

Caitanya Reader Book Ten

The Pastimes of

Śrī Kṛṣṇa

A Children's Reader

Adapted from the writings of
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Dhruva Mahārāja Leaves for the Forest

Once upon a time there was a great king named Uttānapāda who had two queens named Sunīti and Suruci. Suruci was very dear to the King but Sunīti was not at all dear to him. One day, the son of Suruci, named Uttama, was sitting happily on the lap of his great father. The son of Sunīti, named Dhruva, came near and also tried to climb on King Uttānapāda’s lap. Unfortunately, the King did not favour the child Dhruva, who was only five years old and did not want him to sit on his lap. When the step-mother, Suruci, saw little Dhruva trying to get on the lap of his father, she became very envious and began to speak with great pride.

“My dear child, you do not deserve to sit on the throne or on the lap of the king. Surely you are also the son of the King but because you did not take your birth in my womb, you are not qualified to sit on your father’s lap. My dear child, you are unaware that you were not born of my womb; nevertheless, your attempt to sit on the throne of your father

is doomed to failure. If you desire to rise to the throne of the King then you will have to undergo severe austerities.

Firstly, you will have to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa. When you are favoured by Him, because of your worship, then you shall take your next birth in my womb.” In this way, the proud step-mother Suruci asked Dhruva to change his body and take birth in her womb in order to satisfy his desires.

When someone hits a snake with a stick, the snake becomes angry and begins to breathe very heavily. In the same way, Dhruva Mahārāja grew angry when he was struck by the strong words of his step-mother and he began to breathe very heavily. He looked toward his father but he saw that the King was sitting silently and could not protest the words of his wife. Thus, the child immediately left the palace and went to his mother.

By the time Dhruva reached his mother, his lips were trembling and he was crying grievously. The palace residents who had heard the harsh words of Suruci related everything to Dhruva’s mother and she also became greatly aggrieved.

The incident was unbearable to Sunīti's patience. She began to burn as if in a forest fire and in her grief, she became just like a burnt leaf. As she remembered the words of her co-wife, her bright lotus-like face became filled with tears. She was breathing heavily and could not find any remedy for the painful situation.

At last she said, "My dear son, please don't wish anything inauspicious for others. Anyone who inflicts pain upon others suffers himself from that pain.

"My dear boy, whatever has been spoken by Suruci is true, because the King, your father, does not consider me his wife or even his maidservant. He feels ashamed to accept me so it is a fact that you have taken birth in the womb of an unfortunate woman. Therefore, if you desire to sit on the same throne as your stepbrother, Uttama, then you must give up your enviousness and immediately execute the instructions of your stepmother. Without further delay, you must engage yourself in worshipping the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

Sunīti continued, “The Supreme Personality of Godhead is so great that simply by worshipping His feet, your great-grandfather, Lord Brahma received the power to create this universe. Your grandfather, Svāyambhuva Manu, worshipped and satisfied the Supreme Personality of Godhead with sacrifices and charity. Thus, he received great material happiness and ultimately, he achieved liberation.

“My dear boy, you should also take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead who is very kind to His devotees. Persons who want relief from the cycle of birth and death always take shelter of His lotus feet in devotional service. You should fix the Supreme Personality of Godhead in your heart and without deviating for a moment, always engage in His service. Only Kṛṣṇa can relieve your distress.”

The young Dhruva seriously considered the words of his mother. With his intelligence fixed in determination, he left his father’s house.

Dhruva Mahārāja Meets Nārada Muni

The great sage, Nārada Muni heard of the plight of the child Dhruva and was struck with wonder. He approached the young boy and touched Dhruva’s head with his all-virtuous hand.

Nārada Muni said, “How wonderful are the powerful kṣatriyas. They cannot tolerate even a slight insult! My dear boy, you are only a little boy whose attachment is to sports and other frivolities. Why are you so affected by the insulting words of your step mother? You should simply accept the arrangement made by the Supreme Personality of Godhead and be satisfied with whatever comes, favourable or unfavourable, by His supreme will.

“Now you have decided to undertake the mystic process of meditation under the instruction of your mother. These austerities, however, are not possible for any ordinary man. It is difficult to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. For this reason, my dear boy, you should not endeavour for his; it will not be successful. It is better that you go home.

When you are grown up, by the mercy of the Lord, you will get a chance for these mystic performances. At that time you may execute this function.”

Nārada Muni continued, “You should try to be satisfied in any condition of life. A person who tolerates happiness and distress is able to cross over the darkness of nescience very easily. Every man should act like this; when he meets a person more qualified than himself, he should be very pleased; when he meets someone less qualified than himself; he should be compassionate towards him and when he meets someone equal to himself, he should make friendship with him. By doing this, one will never be affected by the threefold miseries of this material world.”

Dhruva Mahārāja replied, “My dear Lord Nārdajī, your instructions on the attainment of peace are certainly very good for those who are not disturbed by the conditions of happiness and distress. But I am covered by ignorance and your philosophy does not touch my heart. My dear lord, I am very impudent for not accepting your instructions but this is not my fault. It is due to my being born in a kṣatriya family.

My step-mother, Suruci, has pierced my heart with her harsh words. Therefore, your valuable instruction does not stand in my heart.”

It is sometimes said that the heart is just like a broken pot; once it is broken, it cannot be repaired. Dhruva said that his heart had been broken and nothing seemed valuable except his desire to counteract her insult.

Dhruva said, “O learned brāhmaṇas, I want to occupy a position more exalted than any yet achieved within the three worlds by anyone, even by my fathers and grandfathers. Kindly advise me of an honest path to follow by which I can achieve the goal of my life. My dear lord, you are a worthy son of Lord Brahmā and you travel, playing on your musical instrument, the vīṇā, for the welfare of the entire universe. You are like the sun, which rotates in the universe for the benefit of all living beings.

Nārada Muni saw the determination of the boy and became very compassionate towards him. Thus he gave him the following expert advice.

“The instruction given by your mother, Sunīti, to follow the path of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is just suitable for you. You should therefore completely absorb yourself in the devotional service of the Lord. You should go to the bank of the Yamunā and become purified in the virtuous forest named Madhuvana. Just by going to that forest, one becomes nearer to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who always lives there.

“My dear boy, in the waters of the Yamunā River, which is known as Kālindī, you should take three baths daily because the water is very auspicious, sacred and clear. After bathing, you should perform the necessary activities for yoga and then sit down on your asana in a calm and quiet position. After sitting on your seat, practice the three kinds of breathing exercises and thus gradually control the life air, the mind and the senses. Completely free yourself from all material contamination and with great patience, begin to meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

Then Nārada Muni began to describe the form of the Lord, “The Lord’s face is perpetually very beautiful and pleasing in attitude. To the devotees who see Him, He is always prepared to award benediction to them. His eyes, His nicely decorated eyebrows, His raised nose and His broad forehead are all very beautiful. He is more beautiful than all the demigods. His form is always youthful. Every limb of the Lord’s body is properly formed, free from defect. Both his eyes and lips are pinkish like the rising sun. His bodily hue is deep bluish. He wears a garland of flowers and the mark of Śrīvasta on His chest. The Lord’s body is decorated with a valuable jeweled helmet, necklaces and bracelets. His neck is adorned with the Kaustubha jewel and He is dressed in yellow silk garments.”

