

## CHAPTER 53

### Descriptions of Purāṇas and merit of making the gift of a Purāṇa

पुनय ऊचुः

पुराणसंख्यामाचक्ष्व सूत विस्तरशः क्रमात्।

दानधर्ममशेषं तु यथावदनुपूर्वशः॥१॥

The Ṛṣis said— O Sūta! Be pleased to describe to us the number of the Purāṇas in due order and in detail and also about the giving of gifts and charity (Dāna Dharma).

सूत उवाच

इदमेव पुराणेषु पुराणपुरुषस्तदा।

यदुक्त्वान्स विश्वात्मा मनवे तन्निबोधत॥२॥

Sūta said— I shall tell you exactly what the Universal Soul, the ancient Male Lord, said to the King Vaivasvata Manu.

मत्स्य उवाच

पुराणं सर्वशास्त्राणां प्रथमं ब्रह्मणा स्मृतम्।

अनन्तरं च वक्त्रेभ्यो वेदास्तस्य विनिर्गताः॥३॥

Lord said to Manu! Brahmā remembered in the beginning first the Purāṇas among all the Śāstras. So Purāṇas are the first among the Śāstras. Afterwards, Brahmā uttered out the four Vedas from His four mouths.

पुराणमेकमेवाऽऽसीत्तदा कल्पान्तरेऽनघ।

त्रिवर्गसाधनं पुण्यं शतकोटिप्रविस्तरम्॥४॥

There was only one Purāṇa in the beginning of the Kalpa. It was alone the means of the accomplishment of the three ends of man (Dharma, Artha and Kāma). And it was the only

holy book consisting of thousand millions of stanzas.

निर्दग्धेषु च लोकेषु वाजिरूपेण वै मया।

अङ्गानि चतुरो वेदान्पुराणं न्यायविस्तरम्॥५॥

मीमांसां धर्मशास्त्रं च परिगृह्य मया कृतम्।

मत्स्यरूपेण च पुनः कल्पादावुदकार्णवे॥६॥

अशेषमेतत्कथितमुदकान्तर्गतेन च।

श्रुत्वा जगाद च मुनीन्प्रति देवांश्चतुर्मुखः॥७॥

प्रवृत्तिः सर्वशास्त्राणां पुराणस्याभवत्ततः।

कालेनाग्रहणं दृष्ट्वा पुराणस्य ततो नृपा॥८॥

व्यासरूपमहं कृत्वा संहरामि युगे युगे।

चतुर्लक्षप्रमाणेन द्वापरे द्वापरे सदा॥९॥

तथाऽष्टादशधा कृत्वा भूर्लोकैऽन्मिन्प्रकाशयते।

अद्यापि देवलोकेऽस्मिञ्छतकोटिप्रविस्तरम्॥१०॥

तदर्थोऽत्र चतुर्लक्षं संक्षेपेण निवेशितः।

पुराणानि दशाष्टौ च सांप्रतं तदिहोच्यते॥११॥

When all the regions perished by fire at the Great Dissolution, then I recited the four Vedas, with their six Aṅgas as well as the Purāṇas, the manifold Nyāyas, the Mīmāṃsā and the Dharmasāstra. In the beginning of the new age, I immersed myself in the furious waters, at the time of dissolution of the universe and explained them fully to Brahmā, Who in His turn revealed them to the Devas and the sages, after which they spread all over the world. Therefore, the Purāṇas became the source of all other Śāstras. Later on, seeing the neglect of the Purāṇa under the changed circumstances, I repromulgated them in every yuga, through my partial incarnation of Vyāsa. In every Dvāpara yuga, I compiled the Purāṇas to the extent of four lacs of ślokas, and spread them in the world after dividing them into eighteen. Even now the bulk of the Purāṇa extends to a hundred crore verses in the Deva loka. On the universe, however, its bulk is abridged only to 4 lakhs of ślokas, and is divided into eighteen Purāṇas.

नामतस्तानि वक्ष्यामि शृणुध्वं मुनिसत्तमाः।

ब्रह्मणाऽभिहितं पूर्वं यावन्मात्रं मरीचये॥१२॥

Sūta said— Hear, O Ṛṣis! The names of the different eighteen Purāṇas. I shall enumerate them to you, as they were described to Marīci by Brahmā.

ब्राह्मं त्रिदशसाहस्रं पुराणं परिकीर्त्यते।  
लिखित्वा तच्च यो दद्याज्जलधेनुसमन्वितम्।  
वैशाखपूर्णिमायां च ब्रह्मलोके महीयते॥१३॥

*The Brahma Purāṇa.* Brahma Purāṇa contains 13,000 ślokas. One who writes and gives it away in charity, along with a cow and water, in the month of Vaiśākha on the full-moon day, passes his days in Brahmaloaka, in happiness.

