

front of her with a great speed, O brāhmaṇa, and spreading out his hand, stood (before her).

Śrī Mādhava said:

30-35. O excellent lady, O you of a beautiful body, snatching away my heart by means of the power of your excellent youth, you are running away. I who have lost my sense, am tormented. O you of unsteady outer corners of your eyes, O you of a charming body, what is your name? Who is your husband? Have you come from heaven? (For) there is none else like you on the earth. O beautiful lady, O you whose face is like a lotus, you are the best (lady) here (i.e. on the earth). You are endowed with all (auspicious) marks. How do you, like a maid-servant, carry water? On your bosom you always carry golden breasts; and on your waist you carry the water-pitcher. This is wonderful, O you lady of a delicate body. The toes (turned) red on the path very much heated by the sun, at times appear like the buds of the japā (flowers). O you of large buttocks, resort to me with love; O you of a beautiful face, abandon the pitcher. Just on seeing me, your affliction has ended (i.e. would end).

36-38. I am the son, called Mādhava, of king Śrī Vikrama. With full attachment I, of an excellent body, will be yours, O beautiful lady. In the group of my wives you will be my favourite, as the jasmine is to a bee among creepers having good flowers. Or even if, through pride, you transgress my words, I shall not leave you, since I am the son of the king.

Vyāsa said:

39-42. Hearing the words uttered by him, she left the path, and remained with her face hung down. (Then), O brāhmaṇa, she very slowly said: "Even if you will never listen to the words of me, a stranger to you, yet giving up my sense of shame, I will speak to you. O great hero, I am the wife of a kṣatriya Subāhu. I, Candrakalā, am taking water for the worship of deities. The words which you uttered are not becoming to your family. All (men) born in your family are impotent for others' wives.

43-46. I am a lonely woman. You are the majestic dignity of heroes. What glory will be yours by forcibly embracing me here? By embracing the wife of another there would be plea-

sure for a moment only. There will be infamy here (i.e. in this world); the rest (i.e. afterwards there) will be misery for more than a hundred kalpas. O brave one, this is the land of religious rites. Meritorious deeds should he done here. Do not put your mind into (i.e. do not think of) kidnapping the wife of another (man). Desire of sensual enjoyments results from greed. Sin results from desire of sensual enjoyments. Death comes from sin. And even after death there (results) residence in hell.

47-51. All your virtues are in vain. Your existence also is fruitless, (since) you, being influenced by lust, long for another's wife. My body is produced from flesh, urine, feces, bones. Even seeing this, are you influenced by Cupid, not afraid of your citizens, because you are born in a royal family? Do you not see Yama, the god of death, roaring over your head? The fish seize the fish-hook; (but) all of them are ignorant. How do you, even being a wise one, seize a fish-hook on reaching it? In the three worlds discrimination is the highest abode of riches. Indiscretion is the highest abode of miseries."

52-55. O Jaimini, having heard the words spoken by her, Mādhava who was deluded by passion of love, again stooping humbly, said: "O dear one, protect me whose mind is shattered by the volley of the arrows of your glances. Protect me. I am seeking your refuge. A woman is most dear as long as she is in youth. A golden bee does not go to a lotus-plant whose fibres have become bud-like (i.e. contracted). O you deer-eyed one, be pleased. Protect me, your own servant. On hearing your insipid words, my heart breaks."

Candrakalā said:

56-57. O great hero, give up your grief. Listen to my good words. I shall tell you about my mental agony which is capable of removing your grief. In the Plakṣa island, beyond the ocean, there is a well-known city named Vikhyātā, resembling Indra's city.

58-59. There lives the king named Guṇākara, who is the best (king), very glorious, endowed with all virtues, and who, the strong one, resembles fire in valour. His wife, Suśīlā by name, was endowed with all (good) marks. By her service she had won over her husband's heart; (and) she was kind to people.

60-65. O hero, her daughter, named Sulocanā, was born from her womb. By her beauty she conquered all hosts of beautiful ladies. Who on the earth is able to describe her beauty and the heap of her virtues? The creator created another (woman) on seeing her beauty. O great hero, O prince, I was her maid-servant. I, a beautiful woman, have through (bad) back, come to your land. There is no (other) beautiful lady like her. There is no (other) handsome man like you. If you desire heavenly enjoyments, then accept her in marriage. Does a strong lion not fix (his mind) to secure, with effort, a female elephant, after having discarded a female fox even though she has come near him? In the world an industrious man obtains great wealth. Tell me which work is (accomplished) without effort, in the world.

Vyāsa said:

66. Having heard those words of her, Mādhava, Viṣṇu's worshipper, put away his passion of love and thus spoke to the beautiful woman:

Mādhava said:

67-68. O lotus-eyed one, by what mark shall I know the girl? Tell me that, O you of beautiful hips, if you favour me. How can I, an ignorant man, go to the other side of the ocean? How shall I have a meeting with her?

Candrakalā said:

69-71. On her left hip is a mark resembling a sesamum-seed. By just seeing that you will recognise the beautiful-eyed one. In your stable there is the son of the noble horse (of Indra) named Uccaiḥśravas. He is an excellent horse, going (i.e. able to go) everywhere. By mounting upon that best horse, having wind's speed, you will speedily go to the (other) end of the ocean, since the earth is easy to subdue (i.e. to tread upon).

72-74. Then the king's son, along with his army, came home. That chaste woman Candrakalā also being very pleased, went home. Thinking over her words, Mādhava, with his mind full of anxiety hastily and suddenly went to the stable. He, the son of Vikrama, endowed with valour, joined there the palms of his

hands, and said to the very powerful horses endowed with good qualities:

Mādhava said:

75-77. All of you are noble and endowed with all (auspicious) marks. Which horse is able to take me beyond the ocean?

Then all those horses, on hearing his words, with one another turned their faces towards the ground through fear, and were not ready to take him. One horse, endowed with all (auspicious) marks, went in front of Mādhava, and spoke these words:

78-83. "I shall undoubtedly take you beyond the ocean. But, O prince, listen to my agonies: I eat what is left over after others have eaten. I am bound with cords having crores of knots. O hero, even in a dream, I, a strong one, have not seen grains of rice. Then, O prince, what can be said about other pleasures? O hero, the valour of the good would not be possible without respect (i.e. unless they are respected). How can fire be produced without wood (only) with ghee etc.? I am like this. All these are endowed with decorations. But dogs, (though they are) adorned with all ornaments, are not like lions. O king, O lord, in a moment only I can go round the earth with the mountains, islands and oceans."

Mādhava said:

84-88. O horse, forgive all censures inflicted on you by my father. From today you are the chief (horse) in my stable. In (the mind of) the best man torment given by others does not always abide. Water, heated by fire, would be cool in a moment. Sugarcane causes satisfaction even for a moment due to its sweetness.

Having spoken thus, the prince saluted the horse. And then, at an auspicious moment, that brilliant Mādhava, along with his servant called Praceṣṭa, mounted on the back of the horse, and crossing the ocean, went to the city (of Vikhyātā) which was endowed with all excellences, was like the city of Indra, and bright due to the rows of great mansions.

89. Seeing there, a good lady, a female gardener, present nearby Mādhava, with a smiling face, uttered these soft words, O brāhmaṇa:

90-93. "O old lady, O mother, I am a traveller. O unknown one, I, a rich man, named Mādhava, desire to stay in your house for a day." That woman, (a female gardener,) seller of perfumes, who was hospitable, took the guest, and he being delighted, very devoutly entered her house. O brāhmaṇa, she treated him with respect, according to the manner told (in holy texts). O brāhmaṇa, Mādhava, with his mind full of anxiety, passed that night. O brāhmaṇa, when the bright morning dawned, Mādhava told the (female gardener), seller of perfumes, his entire mission.

94-98. On that auspicious day only, the queen arranged for the rite of anointing Sulocanā with fragrant substances etc. (as a preliminary to her marriage). O brāhmaṇa, having heard about that rite of anointing the princess, Mādhava sank in the mass of the billows of the ocean of grief. 'The rite of anointing her with perfumes etc., longing for whom I left my kingdom, I abandoned my relatives and crossed the great ocean, will take place today only. All the efforts I have made up to now are fruitless. But people will not say that he, fascinated by the sweet one, went over the entire (distance). He who well knows what ought to be done, would not have his exertion foiled.'

99-108. Repeatedly thinking like this in his mind, Mādhava wrote (and put) a love-letter into the garland, flowers, etc. (taken to Sulocanā by the female perfumer): "O maiden, I am the son, named Mādhava, of Vikrama, the magnanimous emperor of Tāladhvaja. O maiden, a female servant of you, Candrakalā by name, lives there. Formerly, the host of your virtues was narrated by her to me. With my heart attached to the host of your virtues, I, having mounted upon a horse, crossed the ocean and came to your city. O maiden Sulocanā, now choose me as your husband, since in this ocean of the mundane I seek your refuge, (and) since no other man knows you (to be) virtuous. A bee alone, and not a frog, knows the virtues of a lotus-plant. So also not one white cloud only appears in the sky (i.e. Many white clouds appear in the sky). But the lotus-plant chooses none else but the moon." Then the prince, handed over that letter, along with a golden ring, to the female gardener. Then the perfumer, putting that letter, along with the ring, into a garland of flowers, went quickly to the princess. Having presented that garland of flowers to her, she went a little distance away

from her through fear, and stood there with the palms of her hands joined.

109-118a. The very clever princess then saw the letter along with the ring, and read it from the beginning. The princess who was amazed, also wrote, on the backside of the letter, its reply: "O prince, O you of large arms, I have read all the words that you wrote. O best one, read these my words fitting (to your letter). Today will take place the rite of anointing with fragrant substances etc. (preliminary to marriage); and my marriage will certainly take place tomorrow. Nobody in the world will disregard what is approved by one's father. In case of (a piece of) work which is accomplished with difficulty people should not exert themselves too much. If the work succeeds then no exertion is (felt), but if it does not succeed, then there is exertion (i.e it is felt). Yet, listen to (the means) by which you will (be able to) secure me, for which you have even crossed the ocean. I have to go round this Vidyādhara (chosen as the) groom (for me). Adorned with many ornaments and with my left arm raised I shall go before (i.e. to) him. The hero, would stand facing me. He who is able to take me (away) will be my husband. This is the truth, the truth only, that I have written in the letter. Otherwise it is not possible to transgress the well-fixed rite."

118b-119a. Writing this the maiden handed over (the letter) to her only. She too, taking that letter went to Mādhava.

119b-121. Mādhava, having read what she had written in the letter, again wrote (another letter) with great impatience, O brāhmaṇa: "O virtuous maiden born in a lucky family, all that you have said (in your letter) is just what I had (also) thought. There is no doubt about it." Then, O brāhmaṇa, that female gardener again approached her.

122-125a. And she gave Sulocanā that note (i.e. the letter) of beautiful letters. Then perceiving that her letter was accepted by the prince, she was very much delighted, and was repeatedly amazed, O brāhmaṇa. 'He will undoubtedly do it (i.e. accept me) as he has given his assent. Then is that man Mādhava Indra himself? A husband is always a receptacle of love in this world and the next. Even without seeing him he is respected by me as my husband.'

125b-132. Thinking like this, and sighing again and again,

that chaste lady went with her friends to the perfumer's house under the pretext of (taking) a bath. That respectable perfumer, seizing the maiden with her hand, showed her Mādhava sleeping on a bed. The maiden seeing him resembling Cupid horripilated, and observed his entire great body. The pair of her eyes, merged in (i.e. fixed on) whichever part of the body of him, did not move elsewhere, as it found it difficult to glance anywhere else. (She said:) "He is actually god of love or (Kṛṣṇa) Devakī's son, or actually Śarva, the lord of Pārvatī and the controller of all objects of senses. With such form a man is not born in the world. The life of a deer-eyed one with this one as her lord is fruitful. Did the creator, being influenced by my devotion, create him (as a man) with great effort, when I was born as a daughter? From today this one alone is my lord. There is no doubt about it."

133a. Speaking like this, she decided to go home.

133b-135. The perfumer (the female gardener) said: "O maiden, O good one, you should also keep in mind this consideration. A man does not look as handsome during sleep* as he actually is. O you deer-eyed one, (even) in his sleep (i.e. while he is asleep) all the godly signs like joy, (characteristic) bend in the body, gentle eyes and a peculiar smile (are seen). Though addressed, he will not certainly get up (as is clear from) his lips being bitten (i.e. closed)."

136-137. She slowly touched** his hand with her hands (and said:) "Listen, the princess has courageously come (to see you)." Hearing that Mādhava too, with his mind overcome with confusion, got up and politely said these words to her:

Mādhava said:

138-139. O maiden, my existence is fruitful; my effort is fruitful, that I have actually seen your lotus-like face. O maiden, with all your youth, choose me as your husband. O beautiful one, in the world there is no other groom proper for you than me.

Sulocanā said:

140-141a. O fortunate one, due to my great luck you would

**nindayā* is obviously a misprint. It should be *nidrayā*. (Ed.)

***adarśayat* is perhaps a misprint for *amarśayat*. (Ed.)

be my lord. The words that I uttered are very reliable. O glorious one, order me. I shall go home.

Mādhava said:

141b-143a. If I speak 'wait', O maiden, it would be arrogance (on my part). The word 'go' does not come from my mouth. Having thought for yourself, O beautiful-bodied one, do what is proper. Since the words are true, you will be very much devoted.

143b-151. Thus addressed by him, the maiden, being delighted, went home. Mādhava, surrounded by many attendants, stayed there only. The charming Vidyādhara just remained as the groom. All the men there, adorned with garlands and sandal, and wearing divine garments, shone. In that city at places there was singing, at places there was dancing, and at places there was a row of lamps (put) by someone. The ten quarters were filled with the neighing of the groups of horses, the trumpets of elephants and the delightful notes of birds. O Jaimini, the entire atmosphere was full of hosts of various banners and royal mansions. Some blew conches, some sounded large and (small) drums, so also the sweet(-sounding) musical instruments etc. Then all young ladies, with lotus-buds, and with faces resembling the moon, sang good, charming songs. The ground there appeared like a maiden, due to the garlands dropping down on account of mutual friction, and due to sandal flowing on account of perspiration.

152-155. The beautiful Sulocanā, surrounded by relatives, mounted upon a seat made of gambhārī-wood, and went to an excellent place. In the meanwhile Vikrama's son (Mādhava), asleep on the bed, did not, due to (his ill-)luck, know about the marriage of Sulocanā, of beautiful eyes. Those that are deluded by hundreds of tricks of the creator, are not happy in the world. Therefore, this man (Mādhava) forgot his own agreement, and slept happily. A lotus-plant that leaves the forest through fear of fire and enters water, is burnt (i.e. bitten) there by frost-fire. Whatever is one's fate cannot be changed.

156-158. Let people recite the entire holy texts like that of the Veda. Let them serve a king. Let them practise severe penance

everyday. Yet prosperity does not go to the luckless. Pains and pleasures remain over (one's) head. O best one, they come at the time of others (i.e. Pains come when pleasures are expected and vice versa). Praceṣṭa, seeing the unhappy Mādhava sleeping, and knowing the agreement between the two, thought:

159-163. 'Fie upon this prince! Deluded by destiny's trickery, he, forgetting his agreement, enjoys sleep. That maiden now near the groom (Vidyādhara) would have been unhappy. What would happen if she is taken (by him)? The agreement with her will be fruitless. O sinful one, keeping sleep over your head, remain (here only). Mounting upon the horse I would carry away that beautiful lady. With a great difficulty does one obtain a gem of a maiden and a jewel. Then what is the use of serving this wicked Mādhava? Kings are served (by men) with full devotion for money. If that itself has gladly come (to me), why should I have the trouble of (rendering) service?'

164-168a. Having thought like this, and having mounted upon the horse, Praceṣṭa went, along the aerial path, to the place where the princess was. Having gone round the bridegroom keeping him to her right, and remembering her agreement, she had stood before the Vidyādhara after raising her left hand (i.e. with her left hand raised). Having seized the maiden's hand, the very powerful Praceṣṭa very quickly put her on the horse's back. Taking the princess to the very beautiful city of Kāñcī, and seeing it, Praceṣṭa, with the fear in his mind gone away, and waving his hand, hurriedly said (to her):

Praceṣṭa said:

168b-174a. See this city named Kāñcī, which is near the seashore, which is well-known everywhere, and which gives happiness to all men. O you having a face like the moon, here there is no fear of either that hero Mādhava or the Vidyādhara. O beautiful lady, give extinction, accomplished by your pitcher-like breasts and your hands, to this row of flames of the fire of lust, sticking to the fuel (burning) in my heart. The bee of my mouth would now desire (i.e. now desires) to drink the honey in (i.e. from) the charming lotus of your mouth. O dear one, who waits for one about whom nothing is known? God of love strikes me

with his arrows due to the conduct of your charming body. O dear one, protect me, protect me. I have sought your refuge.

The beautiful lady, with her entire body burnt with anger born of grief, seeing the fool, speaking like this thought in her mind:

174b-179a. 'Is this fool, of wicked acts, named Praceṣṭa, written on my forehead (i.e. destined to be my husband)? Oh, I am doomed. Where are my mother, my father, and Vidyādhara —the groom? This one has brought me. Fie upon this doing of the creator! In the world people always fully entertain pride. (But) the creator knows (how) to cut the tree of pride with the axe of exertion. Yet the prudent have recommended four ways out of a calamity: courage, fearlessness coming after that (etc.).' Mentally observing like this, the maiden, expert in all acts, spoke to Praceṣṭa with words of soft letters:

Sulocanā said:

179b-183a. O hero, make your mind steady. I am an unmarried girl. Having embraced me, O wicked-minded one, how will you go? O hero, accept me in marriage (performed) according to the manner laid down in the holy texts. I shall serve you as your maid. What doubt is there? You are my life, my friend, my ornament, and my kinsman. Do you not know that women have no other resort (than their husbands)? Bring objects fit for marriage for (our) marriage. Quickly accept my hand, O you lazy one.

183b-185. Having heard her words, tough within but soft without like a badari-fruit, the fool was very much delighted. The wicked-minded one, putting the maiden at a place on the horse, came to that city to fetch the marriage-string fastened round the wrist. Having thus recommended the rite to him, she thought:

186-194. 'Since the fool, being delighted, and leaving me, has gone what should I do now? Where should I go now? Where should I stay now? How shall I protect myself from this great peril? If I stay here, what then will they (i.e. people) say? Going

to a holy place, and with a desire for a birth in the other world, I shall meet death, since it will promote my happiness. Remembering me even for a moment, this fool, so also the Vidyādhara and Mādhava—the three—will not survive. If I live, their life will be preserved. If I die, all the three will die. When these men will cast their life for me, then I shall indeed be responsible for their death. Now at the holy places lord Viṣṇu should be worshipped. When he is pleased, all happiness will come to me. When life perishes, everything will perish. When it remains everything will be accomplished bit by bit. Does not a very beautiful lotus plant that has survived (during) the night, obtain the union with an excellent bee with a mass of fragrant flowers, when the sun with hot rays has put away the moon?'

195-196. O best among the wise, having thus thought in her heart, that beautiful lady mounted upon that very speedy horse, and went to practise penance at the meeting-place of the Ocean and Gaṅgā. In that excellent, auspicious holy place, the meeting place of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, lived a king, named Suṣeṇa, born in the family of Soma (the moon).

197-200. She thought in her mind to go to that king's assembly: (She thought): 'How should I, a young lady, see the king? Around my wrist are (tied) the marriage-threads along with dūrvā grass. I am a young maiden without any company, and mounted upon horse. Indeed my behaviour will cause wonder in one's mind. Concealing myself (i.e. my true nature) I shall go to the king's assembly.' With magical power she became one of (i.e. turned herself into) the figure of a man. O Jaimini, she entered the king's assembly, like that of the assembly of gods.

201. Seeing him (i.e. Sulocanā in a man's garb), an affluent one, having a (missile called) śakti in his hand, seated upon a horse, coming (to him), the king himself asked him: "Who are you? Whence have you come?"

202-204. Having heard these words of him, that maiden in a man's figure, saluted the friendly king, the refuge of the good people. "O lord, I am a king's son, named Vīravara. I have now come to your kingdom for my livelihood. I shall accomplish whatever mission is impossible to be accomplished. When I am there, my lord will be nowhere defeated."

CHAPTER SIX

Happy End of the Story of Mādhava and Sulocanā

Tha king said:

1. O you of large arms, stay here only, in my very auspicious kingdom. I shall undoubtedly look after your livelihood.

2-6. Then, O brāhmaṇa, Vīravara, with his mind set upon serving him, constantly stayed there, in the vicinity of the king. Once in his city, a rhinoceros, named Bhīmanāda, continuously agitated all his subjects, O Jaimini. To kill him, the king angrily sent him. Then Vīravara, with people, went to kill that rhinoceros. That powerful (Vīravara) saw that rhinoceros, of the size of a mountain, with his mouth fearful due to the fangs, sleeping on the ground. Making his horse move in the atmosphere that Vīravara angrily spoke to the rhinoceros with a voice deep like that of a cloud:

7-10. "O wicked one, those trees of sins that you have acquired, have fructified, as trees are when they reach the (proper) season (i.e. in the proper season). In Yama's abode you will see all the beings which you, the sinful one, had devoured in this kingdom. O wicked one, abandon your sleep. Look at me, your killer. What is the use of this sleep to you? You will have 'the great sleep' (i.e. death)." Then that very powerful one also, with eyes red due to anger, with his entire body greyish due to dust, abandoned his sleep and got up.

Bhīmanāda said:

11-13. O wicked one, do not be proud. (Very little) has remained (of the span) of your life. Who is free just on seeing me? As a moth would enter the row of the flames of a burning fire, so you will fall into the heap of (i.e. the large) fire of my anger.

He (i.e. Vīravara), looking at him who was talking like this, uttered a 'hum' sound and burnt him with great anger.

14-15. Then the rhinoceros, shaking the entire earth, and full of (i.e. making) a thunder-like noise, fell dead on the ground.

O brāhmaṇa, seeing the rhinoceros fallen (dead) on the shore (of the place of the union) of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, he proceeded to go in the vicinity of (i.e. to) the king.

16-18. O brāhmaṇa sage, while going he saw on the path a noble (man) blazing with lustre, and as it were another sun. (He was) accompanied by Viṣṇu's messengers, (was) adorned with tulasī-garlands, wore divine garments, was riding in a celestial chariot, and had a smiling face. That Vīravara thus asked him with devotion: "Who are you? Whence have you come? Where are you going? Tell it to us."

The man said:

19-23. O girl who has put on a man's dress, listen to my account. If you desire to hear it, I shall gladly tell it. Formerly I was a king, wild fire of the family of the Caura dynasty. I was known as Dharmabuddhi, devoted to all religious practices. I performed all sacrifices; (gave) all (kinds of) presents. I protected the earth for fourteen thousand years. By (i.e. on listening to) the words of a heretic, I being angry, seized the land of a brāhmaṇa, which was never (before) polluted. Due to that offence of me, Viṣṇu himself angrily took away just at that moment all my royal glory.

24-32. O good lady, I whose wealth was lost, whose mind was burnt by the fire of grief, was subdued by king Yama within a few days. Seeing me, Citragupta brought that action of me to light. He said to the lord, god Yama, Sun's son, of a charming smile and gait: "This is king Dharmabuddhi. He has always done meritorious acts. He has (committed) some sin. Hear it. I shall tell it. Advised by heretics, he took away the royal grant of a brāhmaṇa. Due to that act only, he will have a place in the hell, difficult to be crossed. O Sun's son, he who cuts off the livelihood of a person is guilty of (the sin of committing) his murder. This is decided in the holy texts. Therefore, this king, the killer of a brāhmaṇa, is a sinner. His place is in hell for the period of a hundred crores of kalpas. O king, he who would snatch the land given by himself, or by someone else, goes to (and stays in) hell along with a crore (members) of his family. No atonement for him who would take away the land of a deity or a brāhmaṇa is seen for a period of hundred crores of kalpas. He who protects

the land given by others, obtains religious merit which is a crore times more than that of the giver."

33-37. Then by Yama's order I ate pus and earth and always committed harm to beings in (my) existence (as a rhinoceros) in (this) kalpa. I, a wicked one, killed thousands of crores cows, brāhmaṇas and other beings also. O good lady, impelled by Yama, you killed me, born in the stock of the rhinoceros, and having no abode. The holy place of the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean is difficult to be obtained even by gods; dying on even a dry ground there, will give me liberation. O you of large buttocks, go. You will undoubtedly get happiness. You will soon see your husband.

Vyāsa said:

38-40. Having heard those very wonderful words of him, the maiden saluted his feet. The king Dharmabuddhi then got into a chariot and went to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, that hero Vīravara also went to the king's assembly. And the king having learnt that the fiercely valorous rhinoceros was dead, gave him (i.e. Vīravara) his daughter Jayantī in marriage.

41-43. Having accepted that girl Jayantī, (Vīravara) in a man's form decided to practise penance at (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean. O best brāhmaṇa, having bathed in the morning at (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, she would worship lord Nārāyaṇa with songs, musical instruments and dances. O best brāhmaṇa, that excellent lady, ate fleshless food fit to be eaten during days of fast or ate fruits, or sometime fasted also.

44-47. (Praceṣṭa thought:) 'Who, seeing her all alone, has seized her on the earth? (Or) has that excellent lady, finding me to be (a) mean (man), mounted upon the horse and gone to her kingdom? Is that princess dead due to the separation of Mādhava or of Vidyādhara, since she would not resort to any other man?' That servant, Praceṣṭa, on her death (i.e. taking her to be dead), went at will. He very much lamented there and grieved very much. Desiring to die he came to (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean.

48. Having bathed at (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, and having adorned himself with the earth (from the

root) of a tulasī-plant, Praceṣṭa, after having joined the palms of his hands, said these (words) to (Gaṅgā) Bhīṣma's mother:

49. "O mother, I shall now cast my body into your pure water, so that you will make Sulocanā my wife."

50-58. Her servants took him who was repeatedly speaking like this, after binding him with a noose, to the learned assembly. The very fierce servants tormented Praceṣṭa by Vīravara's order and put him who was alarmed, into a prison. O best brāhmaṇa, at this time only on this wonderful deed being seen, there was a very loud wailing in his kingdom. O best brāhmaṇa, having heard about this wonderful deed, that king Guṇākara, who was inflamed, came there and said this (?). O best brāhmaṇa, at that time the king, overcome by grief, put at every place in the city, men with quivers, warriors who fight from a chariot, soldiers armed with shields, with swords, bowmen, lancers in thousands of crores for protection. All the warriors of unlimited valour, ordered by him, quickly and angrily stood in the city to protect their lord. Through fear, all singers abandoned (singing) songs, dancer abandoned dances, musicians abandoned (their) musical instruments. Then, O brāhmaṇa-sage, the king called his ministers, and, with his mind overpowered by grief, asked them: "What is this?"

The ministers said:

59. O lord, this is a wonderful action. It was never seen nor heard of before. Where has he gone when so many men were seeing (him)?

60-61. Someone said: "Having come to the earth due to Lakṣmī's curse, she, of her own accord, has vanished in your palace." "That lovely lady, full of tricks, lived in your house through trickery. Having shown her trick, she has gone," thus said others.

62. Others said: "The lovely lady, endowed with all (auspicious) marks, will come again also from where Indra, of an excellent body (comes, i.e. from heaven)."

63. Some said: "Thinking her face to be like himself, the Moon took her to be himself and took her for observing her well."

64-65. Some said: "That virtuous lady, having long clothes, and with her face resembling the full moon, has been erroneously seized by the Moon. She, with a face like a blooming lotus, with bud-like breasts and lotus-stalk-like open hands with the fingers spread, has been (struck) by quarter-elephants, mistaking her for a lotus-plant."

66. Some said: "Having created her having beauty and excellences, the Creator took her to create, after seeing her, another lady like her, O king."

67. Some said: "O king, you have conquered all the quarters. She has gone to heaven to vanquish divine ladies by her beauty."

68. The ministers having thus looked at one another's face, became silent, inactive, and nervous.

69-71. The king saying, "O Sulocanā, leaving me, where have you gone?" fell unconscious on the ground. O best brāhmaṇa, seeing the king fallen (unconscious), there was a loud wailing due to grief in that city. There was an echo of the wailing, O brāhmaṇa. There was a conjecture among the people there that the quarters were crying.

72. All the ministers took the king whose body was greyish due to dust and whose hair was loose, and quickly went to the palace.

73. Then that Vidyādhara, born of Śrī Vikramadeva, embraced her seat and wept with a piteous sound:

74-77. "O dear one, O you having tremulous eye-corners, O you having the lustre of a golden flower, O you of a charming face, where have you gone after dropping me into the ocean of grief? O dear one, what fault of me, did you, the faultless one, note, that you, O you having a lotus-like face, O you good one, are not appearing before me? O good one, even for a moment I shall not live without you. Therefore, appear before me, and save my life. If I do not obtain you, superior even to my life, (then) O good one, what is the use of wealth, people, friends, riches or home to me?"

78-79. O brāhmaṇa sage, having uttered such and other very piteous words, he, deciding to die due to his grief, went to (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean. There he bathed in the Gaṅgā-water mixed with the water of the Ocean,

offered oblation to the Sun and saluted mother (Gaṅgā, and said):

80-82. "O Gaṅgā, O goddess, O mother, I am casting my body in your pure water. You will do that by which I shall again get her." Then, O brāhmaṇa, the angry, excellent servants of Vīravara, took him to the law fit for him. Then Vīravara said (to him): "Who are you? Wherefrom have you come? Why do you cast your body here? Tell it to me."

83-88. Having heard these words of him, that Vidyādhara told the entire story, causing wonder to the listeners. "And there is no doubt that you are the greatest among the foolish people. That maiden was a female gandharva, a demoness, a female serpent or a female kinnara. She had come (to the earth), as it were, through a curse. Therefore, she vanished of her own accord. That maiden of the form of a deity went to the abode of gods. How can you see her again? Can the wicked crows, though powerful, drink the moon's nectar, fit to be drunk by the cakoras (only). What cannot be obtained can never be obtained. Whatever is fit to be obtained is (alone) obtained (by people). Some people know this; (and so) they are not deluded. A daughter is given (in marriage) by someone, and accepted by someone.

89-94. A groom gets that girl (as his wife) who was such a girl in his former life (also). The purpose of (having) a wife is to have sons. The purpose of (having) a son is (to receive) piṇḍas (from him at the śrāddha ceremony). For this purpose only the wise take a wife. A woman gets as is given by her in this world. The humming bee would put up with a lotus-creeper during the night. (But) even a handsome husband would not please women. Even though the sun is there a bee would drink the honey (from the lotuses) of a lotus-creeper. For a man (these) are matters for laughter: always thinking about women, indifferent to devotion for Viṣṇu, and casting the body (i.e. committing suicide) due to certain afflictions. All these, viz. the wife, the sons, the brother, the country (of one's birth), the kinsmen can be obtained again. But life cannot be had again. You did not give up the objects of senses. You did not do pious acts.

95-98a. O fool, when the present (existence) has gone the future existence is difficult to secure. Due to the sense of mineness, viz. (this is) my mother, (this is) my father, this is my wife,

my wealth, the life of men becomes fruitless." O Jaimini, thus admonished properly by that Vīravara, he gave up his dejection and remained there only. Then that female perfumer, laughing (herself) went home. And having gone (home), she saw Mādhava, who was asleep.

The female perfumer said:

98b-99. Get up, get up, O wicked-minded one. Your roaming about would be useless. That maiden has disappeared of her own accord at the time of her marriage."

Hearing her words like these, that Mādhava got up.

100-101. Being overcome by great grief, he rolled on the ground. (He said to himself:) "It is not the fault of the girl, nor of Vidyādhara. It is entirely my fault only, since I had the company of the mean. The Creator does not give happiness to men when they have the company of the mean.

102-111. I have realised just this, since this is my fate. Even a great (being) does not at all obtain happiness in the company of the mean: Śiva became naked, and had broken (pieces of objects) as his ornaments, due to his contact with evil spirits. A mean man, entering a hiding place, longs for a woman, riches etc. Having had some attachment Kārtikeya became six-faced. A mean man, having heard about the virtue of the good, instantly sinks down. He goes to listen to a fault which then would become of a hundred forms. A wise man, desiring his good, should not go to the mean. Even for a moment a wise man should not go to the mean. A wise man does not move even a step with the mean. He who takes the words of the mean to be reliable, instantly sinks down. If he gets to listen to a fault, he carefully comes to listen to it. Then getting an opportunity, he, laughing loudly, manifests it. Those whose minds are controlled, have one (i.e. the same) thing in their mind, in their speech and in their action. (But) the wicked have one thing in mind, another in their speech and (still) another in their action. When that girl, that princess will marry, then there will not be the slightest affliction in my mind. (So also I shall not be sorry) if the girl, endowed with all (good) marks, has gone to heaven. (If) she is taken away by the mean (Praceṣṭa), then there would be unbearable

grief in my mind. I am seeing her, of an excellent face, as it were, drawn in a picture at every place.

112-118a. I who am alive, cannot forget her. If the good lady has gone to the bosom of the mean one (i.e. is held in his bosom by the mean one), then she will not live (even) for a moment. Due to the intense grief on her account, that Vidyādhara also will not live. To secure her I had left my country as I had left my mother and my father. Undoubtedly I should cast my life like that only. To obtain her again, I shall abandon my life at (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean." Making such a firm decision, he proceeded to go. At this time only, that very intelligent Mādhava, after having obtained the unguent for the feet from the best sage Nārada, went to (i.e. reached) (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, after a few days. Having bathed in the water at (the union of) the Gaṅgā with the Ocean, he worshipped Viṣṇu. Then Mādhava, adorned with the garlands of tulasī-leaves, and with the palms of his hands joined, said to that best river, Jahnu's daughter:

Mādhava said:

118b-122a. O goddess, I, who am suffering grief, shall abandon my body. You will give that beautiful girl to me (as my wife) in my next birth.

Having spoken like this, and having saluted Gaṅgā, the mother of the three worlds, he proceeded to get into the deep water (of the river). O brāhmaṇa sage, Vīravara seized the prince by his back, and having speedily come, along with his men to the (king's) assembly, and resorting to love (i.e. affectionately) looked at the prince of praiseworthy beauty. Then he, being asked by Vīravara, "Who are you? How (i.e. why) do you cast your body here?" said to Vīravara:

Mādhava said:

122b-127. I am the son of king Vikrama, named Mādhava. Once I, along with my army, went for hunting to a fierce forest. In the vicinity of the city there was a lake beautiful due to lotuses. I who was lustful, saw there a lonely, beautiful woman. That beautiful woman, named Candrakalā, made a reference of

Sulocanā (as living) on the earth to me, overcome by passion of love. Then mounting upon a horse, and crossing the ocean, I, along with my servant called Praceṣṭa, went to that city. On that day only the excellent (rite of the) application of perfumes etc. (as a preliminary to the marriage-rite) to her (was to take place). Hearing that I sent (her) a ring. What she also wrote on the back of the excellent letter, sent along with the ring by me, is told (now):

128-130. "O best one, there is the son of king Śrī Trivikrama-deva, called Vidyādhara. My father will give me to him in marriage. (The right of) the application of perfumes etc. will take place today; and my marriage will certainly take place tomorrow. Yet I shall tell you the means by which you (can) obtain me. I (shall) remain with my left hand raised, and facing the bride-groom. He, who can take me is undoubtedly my husband."

131. Having written that letter the maiden gave it into the hand of the female perfumer. That female perfumer also gave that excellent letter to me.

132-133. Praceṣṭa, facing me, heard about the condition, and, mounting on the horse, took her (away). I was overcome by sleep. Listen, due to this affliction, (and) in order to secure her again, I am keeping awake according to the manner (laid down in the scriptures), O good one.

134-139. Thus addressed, that maiden, in a man's form, appointed many foot-soldiers for his protection, and she, laughing, went to the harem. Then, having put on a woman's dress and adorned with various ornaments, she sent her maid-servant to fetch the prince. Having come (to the harem) by her order, the prince saw that chaste lady, as it were, Lakṣmī incarnate. That girl, with her body graced with horripilation, got up from the golden seat, and saluted his feet, O brāhmaṇa. Then that very intelligent prince, securing the marriage-thread there only, married the girl according to the gandharva-type of marriage. That prince sprinkled with the streams of the water of her love and sporting with her, passed the night there only.

140-145. Then when the day broke that chaste lady having eyes like those of a female deer, told Mādhava the whole account from the beginning. Then that chaste Sulocanā, taking that

princess Jayantī and Mādhava, went to Suṣeṇa's assembly. Hearing (from) the girl (the account), the king, being delighted, gave to him in marriage Sulocanā and Jayantī. That king, highly devoted to piety and very much pleased, gave him as the dowry half of his kingdom and hundreds (of coins) of gold. Then that prince, having fashioned a beautiful house, lived in that most holy place, O brāhmaṇa. Then, in the meanwhile, Mādhava, having brought Praceṣṭa, kept in the prison, to the assembly, thought:

146-149. 'I shall not protect this evil-minded, cruel man, treacherous to his master, this fool, the greatest enemy. A cruel man, though protected repeatedly with constant favour, wealth and food, acts like an enemy, when he gets an opportunity. (Such) a man, after reaching prosperity, would cut off the head of the master with the same hand with which, in adversity, he would carry the dust of the (master's) feet. The subjugated rows of kings do indeed kill their lord. Even hot water would instantly put out fire.'

150-154. O best brāhmaṇa, thinking like this in his mind, that prince drove out that insensible Praceṣṭa. O brāhmaṇa, with those two ladies, he, free from grief and malady, lived happily there for sometime. On that Sulocanā (the wife) of that magnanimous Mādhava a hundred sons were born; and two hundred sons were born on Jayantī. Those sons of Mādhava also were very proficient in the science of (using) weapons, were highly devoted to piety and became dear to the people. That Mādhava, associated with Viṣṇu's devotion secured in the former existence, once thought in his mind:

155-159. 'Who am I? Whence have I come? To whom do I belong? Who created me? Where shall I go again (after death)? Where shall I stay? The life of me, enjoying objects of senses, has passed without any religious merit. So, who will save me who am plunged in the ocean of perils. That man who, having taken birth in this mundane existence, has not propitiated Viṣṇu, should be known to be the killer of himself and one that is excommunicated. Birth would repeatedly take place, so also death would take place again and again. Therefore, this mundane existence is said to be very fierce and causing affliction. Without devotion for Viṣṇu birth and death would not be kept

off. Therefore, today, having abandoned everything, I shall worship Viṣṇu.'

160. Having thought like this in his mind, and having repeatedly trusted (Viṣṇu), he called Viśvakarman, and said these words to him:

Mādhava said:

161-167. O Viśvakarman, O you of big arms, having fashioned a stone-image of Viṣṇu, giving all desired objects, give it to me.

Then, O brāhmaṇa, by his order, the artisan Viśvakarman fashioned a stone-image of the great Viṣṇu. It was dark like a fresh cloud. Its eyes resembled lotuses. It held a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus. It had four arms. It was united with Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī. It was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers. It possessed all (good) marks. It was adorned with all ornaments. Having installed that image of Viṣṇu, giving desired objects and having a disc in its hand, in a beautiful pavilion, he started worshipping it. O brāhmaṇa, O best brāhmaṇa, in the same abode he would everyday offer a ghee-lamp with continuous flame. He would himself bathe in the morning, and would sweep (the hall) etc. He would decorate the path, and would smear it (with cowdung).

168-171. Having bathed in the water at (the place of the union of) Gaṅgā and the Ocean, and having offered the five great sacrifices, he would worship Viṣṇu thrice (a day) with excellent offerings, with sandal, incense, with offerings of eatables, tāmbūlas, incense and lamps, so also with songs and musical instruments, discourses, and excellent repetitions of hymns, so also by means of going round the image, keeping it to his right, with salutations, and sacrifices in which presents were given, so also with fleshless food fit to be eaten during days of fast, and by eating fruits. He would mutter the great (prayer) formula of eight letters, viz. 'Salutation to Nārāyaṇa' preceded by Oṁ (*Oṃ namo Nārāyaṇāya*), and giving all desired objects.

172-174. In this way for thousands of years he very devoutly performed the worship, giving all desired objects, of the noble Viṣṇu, the highest soul. By means of that devotion, (Viṣṇu) the

crest-jewel of all gods was pleased. The lord, resembling a tulasī-sprout, appeared before him. Seeing Viṣṇu who had appeared before him, Mādhava along with his wives embraced (i.e. touched) the ground with his head, and saluted Viṣṇu's feet.

Mādhava said:

175-190. Salutation to the god of gods. Salutation to the highest soul. Salutation to the highest lord, to the lord of gods; salutation to the giver of knowledge. Salutation to you, O highest joy, O Puruṣottama, O Keśava. Salutation to the lotus-eyed one, to the lord of Lakṣmī. Salutation to you of many forms; repeated salutations to the formless one. Salutation to the conceivable one, to the inconceivable one, to the visible one, and the invisible one. Salutation to the lord of the three worlds; repeated salutations to the father of the worlds. Salutation to the one obtainable by knowledge; salutation to you belonging to all Vedas. Salutation to you, the enemy of Kaṁsa. Salutation to you, the enemy of Kaiṭabha. Salutation to you who seized Madhu; repeated salutations to you, the creator, who taking the form of the Fish, extracted the Vedas. Repeated salutations to you. I resort to you who, in the form of the Tortoise, extracted the Earth along with mountains, forests and groves, from inside the water of the deep ocean. Repeated salutations to you who, in the form of the Boar, held up, with your tusk, the Earth, O lord of the Earth. Salutations to you who, in the form of Nṛsiṁha, tore off the angry demon Hiraṇyakaśipu. O god, salutation to you who, in the form of Vāmana, destroyed Bali's sacrifice, and seized (the earth) for Kaśyapa. Salutation to you, that Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma) who gratified your manes with the blood of the kṣatriyas and who killed Kārtavīrya. Salutation to you, that (Dāśarathi) Rāma, the son of Kauśalyā, who killed Rāvaṇa, so also Mārīca and Kumbhakarṇa. Salutation to you, that (Bala)Rāma, Revatī's husband, who killed Pralamba, and who cleared the Kālindī (i.e. the Yamunā). Salutation to you that Buddha who, seeing the killing of beasts, censured the Vedas with compassion (for the beasts). Salutation to you, of the form of Kalki, who at the end of the yuga killed* the Mlecchas for the

**vihitā* is a misprint for *vihatā*.

good of all people. O Hari, O Viṣṇu, O conqueror of the demons, O Nārāyaṇa full of pity, save me who am fallen into the fierce ocean of the worldly existence.

191-193. Then that Mādhava washed Viṣṇu's feet through joy, and dropping his entire body on the ground, spoke to Viṣṇu:

Mādhava said:

O Govinda, O you highest joy, O Mukunda, O Madhusūdana, O Kṛṣṇa, protect me, a sinner, since you destroy all sins.