Nārada Muni continued, “O son of the King, now I shall speak unto you the mantra which is to be chanted with this meditation process. One who carefully chants this mantra for seven nights can see the perfect human beings flying in the sky. That mantra is:

om̐ namo bhagavate vāsudevāya

One should install the Deity form of the Lord and while chanting this mantra, he should offer flowers, fruits and other varieties of foodstuffs. One should worship the Lord by offering pure water, pure flower garlands, fruits, flowers and vegetables which are available in the forest or by collecting newly grown grasses, small buds of flowers or even the skins of trees. If possible, one should offer tulāsi leaves which are very dear to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You should make a Deity of the Lord out of earth and water and worship Him three times daily while chanting the mantra and meditating on the transcendental activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His different incarnations.”

Having heard the words of the great sage Nārada Muni, the young boy circumambulated Nārada, his spiritual master and offered him respectful obeisances. Then he started for Madhuvana, which is always imprinted with the lotus footprints of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Dhruva Begins His Austerities

After Dhruva entered the Madhuvana Forest to execute devotional service, the great sage Nārada Muni thought it would be wise to go to King Uttānapāda to see how he was faring within the palace. The King received Nārada well and offered him all obeisances.

Then Nārada Muni said, “My dear King, your face appears to be withering up and you look like you have been thinking of something for a very long time. Why is that? Have you been hampered in following your path of religious rites, economic development and sense gratification?”

The King replied, “O best of the brāhmaṇas, I am very much addicted to my wife and I am so fallen that I have abandoned all merciful behaviour, even to my own son, who is only five years old. I have banished him and his mother, even though he is a great soul and a great devotee.

“My dear brāhmaṇas, the face of my son was just like a lotus flower. I am now thinking of his precarious condition. He is

unprotected and he might be very hungry. He might have lain down somewhere in the forest and the wolves might have attacked him to eat his body.

“Alas, just see how I was conquered by my wife! Just imagine by cruelty! Out of love and affection the boy was trying to get on my lap but I did not receive him, not even did I pat him for a moment. Just imagine how hard-hearted I am.”

The great sage, Nārada Muni replied, “My dear King, please do not be aggrieved about your son. He is well protected by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although you have no actual information of his influence, his reputation is already spread all over the world.

“My dear King, your son is very competent. He will perform activities which would be impossible even for great kings and sages. Very soon he will complete his task and come back home. You should know that he will also spread your reputation all over the world.

King Uttānapāda, after being advised by Nārada Muni, practically gave up all duties in relation with his kingdom which was vast, wide and opulent like the goddess of fortune. He simply began to think of his son, Dhruva.

Meanwhile, Dhruva Mahārāja arrived at Madhuvana, took his bath in the River Yamunā and observed fasting in the night with great care and attention. After that, he engaged himself in worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He did everything according to the advice he had received from Nārada Muni.

For the first month, Dhruva Mahārāja ate only fruits and berries on every third day, only to keep his body and soul together. In this way, he progressed in his worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The fruit which Dhruva ate was called kouth and generally the kouth fruit was not eaten by humans, only by monkeys in the forest. But Dhruva accepted that fruit in order to maintain his body. He did not try to eat for sense gratification.

In the second month, Dhruva Mahārāja at only every six days and for his eatables he took dry grass and leaves. Thus, he continued his worship. On the third month, he drank water only every nine days. He remained completely in trance and worshipped the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is glorified by selected verses.

In the fourth month, Dhruva Mahārāja became a complete master of the breathing exercise and thus he inhaled air only every twelfth day. In this way, he became completely fixed in his position and worshipped the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

By the fifth month, Dhruva Mahārāja, the son of the King, had controlled his breathing so perfectly that he was able to stand on only one leg, just as a column stands, without motion and concentrate his mind fully on the Parambrahma. He completely controlled his senses and their objects and in this way he fixed his mind, without diversion, upon the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

When Dhruva Mahārāja thus captured the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the master of all living entities, the three worlds began to tremble. Dhruva kept himself steadily standing on one leg and the pressure of his big toe pushed down half the earth, just as an elephant being carried on a boat rocks the boat left and right with every step.

When Dhruva Mahārāja became practically one in heaviness with Lord Viṣṇu, he concentrated fully and closed off the holes of his body. Thus, the total universal breathing became choked up. All of the big demigods in all the planetary systems felt suffocated and this took shelter of Supreme Personality of Godhead.

When Dhruva Mahārāja lived in the house of his father, he could not even sit on his father's lap. He was forcibly rejected but simply by becoming a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Dhruva became powerful enough to press down the whole earth with his toe and stop the universal breathing by his austerities. Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotees can all take example from Dhruva Mahārāja. Although no one can now live in the forest and perform the kind of austerities Dhruva performed,

still everyone can develop the kind of determination he had in his service to Kṛṣṇa.

At last the demigods said to Kṛṣṇa, “Dear Lord, You are the refuge of all moving and non-moving living entities. We feel all living entities to be suffocating. We have never experienced such a thing. Since You are the Ultimate shelter of all surrendered souls, we have therefore approached You; kindly save us from this danger.”

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said, “My dear demigods do not be disturbed by this. It is due to the severe austerities of the son of King Uttānapāda, who is now fully absorbed in thoughts of Me. He has stopped the universal breathing. You can safely return to your homes. I shall stop this boy’s severe acts of austerity and save you from the situation.”

The Appearance of Lord Viṣṇu

When the suffocating demigods were reassured by the Personality of Godhead, they were freed from all fears. After offering their obeisances, they returned to their heavenly planets. The Lord then got on the back of Garuḍa who carried Him to the Madhuvana Forest to see His servant Dhruva. At that time, Dhruva was fully absorbed in meditation on the form of the Lord which was as brilliant as lightning.

Suddenly, the form of the Lord in Dhruva's meditation disappeared. The boy became disturbed and as soon as he opened his eyes, he saw the same form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead standing before him that he had seen in his heart. Immediately Dhruva fell down before the Lord like a rod and began to offer obeisances. Then Dhruva looked upon the Lord as if he were drinking the Lord with his eyes, kissing the lotus feet of the Lord with his mouth and embracing the Lord with his arms.

Although Dhruva Mahārāja was a small boy, still he wanted to offer prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead in sweet, proper language. Because he was so young, he could not easily do that. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is situated in everyone’s heart, could understand Dhruva’s desire. Out of His causeless mercy, He touched his conch shell to the forehead of Dhruva Mahārāja who stood before Him with folded hands.

By that touch, Dhruva became completely aware of all knowledge and he began to offer perfect prayers to the Lord. He said, “My dear Lord, You are all powerful. After entering within me, You have enlivened all my sleeping senses – my hands, legs, ears, touch, life force and especially my power of speech. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

“O my master, Lord Brahmā is fully surrendered unto You. In the beginning You gave him knowledge and thus he could see and understand the entire universe. You are the only shelter of all persons who desire liberation. You are the friend of all who are distressed. How can a learned person, who has perfect knowledge, ever forget You?

“Persons who worship You simply for the sense gratification of this bag of skin are certainly influenced by Your māyā. You are like a desire tree and You are the cause of liberation from birth and death. Nevertheless, foolish persons, such as me, desire only benedictions of sense gratification.

“O unlimited Lord, kindly bless me so that I can associate with great devotees who engage in Your transcendental loving service constantly, as the waves of a river constantly flow. By the process of devotional service, I shall surely be able to cross the ocean of material life which is filled with waves of blazing, fire like dangers. It will be very easy for me, for I am becoming mad to hear about Your transcendental qualities and pastimes.