एतदेव यदा पद्ममभूद्धैरण्मयं जगत्।  
तद्वृत्तान्ताश्रयं तद्वत्पाद्ममित्युच्यते बुधैः।  
पाद्मं तत्पञ्चपञ्चाशत्सहस्राणीह कथ्यते॥१४॥

*The Padma Purāṇa.* At the time when this universe came out of the cosmic waters, in the beginning of the Lotus Kalpa, and in the form of a golden lotus, then the Padma Purāṇa was revealed, describing that creation, and it is called Padma Purāṇa by the wise. And is consists of 55,000 ślokas.

तत्पुराणं च यो दद्यात्सुवर्णकमलान्वितम्।  
ज्येष्ठे मासि तिलैर्युक्तमश्वमेधफलं लभेत्॥१५॥

One who gives away Padma Purāṇa in charity, along with a golden lotus and sesamum, in the month of Jyēṣṭha, gets the benefit of performing an aśvamedha sacrifice.

वाराहकल्पवृत्तान्तमधिकृत्य पराशरः।  
यत्प्राह धर्मानखिलांस्तद्युक्तं वैष्णवं विदुः॥१६॥

*The Viṣṇu Purāṇa.* Similarly, the rules of virtue laid down by Parāśara, for the period when there was the Varāha incarnation of Viṣṇu, in the beginning of Varāha Kalpa, form the Viṣṇu Purāṇa.

तदाषाढे च यो दद्याद्घृतधेनुसमन्वितम्।  
पौर्णमास्यां विपूतात्मा स पदं याति वारुणम्।

त्रयोविंशतिसाहस्रं तत्प्रमाणं विदुर्बुधाः॥१७॥

That Purāṇa contains 23,000 ślokas and one who gives it away in charity, along with a cow and clarified butter, in the month of Āṣāḍhas, on the full-moon day, is purified of all sins and goes and rests in peace in the region of Varuṇa.

श्वेतकल्पप्रसङ्गेन धर्मान्वायुरिहाब्रवीत्।  
यत्र तद्वायवीयं स्याद्दुदमाहात्म्यसंयुतम्।  
चतुर्विंशत्सहस्राणि पुराणं तदिहोच्यते॥१८॥

*The Vāyu Purāṇa.* The rules of virtue laid down by Vāyu, along with the glory of Rudra, in the Śveta-kalpa, is known as Vāyaviya Purāṇa. It contains 24,000 ślokas.

श्रावण्यां श्रावणे मासि गुडधेनुसमन्वितम्।  
यो दद्याद्दृषसंयुक्तं ब्राह्मणाय कुटुम्बिने।  
शिवलोके स पूतात्मा कल्पमेकं वसेन्नरः॥१९॥

One who gives it away in charity, along with a cow, jaggery and an ox, to a Brāhmaṇa, whose family is large, on the 15th day of light half of the month of Śrāvaṇa, attains the region of Śiva and resides there for a Kalpa.

यत्राधिकृत्य गायत्रीं वर्णयते धर्मविस्तरः।  
वृत्रासुरवधोपेतं तद्भागवतमुच्यते॥२०॥  
सारस्वतस्य कल्पस्य मध्ये मे स्युरोत्तमाः।  
तद्वृत्तान्तोद्भवं लोके तद्भागवतमुच्यते॥२१॥  
लिखित्वा तच्च यो दद्याद्धर्मसिंहसमन्वितम्।  
पौर्णमास्यां प्रोष्ठपद्यां स याति परमां गतिम्।  
अष्टादश सहस्राणि पुराणं तत्प्रचक्षते॥२२॥

*The Bhāgavata Purāṇa.* The Purāṇa which begins with the description of the sacred Gāyatrī worship, and goes on to mention various Dharmas and which contains a narration of the destruction of the demon Vṛtrāsura as well as an account of the famous men who flourished in the Sārasvata Kalpa, is known as Bhāgavata. One who writes Bhāgavata and gives it away in charity, along with a golden lion, on the full-moon day, in the month of

Bhādrapada, attains final emancipation. It contains 18,000 ślokas.

