

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

(Harassment by Viṣṇu's sons and the story of Śiva's incarnation of the Bull)

Nandiśvara said:—

1. O great sage, O intelligent son of Brahmā, listen to the excellent Vṛṣeṣa incarnation of Śiva that performed good sports and that destroyed the arrogance of Viṣṇu.

2. Formerly all the gods and Asuras, distressed by the fear of old age and death made alliance with each other and became desirous of taking gems from the ocean.

3. O son of the sage, then the gods and the Asuras attempted to churn the excellent milky ocean.⁶⁴

4. "With what shall the churning be carried out for the attainment of our object?" thus the gods and the Asuras were quite dismayed.

5. Then a celestial voice with the rumbling sound of clouds spoke to the gods and the daityas as a result of Śiva's wish and consoled them.

The celestial voice said :—

6. O gods, O Asuras, churn the milk-ocean. Undoubtedly a factual test of your strength will take place.

7. Make Mandara your churning rod and Vāsuki your churning rope. Unitedly you carry on the churning with firm devotion.

Nandiśvara said :—

8. O excellent sage, on hearing the celestial voice the gods and the Asuras exerted themselves in carrying out the plan.

9. Allying together they went straight to the excellent mountain Mandara of golden splendour and of diverse lustre.

10. After propitiating Śiva and after obtaining his consent they tried to uproot the Mandara in their desire to take it to the milk-ocean.

11. O sage, uprooting and lifting it by means of their arms they went to the milk-ocean. Their strength failing they became incapable of taking it up to the sea.

64. See P 224 note.

12. Slipping from their arms the Mandara became very heavy suddenly and fell over the gods and the Asuras.

13. Failing in their effort the gods and the Asuras broke down. After regaining consciousness they eulogised the lord of the universe.

14. At his wish in their next attempt they lifted up the mountain. They took it to the northern shore of the ocean and hurled it into the waters.

15. Then both the gods and the Asuras made Vāsuki the churning rope. Desirous of taking the excellent articles they churned the milk-ocean.

16. When the milk-ocean was churned the goddess of heaven sprang up from the ocean as the daughter of Bhṛgu who later became Viṣṇu's beloved.

17-18. There also emerged—Dhanvantari, the moon, the Pārijāta tree, the horse Uccaiśravas, the elephant Airāvata, wine, the bow of Viṣṇu, the conch, the cow Kāmadhenu, the jewel Kaustubha and the nectar.

19. When it was churned again, the great poison Kālakūṭa blazing like the fire at the dissolution of the Yugas and terrifying the gods and the Asuras, came out.

20. From the sprays and drops that sprang up at the outcome of nectar, many damsels of wonderful beauty were born.

21. Their faces resembled the full moon in the Autumn; their lustre was as glittering and dazzling as fire, lightning or the sun and they were bedecked in divine jewels, necklaces, bracelets and bangles.

22. Sprinkling the ten quarters by the water of nectarine beauty they seemed to madden the world by their beautiful glances.

23. They emerged in crores from the nectar sprays. Then the nectar that wards off old age and death came out.

24. Viṣṇu kept for himself Lakṣmī, the conch, Kaustubha and the sword; the Sun chose the divine horse Uccaiśravas for himself.

25. With great eagerness the husband of Śacī, the lord of the gods, took Pārijāta the excellent tree and Airāvata the lordly elephant.

26. For the protection of the gods, Śiva, favourably disposed towards his devotees, voluntarily retained the Kāla-kūṭa in his neck and held the moon on his forehead.

27. O Vyāsa, deluded by the illusion of Śiva, the Daityas accepted Surā (wine) and the common people took Dhanvantari (the physician).

28. The great sages took the cow Kāmadhenu. The damsels, the enchantresses became common to all.

29. A great battle for the possession of Amṛta ensued between the gods and the Asuras who desired to conquer each other and who were agitated in their minds.

30. The Amṛta was forcibly taken by the Daityas Bali and others, O Vyāsa, of fine lustre resembling that of the fire and the sun at the dissolution of the Yugas. They defeated the gods.

31. Indra and other gods, O dear, overwhelmed by Śiva's illusion and harassed by the Daityas sought refuge in Śiva.

32. O sage, then the Amṛta was strenuously snatched away from the Daityas by Viṣṇu at the behest of Śiva, after assuming the form of a woman.