Having heard this hymn of praise of him, the lord, affectionate to (his devotees), being very much pleased, himself said these words:

The lord said:

194. O dear, O Mādhava, O best kṣatriya, choose a boon. What do you desire—the state of Brahman, Śiva, or Śakra?

Mādhava said:

195-196. O lord of the world, I have obtained everything. There is no doubt about it. I am seeing you who are invisible even to deities. You are capable of giving enjoyment, salvation, wealth, prosperity—everything. O lord, I am not fit for devotion. Give me devotion only.

The lord said:

197. I am undoubtedly pleased with this devotion of you. Tell me by giving which thing I shall be free from your debt.

Sūta said:

198. O brāhmaṇa, saying so, Viṣṇu who was very much pleased, spread his four arms and embraced him as a father embraces his son.

The lord said:

199-200. Due to the power of the embrace I am acquitted of the debt. O good one, everything will undoubtedly be auspicious. O child, by you having a desire my image was worshipped by means of the yoga of action.

Vyāsa said:

201-204. Having thus given him a boon and having embraced him with his four long arms dear as life, he vanished there only. Then Mādhava, along with his wife, devoutly worshipped that image of Viṣṇu by means of the yoga of action. Along with his sons and grandsons he enjoyed all pleasures. And having met his death along with his wife in Gaṅgā, he obtained liberation. He who with full devotion, recites this chapter containing Viṣṇu's account, destroying all heaps of sins, enjoys all pleasures in this world, and ultimately goes to the abode of lord Śrī Vāsudeva.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Kālakalpa is Liberated by the Touch of Gaṅgā-water

Śrī Vyāsa said:

1-4. I shall just again tell you the excellent importance of Gaṅgā; having heard it all men would obtain all their desired objects. On seeing the face of him who has not bathed in Gaṅgā, the mother of the world, a man should instantly look at the Sun. The sins of him who, in the morning, would devoutly remember the couple of letters 'Gaṅ-gā', perish, as darkness perishes at dawn. All the food, water etc. of (i.e. offered by) him who has not seen the best among rivers, are unfit to be accepted.

5-9. The sins of those who bathe in Gaṅgā leave their bodies and go to the bodies of those who do not bathe in Gaṅgā. Oh, very, very strange it is that fools fall into a hell, (though) there is the name of Gaṅgā (to purify them). That brāhmaṇa

who would carry even a drop of the Gaṅgā-water on his head is freed from great sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. That meritorious man, on whose forehead an excellent mark made with the Gaṅgā-sand is seen, undoubtedly purifies the entire world. That man who would see (a man) who has come from the bank of Gaṅgā with great respect, obtains the fruit of thousands of horse-sacrifices.

10. Viṣṇu is pleased with him and gives him all his desired objects who says (to another man): "I am going to the bank of Gaṅgā. You (too) come (with me)".

11-13. That man who, remembering the name Gaṅgā, bathes even in the water of a well, would obtain the fruit of a bath in Gaṅgā. He who, at the time of death, gets a drop of the Gaṅgā-water equal (to the size of) a mustard, would go to the highest position. O brāhmaṇa sage, in this context only listen to an ancient account, by merely hearing which goddess Gaṅgā is pleased.

14-17. In the Tretā age there was a brāhmaṇa by name Dharmasva. He was righteous, calm, controlled, full of pity and had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He spoke the truth, was without anger and free from harming (anyone); he had controlled his senses; he desired the good of all beings; he was always engaged in abstract meditation. To cross the ocean of the mundane existence, that devotee of Viṣṇu worshipped Keśava, the lord of gods, by means of the yoga of action (i.e. religious deeds). Sometime, finding an auspicious day, that best brāhmaṇa, desiring liberation, went to the bank of Gaṅgā to bathe, O brāhmaṇa.

18-24. Having bathed there in the Gaṅgā-water, and having presented libations of water etc. to the manes, he, carrying pitchers of the Gaṅgā-water, decided to go home. O brāhmaṇa, at that time a vaiśya called Ratnakara, surrounded by all his servants, came back after finishing trade. He had a brāhmaṇa servant known as Kālakalpa. He who had committed all (kinds of) sins, came (there) with a staff in his hand. O best brāhmaṇa, one ox of that Ratnakara, fatigued due to the journey, slept on the road. That very cruel Kālakalpa, seeing the bull lying on the path, struck him with the staff in various ways. Due to anger produced by the strokes of the staff, the bull got up and tore him with his very sharp horns. His chest was torn out by the

couple of horns, and he (also) lost his sight. Dharmasva, full of pity, quickly went near him.

25-26. Then that intelligent one (i.e. Dharmasva) took an excellent tulasī-leaf from his ear, and sprinkled him with the divine drops of the water of Gaṅgā. O best brāhmaṇa, seeing him dead, he, the knower of the most sublime truth, was amazed, and decided to go home.

27-32. Then going along the path while repeating the names of Gaṅgā, he saw before him, thousands of crores of Yama's messengers. Some of them had one of their legs cut off. Some of them had one of their hands cut off. The ears of some were cut off. Some had one ear only. Some had their noses cut off. Some had their tongues cut off. The teeth of some were broken. Some were without teeth. The entire bodies of some were smeared with streams of blood. Some had their hair loose. Some had lost their mouths. Similarly some of them were naked. The chests of some were pierced. The bodies of some were disabled with very sharp arrows. Others had their fingers and hands tied with strong cords. Others wailing due to agony, were intent on running (away).

33-34. That best brāhmaṇa, seeing Yama's servants reduced to such a state, had his heart trembling, and through fear he was a little motionless. Then mustering courage, that brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu, asked thus with sweet (voice) the savage servants of Yama.

Dharma(sva) said:

35-36. Who are you of deformed figures and having nooses and hammers in your hands, with your mouths fierce due to fangs and resembling charcoal? All you have eyes like very powerfully burning fire. Yet, someone has reduced you to this bad plight.

Yama's messengers said:

37. We all are Yama's messengers, always carrying out Yama's order. This very great sin has come to us with great chastisement (as its fruit).

Dharmasva said:

38. You, of great power and valour, have come all of a

sudden. Who has reduced you, and how has he reduced you to such a very bad plight?

Yama's messengers said:

39-46. O best brāhmaṇa, give up your fear. Listen to the whole account, since this agony of us has become extremely unbearable. We, the servants, have been sent forth by Yama to carry this Kālakalpa who has been torn with his horns by a bull. Ordered by him (i.e. Yama), all of us, with all weapons in our hands have come here to take the greatest of sinners after tying him. This wicked-hearted Kālakalpa whose death was imminent, was torn with his horns by the bull who became the cause (of his death). You, being kind, repeating the names of Gaṅgā, sprinkled the greatest of sinners with the drops of the water of Gaṅgā. Though his sins had gone due to his being sprinkled with the drops of water, we, binding him strongly with cords, exerted to take him (to Yama's abode). The lord of gods, the protector of those who have sought his refuge, also sent his very powerful and valorous messengers to take him (to Vaikuṇṭha). O best brāhmaṇa, certain messengers then came by Viṣṇu's order and angrily said these words to us on the path:

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

47-49. O noble ones, who are you? How do you take this noble-minded one after binding him with a cord? Whose servants are you? Leaving this noble one, run (away) as you please. Otherwise we shall cut off your heads with the edge of (our) discs.

O best brāhmaṇa, having heard these proud words of them, the servants of Viṣṇu, we said to them:

50-53. "We all are the servants of Yama, the lord of (every) life. Taking this greatest sinner we are going to Yama's abode. All you noble ones are adorned with the garlands of tulasī-blossoms. Your eyes are like full-blown lotuses. You are strong, and are Garuḍa-bannered. You have put on divine garments. You are handsome like the peacock's neck. You are holding conches, discs, maces and lotuses. You (each) have four arms. Who are all of you, endowed with all (auspicious) marks? How do you desire to take this greatest sinner?"

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

54-55. All of us are Viṣṇu's messengers. To take this meritorious man to Vaikuṇṭha we have come here now. O servants of Yama, if you desire to live, then quickly release this our man, Viṣṇu's devotee, free from sins.

56-63. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the words we angrily uttered on hearing these words of them, addressed to all. I (shall) tell them. "This one is a sinner, of a bad conduct. He has committed thousands of murders of brāhmaṇas. He is ungrateful. He is the killer of cows, (his) friends, and is evil-hearted. This extremely wicked one has snatched very many (pieces of) gold of the size of the Meru (mountain). He has always kidnapped others' wives. O servants of Viṣṇu, he has committed thousands of crores of murders of living beings in various ways, so also murders of women. Everyday he snatched the deposits kept with him; he committed incest with his mother and ate cow's flesh also. He killed others and set fire to others' houses. He censured others in an assembly, and caused abortions of widows. He, resembling a Yavana, killed at night with sharp swords a guest that had come to his house through greed for wealth, O best one. This mean fool has committed innumerable sins (like) these and other great sins. He has not done even a little producing auspiciousness.

64. Therefore, this great sinner is being taken to the house of torture. O best ones, the sinners are known to be punished by Yama.

65. If you are the messengers of the lord, the god of gods, then how do you wish to take this greatest sinner (to Vaikuṇṭha)?"

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

66-72. You have spoken the truth only. There is no doubt about it. All sinners are always to be punished by the lord of beings. (But) this one is free from sins due to his being sprinkled with the drops of the water of Gaṅgā. Therefore, we all shall take him to Viṣṇu's abode. Till the drops of Gaṅgā-water, very difficult to be secured, do not touch the bodies of men, sins remain in their bodies. As by just one digit of the moon entire darkness is removed, in the same way sin is destroyed by a drop

of Gaṅgā-water. By (merely) remembering the names of Gaṅgā a sinner is freed from his sins. What wonder is there if he is freed on actually seeing her water? Even the cold Gaṅgā-water is like fire to the forest of sins, as cold water acts like fire in the case of a lotus-pond. Therefore, this one is a meritorious man, as it were, another Viṣṇu. O servants of Yama, if you desire your well-being, (then) go (back).

73-76. Listen to what we again said, after laughing loudly on hearing these words of those messengers of Viṣṇu. "Oh wonder! Oh wonder! that this abode of sins has been freed from all sins just due to the sprinkling of Gaṅgā-water. A mortal is not freed even after hundreds of crores of kalpas, without experiencing (the fruit of) the act, good or bad, done by him. We have come (here) by Yama's order to take him (to Yama). By whose words should we leave this great sinner?"

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

77-80. Since you do not know the merits of the daughter of Jahnu (i.e. Gaṅgā), you are evil-minded and devoid of discrimination. That act which is prohibited in (i.e. by) the Veda is said to be a sin. That act approved by the Veda is alone said to be religious. We hear that god Nārāyaṇa is evidently self-born. As Viṣṇu is, so is Gaṅgā. Gaṅgā alone destroys all sins. A bad or a good act is fixed by Viṣṇu with his own hands. When Viṣṇu is pleased, where do men's sins remain?

81-84. You have been reduced to this state due to your sins earned (i.e. committed) in other (i.e. former) existences. O you of sinful acts, why do you even now desire (to commit) sinful acts? You censure Gaṅgā; so also you censure Viṣṇu. Therefore, we shall kill you, the sinful ones, with the edge of our discs.

Speaking like this, O best one, those messengers of Viṣṇu, with their eyes red due to anger, started fighting with us. They angrily said: "Kill (these) messengers of Yama". Repeatedly speaking like this, they struck us with the edge of their discs.

85-87. Speaking like that, all those messengers of Viṣṇu, very fierce in battle, and being delighted at heart, suddenly blew their conches. Then, O brāhmaṇa, the three worlds were perva-

ded by our lion-like roars, like thunderings of clouds, and by our bows being expanded (i.e. strung). Then with trees, stones and showers of rocks, we split those messengers of Viṣṇu.

88-91. In that ocean (of the battle) the messengers of Viṣṇu variously struck us with missiles like double-edged swords, small javelins, arrows, so also clubs studded with iron, axes, knives, staffs and darts, swords, (missiles called) śakti, sharp arrows, maces, edges of discs, and very fierce arrows of iron, and with fearful missiles. Then all of us wounded by the missiles ran away through fear. Thousands of us fell dead in the battle.

92-96. Then those mighty servants of Viṣṇu, seeing us intent on fleeing, joyfully blew their conches. Then cutting off the bond of Kālakalpa, and putting him into an aeroplane, they went to the lord's city, O best brāhmaṇa. O best one, due to the efficacy of the sprinkling of the drops (of the water) of Gaṅgā, that very sinful Kālakalpa obtained residence in the same heaven with Viṣṇu. Having lived there for a hundred kalpas, having enjoyed charming pleasures, and having obtained knowledge there only, he obtained liberation. O lord, due to the efficacy of Gaṅgā, this our affliction has gone. O brāhmaṇa, well-being to you. Being very much pleased, go home.

97. O brāhmaṇa, having spoken like this, those messengers of Yama went to Yama's city. That Dharmasva again went to the bank of Gaṅgā.

98. Having bathed in Gaṅgā, the mother of the world, the brāhmaṇa, with the palms of his hands joined, praised that greatest goddess.

Dharmasva said:

99-112. O Gaṅgā, O mother of the entire world, O you of unsteady ripples, O you having the garland of the flowers of the very charming heads of Anaṅga etc., O you who remove the dust on both the lovely feet of the enemy of Kaṁsa, I salute you who destroy sins. O mother, O you who give happiness to all, O you best among the rivers, O you whose merits have been sung by the hosts of brāhmaṇas like Vyāsa, O you rich in virtues, O you, the boat in the fearful, great ocean in the form of the mundane existence, I salute the pair of your feet, which remove sins.

O daughter of Jahnu, with (i.e. by bowing) my head, I salute you, on having whose drop of water the king named Saudāsa, having (committed the sin of) the murder of crores of brāhmaṇas, obtained liberation, difficult to be obtained even by gods. O you giver of boons, be pleased. By your grace let the body of me, repeating the names like Nārāyaṇa, Acyuta, Janārdana, Kṛṣṇa, Rāma, Gaṅgā etc., fall into your water, O goddess, O mother, O you who remove sins in the worldly existence. O goddess of all, what is the use of austerities, muttering (the hymns etc.), (giving) presents, or of sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice? (For) even very sinful men obtain liberation, difficult to be obtained even by gods, on securing a drop of your water. O you highest goddess, O you who are the cause of the creation, maintenance, and destruction of the world, I salute you of the form of the three guṇas, viz. sattva (i.e. goodness), rajas (i.e. passion), and tamas (i.e. darkness or ignorance), who are that Svāhā (i.e. oblation offered indiscriminately to all gods), that Svadhā (i.e. offering of food made to the manes of deceased ancestors) for the great satisfaction of the hosts of gods and manes. May the entire dust from your feet be on the head of me who always wear your sand, and a vertical mark with your clay on my forehead, who would devoutly repeat your name, the abode of all tastes. May my birth remove the tie with the worldly life, after (my) having lived on your bank, O Gaṅgā, after (my) having drunk your water which removes sins, after (my) having recollected your name, and after (my) having seen your water with waves. Looking upon heaven as having a difficult path leading to it, and taking it to be very important, very happy men have a great fear about it. But O giver of nectar, it is indeed in vain, since your water acts as a staircase for going to heaven. O you goddess of all, O you giver of enjoyments, O you Gaṅgā, the chief among rivers, sins, hosts of diseases remain in the bodies (of men) till they do not bathe in your pure water. O you of an uninterrupted flow, that some call you who are the giver of the highest liberation, to reach whose greatness (gods) like Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Śiva and hosts of gods like Indra (try hard), a (simple) river, is their ignorance! O Gaṅgā, O you who give all pleasures, lord Śiva knows a little of your importance, since he, the best of the good-minded, very devoutly holds you, the (only) goddess of the

world, on his head. O Gaṅgā, O goddess, O mother of the world, O highest goddess, nourish me; salutation to you; protect me, your servant. O giver of liberation, can I whose mind is confused, praise you, of the nature of the highest Brahman and the only mother of the world?

Vyāsa said:

113-116. Gaṅgā, the mother of the world, thus praised by the intelligent brāhmaṇa, suddenly appeared before him in an embodied form, O brāhmaṇa. Before him he saw Gaṅgā with two arms, seated on a crocodile, white like a kunda (flower), the moon and a conch, and adorned with all ornaments. Then, he, seeing Gaṅgā before him, saying 'O Gaṅgā, O Gaṅgā,' saluted her after touching the ground with his head. O Jaimini, infatuating him with smiling looks, that highest goddess who was very much pleased, said to him: "O brāhmaṇa, choose a boon."

Dharmasva said:

117-119. O mother, by the touch of your water even the murderer of a brāhmaṇa gets liberation. I am actually seeing you. What else have I to gain? Yet, O highest goddess, I ask for one boon: May I, while recollecting your name, die in your water. O goddess, he who praises you with the hymn composed by me, will, after enjoying all desired objects, obtain a good position in the end.

Gaṅgā said:

120-121. O best brāhmaṇa, by this devotion of you I am pleased. Undoubtedly you will soon have full happiness. Being pleased with the man who would recite this hymn composed by you, three times a day, I shall grant him the excellent liberation.

Vyāsa said:

122-128. That goddess, affectionate to her devotees, having thus given a boon to that (brāhmaṇa) named Dharmasva, vanished there only, O best brāhmaṇa. The brāhmaṇa too, having secured that boon, was as it were fortunate. O brāhmaṇa, he lived there only on the beautiful bank of Gaṅgā. Then after a long time having met a happy death in the pure water of

Gaṅgā, he reached the best position. Even that wicked-minded Kālakalpa, sprinkled with the drops of the Gaṅgā-water, obtained excellent liberation. Then what need one say of others, O brāhmaṇa? The Gaṅgā-water, even though touched unintentionally, gives fruit. I do not know what would happen to those who touch it with devotion. I say repeatedly, there is no other holy place like Gaṅgā, touching a drop of water of which one obtains the highest abode. Those, who devoutly touch in this world just a drop of the water of this excellent river, go to the position of Viṣṇu after being freed from all very fierce sins.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Love Story of Indra and Padmagandhā

Vyāsa said:

1-6. O chief among brāhmaṇas, I shall again narrate the excellent greatness of Gaṅgā. If you desire liberation, drink the nectar in the form of an account of Gaṅgā. He who has devotion for the mother of Bhīṣma, has given all gifts, has performed all sacrifices, and has worshipped Viṣṇu. O Jaimini, whatever religious rites are performed in Gaṅgā, all those become inexhaustible for him. Seeing flowing water he who gets up and goes to the water of Gaṅgā with devotion, is the performer of a thousand horse-sacrifices. He who does not show devotion (i.e. does not become devoted) when Gaṅgā-water has come (to him), will perpetually have beasthood in every existence. The religious merit earned during crores of existences of him who, having come across the Gaṅgā-water, does not devoutly take it, perishes just in a moment.

7-10. He who stops one desiring to go to the bank of Gaṅgā, would, along with a crore (members of) his family, go to Raurava hell. The expiation for him who urinates or excretes on the bank of Gaṅgā is not seen even after hundreds of crores of kalpas. He who would drop phlegm, spittle, rheum, tears or dirt on the bank of Gaṅgā would be a resident of hell. He who would

throw leavings of food and phlegm into Gaṅgā goes to a fearful hell, and gets (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

11-12. The sin which a foolish man commits on the bank of Gaṅgā, would indeed be perpetual and is not destroyed at (i.e. by visiting) other holy places. A sin committed at another holy place is destroyed in Gaṅgā; (but) the sin committed in Gaṅgā is destroyed nowhere.

13-14. Therefore, those who are proficient in the holy texts should not commit a sin in Gaṅgā. They should collect religious merit through (bodily) act, (act of) mind, and through words. They are not countries, they are not mountains, and they are also not the forests where the divine river, destroying sins, would not exist.

15-19. O Jaimini, even if one has (to carry out) a hundred (pieces of) work one should not stay at any other place even for a short while after leaving the bank of Gaṅgā. Even by eating begged food one should stay at the bank of Gaṅgā, but not at other place, even for a moment, even after having obtained the status of a king. By casting his body in Gaṅgā even the killer of a brāhmaṇa is liberated. (But even) the performer of a thousand horse-sacrifices at any other place would not get liberation. He who would live on the bank of Gaṅgā and be devoted to Viṣṇu's worship (would obtain liberation). He who has never worshipped Viṣṇu in any former existence, would not have devotion for Gaṅgā, the mother of the world. O men, all of you listen. I am saying this repeatedly.

20-24 Having bathed in Gaṅgā, he would go to the highest position. That man who would worship Gaṅgā by repeating the name 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā', (would) freed from all sins, (live) in heaven for a myriad divine ages. O brāhmaṇa, he who would start (narration of) the account of Gaṅgā at the time of his death, would, with all his sins dropped, go to the abode of Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, with the wise man who at the time of his death remembers the name 'Gaṅgā' giving liberation, Viṣṇu would be pleased. He who would, at the time of death, have a sectarian mark (on his forehead) of the Gaṅgā-clay (*mṛtpuṇḍra*), so also he who would cast his body after seeing him who bathes in Gaṅgā, would get (the fruit of) death in Gaṅgā even (if his death occurs) in a cremation ground, O brāhmaṇa.

25-26. As long as the bones of a man remain in Gaṅgā, he would, for thousands of kalpas, be honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven. That wise man whose ashes, bones, nails and hair lie dipped in Gaṅgā, would live in Viṣṇu's abode.

27-28. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell (about) the fate a man has when his bones lie in Gaṅgā. I shall tell the entire fruit of it. Listen attentively. Once the lustful lord Indra, adorned with various ornaments, went along with a young woman Padmagandhā to the pleasure-house.

29-31. She who was called Padmagandhā, who had the prime of youth, contributed to great delight by giving him various pleasures. He, the conqueror, deluded by Cupid and being pleased, sat at the feet of that lady having eyes like those of a young deer, and seated on his wife's golden bed. Indra, being very much pleased and with his mind attracted by her virtues, himself prepared a tāmbūla and gave it to her.

32-33. Just at that time, very beautiful Paulomī, adorned with all ornaments, herself came to that (pleasure-)house. Paulomī, seeing lord Indra, the king of all gods, in that condition, was very angry; and she, of good marks, spoke thus:

Śacī said:

34-37a. O lord, O my husband, O king of all gods, what is this that you are doing? Giving a golden tāmbūla to one who is my maid! O lord, all gods touch your feet with their heads. Then how do you remain at the feet of Padmagandhā? A bee is solicited for its fragrance(?). It would not be its success(?). O lord, how do you, who are the lord of a crore of beautiful women, and who know all flavours, do such an extremely condemned act?

37b-38a. O you virtueless Padmagandhā, O you maid, go away. You, (as if you were) a goddess, are (lying) on the bed, and Indra is seated at your feet!

Vyāsa said:

38b-39a. Thus reproached in various ways by that Paulomī, that chaste woman of a beautiful body angrily spoke thus:

Padmagandhā said:

39b-43a. The lord himself knows my virtue and vice. O

you virtueless one, with what authority are you, after coming (here), censuring me? Others see virtues and vices even with two eyes. O you wicked-minded one, would Indra not see with a thousand eyes, since the virtue of people is not propagated as (as quickly as) their fault? Virtuous people first see the spot on the moon. You are talking nonsense, are cruel, of a bad form, void of virtues. If I am not virtuous, then let your husband resort to you.

Vyāsa said:

43b-44a. Speaking like this, that lotus-eyed Padmagandhā, acting very pitiably, angrily got up from the golden bed.

Indra said:

44b-47a. O dear one, O mistress of my life, O greatest one, leaving me where are you going? Tell me, O beautiful lady, what offence have I committed against you. O dear one, I am your servant and will serve you as a servant. The wife of a servant would be a maid-servant. Do you not hear such words?

Then Indra, with his mind overcome by infatuation, got up and again put that exquisitely beautiful woman on his lap.

Śacī said:

47b-51a. O female curlew, your life is good, (and) my life certainly fruitless. You are loved by the lord, and I, an excellent lady, am always disliked by him, till (your) religious merit (lasts). O female curlew, that religious merit will be exhausted. Being born in the family of curlew you will again suffer grief. Till then sport with the lord of gods as you please. O virtueless female curlew, after a few days (the lord) would not be yours.

Having heard her very amazing words, that Padmagandhā, giving up her antagonism, saluted that chaste lady (i.e. Śacī), and said to her:

Padmagandhā said:

51b-53a. O daughter of Puloman, O beautiful woman,

what you have said is wonderful. Tell me how I am a female curlew. I desire to listen to it carefully. Who am I? Where did I stay? How have I, a chaste woman, come here? After how much time will my religious merit be exhausted?

Śacī said:

53b-60a. O Padmagandhā, formerly you were born of a curlew. You lived on the earth, eating impure flesh and insects. On the charming bank of Gaṅgā there was a fig tree. After building a nest on it, you lived there. Once a black serpent entered the hole on the fig tree and bit you. And you, a wicked one, suddenly died. The serpent angrily ate up all your flesh. O beautiful woman, all your fleshless bones remained there only. O good one, once the tree was hurled down by a strong wind. O beautiful one, being broken it fell into the Gaṅgā along with its roots. When that fig tree fell into Gaṅgā, your bones were submerged, O best lady. As long as those bones will remain in Gaṅgā, you will always be loved by the lord.

60b-65a. O Padmagandhā, I have told you everything as to which of your religious merits has placed (even) Indra under your thumb. Blessed is goddess Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) due to whose favour, you, a female curlew, not touched even by cāṇḍālas, lie on the lap of Indra.

The daughter of Puloman, the chaste lady, being insulted even by Indra, with her lotus-face faded, went as she had come. That excellent woman Padmagandhā remained on Indra's lap only. Those words of her remained, as it were, wakeful in her heart. O brāhmaṇa, once the lord of gods very much pleased with her virtues, himself said to her: "O beautiful lady, ask for a boon."

Padmagandhā said:

65b-67a. You are the chief of all gods and the lord of crores of women. Yet, O lord, you are under my influence. (Then) what is the use of other boons? Yet, O best god, you who desire to grant (me) a boon (should) take a pledge before me with your (bodily) acts, mind and words.

Indra said:

67b-69a. O you beautiful lady, order me what I shall give you—(my) life, wealth, kingdom, clothes (or attendants). (What I promise) is true, (certainly) true, is repeatedly true. There is no doubt about it. O you fawn-eyed one, I shall certainly give you what you desire.

Padmagandhā said:

69b-70a. O lord of the three worlds, if you are indeed pleased with me, then give me the boon that I shall be born in the stock of elephant.

Indra said:

70b-74a. O beautiful lady, I who have given a promise, give you the boon. But many griefs have come to my heart. O beautiful lady, I do not get happiness if I do not see you even for a moment. Then how can I put up with the unbearable separation from you for a long time? O you of stout breasts, O you beautiful lady, if you have compassion for me, then stay with me for a few days (more).

Then enjoying the large wealth of the lord of the gods that chaste woman lived for a myriad of years in the house of the lord.

Padmagandhā said:

74b-75a. O lord of gods, give me an order to fulfil my desire. I (shall) go to the land of religious rites (i.e. Bhāratavarṣa). I salute the pair of your feet.

Indra said:

75b-76a. O you having a moon-like face, after living with me, having the measure of an ocean of love for you, for a few days, you will go as you please.

76b-78a. Then, that Padmagandhā, day and night sporting with him in the pleasure-house, lived there for three myriads of years. Then, she, full of joy, said to the lord of gods: "Give me an order. I (shall) now go to the earth."

Indra said:

78b-79a. O you beautiful one, give up your apathy. Stay with me here only. I cannot abandon you; (you are) more important than (my own) life.

Padmagandhā said:

79b-82a. O lord of gods, when, on the exhaustion of my religious merit I shall go to the earth, then I shall have separation from you for a long time. On that separation, O lord, I, having gone to the earth, desire (to come back to) heaven. O Indra, having gone to the land of religious rites, I shall employ that means by which I shall never be separated from you.

Indra said:

82b-84. O good one, when you again desire to do this, then O beautiful one, you will again quickly come (here).

Then, with his body sprinkled by tears trickling from his eyes, he embraced her, and addressing her as "O dear one", said: "You (can) go". Then by his order the chaste woman came to the land of religious rites.

85-92a. O brāhmaṇa, she was born in the stock of female elephants and remembered her former birth. She who was well-born in the stock of female elephants and remembered her account went, after a few days, to the bank of Gaṅgā. Bathing in Gaṅgā, and decorated with the mud from Gaṅgā, and uttering (the words) 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā', she entered a deep pool of water. That female elephant, of the form of a mountain, remembering her own birth, went into that pool of the Gaṅgā water, and died. Seeing her boldness, all deities gladly showered her with excellent flowers like pārijāta etc. To bring her, of a dark body, Indra, of a good mind, and surrounded by all hosts of gods, speedily went (to Gaṅgā) due to a long separation from her. Telling her, of a divine body, his own agonies (while) in the Puṣpaka (aeroplane) he went to his own abode, after gladly abandoning, for her sake, Śacī, Rambhā and Pramlocā and Urvaśī, that had come (there).

92b-95a. That excellent lady, increasing the happiness in the mind of Śakra, that fortunate one, dear (to Indra), stayed in the city of Indra as long as her bones remained in Gaṅgā, O

Jaimini. A hundred crores (of the members of) her family lived in Indra's abode for that period. That divine beauty became the object of the friendship of those who were kings of kingdoms in heaven due to the power of their austerities.

95b-97a. O Jaimini, such a fruit is had due to a bath in Gaṅgā. The fruit of (i.e. got by) him who casts his body in Gaṅgā cannot be described. O Jaimini, as long as the dead body and the bones remain in Gaṅgā, till that time, i.e. for a hundred crores of kalpas she resided in the abode of the god.

97b-99a. O Jaimini, listen to the fruit obtained by a man whose dead body is tossed in Gaṅgā by her currents: He, lying on a golden bed, and fanned with the breezes of charming chowries by divine ladies, becomes happy.

99b-104. I shall tell you about the abode of him whose dead body is seen on the sandy bank of Gaṅgā heated by the rays of the sun: With his entire body smeared with divine fragrant substances and sandal he always sports with divine damsels in heaven. Listen to the fruit obtained by him whose body is seen torn by crows, vultures, herons, and (other) birds in (Gaṅgā) the mother of Bhīṣma: He, with his chest embraced by the stout, high, charming breasts of divine damsels, always sleeps on a bed in heaven. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the inexhaustible fruit from me who am telling it, which he who (i.e. whose body) is surrounded by ants, insects and flies and whose bones are seen to have fallen in Gaṅgā, obtains.

105-110. He, with the dust-particles on his feet removed by the ornaments on their crowns and being saluted with their heads by the hosts of gods, behaves in heaven like Indrafor a long time. That man whose body falls into Gaṅgā even against his desire, is freed from all sins, and would become Viṣṇu. He whose charcoals (burnt parts of the body) are seen to be tossed by the water in Gaṅgā, would remain in heaven proportionately with the number of the charcoals for more than a hundred kalpas. Maybe all (kinds) of religious merit are exhausted. (But) when the body has fallen into Gaṅgā, the religious merit is never exhausted. What is the use of prolixity in this matter? The greatness of him who has cast his body in Gaṅgā is not (i.e. cannot be) known. That blessed man who, on the earth, sometime devoutly touches the water of Gaṅgā, destroying heaps of

very strong sins, crosses the fearful ocean of the (mundane) world and goes to the (other) shore in a boat of boundless pleasure.

CHAPTER NINE

The Greatness of Gaṅgā

Jaimini said:

1. O preceptor, tell me again the excellent greatness of Gaṅgā. Due to its sweetness I again desire to drink the nectar of the account of Gaṅgā.

Vyāsa said:

2-9a. That too I shall tell you since you are a devotee of Gaṅgā. Those feet of men (alone) are fruitful (i.e. meritorious) that go to the bank of Gaṅgā. Those (alone) are (fruitful) ears that hear the sound of the waves of Gaṅgā. That (alone) is the (fruitful) tongue which knows the various (kinds of) sweetness of her water. Those (alone) are the (fruitful) eyes that see the charming ripples of Gaṅgā. That is said to be the (fruitful) forehead which bears a vertical mark of the clay of Gaṅgā. Those (alone) are the (fruitful) hands that are intent on worshipping Gaṅgā. That (alone) is the (fruitful) body, giving the fruit of the four goals of human life, which has fallen into the pure water of Gaṅgā. O best brāhmaṇa. All the manes of the dead ancestors, living in heaven, (seeing their son) going to the bank of Gaṅgā, and seeing her water are delighted, and praise it, O Jaimini, saying: "Formerly we have done religious merit for obtaining a good position; and it will be inexhaustible, since we have such a son. He has now gratified us with the water of Gaṅgā. We shall go to the highest abode which is difficult to be had even by gods.

9b-15. Those substances which our son will offer to us and into Gaṅgā, will, all of them, be inexhaustible for us." So also the manes living in hell and full of all miseries, will, on seeing their son going to the bank of Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) speak thus: "Even by the grace of (our) son, all sins that we committed and

that give the torments in hell, will perish. All of us are freed from all the torments in hell, extremely difficult to bear. Now due to the grace of our son we shall reach the highest position." The manes of that man who having undertaken a pilgrimage returns home through folly, are disappointed, and all of them go (back) as they had come. While on pilgrimage to Gaṅgā, one should avoid (eating) flesh, coitus, a swing, a horse, an elephant, so also (using) shoes, an umbrella. The trouble due to the fatigue of the journey is not regarded as painful.

16-20. At the time of bath in Gaṅgā one should not remember the pleasure from *padma* (= a mode of coitus) (that is had) in the house. One should avoid, while on the pilgrimage to Gaṅgā, false speech and contact with heretics. (One should also avoid) eating twice (a day), a quarrel, censuring others, greed, pride, anger and jealousy. While on the pilgrimage to Gaṅgā one should also avoid laughing too much, and grief. One should look upon oneself, sleeping on the ground, as sleeping on a bed. While going along the path, a man should utter the good names of Gaṅgā. The greatness of goddess Jāhnavī destroys all sins. Uttering (the name of Gaṅgā) giving happiness and liberation he goes along the path. "O Gaṅgā, O goddess, O mother of the world, present yourself to me."

21-27. With these gentle words he should remove his fatigue. "Oh, how I left my house; how I came here after (so much) exertion". He who would speak like this, does not have the complete fruit of it (i.e. the pilgrimage). Those men who, overcome by such sorrowful thoughts as: "Where is my bed? Where is my wife? Where is my friend? Where is my house? I am sleeping on the ground on this desolate road. How have I come here? What is the position of the things like wealth and grains in my house? After how many days shall I go back to my house?," go along the path, do not have the entire fruit of the bath in Gaṅgā, O brāhmaṇa. "O Gaṅgā, this pilgrimage is undertaken to reach your bank. O best river, due to your favour I shall succeed in it without any obstacle." Having uttered this hymn, especially at the time of the pilgrimage, he, with delight, should go from his house along with devotees of Viṣṇu, O Jaimini. He should not go with a great speed, nor very slowly.

28-30. The wise ones should not undertake any other work

during the pilgrimages to Gaṅgā. Half of the religious merit of him who carries on trade, business etc. on the bank of Gaṅgā or at Prayāga, perishes. "All my sins, small or great, committed in existence after existence will perish due to the favour of the goddess Gaṅgā." Saying so, a wise one, being very much delighted, should go to the bank of Gaṅgā.

31-35a. Seeing mother Gaṅgā, he should utter this hymn: "Today my existence is fruitful, today my life is well-lived, (since) with my eyes I am actually seeing you of the nature of Brahman, O goddess; just by seeing you the sin of me, a great sinner, produced during crores of existences, has perished." Speaking like this, he, full of devotion, should salute goddess Jāhnavī, by dropping his body (i.e. by prostrating himself) on the ground. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, he, with the palms of his hands joined, with devotion and being very much delighted, should again utter this hymn:

35b-41. "O Gaṅgā, O goddess, O mother of the world, I am touching your water with my feet. Being pleased, pardon this fault of mine. O auspicious one, your water is a staircase for going up to the heaven. Therefore, I am touching it with my feet. O Gaṅgā, O goddess. I repeatedly salute you." Then the wise one, devoutly carrying the Gaṅgā-water on his head, should, saying 'Gaṅgā', enter the stream (of Gaṅgā). "I smear my body with your mud, very soft and destroying all sins. O mother, remove my sin." With his body smeared with the mud of Gaṅgā, and uttering (the words) 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā', he should bathe in Gaṅgā, destroying all sins. Then again taking the clay to the accompaniment of the hymn mentioned before, and again taking the clay to the accompaniment of the hymn that will be told (now) he should devoutly bathe.

42-43. "O Gaṅgā, O you of the nature of Brahman, I am bathing in your pure water. Give me the fruit told (in the holy texts)." Then, O brāhmaṇa, the wise one, remembering Gaṅgā, Nārāyaṇa, should, as he wishes, bathe in Gaṅgā, the mother of the world.

44. Having thus bathed in Gaṅgā, he should clean his body with (a piece of) cloth. He should not drop the water from the clothes to be worn into Gaṅgā.

45-46. A wise man should not brush his teeth in Gaṅgā. If

he does so through folly, he would not obtain the religious merit due to the water of Gaṅgā. Having done that act of brushing the teeth etc. in the morning somewhere else, he should abandon the garment worn during the night, and then should bathe in Gaṅgā.

47-48. He who without going to an external land would bathe in Gaṅgā, would also not obtain the full fruit of the bath in Gaṅgā. Having bathed, the wise one should place sectarian marks of clay at various places (on his body). Then with a steady mind he should present libations of water to the manes etc.

49-50. The manes of him who offers them libations of the water of Gaṅgā, are gratified for a period of a hundred crores of years. The manes of him who offers śrāddha to them on Gaṅgā, live pleased in the abode of gods (i.e. heaven), O best brāhmaṇa.

51-52. Observing a fast, and having performed rites like a bath etc. in Gaṅgā, he should then do acts like giving gifts, worshipping deities, (shouting) 'victory (to Gaṅgā)', which being done in Gaṅgā do not perish. Fasting and finishing the rites like bathing in Gaṅgā, he should perform the five major sacrifices (viz. *brahma-*, *pitṛ-*, *deva-*, *bhūta-*, and *nṛ-yajña*) and should worship Gaṅgā.

53-58. A wise man should bathe the image of goddess Gaṅgā, so also of Śrī Viṣṇu with the divine water of a cocoanut. In the absence of the image of Gaṅgā, he should recollecting Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) in his heart, put the cocoanut-water into the Gaṅgā-water. He should (then) devoutly worship (the images of) Gaṅgā and Viṣṇu with divine fragrant substances, bright lamps full of ghee, fragrant incense, many beautiful flowers, many very ripe fruits, excellent offerings of eatables, water for washing the feet, respectful offerings, water for rinsing the mouth with, tāmbūlas with khadira, so also with other special presents, with various eulogies, and with offerings of eatables. Then the wise one should devoutly go three times round the image of the goddess that is worshipped and (that of) Viṣṇu, the highest lord, keeping them to his right.

59-60. Then the wise one making a solemn vow through physical acts, mind and speech as "O sinless one, O daughter of Jahnu, remaining without food (today) I shall eat food the next

day (i.e. tomorrow); be my refuge", he being extremely delighted should keep awake at night after having controlled his sleep.

61-62. If the wise one is too weak to eat fruits only, then, O greatest brāhmaṇa, he should eat (very) little food, but should not have a (full) meal. O Jaimini, having worshipped (the images of) Gaṅgā and Viṣṇu in the morning, he should give presents to a brāhmaṇa according to his wealth.

63-65. "O best river, may all that—the worship, the keeping awake before you—be faultless through your favour." Speaking like this, saluting her (i.e. Gaṅgā) and having performed his daily rites, the brāhmaṇa himself should break his fast along with his relatives. O dear, listen to the fruit from me who am telling it, of the religious merit of him who thus observes the holy fast on the bank of Gaṅgā.

66-68. He is freed from sins committed during other (i.e. former) existences. He, having Viṣṇu's form and reaching Viṣṇu's city, rejoices (there) with Viṣṇu. Living in Viṣṇu's city for thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas, he enjoys all prosperity, very difficult to be obtained. Then by Viṣṇu's order he goes to Brahmā's world. In Brahmā's world he enjoys prosperity which is very difficult to be had even by gods.

69-70. Living in Brahmā's world for that much period (i.e. thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas), he, then, getting into a beautiful chariot, goes to Śiva from Brahmā's abode. There he enjoys pleasures of various kinds, which are extremely difficult to be had. He also gets the headship of Śiva's attendants. What is the use of speaking many other words?

71-78a. Then that meritorious man, after living in Śiva's abode for that much period (i.e. thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas), would, as it were, another Indra, go to Indra's world. Then he would remain on the same seat with that virtuous (god). Having enjoyed there all his desired objects for a period of a hundred crores of kalpas, he would, like another Moon, go to the Sun's world from there. Having enjoyed nectar there, near the Moon, he would become a sovereign emperor after again having come to the earth. Having protected the earth for a long time and having conquered all his enemies,

he would, at the end of his life (-span), happily meet death in Gaṅgā. Again he, the very glorious one, himself getting into an aeroplane, goes to the city of the lord, difficult to be reached even by deities. Having enjoyed all pleasures there for four ages of Manus, he securing the highest knowledge, would obtain liberation, difficult to be secured. There is no doubt that even he who would meet death on the path when he is on his pilgrimage to Gaṅgā would go to the highest abode.

78b-84a. On the earth there was a religious and sweet-speaking king named Satyadharma during the junction of Tretā and Dvāpara yugas. The queen of that king was Vijayā by name. She was beautiful, of good character, and highly devoted to the service of her husband. Having enjoyed for seven thousand years this earth, he whose time of death had come sometime died along with his wife. Then the couple, causing fear, tied by Yama's soldiers went to Yama's abode along a painful path. Seeing them Dharmarāja also said to Citragupta: "O Citragupta, consider all acts of these two." O Jaimini, Citragupta, being (thus) ordered by him, considered their acts from the beginning, and with the palms of his hands joined, spoke:

Citragupta said:

84b-85. O king, listen. I am telling all the acts of these two. Listen, I am also telling the remedy against their ill-luck (due to) whatever good or bad act they did on the earth.

86-88. Once, O competent one, a deer frightened by tigers, came from the forest to save its life, to his assembly. Seeing it coming, he, being very curious, got up and quickly struck on its hip with his sword. The king struck the deer even though it had sought his shelter. Therefore, O lord, this king, along with his wife, should be punished by you.

89-96. There is no doubt that he, along with crores and crores of members of his family, would reside in hell for as many thousands of ages and hundreds of ages of Manu as the number of hair on his body. Listen to the religious merit of the wise one who with (i.e. at the cost of) even his life and wealth protects him who has sought his shelter. Freed from all sins, chief among them being a brāhmaṇa's murder, he would at the end (of the

span) of his life go to liberation difficult to be attained even by meditating saints.

