

30. From that time onwards the divine phallus and the embodied image, both, were assigned to Śiva alone.

31. The embodied form alone was assigned to deities other than Śiva. The different types of the embodied forms of the different Devas yield only enjoyments. In regard to Śiva the phallic emblem and the embodied form together bestow auspicious enjoyment and salvation.

CHAPTER SIX

(The journey to Kailāśa of the Devas terrified by the use of the Pāśupata weapon in the fight between Brahmā and Viṣṇu who vied with each other maintaining that each of them is the Lord himself)

Nandikeśvara said :—

1. Once, long ago, O foremost among Yogins, Viṣṇu was having his nap on his serpent-couch. He was surrounded by the goddess of fortune and his attendants.

2. Brahmā, the foremost among the Vedic scholars chanced to come there. He asked the lotus-eyed handsome Viṣṇu who was lying there.

3. Who are you lying here like a haughty person even after seeing me ? Get up, O dear, and see me who am your lord. I have come here.

4. Expiatory rites are ordained for that spiteful wretch who behaves like a haughty fool at the visit of an honourable elderly person.

5. On hearing these words Viṣṇu was angry. But assuming a calm exterior he said—“O dear, Hail thee. Welcome. Please sit on this couch. How is it that thy face is agitated and thy eyes look curious ?

Brahmā said :—

6. Dear Viṣṇu, know me to have come with the speed of the Time. I am to be honoured greatly. O dear one, I am the protector of the world, Grandfather, your protector as well.

Viṣṇu said :—

7. O dear one, the whole universe is situated within me but your way of thinking is like that of a thief. You are born of the lotus sprung from my navel-region. You are my son. Your words are futile therefore.

Nandikeśvara said :—

8-9. Arguing with each other like this, saying that each is better than the other and claiming to be the lord, they got ready to fight, like two foolish goats, desirous of killing each other.

10. (The two heroic deities, seated on their respective vehicles—the Swan and the Garuḍa, fought together.) The attendants of Brahmā and Viṣṇu also came into clash.

11. In the meantime the different groups of Devas moving about in aerial chariots came there to witness the wonderful fight.

12-18. Witnessing from the heaven they scattered flowers everywhere. The Garuḍa-vehicled deity (Viṣṇu) became infuriated and discharged unbearable arrows and many kinds of weapons on the chest of Brahmā. The infuriated Brahmā also hurled many arrows of fiery fury and different kinds of weapons on Viṣṇu. The Devas commented on this wondrous fight and were agitated much, Viṣṇu in his great fury and mental agitation breathed hard and discharged the Māheśvara weapon over Brahmā. Annoyed at this, Brahmā aimed the terrible Pāśupata weapon at the chest of Viṣṇu. The weapon rising high in the sky blazing like ten thousand suns, with thousands of terrible pointed spikes roared awfully like a gust of wind. These two weapons of Brahmā and Viṣṇu thus faced each other in a terrible clash.

19. Such was the mutual fight between Brahmā and Viṣṇu. Then, O dear, the devas in their helpless agitation and vexation talked among themselves as people do at the time of war between their monarchs.

20-22. The three-pointed-trident-bearing deity, the supreme Brahman, (*i. e.* Śiva) is the cause of creation, maintenance, annihilation, concealment and blessing. Without His corroboration even a blade of grass cannot be split by any individual anywhere. Thinking thus in their fright they

desired to go to Śiva's abode and accordingly came to the summit of Kailāsa⁴⁰ where the moon-crested God resided.

23. On seeing that region of Parameśvara in the shape of Omkāra they bent their heads down in reverence and entered the palace.

24. There they saw the supreme leader of the Devas brilliantly shining on the gem-set seat in the company of Umā on an altar in the middle of the council-chamber.

25. His right leg was kept over the knee of the left ; his lotus-like hands were placed over the legs ; his attendants were all round him. He had all good characteristic features.

26. He was being fanned by the specialists in that art—ladies of pointed attention. The Vedas were extolling Him. The lord was blessing every one.

27. On seeing the lord thus, the Devas shed tears of joy.⁴¹ O dear one, the hosts of Devas knelt down even from a great distance.

28. The lord, on seeing the Devas, beckoned them to him through his attendants. Then causing the delight of the Devas, the crest-jewel of Devas (*i. e.* Śiva), addressed them gravely with sweet auspicious words.

CHAPTER SEVEN

(Śiva manifesting himself as a column of fire in the battlefield)

Īśvara said :—

1. Dear children, hail to ye. I hope the universe and the race of the deities, under my suzerainty, flourish in their respective duties.