33. Viṣṇu, the most excellent of those who wield Māyā assuming the form of a woman Mohinī deluded the Asuras and made the gods drink it.

34. The leading Daityas approached her and said—“Make us drink this nectar. Let there be no break in the lines.”

35. All those Daityas and Dānavas deluded by Śiva's Māyā said thus and gave the nectar to Viṣṇu in disguise.

36. In the meantime on seeing the damsels born of Amṛta, the leading Dānavas took them to their abodes according to their convenience.

37. The cities built by the architect Maya for those women were divine, hundred times more beautiful than heaven. They were well fortified by terrible machines.

38. The daityas made those cities well guarded and set off for fighting after taking this pledge touching their chests.*

*We have adopted the reading संस्पृष्ट० For अस्पृष्ट ।

39. "We will never touch these women if we were to be defeated by the gods." After saying this, the heroic Daityas became eager to fight.

40. They roared like lions. Severally they blew their conches as if filling the sky and propitiating the clouds.

41. A terrible fight ensued between the gods and the Asuras. The unrivalled battle between the gods and Asuras is famous in the three worlds.

42. Protected by Viṣṇu, the gods gained victory. The Daityas fled and those who remained were killed by Viṣṇu and his associate gods.

43. The Daityas were deluded by the gods and Viṣṇu the great soul. Those that survived entered the nether regions.

44. The powerful Viṣṇu armed with his discus chased them even after they had gone to the ultimate end of Pātāla⁶⁵ excessively frightened.

45. In the meantime Viṣṇu saw those damsels born of nectar sprays who were haughty due to their divine beauty and whose faces resembled the full moon.

46. Fascinated by the Cupid's arrows Viṣṇu attained highest pleasure only there. He began to indulge in sexual dalliance with those women of exquisite beauty.

47. Viṣṇu begot of them sons of great exploits and valour, experts in various kinds of warfare, shaking the entire earth.

48. Those sons of Viṣṇu of great strength and valour wrought great havoc both in heaven and earth causing misery to all.

49. On seeing the great harm done to the worlds the gods and the sages approached Brahmā and informed him of this after bowing to him.

50. On hearing it Brahmā took them to the mountain Kailāsa. On seeing Śiva there he bowed to him again and again along with the gods.

51. Saying "O lord Śiva, be victorious, O Lord of all", he eulogised him with various hymns with palms joined in reverence and shoulders drooping down.

65. Pātāla is the lowermost of the seven or eight regions in which Vāsuki reigns over the chief gaṇas or snake-gods.

Brahmā said :—

52. O great God, O lord of the gods, save the worlds harassed by the passionate sons of Viṣṇu stationed in nether regions.

53. O lord, Viṣṇu is now enamoured of the damsels born of the nectar sprays. He is in nether regions indulging in passionate sexual dalliance with them.

Nandiśvara said :—

54. For the protection of the worlds and for the redemption of Viṣṇu, Śiva was eulogised thus by Brahmā, the gods and the sages.

55. Then lord Śiva, the ocean of mercy, realising the havoc caused by the sons of Viṣṇu assumed the form of a bull.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

(The bull incarnation of Śiva)

Nandiśvara said :—

1. Then bellowing in the form of a Bull, the Pināka-bearing lord entered the crevice and shouted terribly.

2. At his bellowing sound, cities and towns crumbled down and all the citizens trembled.

3. Then the bull attacked Viṣṇu's sons wielding their bows for fighting, deluded by Śiva's Māyā and proud of their great strength and exploit.

4. O excellent sage, the sons of Viṣṇu became furious. Those heroes roared loudly and rushed against Śiva.

5. Rudra in that form of a bull was furious at those sons of Viṣṇu who rushed at him. He kicked them with his hoofs and tore them with his horns.

6. When their limbs were split by Rudra, they swooned and lost their lives. They were immediately destroyed.

7. When they were killed Viṣṇu the foremost of the strong came out shouting loudly and hastened towards Śiva.

8. On seeing Śiva in the form of the bull going along after killing his sons, Viṣṇu hit him with divine arrows and missiles.

9. Then the infuriated Śiva, the highly powerful one in the form of a bull stood like a mountain and caught hold of all those missiles of Viṣṇu.

