

## Devi Bhagavatam

### THE THIRD BOOK

#### Chapter I

On the questions put by Janamejaya

1-10. Janamejaya said :- “O Bhagavân! What is that great Yajña (sacrifice) named Ambâ Yajña about which you referred just now? Who is the Ambâ? Where was She born? From whom and what for did Her birth take place? What are Her qualities? What is Her form and nature? O Ocean of mercy! You are all-knowing; kindly describe everything duly. Along with this, describe in detail the origin of Brahmânda. O Brahmâna! You know every thing of this whole Universe. I heard that Brahmâ, Visnu and Rudra are the three Devatâs, who are successively originated to create, preserve, and destroy this Universe. Are these three highsouled entities independent? or Do they do their respective duties, being subservient to another Person? Now I am very eager to know all these. So Pârâs'ara's son! Describe all these to me. Are these highly powerful Brahmâ, Visnu and Mahes'vara subject to Death like ordinary beings? Or are they of the nature of everlasting Existence, Intelligence and Bliss? Are they subject to the three fold pains arising from their own selves from elements and from those arising from gods? Are they subject Time? How and wherefrom were they originated? Do they feel the influence of pleasure, pain, sleep or laziness? O Muni! Do their bodies consist of seven Dhâtus? (blood, etc.) or are they of some other kinds? A great doubt has arisen in me on all these points. If these bodies be not made up of five elements, then of what substance are they built of? And of what gunas are their senses built also? How do they enjoy objects of enjoyments? How long is their longevity? O Brâhmana! where do they, Brahmâ, Visnu, and Mahes'vara, the best of the gods live? And of what nature are their powers and prosperities? I like very much to hear all these. So describe all these in detail to me.”

11-24. Vyâsa said :- “O highly intelligent king! The questions that you have asked me today whence and how Brahmâ, etc., were born? etc., are very difficult. In ancient days, once, on an occasion, I asked many questions like you to the Muni Nârada. At first he was greatly suprised to hear my queries, afterwards he gave due replies to them. O king! I will answer to you in the same way; listen. Once I saw that the all-knowing, peaceful Nârada, the knower of the Vedas was sitting on the banks of the Ganges. I became very glad and fell at his feet. By his order I took one excellent seat. Hearing, then, of his welfare and seeing him sitting on the sands I asked him :- “O highly intelligent One! Who is the Supreme Architect of this widely extended Universe? Whence is this Brahmânda born? Is it eternal or temporary? When it is an effect, then it is natural that it cannot be created without a cause. Now when the cause, the creator, is certain, is he one or many? O sage! as regards this wide Samsâra, I have expressed my doubt; now answer me what is the Real and True, and thus remove my doubts. Many believe Mahâ Deva, the Lord of all the other Devas as the Supreme God, the Cause of all. He is the source of deliverance to all the Jîvas; devoid of birth and death; always auspicious; peaceful in Himself and the controller of the three gunas. He is the one and only cause of creation, preservation and destruction. Some Pundits believe Visnu as the God of all and praise Him as such. It is Visnu that is the powerful Supreme Self, the Lord of all and the First Person Âdipurusa. It is He that has no birth nor death, the Deliverer of the whole Jîvas, Omnipresent; His faces are everywhere; He is the Granter of enjoyments and liberation to the devotees. Some others call again Brahmâ, the Cause of all. It is He that is omniscient and the Stimulator of all beings.

The four-faced Brahmâ, the best of all the Devas is born from the navel lotus of some One of endless force. He resides in Satyaloka; He is the Creator of all and the Lord of all the Devas. Again some other Pundits call the Sun, Sûrya as God. In the morning and in the evening they chant His hymns, without any lack of slackness and laziness. Again there are some others, who say that Indra is the lord of all the Jîvas; He is thousand-eyed; it is Indra, the husband of S'achî, that is the God of all. Those who perform Yajñas (sacrifices) worship Vâsava, the king of the Devas. He drinks Soma juice Himself and those who drink Soma are his beloved. He is the one and only Lord of Sacrifices. Thus all men worship, according to their respective wishes, Varuna, Soma, Agni, Pavana (wind), Yama (the god of Death), Kuvera, the lord of wealth; there are some again who worship the elephant-faced Ganapati, the Fructifier of all actions, the Granter of desires of all the devotees, and the Giver of success to all in all enterprises, no sooner He is remembered. Some Âchâryas (professors) say again that the All auspicious the Âdi Mâyâ, the Great S'akti Bhavânî, the Giver of everything, Who is the nature of with and without attributes Who is not different from Brahmâ, who is both Purusa and Prakriti, the Creatrix, the Preservatrix and the Destructrix of all, the Mother of all the gods, beings and lokas, is the Great Goddess of this Brahmânda. She is without beginning and end, full, present in all the beings and everywhere. It is this Bhavanî that assumes the various endless forms such as Vaisnavî S'ânkari, Brâhmî, Vâsavî, Vârunî, Vârâhî, Nara Simhî, Mahâ Laksmî the one and secondless Vedamâtâ, and others. It is this Vidyâ nature that is the One and the only Root of this tree of Samsâra (universe).

The mere act of remembering Her destroys heaps of afflictions of the devotees and fulfills all their desires. She gives Moksa to those who are desirous of liberation and gives rewards to those who want such. She is beyond the three Gunas and still She emanates them. Therefore the Yogis that want rewards meditate Her, Who is of the nature of Vidyâ and Who is devoid of attributes. The best Munis, the knowers of the truths of Vedanta meditate on Her as formless, immutable, stainless, omnipresent Brahmâ devoid of all Dharma. She is described in some Vedas and Upanishads as full of Light (Tejas). Some intelligent persons describe God as of infinite hands, infinite ears, infinite legs, infinite faces, peaceful, Virât Purusa and describe sky as the Pada (place) of Visnu. Other knowers of the Purânas describe Him as Purusottama. There are some others again who declare that this creation cannot be done by a single individual. Some atheists say that this inconceivable infinite Universe can never be created by one God. So there is no such definite God that can be called its Creator. Though without any creator, this Brahmânda is sprung from the Nature and conducted by Her. The followers of the Sâmkhya system say that Purusa is not the creator of this Universe; they declare that Prakriti is the Mistress of this Universe O Muni! Thus I have expressed to you what the Muni Kapila, the Achârya of the Sânkhyas and the other philosophers declare as their opinions; various doubts, thus, reign always in my breast. Owing to these doubts my mind is so confused that I cannot arrive at any definite conclusion. My mind is very much unsettled as to what is Dharma and what is Adharma. What are the characteristics of Dharma? I cannot make out them. For the Devas are all sprung from the Sattva Guna and are always attached to the true Dharma; yet they are frequently troubled by the sinful Dânavas. How, then, can I place my confidence on the permanence of the Dharma? My forefathers, the Pândavas were always endowed with good behaviours and good actions and they remained always in the path of the Dharma; yet they suffered a good deal of troubles and sufferings. In these cases it is very difficult understand the greatness of Dharma. So, O Father! Seeing all these, my mind is thrown into a sea of doubts and troubles. O Great Muni!

There is nothing impracticable with you; so remove my doubts. O Muni! I am always plunged and raised and plunged again in this sea of delusion. So save me by lifting me on a boat of wisdom and carry me across this ocean of samsâra (this world).

Thus ends the first chapter on the third Skandha on the questions put by Janamejaya in the Mahâpurâna S'rîmad Devî Bhagâvatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâs.

## Chapter II

On Rudras going towards the heavens on the celestial car

1-19. Vyâsa said :- O mighty armed Kuru! What you have asked me just now, I also asked the same thing to Nârada, the lord of the Munis and he gave me the following reply :- O Vyâsa! What shall I say to you on this point more than this that a doubt occurred to me also in my former days. The question that you have put to me today rose in my mind before; and I went to my father Brahmâ, of endless energy and asked to him thus :- O Lord! O Father! Whence is this whole Brahmânda born? Have You created it? Or is it Visnu or Mahes'vara? O all pervading soul! Who is there in this Brahmânda fit to be worshipped? O Lord of the world! Who is the top-most Lord ruling over everything? Kindly say. O Brahmân! I am plunged in this sea of Maya and perils; my heart is agitated with doubts; hence it is not appeased in any place of pilgrimage ; or in thinking any Deva or in practising any Sâdhan or in any other object. O Sinless one! Give me the answers duly and thus remove my doubts. O Tormentor of foes! Unless the highest truth is not known, peace is not found. This heart, distracted in various ways, cannot rest fixed on one subject. Whom am I to remember? Whom to worship? Where to go? Whom to praise? Who is the Supreme God this Universe? I do not understand these things. O Satyavati's son! Hearing these my serious queries, Brahmâ, the grand-Sire of beings, replied to me as follows :- O highly illustrious son! What more shall I say to you than this that even Visnu is unable to answer your questions; so difficult are they indeed! O great intelligent one! Nobody that is attached to the world knows anything about this. Those who are unattached to this world, who are free from any envy, these who are without desires and calm, those highsouled ones know the secret of all this. In former days when all was water, water everywhere and all things, moving and non-moving were destroyed, when five elements were sprung, then I was also born from the lotus navel of Visnu. Then not seeing Moon, Sun, trees, or mountains or anything and sitting on the centre (Karnikâ) of the lotus thought thus :- When I am born in this great ocean of waters? Who has created me? Who is now my protector? And Who will be my Destroyer when this cycle ends? There is no earth distinctly visible anywhere here; on what, then, this mass of water rests? Lotus is termed Pankaja because it springs from mud and dirt; so unless there exists the earth underneath with mud and dirt, how this lotus will come out here! Now let me try and find out where is the root of this lotus, where is the mud and dirt? If this be found, then the earth will be also certainly there. Thus thinking, I dived underneath the water and searched for one thousand years but could not find earth anywhere, when the celestial voice entered my ears "Practise tapasyâ (austerities)." Hearing this celestial voice, I sat on the lotus, my birth place, and practised tapasyâ for one thousand years.

20-30. Next, the celestial voice came again "Create." Hearing this, I became quite confounded and began to think within myself "now what am I to create? What to do?" After this, the two terrible Daityas Madhu and Kaitabha came to me and affrighted me saying "Fight with us." I became quite terrified and holding the stem of the lotus, I got down within the water. There I saw a wonderful person, sleeping on the Ananta serpent. He was of a deep blue colour like a rain-cloud, wearing yellow clothes, four-armed, garlanded with forest flowers, and the Lord of this whole Universe. On the four arms of this Mahâ Visnu there were conch-shells, disc, club,

and lotus and other weapons. I saw this Achyuta Purusa, sleeping on the Ananta serpent bed, motionless and under the influence of Yoga Nidrâ. I then thought within myself "What am I to do?" Not being able to find out any other way, I recollected the Devî who was then of the nature of sleep and began to praise Her. The auspicious Devî Yoga Nidrâ, whose form could not be determined, immediately left the body of Visnu and decorated with divine ornaments, began to shine in the air. After She left the body of Visnu, Visnu immediately got up. And He fought terribly for five thousand years with the Dânavas Madhu Kaitabha; then by the grace of the Bhagavatî, He extended His own thighs and then, on those thighs, He slew the two demons. Where Visnu and myself were standing, Rudra Deva came also and joined with us. Then we three saw the beautiful Devî in the celestial space.

31-40. We three, then, commenced to chant hymns to Her and She gladdened our hearts by Her gracious look and said :- "O Brahmâ! O Visnu! O Rudra! The two great Daityas are slain. Now forsake your laziness and do your respective works of creating, preserving, and destroying the Universe; create your own abodes, and live in happiness; create by your respective lordly powers, the fourfold beings." Hearing the Devî's gentle sweet words, we spoke :- "O Mother! There is no wide earth here; all is one mass of infinite ocean. No five elements, no five tanmâtrâs, no sensual organs, no Gunas, nothing exist here; how can we then execute the works of creation, etc. Hearing our words, the Devî smiled. Immediately there came from the sky overhead a beautiful aerial car. The Devî said :- "O Brahmâ! O Visnu! O Rudra! Get in this car without any fear. To-day I will show you one wonderful thing." At Her word, we got into the beautiful car without any fear. It was decorated with various gems and jewels, bedecked with pearls, emitting sweet tinkling sounds of bells and looking as the abode of the celestials. Seeing us seated without any fear, She made the car get high up in the sky by Her force.

Thus ends the second chapter of the third skandha on Brahmâ, Visnu and Rudra's going towards the heavens on the celestial car, given by the Devî in the Mahâpurâna S'rîmad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâs.

### Chapter III

#### On seeing the Devî

1-5. Brahmâ said :- "We were very much astonished not to find water where our beautiful aeroplane landed us. We saw earth resonated with the sweet cooings of the cuckoos, filled with beautiful fruit-laden trees, forests and gardens. Big rivers, wells, tanks, ponds, water-springs, small pools, women, men all are there. Next we saw, in front of us, a nice city enclosed by a divine wall, containing many sacrificial halls and various palatial buildings and magnificent edifices. Oh! We thought :- It is Heaven! What a great wonder! Who built this?"

6-11. Next we saw a king looking like a Deva is going out on a hunting excursion in the forest. The Devî Ambikâ, Whom we saw before, is staying on the chariot. In an instant, our aeroplane, propelled by air got high up above the sky and reached in the twinkling of an eye at a lovely place. We saw there a divine Nandana garden. There Surabhi, the cow of plenty, was staying under the shade of the Parijâta tree. Close by her, there was an elephant having four tusks; and Menakâ and other hosts of Apsarâs were there with their various gestures and postures, playing, dancing and singing. There were hundred of Yaksas, Gandharbhas, Vidyâdharas within that Mandâra garden playing and singing. Within this there was the Lord Satakratu with S'achî, the daughter of Pulomâ.

12-34. Next we saw with great wonder, Varuna, the lord of the aquatic animals, Kuvera, Yama, Sûrya (sun), fire and the other Devas; then we saw that in our front, Indra the Lord of

the Devas, was coming out from a well decorated city. He was there situated in his palanquin, calm and quiet and carried by men. Then the car, where we were situated, began to

get up high in the sky, and in the twinkling of an eye, we reached Brahmâ loka, that is saluted by all the Devas. There S'ambhu and Kes'ava were greatly bewildered to see Brahmâ of that place. In the council hall of Brahmâ, the Vedas with their Angas, the serpents, hills, oceans and rivers were seen. Seeing all these, Visnu and Mahes'vara asked me :- "O Four-faced one! Who is this eternal Brahmâ? I replied :- I do not know who is this Brahmâ? Who am I? and who is He? why has this error come over me? You, too, also are gods so you can better ponder over it." Next our car, going with the swiftness of mind went, in the twinkling of an eye, to the beautiful all auspicious Kailâs'a mountain surrounded by bliss-giving Yaksas. It was beautified by the Mandâra garden, resonated by the sweet cooings of S'ukas and cuckoos and the sweet sounds of lutes and small drums and tabors. When we reached there we saw the five faced, three-eyed Bhagavân S'ashi S'ekhara, with ten hands, wearing tiger skin, and the upper garment of the elephant skin. He was then, getting out of his abode, riding on a bull. His two sons, the great heroes, Ganes'a and Kârtikeya, beautifully adorned, were attending Him as His body guards. Nandi and all other hosts were following Him, chanting victories to Him. O Muni Narâda! we were greatly wondered to see another S'ankara, surrounded by the Matrikâs. So much so, that perplexed with doubts, I sat down there. Next our aeroplane went on with the force of wind; and in an instant reached the abode of Vaikuntha, the amusement court of Laksmî. O Sûta! There at Vaikuntha, we saw a wonderful manifestation of power. Our companion Visnu was greatly surprised to see that excellent city. We saw there four-armed Visnu, of the colour of Âtasi flower, wearing yellow garments, adorned with divine ornaments sitting on Garuda. Laksmî Devî is fanning wonderful chowry to Him. Struck with wonder at the sight of the eternal Visnu, we took our seat on the car and looked at one another's face.

Next the balloon ascended with the swiftness of wind; and, in the twinkling of an eye, reached to the ocean of nectar, the Sudhâ-Sâgar, with waves playing sweetly on it. This ocean Sudhâ Sâgara is filled with aquatic animals and agitated with ripples. We saw and went along and came to a very wonderful place called the Mani Dvîpa (the island of gems) in the midst of the Ocean. It was adorned with Mandâra and Pârijâta an other heavenly flower trees (plants?), with various beautiful carpets, with variegated trees As'oka, Vakula, Ketakî, Champaka, Kuravaka, etc., adorned with lustrous gems and pearls. It was resonated with the sweet cooings of the cuckoos and the humming sounds of bees; and it presented the sight of a sweet harmonious music playing there.

35-67. Sitting on our aeroplane, we saw, from a distance, within that Dvîpa, a beautiful cot known as S'ivâkâra (i.e. whose four legs represent Brahmâ, Visnu, Rudra, etc., and whose top portion represents Sadâ S'iva looking like a rainbow, with exquisitely beautiful carpet spread over it and decked with various gems and jewels and inlaid with pearls. We saw a Divine Lady, sitting on the cot, wearing a red garment and a garland of red cloth and bedewed with red sandal paste. Her eyes were dark-red; that beautiful faced red-lipped lady looked more beautiful than ten millions of lightnings and ten millions of Laksmîs and lustrous like the Sun. The Bhagavatî Bhuvanes'varî was sitting with a sweet smile on Her lips and holding in Her four hands noose, goad, and signs indicating as if She was ready to grant boons and asking Her devotees discard all fear. We never saw before such a form. Even the birds of that place repeat the mystic incantation Hrim and serve that Lady, Who is of the colour of the rising Sun, all merciful, and in the full bloom of youth. That lotus-faced smiling lady was adorned with all the beauties of Nature. Her high breasts defied the lotus bud. She was holding various jewelled ornaments, e.g., armplates, bracelets, diadems, etc.

Her lotus-face looked exceedingly beautiful with jewelled ear-rings of the shape of the S'ri Yantra (yantra of Tripurâ Sundarî). Hrillexhâ and other Deva girls were surrounding Her. There were Sakhis on the four sides – always chanting hymns to Mahes'varî, the Lady of the world. She was surrounded on Her all sides by Ananga kusuma and other Devîs. She was sitting in the middle of the Satkona (six angled) Yantra. We were all wondered at the sight of this Wonderful Form never seen before and we thought :– “Who is this Lady? What is Her name? we know nothing of Her, from such a distance.” Thus while we were gazing at Her, that four armed Lady became gradually thousand eyed, with thousand hands and thousand feet; so it seemed to us. O Nârada! We became very much embarrassed with doubts and thought within ourselves “Is She Apsarâ (nymph) or a Gandharva daughter or any other Deva Girl? who is She?” At this juncture Bhagavân Visnu saw closely the sweet smiling Devî and by his intelligence came to a definite conclusion and spoke to us :– “This is the Devî Bhagavatî Mahâvidyâ Mahâ Mâyâ, undecaying and eternal; She is the Full, the Prakriti; She is the Cause of us all. This Devî is inconceivable to those who are of dull intellects; only the Yogis can see Her by their Yoga-powers. She is eternal (Brahmâ) and also non-eternal (Mâyâ). She is the Will-force of the Supreme Self. She is the First Creatrix of this world.

This Devî with wide eyes, the Lady of the Universe, has produced the Vedas. The less-fortunate persons cannot worship Her. During the time of Pralaya, She destroys all the Universe, draws within Her body all the subtle bodies (Linga-Sarîras), and plays. O two Devas! At present She is residing in the form of the Seed of the Universe. Behold! On Her sides are seen duly all the Vibhûtis (manifestations of powers). They are all adorned with divine ornaments and anointed with divine scents and are serving Her. O Brahmân! O S'ankara! To-day we are blessed and highly fortunate that we have got the sight of this Devî. The tapasyâ (asceticisms) that we practised of yore have yielded to us this fruit. Else why Bhagavatî has shown so carefully Her own form? Those who are highly meritorious by tapasyâs and gifts of abundant wealth, those high souled persons are able to see this all-auspicious Bhagavatî. The person attached to sensual objects can never see Her. It is She that is the Mûlâ Prakriti, united with the Chidânanda Person. It is She that creates this Brahmânda and exhibits it to the Paramâtmâ (the Supreme Self). O two Devas! This whole Universe and all the Seers and Seen and other things contained therein owe to Her as their sole cause. She is the Mâyâ assuming all forms; She is the Goddess of all. Where is I myself! Where are the Devas! Where are Laksmî and the other Devîs! We cannot compare to one-hundred thousandth part of Her. It is this all-excellent Lady, Whom I saw in the great Ocean when She reckoned Me who was baby then with greatest gladness. In former days, when I was sleeping on the cot made of immoveable fixed leaves of a banyan tree and licking my toe, making it enter within my mouth and playing like an ordinary baby, this Lady rocked my gentle body to and fro on the banyan leaves singing songs like a Mother. Now I recollect all what I felt before at Her sight and recognise that She is the Bhagavatî. These very things I now communicate to you. Hear attentively that She is this Lady and She is our Mother.”

Thus ends the third chapter of the Third Skandha on seeing the Devî in the Mahâ Purânam S'rimad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâs.

#### Chapter IV

On the hymns to the Great Devî by Visnu

1-20. Brahmâ said :– Thus speaking, Bhagavân Janârdana Visnu spoke to me again :– “Come, let us bow down to Her again and again and let us go to Her. We shall reach at Her feet fearlessly and we will chant hymns to Her; Mahâ Mâyâ will be pleased with us and will

grant us boons. If the guards at the entrance prevent us from going, we would stand at the gateway and we will chant hymns to the Devî with one mind.”

Brahmâ said :- When Hari addressed us in the above way, we two became choked by intense feelings of joy; our voice became tremulous and we waited there for some time; our hearts were elated with joy to go to Her. We then accepted Hari's word said “Om” and got down from our car and went with hastened steps and with fear to the gate. Seeing us standing at the gateway, the Devî Bhagâvatî smiled and within an instant transformed us three into females. We looked beautiful and youthful women, adorned with nice ornaments; thus we greatly wondered and went to Her. Seeing us standing at Her feet in feminine forms, the beautiful Devî Bhagâvatî, looked on us with eyes of affection. We then bowed to the great Devî, looked at one another and stood before Her in that feminine dress. We three, then, began to see the pedestal of the great Devî, shining with the lustre of ten million Suns and decorated with various gems and jewels. We next discerned that thousands and thousands of attendants are waiting on Her. Some of them are wearing red dress; some blue dress, some yellow dress; thus the Deva girls, variously dressed were serving Her and standing by Her side. They were dancing, singing on and playing with musical instruments and were gladly chanting hymns in praise of the Devî. O Nârada! We saw there another wonderful thing. Listen. We saw the whole universe, moving and non-moving within the nails of the lotus feet of the Devî. We saw there myself, Visnu, Rudra, Vâyû, Agni, Yama, Moon, Sun, Varuna, Tvastâ, Indra, Kuvera and other Devas, Apsarâs, Gandarbhas, rivers, oceans, mountains, Visvâvasus Chitraketu, Sveta, Chitrângada, Nârada, Tumburu, Hâ Hâ Hû Hû and other Gandarbhas, the twin As'vins, the eight Vasus, Sâdhyas, Siddhas, the Pitris, Ananta and other Nâgas, Kinnaras, Uragas, Râksasas, the abode of Vaikuntha, the abode of Brahmâ, Kailas'a mountain, the best of all mountains; all were existing there. Within that nail of the toe were, reflected all the things of the Universe. The lotus whence I was born, the four faced Brahmâ like myself on that lotus, Bhagavân Jagannâth lying on that bed of Ananta, the two Demons Madhu Kaitabha, all I saw there.

21-31. Seeing all these wonderful things within the nails of Her lotus feet, I became greatly surprised and thought timidly :- “What are all these!” My companions Visnu and S'ankara were struck with wonder. We three, then, made out that She was our Mother of the universe.

Thus full one hundred years passed away in seeing the various glories of the Devî in the auspicious nectar-like Mani Dvîpa; as long we were there, Her attendants, the Deva girls adorned with various ornaments gladly considered us as Sakhîs. We, too, were greatly fascinated by their enchanting gestures and postures. For that reason, we saw always their beautiful movements with great gladness. Once, on an occasion, Bhagavân Visnu, while He was in that feminine form, chanted hymns in praise of the great Devî S'rî Bhuvanesh'varî.

S'rî Bhagavân said :- Salutation to the Devî Prakriti, the Creatrix; I bow down again and again to Thee. Thou art all-auspicious and grantest the desires of Thy devotees; Thou art of the nature of Siddhi (success) and Vriddhi (increase). I bow down again and again to Thee. I bow down to the World Mother, Who is of the nature of Everlasting Existence, Intelligence and Bliss. O Devî! Thou createst, preservest and destroyest this Universe; Thou dost the Pralaya (the great Dissolution) and showest favour to the created beings. Thus Thou art the Authoress of the above five fold things that are done; so, O Bhuvanesh'varî, I bow down to Thee! Thou art the great efficient and material cause of the changeful. Thou art the Unchangeable, Immoveable Consciousness; Thou art the half letter (Ardhamâtrâ), Hrillekâ (the consciousness that ever pervades both inside and outside the Universe); Thou art the Supreme Soul and the individual soul. Salutation again and again to Thee.

O Mother! I now realise fully well that this whole Universe rests on Thee; it rises from Thee and again melts away in Thee. The creation of this Universe shews Thy infinite force. Verily, Thou art become Thyself all these Lokas (regions). During the time of creation Thou createst the two formless elements akâsâ and Vâyu and the three elements with form, fire, water, and earth; then with these Thou createst the whole Universe and shewest this to the Enjoyer Purusa, who is of the nature of consciousness, for His satisfaction. Thou again dost become the material cause of the twentythree (23) Tattvas, Mahat, etc., as enumerated in the Sâmkhya system and appearest to us like a mirage.

32. O Mother! Were it not for Thee, no object would be visible, Thou pervadest the whole Universe. It is for this reason that those persons that are wise declare that even the Highest Purusa can do no work without Thy aid.

33-34. O Devî! Thou createst and art giving satisfaction to the whole Universe by Thy power; again at the time of Pralaya Thou swallowest forcibly all these that are seen. So, O Devî! Who can fathom Thy powers? O Mother! Thou didst save us from the hands of Madhu and Kaitabha. Then Thou hast brought us to this Mani Dvîpa and shewed us Thy own form, all the extended regions and immense powers and given us exquisite delight and joy. This is the highest place of happiness.

35-37. O Mother! When I Myself, S'ankara and Brahmâ or any one of us is unable to fathom Thy inconceivable glory, who else can then ascertain? O Bhavânî! Who knows, how many more than the several regions that we saw reflected in thy nails of Thy feet, exist in Thy creation. O One endowed with infinitely great powers! O Devî! we saw another Visnu, another Hara, another Brahmâ, all of great celebrity in the Universe exhibited by Thee; who knows how many other such Brahmâs, etc., exist in Thy other Universes! Thy glory is infinite. O Mother! I bow down again and again to Thy lotus feet and pray to Thee that may Thy this form exist always in my mind. May my mouth always utter Thy name and may my two eyes see always Thy lotus feet.

38-43. O Revered One! May I remember Thee as my Goddess and may'st Thou constantly look on myself as Thy humble servant. O Mother! What more shall I say than this :- May this relation as mother and son always exist between Thee and me. O World-Mother! There is nothing in this world that is not known to Thee for Thou art omniscient. So O Bhavânî! What more shall my humble self declare to Thee! Now dost Thou do whatever Thou desirest. O Devî! The rumour goes that Brahmâ is the Creator, Visnu is the Preserver, and Mahes'vara is the Destroyer! Is this true? O Eternal One! It is through Thy Will power, through Thy force, that we create, preserve and destroy. O Daughter of the Himalaya mountain! The earth is supporting this Universe; it is Thy endless might that is holding all this made of five elements. O Grantress of boons! It is through Thy power and lustre that the Sun is lustrous and becomes visible. Though Thou art the attributeless Self, yet by Thy Mâyic power Thou appearest in the form of this Prapancha Universe. When Brahmâ, Mahes'a, and I myself take birth by Thy power and are not eternal, what more can be said of Indra and other Devas than this that they are mere temporary things and created. It is only Thou that art Eternal, Ancient Prakriti and the Mother of this Universe. O Bhavânî! Now I realise from my remaining with Thee, that it is Thou that dost impart, out of mercy, the Brahmâ vidyâ to the ancient Purusa; and thus He can realise His eternal nature. Otherwise He will remain always under delusion that He is the Lord, He is the Purusa without beginning, that He is good and the Universal Soul, and thus suffers under various forms of egoism (Ahamkâra).

Thou art the Vidyâ of the intelligent persons and the S'akti of the beings endowed with force; Thou art Kîrtî (fame), Kânti (lustre), Kamalâ (wealth) and the spotless Tusti (peace,

happiness). Amongst men, Thou art the dispassion, leading to Mukti (complete freedom from bondage). Thou art the Gâyatri, the mother of the Vedas; and Thou art Svahâ, Svadhâ, etc. Thou art the Bhâgavatî, of the nature of the three Gunas; Thou art the half mâtrâ (half the upper stroke of a letter), the fourth state, transcending the Gunas. It is Thou that givest always the S'âstras for the preservation of the Devas and the Brâhmanas. It is Thou that hast expanded and manifested this whole phenomenon of the visible Universe for the liberation of the embodied souls (Jîvas), the parts of the pure holy Brâhman, the Full, the Beginningless, the Deathless, forming the waves of the Infinite expanse of ocean. When the Jîva comes to know internally and becomes thoroughly conscious that all this is Thy work, Thou createst and destroyest, that all this is Thy Mâyic pastime, false, like the parts of an actor in a theatrical play, then and then only he desists for ever from his part in this Theatre of world. O Mother! O Destroyer of the greatest difficulties! I always take refuge unto Thee. Thou dost save me from this ocean of Samsâra, full of Moha (delusion). Let Thou be my Saviour when my end will come, from these infinitely troublesome and unreal pains arising from love and hatred. Obeisance to Thee! O Devî! O Mahâ vidyâ! I fall prostrate at Thy feet. O Thou, the Giver of all desires! O Auspicious One! Dost Thou give the knowledge that is All-Light to Me.