Then by Yama's order, his messengers put the king with his wife in a very painful hell where the trees have leaves as sharp as swords. Since the leaves of the trees there resemble swords, the wise call it Asipatravana. Then living in that Asipatravipina (hell) for hundreds of crores of Yugas, he, along with his wife resorted to the hell called Vyāghrabhakṣya. (One) who enters that hell full of all troubles, would be a prey of tigers. Therefore, it is known as Vyāghrabhakṣya.

97-99a. The king, along with his wife, stayed there for thousands of crores of yugas, and at the end of his sins was born, after having gone to the earth, in the stock of frogs. The two, the male frog and the female frog, remembering their (former) births, were very much pained. Always eating insects, they lived on a bank (of a river). Once, finding (i.e. on) an auspicious day (some) men were going along the path to the bank of Jāhnavī. O brāhmaṇa, the two (frogs) saw them.

The frog said:

99b-102. Due to all those sinful acts I did due to my ignorance, even now pain does not abandon us. Casting their bodies into Gaṅgā, even the sinners would be freed. Yet, how can we experience such a kind of unhappiness? Now I desire to cast this body (of me) into Gaṅgā. O dear one, tell me, what is the remedy? I desire to cross the ocean of agony.

The female frog, having heard his words, spoke politely:

The female frog said:

103-105a. O lord, it is not possible to bear this agony. Do so quickly.

O brāhmaṇa, the couple, then, remembering Gaṅgā, giver of auspicious things, was delighted and at once undertook the pilgrimage in order to die. A poisonous, fearful deadly serpent saw them, hungry for a long time, going along the path.

The deadly serpent said:

105b-112. O sinful frogs, you, whose time of death has come, have arrived. Therefore, you should be eaten by me who am hungry.

Then the unhappy, very much frightened couple spoke with reverence to the deadly serpent, that was in front of them, these words: "In our heart, O serpent, there is not the slightest fear of death. Formerly, I was a king called Satyadharma on the earth. This was my queen named Vijayā. Through temptation I, a wicked one, resorted to her(?) Due to that act I experienced pain for a long time in the abode of Yama. To undergo the remaining (fruit of) my act I went to (i.e. was born in) the stock of frogs along with my wife. The act done by a sinner does not leave (him). O serpent, we truly desire to go to the highest abode. We are going to the bank of Gaṅgā to cast our bodies (into her). O serpent, give up your indiscrimination, causing torment in the hell. How much pleasure will you have by devouring us?

113-116. Viṣṇu dwells in our heart. (In the same way) Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) dwells in your heart also. Therefore, what enmity do we have with you, O serpent? The wise should never harm a living being. If it is done, then it is the Destiny that brings it about. Giving harm to men (i.e. causing them to commit harm) the wicked Destiny itself would take away (their) life, sons, wives, riches and glory. What is the use of mutterings (of names of deities), austerities, (giving) gifts, or sacrifices to him in whose heart the two letters 'hiṁ-sā' (i.e. harm) always remain?

117-118. That man who harms a living being just harms Viṣṇu (also). The revered lord of Lakṣmī lives in the bodies of all living beings. Lord Viṣṇu, having created himself in many ways, plays like a child in the pleasure-house of the mundane existence.

119-122. The body of a sentient being is the abode of the highest soul. Viṣṇu himself is the highest soul. Therefore, one should avoid doing harm. By destroying another's life one's own pleasure is had. (But) one's pleasure would be momentary (while) another would lose his life. This is the wonderful behaviour of people on the earth: Killing another person with great effort they

bring about their own pleasure. An intelligent one never knows himself.

123-127a. He should think in his mind: 'I am Viṣṇu. He is (also) Viṣṇu.' He, who, in this worldly existence, is pained due to another man's agony and is happy on his happiness, should be known to be actually Viṣṇu himself. Fie upon the happiness of the men deceived by delusion, and the happiness which would be had by causing harm to another (being), O serpent! Men soon get the fruits of those pleasures and pains which are given by them to a living being on the earth. Therefore, O serpent, give up (doing) harm, and be happy. When you are pleased, we shall go to the other shore of the ocean of unhappiness."

The serpent said:

127b-133a. When there would not[1] (?) indeed be a major sin (involved) in killing others, then Oh, how (i.e. why) has the Creator created those that are the preys and those that eat them? You have told the truth that harm should not be done to others. But in the case of all preys harm is not involved. Viṣṇu is of a universal form. It is the truth. There is no doubt about it. He himself has created the union of the prey and the one who eats it. He himself creates himself and himself protects himself. He himself eats himself. Such is the creation of Viṣṇu. Am I able to kill you? The creator of the form of Death, Viṣṇu himself, has sent me for this mission. That god who created you, and who always protects you, and who is of the nature of Death today kills you making me the instrument.

Vyāsa said:

133b-141. Then the serpent ate up (the couple of frogs), which was uttering, through great hunger, (the words) 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā', on the path. These two persons at every step obtained the great fruit of horse-sacrifices in their pilgrimage to the bank of the Gaṅgā. Therefore, these two noble ones have (the credit of) many horse-sacrifices. None is like them, since (even) I have

1. The word '*na*' (not) is redundant as it gives a sense not intended in the context.

performed (only) a hundred sacrifices. Indra, in his own authority depending upon another came (there) on foot with materials of worship in his hand and surrounded by gods. The beauties like Rambhā and Urvaśī, proud of their youth, said to one another: "This very handsome man of taste, the best among the meritorious, has come. With my service I shall bring him under my influence." Someone said to someone else: "I know all arts. Therefore, only I shall be the beloved of this king." Someone said to someone else: "Even your Indra is under my influence. Then what wonder is there that this king also will be under my influence?"

142-149. "This one is my husband. This one is my lord. This one is my master. This one is my protector." Thus all the women, appreciating good qualities, said with great delight. O brāhmaṇa, hearing these various (talks) of them, a virtuous, appreciative woman said: "This king has taken that charming one (viz. Vijayā) belonging to Sudāsa as his wife. O ladies, (then) what is the use of quarrelling?" Then, O brāhmaṇa, those beauties, adorned with all ornaments, gave up quarrelling, and came there delighted at heart. They then worshipped that king with his sin vanished, and along with wife with (i.e. by giving him) water for washing his feet etc. Indra then spoke (to him) thus. Indra put him, along with his wife, into the chariot (decorated) with flowers. Heaven was full of noise with the sounds of kettle-drums, tabors, melodious small drums, and large drums, so also with the sounds of bracelets and clappings, and the shouts of victory given by gods. He, fanned with the breezes produced from white chowries in the charming hands of the divine ladies, and seated in a chariot with his wife, went to heaven. Then the god Indra, fearing destruction, gave that king Satyadharma half of his seat.

150-152. Due to Viṣṇu's compassion, that king, sitting on the same seat with Indra, acted as Indra in heaven. Enjoying all pleasures for thousands of crores of yugas he got into a chariot by the lord's order, and went to Vaikuṇṭha. Having enjoyed all charming pleasures there for a Manu period, and having obtained the higest knowledge there, he, with his wife, obtained liberation.

153-159. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you the entire fruit of this kind of (i.e. got by) him who casts his body while going on a pilgrimage along the bank of Gaṅgā. Philosophers, great sages

like Nārada, have not declared any restriction as regards time on going to the bank of Gaṅgā. O best brāhmaṇa, whenever a man would bathe in Gaṅgā, he certainly obtains inexhaustible religious merit. It is certain that Gaṅgā destroys all sins. If a man repeatedly commits sins, Gaṅgā does not purify him. O people, if you desire beatitude, then, giving up wicked thoughts, bathe in Gaṅgā, the mother of the world. By means of which very difficult acts do men get that religious merit which they would have by means of a bath in Gaṅgā? It is possible (for a man) to count the number of sharp showers and dust particles on the earth. (But) O brāhmaṇa, he cannot narrate the merits of Gaṅgā.

160-161. Having considered all your holy texts I say: "A man gets liberation after bathing (just) once in the water of Gaṅgā. Even he who, thinking of the lord of gods, and of Gaṅgā, destroying the mass of the affliction of all the afflicted ones, and the fear of sins, bathes in the water of a well, is freed from the masses of all sins like the murder of a cow, and due to the favour of Gaṅgā, O brāhmaṇa, he would go to Viṣṇu's city, giving all pleasures."

CHAPTER TEN

The Efficacy of Campaka Flower

Jaimini said:

1. O preceptor, through your grace I have heard this (description of the) greatness of Gaṅgā. Now, I desire to listen to the fruit of Viṣṇu's worship.

Vyāsa said:

2-3. O dear, listen to the excellent fruit of the worship of the lord of Lakṣmī, hearing which all men obtain excellent knowledge. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the rules according to which the Eternal One should be worshipped in the twelve months like Māgha. I shall (now) tell them.

4-8. When the auspicious month of Māgha, the best of all months, comes, the best devotee of Viṣṇu should give up (eating) flesh and coitus. He should everyday bathe in the morning; he should also avoid (the use of) oils; he should avoid taking food twice (a day) and also the food of others in the month of Māgha. A man, wearing a white garment, should, with a firm mind, begin worshipping Viṣṇu in the morning after having performed the five major sacrifices (viz. *brahmayajña* etc.). With lukewarm, pure water he should give bath to (the image of) the immutable Viṣṇu. He should besmear the parts of the body (of the image) of Viṣṇu with loose (i.e. soft) sandal. He should worship these of the lord of the world, the chief of gods, the Disc-holder. He should dry the vessels that are washed.

9-11. Having bathed (the image of) the lord of the world with lukewarm water, he should carefully dry his body with a divine garment. O best brāhmaṇa, I (shall) tell about the fruit which he who bathes (the image of) Viṣṇu with lukewarm water in the month of Māgha, gets. Freed from all sins committed in former existences, he enjoys all pleasure in this world, and (to enjoy) the remaining pleasure he goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

12-14. Listen to the religious merit of (i.e. obtained by) him who, after having washed the vessels and having purified them with water, would worship the (image of) the lord of the world. Free from all diseases, he, enjoying all desired objects here (i.e. in this world), would finally dwell for thousands of yugas in Viṣṇu's abode. In the morning and in the entire evening a devotee of Viṣṇu should place a smokeless, burning fire in front of (the image of) the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu).

15-19. Listen to the fruit of, i.e. obtained by, that devotee of Viṣṇu, who would burn fire in the morning and in the evening before (the image of) Viṣṇu in the month of Māgha to keep off cold. He, along with his sons and grandsons, enjoys all desired objects in this world, and in the end goes to Viṣṇu's city, difficult to be reached even by deities. As is his soul (to him) so is Viṣṇu. There is no doubt about this. A man should keep away cold from (the imags of) Viṣṇu sleeping on the bed as he keeps away cold from himself. What does the best god, being pleased, not give to him who would bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with milk during the month of Māgha? In the same way he

should remove the cold (of the image) of the Disc-holder with a divine garment.

20-26. I shall tell the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who would worship (the image of) Viṣṇu after bathing him (it) with cocoanut water and milk in the month of Māgha. He, having lifted up a crore of men of his family sinking due to their own acts in the ocean of hell, difficult to cross, goes to the position of the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu). O best brāhmaṇa, especially during the worship of Viṣṇu on the fifth day of the bright half in the month of Māgha, so also on the Ekādaśī day and the fifth day[1] (in the dark fortnight) rice boiled in milk along with a lamp should be offered to Mura's enemy, the god of gods along with (his spouse) Lakṣmī. O Jaimini, O devotee of Viṣṇu, I shall tell you about the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who, everyday in the month of Māgha, offers rice boiled in milk along with incense to the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu). (Please) listen. Having at the end (of his life) gone to Viṣṇu's city, he enjoys (there) charming pleasures for four periods of Manu due to the grace of the Disc-holder. Again having come to the earth he would be a sovereign emperor. (There) he enjoys pleasures for a very long time and when dead (i.e. after death) goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

27-29. O Jaimini, a devotee of Viṣṇu, who is unable to give (rice boiled in milk) to the enemy of Mura on the fifth day, the seventh day or the eleventh day, should offer him best food. O best brāhmaṇa, the bright half is especially superior to the dark half. On the days (mentioned above) of the bright half one should give food to Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu is not difficult to be attained by him who would give rice boiled in milk along with cakes to Viṣṇu, the conqueror of demons, at least on one day in Māgha.

30-33. There is no doubt that whatever is offered by a man to please a brāhmaṇa in the month of Māgha, would be inexhaustible for him. O brāhmaṇa, there is no destruction of the (fruit of the) act, good or bad, done in the month of Māgha, even after hundreds of ages of Manu. He who would worship Viṣṇu with campaka flowers in the month of Māgha would, after being freed from all sins, go to the highest abode. He stays in

1. The reading should have been '*saptamyām*' in place of '*pañcamyām*', as it rightly occurs in line 27a below.

Viṣṇu's abode for as many thousand yugas as the number of campaka flowers offered to Viṣṇu by him.

34-37. That fruit which is (obtained) by giving gold equal (in weight) to Meru, is obtained by worshipping Viṣṇu with (only) one campaka flower. O best brāhmaṇa, a campaka flower is always dear to Viṣṇu. Especially in the month of Māgha it is pure and dear to Viṣṇu. He who has not worshipped Viṣṇu with divine campaka flowers, would be without gems, without gold etc. in every birth. I am specially telling you the fruit of (the offering of) a campaka flower. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to it, the excellent one, along with its history.

38-44. O brāhmaṇa, a king named Suvarṇa, knowing all holy texts, became powerful in the entire Āryāvarta[1] due to his vigour. O brāhmaṇa sage, he, mad with royal glory, knowledge and youth, was always engaged in sins. By the words of his heretic ministers, he, through his greed for money, punished the good (even) without their fault, O brāhmaṇa. He, without sacrifices and gifts (i.e. who did not perform sacrifices and give gifts), surrounded by music and musical instruments squandered all the wealth obtained unjustly. He, always deluded by sins, did not support his kinsmen, did not feed deities and brāhmaṇas, and did not gratify the suppliants. He, always attached to sins, never honoured a guest. That king, the abode of sins, everyday went (away) from a temple. Was anyone among the indiscriminate ones able to count, even for hundreds of years, the other sins which he had committed?

45-52. Once that wicked-hearted king, deluded by lust, went to a prostitute's house at night. Seeing the king coming, (the prostitute) named Ujjvalā, suddenly getting up from the bed saluted him. Having washed his pair of feet with water from a golden pitcher, she, embracing the king with her arms, seated him on the bed. That king, sprinkled with the streams of the nectar of her love, and being curious remained on that bed. Then that harlot who was quite young, herself gave, with a smile, campaka flowers to the king. A flower from the garland of

1. Āryāvarta: Abode of the noble or the excellent (Āryas). Name of the region extending from the eastern to the western sea, and bounded on the north and south by the Himālaya and the Vindhya respectively.

flowers dropped on the ground from the hand of the king, and pervaded the atmosphere with its fragrance. Seeing the flower that had fallen down, the king, through great confusion said (the words) '*Namo Nārāyaṇāya* (salutation to Nārāyaṇa)' preceded by the syllable '*Oṃ*'. All the sins of the king perished due to (his having uttered) the word 'Nārāyaṇa' and due to the offering of the campaka flower.

53-58. All the villagers also gathered there and killed him that night in the prostitute's invincible house. Yama, who was very angry, sent his servants to take the king, the greatest sinner (to his abode). The messengers ordered by him, with their eyes red due to anger and having nooses and mallets in their hands came there very speedily. Yama's messengers exerted to take him to their abode. Then Nārāyaṇa's (i.e. Viṣṇu's) servants holding conches, discs and maces, and mounted upon Garuḍa came to take the king (to Viṣṇu's abode). Seeing the king bound by a noose, the very powerful servants of Viṣṇu struck Yama's messengers with discs and maces. Putting him into a divine chariot, they blew excellent conches.

59-61. Then the king who had got in the chariot, who was adorned with tulasī (leaves and) flowers, who had put on yellow silken garments, who was adorned with golden ornaments, who was being praised by hosts of sages, masters of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, who was surrounded by Viṣṇu's messengers, came to Viṣṇu's world. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu himself got up, embraced the king with his four long arms and said to him:

The lord said:

62-65. O king, O best among all meritorious souls, tell (me) about (your) welfare. Now let us know what still remains to be attained by you. I always look after him who would even once say: 'Salutation to Nārāyaṇa.' He is my brother; he is my father. I accomplish all the desired objects, like a father to his son, of the man who would sometime remember my name 'Nārāyaṇa'. O best king, you are my devotee. Therefore, disclose your desire. What wonderful object shall I give you now?

The king said:

66-73a. O ocean of pity, you have undoubtedly given (me)

everything. Even a sinner like me has reached your inaccessible place.

By these words of him Lakṣmī's lord was pleased, and he affectionately made him sit. Listen to it (i.e. that account). He, full of pity, himself adorned him with golden ornaments fashioned by Viśvakarman. Viṣṇu, the extremely tolerant one, gratified the king with various kinds of eatables, very difficult to be had even by the divine ones. In this way the king lived in Viṣṇu's abode everyday for thousands of Manu's ages and nine hundred years. The righteous king protected his subjects. With great devotion he always worshipped Viṣṇu with charming campaka flowers and various kinds of offerings of eatables. When the span of his life was over the king died in the water of Gaṅgā and obtained liberation by the grace of Viṣṇu.

Vyāsa said:

73b-78. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you this efficacy of campaka flowers. Sinful persons have been liberated after worshipping Viṣṇu with campaka flowers. O brāhmaṇa sage, revered Viṣṇu, worshipped with a full-blown campaka flower gives the highest position in a short time. Those who worship the highest soul intentionally or even without an intention are freed from all sins, and they also go to the highest position. When Viṣṇu is pleased, nobody is a sinner, since that king, even though he had committed a sin, crossed this deep worldly ocean through Viṣṇu's favour and attained liberation. That man who, abandoning sin, would, with devotion and great respect, worship Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), having large eyes like lotus-petals, with divine, fragrant campaka flowers would go (to Viṣṇu).

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Rules of Viṣṇu Worship

Vyāsa said:

1-8. O Jaimini, O brāhmaṇa sage, I (shall) tell you the mode in which Viṣṇu should always be worshipped. Listen to it attentively. A wise man, having got up from his bed in the morning and taking a pot (full) of water, and covering his head with (a piece of) cloth, should go to a place outside (the town). There, the wise man, keeping mum, putting the sacred thread on his ear, should sit in the northern direction and urinate and excrete. He should not urinate or excrete in a temple of a deity, on the way, in cowpens, places where four roads meet, on the main road, in a ploughed soil, at the root of darbhas, in a courtyard, on the sandy bank of a river, at the root of a fig tree standing on a sacred spot, so also in a forest, in lakes and wells. A wise man should urinate and excrete till he does not see the sun, the moon, brāhmaṇas and the ten quarters. To cleanse himself he should not take the clay from inside the holes dug by mice etc. or (from) ploughed soil. A wise man should purify himself with water after bringing it from (a place of) water. A wise man does not purify himself by keeping his foot in water.

9-10. A wise man should answer the nature's call at night by facing the south. Covering his head with (a piece of) cloth he should answer the nature's call. A wise man should apply one (layer of) clay to his organ of generation, three (layers) to his anus, seven to his left hand, and ten to both the hands.

11-21. The wise should apply six (layers of) clay to both the feet. A wise man should brush his teeth after having (thus) purified himself. The cleansing of the teeth along with that of the lips etc. should be done. He should not brush his teeth by facing the south or the west. If he would do so, he would be a resident of hell. O brāhmaṇa, he should brush his teeth with the middle finger or the ring-finger or the thumb but never with the forefinger. A wise man should not brush his teeth with a twig of aśvattha or fig tree or of dhātrī tree; so also with that of devadāru or asura tree (for by doing so) the entire fruit of his daily rites perishes. O Jaimini, the manes of him, so also gods and

divine sages, being disappointed with him who brushes his teeth at the time of his bath go (away). The deities do not accept the worship of (i.e. offered by) him, and the manes do not accept the (libations of) water of (i.e. offered by) him who brushes his teeth in the noon or the afternoon. He who brushes his teeth at the time of his bath in a lake, should be known to be a cāṇḍāla till he sees Gaṅgā. The manes of him who brushes his teeth after the revered sun has risen, eat that stick with which he brushes his teeth and being grieved, go (away). A man brushing his teeth on a fast day or a śrāddha day does not get the fruit of it (i.e. of the fast or the śrāddha), O brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, he should clean his teeth in the morning and his tongue with (a piece of) cloth. He should have twelve rinsings with water.

22-24. O Jaimini, the man who brushes his teeth in this manner on a fast day or the day of (offering of) śrāddha to the manes, gets the entire fruit. Doing the purification in this manner, the wise one should go into his house and abandon the night-garment. Then the wise, pure one, seated at the door of the chamber of the deity should remember the infinite god, the highest lord, Viṣṇu.

25-30. 'O Rāma, O you of a dark body, O Viṣṇu, O Nārāyaṇa, O you full of pity, O Janārdana, O you abode of the world, O Keśava, remove my sin. O you wearing a yellow garment, O infinite one, O Padmanābha, O you full of the world, O Vāmana, O god, O lord, be the refuge of him who has sought your shelter. O Dāmodara, O greatest of the Yadus, O Śrī Kṛṣṇa, O ocean of pity, O lotus-eyed one, O lord of gods, O Vāsudeva, favour me. O Garuḍa-bannered one, O Govinda, O supporter of all, O holder of the mace, O you having the conch in your hand, O you having the disc in your hand, O you having a lotus in your hand, remove (my) calamities. O you pleasure of Lakṣmī, O Viṣṇu, O Hṛṣīkeśa, O best of gods, O Puruṣottama, O enemy of Kaṁsa, O enemy of Kaiṭabha, remove (my) fear. O Śrīpati (i.e. lord of Lakṣmī), O Śrīdhara, O lord, O Śrīda, O Śrīkara, O Mādhava, O highest Brahman, O highest abode, O immutable one, be my refuge.'

31. O best brāhmaṇa, having thus remembered Viṣṇu, the wise man with the palms of his hands joined, having gone into the house, speaks like this:

32-35. 'O god, O Śrīpati, O Kṛṣṇa, O son of Devakī, O lord, O master of the world, abandon your sleep. It is the morning time.' Then the wise man should think in his mind that Devakī's son along with Lakṣmī is seated on the bed after having given up sleep. Then the devotee of Viṣṇu should give to Kṛṣṇa, a divine, covered pot full of water for washing his face. The intelligent ones serve the highest lord as servants serve their master for their livelihood.

36. O brāhmaṇa sage, the desired object of him who serves the lord of the world as his servant, is soon accomplished.

37-39. As the servants serve their master through fear, so the wise ones always serve Viṣṇu, the lord. O brāhmaṇa, he who, being fearless, serves him with this desire of him, is just a bad servant. He would not be (a devotee). Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, a man desiring final beatitude, should always render service to the lord of Lakṣmī.

40-44. In the morning a devotee of Viṣṇu should take off from the body of Viṣṇu (i.e. his image) the used flowers, the garment worn during the night, and stale sandal also. Then the wise man should himself sweep the temple. He should slowly clean it with a groom. That man would live in Viṣṇu's house for as many hundred periods of Manu as the number of particles of dust that go out of the temple. Even a murderer of a brāhmaṇa, who sweeps the temple of Viṣṇu, goes to the highest position. What is the use of saying much? He should smear the temple with wool and cowdung. In that temple a wise man should recollect Viṣṇu.

45-51. O Jaimini, I shall tell you in brief about the religious merit of him who smears Viṣṇu's temple. Listen to it. He would happily live in Viṣṇu's house for as many thousands of kalpas as the dust particles that perish (i.e. are removed). One who sweeps and smears Viṣṇu's temple obtains the highest abode. Then what to say about him who knows how to worship the lord? When due to a calamity due to Indra he is not able to do it himself, then he should appoint his wife in Viṣṇu's temple. Or he should appoint his devoted son of good character, or his brother or sister in the god's temple. He should himself very carefully wash the things (needed) for Viṣṇu's worship with pure water seven times or three times. There is no doubt that copper vessels are

purified with acid, the vessels of bell-metal are purified with ash, and iron-vessels with fire.

52. Viṣṇu is not pleased with a rich man who bathes Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, with water in an iron pot.

53. If (he does so) through ignorance, he is purified by means of a bath in Gaṅgā. O best brāhmaṇa, in prosperity (i.e. when one is wealthy) one should always follow a rule.

54-62a. It is laid down in the holy texts that there is no rule in adversity. O best brāhmaṇa, when a conch which is carefully washed, touches the ground, it becomes pure after washing it a hundred times. Having in this way carefully washed the materials for worship, he should take materials for his bath and should go to a lake. If he comes home without taking a bath, the hosts of his manes do not accept the libations offered by him on that day. That man who foolishly puts in an obstacle for him who goes for bathing or for taking a meal, would be a resident of hell. There is no doubt that the manes of him who, having gone to a lake for a bath, would urinate or excrete (there) would eat urine and feces. Then having bathed and offered libations according to the rules, a wise man, remembering Viṣṇu, should come home. Then, O brāhmaṇa, the best brāhmaṇa after having washed both his feet in the courtyard should enter the temple of the deity. The religious merit earned during a year, of him who would enter the temple without washing his feet, perishes that moment only.

62b-67. Therefore, a wise man, having come after having bathed, should wash his feet in the courtyard and then enter the temple of the deity. Having sat down, the wise man should wash the pair of his feet with his left hand. Then he should carefully wash both his hands, O brāhmaṇa. O best brānmaṇa, Lakṣmī certainly abandons the fool who washes one of his feet with another or with his right hand. Then the intelligent one, having sat down, and with full concentration should commence the worship of Viṣṇu, giving all desired objects. After sitting upon a pure seat of deer-hide or tiger-hide, or merely on a cloth-seat, or also on the seat of darbhas or of flowers, he should worship Lakṣmī's lord.

68-79. A learned brāhmaṇa should never worship Viṣṇu (after sitting) on a wooden seat. 'O Earth, you are held by Viṣṇu,

you sustain all people. Therefore, O you who bear everything, give me an excellent seat to stay.' Speaking like this the worshipper of Viṣṇu should sit on the seat after spreading it out. He should never worship Viṣṇu by facing the South. Having poured water very fragrant and purified with a hymn into a conch, he should bathe the master, Lakṣmī's lord, along with Lakṣmī. O best brāhmaṇa, Jaimini, I shall tell you the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who bathes (the image of) the revered Janārdana with (water from) a conch. Listen. Being free from the sins of the murder of a brāhmaṇa, a cow, a woman, or of causing abortion or drinking liquor, he goes to Vaikuṇṭha, and (there) enjoys all pleasures. O brāhmaṇa, if a man on seeing (the image of) Viṣṇu, would worship (it) him, he quickly obtains whatever (he desires) through the grace of Lakṣmī's lord. O best brāhmaṇa, a wise man should, in the absence of a conch, put the fragrant water and tulasī (leaves) in a pot, and should bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu. Then having bathed (the image of the) god and having put (it) him on an excellent seat, he should smear his entire body with fragrant sandal. The man who treats the body of the Disc-holder with the mire of tulasī wood (tulasī-plant), has Viṣṇu always pleased with him. 'O lord of the world, this garland of tulasī leaves, giving pleasure by means of its fragrance is offered to you. Always be very well pleased.' O best brāhmaṇa, what does the great Viṣṇu, adorned with the garland of tulasī leaves to the accompaniment of this hymn, and pleased, not give? Then he should make the solemn observance with the hymns from the Veda.

80-89. The wise ones should then fix the directions with hymns from the Purāṇas: 'May Kṛṣṇa protect in the east. May Devakī's son protect in the south-east. May the enemy of demons protect in the south. May Madhusūdana protect in the south-west. May the Śrīmat (i.e. having Lakṣmī) protect in the intermediate directions. May Śrīdhara protect upwards. May the universal soul, of the form of the tortoise and full of pity protect from below. May all those who cause obstacles at the time of (Viṣṇu's) worship, go away, being struck by the missile of Viṣṇu's name.' Having thus fixed the directions he, bowing and with his palms joined, makes a solemn vow by means of the hymn to be told (hereafter): 'O god of gods, O Janārdana, make this wor-

ship commenced by me free from obstacles and successful. Be pleased, O highest god.' Having made a solemn vow (like this) a devotee of Viṣṇu, knowing everything, should assign the various parts of his body to different deities, and should meditate, with his heart on god Viṣṇu, resembling a fresh cloud, having eyes like lotuses, wearing a yellow garment, having a very charming, smiling face, adorned with the garlands of kadamba flowers, having very large arms, having ear-rings with the row of peacock's feathers on his head, deluding the ten directions with the sweet sound of his flute, surrounded by cowherdesses, and living in the charming Vṛndāvana. Having thus meditated upon the lord of gods, Viṣṇu, giving all desired objects, the devotee of Viṣṇu should then devoutly invoke him.

90-92a. The wise one should then offer water for washing his feet, materials of worship and water for sipping to Kṛṣṇa who is invoked and who grants the four goals of human life. The wise one should worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Devakī's son and the lord of all gods, with tender tulasī leaves or charming flowers.

92b-101. 'Salutations to Matsya (incarnation), to Kūrma incarnation. Repeated salutations to Varāha (incarnation). Salutation to you, Hari; repeated salutations to Vāmana. Salutation to the powerful Rāma, Rāma, Rāma. Repeated salutations to pure Buddha (the enlightened one), having pity. Salutation to you, Kalki; salutation to you of many forms. Salutation to you, Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, the holder of the Śārṅga bow, to Dāmodara, to the lord, to the god of gods. Salutation to Hṛṣīkeśa, to Śānta (the tranquil one), to Vyomapāda (whose feet are extended in the heaven). Salutation to the lord of Lakṣmī. Salutation to (you) having lotus-like eyes. Salutation to you Ananta, to you having mace in your hand, to you, Garuḍa-bannered (one), to you having the disc in your hand. Repeated salutations to you having the lotus in your hand, to Acyuta. Salutation to you, the enemy of demons and giving all desired objects. I always salute Mādhava, Sureśa (lord of gods), Viṣṇu, the highest soul, the one having a crown and ear-rings. Salutation to you, the revered one.' The wise one (should invoke Viṣṇu's) vehicle called Garuḍa with the hymn: 'Salutation to Garuḍa. Salutation to (his) conch, to (his) disc. Repeated salutations to (his) mace. Repeated salutations to (his) lotus, to his sword Nandaka.'

102-104. Having thus worshipped the lord of gods along with his consort and vehicle and weapons, the wise one should repeat the eight-syllabled formula. The wise one having then devoutly repeated the eight-syllabled formula, should offer Viṣṇu many excellent eatables. The devotee of Viṣṇu should also offer god Viṣṇu incense, lamp, tāmbūla and other presents.

105. The desired object of him who would offer Viṣṇu excellent incense made fragrant with sandal and agaru, is accomplished quickly, O best brāhmaṇa.

106. O brāhmaṇa, he who offers Viṣṇu incense made fragrant with ghee, would, after being free from crores of sins, go to Viṣṇu's abode.

107. He who would offer Viṣṇu incense made fragrant with resin, goes to the highest abode, inaccessible even to gods.

108. Viṣṇu in a moment removes all the sins of him who offers him a lamp with ghee or sesamum oil.

109. O best brāhmaṇa, O Jaimini, he who would give a tāmbūla made fragrant with camphor to Viṣṇu, gets liberation.

110. He who gives a tāmbūla with khadira, ultimately goes to Viṣṇu's place after having enjoyed all pleasure here (i.e. in this world).

111. A man, after offering a tāmbūla with ṣaṣṭimadhurikā (?) and nutmeg to Viṣṇu, would obtain heaven.

112-113. O Jaimini, the devotee of Viṣṇu, should go round him (i.e. his image) after keeping water in a conch, to the accompaniment of the hymn which will be told (now). 'O Janārdana, friend of the world, O you protector of those who seek your refuge, O lord, give me the status of the servant of the servant of your servant.'

114-119. O Jaimini, I shall tell you in brief the fruit of the religious merit of him who would go round (the image of) Viṣṇu with (i.e. repeating) this hymn. At every step of the going round (the image of) Viṣṇu sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, and (other) major sins perish. For as many thousands of kalpas a man rejoices with Viṣṇu as the steps he would devoutly walk while going round Viṣṇu. When a man slowly walks step by step while going round Viṣṇu, he obtains the fruit of a horse-sacrifice at every step. A crore-fold greater fruit would be obtained by going round (the image of) Viṣṇu than the fruit (obtained by) go-

ing round all (other images) in the worldly existence. Even he who goes round himself in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu, gets the same fruit. What is the use of many other words?

120-123. An intelligent man, while going round (the Liṅga of) Śiva, should not cross the receptacle for receiving the water with which the Liṅga has been bathed. By crossing it (i.e. if a man crosses it) his worship (of Śiva) would be fruitless. O best brāhmaṇa, he who would even once go round Viṣṇu, would certainly become a sovereign emperor in every birth. O brāhmaṇa, he who would go round Viṣṇu twice, obtains Indra's position within three days. There is no doubt about this. The man who would go round (the image of) Viṣṇu twice, would enter, after being freed from all sins, Viṣṇu's body.

124-125. O Jaimini, he who after entering a temple, would wave a conch over (the image of) Viṣṇu, would be honoured by gods. The sin in the body of him who would salute (the image of) Viṣṇu (by prostrating himself) like a staff on the ground, is reduced to ash that moment only.

126. Lakṣmī's lord Viṣṇu gives him who would salute Janārdana with his palms joined and placed on his head, the highest position.

127-129a. O brāhmaṇa sage, listen to the efficacy which I am telling, of the religious merit of those men who drop their entire body (i.e. prostrate themselves) on the ground and salute Viṣṇu. For as many thousands of kalpas as the dust particles with which their bodies are decorated, these men stay with Viṣṇu. Then the flowers taken off from (the image of) Viṣṇu are offered to the devotees of Viṣṇu.

129b-131. I shall tell you about these devotees of Viṣṇu. O best one, O Jaimini, listen. 'May Śuka, Sūta, so also Vyāsa, Nārada, sage Kapila, Prahlāda, Ambarīṣa, so also Akrūra and Uddhava, Bibhīṣaṇa, Hanūmān, and other devotees of Viṣṇu also accept the flowers taken off from (the image of) Viṣṇu, giving all desired objects.'

132-133. Saying so the devotee should drop on the ground the flowers taken off from (the image of) Viṣṇu. Then he himself devoutly accepts the flowers taken off from (the image of) Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, he on whose head are seen the excellent flow-

ers taken off from (the image of) Viṣṇu, should be known to be actually Viṣṇu himself.

134-138. All deities take the offerings of eatables to Viṣṇu, and flowers taken off from (the image of) him, which are difficult to be had, and which destroy sins. Then what need one say about human beings? O Jaimini, all the sins remaining in the body of the devotee of Viṣṇu, who smells a tulasī leaf, perish. The diseases in the body of him, into whose nose the fragrance of a tulasī leaf enters, instantly perish. O best brāhmaṇa, joy always exists in the house of him who rejoices after smelling the fragrance of a tulasī leaf. A wise man, with his palms joined, having praised the lord of the world with eulogies, should recite this hymn:

139-140. 'O Nārāyaṇa, O you of the form of the world, O you lord of the world, go home. O god, go to your place. Always be pleased. O lord of the world, O you full of the world, may the worship which I offered according to my capacity be faultless through your grace.'

141. Then the wise one should devoutly take the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu, the highest soul, and destroying all sins.

142. He who carries (on his body) even a drop of water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, has bathed at all holy places. I have told you the truth.

143. He should touch the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu. It would give him the fruit of a bath in Gaṅgā, since the water of Gaṅgā is the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu.

144. For him who would touch the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet there is no untimely death nor any fear from a disease.

145-147. May even sinful men drink everyday the medicine of the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu for the destruction of their sins and diseases. O brāhmaṇa, the sin in the body of that man who would drink the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet perishes just in a moment. As by a medicine (the disease) in a human body is very much destroyed, in exactly the same way all the sin is destroyed by the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet.

148-149. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you about the religious merit of (i.e. obtained by) him who would carry on his head the

pure water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet along with a tulasī leaf. He, freed from all sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, and assuming Viṣṇu's form, ultimately goes to Viṣṇu's city and rejoices with him.

150. A greater fruit would be obtained by touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet than by giving gold equal to the measure of Meru (mountain).

151-154. A man who touches the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet obtains that fruit which men get by giving a crore of horses, or which one would get by giving the earth with the seven islands to brāhmaṇas. A greater fruit would be obtained by touching the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu than the one that would be (obtained) by performing thousands of horse-sacrifices. A man would get a bigger fruit by touching the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu than the religious merit declared (to be got) by giving a hundred wells. What is the use of speaking much in this matter? I shall tell it in brief.

155-160a. A man becomes free due to the touch of the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet. O best brāhmaṇa, I am repeatedly telling (this) firmly. He who touches the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, does not get rebirth. He who would devoutly eat the remnants of the eatables offered to Viṣṇu, which destroy all the sins, would go to the highest position. The body of him who, O best brāhmaṇa, eats the eatables offered to Viṣṇu, which are difficult to be had, abandons the sins even like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. The land of liberation, difficult to be obtained even by deities like the greatest god, would be obedient to him like a maid, who eats the articles of food offered to Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu soon takes him to his own body, who worships Viṣṇu without abandoning any of the eatables offered to Viṣṇu.

160b-169. How can I tell you the efficacy of the eatables offered to great Viṣṇu, on the enjoyer of which even Viṣṇu is dependent, O lord of brāhmaṇas? O brāhmaṇa, he who would devoutly offer excellent worship to Śrī Viṣṇu in this manner, even without the proper religious ceremony, every month, also would be dear to Viṣṇu, and would obtain the same fruit which he who knows the religious ceremony would get after performing the worship of Viṣṇu with the proper religious ceremony. O brāhmaṇa, O lord, if there is no devotion, then the lord would not be

pleased even if he is worshipped with many offerings of eatables. There is no doubt that one gets as much fruit as is his devotion to the god. That worship of Viṣṇu which men perform without devotion would be a worship at a wrong time, O best brāhmaṇa. Knowledge is the root of devotion. Devotion is the root of Viṣṇu. For the coming up of the liberation due to worship, the root is the propitiation of Viṣṇu. All that, even very little which a man does with faith, would be inexhaustible, O wise one; (for) every act is accompanied by faith. O brāhmaṇa, he who devoutly worships Viṣṇu even (with) little water, obtains the position of Viṣṇu, since Viṣṇu is dependent on his devotees.

170. O brāhmaṇa, this entire world is worthless. Worship of Viṣṇu is the only truth. Therefore, a man desiring his good should worship Kṛṣṇa of infinite forms.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Greatness of the Holy Fig Tree

Vyāsa said:

1-2. O best brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu should everyday in (the month of) Phālguna devoutly worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa saluted by gods. Listen properly to the fruit which I shall tell, of (i.e. obtained by) him who would bathe Devakī's son with clarified butter in Phālguna.

3-6. He, having received the fruit of all sacrifices and of all gifts, and freed from all sins goes in the end to Viṣṇu's place. Having enjoyed pleasures in Viṣṇu's abode for thousands of crores of yugas, he, having obtained excellent knowledge, obtains liberation there only. He who offers, in winter, sweet-meat made of sesamum-seeds to Kṛṣṇa, of the form of a cowherd, would go to Viṣṇu's abode. He who would offer sweet balls made with ghee to Viṣṇu, the highest soul, would drink nectar in heaven for a period of hundreds of Manu's ages.

7-9. Viṣṇu, with his mind pleased, cuts off the bond of the mundane existence of him who offers pleasing candied sugar to

Viṣṇu, O Jaimini. O brāhmaṇa, a man should offer a beautiful fruit to the god. In the end he goes to Indra's city and would be honoured by gods. What does he who, the devoted one, would offer pure sugar to Kṛṣṇa, not obtain through Vāsudeva's grace, O brāhmaṇa?

10-12. Listen to the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who offers a very ripe, sweet, badari-fruit to Kṛṣṇa in the month of Phālguna? Along with his sons and grandsons he enjoys all pleasures here (i.e. in this world), and getting into a beautiful chariot, goes to Viṣṇu's abode in the end. A man should not give a badari-fruit with jaggery to Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, if, through ignorance, he would give it, he would be a resident of hell.

13-16. O brāhmaṇa, listen from me who am telling it, to the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who offers a very ripe pomegranate to Viṣṇu in the month of Phālguna. The lucky one stays for as many ages of Manu as there are seeds in the pomegranate in Viṣṇu's abode. O best brāhmaṇa, he who offers a mixture of flour and molasses ground and boiled together to Viṣṇu in the month of Phālguna, should be known to be the performer of a thousand horse-sacrifices. O best brāhmaṇa, the man who would bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with honey in the month of Caitra, obtains the highest position of Viṣṇu.

17-18. The Sun's son (i.e. Yama) never makes an inquiry of him who would bathe (the image of) Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya with honey (in the month of Caitra). The name of him who would bathe (the image of) Lakṣmī's lord with a kiṁśuka flower, is not written by Citragupta in his record.

19-21. When in Caitra Kṛṣṇa, the lord of the worlds, is worshipped with tilaka flowers by a man, then he is not reborn on the earth. A man worshipping Kṛṣṇa, the crest-jewel of all gods, with a black aśoka flower, never meets with a calamity. He who with a pleased mind, worships in the spring, the lord with fragrant vernal (flowers), is honoured even by gods.

22. The lord, seated on the altar, himself gets up and honours him who would worship Viṣṇu with divine, unbroken sprouts.

23-24. A man who would worship Viṣṇu with fresh, tender dhātrī leaves, soon obtains his desired object. He who would

worship lord Viṣṇu with bilva leaves, with flower of white thorn-apple and flowers of sun-plant, crosses the ocean of the worldly existence.

25. O brāhmaṇa, all gods like Indra day and night honour him who would offer an excellent plantain fruit to Viṣṇu.

26. O brāhmaṇa, he who would devoutly offer wheat-flour to Viṣṇu of the form of a cowherd, is freed from all sins.

27-32. When the sacred month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu, arrives, a devotee of Viṣṇu should abandon flesh, coitus and oil. In the month of Vaiśākha a devotee of Viṣṇu should bathe in the morning, should avoid the food of others, and should not eat twice (a day). In the morning, O brāhmaṇa, he should worship Viṣṇu according to the mode mentioned already. In (the month of) Vaiśākha he should bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with water made fragrant with flowers. Till twilight he should bathe (the image of Viṣṇu) in cold water. Thrice a day (i.e. at dawn, in the noon and at sunset) he should devoutly worship the lord with various offerings of eatables. O brāhmaṇa sage, what would the lord of Lakṣmī, the highest god, decorated with the garlands of damana in Vaiśākha, and (therefore) pleased, not give (to the devotee)? Which wise man is able to measure the religious merit of him who would offer barley-food to the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) in the month of Vaiśākha?

