

## CHAPTER 61

### The birth of Agastya and the dialogue between Nārada and Śiva

नारद उवाच

भूर्लोकोऽथ भुवर्लोकः स्वर्लोकोऽथ महर्जनः।

तपः सत्यं च सप्तैते देवलोकाः प्रकीर्तिताः॥१॥

Nārada said— Śiva! There are named the following seven regions of the Devas, viz., Bhuḥ, Bhuvah, Svah, Manah, Janah, Tapaḥ, Satyam.

पर्यायेण तु सर्वेषामधिपत्यं कथं भवेत्।

इह लोके शुभं रूपमायुः सौभाग्यमेव च।

लक्ष्मीश्च विपुला नाथ कथं स्यात् पुरसूदन॥२॥

How may perfection be obtained in

succession over these lokās and how one may obtain in this earth prosperity, beauty, long life and blessing. Please also explain to me how they become blessed with fortune, beauty and wealth?

महेश्वर उवाच

पुरा हुताशनः सार्द्धं मारुतेन महीतले।

आदिष्टः पुरुहूतेन विनाशाय सुरद्विषाम्॥ ३॥

Śiva said— Formerly, a fearful fire was ablaze on this earth accompanied with a strong wind. The friction caused by the wind produced the fire for the destruction of the demons, at the command of Puruhūta (Indra).

निर्दग्धेषु ततस्तेन दानवेषु सहस्रशः।

तारकः कमलाक्षश्च कालदंष्ट्रः परावसुः।

विरोचनश्च संग्रामादपलायंस्तपोधन॥ ४॥

That terrific fire reduced many demons to ashes, when Tārakāsura, Kamalākṣa, Kāladanṣṭra, Parāvasu and Virocana fled from their warfare with the Devas.

अम्भः सामुद्रमाविश्य सन्निवेशमकुर्वत।

अशक्या इति तेऽप्यग्निमारुताभ्यामुपेक्षिताः॥ ५॥

They all plunged themselves into the waters of the sea and took up their abode there, where fire with the help of air could not consume them.

ततः प्रभृति ते देवान् मनुष्यान् सह जङ्गमान्।

संपीड्य च मुनीन् सर्वान् प्रविशन्ति पुनर्जलम्॥ ६॥

Afterwards, the demons began to come out of the waters and persecute the Devas, men, sages and other living beings, and disappear again into the sea.

एवं वर्षसहस्राणि वीराः पंच च सप्त च।

जलदुर्गबलाद्ब्रह्मन् पीडयन्ति जगत्त्रयम्॥ ७॥

In that way, the demons asserted their boldness for twelve thousand years and continued their campaign of persecuting the three worlds, for a period of five or seven years at a time, by taking shelter in the fortress of the

ocean.

ततः परमथो वह्निमारुतावमराधिपः।

आदिदेश चिरादम्बुनिधिरेष विशोष्यताम्॥ ८॥

Later on, Indra directed the fire and the wind to dry up the ocean in the following words : Dry up this receptacle of water quickly.

यस्मादस्मद्द्विषामेष शरणं वरुणालयः।

तस्माद्भवद्भ्यामद्यैव क्षयमेव प्रणीयताम्॥ ९॥

“Because it shelters my foes. They have taken their refuge in the home of Varuṇa. It should therefore be dried up as quick as possible.

तावूचतुस्ततः शक्रमुभौ शम्बरसूदनम्।

अधर्म एष देवेन्द्र सागरस्य विनाशनम्॥ १०॥

यस्माज्जीवनिकायस्य महतः संक्षयो भवेत्।

तस्मान्न पापमद्यावां करवावः पुरन्दर॥ ११॥

अस्य योजनमात्रेऽपि जीवकोटिशतानि च।

निवसन्ति सुरश्रेष्ठ स कथं नाशमर्हति॥ १२॥

Hearing that mandate of Indra, both fire and wind said to Him, the destroyer of Sambara— “It would be a great sin to destroy the ocean. Because innumerable beings had made it their home, and the destruction of the ocean meant their annihilation along with it, therefore, we, O Purandara, cannot do it. Lacs and lacs of beings inhabit the ocean, within the space of every yojana. It was not meet for us to annihilate them. What fault have they done to be destroyed. O chief of the Devas.”

