

CHAPTER TWENTY

Creation of the Moon

Īsvara said:

1-5. Henceforth, the order of the lineage of Daityas is being described again. Hiranyakaśipu shone as the king for one hundred seven million two hundred eighty thousand years. He was the emperor of the three worlds.

During the Aśvamedha of Kaśyapa, the Atirātra sacrifice was performed. On the *Sautya* day (day when Soma juice is extracted) thereof, a golden throne was assigned to the Hotṛ. A deep pit occurred there. Hiranyakaśipu sat there.

He performed a very severe penance for a hundred thousand years. Formerly he had stayed in the womb of Diti for ten thousand years.

6-9. An old verse has been sung about Hiranyakaśipu by Daityas: "The Suras along with the sages used to pay respect to that direction which Hiranyakaśipu, the king, looked at."

After his term was over, Bali became the king for ten million three hundred sixty thousand years. While Bali continued to be the king, Prahlāda was held as hostage by the Suras. Indra and other famous (Suras) killed the Asuras with their valour.

10-12. The rule of the Daityas continued thus for ten Yugas without any enemy. Then for eighteen Yugas, the entire region of the three worlds was protected carefully by Mahendra. In the tenth Tretā Yuga, Kārtavīrya¹ was the extremely powerful king for eighty-five thousand years. He was an emperor in possession of seven gems.

13. During his reign that king used to go round in all the seven *Dvīpas* (continents) armed with a sword, shield and bow in his chariot, accompanied by his followers. By his Yogic power he used to detect thieves.

14-15. If he is remembered, men will never lose their wealth. After the lapse of a quartet of Yugas (Caturyuga) the eleventh Manu became the Lord. Half the period of his reign elapsed

1. It is surprising that Kārtavīrya, a disciple of Datta, is regarded as a Daitya. He is a seer of Mantras (Nārada Purāṇa). He belonged to Haihaya dynasty. His greatness is described in Mbh, *Śānti* 49.

and Dvāpara Yuga ensued. Mada was the son of Nariṣyanta, the son of Manu.

16. His ninth successor was remembered as Tṛṇabindu. He became the king at the beginning of the third Tretāyuga.

17. His daughter Ilavilā was unrivalled in beauty. The saintly king gave his daughter to Pulastya.

18-20. Sage Viśravas was born of her and he is known as Ailavila too. He had four wives and they were ornaments to the family of Pulastya: Bṛhaspati's splendid daughter named Vedavarṇinī, the two daughters of Mālyavān named Puṣpotkaṭā and Bikā and Kekasī, the daughter of Mālin. O goddess, listen to her progeny. The lady of excellent complexion gave birth to the eldest son of Viśravas.

21-22. The boy had eight teeth and three feet like those of a dog. He had green moustache and pike-like ears. His hands were small. He was tawny in complexion but had pure ornaments. His body was huge and the head was large with a great chin. She saw the son so very ugly as this (and felt sad).

23-24. On seeing him, she said to herself: "This is Kubera". The word Ku is used to denote contempt. Bera means the body. He was named Kubera because of his ugly body. His wife was Vṛddhi and son Nalakūbera.

25-26. Kaikasī (Kekasī is an alternate form) gave birth to Rāvaṇa who later became Lord of Rākṣasas. His ears were like pike. He was tawny in colour with red hairs. He had ten heads, eight feet and twenty arms. He was very powerful with a huge body. He had complexion resembling black collyrium. He had curved fangs and his eyes were red.

27. He was endowed with the vigour of Rākṣasas. He was naturally terrible in features and strength. He was cruel. He was remembered as Rāvaṇa because his cry was shrill.

28. He was King Hiraṇyakaśipu in his previous birth. He was a king for fourteen Yugas as a Rākṣasa.

29-31. O my beloved, in terms of years, the time extended to five crore sixty-one lakh sixty thousand years. During this period, Rāvaṇa terrified Devas and the sages and made them sleepless. Rāvaṇa's penance (i.e. power of penance) dwindled and in the twenty-fourth Tretā Yuga, he met with his death along with his followers at the hands of Rāma, the son of Daśaratha.

32-36. O goddess, this same ten-headed Rāvaṇa, a suppressor of enemies; was reborn as son of the saintly king Damaghoṣa. His manliness was well-known. He was born of Śrūtaśravā as Śīsupāla and became king of Cedi (modern Bundelkhand, Madhya Pradesh). Kaikasī gave birth to four children, viz. Rāvaṇa, Kumbhakarṇa, Vibhīṣaṇa and Śūrpaṅakhā.

Puṣpotkaṭā's children were Manohara, Prahasta, Mahāpārśva, Khara (four sons) and one daughter Kumbhīnasī. Triśiras, Dūṣaṇa, Rākṣasa Vidyujjihva and a daughter named Śyāmikā are remembered as the children of Bikā. Thus in the family of Pulastya nine Rākṣasas were of ruthless activities. Vibhīṣaṇa, an extremely pure soul, is glorified as the tenth.

37. The children of Pulaha were all the deer, all tigers with curved fangs, Bhūtas, Piśācas, serpents, boars and elephants.

38. It is remembered that Kratu was issueless in this Vaivasvata Manvantara. Atri had ten wives. All of them were beautiful and chaste.

39. The ten celestial damsels ending with Ghṛtācī were born of Bhadrāśva.

40-41. O great goddess, Prabhākara is well-known as the husband of these ten: Bhadrā, Sūdrā, Madrā, Naladā, Jaladā, Urnā, Pūrṇā, Gopucchālā, Tāmarasā and Raktakoṣikā the tenth.