When Dhruva Mahārāja had finished all of his prayers, the Supreme Personality of Godhead said, “My dear Dhruva, son of the King, you have executed great vows and I also know the desire within your heart. Although your desire is very ambitious and very difficult to fulfill, still I shall favour you with its fulfillment. All good fortune unto you.”

The Supreme Personality of Godhead continued, “My dear Dhruva, I shall award you the glowing planet known as the Pole Star which will continue to stay even after the end of the world. No one has ever ruled over this planet which is surrounded by all the universes, planets and stars. All the planets in the sky circumambulate this planet, just as bulls go around a central pole for the purpose of crushing grains.

“After your father goes to the forest and awards you the rule of this kingdom, you will rule the entire world for 36,000 years and all your senses will continue to be as strong as they are now. You will never become old.

“Sometime in the future, your brother Uttama will go hunting in the forest and while absorbed in hunting, he will be killed. Your stepmother, Suruci, being maddened upon the death of her son, will go to search him out in the forest but she will be devoured by forest fire.”

The Supreme Lord had arranged this death for Suruci on account of the great offenses she committed to Dhruva. The

Lord never forgives someone who offends a Vaiṣṇava, therefore, no one should offend a devotee, even by accident.

The Lord continued, “My dear Dhruva, after your life in this body, you will go to My planet, which is always offered obeisances by all the residents of all planets. When you go there, you never have to come back to this material world again.”

Having been completely worshipped by the boy, Dhruva Mahārāja, and having given him all benediction, Lord Viṣṇu returned to His abode on the back of Garuḍa while Dhruva looked on. Although he achieved the desired result of his austerities by worshipping the feet of the Lord, Dhruva Mahārāja was not very pleased. He had undergone very severe austerities out of great anger against his stepmother. When he finally saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he was simply ashamed that he held so many material desires within his mind.

He thought to himself, “Alas, just look at me! I am so unfortunate. I approached the lotus feet of the Supreme

Personality of Godhead, who can immediately cut the chain of birth and death, but still , out of my foolishness, I prayed for something which is not eternal – a kingdom. I am just like the poor man who once satisfied a great emperor. When the emperor offered the man any benediction he might like, the ignorant man requested only a few broken grains of husked rice.” While thinking like this, Dhruva Mahārāja stared for home.

Dhruva Mahārāja Goes Home

When King Uttānapāda heard that his son Dhruva was coming back home, as if coming back to life after death, he could not put his faith in this message for he was doubtful how it could happen. He considered himself the most wretched and therefore he thought that it was not possible for him to have such good fortune. Although he could not believe the words of the messenger, he had full faith in the word of the great sage, Nārada. Thus, he was greatly overwhelmed by the news and immediately offered the messenger a highly valuable garland in great satisfaction.

Then King Uttānapāda, being very eager to see the face of his lost son, mounted a chariot drawn by excellent horses and bedecked with golden filigree. Taking with him many learned brāhmaṇas, all the elderly personalities of his family, his officers, his ministers and his immediate friends, he left the city. As he proceeded in this parade, there were auspicious sounds of conch shells, kettledrums, flutes and the chanting of Vedic mantras. Both the queens of King Uttānapāda, namely Sunīti and Suruci, along with his other

son, Uttama, appeared in the procession, seated in a palanquin.

When he caught sight of Dhruva Mahārāja approaching the neighbouring small forest, King Uttānapāda got down from his chariot with great haste. He had been anxious for a long time to see his son Dhruva, and therefore with great love and affection he went forward to embrace his long lost boy.

Breathing very heavily, he embraced him with both arms. But Dhruva Mahārāja was not the same as before, he was completely sanctified by spiritual knowledge due to being touched by the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Reunion with Dhruva Mahārāja fulfilled King Uttānapāda's great desire and for this reason, he smelled Dhruva's head again and again and bathed him with torrents of very cold tears. By nature's way, when someone cries, there may be two causes. When one cries in great happiness upon the fulfillment of some desire, the tears coming forth from the eyes are very cold and pleasing, whereas tears in times of distress are very hot.

Then Dhruva Mahārāja offered his obeisances at the feet of his father and was honoured by his father with various questions. He then bowed his head at the feet of his two mothers. Because Dhruva had been purified by devotional service, he no longer held any feelings of anger or hatred towards his stepmother. Thus, he could approach her very humbly and offer respects.

Suruci, the stepmother, saw that Dhruva had fallen at her feet and she immediately picked him up. She embraced him with her hands and with tears in her eyes, she blessed him, saying, “My dear boy, long may you live.” The two brothers, Uttama and Dhruva Mahārāja, also exchanged their tears. They were overwhelmed by the ecstasy of love and affection and when they embraced one another, the hair on both their bodies stood up. Sunīti, the real mother of Dhruva, embraced the tender body of her son, who was dearer to her than her own life and thus she forgot all her material grief.

When Dhruva had greeted all of his relatives and friends, he was seated on the back of a she-elephant and he proceeded

toward the capital city. The whole city was decorated with columns of banana trees bearing bunches of fruits and flowers. Betel nut trees with leaves and branches were seen growing here and there. There were many gates which shaped like sharks and at every gate there were burning lamps and big water pots decorated with differently coloured cloth, strings of pearls, flower garlands and hanging mango leaves.

As he passed along the road, the gentle household ladies came out of their houses to see him. Out of great affection for him, the ladies offered their blessings and showered him with white mustard seed, barley, curd, water, newly grown grass, fruits and flowers. In this way, Dhruva entered the palace of his father.

Dhruva Mahārāja lived in his father's palace, which had walls bedecked with highly valuable jewels. His father took special care of him and he lived like one of the demigods on a higher planet. The bedding in the palace was as white as the foam of milk and very soft. The bedsteads were made of ivory with fold and the chairs, benches and other sitting places were made of gold. The palace of the King was surrounded by

walls made of marble with many decorations made of jewels like sapphires. Surrounding the palace were gardens with varieties of trees brought from the heavenly planets. In those trees lived pairs of sweet singing birds and mad bumblebees who made a pleasing buzzing sound. There were emerald staircases which led to lakes full of coloured lotus flowers and lilies and valuable birds were visible in those lakes.

In this beautiful palace, Dhruva Mahārāja grew up, being specially cared for by the King himself. After some time, King Uttānapāda discussed the matter with his ministers and then enthroned Dhruva Mahārāja as the Emperor of this planet. Considering his own advanced age and the welfare of his spiritual self, King Uttānapāda detached himself from world's affairs and entered the forest to practice austerities.

Dhruva Mahārāja Fights with the Yakṣas

After King Uttānapāda left for the forest, Dhruva married two wives and begot three sons and a beautiful daughter in them. One day, Dhruva's younger brother, Uttama, who was still unmarried, went on a hunting trip and was killed by a powerful Yakṣa in the Himalayan Mountains. His mother went in search of him and also died in those mountains.

When Dhruva Mahārāja heard of the killing of his brother, Uttama by the Yakṣas in the mountains, he became overwhelmed with lamentation and anger. He got on his chariot and went to conquer the city of the Yakṣas, Alakāpurī. He travelled in the northern direction up the Himalayan range and in a valley he saw a city that was full of ghostly persons who were followers of Lord Śiva. Upon reaching the outskirts of the city of Alakāpurī, Dhruva blew his conchshell and the sound could be heard throughout the sky in every direction.