33-34. All that is offered to Viṣṇu only in the month of Vaiśākha to please him, would be inexhaustible. O brāhmaṇa, any other good act done in the month of Vaiśākha to please Viṣṇu, does not perish.

35-38. A man who puts up a place where water is distributed to travellers in the month of Vaiśākha to please Viṣṇu, everyday gets the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. Vaiśākha is a month difficult to be had. It gives the fruits of all acts. Abandoning even hundreds of other acts Viṣṇu should be worshipped during that month. He who worships Viṣṇu even for a day in Vaiśākha, obtains that fruit which is obtained by having worshipped Viṣṇu for six years. A man should worship Viṣṇu of the form of the holy fig tree everyday in Vaiśākha for securing the four goals of human life.

39-42. He who would worship the holy fig tree with a handful of water, would, after being free from crores of sins, go to the

highest place. What would the lord in the form of the holy fig tree not give to him who binds the roots (i.e. puts up a platform around the roots) of the holy fig tree with stones etc., O brāhmaṇa sage? He also, who, on seeing the holy fig tree, salutes it, goes to the highest place. (The span of) his life increases. There is no doubt about this. O Jaimini, there is no want or excess in the rite which, O brāhmaṇa, a man performs at the root of the holy fig tree.

43-55. O Jaimini, all holy places like the Three-streamed (Gaṅgā) are present there where even one holy fig tree, the best among the trees, stands. O brāhmaṇa, he who would worship the holy fig tree, worships Viṣṇu, since the lord himself is of the form of the holy fig tree. There is no act in the world doing which he who, a fool, through disrespect, hurts the holy fig tree, is purified, O best brāhmaṇa. This holy fig tree, the lord of trees, is glorified to be Viṣṇu's form. Therefore, there is no savior of those who hurt a holy fig tree. O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu would remove the sin remaining in the body of him who seeing a holy fig tree, afterwards touches it and salutes it. Yama himself extracts with fish-hooks the eyes of him who sees him who harms a holy fig tree, and though capable, would not ward him off. Yama himself cuts off with a knife the tongue of him who, a fool, would not say: 'Do not cut off the holy fig tree.' That man who hurts even one small branch of a holy fig tree, obtains the fruit of a crore of murders of brāhmaṇas. That fierce sin which is involved in the murder of a brāhmaṇa, in violating the wife of one's preceptor, in drinking liquor, so also in snatching others' deposits, that sin which is involved in causing an abortion, in killing a cow, in the murder of a woman, in adultery, in killing him who has sought one's refuge, so also in killing one's friend, in not speaking in confidence, in killing one's husband, in censuring others, in eating on a day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, is committed by men by cutting off a holy fig tree. No sinner, comparable to him who hurts a holy fig tree, Viṣṇu's form, is heard on the earth.

56. I am telling the importance of the holy fig tree along with its history. O best brāhmaṇa, O dear, listen to it attentively.

57-63. O brāhmaṇa, formerly in Tretāyuga there was a brāhmaṇa devoted to Viṣṇu and engaged in the welfare of all

beings. He was always delighted in honouring his relatives; he was always delighted in offering a lamp (to Viṣṇu). He spoke the truth; he had conquered his anger. He was harmless and without religious hypocrisy. O best brāhmaṇa, he, striving after final emancipation, always worshipped lord Viṣṇu, the highest god, with great devotion. The lord, knowing his very firm devotion, took away his entire wealth with some motive. Yet that very intelligent, best brāhmaṇa, everyday worshipped the noble Viṣṇu with great devotion. O brāhmaṇa, all his wealth earned with difficulty, perished. The brāhmaṇa, knowing the highest truth, seeing that also with grief that cannot be conceived by mind, gave up eating (food) after making his mind firm in the worship of the great Viṣṇu.

64-67. Knowing the devotion of that brāhmaṇa Viṣṇu, giving tranquillity, also again brought about the destruction of his relatives. O best brāhmaṇa, the brāhmaṇa's relatives, deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā, always commenced doing harm (to others). The brāhmaṇa accomplished by means of restrictions and pleased, always worshipped Viṣṇu with great devotion. The brāhmaṇa, having made arrangement to secure money for the worship of Viṣṇu, (worshipped) Mādhava, the lord of the world, and gave up grief for his relatives.

68-69. O Jaimini, great Viṣṇu, though kind to him, being curious, took away even his sons day by day. Yet that best brāhmaṇa everyday worshipped Viṣṇu, the destroyer of distress, with double the former devotion.

70-73. O brāhmaṇa, then his wife, extremely distressed due to grief and affliction, and being deluded by Viṣṇu' s Māyā, went to her father's house. That lonely brāhmaṇa, highly given to Viṣṇu's devotion, never minded any calamity on account of his good heart. O best brāhmaṇa, once he, the best among Viṣṇu's devotees, taking an axe on his shoulder went to a forest. The brāhmaṇa, having no clothes, warded off cold everyday in winter after bringing wood from the forest.

74-77. Once the best brāhmaṇa was unable to go to the forest. (So) he cut off a branch of a holy fig tree standing in the courtyard (of his house). Meantime great Viṣṇu, the best of gods, with his mind distressed by agony came out of the holy

fig tree. In front of him the brāhmaṇa happily saw Viṣṇu, the highest god, having four arms, large eyes like lotus-petals, having worn a yellow garment, having ear-rings, good hair, and having his weapons like the lotus etc., resembling a new cloud, very much reddened in the evening, due to large streams of blood flowing (from his body), (resembling) fire, and invisible (even) to the hosts of gods. The brāhmaṇa with his pair of eyes charming due to streams of tears of joy, praised (him) with soft words.

The brāhmaṇa said:

78-85. O Hari, Murāri, the only lord of the world, Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava, lord of Lakṣmī, Keśava, enemy of Keśin, Nārāyaṇa, infinite one, lord, be pleased. How can I describe your advent? In this world there is none else except you. O Acyuta, having given one the entire world full of virtues or having given compassion whereby one looks upon one's own (persons) and others as equal, why do you, O Viṣṇu, why do you take away the devotion for you, which resides in one's body? By getting (i.e. if I get) wealth I shall give (i.e. part with) my joy. Devotion given to the great is very blessed. Since I constantly look upon the greatest sinner as a noble one, a sinner (like me) never sees your pair of feet meditated upon by gods. Though I am the greatest among the unhappy, yet I myself, with my eyes, am actually seeing you, like Indra, the soul of the worlds. I do not know even a small worship of you. Nor have I ever given any wealth to you. Yet, O Keśava, in front of me you, the only adorable one, are seen in a bodily form. You have given me this tree of devotion. It is full of piety, material welfare, and desire of sensual enjoyments. O lord, it, sprinkled with the water of your sight, has today borne the fruit of final emancipation. O Keśava, O you of a universal form, of all the heads in the world my head will be the best. O god of gods, my mind now goes to the couple of your lotus-like feet.

Vyāsa said:

86. That brāhmaṇa, having thus praised Jagannātha (i.e. lord of the world), Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, again, with the palms of his hands joined, devoutly spoke to him thus:

The brāhmaṇa said:

87-88. O god of gods, O lord of the world, O you who favour the world, with these strokes of the whip your body is wet with blood. In a battle you killed the members of the family of the demons. O lord, on the earth who is able to kill you? This is very wonderful.

The lord said:

89-90. O dear, you have undoubtedly spoken the truth. Neither a demon nor a fiend can kill me. O brāhmaṇa, I am just of the form of the holy fig tree. You cut me off with an axe. Therefore, there was now bleeding from my body.

Vyāsa said:

91-94. Hearing these words of him the brāhmaṇa, distressed with fear, censured himself in many ways. "Fie upon me, the unfortunate one and the greatest among sinners, who caused great grief to the heart of the lord of the three worlds. Viṣṇu removes all sins and he was hurt by me. Who can make me go beyond this sin? He, on whose being pleased sinners are honoured by gods, is distressed due to the trouble given by me. Oh, I am doomed!

95-96. I, a sinner, have caused pain to the heart of him whom gods like Brahmā please with great devotion. What is the use of austerities, mutterings of hymns, or life in the house to me, (since) this only giver of piety, material welfare, of sensual enjoyments and liberation is distressed with pain."

97-98. O best brāhmaṇa, speaking like this he decided to put that axe only at his throat (i.e. to cut off his throat with that axe), to please Viṣṇu. Seeing his great devotion, the kind lord of Lakṣmī, loving his devotees, quickly took it away from his hand.

The lord said:

99-100. O dear, how (i.e. why) do you do such a very dreadful act? I am never pleased with men who commit suicide? I am very much pleased with your devotion. O best one, do not entertain fear. O best brāhmaṇa, choose a boon that is in your mind.

The brāhmaṇa said:

101. O highest god, I caused great pain to you. O lord, may it not remain in your body. This is the boon I choose, O lord.

The lord said:

102-105a. O dear, O brāhmaṇa, you did this act through ignorance. You should not, therefore, even regard it as a great offence. I am always obedient to you, since you are the greatest among devotees. Everyday I know your errors (i.e. you erred). Yet your devotion for me always increased. Therefore, O dear, I now desire to be free from your debt. Giving up all fear, choose a boon in front of (i.e. from) me.

The brāhmaṇa said:

105b-106a. O Viṣṇu, O best god, may I have very strong devotion for you in every birth.

Vyāsa said:

106b-108a. Hearing these words of him spoken due to affection for Viṣṇu, (Viṣṇu) being pleased, then gave him the garland that was (put) around his own neck. Then as a father embraces his son, he embraced the brāhmaṇa, with his four long arms, and spoke (these) soft words (to him):

The lord said:

108b-114. O brāhmaṇa, since you are my devotee, therefore you will soon have all prosperity. O brāhmaṇa, O best one, everyday propitiate me in the form of the Aśvattha tree with the employment of (proper) rites. I shall accomplish all your desired objects.

Speaking like this to the best brāhmaṇa and embracing him again, Viṣṇu, the abode of compassion, disappeared just there. That best devotee of Viṣṇu, that brāhmaṇa, having received the garland from the neck of Viṣṇu, regarded himself as having done his duty and remained in his own house. Then, O brāhmaṇa sage, Kubera himself, by Viṣṇu's order, showered much wealth into his house. The architect (of gods) Viśvakarman fashioned for him, by Viṣṇu's order, an excellent palace like that of Indra.

It was having male and female servants. It was adorned with various things.

115-118. His abode crowded with crores of elephants and horses, shone. Even his relatives who were dead, were (again) united with him. His wife who had disrespected him, came home of her own accord. O brāhmaṇa, his wife whose sons were dead, had stable progeny due to the favour of Viṣṇu, and she was highly devoted to her husband. That best brāhmaṇa, having, for a long time, along with his sons and grandsons, enjoyed all pleasures, attained at the end of his life along with his wife liberation.

Vyāsa said:

119-120. The excellent, holy fig tree is actually Viṣṇu himself. Those men who worship it, never face any calamity. O best man, Viṣṇu, being pleased, gives him who, meditating upon Viṣṇu, worships the holy fig tree, the highest position.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Viṣṇu's Worship with Lotuses: *The Story of Prajā*

Vyāsa said:

1-4. O best brāhmaṇa, in the month of Jyeṣṭha (a man) should devoutly worship lord Viṣṇu after having bathed him (i.e. his image) with cold water. Everyday in summer unguents, fragrant āmalaka, fragrant oil should be offered to Viṣṇu. In a pavilion (having free access) to people he should everyday install (the image of) the lord of Lakṣmī in a temple which is made very fragrant, which is cool and very charming. One should not install (the image of) the lord of Lakṣmī in a hot place, in a place full of smoke or fuel, or in a lying-in chamber.

5-11. O best brāhmaṇa, what does the lord of Kamalā, very much pleased when fanned with very long, white chowries in Jyeṣṭha, not give? O best one, Viṣṇu fanned with fans made of the

feathers of peacocks in the summer soon gives everything that is desired. All those who fan Viṣṇu with breezes from a fan or from a pure (piece of) cloth, go to heaven. O best brāhmaṇa, one who in summer, when it arrives, smears the body of Mādhava with fragrant pastes or with sandal, enters his body. There is no doubt that he is liberated. One should install (the image of) Viṣṇu in a garden with blossoming flowers, so also in a tulasī-grove, having gentle breezes at twilight. He who has adorned Viṣṇu with pāṭala flowers in Jyeṣṭha, should be known to be the performer of a thousand horse-sacrifices.

12-16. Viṣṇu would give that man the position of a king in every birth, who would give a necklace of pearls to him in summer. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the fruit of the religious merit of him who decorates Śrī Kṛṣṇa with jewelled necklace, from me who am telling it. He, decorated with a jewelled necklace, would live in Viṣṇu's city till Brahmā creates the entire world, O Jaimini. He also, who decorates Kṛṣṇa with golden or silver ornaments in summer, would get the (same) fruit. He who gives god Viṣṇu a beautiful bed with a pillow, is never unhappy. In summer heavy garments should not be given (to Viṣṇu).

17-21. O best brāhmaṇa, light, pure silken garment should be given to Viṣṇu (in summer). He who would worship Viṣṇu with divine, fragrant fruits of acyuta (Morinda Tinctoria), would in the end go to Indra's city, and would gladly drink nectar (there). He too, who would worship Lakṣmī's lord with the divine fruits of priyāla (Buchanania Latifolia), would get the (same) fruit. What is the use of speaking so many words? That devotee of Viṣṇu, who devoutly offers in summer very cold rice-gruel with sauce (does not again drink the milk from a mother's breasts, i.e. is not reborn). O best brāhmaṇa, that wise man also, who, in the month of Āṣāḍha, would devoutly worship Viṣṇu, after bathing him (i.e. his image) with curd, does not again drink the milk from a mother's breasts (i.e. is not reborn).

22-23. O brāhmaṇa sage, he who at the advent of rainy season worships (Viṣṇu) dark like a cloud with kadamba flowers, would obtain the highest position. That brāhmaṇa whose pavilion looks like fire with garlands of kadamba flowers, would have the fruit of a horse sacrifice, O greatest brāhmaṇa.

24-25. O best brāhmaṇa, the lord of Lakṣmī worshipped

with fragrant ketakī flowers does remove all miseries of human beings. Lord Viṣṇu worshipped with divine, very ripe bread-fruits mixed with ghee, would give excellent affluence.

26-33. O best brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu, desiring liberation, should devoutly offer boiled rice mixed with curd to Viṣṇu everyday in the month of Āṣāḍha. That devotee of Viṣṇu who offers butter to Kṛṣṇa, is purified from all sins, and goes to Brahmā's world. He who would worship the highest soul with the flower of śephālikā (Vitex Negundo) and jasmine flowers, would go to the highest position. He who would worship Viṣṇu with full-blown fragrant, jasmine flowers, would not be (born) due to the religious merit on account of that, O brāhmaṇa. The man, worshipping Viṣṇu, the friend of the world, with kanda (Amorphophallus Campanulatus) flowers, obtains all his desired objects. Viṣṇu is always pleased with him who would worship Viṣṇu with large flowers and full-blown Barleria flowers. He who worships Viṣṇu with sairīyaka (Barleria Cristata) flowers, herb-flowers, and karavīra (Terminalia Arjuna) flowers, goes near Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, all-round prosperity exists in the house of him who would offer parched grain with ghee to Viṣṇu in Śrāvaṇa.

34-35. O greatest brāhmaṇa, a wise man should devoutly worship Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, giving the four goals in human life, in the month of Bhādrapada. He should install (the image of) lord Viṣṇu having lotus-like eyes in a house newly constructed and free from every obstacle.

36-37. A man should not install (the image of) Viṣṇu in an old house crowded with gad-flies, mosquitoes and flies etc. A wise man should not install (the image of) the highest lord Viṣṇu in a house with mud, with its doors and walls falling down.

38-39. O best brāhmaṇa, a man who fashions a beautiful candrātapa (a hall with a roof only) in Viṣṇu's temple, goes to the world of the Moon. At night at the time of worship he should drive away, with many kinds of incense in the lord's temple, gad-flies and mosquitoes.

40. In rainy season he should install (the image of) Viṣṇu lying on a bed in a divine temple at night after covering him with emeralds.

41-42. He who desires liberation, should, everyday in the month of Bhādrapada worship the lord of gods with fresh, fragrant lotuses. He should not worship Viṣṇu with ketakī flowers in Bhādrapada, since in the month of Bhādrapada ketakī is like liquor.

43-45. He who worships Yadunandana (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) with ripe, divine palmyra fruits, does not again have the great trouble of remaining in the womb (i.e. being born). That man who devoutly would offer a ripe palmyra fruit mixed with ghee and milk to Viṣṇu would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O best brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu should offer, in the month of Bhādrapada, palmyra powder along with ghee to Viṣṇu in order to obtain the Absolute.

46. O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu's devotee, desiring liberation, should not eat any vegetable in the month of Bhādrapada. He should not eat at night.

47-49a. O best brāhmaṇa, Lakṣmī's lord accepts that water as nectar which people offer to him, O brāhmaṇa, and which removes distress, in the forenoon (of a day) in the month of Āśvina.

49b-50. O best brāhmaṇa, that water which is offered at midday to Viṣṇu, should be known as water, and he accepts it (as water). That water which is offered to Govinda in the afternoon, would be like blood. Viṣṇu does not accept it. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, one should worship Viṣṇu in the forenoon.

51-54a. Due to Viṣṇu's compassion one gets all desired objects. O best brāhmaṇa, one should not worship Viṣṇu while having (just) one garment on one's body. If one performs (Viṣṇu's) worship like that, Viṣṇu does not accept it. That worship of Viṣṇu which one performs, with the garment on one's body not washed, is fruitless; and Viṣṇu is not pleased. Those who, without tying the tuft of hair on the crowns of their heads, perform the worship of the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), do not obtain the fruit of the worship. It would be accepted by hogs.

54b-56a. O best brāhmaṇa, that worship of Viṣṇu which is performed in a house that is not purified, would indeed be accepted by hogs. O brāhmaṇa, a wise man does not bathe, worship deities, give gifts or honour his manes without having (sectarian) marks (on his body).

56b-57a. That entire holy act which is done without having

sectarian marks on his body by a devotee, is reduced to ash. And the doer would be a resident of hell.

57b-60. O best brāhmaṇa, he whose body is marked with (the marks of) a conch, a disc, a mace, a lotus, should be known to be Viṣṇu himself. There is no doubt that he who would draw (the marks) of a conch and a lotus on his right hand, and (the marks of) a disc and a mace on his left hand is Viṣṇu (himself). All sin of him who would draw (the mark) of a lotus upon (the mark of) the conch perishes in a moment.

61. Even gods like Indra salute him who would draw (the mark of) a mace upon (that of) the disc, O brāhmaṇa. A wise man should also draw (the marks of) the couple of the feet of Viṣṇu on his forehead.

62-67. Seeing him, even a sinner becomes free from his sin(s). That best devotee of Viṣṇu who would draw on his chest the eight-syllabled great formula, (the marks of) a fish and a tortoise purifies the three worlds. Kṛṣṇa, the lord of the world, gives him whose body is everyday marked with drawings of Kṛṣṇa's weapons, the highest position. All that act, auspicious or inauspicious, that a man whose body is marked with (the drawings of) the weapons of Kṛṣṇa, would be inexhaustible. Seeing him having marks of the weapons of Kṛṣṇa on his body, all demons and fiends, so also spirits and vampires, goblins, serpents, yakṣas, vidyādharas, kinnaras, guhyakas, evil demons, young evil demons seizing upon children, so also (goblins called) kuṣmāṇḍas, female goblins, so also others that bring about obstacles, run (away) through fear.

68-70a. Elephants, tigers, so also other inhabitants of the forest, run away through fear on seeing him who is marked with (the drawings of) the weapons of Kṛṣṇa. Severe diseases like jaundice causing the fall of the body (also go away). That man, who devoutly sees the body (of a man) marked with (the drawings of) the weapons of Kṛṣṇa, gets the fruit equivalent to that of seeing Kṛṣṇa.

70b-72a. The progeny of him who would worship Viṣṇu in Āśvina with three-bladed dūrvā grass, proceeds without any interruption. O brāhmaṇa, in the heart of him who would offer a karkaṭī (Cucumis Utilissimus) fruit to Viṣṇu in the month of Āśvina, unhappiness is never produced.

72b-73a. A wise man should devoutly worship Dāmodara, god of gods, when the auspicious, the best of all months, viz. Kārtika has arrived.

73b-75a. O best brāhmaṇa, a wise man should bathe in the morning in the proper manner to please Viṣṇu in the month of Kārtika. He who would give up (eating) flesh, copulation in the month of Kārtika, goes to the highest position after being freed from sins committed during existence after existence.

75b-77a. O best brāhmaṇa, when the Sun enters the Libra sign of the Zodiac, a bath in the morning, offering of clarified butter and celibacy destroy great sins. O best brāhmaṇa, he who enjoys flesh, copulation in the month of Kārtika would become a village hog in existence after existence.

77b-79a. When the month of Kārtika has arrived, a devotee of Viṣṇu should, even with effort, avoid eating twice (a day), food of others and oil. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell (you) in brief the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who offers a lamp to Viṣṇu in Śrāvaṇa. (Please) listen.

79b-80a. Being freed from agonising sins like those of the murder of a brāhmaṇa, he goes to the city of Dāmodara and would stay (there) for a period of a crore of yugas.

80b-81a. Seeing a lamp burning (before Viṣṇu's image) in Śrāvaṇa, all gods like Indra, being delighted, say to one another:

81b-82. "This one highly devoted to worshipping Viṣṇu is the best among the righteous souls, since he offers a lamp to the Disc-holder (Viṣṇu) in the month of Kārtika. O best brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu is always pleased with him in the month of Kārtika.

83. That man who would continuously offer a lamp in Viṣṇu's temple in Kārtika, obtains the fruit of a horse-sacrifice everyday.

84. That man who would worship Viṣṇu with lakhs of tulasī leaves in Kārtika, obtains the fruit of a lakh of horse-sacrifices.

85. He who would worship the immutable Viṣṇu with a lakh of bilva-flowers, obtains liberation due to the favour of the lord of the world.

86. Whatever is given after dedicating it to Viṣṇu in Kārtika, all that would be inexhaustible. This is the truth told by me.

87. O brāhmaṇa, he who would offer the sura leaf smeared

with ghee everyday in the month of Kārtika, remains in front of Viṣṇu, O brāhmaṇa.

88-90. What is difficult on the earth for the best brāhmaṇa who would worship Lakṣmī's lord with a white or black lotus that is full-blown? What has he who has offered a lotus to Viṣṇu in the month of Kārtika, not given to Viṣṇu, the conqueror of the demons? What does the revered lord of Lakṣmī not give to him who just takes a lotus and offers it to the enemy of Kaiṭabha?

91. Lakṣmī (i.e. Prosperity) does not stay during existence after existence in the house of him who has not worshipped Viṣṇu with lotuses in the month of Kārtika.

92-93. He who would offer lotus-seeds to the magnanimous Viṣṇu, is born in a brāhmaṇa family in every existence. He, born in a brāhmaṇa family, would be the friend of the four Vedas, be wealthy, have many sons and maintain the members of his family.

94-95. O Jaimini, I tell you the truth: There is no (other) flower like a lotus with which even a sinner having worshipped Viṣṇu enjoys liberation. O best brāhmaṇa, I shall especially tell the greatness of lotus, along with its history. Listen to it attentively.

96-100. There was a brāhmaṇa named Prajā, who knew all branches of holy literature, and the bee of whose mind always remained in the lotus of Viṣṇu's feet. (Abandoning) hundreds of acts fit and unfit to be done, he always worshipped deities, brāhmaṇas and preceptors (or elderly persons). To him the wealth of others was like poison. Wives of others were to him like his own mother. He did to his enemy what he did to his friend. That brāhmaṇa, knowing the sublime truth, did not have much regard on seeing a best brāhmaṇa as a guest or a suppliant. Desiring to cross the fearful, boundless ocean of the mundane existence, he performed all (kinds of) sacrifices and observed all vows.

101-102. Once that best brāhmaṇa, highly given to devotion for Viṣṇu, thought in his mind about his death and birth: 'Who was I formerly? What act have I done formerly? How have I got this (birth)? Where shall I go again?'

103. Thinking like this and sighing repeatedly, that

brāhmaṇa went to a place sacred to Śiva to know his former account.

104. There, the brāhmaṇa with the palms of his hands joined, praised god Śiva with great devotion and with sweet words.

The brāhmaṇa said:

105-115. O great god, salutation to you. O highest god, salutation to you. O Śaṅkara, O Īśāna, O you giver of boons, O you lord, salutation to you. Salutation to you, of the form of knowledge; salutation to you the giver of knowledge. Salutation to you living in the lotuses of the hearts of all beings. Salutation to you, the creator of the world. Repeated salutations to you, the father of the world. Salutation to you, the destroyer (of the world). Salutation to you, the lord of beings. Salutation to you, Vahninetra (having fire-like eyes). Salutation to you Vahnicakṣus (having fire in your eye). Salutation to you, having the moon and the sun as your eyes. Salutation to you, decorated with ash; salutation to you, wearing a hide; salutation to you, having a string of bones; salutation to you, Nīlakaṇṭha. Salutation to you, Pañcavaktra (having five faces); salutation to you having the trident in your hand; to you who destroyed the pride of Cupid; and to you of a fierce form. Salutation to you, god of gods; salutation to you, Tripura's enemy. Salutation to you, the lord of Pārvatī; salutation to you, of a fierce form. Salutation to you whose mind was very much pleased with Bāṇa's devotion. Salutation to you of many forms and of a universal form. Salutation to you, Gaṅgādhara (who sustains Gaṅgā on his head); to you, the destroyer of Dakṣa's sacrifice. Salutation to you, the lord of the evil spirits; to the holder of (the bow) Pināka. Salutation to you, Īśāna; salutation to you, Manīśa. Salutation to you, the visible and the invisible one. Salutation to you who can and cannot be discovered. You alone are Brahmā; you alone are the lord of gods, Viṣṇu; you alone are the Sun. You alone are the Moon, removing all afflictions. Repeated salutations to you, the highest god.

116-118. Having heard his eulogy, Śaṅkara, the highest lord, who brings about the welfare of the world, was pleased, and suddenly manifested himself (before him). The very devout

brāhmaṇa, seeing him, saluted by all gods to have manifested himself, saluted his feet. The best brāhmaṇa, with his mind full of joy and with the palms of his hands folded, also again praised Mahādeva, the lord, who grants boons.

119-122. "I actually see him, the lord of gods, whom even gods including Indra do not (i.e. are unable to) see. This is my great fortune. I actually see that highest god who cannot be seen with the mind set upon meditation. What else have I to accomplish? I see that lord by merely remembering whose name even great sinners go to the highest position. I am blessed, I am blessed, I am blessed, and I am fortunate. O highest god, repeated salutations to you. Be pleased."

Mahādeva said:

123. O best brāhmaṇa, with these words of you I am pleased. O glorious one, ask for a boon. I indeed desire to grant a boon.

The brāhmaṇa said:

124-127. O lord, I am actually seeing you, the highest soul, who cannot be seen even by deities. What is the use of other boons? Yet, O great god, you, full of pity, desire to grant a boon. O highest lord, I ask you something. Tell (i.e. answer) it. O god, who was I formerly? What acts did I do formerly? O lord, how have I fallen into this ocean of worldly existence? A body is obtained through acts. A man is smeared with sin. Again as a result of the sin miserable position is had.

128-130. Due to which acts have I obtained this existence full of many miseries? O Śaṅkara, be pleased, and tell it. This existence is the root of sins. Existence is the cause of misery. Therefore, I desire to know my former account. Due to the maturity of my acts, I, tormented by the digestive fire of the stomach, remained in my mother's womb mixed with urine and feces.

131-134. In the worldly existence no other affliction is said to be equal to that due to remaining in the womb. O lord, O you who remove the misery of your devotees, how did I experience it? O Śiva, O lord of the worlds, how have I fallen into this very fierce, worthless, limitless mundane existence which is full of various miseries, which is deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā, which has

supported sins, which is difficult to cross, which is without kinsmen, which is full of desire for sexual union and anger, which gives affliction and attachment, which also gives birth and death? O lord, if you favour, then tell (i.e. explain) all this to me.

Mahādeva said:

135-136. O best brāhmaṇa, even though this is a great secret among secrets (i.e. the greatest secret), and (therefore) is not to be divulged, yet I shall tell it to you (my) devotee. O best brāhmaṇa, formerly you were born in the family of mountaineers. You were known as Daṇḍapāṇi, and you lived by giving trouble to good people.

137-138. Abandoned by discrimination, and having abandoned the fear of the other world, you took to the livelihood of bandits, which caused great affliction and agony to those who were distressed. Seeing you, the extremely cruel one, to have taken to the livelihood of a robber your other brothers also became robbers.

139-143. O best brāhmaṇa, I (shall) tell you the names of your brothers with whom you formerly committed robbery: These six—Daṇḍin, Daṇḍāyudha, and Dattavān, Dattabhū, Sudaṇḍa, Daṇḍaketu—are said to be your brothers. Along with those very fierce and cruel brothers of yours, you always frightened all people with a club. O brāhmaṇa, due to greed for money, you, along with those wicked brothers of yours, killed hundreds of thousands (of people) in the forest on a desolate road. O brāhmaṇa, you, remaining in the forest, and killing with sharp arrows (cows), always ate the raw flesh of cows along with liquor.

144-145. Then all traders gave up using vehicles. A great calamity always befell (travellers) in that forest. When you took to robbery, the wealth of a man did not remain his wealth, the house of a man did not remain his house, and the wife of a man did not remain his wife.

146. In this way in that very great forest, you, along with those brothers of yours (once) after being fatigued due to the journey went to a lake for bathing.

147-148. O best brāhmaṇa, having bathed there you along with your brothers, being hungry, ate lotus-stalks and (drank)

water. O greatest brāhmaṇa, O best one, there you ate, through curiosity, many full-blown lotuses.

149-150. Just at that time, a brāhmaṇa, known as Sarvavedas, roaming in the forest, came there for bathing. The religious-minded one, having bathed there, and desiring to worship Viṣṇu, politely asked you for your lotus.

151-154. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, you gave him, with great devotion, a very clean lotus for the worship of the lord of Lakṣmī. That best brāhmaṇa was pleased with the lotus given by you. And just there he worshipped Viṣṇu, bringing about everything. Seeing that brāhmaṇa absorbed in worshipping Viṣṇu, you too laughed and saluted Viṣṇu, the good giver of desired objects. That brāhmaṇa, having worshipped duly the highest soul, the giver of the fruit of the four goals of human life, went as he had come.

155-156. O best one, due to the present of the lotus and the salutation, and due to seeing Viṣṇu's worship, all your sin perished. O excellent brāhmaṇa, after a few days you, whose death was imminent, died in that great forest only.

157-159. The lord, the abode of compassion, pleased with just that act of yours gave you the highest place, very difficult to be obtained even by gods. Due to the favour of Lakṣmī's lord you enjoyed various pleasures there for thousands and hundreds of Manu-periods. Then at the end of (i.e. after the fruit of your) acts (was enjoyed), you came to this land of religious rites and were born in a brāhmaṇa family due to the fruits of that religious merit.

160-162. O best one, having secured a birth in a pure brāhmaṇa family, you obtained steady devotion for Viṣṇu, which is the abode of all virtues. The lord, the great Viṣṇu propitiated by you with the yoga of (ritual) acts, will give you special knowledge. And you will be liberated by means of (that) knowledge. O brāhmaṇa, being very much pleased, go home. Well-being to you. You have obtained my sight. You are freed from the bond of the worldly existence.

Vyāsa said:

163-164. O brāhmaṇa, having spoken like that, the lord of the world vanished there only. That brāhmaṇa also, being satis-

fied, went home. To glorify the highest lord Viṣṇu he with effort worshipped him day and night with lovely lotuses.

165-169. Having worshipped Viṣṇu with lotuses, beautiful, good flowers, he slept for a long time. Having obtained knowledge, he attained liberation through the favour of the Garuḍa-bannered (god). If such is the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who offers a lotus to Viṣṇu even unintentionally, then what would be the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who offers it intentionally? I am telling the truth. I am again telling the truth (only). By worshipping Viṣṇu with lotuses one obtains the highest position. He who offers a lotus (even) once to Mura's enemy, is not reborn in this fearful worldly existence. Those full of major sins, even great sinners who worship Viṣṇu giving desired objects with full-blown lotuses even one day, go to (i.e. obtain) liberation.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Prohibition regarding and Fruit of Viṣṇu Worship

Vyāsa said:

1-10. A devotee of Viṣṇu should devoutly worship the immutable Viṣṇu along with the great Lakṣmī in Mārgaśīrṣa, O best brāhmaṇa. So also he should not worship Viṣṇu in a Mleccha region, in the house of a fallen person, or at a place full of bad odour, O best brāhmaṇa. He should not worship Viṣṇu near the heretics or great sinners, so also near those who tell lies. He should not worship Viṣṇu near those who are crying, who are quarrelling or at the place of those who are ridiculing. He should not worship Viṣṇu at the place of those who are engaged in accepting gifts, so also in the house of misers and of those who are greedy of others' wealth. So also he should not worship Viṣṇu in the house of those whose nature is deceitful. O brāhmaṇa, being highly devoted, he should, giving up attention to any other thing, be intent on meditating upon Viṣṇu at the time of worshipping Viṣṇu. He should not worship Viṣṇu, when there is loud wailing, when there are sighs, when there is a

doubt, or a talk with the heretics, O best brāhmaṇa. Viṣṇu receives that flower which is offered even into ash by him whose mind is concentrated, to the god of gods, the lord of the world. O brāhmaṇa, the lord does not receive that flower which a man fatigued due to hundreds of thoughts, offers even on the discs of the (śālagrāma) stones. With an undivided mind a wise man should worship Viṣṇu.

11. That act which is done with a confused mind is fruitless. Every act depends upon the mind. The three worlds depend upon the mind.

12-16a. Therefore, after making his mind steady he should worship Lakṣmī's lord. O best brāhmaṇa, he who worships at one place, but whose mind is somewhere else, would not get the fruit of his act even after hundreds of crores of kalpas. He who has become (bodily) pure with effort, and engaged in Viṣṇu's worship, is taken to be like a cāṇḍāla if he is without the purity of mind. O brāhmaṇa, that penance which is duly performed for a long time, but without devotion, would all be fruitless, and would only purify the body. That gold, (even) as much as the measure of Meru (mountain), which is given without devotion to a brāhmaṇa with family for (securing) beatitude leads to the loss of the desired object.

16b-25a. Therefore, a devotee with a concentrated mind and full of faith and devotion, should give in his house vegetables with a dwelling etc. to Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, he who offers a very ripe, divine, orange to Viṣṇu is honoured by us. A devotee should devoutly and with effort give a new thing dear to Viṣṇu, to him, the enemy of Mura, in the month of Mārgaśīrṣa. The devotee of Viṣṇu should bathe with divine sugarcane juice (the image of) god Viṣṇu, the lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who grants boons, when the month of Pauṣa has come. O best brāhmaṇa, he who bathes (the image of) Viṣṇu with sugarcane juice, enjoys all pleasures here (i.e. in this world) and after death goes to the Ikṣu-sāgara. So also he who would offer the sugarcane as an eatable to Viṣṇu, the god of gods, obtains the same fruit. What is the use of uttering many (more) words? A man by giving rice parched and flattened along with milk or with curd to Viṣṇu, would obtain all desired objects. Having removed the old garment (from Viṣṇu's image), he should offer him a new (piece of) cloth for

keeping off cold, O brāhmaṇa, when the Sun passes from one Zodiacal sign to another. In Pauṣa (when he is in the Puṣya asterism), a man desiring liberation should give to Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī, a seat of ten colours.

25b-31a. O dear, I (shall) tell (you) the fruit of the religious merit of him who, after worshipping the lord of Lakṣmī, would blow a conch. Listen to it. Being freed from all sins like illicit intercourse, he in the end goes to Viṣṇu's city and rejoices with him. O best brāhmaṇa, I (shall) tell you about the religious merit of him who sounds at the time of (Viṣṇu's) worship a bell marked with Garuḍa. He, being freed from all sins like eating articles that are prohibited, goes after getting into a charming chariot to Viṣṇu's abode. Having enjoyed there all desired objects for a period of hundreds of crores of kalpas, he again comes to (i.e. is born on) the earth as a best brāhmaṇa, well-versed in the four Vedas. Having enjoyed there all desired objects for a period of hundreds of crores of kalpas, he again goes to Viṣṇu's city and obtains excellent liberation.

31b-36a. That man who plays upon the lute at the time of worship of the lord, would become the chief among the learned in every existence. The lord, being pleased with him who beats a tabor at the time of the worship of the enemy of Kaiṭabha, gives him immense fruit. Listen to the religious merit of (i.e. got by) him who beats a small drum shaped like an hourglass, a small drum, or who sounds sweet cymbals, or beats a tabor, a large kettle-drum, a large drum, a sindhuvāraka (?), a gong of bell-metal, or claps, or plays upon a lute, at the time of (Viṣṇu's) worship; being freed from sins like theft, he goes to the abode of the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu).

36b-37. Getting the highest knowledge (there), he is freed there only. O best brāhmaṇa, I tell (you) about the religious merit of him who would produce sweet sound at the time of the worship of the lord of the world, or would play on the wind-instrument. With crores and crores (members) of his family, he goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

38-42. Having obtained knowledge, he would obtain inexhaustible liberation there only. O best brāhmaṇa, he who devoutly dances in the temple of Viṣṇu, goes to that highest position of Viṣṇu. He who devoutly sings songs in front (of the image) of

Viṣṇu, becomes a king in cities of gandharvas. With that devotee of Viṣṇu, who devoutly praises the lord of the world with hymns of praise, the lord is pleased and gives him all his desired objects. O brāhmaṇa sage, that Viṣṇu soon favours him who would worship Viṣṇu in this manner every month.

43. All those men who desire to cross this mundane ocean which is very deep and which gives all afflictions, should worship the pair of the lotus-like feet of the Supreme Spirit, that is charming and served by the hosts of gods.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Efficacy of Rāma's Name

Vyāsa said:

1-3. O brāhmaṇa, listen. I (shall) again tell you about the greatness of Viṣṇu, having heard which a man becomes free from all sins. O best brāhmaṇa, this entire world is a portion of Viṣṇu. Therefore, those wise men who desire the highest knowledge, look upon it as full of Viṣṇu. All gods like Brahmā, Śaṅkara, Rudra are Viṣṇu's portions. Therefore, worship offered to all gods, goes to Viṣṇu alone.

4-6. By this means or that no inauspicious (things) ever take place in the case of those who remember Viṣṇu's names, removing all sins. O best brāhmaṇa, everything is said to be a sin due to the act (involved in it). (But) the recollection of Viṣṇu is indestructible and destroys sins. A devotee of Viṣṇu, desiring liberation, should, while sleeping, eating, speaking, remaining (at one place), getting up, walking constantly remember Viṣṇu.

7-8. No exalted sages have laid down any restriction about time, destroying all afflictions, on the recollection of Lakṣmī's lord. O brāhmaṇa sage, I (shall) tell (you) in brief about the efficacy of the name of the magnanimous Viṣṇu, along with its history. Listen.

9-10. Formerly, in Kṛta age, there lived a vaiśya named Paraśu, who was the greatest in the family of vaiśyas and who

had mastered all virtues. O brāhmaṇa, due to (ill) luck, that vaiśya, suffering from cough and asthma, died in his youth.

11-14. His wife of a beautiful waist and quite young, and named Jīvantī, went to her father's house after her husband was dead. O best brāhmaṇa, since that Jīvantī was proud of the prime of her youth, she went to paramours, though checked by her relatives. She, in the prime of her youth and with her heart attached to the paramours, gave up observing vows and domestic duties. O best brāhmaṇa, she of beautiful buttocks and stout breasts, was blinded by lust, and never followed a religious path.

15-17. Her father, devoted to piety, seeing her of a bad character, was afraid of infamy, and being very angry, spoke to her thus: "O wicked one, O sinner, having secured a birth in my family, without any blemish, why do you commit (this) sin? If you have (set) your mind on (committing) a sin, then there is no (food here for you) to eat. O you inauspicious one, go (away) from my house. Leave my house."

18-19. Thus addressed by her father, she, with her eyes red through anger, left her father's house and went as she pleased. Then that woman moving with a desire for (having) a paramour, and being shameless, lived after resorting to the way of a prostitute.

20-21. A pulinda, a mountaineer or even a cāṇḍāla came to her house, and the unchaste woman, with pleasure sported with him. That prostitute never properly entertained in her mind the fear of the next world, O brāhmaṇa.

22-28. O best brāhmaṇa, sometime a fowler, carrying the young one of a parrot, came to her house to sell it. That prostitute too took (i.e. bought) that excellent young one of a parrot with great delight after honouring the fowler with much wealth. Out of curiosity the prostitute everyday nourished the parrot by (giving) proper food. The prostitute who was childless, nourished that young one of a parrot, looking upon it as her own son. O best brāhmaṇa, that bird too by her order always behaved affectionately with her like her relative. Then that prostitute always taught the parrot that had developed devotion for her the name of Rāma with beautiful letters. That parrot always repeated the name of Rāma, the highest Brahman, great and superior to all (other) gods, and destroying all sins.

29-30. Due to just uttering the name of Rāma the entire, very fierce sin of the parrot and the prostitute perished. O best brāhmaṇa, that prominent prostitute, so also the parrot, both died at the same time.

31-32. Then king Dharma (i.e. Yama) sent his servants like Caṇḍa to bring the two who had committed all sins (to him). Then all those very speedy servants with nooses and mallets in their hands came (there) by Yama's order.

33-34. All the servants of Viṣṇu, as valourous as Viṣṇu (himself), (also) came (there). Seeing the two bound by nooses and lying on the ground, the angry servants of Viṣṇu said to the unconquerable messengers of Yama these words:

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

35-37. Oh, strange are the words heard by us (coming) from your mouths, O messengers of Yama, that these two though devoted to Viṣṇu, are being punished by (Yama) the Sun's son. Oh, the behaviour of the wicked is never excellent, since even with efforts they always harm the good. Wonderful is this behaviour of the wicked who have committed sins.

38-41. The religious-minded ones always look upon the entire world as sinless. The sinners do not look upon it like that. They look upon the entire world as having committed sins. The religious ones rejoice on hearing about the religious merit of the righteous; (but) the sinful persons are delighted on hearing about the sin(s) of the sinful ones. The sinful ones are not so much gratified after getting hundreds of bhāras of gold, as they are after hearing the discussion about sins. Oh, powerful is the Māyā (Illusive Power) of the noble, great Viṣṇu, (since, due to it) sinners commit a sin (in spite of its being) painful to their selves, O brāhmaṇa.

Vyāsa said:

42-43. Speaking like this, Viṣṇu's messengers, highly engaged in devotion for Viṣṇu, cut off their bonds with the edge of their discs, O brāhmaṇa. Then Yama's servants got angry. They, resembling fire, all of a sudden showered heaps of burning charcoals there.