एवमुक्तः सुरेन्द्रस्तु कोपात्संरक्तलोचनः।

उवाचेदं वचो रोषान्निर्दहन्निव पावकम्॥ १३॥

Hearing the speech of the fire and the wind, Indra became full of wrath. His eyes turned crimson red, and it appeared as if He was going to eat up both fire and wind. In his rage, he said.

न धर्माधर्मसंयोगं प्राप्नुवन्त्यमराः क्वचित्।

भवतस्तु विशेषेण माहात्म्यं चाधितिष्ठति॥ १४॥

मदाज्ञालङ्घनं यस्मान्मारुतेन समं त्वयः।

मुनिव्रतमहिंसादि परिगृह्य त्वया कृतम्।  
 धर्मार्थशास्त्ररहितं शत्रुं प्रति विभावसो॥ १५॥  
 तस्मादेकेन वपुषा मुनिरूपेण मानुषे।  
 मारुतेन समं लोके तव जन्म भविष्यति॥ १६॥  
 यदा च मानुषत्वेऽपि त्वयागस्त्येन शोषितः।  
 भविष्यत्युदधिर्वहे तदा देवत्वमाप्स्यसि॥ १७॥

“There is no question of Dharma or Adharma where Immortals are concerned, and your glory is still more high. O Agni and Vāyu! Since you have violated my injunction and have adopted the duties of the Munis not to injure any being, and since you have leaned towards the enemies who are devoid of religion and politics, losing sight of duty and Śāstra; therefore You, O fire, will now be born by assuming one body along with Maruta, among the mortals, in the form of a sage. In that form of the sage Agastya, you will dry up the ocean, after which you will again come back to your Divine form.”

इतीन्द्रशापात्पतितौ तत्क्षणात्तौ महीतले।  
 अवासावेकदेहेन कुम्भाज्जन्म तपोधन॥ १८॥  
 मित्रावरुणयोर्वीर्याद्विसिष्ठस्यानुजोऽभवत्।  
 अगस्त्य इत्युग्रतपाः सम्बभूव पुनर्मुनिः॥ १९॥

After thus being cursed by Indra, both of them fell on the earth, where they were jointly born out of the pitcher by the seeds of Mitra Varuṇī and came to be known as Agastya—the younger brother of Vasiṣṭha, and one of the most renowned ascetics.

नारद उवाच

सम्भूतः स कथं भ्राता वसिष्ठस्याभवन्मुनिः।  
 कथं च मित्रावरुणौ पितरावस्य तौ स्मृतौ।  
 जन्म कुम्भादगस्त्यस्य कथं स्यात्पुरसूदन॥ २०॥

Nārada asked Śiva how Agastya became the brother of Vasiṣṭha, and how Mitra Varuṇa became his father and how the sage Agastya was born out of the pitcher?

ईश्वर उवाच

पुरा पुराणपुरुषः कदाचिद्रथमादने।  
 भूत्वा धर्मसुतो विष्णुश्चचार विपुलं तपः॥ २१॥  
 तपसा तस्य भीतेन विघ्नार्थं प्रेषितावुभौ।  
 शक्रेण माधवानङ्गावप्सरोगणसंयुतौ॥ २२॥

Śiva said that, once upon a time Lord Viṣṇu, the son of Dharma, began to practise rigid asceticism on the summit of the Gandhamādana mountain. Indra being afraid of His austerities, sent a group of nymphs in company of the Vernal-season and Cupid to distract Him from His penances and destroy His austerities.

तदा तद्गीतवाद्येन नाङ्गरागदिना हरिः।  
 न काममाधवाभ्यां च विषयान्प्रति चुक्षुभे॥ २३॥

The Lord Hari was not in any way moved by the songs and music, gestures and tones of the Cupid and the spring, nor was his mind attracted to external objects.

तदा काममधुस्त्रीणां विषादमगमद्गणः।  
 संक्षोभाय ततस्तेषां स्वरुदेशान्नराग्रजः।  
 नारीमुत्पादयामास त्रैलोक्यजनमोहिनीम्॥ २४॥

Finding the Lord remaining firm, the agents of Indra began to shiver with fear, when the Lord, in order to further bewilder them, produced from His thigh a damsel of exquisite beauty, fascinating the dwellers of the three worlds.

संक्षुब्धास्तु तथा देवास्तौ तु देववरावुभौ।  
 अप्सरोभिः समक्षं हि देवानामब्रवीद्धरिः॥ २५॥

Seeing whom, all the Devas, along with Cupid and spring, became enamoured of her, when the Lord said to them, in the presence of the Apsarās.