यत्राऽऽह नारदो धर्मान्बृहत्कल्पाश्रयाणि च।  
पञ्चाविंशत्सहस्राणि नारदीयं तदुच्यते॥२३॥  
आश्विने पञ्चदश्यां तु दद्याद्धेनुसमन्वितम्।  
परमां सिद्धिमाप्नोति पुनरावृत्तिदुर्लभाम्॥२४॥

*The Nāradiya Purāṇa.* The Nāradiya Purāṇa, containing 25,000 ślokas is that in which Nārada has described the Bṛhatakalpa and the Dharmas of the Bṛhatakalpa. One who gives away this Purāṇa in charity, on the full-moon day of Āsvin, along with a cow, attains bliss, and is liberated from the cycles of birth.

यत्राधिकृत्य शकुनीन्धर्माधर्मविचारणा।  
व्याख्याता वै मुनिप्रश्ने मुनिभिर्धर्मचारिभिः॥२५॥  
मार्कण्डेयेन कथितं तत्सर्वं विस्तरेण तु।  
पुराणं नवसाहस्रं मार्कण्डेयमिहोच्यते॥२६॥

*The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa.* The Purāṇa which begins with the story of the birds solving the difficulty of Dharma and Adharma and which the pious sages explain in an answer to the question of the sage (Jaiminī), which has been described at great length by the sage Mārkaṇḍeya, at the request of the Ṛṣis, and which contains 9,000 couplets, is known as Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa.

प्रतिलिख्य च यो दद्यात्सौवर्णकरिसंयुतम्।  
कार्तिक्यां पुण्डरीकस्य यज्ञस्य फलभाग्भवेत्॥२७॥

One who writes this Purāṇa and gives it away in charity, along with a golden elephant, on the full-moon day, in the month of Kārtika, attains the benefit of performing Puṇḍarīka sacrifice.

यत्तदीशानकं कल्पं वृत्तान्तमधिकृत्य च।  
वसिष्ठायग्निना प्रोक्तमानेयं तत्रचक्षते॥२८॥

*The Agni Purāṇa.* The Purāṇa, which commences with the description of the Īśāna Kalpa, and which was a path of virtue revealed to Agni by Vasiṣṭha, is known as the Āgneya

Purāṇa, and contains 16,000 ślokas.

लिखित्वा तच्च यो दद्याद्धेमपद्मसमन्वितम्।  
मार्गशीर्ष्यां विधानेन तिलधेनुसमन्वितम्॥२९॥

One who writes this Purāṇa and gives it away in charity, along with a golden lotus, a cow and sesamum, on the full-moon day, in Mārgaśīrā, attains the benefit of performing 16,000 sacrifices.

तच्च षोडशसाहस्रं सर्वक्रतुफलप्रदम्।  
यः प्रदधन्नरः सोऽथ स्वर्गलोके महीयते॥३०॥  
यत्राधिकृत्य माहात्म्यमादित्यस्य चतुर्मुखः।  
अघोरकल्पवृत्तान्तप्रसङ्गेन जगत्स्थितिम्।  
मनवे कथयामास भूतग्रामस्य लक्षणम्॥३१॥  
चतुर्दश सहस्राणि तथा पञ्च शतानि च।  
भविष्यचरितप्रायं भविष्यं तदिहोच्यते॥३२॥

*The Bhaviṣya Purāṇa.* The Purāṇa in which Brahmā has described the history of Aghorakalpa, the glory of the Sun, the existence of the Universe, the characteristics of the aggregate multitude to Manu, is known as the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa, and contains 14,500 ślokas.

तत्पौषे मासि यो दद्यात्पौर्णमास्यां विमत्सरः।  
गुडकुम्भसमायुक्तग्निष्टोमफलं भवेत्॥३३॥

One who gives away this Purāṇa in charity, free from the feeling of jealousy, on the full-moon day of Pauṣa, along with a pitcher of raw sugar, attains the benefit of performing the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

स्थन्तरस्य कल्पस्य वृत्तान्तमधिकृत्य च।  
सावर्णिना नारदाय कृष्णमाहात्म्यमुत्तमम्॥३४॥  
यत्र ब्रह्मवराहस्य चोदन्तं वर्णितं मुहुः।  
तदष्टादशसाहस्रं ब्रह्मवैवर्तमुच्यते॥३५॥

*The Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa.* The Purāṇa which commences with the description of Rathantara Kalpa, and in which Sāvārṇi Manu has described to Nārada the glory of Kṛṣṇa and the history of the Rathantara Kalpa, and in which there is also a constant allusion to

Brahmavarāha, is known as Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa and contains 18,000 ślokas.