10. O sage, shouting furiously, lord Śiva in the form of a bull shook the three worlds terribly.

11. The lord leaped up suddenly and kicked the infuriated Viṣṇu who was deluded and could not realise him. The lord then tore him with his horns.

12. Unable to bear the onslaught, Viṣṇu deluded by Māyā was exhausted and utterly shattered.

13. When his pride fell off, Viṣṇu was dejected, and dispirited. He then realised that Śiva was sporting about in the form of a bull.

14. Then on realising that Śiva himself had come in the form of a Bull, Viṣṇu spoke in a shrill voice with drooping shoulders and palms joined in reverence.

Viṣṇu said :—

15. O lord of the gods, O ocean of mercy, O lord Śiva, I had been deluded by your Māyā and my mind had been confused.

16. O lord, I fought with you, Śiva. Taking pity on me, O lord, let this offence be excused.

Nandiśvara said :—

17. O sage, on hearing those piteous words of Viṣṇu, lord Śiva favourably disposed to his devotees spoke to Viṣṇu.

Śiva said :—

18. O Viṣṇu, O intelligent one, how is it that you did not know me? Why did you fight? Your intellect has completely been depraved.

19. Why don't you realise yourself as one whose exploit is dependent on me. You should not have indulged in sexual dalliance there. You should have refrained from all misdeeds.

20. Why should your intellect be subservient to lust? That you should indulge in dalliance with women does not behove you, O lord of gods. Remember the task of uplifting the universe.

Nandiśvara said :—

21. On hearing those words of Śiva that imparted knowledge Viṣṇu was ashamed of himself and then he spoke to lord Śiva respectfully.

Viṣṇu said :—

22. My discus is here. I shall take the discus and return to my region abiding by your order with reverence.

Nandiśvara said :—

23. On hearing the words of Viṣṇu, lord Śiva the protector of virtue in the guise of a bull, replied to Viṣṇu again.

24. You shall go away quickly from this place. You shall not delay, O Viṣṇu, this is my behest. Let your discus stay in this world itself.

25. I shall give you a discus more terrible than the sun at the time of dissolution and more efficacious than the words of Śiva.

26. After saying this Śiva created another blazing discus, as lustrous as the Kāla fire, for the destruction of the wicked.

27. He gave the discus, as lustrous as ten thousand fierce suns, to Viṣṇu, the great Ātman, the protector of the gods and the leading sages.

28. After securing another Sudarśana discus of more brilliance, Viṣṇu the foremost of intelligent gods spoke to the gods.

29. “O ye gods, you listen to my statement eagerly. You must act accordingly and immediately. It will be to your advantage.

30. There are many youthful maidens in the nether regions exquisitely dressed. Any one of you can go and indulge in sexual dalliance with them.”

31. On hearing these words of Viṣṇu the valorous gods became desirous of entering the nether regions along with Viṣṇu.

32. Knowing their intention then, lord Siva angrily cursed all the eight⁶⁶ types of the gods.

Siva said :—

33. "Excepting a quiescent sage and the Dānavas born of my parts whoever enters this place shall die in a trice."

34. After hearing these terrible words which are conducive to the increase of the benefit of human beings, the gods thus restrained by Rudra returned to their own abodes.

35. Thus Viṣṇu who was excessively indulgent in women was chastised by Śiva. O Vyāsa, he returned to heaven. The world attained normalcy.

36. Lord Śiva, favourably disposed towards his devotees, returned to his mountain after carrying out the task of the gods in the guise of a bull.

37. Thus the bull incarnation of Śiva that dispelled Viṣṇu's delusion and caused happiness to the three worlds, has been narrated.

38. This narrative is sacred. It dispels the harassment from enemies. It is conducive to the attainment of heaven, fame and longevity. It confers worldly pleasures and salvation to the good.

39. He who listens to this with devotion and narrates this with purity enjoys all pleasures here and attains salvation hereafter. So also is the case with him who reads or teaches this to intelligent men.

66. Amara mentions ten semi-divine beings viz. विद्याधर, अप्सरस्, यक्ष, रक्षस्, गन्धर्व, किन्नर, पिशाच, गुह्यक, सिद्ध and भूत । ŚP. mentions eight, without giving their names. It is not clear which two shall be excluded from the above list.