

CHAPTER 7

Contest between Viṣṇu and
Brahmā, victory of the former

ईश्वर उवाच

वत्सकाः स्वस्ति वः कच्चिद्वर्तते मम शासनात्।
जगच्च देवतावंशः स्वस्वकर्मणि किं न वा॥ १॥
प्रागेव विदितं युद्धं ब्रह्मविष्ण्वोर्मया सुराः।
भवतामभितापेन पौनरुक्तेन भाषितम्॥ २॥

Īśvara (Śiva) said, “O Sons, who always obey my command. Do you enjoy the pleasure always? Are all the gods and the creatures of the world engaged in this respective assignments? I have already learnt about the news relating to the fight between Brahmā and Viṣṇu, observing your pain, it appears to have been repeated.”

इति सस्मितया माध्व्या कुमारपरिभाषया।
समतोषयदम्बायाः स पतिस्तत्सुरव्रजम्॥ ३॥

Thus O Sanatkumāra, speaking such sweet words, Śiva, the lord of Pārvatī pleased the crowd of gods.

अथ युद्धाङ्गणं गन्तुं हरिश्चात्रोरधीश्वरः।
आज्ञापयद्गणेशानां शतं तत्रैव संसदि॥ ४॥

Then lord Śiva, commanded a hundred of his *gaṇas* to move to the place where Brahmā and Viṣṇu were fighting.

ततो वाद्यं बहुविधं प्रयाणाय परेशितुः।
गणेश्वराश्च सन्नद्धा नानावाहनभूषणाः॥ ५॥

Thereafter, at the time of the departure of Śiva, several types of large Kattle drums were sounded. The Gaṇeśvaras, having been adorned with all the ornaments, and mounted over the different types of vehicles, got ready to depart.

प्रणवाकारमाद्यन्तं पञ्चमण्डलमण्डितम्।
आरुरोह रथं भद्रमम्बिकापतिरीश्वरः।
ससूनुगणमिन्द्राद्याः सर्वेऽप्यनुययुः सुराः॥ ६॥

Then lord Śiva, and his spouse of Pārvatī, mounted over the chariot named Bhadra-ratha, decorated with *pañcamāṇḍala*. His son Gaṇeśa and other *gaṇas* also went along with him, in addition to Indra and other gods.

चित्रध्वजव्यजनचामरपुष्पवर्ष-

सङ्गीतनृत्यनिवहैरपि वाद्यवर्गैः।

सम्मानितः पशुपतिः परया च देव्या

साकं तयोः समरभूमिमगात्ससैन्यः॥७॥

Various types of flag and banners, of different colours, the fans, flywhisks, rain of flowers, music and dance accompanied with various types of musical instruments, both Śiva and Pārvatī went to the place where Brahmā and Viṣṇu had been engaged in a fight, together with army.

समीक्ष्य तु तयोर्युद्धं निगूढोऽभ्रं समास्थितः।

समाप्तवाद्यनिर्घोषः शान्तेरुगणनिःस्वनः॥८॥

Finding them engaged in fight, Śiva halted concealing himself with Pārvatī and the army. The playing of the music was stopped together with the movement of the army.

अथ ब्रह्माच्युतौ वीरौ हनुकामौ परस्परम्।

माहेश्वरेण चास्त्रेण तथा पाशुपतेन च॥९॥

At that point of time both Brahmā and Viṣṇu, in order to kill each other, were using Maheśvara and Pāśupata weapons.

अस्त्रज्वालैरथो दग्धं ब्रह्मविष्णवोर्जगत्त्रयम्।

ईशोऽपि तं निरीक्ष्याथ ह्यकालप्रलयं भृशम्॥१०॥

Thereafter with the flames of the weapons shot by Brahmā and Viṣṇu, for killing each other all the three worlds started burning. Śiva also observed the destruction which was the cause of great misfortune, and untimely dissolution of the earth.

महानलस्तम्भविभीषणाकृति-

र्बभूव तन्मध्यतले स निष्कलः॥११॥

He appeared himself in between them as the form of a horrible burning column, of the absolute Brahman.

