

## CHAPTER TEN

*Śiva Swallows the Poison*

*The sages said:*

1. O holy Sir, you said that the Cosmic Egg including the mobile and immobile beings was entirely reduced to ash by the fire of Kālakūṭa on account of the wrath of Rudra.

2-4. But, we consider Rudra to be within the Cosmic Egg. Then the mobile and immobile beings with Brahmā and Viṣṇu as leaders were destroyed and reduced to ash through the wrath of Rudra. How was creation resumed and made to function? Wherefrom did Brahmā, Viṣṇu and other Suras and Asuras with the Moon at their head (originate again)? Where did they get merged? Where were they reduced to ash? What happened after that? It behoves you to recount everything.

5. By the grace of Vyāsa you know everything. No one else knows it. Hence you understand the holy scripture full of knowledge as no one else does.

6. Asked thus by all those sages of sanctified souls, Sūta bowed down to Vyāsa and spoke these words:

*Lomaśa said:*

7. When Devas beginning with Hari and Brahmā, stationed in the middle of the Cosmic Egg, as well as the guardians of the worlds including Indra were enveloped by the fire of poison, Śambhu was informed by the noble-souled Heramba (Gaṇeśa):

*Heramba said:*

8-9. O Rudra, O Mahādeva, O Sthāṇu, the lord of the universe, an obstacle very difficult to be surmounted has been created for them by me by way of amusement.<sup>1</sup> There are persons who start an enterprise, but either because of their fear or through the delusion of their minds, they do not worship you or me. The distress unto them will be very great.

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1. The destruction of the universe by Kālakūṭa is a 'diversion' (*vinoda*) to god Gaṇeśa, because people do not worship him and Śiva through delusion.

10-11. On being requested thus by the over-lord of Gaṇas, who dispels obstacles like the sun dispelling darkness, the Pināka-bearing Lord with a bull for his emblem, the Lord Nīllohita with matted hair, the lord devoid of ailments, the lord in the form of *Liṅga*, the unsullied lord without form or features, the sky-haired lord Śiva, Śaṁbhū spoke thus :

*Maheśvara said*<sup>1</sup> :

12-14. O Heramba, listen to my words with great faith and attention. This universe consisting of the mobile and immobile beings is of the form of *Ahaṁkāra* (Cosmic Ego). This *Ahaṁkāra* creates, sustains and destroys. At the beginning of the universe, O Gaṇapati, *Vijñapti* (Intelligence, Consciousness) alone (remained). It was devoid of *Māyā*. It was quiescent and of the form of *Dvaita* and *Advaita* (duality and non-duality). It was in the form of intelligence alone characterized by existence and eternal bliss.

*Gaṇapati said* :

15. If you are the sole Ātman, characterized by supreme bliss, O Scorcher of foes, then there is nothing other than you.

16. Then how did the different forms originate, differentiated as Suras and Asuras? It is of variegated form observed by the three Devas. It is the cause of delusion.

17. The cycle of worldly existence originated as different from *Nitya* (eternal) and *Anitya* (transient). It consists of four types or species of living beings endowed with many distinctive features etc.

18. People are deluded by various doctrines and tenets of knowledge antagonistic to one another. Some are devoted to the doctrine of *Karman*. Some resort to their (intrinsic) qualities.

19. A few are adherents of the path of knowledge but they are opposed to one another.

O Bull-bannered Lord, thus I have been overwhelmed by doubts. Save me (by dispelling the doubt).

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1. One wonders whether this was the proper occasion for expounding the *Dvaitādvaita* philosophy when the entire universe was being burnt down by Kālakūṭa.

20. Where do I and the Gaṇas belong to? Whence is this bull, O Lord? From where are these and many others born? Where (do they go)?

21. Whence are all these exceedingly fortunate ones made into *Sāttvikas*, *Rājāsas* etc.?

Lord Śāmbhu laughed and began to speak to Gaṇeśa:

*Maheśvara said:*

22. *Rajas*, *Sattva* and *Tamas* are produced by *Kālaśakti* (Power of Time). The entire universe including Devas, Asuras and human beings is enveloped by them.

23. This (world) that is being seen is imperishable ultimately, but, understand that as an evolved effect it is perishable. It is evolved by means of all *Siddhis*.

*Lomaśa said:*

24-25. While Sadāśiva of Cosmic Form and in the form of the Liṅga was conversing with Gaṇeśa, His Power (*Śakti* called Śiva), the source of the universe of the nature of cause and effect was born of Sadāśiva. At the same instant, the Lord in the form of the *Liṅga* became submerged.

26. The single supreme *Śakti*, characterized as the *Ātman* of *Brahmavidyā* abided (there). Overwhelmed by wonder, Gaṇeśa became engrossed in looking (at that form).