Being unable to tolerate the vibration of the conchshell of Dhruva Mahārāja, the Yakṣas came forth from their city with

weapons and attached Dhruva. Dhruva Mahārāja was a great charioteer and a great bowman and he began to kill the Yakṣas by firing arrows at the rate of three at a time. Just like serpents who cannot tolerate being trampled upon by anyone’s feet, the Yakṣas, being intolerant of the wonderful skill of Dhruva Mahārāja, threw twice as many arrows – six from each shoulder – and thus, they exhibited their own skill.

The Yakṣa soldiers were 130,000 strong, all greatly angry and all desiring to defeat the wonderful activities of Dhruva Mahārāja. With full strength, they showered various types of feathered arrows, iron bludgeons, swords, tridents, lances, pikes and spears upon Dhruva Mahārāja and his chariot and charioteer. Dhruva was completely covered by an incessant rainfall.

All of the perfect beings from the higher planets were observing the fight from the sky and when they saw that Dhruva Mahārāja had been covered by the incessant arrows of the enemy they roared, “The grandson of Manu, Dhruva, is now lost!” They thought that Dhruva was just like the sun and that now he had set within the ocean of the Yakṣas.

The Yakṣas, being victorious for the moment, exclaimed that they had conquered Dhruva Mahārāja but in the meantime, Dhruva's chariot suddenly appeared, just as the sun suddenly appears from within the foggy mist. Dhruva's bow and arrows twanged and hissed, causing lamentation in the hearts of his enemies. He began to shoot incessant arrows, shattering all their different weapons, just as the blasting wind scatters the assembled clouds in the sky. The sharp arrows released from the bow of Dhruva Mahārāja pierced the shields and bodies of the enemy, like a thunderbolt released by the King of heaven dismantles the bodies of the mountains.

The heads of those who were cut to pieces by the arrows of Dhruva Mahārāja were decorated very beautifully with earrings and turbans. The legs of their bodies were as beautiful as golden palm trees, their arms were decorated with golden bracelets and armlets and on their heads there were very valuable helmets bedecked with gold. The remaining Yakṣas, who had somehow escaped death, had their limbs cut to pieces by the arrows of the great warrior

Dhruva Mahārāja. Thus they began to flee, just as elephants flee when defeated by a lion.

Dhruva saw that in that great battlefield, not one of the opposing soldiers was left standing with proper weapons. He desired then to see the city of Alakāpurī but he thought to himself, “No one knows the plans of the mystic Yakṣas.” Just as he was thinking about the tricks of the mystics, Dhruva and his charioteer heard a tremendous sound, as if the whole ocean were there and they found that a great dust storm was circling them in all directions.

Within a moment, the whole sky was overcast with dense clouds and severe thundering was heard. There was glittering electric lightning and severe rainfall. In that rainfall, there was blood, mucus, pus, stool, urine and marrow falling heavily before Dhruva Mahārāja and there were trunks of bodies falling from the sky. From all directions, hail stones fell along with lances, clubs, swords, iron bludgeons and great pieces of stone.

Dhruva Mahārāja also saw many big serpents with angry eyes, vomiting forth fire and coming to devour him, along with groups of mad elephants, lions and tigers. Then, as it if were the time of the dissolution of the whole world, the fierce sea, with foaming waves and great roaring sounds, came before him. The demon Yakṣas are by nature very bad and by their demoniac power of illusion they can create many strange things to frighten someone who is less intelligent.

When the sages heard that Dhruva Mahārāja was overpowered by the illusory mystic trick of the demons, they immediately assembled to offer him encouragement. They said “Dear Dhruva, O son of King Uttānapāda, may the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who relieves all the distresses of His devotees, kill all your enemies. The holy name of the Lord is as powerful as the Lord Himself. Therefore, simply by chanting and hearing the holy name of the Lord, one can be fully protected from fierce death.”

Having heard the encouraging words from the sages, Dhruva Mahārāja touched the water and then took up his arrow and fixed it on his bow. Dhruva’s arrow was made by Lord

Nārāyaṇa Himself, and as soon as Dhruva touched it to his bow, all the illusory tricks of the demons disappeared. As Dhruva fixed the wonderful arrow on his bow, hundreds of arrows, with golden shafts and feathers like the wings of a swan, flew out from it. They entered the enemy soldiers with a great hissing sound, just like the sound of peacocks entering a forest with great crowing.

The Yakṣas decided to attack Dhruva Mahārāja all together and ran towards him with upraised weapons. When Dhruva Mahārāja saw the Yakṣas coming forward, he immediately took his arrows and cut the enemies to pieces. Separating their arms, legs, heads and bellies from their bodies, he delivered the Yakṣas to the planet which is situated above the sun-globe and is attainable only by first-class brahmacārīs who have never released their semina. Thus, even though the Yakṣas were demons, they were given great benediction by being killed by the devotee of the Lord.

When Svāyambhuva Manu, the grandfather of Dhruva was that Dhruva was killing so many of the Yakṣas who were not actually offenders, he approached Dhruva to give him good

instruction. Lord Manu said, “My dear son, please stop. It is not good to become unnecessarily angry – it is the path to hellish life. Now you are going beyond the limit by killing Yakṣas who are not actually offenders. My dear son, the killing of the sinless Yakṣas which you have undertaken is not at all approved by the authorities. It has already been proved that you are very much affectionate towards your brother and you are eager to revenge his death but just consider – for one offense made by a Yakṣa, you have killed so many others who are innocent. One should not accept the body as the self and thus, like the animals, kill the bodies of others. That is forbidden by saintly persons who follow the path of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord is most pleased when his devotee greets other people with tolerance, mercy, friendship and equality.”

Because of the good instructions from his grandfather, Svāyambhuva Manu, Dhruva Mahārāja, completely ceased killing the Yakṣas. The head of the Yakṣas, Lord Kuvera, came before Dhruva and offered him any benediction he might ask. At that time, Dhruva Mahārāja, the most elevated of the devotees, begged from Kuvera that he might have

complete faith in and remembrance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by which he could easily cross over the ocean of ignorance. Kuvera happily blessed Dhruva with his benediction, whereupon, Dhruva Mahārāja returned to his capital city.

Dhruva Mahārāja Goes Back to Godhead

As long as he remained at home, Dhruva Mahārāja performed many great sacrifices to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As a king, Dhruva was endowed with all the godly qualities; he was respectful to the devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, very kind to the poor and innocent people and always mindful to protect the religious principles. Because of his good qualifications, he was considered to be the father of all citizens. For 36,000 years, Dhruva ruled the kingdom successfully and at last he handed the charge of the royal throne to his son.

Dhruva left his kingdom, which extended all over the earth and was bounded by the great oceans. He also left his wife, his children, his friends, his army, his rich treasury, his comfortable palaces and his many enjoyable pleasure-grounds, considering them all to be creations of the illusory energy of the Lord. Thus, in due course of time, he retired to the forest known as Badarikāśrama in the Himalayas.

In Badarikāśrama, Dhruva Mahārāja's senses became completely purified because he bathed regularly in the crystal-clear purified water. He fixed his sitting position and by yogic practice, he controlled the breathing process and the air of life. He then fixed his mind on the Deity form of the Lord and entered in to complete trance.