ते अस्त्रे चापि सज्वाले लोकसंहरणक्षमे।

निपेततुः क्षणेनैव ह्याविर्भूते महानले॥१२॥

The weapons which were competent enough to destroy the entire universe, fell in the column of fire produced by Śiva and were destroyed in a moment and reduced to ashes.

दृष्ट्वा तदद्भुतं चित्रमस्त्रशान्तिकरं शुभम्।

किमेतदद्भुताकारमित्यूचुश्च परस्परम्॥१३॥

Observing the astonishing and benevolent event of the destruction of the weapons, all the gods whispered among themselves, “what is this with an astonishing form?

अतीन्द्रियमिदं स्तम्भमनिरूपं किमुत्थितम्।

अस्योर्ध्वमपि चाधश्च आवयोर्लक्ष्यमेव हि॥१४॥

(Then Brahmā and Viṣṇu said,) “What is this pillar like formation resembling the fire flames, which has been raised above? What is there at its top and the bottom. Both of us should find out the same.”

इति व्यवस्थितौ वीरौ मिलितौ वीरमानिनौ।

तत्परौ तत्परीक्षार्थं प्रतस्थतेऽथ सत्वरम्॥१५॥

Thus speaking both of them thinking themselves to be extremely valorous, engaged themselves to find the truth about the same.

आवयोर्मिश्रयोस्तत्र कार्यमेकं न सम्भवेत्।

इत्युक्त्वा सूकरतनुर्विष्णुस्तस्यादिमीयिवान्॥१६॥

“In case both of us go together, it would not be possible to establish this gigantic task.” Thus thinking Viṣṇu taking to the form of a boar went downwards towards the root.

तथा ब्रह्मा हंसतनुस्तदन्तं वीक्षितुं ययौ।

भित्त्वा पातालनिलयं गत्वा दूरतरं हरिः॥१७॥

Then Brahmā, taking to them form of a swan, flew up towards the sky in order to

measure its height. Lord Viṣṇu piercing through the *Pātāla* (nether world) went too far.

नापश्यत्तस्य संस्थानं स्तम्भस्यानलवर्चसः।

श्रान्तः स सूकरहरिः प्राप पूर्वं रणाङ्गणम्॥ १८॥

When Viṣṇu in the form of a boar could not reach the bottom of the column of fire, then he felt tired and returned to the battle ground.

अथ गच्छंस्तु व्योम्ना च विधिस्तात पिता तव।

ददर्श केतकीपुष्पं किञ्चिद्वितच्युतमद्भुतम्॥ १९॥

O Vedavyāsa, Brahmā, your father, while flying in the sky found the *ketakī* flower falling.

अतिसौरभ्यमप्लानं बहुवर्षच्युतं तथा।

अन्वीक्ष्य च तयोः कृत्यं भगवान् परमेश्वरः॥ २०॥

The *Ketakī* flower had been separated from its stem long time back, still it had enough of fragrance and had not been faded out. Lord Śiva found that both of them had been unsuccessful in their respective efforts.

परिहासं तु कृतवान् कम्पनाच्चलितं शिरः।

तस्मात्तानुगृह्णातुं च्युतं केतकमुत्तमम्॥ २१॥

He laughed at them, as a result of which his head started shaking. Thereafter the extending of grace over him, the *Ketakī* flower fell down.

किं त्वं पतसि पुष्पेश! पुष्पराट् केन वै धृतः।

आदिमस्याग्रमेयस्य स्तम्भमध्याच्च्युतिश्चिरम्॥ २२॥

Brahmā said, “O King of the flowers, why are you falling? Who had held you?” Then the flower said, “I had fallen long back, before the creation, this pillar appeared without any authority, I was lodged in the middle of it and reached here.

न सम्पश्यामि तस्मात्त्वं जह्याशामन्तदर्शने।

अस्यान्तस्य च सेवार्थं हंसमूर्तिरिहागतः॥ २३॥

Till date, I have not been able to locate the beginning or the end of it. You also give up this hope.” Then Brahmā said, “I have also arrived here taking to the form of a swan to know about the same.