Thus ends the fourth chapter of the Third Skandha on the hymns to the Great Devî by Visnu in the Mahâpurâna S'rîmad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâs.

## Chapter V

On the chanting of hymns by Hara and Brahmâ

1. Brahmâ said :- O Nârada! Thus speaking, Visnu stopped; Sankara, the Destroyer, then stepped in and, bowing down to the Devî said :-
2. S'iva said :- O Devî! If Hari be born by Thy power and the lotus-born Brahmâ have come into existence from Thee, why, then, I who of Tamo Guna be not born of Thee! O Auspicious One! Thou art clever in creating all the Lokas! What wonder is there in My being created by Thee.
3. O Mother! Thou art the earth, water, air, âkâsa and fire. Thou art, again, the organs of senses and the organs of perception; Thou art Buddhi, mind and Ahankâra (egoism).
4. Those who say that Hari, Hara, and Brahmâ are respectively the Preserver, the Destroyer and the Creator of this whole Universe do know anything. All the three, above mentioned, are created by Thee; then they perform always their respective functions; their sole refuge being Thyself.
5. O Mother! If the Universe be created of the five elements, earth, air, ether, fire, and water, having the properties of touch, taste, etc., then how these five elements possessing attributes and of the nature of effects, can come into manifestation, without their being born from Thy Chit portion (Intelligence)?
6. O Auspicious Mother! It is Thou in the shape of Brahmâ, Visnu and S'iva, That art creating this Universe and it is Thou that hast assumed the form of this whole Universe, moving and non-moving. Thus Thou playest, as it wills Thee, under various forms, again and again. Thou dost cease from play (during pralaya) as it likes Thee.
7. O Mother! When Brahmâ, Visnu and I become desirous to create the world, we execute our duties by taking the dust (earth, etc.) of Thy lotus feet.
8. O Mother! If it were not Thy mercy, then how Brahmâ could have become endowed with Rajoguna, Visnu with Sattvaguna and I with Tamoguna?

9. O Mother! If there were no differences observed in Thy mind, then why hast Thou created in this world rich and poor, king and councillors, servants, etc., various classes of beings? Why hast Thou not created all alike happy or all alike miserable?

10. So Thou wilt have to show Thy mercy towards me. Thy three gunas are capable at all times to create, preserve and destroy the world; then Hari, Hara and Brahmâ, whom Thou hast created as the cause of the three worlds, is simply Thy will.

11-12. O Bhavâni! If Thy Gunas had no power in the acts of creation, etc., then how can the fact that while we three Hari, Brahmâ and I were coming in the aeroplane, we saw on our way new worlds created by Thee, become possible? Kindly dost Thou say on this. O World-Mother! It is Thou that desirest to create, preserve, and destroy this world by Thy part Mâyik power. Thou art always enjoying with Purusa, Thy husband. O S'iva! We cannot fathom Thy inscrutable ways.

13-15. O auspicious one! How can we understand Thy sport? O Mother! We are transformed into young women before Thee; let us serve Thy lotus feet. If we get our manhood, we will be deprived from serving Thy feet and thus of the greatest happiness. O Mother! O Sire! I do not like to leave Thy lotus feet and get my man-body again and reign in the three worlds. O Beautiful faced one! Now that I have got this youthful feminine form before Thee, there is not a trace of desire within me to get again my masculine form. What use is there in getting manhood, what happiness is there if I do not get sight of Thy lotus-feet!

16-18. O Mother! Let this unsullied fame of mine be spread over in the three worlds that I have got, in this young womanly form, the chance of serving Thy lotus feet that has got this effect that the idea of world goes away. Who is there that will leave Thy service and desire to enjoy the foeless kingdom in the world? Oh! even a moment appears a Yuga to him who has not got Thy lotus feet with him! O Mother! Those that

leave the worship of Thy lotus feet and become engaged in performing tapasyâ are certainly deprived of the best thing by the Creator, though their minds be pure and holy. Their power from their Tapasyâ may be acquired and they be entitled for Mukti; yet they get dire defeat from not having Thee.

19. O Unborn One! Austerities, control of passions, enlightenment or performance of sacrifices, as ordained in the Vedas, nothing can save, from this ocean of Samsâra. It is the devotional worship only of Thy lotus feet that can make one attain the Beatitude. O Devî! If Thou be extremely merciful towards me, then initiate me in that wonderful holy mantra of Thine; I will repeat that omnipotent par-excellent nine-lettered mantra of the Chandikâ Devî and be happy.

20-26. O Mother! In my former birth I got the nine-lettered mantra but now I have forgotten it O Tarinî! O Saviour! Give me today that mantra and save me from this ocean of world. Brahmâ said :- When S'iva of wonderful fire and energy, said this, the Devî Ambikâ clearly uttered the nine lettered mantra. Mahâdeva accepted the mantra and became very glad. He fell down at the feet of the Devî, and then and there began to repeat the nine-lettered mantra together with Vîja (seed) that yields desires and liberation and can be easily pronounced. When I saw S'ankara, the Auspicious One to all the Lokas, in that state, I fell down also at the feet of the Devî and spoke to Mahâ Mâyâ :- O Mother! It is not that the Vedas are unable to ascertain Thy nature; for, in the performances of sacrifices and other minor actions, they do not mention Thy full Nature, the Ordainer of all but mention simply Indra and minor deities and Svâhâ Devî, a portion of Thy essence as the presiding deities of the sacrificial offerings and

oblations. So, O Devî! It is Thou that hast been extolled in this Universe as the Universal Consciousness, all knowing and transcending all the Devas and all the Lokas.

Note :- The nine lettered mantra is “Om Hrîm S'rîm Chandikâyai namah.”

27. I have created this greatly wondrous Universe; I am the Lord of this Brahmânda. Who is there more powerful than me in these three worlds? When I am Brahmâ, transcending all the Lokas, then I am blessed; there is no doubt in this. By reason of this vanity I am plunged in this widely extended ocean of Samsâra.

28-31. That now I have been able to get the dust of Thy lotus feet, has now made me really proud; and truly I am blessed today and by Thy grace this manifestation of pride on my part has become quite justified. Thou destroyest the fear of this Samsâra and givest Mukti. So, O Goddess! pray unto Thee that Thou dost cut asunder this iron chain of my delusion, full of great troubles and make me devoted to Thee. O Auspicious One! I am born from the lotus discovered by Thee; now I am extremely anxious how I can get Mukti. I am Thy obedient servant; I am merged in the delusion of this ocean of world. Save me O S'iva! from this Samsâra. Those who do not know Thy character, think that I am the Creator and Lord of this Universe; those, who do not worship Thee and worship Indra and other Devas and perform sacrifices to attain Heaven are certainly ignorant of Thy glory. O Prime Mâyâ! Thou art the Eternal Mahâ Mâyâ! It is Thou that dost want to play this worldplay, and for that purpose hast created me as Brahmâ. Then I created these four sorts of beings, engendered by heat and moisture (said of insects and worms), those that are oviparous, those that are sprung from germs or shoots, and those that are born from womb, viviparous and exhibit my pride “That I am omniscient” So forgive this sin of mine, this my pride.

32-37. O Mother! Those ignorant persons blinded by passion, who take recourse to the eight-fold Yoga and Samâdhi and labour under it, do not know for certain, they would get Moksa, if they utter Thy name, even under a pretext. O Bhavânî! are they not deluded by error and blinded by passion for this world, who discriminate only the Tattvas (essences) and forget Thy name? For it is Thou that dost give Mukti from this world. O Thou Unborn! Can Hari, Hara, etc., and other ancient persons who have realised the highest Truth, forget, even for a second Thy holy character and Thy names S'iva, Ambikâ, S'akti, Isvarî and others? Canst Thou not create, by Thy glance merely, this fourfold creation? In fact, for mere recreation and will, it is Thou that hast made me as a Creator from the earliest times. Is it not that Thou didst save Hari in the ocean from the two Daityas Madhu and Kaitabha? Is it not again the fact that Thou destroyest Hara even who is the great destroyer, when Thou dissolvest the creation? Otherwise why is it that Hara becomes born from my eye-brows at the time of fresh creation? So Hari is not the Preserver of all. Hara is not the Destroyer of all. Had they been such, why would they be preserved and destroyed respectively by Thee? So Thou alone art the Creatrix and Preservatrix of all. O Bhavânî; no one has heard of or seen Thee taking birth; nobody knows whence Thou art born. Thou art, indeed, the One and only S'akti! Only the four Vedas can make one understand Thy Nature. O Mother! It is only by Thy help that I am able to create this creation; Hari, to preserve; and Hara, to destroy.

Without Thy aid, we are able to do nothing. There is nobody, in this world, born or that was born or that will be born, who does not become doubtful as we are. This Thine wondrously variegated Universe, full of Thy Lîlâ, consisting in variety, is the common ground of dispute of the imperfect intellects; who are not deluded here! In this Samsârâ, full of things, visible and invisible, there is another one who is more ancient than Thee; there is another Highest Person who is Thy substratum. If it be argued nicely, it will be seen that there is no other third Person that can be proved as far as evidences or proofs go to measure it. The wise persons,

knowing all the laws, declare that there is the One God attributeless, inactive, without any object in view, without any upâdhis or adjunct without any parts, who is the witness of Thy widely extended Leelâ "One alone exists; and that is Brahmân, and there is nothing else." This is the saying of the Vedas. Now I feel in my mind a doubt as to the discrepancy with this Veda saying. I cannot say that the Veda is false. So I ask Thee :– Art Thou the Brahmân, the one and the secondless that is mentioned in the Vedas? or Is the other Person Brahmâ? Kindly solve this doubt of mine. My mind is not completely free from doubts; this little mind is still discussing whether the Reality is dual or one; I cannot solve myself. So dost Thou say from Thy mouth and cut my doubts asunder. Whether Thou art male or female, describe in detail to me. So that, knowing the Highest S'akti, I be freed from this ocean Samsâra.

Thus ends the fifth chapter of the Third Skandha on the chanting of hymns by Hara and Brahmâ in the Mahâ Purânâ S'rîmad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

## Chapter VI

On the description of the Devî's Vibhûtis (powers)

1-10. Brahmâ said :– When I thus asked with great humility, the Devî Bhâgavatî, the Prime S'akti, She addressed me thus in the following sweet words :– There is oneness always between me and the Purusa; there is difference whatsoever at any time between me and the Purusa (Male, the Supreme Self). Who is I, that is Purusa; who is Purusa, that is I. The difference between force and the receptacle of force is due to error. He who knows the subtle difference between us two, is certainly intelligent; he is freed from this bondage of Samsâra; there is no manner of doubt in this. The One Secondless Eternal ever-lasting Brahmâ substance becomes dual at the time of creation. As a lamp, though one, becomes two by virtue of adjuncts; as a face, though one, becomes two, as reflected in a mirror; as one man becomes double by his shadow, we become reflected into many, by virtue of different Antah Karanas (mind, buddhi, and ahankâra) created by Mâyâ. The necessity of creation, again and again, after the Prâkriti Pralayas is due to the fructification of those Karmas of the Jîvas, whose fruits were not enjoyed before the Pralayas ; so when creation again commences, the above said differences are found to appear; Brahmâ is the material cause of these changes; without Brahmâ as the basis, the existence of Mâyâ is simply impossible. It is therefore that in Mâyâ and Mâyâ's action, Brahmâ is interwoven. For this reason as many differences are found in Mâyâ, so many differences exist in Brahmâ.

The Mâyâ and Brahmâ appear as two and hence all the differences, visible and invisible, have come forth. Only during creation are these differences conceived. When everything melts away, i.e., there comes the Pralaya or general dissolution, then, I am not female, I am not male, nor I am hermaphrodite. I then remain as Brahmâ with Mâyâ latent in it. During the time of creation I am S'rî (wealth), Buddhi (intellect), Dhriti, (fortitude). Smriti (recollection), Sraddhâ (faith), Medhâ (intelligence), Dayâ (mercy), Lajjâ (modesty), Kshudhâ (hunger), Trishnâ (thirst), Kshamâ (forgiveness), Akshamâ (non-forgiving), Kânti (lustre), Sânti (peace), Pipâsâ (thirst), Nidrâ (sleep) Tandrâ (drowsiness), Jarâ (old age), Ajarâ (non old-age), Vidyâ (knowledge), Avidyâ (non-knowledge), Sprihâ (desires), Vâncchâ (desires), S'akti (force), As'akti (non-force), Vasâ (fat), Majjâ (marrow), Tvak (skin), Dristi (sight), Satyâsatya Vâkya (true and untrue words) and it is I that become Parâ, Madhyamâ, Pas'yanti, etc., the innumerable Nâdis (tubular organs of the body, e. g., arteries, veins, intestines, blood vessels, pulses, etc.); there are three koti and a half Nâdis (35 millions of Nadis).

11-13. O Brahmâ! See what substance is there in this Samsâra, that is separate from Me? And what can you imagine with which I am not connected? So know this as certain that I am these all forms. O Creator! Say, is there any such thing, where you will not see my above mentioned positive form? So, in this creation, I am one, and I am many as well, in various forms. Know this as certain that it is I, that assuming the names of all the various Devas, exist in so many forms of S'aktis. It is I that manifest power and wield strength.

14-27. O Brahmâ! I am Gaurî, Brâhmî, Raudrî, Vârâhî, Vaisnavî, S'iva, Vâruni, Kauverî, Nâra Sinhî, and Vâsavî S'aktis. I enter in every substance, in everything of the nature of effect. Making that Purusa the instrument, I do all the actions (rather Purusa is the efficient cause, the immediate agent). I am the coolness in water, the heat in fire, the lustre in the Sun, the cooling rays in the Moon; and thus I manifest my my strength. O Brahmâ! Verily, I tell you this as certain that this universe becomes motionless, if it be abandoned by Me. If I leave S'ankara, he will not be able to kill the Daityas. A very weak man is declared to be as without any strength; he is not said to be without Rudra, or without Visnu, nobody says like this; everyone says, he is without strength, without S'akti. Those who get fallen, tumbled, afraid, quiet, or under one's enemies are called powerless; no one says that this man is Rudraless and so forth. So the creation that you perform, know S'akti, power to be the cause thereof. When you will be endowed with that S'akti, you will be able to create this whole Universe. Hari, Rudra, Indra, Agni, Chandra, Sûrya, Yama, Vis'vakarmâ, Varuna Pavana, and other Devas all are able to do their karmas, when they are united respectively with their S'aktis. This Earth, when united with S'akti, remains fixed and becomes capable to hold all the Jîvas and beings. And if this Earth be devoid of force, She cannot hold an atom even.

Thus Ananta, Kurma and all the other elephants of the eight points of the compass, become able to do their respective works, only by My help (when united with Me, the Force). O Lotus born! If I wish I can drink all the fire and waters today and I can hold wind in check. I do whatever I wish. If I say that I am creating this world then the inconsistency arises thus :— “When I am everything, then I am being eternal, all this universe, made up of Prapancha, becomes eternal.” (Whereas this universe is not eternal in the sense that it is changing.) If it were said that this universe is different from Me, then My saying that I am everything becomes inconsistent. Thinking thus, do not plunge yourself in the doubt as to the reality and origin and separateness of the non-eternal universe. For what is unreal, how can that come into existence? The unreal substances can never come into existence; as the child of a barren woman, the flowers in the sky are simply absurd. What is real can only be born. In discussing about origin, birth, etc., the appearance and disappearance of real things is called their birth and dissolution. In the cold of earth there exists the previous existence of the jar and this is the cause of the appearance of the jar; the disappearance of the jar exists in the jar; hence this disappearance is the cause of the destruction of the jar. Thus the appearance and disappearance of the causal eternal things are called the Origin and Pralaya. Similarly in discussing on the causal nature, there does not arise an inconsistency in My being everything.

28-48. So there is nothing to fear. In discussing about the reality of effects, this is to be conceived, that today there does not exist here the earth in the form of jar, if it is destroyed, where it has gone? The conclusion is that the earth in the form of jar exists in atoms. O Brahmâ! All substances eternal, existing for a moment only, the void, and the substances of the nature, real and unreal both, all are due to a cause.

Ahankâra is born first among them. Thus substances are of seven kinds: Mahat, etc. O Unborn One! Mahattattva first arises from Prakriti; from Mahattattva springs Ahankâra; and

from Ahankâra arises other substances. Thus, in this order, you go on creating this Universe. O Brahmâ! Now you better go to your respective places, and after creating the Universe, remain there and perform your respective functions ordained by Prâabdha. Take this beautiful great S'akti Mahâ Sarasvatî, full of Rajoguna, and of a smiling nature. This S'akti, wearing white clothes, adorned with divine ornaments and sitting on Varâsana, will always be your playmate. This beautiful woman will always be your boon companion; consider Her as My bibhuti (manifestation of power), and so most worshipful. Never show any sort of disrespect towards Her. Take Her and go immediately to Satyaloka; and from the seed of Mahattattva, create the fourfold beings from these. The subtle bodies (Linga sarîra) and Karmas are remaining mixed up with each other. Separate them, as before, duly, in due time.

Now go on as before and according to Kâla (time), Karma, and Svabhâva (nature), join them with their respective attributes (sounds and other qualities); in other words bestow fruits according to their gunas and Karmas (Prâabdhas), and to the time when these fruits are due.

Visnu is prominent in Sattvaguna and hence superior to You. So You should always respect and worship Him. Whenever any difficulty will come to you, Visnu will come down on earth to fulfil your ends. Janârdan Visnu will sometimes be born in the wombs of birds and animals, be sometimes in the wombs of men and destroy the Dânavas. The highly powerful Mahâ Deva, too, will help you. Now create the Devas and enjoy as you like. The Brâhmanas, Kshattriyas, and Vaisyâs will worship you, with devotion, in various sacrifices, endowed with due sacrificial fees. All the Devas will be always satisfied when my name "Svâhâ" will be uttered in the sacrificial oblations and ceremonies.

S'iva, the incarnate of Tamo guna will be revered and worshipped by all persons in every sacrifice. When the Devas will be frightened by the Daityas, then Vârâhî, Vaisnavî, Gaurî, Nara Simhî, S'achî, S'iva and My other S'aktis will take excellent bodies and destroy your fear. So, O Lotus-born! Be at your ease and do work. You utter and repeat my nine-lettered mantra with Vîja and Dhyân and do your work.

O highly intelligent one! This nine-lettered mantra is the best of all the mantras. You are to keep this mantra, within your heart, for the accomplishment of all your ends.

Thus saying to me, Bhagavatî smiled and began to say to Visnu :- O Visnu! Take this beautiful Mahâ Laks'mî and go. She will always reside within your breast; there is no doubt in this. This all auspicious giving S'akti I give to you for your enjoyment.

You should always shew respect to Her; never show hatred or contempt. For the good of the world, I unite thus Laks'mî and Nârâyan. For your sustenance I create Yajña. You three will act together in harmony unanimously.

You, Brahmâ and S'iva are my three Devas, born of my Gunas. You three will undoubtedly be respected and worshipped by the world.

The stupid man who will find any difference between you three, will go to hell; there is no doubt in this. He who is Hari, is S'iva; He who S'iva is Hari; to make difference between these will lead one to hell. So Brahmâ is one and the same with S'iva and Visnu; there no manner of doubt in this. O Visnu! But there are other differences in their Gunas; I will tell this; listen, as far as meditation of the Supreme Self is concerned you will have Sattva Guna predominant within you; and Rajo Guna and Tamo Guna will be secondary. In various other pursuits and Vikâras (changes) better have Rajo Guna with Laks'mî and always enjoy Her.

49-85. O Lord of Ramâ! I give you Vâkvîja, Kânavîja, and Mâyâvîja that will lead you to the highest end. Take this Mantra and repeat it and enjoy as you like. O Visnu! By this, the

danger of death, caused Kâla, will never come to you. When the creation of this Universe will be completely done I will then destroy this whole thing, moving and non-moving. You all will then be dissolved in Me. You should add pranava this mantra with Kâlavîja leading to Moksa and repeat it always with auspicious motives. O Purusottama! Build your Vaikunthapurî; live there and think of this My Eternal Form and enjoy as you like.

Brahmâ said :— Saying thus to Vâsudeva, that Higher Prakriti Devî who is all of the three Gunas and yet transcending them, began to address Mahâ Deva, the Deva of the Devas, in sweet words, thus :— O Sankara! Accept this beautiful Mahâ Kâlî Gaurî, build a new Kailâs'a city and live there happily. Your primary Gunas will be Tamas; Sattva and Rajas will be your secondary Gunas. Have recourse to Rajo and Tamo Gunas while you slay the Asuras and thus wander.

O sinless S'ankara! Have recourse to peaceful Satto Guna, when you reflect on the Supreme Self and practise austerities. You all are for creating, preserving and destroying the Universe and you are all of the three Gunas. There is no such thing in this world as are devoid of these three Gunas. Everything, that is visible, is endowed with the three Gunas, and whatever will be or was before cannot exist without them. Only the Supreme Self is without these Gunas; but He is not visible. O Sankara! I am the Parâ Prakriti; at times I appear with Gunas; and at others I remain without any Gunas. O S'ambhu! I am always of the causal nature; never I am of the nature of effect. When I am causal, I am with Gunas; and when I am before the Highest Purusa, I am, then, without any Gunas on account of my remaining in the state of equilibrium (Sâmyâ vasthâ). Mahattattva, Ahamkâra, and sound, touch, etc., all the Gunas perform the work of Samsâra, day and night, each preceding one being the cause and each subsequent one being the effect; never do they cease in their activities.

From the Reality (Sat vastu) springs Ahamkâra (Avyakta); therefore I am of the nature of causality; again Ahamkâra is embodied with the three Gunas, and so the Pundits call it as an effect of mine. From Ahamkâra arises Mahattattva; this is denominated as Buddhi. So Mahattattva is the effect and Ahamkâra is its cause. From Mahattattva arises again another Ahamkâra; from this second Ahamkâra arise the five Tanmâtrâs or the subtle elements. From these five Tanmâtrâs, the five gross elements arise after a process called Panchîkarana. From the Sâttvika part of the five Tanmâtrâs, arise the five organs of perception; from their Râjasik part, the five organs of action come; from their Panchîkarana, came the five gross elements; from the Sâttvika portion of all the five elements comes mind. Thus sixteen things come into existence. These organs of perception, etc., and other effects together with the Mahâ bhûtas form one Gana, composed of the sixteen categories. The original Purusa is the Supreme Self; He is neither cause nor is He any effect. O S'ambhu! At the beginning of the creation, all the above things are born in the way already indicated. Thus I have described to you, in brief; about the creation. O Devas! Now get up in your aeroplane and go to your respective places and fulfil your respective duties. Whenever you get into any dire distress, then remember Me; I will appear before you. O Devas! You should remember always the Eternal Supreme Self and Me. When you will remember us both, all your actions, will, no doubt, be crowned with success.

Brahmâ said :— Bhagavatî Durgâ gave us S'aktis, full of Divine beauty and lustre; She gave Mahâ Laksmî to Visnu, Mahâ Kâlî to S'iva, and Mahâ Sarasvatî to me and bade good bye to us. Thus given farewell to by the Devî, we three went to another place and were born as males. We thought of the very wonderful nature and influence of the Devî and we got upon our divine aeroplane. When we ascended, we saw there was no Manidvîpa, there was no Devî, there was no ocean of nectar, nothing whatsoever. Save our aeroplane, we did not see

anything. We then got into our wide aeroplane and reached there where Visnu killed the two indomitable Daityas, in the great ocean, where I was born from the lotus.

Thus ends the Sixth Chapter of the Third Skandha on the description of the Devî's Vibhritis (powers) in the Mahâpurânâ S'rîmad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsî Veda Vyâs.

## Chapter VII

On the creation and the Tattvas and their presiding deities

1. O Brahmâ said :— Nârada! Thus we three I, Visnu, and Mahâdeva saw that highly effulgent Goddess: we also saw separately Her attendant goddesses, one after another, that form, as it were, a veil to her? Who were also preeminently grand.

2-3. Vyâsa said :— O king! Nârada, the foremost of the Munis, hearing thus his father's words, was exceedingly pleased and asked :— O Grandsire of all the Lokas! Now describe in detail that ancient and indestructible undecaying, unchangeable, eternal Purusa, that is Nirguna (free from Prâkritic qualities) that you have seen and realised.

4. Father! You have seen the S'akti (the Prime Energy) personified the Saguna energy, the Supreme Goddess, having hands and feet; but cannot understand of what kind is that Nirguna S'akti which cannot be seen and which is devoid of all Prâkritic qualities.

O Lotus-born! Be good enough to describe to me the real nature of that Prakriti and Purusa and thus satisfy me.

5-6. O Lord of Creation! I practised severe austerities in the Svetadvîpa (white island), so that I might realise and see the Nirguna Highest Self and the Nirguna S'akti, the Supreme Goddess; I saw there many other Mahatmâs (high class spiritual persons) who attained siddhis (supernatural powers) practise Tapasyâ with their passions and anger conquered. But I did not realise nor did I see anything about that Nirguna Highest Self. Father, I was not despaired; again and again I continued with my ascetic practices; but still I failed.

7. Father, you have been so successful as to see that beautiful S'akti with qualities; I have heard about Her from you, but how and of what sort, is that invisible attributeless energy as well as that Nirguna Purusa. Please narrate and explain all these and satisfy my desires that always reign in my breast.

8. Vyâsa said :— O King! Thus asked by Nârada, the Lord of creation, the grandsire of the Lokas, smiled, and began to speak the truth in the following words :—

9. O best of Munis! The form of the Nirguna Purusa (the Supreme Spirit beyond the Prâkritic qualities) cannot exist or be visible; for everything that comes within the range of sight is transitory. How can, then, that Eternal Spirit have form and how can He become visible!

10. O Nârada! The Nirguna Energy or Nirguna Purusa comes not easily within the range of knowledge; but both of them can be realised by the Munis in their meditation in their consciousness.

11. Prakriti and Purusa have no beginning nor end; they can be realised only through faith; those that have no faith can never realise them.

12. Nârada! The universal consciousness, that is felt in all the beings, know that as the Highest Self; the Energy that is universal and is seen always in all the beings, know that as the Highest Self.

13. O blessed one! That Purusa and Prakriti pervade everywhere and exist in all the things; in this Universe nothing can exist without the presence of both of them.

14. Both of them are the highest intelligent self, nirguna (free from all material qualities), without any tinge of impurity, and undecaying. The one form that is a combination of these two is always to be meditated in the heart.

15. What is S'akti (energy) is the Highest Self; what is the Highest Self is the Highest S'akti. O Nârada! Nobody can ascertain the subtle difference between these two.

16. O Nârada! Merely the study of all the S'âstras and the Vedas with their Amgas without renunciation does not enable one to ascertain the difference between these two.

17. O Child! This whole universe, moving and non-moving, comes out of Ahamkâra (egoism). How can one ascertain the above difference even if he tries for one hundred kalpas, unless one frees oneself from Ahamkâra.

18. The Jîvas are Saguna (with qualities), how can the Sagunas see the Nirguna One with their physical eyes? Therefore O Intelligent one! try to see the Saguna (Brahmâ) only within your heart (until you free yourself from the material qualities and thus be fit to realise the Nirguna Brahmâ).

19-20. O best of Munis! If the tongue (organ of taste) and eyes (organ of sight) be affected with over biliousness, the pungent taste and the yellow colour do not appear what it appeared before; so the hearts of Jîvas, overpowered with material qualities, are quite unfit for realisation of the Nirguna Brahmân. O Nârada! That heart again has come out of Ahamkâra; how can then that heart be free from Ahamkâra?

21. Until one becomes able to cut asunder all connections with qualities, the seeing of that Nirguna Brahmâ is impossible. No sooner one is totally free from Ahamkâra, than the Nirguna Brahmâ is at once seen by him within his heart.

22-24. Nârada said :- O best of the Devas! Ahamkâra is three-fold, Sâtvik, Râjasik and Tâmasik; describe in detail the differences between these three sub-divisions as well the real nature of the Gunas. Also describe to me about that knowledge, knowing which will lead to my salvation. Also describe, in detail, the characteristics of the several Gunas, in due order.

25-26. Brahmâ said :- O Sinless one! The energy of Ahamkâra is of three kinds :- Jnâna S'akti, Kriyâ S'akti, and Artha or Dravya S'akti. The power by which knowledge is produced or obtained is the Sâttvic Ahamkâra; the power by which action or activity or motion is produced is the Râjasic Ahamkâra; and that by which the material things or objects of have senses are generated is called the Tâmasic Ahamkâra. O Nârada! thus I described to you, in due order, the threefold Ahamkâra.

27-30. Now I describe to you their merits and workings in detail; hear. Out of the Dravya S'akti of the Tâmasic Ahamkâra come sound, touch, form, taste and smell. From these five qualities, the five Tanmâtrâs or the five subtle-elements (primary atoms) are produced.

Sound is the quality of Âkâ'sa (ether); touch is the quality of Vâyu (Air); the form is the quality of Agni (fire); the taste is the quality of Jala (water); and the smell is the quality of earth.

O Nârada, these ten gross and subtle materials can, when combined, become endowed with power to work out results in the shape of earth, water, fire, etc., and when the Panchîkarana process is combined, the building of the whole cosmos takes place as a natural consequence of the Tâmasa Ahamkâra, endowed with the energy of generating material substances.

31-34. Now hear what are produced by the Râjasic energy. The five organs of hearing, touch, taste, sight, and smell (ears, skin, tongue, eyes and nose) called the five Jñânendriyas (organs of senses); mouth, hands, feet, anus and the organs of generation called the five Karmendriyas (organs of action); and Prâna, Apâna, Vyâna, Samâna, and Udâna, the five Vâyus. The creation out of these fifteen substances is called the Râjasic energy. Nârada! All these organs of senses and actions endowed with the Kriyâ S'akti, called the Karanas and the materials fashioned out of them are called the chidanuvritti or Mâyâ.