42-44. When Sūrya was struck down by Svarbhānu (i.e. Rāhu) and the Lord fell to the ground from heaven, the whole world was assailed (enveloped) with darkness. At that time the Brāhmaṇical sage said: "Hail unto you". Divākara (the Sun god) who was about to fall did not fall. Hence the sage was called Prabhākara because he caused light to function. The great sages called him so. Lord Prabhākara begot of Bhadrā the reputed son Soma.

45. The refulgent Lord Soma was a son unto Dharma. His rays are cool. He was born of Kṛttikās. He is cause of night (Niśācaraḥ).¹

46. O goddess, Atri held the Lord of all the worlds in his eyes and stationed himself thus. In this way the holy sage Atri became the father of Soma.

47. Mentally, verbally and physically, whatever he performed was only auspicious.

1. The reading is Niśācaraḥ - one who moves at night.

In the course of his penance the highly lustrous sage remained motionless like a wooden piece or a wall or a rock. He kept his arms raised up.

48. The penance performed by him formerly was very severe and great. O beautiful goddess, he performed that penance for three thousand years according to the reckoning of Devas.

49. O auspicious lady, the highly intelligent one remained winkless thus. He had sublimated his sexual energy. His body attained the state of Soma (Moon).

50. As his body attained the status of Soma, the Moon rose up and the Soma juice flowed out of his eyes illuminating the ten directions.

51. The ten delighted directions duly conceived it in their wombs. They received it collectively but they could not hold it.

52. That eternal foetus, the cool-rayed Moon, the delighter of all, suddenly fell down from the directions and illuminated the worlds.

53. When those ladies were unable to hold the foetus, Śītāṁśu (the cool-rayed Moon) fell on to the ground from the directions.

54. Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds, saw the fallen Soma. With a desire for the welfare of all the worlds, he placed him into a chariot.

55. O goddess, O beautiful lady of Suras, the chariot was fitted with a thousand white horses by me for the purpose of establishing piety. He was truthful in speech.

56. O goddess, when the great soul, the son of Atri, fell down, the well-known mental sons of Brahmā eulogized him.

57. These as well as all the Aṅgirasas and sons of Bhṛgu eulogized him with the Mantras of R̥g Veda, Sāmaveda and Atharva Veda.

58. As he was being eulogized, the splendour of the refulgent Soma became well-nourished and enhanced. He illuminated all the three worlds.

59. The excessively renowned one circumambulated the ocean-girt earth twenty-one times (riding) in that excellent chariot.

60. From the part of (his) Tejas that reached the earth, arose (were born) medicinal herbs which shone with great lustre.

61. With them, he (i.e. Moon) enlivens this world and the

four types of subjects (creations). These *Oṣadhīs* (medicinal herbs) are of seventeen varieties (in the form of cereals and lentils). They mature and bear fruits.

62-64. They are: *Vṛīhi*, *Yava* (barley), *Godhūma* (wheat), *Aṇu*, *gingelly seeds*, *Priyaṅgu* (the sixth), *Kovidāra*, *Koradūṣa*, *Tinaka*, *Māṣa*, *Mudga*, *Masūra*, *Niṣpāva*, *Kulattha*, *Āḍhakī*, and *Caṇaka* and *Kaṇa*. These are remembered as the rural varieties of *Oṣadhīs*.

65-68. *Oṣadhīs* pertaining to *Yajñas* are both *Grāmya* (rural) and *Āraṇya* (grown in forests). They are fourteen: *Vṛīhi*, *Yava*, *Godhūma*, *Aṇu*, *Tila* (gingelly seeds), *Priyaṅgu* forming the sixth variety, *Kulattha* the seventh variety, *Syāmāka*, *Nivāra*, *Jartila*, *Gavedhūka*, *Uruvinda*, *Markaṭaka*, and *Veṇuyava*. These are the fourteen varieties grown in village fields and forests. There are crores and crores of varieties of grass and creepers etc. Candra is the Lord of all these. He sustains the entire universe.

69. Lord Soma sustains the entire earth by means of *Jyotsnā* (Moonlight) with a desire for the welfare of the universe. Therefore, *Brahmā* the foremost among the knowers of *Brahman*, gave a kingdom unto him.

70. O lady of excellent countenance, the highly resplendent *Niśākara* (Moon) was crowned in the kingdom of seeds and medicinal herbs, *Brāhmaṇas* and *Mantras*.

71-74. The foremost among the refulgent luminaries sustained the three worlds with his lustre. Nine *Devīs* (goddesses) viz. *Sinī*, *Kuhū*, *Dyuti*, *Puṣṭi*, *Prabhā*, *Vasu*, *Kīrti*, *Dhṛti* and *Lakṣmī* served him. *Dakṣa*, the son of *Pracetas*, gave him his twenty-seven daughters of great holy rites, whom they (people) knew as constellations.

After attaining the great kingdom, Soma, the most excellent one among those endowed with Soma juice, performed a *Rājasūya* *Yajña*. The monetary gifts consisted of hundred thousand (gold coins). *Hiraṇyagarbha* was the *Udgātṛ* and *Brahmā* accepted the *Brahmatva* (the post of the presiding priest).

75. Lord Hari, *Nārāyaṇa* was his *Sadasya* (member of the sacrificial assembly). He was surrounded by the primordial sages, the chief of whom was *Sanatkumāra*.

76. O splendid lady of excellent countenance, Soma gave the three worlds as the *Dakṣiṇā* to those *Sadasyas* of whom the *Brāhmaṇical* sages were the chief ones.