*The sages asked:*

27. If this entire universe consisting of the mobile and immobile beings is included within *Prakṛti*, how is it then that Gaṇeśa was able to preserve his separate entity? Let this be explained.

*Lomaśa replied:*

28. Lord Gaṇeśa was directly born of *Prakṛti* herself.<sup>1</sup> Gaṇeśvara has the same form as that of Śiva himself.

29-30. A battle ensued between Śiva and that noble-souled one who had been *Prākṛta* (born of *Prakṛti*) due to ignorance. That battle continued without a break for a long time.

1. VV 28-38. This is another version how Gaṇeśa became elephant-headed and why he is called 'the king of obstacles and difficulties.'

On observing that he was invincible as long as he was riding an elephant, Śaṁbhu hit him with his trident and toppled him down along with the elephant.

31. Then Mahādeva the scorcher of enemies, was eulogized by the Supreme Power (*Prakṛti*). The lord then said to the great *Śakti*, “O splendid lady, choose your boon.”

32-33. Then an excellent boon was chosen from Mahādeva: “O lord, he who was killed by you was undoubtedly my son. Being born of a part of *Prakṛti*, he is deluded. Hence he does not know you. In order to gratify me, resuscitate this son of mine.”

34. Lord Rudra laughed loudly and revived the son of *Māyā*. He fixed the head of an elephant to his body.

35. Thus the elephant-faced lord was born by the grace of Śaṅkara. Although he was the son of *Māyā*, he was free from the clutches of *Māyā* and became endowed with (spiritual) knowledge.

36. He was perpetually contented with the nectar of the knowledge of *Ātman*. He was free from ailments. Sitting in deep meditation, he became very fierce and then destroyed Kāla (god of death) of black complexion.

37. He pulled out his own huge tooth for the sake of *Yogadaṇḍa*<sup>1</sup> (the mystic wand of Yogic practice) and held it in his hand. He was the presiding deity of the Gaṇas. He surpasses the *Śabdabrahman* (the Vedas or the supreme spiritual knowledge expressed in words). Though accompanied by both *Ṛddhi* and *Siddhi*, he shines in his aloneness.

38. The groups of Gaṇas and *Vighnas* (obstacles) and many others superior to these—whatever there was on the earth, he became the lord thereof. He was made so by Śaṁbhu then.

39. Hence he was able to see *Prakṛti* which has the Cosmic form. He remained separate and was able to realize the *Liṅga* as well as the *Prakṛti*. He saw the pure *Liṅga* naturally abiding in the *Prakṛti*.

40. Herāmba who was equipped with perfect knowledge

1. In BdP Paraśurāma is said to have cut down one of Gaṇeśa's tusks with his axe (II.iii.41.2-4). Here it is self-extraction of the tusk by Gaṇeśa himself.

saw himself along with the Gaṇas as well as the three worlds entirely merged in the *Liṅga*.

41. Though he was endowed with perfect knowledge, he lost his consciousness. He regained it with very great effort. The lord of the Gaṇas bowed down his head to those two supreme powers.

42. Then he saw there itself Brahmā, Rudra, Viṣṇu and Sadāśiva in the form of the annihilator of the worlds.

43-45. He saw some beings resembling ghosts. They were the *Liṅgaśaktis*. He saw crores of spherical Cosmic Eggs like so many atoms. They were getting merged and dissolved in Maheśa who was in the form of a *Liṅga*.

The *Liṅga* was inside the *Prakṛti* and the *Prakṛti* was within the *Liṅga*. The whole of the *Liṅga* was seen covered by *Śakti*. The *Śakti* was covered by the *Liṅga*. Thus the two encompassed each other.<sup>1</sup>

46. The whole world consisting of the mobile and immobile beings stayed supported by both Śivas (i.e. Śiva and Śakti). Only Gaṇeśa and none else, though great, had that knowledge.

47. The presiding deity of the Gaṇas (Lord Gaṇeśa), of great splendour, accompanied by the Gaṇas eulogized with great strength, the Lord accompanied by Śakti.

#### *Ganeśa prayed:*

48. I bow down to the god accompanied by His Śakti (Power)—the Lord who is the embodiment of knowledge, who is kindly disposed (but) beyond the ken of knowledge and of the form of supreme Light, who transcends forms, is the Supreme Reality incarnate, who is beyond the principles (categories of Sāṅkhyas), supremely auspicious, who is called Bliss undivided and uncontaminated by sorrow.

49-50. The fire in (a ball of) iron is beyond smoke (smokeless), but it appears as though filled with smoke. You who are the source of knowledge, appear to be within *Prakṛti*. You who are present within the *Prakṛti* by *Māyā*, are spoken of as manifested.

You whose nature is such, O lord, create, annihilate and protect the universe by your *Māyā*. On account of this

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1. This peculiar mutual relation between Śiva and Śakti shows the influence of Trika Śaivism of Kashmir.