35-38. O Nârada! From the S'âttvik Ahamkâra are produced the five presiding rulers of the five internal organs named Dik (quarters), Vâyus, Sun, Varuna, and the twins Asvini Kumâras and the four presiding rulers of the four fold divisions of Antahkarana (Buddhis, manas, Ahamkâra and chitta) named Moon, Brahmâ, Rudra, and Ksetrajña. Thus the above five organs of senses, the five organs of action, the five Vâyus and mind, these sixteen substances are reckoned as the Sâttvic creation.

39-40. O Child! The Highest Self has two forms; one gross and the other subtle. The formless Self; the Consciousness incarnate, as it were, is the first form. The Seers consider this formless self to be the primary cause (the ultimatum) of all this phenomenal cosmos. (This is only for the best qualified Jñânis, not for others).

The Second Form is the Gross Form for the meditation of the second class qualified persons; thus the sages say. This second form of the Supreme Goddess is conditioned by inherent Mâyâ (time, space and causation); this is also divided into gross and subtle, according as it is the outer or inner body of the second form (and the form suited for the meditation of the third class and the second class devotees).

41. My body is called Sûtrâtmâ; I will now tell you the gross body of Brahmân, the Highest Self.

O Nârada! This my body and soul having the nature of a string or thread is called Hiranyagarbha; this is also the gross body of the Paramâtman; therefore the Paramâtman together with the Sûtrâtmâ, should also be worshipped. O Nârada! I will now describe to you the outer gross body of Brahmân, the Highest Self; hear it attentively; if one hears it with faith and devotion, one is sure to get salvation.

42-43. I have mentioned to you before the five subtle elements, called the five Tanmâtrâs; these, now, when the Panchî Karana process is done, are converted into the five gross elements. Now hear what the Panchî Karana process means :—

44-46. Suppose you are to create the gross element of water. Divide into two equal parts the subtle element of water; divide also the other 4 elements into two equal parts respectively. Now set apart the first half of each of the five elements; divide the second half of each of the elements into four equal parts. Mix the first half of each of the elements with each of the fourth part of the other four elements; and you get one gross element. Similarly you get the other four gross elements. For example :— You want to get the gross element of water :— With the half of the subtle element ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) of water mix the fourth part, of the halves of the other elements of ether, fire, air and earth; you get the gross element of water and so on. When the five gross elements are thus produced, consciousness then enters into these elements as their presiding deities; next comes the feeling of egoism (I ness) identifying itself with the body thus created out of the five elements. (I am this body and so forth).

47. This great "I", the great consciousness, creating and considering the Cosmos as its body is called the Bhagavân, Âdideva, Nârâyana or Vâisvanara.

48. When, by the Panchîkarana process, the five gross elements, earth, ether, air, etc., are solidified and get their clear definite forms, one, two, three, four, five, qualities are seen to exist in ether, air, fire, water, and earth, respectively.

49-51. Thus ether has one quality only - that is sound: the air has got two qualities - sound and touch; the fire possesses three qualities - sound, touch, and form; the water has got four qualities - sound, touch, form and taste; the earth has got five qualities - sound, touch, form, taste and smell, and by the various combinations of these five gross elements, is produced this grand Cosmos, the great body of Brahmân.

52. Similarly the sum-total of Jîvâs is produced from the several parts of the whole Brahmânda; these Jîvâs are eighty four lakhs; so the sages say.

Thus ends the Seventh Chapter of the Third Skandha of S'rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam, the Mahâ Purânam, of 18,000 verses, on the creation and the Tattvas and their presiding Deities.

Note :Of these Jîvâs, those who are the best qualified, the Uttamâdhikâris, are known as the Brahmânas, Jânaghana Tûriyas, as denoted by Om Hrîm; the middlings have their gross, subtle and causal bodies and are called as Brahmâ Vais'vânara, Sûtra, Hiranyagarbhas; and the third class is known as Vis'va, Taijasa. and Prâjñas and forms the body, as it were, of the Brahmân. There are others also, animals, etc., in the lowest class.

## Chapter VIII

### On the Gunas and their forms

1. Brahmâ said :-O Nârada! I have described to you what you asked me just now about the creation of this universe, etc. Now hear with attention the colour of the three qualities, as well their configuration and how they are seen to exist.

2-3. The Sattva Guna is the source of pleasure and happiness; and when happiness comes, everything seems delightening. When integrity, truthfulness, cleanliness, faith, forgiveness, fortitude, mercy, bashfulness, peace and contentment arise in one's heart, know certainly that there has arisen firmly the Sattva Guna in that man.

4. The colour of the Sattva quality is white; it makes one always like religion, and have faith towards good purposes and discard one's tendencies towards bad objects.

5. The Risis, the seers of truth classify Sraddhâ (faith) under the three headings: Sâttvik, Râjasik and Tâmasik.

6. The quality Rajas is of red colour, wonderful and is not pleasant; it is the source of all troubles; there is no doubt in this.

7-8. The intelligent should understand that Rajas has certainly arisen in him, when his mind is filled with hatred, enmity, quarrelsome feeling, pride, stupification, uneasiness, sleeplessness, want of faith, egoism, vanity and arrogance.

9-11. The quality Tamas is of black colour. From Tamas arises laziness, ignorance, sleep, poverty, fear, quarrels, miserliness, insincerity, anger, aberration of intellect, violent atheism, and finding fault with others. The wise should think that Tamas has overpowered him when the above qualities are found to possess him. When this Tamas quality is attended with the Tâmasî faith, then it becomes the source of pain to others.

12. The well wishers should manifest in themselves the Sattva qualities, control the Râjasic qualities, and destroy the Tâmasic qualities.

13. These three qualities are always found to remain intermingled with another, and each of them has always an inherent tendency to overcome the others; and therefore they are always, as it were, at war with another. They never have a separate existence from one another.

14. Never is found anywhere only one Sattva quality to the exclusion of others, the Rajas and Tamas; similar is the case with the Rajas or Tamas. They remain intermingled and depend on one another.

15. O Nârada! Now hear, in detail, which two qualities remain in twins, knowing which, one is freed from this ocean of the transmigration of existence.

16. I have realised these; therefore you ought not to have any uncertainties on these points. The reality of these is especially felt, when it is really understood and when its effects begin to manifest themselves.

17. O high-minded! No one is able to realise these at once; it requires be heard, and then meditated upon. It also depends on one's natural capability and merits, due to the past actions.

18-21. Suppose one hears of the sacred places of pilgrimages and is filled with the Râjasic devotion. He goes out to those places and sees what he had heard before. There he performs his ablutions, makes offerings and the Râjasic gifts, stays there for some time; but all this he does under the influence of the Râjasic quality. And when he returns home, he finds himself not free from lust, anger, love and hatred; he remains the same that he was before. Therefore, in this case, O Nârada! man hears but he does not realise the purifying effects of those holy places. O best of Munis! And when he does not find any benefit from the holy place of pilgrimage, it is equivalent to his not at all hearing of the place.

22. O best of Munis! The effect of visiting the sacred places of pilgrimages is then said to accrue to any individual, when he becomes freed from his sins, just as the fruit of cultivating fields is then said to occur, when the cultivator gets the ripened harvest out of his labour and enjoys the produce of his fields.

23. O Nârada! Lust, anger, covetousness, delusion, thirst, hatred, love, vanity, malice, jealousy, non-forgiveness, unrest all these indicate that there is sin; and until these are purged out of one's body and mind, man lives in sin. If the visiting of the sacred places of pilgrimages does not enable one to overcome the above passions, then the labours in going to those places are in vain, i.e., those labours merely are the results just as the toil only undergone by the cultivator is his only result, and is not met with any reward when there is no harvest at all.

24-28. Lo! The cultivator takes hard labour to clear his fields and cultivate the hard soil; he then sows the valuable seeds, because this is considered as doing good. Next, in expectation of the harvest, he undergoes a good deal of pains, day and night, to protect his fields and goes down to sleep, in the cold season, in the forest surrounded by tigers and other dangerous animals; but alas! locusts coming eat away and destroy all the crops, to the utter disappointment of the cultivator. All his labours are spent in vain. So, O Nârada! The labour taken by one in going to the holy places yields pains, and pains only, instead of success and happiness.

29-32. When the Sattva quality grows in abundance, as a consequence of reading the Vedânta and the other S'âstras, dispassion comes towards the Râjasic and the Tâmasic qualities and things, and the Sattva quality overpowers the Rajas and Tamas. Similarly when

the Râjasic quality grows in abundance, as a natural consequence of greed and avarice, then it overpowers Sattva and Tamas; so, by delusion, when the Tâmasic quality grows in abundance, it overpowers the Sattva and the Râjasic qualities. O Nârada! I will now speak to you, in detail, about the overpowering of these qualities by one another.

33-35. When the Sattva quality grows in preponderance, the mind rests in religious ideas and things; it no more thinks of those external things, the products of the Rajas and Tamas qualities. Rather it wants to enjoy the Sâttvic things; wealth, religious affairs, sacrifices that can be acquired or performed without any trouble. Then that individual yearns after salvation and renounces his pursuits after the Râjasic and Tâmasic objects.

36. Thus, O Nârada! first try to conquer the Rajas and then the Tamas; then the Sattva becomes pure.

37. When the Râjasic quality grows in preponderance, the individual imbibes the Râjasic faith, abandons his own Sanâtan Dharma (settled eternal religion) and practises against his religious instructions.

38. Under the Râjasic propensities, one is eager to amass wealth and enjoy the Râjasic things. The Rajas drives away the Sattva and curbs the Tamas.

39-41. Nârada! So when the Tâmasic quality grows in preponderance, the faith in the Vedas and in the religious S'âstras entirely disappears. Imbibing the Tâmasic faith, the individual squanders away his wealth and is always engaged in quarrels, and party feelings, envy, violence and never enjoys peace. The individual with the Tâmasic quality in excess overpowers the Râjasic and Sâttvic qualities and becomes angry, wicked, and a great cheat and does everything as he likes, without any regard to his superiors.

42. Nârada! Thus you see that, of these three qualities, no one can remain entirely alone, free from the other qualities. These remain always in twos or threes.

43-44. The Sattva can never exist without the Rajas; the Rajas can never exist without the Tamas; and these two qualities can never exist without Tamas. Again Tamas cannot exist without Rajas and Sattva. These qualities act and react always in twos or threes.

45-47. They never exist separately; they live in pairs or threes and are the originators of each other; these qualities are of the nature of procreating things; in other words, Sattva originates the Rajas or Tamas; again the Rajas originates sometimes Sattva and Tamas. Again the Tamas sometimes originates Sattva and Rajas. Thus they generate each other as the earthen pots and earth are their mutual causes.

48-49. Deva Datta, Visnu Mitra, and Yajña Datta these three united perform any action, so these three qualities united reside in the buddhi (intellect) of the Jîvas and generate their sense perceptions.

Just as the husband and wife get into a couple, the qualities get into couples.

50. The Sattva with Rajas forms the couple Rajas Sattva; so Sattva Rajas forms another couple, where the Sattva predominates. So Sattva and Rajas forms each with Tamas the other couples.

51. Nârada said! O Dvaipâyana! Hearing thus about these three qualities from my father, I asked him again these questions.

Thus ends the eighth chapter of the Mahâ Purânam S'rîmad Devî Bhâgavatam containing the description of the Gunas, of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

## Chapter IX

### On the characteristics of the Gunas

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1-2. Nârada said :— Father! You have described to me the characteristic of the three qualities; though I have drunk the sweet juice from your lotus like mouth, still I am not quite satisfied. Kindly describe to me, in detail, in due order, how I can recognise clearly the three qualities so that I can get the highest peace of mind.

3. Vyâsa said :— O King! The Creator of the world, Brahmâ, originated from the Rajo Guna, asked by his high minded son Nârada, began to speak in the following terms.

4. O Nârada! I myself do not possess fully the complete knowledge of the three qualities; but, as far as I know, I am telling that to you.

5. The pure Sattva quality is not found alone to exist anywhere; it manifests itself always, in mixed condition, in combination with the other qualities.

6-9. As a beautiful woman, well decorated with ornaments and endowed with amorous gestures, gives delight, on the one hand, to her husband, father, mother and friends; and, on the other hand, becomes a source of pain and delusion to her rival wives, so the Sattva quality, personified as a beautiful woman, engenders the Sâttvic happiness of the mind to some individual, at one time, and at another time becomes a source of pain to the same individual (or at one and the same time becomes a source of happiness to one and a source of pain to another.) Thus the Rajas or the Tamas quality, personified respectively as a beautiful woman becomes a source of pain or delusion to an individual at one time, and at another time, a source of happiness to the same man. So it is easily seen that one quality cannot remain single; it remains in union with the other qualities.

Note :— It is very possible that a man, possessing the Sâttvic quality at any time, can be said not to possess only the Sâttvic quality but also the Rajas and the Tamas to a certain degree. At any subsequent time the Rajas might get preponderance, and that man may be in circumstances requiring money or so forth; but, due to his Sattva quality before hand he did not collect money and therefore he feels pain afterwards. So with the Rajas. Or it may be thus :— Suppose an earning member is Sâttvic. He earns just sufficient to meet his wants. But his family members require more money, for they are Râjasic. Therefore the earning member is happy for his Sâttvic quality; but the other members are unhappy for his Sâttvic quality. A man is, as it were, wedded to the three wives, Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas.

10. O Nârada! When the three qualities remain each in their own real natures, then the effects produced by them also remain always the same; no changes are perceived owing to the difference of time or person. But when they get combined, then each of them produces effects sometimes counter to their natures.

11-13. A young beautiful woman, shy, modest and of sweet qualities, well versed in her religious learning, and full of good behaviour, skilled in love practices and full of sweet sentiments becomes a source of loving delight to her beloved and also a source of pain to her rival wives so each of the three qualities assume no doubt, different aspects according to differences in time and in the nature of the person.

O Nârada! As one woman gives pain and delusion to her rival wives and gives pleasure to her husband and friends, so the Sattva quality, when perverted, gives pain and delusion to the persons.

14-19. As the police sepoy and constables are, on the one hand, delight to the saints, troubled by thieves, and, on the other hand, sources of pain and confusion to the thieves and robbers; again as the heavy shower of rain in a pitch dark night, in the rainy season, when the sky over clouded, and when there are flashes of lightning and thunder, is on the one hand, a source of highest delight to a farmer, who has all seeds and necessary things and implements, and, on the other hand is a source of pain to the unfortunate householder, whose house is not yet completely thatched with grass or who has not been able to collect his beams and grass for necessary roofing, and a source of utter bewildering confusion to the young woman, whose husband is abroad expected back at that time, so the three Gunas produce contrary results when perverted by contact with the remaining Gunas, instead what they would have produced, had they not been perverted so.

20-25. O Child! Again I speak to you of the characteristics of the the Gunas. The Sattva guna is pure, clear, illumining, light (not heavy) white. When the senses, eyes, etc., and the limbs are felt very light (without any heaviness) and the heart and brain clear, when there is dispassion towards the Râjasic and the Tâmasic enjoyments, know then that the Sattva quality has grown in preponderance in a body. When there is a tendency to yawn, when there is rigidity and suppression of the functions of faculties and when one feels drowsiness, consider that the Râjasic quality has gone to excess. Again, when one seeks after quarrels and goes to another village, one is always restless and ready to fight, when one feels heaviness in body, as if wrapped by a very heavy darkness, when one's limbs and senses are heavy and obscure, when one's mind is vacant, and when one does not like to go to sleep, know that the Tamas has increased too much, Nârada!

26. Nârada said :- O Father! You have described the different characteristics of the three Gunas; but I cannot understand how they act all in conjunction?

27. As those who are enemies to one another do not work united, so these Gunas, of opposite characteristics, are enemies, as it were, to one another; how can, then, they act in unison? Kindly explain this to me.

28-30. Brahmâ said :- O Nârada! The three Gunas may be likened to a lamp. As a lamp manifests a certain object, so these three qualities united do manifest or reveal a certain thing. See the wick, oil, and flame are all of different characteristics; though the oil goes against fire, still it unites with the fire. The oil, wick and fire though running against each other, all these united, serve the one common purpose of illumining, revealing a certain object.

31. So, O Nârada! All the three qualities, though of contrary natures, go to prove the same thing.

Nârada said :- O Son of Satyavatî! The lotus born Brahmâ thus described the three qualities, as born of Prakriti; and they are the causes of this Universe. What I heard of you about the nature of Prakriti, I have now described before you.

32. Vyâsa said :- O King! What you asked me, I asked before the same to Nârada and he described thus (as I told you above) to me about the characteristics and the effects of the three Gunas in regular order and in detail.

33. O King! Wherever in the S'âstras whatever is said, the essence of all that is this – that the Highest Energy, the Supreme Force, the Great Goddess who is pervading the Universe, is always with qualities and without qualities, according to the differences in the manifestation. This Supreme Force is to be worshipped with the highest devotion.

34. The Brahmân, the Purusa (the Supporter, the Ultimate Substratum) the Highest Energy considered as the Male Principle though It is Undecaying, Supreme and Full, is still without any desires or emotions. It is not able to accomplish any action (without the help of its inherent force); this Mahâmâyâ, the Supreme Force is doing all the functions, real and unreal, of the universe.

35-37. Brahmâ, Visnu, Rudra, the Sun, Moon, Indra, the twin Asvins, the Vasus, Visvakarmâ, Kuvera, Varuna, Fire, Air, Pûsâ, the Sadânan, and Ganesa all are united with S'akti and can do their respective functions; else they are unable to move themselves. Therefore O king! Know that Supreme Goddess Mahâmâyâ as the cause of this Universe.

38. O Lord of men! You worship this Goddess, perform sacrifices in honour of Her and worship Her with the highest devotion.

39. O king! That Mahâmâyâ is Mahâ Laksmî, She is Mahâ Kâlî, She is Mahâ Sarasvatî; She is the Goddess of all the bhûtas and She is the Cause of all causes.

40. That all peaceful, easily worshipped and the ocean of mercy, when worshipped, fulfills all the desires of Her devotees; what to say, the mere utterance of Her name is sufficient for the granting of the desires.

41. In days of yore Brahmâ, Visnu, Mahes'vara and all the Devas and many other self controlled ascetics worshipped Her to attain liberation.

42. O king! What shall I speak now about Her more than this :- If one takes Her name even with indistinctness, She grants the desired purposes, even if they are quite unattainable.

43. In the midst of forest, on the sight of tigers and other ferocious animals, if one becoming afraid, cries aloud Her seed mantra (twice) "Ai, Ai" without the Vindu (incorrectly) instead of "Aim, Aim" She grants immediately his desires.

44-45. O best of kings! There is an example of Satyavrata on this point. That the mere utterance of the name of Bhagavatî gives unforeseen results, has been witnessed by us and other high minded Munis. Also in the assembly of the Brâhmanas I have heard fully many sages quoting in detail many instances on the above point.

46-47. O king! There was a Brahmân, named Satyavrata, quite illiterate, a thorough block-head. Once he heard the letter "Ai, Ai" being uttered by a pig; and in course of a talk he himself uttered incidentally that letter and thereby became the one of the best Pundits.

N. B. – "Aim" is the seed mantra of Sarasvatî, the Goddess of learning.

48. The Goddess Devî, the Ocean of mercy, hearing the letter "Ai" being pronounced by that Brahmin, became very glad and made him the best of the poets.

Here ends the Ninth Chapter of the 3rd Skandha on the characteristics of the Gunas in S'rîmad Devî Bhâgavatam, the Mahâ Purânam 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

## Chapter X

### On the story of Satyavrata

1. Janamejaya said :- O Maharsi! Who was Satyavrata, the Brâhmin whose name you have just taken? In what country was he born? Of what nature was he? Please describe all these to me and satisfy my curiosity?

2. How did he hear that sound "Ai"; how did he repeat that word? How came out the success to him, that illiterate Brâhman, at that very instant?

3. And how is it that that Great Goddess, who is omniscient and omnipresent, was pleased with him, kindly describe this interesting incident in detail.

4. Sûta said :– Vyâsa, the son of Satyavatî, thus asked by the king, addressed in the following pure, sweet, and highly liberal words.

5. Vyâsa said :– Hear, O king! You are the best and foremost in the Kuru clan; what I before heard in the assembly of the Munis, I am now relating that ancient story, highly beneficial to you.

6. O best of the Kurus! Once in my peregrinations in the holy places of pilgrimages, I came to the Naimisâranya forest, that highly sacred place frequented by the Munis.

7-8. That time there were staying Sanaka, Sanâtana and the other sons of Brâhma who were liberated while living. I went there and bowed down to the Munis and took my seat. Then the religious conversations ensued there in the assembly, when the great sage Maharsi Jamadagni began to question the Munis in the following terms :–

9. O high-minded excellent ascetics and Munis! There has arisen a great doubt in my mind; I am desirous to have that doubt solved in this assembly of the Maharsis.

10-12. O all-knowing Maharsis that have fulfilled your vows! O Givers of one's honour! Now my question is this :– Of the following Devas Brâhma, Visnu, Rudra, Indra, Varuna, Fire, Kuvera, Wind, Visvakarmâ, Kârtikeya, Ganesa, the Sun, the two As'vins, Bhaga, Pûsâ, Moon, and the other planets, who is the first and best to be worshipped, that can easily be served; who is very quickly satisfied and grants the desired boons; kindly tell me this as early as possible.

13. Thus questioned by the Muni Jamadagni, Maharsi Lomas'a, one in the assembly, spoke :– O Jamadagni! Hear in reply to your question.

14-15. The Goddess of Energy is the best of the Devas, most excellent and highest to be worshipped. Those who want welfare, they ought to worship this Supreme Force. She is the Parâ Prakriti, the Highest Nature, the Brâhma, conditioned by Mâyâ (Time, space, and causation). She grants all the desires, does good to all, pervades everywhere, and is the Mother of Brâhma and the other high souled Devas. She is the First Prakriti, and is the Root of this gigantic Tree of Universe.

16. If any one calls the Devî in remembrance or distinctly utters Her Name, She fulfills all the desires of the human beings. If anybody worships Her, She is at once filled with mercy and becomes ready to grant boons.

17. O Munis! How, once on a time, at Brâhmin, uttering one letter of Her mystical mantra, obtained Her Grace, I am now describing that most auspicious history before you. Be pleased to hear.

18. Once on a time, there lived in the country of Kosala,\* a famous Brâhmin, named Deva Datta. He had no issues and therefore started duly according to the prescribed rules a sacrifice called Puttresti for the sake of obtaining children.

\*Kosala is a country situated, according to Râmâyana, along the banks of the Sarayû (or Gogrâ). It was divided into Uttara-Kosala and Dakshina Kosala. The former is also called Ganda and it must have therefore signified the country, north of Ayodhyâ comprising Gonda and Bahraich. Aja and Dasaratha, etc., are said to have ruled over the province. At the time of

Râma's death, his two sons Kusa and Lava reigned respectively at Kusâvati in Southern Kosala in the defiles of the Vindhya and at Srâvasti in northern Kosala.

19-20. On the banks of the Tamasâ river, the Brâhmin erected a temporary building (or an open shade) for performing the ceremony, and there built an altar and invited the Brâhmins, versed in the Vedas, and clever in performing sacrificial rites. There he placed the fire and began to perform according to the strict rules, the Puttresti sacrifice.

21-22. In that sacrifice, Suhotra, the best of the Munis acted the part of Brâhma (1); Yâjñavalkya acted the part of Adhvaryu (2); Brihaspati, that of Hotâ (3); Paila, that of Prastotâ (4); Govila, that of Udgâtâ (6); and the other Munis acted as assistants. These all were duly paid their remunerations.

(1) One of the four priests employed at a Soma sacrifice as a superintendent.

(2) Any officiating priest technically distinguished from Hotri, Udgâtri and Brâhman. His duty was to measure the ground, build the altar, prepare sacrificial vessels, to fetch wood and water, light the fire, bring the animal and immolate it and while doing this to repeat the Yajurveda.

(3) A sacrificing priest who offers the oblations. Or one who recites the prayers of the Rigveda at a sacrifice.

(5) One of the four principal priests at a sacrifice, one who chants the hymns of the Sâmaveda.

23-24. The Hotâ Govila, the excellent reciter of the Sâma hymns, began to sing in accented tones called svarita (the accents are three Udâta, Anudâta and Svarita) and the Rathantara Sâma in 7 tunes.

Then he began to draw breath frequently; and consequently there was a break in time in the accent of Govila. Seeing this, Deva Datta was angry and immediately said to Govila.

25. Well, Govila, you are the foremost of the Munis and still you are doing your work like a quite illiterate man. I fear obstacles may arise in the getting of my son in this my sacrifice of Puttresti.

26. Govila then became much enraged and told Deva Datta "your son will be illiterate, hypocrite, and dumb."

27. Behold! Every being is subject to breathing and respiring; it is very hard to control them; there is no fault of mine in the accents of my songs being thus broken; it is strange that you, being intelligent, cannot understand this.

28. Being afraid to hear the curse from Govila, Deva Datta became very sorry and said "O Muni! I have done no serious offence; why are you so offended without any cause. See! The Munis are void of anger and they always give delight to others."

29-30. O best of Brâhmans! My offence is very trifling; why have you inflicted on me so severe a curse? I was already under the mental agony, since I had no issues; and now you have made me suffer more pain.

31. For the Vedic Pundits declare that it is better not to have any son than to have an illiterate stupid son; the more so, when a Brâhmin's son is illiterate, he is blamed by one and all.

32. An illiterate son is like a S'ûdra or a beast; he is unfit for any action. O Brâhmin! What shall I do with an illiterate son?

33. An illiterate Brâhmin is like a S'ûdra; consequently not an object to be engaged in any act of worship or of gifts, he is not deserving to do any action.
34. A Brâhman, bereft of the knowledge of the Vedas, living in a country is treated as a S'ûdra by the king of the place and is liable to pay taxes.
35. Whoever wants to have any fruit in any action will never invite an illiterate Brâhmin to take his seat in the ceremony relating to the Pitris or the Devas.
36. The king will consider an illiterate Brâhmin as if a S'ûdra and will never engage him in any religious ceremony but will order him to do the work of a farmer in cultivating fields.
37. Rather to perform the funeral ceremonies by erecting a Kus'abata than to engage an illiterate Brâhmin for the purpose.
38. One should give food to an illiterate Brâhmin just sufficient to fill his belly and no more. If he does not do that, the giver and especially the receiver are subject to go down to hell.
39. Fie to a kingdom where honour is shown to the illiterate stupid Brâhmanas.
40. Where no difference is observed when seats, worship and gift are given to various persons, sages should draw their inference how the literate and illiterate persons are treated there.
41. When the illiterate fools become haughty, when they are paid honours and gifts, the literary persons should never dwell there.
42. The wealth of the wicked goes to the enjoyments of the bad persons; for the Nim trees, though abounding richly in fruits, are enjoyed only by crows.
43. Again, on the other hand, if the Brâhmins, versed in the Vedas, study the Vedas even after they have taken their food, still his father and forefathers are happy and play cheerfully in their heavens.
44. Therefore O Govîla! You being the foremost of the Brâhmin who are versed in the Vedas, what have you said just now? See in this world, death is rather to be preferred than to have an illiterate son. How is it, then, that you have cursed me that I would get an illiterate son, when you are the best one, highly qualified with knowledge.
45. O high minded one! You are capable to relieve the distressed; I am bowing down to your feet; shew your mercy and re-consider your curse.
46. Lomas'a said :- O Munis! Devadatta, saying these words, fell prostrate at his feet and began to eulogise him in very pitiful words, being very much grieved and with tears in his eyes.
47. Seeing him thus distressed, Govila was moved with pity. The persons that are noble have their anger satiated after a short while; the anger of the ignoble lasts for a long time.
48. The water is naturally cool; but it gets hot in contact with fire heat; and no sooner the heat is drawn away, water gets again cooled quickly.
49. The merciful Govila then addressed the distressed Devadatta "your son though at first illiterate, will afterwards be very learned."
50. The Brâhmin Devadatta was very glad on getting this boon; then completing the sacrifice, rewarded the Brâhmins with their due dakshinâs and dismissed them.

51. In due course of time, his fair chaste wife Rohinî, like the asterism Rohinî became pregnant.

52. Devadatta performed the Garbhâdhân (1) and Pumsavan (2) ceremonies and other purificatory rites duly.

53. He performed the Sîmantonnayana ceremony according to rules and considered his Puttrvesti sacrifice successful and made various offerings to the Brâhmins.

N. B. – (1) One of the Samskâras, purificatory ceremonies, performed after menstruation to ensure or facilitate conception (this ceremony legalises in a religious sense the consummation of marriage).

(2) It is a ceremony performed on a woman's perceiving the first signs of a living conception, with a view to the birth of a son.

(3) "Parting of the hair" one of the twelve Samskâras or purificatory rites observed by women in the fourth, sixth, or eighth month of their pregnancy.

54-55. In the auspicious lagna when Rohinî asterism was present and in the auspicious day, his wife Rohinî gave birth to a male child. Devadatta performed the nativities of the new born child and saw its face. Next that knower of the Purânas, Devadatta kept the name of the child as Utathya.

56. When the son was eight years old, Devadatta performed the Upanayana (thread) ceremony duly.

57-58. Next the child was made to accept the vow of Brâhmachâri; and Devadatta made him study the Vedas; but the child could not pronounce a single word and used to sit simply like a stupid boy. Though tried in various ways to read and write, that wicked boy never paid the slightest attention, simply sat idly. Seeing this, his father was very sorry and much grieved.

59. Thus twelve years passed. Yet the boy could not learn how to perform his Sandhyâ Bandanâ duly.

60. The rumour went abroad that Utathya, the son of Devadatta turned out very illiterate. All the Brâhmanas, ascetics, and other persons came to learn this fact.

61. Wherever Utathya used to go in any forest on hermitage, the people used to laugh at him, ridiculed his father and mother and began to chide that illiterate son.