Daṇḍa (Caṇḍa?) said:

44-45. To take the parrot and the sinful prostitute I have arranged like this; and you have (also) come. It is simply wonderful. O best ones, if you desire to take these two, then now fight with us.

46-47. Speaking like this, all the strong, haughty messengers of Yama, who had held weapons, filled the quarters with lion-like roars. So also the magnanimous messengers of Viṣṇu like Supratīka, made the world full of sound with very charming sounds of conches.

48-53. In that very fierce battle, the great messengers of Yama then covered those messengers of Viṣṇu with arrows discharged from (their) bows. In that great ocean (of battle) some angrily discharged spears, some discharged (the missiles called) śakti, some discharged thousands of arrows and some discharged discs. The messengers of Viṣṇu, the great deities, pounded with weapons like maces the great missiles discharged by them. Then the followers of Viṣṇu cut off the feet of certain messengers of Yama and the hands of some with the edge of their discs. Some with their heads out off, some with their chests pierced, some with very amazing wounds, some with their mouths wide open, dropped dead (on the ground). The followers of Yama, with one foot of some cut off, with one hand of some cut off, suddenly left the battle, and fled away from it.

54-55. Seeing those messengers intent on fleeing, Caṇḍa holding a mallet, angrily entered the battle. Caṇḍa, the greatest among the host of Yama's messengers, and very brave, struck with mallets Viṣṇu's servants in hundreds.

56-57. Then Viṣṇu's messengers quickly showered Caṇḍa of a fearful valour with showers of sharp weapons. Then Caṇḍa with his body wetted with flowing blood, struck separately Viṣṇu's messengers.

58-68. The lord's messengers, struck by that Caṇḍa in the battle, gave up their spirit and went behind Suprakāśa. Then that angry and very strong Suprakāśa, having eyes (red) like the japā-flowers, taking a mace in his hand, entered the battle (going on) on the battlefield. He who was angry, and who resembled Viṣṇu in valour, struck (him). From the mallet in Caṇḍa's hand, which

frightened the onlookers, a (column of) smoke having the smell of pus, rose. From him who was struck by the quick Caṇḍa, very fearful shower of sparks of fire was discharged. Then the angry Caṇḍa, struck, with that mallet only the very powerful Suprakāśa, O brāhmaṇa sage. Then, O brāhmaṇa, that Suprakāśa who was angry, forgot his pain and struck Caṇḍa, Yama's servant, with a mace. O Jaimini, Caṇḍa, struck by him, was wetted with blood, and he, resembling the young sun, fell unconscious on the ground. Then those messengers of Yama took Caṇḍa, who was in a swoon, and making a loud wailing, and being afraid of the battle, fled away. O brāhmaṇa, O Jaimini, O best brāhmaṇa, all the messengers of Viṣṇu, being very much delighted, blew (their) conches. Then those servants of Yama, wetted with streams of blood, overcome by fear and crying, approached Yama.

Yama's messengers said:

69-72. O Sun's son, O you of large arms, we are obedient to you. Yet the messengers of Viṣṇu have reduced us to such a miserable plight. O lord, though the two (i.e. the prostitute and the parrot) were greatest among sinners, they went to Viṣṇu's abode due to the efficacy of Rāma's name. Even those wicked sinners who are fit to be punished by you, go to Viṣṇu's city! What is your authority then? Oh, the messengers have not done this insult to us. It is, O lord, your insult only, since we are (just your) servants.

Yama said:

73-74. O messengers, they recollect the pair of letters—Rāma's name. So they are not to be punished by me. Viṣṇu is the lord of the two. Listen, O servants, there is no sin in the worldly existence, which does not instantly and thoroughly perish by recollection of Rāma.

75-80. O soldiers, those men who everyday devoutly remember the names which destroy heaps of sins, of Viṣṇu, worshipped by the best among the wise, are not at all fit to be punished by me, even though they are sinners. Those men who, on the earth, utter constantly and devoutly (the names) Govinda, Keśava, Hari, Jagadīśa, Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, affectionate to those who are humble, and Mādhava are not fit to be punished by me, even

though they are great sinners, O soldiers. O soldiers, those men who, on the earth, constantly utter (words like) 'O destroyer of the affliction of (your) devotees', 'O lord of gods', 'O friend of the distressed', 'O lord of Lakṣmī', 'O you destroyer of all sins', are not fit to be punished by me even though they are great sinners. O messengers, everyday I salute even those in (i.e. by) whose mouths words like 'Dāmodara', 'Chief of gods', 'One who is fit to be served by the hosts of gods', 'Śrī Vāsudeva', 'Puruṣottama' (and) 'Mādhava' are uttered. O best soldiers, I am always subservient to those men whose very kind heart is always engaged in the reflections on Viṣṇu, Mura's enemy, and the only lord of the world, and who resort to the form of the lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu). O soldiers, even though those who are engaged in Viṣṇu's worship, who are devoted to Viṣṇu's devotees, who are engrossed in the Ekādaśī vow, who are free from fraud, who carry on their heads the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, are great sinners, they are not fit to be punished by me.

81-82. O soldiers, I salute them who enjoy the remains of the offerings of eatable made to Viṣṇu, which destroy the entire heap (of sins), and who always carry on their ears and head, a tulasī-leaf. O soldiers, I am always dependent on them who are eagerly engaged in worshipping Kṛṣṇa's feet, who are engaged in honouring brāhmaṇas, who resort to virtues, who give great joy to the hearts of the distressed people.

83-85. O soldiers, those men who are always given to speaking the truth, who are dear to people, who are like regents of the quarters to those who have resorted to them, who always look upon others' wealth as poison, are not fit to be punished by me. O messengers, they who are engaged in offering food, who offer water (to the thirsty), who give land, who desire the good of all people, who gratify those people who have no livelihood, who have curbed their senses, who are tranquil, are never to be punished by me. I never make any inquiry of them who speak pleasing word, whose minds are free from hypocrisy, anger, pride and jealousy, who do not have a sinful attitude, and who have controlled their senses.

Vyāsa said:

86-89. When the servants of Yama were thus informed by

Yama, they knew the incomparable glory of Viṣṇu, the lord of the world. O best brāhmaṇa, names of Viṣṇu are superior to (the names of) all (other) gods. The knowers of Brahman have declared Rāma's name to be the best among them. O brāhmaṇa, the couple of letters, viz. Rā-ma, is superior to all magical formulas, by just uttering which a sinner goes to the highest position. Śiva alone and none else knows the efficacy of Rāma's name (which is) the worship of all deities.

90-92. A man gets the same fruit even by recollecting Rāma's name as he gets by reciting the thousand names of Viṣṇu. Oh, wonderful is said to be the behaviour of men, that the wicked-hearted ones do not recollect the name 'Rāma' which gives liberation. To utter it there is not the least effort. It is very charming to hear. Yet the wicked-hearted ones do not utter (the name) 'Rāma, Rāma'.

93-94. In the world, liberation which is attained with great difficulty, is attained by Rāma's name only. What other (better) act can be there? So long as men do not recollect Rāma's name giving pleasure, sins remain in their bodies.

95-97. A wise man desiring the fruit of that act should devoutly remember (the name) 'Rāma, Rāma' at a śrāddha, at the time of offering oblations to the manes, at the time of offering a portion of the daily meal to all creatures, so also at a festival, at a sacrifice, at the time of (making) a present, at the time of a vow, so also at the time of the worship of a deity, so also at other Vedic rites. O best brāhmaṇa, he who would mutter the formula '*Namo Rāmāya*' (salutation to Rāma) preceded by Oṁkāra, obtains absorption into Viṣṇu.

98. A man worshipping Viṣṇu with (this) formula of six letters, obtains all his desired objects through the grace of the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu).

99-103. O greatest brāhmaṇa, that man who at the time of death would remember (the name) 'Rāma, Rāma' obtains liberation, even though he is the most sinful. There is no doubt that the wise ones who remember the name Rāma while on a pilgrimage, would get success in everything. O brāhmaṇa, he who would remember Rāma's name in a forest, on a desolate road, or even at a frightful cremation ground would not face calamities. A man remembering Rāma's name at the royal gate, at a difficult

place, in a foreign country, in front of bandits, on seeing a bad dream, so also at the time of trouble caused by Planets, at the time of fear due to portents, so also at the time of fear due to the disease of gout, meets with nothing unfortunate, O Jaimini.

104-105. The wise should always remember Rāma's name which removes all calamities, which gives desired objects and liberation. O brāhmaṇa sage, that moment at which Rāma's name is not remembered, would be only useless. I am telling the truth.

106. Men, remembering Viṣṇu's names, do not sink down; and a man desiring the destruction of sins (committed) during crores of existences obtains affluence on the earth, and constantly remembers with devotion the very sweet name of Viṣṇu, giving liberation.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Cakrika's Story

Vyāsa said:

1. O greatest brāhmaṇa, I am again describing the greatness of Viṣṇu, the highest soul, which destroys all unhappiness. (Please) listen.

2-3. Those brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras and others belonging to the lowest castes, who resort to Viṣṇu's devotion, are fortunate. There is no doubt about this. A brāhmaṇa who is not a devotee of Viṣṇu, should be known to be inferior to a cāṇḍāla, while a cāṇḍāla who is devoted to Viṣṇu, should be known to be superior to a brāhmaṇa.

4. How can he who is without devotion for Viṣṇu, be a brāhmaṇa? And how can he, in whose mind there is devotion for Viṣṇu, be a cāṇḍāla?

5. One should look upon that cāṇḍāla when he honestly worships Viṣṇu, to be superior to a brāhmaṇa knowing (all) the four Vedas.

6-16. Formerly in the yuga called Dvāpara, there was a mountaineer named Cakrika, who tilled (others') land and who did not have a good birth (i.e. birth in a good family) but was without a good livelihood. He talked like brāhmaṇas, had curbed his anger, was free from harming others, kind, without hypocrisy, and highly devoted to his father and mother. He had not talked about Viṣṇu; he had not learnt the holy texts about liberation. Yet there arose in his mind steady devotion for Viṣṇu. Everyday he remembered names of the Disc-holder (Viṣṇu) like Hari, Keśava, Govinda, Vāsudeva, Janārdana. He, born in a mountaineer's family, first put into his own mouth whatever wild fruit he had obtained. He then knowing its sweetness and taking it out of his mouth again and being very much pleased, everyday offered it to Viṣṇu. He did not discriminate between what is defiled (by being tasted by the mouth) and what is not. The habit of one's own class always remains at the top (i.e. prevails). O greatest brāhmaṇa, once he, while roaming in a forest, found a ripe fruit of priyāla tree. He, not finding (such) a fruit (before), was delighted, and to know (its taste) he hastily put it into his mouth. O Jaimini, just when he put the fruit into his mouth, it got into his throat, O brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, holding (his throat) carefully with his left hand, he arrested (the downward movement of the fruit through) the entire cavity of his throat with his right hand.

17-20. Then Cakrika, solely absorbed in devotion for Viṣṇu, thought: 'If I do not offer this fruit to that enemy of Mura, then no sinner like me is born in the worldly existence.' Meditating on Viṣṇu in various ways he then decided. Yet that fruit did not come out of his throat, O brāhmaṇa. That exclusive devotee of Viṣṇu cut his throat with an axe. He brought (out) that fruit (from his throat) and offered it to Viṣṇu. He, thinking about him only in his heart, approached him.

21-22. And with his entire body wetted with blood, he fell on the ground. Seeing him dead, lord Viṣṇu was distressed. "There is no (other) devotee like him, since, he having cut his throat, pleased me.

23-25. Since this devoted one has done a good act, what object can there be, by giving which I can be free from his debt? He is blessed, he is very blessed. He is undoubtedly blessed.

Even sacrificing his life, he has pleased me. I do not know whether I (should) give him the position of Brahmā, or of Śiva or an emperor and be free from his debt."

26-27. Saying so, and being very much pleased, the Garuḍa-bannered god touched his head with the lotus in his own hand. Due to the touch of the lotus in his hand, that mountaineer, freed from the anguish, solely devoted to Viṣṇu, got up with great vigour.

Vyāsa said:

28-29. Then Viṣṇu cleaned the dust on the body of that greatest devotee with his own garment as a father (cleans the dust on the body of his son), O brāhmaṇa. Cakrika, seeing Viṣṇu in an embodied form, humbly bent down his head, and with the palms of his hands joined, praised him with sweet words.

Cakrika said:

30-32. O Govinda, Keśava, Hari, Jagadīśa, Viṣṇu, though I do not know (i.e. find) words proper for your praise, yet my tongue desires to praise you. O lord, be pleased; remove this enhanced blemish. O lord of everything, O you having the disc in your hand, those men who, leaving you, worship another god in the world are just fools, since you are favouring even me who am the abode of the heap of sins only. Though I who am extremely sinful and who have been born in a mountaineer's family, know you (only) through devotion for you which removes the bond of the mundane existence of men, yet the lord is very much pleased with me, O you, the only lord of the world.

33-37. O lord, I have today gained the touch of your charming, lotus-like hands which even hosts of gods led by Brahmā do not obtain. There is no one (more) kind than you to his servants. Salutation to you, the most auspicious (god), who, the lord, for the good of the group of gods like Indra, formerly (killed) the demon Kaṁsa, the first enemy of gods, and Nimi's son who had committed all sins. Salutation to you resembling a fresh cloud, who, the very powerful son of Vasudeva and the best god killed the twin Arjuna trees, so also the wicked Kālayavana in a battle, so also Dhenuka. O Śrī Kṛṣṇa, O Dāmodara, O Ananta, salutation to you, the best in Yadu family, who, the lord, the highest

god, formerly gave steady prosperity to the lord of gods (i.e. Indra). Repeated salutations to you who took away the pārijāta tree, who vanquished Indra and easily conquered Maheśa.

38-40a. Making Bhīma the instrument you knocked down Jarāsandha. The arms of Bāṇāsura struck by you, perished. I always salute him who killed Śiśupāla. Constant and repeated salutations to him who, the noble one, having killed the kṣatriyas through his Māyā, removed the burden of the earth.

Vyāsa said:

40b-41a. O Jaimini, Viṣṇu, thus praised by the magnanimous Cakrika, being very much pleased, said to him: "Choose a boon."

Cakrika said:

41b-47. O highest Brahman, O highest abode, O highest soul, O you full of pity, I am actually seeing you. What is the use of other boons, O twice-born? I did not meditate upon your form. I did not worship you with offerings of eatables, divine flowers, divine incenses or lamps. I never recollected your names. O lord, I never held on my head the water (flowing) from your feet. I did not eat the offerings of eatables made to you, nor did I observe any vow (in honour) of you. Yet I (am able to) see you. What shall I do with other boons? I am born in a mountaineer's family and am excluded from all religious rites. Yet I have today secured your lotus-like feet difficult to be secured even by deities. What (then) is the use of other boons to me? Yet, O lord of Lakṣmī, when you desire to grant a boon, (then) let my heart remain on you; let it not sink from (want of) your favour.

The lord said:

48-49. I, a sinful servant, have got great satisfaction by this shower of nectar that you have offered, O large-hearted one. O dear, I am very much pleased with this excellent lotus that you offered me. Being delighted (i.e. gladly) I accept your devotion.

Vyāsa said:

50. Speaking like this, Viṣṇu who accepted devotion and who was full of pity, embraced the devotee with his four long arms.

The lord said:

51-52. O dear, O Cakrika, O best one, I am pleased with your devotion. O dear, whatever I have given will certainly come off.

The universal soul, the protector of the universe, the highest lord, having again embraced that great devotee, vanished there only.

53-54. That Cakrika, highly intent upon devotion for Viṣṇu was very much pleased, and abandoning his sons, wife etc. went to the city of Dvārakā. Having, due to the favour of Lakṣmī's lord, thus gone there, he, at the end of his life, attained liberation, difficult to be had even by gods.

55-56. Therefore, god is dependent upon his devotees. He is pleased merely by means of devotion, and not by means of hymns of praise, wealth, austerities or muttering (a deity's names). O best brāhmaṇa, though he gave (Viṣṇu) the fruit that had been defiled by him (by tasting), yet Viṣṇu, knowing his steady devotion, was pleased with him.

57-58. Therefore, in this world those who desire liberation, (should worship) god Viṣṇu. Those men, who worship with a firm devotion the pair of Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet, fit to be worshipped by great deities like Indra, go to (i.e. obtain) liberation.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Bhadratanu's Story

Jaimini said:

1. O preceptor, again tell me the greatness of Lakṣmī's lord. Who is satisfied after drinking the nectar of Viṣṇu's account?

Vyāsa said:

2-3. There is no one pious like you in the mundane existence, since you desire to listen to Viṣṇu's greatness with devotion. O best brāhmaṇa, the charming tale of Viṣṇu does purify

the three worlds—(it purifies) the listener, the questioner and the speaker.

4-6. O dear, listen to the greatness of Lakṣmī's lord, which destroys sins. I shall narrate it, giving the four goals of human life, in brief. Viṣṇu would instantly remove the sin, committed during crores of births, of him who would worship Viṣṇu very devoutly even one day. How can he be (called) pious who has not worshipped Viṣṇu? How can he be (called) a sinner who has devotion for lord Viṣṇu?

7-8. There is the best city called Puruṣottama, a city endowed with all qualities and resorted to by hosts of all gods. It is said to be the greatest of all holy places, since in that charming city Viṣṇu actually lives.

9-14. Formerly there lived a brāhmaṇa named Bhadratanu. He was handsome; he spoke pleasing words; and was born in a pure family. The handsome brāhmaṇa, on attaining youth, was deluded by passion of love; and giving up the fear of (not attaining) the other world, he was attached to a prostitute. He did not study the Vedas, nor did he at all study the Purāṇas. Due to the company of heretics he abandoned the excellent Gāyatrī hymn. That brāhmaṇa, highly attached to sins, accepted gifts not fit for sacrificial purposes, snatched others' wealth, and censured religion. He, the mean brāhmaṇa, abandoned the conduct of brāhmaṇas, so also devotion to truth, and also the worship of elderly persons (or preceptors) and guests. He did every act that was more and more sinful. O Jaimini, he never did the most meritorious act.

15. Once that brāhmaṇa who had committed sins and who was not ashamed and afraid of people, performed a śrāddha without faith in it.

16-25. Having gone to the prostitute's house at night he said to her:

The brāhmaṇa said:

O you of large buttocks, this is the day of the śrāddha to be offered to my manes. Yet, bound by your virtues I have come to your house. O dear one, see this night fearful to all people. The sky, (right) from the ground, has multitudes of clouds dropping water, and is covered. Even at this night, at which the way is

lost due to fresh clouds, I, with my mind attracted towards your qualities, have come (to you), with the lamp of lightning in the clouds and my longing directing me to the object. O dear one, I, with anxiety about and relying upon your qualities have come (to you) at night. Not seeing you even for a moment, I am not happy. O slender one, I have come to see you with difficulty. O dear, what have I to do with a bath with the water of a holy place? Sprinkled with the holy water of your love I have reached heaven. What fruit would I get by exerting for pleasure in the other world (i.e. heaven)? Due to your favour, O dear one, I get heaven even while alive. O dear one, I performed the śrāddha-rite at home for fear of bad name. I do not have the slightest faith in this śrāddha. O beautiful lady, you are my muttering of prayers, my penance, and my prudence. O beautiful lady, I have resorted to you only in this mundane existence with full devotion. I always belong to you. Order (me) what I (should) do.

Sumadhyamā said:

26-34. With you as his son, your father has become like one who is sonless. You desire to have coitus even on the day of the śrāddha (offered) to the manes. O wicked one, the manes of him who has coitus on the day of (the śrāddha offered to) his manes, and he also eat semen. If a fool, through folly, has coitus on the day of (the śrāddha offered to his) manes, the śrāddha is fit to be received by demons. There is no doubt about this. I have clearly told you. What would one not get if one's mind in accordance with that (i.e. what I have said) would be (set) on Viṣṇu? The life of living beings remains within (the control of) Yama's staff. Yet, O fool, you, being fearless are always commiting sin(s). O fool, life perishes in a moment like a water-bubble. Then thinking that it is eternal, why do you always commit (sinful acts) secretly? How does he, on whose head the couple of letters 'mṛ-tyu' (i.e. death) is written, commit a sin, giving pain to all? Oh! wonderful is great Viṣṇu's Māyā on the earth, since, O brāhmaṇa, a sinner is always delighted. The sacrifice performed in the stage of a householder, burning like fire (says:) "Give place to (your) sin in my body, difficult to be resorted to."

Vyāsa said:

35-40. Due to the sin impelled by destiny that good prosti-

tute spoke like this. The brāhmaṇa who had committed sins, thought in his mind. 'Fie upon me a great sinner, a fool, the greatest among sinners! I, a wicked one, do not have that knowledge which the prostitute has. I, having got birth in a pure brāhmaṇa family, have everyday committed great sin(s), destroying myself. How do I still commit sin(s) through indiscrimination, when death is certain, and Yama is my master after my death! When I have not muttered (the names of Viṣṇu), when I have not observed penance, so also when I have not performed a sacrifice, when I have not studied the Vedas, when I have not practised the conduct of a brāhmaṇa, when I have not honoured guests, when I have not been devoted to my preceptor, when I have not honoured brāhmaṇas, so also when I have not offered a śrāddha to my dead ancestors, so also when I have not offered worship to Lakṣmī's lord, how can I have an excellent position (after death)?'

41-43. That brāhmaṇa, having saluted like (i.e. prostrating himself like) a staff on the ground, the illustrious Mārkaṇḍeya, the best among the knowers of religious rules, praised him with (proper) words. "Salutation to you, O greatest brāhmaṇa. Salutation to you, O long-lived one. Salutation to you the illustrious one, of the form of Viṣṇu. Salutation to Mṛkaṇḍu's son, desiring the good of all people. Salutation to you, the ocean of knowledge. Salutation to you, the immutable one."

44. Thus praised by the brāhmaṇa, the great ascetic Mārkaṇḍeya, master of the significance of all holy texts, being very much delighted, spoke (thus):

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

45. O very blessed one, I am very much pleased by your devotion. Choose a boon. I shall instantly accomplish your desired object. (This will) not (be) otherwise.

The brāhmaṇa said:

46-48. I am the greatest of sinners. I am without (i.e. I do not follow) the practices of a brāhmaṇa. I am always connected with doing harm to others. I am always interested in others' wives. O best brāhmaṇa, I, a fool, always committed great sin(s). I have never done any pious act with regard to the other world.

How can I, a great sinner, cross the fearful ocean of the worldly existence which causes pain and which is very fierce?

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

49-51. O best brāhmaṇa, even if you have committed sins, you are the best among the pious, since (in you) has arisen this knowledge difficult to be found in the world. The liking for religious merit of the pious ones increases everyday. The liking for sins of the sinful ones (also) increases everyday. Though you are a sinner, you (can) keep off your thought for sins. Therefore, the lord indeed appears to be pleased with you.

52-53. They call the man to be the best, who having first committed a sin, turns away from it (afterwards), and who has worshipped Viṣṇu in his former existence(s). Lord Viṣṇu, the great one, seeing his devotee attached to sins, gives him broad understanding, so that he gets felicity.

54-55. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, you who have worshipped Viṣṇu in every existence, will soon have good fortune. There is no doubt. (But) O brāhmaṇa, since now it is time for me to perform my religious rites, you will not hear from me (the answers to) whatever you have asked me.

56-62. There is a brāhmaṇa named Dānta, who knows the truth of every object. He will tell you all that. Go to his hermitage.

Advised by that intelligent Mārkaṇḍeya, the brāhmaṇa quickly went to the pure and very beautiful hermitage of Dānta. It was adorned with trees like aśvattha, campaka, bakula and priyaka, so also other flowered trees and was very charming. The atmosphere was filled with the fragrance of full-blown flowers. It had swarms of humming bees. It was very much resounding with the sounds of (i.e. produced by) fruits. Breezes gently blew there. The water there was cold. It was crowded with hundreds of wild beasts, and with pupils and their pupils. That brāhmaṇa, having entered that very charming hermitage, saw Dānta who knew the true nature of Brahman and who was surrounded by the hosts of his pupils. That best brāhmaṇa, having praised that best brāhmaṇa, Dānta, of the nature of Viṣṇu, saluted his feet with (i.e. by bowing) his head.

Dānta said:

63. O good one, who are you that have come (here)? What is your intention (in coming over) here? Tell the truth. With what motive are you praising me now?

Bhadratanu said:

64-65. O distinguished one, I am a brāhmaṇa without (i.e. not following) the practices of a brāhmaṇa. I am known by the name Bhadratanu, and have committed all sins. O brāhmaṇa, since you know the true nature of Brahman, tell me this: How can I, a sinner, destroy the sins (I have committed) in the world?

Dānta said:

66-72. O brāhmaṇa, listen to a great secret. Through affection for you I tell it, by which the fetter of the worldly existence of men is cut off. Give up the company of heretics. Always resort to the company of the good. Give up lust, anger, delusion, greed, pride and jealousy. So also, O brāhmaṇa, carefully avoid falsehood and doing harm to others, while always recollecting the names of the magnanimous, great Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, in the same way clean and also besmear Viṣṇu's temple. Adorn the path leading to it, and put lamps in it. Always giving water (to the thirsty) and performing the five great sacrifices, serve the brāhmaṇas and your relatives. Listen to the tale of Viṣṇu. Mutter the formula of twelve syllables. O best one, you who will be doing all these acts, will have excellent knowledge, and due to knowledge you will obtain liberation.

The brāhmaṇa said:

73-76. O brāhmaṇa, explain these good (qualities) which you talked about. (Tell me:) What is *moha*, what are religious hypocrisy and jealousy? What is falsehood? What is (doing) harm (to others)? What is pity? What is tranquillity? And what is control? What is said to be impartiality? What is (said to be) the worship of Lakṣmī's lord? What is said to be the day and the night? What is recollection of Viṣṇu? What are the five great sacrifices? What is twelve-lettered formula? O best brāhmaṇa, give me the full explanation of these, so that through your favour I shall reach the highest place.

Dānta said:

77-86. Those who, giving up acts approved by the Vedas, do other acts, and who are without their own practices (i.e. who do not follow practices laid down for their own caste) are declared to be heretics. Those who follow their practices (i.e. practices laid down for their caste) approved by the Vedas, and who are without sins and greed are declared to be good people. O best brāhmaṇa, that constant longing for women and for obtaining wealth is said to be *kāma*, desire of sensual enjoyments. That torment which is produced in one's heart after hearing one's censure should be known as anger. It destroys all virtue. That desire which is produced in one's mind to take others' wealth on seeing it, is said to be greed, O best brāhmaṇa. The feeling of mineness as 'This is my mother, this is my father, this is my wife, this is my house', is said to be *moha* (attachment). The (feeling viz.) 'I am noble, I am rich, nobody is comparable to me on the earth,' which is produced in one's mind is called pride. 'People always censure me. Fie upon my life!' He who says like this to himself (has) contempt for himself. Such contempt is (called) *matsara*, self-condemnation. That which is the statement of facts and which delights all people should be known to be truth. The opposite of it is falsehood. Such a thought—when will his affluence, wife, sons perish?—which is produced in a man's heart is called *himsā*, harm.

87-95. That desire which is produced in the heart to remove the affliction of others even with an effort is said to be pity, O best brāhmaṇa. The satisfaction that is produced in the heart is called tranquillity. Taking away the heart from a censured act is declared by the wise to be self-control and is approved by those who see the truth. O best brāhmaṇa, that contentment which always prevails in misery or happiness, so also viewing an enemy or a friend as equal is called impartiality. O brāhmaṇa, that is said to be the worship of Viṣṇu, when reverence is paid to Viṣṇu with faith by means of offering of eatables, sandal, flowers etc. Abstinence from taking food observed during the day and at night on the first and the subsequent day is known as fast. O best one, the unification of oneself and of Viṣṇu is said to be the recollection of Viṣṇu. Teaching and reciting the Vedas (*brahmayajña*), reception of guests (*nṛyajña*), sacrifice to the superior

gods made by oblations to fire (*devayajña*), obsequial offerings (*pitṛyajña*), an oblation to all created beings (*bhūtayajña*), are said to be the five sacrifices. The wise call this—*namo bhagavate Vāsudevāya* (Salutation to the revered Vāsudeva) preceded by (the syllable) *Oṁ* to be a great formula of twelve syllables. O best brāhmaṇa, I have thus told you what was asked by you.

96-97a. Hearing it all men get excellent knowledge. O brāhmaṇa, therefore, having everyday recited the one hundred and eight names of the lord of Lakṣmī, you will obtain liberation which is difficult to be obtained.

Bhadratanu said:

97b. (Please) tell (me) the hundred and eight names of Viṣṇu, the lord of Lakṣmī.

Dānta said:

98-102. O brāhmaṇa, listen. Having drawn the essence of the thousand names of Viṣṇu, the highest soul, I shall tell you the mode of meditation, having meditated in which way the hundred and eight names destroy great sins. Having meditated upon the excellent face of Kṛṣṇa, which has the form of a hemp-flower, of Kṛṣṇa whose eyes are like full-blown lotuses, the entire body of whom (i.e. of the lord) is adorned with the dust from cows' feet, whose excellent head is adorned with the beautiful hair of a cow's tail, the lord who has put on his charming lips the beautiful sound of the flute (i.e. the sweet-sounding flute), who is surrounded by children living in cowpens, who has put on a yellow garment, whose face is like that of Cupid, one should repeat the hundred and eight names of Viṣṇu.

103-117. (He should repeat it in the following way:) 'Oṁ, salutation to him. Of the hundred and eight names of Kṛṣṇa, the seer is Veda Vyāsa. The metre is anuṣṭup. The deity is Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Application is to the muttering: Salutation. Kṛṣṇa, Keśava, Keśi's enemy, Sanātana (ancient), Kaṁsāri (Kaṁsa's enemy), Dhenukāri (Dhenuka's enemy), Śiśupāla-ripu (Śiśupāla's enemy) Prabhu (the lord), Devakīnandana (Devakī's son), Śauri, Puṇḍarīkanibhekṣaṇa (having lotus-like eyes), Dāmodara, Jagannātha, Jagatkartā (creator of the world), Jaganmaya (full of the world), Nārāyaṇa, Balidhvaṁsī (destroyer of Bali), Vāmana, Ditinandana

(Diti's son), Viṣṇu, Yadukulaśreṣṭha (the best in Yadu's family), Vāsudeva (son of Vasudeva), Vasuprada (giver of wealth), Ananta, Kaiṭabhāri (enemy of Kaiṭabha), Mallajit (conqueror of Malla), Narakāntaka (destroyer of Naraka), Acyuta, Śrīdhara, Śrīmat (possessing abundance), Śrīpati (Lakṣmī's lord), Puruṣottama (the highest Brahman). Govinda, Vanamālin (who wore a garland of wood-flowers), Hṛṣīkeśa, Akhilārtihā (who removes all afflictions), Nṛsiṁha, Daityaśatru (enemy of demons), Matsyadeva (the Fish-god), Jaganmaya (full of the world), Bhūmidhārin (sustainer of the earth), Mahākūrma (the great tortoise), Varāha, Pṛthivīpati (lord of the earth), Vaikuṇṭha, Pītavāsas (who wears a yellow garment), Cakrapāṇi (who has a disc in his hand), Gadādhara (who holds a mace), Śaṁkhabhṛt (who holds a conch), Padmapāṇi (who has a lotus in his hand), Nandakin (who holds the Nandaka sword), Garuḍadhvaja (the eagle-bannered god), Caturbhuja (having four arms), Mahāsattva (very powerful), Mahābuddhi (very intelligent), Mahābhuja (having large arms), Mahotsava (very joyful), Mahātejas (very lustrous), Mahābāhupriya (liking the large-armed i.e. mighty ones), Prabhu (the lord), Viṣvaksena (Aniruddha), Śārṅgin (having the Śārṅga bow), Padmanābha, Janārdana, Tulasī-vallabha (lover of Tulasī), Apara (unlimited), Pareśa (the highest lord), Parameśvara (the highest god), Paramakleśahārin (remover of great affliction), Paratrasukhada (giving happiness in the next world), Para (the highest one), Hṛdayastha (remaining in the heart), Ambarastha (remaining in the sky), Mohada (causing delusion), Mohanāśana (destroying delusion), Samastapātaka-dhvaṁsin (destroying all sins), Mahābalabalāntaka (destroyer of the power of the very mighty ones), Rukmiṇīramaṇa (Rukmiṇī's husband), Rukmipratijñākhaṇḍana (who broke Rukmi's pledge), Mahat (the great one), Dāmabaddha (who was tied with a rope), Kleśahārin (who removes affliction), Govaradhanadhara (who held up the Govardhana mountain), Hari, Pūtanāri (Putanā's enemy), Muṣṭikāri (Muṣṭika's enemy) Yamalārjunabhañjana (who broke the twin Arjuna trees), Upendra, Viśvamūrti (of a universal form), Vyomapāda (having his foot in the sky), Sanātana (the eternal one), Paramātman (the highest soul), Parabrahman (the highest brahman), Praṇatārtivināśana (destroying the affliction of those

that bow to him), Trivikrama (having three strides), Mahāmāya (having great divine power), Yogavid (knowing the Yoga), Vistaraśravas (far-famed), Śrīnidhi (treasure of wealth), Śrīnivāsa (abode of glory), Yajñabhoktṛ (enjoyer of sacrifices), Sukhaprada (giving happiness), Yajñeśvara (lord of sacrifices), Rāvaṇāri (Rāvaṇa's enemy), Pralambaghna (killer of Pralamba), Akṣaya (inexhaustible), Avyaya (immutable).

118-120. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you these one hundred and eight names (of Viṣṇu) (selected) from his thousand names, for pleasing Viṣṇu. All of them destroy sins. They destroy (the effect of) bad dreams. They destroy the trouble due to Planets. They destroy all diseases. They give great affluence also. They destroy all harms. They give the fruits of all acts.

121-125. With him who, three times everyday, would repeat these hundred and eight names before Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu is always pleased. The dead ancestors of him, the devotee of Viṣṇu, who would devoutly recite these hundred and eight names at the time of a śrāddha, are pleased, and go to the highest position. He who would recite them at the time of a sacrifice, at the worship of a deity, at the time of giving (gifts), during a pilgrimage, would (also) obtain that fruit. By repeating this hymn, one who has no son gets a son, one longing for wealth gets wealth, one desiring knowledge gets it. Never any evil befalls them on the earth who devoutly recite these hundred and eight names of Viṣṇu.

Dānta said:

126-131. O brāhmaṇa, go. Well-being to you. Having very devoutly propitiated Viṣṇu in the manner as told by me, you will obtain the highest happiness.

Thus advised by Dānta, the knower of Brahman, he was engaged in worshipping Viṣṇu in that excellent holy place. O Jaimini, that brāhmaṇa devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu in the manner as told by Dānta everyday for five days. Knowing his very firm devotion, Viṣṇu, full of compassion, and lustrous like a crore of suns, appeared before him. Seeing that lord of the worlds, Acyuta, dear to Lakṣmī, the brāhmaṇa saluted his pair of feet by (bowing) his head. Then the greatest brāhmaṇa, with his mind full of joy, praised Lakṣmī's lord by joining the palms of his hands.

132-134. "O Viṣṇu, you have taken my intellect disposed to sins to your kind devotion giving auspicious objects. Therefore, I, a rustic, who has done abundant sins, have been today made a (gentle) man. O highest lord, I have known this much only: When you whose pair of feet is saluted by the three worlds, are angry, then man's intellect goes towards a sin. And when you are pleased, the same goes to good acts. O lord, I tell you about the efficacy of remembering you, due to which I who have committed all sins, went, after getting into an aeroplane covered with pure gold, to the highest place.

135-136. The hunter Kanika, who was rich in virtues, (but) who had committed sins, knows (the efficacy) of the water (flowing) from your lotus-like feet. O you, the only lord of the world, king Yajñadhvaja, honoured by gods, knows the fruit of smearing the abode of you, the lord, O Mura's enemy, O you the cause of the creation, the maintenance and the destruction of the world. Yajñamālin, his brother Sumālin who is afraid of sins (also) know it, O you having on your banner (Garuḍa) the enemy of serpents.

137-140. Dharma alone, and none else in the three worlds, knows that fruit which would be (obtained) by going round you, Viṣṇu. O lord, on the earth who is able to describe your heart and your kindness? A hunter, having pierced you with arrows, went to the highest place. O lord of the world, even after censuring you Śiśupāla obtained liberation. (Then) what to say about your devotee? May my mind delight in you who, in the form of Brahmā, created this world, O great Viṣṇu.

141-153. O Viṣṇu, the entire destruction of the world is done by you in the form of Rudra in this mundane existence. Salutation to you who are that. Salutation to you, than whom the world is neither smaller nor larger, and who has occupied the entire world. Salutation to you, from the eyes of which god the Sun that causes the day is produced; and from whose mouth fire is produced. O best god, O Keśava, I always salute you, from whose ear airs and vital airs also have sprung up. Salutation to you, (embracing) the chest of whom, of a dark body, Lakṣmī was very happy as the lightning is (after resorting to the body) of a cloud. Salutation to you, the limit of whose greatness even gods like Brahmā have not been able to reach. Salutation to you who

would be born in every yuga for establishing righteousness and destroying sinners. Salutation to you who, the noble one, has deluded this world, and due to whose delusion Śiva destroys it. Salutation to you who are pleased by means of devotion alone, and not by means of wealth, eulogies, gifts and austerities. Salutation to you who bring about the welfare of and who favour cows, brāhmaṇas and the good. Salutation to you, the god, who remove the affliction of the helpless, the kinsmen, and the meditating saints. Salutation to you who behave equally with all men, gods and elephants. Salutation to you, on whose being pleased even a mountain suddenly becomes (soft) like grass, and on whose being angry grass becomes (hard) like a mountain.

154-156. May I have my (mind) on you (i.e. may I think of you), as the meritorious ones have theirs on religious merit, as the father has his (mind) on his son, or as the chaste ladies have theirs on their husband. May I have my (mind) on you (i.e. may I think of you) as that of the hungry on food. May I have my (mind) on you (i.e. may I think of you) as those that are tormented by heat have theirs on the moon, as those that are afflicted by cold have theirs on the sun, or as those oppressed by thirst have theirs on water.

157-186. May the sin of cohabiting with my preceptor's wife, which I, who am seeing you, committed, perish. May the sin of the murder of those who did not merit it, who was deluded by (your) Māyā and who am seeing you, committed by me perish. O highest lord, I drank (liquor etc.) that is prohibited. May that sin of me who am seeing you (perish). May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed (when) I emitted my semen in water or in a vulva (perish). May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, when I, sprinkling (i.e. dropping) my semen on the earth, caused an abortion, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, by unintentionally deceiving (others), perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed when I told lies every moment (perish). May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed when I censured the good and always harmed others (perish). May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed (when) I kept phlegm in my mouth (perish). May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I cut off a tree which had some life in it, perish. May the sin which I who

am seeing you, committed, (when) I urinated or evacuated feces on a path, in a temple of a deity or in a cowpen, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I had no devotion to my father and mother, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed (when) I stopped (a person) going for a bath or for a meal, perish. O best god, may the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I took a meal on the Ekādaśī-day (perish). O lord, I did not honour a guest coming to my house. May that sin of me who am seeing you, perish. May that sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I twice took meals on Dvādaśī (the twelfth day) and Daśamī (the tenth day of a month), perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I stopped cows running to drink (water), perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I gave up a vow without completing it, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I gave a false testimony due to my love for my friends, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I did not approach my wife during the time favourable for conception, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you committed, (when) I took meals in an unhallowed house, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you committed, (when) I followed the livelihood of a beggar, perish, O Nṛhari. May the sin which I who am seeing you committed, (when) O lord, I showed ascendancy when I was being punished by the king, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you committed, (when) I put up an obstacle in the (narration of) the tales from the Purāṇas, perish. May that sin which I who am seeing you committed, (when) I listened to the account of the consequences of acts done by others, perish. May that sin which I who am seeing you committed, (when) I cut off the holy fig tree and the dhātrī tree, perish. May that sin which I committed, (when) I sold curd, milk and ghee, perish. May that sin which I committed, (when) I gave hope to others, and made it fruitless (i.e. disappointed them), perish. May that sin which I committed, when I cast an angry glance at brāhmaṇas and mendicants, perish. May that sin which I committed, (when) through anger I reproached those who gave me means of livelihood, perish.

187-189. What is the use of speaking much in this regard?

The sins of me who am seeing you, have perished. There is no doubt that I am fortunate, I am fortunate, I am fortunate. O Lord of the world, salutation to you, salutation to you, salutation to you." O Jaimini, having spoken like this, that brāhmaṇa, with his body horripilated due to devotion, fell at the charming pair of the feet of Viṣṇu.

The lord said:

190. Rise, get up, O brāhmaṇa, I am pleased with you by your devotion. Tell me what is desired by you. I shall certainly give it to you.

Bhadratanu said:

191-193. O highest lord, O Govinda, O kind one, O greatest one, O Acyuta, who will get on the earth what I have received now? Yet, O enemy of Mura, I ask for one boon from you. O lord, may I have firm devotion to you in every existence. You, being pleased, will give everything desired by that man who would devoutly recite this hymn composed by me.

The lord said:

194-195. O brāhmaṇa, the boon is given to you. There is no doubt about it. Yet, O wise one, I desire to form friendship with you. I do not deserve to have a servant (like you), since you are just like (i.e. equal to) me. Therefore, I have now displayed this friendship with you.

Vyāsa said:

196-201. O Jaimini, then that kind god Viṣṇu, loving his devotees, formed friendship with the pious one. Viṣṇu gladly gave him the garland put round his own neck. The brāhmaṇa also devoutly gave Viṣṇu a garland of tulasī (-leaves). Having spread out his four hands, Viṣṇu embraced him. The brāhmaṇa also joyfully embraced lord Viṣṇu. Having thus formed friendship with that brāhmaṇa, kind Viṣṇu, accepting devotion, vanished there only. Then Viṣṇu everyday played with the brāhmaṇa with a ball in that holy place (called) Puruṣottama. O brāhmaṇa sage, once, seeing the brāhmaṇa (to be) weak, Viṣṇu, full of pity, said (these) words to the brāhmaṇa with affection:

The lord said:

202. O friend, how have you become weak? Who snatched away your wealth? What is the anxiety in your mind? Friend, please tell it.

Bhadratanu said:

203. O lord of the world, to please you I practise penance everyday. Due to that, O lord, my body has become weak.

The lord said:

204-209. I am not so much pleased with anyone else as I am pleased with you. (Then) O best brāhmaṇa, why do you trouble your body again? Seeing you weak, anxiety is produced in my heart. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, give up this trouble to your body.