इतः परं सखे मेऽद्य त्वया कर्तव्यमीप्सितम्।

मया सह त्वया वाच्यमेतद्विष्णोश्च सन्निधौ॥ २४॥

स्तम्भातो वीक्षितो धात्रा तत्र साक्ष्यहमच्युत।

इत्युक्त्वा केतकं तत्र प्रणनाम पुनः पुनः।

असत्यमपि शस्त्रं स्यादापदीत्यनुशासनम्॥ २५॥

O Friend, you accomplish my task. You get alongwith me and speak to Viṣṇu accordingly, “that Brahmā had found the end of this column. You say that you are my witness.” Thus speaking, Brahmā, offered his salutation to the *ketakī* flower again and again, because it is not a sin to speak untruth at the time of misfortune. This has been propounded by the *sāstras*.

समीक्ष्य तत्राच्युतमायतश्रमं

प्रणष्टहर्षं तु ननर्त हर्षात्।

उवाच चैनं परमार्थमच्युतं

षण्ढात्तवादः स विधिस्ततोऽच्युतम्॥ २६॥

When Brahmā found Viṣṇu having been exhausted, and with a disturbed mind then he started dancing in delight. Talking like a eunuch, Brahmā said to Viṣṇu.

स्तम्भाग्रमेतत्समुदीक्षितं हरे

तत्रैव साक्षी ननु केतकं त्विदम्।

ततोऽवदत् तत्र हि केतकं मृषा

तथेति तद्धातृवचस्तदन्तिके।

हरिश्च तत्सत्यमितीव चिन्तयं-

श्रकार तस्मै विधये नमः स्वयम्॥ २७॥

षोडशैरुपचारैश्च पूजयामास तं विधिम्॥ २८॥

“O Hari, I have seen the top of this pillar and this flower is my witness for the same.” At the instance of Brahmā the *ketakī* flower

made a false statement before him. Taking the words of Brahmā to be true, Viṣṇu offered his salutation to the form and adored him in sixteen ways.

विधिं प्रहर्तुं शठमग्नलिङ्गतः

स ईश्वरस्तत्र बभूव साकृतिः।

समुत्थितः स्वामिविलोकनात् पुनः

प्रकम्पपाणिः परिगृह्य तत्पदम्॥ २९॥

But Śiva appeared suddenly from the pillar in order to punish Brahmā. Brahmā Viṣṇu touched his feet with his shaking hands.

आद्यन्तहीनवपुषि त्वयि मोहबुद्ध्या

भूयान्विमर्श इह नावति कामनोत्थः।

स त्वं प्रसीद करुणाकर! कश्मलं नौ

मृष्टं क्षमस्व विहितं भवतैव केल्या॥ ३०॥

He said, “You have a body without a beginning or the end. Because of his ignorance, a person is unable to find you in spite of much efforts. O Compassionate one, you be pleased with me. By an audience with you, all my sins have been washed out. You kindly forgive me. You have done all this quite playfully.

ईश्वर उवाच

वत्स! प्रसन्नोऽस्मि हरे! यतस्त्व-

मीशत्वमिच्छन्नपि सत्यवाक्यम्।

ब्रूयास्ततस्ते भविता जनेषु

साम्यं मया सत्कृतिरप्यलब्धाः॥ ३१॥

Īśvara said, “O Son Viṣṇu, I am pleased with you, because you have spoken the truth becoming desirous of achieving the form of Īśvara. Therefore you would achieve divinity in the world and will also earn my grace.

इतः परं ते पृथगात्मनश्च

क्षेत्रप्रतिष्ठोत्सवपूजनं च॥ ३२॥

From today onwards your images shall be adored in the different parts with festivities.

इति देवः पुरा प्रीतः सत्येन हरये परम्।

ददौ स्वसाम्यमत्यर्थं देवसङ्गे च पश्यति॥ ३३॥

Lord Śiva was pleased with Viṣṇu because of his truthful conduct and in full view of all the gods he bestowed on him, equality with himself.

इति श्रीशिवमहापुराणे प्रथमायां विद्येश्वरसंहितायामनल-

स्तम्भाविष्कारवर्णनं नाम सप्तमोऽध्यायः॥ ७॥