2. O gods, the fight between Brahmā and Viṣṇu is

40. Kailāsa: It is said to be the centre of the Himālaya region, *Mat.* Ch. 121 ; it is identified with a peak of the Hemakūta mountain : S. M. Ali : *The Geography of the Purānas* P. 57-58. It is called Śiva-parvata and Gaṇa-parvata and is situated to the north of Mānasarovara.—*Sk.* I. ii. 8. 15 ; I. iii u. 4.14 ; II. 1.5. 76.

41. Dāṇḍa-praṇāma: It is the same as the aṣṭāṅgapraṇāma which is performed by prostration of the eight parts of the body ; the eight parts being the hands, breast, forehead, eyes, throat and the middle of the back.

already known to me. This agitation on your part is like a redundant speech.

3. Thus the consort of Ambā consoled the concourse of devas with honeylike speech sweetened with a smile in the manner of appeasing children.

4. In that very assembly the lord announced his desire to go to the battlefield of Hari and Brahmā and accordingly issued His directive to a hundred of the commanders of his attendants.

5-6. Different kinds of musical instruments were played to announce the start of the journey of the Lord. The commanders of the attendants were in readiness fully bedecked in their ornaments, seated in their respective vehicles. The lord, consort of Ambikā, mounted the holy chariot shaped like Omkāra from front to the back and embellished in five circular rings. He was accompanied by his sons and Gaṇas. All the devas, Indra and others, followed.

7. Honoured suitably by the display of banners of various colours, fans, chowries, scattered flowers, music, dance and the instrument players, and accompanied by the great goddess (Pārvatī), Paśupati (Śiva) went to the battle-field with the whole army.

8. On espying the battle, the lord vanished in the firmament. The play of the music stopped and the tumult of the Gaṇas subsided.

9. There in the battlefield Brahmā and Acyuta desirous of killing each other were awaiting the result of the Māheśvara and the Pāśupata weapons hurled by them.

10-11. The flames emitted by the two weapons of Brahmā and Viṣṇu burned the three worlds. On seeing this imminent untimely dissolution the bodiless form of Śiva assumed the terrific form of a huge column of fire in their midst.

12. The two weapons of fiery flame potential enough to destroy the entire world fell into the huge column of fire that manifested itself there instantaneously.

13. Seeing that auspicious wonderful phenomenon assuaging the weapons they asked each other "What is this wonderful form?"

14. "What is this column of fire that has risen up? It

is beyond the range of senses. We have to find out its top and bottom."

15. Jointly deciding like this, the two heroes proud of their prowess immediately set about assiduously in their quest.

16-18. "Nothing will turn up if we are together". Saying this, Viṣṇu assumed the form of a Boar and went in search of the root. Brahmā in the form of a swan went up in search of the top. Piercing through the netherworlds and going very far below, Viṣṇu could not see the root of the fiery column. Utterly exhausted, Viṣṇu in the form of a Boar returned to the former battle-ground.

19. Dear one, your father, Brahmā who went high up in the sky saw a certain bunch of Ketakī flower of mysterious nature falling from above.

20-21. On seeing the mutual fight of Brahmā and Viṣṇu, lord Śiva laughed. When his head shook, the Ketakī flower dropped down. Although it had been in its downward course for many years, neither its fragrance nor its lustre had been diminished even a bit. The flower had been intended to bless them.

22-23. (Brahmā said) "O lord of flowers, by whom had you been worn? Why do you fall? I have come here to seek out the top, in the form of a swan." (The flower replied) "I am falling down from the middle of this primordial column that is inscrutable. It has taken me a long time. Hence I do not see how you can see the top."

24-25. "Dear friend, hereafter you must do as I desire. In the presence of Viṣṇu you must say like this. O Acyuta, the top of the column has been seen by Brahmā. I am the witness for the same." Saying this he bowed to the Ketakī flower again and again. Even falsehood is recommended in times of danger. So say the authoritative texts.

26. (Returning to the original place) on seeing Viṣṇu there, utterly exhausted and lacking pleasure, Brahmā danced with joy. Viṣṇu, in the manner of a eunuch admitting his inability (to a woman), told him the truth (that he could not see the bottom). But Brahmā told Viṣṇu like this.

27—28. "O Hari, the top of this column has been seen by me. This Ketakī flower is my witness." The Ketaka flower repeated the falsehood endorsing the words of Brahmā

in his presence. Hari, taking it to be true, made obeisance to Brahmā. He worshipped Brahmā with all the sixteen means of service and homage.⁴²

29. The Lord taking up a visible form in order to chastise Brahmā who practised trickery, came out of the column of fire. On seeing the lord, Viṣṇu stood up and with his hands shaking with fear caught hold of the lord's feet.

30. It is out of ignorance and delusion about you whose body is without a beginning or an end that we indulged in this quest prompted by our own desire. Hence O, Sympathetic Being, forgive us for our fault. In fact, it is but another form of your divine sport.