62. Thus blamed by father, mother and all other persons, dispassion occupied the heart of Utathya.

63. Once when rebuked by his father and mother that it was better to have a blind and lame son instead of an illiterate brute, Utathya took recourse to renunciation and went to a dense forest.

64-65. On the banks of the Ganges in a beautiful spot free from obstacles, he built a beautiful hut and began to subsist on the roots and fruits of the forest and with collected mind. Having made the excellent vow "I will never speak untruth" and holding the vow of celibacy, he lived in that beautiful hermitage.

Thus ends the 10th chapter in the 3rd Skandha of S'rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa relating to the story of Satyavrata.

Chapter XI

## On the merits of the Devî in the story of Satyavrata

1-5. Lomas'a said :- O Munis! Utatthya, the son of Devadatta, was quite ignorant of anything of the Vedas, Japam (muttering of mantra), meditation of the deity, worship of the Devas, Âsana (Posture), Prânâyâma (withholding the breath by way of religious austerity), Pratyâhâra (restraint of mind), Bhûtas'uddhi (purification of the elements of the body by respiratory attraction and replacement), mantra (a mystical formula regarding some deity), Kîlaka (chanting of a mantra to serve as a pin of protection), Gâyattrî (the famous mantra of the Brâhmins), Saucha (cleanliness, external and internal), rules how to bathe, Âchamana (sipping of water and reciting mantrams before worship), Prânâgnihotra (offering of oblations to the fire of Prâna or to the fire of life), the offering of a sacrifice, hospitality, Sandhyâ (the morning, mid-day or evening prayer), collecting fuels for oblations, and offering of oblations. Daily he rose in the morning and somehow rinsed his mouth and washed his teeth and bathed in the Ganges river without any mantrams (like a Sûdra).

6. That stupid fellow ate indiscriminately, did not know what to eat and what not to eat. During the mid-day he collected the fruits from the forest and used to eat them.

7. But he always spoke truth while he stayed there; never did he say any untruth. The people of that place, seeing this, named him Satyatapâ.

8-9. That Utatthya did no good or bad to anybody; he slept peacefully and blissfully; but he used to think when he would die; thus his troubles would be ended; he felt that the life of an illiterate Brâhman is a curse; his death would be a better alternative.

10. He used to think thus :- Fate has made me a fool; I do not find any other cause for it. Oh! I got the exceedingly good birth amongst men; but all this has been rendered in vain by Fate.

11. Oh! As a fair woman, if barren, a cow if giving no milk, and a tree without any fruits are all useless, so Fate has rendered my life, too, quite useless.

12. Why am I cursing Fate? This is all the fruits of my past Karma. In my previous life I never wrote a book and presented to a good Brâhmin; hence I am illiterate in this birth.

13. In my former birth I did not impart any knowledge to my favourite pupils; hence I am wicked and a cursed Brâhmin in this birth.

14. I never performed any religious asceticism in any holy place, I did not serve the saints, I never worshipped the Brâhmins with any offerings. For all these reasons I am now born of perverted intellect in the present birth.

15. Many a son of the Munis have learnt the meanings of the Vedas and the S'âstras; and I am whiling away my time thus in a quite illiterate condition by some wretched combinations of incidents.

16. I do not know how to perform Tapasyâ; what is the use, then, of my attempting to do so? I am of very bad luck, and thus my good resolve will not be crowned with success.

17. I consider Fate to be the strongest of all; Fie on one's own prowess! For actions done with effort and hard labour are frustrated entirely by Fate.

18. Time can never be overstepped; See! Brahmâ, Visnu, Rudra, Indra, and others are all under the influence of the Great Time.

19. O Risis! Thus arguing in his mind, that Brâhmin son Utatthya stayed there in that hermitage on the bank of the holy Ganges.

20. And gradually he became thoroughly unattached to all the things and, being peaceful, passed away his time in that forest without any habitations and men, with great difficulty.

21. Thus passed away fourteen years in that forest where the Ganges was flowing. Still he did not learn how to worship the Supreme Deity, how to make Japam, nor did he learn any mantrams. Simply he lived there and whiled away his time.

22. People surrounding that place knew this much only of him that this Muni spoke truth only and hence his name was Satyavrata. This one name made him celebrated that he is Satyavrata; never did he say any untruth.

23. Once on a time, a hunter named Nisâda, exceedingly clever in hunting, came accidentally with bows and arms in his hands, while hunting a deer in that wide forest. He looked like a second God of Death (Yama) and seemed to be very cruel.

24. That savage mountaineer, drawing his bow so as to touch the ear, pierced a boar with his sharp arrows. The boar, being very much terrified, fled with enormous rapidity to the Muni Satyavrata.

25. On seeing the distressed condition of the boar trembling with fear and his body besmeared with blood, the Muni was moved with mercy.

26. While the boar, pierced with arrows and besmeared with blood, was running away in front of him, mercy took possession of the Muni, therefore the Muni began to tremble and agreeably to the human nature exclaimed "Ai" "Ai" (go to that direction), the seed mantram of the Goddess of learning with "m" left out (Aim, Aim).

27. That illiterate Brâhmin son never heard before that "Ai" was the seed mantram of the Sarasvatî Devî; nor did he come to know of it by any other means. Accidentally it came out of his mouth, and he uttered. And afterwards that Mahâtmâ seeing the boar's distressed condition was merged in deep sorrow.

28. The boar entered trembling into the Muni's hermitage very much distracted and being very much pained with arrows. Being unable to find any other way the boar hid himself in the dense bushes.

29. Instantly there appeared then, before the Muni, the terrible savage hunter, like a second God of Death, with string stretched to his ear, in pursuit of that boar.

30-33. On seeing the Muni Satyavrata sitting there alone and silent on the Kus'a grass seat, the hunter bowed down to him and asked "O Brâhmin! Whither has that boar gone. I know very well everything about you that you never speak untruth; therefore I am enquiring about the boar pierced by my arrows. My family members are all very hungry; and to feed them, I am come out in this hunting. This is the living, ordained by the Fate; I have got no other means of maintaining the livelihood of my family. This I speak truly to you; whether it is bad or good, I will have to maintain my family with it. O Brâhman! You are famous as Satyavrata; my family members are starving; kindly reply quickly where that boar has gone?"

34. Thus asked by the hunter, the Mahâtmâ Satyavrata was merged in an ocean of doubt; he began to argue "If I say I have not seen the boar then my vow to speak the truth will certainly be broken.

35. The boar struck with arrows has gone this way, it is true. How can I tell a lie? Again this man is hungry and is therefore asking, he will instantly kill the boar no sooner he finds him. How then can I speak truth?

36. Where speaking out the truth causes injury and the loss of lives, that truth is no truth at all; moreover, even untruth, when tempered with mercy for the welfare of others, is recognised as truth. Really speaking, whatever leads to the welfare of all the beings in this world, that is truth; and every thing else is not truth.

37. O Jamadagni! Thus placed between the horns of a religious dilemma what shall I do now so as to meet both the ends – to save the life of the boar, to do the welfare, as well as not to speak untruth.”

38. When Satyavrata saw the boar wounded by the arrow of the hunter, he, moved with pity, uttered the seed mantra of the Goddess of Learning; and now that most auspicious Goddess, on account of his uttering Her seed mantram, was very pleased and gave him the knowledge, difficult to be attained otherwise.

39. The door of all his knowledge opened out at once, and he became at once instantly the seer, the poet like the ancient Muni Vâlmikî.

40. Then that religiously disposed, merciful Brâhman, aiming at Truth, addressed that hunter before him with bows in his arms, thus :-

41. That force which sees (as witness) never speaks; and that force which speaks, never sees. O hunter! Why are you asking me repeatedly, impelled by your own selfish desire?

42. The hunter, the killer of the animals, on hearing this was disappointed in the matter of finding out the boar and went back to his home.

43. That Brâhmin turned out a poet like Varuna and he became celebrated as Satyavrata, the speaker of truth, in all the worlds.

44. He began to recite the Satyavrata mantram duly, and, by its influence, became a Pundit, rivalled by none in this world.

45. During every festival the Brâhmans chanted his praise and the Munis used to narrate his story in detail.

46. On hearing his fame spreading all around, his father Devadatta who forsook him before, recalled him to his hermitage and took him again in his family with great honour and affection.

47. Therefore O King! You should always worship and serve that Great Goddess, the Prime Energy, the Cause of all this Universe.

48. O King! With due Vedic rites you perform that sacrifice to that Goddess which will surely yield results at all times and all desires. I already spoke to you about this.

49. That Great Goddess is known as Kâmadâ (the giver of all desires); for She grants all desires when men with devotion remember Her, worship Her, take Her name, meditate Her and eulogise Her.

50-56. O King! The wise sages ought to see the persons diseased, distressed, hungry, those without any wealth, the hypocrite, the cheat, the afflicted, the sensual, the covetous, the incapable, always suffering from mental troubles; again those who are wealthy with their children and grand-children, prosperous, healthy, with enjoyments, versed in the Vedas, literary, kings, heroes, those who command over many, those attended with relations and kinsmen and endowed with all good qualities; and then judge for themselves that those people did not worship the Goddess and therefore they were sufferers and these people worshipped the Goddess and hence they were happy in this world.

57. Vyâsa said :– Thus I heard from the mouth of Lomas'a Muni, in assembly of the sages, the good merits of the Great Goddess.

58. O King! Consider all these and you will find that the Highest Goddess, the Bhâgavatî is to be worshipped always with devotion and unselfish love.

Here ends the Eleventh Chapter on the merits of the Devî in the story of Satyavrata in the Third Skandha of the Mahâ Purânam S'rî mad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

## Chapter XII

### On the Ambâ Yajña rules

1. The king spoke :– O Lord! Kindly describe the rules and regulations as to how the Devî Yajña (sacrifice) is performed with its duly prescribed rites and ceremonies. Hearing it I will unwearied perform it, as far as it lies in my power, with as little delay as possible.

2. How the worship is done, what are the mantras, what are the articles required for oblations, how many Brâhmins are required and what Daksinâs are to be paid to them, describe in detail all these.

3-5. Vyâsa said :– O king! I am telling you duly how the Yajña is performed, hear. The actions are always threefold according as the preparations are made and according as they are practised with regard to the observed rules. The threefold divisions are Sâttvik, Râjasik and Tâmasik. The Munis do the Sâttvik Pûjâ, the kings celebrate Râjasik and the Rakshasas do the Tâmasik Pûjâs. There is another Pûjâ which is devoid of qualities and which is performed by the liberated ones. I will describe to you all these in detail.

6-7. O king! The Yajña is then called Sâttvik, when it is performed in a Sâttvik country, like Benares, etc., in Sâttvik time, e.g., in Uttarâyana, when the materials collected are earned rightly, when the mantras are those of the Vedas, when the Brâhmin is Srotriya, where there is Sâttvik faith, void of any attachment towards the sensual objects, when all these happen to coincide. O king! When all the above takes place and there is purification of materials, actions, and mantras, i.e., when the materials are all right, when the actions are done as they ought to be, and where there is no error or omission, etc., in the mantras, etc., then and then only the Yajña becomes perfect and no doubt yield full results; there would be nothing contrary to this.

8-9. If the Yajña is performed with articles not rightly earned, then there is no fame either in this world nor there is any reward in the next world. Therefore it is necessary that the Yajña should be performed with rightly earned materials; then there is fame in this world and better state in the next world; and happiness is also acquired; there is no doubt in this.

10. O king! It is before your eyes, as it were, that the Pândavas performed the Râjasûya Yajña, the king of sacrifices, and, on the completion whereof, the excellent Daksinâs were paid to the Brâhmins and others.

11. In that Yajña the highly intelligent S'rî Krisna Himself, the Lord of the Yâdavas was present, as well as many other Brâhmanas, like Bhâradvâja and other fully enlightened souls.

12. But within three months after completing the sacrifice, the Pândavas suffered extreme hardships and had to live, with extreme difficulty, as exiles in the forest.

13. Consider the insult shown towards Draupadî, the Pândava's defeat in the play of gambling, their going away to dwell in the forest; these hardships were borne by the Pândavas. What rewards did then the Pândavas derive from the Râjasûya Yajña?

14-15. All the high-souled Pândavas had to work as slaves of Virâta; and Draupadî, the best of women, was very much troubled and insulted by Kichaka. When all these occurred, any one can easily ask where were the ashirvâdas of the pure souled Brâhmanas? Also what result did they derive from their unflinching devotion towards S'rî Krisna when they were involved in the above critical state?

16. No one protected Draupadî, the chaste and the best, the daughter of Drupada, when she was drawn by her hair on her head into the hall of assembly where gambling was being played?

17. O king! How could all these happen in a place where S'rî Bhagavân Kesava Himself and the high souled Yudhisthîra were present? If one argues, one would conclude "there must have been something wrong in that Yajña."

18. If you say that nothing wrong happened in the Yajña, all these were caused by Fate; then it comes to this :- that the Vedic mantras, Âgamas and the other Vedic rites are all fruitless.

19. If it be argued that though the Vedic mantras are powerful enough to bear fruits, yet whatever is predestined to come to pass, will surely pass, then the proposition resolves into this :- that all the means, expedients, and appliances lead to meaningless conclusions.

20. Then the Âgamas, the Vedas merely recommend a vidhi or precept by stating the good arising from its proper observance and the evils arising from its omission and also by adducing historical instances as its support; in other words, they are powerless as far as bearing fruits is concerned; all the acts are meaningless, asceticism to attain Heaven comes as useless and the peculiar duties of caste are fruitless. O king! This view is exceedingly culpable; it is never fit for acceptance by the highsouled persons.

21. O King! If what is laid by God in the womb of futurity (a state of things preordained by God in which it is sure to take place in the fullness of time), be taken as the first-hand proof, then all the other proofs are rendered null and void. Therefore Fate and human exertion both are to be undoubtedly taken into account to ensure success.

22. Human exertions being applied, if the results come otherwise, the wise Pundits would infer that some defects, omissions or imperfections crept into the work.

23. All the Pundits, very learned and instituters of sacrifices have classed Karmas under different headings according as the agents, mantras, and articles employed in the worship vary.

24. Once on an occasion Vis'varûpa, ordained as a Guru by Indra (in a Yajña) (intentionally) did things contrary so as to benefit the Daityas, who belonged to his mother's side.

25. Vis'varûpa uttered repeatedly the mantrams beneficial to the gods, while they were present; and, during their absence, prayed heartily for the welfare of the Daityas; and, in the long run, protected the Daityas.

26. On seeing the Asuras gaining strength, Indra, the Lord of the Devas, became very much enraged and instantly cut off Vis'varûpa's head by his thunderbolt.

27. O King! This is then the instance where the contrary fruits were borne out by the agent employed in performing the Yajña; there is no doubt in this. This is not possible in the other cases.

28. See, again, the king of Pânchâla performed his sacrifice to get a son to kill Drona, the son of Bhâradvâja; and though he did this out of angry motives, still Dhristadyumna was born out of fire; and Draupadî sprang out of the altar.

29. Again, in days of yore, Das'aratha, the king of Kosala, was sonless; and he instituted a sacrifice to get one son; and lo! he got four sons.

30. Therefore O King! If the Yajña be performed according to proper rules and regulations, it yields fruits in all respects; again if it be done unrighteously, without any regard for the rules, etc., it yields results just the contrary; there is no doubt in this.

31-32. Therefore, there must have been some defects in the Yajña of the Pândavas; hence contrary effects ensued, and therefore the truthful king Yudhisthîra and his powerful brothers and the chaste Draupadî were all defeated in the play at dice.

33. It might be that the materials were not of a good stamp; they were all earned by killing the kings, good many in number, and earned thus unrighteously; or it might happen that the Pândavas did their Yajña with too much egoism. However, this is certain that there had crept in some defects in their actions.

34. O King! The Sâttvik Yajña is rare; it can be done only by the Sâttvik Munis who live in the 3rd order of the household life or who live as hermits.

35-36. The ascetics that eat daily the Sâttvik food, the roots and fruits, collected from forests and obtained rightly, that is good to the Munis and that is well cleaned and purified, are the only ones that can perform with full devotions the Sâttvik Yajñas, where no animals are sacrificed (where there are no sacrificial posts to which the victim is fastened at the time of immolation) and where offerings of cakes of ground rice in vessels are given. These are the best of all the Sâttvik Yajñas.

37. The Ksatriyas and the Vaisyas perform the Yajñas with Abhimân (self-conceit and egoism) where many presents are given, animals are sacrificed, and all things are well cleansed, purified and elaborately decorated. This Yajña is called Râjasic.

38. That Yajña is according to the sages, Tâmasik, where the Dânavas, puffed up with arrogance, infatuated with anger, jealousy and wickedness perform their acts with the sole object of killing their enemies.

39. That Yajña is called Mânas Yâg or mânasic (mental) where the high-souled Munis, void of worldly desires, collect mentally all the necessary articles and perform the Yajña with the sole object of liberation from the bondages of the world.

40. In all the other Yajñas (than the Mânas Yâg) some imperfections or other naturally arise, due to some defects in the materials, or want of faith, or in the performance or in the Brâhmins.

41. No other Yajñas can be so complete as the Mânasa Yajña; the reason being that in the other Yajñas some, imperfections come out due to time, place, and separate ingredients to be collected.

42-43. Now hear who are the persons fit to undertake this mental Yajña in honour of the Great Goddess. First this mind is to be purified, by making it void of the Gunas; the mind

being pure, the body becomes also pure, there is no doubt. When the mind becomes completely pure, after it has abandoned all sensual objects, fit for enjoyment, then that man is entitled to perform the Mother's Yajña.

44-45. There he should build mentally the big hall for sacrifice, many Yojanas wide, decorated with high polished pillars out of the materials brought for the purpose (e. g., fortitude, etc.). Within the hall he will imagine a wide and spacious altar and place the Holy Fire on it mentally according to due rules and regulations.

46-47. He is to select mentally the Brâhmin priests and consecrate them as Brahmâ, Adharyu, Hotâ, Prastotâ, Udgâtâ, Pratihatrâ and other assistants. He is to worship mentally all these priests.

48. Then he will have to imagine the five Vâyus, Prâna, Apâna, Vyâna, Samâna, and Udâna, as the five fires and locate them duly on the altar.

49-50. Prâna Vâyus stands for Gârhapatya; Apâna, for Âhavanîya; Vyâna for Dakshinâ; Samâna for Avasathya; and Udâna for Sabhya Agni. These fires are all very terrible; then one should place these carefully on the altar with great concentration of mind. He is to collect then all the other necessary materials and think that all are very pure and free from any defects.

51-57. In the Mânasic Yajña, mind is the offerer of oblations and mind the Yajamâna, the performer of the Sacrifice; and the Presiding Deity of the Sacrifice is the Nirguna Brahmâ. The Great Goddess, the Nirguna Energy, who is always auspicious and gives the feeling of dispassion and indifference to worldly objects is the awarder of fruits in this Yajña. She is the Brahmâ Vidyâ, She is the substratum of all and She is all pervading. The Brâhmin is to take the Devî's name and offer oblations in the fire of Prâna, the necessary articles for the Devî's satisfaction. Then he is to make his Chitta and Prâna void of any worldly thought, or any worldly support and to offer oblations to the Eternal Brahmâ through the mouth of Kundalinî (the Serpent Fire.) Next, within his Nirvikalpa mind, by means of Samâdhi, he should meditate on his own Self, the Mahes'varî Herself by his consciousness. Thus, when he will see his own self in all the beings and all the beings in his own self, then the Jîva will get the vision of the Goddess Mahâvidyâ, giving auspicious liberation (Moksa). O King! After the high souled Munis have seen the Goddess, of everlasting intelligence and bliss, then he becomes the knower of Brâhman. All the Mâyâ, the cause of this Universe becomes burnt up; only, as long as the body remains, the Prârabdha Karma remains.

58. Then the Jîvas become liberated, while living; and when the body dissolves, he attains to final liberation. Therefore, O Child! Whoever worships the Mother becomes crowned with success; there is no doubt in this.

59. Therefore follow the advice of the Guru, the Spiritual Teacher; and with all attention, hear, think and meditate on the Great Goddess of the World.

60. O King! Liberation is sure to ensue of this Mânasa Yajña. All the other Yajñas are Sakâma (with some object in view) and therefore their effects are temporary.

61-62. He who wants enjoyments in Heaven, should perform the Agnistoma Yajña, with due rites and ceremonies; such is the Vedic injunction. But when the acquired merit expires, the sacrificer will have to come again into this world of mortals. Therefore the Mânasa Yajña is eternal and best.

63-65. This Mânasa Yajña is not fit to be performed by kings intent on getting victory. The Yajña that you performed, the serpent Yajña, is Tâmasic, for you wanted to take vengeance

on your enemy, the serpent Taksaka; and millions of serpents were made to be burnt in that sacrifice.

O King! Hear now about the Devî Yajña, that was performed by Visnu in the beginning of the creation. You better now do that Devî Yajña with due rules.

66-67. I will tell you all about the rules; there are Brâhmîns that know the rules and know best also the Vedas; they know also the seed mantrams of the Devî, as well as the rules of their application; they are clever in all the mantrams. These will be your priests and you yourself will be the sacrificer.

68. O King! Do this sacrifice duly and deliver your father from hell by the merits that you will acquire thereby.

69. O Sinless One! The sin incurred on account of insulting a Brâhmîn is serious and leads the sinner to hell. Your father committed that sin and incurred the curse from a Brâhmîn. Therefore he has gone to the hell.

70. Your father died also out of a snake bite which is not a meritorious one. The death occurred also in a palace built high up in the air (on a pillar), instead of taking place on the ground on a bed of Kus'a grass.

71. O best of the Kurus! The death did not occur in any battle nor on the banks of the Ganges. Void of proper bathing and charities, etc., he died in a palace.

72. O best of Kings! All the ugly causes, leading to hell, were present in the case of your father. See, again, there is also one thing which done will lead to one's liberation; but that was absent too with your father.

73-76. That is this :- Let a man remain, wherever he may, whenever he comes to learn that his end is approaching, even if he had not practised before any good practices or meritorious deeds, and even if he becomes senseless in the trial time of death, when dispassion comes to an individual whose mind gets, for the time being, clear and free from any worldly thoughts, then he should think thus :- "This my body, composed of five elements, will soon be destroyed; there is no cause whatsoever in having any remorse for it; let whatever come, that it may; I am free, void of qualities; and I am the Eternal Purusa; death is not capable to do any harm to me. All the elements are liable to decay and destruction; what remorse can overtake me? I am not a man of the world, I am always free, Eternal Brahmâ; I have got no connection with this body that is merely the outcome of actions.

77. Before I did meritorious or unmeritorious acts, leading to happiness and pain; therefore I have got this mortal coil and am enjoying the fruits of my past auspicious or inauspicious Karma."

78. Whoever thinks thus and dies, even if he does not take proper purificatory bath or make any charity, he gets himself freed from the awful Samsâra and never comes to see himself again born in this world.

79. O King! This method of parting from one's body is rarely attained even by the Yogîns; this is the acme, the highest height of all the human efforts towards liberation.

80. But your father, hearing even the curse from a Brâhmîn, retained his attachment towards his body; therefore he did not attain dispassion.

81. He thought thus :- “My body is now free from any disease; my kingdom is free from enemies or any other source of danger; how can I now get myself saved from this untimely death.” Thinking thus, he ordered to call the Brâhmans, who know the mantrams.

82. Then that king ascended to the palace, with medicines, many mantras and many other instruments.

83-84. He considered his fate to be the strongest and therefore did not take his bath in any holy place; he did not perform any charities, did not sleep on the ground or remember any mantram of the Devî. Due to Kali entering into his body, he committed the sin of insulting an ascetic and plunged himself in the ocean of delusion and died bitten by the Taksaka snake on the top of a palace.

85. The King has now fallen undoubtedly to the hell, on account of those vicious deeds. Therefore, O King! dost Thou deliver your father from the sin.

86. Sûta said, O Risis! Hearing these words from the fiery Vyâsa, the king Janamejaya became very sad and tears came from his eyes and flowed down his cheeks and throat.

He then exclaimed in a suffocating voice “Fie on me! my father is still in the hell. I will now do at once whatever leads my father to heaven.”

Thus ends the twelfth chapter on the Ambâ Yajña rules in the 3rd Adhyâya of S’rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam, the Mahâ Purânâ of 18,000 verses composed by Mahârsi Veda Vyâsa.

### Chapter XIII

#### On the Devî Yajña by S’rî Visnu

1-3. The King spoke :- O Grandfather! How did Visnu, the Powerful, the Cause of the world, perform the Devî Yajña? Whose help did he receive and what priests with their knowledge of the Vedas did he engage, kindly tell all these to me in special details. I will very attentively hear first this Devî Yajña, performed by Visnu; and then I will make arrangements to do that myself accordingly.

4. Vyâsa said :- O noble one! Hear in detail that very wonderful thing, how Visnu celebrated the Devî Yajña conformably to the rules laid down in the S’âstras.

5. When Brahmâ, Visnu, and Mahes’a were each given powers by the Devî, the Goddess of the Universe, and when they parted, these three Devas became free from their womanhood, while they were coming back in their aerial cars and turned out men, as they were before.

6. These three Devas, found the great ocean before them. They brought out world from it; and built, in that world, dwelling abodes; and they themselves began to live in some of them.

7. That world became fixed, steady and the supporter of all beings when the Goddess imparted the power of fixture, steadiness, and the power of supporting to the world. The earth, filled with marrow, then, became fixed and the great supporter by Her power.

8-10. O King! The name of this earth is Medinî, since it was made out of the marrow of the two Asuras Madhu and Kaitabha. This earth is termed Dharâ because it supports all; is termed Prithvî because it is very capacious; and it is called Mahî because it is great, since it supports so many beings. O King! the Ananta serpent is holding it on her thousand-hoods. To make the earth remain solid and compact, Brahmâ built at places mountains. As iron nails in a log of wood, so these hills and mountains within this earth made it fixed. Therefore the Pundits call these mountains “Mahîdhara,” holder of the earth.

11. O King! Thus the golden Meru, the great mountain, many Yojanas wide, adorned with many golden mountain peaks was created.
12. Next Marîchi, Nârada, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Daksa, and Vas'istha were created by Brahmâ; these are the Brahmâ's mental sons (sons created by the sheer power of mind).
13. The son Kas'yapa was born to Marîchi and thirteen daughters were born of Daksa. From these daughters and out of the seed of Kas'yapa, various Devas and Daityas were born.
14. Then human beings, animals, serpents and many other classes were created. This is called the Kâsyapî S'rîsti or the Kas'yapa's creation.
15. Next Svâyambhava Manu sprang from the lower half of Brahmâ; and the daughter named S'atarûpâ came out of the left hand side of the Brahmâ's body.
16. The two sons Priyavrata and Uttânapâda were born of Manu in the womb of S'atarûpâ and the three daughters, very beautiful and fair complexioned, were also born of him.
17. Creating then, the Bhagavân, the lotus born Brahmâ built the beautiful Brahma-loka, on the top of the Meru mountain.
18. Then the Bhagavân Visnu built the Vaikuntha city on the top of all the lokas or worlds to dwell with his consort Laksmî.
19. Mahâdeva, too, built the exceedingly beautiful Kailâs'a and stayed there with his Bhûtas and played with them at his will.
20. The third Loka termed Heaven was built on the top of Meru, decorated with various precious gems and jewels and stones. It was fixed as the abode of Indra.
- 21-22. When the great ocean was churned, Pârijâta, the best of all the trees, the elephant Airâvata with four tusks, the Heavenly cow yielding the milk of all desires, the Uchchais'ravâ horse and Apsarâs, Rambhâ and others, arose and were taken by Indra. These became the ornaments of Heaven.
23. The Moon and Dhanvantarî, the great physician also came out of the churning of the ocean. These surrounded with many other members began to shine, being situated above the Heavens.
24. O King! Thus the three varieties, human beings, Devas, and Tiryakas (birds, etc.) and their great subvarieties sprang up.
25. The four classes of Jîvas, Andaja (born from the eggs), Svedaja (born out of sweats), Udbhija (plants, etc.) and Jarâyujâ (men, etc.) were created, being endowed with the fruits of their past auspicious or inauspicious Karmas, as the case may be.
26. Brahmâ, Visnu, and Mahes'a began to play and walk about at their leisures in their respective spheres, after they finished all their creations.
27. Thus the wheel of creation being started, the Great God Bhagavân Visnu Achyuta remained in sport with Mahâ Laksmî in His own sphere Vaikuntha.
28. Then Bhagavân Visnu, while sitting one day in Vaikuntha, got in his mind the memory of that beautiful island, called Mani Dvîpa, adorned with precious stones, gems and jewels.
- 29-33. O King! In this Mani Dvîpa, the Bhagavân Visnu got the vision of the Mahâ Mâyâ and the auspicious mantra. He now thought to celebrate a Yajña in honour of the Devî, when he recollected the highest Energy, the Great Goddess. He then went out of his abode and invited

Brahmâ, Mahes'vara, Kuvera, Indra, Varuna, Fire, Yama, Vas'istha, Kas'yapa, Daksa, Vâmadeva, Brihaspati and others and began to collect lots of materials necessary for the Devî sacrifice. Selecting a site Sâttvik, beautiful, and possessing great spiritual powers, Visnu erected, with the help of the great artists and engineers, a wide capacious sacrificial hall, and for the due celebration and fulfilment of it, appointed twenty seven priests; who pledged a solemn vow to complete it duly.

34. When the big altar and chiti (pile of wood for burning, stack of sacrificial bricks) were finished, the Brâhmanas began to recite slowly the Devî mantrams with their root mantrams.

Note :- Chiti, lit pile of wood for burning, is perhaps the Mûlâdhâra, the sacral plexus, where the fire called Kundalinî is first kindled by processes of Yoga.

35-37. Then the profuse quantities of ghee were offered as oblations to to the Sacred Fire. Thus when the Homa, (offering oblations of ghee to the fire) ceremony was finished elaborately and conforming to the rules of the S'âstras, the sweet and melodious Heavenly voice was heard in the air, addressing Visnu Bhagavân, thus :- O Visnu! Let You be the supreme amongst the gods; honour and worship shall be Thine first; and you would be the most powerful of the Devas. Indra together with Brahmâ, and the other Devas, all will worship You.