Due to his transcendental bliss, incessant tears flowed from his eyes, his heart melted and there was shivering and standing of the hairs all over his body. In a trance of devotional service, Dhruva completely forgot his bodily life and thus he immediately became freed from material bondage.

As soon as the symptoms of his liberation were manifest, he saw a very beautiful airplane coming down from the sky, as if the brilliant full moon were coming down, illuminating all the ten directions. Two servants of the Supreme Lord, known as Nanda and Sunanda, came out of the airplane and smiled happily at Dhruva, who stood humbly with folded hands.

The two servants said, “Dear King, let there be all good fortune unto you. Please hear what we shall say. When you were only five years old, you underwent severe austerities and you thereby greatly satisfied the Supreme Personality of Godhead. On the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the creator of the whole universe, who carries the Śārṅga bow in his hand, we have come to take you to the spiritual world.

“It is very difficult to achieve Viṣṇuloka but by your austerities you have conquered. Now please come; we welcome you to go there. O immortal one, this unique airplane has been sent by the Supreme Personality of Godhead who is worshipped by selected prayers and who is the head of all living beings. You are quite worthy to board such a plane.”

When Dhruva Mahārāja heard the sweet speeches of the Lord’s chief associates in the Vaikuṅṭha planet, he immediately took his sacred bath, dressed himself with nice ornaments and performed his daily spiritual duties. Then he offered his respectful obeisances to the great sages present

there and accepted their blessings. Before getting aboard, Dhruva Mahārāja worshipped the airplane, circumambulated it, and also offered obeisances to Nanda and Sunanda. In the meantime, he became as brilliant and illuminating as molten gold. Thus, he was completely prepared to board the transcendental airplane.

Just as Dhruva Mahārāja was attempting to get on the transcendental plane, he saw death personified approach him. Not caring for death, however, he took the opportunity to put his feet on the head of death and thus he got up on the airplane, which was as big as a house. At that time, drums and kettledrums resounded from the sky, the Gandharvas began to sing and other demigods showered flowers like torrents of rain upon Dhruva Mahārāja.

Dhruva was seated in the transcendental airplane, which was just about to start, when he remembered his poor mother, Sunīti. He thought to himself, “How I shall go alone to Vaikuṅṭha planet and leave behind my poor mother?” Dhruva thought that his mother was just like his spiritual master because she was the first one to give him instruction about

devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Nārada Muni was actually his spiritual master but Dhruva did not need to take Nārada Muni to Vaikuṅṭha so he thought about his mother.

Nanda and Sunanda could understand the mind of Dhruva Mahārāja, and thus showed him that his mother, Sunīti was going forward in another place. Simply by becoming an advanced devotee of the Lord, Dhruva was able to free his mother and take her to Vaikuṅṭha.

While Dhruva Mahārāja was passing through space, he gradually saw all the planets of the universe and on the path he saw all the demigods in their airplane showering flowers upon him like rain. At last he reached the transcendental world where he achieved permanent life in the planet where Lord Viṣṇu lives.

One should chant about the character and activities of Dhruva Mahārāja both in the morning and in the evening with great care and attention, in a society of brāhmaṇas or devotees. Persons who have completely taken shelter of the

lotus feet of the Lord should recite this narration of Dhruva Mahārāja without asking any price. This recitation is recommended on the full moon or dark moon day, on the day after Ekādaśī, at the end of a month or on a Sunday. When recitation is performed this way, the one reciting and the audience become perfect.

Dakṣa's Curse

In a former time the leaders of the universal creation performed great sacrifice in which all the great sages, philosophers, demigods and fire-gods assembled with their followers. When Dakṣa, the leader of the Prajāpatis, entered that assembly, his personal bodily luster was as bright as that of the sun. The entire assembly was illuminated and in his presence, everyone else looked insignificant.

Being attracted by his personal bodily luster, all the fire-gods and other demigods present in that assembly gave up their own sitting places and stood in respect of Dakṣa. Only Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva remained seated. Dakṣa was very respectfully greeted by Lord Brahmā, the president of that assembly. Dakṣa offered Lord Brahmā his obeisances and took his seat in the assembly.

Just before he sat down, however, Dakṣa noticed that Lord Śiva was still seated and was not showing any respect toward him. Dakṣa became offended by this and his eyes glowed

with anger. Suddenly he began to speak very strongly against Lord Śiva.

Dakṣa said, “All sages, brāhmaṇas and fire-gods present here, please hear me with great attention for I am speaking about the manners of gentle persons. I am not speaking out of ignorance or envy. Śiva has spoiled the name and fame of the controllers of the universe and he has polluted the path of gentle manners. Because he is shameless, he does not know how to act. He has already accepted himself as my subordinate by marrying my daughter in the presence of the fire and brāhmaṇas. He has married my daughter and pretended to be just like an honest person.

“He has eyes like a monkey’s, yet he has married my daughter, whose eyes are just like those of a deer cub. Nevertheless, he did not stand up to receive me, nor did he think it fit to welcome me with sweet words. He lives in filthy places like crematoria and his companions are ghosts and demons. Naked like a madman, sometimes laughing and sometimes crying, he smears crematorium ashes all over his body. He does not bathe regularly and he ornaments his body

with a garland of skulls and bones. Although his name means auspicious, actually he is the most mad and inauspicious creature. Thus he is very dear to crazy beings who are in the gross mode of ignorance. He is their leader. On the request of Lord Brahmā, I handed over my chaste daughter to him, although he is devoid of all cleanliness and his heart is filled with nasty things.”

When Dakṣa saw that Lord Śiva was sitting peacefully, he washed his hands and mouth and cursed him in the following words: “The demigods are eligible to share in the fruits of this sacrifice but Lord Śiva, who is the lowest of the demigods, should not have a share.” Thus Lord Śiva was cursed by Dakṣa. Because of this curse, Lord Śiva never associates with materialistic persons like the demigods, who simply assemble at sacrifices to gain a share of the fruits.

Dakṣa’s anger burned within him and after cursing Lord Śiva, he left the assembly and went to his home. All the demigods requested him to remain in the assembly but he was blinded by his anger. Puffed up by his position as the head of the Prajāpatis, Dakṣa thought that no one was greater than him.

Even when the demigods requested him to remain, he was forced by his own anger to leave the assembly. In *Bhagavad-gītā* it is advised that one give up anger if he wishes to have any intelligence in spiritual life. Because of Dakṣa's hatred of the saintly Lord Śiva, he was overcome by anger as well as lust and greed.

Nandīśvara was one of the foremost associates of Lord Śiva. When he realised that his Lord had been cursed, he also became affected by anger and prepared to curse Dakṣa and all the brāhmaṇas there who had tolerated the words of Dakṣa. Unfortunately, the neophyte devotees of Lord Viṣṇu and the neophyte devotees of Lord Śiva are always quarrelling amongst themselves. Because some of the brāhmaṇas in the assembly were not very knowledgeable, they thought that the things Dakṣa said were true. Even Nandīśvara became affected by Dakṣa's anger and began to curse. In reaction to Nandīśvara's cursing, others began to counter curse and at last the whole atmosphere became polluted by anger.

