

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

*The Glory of Amṛtavāpī<sup>1</sup>: Salvation of Agastya's Brother**Śrī Sūta said:*

1. After taking the holy bath in the great Tīrtha and getting rid of the sins, one should go to the holy spot named Ekāntarāmanātha.

2-3. There, O Brāhmaṇa, Rāma, the lord of the worlds, is always present along with Jānakī, Lakṣmaṇa and the monkeys, the chief of whom is Hanumān. He is present there with a desire to bless the worlds. There is a tank there named Amṛtavāpikā which bestows merits.

4-6a. Men who take their holy plunge there need not be afraid of old age or death. The man who faithfully takes his holy bath in this Amṛtavāpī attains immortality, due to the favour of Śaṅkara.

On its banks Hara is always present in order to grant immortality to those who take their holy bath in this tank that destroys great sins.

*The sages said:*

6b-7. For what reason is this called Amṛtavāpī? O disciple of Vyāsa, kindly tell this to us. So also state the glory of this tank named Amṛta. We who regularly drink the nectar of your words are not satiated.

*Śrī Sūta said:*

8-12. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, I shall particularly describe (the origin of) the name *Amṛta* given to this tank and its fascinating glory. Listen.

Formerly the brother of the Pot-born Sage (Agastya) lived and performed his penance on the sides of Himavān which is full of sages of various classes. It is resorted to by Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Gandharvas, Devas and Kinnaras. It is infested by various beasts of prey and wild animals such as lion, tiger, boar, elephant and buffalo. It abounded in trees like Tamāla, Tāla, Hintāla, Campaka

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1. This Tīrtha is inside Ekānta Rāmar Temple. It is called here Ekāntarāmanātha and the story connected with Rāma is told to explain its derivation in vv 46-53.

and Aśoka. It is rendered beautiful by swans, cuckoos, gallinules, ruddy geese and other birds. It is surrounded by lakes full of lotuses, blue lotuses, red lotuses and lilies.

The sage was truthful and of good conduct. He was eloquent and had control over his senses and passions.

13-19a. He sought salvation. He was a devotee of Śaṅkara. With roots, fruits, etc. available in the forest, he worshipped Śaṁbhu three times everyday. With sylvan foodstuffs, he honoured guests who came to his hermitage. He performed *Sandhyā* and worshipped the sacred fire. At the proper times he repeated Gāyatrī and other great Mantras with great joy. He used to get up from his sleep in the Brāhma Muhūrta. He meditated upon Viṣṇu. He used to take the holy bath early in the morning. With a delighted mind he bowed down to the *Sandhyās*. O Brāhmaṇas, he repeated Gāyatrī and worshipped both Hari and Śaṅkara. He studied the Vedas regularly. He read the scriptures regularly. He honoured guests during midday. He regularly listened to the Purāṇas. He was active and very scrupulous with regard to the sacred rites in the fires. Everyday he performed the five Yajñas. He used to offer the Vaiśvadeva oblations. O Brāhmaṇas, every year he performed Śrāddhas to his parents and other Śrāddhas as well. Thus he spent his time regularly engaged in his daily routine of duties.

19b-22. Thousand years passed off thus as he performed the excellent penance with the mind attached to Śaṅkara. Still Śaṅkara did not appear before him. Therefore, the brother of Agastya performed a more terrible penance. During summer he stayed within five fires with his eyes fixed on the Sun. He observed the vow of silence. He stood motionless on the small toe of his left leg. He kept his hands lifted up. He had no prop as he performed the severe penance.

23-24. Mahādeva, the storehouse of mercy, became pleased with him then and appeared before him illuminating the ten directions by means of his own refulgence. Then the sage saw Śaṁbhu, Sāmba (accompanied by Arbā, the goddess) seated on his Bull. On seeing the lord of Bhavānī, the sage bowed to him and eulogized him.

