

CHAPTER 10

The story of the king Pṛthu and the milking of the cow

ऋषय ऊचुः

बहुभिर्धरणी भुक्ता भूपालैः श्रूयते पुरा।

पार्थिवाः पृथिवीयोगात्पृथिवी कस्य योगतः॥ १॥

किमर्थं च कृता संज्ञा भूमेः किं पारिभाषिकी।

गौरितीयं च विख्याता सूत कस्माद्ब्रवीहि नः॥ २॥

The Ṛṣis asked, “O Sūta, it is learnt that several of the ruler have ruled the country and have been called as Pārthivas or Pṛthvīpatis, because of their association with the earth. But how did the name of the earth came to be known as Pṛthvī? Why was the earth also known as *gau* or cow? You kindly reveal its secret.

सूत उवाच

वंशे स्वायम्भुवस्यासीदङ्गो नाम प्रजापतिः।

मृत्योस्तु दुहिता तेन परिणीता सुदुर्मुखा॥ ३॥

सुनीथा नाम तस्यास्तु वेनो नाम सुतः पुरा।

अधर्मनिरतश्चासीद्वलवान्वसुधाधिपः॥ ४॥

Sūta said, “O Ṛṣis, in the Svāyambhuva dynasty in ancient times, there had been a Prajāpati known by the name of Aṅga; who married Sunithā, the daughter of Mṛtyu. The

face of Sunithā was quite ugly, but she gave birth to a powerful son named Vena who became a splendid king in due course of time. But he always engaged himself in evil ways.

लोकेऽप्यधर्मकृज्जातः परभार्यापहारकः।

धर्माचारस्य सिद्धयर्थं जगतोऽथ महर्षिभिः॥५॥

He always indulged in abducting and seducing others wives. In this way he kept on spreading *adharma* in the universe. Then the ṛṣis humbly prayed Vena to embrace the noble ways.

अनुनीतोऽपि न ददावनुज्ञां स यदा ततः।

शापेन मारयित्वैनमराजकभयार्हिताः॥६॥

But because of his evil mind, he failed to agree to their request, then the sages killed him pronouncing a curse on him.

ममन्युर्ब्राह्मणास्तस्य बलादेहमकल्मषाः।

तत्कायान्मथ्यमानान्तु निपेतुर्लेच्छजातयः॥७॥

The kingdom was thus deprived of a ruler. The sages then churned the body of Vena, getting apprehensive of disturbance. First of all the forces of Mlecchas emerged out of his body.

शरीरे मातुरंशेन कृष्णाञ्जनसमप्रभाः।

पितुरंशस्य चांशेन धार्मिको धर्मचारिणः॥८॥

उत्पन्नो दक्षिणाद्धस्तात्सधनुः सशरो गदी।

दिव्यतेजोमयवपुः सरत्नकवचाङ्गदः॥९॥

पृथोरेवाभवद्यत्नात्ततः पृथूरजायत।

The barbarian race black as the soot, emerged out of the body of Vena due to the evil qualities of his mother. For the good qualities of his noble and auspicious father, a most brilliant figure appeared from the right hand wearing the armour studded with precious gems and holding the bow, arrow and a club in both the hands. This figure emerged out of the body of Vena, when it was quite carefully churned. He therefore came to be known as Pṛthu.

स विप्रैरभिषिक्तो तपः कृत्वा सुदारुणम्॥१०॥

विष्णोर्वीरेण सर्वस्य प्रभुत्वमगमत्युनः।

निःस्वाध्यायवषट्कारं निर्द्धर्मं वीक्ष्य भूतलम्॥११॥

दग्धुमेवोद्यतः कोपाच्छरेणामितविक्रमः।

ततो गोरूपमास्थाय भूः पलायितुमुद्यताः॥१२॥

Though the Brāhmaṇas had crowned him as the king over the kingdom of his father, but, still, he pleased lord Viṣṇu performing the severe *tapas*. Then he, with the boon of lord Viṣṇu, conquering all the mobiles and immobles of the world, himself became the lord of the entire universe. When the king found that the earth was deprived of the Vedic rites, he was filled with righteous indignation and endeavoured to destroy it with his infallible arrow. The earth then shook with fear. Assuming the form of a cow, she took to flight.