अप्सरा इति सा मान्या देवानामब्रवीद्धरिः।  
 उर्वशीति च नामेयं लोके ख्यातिं गमिष्यति॥ २६॥

“This is the nymph Urvaśī, O Devas! And I have created her to become the head of all Apsarās.”

ततः कामयमानेन मित्रेणाहूय सोर्वशी।

उक्ता मां रमयस्वेति बाढमित्यब्रवीतु सा॥ २७॥

Then the God Mitra called her, and asked her to enjoy with Him, which she accepted.

गच्छन्ती चाम्बरं तद्वत्स्तोकमिन्दीवरेक्षणा।

वरुणेन धृता पश्चाद्वरुणं नाभ्यनन्दत॥ २८॥

मित्रेणाहं वृता पूर्वमद्य भार्या न ते विभो।

उवाच वरुणश्चित्तं मयि सन्नस्य गम्यताम्॥ २९॥

Afterwards, the lotus-eyed Urvaśī, while moving in the sky slowly, was caught by Varuṇa, who slowly pulled her by her cloth, at which she told Him: “Your action is not proper. Because I have accepted Mitra first, and consequently I cannot be your wife, O Varuṇa.” Varuṇa told her, “Keep me atleast in your favour and then go elsewhere.”

गतायां बाढमित्युक्त्वा मित्रः शापमदान्तादा।

तस्यै मानुषलोके त्वं गच्छ सोम सुतात्मजम्॥ ३०॥

भजस्वेति यतो वेश्याधर्म एष त्वया कृतः।

जलकुम्भे ततो वीर्यं मित्रेण वरुणेन च।

प्रक्षिप्तमथ सञ्जातौ द्ववेव मुनिसत्तमौ॥ ३१॥

She replied— “All right.” When Mitra heard this, he cursed her: “You go down to the world of the mortals and be married to the son of moon, Budha because you have followed the ways of a courtesan.” Saying that, both Varuṇa and Mitra threw their seed in a pitcher of water, out of which two sages (Agastya and Vasiṣṭha) came out.

निमिर्नाम सह स्त्रीभिः पुरा द्यूतमदीव्यत।

तत्रान्तरेऽभ्याजगाम वसिष्ठो ब्रह्मसम्भवः॥ ३२॥

तस्य पूजामकुर्वन्तं शशाप स मुनिर्नृपम्।

विदेहस्त्वं भवस्वेति ततस्तेनाप्यसौ मुनिः॥ ३३॥

Once upon a time King Nimi was playing with women the game of dice, where Vasiṣṭha, the son of Brahmā, chanced to go. At that time the king did not show his respect to the sage, at which the latter got annoyed and cursed him to

become bodyless, and the king also pronounced another curse on the sage.

अन्योन्यशापाच्च तयोर्विगते इव चेतसी।

जग्मतुः शापनाशाय ब्रह्माणं जगतः पतिम्॥ ३४॥

They both became bereft of reason, as it were, through the curse of each other, and went to Brahmā, the Lord of the Universe, to remedy the effects of the curses.

अथ ब्रह्मण आदेशाल्लोचनेष्ववसन्निभिः।

निमेषाः स्युश्च लोकानां तद्विश्रामाय नारद॥ ३५॥

वसिष्ठोऽप्यभवत्तस्मिञ्जलकुम्भे च पूर्ववत्।

ततः श्रेतश्चतुर्बाहुः साक्षसूत्रकमण्डलुः।

अगस्त्य इति शान्तात्मा बभूव ऋषिसत्तमः॥ ३६॥

With the orders of Brahmā, Nimi entered the eyes of the mankind, and this causes them to open their eyes; but when Nimi takes rest, they close their eyes; and hence this shutting and closing of the eyes is called winking or nimeṣa. Vasiṣṭha, similarly, entered that pitcher of water and was born out of it and after him the sage Agastya was born, of the same pitcher, of white colour, with four hands, sacred thread, kamaṇḍalu and garland.

मलयस्यैकदेशे तु वैखानसविधानतः।

सभार्यः संवृतो विप्रैस्तपश्चके सुदुश्चरम्॥ ३७॥

The sage Agastya went to the Malaya mountain, along with his better half and began to practise rigid austerities, surrounded with a number of other sages, according to the rules of forest-dwellers, hermits.