*The sage said:*

25-29. Obeisance to you, O lord of Pārvatī, O blue-throated great lord, O Śiva, O Rudra, O Mahādeva, O lord, obeisance to

you, to Śāmbhu. O Śrīkaṅṭha, O lord of Umā, O trident-bearing lord, O destroyer of the eyes of Bhaga, O immutable one, O holder of Gaṅgā, O lord of unequal (i.e. three) eyes, obeisance to you, O Rudra, O Manyu. O enemy of Yama, O enemy of god of Love, O lord of the Devas, O lord of the universe, O master, O lord of Paśus (individual souls), obeisance to you, O Śarva of a hundred bows. Obeisance to the destroyer of Dakṣa's Yajña, to the lord of sinews\* (*snāyūnām? pataye*). Obeisance to you, *Niceru* (the gliding one); obeisance to the lord of the nourished ones. Again and again, obeisance to you, O Mahādeva, O ocean of mercifulness. O three-eyed one, enable me to cross the ocean of worldly existence.

30. Eulogized thus by the brother of Agastya, Śāmbhu delighted the sage, the younger brother of the Pot-born One (Agastya), by means of his words and spoke thus:

*Īśvara said:*

31-33. O younger brother of the Pot-born Sage, O sinless one, I shall tell you the means of salvation. In the middle of the Setu on the Gandhamādana mountain, not far from the Tīrtha named Maṅgala, there is a great Tīrtha. Go there and take your holy bath. Thereby you will attain salvation. There is no other easy means for you to obtain salvation than resorting to that Tīrtha. It is impossible for me to recount the excellence of that Tīrtha.

34. No doubt should be entertained by you in this matter, O excellent sage. Hence do go there, if you wish for the destruction of worldly existence.

35-36. After saying this, Lord Īśa vanished there itself. Then at the instance of the lord, the brother of Agastya went to Setu on the Gandhamādana mountain in the sea. He soon reached the Tīrtha spoken by Īśvara.

37-40. There is that highly meritorious Tīrtha which bestows salvation on those who take their bath therein, and which is a splendid ornament to the holy spot named Ekāntarāmanātha. That

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\* Probably a misprint for '*Dasyūnām*', for '*Dasyūnām pati*' is Rudra's epithet in *Rudrādhyāva*.

Brāhmaṇa duly took his holy bath for three years. In the fourth year the great sage entered into transcendent meditation. By means of Yogic power he directed the vital breath in the Brahma-nāḍī on the head. Then he made the vital breath come out through the *Brahmarandhra* (the aperture on the crown of the head). Then the younger brother of Agastya abandoned his body and attained the greatest salvation due to the power of that Tīrtha.

41-43. Agastya's younger brother got rid of all his miseries due to the power of the holy bath in that Tīrtha. Since he attained *Amṛtatva* (immortality), O eminent sages, this tank became famous by the name Amṛtavāpī. Men who regularly take their holy bath in this Tīrtha for three years will certainly attain immortality. Thus, O Brāhmaṇas, the reason for being famous by the name Amṛtavāpī as well as its power have been narrated by me to you. What more do you wish to hear?

*The sages said:*

44-45. O sage, how did that holy spot get the name *Ekāntarāmanātha*? O Sūta, it behoves you to recount this. O tiger among sages, our desire to hear about it is very intense.

*Śrī Sūta said:*

46-48. Formerly when the Setu was being built in the middle of the sea, Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, was mentally thinking about Sītā. With Sugrīva, Vibhīṣaṇa, his brother Lakṣmaṇa and Hanumān who was an expert in secret counselling, Rāma was taking counsel regarding the means of killing Rāvaṇa and others. At that time the sea rumbled much with the waves moving about up and down.

49. When the loud rumbling sound of the sea rose up in a terrific manner, they could not hear the words uttered by them to one another.

50-55. Thereupon, Rāma became a bit furious. He knitted his eyebrows and glanced at the sea furiously. Rāma brought the sea under control and continued his counsel with the others, O eminent Brāhmaṇas, for planning an attack on Rākṣasas and their slaying.

Since Rāghava took counsel with them in a lonely, quiet spot, O Brāhmaṇas, that holy spot came to be known by the name *Ekāntarāmanātha*.

The sea restrained by the graceful knitting of the eyebrows of

Rāma is seen even today in that area with still water.

This is the excellent holy spot named Ekāntarāmanātha. Those who come here, take their holy bath in Amṛtavāpī with due observances and serve Rāma and others shall attain salvation.

O great Brāhmaṇas, by taking the holy bath here those who are devoid of discrimination (of right and wrong) and knowledge of non-duality, those who have no detachment, those without (performance of) meditation and those who have never performed sacrifices attain immortality.