Nandīśvara said, "Anyone who has accepted Dakṣa as the most important person and has neglected Lord Śiva because

of envy is a less intelligent person. He will be bereft of transcendental knowledge of the soul. Dakṣa has accepted the body as all in all. Therefore, since he has forgotten the feet of Lord Viṣṇu and is attached to sex life only, he will soon have the head of a goat. Those who are as dull as matter because of material intelligence are simply engaged in fruitive activities. They have insulted Lord Śiva. May they continue in the cycle of birth and death. May those dull persons who are attached to the Vedas and envious of Lord Śiva always remain engaged in fruitive activities. May these brāhmaṇas become devoid of knowledge of what to eat and what not to eat. They will gain money by begging from door to door, simply for the satisfaction of the body.”

When Nandīśvara finished cursing the brāhmaṇas in the assembly, Bhṛḡu said, “One who takes a vow to satisfy Lord Śiva or who follows his principles will become an atheist and never understand spiritual regulations. Those who vow to worship Lord Śiva are so foolish that they imitate him by keeping long hair on their heads. When initiated into the worship of Lord Śiva, they prefer to live on wine, flesh and

other such things. It is understood that you are all atheists because you have blasphemed the Vedas and the brāhmaṇas.”

In this way, the cursing and counter-cursing went back and forth between the followers of Lord Śiva and the followers of Dakṣa. Thus Lord Śiva became very morose. Not saying anything, he left the arena of the sacrifice, followed by his disciples. Lord Śiva did not like all the cursing that was done because he did not see anyone in the assembly as better or worse than anyone else. He was not personally offended by Dakṣa's statements to him, however, he was very sad that both Bhṛgu and Nandīśvara had acted so angrily without any interest in spiritual advancement.

The Death of Satī

The tension and animosity which had begun at that sacrifice between Lord Śiva and Dakṣa continued for many thousands of years. Being very puffed up with his title as head of the Prajāpatis, Dakṣa decided to hold another sacrifice and did not even consider inviting Lord Śiva. Dakṣa wanted to be very successful in his sacrifices but he was neglecting the devotees of Lord Viṣṇu. Therefore, he could never succeed.

When Dakṣa began the sacrifice called Bṛhaspati-sava, many brahmarṣis, great sages, demigods and wives of demigods attended from different parts of the universe. All of the women were very nicely decorated with ornaments, fine clothing and cosmetics. In this way, they pleased their husbands and brought auspiciousness to the sacrifice.

The chaste lady Satī, the daughter of Dakṣa and the wife of Lord Śiva, heard the heavenly people flying in the sky as they talked about the great sacrifice being performed by her father. When she saw the beautiful wives of the demigods with their

glittering eyes, fine clothing, ornaments, earrings, necklaces and lockets, she approached her husband in great anxiety.

Satī said, “My dear Lord Śiva, your father-in-law is now holding great sacrifices and all the demigods, having been invited by him, are going there. If you desire, we may also go. I think that all my sisters must have gone to this great sacrificial ceremony with their husbands just to see their relatives. I also desire to decorate myself with the ornaments given to me by my father and go there with you to join in that assembly. My sisters, the sisters of my mother and their husbands and other relatives must be assembled there so if I go I shall be able to see them. I shall see the flapping flags and the performance of the sacrifice by the great sages. For these reasons, my dear husband, I am very much anxious to go.

“I know that everything about this creation is known to you but I am a poor woman and I am not in knowledge of truth and illusion. Therefore, I wish to see my birthplace once more.

“O never-born, O blue-throated one, not only my relatives but also other women, dressed in nice clothes and decorated with ornaments are going there with their husbands and friends. Just see how their flocks of white airplanes have made the entire sky very beautiful. O best of the demigods, how can the body of a daughter remain undisturbed when she hears that some festive event is taking place in her father’s house? You are considering that I have not been invited but there is not harm if one goes to the house of his friend, husband, spiritual master or father without invitation. O immortal Śiva, please be kind towards me and fulfill my desire. You have accepted me as half of your body, therefore, please show kindness towards me and accept my request.”

Hearing the request of his poor wife, Lord Śiva remembered the malicious, heart-piercing speeches delivered by Dakṣa before all the demigods. Smilingly he said to his wife, “My dear beautiful wife, you have said that one may go the house of a friend without being invited. That is true provided the friend does not become angry and find fault with you when you arrive. When one possesses the six qualities of education, austerity, wealth, beauty, youth and heritage and

yet is proud of himself, he loses his good sense and cannot understand the glories of great persons. One should not go to anyone's house, even a relative or friend if that person is disturbed in mind and looks upon you with raised eyebrows and angry eyes.

“If one is hurt by the arrows of an enemy, he is not as pained as when he is but by the unkind words of a relative. Such a pain rends his heart day and night. My dear white-complexioned wife, it is clear that of the many daughters of Dakṣa, you are the pet, yet you will not be honoured at his house because of your being my wife. Rather, you will be sorry that you are connected with me.

“My dear young wife, certainly friends and relatives offer greetings to each other by standing up, welcoming one another and offering obeisances but those who are elevated to the transcendental platform, being intelligent, offer respects to the Supersoul who is sitting within the body, not to the person who thinks he is the body. I am always engaged in offering obeisances to Lord Vāsudeva in pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is always pure

consciousness. In that consciousness, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is revealed to me without any covering.

“Therefore, you should not see your father, although he is the giver of your body because he and his followers are envious of me. Because of his envy, O most worshipful one, he has insulted me with cruel words, although I am innocent. If in spite of this instruction you decide to go, neglecting my words, the future will not be good for you. You are most respectable and when you are insulted by your relative, it will immediately be equal to death.”

Lord Śiva saw that Satī was between decisions. She was anxious to go to her father’s house but at the same time, she was afraid of Lord Śiva’s warning. Her mind was unsettled and she moved in and out of the room as a swing moves this way and that. She was very sorry that he had forbidden her to go and see her relatives at her father’s house and tears fell from her eyes. Shaking and very much afflicted, she looked at her uncommon husband, Lord Śiva, as if she were going to blast him with her vision.

Thereafter, Satī left her husband, Lord Śiva, breathing very heavily because of anger and sadness and went to the house of her father. This less intelligent act was due to her being a weak woman.

When they saw Satī leaving alone very rapidly, thousands of Lord Śiva’s disciples headed by Maṇimān and Mada, quickly followed her with Śiva’s bull, Nandī and the Yakṣas. They arranged a sitting place for her on the back of a bull and gave her the bird which was her pet. They carried a lotus flower, a mirror and other paraphernalia for her enjoyment and covered her by a great canopy. She was followed in a royal parade by a singing party with drums, conchshells and bugles.

At last she reached her father’s house where the sacrifice was being held. She entered the arena where everyone was chanting the Vedic hymns. The great sages, brāhmaṇas and demigods were all assembled there and there were many sacrificial animals as well as pots made of clay, stone, gold, glass and skin which were all necessary for the sacrifice.

When Satī, with her followers, reached the arena, she was not greeted well because all of the people were afraid of Dakṣa. No one welcomed her except her mother and sisters who approached her with tears in their eyes and glad faces. Although she was received by her sisters and mother, she did not reply to their words of greeting and although she was offered a seat and gifts, she did not accept anything because her father neither talked to her nor welcomed her by asking of her welfare. She saw that there were no oblations for her husband, Lord Śiva, and that Dakṣa did not plan to receive her either. Thus, she became very angry and looked at her father as if she were going to burn him with her eyes.