38-39. O Achyuta! (O Infallible One!) Those men on the earth that will be devoted to you, will certainly be endowed with power and you shall be the bestower of boons and all their desires. O Visnu! you will be the Supreme of the Devas and you will be the God of the gods; you will be the first and foremost in all the sacrifices and you will be worshipped by the sacrificers.

40-41. People will worship you; and you will favour them with the boons. O best of the Purusas! When the Devas will be troubled by the Asuras, they will come and take refuge in Thee. You will be the Protector of all, there is no doubt in this. In all the Purânas and all this vast Vedas, You will be first worshipped.

42. O Kes'ava! Wherever there will be decay and decline in religion, You will incarnate in your parts and preserve the religion.

43-44. O Mâdhava! Avatâras, renowned in all the worlds, will come down on earth as Your part incarnations in all sorts of wombs, in due order, and will be respected by all the high souled personages. O Madhusûdana! Those Avatâras will be the best of all the Avatâras and will be famous all the Lokas, the worlds.

45. In all your Avatâras, you will get your attendants, the S'aktis (females) drawing their energies from My parts; and they will serve your purposes.

46-47. Vârâhî, Nârasimhî, etc., and various other S'aktis of auspicious appearances, endowed with various weapons and decked with all the ornaments will serve as your attendants; no doubt in this. O Visnu! Always with their help and under the influence of My favour, you will no doubt be quite competent to serve the purposes of the Devas.

48. You should respect and worship all those powers by all means and with very great attention; never shew the slightest trace of pride to them; never do you thus insult them.

49. These S'aktis, capable of bestowing all the desires, will be worshipped in Pratinâm (images of clay, etc.) in the whole of India.

50. O Deva of the Devas! The fame of all these S'aktis, as well as of You will be spread in the seven worlds and in the whole Universe.

51. O Hari! The human beings on this earth will constantly worship with selfish ends these powers and you, for the fructification of their desires.

52. Having various desires, men will, in your worship, present various offerings, recite the Veda mantrams, and repeat the names of you and the powers.

53. O Visnu! You will be the God of the Immortals and your glory will be enhanced by the worship offered by the human beings in the world as well as in the heavens.

54. Vyâsa said :- O king! The heavenly voice, thus, bestowing boons on Visnu, ceased. Visnu Bhagavân became very glad to hear this.

55-58. Then Hari, the God of Gods, completed duly the sacrifice and dismissed the Devas and the Munis, the sons of Brahmâ. Then ascending on Garuda, (His Vâhana), He went up to Vaikuntha with his followers. The Devas also went to their own respective places. The Munis also retired gladly to their own hermitages, all thunderstruck to see these things, conversing with each other about this sacrifice.

59. O king! All were filled with best devotion towards the Supreme Force, on hearing this clear beautiful, sonorous heavenly voice; then the Dvîjas, the Munis, and Munîndras began to worship with devotion, according to the Vedas, that Highest Force, the Supreme Goddess, giving all desired objects profusely in all the details.

Here ends the thirteenth chapter on the Devî Yajña by S'rî Visnu in the third Adhyaya in S'rîmad Devî Bhâgavatam; the Mahâ Purânâ by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

## THE THIRD BOOK

### Chapter XIV

On the narration of the glories of the Devî

1-2. Janamejaya spoke :- O Dvîja! I have heard in detail the Devî Yajña, performed by S'rî Visnu. Now describe Her Glory and glorious deeds. After hearing these, the Devî's glorious deeds, I will also perform that, the best of all sacrifices. Thereby I will no doubt be pure through your favour.

3. Vyâsa said :- O king! Hear, I am describing to you the history of the most auspicious mighty deeds of the Devî, according to the Purânas.

4-5. In days of yore, there reigned in the country of Kosala, the king Dhruvasandhi of the Solar Dynasty. He was the son of Puspa and celebrated on account of his great prowess. He was truthful, religious, engaged in doing good to his subjects, obeying the laws of the four castes and Âs'ramas. He being pure, performed his regal duties in the flourishing city of Ayodhyâ.

6. The Brâhmanas, Ksatriyas, Vais'yas, and S'ûdras and other good persons all lived religiously under his rule, each abiding by his own profession.

7. No thieves, cheats, cunning persons, vain and arrogant persons, treacherous and illiterate men were allowed to remain in his kingdom.

8. O host of Kurus! Thus ruling virtuously, the king had two wives, both of them young, fair and beautiful and well able to give delights and enjoyments to the king.

9. The first and lovely wife was Manoramâ, and the second was Lîlâvatî. Both of them were exceedingly handsome, intelligent and qualified.

10. The king enjoyed much with them in palaces, gardens, romantic hills, lakes, and various beautiful mansions.

11. In the auspicious moment, Manoramâ gave birth to a beautiful child, endowed with all royal qualifications. The child was named, in due course, Sudars'ana.

12. Next within one month, his second wife the fair Lîlâvatî in the auspicious fortnight and in the auspicious day, gave birth to an excellent child.

13. The King then performed the Jâta-Karma (ceremonies on the birth of a child) and being very glad, made lots of presents, wealth, etc., to the Brâhmanas.

14. The King shewed affection equally to the two children; never he made any distinction between them.

15. The king, the tormenter of the foes, was very glad and performed duly the chudâ karana ceremony according to his position and wealth.

16. The sight of these two sons delighted very much the people. Now seeing these Kritachûdas, and playing, the king was merged in the ocean of pleasure.

17-18. Sudars'ana was the eldest; but Satrujit, the second beautiful son by Lîlâvatî was of sweet and persuasive speech. His beautiful figure and sweet words gave very much delight to the king, and for these qualities, the child Satrujit turned out also a favourite of the people and ministers.

19. The king could not show so much affection to the unfortunate Sudars'ana as he showed to Satrujit.

20-21. Thus some days having passed, one day the king Dhruvasandhi went out on an hunting expedition to the forest. He killed in the forest many deer, Ruru (a kind of deer), elephants, boar, hare, buffaloes, rhinoceros, camels and amused himself very much with this hunting affair.

22-23. While he was hunting thus, a lion got very much enraged, and, from a bush, suddenly jumped and came upon the king. That king of the beasts was already struck with arrows; now seeing the king in front, he loudly roared.

24-25. He angrily lifted his long tail high up in the air and, puffing up his manes, jumped up high in the air to attack and to take the life of the king. Seeing this, instantly the king took sword in his right hand and shield in his left and stationed himself like another lion before him.

26. The king's followers, one and all, angrily shot arrows on the lion.

27. Then a loud uproar ensued; and all began to hurl arrows as best as they could. But, after all, that dangerous lion fell upon the king.

28-29. Seeing thus, the king struck him with his sword, but the lion also tore asunder the king, with his sharp nails. The king thus struck by the lion, fell on the spot and died. The soldiers cried aloud and killed the lion with arrows.

30. Thus both the king and lion lay dead on the spot; and the soldiers turned back to the palace and gave all the informations to the royal ministers.

31. When the munis heard the demise of the king, they went to the forest, performed the burning of the dead body of the king.

32. The Maharsi Vas'istha performed duly on the same spot, all the funeral ceremonies, thus ensuring the king the safe journey to the next world.

33. All the subjects and the citizens and the Muni Vas'istha counselled each other to install Sudars'ana on the throne as the king.

34-35. The minister-in-chief as well as the other members proposed that as Sudars'ana is the son of the legal wife, calm and quiet, beautiful and endowed with all the royal qualifications, he is fit for the throne. Maharsi Vas'istha said, the royal son, though not attained to proper age is still religious; therefore he is really fit to be installed as king on the royal throne.

36. When the wise aged ministers thus decided, Yudhâjit, the king of Ujjain, on hearing the decision hastened to the spot.

37. He was the father of Lîlâvatî; on hearing the demise of his son-in-law he came there, so that his daughter's son might get the kingdom.

38. Next, Vîrasena, the king of the country of Kalinga and the father of Manoramâ, came there also with the object that his daughter's son Sudars'ana be the Emperor.

39. The two kings, accompanied respectively by their own army and soldiers, began to counsel with the aged ministers, each trying so that his daughter's son may get the throne.

40. Yudhâjit made the question :- "Who is the eldest of the two sons? Is it always the case that the eldest will inherit the kingdom? Will not the youngest ever be able to acquire it?"

41. Vîrasena said :- O king! He who is the son of the legal wife inherits the kingdom; this I have heard from the learned who are proficient in the knowledge of the S'âstras.

42. Hearing Vîrasena, Yudhâjit repeated "Sudars'ana is not so qualified with royal qualifications and other matters as this son of the late king, Satrujit. How can then Sudars'ana inherit the throne?"

43. O King! Then quarrels ensued amongst the two kings. Now, at this critical juncture, who is able to solve their doubts?

44. Yudhâjit then addressed the ministers :- "You all are prompted by selfish ends; you want to acquire a good deal of money by making Sudars'ana the king.

45-46. I have come to know by your gestures and postures that your decision is to the above effect. After all, as Satrujit possesses many more qualifications than Sudars'ana, he has more claims to the throne; and therefore he is fit to occupy the throne and no other. Moreover, let me see as long as I live who can set aside the claims of a qualified prince, in possession of an army, and put forward the claims of a prince who has no qualifications at all.

47. I am ready to fight and I will tear the earth into two pieces by my sword. What more have you to say on this?"

48. Hearing this, Vîrasena addressed Yudhâjit "I see the two boys' intelligence the same. You are intelligent; kindly mention where is the difference?"

49. O king! The two kings quarrelling with each other, remained there; the subjects and the Rîsis, seeing this, were very anxious.

50. Hundreds of tributary princes wanting that the two kings might be involved into quarrels with each other, came to the spot, with their soldiers, though they had to undergo great hardships in doing so.

51. Many aborigines, from the inhabitants of Srīngaverpur, hearing the demise of the late king, also appeared on the scene with the sole object to plunder.

52. The two princes are minors; and hearing their parties at war with each other, many robbers from various adjoining countries came also there.

53. Thus when the war broke out between the two kings, the great confusion and tumult across within the kingdoms; on the other hand, Yudhâjit and Vîrasena both became ready to fight.

Thus ends the Fourteenth Chapter on the narration of the glories of the Devî and the death of the Kosala king Dhruva Sandhi in the 3rd Adhayâya of S'rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam.

## Chapter XV

On the battle between Yudhâjit and Vîrasena

1. Vyâsa said :- O king! When the war was declared, the two kings, excited by greed and anger, took up arms; and a dreadful encounter ensued.

2. On one side the king Yudhâjit of long arms, surrounded by his own army, with bows and arrows came ready to fight.

3. On the other hand, the fiery Vîrasena, the second God of the Devas appeared in the battle, following a true Ksatriya custom, on behalf his daughter's son.

4. Then that truthful king Vîrasena, seeing Yudhâjit in battle, became very angry and hurled arrows on him, as a cloud rains on the mountain tops.

5. On being covered, as it were, by the sharp and swift arrows, sharpened on a stone slab hurled at him by Vîrasena, Yudhâjit, too, quickly, shot arrows at Vîrasena and cut off all his arrows.

6. O King! A dreadful fight then ensued between the cavalries, the warriors on the elephants; and the Devas, men, and Munis began to witness this terrible battle with wonder and astonishment. Birds, vultures and crows, desirous to eat the flesh of the dead soldiers, flew in the air.

7. Blood of elephants, horses and warriors, the bodies that lay dead, flowed in torrents awfully like rivers in that deadly battle ground. The torrent of blood excited fear amongst those who came to see it, as the river Vaitarani on the way to hell (the Lord of Death) is very fearful to the sinners.

8. The human skulls were driven ashore by the current and they look like so many hollow shells of gourds scattered there for the play of the boys on the banks of the Jumnâ.

9. When any warrior lay dead on the field, the vultures began to fly about in the air for devouring his flesh. It seemed then that the soul of the warrior beholding his beautiful body tried to reenter into his body, though he thought that it had become very inaccessible to him.

10. Some warriors on being slain in the battle instantly arose in a celestial car to the heavens and was seen addressing the celestial nymph, who came already within his embrace, thus "O one of beautiful thighs. Behold! how my beautiful body is lying on the earth below!"

11. Another warrior thus slain got up in the heavens on a celestial car, came in possession of a celestial nymph and when he was sitting with her in the car, his former wife in the earth made herself a sati and burnt herself up in the funeral pyre, thus got a celestial body, came

up to the heavens; and that chaste virtuous woman drew away perforce her own husband away from that celestial nymph.

12. Two warriors, went up, slew each other and lay down dead at the same time. They went up in the heavens at the same time and there began quarrel with each other and fight with their weapons for one and the same celestial nymph.

13. Some hero got in the heavens a nymph more lovely and beautiful than himself and he thus became very much attached and devoted her. He began to describe his own heroic qualities and also to copy dotedly the qualities of his lover so that she might remain faithfully attached to him.

14. The dust, arising from the dreadful encounter of the soldiers in battle field, rose up in the air and covered the sun. It appeared night. After a while that dust became absorbed in the blood below, and the sun appeared very red, reflected with the colour of the blood.

15. Some Brahmachârî fought in the battle and was slain. He went up to the heavens; instantly a lovely eyed Devakanyâ, a celestial nymph desired to select him as bridegroom with great devotion. But that clever man did not accept the offer, thinking that his vow of Brahmacharya would be thus broken.

16-17. O King! Thus when the battle was deadly, the king Yudhâjit shot a sharp, dreadful arrow at Vîrasena and severed his head from body. Vîrasena lay dead on the battle field and his army was routed. The soldiers fled away from the battle.

18-19. Hearing that her father was slain in the battle, Manoramâ became very terrified and anxious. She then began to think that the vicious wicked king Yudhâjit will surely slay her son, for kingdom's sake and to satisfy his enmity with her father.

20. What shall I do now? My father is slain in the battle. My husband is no more. My child is a minor to-day. Where shall I go?

21. Greed is very sinful; who is there that cannot be bought over by love of gold? and what vicious act can there be, that cannot be done when actuated by covetousness?

22. A greedy man does not hesitate to kill his father, mother, spiritual guide, friends and others. There is no doubt in this.

23. It is the inordinate love of worldly things that makes a man eat what is held unclean in society, that makes a man approach a woman who is unapproachable, and it is greed that makes a man discard his own religion and become an apostate.

24. In this city I find none so powerful as I can remain there under his shelter and be able to rear up my child.

25. What can I do if the king Yudhâjit slay my son? There is none in this world who can save me, and, counting on whose shelter, I can stay here without any anxiety.

26. And this my co-rival wife Lîlâvatî will always practise enmity with me. She will never shew mercy on my son.

27. When Yudhâjit will arrive in this city, I will never be able to go out of it and he will to-day put my son in the prison on the pretext that he is a minor.

28-29. I heard that, in days of yore, Indra entered into the womb of his pregnant step mother with a small thunderbolt in his hand and divided the foetus into seven parts with that weapon,

again each of these seven into seven parts again, thus the forty nine Maruts were born in the Heavens.

30-31. I heard also that in ancient times one queen gave poison to destroy the foetus in the womb of her rival wife. When the child came out of the womb, he was celebrated by the name of Sagara (with poison) in this earth.

32. The husband was alive, and still his queen Kaikeyi banished the eldest son of his king, S'rî Râmchandra to the forest; and the king Das'aratha sacrificed his life for that very reason.

33. The ministers no doubt wanted before to install my son as the king; but now they are not independent; they have now yielded themselves to the king Yudhâjit.

34. There is no brother of mine powerful enough to release me from my bondage; I see I have fallen into a great difficulty by the combination of unforeseen circumstances.

35. Though the success depends on Fate, still one should make an earnest effort. If one does not make any effort, fate also remains asleep. I will therefore soon make out a plan to save my son.

36-38. O King! Thinking thus, that woman Manoramâ called in private the best and very respectable minister Vidalla, who was intelligent and expert in everything, and holding the hands of her son and weeping, said humbly in a depressed spirit "O Minister! My father is slain in the battle field, this my son is a minor, and Yudhâjit is a powerful king; consider all these and tell me what I should do now?"

39-40. The venerable minister Vidalla then said to the queen Manoramâ "It is never advisable for us to stay here. Soon we will go into the forests of Benares. There I have got my powerful uncle Subâhu. He is prosperous and has got a strong army. He will protect us."

41. "I will make the pretext that I am become very anxious for the king and therefore I am going out to see the king Yudhâjit and will go out of the city in my chariot. There is no doubt in this."

42-43. Hearing, thus, the Vidalla's words, the queen Manoramâ went to Lîlâvatî and said "O faireyed! To-day I am going to see the father Yudhâjit." Thus saying, she went out of the city in a chariot, accompanied by her son, attendants and Vidalla.

44-45. Grieved at the loss of her father, fearful, distressed, and fatigued, Manoramâ saw Yudhâjit and performed the cremation of her father Vîrasena; and, trembling with fear, got to the banks of the Ganges after two days' swift journey.

46-48. There the robbers, the Nisâdas plundered all their riches and took the chariot and went away. Manoramâ had only her clothings, that she wore, left to her. She began to weep, and, holding the hands of her attendant, went to the Ganges shore, and being afraid crossed the river on a raft and went to the Chitrakûta mountain.

49. That terrified Devî went to the hermitage of Bhâradvâja as early as possible. There she saw the ascetics and was relieved of her fear.

50. Bhâradvâja asked, "O lotus eyed! Who are you and whose wife are you? Why have you taken so much trouble to come here? Answer all these truly."

51. "O beautiful one! are you a Devî or a human being? your son is a very minor. Why have you come in this dense forest? It seems, as if you are deprived of your kingdom."

52. Thus asked by the best of the Munis, the beautiful Manoramâ became very much afflicted with grief and began to weep; she could not speak anything herself and ordered Vidalla to inform the Muni all what had happened.

53-54. Vidalla then said :- There was a king of Kosala, named Dhruvasandhi. She is the legal wife of that king. Her name is Manoramâ. That powerful king of the Solar Dynasty was killed by a lion in a forest. This boy Sudars'ana is his son.

55. The father of this Manoramâ was very religious. He died fighting for the cause of his daughter's son. Now the present queen has become much afraid and has therefore come to this wild forest.

56. The son of this woman is now a minor; he is now taking your refuge. O best of the Munis! Protect them.

57. To give protection to any distressed person is to acquire merits higher than performing a sacrifice. Therefore to protect one who is very much afflicted with fear and who is helpless will have still higher merits.

58. Bhâradvâja said :- "O beautiful one! Remain in this hermitage without any fear; rear up your son here. O auspicious one! There is no cause of fear here from your enemies.

59. Better nourish and support your child. Your son will surely be a king and if you remain in this hermitage, no sorrow or grief will overtake you."

60. Vyâsa said :- When the great Muni Bhâradvâja said thus, the queen Manoramâ became peaceful. The Muni gave them a cottage to live in and there they dwelt without any sorrow.

61. Thus Manoramâ dwelt obediently with her maid servant, liked by all. Vidalla also remained there and Manoramâ began to nourish her child.

Here ends the Fifteenth chapter on the Devî Mâhâtmya and the battle between Yudhâjit and Vîrasena and the going away of Manoramâ to the forest in the 3rd Adhyâya of S'rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

## Chapter XVI

### On the glory of the Devî

1. Vyâsa said :- After gaining the victory in the battle, the king Yudhâjit returned to the city of Ayodhyâ with his huge army and asked where are Sudars'ana and Manoramâ? He wanted to kill Sudars'ana.

2. He repeatedly exclaimed "Where are they gone?" and sent his servants on their search. Then, on an auspicious day, he installed his daughter's son on the throne.

3. Maharsi Vas'istha was engaged as the priest; he and the other ministers began to chant the auspicious hymns of the Atharvaveda and with the jars, filled with water, and consecrated by these hymns, installed S'atrûjit on the throne.

4. O best of the Kurus! Conch shells resounded; drums, bherîs and tûriyas, resounded; and great festivals and rejoicings took place in the city.

5. The reciting of the Vedic mantrams by the Brâhmans, the chanting of hymns by the bards and the auspicious acclamation of Victory to the new king resounded the whole city of Ayodhyâ with joy.

6. When the new king S'atrûjit ascended on the throne, the subjects were filled with joy; everywhere hymns were sung; drums were resound. At this Ayodhyâ looked as fresh as ever.

7-8. O King! Though there were thus great rejoicings and festivals, yet some good persons were found that remembered Sudars'ana and gave vent to this feeling of sorrow, thus :- "Alas! Where has that prince gone? Where has that chaste queen Manoramâ gone with her son? Oh! The enemies have killed his father for greed of kingdom."

9. The saints with their views impartial, thus rendered uneasy, sorry, began to pass away their time there subject to S'atrûjit.

10. After installing duly his daughter's son on the throne and after having made over the charge of the kingdom to the wise councillors, Yudhâjit turned towards his own city.

11-12. Afterwards Yudhâjit heard that Sudars'ana was staying in the hermitage with the Munis. He started at once for Chitrakûta and went quickly to Durdars'a, the chief of the city of Srngavera, being accompanied by Bala, the chief of the Nîsâdas.

13-15. Hearing that Yudhâjit was coming there with his army, Manoramâ began to think that his son was a minor and became very sorrowful, distressed and terrified. Then she with tears in her eyes addressed the Muni thus :- "Yudhâjit is coming here; what shall I do and whither shall I go? He has slain my father, and has installed his daughter's son on the throne. Still he is not satisfied and he is now coming with his army here to kill my minor child."

16-21. O Lord! In days of yore, I heard that the Pândavas, when they went to the forest, lived in the holy hermitage of the Munis with Draupadî. One day the five brethren went a hunting, and the beautiful Draupadî stayed without any fear with other maid servants in the hermitage where there was the chanting of the Vedas by Dhaumya, Attri, Gâlava, Paila, Jâvâli, Gautama, Bhriгу, Chyavana, Kanva of the Atrigotra, Jatu, Kratu, Vîtihoṭra, Sumantu, Yajñadatt, Vatsala, Râs'âsana, Kahoda, Yavakrî, Yajñakrit, Kratu and other holy high souled Risis like Bhâradvâja and others.

22-23. While the five great heroes Arjuna and others, the destroyers of their enemies, were roaming in the forests, Jayadratha, the king of Sindhu came with his army to the hermitage, hearing the reciting of the Vedic hymns.

24. Hearing thus, that king quickly descended from the chariot so that he might have a sight of these holy maharsis.

25-27. Accompanied by two attendants only, he approached to the Munis and, finding them engaged in the study of the Vedas, waited there with folded hands for an opportunity. O Lord! When the king Jayadratha on entering the hermitage took his seat, the wives of the Munis came there to see the king and began to enquire "Who is this person?"

28. With the wives of the Munis came there also the beautiful Draupadî. Jayadratha looked upon Draupadî as if she were the second goddess Laksmî.

29-30. Looking at that lovely royal daughter who looked like the Deva girls Jayadratha asked the Maharsi Dhaumya, "Who is this beautiful lotus eyed lady? Whose wife is she and who is her father? What is her name? Oh! From her beautiful appearance it seems that the goddess S'achî has come down on earth."

31. This fair woman is shining like the celestial nymph Rambhâ surrounded by the Raksasis or like the beautiful creeper Lavangalatika encircled by thorny trees.

32. O good ones! Tell truly whose beloved is she? O Brâhmins! It seems that she is the wife of some king, not the wife of a Muni.

33. Dhaumya said :- “O king of Sindhu! She is the daughter of Pâncâla; her name is Draupadî; she is the wife of the Pândavas; they are residing in this forest, having got rid of their fears.”

34. Jayadratha said “Where have those powerful Pândavas of great prowess gone now? Are they dwelling in this forest, free from fears?”

35. Dhaumya said :- “The five Pândavas have gone out on hunting, ascended on a chariot. They will return at noon with their game.”

36-37. Hearing the Muni's words Jayadratha got up, and going near to Draupadî, bowed down to her and said :- “O Fair One! Is there everything well with you? Where have your husbands gone? To-day it is eleven years that you are residing in the forest.”

38. Draupadî then said :- “O prince! Let all be well with you, wait here for a short while; the Pândavas are coming quickly.”

39. While Draupadî thus spoke, that powerful king, being overpowered with greed and avarice, stole her away, disregarding all the Munis present there.

40-42. O Lord! The wise should never trust any body; if on any body he places his trust, he will surely come to grief. For example, see the case of the king Bali. Bali, the son of Virochana, and the grandson of Prahlâda, was prosperous, devoted to his religion, true to his promise, performer of sacrifices, generous, always giving protection to and liked by the saints and a great warrior. His mind never turned to any irreligious subject and he performed ninety nine Yajñas with full Daksinâs (remunerations).

43-44. But the Bhagavân Visnu, who is all full of Sâttvic purity and who is never affected with passions and changeless, who is always worshipped by the Yogis, He, in the form of a dwarf in his Vâmana incarnation as the son of Kas'yapa Risi, to serve the Devas, stole away his whole seagirt earth and kingdom deceitfully on hypocritical pretext.

45. O Lord! I heard that the son of Virochana was a generous large hearted king. He truly resolved to give what was wanted; but Visnu behaved with him deceitfully to serve the cause of Indra.

46. When the pure, Sâttvik Visnu could assume this dwarf incarnation to bring about the hindrance to Bali's Yajña, what wonder is that other ordinary mortals would practise things like that?

47. Therefore never trust on any body in any way. Lord! Where there are greed and avarice, reigning in one's heart, what fear can he have to perpetrate any evil deed?

48-49. O Muni! It is through avarice that men commit sinful deeds; they do not care what good or bad will happen to them in the next world. Thoroughly overpowered by greed, they take away in mind, word and deed other's things; and thus they become fallen.

50-51. Lo! Human beings always worship the Gods for wealth; but the Devas do not give them wealth instantly; they give them these things through others by making them carry on trade, make gifts, or shew their strength or by making them steal.

52. The Vais'yas worship the Gods simply because they think they will be highly prosperous and therefore they sell many things as grains, cloth and the like.

53. O Controlled one! Is there not the desire to take away the other's property in this act of merchandise? Certainly there is. Besides the merchants, when they find that when people are in urgent need of buying articles from them, expect that the price of those articles might run higher.

54. O Muni! Thus every one is anxious to take away other's properties. How, then, can we trust them?

55. Those who are clouded by greed and delusion, their going to places of pilgrimages, their making charities, their reciting the Vedas, all are rendered useless. Though they go to the holy places, etc., still these things bear no fruits to them, as if they have not done these things at all.

56. Therefore O Enlightened one! You make Yudhâjit go back to his own place. Then I will be able to remain here, like Sîtâ, with my son.

57-58. On Manoramâ's thus speaking to the Muni, the fiery Maharsi went to Yudhâjit and said :- "O King! You better go back to your own place or anywhere else you like. The son of Manoramâ is a minor; that queen is very much grieved; she cannot come to you now."

59. Yudhâjit said "O peaceful ones! Kindly cease showing this impudence and give me Manoramâ. I will never go away leaving her. If you do not give her easily, I will take her away by force."

60. The Risis said "O King! If there be any strength in you, you can take away Manoramâ by force; but the result will be similar to that when the King Visvâmitra wanted to take away the heavenly cow by force from the hermitage of Vas'istha."

Thus ends the Sixteenth Chapter on the glory of the Devî and the going of the King Yudhâjit to the hermitage of Bhâradvâja, to kill Sudars'ana, in the the 3rd Adhyâya of S'rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

## Chapter XVII

### On the story of Vis'vâmitra

1-3. Vyâsa said :- O King! Hearing thus the words of the Maharsi Bhâradvâja and seeing that he made a firm resolve, the King Yudhâjit called his prime minister quickly and asked, "O intelligent one! What am I to do now? I want to carry away by force this boy with his mother sweet Manoramâ; no one desirous of one's welfare won't trifle away his enemy, be he even a very weak one; if he does so, that enemy will get stronger day by day, as the disease consumption becomes stronger; and will ultimately become the cause of death.

4. There is no warrior, nor any soldiers here of the other party; no one will be able to resist me; I can take away, as I like, the enemy of my daughter's son and can kill him.

5. I will try to-day to carry him away by force, and Sudars'ana being killed, my daughter's son will reign fearlessly without an enemy; there is no doubt in this."

6. The prime minister said :- No such hazardous courage need be shewn now; you have heard the Maharshi's words; he quoted you the example of Vis'vâmitra.

7. O King! In days of yore, Vis'vâmitra, the son of the King Gâdhi, was a celebrated monarch; one day while roaming, he accidentally reached the hermitage of Vas'istha.

8. The powerful king Vis'vâmitra bowed down before the Muni, and the Muni gave him a seat. The king took his seat there.

9. Then the high souled Vas'istha invited the king to a dinner. Vis'vâmitra, the king, went there with his whole army.

10-12. There was a cow, named Nandinî, of Vas'istha. The Muni prepared all sorts of eatables from her milk and entertained them all. The king with his whole army was very much pleased; and, coming to know of the divine power of the cow, asked Vas'istha to give his cow Nandinî over to him and said "The udder of your cow Nandinî is like a big jar. I will give you thousand cows like that; I pray you to let me have your cow Nandinî."

13. Vas'istha said "O King! This is my sacrificial cow; I cannot give you this cow in any way, let your thousand cows be yours."

14. Vis'vâmitra said :- "O Saint! I will give you cows lakhs or tens and hundreds of lakhs or any number you like. Please give me your cow; in case you be unwilling, I will carry her away perforce."

15. Vas'istha said :- "O King! As you like, better take it perforce; I will never be able to give you my cow Nandinî from my house."

16. O King! Hearing thus the Vas'istha's words, Vis'vâmitra, the King, ordered at once his powerful followers to carry the cow Nandinî away by fastening a cord round her neck per sheer force.