Īśvara said

31. "O dear Hari, I am pleased with you, because you strictly adhered to truth in spite of your desire to be a lord. Hence among the general public you will have a footing equal to mine. You will be honoured too likewise.

32. Hereafter you will be separate from me having separate temple, installation of idols, festivals and worship."

33. Thus, formerly, the lord was delighted by the truthfulness of Hari and offered him a footing equal to his own even as the assembly of the devas was witnessing the same.

CHAPTER EIGHT

(Śiva's forgiveness of Brahmā)

Nandikeśvara said :—

1. Mahādeva then created a wonderful person, Bhairava, from the middle of his brows to quell the pride of Brahmā.

2. This Bhairava knelt before the lord in the battle-field

42. Ṣoḍaśopacāra: The sixteen acts of homage to a deity are mentioned in ŚP 11. 25-29. They are differently enumerated elsewhere : आसनं स्वागतं पाद्यमर्घ्यमाचमनीयकम् । मधुपर्काचमस्नानं वसनाभरणानि च । गन्धपुष्पे धूपदीपौ नैवेद्यं वन्दनं तथा । Tantrasāra enumerates 64 Upacāras.

and said—"O lord, what shall I do ? Please give me your directives quickly."

3. "Dear, here is Brahmā, the first deity of the universe. Worship him with your sharp-pointed quick-moving sword."

4. With one of his hands he caught hold of the tuft of Brahma's fifth head that was guilty of haughtily uttering a falsehood, and with the hands he furiously shook his sword in order to cut it off.

5. Your father trembled like a plantain tree in a whirlwind, with his ornaments scattered here and there, his cloth ruffled and loosened, the garland displaced, the upper cloth hanging loose and the glossy tuft dishevelled, and fell at the feet of Bhairava.

6. Meanwhile the sympathetic Acyuta desirous of saving Brahmā, shed tears over the lotus-like feet of our lord and said with palms joined in reverence just like a child lisping words of entreaty to its father.

Acyuta said :—

7. O Lord, it was you who gave him five heads⁴³ as a special symbol, long ago. Hence please forgive him his first guilt. Please favour him.

8. The lord thus requested by Acyuta relented and in the presence of all devas asked Bhairava to desist from punishing Brahmā.

9. Then the lord turned to the deceitful Brahmā who bent down his neck and said "O Brahmā, in order to extort honour from the people you assumed the role of the lord in a roguish manner.

10-11. Hence you shall not be honoured, nor shall you have your own temple or festival.

43. Brahmā's five heads : When the four faces of Brahmā became thwarted in their function because of Brahmā's erotic impulse, then out of his Tapas was produced a fifth head on the top and that head was covered with matted locks. In image No 382 of Brahmā in the Kushāna period at Mathura, the fifth head on the top is shown with moustaches, beard and long locks, a feature which is only found in the Kusāna period from the first to the third century A. D. But later on, the fifth head was eliminated and a new theory (contradicted by ŚP. I. 8.8) was devised that Brahma's head was clipped by Rudra. The fact was that the fifth head corresponding to Ākāśa was taken to be invisible, being a symbol of his unmanifest form (Avyakta mūrti) and that only the four others became manifest.—V.S. Agrawal : *M.P. A Study*.

Brahmā said :—

O Lord, be pleased. O flourishing one, I consider this sparing of my head itself a great blessing and a boon. Obeisance to Thee, the lord, the kinsman, the originator of the universe, the forbearing, the forgiver of defects, the benevolent one, wielding the mountain as his bow.

Īsvara said :—

12. O child, the whole universe will be ruined if it loses the fear of a king. Hence you mete out punishment to the guilty and bear the burden of administering this universe.

13-14. I shall grant you another boon which is very difficult to get. In all domestic and public sacrifices you will be the presiding deity. Even though a sacrifice is complete with all the ancillary rites and offerings of monetary gifts, it will be fruitless without you. Then the lord turned to the deceitful Ketaka flower guilty of perjury and said :—

15. “O you Ketaka flower, you are roguish and deceitful. Go away from here. Hereafter I have no desire to include you in my worship.”

16. When the lord said thus, all the devas shunned the very presence of the flower.

Ketaka said :—

17. Obeisance to Thee, O Lord, Your bidding will mean that my very birth is fruitless. May the lord be pleased to make it fruitful by forgiving my sin.

18. Thy remembrance is reputed to quell all sins perpetrated consciously or unconsciously. Now that I have seen Thee, how can the sin of uttering falsehood sully me?

19-21. Thus entreated in the middle of the council the lord said—“It is not proper for me to wear you. I am the lord and my words must stay true. My attendants and followers shall wear thee. Hence thy birth shall be fruitful. Of course in the canopies over my idol you can be used for decoration.” The lord thus blessed the three—the flower Ketaka, Brahmā and Viṣṇu. He shone in the assembly duly eulogised by the Devas.