The followers of Lord Śiva, the ghosts, were ready to injure or kill Dakṣa but Satī stopped them by her order. She was very angry and sorrowful and in that mood she began to condemn the sacrifices and everyone in it. She especially condemned her father and spoke against him in the presence of all.

Satī said, “Lord Śiva is the most beloved of all living entities. He has no rival. No one is very dear to him and no one is his enemy. No one by yourself could be envious of such a kind

being who is free from all hatred. Twice-born Dakṣa, a man like you can simply find fault in others. Lord Śiva does not find fault with others but if someone has little good quality, he magnifies it greatly. Unfortunately, you have found fault with such a great soul.

“My dear father, you are committing the greatest offence by envying Lord Śiva, whose very name, consisting of two syllables, śi and va, purifies one of all sinful activities. Lord Śiva is always pure and no one by yourself envies him. Do you think that Lord Brahmā and others who are greater than you do not know the nature of this person named Lord Śiva? He associates with the demons in the crematorium, his locks of hair are scattered all over his body, he is garlanded with human skulls and smeared with ashes from the crematorium but in spite of all this, great persons like Brahmā honour him by accepting the flowers offered to his lotus feet and placing them on their heads with great respect.

“Because of your offense, I shall no longer keep this unworthy body, which has been given to me by you. You are an offended at the lotus feet of Lord Śiva and unfortunately I

have a body produced from yours. I am very much ashamed of our bodily relationship. I condemn myself because my body is associated with the body of an offender of Lord Śiva. Because of our relationship, when Lord Śiva addresses me as Dākṣayaṇī (the daughter of Dakṣa), I at once become morose and my jolliness and my smile disappear. I feel very sorry that my body, which is just like a bag, has been produced from you. Therefore, I shall give it up.”

While Satī spoke harshly to her father in the arena of sacrifices, she sat down on the ground and faced north. Dressed in saffron garments, she purified herself with water and closed her eyes to absorb herself in the mystic yoga process. First of all she sat in the proper sitting posture and then she carried the life air upwards and placed it between the eyebrows. Then, in order to give up her body, she began to meditate on the fiery air within the body. Satī concentrated all her meditation on the holy lotus feet of her husband, Lord Śiva, who is the supreme spiritual master of all the world and thus she became completely free of all sin. She quit her body in a blazing fire by meditation on the fiery elements.

When Satī gave up her body, there was a great roar all over the universe. It was surprising that Satī, who was a chaste, great soul, would have to quit her body because of the neglect of her father. Dakṣa was unworthy to be a brāhmaṇas and gained great ill fame because of his offenses to his daughter because he did not prevent her death and because he was envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

While people were talking amongst themselves about the wonderful death of Satī, the attendants who came with her readied themselves to kill Dakṣa with their weapons. They came forward forcibly but Bhṛgu Muni saw the danger and offered oblations into the southern side of the sacrificial fire. He then uttered hymns from the Vedas by which the destroyers of the sacrifice could be killed immediately.

As soon as Bhṛgu Muni offered oblations in the fire, there became manifest many thousands of demigods named Ṛbhu. All of them were powerful because they had gained strength from the moon. When the Ṛbhu demigods attacked the ghosts and demons with half-burned fuel from the sacrificial fire, all the attendants of Satī fled in different directions.

Lord Śiva's Anger

When Lord Śiva heard from Nārada that Satī, his wife, was dead because of Prajāpati Dakṣa's insult to her, and that his soldiers had been driven away by the Ṛbhu demigods, he became very angry. He pressed his lips with his teeth and immediately snatched from his head a strand of hair which blazed like electricity or fire. He stood up at once, laughing like a madman and dashed the hair to the ground.

A fearful black demon, as high as the sky and as bright as three suns combined, was created by him. The demon's teeth were very fearful and the hairs on his head were like burning fire. He had thousands of arms equipped with all kinds of weapons and he was garlanded with the heads of men.

The gigantic demon approached Lord Śiva with folded hands and asked, "What shall I do my Lord?"

Lord Śiva said, "Because you are born from my body, you are the chief of all my associates. Therefore, kill Dakṣa and his soldiers at the sacrifice."

That big black demon, named Vīrabhadra, was the personified anger of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and he was ready to follow the order of Lord Śiva. This, he circumambulated the Lord and started towards the sacrifice. Followed by many soldiers of Lord Śiva, Vīrabhadra carried a great trident, fearful enough to kill death himself. On his legs he wore bangles, which seemed to roar.

At that time, all the persons in the arena began to wonder why the sky was becoming dark. They guessed that it must be dust storm and all of them became anxious. They said, “Why is this dust storm coming? There is no wind blowing and there are no cows passing. The dust is not caused by plunderers because our strong king Barhi would punish them. Is this the time of destruction for this planet?”

Prasūti, the wife of Dakṣa, said, “This danger has been created by Dakṣa because of the death of Satī, who even though innocent, quit her body as her sisters looked on. At the time of destruction, Lord Śiva’s hair is scattered and he pierces the rulers of the different worlds with his trident. He laughs and

dances proudly, scattering their hands like flags, just as the thunder scatters the clouds all over the world.”

The gigantic black man, Virabhadra, then arrived at the sacrifice and bared his fearful teeth. By the movements of his eyebrows, he scattered the stars all over the sky. All the followers of Lord Śiva surrounded the arena of sacrifice. They were short and were equipped with various kinds of weapons. Their bodies appeared to be like those of sharks, blackish and yellowish. Then they began to run around the arena.

Some of the soldiers pulled down the pillars which were supporting the canopy over the sacrifice. Some entered the women’s quarters and some began to destroy the sacrifice. Others entered the living quarters and the kitchen. They broke all the pots made for use in the sacrifice and some of them began to put out the sacrificial fire. Some tore down the boundary lines of the sacrifice and some passed urine on the arena.

Some blocked the way of the fleeing sages, some threatened the women and some arrested the demigods who were trying

to leave the arena. Maṇimān arrested Bhṛgu Muni and Vīrabhadra, the black demon, arrested Dakṣa. The other servants of Lord Śiva began to arrest members of Dakṣa's sacrifice.

There was a continuous shower of stones and all the priests and other members assembled at the sacrifice were put into immense misery. For fear of their lives, they ran in different directions. Vīrabhadra shaved off the moustache of Bhṛgu and then caught Bhaga. Bhaga had been moving his eyebrows during the cursing of Lord Śiva by Dakṣa, and out of great anger, Vīrabhadra threw him on the ground and put out his eyes. Vīrabhadra then knocked out the teeth of Dakṣa and Pūṣā because they had shown their teeth during the cursing of Lord Śiva. This was just like the time when Balarāma knocked out the teeth of the King of Kalinga during the gambling match at the wedding of Aniruddha.

The giant person Vīrabhadra then sat on the chest of Dakṣa and tried to separate his head from his body with sharp weapons but he couldn't do it. He then tried to cut off Dakṣa's head with hymns and more weapons but he could not

cut the skin on Dakṣa's body. At last, Vīrabhadra spotted the large wooden device which was going to be used to behead the animals in the sacrifice. He used that device to behead Dakṣa in the presence of everyone.

Vīrabhadra took the head of Dakṣa and cast it into the southern side of the sacrificial fire. All of the followers of Lord Śiva then devastated the sacrifice and set fire to the arena. Thereafter, they left for this master's abode.