पृष्ठतोऽनुगतस्तस्याः पृथुर्दक्षिशरासनः।

ततः स्थित्वैकदेशे तु किं करोमीति चाब्रवीत्॥१३॥

पृथुरप्यवदद्वाक्यमीप्सितं देहि सुव्रते।

सर्वस्य जगतः शीघ्रं स्थावरस्य चरस्य च॥१४॥

She was followed by Pṛthu, the great archer. Finding that she was being followed by Pṛthu, the earth felt exhausted and standing there at a particular place, she spoke, “What should I do to please you, O Lord?” At this Pṛthu said, “O Noble one, you at once bestow the best of the king to the mobile and immobile world.”

तथैव साब्रवीद्भूमिर्दुदोह स नराधिपः।

स्वके पाणौ पृथुर्वत्सं कृत्वा स्वायम्भुवं मनुम्॥१५॥

On hearing this, the earth said, “All right, it will be done accordingly. With the consent of the earth as cow, Pṛthu made Svāyambhuva Manu as a calf and milked the cow in his own hand cup. The milked material became the spotless cereals, which made the people to remain alive.

तदन्नमभवच्छुद्धं प्रजा जीवन्ति येन वै।

ततस्तु ऋषिभिर्दुग्धा वत्सः सोमस्तदाभवत्॥१६॥

दोग्धा बृहस्पतिरभूत्पात्रं वेदस्तपो रसः।

देवैश्च वसुधा दुग्धा दोग्धा मित्रस्तदाभवत्॥१७॥

इन्द्रो वत्सः समभवत्क्षीरमूर्जस्करं बलम्।
देवानां काञ्चनं पात्रं पितृणां राजतं तथा॥ १८॥

Thereafter the process of milking the cow was started. The Rṣis also milked the same cow. At that point of time moon was turned as a calf, Bṛhaspati became the milkman, Vedas became the vases and the milked material was the *tapas*. The gods also milked the cow, when Mitra became the milkman and Indra became the calf, while the prowess was the essence as milk. At the time of the milking of the cow, golden was the vase of the gods.

अन्तकश्चाभवद्दोग्धा यमो वत्सः स्वधा रसः।
अलाबुपात्रं नागानां तक्षको वत्सकोऽभवत्॥ १९॥
विषं क्षीरं ततो दोग्धा धृतराष्ट्रोऽभवत्पुनः।
असुरैरपि दुग्धेयमायसे शक्रपीडिनीम्॥ २०॥

Then Antaka also milked the cow, when Yama became the calf, Svadhā was the juice, the manes had the vase of silver. In the milking of the cow by the nāgas, Dhṛtarāṣṭra became the milkman, Takṣaka, the lord of serpents became the calf, gourd was the vase, while *pāyasam* or poison was the milked material.

पात्रे मायामभूद्वत्सः प्राह्लादिस्तु विरोचनः।
दोग्धा द्विमूर्द्धा तत्रासीन्माया येन प्रवर्तिता॥ २१॥

The demons also milked the cow. They milked Māyā used for the torture of Indra in the vase of iron. In that case Virocana, the son of Prahlāda became the calf. Dvimūrdhā had been the milkman, and pressed out Māyā in an iron pot.

यक्षैश्च वसुधा दुग्धा पुरान्तर्द्धानमीप्सुभिः।
कृत्वा वैश्रवणं वत्समामपात्रे महीपते॥ २२॥

Yakṣas also milked the cow with the desire of becoming invisible. For this purpose, they made Kubera the calf and milked the cow in the vase of clay.

प्रेतस्त्रक्षोगणैर्दुग्धा धारारुधिरमुल्बणम्।
रौघ्यनाभोऽभवद्दोग्धा सुमाली वत्स एव तु॥ २३॥

The goblins as well as the *pretas* milked the cow yielding a terrific flow of blood. For this purpose, Raupyanābha, a goblin, functioned as a milkman, the goblin Sumālī became the calf.

गन्धर्वैश्च पुरा दुग्धा वसुधा साप्सरोगणैः।
वत्सं चैत्ररथं कृत्वा गन्धान्यद्बले तथा॥ २४॥
दोग्धा वररुचिर्नाम नाट्यवेदस्य पारगः।
गिरिभिर्वसुधा दुग्धा रत्नानि विविधानि च॥ २५॥
औषधानि च दिव्यानि दोग्धा मेरुर्महाचलः।
वत्सोऽभूद्धिमवांस्तत्र पात्रे शैलमयं पुनः॥ २६॥

The *apsaras* as well as the Gandharvas, making Caitraratha as the calf milked the fragrance of the earth in a lotus leaf from the earth. During this exercise, a Gandharva Vararuci, the excellent dancer became the milkman. The mountains milked the precious gems as well as the divine *auśadhis* from the cow. Sumeru, the great mountain was used as the milkman, while Himavān acted as a calf. The vase was like the mountain.