The brāhmaṇa was adorned by the lord of gods with his own upper garments, with his own garments and ornaments, with very charming golden rings, and with bracelets shining round his own hands. Lord Kṛṣṇa took the crown from his own forehead, the pair of anklets from his own feet, a golden necklace from his own neck, and gave them to the best brāhmaṇa. The pious brāhmaṇa, adorned with those ornaments given by Śrī Hari, and knowing the game with a ball would always play with Kṛṣṇa charming like a black lotus. Once Dānta saw him who had adorned his body with ornaments, whose pair of lips was bright due to the redness of tāmbūla, who had put on a divine garment and a very beautiful upper garment and who had a smiling face.

Dānta said:

210-219. O good Bhadratanu, you still do not give up sinful notions. All people, even after seeing your act, condemn it. Since I made you my disciple, all the ornaments are mine. An egotist, one of a bad character, a cruel one, one addicted to sins, one who destroys the teacher's fame, are five defiled disciples. So also, one having no faith, one who is garrulous, one of a fickle mind, one who censures the preceptor behind his back—these are said to be mean disciples. The wise ones should make a disciple after ascertaining his excellent character, since knowledge going to the wicked always causes pain to the preceptor also. Those sciences which are declared by the philosophers to bring fame, instantly

destroy the tree of the teacher's fame, when they are taught to the wicked. The sinful ones never like pious deeds, as the flies do not like fragrant sandal. As donkeys are not gratified by eating sweet meats, in the same way the wicked are not gratified by pious thoughts. Lakṣmī and piety, giving all desired objects, would never resort to a wicked one for fear of infamy. Or if they resort to him, they perish. And by chance he obtains, through (good) luck, highest knowledge; (if) he obtains it, (good) fortune leaves him.

Bhadratanu said:

220-221. O brāhmaṇa sage, you are speaking the truth. I am not proficient in the holy texts. You will never have infamy due to me (as) your disciple. O best brāhmaṇa, since, through your favour, I accomplished all my desired objects, you alone are difficult to be secured on the earth.

Dānta said:

222. O brāhmaṇa, tell (me) which desired object you accomplished. How did you terminate your penance just in a short time?

Bhadratanu said:

223-227. O preceptor, I gave up my daily rites etc. by the order of Viṣṇu whom I was able to see with little trouble. O best brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu was so much pleased with me that he gave me his upper garment, (another) garment, two golden pitchers, the bracelet(s) (worn) round his hand(s), the crown on his forehead, the anklet(s) from his feet, and his own necklace. He who removes the affliction of his servants, has formed friendship with me. O preceptor, I constantly play with him the game with a ball. Though I do not go after (your) having heard these words of me, yet I have told with conviction in your presence.

Dānta said:

228-231. Lord Viṣṇu did not appear before me though I have propitiated him for seven thousand years with great devotion. Oh, having worshipped Viṣṇu only for five days, O best one

you had his audience, difficult to be obtained even by gods. You are blessed; you are fortunate. You are (i.e. should be) called actually a god, since the lord affectionately formed friendship with you. O best brāhmaṇa, when you have affection for me, (then) tell me, O brāhmaṇa, how seeing Viṣṇu is difficult for me.

Vyāsa said:

232-233. Thus addressed by his preceptor, the wise, amazed brāhmaṇa, highly devoted to Viṣṇu, went to his own hermitage. Then the next day he went (to Viṣṇu) and played (with him) with a ball. And full of politeness, he said these words to the kind lord of the world:

Bhadratanu said:

234-235. O lord of gods, O kind one, O lord of Lakṣmī, my preceptor desires to see you. Tell me who am here, what your order is. O you having lotus-like eyes, the brāhmaṇa is extremely devoted to you. Therefore, O best god, please appear before him.

The lord said:

236-238. O best brāhmaṇa, you worshipped me with great devotion during many births. Therefore, now I appeared before you. That wise brāhmaṇa, having worshipped me, (should) desire to see me, invisible even to deities, after a few days. He too is my great devotee. He is very much interested in worshipping me. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, he will sometime have my audience.

Vyāsa said:

239. Having heard these words the brāhmaṇa again devoutly spoke to Viṣṇu, the destroyer of afflictions:

Bhadratanu said:

240-241. O lord of the world, O you who love your devotees, if you favour me, then appear before him in my presence. O god, my preceptor has asked for your audience as his fee. (Therefore,) O lord, having granted him audience, protect me.

The lord said:

242-245. When you laid out as his fee my audience, then bring your preceptor and make him see me.

Thus ordered by him, Bhadratanu went to the excellent hermitage of his preceptor. The preceptor came joyfully. When that brāhmaṇa Dānta, the best among donors, came (there) Viṣṇu showed himself endowed with all (good) marks to him. Then that brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu's devotee, with his eyes full of tears of joy, joined the palms of his hands, and praised him.

Dānta said:

246-249. O kind one, O lord of Kamalā, O you who protect those who seek your shelter, salutation to you, salutation to you, salutation to you. Today my existence is fruitful; today my penance is fruitful; today everything of me is fruitful, (since) I saw you. O lord of Lakṣmī, O master, I have put before you, deep like crores of oceans, those words which I have thought out before. There is no eulogy of the lord of speech, the master of the world, which will produce love for you in my mind. O lord, protect me, protect me; be pleased, O lord of the world. Choose me even as the servant of the servant of the servant of you.

Vyāsa said:

250. O Jaimini, then that lord of gods, who accepted devotion and who was full of pity, laughed, put his lotus-like hand on his head, and spoke thus:

The lord said:

251. O best brāhmaṇa, you are my devotee. You have seen me. You will have all welfare due to my favour.

Vyāsa said:

252-257. O brāhmaṇa, having affectionately embraced Dānta and Bhadratanu, the greatest god suddenly disappeared just there. In that excellent holy place Puruṣottama, difficult to reach, Dānta, having seen Viṣṇu by means of *kriyāyoga* (employ-

ment of rituals), went to the highest place. That brāhmaṇa Bhadratanu very much interested in devotion to Viṣṇu also obtained at the end of his life liberation, difficult to be obtained even by gods. The sin committed during many existences by him who would devoutly worship the highest lord even for a day, (perishes. His) love for Viṣṇu increases. Even today all gods like Brahmā do not know the power of Viṣṇu's devotee on the earth, O Jaimini. O brāhmaṇa, this land of religious rites (i.e. Bhāratavarṣa), where having worshipped Viṣṇu men would be honoured by gods, is more difficult than heaven to be secured.

258-263. O best brāhmaṇa, all gods like Indra, afraid of losing their great religious merit, constantly say to one another: "When shall we just again go to the land of religious rites? When shall we worship there the lord of Lakṣmī? These people are very fortunate and are greater even than we, (since) they worship lord Viṣṇu in Bhāratavarṣa, difficult to be reached. Oh, who can describe the merits of Bhāratavarṣa where having formerly worshipped Viṣṇu we have attained godhead?" O best brāhmaṇa, in this way all hosts of gods like Indra always praise the Bhārata region, giving happiness. In this mundane existence no one like him who, after getting a birth there, has not worshipped Viṣṇu, is either seen or heard of.

264-265. I am telling the truth. I am again telling the truth only. Those men who, without being tired, and with firm devotion, even once worship the lord of the universe in this land of religious rites, are freed from sins easily committed, and quickly reach beatitude.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Greatness of Puruṣottama

Jaimini said:

1. O preceptor, if you favour me, then tell me about the greatness of Puruṣottama which you said to be the greatest holy place.

Vyāsa said:

2-6. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the greatness of Puruṣottama (told by me) in brief. Who else but Viṣṇu is able to tell it in the world? O best brāhmaṇa, the city called Puruṣottama is (situated) on the shore of the Lavaṇa sea (the Salt-sea), and it is more difficult to be reached than even heaven. Since Śrī Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu) lives in that city, therefore those who are conversant with the name have called it Puruṣottama. O brāhmaṇa, that rare holy place is ten yojanas (in area) on all sides. The men living there are seen to have four arms by gods. While entering the holy place, all would have the form of Viṣṇu. Therefore, the wise should raise no doubt about it.

7-9. O best brāhmaṇa, since Viṣṇu is a cāṇḍāla there, the food of (i.e. offered by) cāṇḍālas should be accepted by brāhmaṇas (at that holy place). There Lakṣmī cooks the food, and Viṣṇu himself eats (it). Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, the boiled rice there is difficult to be had even by deities. For those men who eat the pure food left over after it is eaten by Viṣṇu, salvation is not difficult to be had.

10-11. All gods like Brahmā everyday come (there) and eat that food which is very difficult to be had. Then what can be said about human beings? All great sages call him the hater of Viṣṇu, whose mind does not take delight in that food which is very difficult to be had.

12-19. O brāhmaṇa, as the water of Gaṅgā is pure everywhere, in the same way that food, destroying sins, is pure everywhere. O best brāhmaṇa, though that food is delicate, divine, and of the size of a partridge's belly, it is capable of removing sins. The sins committed formerly of (i.e. by) him whose devotion proceeds to that food, very difficult to obtain, perish. O best brāhmaṇa, he whose religious merit earned in many existences perishes, does not develop devotion for that food. Those mortals, full of devotion, who bathe in the lake of Indradyumna, in the large and deep pool of Mārkaṇḍeya, in Rohiṇī, in the sea, so also in the water of Śvetagaṅgā, are not reborn on this earth. O brāhmaṇa, the dead ancestors gratified with the water of the Salt-sea, are free from all afflictions, and go to Viṣṇu's abode. The wise ones have declared this sea to be the king of holy places. Therefore, every act done there would be inexhaustible.

20-25. There is no doubt that whatever act—honouring dead ancestors, giving gifts, worshipping the feet of the lord, muttering prayers, or any other act which a man performs in that charming holy place Viṣṇu would be fully inexhaustible. Those men who see (the idols of) Balabhadra, Subhadrā, and lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, have nothing that is difficult to be got. A man, even performing hundreds of acts of religious merit, does not get liberation without seeing (the idols of) Śrī Jagannātha, Subhadrā and Bala(rāma). O best brāhmaṇa, all gods like Indra salute him whose body has become red due to stroke(s) of cane there. O brāhmaṇa, all hosts of gods like Indra, remaining in the atmosphere and moving in aeroplanes, and being very delighted speak like this to one another:

26-28. 'When will Lakṣmī's lord give us the existence of a man? Then like a man we shall go to see lord Viṣṇu. When will our bodies be red due to the stroke(s) of cane in that holy place Śrī Puruṣottama?' O best brāhmaṇa, all gods like Indra always long for the stroke(s) of cane in that holy place, granting boons.

29-32. Those men who see there the Akṣaya Vaṭa (the inexhaustible fig-tree) with devotion, are freed from sins committed during crores of existences, and go to the highest position. The liberation of those who see (the idols of) Subhadrā, Balabhadra, Jagannātha, Anāmaya (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), the white Mādhava —the lord of gods, so also the deep and large pool of Mārkaṇḍeya, Jyāmeśvara, Hanūmat, the Akṣaya Vaṭa with devotion, is eternal. Listen to the religious merit of those men who there see Govinda rocked to and fro in a swing in the month of Phālguna.

33-38. Freed from all sins they go to Viṣṇu's abode in the end. Having obtained knowledge there only, they attain beatitude, very difficult to be secured. O Jaimini, he who sees Jagannātha in the west in the month of Caitra, would enter Viṣṇu's body after he is dead. That man who would see the lord of the world on the Ekādaśī of the bright half of Caitra, so also on the Tṛtīyā, is surely liberated. O brāhmaṇa sage, all the desires of that man who would enter (the place of) the great bath of the lord of the world, are fulfilled, in the sky. All gods like Brahmā, remain in the sky, and full of devotion, observe the great bath of the lord of the world. O brāhmaṇa sage, a mortal on seeing (the

idol of) Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, on the great full-moon day, obtains that highest position of Viṣṇu.

39-41. There is no doubt that he who would see (the idols of) Lakṣmī's lord and Balabhadra going to the Guṇḍikā-maṇḍapa (the pavilion called Guṇḍikā) in Āṣāḍha, is liberated. He who sees (the idol of) the lotus-eyed lord of the world seated in a chariot, does not get rebirth in the mundane existence, giving every (kind of) affliction. The lord cuts off the painful bond of the worldly existence of those men who devoutly see (the idol of) Subhadrā mounted on a chariot.

42. O brāhmaṇa, that woman who is sonless, or whose son is dead and who sees (the idol of) Subhadrā, has many children, and her children live (long).

43-55. An unfortunate lady (deserted by her husband) that has but one child would indeed become fortunate in the matter of her lord and would have many children. That man who sees (the idol of) Kṛṣṇa that is in the Guṇḍikā-maṇḍapa, so also (those of) Balabhadra and Subhadrā, goes to the highest position. O Jaimini, a sick person or an unhappy person who would see (the idol of) Viṣṇu in the Guṇḍikā-maṇḍapa, is instantly free from the disease or the affliction. O best brāhmaṇa, he who, being sonless, would see (the idol of) Viṣṇu that is in the Guṇḍikā-maṇḍapa, would obtain a son who is Viṣṇu's devotee. One desiring knowledge gets it. One longing for wealth obtains it. One wanting a wife gets her. One desiring liberation would get it. O brāhmaṇa, that king who is deprived of his kingdom and who sees with devotion (the idol of) Viṣṇu in the Guṇḍikā-maṇḍapa gets it (back). The enemies of him who, troubled by his enemies, devoutly sees (the idol of) Viṣṇu in the Guṇḍikā-maṇḍapa, perish, O brāhmaṇa sage. He who, very much harrassed by the king, sees (the idol of) Viṣṇu in the Guṇḍikā-maṇḍapa, would instantly bring the king under his control. Of all pilgrimages the one to Guṇḍikā is said to be the best. Therefore, even by abandoning hundreds of other activities, men should undertake it. That man who in that charming holy city sees Viṣṇu at the time of going to bed or getting up, is honoured even by gods. On the earth who can describe the importance of Puruṣottama, by entering which (holy place) a man would become Viṣṇu? What is the use of prolixity? I tell in brief: Of all holy

places Puruṣottama is the best. He who desires to cross this ocean of worldly existence, which is very deep, which causes pain, which is the resort of dangerous hosts of sins, should see Viṣṇu, the best of gods, in the holy place called Puruṣottama, giving all pleasure.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

What Pleases Viṣṇu; What Makes Him Angry?

Vyāsa said:

1-2. O best brāhmaṇa, those men who, full of devotion, resort to Viṣṇu, never face a disaster. I will once more narrate the greatness of Lakṣmī's lord, hearing which all men obtain the highest position.

3-4. Devotees of Viṣṇu are satisfied with listening to the greatness of Kṛṣṇa. Heretics, suffering from trouble in a hell, are not satisfied. O best brāhmaṇa, the excellent greatness of Viṣṇu should not be narrated in the presence of heretics. It should be told in the presence of Viṣṇu's devotees.

5-9. O Jaimini, formerly in Tretā yuga there lived a brāhmaṇa, Urvīśu by name. He was always engaged in sinful acts, and was highly given to the censure of religion. He snatched brāhmaṇas' wealth. O best brāhmaṇa, he was always bent upon cohabitation with another's wife. He ate cow's flesh. He drank liquor. He had an ardent longing for the amorous gestures of prostitutes. He harmed him who sought his shelter. He always censured others. He was a traitor. He harmed his friends. He harassed his kinsmen also. He told lies. He was cruel. He used to have the company of heretics. He cut off the livehood of brāhmaṇas. He took away deposits. Seeing him cruel and highly attached to sins like that all his kinsmen who were angry came to his house.

The kinsmen said:

10-14. O fool, the eminence which our ancestors had earned in our pure family is (now) being destroyed by you. Giving up the righteous path, you are always committing sin(s). You are

born as the destroyer of the fame of our family and as one giving pain to your kinsmen. In you (i.e. with regard to you) the Creator's creation is thought to be causing wonder. Poison came up from that sea from which the moon had come up. Oh, it is not possible to measure the power of bad sons. In a moment they destroy the fame gathered by many men (i.e. their ancestors). Even a low family becomes the greatest when the best son is born (in it). But even the best family is degraded when a mean son is born in it.

Vyāsa said:

15-20. O brāhmaṇa, speaking like this all the kinsmen, getting angry due to the fear of infamy, deserted that greatest sinner. He, deserted by all his kinsmen and reproached by all people, was sorry, and deprived of all his affluence, became a bandit. All (the members of) the community seized him who did that act of a robber, cruel and harmful to others, and reported him to the king. O best brāhmaṇa, the king, due to affection for his father, did not kill him, (but) expelled him from his country. Then the cruel one, resorting to a forest along with many (other) haughty bandits, remained (there) for snatching the wealth of travellers. O Jaimini, he, fatigued while roaming in the forest, sometime went, along with (other) bandits, for a bath to a river-bank.

21-22. This wicked one saw in that river many blessed brāhmaṇas highly devoted to the lord's worship. Then all the brāhmaṇas, having worshipped Viṣṇu, spoke to one another with great curiosity:

23-29a. "I have today dropped those campaka-flowers (in honour of Viṣṇu)." Someone (else) said: "I have offered tāmbūla to Viṣṇu. In my life I shall never eat a tāmbūla. Today I have offered the best banana to Viṣṇu. Birth after birth I would eat a banana." Someone said: "I have offered a pomegranate to Viṣṇu." Someone said: "I have offered an excellent mango (to Viṣṇu)." Having heard these words of them talking to one another, Urviśu thought, 'What shall I offer to Viṣṇu? I cannot give all those things that are eatables in the worldly existence to Viṣṇu. (Then) What shall I offer to him? I, a thief, overcome by the fear of the king, always stay in the forest. I am never entitled to getting into a cart.'

Vyāsa said:

29b-33. O best brāhmaṇa, the thief, repeatedly speaking like this, gave a cart to Viṣṇu, the giver of the four goals (of human life). Then all the brāhmaṇas went as they had come. That thief also went to his abode along with (other) thieves. Once a traveller carrying a basket of jaggery came to that region of the impudent (thieves) along the same path. Then this fearless bandit, harming others, snatched that basket of jaggery of the traveller. Then the robbers broke the basket of jaggery.

34-36. As his share Urvīśu obtained a cart fashioned from jaggery. O best brāhmaṇa, Urvīśu, having obtained that jaggery-cart thought in his mind recollecting the words (of those brāhmaṇas): 'Formerly I myself have presented a cart to Viṣṇu. Therefore, in this existence, I should not take a cart.' Thinking like this in his mind he intended to give the cart (to a brāhmaṇa).

37-42. To please Viṣṇu he gave it to some brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, knowing that devotion of that great sinner, Viṣṇu who was pleased, instantly removed all his sin. O brāhmaṇa, on the same day all the angry citizens entered that great forest and killed that Urvīśu. To take him (to his own abode) the lord sent an aeroplane made of gold, so also messengers adorned with various ornaments. Then those messengers of the lord, having put that Urvīśu who was dead, into the aeroplane, instantly went to Viṣṇu's city. Then the best one among the pious obtained Viṣṇu's proximity. After living near Viṣṇu for a hundred periods of Manu, and after securing the highest knowledge, he entered Viṣṇu's body.

Vyāsa said:

43-44. A man who, somehow or the other, is devoted to Viṣṇu, goes, like a royal swan beyond the ocean of the worldly existence. He in whose heart there is devotion for Viṣṇu even for a moment, goes to the highest position. Even though he is a sinner, he goes (to the highest position).

45. One should, after offering even the best thing to Viṣṇu, afterwards enjoy it for the appeasement of the sin.

46. The thing that is offered to Viṣṇu should be given to a brāhmaṇa. The wise should not enjoy any remnant of it themselves.

47. O best brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu should not enjoy whatever things and sweets without offering them to Viṣṇu.

48-51. I shall again tell, along with its history, the greatness of eatables offered to Viṣṇu, which destroy all sins. O brāhmaṇa, being attentive, listen to it. There was a brāhmaṇa, Sarvajani by name, who was born in a pure family. He was calm, controlled, kind and honoured his preceptors (or elderly persons) and brāhmaṇas. He was absorbed in Viṣṇu's worship, and was exclusively devoted to remembering Viṣṇu. He removed the affliction of those who sought his shelter; he was truthful, and had curbed his senses. He (everyday) bathed in the morning. He followed the practices of his own (caste); he abandodned harm (to others); he was absorbed in (observing) the Ekādaśī vow; he was intent upon honouring his kinsmen.

52-54. Once that best brāhmaṇa saw in his dream lord Viṣṇu who was dark, whose eyes were like dustless lotuses, who had a smiling face, who had put on a yellow garment, whose body was bright due to golden ear-rings and anklets and a crown, whose chest shone with the Kaustubha (gem), who was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers. He had four arms, had held a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus, was endowed with all (auspicious) marks, and had worn a golden sacred thread.

55. Having seen the lord of the world in the dream, the brāhmaṇa joined the palms of his hands, and with his body horripilated, gladly praised him.

56-64. "I salute you, (i.e.) Viṣṇu, who are the lord of the entire world, who destroy the grief, fear and diseases of good people, who are dear to Lakṣmī's heart, who give the nectar of piety, material welfare, and sensual enjoyment. O Murāri, I, being arrogant through folly committed all sins. I am, therefore, frightened. Giving the boat of your devotion, take me out of this deep ocean of (the existence in) the world. O Viṣṇu, though I know that a man quickly obtains sin and delusion on the earth, yet I am always gladly committing sins. Therefore, there is no man here (i.e. on the earth) who is foolish like me. O Viṣṇu, do I who have committed sins, not know that the tree of religious merit suddenly gives the fruit of happiness, O Nṛhari? O lord, I have no wealth to (undertake) the act of offering you a tree having flowers. Be pleased. O lord, what shall I do ? O god, this

bee of my heart, leaving the pair of your lotus-like feet, the place of the best nectar, constantly moves to a woman's face—misunderstanding it for a lotus which causes death and which is full of the phlegm of deceit. (My) hand is bereft of (giving) gifts. (My) mouth tells lies. (My) ears are always intent upon listening to sinful things. O Viṣṇu, remove these faults of me, your servant, since, O lord, you always destroy the blemishes of him who has sought your shelter. O Nṛhari, at one time, I have, in this world, obtained the very strong boat of your devotion in (order to cross) this fearful ocean of the worldly existence. Even in that case, I, under the sway of Destiny, remain a wicked-hearted person. I am constantly having an unhappy time. Is there a bright path, kind, pleasant and free from all afflictions, for crossing the mundane existence? O Viṣṇu, my eyes blinded by a great darkness in the form of delusion never go to you in this world. O destroyer of Keśin, O you whose lotus-like feet are saluted by all gods, since I see you today, this mind of me, even of a wicked nature, destroying the trouble of people that are tormented, has perished."

Vyāsa said:

65. Thus praised by him, the revered god, the lord of Lakṣmī, knower of words and saviour from the ocean of the worldly existence, said (these) words:

The lord said:

66-67. O best brāhmaṇa, I am constantly pleased with your devotion. Therefore, you will have full happiness soon. O brāhmaṇa, I have formerly emancipated you, though a sinner. Now you are my devotee. You will not face a calamity.

The brāhmaṇa said:

68-69. O Viṣṇu, who was I formerly? What sin did I commit? How did you formerly emancipate me, though a sinner? Since you are always kind, O lord, tell me all this—How was I born, and how was I created by you in this mundane existence?

The lord said:

70-73. O best brāhmaṇa, though this secret is not to be

divulged, I am telling it through affection for you. Listen. O best brāhmaṇa, formerly due to the ripening of your acts you were born in a region on the earth in the stock of a bird. You, always oppressed by hunger and thirst, wandered, eating insects and (drinking) the hot water of springs. You, born in the stock of a bird, always experiencing various afflictions formerly lived for four thousand years on the earth.

74-77. Once, a brāhmaṇa named Kulabhadra, knowing the full truth, devoutly worshipped me with offerings of eatables etc. on the bank of a river. The best brāhmaṇa, having offered me rice as the offering of eatables, again went home after leaving it just there. Then you, a hungry bird, having come down from the tree, ate all that rice offered as an offering of eatables to me. On just eating it you were instantly freed from very fearful sins. Once, on the completion of your life, you died, O brāhmaṇa.

78-80. Then by all means I sent my messengers to bring you (to me). Then putting you whose sins had perished, into a chariot, the hosts of messengers instantly came to the highest place. Enjoying all pleasures, difficult to be had even by gods, you stayed with me for thousands of crores of yugas. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, you went to (i.e. were born in) a pure brāhmaṇa-family.

81-84a. There (i.e. in that existence) also, very firm devotion for me was again produced in you. O excellent brāhmaṇa, having everyday worshipped me with employment of rituals, you will obtain my position at the end of your life. O brāhmaṇa, when I am pleased, you, though a sinner, will enjoy liberation. When sometime I am angry with a man, he is a sinner, even though he is pious; (but) O brāhmaṇa, when I am pleased, a man, though he is a sinner, obtains liberation. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, O you of a good vow, may you have welfare. You are my devotee. I shall give you that place which cannot be obtained even by gods.

The brāhmaṇa said:

84b-86a. O lord, due to your grace, I have heard my former account. Now I desire to hear something. O lord, tell it. O lord, with whom are you pleased? O best of gods, with whom are you angry? With great favour please tell me all this.

The lord said:

86b-94. O best brāhmaṇa, I shall tell (you) all that in brief, due to which act pleasure is produced in my heart and due to which anger is produced. O best brāhmaṇa, with him who acts for my sake and who is without egotism, I am always pleased. With him who, full of piety and devotion, speaks calmly for me, I am always pleased. With that man who having secured sweetmeat gives it to me and who is equanimous in honour and insult, I am always pleased. With the man who knows me to be present in the bodies of all beings and who avoids harm to others, I am always pleased. With him who repeatedly thinking well, does his acts and who desires the good of cows and brāhmaṇas, I am always pleased. With him who would, with great effort, keep the word uttered by him, and who goes to him carefully who has sought his shelter, I am always pleased. O best brāhmaṇa, with him who always gives gifts to those who do not oblige him, and whose heart is always in me, I am always delighted. I have told (you) in brief with which act I am pleased.

95-111a. O brāhmaṇa, I (now) tell the act due to which I am angry. Listen to it. He who is engaged in harming others, who is cruel to all living beings, who is egoistic, who is always angry, makes me his enemy. He who tells lies, who is cruel, who is given to censuring others, who destroys the mode of the living of the wise, makes me his enemy. The fool who, through delusion, abandons his parents whose faults are not noticed, so also his wife, brother, sister, makes me his enemy. A dull-witted man who reproaches his parents, who insults his preceptor, makes me his enemy, O brāhmaṇa. Those who destroy groves, who destroy lakes, who destroy villages, make me their enemy. With those people who, on seeing another's wife are dejected, who listen to sinful discussion, I am always angry. With those who hate the lord, who snatch the wealth of the unprotected, who are traitors, I am always angry. With those who take away the price of cow's milk, who are the husbands of Śūdra women, who harm the holy fig-tree, I am always angry. With those who make a distinction among Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, and who are very much attached to other's wives, I am always angry. With those men of sinful minds, who eat on the Ekādaśī day through greed and who censure the Vedas, I am always angry. With those who are attached

to sinful thoughts and to plotting against their friends, and who destroy the dhātrī-tree I am always angry. With those who, deluded by lust, cohabit by day and who cohabit with a woman in her menses, I am always angry. O best one, those who, through folly, approach a woman who has not attained puberty, so also the rogues who approach a woman observing a vow, make me their enemy. I am always angry with them who take a meal at night on the new-moon day, so also with them who take two meals on Sundays. O brāhmaṇa, with those who do not avoid cohabitation, flesh, oil on new-moon day, I am always angry. What is the use of talking much in this matter? I (shall) tell you in brief. So also I am always angry with them who censure Viṣṇu's devotees.

Vyāsa said:

111b-117. Speaking like this lord Viṣṇu suddenly vanished. And that brāhmaṇa, having abandoned his sleep, got up from his bed. Due to the words uttered by Viṣṇu the brāhmaṇa, the devotee of Viṣṇu, gave up all (other) activities and was engaged in the employment of rituals. This is the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) them who even eat the articles of food (after they are) offered to Viṣṇu. I do not know how much fruit would be theirs who have worshipped Viṣṇu. O best one, O Jaimini, I (shall) tell you in brief. Listen. A man, having performed Viṣṇu's worship (but) once, obtains the highest position. In the world manhood is difficult to be obtained. Even in it worship of Viṣṇu is (difficult to be had). O best brāhmaṇa, there also devotion is declared to be difficult. That respectable man in whose mind there is a desire to cross the ocean of the mundane existence, should everyday devoutly worship Viṣṇu with all rites.

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Great Efficacy of Giving (Charity)

Vyāsa said:

1. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you in brief the fruit of Viṣṇu's worship. Now I shall tell (you about) the presents. Listen attentively.

2-3. Of giving presents and penance, giving presents is said to be superior. Due to penance, it is said, there is sin. In the act of giving presents there is no sin. Penance is (said to be) the best in Kṛtayuga. And meditation is (said to be) the best in Tretā (yuga). Worship is (said to be) the best in Dvāpara (yuga). Giving presents is (said to be) the best in Kali (yuga).

4-6. Therefore, the wise desiring the highest position, should always make presents for pleasing Lakṣmi's lord in Kaliyuga. As the moon waxes digit by digit, similar is said to be the condition of giving gifts and of penance by the wise. O best brāhmaṇa, wealth should be stored (beginning) with even a straw. A wise man should use his stored wealth in giving gifts.

7-8. A man who, though having wealth, does not enjoy or give it, should be known to be a poor man, deprived of giving gifts or of enjoyment. O brāhmaṇa, with whom does wealth come? Who goes with it? When death comes, that which is given before in this world comes (to a man's help).

9-11. Those men who become poor due to repeatedly giving gifts should not be known to be poor. They are the great lords in the next world. Those who save wealth due to miserliness should be known to be very unhappy. O Jaimini, at the end, giving it up all, they, being disappointed, go (i.e. die). O best brāhmaṇa, a man bereft of a good, strong power (lives) in the other world devoid of wealth and relatives. Whatever is not given by a man, does not stand by him there.

12. O best brāhmaṇa, the devotees of Viṣṇu, having devotion and faith, should everyday devoutly give small gifts.

13-19a. O best brāhmaṇa, the wise have declared the gift of food as the best of all gifts. So also the gift of water. Vital airs cannot stay in the body without food. (Therefore) one who gives food should be known to be the giver of life. (And) the giver

of life is the giver of everything. Therefore, the giver of food obtains the fruit of all (kinds of) gifts. O Jaimini, giving water is similar to giving food. Food would not exist without water. Therefore, water is given. O best brāhmaṇa, hunger and thirst are said to be equal. Therefore, the wise have said the gift of water to be the best. Water is the life of men. Life is not their life. Therefore, for the protection of life, a wise man should give water. O best brāhmaṇa, he who has given food and water on the earth, has given all gifts. There is no doubt about it.

19b. Listen to the greatness of the gift of food and the gift of water:

20-26a. In the city of Hastināpura itself there lived a prostitute beautiful like a divine damsel, rich like Kubera. She was known as Ratividagdhā, and had all the marks (of a beautiful lady). There (also) lived a brāhmaṇa lady, named Kṣemaṅkarī, born in a great family. That daughter of a brāhmaṇa, who possessed all virtues, was a widow. O best brāhmaṇa, that brāhmaṇa lady had her mind attached to paramours. She, doing prohibited act (s) became thoughtless. O brāhmaṇa, the brāhmaṇa lady, being near the prostitute, formed friendship with her, and took to the life of a prostitute, O Jaimini, the prostitute and the brāhmaṇa lady together, joyfully, everyday committed innumerable sins. Then that Rativiḍagdhā attained old age. The brāhmaṇa lady of a bad character also (became old). Sometime that chief prostitute who was aging, who was very much amazed, and who was full of modesty, said these words to her friend, O brāhmaṇa:

Ratividagdhā said:

26b-32a. O friend, along with you, I committed many fearful sins. Even now I have a great thought (i.e. a strong desire) for (committing) sins. All my beauty and strength has been taken away by old age. (The condition) like this causing ill-health, does not make (me) give up hope. I, who have committed sins, have secured very great real estate. Seeing this my death, as it were, has approached. Who will protect my wealth obtained through sins which I committed, when I die issuless? Therefore, O friend, if you consent, I desire to give to brāhmaṇas all my wealth obtained unjustly.

The brāhmaṇa lady said:

32b-34. See, I have always given to unworthy recipients all the wealth which I had collected. Therefore, I am without wealth. What shall I give to a brāhmaṇa? If you have wealth, then make a present of it quickly.

Hearing these words of her, the prostitute was very much glad.

35-43. With all her wealth she made a present of food. There was an excellent brāhmaṇa named Hariśarman, who very devoutly always worshipped lord Viṣṇu. He who had curbed his senses and his anger, who was free from harming (others) and hypocrisy, practised a great (i.e. severe) penance to please Lakṣmī's lord. With sandal, flowers, offerings, incense, ghee and lamps he everyday worshipped Viṣṇu, the lord of gods. Even though the brāhmaṇa was rich he was always afraid of spending money. O best brāhmaṇa, in the house of the miser, ants, rats and other living beings, were always hungry. O best brāhmaṇa, he, without (i.e. not doing) the act of giving gifts, himself enjoyed everyday all the wealth that he had earned. For fear of being requested (to give) money, he never conversed with his friends and his brāhmaṇa relatives. O best brāhmaṇa, counting his very large wealth in his own house, he, regarding himself as the greatest, delighted himself. O brāhmaṇa, at the time destined for death, that very rich brāhmaṇa, that prostitute and that brāhmaṇa lady died at the same time.

44-45. Then, very fierce messengers, with nooses and mallets in their hands, of god Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) came to take them (to him). Then, O Jaimini, those messengers like Caṇḍa, took them and instantly went to Yama's city along a difficult path.

Caṇḍa said (to Yama):

46. O lord of life, by your order Hariśarman is brought here. So also the prostitute, the brāhmaṇa lady (are brought here). Look at them standing before you.

47. Seeing them, the lord of life laughed, O best brāhmaṇa, and spoke thus to Citragupta skilled in all jobs:

Yama said:

48. O wise, very intelligent Citragupta, think over, from the beginning all the good and evil acts of these.

49. Then by Yama's order, the wise Citragupta considered all their good as well as evil acts.

Citragupta said:

50-56. O god, listen I shall tell (you) their religious merit and sins, which this prostitute, this brāhmaṇa lady and Hariśarman did. It is not possible to narrate the sins which this prostitute called Ratividagdhā, of a very wicked heart, committed. O Sun's son, this one, when she became old, gave food with all her wealth that was unjustly earned. Due to the efficacy of the gift of food, she was abandoned by all her sins committed during crores of existences, which would have resulted in her residence in houses of torments (i.e. where torments are inflicted). O great king, those who, even though they are sinners, give gift of food on the earth, go to the highest position of Viṣṇu. As many sins of (i.e. due to) brahminicide perish as the number of foods given by men on the earth. There is no doubt about it. Sin, leaving the bodies of the givers of food, goes to the vessels of those receiving it, O Sun's son.

57-58. Therefore, the wise ones do not accept the food of sinners. Those fools who accept it through delusion are sinners only. O lord, I have told the good and evil acts of the prostitute. Listen to the good and evil acts of the brāhmaṇa lady.

59-67a. O lord, this brāhmaṇa lady named Kṣemaṅkarī, born in a pure family, and the wife of Bhadrakīrti, committed evil acts. Abandoning the acts of (i.e. suited to) the stage of life, she, proud of her youth, ardently longing for union with paramours, became most sinful. O king, once in her childhood, while playing with (other) children, she dug a ditch having four corners on the road. On the same day clouds showered water. O lord, that ditch made by her was filled with water. O king, at noon, a thirsty bull scorched by the sun's heat drank water there. Due to the efficacy of the act of giving water only, all her great sins perished, O wise son of the Sun. Freed from all sins, she went to Viṣṇu's abode. O lord of gods, this wicked brāhmaṇa lady who

had committed sins, became freed from all sins due to the effcacy of the gift of water. This brāhmaṇa is a great devotee of the Disc-holder, the god of gods. Therefore, O lord of life, Viṣṇu alone is said to be superior to him.

Vyāsa said:

67b-69. Having heard those words of Citragupta, Yama saluted the prostitute, the brāhmaṇa lady and the brāhmaṇa. Having heard about the worship of them and the members of their family, Yama, very much pleased, laughed and spoke words containing soft letters (i.e. spoke soft words), O Jaimini.

Yama said:

70-71. All you noble ones have all your sins perished. Go to the place of Viṣṇu, lord of Lakṣmī, which gives all pleasures.

Then Yama, having put them into a divine (chariot) which was made of gold and to which royal swans were yoked, sent them to the place of the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu).

72. Then all of them, freed from sins, mounted upon a divine chariot, and adorned by all ornaments, went to the lord's city.

73-75. That prostitute, with all her sins perished, obtained the proximity of the god, and lived happily for a long time, O brāhmaṇa. So also the brāhmaṇa lady. Seeing that Hariśarman in the assembly Viṣṇu, through affection, gave him an excellent seat made of gold. Having gladly honoured the best brāhmaṇa by offering him water for washing his feet, a respectful offering, water for sipping, Viṣṇu asked him seated on an excellent seat (there):

The lord said:

76. O brāhmaṇa, tell me about your happiness (i.e. How do you do?). Since you are my excellent devotee, stay for a long time in my abode, free from all troubles.

The brāhmaṇa said:

77. O god, O lord, on remembering you, you are seen. (And

the devotee) gets happiness. I have obtained your proximity. What greater happiness is there than this?

Vyāsa said:

78-80. Hearing his words spoken through affection, the lord gave the brāhmaṇa his similarity (i.e. assimilated the brāhmaṇa into himself). The lord of Lakṣmī, gave him all happiness difficult to be obtained; but remembering his miserliness, did not give him his measure of food. After a couple of days, the brāhmaṇa, being without food (and therefore) overcome by hunger, and being humble through modesty, said to Viṣṇu, the lord of gods:

The brāhmaṇa said:

81-90. O lord, as the fruits of many austerities I have secured your position. O lord, even here how am I everyday suffering from hunger? Even on beds I am fanned with breezes from white chowries by celestial hosts of divine maidens who have attained the prime of youth? O lord, like the best king, I am adorned with large garlands of fragrant flowers and my entire body is smeared with sandal. O Viṣṇu, by your order, everyday ladies with beautiful bodies dance to the accompaniment of songs before me. Everyday, gods like Indra always carry the dust-particles from my feet (on their heads), which beautify the crowns on their heads. And, O lord of the world, gods, divine sages, (other) sages, always praise me with eulogies like (my) servants. I have become Viṣṇu, having four arms, dark, holding a conch, a disc, a mace, and a lotus, having eyes like full-blown lotuses, wearing a yellow garment, and fine ear-rings. I am having a golden sacred thread, a crown and also ear-rings. By gods I am seen to be another Garuḍa-bannered (god) like you. O lord, you have given me all these pleasures difficult to be obtained. (Then) O highest lord, how (i.e. why) do you not give me food? As a tree is burnt by the fire in its hollow, my body is being very much scorched by the fire of hunger.

91-93. O Viṣṇu, with the digestive fire of the stomach blazing, I, whose body is afflicted, do not like this happiness given by you. None else worshipped by hosts of gods, except you, the lord of the world, has ever been worshipped by me through

(physical) acts, mentally, or through speech. I have not been devoted to him (i.e. any other god than you) even in a dream. (Then) due to which fault (of mine), O lord, you are not giving me food?

Vyāsa said:

94-95. Then lord Viṣṇu, full of joy, said to him: "Well-being to you, O brāhmaṇa. Go quickly to Brahmā."

Hearing these words, the brāhmaṇa quickly went to Brahmā. Pointing out to him his miserliness, Brahmā said to him:

Brahmā said:

96-97. There is no doubt that (the fruit of) an action, obtained with difficulty, which is not given to a brāhmaṇa nor enjoyed by oneself, perishes. I have told you the entire cause of your affliction. O brāhmaṇa, well-being to you; you who have come from Yama, (now) go without any doubt.

The brāhmaṇa said

98. Through your grace I have heard fully (about) this maturity of my acts. Now tell (me) which gifts should be given by men.

Brhamā said:

99-101. There are many (kinds) of gifts. (All) cannot be described. O brāhmaṇa, I (shall) tell (about them) in brief. Listen attentively. O best brāhmaṇa, the pious one who has made the gift of land, the best of all gifts, should be known to be the giver of all (kinds of) gifts. O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives (a piece of) land measuring a gocarman,[1] would, being freed from all sins, go to the highest place.

102-107. Listen to the religious merit of (i.e. earned by) him who gives land along with the crop to a poor brāhmaṇa, O best brāhmaṇa. Freed from all sins, he would go to Viṣṇu's city. There he enjoys all happiness as long as fourteen Indras (rule).

1. Gocarman—A particular measure of surface thus defined by Vasiṣṭha:
daśahastena vaṁśena daśavaṁśān samantataḥ/
pañca cābhyādhikān dadyādetadgocarma cocyate//

Again obtaining land, he would be a sovereign emperor. That man, enjoying the entire earth for a long time, would become Viṣṇu. Since, brāhmaṇas should accept the land, even after abandoning (i.e. not accepting) hundreds of (other) gifts, the giver of the land and its receiver both go to heaven. O best brāhmaṇa, that dull brāhmaṇa who would reject the gift of land, would be very much afflicted in every existence. Even with him Viṣṇu is pleased and gives the highest position to himwho would give a gift of land, even after obtaining it from others.

108-110. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the religious merit of (i.e. obtained by) him who gives or causes (someone else) to give a village to a poor brāhmaṇa. The wise one would live in Viṣṇu's world for as many periods of Manu as there are dust-particles on the earth or as there are drops in showers. O brāhmaṇa, I am telling you about the religious merit of the noble one who gives a milch-cow along with her calf (to a brāhmaṇa). Listen.

111-121. A man who gives a cow to a brāhmaṇa would obtain that fruit which one would get by giving the earth with the seven islands along with the crop (on it). He who gives a bull to a brāhmaṇa with a family, is freed from sins and goes to Rudra's world. For as many thousands of kalpas as the number of small hair on the body of the bull, he rejoices with Rudra. He who gives a cow to one proficient in the Vedas, never returns (to this world) from Rudra's world. O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives a bull with sesamum seeds (to a brāhmaṇa) would live in Rudra's abode in accordance with the number of the sesamum seeds. He who gives gold even of the measure of a sesamum seed to a brāhmaṇa, goes, along with crores (of the members) of his family to Viṣṇu's abode. He who would devoutly give silver to a poor brāhmaṇa, reaches the world of the Moon and drinks nectar (there). O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives a diamond or a pearl or a coral or any (other) gem, goes to Indra's world. O best brāhmaṇa, he, the generous-minded one, who gives the gift of a horse (to a brāhmaṇa) obtains the kingship of kings of gandharvas. There is no doubt about it. He who gives a young elephant without blemishes, would become a partner in the kingdom of gods like Indra, O brāhmaṇa. He too, who would give a palanquin carried by men, along with presents, to a brāhmaṇa,

would also, having secured Indra's position, live there for four kalpas.