17-19. The followers, obeying the order at once bound the cow with ropes and began to carry her away by force. At this Nandinî, trembling and with tears in her eyes, began to say to the Muni "O One! whose wealth consists only in asceticism! Are you going to leave me? Otherwise why these fellows are binding me with a cord and dragging me away?" At this the Muni replied "O Nandinî! I have never parted with you; I perform all my sacrifices through your milk. O auspicious one! I honoured this king, my guests, with eatables prepared from your food and for that reason he is carrying you away from me by sheer force. What can I do? O Nandinî! I have not the least desire to part with you."

20. Hearing these words from the Muni, the cow became very angry and bellowed loudly and terribly.

21. At once came out from her body, on that very spot, the terrible demons wearing coats of armour, and holding various weapons; and they uttered aloud, "Wait; you will soon meet with vengeance."

22. They then destroyed all the forces of the king. And the king alone was left and he went away alone, much dejected and sorrowful.

23. Oh! That wicked king then cursed with great humility the Ksatriya S'akti; and thinking the Brâhmanic power would be attained with great exertion, began to practise asceticism and penance.

24. Performing penance and tapasyâ, very hard indeed, in the great forest, Vis'vâmitra, the son of Gâdhi, succeeded at last in becoming a Risi and then he renounced his Ksatriya Dharma.

25. Therefore, O King! Dost Thou never quarrel with these ascetics and be involved in wars resulting in great enmity and causing the extinction of the race.

26. Better dost thou appease the Muni and now go back to your own kingdom. Let Sudars'ana remain here at his pleasure.

27. O King! This minor boy has no wealth; what harm can he do to you? It is useless to show your enmity towards an orphan, a weak minor boy.

28. This world is under the control of Destiny; therefore one should shew mercy to all. O king! What use is there to shew one's jealousy? What is inevitable will surely come to pass.

29. O king! The thunderbolt comes sometimes like a blade of grass; a blade of grass acts sometimes like a thunderbolt.

30. O king! You are very intelligent; consider that by, combinations of circumstances, a hair can kill a powerful tiger and a gnat can kill an elephant. Therefore dost thou forsake this rashness and hear my beneficent advice.

31. Vyâsa said :- O king! The best of kings, Yudhâjit hearing the prime minister's advice bowed down humbly at the feet of the Muni and returned to his own city.

32. Manoramâ, too, became free from anxiety, and, remaining peaceful in the hermitage, began to nourish and support her child, engaged in vows.

33. The lovely son of the king began to grow daily like the phases of the waxing moon and sport fearlessly with the boys of the Munis, altogether, wherever they liked, a sight very auspicious.

34. One day the minister Vidalla came there and the sons of the Munis seeing him began, in the presence of Sudars'ana, to address him "Klib," "Klib."

35. Sudars'ana, too, hearing them pronounce "Klib," "Klib" took up the one letter, "Kli" and uttered this only repeatedly, which is, in fact the prince of the root mantras of Kâma, with anusvâra omitted.

36. Then the son of the king took that mantram and silently repeated this in his mind.

37. O King! Thus that boy Sudars'ana was initiated in this root mantra of Kâma (desire) spontaneously, out of his original Samskâra (innate tendency) owing to the unavoidable destiny of Fate.

38-39. The son of the king, when he was five years old, got this most excellent mantra, though without its Risi (seer), meditation, without its chhanda (metre) and without Nyâsa (assignment of the various parts of the body to different deities, accompanied with prayers and corresponding gesticulations), and considered this as the quintessence of all, therefore meditated this always in his mind spontaneously and never forgot it.

40-41. When the king's son grew eleven years old, the Muni performed his Upanayana (sacred thread) ceremony and made him begin the study of the Vedas. The son, with that mantra power, soon mastered all the studies about archery, all the moral and political sciences in conformity with proper rules, within a very short time.

42-43. One day Sudars'ana got a vision of the form of the Supreme Goddess, of a red colour, wearing red apparel and decorated with red ornaments, mounting on Garuda and with Her wonderful Vaisnavî powers and Her face, fully opened like the budding of a lotus flower.

44. Thus, expert in many branches of learning, Sudars'ana served his Mother in that forest and began to wander on the banks of the Ganges.

45. One day the Mother of the Universe gave the bows, sharpened arrows, quiver and a mail coat of armour to that boy in that forest.

46-47. O King! At this time the extraordinary beautiful and lovely princess S'as'ikalâ, endowed with all auspicious qualities, the daughter of the king of Kâshi, came to hear that a beautiful prince named Sudars'ana, a second Kandarpa, full of heroism and endowed with all auspicious qualities is dwelling in a forest.

48. The princess, hearing this from a soothsayer, mentally loved and desired him and wanted finally to accept him as her legal husband.

49-50. Thus, on one occasion, at the end of a night (night-fall), the Goddess appeared in her dreams before her and consoled her and said "O fair one! ask a boon from me; Sudars'ana is my devotee; he will fulfill, at my word, all your desires."

51. Thus seeing the beautiful figure of the Goddess in her dreams and hearing Her sweet words, the honoured S'as'ikalâ was drowned in the ocean of bliss.

52. When the princess awoke, her face beaming with gladness, her mother perceived her joy and inferred that her daughter must have been internally very glad, and asked her repeatedly, but S'as'ikalâ was too much abashed and did not give vent to the cause of her satisfaction.

53. The princess, remembering her dreams, began to laugh repeatedly on account of her excessive joy. At last she spoke out in detail all about her dreams to one of her lady friends, or companions.

54. On one occasion, that large eyed S'as'ikalâ went out for enjoyment to a nice garden beautified with champaka flowers, attended by her companion.

55. While the King's daughter seated under a champaka tree, was collecting flowers, she saw a Brâhmin, coming towards her in great haste.

56. After bowing down before him, that beautiful princess, endowed with all auspicious qualifications, addressed him in sweet words "O blessed one! whence are you coming?"

57. The Brâhmana said :- "O girl! I am coming on an errand from the hermitage of Bhâradvâja Muni. Please mention what you are going to ask me?"

58. S'as'ikalâ replied "O Noble one! What beautiful thing is therein that hermitage that is extraordinary and worth describing."

59. The Brâhmana said "O fair one! There is staying the most lovely Sudars'ana, the son of the King Dhruvasandhi. He is the loveliest of all men.

60. O fair one! He who has not seen him, I think, has his eyes given to him in vain.

61. O auspicious one! It appears as if the Creator, with a view to see how it looks, has invested him with all the qualities.

62. O beautiful one! what shall I say more to you, suffice to say that, that prince is fit to become your husband. I think that the Creator has, no doubt, settled already the union between you two, as a happy union of two congenial things (gold in union with Jewel)."

Thus ends the seventeenth chapter on the story of Vis'vâmitra and on the getting of the root mantra of Kâma by the son of the King in S'rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam, of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

## Chapter XVIII

### The Svayambara of S'as'ikalâ

1. Vyâsa said :- The King's lovely daughter was very glad on hearing the words of the Brâhmana, and drowned herself in ecstasy of love. The Brâhmin also departed, thinking of the whole affair.

2. The daughter was already attached to the prince, and now she became the more merged in love for him and became very anxious. Now, on the departure of the Brâhmin, she felt herself struck by the arrows of love.

3-4. Then S'as'ikalâ, oppressed by love, addressed her dear companion, who followed her inclinations thus :- "O my companion! I have not as yet had any knowledge of the king's son; still the signs of love have sprung up in my body and mind, from the moment that I heard about him from the Brâhmin. The love is giving me much trouble; tell, my companion what am I to do now? and whither shall I go?"

5. O dear companion! I saw him like a second God of Love in my dreams; and, since then, my innocent mind is being troubled with his being away from me.

6. O fair one! The sandal paste on my body appears to me like a poison, this garland is like a serpent and the moon's rays seem like a fire.

7. O companion! My mind gets not rest anywhere, in palaces, gardens, in lakes, in hills, at any time, during the day or night; all the enjoyable things have assumed now contrary aspects and are paining me.

8. The bedding, betel leaves, music, singing, and dancing, all now fail to give me satisfaction and peace.

9. O companion! I would have gone to-day where is residing that deceiver; but I fear for my father as well for the honour of my family.

10. My father is not yet declaring the svayamvara for my marriage. What shall I do? Had he given me in marriage to that Sudars'an, I would have allowed him embrace me and satisfy his passions to-day!

11. O friend! look at the strange ideas of the Creator! There are hundreds of kings today who are influential and I do not consider them beautiful; and that King's son is exiled from his kingdom and yet he has stolen away my heart."

12. Vyâsa said :- Thus that King's son, Sudars'ana, though helpless, and living in a forest on roots and fruits, deprived of wealth, power, and army, began to reign in the heart of that princess.

13-14. S'as'ikalâ, too, began to recite slowly the root mantra of Sarasvatî and therefore her love towards this prince held out signs of success.

Once engaged in meditation on that excellent root mantra on Kâma, and, while repeatedly reciting it mentally, he got in a dream the vision of that Ever Full, the World Mother Ambikâ, that cannot be expressed in words, the Vaisnavî S'akti and capable to bestow all wealth and property.

15-16. At this time the King of Nisâdas, the lord of S'ringaverpur came to the hermitage and presented an excellent chariot together with all other necessary things. This chariot was drawn by four horses, decorated with nice flags and was endowed with the prospect of getting victory everywhere; thinking it thus a befitting present to be given to the King, he gave it to Sudars'ana.

17. Sudars'ana, too, accepted the offer of a friend and worshipped him well in return, with roots and fruits of the forest.

18-19. The lord of the Nisâdas, thus worshipped as a guest, went away. The Munis and ascetics then began to address Sudars'ana, with fondness "O son of the king! Don't be anxious and restless; within a very short time, you will get your kingdom, no doubt, by your own good luck and prowess.

20. O one attached to one's vows! The Goddess that enchants the whole universe, the Giver of boons, S'rî Ambikâ, has been pleased with you; assistance is also rendered well to you; therefore do not trouble yourself with contrary thoughts any more."

21. The Munis, who have taken vows, addressed Manoramâ also "Your son will soon become the lord of the world; you need not care any more."

22. Then the lean and thin Manoramâ, hearing the Muni's words said "O Brâhmanas! Let your âsiss (words of benedictions) be justified with success. What wonder that a kingdom be obtained by the good will of the Sâdhus!

23. There is no force, no minister, no help, no property; how, under what combinations, can then my son get kingship?

24. You are the best of the knowers of mantrams; due to the influence of your good will, my son will surely be a king; there is no doubt in this."

25. Vyâsa said :- Wherever that intelligent Sudars'ana used to go on his chariot, there he seemed by his own prowess, as if he were surrounded by a whole army consisting of 109,350 foot, 65,610 horse, 21,870 chariots and 21,870 elephants.

26. This is the influence of the seed mantra; it is not an ordinary acquisition. It is because Sudars'ana, with gladness and one-pointedness of his mind, meditated on his seed mantra, that he acquired the above powers; there is no doubt in this.

27. Becoming pure and peaceful, whoever gets this wonderul seed mantra from a true spiritual guide and meditates on it incessantly, is destined certainly to attain all desires.

28. O best of kings! There is no such thing either in the heavens above or in the worlds below, that a man won't get, when the Supreme Goddess becomes pleased.

29. Those are certainly very unfortunate and of dull intellect, who cannot place their faith on the worship of this Goddess and consequently suffer incessantly all sorts of troubles.

30. O best of the Kurus! At the beginning of the creation, this Ambâ Devî was the Mother of all the Gods, and is therefore known as the First Mother.

31. She is practically seen in this world in the shape of Buddhi (intelligence), Kîrti (fame), Dhrîti (fortitude), Laksmî (Goddess of wealth), S'akti (the Force), S'raddhâ (Faith), Mati (Intellect), Smriti (memory), etc.

32. It is only the deluded souls that do not realise the nature of the Devî; it is only those, whose hearts are destroyed by the glare of false argument, that do not worship this All-auspicious Goddess of the Universe.

33-34. O king! Brahmâ, Visnu, S'ambhu, Indra, Varuna, Yama, Vâyû, Agni, Kuvera, Vis'vakarmâ, Pûsâ, Bhaga, the two Asvins, Âdityas, Vasus, Rudras, Vis'vedevas, Maruts, all worship the Supreme Deity of Creation, Preservation and Dissolution.

35. Who is there amongst the wise that does not serve this Highest Energy? The real nature of that Auspicious Goddess, the Bestower all desires, Sudars'ana came to know very well.

36. She is the Real Essence, Brahmâ, very rarely realised; She is the Higher Vidyâ and the Lower Vidyâ (Avidyâ) and She is the vital energy, the Mukhya Prâna, of the best of the Yogis, who are desirous of liberation.

37. O king! What individual is there that is able to realise the nature of Pramâtmâ (the Highest Universal Self) without having recourse to Her, Who is manifesting this universal consciousness, by bringing into existence these Sâtvik, Râjasik, and Tâmasik creations.

38. Sudars'ana, though he dwelt in the forest, realised a greater happiness than that in obtaining the sovereignty of a kingdom, by constantly meditating on that Goddess.

39. S'as'ikalâ, too, being too much oppressed with the arrows of love, any how remained with her soul in her body, having had to be always cared for her health in various ways by her attendants.

40. Then the king Subâhu, on coming to know that her daughter is desirous of getting her husband, made arrangements for her Svayambara (a marriage in which the girl chooses her husband from among a number of suitors assembled together) without any delay.

41-44. The Svayambara of the royal family, the Pundits say, is of three kinds :- 1st Ichchhâ Svayambara (optional); 2nd Panya Svayamvara by fulfilling a promise, e.g. Râmachandra broke in two the bow of S'iva and married Sîtâ; 3rd the Svayambara, preferring one who will prove the strongest hero by one's own prowess. Of these three kinds of Svayambaras, the king Subâhu preferred Ichchhâ Svayamvara (according to the bride's free choice).

Accordingly the king employed many artisans, had platforms covered with beautiful carpets and big halls decorated beautifully in various ways.

45-47. Thus the assembly hall for Svayambara built and decorated and all the necessary articles and equipments brought thither, the fair eyed S'as'ikalâ, told her companions with sorrow "Better go to my mother and say her privately that I have already selected mentally my husband the beautiful Sudars'ana, the son of the king Dhruvasandhi in my mind; I won't marry any other prince than him; the Goddess Bhagavatî has settled him for my husband."

48-50. Vyâsa said, the companion of S'as'ikalâ hearing thus, went quickly to her mother Vaidarbhî and addressed her sweetly in private "O chaste one! Your daughter, with a sorrowful heart, has sent me to you to say the following; Please hear and do at your earliest convenience, what is good and beneficial." She said "There is staying in the hermitage of Bhâradvâja, the son of the king Dhruvasandhi; I have mentally selected him as my husband; I won't select any other prince."

51. Vyâsa said :- The queen, hearing her words, told to her husband, when he returned to the palace, all her daughter's words as she had heard them.

52-53. Hearing this, the king Subâhu was astonished and then laughed frequently and then began to say to his wife, the daughter of the king of Vidarbha the following true words :- "O fair one! That king's son Sudars'ana is a minor, he has been exiled to the forest; now he is helpless and is residing with his mother in a dense forest.

54. For his sake, the king Vîrasena was slain in battle by the king Yudhâjit. O fair eyed! how can that helpless exiled poor boy become her husband.

55. Do say therefore to S'as'ikalâ that, in the assembly hall for her Svayamvara, many kings commanding honour and respect would be present. She would then choose whomever she likes. She need not repeat such words any more."

Thus ends the Eighteenth Chapter of the 3rd Skandha about the Svayambara of S'as'ikalâ, the daughter of the king Kâsirâja in the Mahâ Purânâ S'rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

## Chapter XIX

On the going to the Svayamvara assembly of Sudars'ana

1-2. Vyâsa said :- After the king Subâhu had spoken thus, the Queen made her daughter S'as'ikalâ, who had always sweet smiles on her lips sit on her lap and after consoling her with sweet words, began to say "O fair eyed! You always practise vows and other religious performances; why are you, then, speaking these unpleasant words? The King has heard all what you wanted to say and has been very sorry.

3-5. That Sudars'ana is very unfortunate, deprived of his kingdom, helpless, void of wealth and army, abandoned by his friends, exiled with his mother in the forest, subsisting on roots and fruits, lean and thin. Thus he is not worthy of becoming the husband of yours. There are many learned, beautiful, approved of all, qualified with all royal marks, princes fit to become your husband. They all will come in this Svayamvara.

6. There is one brother of this Sudars'ana, who is endowed with all kingly qualifications, beautiful, and qualified in various other ways. He is the king of the Kosala country.

7. There is another point worth consideration; please hear it. The King Yudhâjit is trying his best to kill Sudars'ana on a befitting opportunity.

8. He already counselled with his ministers and killed in a desperate fight the king Vîrasena and installed his daughter's son on the throne.

9. Even he came up so far as the hermitage of Bhâradvâja to kill Sudars'ana; afterwards he was prevented by the Munis from doing so then he returned home."

10-11. S'as'ikalâ replied :- "Mother! That prince, though staying in the forest, is approved of by me; under the advice S'aryâti, the chaste Sukanyâ married Chyavana Muni and served her husband all along; so I will marry this king's son and will always be engaged in serving him. The women are able to attain heaven and emancipation, if they serve their husbands; therefore if we be sincere in serving our husbands, we will no doubt be happy.

12. I have seen in my dream that the Goddess Bhagavatî has ordained him to be my husband; how can I now accept any other body as my husband than him?

13. The Devî Bhuvanesh'varî has pictured his frame firmly in my heart; I will never be able to leave my dearest beautiful husband and to contract marriage with any other person."

14. Vyâsa said :- Thus the mother, the daughter of the King of Videha, found many signs and at last desisted. She then reported to the King all the words of S'as'ikalâ.

15-16. When S'as'ikalâ, on the day before the marriage day, became very anxious and, sent in a great hurry, one trustworthy Brâhmin, versed in the Vedas to the hermitage of Bhâradvâja with this message "O Brâhman, go in such a way to Sudars'ana, as my father be not able to know about it and tell Sudars'ana all my words.

17-18. My father has called in for my marriage a Svayambara ceremony; many powerful kings will attend with their armies; O Deva! The Goddess Bhagavatî has ordered me in dream and accordingly I, with full gladness of my heart, have become yours already in my heart.

19. Rather I will take poison or I will jump in a blazing fire, than I can obey my father's and mother's words and marry another.

20. By my mind, word, and deed, I have selected you my husband; and pleasure and happiness is sure to attend on us by the blessings of the Bhagavatî.

21. Please depend unto Her, at Whose command this whole universe, moving and unmoving is resting, unto that Great Destiny and come to this place without fail.

22. What the Goddess, whose commands S'ankara all the other Devas obey, has ordered, can never turn out false.

23. O Brâhmin! You the foremost amongst the virtuous; do therefore call on that King's son in privacy and speak out all there to him. What shall I say more to you. Do all that my object may be fulfilled."

24. Thus saying, she gave the Brâhmin his Daksinâ and sent him to Sudars'ana. He went there and reported all the matter duly to him and quickly returned back.

25. On coming to know all this, Sudars'ana determined to start; and the Mahârsi Bhâradvâja, with gladness, sent him.

26. Vyâsa said :- Seeing her son ready to start, the mother Manoramâ became very sorry and, trembling and shedding tears, thus spoke to her son.

27-28. "Sudars'ana! Where are you going now? How do you dare to go there in the Svayamvara alone, where are present kings and all your terrible enemies. O Son! You are as yet a boy. The King Yudhâjit will certainly go there with the object of killing you; there will then is no other body to help you. So you should never go to that place.

29. You are my only son; I am very poor and helpless; I have no other to lean upon than you; therefore you ought not to throw me in despair at this moment.

30. See Sudars'ana! The King Yudhâjit who had slain my father, that uncontrollable king will come there; if you go there alone, he will certainly kill you."

31. Sudars'ana replied "Mother! What is inevitable will certainly come to pass; there is no need to discuss further on the subject. I will go at the command of the World Mother to that assembly hall

Svayamvara.

32. O Auspicious one! Do not give vent to sorrow; I do fear none by the grace of the Bhagavatî."

33. Vyâsa said :- Thus saying, Sudars'ana mounted on his chariot and was ready to start. Seeing this Manoramâ began to bless him and so cheer him.

34-37. O Son! Let Ambikâ Devî protect your front; Padmalochanâ protect your back; Pârvatî, your two sides; S'ivâ Devî, all around you; Vârâhî, in dreadful paths; Durgâ, in royal forts, Kâlikâ, in terrible fights; Parames'varî, in the platform hall; Mâtamgî, in the Svayamvara hall; Bhavanî, the Avertress of world, amidst the kings; Girijâ, in mountain passes; Chamundâ, in the sacrificial ground, and let the eternal Kâmagâ, protect you in the forests.

38. O Descendant of Raghu family! Let the Vaisnavî force protect you in quarrels; let Bhairavî protect you in battles and amongst your enemies.

39. O Son! Let the Mahâ Mâyâ Jagaddhâtrî Bhuvaneshvarî protect you everywhere and at all times.

40. Vyâsa said :– Then Manoramâ, speaking thus to him, trembled with fear and again said :– “O Sudars’ana, I will also accompany you; there will not be otherwise.

41. I will never be able to remain anywhere without you and even for the twinkling of an eye. O Son, carry me thither where you are desiring to go.”

42. Thus saying, his mother with her attendants was ready to start. The Brâhmanas pronounced their blessings. All then went out.

43. Sudars’an, the descendant of the Raghu family, mounted then alone on his chariot and reached Benares. There the King Subâhu, hearing that he had come, welcomed him and worshipped him with various presents.

44. He gave him, the house for his residence, and made arrangements for his food and drink and other necessary requirements and gave order to his servants to wait on the prince.

45. Then, from various quarters, the kings assembled together; and Yudhâjit, too, came there accompanied by his daughter’s son, S’atrujit.

46-48. The King of Karûsa, the King of Madra, the King of Sindhu, the King of Mâhîsmatî, the valiant warriors, the King of Pânchâla, the kings of the mountainous tract, the King of Karnat, the powerful King of Kâmarûpa, the King of Chola, and the very powerful King of Vidarbhas with 180 Aksauhini soldiers all arrived and assembled there. Benares was then crowded all over with soldiers and soldiers.

49. Many other kings came there on their beautiful elephants to witness the Svayamvara ceremony.

50. Then the princes began to talk amongst them “The King’s son Sudars’ana, too, had come there and is staying unconfused and calm.

51. Is it that the high minded Sudars’ana, born of the Kâkutstha family, had come there on a chariot, helpless, to marry?

52. Can it be that the princess will overlook these Kings with soldiers and weapons, and select the long armed Sudars’ana?”

53. Then the King Yudhâjit addressed all the other kings “I will slay Sudars’ana for the sake of the daughter; there is no doubt in this.”

54-55. Hearing Yudhâjit’s words, the king of Keral, the foremost of those who know morals, began to say :– “O king! In this Ichchhâ svayamvara, it is not proper to fight. Here there will be no marriage for the prowess; there is no arrangement fixed to steal away the bride elect by force; here the bride will select of her own free choice; what cause can then there crop up here for quarrels?

56. Before, you had driven him out of his kingdom; and though you are the superior king, you have taken his kingdom by force and installed your daughter’s son on the throne.

57. O King! This Sudars’an is born of the Kâkutstha family and the son of the King of Kosala. Why would you kill this innocent boy?

58. O Long lived! Better be sure that there is some God of this Universe; He is governing all; and if you commit anything wrongful know that you will get the fruit of that due to you; there is no doubt it

this.

59. O King! There is victory everywhere of the Truth and Dharma, always you find Adharma and Falsehood defeated. Therefore dost thou forsake your evil and mean intentions and pacify your vile mind.

60. Your daughter's son is also present here; he is beautiful and prosperous and is reigning a kingdom. Why will not that bride elect him as bridegroom?

61-62. Consider again that there are many other powerful princes and kings in this Svayamvara; the princess may select them also. Therefore let all the kings assembled here say that if the selection of the bridegroom be performed in that way, what cause of a quarrel can there crop up? Knowing all these, you ought not to quarrel here.”

Thus ends the Nineteenth Chapter on the going to the Svayamvara assembly of Sudars'ana and the other kings in the Mahâ Purânam S'rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses, by Mahârsi Veda Vyâsa.

## Chapter XX

On the Svayamvara hall and the kings' conversation there

1. Vyâsa said :- O Noble minded one! The king Yudhâjit replied to the address of the king of Keral, thus :-

2-3. O King! You are truthful and have restrained your passions. What you have told just now in this assembly of kings is all correct and approved by morality. O best of the kings! You are born of a high family; you better say how can this take place that when so many fit persons are present here to become the bridegroom, can an unworthy person take away the offer?

4. As a jackal never becomes fit to enjoy what are the dues of a lion, so this Sudars'ana is also unfit to acquire this bride elect.

5. The Brâhmanas have the Vedas as their strength; the Ksatriya kings take bows and arrows to be their source of strength; this is ordained everywhere. Therefore O King! What wrong have I done in my statement. Kindly explain.

6-7. The power of the kings is the befitting money given to the parents of a bride; according to this, the strongest man is to acquire the bride, a jewel. The Ksatriyas that are weak can never acquire that. Make this the rule in this marriage. This earth is fit to be enjoyed by the heroes only and not by the cowards and intriguing persons. Otherwise quarrels are sure to ensue amongst the kings.

8. The dispute thus arose in that Svayamvara hall; and the king Subâhu was called in.

9. The kings that could see the reality of things then addressed the king Subâhu. "O king! You are requested to establish a golden rule in this marriage ceremony.

10. What is your object in calling this Svayamvara. Better give it out after a mature consideration. Please be explicit whom have you intended to give over your daughter in this marriage?"

11-12. Subâhu said :- "My daughter has mentally selected Sudars'ana; I prevented her repeatedly from doing this; but she did not accept my word. What shall I do now? The mind of

my daughter now is not at her will. Sudars'ana, too, though uninvited, has come here singly and is residing calmly, without any signs of disturbance in his mind.”

13-14. Vyâsa said :— Then the chief kings all invited Sudars'ana there; Sudars'ana, too, came there quietly, and the princes, seeing his quiet nature, asked him, “O one, engaged in practising vows! Who has invited you here? Why have you come here singly, in this assembly of kings?”

15. You have no force, no ministers, no help, no wealth, and no army. O intelligent! Then explain why have you come here alone?

16. In this assembly of kings you see that the powerful monarchs are ready to fight with each other for the sake of this princess. What do you intend to do under those circumstances?

17. Your brother, too, is come here to have the princess; he has got his army and is also marked with his strength and valor. The powerful Yudhâjit has come here also to help him.

18. O observer of good vows! Seeing you without any army, we have narrated to you all the facts. Now think and do accordingly. If you please, remain here or go anywhere else.”

19-20. Sudars'ana replied :— “True, I have no army, no help, no wealth, no forts, no friends or no kings to protect me. Hearing that Svayamvara will be held here, I have come here to witness it. But there is one particularity here; it is this :— The Devî Bhagavatî has ordered me in my dream to come here. Under Her command I have come here; there is no doubt in this.

21. I have got no other object in view; I have obeyed what the Bhagavatî Bhuvanes'varî has ordered me to do. Today will happen, no doubt, what She has ordained.

22-23. O kings! I am seeing everywhere the Supreme Goddess Bhagavatî Bhavânî. Therefore there is no enemy of mine in this world; but he who will turn out an enemy of mine, will be duly punished by the Mahâ Vidyâ Mahâ Mâyâ. I do not know what is enmity?

24. O kings! What is inevitable will surely come to pass. There will be nothing otherwise. I am always depending on Fate, Destiny. What is the use, then, in thinking what will be the result?

25. Everywhere in the Devas, in the spirits, in men, in all the beings, the Devî's power is existent; it cannot be otherwise.

26. O kings! Whenever She wishes, She makes kings, masters of wealth or devoid of wealth. What is, then, the use of bothering my head in this?

27. When even the Gods Brahmâ, Visnu, and Mahes'a without Her presence, become powerless enough to move their hands or feet, then why shall I be anxious for the result?

28. O kings! Whether I am unable or able or an ordinary person, you have nothing to consider; I have come here in this assembly hall under the command of the Supreme Bhagavatî.

29-30. What She has willed, She will do that. I am not to care for that. O high minded ones! You need not be afraid at all in this. I have told you all truth. Victory or defeat, I feel no shame in either of them. For I am always under the control of Bhagavatî; therefore if there be any shame here, it is all Hers.”

31-33. Vyâsa said :— Hearing thus his words, and seeing that his mind is firmly devoted to Bhagavatî, the kings saw each other and said thus :— “O Sudars'ana! What you have said is quite true; it is never otherwise; still Yudhâjit, the king of Ujjain is intent on killing you. O

intelligent! O sinless! we have all come to know that there is no trace of evil in you. We were all overcome with pity for you; hence we have informed you; now think and do the needful?"

34. Sudars'ana said, "You are all kind and large hearted; what you all have said is quite true. What shall I tell you, being a minor as yet!

35. O kings! No one can cause the death of another. All this world, moving and unmoving, is under the control of Fate.

36-38. No soul is independent; every one is under the effects of one's own Karma. The Pundits that have realised the Truth, say that Karma is of three kinds, Accumulated, Present, and Prârabdha? This whole world is due to Kâla (Time), Karma (action) and Svabhâva (Nature); unless the proper time comes, even the Devas cannot kill men. The men are killed on account of some cause, immediate; but the Great Time is the real Destroyer.

39. My father, though a destroyer of many others, was himself killed by a lion and my mother's father was slain by Yudhâjit in the battle.

40. The Jîvas, though caring hard to preserve their lives, are killed by Fate in spite of all their cares; and they live thousand years though there is none to protect them.

41. O religious kings! I do not fear a bit from Yudhâjit. I consider Fate as the Supreme and I therefore remain always undisturbed, calm and quiet.

42. Daily and constantly I remember Bhagavatî, Who is the Mother of all this Universe. She will look after my welfare.

43. Behold! One will have certainly to bear the burden of one's past Karma, whether it be good or it be bad; one's own actions must bear their fruits. Then why shall he be sorry, who has come to know this?