वृक्षैश्च वसुधा दुग्धा क्षीरं छिन्नप्ररोहणम्।
पालाशपात्रे दोग्धा तु शालः पुष्पलताकुलः॥ २७॥
प्लक्षोऽभवत्ततो वत्सः सर्ववृक्षो धनाधिपः।
एवमन्यैश्च वसुधा तदा दुग्धा यथेप्सितम्॥ २८॥

The trees milked the power of regeneration even after being lopped off, in a leaf of Pālāśa (*Butea frondosa*). For this purpose Śāla (*Shorea robusta*) was made the milkman and the fig tree officiated as a calf. In the same manner, everyone who milked the earth, received the desired fruit.

आयुर्धनानि सौख्यं च पृथौ राज्यं प्रशासति।
न दरिद्रस्तदा कश्चिन्न रोगी न च पापकृत्॥ २९॥
नोपसर्गभयं किञ्चित्पृथौ राजनि शासति।
नित्यं प्रमुदिता लोका दुःखशोकविवर्जिताः॥ ३०॥

During the rule of the king Prthu, the people had long life, were quite well off and wealthy. No one was poor at that time. There were no ailments and no one indulged in the evil ways.

During the rule of the king Pṛthu, there were no misfortunes or dangers and the people were free from sufferings and enjoyed a comfortable life.

धनुष्कोट्या च शैलेन्द्रानुत्सार्य स महाबलः।

भुवस्तलं समं चक्रे लोकानां हितकाम्यया॥ ३१॥

The valorous Pṛthu, getting inspired with the welfare of the people, raised the huge mountains with the bow and made the surface even.

न पुरग्रामदुर्गाणि न चायुधधरा नराः।

क्षयातिशयदुःखं च नार्थशास्त्रस्य चादरः॥ ३२॥

धर्मैकवासना लोकाः पृथौ राज्यं प्रशासति।

कथितानि च पात्राणि यत्क्षीरं च मया तव॥ ३३॥

During the rule of Pṛthu, there were no cities, towns or the forts, nor did the people carry the weapons for self protection. The ailments were totally absent; the science of political economy was unknown and had been neglected having no importance. All the people performed their duties and the prescribed rites. There was no trace of greed in them and they were all devoted to dharma. O Ṛṣis, thus, I have narrated the story of the milking of the cow by Pṛthu and the milking vases, in which the milk was poured.

येषां यत्र रुचिस्तत्तद्देयं तेभ्यो विजानता।

यज्ञश्राद्धेषु सर्वेषु मया तुभ्यं निवेदितम्॥ ३४॥

Whatever things are desired by the people, they should make offering of the same in the *yajñas* as well as in the *Śrāddhas*¹ of the manes.

दुहितृत्वं गता यस्मात्पृथोर्धर्मवती मही।

तदानुरागयोगाच्च पृथिवी विश्रुता बुधैः॥ ३५॥

Thus the story of the milking of the earth has been narrated by me, by which the earth had become the daughter of Pṛthu. Therefore, because of the immense love of Pṛthu, the earth came to be known as Pṛthivī, by the learned people.

इति श्रीमात्स्ये महापुराणे वैन्याभिवर्णनो नाम

दशमोऽध्यायः॥ १०॥

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1. The *Nirṇaya Sindhu*, in a passage referred to by Colebrooke (*As. Res.* VII.) specifies the following *Śrāddhas* : 1. The *Nitya* or perpetual; daily offerings to ancestors in general; 2. The *Naimittika* or occasional; as the *Ekoddiṣṭa* or obsequial offerings on account of a kinsman recently deceased; 3. The *Kāmya*, voluntary; performed for the accomplishment of a special design (अभिप्रेतसिद्धये); 4. The *Vṛddhi*; performed on occasions of rejoicing or prosperity; 5. The *Sapiṇḍana*; offerings to all individual and to general ancestors; 6. The *Pārvaṇa*