122-126. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell, in brief, (about) the religious merit of (i.e. got by) him who gives the gift of śālagrāma stone to a brāhmaṇa; (please) listen. The giver of a śālagrāma stone obtains the same fruit as one obtains by giving the earth with the seven islands and with mountains and forests. The giver of a śālagrāma stone would get a crores times greater fruit than the one which men obtain by giving gold, jewels or other valuable things equal to their own weight.[1] O best brāhmaṇa, he who has given a śālagrāma stone has indeed given the fourteen worlds. O best man, that man who gives gold etc. equal to his weight, (lives) in heaven wearing divine garments, and (becomes) a king.

127-130. He is not born again in (i.e. from) the mother's womb. That best man who gives his daughter adorned (with ornaments, in marriage, to a worthy groom), would go to Viṣṇu's abode without (being required) to be born again. That foolish man who through delusion, sells his daughter, would go to the fearful hell called Purīṣahrada. O brāhmaṇa, that son that is born from the daughter (thus) sold, should be known like a cāṇḍāla, expelled from all religious rites. A man knowing the holy texts, should never see the face of him who sells his daughter.

131-136. If through ignorance he sees it, he should look at the Sun. O brāhmaṇa, all that auspicious act that is done in the presence of him who sells his daughter, would become fruitless, O brāhmaṇa. For the seller of his daughter there is no escape from hell. The one who gives his daughter (in marriage) does not again return from heaven. What is the use of talking much in this regard? I shall tell (it to you) in brief. The fruit of (the gift of) a diamond, (a piece) of land, and a daughter is hundred times more. Listen to the religious merit of (i.e. obtained by) him who gives a pair of shoes, an umbrella on the earth. I shall tell it to you in brief. Endowed with all affluence he would live here (i.e. in this world) for a hundred years. Reaching Indra's city after death (he would live there) for four hundred kalpas. He who gives a new garment goes to the best position.

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1. Tulāpuruṣa—Gold, jewels or other valuable things equal to a man's weight (given to a brāhmaṇa as a gift).

137-147. He who would give an old garment, or an aging[1] cow or a girl in her menses, would always go to hell. O brāhmaṇa, a man who gives (the gift of) a fruit, goes to the abode of gods (i.e. heaven). There he enjoys the fruit like nectar for thousands of kalpas. O brāhmaṇa, the giver of vegetables goes to the position of lord Śiva. There he enjoys, along with gods, rice boiled in milk for two kalpas. A giver of milk, of curd, of ghee and of butter-milk obtains the drink of nectar in front of lord Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, a man who gives flowers, sandal, (would go) to the abode of gods (i.e. heaven and), decorated with flowers and sandal would stay there for thousands of yugas. O best brāhmaṇa, he who offers a bed, comes to Brahmā's world, and lies for a long time on a bed there. O best brāhmaṇa, he who offers a lamp or a seat, being free from all sins, is seated, surrounded by rows of burning lamps, on divine throne. O king(?), the giver of a tāmbūla enjoys all auspicious things. Lying on the bosom of divine ladies in heaven, he eats tāmbūla. O best brāhmaṇa, O best man, he who gives knowledge, would, after securing Viṣṇu's proximity, stay (near him) for a couple of hundred yugas. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, having secured knowledge there, he obtains, through the grace of Lakṣmī's lord, liberation, difficult to obtain. He who teaches a helpless, much afflicted brāhmaṇa, goes to Viṣṇu's abode, from which return (to this earth) is difficult to be had.

148-153. Even the best brāhmaṇa belonging to a noble family, does not shine without knowledge. Therefore, those who teach a brāhmaṇa, go to the highest position. A brāhmaṇa, to whom deities resort, is actually a god. The preceptor of all castes does not at all shine without knowledge. He who has taught a brāhmaṇa, has given (all) the gifts like gold, that are there in the world. O best brāhmaṇa, I (shall) tell you in brief the religious merit of that man who devoutly gives the gift of a book. For every letter that is there on every leaf of the book, he would get the fruit of giving a crore of tawny cows. The giver of the book would live in Vaikuṇṭha for as many periods of Manu as the days twice-borns read that book.

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1. Rajatī—*Jaratī* seems to be the correct reading and not *rajatī* which means 'whitish'.

154-160. O brāhmaṇa, there are many such gifts. Even in two hundred (months) who is in this world able to describe them correctly? All those sins like brāhmaṇicide which are committed by men are destroyed (by gifts). Therefore, one should give gifts. The fruit of that gift is obtained as long as the material of the gift given by the three castes through their religious merit, exists. There is no doubt that a man obtains the religious merit, crore times more than the gift given to please Lakṣmī's lord. O brāhmaṇa, therefore, an intelligent man should devoutly give a gift to please Viṣṇu. The wise have declared giving gifts to be superior even to penance. Therefore, a wise man should, even with an effort, give gifts. O brāhmaṇa, there is none like him in this world who does both—giving gifts and practising penance.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Brāhmaṇas; Gift of Food and Water

Vyāsa said:

1. Having heard Brahmā's words, that best brāhmaṇa, Hariśarman, again saluted him devoutly, and spoke, O Jaimini:

Hariśarman said:

2. O lord, please tell me as to whom the many gifts that you narrated should be given.

Brahmā said:

3-4. Of all the castes brāhmaṇa is the most venerable person. Gifts should be given to him by men having devotion and faith. A brāhmaṇa is the resort of all deities. He is actually a god on the earth. He saves a giver in this ocean of the universe, which is difficult to cross.

The brāhmaṇa said:

5. O best god, you have declared brāhmaṇa to be the most

respectable of all castes. But out of them (i.e. brāhmaṇas) who is the greatest? To whom is a gift given?

Brahmā said:

6-8. O best brāhmaṇa, all the brāhmaṇas are superior, and all are always respectable. But those brāhmaṇas who are spoilt by such blemishes as theft, so also our haters, are not respectable. So (gifts should) not be given to others. Brāhmaṇas of bad conduct are not respectable. Śūdras with their senses curbed are respectable. So also those who eat what is prohibited (are not to be honoured). Cows are supposed to be the mothers of people. O best brāhmaṇa, I am now particularly telling the greatness of brāhmaṇas through affection for you. Listen to it attentively.

9-11. Brāhmaṇas are respectable to kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras. Brāhmaṇas are respectable to one another, and brāhmaṇas are to be honoured. O best man, the life, sons, fame, wealth of him who would worship a brāhmaṇa looking upon him as Viṣṇu, increase. O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu desires to cut off the head of that foolish man who hoards (wealth) on the earth.

12-15. O Jaimini(?), a wise man should not salute a brāhmaṇa who has flowers in his hand, who has water in his hand, who has (the idol of) a god in his hand, and whose body is smeared with oil. A wise man should not salute a brāhmaṇa who is in water, who is in a temple of a deity, whose mind is absorbed in meditation, and who is worshipping a deity. O best brāhmaṇa, a wise man should not salute a brāhmaṇa performing outside (i.e. morning) duties, who is taking his meal, so also a brāhmaṇa who is singing Sāmans. An intelligent man should not salute everyone of the brāhmaṇas (separately) where many brāhmaṇas are present, O best brāhmaṇa.

16. He who would not salute (in return) a brāhmaṇa who has devoutly saluted, should be known to be like a cāṇḍāla, and should never be saluted.

17. Parents saluted by their son, should not salute him (in return). All brāhmaṇas saluted by (other) brāhmaṇas, should salute them (in return).

18. The wise ones do not hate brāhmaṇas and cows who have committed faults. If through folly they hate, Viṣṇu is always angry with them.

19. Yama puts a needle into both the eyes of him who looks angrily at suppliants (and) brāhmaṇas.

20. O brāhmaṇa, Yama puts a heated iron rod into that mouth with which fools reproach (others).

21. In that house where a brāhmaṇa eats (food), Viṣṇu himself (lives). So also all deities, manes and divine sages.

22-28. Yama quickly destroys all the sin in the body of him, the wise one, who would carry just a drop of water from the foot of a brāhmaṇa. All the holy places that exist in crores of worlds, exist in the right foot of a brāhmaṇa. He whose head is sprinkled with water from the feet of a brāhmaṇa, has bathed at all holy places and is initiated for all sacrifices. By carrying (on his head) the water from the foot of a brāhmaṇa all his fierce sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa perish at once. By carrying (on the head) the water from the foot of a brāhmaṇa, all diseases like consumption, highly afflicting, perish instantly. The dead ancestors gratified by the water offered at the feet of a brāhmaṇa for the dead ancestors, live in heaven as long as the moon and the stars (exist). By a wise man who would worship a brāhmaṇa's feet with dūrvās after washing them, Viṣṇu, the lord of the world and the best of all gods, is worshipped.

29-33. I am telling the truth (and) the truth (only). That mortal who would carry on his head the remains of the offering at the feet of brāhmaṇas, obtains eternal liberation. That best man who goes round a brāhmaṇa while keeping him to his right, has gone round the earth with the seven islands. He who would give a fruit or a tāmbūla after wetting the feet of brāhmaṇas is free from a disease if he is ill, and from a sin if he is a sinner. One that is bound gets free from his bond on washing the feet of brāhmaṇas. By washing the feet of brāhmaṇas those women who have no children or whose children are dead, have many children and their children live (long). O best brāhmaṇa, listen to the greatness (of the wetting of a brāhmaṇa's feet) which removes all sins.

34a. I (shall) tell you in brief about (the importance of) wetting the feet of a brāhmaṇa.

34b-46a. Formerly there was a brāhmaṇa named Bhadrakriya, born in a pure family and highly devoted to worshipping Viṣṇu. He knew the Vedas, he was tranquil, and was highly

devoted to his parents. He honoured guests; so also he honoured his kinsmen. Once that best brāhmaṇa, with his body smeared with oil, went, taking with him clothes used for bathing, to a lake to bathe (then). That best brāhmaṇa who knew all holy texts and who was engaged in the well-being of all people, having bathed made offerings to his dead ancestors in the proper manner. Having finished the bath-rite, and repeating Viṣṇu's names, he came to his own house and was engrossed in worshipping Viṣṇu. With very cold water he washed both his feet. That brāhmaṇa who honoured (other) brāhmaṇas, who had washed his feet and hands, placed all utensils for the bath (of the deity). O best brāhmaṇa, to the region of the door came a dog that was tormented by the heat of the summer sun, resembling that of fire. He lay in the very cold water used by the brāhmaṇa for washing his feet. Due to the touch of the water used by the brāhmaṇa for washing his feet, the extremely sinful dog was freed from all sins committed during crores of existences. The dog lying at the door of the house and overcome by thirst, begged water. He was beaten by the brāhmaṇa's servants. O brāhmaṇa, the dog died there only. Due to the touch of the wetness of the brāhmaṇa's feet, the dog was free from sins. Seeing the noble one, as it were, the lord of the universe in an embodied form, the brāhmaṇa ascetic bowing with modesty, said to him:

The brāhmaṇa said:

46bc. O noble one, tell (me) who you are. Due to which act are you afflicted? (How) are you born in the stock of a dog, full of many afflictions?

Brahmā said:

47-57. Having heard the words of the brāhmaṇa sage, the very glorious one told all his account from the beginning. "I was a very powerful sovereign emperor named Śaṁkha. I protected the whole earth for four thousand years. All obeyed my orders. I conquered all enemies in battles. I gave all (kinds of) gifts, and protected my relatives. O glorious one, once I, struck by the arrows of Cupid, forcibly kidnapped a very beautiful bride of a man. As a result of that sin my glory was in danger. Then, I, very powerful one, was expelled by all people. Then, I,

deprived of my kingdom, lived in a forest. Fatigued with hunger and thirst, I sometime died (there). Having gone to Yama's city I experienced distress for a long time. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to it, causing pain to the heart of the listeners. I experienced a very fearful mass of the flames of blazing fire on the land full of redness due to heated iron weapons. Then by Yama's order I remained clasping a very fearful iron pillar, heated by a blazing fire. Then Yama's servants sprinkled me with streams of cold water (sharp) like razors. There in Yama's abode I experienced another great misery. Then again and again being born in the remaining hells, I experienced great misery in a sinful stock for a long time.

58-59. Due to the contact of the water (flowing) from your feet I am rescued from the bond of sin. I am going to the highest position difficult to be obtained even by meditating saints. O best brāhmaṇa, you are my preceptor. My salutation to you, the noble one. Being freed from sins due to your grace I (shall) go to Viṣṇu's city."

Bhadrakriya said:

60-71. O king, a man should never (forget) the account of the previous existence. Therefore, abandoning one's son, one should always follow a wise course of action. A king who practises wisdom never faces misery. He enjoys the earth free from troublesome fellows for a long time. That wicked king who does not like wisdom is soon deprived of glory. There is no doubt about this. A king who desires a (long) life, strength, glory, friends, victory and happiness should always appoint wise ministers. Wise men, disregarding a king, abandon him with care. In an assembly without the wise, statesmanship is not strong. Then, when statesmanship of a king has suddenly vanished, the royal glory along with the treasure, the army and the elephants, vanishes. Kings desiring (their) well-being never hate brāhmaṇas, astrologers, physicians and kinsmen. A king who hates astrologers loses his glory. The one hating physicians loses his life. One who hates his kinsmen loses his family. One who hates brāhmaṇas suffers from all afflictions. Kings are said to be the fathers and subjects to be the sons. Therefore, kings protect the subjects as sons born of themselves. A king should love his citizens as his

own sons. The wise ones should know that calamities hang over the heads of those very sinful kings who harass their subjects. Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, protects wise kings as they protect their own subjects. The two, viz. looking after and punishing the subjects, bring him good fortune.

72-75. Kings without (these) two should be known to be mean kings. Kings curbing the wicked and protecting the virtuous rejoice on the earth for a long time. A king should preserve with care the wealth that is obtained justly. A king of bad conduct would not prosper in a calamity. O best brāhmaṇa, kings desiring their own good, always speedily observe the auspicious and inauspicious (happenings) in their kingdom through spies as their eyes. A king should entertain fear till an invasion by an enemy takes place.

76-80. When that fear (of an invasion) has come, the king should act fearlessly. Towards his kinsman, or a friend, or a minister, he should be serious on his face (i.e. outwardly) but should mentally have love only (for him). His ministers, kinsmen, sons, subjects and brothers do not look upon a king without seriousness as a king. First they keep away, so also they do not stand before him. People do not desire the shelter of a king who has given up seriousness. O brāhmaṇa, a king desiring to be (i.e. continue) a king for a long time, should not have only one minister in the entire kingdom for its prosperity. He would take away the position of very intelligent servants.

81-91a. Therefore, the king should appoint another man in the assembly. A king won over by foolish women and always engaged in singing and playing upon musical instruments, so also without horses and elephants, would suddenly face a calamity. O best brāhmaṇa, following (good) practices, truthfulness, keeping one's promise, seriousness are the characteristics of kings. How can he be (called) king who is without valour? How can he be (called) king who has not conquered the land of others? After the land of another (king) is conquered, the king obtains the inexhaustible fruit of a horse-sacrifice for every step that he would go over. When a king, desiring to conquer another king's land, is killed by other kings in a battle, then he, being freed from all sins, would go to the highest place. A king who gets victory in a battle, obtains the highest position. Or if he is killed in a battle

he would obtain Indra's affluence in heaven. That king who kills a warrior who has abandoned his weapon, who has lost his energy, or who is bent upon fleeing, has a downfall. O best brāhmaṇa, both he who is bent upon fleeing and he who kills him, would stay in a hell extremely unbearable. O best brāhmaṇa, a courageous warrior and he who kills him would both live in heaven as long as the moon and the sun exist. What is the use of talking too much in this regard? I shall tell (you) in brief. A king who protects his subjects, never sinks.

Brahmā said:

91b-96a. O brāhmaṇa, when the king was speaking like this, a great shower of flowers fell on him whose sin had dropped, from the sky. Then messengers of the noble Viṣṇu came there taking (with them) a beautiful chariot to which royal swans were yoked. That king whose sins had gone away, got into the divine chariot made of gold and went to Viṣṇu's abode. I have told (you) this greatness of the water (flowing) from a brāhmaṇa's feet. Having listened to it devoutly, a man would obtain liberation. Thus I have told you everything that you desired to hear. O brāhmaṇa, go to the abode of Viṣṇu. Well-being to you.

Hariśarman said:

96b-98a. Due to the great fire of hunger my body is being burnt. O lord of gods, tell me by which means my hunger would be satiated. You are a devotee, loving your devotees. Everyday due to the very blazing fire of hunger I am having very great pain.

Brahmā said:

98b-99. O best brāhmaṇa, eat the flesh of your body which you have always fed with food; for, those who satisfy themselves with the food (meant) for another (person), eat the flesh of their own bodies in the other world.

Vyāsa said:

100. Hearing the cruel words of Brahmā, that best brāhmaṇa again praised the god with words having pleasing letters (i.e. with pleasing words).

The brāhmaṇa said:

101-105. O god of gods, O you who protect him who seeks your refuge, pardon all my faults. Salutation to you, O greatest god. O lord, there are all faults (i.e. committed by) and no virtues of men who carry bodies full of feces and urine. Please pardon the fault committed by me who was deluded. The good do not take into account the fault of those who have sought their shelter. O Brahman, it is not possible for living beings to eat the flesh of their own bodies. Tell what is proper for them, and by what they will be gratified.

Thus the brāhmaṇa devoutly spoke these words. The omnicient Brahmā, dear to brāhmaṇas, and kind, spoke (thus):

Brahmā said:

106-109a. O best brāhmaṇa, do not grieve. Listen to my good words as to the means by which you will now obtain food. The son is born from oneself. (Therefore) the son is like one's own self. Therefore, the manes obtain (the fruit of) the deed of their sons. For a long time you will stay in the very beautiful abode of the god.

Then that brāhmaṇa, thus addressed by him, and oppressed by hunger, appeared before his son in a dream and said to him:

The brāhmaṇa said:

109b-116. O best son, you are initiated. May you have the highest good! O dear one, I am your father. Listen to my grief. O son, due to the efficacy of penance I have obtained the highest abode. Tormented by the fire of hunger I have always been sinking there. O son, O brāhmaṇa, if you have affection for me as your father, then now give food and water to me. Whatever is offered by sons to their fathers on the earth, is obtained by the fathers, since sons are born from (their) fathers' bodies. Formerly I very devoutly worshipped the lord with songs, musical instruments, dances and auspicious recitals of hymns, sandals, incenses, offerings of eatables and lamps full of ghee, so also with water for washing the feet, respectful offerings and water

for sipping, so also meditations and invocations. O son, I, a miser, never gave the lord of the world food, or (other) offerings of eatables. I never honoured a guest with water or other (articles).

117-122a. I never satisfied my kinsmen or suppliants. O son, due to that act only, I, being tormented by the fire of hunger, am everyday sinking (while I live) in Viṣṇu's abode. Therefore, O best of the learned men, by giving the gifts of food and water to brāhmaṇas, protect my life. If, through cruelty you do not do so, then I shall eat my flesh only in Viṣṇu's abode.

Then that hungry brāhmaṇa, with his throat, lips and palate dried up, speaking like this to his son, suddenly disappeared. Then when in the bright morning the sun appeared, the (son who was) initiated thought over what his father had said to him in his dream.

122b-124a. 'Due to the fault in his acts my father, with his body burnt by hunger, everyday is sinking. Fie upon me who am a dull, miserly person. I too am giving nothing through my father's religious merit.'

124b-125. Thinking like this in many ways the brāhmaṇa, though initiated, with faith and devotion gave gifts to brāhmaṇas, O best brāhmaṇa.

126-131a. Listen for how much period he remained in Viṣṇu's abode free from hunger and thirst due to the efficacy of that religious merit. The day of Brahmā is said to be (i.e. to consist) of four thousand yugas. During that day only fourteen periods of Manu pass. During that day only fourteen Indras are said (to rule). O best brāhmaṇa, they enjoy their separate domains. Having enjoyed their auspicious domains during one day of Brahmā, the fourteen Indras and Manus perish. When that Hariśarman lived in the very bright world of Viṣṇu, which gave pleasure and which was charming, one day of Brahmā passed. There, he, having enjoyed charming pleasures for this much period, obtained the highest knowledge and entered Viṣṇu's body.

Vyāsa said:

131b-132. O Jaimini, in the world there is no other gift like

that of food and water. Fruits of all gifts are had from the gifts of food and water. (For them) there is no test of a worthy recipient, or any restriction about time.

133-134. The wise have expressed (their view) regarding the gifts of food and water. (They say:) Gifts of food and water should always be made. Those men who, with great respect, recite this (description of the) greatness (of the gifts) of food and water and of brāhmaṇas, obtain the fruit of the gift of food and water and go to Viṣṇu's abode, giving happiness.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The Greatness of Ekādaśī

Jaimini said:

1-2. O preceptor, by your grace I have heard the sin-destroying greatness along with its history, of the water flowing from a brāhmaṇa's feet, the auspicious greatness of Gaṅgā, so also the fruit of the worship of Viṣṇu, the excellent (account of the) greatness of the gift of food and of water.

3-5. O best sage, now I desire to hear carefully the entire fruit of (the vow of) Ekādaśī, which destroys all sins. Why is the Ekādaśī(-vow) the greatest? What is declared to be the mode of (its observance)? When is it observed? What is its fruit? Tell me. O you ocean of virtues, who is the most adorable deity there? Please tell me what fault (accrues) to him who does not observe it.

Vyāsa said:

6-12. O brāhmaṇa sage, none else but Viṣṇu is able to narrate the entire fruit of the Ekādaśī(vow). Therefore, I shall tell it in brief. The highest Puruṣa (Brahman) having first created the world with the mobile and the immobile, created the 'Man of Sin' (sin personified) for curbing all. His head was the murder of brāhmaṇas. His eyes were the drink of liquor. His face was the theft of gold. His ears were the violation of the preceptor's bed

(i.e. his wife). His nose was the murder of women. His arms were the sin of killing cows. His neck was the snatching of deposits. His throat was causing abortions. The tip of his heart was adultery. His belly was the murder of friends. His waist ending with the hollow of his navel was the murder of those who sought his shelter. His thigh was the preceptor's censure. His penis was the sale of (one's) daughter. His anus was the divulging of confidential words. His feet were the murder of love. The small hair on his body was misfortunes. His body was huge. He was fierce. His complexion was dark. His eyes were tawny. He gave great pain to those who sought his shelter.

13-14. Seeing that Man of Sin, the best among men (but) very fierce, the kind lord who removes the affliction of his creation (i.e. mankind), thought: 'For curbing my creation, I have created this wicked man, cruel and giving affliction to those that resort to him. (Now) I shall create the means (to control him)'.

15-16. Then lord Viṣṇu himself became Yama. He created hells like Raurava that gave affliction to the sinners. A fool who commits a sin does not go to the highest position. By Yama's order he would go to a hell like Raurava.

17. Once lord Viṣṇu, who removes the affliction of the created beings, mounted upon Garuḍa and went to Yama's abode.

18. The Sun's son, on seeing Anāmaya Viṣṇu, the lord of the worlds, was pleased in mind, and worshipped him with incense etc.

19. Viṣṇu, the only chief of all the worlds, honoured by Yama, sat on a seat made of gold, O best brāhmaṇa.

20. The lord, the killer of demons, seated there, heard crying, meditation (dhyānaṁ?), in the southern direction, O lord.

21. Then that lord of Lakṣmī, with his mind full of amazement, said to Yama: "Wherefrom is this sound of their crying (coming)?"

Yama said:

22-23. O god, sinful mortals sink in the hell giving great affliction, in my abode due to sins committed by their own hands. O Viṣṇu, it is extremely painful to eat the fruit of the tree of sins. Therefore, the sinners are crying. This big noise is theirs.

24-25. Thus told by the Sun's son, Kṛṣṇa, having lotus-like eyes, suddenly went where they were crying. Then the lord, the master, seeing those sinful mortals living in Raurava etc. had pity produced in his heart and thought:

26. 'I have created all these living beings in accordance with the fault in their acts. In spite of my presence they sink in hell, giving great distress.'

27. O best brāhmaṇa, thinking this and something else, he, full of pity, himself suddenly became the day of Ekādaśī.

28-30. Then he made it well-known to all the sinners. All of them, with their sins dropped went to the highest abode. Therefore, know Ekādaśī to be the embodiment of Viṣṇu, the highest soul. He made the Ekādaśī day, as the best of all vows, the best one (removing) all misdeeds, and as one purifying the three worlds. The Man of Sin, being afraid, went to Viṣṇu to praise him.

31. Then, O brāhmaṇa, that Man of Sin, devoutly joining the palms of his hands, praised lord Viṣṇu, the lord of Lakṣmī.

32. Hearing his hymn of praise the lord was pleased. He said: "I am pleased. Tell me what you desire."

The Man of Sin said:

33-34. O Viṣṇu, you, the lord, have created me, giving distress (to beings) by obliging them. Due to the power of Ekādaśī, I am perishing now. When I die, all the sentient beings will be free from the bonds of the worldly existence.

35-42. O lord, when all the best sentient beings will be freed, with whom will you sport in this play-house in the form of the worldly existence? O Viṣṇu, if you have a desire to sport in the play-house in the form of the world, then protect me from the fear of the Ekādaśī day. I cannot be killed by thousands of other (kinds of) religious merit. The meritorious Ekādaśī (alone) can kill me. Grant me a boon. For me who ran away through the fear of Ekādaśī, I do not find any place free from fear among men, insects, other living beings, on mountains, trees, dry grounds, in water, rivers, seas, forests, on desolate roads, in heaven, on the earth, in the nether world, (or) among gods, gandharvas, birds. O god of gods, O eternal one, due to this Ekādaśī day I am not getting a place to stay in the crores of universes. O lord, O lord

of gods, tell me where I shall live without fear on the Ekādaśī (day). You have created me without a purpose.

Vyāsa said:

43-44. The Man of Sin spoke like this to Viṣṇu who removes affliction. He, with tears in his eyes, fell down on the ground and wept. Then the lord, the destroyer of Madhu and Kaiṭabha, laughed and said to the Man of Sin who was alarmed through the fear of Ekādaśī:

The lord said:

45-47. O Man of Sin, give up your grief. Be joyful. I shall tell you where you will have your place on the Ekādaśī day. O Man of Sin, when Ekādaśī, the purifier of the three worlds, arrives, you should resort to food. This Ekādaśī day, my embodiment, will not kill you, the Man of Sin, who have taken shetler inside food.

48-49. Then, O brāhmaṇa sage, the god also disappeared there only. The Man of Sin, being satisfied, went as he had come. Therefore, those best ones who desire their welfare should never eat food when the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, has come.

50-52. By the order of glorious Viṣṇu all the sins that are there in the world, save themselves by resorting to food on the Ekādaśī day. (Even) those committing all (kinds of) sins would be discharged from hell. But those who eat food even on this day should be known to be the greatest sinners (and have no requittal). Repeatedly I am telling firmly. O people, listen, listen. Never, never eat food (on the Ekādaśī day).

53-56. O best brāhmaṇa, all brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras and others should observe the Ekādaśī (vow), which gives (the fruit of) the four goals of human life. The wise say that a *kāṣṭhā* is formed by eighteen *nimeṣas*. Those who know everything say that a *kalā* is formed by thirty *kāṣṭhās*. A *kṣaṇa* is formed by thirty *kalās*, and a *muhūrta* by twelve *kṣaṇas*. The day and night of people is declared to be of thirty *muhūrtas*. O best brāhmaṇa, a fortnight should be known (to be formed) by those fifteen (days). A month is formed by the two fortnights—the bright and the dark.

57-58a. O best brāhmaṇa, he who, even having committed great sins, observes the Ekādaśī (vow) in both the bright and dark halves in the month, would, after being freed from all sins, obtain Viṣṇu's world.

58b-62. A mother is not said to be mother. The mother is the Ekādaśī day. A mother would look after (one) in this world only. But the Ekādaśī day (looks after one) everywhere. That dull person who, abandoning the Ekādaśī vow observes another vow, takes up a clod after giving up a gem in his hand. Those who, full of devotion, have observed the Ekādaśī vow, have performed all sacrifices, and have observed all vows. Viṣṇu is always angry with those sinful men who, through folly, eat (food) on the Ekādaśī of the bright half or of the dark half (of a month). He, who has fasted on the Ekādaśī day has performed all religious rites.

63-71. As Viṣṇu is declared to be the greatest of all gods, so is the Ekādaśī vow the greatest of all vows. As the Sun is (said to be the greatest) among Ādityas, as the Moon is (said to be the greatest) among the constellations, so the vow of Ekādaśī is said to be the greatest of all vows. As the holy fig tree is declared (to be the greatest) of all trees, as the Sāma (Veda) is (declared to be the greatest) of all Vedas, so is the Ekādaśī vow said to be the greatest of all vows. As Uśanas (i.e. Śukrācārya) is (said to be the greatest) of (all) thinkers, as brāhmaṇa is (said to be the best) among castes, so is the Ekādaśī vow said to be the greatest of all vows. Among the sages Vyāsa is the greatest. Nārada is the greatest among the divine sages. Similarly the Ekādaśī vow is the greatest of all vows. As the gift of food is said to be the best of all gifts, similarly the Ekādaśī vow is said to be the greatest of all vows. As there is no friend like religious merit, as there is no teacher like the holy texts, similarly there is no vow comparable to the Ekādaśī vow in the three worlds. As the wise have declared mind to be the greatest of the senses, the month of Kārtika to be the greatest among the months, Arjuna to be the greatest of the Pāṇḍavas, as the Vedas are declared to be the greatest of all holy texts, so is the Ekādaśī vow said to be the best among vows.

72-74. O brāhmaṇa, the wise have not declared any other vow equal to the Ekādaśī vow in the Vedas, scriptures, Purāṇas

and other holy texts. Having observed the Ekādaśī vow all men remain without fear on the earth. What will (Yama), the Sun's son, do (to them)? Yama is the servant of those who properly observe (even) one Ekādaśī. Therefore, one should observe the Ekādaśī vow, giving happiness.

75. I am telling you in brief the manner of (observing) the Ekādaśī vow. O best one, O Jaimini, being of (i.e. with) an attentive mind listen (to it).

76-81. Having got up in the morning on the tenth (day) a man should brush his teeth. Then he should bathe without (smearing his body with) oil and (remain) without food. Then having worshipped Viṣṇu by offering water for washing his feet etc., he should, being highly devoted to the meditation of Viṣṇu, take one meal (only). On the tenth he should avoid (eating) flesh, salt, meat, pulses, big beans, so also vegetables. On the tenth he should avoid eating twice, the food of another (man), spirituous liquors, sexual union, so also taking food from vessels of bell-metal. On the tenth he should avoid nimba-leaf, egg-plant-fruit, and dry citron, so also milk without ghee. On the tenth he should avoid eating too much, very much enjoying and eating food and tāmbūla.

82. O best brāhmaṇa, just those articles which are prohibited on the tenth are also undoubtedly prohibited on the twelfth.

83. O best brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu desiring the proper fruit of his vow should not eat at night on the tenth, so also on the twelfth.

84. Therefore, he who observes a vow, having quickly eaten food proper for a fast should, in the proper manner, brush his teeth in the afternoon on the tenth.

85-87. In the evening, having gone to (Viṣṇu's) temple with a handful of flowers, he, meditating mentally upon Viṣṇu, should utter this prayer: 'O Govinda, I have taken up this vow before you. By the grace of your feet, may it reach its completion without any obstacle. Can I, a man of a very fickle mind, full of greed and delusion, observe it without your favour?'

88-93. Having recited these two hymns, and having offered just that handful of flowers to Viṣṇu, he should salute (Viṣṇu) prostrating himself like a staff on the ground. In that very abode of Viṣṇu, he, engaged in remembering Viṣṇu, should sleep on the

ground after covering his bed with kuśa (grass). Then when it is the bright morning, he should not brush his teeth. The wise one should clean his mouth with twelve mouthfuls of water. He should (then) perform his daily rites like Viṣṇu's worship etc. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, at night, he should, together with all other men observing the vow, keep awake in front of the lord of worlds. O best brāhmaṇa, he who observes the vow for a long time along with his mother, wife, brother or also his father, his son, friend, and who would keep awake before Viṣṇu, would dwell in Viṣṇu's abode.

94. Viṣṇu would take away the sin of (i.e. committed by) him during many existences, who would draw the picture of a conch, or a disc etc. in Viṣṇu's temple.

95-100. Listen to the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who would draw in Viṣṇu's temple a picture with the paste of rice-powder or with other sylvan materials. He enjoys all auspicious (things) along with his sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons. And afterwards, he, going to Viṣṇu's abode, would get liberation there. A man hoisting a flag on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Lakṣmī's lord, would go to Viṣṇu's city after emancipating crores of men. That man who would decorate Viṣṇu's temple with lines of banners would be a king in every birth. As soon as the banner moves due to breezes all the sin of the maker of it perishes just then. Wise men desiring the highest position, should put up the lines of banners of various colours in Viṣṇu's temple on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu.

101-105. O brāhmaṇa sage, that man who holds a very beautiful umbrella over Viṣṇu's head, becomes (i.e. is born as) a kṣatriya in every existence on the earth. He who, on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, prepares a pavilion of flowers, would obtain for every flower the religious merit due to more than a hundred horse-sacrifices. A wise man should even with effort prepare a pavilion with flowers on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu in order to obtain (the fruit of) the four goals of human life. He who makes an abode of cloth (i.e. a tent) on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, lives in a mansion in heaven, O brāhmaṇa sage. Having fashioned an abode of cloth, a man, dear to Viṣṇu, (or to whom Viṣṇu is dear), ties there a white, or red or black (piece of) cloth.

106. The observer of the vow should devoutly install there

a śālagrāma stone or idol of the lord of Lakṣmī after bathing it with pañcāmṛta.

107. A wise man should first perform, even with effort the *svastyayana* (recitation of mantras for averting evil) and then declare the purpose in order to obtain (the fruit of) the four goals of human life.

108. Having performed one's *bhūtaśuddhi* (the removal of ghosts from oneself) in accordance with the formality prescribed by scriptures he should take with a concentrated mind an excellent flower.

109-110. He should meditate upon Viṣṇu residing in the lotus of his heart, seated on a golden seat and on a jewelled one. "Constantly looking from the corners of my eyes at him, seated on a golden seat, adorned with fire-like (bright) gems, having donned a sporting attire, having a beautiful body like the sky, having the digit (of the moon), always shining with the four arms holding weapons, looking with his lotus-like eyes at Lakṣmī's face that removes his fatigue, I worship him.

111-123. O lord, O lord of Lakṣmī, O dear one, come along with the gods. In this vow I have to worship you with devotion. O you endowed with all good characteristics, O lord of the world, remain with Lakṣmī on this excellent seat till I worship you. O you whose fame is well-known in all the worlds, O Nārāyaṇa, O lord, I hope you are quite all right. Tell me all that, O you who are worshipped by the gods. O lord of gods, O Nārāyaṇa, accept the fragrant water for washing your feet. It will remove the dust-particles from both your feet; it is pure and very cold. O Viṣṇu, I offer you materials of worship along with dūrvā grass. It is along with unbroken rice grains, O you whose eyes resemble lotuses. I am offering you this very pure water for sipping. O you highest joy, accept it which enhances great joy. O you destroyer of Jarāsandha, O you lord of Lakṣmī, may your body be decorated with the fragrant sandal offered by me. O god, O lord of gods, to you the first cause of the worlds I am offering this water for sipping, for purifying. (Please) accept it. For increasing the joy of the god, this incense was formerly created by Brahmā. Therefore, I offer it to you, O greatest among gods. O Janārdana, O god, may this lamp, full of ghee, and destroyer of the mass of darkness, please you. This garment along with the upper one will very well

decorate your abdomen and hips. O lord of gods, O master of the world, I am giving it to you along with the sacred thread. O highest god, I have devoutly offered to you four kinds of food having six agreeable tastes. (Please) accept it. O Viṣṇu, O you very intelligent one, accept this tāmbūla removing the bad odour of the mouth, with (i.e. containing) camphor and khadira, and giving beatitude".

124-126. Full of devotion he should in this way worship Viṣṇu with excellent offerings in (all) the four watches (of the day). He who would offer various offerings on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu should not show guile about wealth if he desires the fruit of his acts. Then all the observers of the vow, highly devoted to Viṣṇu, should keep awake at night while dancing, singing and eulogizing etc.

127. O best brāhmaṇa, those who are engaged in the vow, should remember Viṣṇu's names destroying all sins, while going round (the image of Viṣṇu) keeping it to their right.

128. Those who hear the sound of Viṣṇu's name coming from every mouth would be free from great heaps of sins.

129. On the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu one should not talk to heretics. Due to a mere talk with heretics (one's) entire religious merit perishes.

130. Fools are not pleased on hearing the song of Viṣṇu's glory which comes out from every mouth, as dogs are not pleased on hearing the sound of a lute.

131. The good ones are pleased on hearing the song about the lord of the world, which destroys all sins, as the deer are pleased on hearing the sound of a lute.

132-134. They sing songs about Viṣṇu. They dance an excellent dance. They are pleased on seeing the observers of Viṣṇu's vow. They are pleased with what the observers of Viṣṇu's vow are pleased with in the temple of Viṣṇu, O brāhmaṇa. Those observers of (Viṣṇu's) vow who do not sing on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, attain beasthood eternally in every existence. They, without (the power of uttering) words (i.e. being dumb) roam in every existence.

135. Musical instruments like tabor should be beaten in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu, since lord Viṣṇu would be pleased with (the sound of) musical instruments.

136. The devotees of Viṣṇu keeping awake (in front) of Viṣṇu study Vedas (in his temple) or recite a Purāṇa (in the temple).

137. On the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, Rāmāyaṇa, Bhāgavata, or Bhārata narrated by Vyāsa or other Purāṇas should be read.

138. Those who read (these) before (the image of) Viṣṇu and those who listen to them on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, obtain for every letter the fruit due to the gift of a tawny cow.

139. A devotee of Viṣṇu should joyfully keep awake at night. He should curb his sleep. He properly meditates upon Viṣṇu with his heart.

140-142. On the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, he should salute Viṣṇu by falling (i.e. prostrating himself) on the ground like a staff while going round (the image keeping it to his) right. Then the devout observer of the vow, after having performed the five great sacrifices in the bright morning, should bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with milk and worship him. The observer of the vow should give a present according to his capacity to a brāhmaṇa. Then on the twelfth day he should break the fast.

143-147. The religious merit earned during crores of existences by him who breaks his fast after having observed a fast on the twelfth day, perishes. The wise ones, desiring the fruit of the vow, should break the fast on the twelfth day, and never on the thirteenth day. O brāhmaṇa, the devotee of Viṣṇu, desiring the fruit of the fast, should, with effort, avoid sleep even at night on the day of the fast. Without keeping awake the fast is useless. Therefore, (on the Ekādaśī days) in both the fortnights he should keep awake. O greatest brāhmaṇa, all those who observe the Ekādaśī vow in this manner truly go to (i.e. attain) liberation.

148. O Jaimini, even hosts of gods like Indra and others should observe this essence of the vow of the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, which is the only cause of avoiding birth and death. You also observe it carefully.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

Queen Suprajñā on the Efficacy of Ekādaśī Vow

Vyāsa said:

1-2. Formerly on the earth there was a king named Kocaraśa. He was calm. He knew the excellent ways of life. He was the best among those who know statesmanship. He, the great one, spoke the truth. He had conquered his anger. He had vanquished the multitude of his enemies. He was very much devoted to Nārāyaṇa's worship. He was engrossed in the service of Hari.

3-4. His queen was Suprajñā by name, who spoke pleasing words, was endowed with all (good) characteristics, and was absorbed in serving her husband. She was engaged in (observing) the Ekādaśī vow, and desired the good of all living beings. She remembered her (past) births. She was noble and of an excellent complexion.

5-6. That king who knew the highest truth, having observed the Daśamī (vow), was along with his wife engrossed in keeping awake at night on the Ekādaśī day. In the meantime a certain brāhmaṇa named Śauri, who was very lustrous, came to the king's pavilion where people kept awake.

7-8. The king, highly devoted to Viṣṇu, seeing him coming, was highly delighted and honoured him by offering him water for washing his feet etc. The brāhmaṇa, knowing the entire truth, and comfortably seated among them, saw there many observers (of the Ekādaśī vow) engaged in Viṣṇu's worship.

9-14. Some worshipped Viṣṇu with many lovely flowers, sandal, incense, lamps and excellent presents. Some observers of the vow decorated with the clay from Gaṅgā, and adorned with garlands of tulasī leaves, gladly danced in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu. (Some) observers of the vow, dear to the lord, sang, keeping rhythm with clapping their hands, charming songs about Viṣṇu. Some (others) praised Anāmaya, Viṣṇu, the lord of the worlds, with excellent hymns having divine meanings and containing pleasing letters. Some fanned (the image of) Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, with white chowries to his great delight. Some played upon the charming, pure, auspicious musical instruments

like the lute. Some noble ones sang (songs) to (i.e. in honour of) Viṣṇu.

15-16. The two—the king and the queen—being very much delighted, sang a charming song, and danced an excellent dance. That best brāhmaṇa, Śauri, spoke with gentle words to the noble couple, dancing and singing:

Śauri said:

17-20. O king, you are fortunate, so also is your queen fortunate. This auspicious behaviour of you two is difficult to be found on the earth. I shall speak something to you, since I have not seen an excellent devotee of Viṣṇu (like you). There is no doubt that the earth, with you as the king, is blessed. O king, along with your wife you are observing this pure Ekādaśī vow, dear to the lord. Therefore, you are the chief among Viṣṇu's devotees, since, O best king, you, the only lord of (the earth with) the seven islands, are, along with your wife, joyfully dancing and singing before (the image of) Viṣṇu.

21. This behaviour of you, the couple, is seen to be wonderful. For what reason such an extremely pure thought has arisen in (the mind of) you?

Vyāsa said:

22. Having heard these words of that brāhmaṇa, Śauri, Suprajñā, with a face having a slight smile on it, spoke to the brāhmaṇa:

Suprajñā said:

23-24. O best brāhmaṇa, we two, very great sinners, were formerly freed by the noble (Yama), the son of the Sun, due to the efficacy of the Ekādaśī (vow). O best brāhmaṇa, due to (my) power of recollecting (the past) existences, we two are now observing this divine Ekādaśī vow with a desire for (reaching) the highest place.

Śauri said:

25-26. O beautiful lady, if you know your former birth, then tell me (about it). In my heart a great curiosity is produced

to listen to it. Who were you formerly? Who was your husband? How was it that you, though sinners, were released by Yama?

Suprajñā said:

27-28. Though these words are not to be divulged (I shall tell you), O best brāhmaṇa. I, proficient in the science of love, was the chief prostitute. O best brāhmaṇa, in that existence, I committed very many fearful sins, giving torment in hell.

