

Mahabharata Tatparya Nirnaya **- Introduction by Prof.K.T.Pandurangi**

Chapter-III

The theme of the third chapter is to describe sarga and anusarga and also to give the background of the characters of the Ramayana as a preliminary to the narration of Sri Rama's story in the next six chapters. This chapter begins with three beautiful benedictory verses praising the three incarnations of the Supreme God viz., vedavyAsa, rAma, and kR^ishNa. Then, the benedictory verse of the Mahabharata viz.,

nArAyaNaM namaskR^tya naraM chaiva narottamam.h |
devIM sarasvatIM vAchaM tato jayasudIrayet.h ||

is quoted, and its significance is explained. In this verse, Narayana refers to both Narayana and Vedavyasa, Devi refers to Goddess Laxmi, Narottama refers to Vayu who is Jivottama, Nara refers to Shesha, and Sarasvati, of course, refers to the goddess of speech. Jaya is the name of this great epic.

jayo nAmetihAso.ayaM kR^ishhNadvaipAyaneritaH |
vAyurnarottamo nAma devIti shrIrudIritA ||
nArAyaNo vyAsa iti vAchyavaktrasvarUpataH |
ekaH sa bhagavAnuktaH sAdhakesho narottamaH ||
upasAdhako narashchokto devI bhAgyAtmikA nR^iNAm.h |
sarasvatI vAkyarUpA tasmAnnamyA hi te.akhilAH || (III-5,7)

Then commences the explanation of sarga, i.e., creation.

Lord Narayana and Goddess Ramaa create Virincha assuming the forms of Vasudeva and Maya, create Vayu assuming the forms of Sankarshana and Jaya, and create Pradhana (Sarasvati) and Shraddha (Bharati) assuming the forms of Pradyumna and Krti. Virincha and Vayu are also known as Purusha. Vayu and Bharati beget Shesha and Suparna, who serve as the bed and vehicle of the Supreme God. Shesha begets servants of the Supreme God called Kala, while Garuda begets Jaya, Vijaya, etc., also servants of the Supreme God. Vayu begets Vishvaxena. This is the first stage of the process of the creation of Virincha, Vayu, etc. Now these have to be provided with sthula sharira. This is initiated by Aniruddha and Shanti. They beget Virincha and Sarasvati with the body of Mahatatva. Virincha and Sarasvati beget Shiva and Parvati. These two beget the manas and the abhimani deities of the ten senses with Vaikarika Ahankara, the ten senses with Taijasa Ahankara, Akasha, etc., and the five bhutas with Tamasa ahankara. Shiva also begets all other deities.

Vayu and Bharati beget Shesha, Shiva, and Indra. Indra begets all other deities and the deities connected with the sacrifice. It has to be noted here that these deities are stated to have been both by Virincha and Sarasvati and by Vayu and Bharati.

Lord Narayana also assumes the three forms of Vishnu, Brahma, and Shiva. He assumes these forms through His Vasudeva form and Goddess Laxmi's Maya form. Among these three forms, Vishnu's form is the direct form, while in Brahma and Shiva, He is present as Antaryamin.

The creation mentioned in the previous posting is termed a Tatvasrshti and takes place outside Brahmanda. The creation within the Brahmanda is known as Padmasrshti. The Tatvabhimani deities who were created outside the Brahmanda (Tatvasrshti) appeal to the Supreme God to create Brahmanda. The Supreme God conjoins with Goddess Laxmi. She delivers the golden Brahmanda. Lord Hari and all other deities enter into it. A lotus arises from the navel of Lord Hari. From this, Chaturmukhabrahma is born again. From him, all other deities will be born again. Then Chaturmukhabrahma creates the fourteen worlds and the abhimani deities of senses, etc. Then, Sanaka, Sanandana, etc.; sages, Marichi, etc.; Vayu putras, asuras, manushyas, cows, elephants, horses, serpents, etc., and other varied beings are born. All of these do not realize their true nature and go on rotating in transmigration. Then, Pralaya takes place. The Srshti and Pralaya are endless. The jivas, prakrti, and kala are eternal. Then what can be said of the Supreme God, who is the God of the gods? After describing Srshti and Pralaya, the various avataras assumed by Lord Narayana are described. The ten avataras of the God viz., Matsya, Kurma, etc., are well known. However, some special points stated in Tatparyanirnaya need our special attention. Here, two Varaha avataras are mentioned, the Adi Varaha and the Neela Varaha. The first one takes place before the ten avataras. Adi Hiranyaxa is killed by this avatara. The second is the third avatara among the ten avataras. Another Hiranyaxa is killed by this avatara. After describing the avataras upto Sri Rama, the birth of Ravana and Kumbhakarna is mentioned. These are stated to be the very persons who were Hiranyakashipu and Hiranyaxa earlier. The birth of Dasharata is mentioned.

The early background of Vali, Sugriva, Jambavan, Angada, Tara, Neela, and other vanaras is mentioned. These were Indra, Surya, Yama, Chandra, Shachi, and Agni respectively. The avatara of Vayu as Hanuman is graphically described:

sa devatAnAM prathamo guNAdhiko |
babhUva nAmnA hanumAn.h prabhaJNchanaH ||

The fact that Sri Rama is Lord Vishnu Himself is well-known. We are further informed here that the Vasudeva form of the Supreme God assumed the incarnation of Sri Rama, while His Sankarshana, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha forms are present as an avेशa in Laxmana, Bharata, and Shatrughna respectively.

In the context of explaining the various avataras of the God and the background of the others, the divine nature of the shanka, chakra, etc., is also explained. Durga is the abhimani deity of the chakra, Shri is that of the shanka, Vayu is that of the gada, Bhu is that of Padma, Sarasvati is that of Saranga, Vayu of five forms is of five arrows, and Durga is again of Khadga.

durgAdhichakrAdhidevI syAt.h shrIshcha shaN^khaAdhidevatA |
vAyurgadAdhidevaH syAd.h bhUmiH padmAbhimAninI ||
durgaiva khaN^gadevI syAt.h shArN6aJNchaiva sarasvatI |

paJNcha bANAH paJNcha prANAH- (padyamAlA)

This chapter is closed by mentioning the fact that Sita is Goddess Laxmi herself.

svayaM ramA sIrata eva jAtA
sIteti rAmArthamanUpamA yA |
videharAjasya hi yaj~nabhUmau
suteti tasyaiva tatastu sA bhUt.h ||