पुराणं ब्रह्मवैवर्तं यो दद्यान्माघमासि च।  
पौर्णमास्यां शुभदिने ब्रह्मलोके महीयते॥३६॥

One who gives away this Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa in charity to a Brāhmaṇa, on an auspicious day, in the month of Māgha, on the full-moon day, goes and enjoys in the region of Brahmā.

यत्राग्निलिङ्गमध्यस्थः प्राह देवो महेश्वरः।  
धर्मार्थकाममोक्षार्थमाग्नेयमधिकृत्य च॥३७॥

*The Liṅga Purāṇa.* The Purāṇa in which Śiva explained the virtues of Agni and the four Vargas, viz., Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa, by manifesting Himself through the pillar of fire, which commences with the description of Āgneya Kalpa, and which was uttered by Brahmā Himself, is styled Liṅga Purāṇa and it contains 11,000 ślokas. One who gives away this Purāṇa, along with sesamum and cow in charity, on the full-moon day, in the month of Phālguna, attains the form of and similarity with Śiva.

कल्पान्ते लैङ्गमित्युक्तं पुराणं ब्रह्मणा स्वयम्।  
तदेकादशसाहस्रं फाल्गुन्यां यः प्रयच्छति।  
तिलधेनुसमायुक्तं स याति शिवसाम्यताम्॥३८॥  
महावराहस्य पुनर्माहात्म्यमधिकृत्य च।  
विष्णुनाऽपिहितं क्षोण्यै तद्वाराहमिहोच्यते॥३९॥

*The Varāha Purāṇa.* The Purāṇa in which Viṣṇu has described the glories of the Great Boar to the goddess Earth, and which was recited in connection with the Mānava Kalpa, is known as the Varāha Purāṇa, and contains 24,000 stanzas.

मानवस्य प्रसङ्गेन कल्पस्य मुनिसत्तमाः।  
चतुर्विंशत्सहस्राणि तत्पुराणमिहोच्यते॥४०॥

One who gives away this Purāṇa in charity, along with a golden eagle (Garuḍa), cow and sesamum, on the full-moon day, in the month of

Caitra, to a Brāhmaṇa with a large family, reaches the region of Viṣṇu by the favour of Varāha.

काञ्चनं गरुडं कृत्वा तिलधेनुसमन्वितम्।  
पौर्णमास्यां मधौ दद्याद्ब्राह्मणाय कुटुम्बिने।  
वराहस्य प्रसादेन परमाप्नोति वैष्णवम्॥४१॥  
यत्र माहेश्वरान्धर्मानधिकृत्य च षण्मुखः।  
कल्पे तत्पुरुषं वृत्तं चरितैरुपबृंहितम्॥४२॥  
स्कान्दं नाम पुराणं च ह्येकाशीतिर्निगद्यते।  
सहस्राणि शतं चैकमिति मर्त्येषु गद्यते॥४३॥

*The Skanda Purāṇa.* The Purāṇa in which the six-faced Kārtika has expressed the virtues of high-class men and also about the worship of Mahādeva, is known as Skanda Purāṇa. It commences with the description of the Māheṣvara Dharmas, as found in the Satpuruṣa Kalpa, and contains 81,100 ślokas in this mortal region.

परिलिख्य च यो दद्याद्धेमशूलसमन्वितम्।  
शैवं पदमवाप्नोति मीने चोपागते रवौ॥४४॥

One who gives away this Purāṇa, along with a golden trident, after writing it out at the time of the Sun being in the 12th sign of the Zodiac (Pisces), goes to the region of Śiva.

त्रिविक्रमस्य माहात्म्यमधिकृत्य चतुर्मुखः।  
त्रिवर्गमभ्याधात्तच्च वामनं परिकीर्तितम्॥४५॥  
पुराणं दशसाहस्रं कूर्मकल्पानुगं शिवम्।  
यः शरद्विषुवे दद्याद्द्वैष्णवं यात्यसौ पदम्॥४६॥

*The Vāmana Purāṇa.* The Purāṇa in which the four-faced Brahmā has related the glories of Trivikrama and which describes the three Vargas also to the Devas, after declaring the glory of Vāmana, is known as the Vāmana Purāṇa, and contains 10,000 ślokas. It describes the Kalpa, and is auspicious. Following Kūrma Kalpa, one who gives it away in charity, after writing it out neatly in the autumnal equinox, goes to the region of Viṣṇu.

