

Chapter X

Samudra mathana

The delineation of the Vedavyasavatara is the theme of the tenth chapter. However, as a preliminary to it, the samudramathana episode is narrated. The purpose of Vyasavatara was to remove ignorance and confusion caused by the curse of Gautama in respect of the knowledge

enshrined in the Vedas, Pancharatra, Itihasapurana, and other sacred pieces of literature. For such an ignorance and confusion Kali was considerably responsible. He arose at the time of the samudramathana along with poison. Not only the personality of Kali was Kali but the ignorance and the confusion caused by him were also Kali. Destroying these was meant to destroy Kali. This was the purpose of Vyasavatara. Therefore, in order to point out that such a Kali had arisen at the time of samudramathana, that episode is narrated in the tenth chapter before the narration of Vyasavatara.

The details of samudramathana are well-known. Therefore, only such items that are especially mentioned in Tatparyanirnaya and that have a deep religious significance will be stated here.

At the close of the 28th Dvapara Yuga, Chaturmukha Brahma, Shiva, Indra, and other deities approached Lord Vishnu present at Shvetadvipa at the center of Kshirasamudra. They offered prayers to Him and informed Him that due to Durvasa's curse, Indra lost his power and glory and was defeated by the demons. Therefore, they had come to Him seeking protection.

As per the instructions of Lord Vishnu, the deities entered into an agreement with the demons through Bali Chakravarthi and attempted to bring the Mandara mountain for samudramathana. They were not able to lift it. Then, God lifted it by His left hand and placed it on the shoulders of Ananta, i.e. Garuda. The deities wanted to test their strength again. When they tried to lift the mountain placed on Garuda's shoulder, it fell down and crushed them. They were restored

to their original form by the grace of God. God lifted the mountain again, placed it on Garuda, and, seated on Garuda, proceeded to Kshirasamudra with the deities and the demons. He made the Mandara mountain the churning rod and Vasuki the rope, and He churned the Kshirasagara

with the deities and the demons. The demons preferred to hold the snake Vasuki on the side of the head, and the deities held it on the tail side. This caused fatigue to the demons.

Kurmavatara

The mountain sank because of its weight. Then God lifted it and placed it on his back, assuming the Kurma form. Not only was the mountain held by Him on His back, but He entered it and supported it. He entered the deities and the demons also to enable them to churn.

The Halahala poison was drunk by Vayu

In the course of churning the Halahala poison came out. Vayu took it in his hand as per God's instructions, rubbed a little portion of it, reduced its vigor, and gave it to Shiva. Shiva sipped it. It was so little that it could go down only upto his throat. He became

unconscious even for that much. God touched him, and he regained his consciousness. Vayu collected the poison in a golden vessel, drank it, and digested it. Out of the little poison given to him, only a fraction was drunk by Shiva. The remaining portion became the body of Kali. From this poison, cruel objects like snakes, wolves, and tigers were born. From samudramathana, objects like the horse Uchhaishrava, Airavata, elephants, a thousand apsaras belonging to the amrita group came out. The weapons of deities, ornaments, the Parijata tree, and Kamadhenu i.e., Surabhi also came out. The Mahalakshmi and Dhanvantari forms of God arose with the amritakalasha. When the amritakalasha came out, the demons snatched it. God allowed them to snatch it since He desired that they break the agreement and be punished for that. Then, God assumed the Mohini form and offered to distribute the amrita. She asked the deities and the demons to sit separately in rows and asked the demons to close their eyes as She felt embarrassed by their staring at Her. She served the deities amrita and killed Rahu by assuming the Purusha form.

Rahu's head only is the place of Rahu and Ketu

The head of Rahu became the abode of the planets Rahu and Ketu. When Rahu's head was cut, a drop of amrita had already moved into his body. Therefore, both his head and the body survived. His body without the head was thrown into Svadudaka. Rahu remained in his head. [Note: Along with him, there are 100 Ketus, who are deities, in this head. The offerings made to Rahu are received by these deities. The demon Rahu present in the head receives unholy offerings only. This Rahu obstructs the sun and the moon. The popular impression that the head became Rahu and the rest Ketu is not correct. Rahu's head itself is the adhithana for both Rahu and Ketu.] When Rahu's head was cut, the demons rushed towards God with their weapons. They were all killed. However, Kali was not killed. He entered men. [Note: Kali can never enter God, Lakshmi, or Vayu. He enters into Shiva and others only occasionally.] Kali's wife Alakshmi and her sons who supervise evil also came from Kshirasagara. Lakshmi made the chest of God her abode. Kaustubha found a place at God's neck. The other valuable items were given as gifts to different deities at Lakshmisvayamvara. Kali entered Shiva and composed the evil scriptures. His mischief could not be corrected by others. This Kali is invisible, unimaginable, and present in all. The ignorance and confusion caused by him had to be removed by the revival of the sacred scriptures. In view of this, Chaturmukha Brahma and other deities appealed to God to take an appropriate incarnation. Lord Hari took the incarnation of Sri Vedavyasa.