29-30. This (king) was a śūdra named Nityodaya, who had given up the practices of his own (caste), who, the cruel one, kidnapped other's wives and snatched other's wealth. He drank liquor, killed his friends, caused abortions, harmed others, was very proud, and always censured the prescribed course of conduct.

31-33. Once he, abandoned by all his kinsmen of good vows, and longing for the amorous movements of prostitutes, came to my house. O best brāhmaṇa, seeing this handsome youth, I too, having love for him, pleased him with sexual unions (with him). Then, O you rich in penance, he, having had sexual union with me, being humble with modesty, spoke to me (these) words with love:

34. "I am proficient in the science of sexual union. I am abandoned by my relatives. If you agree about it (i.e. the sexual union), then I shall stay here with you."

35-40. Hearing these polite words, O brāhmaṇa, I forming the relation of a couple, stayed with him. O best brāhmaṇa, once on a day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, I was tormented by major (diseases) harming the body. On that (day) only, O best brāhmaṇa, I, with my body dull by fever, did not drink water, nor did I eat food due to great fear. This one, in whom love for me was begotten, abandoned food and water on the same day, and was as it were unhappy with existence. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, I, with my mind smitten with fever, burnt a lamp with ghee, and kept awake. He too, repeatedly saying, 'Nārāyaṇa, Hari, Kṛṣṇa,' kept awake during the night.

41. O brāhmaṇa, due to the efficacy of the fast, and the utterance of (the name) Keśava, all our sin perished.

42-43. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, when the morning dawned,

and the sun rose, I, oppressed by fever, expired. Then he, seeing me dead, and censured by all people, resorted to death with me.

44-45. Then we two, after being bound with a strong noose by the servants of Yama, whose eyes were like blazing fire, were taken (to him) along a difficult path. That wise Citragupta considered, from the beginning, all our good and evil acts by Yama's order.

Citragupta said:

46-49. O you large-armed one, even though these two are the greatest sinners, yet they are freed from sins due to their fasting on the Ekādaśī day. Even he who would observe the meritorious Ekādaśī vow unintentionally would, being free from all sins, go to the highest place.

The very glorious Dharmarāja, thus addressed by Citragupta, suddenly rose from his seat, and saluted her and him. The two, free from sins, were adorned with fragrant sandal, divine incense, and flowers, so also with golden ornaments by Yama.

50-51. Then the Sun's son affectionately fed us with various kinds of fruits, sweet and resembling nectar. Then lord Yama himself praised us with divine eulogies and having put us in a divine chariot said to us with the palms of his hands joined:

Yama said:

52. You are the greatest among the meritorious. You are free from sins. Now go there where Viṣṇu dwells.

53-54. When we two were thus addressed by Yama, humble with modesty, we, bowing at his lotus-like feet, said to him: "O god, we would not go anywhere (else). (We would go to) the highest position of Viṣṇu. But we have a desire to see the hell situated in your dwelling."

55. Then, O brāhmaṇa, by Yama's order we two got into a beautiful chariot and we two saw there extensive hells, difficult to be seen.

The brāhmaṇa said:

56-58. O you chaste lady, please tell (me) in detail all the

conditions of the sinners which you saw there. O you beautiful lady, tell me in detail by which path the meritorious ones go to Yama's house, and by which way the sinners go. How would a pious soul see there lord Yama and the paths of the pious and of the sinners, giving pleasure and pain (respectively)?

Suprajñā said:

59-64. I shall first describe the path of the pious men, which increases the pleasure of the meritorious. O best brāhmaṇa, listen. The path of the pious, built with big stones and covered with divine pieces of cloth, appears to be free from all troubles. At places wonderful songs are sung by gandharva-maidens. At places celestial nymphs of beautiful bodies dance. At places they produce the sound of the lute and the charming (sound) of various musical instruments. At places there is a shower of flowers; at places cold breezes blow. At places there are stalls where water is distributed to travellers, at places there are houses for eating. At places god and gandharvas recite excellent eulogies. At places there are very beautiful lakes with fully bloomed lotuses. At places there are very shady trees like blossomed aśoka trees.

65-73. From there, O best brāhmaṇa, the pious men endowed with happiness, and meeting with a happy death, go along the path. Some are mounted on horses; some are decorated with various ornaments. They go covering their heads with white umbrellas with their handles raised. Some mounted on elephants, some mounted on chariots, some having got into vehicles, happily go to Yama's abode. Some men, fanned with breezes from the chowries placed in the hands of divine ladies, and praised by great sages, go (to Yama's abode). Certain pious men, holding divine weapons, adorned with garlands and sandal and eating tāmbūla go to Yama's abode. Some living in houses built near water, blazing the ten quarters with the lustre of their bodies go to Yama's abode. O best one, certain (men), enjoying rice boiled in milk, and eating well go happily to Yama's abode. Some drinking milk, some drinking sugarcane juice, also some drinking butter-milk go to Yama's abode. Some meritorious ones eating curd, some eating various fruits, some drinking spirituous liquor go (to Yama's abode).

74-76. Seeing many (such) pious men, securing Yama's

love and coming there, Viṣṇu would himself appear there. He has four arms; his complexion is dark; his eyes are like full-blown lotuses. He holds a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus. His vehicle is Garuḍa. His sacred thread is golden. His great face is lovely like that of Cupid. He puts on a crown and ear-rings. He is adorned with a garland of wood flowers.

77-79. All like the very wise Citragupta, Yama's servants like Caṇḍa, speaking sweetly have the forms of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, then Yama himself, having great affection, would worship all those excellent men. Having (honoured) the pious men with divine gems (and) fed them fruits the Sun's son (i.e. Yama) said:

Yama said:

80-81. O you noble ones afraid of the torment in the hell, you (will) go to the highest position due to the efficacy of your acts. The man who, being born in the world, does (acts of) merit, is my father, my brother, and is my friend and like my kinsmen.

82. O best brāhmaṇa, all those, thus addressed by Yama, got into a divine chariot and went to Viṣṇu's city.

83-98. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you in brief (about) the fate of the meritorious. Listen to the fate of sinners. I shall tell it in detail. The expanse of the path, full of all afflictions, of the wicked ones, is said to be eighty-six thousand yojanas. At places there is a shower of fire. At places there is a shower of stones, and O best brāhmaṇa, at places there is hot sand. At places there are sharp stones. At places there are hot stones. At places there is a shower of weapons. At places there is a shower of burning charcoals. At places breezes, very hot like fire, blow. At places are deep places of darkness with their openings covered with grass, O brāhmaṇa. At places there is a shower of thorns, along with thorny arrows. At places there are rows of rocks, difficult to climb, along with serpents. The sinners, with their throats and palates parched up, go there. O best brāhmaṇa, the unhappy sinners go along that path full of various kinds of sufferings and without shade or water. The sinners named Vimuktakeśa, some of the form of goblins, fierce, wet with steams

of blood, some adorned (i.e. smeared) with mud, some with dark bodies, go along the path. Some sinners waiting with agony, some with their eyes full of tears that are trickling, some repenting for their deeds, go along the path. Round the neck of some sinner a hide-noose is tied. (Chains) are bound round someone's skeleton and someone's both feet. Yama's servants, angrily putting a noose round the sinners' necks pierced with needles, drag them. The sinners carrying in the cavities of their ears heavy stones lying on the path, and (carrying) iron-loads on the tops of their heads, go along the path. Yama's servants take some sinners after putting nooses round their arms and (after keeping) strong weapons on their necks. By tossing the sinners Yama's servants take them. Some walk with their heads down, and some with their feet up. Some walk on their hands; some walk on one foot. Thus they are deformed, and cry piteously.

99-102. The sinners, being beaten by Yama's messengers go along that path. When they had come, evil-minded Yama, angrily gave up his divine form and became very fierce. His body was thirty yojanas long, and his eyes resembled wells. His complexion was smoky. He was very lustrous. He was prominent. His sound was gurgling. He had rows of very long teeth. His rows of nails resembled winnowing baskets. He was mounted on a strong he-buffalo. He bit his lips. He had a staff in his hand. He had a noose of hide. His face had curved eyebrows.

103. With him shone Citragupta who had great illusory power, whose eyes were red due to anger, and who was laughing loudly.

104-105. All (Yama's) servants, with nooses and mallets in their hands, who were fierce and angry, thundered like clouds. Yama's servants, running from every side said boastfully: "Quickly kill the most sinful ones. Break them, cut them, pierce them."

106. Lord Yama threatened all the sinners that were running, giving out a 'hum' sound with these words:

Yama said:

107-113a. O sinners, O wicked ones, you thoughtless ones have committed sins which trouble yourselves. You do not see me remaining over your heads. Even knowing me, the lord of life,

(to be observing your deeds), you committed sins. Nowhere have you heard with your own ears that I am the brother of the meritorious and the enemy of sinners. Hells are unbearable; they are full of various afflictions. The sinners experience them (i.e. undergo tortures there). Have you not heard this? O you wicked-hearted ones, you regarded my inquiry to be just untrue. O you who have committed sins, today see it with your own eyes. In the blindness due to wealth, all of you being insolent, never followed my words. You always committed heaps of sins. In accordance with that (heap of sins), O wicked ones, experience the fruit of your sins. What is the use of crying?

Suprajñā said:

113b-116a. Speaking (to them) like this, Yama said to Citragupta: "O you noble one, take into account the sinful deeds of these."

Hearing those great words of Yama, Citragupta being (thus) directed (by Yama) told as many sins of them (as they had committed). Then, O best brāhmaṇa, all the sinners waited. They, who were frightened, and who were controlled with a noose of hide (said):

The sinners said:

116b-119a. O Sun's son, who were the witness presented by you to the sins which we had committed. Tell us who witnessed the good or evil deeds that we did formerly.

Then, O brāhmaṇa, Yama having laughed spoke these words very angrily after summoning all the witnesses:

Yama said:

119b-120. You were all nearby and witnesses to whatever took place. The sky, the earth, so also the water, the dates, the day, the night, both the twilights and Dharma—these are the witnesses.

121-122. They narrated all the good and evil deeds of the sinners, and the deed of each one of them and the time when it was done. Each witness told (the deeds) in Yama's presence.

Hearing them, the minds of all sinners were overpowered by fright.

123-125a. They stood with their hearts trembling as deer (remain) on seeing a cloud. Then making a 'Kaḍa Kaḍa' sound with the rows of his teeth (i.e. gnawing his teeth), Yama separately struck them with his fatal staff. All those sinners, struck separately by Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) wailed over their deeds and being alarmed lamented.

125b-132. Then, Caṇḍa and others, the messengers of Yama, threw, by Yama's order, all those sinners into hells. They dropped some sinners into (the hell called) Tapana, and some into (the hell called) Avīci. (They threw others) into Saṁghāta, Kālasūtra, Mahāraurava, into a hot basin containing sand, and into Kumbhīpāka. They threw the sinners into (hells like) Pramardana which was breathless (i.e. where breathing was not possible) and which was very fierce; so also in the fearful (hell called) Asipatravana, and into (hells) containing various kinds of foods. Certain servants of Yama similarly threw (some) sinners into Vaitaraṇā. Yama's servants threw some sinners into a fierce pool of feces; some (sinners) into (a hell) full of thorns along with bones and chaff-fire, and extremely hot; so also Yama's servants threw them into hells where smearing was done with feces, where the foods was feces, so also in the hell where one's own flesh was eaten. Some (sinners) ate phlegm; some drank semen. Some sinners drank urine; some drank blood. In the mouths of some were leeches, resembling serpents.

133-151. Some (hells) were filled with serpents by the fierce messengers of Yama. O best brāhmaṇa, the very angry (servants of Yama) extracted the tongues of some (sinners). The cruel servants of Yama filled (i.e. put) heated oil into the cavities of the ears and into the mouths of some. They cut off with the edges of swords (i.e. with sharp swords) a hand and a foot also, so also ears and noses of some wicked ones. Some slept on the heap of burning charcoals; some on thorns resembling arrows. O best brāhmaṇa, Yama's servants pulled out the hair of sinners and threw them into hot mud. They repeatedly inserted thousands of heated needles into the mouths and joints of nails of certain sinners. They put certain (sinners) on the tip of a heated pike. With sharp thorns they hurt the heads of some (sinners). (Yama's

servants) seized some sinners crying piteously by their hands and feet, and cut them asunder with the thorns of śālmali trees. Yama's servants, after tying a stone round the necks (of the sinners) repeatedly threw some into ditches full of blood and into ditches full of pus. The messengers of Yama devoured the heads of the sinners. They angrily again and again crushed them with stones. They put into the chests of the wicked ones who were crying, masses of iron nails. The eyes of certain sinners were extracted with hooks. O brāhmaṇa, the noses of some were filled with scorpions. Yama's servants tied the feet of some with ropes to the branch of a tree and burnt fire with smoke at the root (of the tree). There the sinners inhaled smoke. They remained there with their faces down and feet up as long as the moon and stars (shine in the sky). Some (sinners), being repeatedly beaten with pestles and mallets by Yama's messengers, and overcome by agony, vomitted blood, Certain sinners sank into an abode full of darkness and having the odour of pus, along with gad-flies and gnats. Some ate ash; some ate insects. Some ate ill-smelling flesh, and some earth with pus. Some, being eaten by dogs, tigers, jackals and hogs, so also by bears, and wet with blood, wail(ed). Some others were being eaten by serpents with extremely strong poison. O brāhmaṇa, the chests of others were being torn asunder by the horns of he-buffaloes.

152-161. Sprinkling the ground with their blood, they fell in a swoon on the earth. With their entire bodies shattered with arrows, resembling snakes, which (arrows) were discharged from the bows of Yama's servants, others rolled on the ground. They (crush) a mass of heated iron balls and a heated stone with a cutting weapon into their mouths. Yama's messengers sewed the nostrils and mouths of some in order to suppress breath. The arrogant, very strong servants of Yama, pulled out, with Yama's sharp-edged (weapons called) Śakti, the skin of the bodies of some. They seized some by their hair, and dropped them on the ground. They always struck (the sinners) with weapons and (their) feet etc. Some sinners were tormented with streams of saline water. O brāhmaṇa, they wailing in various ways, drank saline water. Certain sinners drank bile, O noble one. Some great sinners drank the mucus resembling thick milk flowing from the nose. Yama's servants placed on the chests of some lying on the

ground, big, heated stones, resembling mountains. They tied with strong cords the faces of some turned upwards, after putting a pair of logs at their necks and into their throats. They dropped some on the ground after placing them on the branch of a tree.

162-167. They raised them and again and again threw them on the ground. In this way all the sinners, hungry and thirsty, and murmuring 'save me, save me' cried in the abode of torment (i.e. in hell). Having, till the end of the yuga experienced torment in hell, and having not experienced (the fruit of) the remaining sins, they are born in sinful stocks. They, born in sin ful stocks, are troubled by diseases. They are defective in a limb, or have an excess limb. They are unhappy and resort to sins. They are sonless. They are great fools. They are absorbed in harming others. They have a short (span of) life. They are dull. They are the husbands of bad wives. Everyday they do sinful acts through (physical) deeds, mind and words. Again as a result of their sins they go to hell as before. Therefore, the best ones should never commit a sin.

168-175a. Men who have committed sins, cannot escape from hell. O best brāhmaṇa, I have explained to you in brief the affliction of sinners. Who is able to describe it properly even with hundreds of myriads of years? Then, having observed the sinners with a bad plight, we, getting into an aeroplane, went to Viṣṇu's city. Having enjoyed pleasures in Viṣṇu's house for thousands of crores of kalpas, we were born in this very pure royal family, O best brāhmaṇa. Having enjoyed here (i.e. in this existence) all pleasures with all affluence, O best brāhmaṇa, we had a happy (i.e. peaceful) death, and we would go to the highest place. In the three worlds, there is no (other) vow like the Ekādaśī vow. Such is our mode of existence even after our having observed the vow unintentionally. I do not know what would happen to them, through Viṣṇu's grace, who observe the Ekādaśī vow with devotion. O best brāhmaṇa, I have thus told you all that (you) had asked (me) about the importance of the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. What else do you want to listen to?

Vyāsa said:

175b-178. Hearing these words of him, the brāhmaṇa, knowing the highest truth, put his mind very firmly into (observ-

ing) the Ekādaśī vow. The king and the queen having, for a long time, enjoyed the earth, in the end went to Viṣṇu's city and obtained the highest position. Those who listen to or recite the importance of this king of vows are freed from the heaps of sins and obtain (a place) near Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

The Greatness of Tulasī and Dhātrī

Sūta said:

1-2. Jaimini, being very much pleased on hearing the fruit of the Ekādaśī (vow), spoke, with the palms of his hands joined, these (words) to lord Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana (i.e. Vyāsa): "Through your grace I have heard the greatness of god Viṣṇu. (Now) tell me about the greatness of tulasī which destroys the sins of the listeners."

Vyāsa said:

3-6. O brāhmaṇa, this revered tulasī should always be worshipped by all deities like Indra. It gives the fruit of the four goals of human life. To the good tulasī is difficult to be obtained in heaven, in the mortal world and in the nether world. Devotion to it secures the four goals of human life. O best one, at that place only where one tulasī-plant stands, all gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva dwell. Always Keśava dwells in the middle of the leaf, Prajāpati at the tip of the leaf, and Śiva at the foot-stalk of the leaf of tulasī.

7-10. Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, so also Gāyatrī and Caṇḍikā, likewise all other wives of (other) gods dwell in the leaves of that (tulasī-plant). These, viz. Indra, Agni, Śamana, Nairṛti, so also Varuṇa, Vāyu and Kubera dwell in the branch of the tulasī-plant. All planets like the Sun, the Viśvedevas,[1]

1. Viśvedevāḥ—Name of a particular group of deities ten in number and supposed to be sons of Viśvā; their names are: Vasu, Satya, Kratu, Dakṣa, Kāla, Kāma, Dhṛti, Kuru, Purūravas, and Mādravas.

Vasus,[1] all sages and all divine sages, so also all the holy places that are there in the crores of universes and on the earth, live by resorting to (i.e. in) the tulasī plant.

11-17. He who devoutly worships tulasī, has worshipped the holy places, so also all gods like Brahmā. Viṣṇu just at that moment destroys (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa remaining in the body of those who remove the masses of grass at the root of tulasī. O best brāhmaṇa, by sprinkling the tulasī plant with fragrant and cold water in summer a man would obtain eternal bliss. He who gives it moonlight or an umbrella, especially in summer, is freed from all sins. A man who would everyday sprinkle the tulasī plant with continuous streams in Vaiśākha obtains the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. He who would sprinkle the tulasī plant with water from the hand stretched out and hollowed also obtains heaven after being freed from all sins. O brāhmaṇa sage, in the house of that man who would sometime sprinkle the tulasī plant with milk, Lakṣmī is steady.

18-22. O brāhmaṇa sage, listen to the fruit of the merit of him who would smear the root of the tulasī plant with cowdung. For as many thousands of kalpas as the dust particles removed from there, he rejoices with Viṣṇu, O Jaimini. He who would place a lamp at the root of the tulasī plant at twilight, goes along with a crore (members) of his family to Viṣṇu's abode. Viṣṇu would always protect him who protects the tulasī plant from cows, dogs, asses, men and children. There is no doubt that he who devoutly plants a tulasī plant, obtains the highest liberation after death.

23. That best devout man who would see the tulasī plant in the morning uninterruptedly obtains the fruit of seeing Viṣṇu.

24. The life, strength, fame, wealth, progeny of one who would devoutly salute the tulasī plant, grow.

25. By remembering tulasī, all sin perishes. The diseases of men perish on just touching the tulasī (plant).

26-27. The sin in the body of him who eats the auspicious tulasī leaf, removing all sins, perishes at that moment (only).

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1. Vasavaḥ—Vasus are a class of deities. They are eight in number: Āpa, Dhruva, Soma, Dhara or Dhava, Anila, Anala, Pratyūṣa, and Prabhāsa.

In the body of the man who wears a rosary made of tulasī wood there is no sin. This is the truth that I tell.

28. There is no doubt that he who bears on his head the water dropped from the leaves of tulasī, obtains the religious merit due to a bath in Gaṅgā.

29. A man having devoutly worshipped the auspicious tulasī with dūrvās, sacred rice grains, flowers, offerings of eatables, would obtain the fruit of the worship (offered) to Viṣṇu.

30. O brāhmaṇas(?), what is the use of worshipping Viṣṇu's feet to him who has sometime worshipped revered tulasī, giving the highest nectar of piety, material welfare and sensual enjoyment, with offerings of eatables, flowers, excellent incense and ghee-lamps?

31. O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu is pleased with them who plant tulasī pleasing Viṣṇu and fit to be worshipped by gods, at places free from blemishes; and Mura's enemy, the lord of the three worlds, quickly gives them the highest position.

32. Whatever auspicious act—a sacrifice, a vow, honouring the dead ancestors, worship of Viṣṇu, giving gifts—and other auspicious act(s) that men perform at the blemishless root of tulasī—all those indeed become inexhaustible.

33. O best brāhmaṇa, all that pious act which a man does on the earth without tulasī, dear to Viṣṇu, becomes fruitless. The god of gods, the lotus-eyed one (i.e. Viṣṇu) is also not pleased.

34. A man who, with devotion, sees the auspicious, pure tulasī during pilgrimages, quickly gets the fruit of the pilgrimages through Viṣṇu's grace. This statement is very firm.

35-36. Ananta (i.e. Viṣṇu), the only lord of the world, abandoning fragrant flowers like mandāra, kunda, lotus, gladly accepts even dry tulasī full of virtues and the security for the destruction of sins. Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) to whom tulasī is dear always snatches the wealth of those wicked men who, through ignorance, uproot a tulasī (plant) purifying like the nectar-giving creeping plant, and place it on the ground. This is the truth.

37. Viṣṇu quickly snatches the wealth of those men who always urinate or excrete or put dirt at the root of tulasī, the abode of gods, and thus collect sins.

38-42. "I am collecting (the leaves of) you for worshipping Viṣṇu. I am collecting (the leaves of) you since even with flowers like (those of) pārijāta, so also with sandal etc., put without you Viṣṇu is not satisfied. O holy one, without you every act is fruitless. Therefore, O goddess Tulasī, I am collecting (the leaves of) you. Grant me a boon. O leader of the world, pardon me that pain which is produced in your heart due to (your leaves) being plucked. O Tulasī I salute you." A devotee of Viṣṇu, joining the palms of his hands recites these two hymns and then clapping twice collects tulasī leaves in such a way that the tulasī branch does not shake, O best brāhmaṇa.

43. When at the time of plucking a leaf, a branch of goddess (Tulasī) would be broken, then anguish is produced in the heart of Viṣṇu, Tulasī's lord.

44. Viṣṇu, the destroyer of (the demons) Madhu and Kaiṭabha should be worshipped even with every old leaf fallen from the tip of a branch.

45. He who would worship lord Viṣṇu with tender tulasī leaves, quickly gets whatever he desires with (i.e. in) his heart.

Jaimini said:

46. O best brāhmaṇa, what (other) tree is like that of tulasī? I desire to know it. O son of Satyavatī, (please) tell it.

Vyāsa said:

47-51. O brāhmaṇa, as tulasī is always most dear to Viṣṇu, so is dhātrī, destroying all sins. O best brāhmaṇa, all those deities who dwell in the plant after having reached it, stay at the root of āmalakī. O best brāhmaṇa, holy places like Gaṅgā dwell just there where pure dhātrī, most dear to Viṣṇu, remains. That act, auspicious or inauspicious, which is done by men at the root of āmalakī, would certainly become inexhaustible, O brāhmaṇa. He who would worship Viṣṇu with pure, fresh leaves of dhātrī, is freed from mass of sins and secures absorption into Viṣṇu.

52-56. O Jaimini, that place where there would be neither dhātrī nor tulasī is impure. (A man) does not obtain the fruit of his act (performed there). All the (pious) acts done by him in his hermitage where the auspicious dhātrī or tulasī does not exist indeed become fruitless. O brāhmaṇa, (in the house) of

him, which is without dhātrī and tulasī, poverty and sin (remain) and by that Kali is pleased. The wise should look upon that place where there is neither tulasī nor dhātrī as a cremation ground, O best brāhmaṇa. All gods dwell there where dhātrī and tulasī exist. All sin exists there where there is neither a leaf of dhātrī nor of tulasī.

57-60. Viṣṇu, along with Lakṣmī, would remain by resorting to the body of the wise man who would wear a rosary of dhātrī-fruits. All deities live by resorting to the body of the intelligent man who would wear a garland of dhātrī wood. All the act, auspicious or inauspicious, which a man wearing a garland (i.e. rosary) of dhātrī fruits does, is said to be inexhaustible. The entire sin remaining in the body of that man knowing the entire nature of Brahman, who eats the dhātrī fruit, perishes.

61-63. O best brāhmaṇa, I (shall) tell (you) the greatness destroying all sins (of the man) who would wear a rosary of the dhātrī fruits. Listen (to it). Even if he by chance dies in a cremation ground, he obtains the religious merit due to a bath in Gaṅgā. There is no doubt about it. Seeing him, all sinners are instantly freed from very fierce heaps of sins, (committed) even during hundreds of crores of existences.

64-66. There is no doubt, O best brāhmaṇa, that he who everyday takes a lump of the dhātrī fruit would obtain religious merit everyday and store it. There is no doubt that he who harms the dhātrī tree, the resort of all gods, gives blows on the body of Viṣṇu. Dhātrī is full of all gods. It is especially dear to Viṣṇu. Even Brahmā cannot correctly describe its virtues.

67. That man who, having known the entire truth, has devotion for dhātrī and tulasī, enjoys all pleasures, and then in the end obtains liberation due to Viṣṇu's grace.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

The Importance of Honouring a Guest

Jaimini said:

1. O glorious one, tell me in detail again about tulasī's greatness destroying sins, so also about the importance of honouring a guest.

Sūta said:

2. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, that very lustrous Vyāsa, started telling the greatness of tulasī, destroying the sins of the listeners.

Vyāsa said:

3-4. This tulasī, dear to the lord, is actually great Lakṣmī. Therefore, O Jaimini they do not recognise it as a tree. As a mortal always worships tulasī on the earth, so gods along with Indra worship it in heaven.

5-6. I am telling firmly that everything is prosperous there only where this tulasī, of the nature of the highest Brahman, stands. Even a sinner who gets, at the time of his death, water dropped from a leaf of tulasī, goes near Viṣṇu.

7. He who would have, at the time of his death, a vertical sectarian mark (*ūrdhvapuṇḍra*) is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu.

8. O best brāhmaṇa, Yama is not the master of him who would have a tulasī leaf in his mouth, on his head or in his ears at the time of his death.

9-12a. There was a pious brāhmaṇa by name Pavitra, who knew the highest truth. His wife had the name Bahulā. The chaste lady belonged to a good family and was highly devoted to serving her husband. There (also) lived an excellent brāhmaṇa named Anapatyapati. That Pavitra, serving brāhmaṇas, formed friendship with him. Then, O best one, Pavitra, through love (for his friend) and with a desire to have talk, sat with Anapatyapati on an excellent seat.

12b-13a. In the meanwhile a good brāhmaṇa, of a great lustre, named Lomaśa, came there and saw the two telling (each other) wonderful stories.

13b-14a. Then the two brāhmaṇas, getting up from the seat, honoured that brāhmaṇa Lomaśa with water for washing his feet, with respectful offerings and water for rinsing his mouth.

14b-16a. That Lomaśa, highly devoted to Viṣṇu, was very much pleased with them, and narrating (tales of) Viṣṇu, sat on the seat, O best brāhmaṇa. The two sages, Pavitra and Anapatya, said devoutly to the magnanimous Lomaśa who had joined the palms of his hands:

16b-20a. "O revered one, O you who know all the worldly practices, indeed our hermitage is purified by the couple of your feet which are fit to be seized (i.e. touched) by the good. By seeing the couple of your feet, all the sins that we had formerly committed through delusion, have perished. You are actually lord Viṣṇu fit to be worshipped even by gods. How are we, men, able to worship you properly? With the worship that we have, according to our capacity, offered to you, our guest, be pleased. Pardon the faults of us two."

20bc. O best brāhmaṇa, speaking like this, the two high-souled friends, the two householders, fell at the couple of the feet of the guest.

Vyāsa said:

21-23. Then Lomaśa, best among the learned, was very much pleased. (He said to them:) "You are best among the polite, You are the best brāhmaṇas, and are highly devoted to piety. By your polite words I am very much pleased. The wise say that a guest is actually Brahmā, Śiva, or Viṣṇu. You have shown so much devotion to me. May auspiciousness come to you. I, a guest, have been properly entertained by you with abundant eatables."

Vyāsa said:

24. Then the two brāhmaṇas got up, and saluting him by touching the couple of his feet, said to that sage Lomaśa:

The two brāhmaṇas said:

25-26. O brāhmaṇa, please tell us the importance of the worship of a guest, having done which, liberation, to be obtained by men but with difficulty, is obtained. Who is said to be a guest

in the world? How is his worship (done)? What position do the one attentive to a guest and the guest obtain?

Lomaśa said:

27-28. Of the four stages of life that of the householder is said to be the best due to its honouring the anchorite, celibate and a religious mendicant. Among (the members of) the four stages of life the householders are said to be the chief. They should devoutly honour guests.

29-30. The greatest duty of householders is said to be honouring guests. They are said to be householders since they have not fallen from the duty of their stage of life. If householders take care in honouring guests, then what purpose do they have with other pious acts?

31-32. The wise call him to be a guest whose name, family and position are not heard of (before), and who would accidentally come to their house. The wise ones should honour like Viṣṇu brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras who have come to their house.

33-34. Those others born in low castes, among whom cāṇḍālas are the chief ones, should be honoured like Viṣṇu with water for washing their feet, with respectful offerings and abundant eatables. When guests come, a householder goes forth (to greet them). A brāhmaṇa should quickly give them water for washing their feet and materials of worship.

35. With soft words he would make a friendly enquiry after the (guests') health. And the householder should gladly feed them with divine foods.

36. The wise one should prepare his bed in a comfortable chamber. Seeing him desirous to go in the morning he should give him leave.

37-38. O best ones, I shall tell you how a guest should be honoured with hospitality if the householder is unfortunately not wealthy. When guests have come he should devoutly offer them (a) grass (seat) etc. If there is no grass seat he should not devoutly say to him: "Sit on the ground."

39-41. For washing his feet he should give him excellent water. Then with sweet words he should ask in a friendly way about his health etc. Then he should devoutly give him fruit etc.

for eating. Without that an intelligent person should not gladly present himself (to the guest). And he should say: "O guest, I am a great sinner, very poor. I desire to offer you (worship with) devotion. But the destiny is opposing."

42-44. The poor one who has avoided honouring a guest in this manner and not anyone else fallen from his duty, would obtain the fruit as stated (in holy texts). The religious merit earned during crores of existences, of the householder from whose house a guest goes unhonoured, perishes. Viṣṇu would instantly remove the sin committed during crores of existences, of him who honours with devotion just one guest.

45-46. I am telling the truth. I am saying what is beneficial. I am making a firm statement. A householder does not go to heaven without carefully honouring a guest. It is truth, (nothing but) the truth. It is the repeated truth. For householders going to heaven is not (possible), is not (at all) possible, except by honouring a guest.

47-51. In the Dvāpara age there was a cowherd known as Jñātidharma. He knew all the ways of life. His wife was called Śrīvallabhā. He who served his kinsmen did all (good) acts. With his wife he lived in Saurāṣṭra. O brāhmaṇas, due to the movement of bad planets Indra did not shower water for twelve years. Therefore, there was a very great famine. During that great famine, the inhabitants of that country were distressed, and all of them gave up even the limit (of decorum). The great meditating saint Jñānabhadra, with his wealth lost due to the great famine, became very much distressed in the age called Dvāpara.

52-53. Seeing his wife and sons distressed with hunger, he with the brāhmaṇa's consent(?), went to the land at the foot of a mountain to eat fruits and roots. O you two best brāhmaṇas, the long-lived one, who was hungry, found one pumpkin gourd at the border of the land at the foot of the hill.

54-56. That very glorious best brāhmaṇa Jñānabhadra, being delighted on getting the fruit, speedily went (back) to his house. O brāhmaṇas, in the meanwhile, when the clouds had covered the sky, as it were, with dark blue feet, it rained with powerful showers. The sage's entire body was bathed with that shower. A forester, afflicted with cold, went to (his) house from the forest.

57-63. Seeing the guest afflicted with cold, he saluted him by (bowing) his head. He then devoutly gave him a grass-seat and water for washing his feet etc. Then with that guest only making an intelligent talk with sweet words the cowherd along with his wife diligent in serving her lord, remained with a composed mind. The chaste lady was delighted on having, with effort, secured a pumpkin gourd and gave a part to him after cutting it (into parts). Then that hospitable cowherd who had become weak due to fasting for twentyone days gladly gave a large part (of the fruit) to the guest. Then that chaste housewife highly devoted to her husband also gladly gave that (other) part (of the fruit) to the guest. O best brāhmaṇa, the guest having eaten both the parts (of the fruit) of (i.e. meant for) that noble couple, was very much delighted. The two with firm devotion worshipped the guest like Viṣṇu.

64. Having rested there only at night, he went in the morning after a long time after having bathed. (The two) passed twentyone days in fasting.

65-66a. Then that noble couple died. Due to the efficacy of that religious merit the noble-hearted couple obtained absorption into Viṣṇu, difficult to be obtained even by meditating saints.

66b-67. Due to the efficacy of their religious merit and the worship of the guest that they had done, the famine in the kingdom came to an end. The people were extremely happy and were free from grief and diseases.

68. They were rich in wealth and grains and were highly devoted to religion. The bandits there disappeared, and the king protected the people.

69-70. People were engaged in their own practices (i.e. practices laid down for their respective castes), and the clouds rained as desired. Crores of the ancestors and successors of the two, being freed from sins due to that act only obtained salvation. They were blemishless, endowed with wealth and were alone honoured by all the people.

71a. The progeny of the two grew without grief and diseases.

Lomaśa said:

71b-72a. I have told you the importance of the worship of

a guest along with its history. O brāhmaṇas, what else do you desire to hear for your pleasure?

Vyāsa said:

72b-76a. When that Lomaśa, rich in austerities was speaking like this, a black mouse, seized by death came up from its hole. Seeing that black mouse to have come from the hole, Pavitra, beside himself with anger got up, repeatedly speaking like this: "This wicked mouse of a sinful heart digs (the ground of) the hermitage with its sharp teeth at night, and destroys domestic things. For all the castes pity is said to be the best. It should be shown to all living beings, but not to wicked ones."

76b-80a. Speaking like this, O best brāhmaṇa, with a very sharp iron arrow he killed the mouse that had committed sins and the death of whom had approached. That rat, with its body bathed (i.e. wet) with the streams of flowing blood, fell on the ground with its consciousness affected due to agony, O brāhmaṇa sage. Seeing the mouse fallen, the kind, best brāhmaṇa, wailed loudly and speedily got up. Taking an excellent tulasī leaf from his own ear, he put it into the mouse's mouth, on its head and ears.

80b-82a. "O mother, O goddess Tulasī, O you causing delight to Govinda, give the best position to this mouse who has committed sins." O best brāhmaṇa, he who obliged all the world, loudly uttered the sound (i.e. the words): 'Hari, Nārāyaṇa Ananta'.

82b-83a. The mouse, due to the touch of the tulasī leaf, and due to hearing Viṣṇu's name, was free from sins and became free from the bond of the worldly existence.

83b-86a. Then the messengers of the great Viṣṇu, who were endowed with all (good) characteristics, quickly came there in good chariots to take (the mouse) whose sins had gone (to Viṣṇu's abode). The mouse surrounded by the hosts of Viṣṇu's messengers got into a divine chariot and went to the highest place. The mouse, having stayed in Viṣṇu's abode for thousands of crores of yugas, and having secured knowledge there only, went to (i.e. obtained) final emancipation.

Vyāsa said:

86b-87. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you the importance of goddess Tulasī. O glorious one, tell me what you desire to hear now.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

Conduct in the Four Yugas

Jaimini said:

1. O glorious one, tell me how will all people be (i.e. behave) when the very fierce Kali age has come.

Vyāsa said:

2-5. The first (age) is called Satya-yuga. In it the people—brāhmaṇas and others—were devoted to worshipping Viṣṇu, and were free from grief and diseases. All of them spoke the truth, all were kind, and all lived long. They were rich in wealth and grains. They were free from (doing) harm (to others) and from religious hypocrisy. All obliged others. All knew sacred treatises. O best brāhmaṇa, in Satya-yuga all people were like this. And the kings followed royal duties and protected people. Oh! Who can relate the merit and the glory of Satya-yuga?

6-8. In it no man practised unrighteousness. When Tretā-yuga came, Dharma became deficient in one foot. Some people had little unhappiness. Some resorted to kindness. People were engaged in meditating upon Viṣṇu. They were highly devoted to (performing) sacrifices and (giving) gifts. They were engaged in (following) the practices of castes and stages of human life. They were happy and of a composed mind. All the śūdras tilled the soil and served brāhmaṇas.

9-11. Brāhmaṇas were noble and had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. They were averse to accepting presents. They were true to their words. They had curbed their senses. They were always engaged in penance and vows. They always worshipped Viṣṇu. When at the end of Tretā-yuga, Dvāpara-yuga arrived.

Dharma would be deficient in two feet and some men would have happiness and unhappiness. Some would be engrossed in sins, and some were pious.

12. Some lacked some virtues. Some men of high virtues were extremely unhappy. Some were happy.

13. Sometime a brāhmaṇa longed for receiving (a present). At some time or other kings harassed their subjects through greed for wealth.

14-17. Brāhmaṇas were very much given to Viṣṇu's worship, and śūdras served brāhmaṇas. When, O brāhmaṇa, in yuga after yuga Dharma became deficient (foot) by foot, then Vyāsa of the form of Viṣṇu divided the Veda. O best brāhmaṇa, in Kali-yuga which is the only abode of all sins, Dharma would be having one foot (only), and all people would be engaged in (committing) sins. Brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras will be very much addicted to sins, will be very voluptuous and cruel. They will censure the Vedas and indulge in gambling and stealing.

18-20. They will be engaged in cohabiting with widows in Kali-yuga. Certain brāhmaṇas, looking to their livelihood (only), will be acting very fraudulently. All will be exceedingly fond of women, all will drink intoxicating liquors. All will be engaged in sexual acts and snatch other's wealth. They will always ardently long for other's food. They will be averse to penance and vows. They will be bound by the company of heretics in Kali-yuga.

21-22. Brāhmaṇas following śūdras' practices, will be (vagrant devotees) wearing red garments. In Kali-yuga the accomplished one will reach a very low position. And the mean, being endowed with wealth, will go to a very high position. All men will give gifts to those who have obliged them.

23-24. Even with effort (being made) cāṇḍālas will not abide by brāhmaṇas. In Kali-yuga people will give false testimony through affection for their friends. They will talk impious ideas. They will lament over righteous thoughts. They will censure (people) in (their) absence. They will be cruel, and will speak sweetly in the presence of other (people).

25-26. Unchaste women will speak like chaste women to their husbands. Brāhmaṇas will harm other's wives and will sell their possessions. In Kali-yuga, people will sell their daughters.

All men will be subjugated by women. Women too will be very fickle.

27-29. In Kali-yuga men will be wicked-hearted. The earth will have few crops and clouds will have little water. They will also shower (water) at a wrong time. O Jaimini, in Kali-yuga cows will eat feces and will yield little milk. And undoubtedly that milk will be ghee-less. People will be given to self-praise. They will be intent on censuring others.

30. Boys will have short bodies, and will eat too much food. In Kali-yuga, brāhmaṇas will offer libations to the dead ancestors for religious hypocrisy.

31. All will be affectionate in words (only) till their mission does not succeed. All will laugh at (certain) people, seeing them to be devoted to piety.

32-33. People will prosper through wicked deeds. Therefore, people will be addicted to sins. And they will completely perish within ten or twelve years. (They will prosper) as water will increase in the rainy season. People will lose their youth in Kali-yuga.

34. A girl will conceive in her fifth or eighth year. Men will have many children and (therefore) they will be very unhappy.

35. All will long for taking (gifts), none will long for giving. In Kali (yuga) Mlecchas will be kings, addicted to sins.

36. In Kali-yuga people will be of one caste (only) in order to satisfy carnal desires. In the first division of Kali (yuga) men (will) censure Viṣṇu.

37-38. In the middle (part) of Kali (yuga) men will only recognise Viṣṇu's names. Brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras will have (but) one caste in Kali-yuga, and there will be only four castes.

39-40a. O best brāhmaṇa, whenever there will be a decrease in (the number of) the pious ones, it should be known that the sinners will be on the increase in Kali (yuga). O best brāhmaṇa, though I have described this Kali (yuga) to be fierce, yet O best among the virtuous, it has (one) great merit.

40b-41. In Satya (yuga) religious merit would be accomplished after twelve years. In Tretā (yuga) (it would be accomplished during half the period of that. In Dvāpara (it would be accompli-

shed) within a month. But it would be produced in a day and night in Kali-yuga.

42-44a. Therefore, in the mortal world men do not at all reach a good position. A man obtains that fruit in Kali-yuga merely by uttering (the name of) Viṣṇu, which he would obtain by worshipping Viṣṇu for twelve years in another yuga. Kali does not trouble that man who utters only one name of Viṣṇu in Kali-yuga in this world. This is the truth, the (only) truth. There is no doubt in it.

Jaimini said:

44b-46a. Every act becomes fruitless due to the lack of the purity of mind. You have told this before. Therefore, my mind gives wonder (i.e. is amazed). In Kali-yuga all lack the purity of mind. O preceptor, tell me how their acts would be (done).

Vyāsa said:

46b-47. A man should devoutly offer whatever act he does in Kali-yuga to the great Viṣṇu. Every act that is dedicated to Viṣṇu would be inexhaustible.

Vyāsa said:

48. O best brāhmaṇa, I have thus told you the entire account, having devoutly heard which a man would obtain liberation.

Sūta said:

49. Jaimini thus informed by that highest soul, became engaged in the employment of rituals, and went to the highest position.

50-52. Those men desiring liberation, who devoutly recite or listen to this Essence of the Employment of Rituals are freed from all fierce sins committed during many existences, and obtain liberation. There is no doubt about this. Those men who, desiring liberation, recite and listen to this, get whatever is desired by them through the auspicious favour of Lakṣmi's lord.

53. A man, reciting or listening to half a verse, or a verse, or a quarter of a verse, gets the desired fruit.

54. That man who, after writing or getting written this holy text, would worship it, obtains the fruit of Viṣṇu's worship only.

55. May this Purāṇa which is very secret, has come out from Vyāsa's mouth, is very charming, gives delight to Viṣṇu's devotees, pleases the Disc-holder (Viṣṇu), Murāri whose feet are for a long time saluted by gods and others and who is the lord of the entire world.

May auspiciousness prevail.
May it be dedicated to Viṣṇu.

End of the Treatise.

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