ततः कालेन महता तारकादतिपीडितम्।

जगद्वीक्ष्य स कोपेन पीतवान्वरुणालयम्॥ ३८॥

A long time after, the sage Agastya, seeing the world oppressed by the demon Tārakāsura, drank the ocean.

ततोऽस्य वरदाः सर्वे बभूवुः शङ्करादयः।

ब्रह्मा विष्णुश्च भगवान्वरदानाय जग्मतुः।

वरं वृणीष्व भद्रं ते यदभीष्टं च वै मुने॥ ३९॥

Then Śiva and other gods alongwith Brahmā and Viṣṇu went to grant him a boon and asked him to seek any boon he wished.

अगस्त्य उवाच

यावद्ब्रह्मसहस्राणां पंचविंशतिकोटयः।

वैमानिको भविष्यामि दक्षिणाचलवर्त्मनि॥४०॥

मद्विमानोदये कुर्याद्यः कश्चित्पूजनं मम।

स सप्तलोकाधिपतिः पर्यायेण भविष्यति॥४१॥

Agastya said— “I wish to have the privilege of moving about in the Vimānas on the Dakṣiṇācala muont, till a thousand Brahmā come and go in turn for twentyfive crores of times; and those who worship me at the time of the appearance of my plane, should be the monarchs of all the seven realms, till the time of the re-establishment of fresh sovereignty in the seven climes.”

ईश्वर उवाच

एवमस्त्विति तेऽप्युक्त्वा जग्मुर्देवा यथागतम्।

तस्मादर्घ्यः प्रदातव्यो ह्यगस्त्यस्य सदा बुधैः॥४२॥

Lord Śiva said— “It will be so;” and afterwards all the Devas went back to their respective regions. It is therefore proper for every sensible man to give a libation of water (arghya) to the sage Agastya.

नारद उवाच

कथमर्घ्यप्रदानं तु कर्तव्यं तस्य वै विभो।

विधानं यदगस्त्यस्य पूजने तद्वदस्व मे॥४३॥

Nārada said— “How should a libation of water be offered to the sage Agastya; be pleased to explain to me the ways of worshipping him.”

ईश्वर उवाच

प्रत्यूषसमये विद्वान् कुर्यादस्योदये निशि।

स्नानं शुक्लतिलैस्तद्वच्चुक्लमाल्याम्बरो गृही॥४४॥

The Lord said— The learned should get up early in the morning, with the rising of Agastya and bathe in water mixed with white sesamum and should wear garland of white flowers and

white clothes.

स्थापयेदन्नं कुम्भं माल्यवस्त्रविभूषितम्।

पंचरत्नसमायुक्तं घृतपात्रसमन्वितम्॥४५॥

And then a good pitcher, free from perforations, should be placed, after decorating it with flowers, clothes, and filled in with Pañcaratna<sup>1</sup> and having a pot, full of clarified butter, put on top of it.

अङ्गुष्ठमात्रं पुरुषं तथैव

सौवर्णमेवायतबाहुदण्डम्।

चतुर्मुखं कुम्भमुखे निधाय

धान्यानि सप्ताम्बरसंयुतानि॥४६॥

Afterwards, a golden image, of the size of a thumb, with extensive arms and four heads, should be made and placed on top of the pitcher; and then, after filling it in with sapta-dhānya<sup>2</sup> and decorating with cloth.

सकांस्यपात्राक्षतशुक्तियुक्तं

मन्त्रेण दद्याद्विजपुङ्गवाय।

उत्क्षिप्य लम्बोदरदीर्घबाहु-

मनन्यचेता यमदिङ्मुखः सन्॥४७॥

It should be given away to a Brāhmaṇa, along with a vessel of bell metal, rice, shell and then the image of gold should be given away in charity, with the devotee's face turned towards the south.

श्रेतां च दद्याद्यदि शक्तिरस्ति

रौप्यैः खुरैर्हेममुखीं सवत्साम्।

धेनुं नरः क्षीरवतीं प्रणम्य

सवत्सघण्टाभरणां द्विजाय॥४८॥

The devotee, if he can afford it, should give away a milch cow, along with her calf, after getting her hoofs covered with silver, and horns covered with gold and wearing a bell round her neck, to a Brāhmaṇa.

1. Lit. five gems.

2. Seven grains.