44. The less intelligent deluded persons, on getting pain from their own actions, turn out enemies on very trifling matters.

45. I do not grieve nor do I fear on account of such enemies. I am staying here in this assembly of kings, cool-minded.

46. Under the order of Chandikâ, I have come here to see this Svayamvara; whatever is inevitable will surely come to pass.

47. The words of the Bhagavatî are the best proof; I do not know any other. My mind is entirely given up to Her. There will be nothing otherwise than what She has ordained; whether it is good or whether it is bad.

48. O kings! Let Yudhâjit remain in peace. I have no enmity with him. He, who will deal inimically with me, will certainly reap his reward. There is not the least doubt in this."

49. Vyâsa said :- O king! When Sudars'ana addressed them thus, all the kings became very glad and they all remained there for the Svayamvara. Sudars'ana, too, went to his camp and remained also calm and quiet.

50. Next day the king Subâhu invited all the kings present in his city to their respective seats in the Svayamvara hall.

51. The princes and kings, decorated with best ornaments, came and took their seats on their respective platforms, covered with valuable carpets of best workmanship.

52. The kings then looked like the celestial Devas, wearing divine ornaments and apparels, blazing with the lustrous light of gems, and remained to see the Svayamvara affair.

53. Every one there had this foremost thought in his mind when will the princess, the bride elect, would come there; and who will be the man so fortunate as to be blessed with garlands offered by her (as a token of selection of the bridegroom)!

54. If, accidentally, she offers the garland to Sudars'ana in this Svayamvara assembly, then will ensue, no doubt, desperate struggles amongst the kings.

55. While they were thus meditating, sounds of drums were loudly sounded.

56-58. Then Subâhu, the king of Benares, went to her daughter and found that S'as'ikalâ had just taken her bath and put on her silken clothes, and adorned herself with various ornaments and sweet garlands. Thus, dressed in complete marriage dress, she began to shine like another Goddess Laksmî, the Goddess of wealth. The king, on seeing his daughter dressed in silken cloth, afflicted with anxious thoughts, just smiled and said, "Child! Rise and take the beautiful garlands by your hands and go to the the Svayamvara hall and just look at the assembly of kings.

59. O lean bodied one! Whoever, well-qualified, beautiful, and of noble birth, amongst the kings is reigning in your mind, better select him.

60. O graceful! The kings from various quarters are adorning their respective seats; better go and see and select whomever you like."

61. Vyâsa said :- When Subâhu had spoken thus, S'as'ikalâ, who generally talked little, replied with sweet sonorous words, impregnated with religious truth.

62. "Father! I won't go before the kings who are inspired by lust; women like me never go there; it is those that are dissolute that attend those places.

63. Father! I have heard from the religious texts that women should cast their glances on their husbands only and not on any other.

64. The woman that goes to many persons is mentally claimed by all; each of them contemplates strongly "Let this woman be mine." Thus her chastity is destroyed.

65-66. Desirous of selecting her husband, when the woman holding in her hands, the garland for her would-be-husband, goes to the Svayamvara hall, then she turns out like an ordinary unchaste woman. As a prostitute going to a public shop looks on many persons and judges of their merits and demerits according to her own power of judgment, the maid that goes in the Svayamvara hall does exactly the same.

67. How can I behave myself in the hall of the assembly of kings like a prostitute, who does not attach her feelings firmly on a single individual but glances constantly at many lustful persons.

68. Though this system of Svayamvara is approved by the elderly persons, I am not going to follow that now. I will take the vow of a chaste woman and act up to that doctrine as perfectly.

69. I will never be able to act like an ordinary woman going in the Svayamvara hall, mentally determining many and finally selecting one.

70. Father! From the very beginning I have given myself up to Sudars'ana in mind, word and deed. I have not the least inclination to leave him and select another in his stead.

71. O King! If you want to have my welfare, then give your daughter on an auspicious day and in an auspicious lagna to Sudars'ana, according to the prescribed rites.”

Thus ends the 20th Chapter on the Svayamvara hall and the kings' conversation there in S'rîmad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Mahârsi Veda Vyâsa.

## Chapter XXI

On the king of Benares fulfilling the advice of his daughter

1. Vyâsa said :– On hearing the sound words of his daughter S'as'ikalâ, pregnant with reason, Subâhu the king of Benares, became very anxious and began to think what he would now, so short a space of time in this momentous occasion, thus :–

2-3. “The powerful kings, all, have come here on intention that they would fight and therefore they are all attended with their armies and followers respectively; and they are now sitting on their respective daises in the Svayamvara hall. If I go now and tell them that my daughter

S'as'ikalâ is not willing to come of her own accord in the hall, the evil minded kings will certainly kill me out of their wrath.

4. I have not so much strength, whether in my army or in forts, as to be able to decline these kings and drive them away from my kingdom.

5. Sudars'ana, too is, alone, helpless, wealthless, and a mere boy. What shall I do now? Alas! I am now plunged in deep sorrow.”

6. Thinking thus, with head bowed down by humility, the king went to the kings, and said thus :–

7. “O Kings! The girl, though requested repeatedly by me and her mother, is not willing to come to this hall. What can I do now?

8-9. I am your servant and, bowing my head at the feet of you all, pray to you, to accept my worship and return to your own cities respectively. I am ready to give a sufficient quantity of gems and jewels, clothes, elephants, chariots. Kindly accept these and go back to your own homes.

10. My daughter is as yet a girl; if I chastise her, she may commit suicide; and I will be exceedingly sorry; therefore I am very much distressed with this thought.

11. You all are fortunate, energetic, and of a merciful disposition; what will it serve you to accept the daughter of mine, who is disobedient and unfortunate?

12. I am your obedient servant; shew your mercy on me and it is your duty to consider my daughter as your own daughter.”

13. Vyâsa said :– Hearing Subâhu's words, the kings did not utter a single word; but Yudhâjit, with his eyes reddened out of wrath, began to address the king of Benares in an angry tone :–

14. “O King! You are a veteran fool; what do you say now after committing a most blameable act? Had you any doubt as to your proceedings, why have you, out of sheer delusion, called this meeting hall of Svayamvara, without thinking the matter before-hand.

15. You have invited the kings and princes in this marriage ceremony Svayamvara; and they all have assembled here; how can they now go back to their homes?

16. Are you going now to insult these? and will you give your daughter in marriage to Sudars'ana? Nothing can be more ignoble than this?

17. The welfare-seeking person ought to judge before-hand and then to act. But you have started your work without any previous judgment and decision. You will have to reap its fruit; there is no doubt this.

18. Why are you now thinking of giving your daughter to this helpless, wealthless Sudars'ana in the presence of kings that are powerful and that command a great militia.

19. O thou most sinful! Today I will certainly kill you; next I will kill Sudars'ana and then give your daughter to my daughter's son; know that this is my firm resolve.

20. Who is there, when I am standing, in this assembly that can aspire to carry away the bridegroom elect by force or theft? Nothing to speak of Sudars'ana who is powerless, wealthless and a mere boy!

21. I spared his life before in the hermitage of Bhâradvâja at the Muni's request; but today I will not spare the boy under any circumstances whatsoever.

22. Therefore, please go and consult with your wife and daughter and give your dear beautiful daughter to my daughter's son.

23. Be engaged in a marriage tie with me by giving your exquisitely beautiful daughter to my daughter's son. You can very well judge that it is always proper and advisable that a great man shall come under the protection of another great man.

24. What happiness can you expect from this Sudars'ana, who is helpless and banished from his kingdom, that you are going to give him your dear and auspicious daughter!

25. Family, wealth, army, appearance, kingdoms, forts and true friends and other helping persons; these a man should consider when he is going to give away his daughter in marriage to anybody; else there is no surety of happiness. Think over the royal custom and the never failing Dharma and do what is proper. Never it is advisable to do any act, abandoning the path of Dharma and morals.

26. You are my intimate friend; therefore I am telling you these good words. O king! Better bring your daughter, surrounded by her attendant maids, in this hall of Svayamvara.

27. Let this daughter select any man other than Sudars'ana; I have got no cause of quarrel; and the marriage will then be celebrated according to your will.

28-29. O best of kings! The other kings are all of high descent; and they have armies and are all in positions befitting your connection! If the daughter chooses any one amongst them, then no quarrels would arise. But if the daughter chooses Sudars'ana, then certainly I will carry her by force. Therefore, O king! act in such a way that no quarrels occur in future."

30-31. Vyâsa said :- Thus addressed by Yudhâjit, the king of Benares was very sorrowful, and, after a heavy sigh, went to his palace and told with a grieved heart to his wife, thus :- "O fair eyed one! Now I am completely under your control; you better explain to S'as'ikalâ that a dreadful quarrel is now to occur; what am I to do now?"

32-33. Vyâsa said :- Hearing her husband's words, the queen went to her daughter and spoke thus :- "O child! Quarrels have now ensued amongst the kings for your sake; your father has become very sorrowful; therefore, O fair one! Choose any other man your husband than Sudars'ana.

34-35. O Child! If you do not judge and rashly choose Sudars'ana, then the powerful king Yudhâjit, possessing a large army, will no doubt kill you, me and Sudars'ana. It might be, if quarrels ensue, you might be married to another husband; therefore better think now and act.

36. O dear eyed! It is now your incumbent duty to choose another king for your husband, if you want your and my welfare and happiness. Leave Sudars'ana."

37. The mother thus advised her daughter; the king, too, afterwards explained and tried to convince her. The girl spoke fearlessly.

38. "O king! What you have said is all true; but you know my firm resolve already. I won't ever select any other king than Sudars'ana.

39-40. O king! If you are afraid and be in agony, then do this thing: better give me in marriage to Sudars'ana and then drive us away from your city. He will put me in his chariot and go away out of your city. After that what is inevitable will surely come to pass. There cannot be anything otherwise.

41. O king! You need not fear anything about what is kept in the womb of future by Destiny. What is inevitable will happen; there is no doubt in this."

42. The king said :- "O child! The intelligent persons never show too much rashness and insolence. The learned people, versed in the Vedas, say it is never advisable to quarrel with many persons.

43. How can I give my daughter in marriage to one and then banish them both? The kings have turned out enemies. There is no heinous crime, that they cannot commit now.

44. O child! If it be your opinion, I can pledge something as a pawn for your marriage, as the king Janaka pledged in days of yore for her daughter Sitâ.

45-47. I will also put forward a pawn very difficult to be carried out, as Janaka originally made an offer of the hands of Sitâ to whomsoever, who would break the S'iva's strong bow. Thus the quarrels amongst the kings might

be diminished; for he who will be able to fulfill the promise, will be able to accept you. Then, be he Sudars'ana or any other king, whoever will be strong to fulfill the promise will take you as his wife.

48. Thus the quarrels will cease and I will also be able to perform your marriage ceremony in peace and happiness."

49. The daughter said :- "Father! On hearing from you, I am merged in an ocean of doubt, for it seems to me what you are saying is the act of a fool; already, I have chosen in my mind Sudars'ana for my husband; now it cannot be otherwise.

50. O king! The mind is the source of virtue and vice. When I have mentally selected, how can I now forego him and choose another?

51-52. O king! If you keep any pledge, then I will be subject to any and everybody; if one, two, or more fulfill the same pledge, I will be then subject to any or all of them. Father! in that case quarrels may arise. What shall I do then? I cannot give my vote on this doubtful point.

53. O king! You need not fear anything. Better give me in marriage to Sudars'ana according to the prescribed rules; then, in that case, the Goddess Chandikâ will certainly protect us.

54. O king! Taking Whose Name destroys a whole host of sins, take Her Name and think the Almighty and perform carefully our marriage ceremony.

55. Better go to the king's assembly today, and, with folded hands, tell them come tomorrow to the hall of Svayamvara.

56-57. Thus bidding goodbye to the kings, perform in the right spirit, according to the prescribed rites, our marriage ceremony. Next, after giving fit dowries and other articles after the marriage, better tell the prince Sudars'ana to depart. The son of Dhruvasandhi will take me away with him.

58. If, at this, the kings get angry and be ready to quarrel with you, then in that case, the Goddess Bhagavatî will no doubt help us.

59. Sudars'ana then will fight against those kings; and if he loses his life perchance in the battle, then I will also follow him and die.

60. O king! Let all good come unto you! Better give me in marriage to Sudars'ana and remain here with your army. I will go alone with him, the object of my love."

61. Vyâsa said :- Hearing these words from her daughter, the king Subâhu trusted her, and firmly resolved to act according to that, and to celebrate the marriage of S'as'ikalâ.

Thus ends the 21st chapter on the king of Benares fulfilling the advice of his daughter in S'rîmad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

## Chapter XXII

### On Sudars'ana's marriage

1. Vyâsa said :- O King! Then, on hearing his daughter's words, that high souled king of Benares, Subâhu, came to the spot where the kings were staying and said :- "O kings! Now you can go to your own camps; tomorrow I will perform my daughter's marriage ceremony.

2. Let you all be pleased with me and graciously accept the food and drink, given by me. Tomorrow let you all come here and perform my daughter's marriage ceremony.

3. O Kings! My daughter is not coming today to this hall of Svayamvara; what can I do now; I will console her and bring her here tomorrow. Therefore do you all go now to your own camps respectively.

4. Intelligent persons should not quarrel with the members of their own family. But they should always shew kindness towards their own sons and daughters who are under their protection. However, I will make my daughter understand and bring her tomorrow morning. You may all go now to your places as you desire.

5. Tomorrow morning we will settle about the pledge, whether by choice or by fulfilling a promise, that requires strength, and have the marriage celebrated; or better you all together would decide what mode of Svayamvara is to be adopted."

6. The kings heard Subâhu and trusted him. Then seeing that the city is well guarded on all sides, they went to their own camps and performed their mid-day duties.

7-8. The king Subâhu on this side began to perform all the duties regarding the marriage of his daughter, after duly consulting with all the chief members of the family. At the appointed time of marriage he brought his daughter in a well concealed and guarded chamber, had the bathing ceremony of the bridegroom elect performed by the priests, versed in the Vedas, and had him well dressed and did other requisite things. Then he brought the bridegroom in the house, made him seat on a Vedî (platform) and duly worshipped him.

9. Then the large-hearted king gave to the bridegroom seat, Âchamanîya (water for rinsing the mouth and such articles of food as require rinsing one's mouth after eating them), Arghya (articles for worshipping deservedly, pâdyam, e.g., water for washing the feet with an offer of

green grass, rice, etc., made in worshipping a God or a Brâhman), the two silken cloths and sheet, cows, and two ear-rings and then wanted to give Sudars'ana his daughter.

10. The high minded Sudars'ana accepted all the offerings given by the king. Seeing this, Manoramâ was relieved of her anxiety. Manoramâ began to think that beautiful and well adorned daughter as if the daughter of Kuvera (the God of wealth); and thanked herself and thought as if all her duties were over.

11. Then the royal ministers carried gladly and fearlessly the beautiful Sudars'ana, worshipped with ornaments and clothings, in a good nice carriage to the centre of the amusement court.

12. On the other hand, the elderly female members, who knew all about the prescribed rules, performed the dressing of the princess in a befitting manner and placing her in a beautiful conveyance took her before the bridegroom elect, in the marriage hall, where there was the platform regularly built.

13-14. The Sacred Fire was then lit, the royal priest began to perform the Homa ceremony duly; when the amusement ceremony of the bridegroom and bride united in love was duly performed, the priest called them there. After this the bridegroom and bride performed duly the Lâjâ Homa ceremony and circumambulated the Sacred Fire. Thus all the ceremonies, befitting the gotra and family, were all fully performed according to the prescribed rules.

15-17. Then the king Subâhu, excited by feelings of love, in the marriage time, gave to the prince Sudars'ana the following presents: well adorned two hundred chariots, with horses and the arrow cases filled with arrows, one hundred and twenty five elephants, dressed with golden ornaments, looking like so many mountains, one hundred beautiful female elephants and one hundred maid servants, all dressed in golden ornaments.

18-20. The king gave the bridegroom also one thousand servants well adorned, bearing the complete set of all sorts of weapons, many gems and jewels, clothings, nice variegated woolen clothes, beautiful capacious rooms to live in, and two thousand excellent horses born in the Sindhu country, three hundred good camels able to carry sufficient loads, and two hundred carriages, filled with grains, etc.

21. Then the king bowed to the king's daughter Manoramâ and with clasped hands, said :- "O royal daughter! I am now become your servant; now kindly say what is your desire?"

22. Hearing these beautiful words of the king, Manoramâ said :- "O king! all good to you and let your family increase in sons and grandsons. You have increased my honour by giving in marriage your daughter (jewel) to my son. I have no other desire than to see your welfare constant and the increase in your family, posterity and prosperity.

23. O king! You are the chief amongst the kings. You have made my son great and strong like the Sumeru mountain by giving him your daughter in marriage. You are high and my related. I am not the daughter of a panegyrist or a bard; how can I then praise you for this noble act of yours.

24-25. O king! Your character is wonderful and pure. What more shall I say to you than this that you all, in the face of many other kings, have given your daughter to my son in marriage, who is banished from his kingdom, is deprived of his father and is living in the forest, penniless, armyless, subsisting himself on roots and fruits only.

26. In these cases the kings as a rule make relations with those only, who are their equals in rank and position, of noble families of equal grade, having forces and wealth equal to each

other. No other king would have offered his beautiful well-qualified daughter in marriage to my prince who is without any wealth.

27. O king! On your this act, all the other kings, holding great influence and possessing armies, have turned out your enemies. I, being a woman am unable to describe the amount of patience in you.”

28. The king Subâhu of Benares, hearing the sweet words of Manoramâ was highly pleased and, with folded hands, began to say, “O Devî, you better take my this celebrated kingdom; I will become the commander of your forces and will try my best to guard this city.

29. Or you can take half of my kingdom and remain here with your son. It is not my desire that you leave this Benares and go and live in the forest.

30-31. The kings have become very offended; I will first try to appease them; if they be not satisfied, I will adopt the means of “gift” or sowing dissensions amongst them; and even, if, in that, I fail, I will ultimately take to war. O Devî! Victory or defeat is under the hands of the Destiny; still victory comes to those who are in the right path and defeat to those who are in the wrong path. How then can the victor arise to those sinful kings?”

32. Hearing the king's words, pregnant with meaning, Manoramâ felt herself highly respected; and, with a cheerful heart, said the following good words.

33. “O king! let all good come on you! you better discard all fear and reign with your sons here; my son Sudars'ana, too, will become the king of Ayodhya by the Grace of S'rî Bhagavatî Bhuvanesh'varî, the Supreme Cause of the innumerable worlds, and will roam in this world; there is no doubt in this.

34. May Bhagavatî Bhavanî bring all good unto you; now kindly permit us to depart to our homes, O king! I always contemplate the Highest Goddess Ambikâ; and I have no time to indulge in other thoughts.”

35. Thus, on various subjects, Manoramâ and the king Subâhu began to talk with each other, causing satisfaction to both like nectar, when the morning broke out.

36. The kings, knowing early in the morning, that the princess had been given away in marriage, became very much enraged and went out of the city and began to discuss with one another.

“We will kill today the king Subâhu, the disgrace amongst the kings as well that boy Sudars'ana, totally unfit to marry the princess, and take away the kingdom and the princess S'as'ikalâ. How can we return to our homes, with this severe disgrace, stamped on our heads.

37. Hear, O kings! the sound of the drums, mridangas, other instruments; the sounds of the conchshells have even been overpowered. Hark! The various musical sounds and the chanting of the Vedas. It is then certain that the King Subâhu has finished the marriage ceremony of his daughter S'as'ikalâ with Sudars'ana.

38. Oh! This king has deceived us with his words and performed the marriage ceremony, according to ordinary religious rules.

39. Now O kings! decide unanimously what to do and come to a definite conclusion.”

When the kings were thus discussing, the king of Benares, of indomitable prowess, the king Subâhu, after finishing his daughter's marriage, came there with his famous friends to invite them.

40. Seeing the King of Benares present, all the other kings did not utter a single word, but they remained silent, beaming with anger.

41. Subâhu then approached to the kings, bowed down, and, with folded hands, said :– “Be kind enough to come to my house for dinner.

42. O kings! My daughter S’as’ikalâ after all has selected Sudars’ana; I could not help in this. You are all kind and noble; therefore you all be peaceful and let the matter drop.”

43. The kings hearing him were filled with rage and said, “We have all taken food; our desires have been fulfilled; you better now go back to your own home.

44-45. Your behaviour with us is all right and proper; now do your other duties and let the kings go back to their homes.” Hearing these words of the kings, the king of Benares was very much terrified and returned home, thinking that the kings were all filled with rage and might do serious harm to him. Thus he began to pass away his time in dire anxiety.

46. Then the king Subâhu disappeared; the kings united made this resolve that they would block the passage of Sudars’ana, kill him, and take the girl away.

47. Some of these kings rather said :– “What is the use in killing the king’s son. We will all go willingly to see the fun.”

48. Thus the kings went and remained blocking the path of Sudars’ana; and the king Subâhu, on returning home, began to make arrangements for the departure of the bridegroom and the bride.

Thus ends the 22nd Chapter on Sudars’ana’s marriage in S’rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

### Chapter XXIII

On the killing of the enemy of Sudars’ana in the great war

1. Vyâsa said :– After paying due respects to his new son-in-law, the king Subâhu cheerfully entertained him for six days with variety of good dishes.

2. Thus finishing off the marriage ceremony, the king after consulting with his ministers, presented the bridegroom and the bride various jewels and ornaments and other things given naturally on marriage occasions.

3. Then the king of Benares, of brilliant splendour, heard from his messengers that the kings had obstructed the way back of Sudars’ana and became very absent minded.

4. Then Sudars’ana, of firm resolve, told his father-in-law “O king! better now give us order that we may depart. We will go without any fear.

5. O king! First we will halt at the holy hermitage of Bhâradvâja Muni; and next we will, after due considerations, settle where we would go.

6. O pure one! You need not fear a bit from these kings; the Mother of the Universe, the Bhagavatî Bhavânî will surely protect us.”

7. Vyâsa said :– O king Janamejaya! Hearing thus his son-in-law’s orders, the king Subâhu gave him a vast amount of wealth and bade good-bye to him. Sudars’ana, too, quickly departed.

8. The king Subâhu followed him with a long train of soldiers. Thus Sudars’ana went on, in his journey, fearless.

9. The great hero Sudars'ana, the descendant of Raghu, with his new consort in the chariot and followed by many other chariots, saw the soldiers of the several kings.

10. The king Subâhu, seeing them, became anxious. But Sudars'ana, gladly took refuge, with his whole heart, of the all-auspicious Goddess S'ankarî.

11. Sudars'ana began to recite silently the excellent one word seed mantra of the King of Desires (Kâmarâja) and, out of its power, he and his wife remained in the chariot without any fear and sorrow.

12. Then all the kings came there with their soldiers to fight with Sudars'ana and to carry away by force the bride. Thus a loud uproar arose.

13. The king of Benares seeing them wanted to kill them. But Sudars'ana, the descent of Raghu, desirous of victory, repeatedly asked him not do so.

14. Loud arose, then, the uproar, caused by the sounds of conchshells, bherri, and war drums of the kings on one side and Subâhu on the other, each of the two parties determining to extirpate the other.

15. S'atrujit prepared himself for the war to destroy his enemy. Yudhâjit came there for his help, well equipped with army, etc.

16-17. Some warrior kings remained there as witnesses with their soldiers. Then Yudhâjit went in front of Sudars'ana. His younger brother S'atrujit, too, attended Yudhâjit to kill his brother in the battle field. Then the warriors, overpowered with anger, shot each other with arrows.

18. A great encounter then ensued in the battle field with sharp arrows. The king of Benares hurriedly advanced there, with a great body of army, to relieve his son-in-law.

19. Thus when the dreadful war began to grow more and more horrible, the Goddess Bhagavatî suddenly appeared there, mounted on Her lion.

20-21. The beauty of Her body was exceedingly lovely; She was adorned with various excellent ornaments and She held various weapons. She wore divine clothings and the beautiful Mandâra garland suspended from Her neck up to Her knees. The kings were greatly astonished to see Her. They began to argue "Who in this Lady, mounted on a lion? Whence has She so suddenly come?"

22-23. Beholding Her, Sudars'ana told the king of Benares "O king! Behold! The Divine Mahâ Devî has come here to favour us. She is very merciful. Now I am completely fearless."

24. Sudars'ana and Subâhu were highly delighted to see the Beautiful Goddess and bowed down to Her feet with great devotion.

25. Then the lion, the vehicle of the Goddess, roared, making tremendous noise. Hearing the roaring of the lion, all the elephants trembled. At that

time, the winds began to blow violently and the four quarters assumed an awful appearance.

26-27. Then Sudars'ana told his general to carry soon his forces where the kings were staying, blocking his way. "What could the vicious kings do now, though they had become very angry? The Goddess Bhagavatî had come there to save us.

28. Now you all go safely and calmly through the midst of the kings. See! At my remembering Her, She has come here mercifully to save us."

29-30. The general, on hearing these words, became ready to march by that route. Then Yudhâjit, very much infuriated with anger, said to all the kings :- "Why are you all so much fear stricken? Kill this Sudars'ana, stealing away this girl.

31. This lad, weak and without any support, will carry away by force and fearlessly the girl, spiting all the kings; and won't you be able to do anything? This is very strange!

32. Are you afraid to see this one lady on a lion? O high minded kings! Never trifle away this boy; kill him with all attention.

33. Killing him, we will then take away this girl. The jackal can never snatch away the lady under the grasp of a lion."

34. Thus saying, the king Yudhâjit, filled with anger, came to the battle field with S'atrujit and all his forces.

35-36. That wicked king, drew his bow string well nigh to his ear and shot arrows after arrows, sharpened under stone and by blacksmith at Sudars'ana, with the object of killing him. Sudars'ana cut off all those arrows quickly with his own quick going arrows.

37. Thus when the fight grew intense, the Goddess Chandikâ became very much enraged and shot arrows at Yudhâjit.

38. Assuming diverse forms, the Goddess Durgâ, holding various weapons the auspicious Mother of the Universe, began to fight terribly in the battle field.

39. S'atrujit and the king Yudhâjit were killed in that terrible battle. Both of them fell dead from their chariots; and a shout of victory arose from the side of Sudars'an.

40. The uncle and cousin of the king Subâhu were on the side of Yudhâjit and were killed. The kings were very much astonished to see them thus lying dead.

41. The king Subâhu, seeing them dead in the battlefield became very glad and began to praise and sing hymns in honour of Durgâ Devî the Destroyer of all difficulties.

42-43. I bow to the auspicious Goddess Jagaddhâtrî, again and again; I bow to the Bhagavati Durgâ the bestower of all desires; I always bow down to Her Who is auspicious, peace giving, and the Higher Vidyâ. O Mother! O Giver of salvation! O Auspicious One! You are pervading the whole Universe, O World Mother! and Upholder of the Universe! I bow down to Thee.

44. O World-mother! O Devî! you are devoid of Prâkritic qualities; you are full of qualities; beyond mind and speech; one cannot think out your prowess, etc., by one's mind. Mother! you are the Highest Force; ever willing to destroy the miseries of your devoted persons. Your influence is manifest everywhere; what eulogy can I sing of Thee.

45. O Devî! You are the Goddess of Vâk (speech) of all beings; you are the all pervading intelligence, mind, effort, and movements; you are the controller of the minds of all; therefore how can I praise You? O Goddess; You are the Self of all; how can I sing eulogies to You, who are beyond speech and mind, and to the Universal Self.

46. Brahmâ, Hari and Hara and other higher Devas have not been able to find the limits of your qualities, though they are incessantly chanting your praises; O Goddess! I am the small of the smallest, I am without qualification, and bound by Prâkritic qualities; I am ignorant as regards Jîva and Brahmâ. O Mother! I will never be able to describe Your characteristics that are unfathomable.

47. O Mother! why not good companionships effect the fulfilment of one's desires. The purification of my heart has been effected incidentally. O Mother! my son-in-law is wholly devoted to you; accidentally there has arisen the connection between him and me and it is on account of his connection that I have been able to see You.

48. O Mother! Today I have got without any restraint and control of passions, and samâdhi, the rare vision of You, who is wanted to be seen even by Brahmâ, Hari and Hara, Indra and the other Devas and by the Munis, who have attained their realisation. Therefore who is there in this Trilokî, that is so fortunate as I am.

49. O Bhavânî! Where am I, void of intelligence and where is the rare vision of You, Who is the only medicine of this disease of the ocean of world? Still, O Mother! Who is worshipped by the Devas, I have got Your vision. Now I have come to know that You always show mercy to Your Bhaktas, who are in their Bhavas (mental images of your Self).

50. O Goddess! You have saved Sudars'an in this great war crisis and You have slain these two powerful enemies. How can I describe your

pro prowess in this matter? This I have understood that Your Holy Character ever shows mercy on Your devotees.

51. O Goddess! Again this is not a matter to be wondered at, if one considers; for You are protecting this whole universe, moving and unmoving; and accordingly You have now protected, out of Your mercy, your Bhakta Sudars'ana, the son of Dhruvasandhi, by killing his enemy.

52. O Bhavânî! It is not merely for the protection of your Bhaktas, engaged in Your service, that You shew this favour but also to extol the meritorious deeds of your Bhaktas that You do such things; otherwise how is it that this Bhakta saintlike Sudars'ana, by marrying my daughter, has got victory in this battle field?

53. O Mother! You are fully capable to destroy the fear of birth and death. What wonder is there that you fulfill the desires of your Bhaktas? The Bhaktas extol You by characterising You as Saguna (full of qualities), Nirguna (devoid of any quality) and Apârâ, beyond all merits and demerits.

54. O Goddess! O Bhuvanesh'varî! I am fortunate that I have been able to see You, and thus all my duties have become crowned with success. O Mother! I have no practices in the shape of Your meditation, etc. nor do I know any seed mantras of Yours; today I have fully seen Your glory manifested.