यत्र धर्मार्थकामानां मोक्षस्य च रसातले।  
 माहात्म्यं कथयामास कूर्मरूपी जनार्दनः॥४७॥  
 इन्द्रद्युम्नप्रसङ्गेन ऋषिभ्यः शक्रसंनिधौ।  
 अष्टादश सहस्राणि लक्ष्मीकल्पानुषङ्गिकम्॥४८॥

*The Kūrma Purāṇa.* The Purāṇa in which Viṣṇu has dwelt on the glories of the four Vargas (Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa) in the form of a Kūrma, in the Rasātala regions, before the sages, in connection with the story of Indradyumna, where Indra was also present, through his companion Indradyumna, is known as Kūrma Purāṇa, and is related to Lakṣmī Kalpa. It contains 18,000 ślokas.

यो दद्यादयने कूर्मं हेमकूर्मसमन्वितम्।  
 गोसहस्रप्रदानस्य फलं संप्राप्त्यान्नरः॥४९॥

One who gives it away in charity, along with a golden turtle, at the time of the equinox, gets the benefit of giving away thousands of cows.

श्रुतीनां यत्र कल्पादौ प्रवृत्त्यर्थं जनार्दनः।  
 मत्स्यरूपेण मनवे नरसिंहोपवर्णनम्॥५०॥  
 अधिकृत्याब्रवीत्सप्तकल्पवृत्तं मुनीश्वराः।  
 तन्मात्स्यमिति जानीध्वं सहस्राणि चतुर्दश॥५१॥

*The Matsya Purāṇa.* The Purāṇa in which the Lord has related the glory of Narasimha to Vaivasvata Manu, at the beginning of the Kalpa, with a view to propagate the Śrutis, in the form of a fish, and in which the Lord has also described about the seven Kalpas, is known, O sages, as the Mātsya Purāṇa. It contains 14,000 ślokas.

विषुवे हेममत्स्येन धेन्वा चैव समन्वितम्।  
 यो दद्यात्पृथिवी तेन दत्ता भवति चाखिला॥५२॥

One who gives this Purāṇa away in charity, along with a golden fish and a cow, at the time of the summer solstice,<sup>1</sup> acquires the benefit of

giving in gift the entire earth.

यदा च गारुडे कल्पे विश्वाण्डाद्गारुडोद्भवम्।  
 अधिकृत्याब्रवीत्कृष्णो गारुडं तदिहोच्यते॥५३॥  
 तदष्टादशकं चैकं सहस्राणीह पठ्यते।  
 सौवर्णहंससंयुक्तं यो ददाति पुमानिह।  
 स सिद्धिं लभते मुख्यां शिवलोके च संस्थितिम्॥५४॥

*The Garuḍa Purāṇa.* The Purāṇa in which Kṛṣṇa has described the birth of Garuḍa out of the cosmic egg, in the Garuḍa Kalpa, is known as Garuḍa Purāṇa, and contains 18,000 ślokas. One who gives away this Purāṇa in charity, along with a golden flamingo, attains a place in the region of Śiva, endowed with highest perfection.

ब्रह्मा ब्रह्माण्डमाहात्म्यमधिकृत्याब्रवीत्पुनः।  
 तच्च द्वादशसाहस्रं ब्रह्माण्डं द्विशताधिकम्॥५५॥  
 भविष्याणां च कल्पानां श्रूयते यत्र विस्तरः।  
 तद्ब्रह्माण्डपुराणं च ब्रह्मणा समुदाहृतम्॥५६॥

*The Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa.* The Purāṇa commencing with the glory of the cosmic egg, and in which Brahmā has described the future Kalpas as well as the history of the Universe to the Devas, is known as the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, and contains 12,200 ślokas.

यो दद्यात्तद्व्यतीपाते पीतोर्णायुगसंयुतम्।  
 राजसूयसहस्रस्य फलमाप्नोति मानवः।  
 हेमधेन्वा युतं तच्च ब्रह्मलोकफलप्रदम्॥५७॥

One who gives away this Purāṇa in charity, along with a yellow woollen garment and a golden cow at the time of Vyatīpāta, attains the benefit of a thousand Rājasūya sacrifices.

चतुर्लक्षमिदं प्रोक्तं व्यासेनाद्भुतकर्मणा।  
 मत्पितुर्मम पित्रा च मया तुभ्यं निवेदितम्॥५८॥

Vyāsa, possessed of wonderful deeds, said

shomon at noon. विषुवर्दनम् the day of the equinox. विषुव रेखा the equinoctical line विषुव संक्रान्ति the sun's equinoctical pasage, V.S. Apte, pp. 524-525, MW p. 998.

1. The first point of Aries or Libra into which the sun enters at the vernal or autumnal equinox, the equinoctical point. विषुवछाया - the shadow of the