II

Parashara and Satyavati

Vashishta, who was born in a jar along with Agastya as a son of Mitravaruna, married Arundhati and begot including Shakti 100 sons. Parasara was his grandson. Earlier, Vashishta was born from the sacrificial pit of Brahma, married Akshamala, and functioned as chief priest of Ikshvakus. Still earlier, he was born as a manasa putra of Brahma and had married Arundhati. Parasara, the grandson of Vashishta, performed penance to have God himself as his son. God informed him that King Vasu of the Pururava royal family known as Uparichara, as he

used to frequently move over the sky as a result of his great deeds, was born to Kritayajna in the Dvapara age. Uparichara got twin children, one male and one female, through a fish. He kept the boy with him and handed the female child over to the fisherman chief. The female child had grown into a beautiful girl and was named Satyavati. He would assume the form of his son through her. Accordingly Parasara duly married Satyavati. This marriage took place in yajnasala. Vasishtha, Yagnavalkya and other sages were present. King Vayu himself gave Satyavati in marriage to Parasara. Then the God assumed the form of their son. [Note: God is never born like an ordinary child. The popular impression that Vedavyasa was born and that too when Satyavati was a virgin is not correct.] Vedavyasa revealed himself in the midst of the river Yamuna. He was brilliant like the sun. His palms and feet were marked with the lines of the conch and the disc. His arms were in the posture abhaya mudra and jnana mudra. Parasara performed upanayana for him within seven days. Then Vedavyasa went to the Meru mountain followed by Chaturmukha Brahma and others. He arranged the Vedas and composed the Brahmasutras, Mahabharata, Puranas, and Bhagavata. Chaturmukha and other deities directly learned these from Him. Vedavyasa wandered all over the world in order to instruct the noble jivas. Once, He converted a small creature as a king. However, He told him that he would be entitled for salvation only when he was born as a Brahmana.

The birth of Shukla

Shiva performed penance to become the son of Vyasa. Vedavyasa pretended to perform penance to get Shiva as his son. This was only to mislead undeserving persons. Shiva was born as a son of Vyasa through Ghritachi, who had arrived in the form of a parrot while Vyasa was engaged in churning the Arani. Shuka was actually born from Arani. However since Ghritachi desired to name him as Shuka he was so named. Vyasa never had any sensual attraction either towards Ghritachi or any other woman. As soon as Shuka was born, Vayu entered him. It was only Vayu who was entitled for the instructions directly from Lord Hari. Shuka received direct instructions from Vyasa because of the presence of Vayu in him. In the same way, while receiving the instructions from Vyasa, Shesha entered Paila, Garuda entered Sumantu, Brahma entered Vaishampayana, and Indra entered Jaimini. This enabled these sages to receive instructions in their respective areas of knowledge.

Shri Vyasa taught Rgveda to Paila, Krsna yajurveda to Vaishampayana, Shukla yajurveda to Surya, Samaveda to Jaimini, and Atharvanaveda to Sumantu. He taught all the lores to His son Shuka and Narada. Then, Shri Vyasa created Romaharsana as a Suta by caste and instructed him to propagate Itihasa, Purana, and Panchatantra. He instructed Sanatkumara, Bhrigu, and Jaimini to propagate Dhyanyoga, Karmayoga, and Karma mimamsa respectively. Shri Vyasa himself composed the first and the last sutras of Daivi mimamsa and asked Paila and Shesha to compose the whole text. Further, he edited the six satvika puranas (Vishnu, Narada, Bhagavata, Garuda, Padma, and Varaha) based on Panchatantra, six Rajasa Puranas (Brahma, Brahmanda, Brahmavaivarta, Markandeya, Bhavisya, and Vamana) based on superficial references in the Vedas, and six tamasa Puranas (Matsya, Kurma, Linga, Shiva, Skanda, and Agni) based on Pasupata Agama. Through the above literature, Brahma and other deities and Sanatkumara and

other sages regained their knowledge.