Lord Brahmā Satisfies Lord Śiva

All the priests and other members of the sacrificial assembly and all the demigods who were defeated by the soldiers of Lord Śiva and injured by weapons like tridents and swords, approached Lord Brahmā with great fear. After offering him their obeisances, they began to speak in detail of all the events which had happened but Lord Brahmā and Lord Viṣṇu already knew that such events would occur in the arena of Dakṣa's sacrifice. Because they knew, they had not attended the affair.

After hearing from the demigods, Lord Brahmā said, "You cannot be happy if you blaspheme a great person and offend his lotus feet. You cannot have happiness in that way. You did not include Lord Śiva in your sacrifice and therefore, you have offended his lotus feet. Still, if you go without any hesitation and surrender unto him and fall down at his lotus feet, he will be very pleased."

Lord Śiva is called Āśutoṣa. Āśu means very soon and toṣa means to become satisfied. Lord Śiva becomes satisfied very

quickly when someone surrenders to his lotus feet. Lord Brahmā knew this so he advised the demigods to approach Lord Śiva very humbly.

Lord Brahmā continued, “You should remember that Lord Śiva is especially sorry because he has recently lost his dear wife. You should go immediately and beg his forgiveness.”

Thereafter, Lord Brahmā took all of the demigods and left for the abode of Lord Śiva, known as Kailāsa Hill. This wonderful place is full of different herbs and vegetables and all the people who live there are demigods with great mystic powers.

Kailāsa has many mountains which are filled with all kinds of valuable jewels and minerals and is surrounded by all varieties of valuable trees and plants. The tope of the hill is nicely decorated by various types of deer. There are many waterfalls and in the mountains there are many beautiful caves in which the very beautiful wives of the mystics are found.

On Kailāsa Hill, the sweet vibrations of the peacocks and the humming of the bees can be heard everywhere. Cuckoos are always singing and other birds whisper amongst themselves. There are tall trees with straight branches that appear to call the sweet birds; and when herds of elephants pass through the hills, it appears that Kailāsa Hill moves with them. The whole hill is decorated with various kinds of trees which all produce very fragrant flowers. There are also lotus flowers, various kinds of deer and banana trees which decorate the small hillside lakes.

There is also a small lake named Alakanandā in which Satī used to take her bath and that lake is especially auspicious. After seeing the beauty of Kailāsa Hill, all the demigods were struck with wonder.

They saw many rivers where the residents of heaven bathe and forests full of flowers, fruits and desire trees. There were many birds whose necks were coloured reddish and whose sweet sounds mixed with the humming of the bees. The lakes were all decorated with swans and long-stemmed lotus flowers. The demigods travelled on through the opulence of

Kailāsa until they reached the place where there was a great banyan tree. That banyan tree was 800 miles high and its branches spread over 600 miles around. The tree cast a fine shade which cooled the temperature under the tree yet there was no noise of birds. Usually, in every tree there are bird's nests and the birds join together in the evening and create noise but this banyan tree was devoid of birds and therefore it was calm, quiet and peaceful. It was just suitable for meditation.

The demigods saw Lord Śiva sitting under the tree as grave as eternal time. He appeared to have given up all anger. He was surrounded by saintly persons like Kuvera and the four Kumāras who were already liberated souls. Lord Śiva himself was grave and saintly. He was seated on a deer skin and was practicing all forms of austerity. Because his body was smeared with ashes, he looked like an evening cloud. Seated on his straw mattress, Lord Śiva was speaking to all who were present there, including the great sage, Nārada. He was speaking about the Absolute Truth.

His left leg was placed on his right thigh and his left hand was placed on his left thigh. In his right hand he held rudrākṣa breads and his fingers were in the mode of argument.

Slowly and respectfully the demigods approached Lord Śiva and offered him there humble obeisances. Although Lord Śiva is worshipped by all kinds of exalted persons, as soon as he saw Lord Brahmā, he stood up and offered respects to him by bowing down and touching his lotus feet. All of the other sages offered their obeisances to Lord Brahmā as well. At last, Lord Brahmā began to speak.

He glorified Lord Śiva with fine prayers and then said, “My dear Lord Śiva, you are the holder of a portion of the sacrifice. The bad priests did not deliver your share and therefore you destroyed everything. Now the sacrifice remains unfinished. Please do the needful and take your rightful share. By your mercy, Dakṣa may get his life, Bhaga may get his eyes, Bhṛgu may get back his moustache and Pūṣā may get back his teeth. May the demigods and priests whose limbs were broken by your soldiers recover from their injuries. Please take your portion of the sacrifice and let the sacrifice be completed.”@

Thus Lord Śiva became pacified by the prayers of Lord Brahmā and said, “My dear father, Brahmā, I do not mind the offenses created by the demigods. They are childish and less intelligent. I have punished them only to instruct them. Since the head of Dakṣa has already been burned to ashes, he will have the head of a goat. The demigod known as Bhaga will be able to see his share of the sacrifice through the eyes of Mitra. The demigod Pūṣā will be able to chew through the teeth of his disciples and if alone, he will have to satisfy himself by eating dough made of chickpea flour. The demigods who have agreed to give me my share of the sacrifice will recover from all their injuries. Those who have had their arms cut off will have to work with the arms of Aśvinikumāra; those whose hands were cut off will have to do their work with the hands of Pūṣā. Bhṛgu can have the beard from the goat’s head.”

The demigods were pleased with Lord Śiva’s plan and they immediately left for the sacrificial arena. Everything was arranged just as Lord Śiva had ordered. Bhṛgu invited Lord Śiva to the sacrifice and Lord Śiva was pleased to attend.

Upon his arrival, Dakṣa's body was joined to the head of the animal that was meant to be killed in the sacrifice. When the goat's head was fixed on the body of Dakṣa, Dakṣa immediately awakened from sleep and saw Lord Śiva standing before him. Upon seeing the Lord, Dakṣa's heart, which had been full of envy for Lord Śiva, became completely cleansed, just as the water in a lake is cleansed by autumn rains. Lord Śiva is auspicious because anyone who sees him with devotion and love is immediately cleansed.

King Dakṣa wanted to offer prayers to Lord Śiva but as he remembered the death of his daughter, Satī, his eyes filled with tears and in sadness, his voice choked up. He could not say anything. With great difficulty, he offered wonderful prayers to Lord Śiva and begged Lord Śiva's forgiveness for his faults. Thereafter, Dakṣa began to purify the sacrificial arena and light the fire of sacrifice. As soon as Dakṣa offered ghee into the fire, Lord Viṣṇu appeared in his original form.

Lord Viṣṇu was seated on the shoulder of Garuḍa, who had wings, and his presence illuminated everything. His complexion was blackish, His garment was yellow, like gold,

and His helmet was as dazzling as the sun. His hair was bluish; the colour of black bees and his face was decorated with earrings. His eight hands held a conchshell, wheel, club, lotus flower, arrow, bow, shield and sword and they were all decorated with golden ornaments such as bangles and bracelets. His whole body looked like a blossoming tree, beautifully decorated with various kinds of flowers.

All the demigods immediately offered their respectful obeisances by falling down straight before the Lord. Each in turn offered his most respectful prayers to the Lord. In exchange, Lord Viṣṇu gave good instruction to King Dakṣa and everyone became satisfied by his own share of the sacrifice of Lord Dakṣa.

Chant

Hare Kṛṣṇa
Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa
Hare Hare
Hare Rāma
Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma
Hare Hare

And your life will become sublime