55. Vyâsa said :- Thus extolled by the king Subâhu, the Goddess Bhagavatî, the Bestower of the Absolute Freedom, was pleased and said "O thou, practiser of good vows! Ask boon from Me."

Thus ends the twenty third chapter on the killing of the enemy of Sudars'ana in the great war, in S'rîmad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

#### Chapter XXIV

On the installation of Durgâ Devî in the city of Benares

1. Vyâsa said :- Hearing the Devî's words, the king Subâhu began to say with great devotion thus :-

2-3. O Devî! If there be made a comparison between the kingdom of the Devas and the world on the one hand and the vision of Thine on the other hand, then it must be acknowledged that

the kingdom of the Devas and the earth cannot stand in comparison before Thee. O Devî! There cannot be anything, in this Trilokî, that is more exalted than Thy vision; therefore, O Mother! What other boon may I ask from Thee. I am very thankful and blessed; all my desires are fulfilled, when I have seen Thee.

4-5. O Auspicious Mother! I ask from You this boon, my desire that my devotion may remain constant, fixed, and unflinching towards You. O Mother! You would remain always in this city of mine being celebrated under the name of S'rî Durgâ Devî, Your S'akti. This is my desire.

6-9. O Devî! As you have cleared off all the obstacles of Sudars'ana and saved him from this danger, so remain here in this city of Benares and protect it, so long as this city stands on the face of the earth and make it firm and well established and renowned. O Durgâ, I pray that you may grant me these boons. O Devî! Grant me also various other desires of mine and destroy my enemies and extirpate all the irreligious and wicked people in this city. O Goddess of mercy! What more can I ask from you?

10-11. Vyâsa said :- Thus praising and praying, the king Subâhu stood, with folded hands, before the Devî Durgâ, the remover of all calamities, when She addressed thus :- O king! I will remain no doubt, in this city of Benares, the place of salvation, as long as it stands on the face of the earth and protect all the people here.

12. Then came there Sudars'ana, heartily gladdened; and he bowed to Her and began to praise Her with intense joy and devotion.

13. O Mother of this Universe! Everyone in this world shows mercy to those that are devoted to him; but, O Mother! I see, in Your case, You take it as if Your bounden duty, to save those, that are void of any devotion towards You; for You have saved my life, though I am devoid of any devotion towards you. Therefore how can I describe the boundless ocean of mercy that reigns in You!

14. O Goddess! I have heard that You have created all this Universe, with its elements, and You are preserving this Your own creations and again You will destroy it in due time. Therefore O Mother! What wonder is there that you have saved me!

15. O Goddess! Now order me early what work of Yours shall I do now? Where shall I go? O Mother! Now I am unable to make out my duty; therefore kindly order me whether I will remain here or go anywhere else or remain anywhere, I like, at my leisure?

16. Vyâsa said :- On Sudars'ana thus petitioning before the Devî, She said with much kindness :- "O good soul! Go to Ayodhyâ and govern the country befitting your family.

17. O king! Constantly remember Me and worship Me with great care. I will always look after the welfare of your kingdom.

18. Especially in the eighth, fourteenth, and in the ninth day of the lunar half month, worship Me according to the prescribed rites and rules and offer me victims (sacrifices).

19. O sinless one! Establish my image in this city and worship it three times, morning, mid-day and evening carefully and with devotion.

20. It is noteworthy that My Great Puja in autumn for the nine nights (Navarâtra) ought to be done with the greatest devotion.

21-22. O king! In the month of Chaitra, Mâgh, Âs'vîn, and Âsâdha, My grand festival should be done on the four Navarâtris respectively; and especially on the fourteenth and on the

eighth day of the black half, all persons ought to worship Me with their minds full of devotion towards Me.”

23. Vyâsa said :- After the Devî, the Goddess Durgâ, the Destroyer of all dangers, had finished Her sayings, Sudars'ana bowed down to Her and praised Her much. The Devî, giving him the above mentioned advices, disappeared.

24. Seeing Her disappear, all the kings went to Sudars'ana and bowed to him, as the Devas go to their lord, the Indra.

25. The king of Benares, Subâhu, too, gladly bowed down and stood before him. Then all the kings began to address Sudars'an, the king of Ayodhyâ.

26. “O king! You are our lord and governor; we are always your servants; protect us as the king of Ayodhyâ.

27. O king! It is through your grace only that we have seen the Supreme Force, the Goddess of this Universe, the most Auspicious, the Eternal Bhavânî, the Giver of the fourfold desires.

28. O king! It is for your sake that the Eternal, Highest Prakriti Devî appeared; therefore you are very fortunate, auspicious, and most blessed in this world. You have finished, as it were, all that you had to do.

29. O king! We all are deluded by the Mâyâ of that Mahâmâyâ Chandikâ Devî; therefore none of us is able to know Her prowess.

30. We are always engaged in thinking of wealth, sons and wives; there we are merged in this awful ocean of delusion, infested with crocodiles, etc., in the shape of lust, anger, greed, etc.

31. O Blessed one! You are highly enlightened and you know everything; hence we ask you What is this Force; whence has She sprung? How is Her prowess? Kindly describe all these to us.

32. O Descendant of Kakud! The saints are always merciful; kindly therefore relate to us the glory of the Excellent Goddess, that serves the purpose of a boat in crossing this ocean of world (transmigration).

33. O king! I am intensely desirous to hear the prowess and nature of the Devî.”

Note :- Kakud is an epithet of Puranjaya, son of S'asâda, a king of the solar dynasty, and a descendant of Ikshvâku. The Mythology relates that when in their war with the demons, the gods were often worsted; they, headed by Indra went to the powerful king Puranjaya and requested him to be their friend in battle. The latter consented to do so, provided Indra carried him on his shoulders. Indra accordingly assumed the form of a bull and Puranjaya seated on its hump, completely vanquished the demons. Puranjaya is therefore Kakutstha 'standing on a hump.'

34. Vyâsa said :- When the kings had thus asked, the son of Dhruvasandhi, the king Sudaras'ana became very glad and, meditating on the Goddess, began to say thus :-

35. “O kings! Indra and the other Devas, even Brahmâ, Visnu, and Mahes'a are unable to fathom the most exalted deeds of that Goddess; how, then, can I describe to you the great glory of the Mahâmâyâ.

36-38. O kings! The Bhagavatî Bhavânî is present, as it were, being divided into four parts. She who is the first and foremost, the excellent Sâttvic Energy, worshipped by all, is always engaged in the preservation of this world. That part which is engaged in creating this world, is

called the Râjasik Energy; and that part which is engaged in destroying the world is called the Tâmasik Energy, and that part which is the cause of all, Brahmâ, etc., that Highest S'akti, the Bestower of all desires, is called the fourth S'akti, the Nirgunâ S'akti.

39. O kings! Those who are not Yogis, will never be able to grasp the Nirgunâ S'akti. The Sagunâ Force can be easily served. All those middle Adhikâris (fit persons) and learned men always meditate and worship the Sagunâ Aspect of Her.”

40-41. The kings said :- “O king! You got afraid and went in your very early age to the forest; how is it, then, that you have been able to know the excellent Goddess Mahâmâyâ. How did you worship and pray to Her? That She, becoming so glad, has favoured you and so helped you?”

42-43. Sudars'an said :- “O kings! Early in my childhood, I got the excellent root-mantra of desires, Kânavîja; daily I meditated and silently uttered that mantram. After that I came to realise through the Risis That Eternal Auspicious Mother; and since that time, day and night, I always used to remember that Highest Deity; with the greatest devotion.”

44. Vyâsa said :- Hearing the words of Sudars'ana, the kings came to know that the Goddess which they saw was the Highest Force and filled with the greatest devotion towards Her, returned to their own homes.

45. The king of Benares, Subâhu, returned to his own city after bidding good-bye to Sudars'ana. The virtuous Sudars'ana, too, went towards his Kosala kingdom.

46. The ministers were very glad to hear the death of S'atrujit and to see the victory of Sudars'ana.

47-48. The inhabitants and armies of Sâkata (Ayodhyâ) hearing that Sudars'ana is coming and knowing him to be the son of the king Dhruvasandhi, became highly delighted and approached to him with various offerings.

49-50. Sudars'ana, with his new consort, arrived at Ayodhyâ with his heart highly gladdened, and shewed his due regard and respect towards all his subjects. Then the ministers came and sainted him; the women threw at him offerings of Lâja (fried rice) and flowers; the bards began to praise loudly. Thus, honoured by various auspicious ceremonies, the king entered into his palace.

Here ends the 24th chapter on the installation of Durgâ Devî in the city of Benares and the return to Ayodhyâ of Sudars'ana in the Mahâ Purânam S'rîmad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

## Chapter XXV

### On the installation of the Devî in Ayodhyâ and Benares

1-4. Vyâsa said :- The king Sudars'ana, surrounded by his friends, on coming to the palace at Ayodhyâ, bowed down to Lîlâvatî, the mother of S'atrujit, and said :- “O mother! I swear by touching your feet, that I have not killed in battle your son S'atrujit nor your father Yudhâjit; it is the Devî Durgâ that has killed them; I am not to be blamed a bit in this. O mother! You need not be sensitive in this; there is no remedy for what will inevitably come to pass; therefore you do not be sorry for the death of your son; you must know that the Jîvas enjoy pleasure and pain as the results of their own Karmas.

5. O mother! I am your servant; you are entitled to the same respect and worship as Manoramâ, my own mother; there is no difference whatsoever between her and you.

6. O mother! One must bear the effects of one's Karma, good or bad; therefore when pleasure or pain arises, you should not be glad or otherwise.

7. When pain arises, more pain is said to be conceived and when pleasure arises, more pleasure is seen. But the learned say that man ought not to subject himself to excessive pleasure or pain.

8. O mother! This whole world is under Fate, Destiny; nothing of it is yours. Therefore the intelligent persons ought not to grieve their hearts at any time with sorrow.

9. As the wooden dolls dance in a stage as danced by the actor, so the individual souls here work as the results of their past Karmas; there is no doubt in this.

10. O mother! I know that the effect of one's own Karma, must have to be borne; it is, on that account, that I never felt sorrow in my exile in the forest.

11. You are quite aware that my mother's father was killed here, and my mother, becoming very much afraid and sorrowful, took me and escaped to the forest.

12-13. The robbers robbed us of everything save our clothes on our bodies; I was then very young; my mother was without any shelter; she carried me with this minister Vidalla and my helpless nurse to the hermitage of Bhâradvâja.

14. There the kind hermit and his wife and the other wives of the hermits protected our lives in that forest, with the roots and fruits, that can be obtained there in that forest. Thus our time passed.

15. Mother! I had felt no pain then; nor do I feel any pleasure at present, when wealth is flowing unto me. What more to say, I have no feeling of jealousy or envy whatsoever in my mind.

16. O mother! Rather it is better, in my eyes, to subsist on roots and fruits than to enjoy kingdoms; for the kings go to hell; but the ascetics living on roots and fruits never meet with that result.

17. The wise should undoubtedly practice Dharma and control their passions and thus save themselves from being led into hells.

18-19. O mother! The human birth in this auspicious Bhâratvarsa is seldom obtained. The enjoyments in eating and drinking are possible in every womb, but it is highly incumbent on us when we have got the privilege of this human birth, to earn Dharma, leading to the Heavens and salvation which can be very rarely attained in being born in other wombs."

20-21. Vyâsa said :- When Sudars'ana had told thus, Lîlâvatî became very abashed; she cast aside the sorrow for the death of her son, told him with tears in her eyes :- "O my son Sudars'ana! I am very much guilty on account of my father Yudhâjit killing your mother's father and taking hold of the sovereignty of this kingdom.

22. I could not then hinder my father and son; whatever unlawful evil and cruel deeds were then committed, all were done by my father Yudhâjit. Therefore, my child, I am not to be made guilty in any way in these doings.

23. Both my father and son were killed out of the wickedness of their own actions; how can you account for those wicked things? Child! I am not expressing sorrow at the death of my son; I have been pained by his doings.

24-25. O noble souled one; You are my son; Manoramâ is my sister; Child! I am not at all offended with you nor am I the least sorry for your obtaining the kingdom; Child! you are very fortunate; therefore you have obtained, by the grace of Bhagavatî, this kingdom without any enemies; now rule your subjects according to the prescribed rules of Dharma.”

26-28. Vyâsa said :— O king! The king Sudars'ana heard Lîlâvatî and bowed down at her feet. Then he went to the beautiful palace where Manoramâ had previously gone and began to live there. Inviting the ministers and the astrologers, he asked them what was the auspicious day and the auspicious moment, that he can establish Durgâ Devî on a beautiful golden throne and he would worship Her.

29. “O ministers! First I will install on the throne the Devî, the Awarder of the four main objects of human pursuits (viz. virtue, wealth, enjoyment and final beatitude) and then I will govern my kingdom like the kings S'rî Râma Chandra and others.

30. All the people of this city of Ayodhyâ ought also to worship this Auspicious S'akti, the Highest Energy, the Giver of all desires and Siddhis, and that is respected and adored by all.”

31. The ministers, on hearing his words, had a beautiful palace built by the engineers, artists and workmen and proclaimed in the city the king's proclamation.

32. Then the king Sudars'ana had an image of the Devî nicely built and got that installed with the help of the Pundits, versed in the Vedas, on an auspicious day and at an auspicious moment.

33. The intelligent king performed the worship and Homa ceremony, according to the prescribed rules, and thus finally settled the ceremony of invocation of the Deity into the new image and established it as an idol in the temple.

34. O Janamejaya! There the soundings of the various drums and other musical instruments, the chanting of the Veda mantrams by the Brâhmanas, and sweet music were heard; and various sorts of festivities and rejoicings were celebrated.

35. Vyâsa said :— Thus completing the installation ceremony of the Durgâ Devî by the Brâhmanas, versed in the Vedas, the king Sudars'ana duly worshipped the image in various ways, etc.

36. Thus gaining his father's kingdom and worshipping the Devî, he and the Devî became celebrated throughout the kingdom.

37. The religious largehearted Sudars'ana, on gaining his kingdom, brought all the other feudatory princes under his control by the sheer force of his religious character.

38. The subjects became happy and got honor in the reign of Sudars'ana, as they got before in the reigns of Dilîp, Raghu and Râmachandra.

39. The virtue of all the citizens under Varnâs'rama shone complete with all its four pâdas; and there remained none in the world irreligious.

40. In villages after villages, the chief townsmen began to build temples, worship the Goddess there with all their jolliness. Thus everywhere in the Kosala kingdom spread the Devî worship.

41. On the other hand, the king Subâhu established the Idol in Benares, had temples built and worshipped there the Devî.

42. The inhabitants of Kâs'î became then filled with devotion and intense love towards the Devî and duly worshipped Her, as they used to do to S'iva in the temple of Vis'vanâtha.

43. Thus the Durgâ Devî became very widely celebrated in this world. O king! Thus in different countries, the devotion began to increase towards the Goddess.

44. The Devî Bhagavatî Bhavânî became in every way an object to be worshipped and adored by all people and everywhere in Bhâratavarsa.

45. The people began to recite slowly, meditate, and chant hymns as advocated by the Âgamas constantly and became deeply attached to the S'akti worship and began to be looked upon with the highest honour by others.

46. O king! From that time all the people used to worship, perform Homa ceremony and sacrifice duly in honour of the Devî in every Navarâtri (for the first nine days of the bright half in the months of Âs'vin and Chaitra).

Here ends the 25th Chapter on the installation of the Devî in Ayodhyâ and Benares in the Mahâ Purânâ S'rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

## Chapter XXVI

On the narration of what are to be done in the Navarâtri

1. Janamejaya said :- "O Best of the Brâhmins! What are men to do in the time of Navarâtra? Especially in the Navarâtra ceremony during the autumnal season how is the ceremony to be performed? Kindly relate all this with the prescribed rules and regulations.

2. O intelligent one! What are the fruits therein of the Navarâtra ceremony? and what are the rules to be observed? Kindly describe all these to me."

3-5. Vyâsa said :- O king! Hear about the vow of auspicious Navarâtra. This has to be performed with loving devotion in the vernal season; but its special season is autumn. The two seasons, autumn and spring, are famous as the teeth of Yama, the God of Death; and these are the two seasons, very hard for the persons to cross over. Therefore every goodfaring man should everywhere perform this vow very carefully.

6-8. O king! The people are very much afflicted with various terrible diseases in these two seasons autumn and spring and many lose their lives during these portions of the year. Therefore the wise should unquestionably worship with great devotion the Chandikâ Devî in these auspicious months of Chaitra and Âs'vin.

9-11. On the day previous to the commencement of the vow, when the Amâvasyâ tithi commences, one should collect the materials that will be required in the worship and should eat only once in that tithi what is called Habisyâna (sacred food, boiled rice with ghee) and should on that day prepare an open shade in a temporary building, twenty four (24) feet in dimensions, on a level piece of ground, that is considered holy; it is to be equipped with a post and a flag. Next, this is to be heaped over with yellow earth and cow dung. Then a raised platform called the Vedî, six feet wide and one and a half foot high, level and hard, is to be erected, and provided with an excellent space thereon for the seat of the Devî. Provisions are to be made also for ornamented gate ways and an awning over the top.

12-17. One should invite then, those Brâhmins, that observe fully the customs and usages, who are self restrained and versed in the Vedas and Vedângas, especially those who are skilled in the ceremony of worshipping the Devî.

Next, in the Pratipad tithi (the first day of the bright half), one should take one's morning ablutions in a river, or in a lake, tank or a well or in one's own residence, according to rules, and one should perform one's every day practices of Sandhyâ Bandanam. Afterwards he

should appoint the Brâhmins and give them water for washing their feet and Arghya (offerings of grass, rice, etc.) and Madhuparka (an oblation of honey and milk, etc.) and give them, as his means permit, clothings and ornaments to them. If he happens to be rich, he should never show his miserliness here in making these gifts; for if the Brâhmins be satisfied, they will try their best to make the ceremony a complete success. O king! The Chandî paths (the reading of the book called Chandî) and Bhâgavata paths (the reading of some portions of the book named Bhâgavat) are done on this occasion, for the satisfaction of the Goddess; and either nine Brâhmins or five or three or at least one Brâhmin should be appointed for the purpose. Moreover one other Brâhmin, of a restrained and calm nature, is to be appointed, who would observe the fasting on the day previous (pârâyana). All these being done, the able man is to perform the ceremony preparatory to the solemn Devî worship, (in which the priest utters the Vedîc mantra Svasti-vâchana, Svasti na Indro vridhas'ravâh, etc.). Om Hrîm S'rîm Dûm Dûrgâyai namah is the nine lettered Dûrgâ mantra.

18-20. O king! When the ceremony has been thus commenced, one should place on the Vedî (a raised platform; an altar), the throne fitted with double silken clothes; and, on that throne, he should place the image of the Devî. The Devî, the Eternal World-Mother, is to be four-armed or eighteen armed, (4 or 18) fully provided with all the weapons, ornamented with garlands of pearls and jewels, decorated with various ornaments of gems and precious stones, wearing excellent heavenly clothings, all the parts of the image being artistically finished and endowed with all the auspicious signs, mounted on a lion, and holding conch shell, wheel, club, and lotus in Her hands.

Note :- The Devî, here, is represented with four (4) or eighteen (18) hands.

21-22. In the absence of the image, one should place an earthen water-pot, on that throne, thoroughly purified by the Vedîc Mantras, filled with gold and jewels, and filled fully with the water, brought from a sacred river or a sacred place of pilgrimage and with five young shoots of plants, the extremities of branches bearing new leaves immersed in water. Beside the water-pot on the throne, there should be a symbol (Diagram or Yantra) with the nine lettered Mantram (Om Hrîm S'rîm Chandikâyai namah) in it for the purpose of worship.

23. One should place on one's side all the materials of worship in their due places, and then have the music and other sounding drums played, for the good fortune and prosperity of the family.

Note :- Look for the mantras in the book Mantramaho Dadhi.

24. O king! If the first day be the Nandâ tithi (i.e., the first day of the bright half with the asterism Hastâ in the ascendant), then that is the best time for worshipping duly the Holy Goddess. There is no doubt that special fortunate results would arise on this.

25. On the previous night, one should observe fasting, or on the previous day one should take only one meal of Habisyâna (boiled rice and ghee) and on the next day one should make a Sankalpa (an avowal of the purpose to perform a rite) and then begin worship.

26. One should pray before the Goddess thus, "O Mother, Mother of the World! I will perform this excellent Navarâtra vow; be pleased to help me in every respect."

27. One is to observe, as far as possible, all the rules enjoined in this vow and then utter the mantras and do the worship according to the prescribe rules.

28-31. First of all, one should worship duly the Goddess Jagaddhâtri, presenting Her Chandan (sandal paste), Aguru (a fragrant wood, the aloe wood), Camphor, the flowers

Mandâra (one of the five trees of the celestial regions), Karaja a kind of fragrant flower) As'oka, Champaka, Karavir, Mâlatî, and Brâhmî and various lovely sweet scented flowers and good Bel leaves, Dhûpa (incense, a fragrant gum burnt before idols) and lamps. Next one should present the fruits cocoanut, Mâtulinga, the pomegranate, bananas, oranges, the jack fruits, Bel and various other delicious fruit and then, offering Her arghya, present boiled rice and other food with a heart, full of devotion.

32. Those who eat meat, they can sacrifice animals in this worship of the Devî; and, for this purpose, goat and wild boars are the best.

33-34. O sinless one! The goats, etc., offered as a sacrifice before the Devî attain to unending heavens. Therefore persons offering the sacrifices of goats do not incur any sin. O king! The goats, etc., and other beast offered as a sacrifice before the Devas undoubtedly go to the heavenly regions; therefore, in all the S'âstras, it has been decided that this killing of animals in a sacrifice is considered as non-killing.

35. Now, for doing the Homa ceremony one should prepare, according to one's requirements, a triangular pit from one to ten hands in dimension and a triangular level piece of ground covered with sand.

36. Daily, thrice, one should worship the Devî with various lovely articles and finally make a great festivity with dancing, singing and music.

37. Everyday he should sleep on the ground and worship the virgins (young girl from the age of two to the age of ten) with nectar like sweetmeats and beautiful clothings and ornaments.

38. Everyday one virgin or increased by one, two, or three every day or nine virgins in all the days respectively are to be worshipped.

39. O king! One should perform worshipping this Kumârî (virgin) Pujâ for the satisfaction of the Devî, as his means allow; never one is to shew miserliness in this.

40. O king! Hear the rules of the virgin worship that I am going to tell you. The virgin, aged one year, is not to be worshipped; for they are quite ignorant as to smell and tasting various delicious things.

41-43. The virgin aged two years is named the Kumârî; aged three years is named the Trimurtî four years, is called the Kalyânî; five years, Rohinî; six years, Kâlikâ; seventh year, Chandikâ; eighth year, S'âmbhavî; ninth year, Dûrgâ; and a virgin, aged ten years, is called Subhadrâ. Virgins aged more than ten years are not allowed in all ceremonies.

44. One should worship these virgins, taking their names and observing all the rules. I am now mentioning the different results that arise from the worship of these nine classes of virgins.

45. The worship of Kumârî leads to the extinction of miseries and poverty, to the extirpation of one's enemies and the increment of riches, longevity and power.

46. The Trimurtî Pujâ yields longevity, and the acquisition of the three things, Dharma, wealth, and desires, the coming in of riches, sons and grandsons.

47. Those who want learning, victory, kingdom and happiness, they should worship the Kalyânî, the fructifier of all desires.

48-49. Men should worship Rohinî duly for the cure of diseases. For the destruction of enemies, the worship of the Kâlikâ with devotion is the best. For prosperity and riches, Chandikâ is to be worshipped with devotion. O king! For the enchanting and overpowering of

one's enemies, for the removal of miseries and poverty, and for victory in battles, S'âmbhavî worship is the best.

50-51. For the destruction of awfully terrible enemies and for happiness in the next world, the worship of Dûrgâ is the safest and best. People worship Subhadrâ when they want their desires to be fulfilled.

52. People should, with great devotion, worship the Kumârîs (virgins) with the mantrams "S'rîrastu" or other mantrams, beginning with "S'rî" or with the seed mantrams.

53. The Goddess who can create without any difficulty all the sacred tattvas of the Kumâr Kârtikeya and who effects, as if in sport, the creation of all the Devas Brahmâ and others; I am worshipping the same Kumârî Devî.

54. She who is appearing under the three forms as differentiated by the three gunas Sâtva, Râjas, and Tâmas, and who is appearing in multiple forms, owing to the differentiations of the three gunas again into various minor differences, I am worshipping Her the Trimûrtî Devî.

55. She who being worshipped always fares us with auspicious things, I am worshipping Her, with devotion, the Kumârî Kalyânî, the awarder of all desires.

56. I am worshipping the Rohinî Devî with a heart, full of devotion who is germinating all the karmas in seed forms, that have accumulated owing to past deeds.

57. She who, at the end of a Kalpa gathers unto Her in the form of Kâlî all this Universe, moving and unmoving, I worship that Kâlîkâ Devî with devotion.

58. She, who is furious and wrathful and hence is called Chandikâ and who killed the two Demons Chanda and Munda I bow down to Her humbly with devotion, to that Chandikâ Devî, who destroys the terrible sins.

59. I worship that S'âmbhavî Devî, the giver of all pleasures and happiness, whose form is the Veda Brahmâ, and whose origin is without any cause, and who is so recited in the Vedas.

60. She who saves from danger her devotees and who always delivers from various difficulties and troubles, whom all the Devas are incapable to know, I worship with devotion that Dûrgâ Devî the destroyer of all calamities.

61. I, with my mind devoted, offer my salutations to that Subhadrâ Devî, Who procures all auspiciousness to Her devotees and removes all inauspicious incidents.

62. Thus, in the mantrams, above described, people should always worship the virgin girls, giving them clothings, ornaments, garlands, scents, and various other articles.

Here ends the 26th Chapter on the narration of what are to be done in the Navarâtri in the Mahâ Purânam in S'rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18000 verses, by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

## Chapter XXVII

On the virgins fit to be worshipped and the Glory of the Devî

1. Vyâsa said :- O king! Those Kumârîs, who are defective in limbs, who are lepers, who are filled with sores and ulcers over their bodies, whose bodies emit offensive smell or whose bodies are polluted, or those who are

of a bad family are never to be accepted for worship in the Navarâtra ceremony festival.

2-3. Those who are born blind, who are squint-eyed, who are blind of one eye, of disgraceful appearance, whose bodies are overgrown with hairs, or who are diseased or who are in their

menstruation or in any other signs, indicating thus their passionate youthful tendencies, or those who are very lean and thin, or born of widows, or of women unmarried are always to be avoided in this Pûjâ.

4. O king! It is only the healthy, graceful, beautiful, without any ulcers, and who are not bastards, those virgins are to be selected for the Kumârî Pûjâ.

5. In all the cases, the Kumârîs, born of the Brâhmin families, can be taken; when victory is desired, the Kumârîs of the Kshatriya families are preferred; when profit is wanted, the Vais'ya Kumârîs and, when general welfare is wanted, the S'ûdra Kumârîs are to be taken.

6-7. O king! In the Navarâtri Pûjâ, the Brâhmins should select for worship the Brâhmin Kumârîs; Kshatriyas, Brâhmin or Kshatriya; the Vais'ya worshippers can select for worship Brâhmin, Kshatriya, or Vais'ya Kumârîs. And the S'ûdra worshippers can select, for worship, any of the four classes. But artists and artisans should select for worship the Kumârîs from their own families and tribes respectively.

8. If persons become unable to worship on all the days, then it is advised that they should perform the special worship on the eighth day (Astamî tithi).

9-10. In ancient times, on the eighth day, Bhadra Kâli Goddess, the destroyer of the sacrifice, started by Daksa, appeared on that day in hideous forms, surrounded by hundreds and lakhs of Yoginîs (one of a class of sixty goddesses or female attendants on Kâli). Therefore one should worship in particular on the eighth day with scents, garlands, and pastes and various offerings.

11. On this day, Pâyasa (a food prepared of rice, milk and sugar), and fresh fish are to be specially offered to the Deity. The Homa ceremonies, feasting of the Brâhmanas, and the worship of the Mother Goddess are done with various offerings, the fruits and flowers, and in good quantities.

12. O king! Those who are unable to observe the fasting in this Navarâtra Pûjâ, will reap the same fruits, if they observe fasting for the three days only the Saptamî, the Astamî, and the Navamî tithis.

13. On the seventh, eighth, and ninth days, in these three tithis (lunar days) if one worships with devotion, one will acquire all the merits.

14. When the Devî's worship, Homa, Kumârî worship and the feasting of the Brâhmanas, all these are done, know that the Navarâtri Pûjâ is completed.

15. O Janamejaya! No worship or vow or charitable gifts extant in this world, can be compared, as regards their meritorious effects, with this Navarâtra Pûjâ.

16. On observing this Navarâtram Vrata, one gets riches, crops, sons and grandsons, prosperity and happiness, longevity, health and heaven and even the final beatitude.

17. Those who are desirous of learning, riches, or sons will get them all if they perform this most auspicious Navarâtra ceremony, able to confer fortunes on the devotees.

18. On the performance of this sacrifice, those who want learning get all the learning; and he, who is deprived of his kingdom will get back all his kingdoms.

19. Those who did not, in their previous births, perform this meritorious vow, they become diseased, poor and devoid of sons in their present births.

20. Those women that are barren, or widows or devoid of sons, infer that they never, in their previous births, performed this sacrifice.

21. Those who have not performed the Navarâtra ceremony, how can they acquire riches in this world and acquire happiness and peace in the next?

22. He who has worshipped the Goddess Bhagavatî Bhavânî Devî with young leaves of the Bel tree, besmeared with red sandal paste, it is he that will undoubtedly become the king in this world.

23. That man who has failed to worship the Goddess of the whole universe, Who fructifies all the pursuits of human life, Who destroys all the troubles, pains and miseries, Who is all suspicious Bhagavatî Bhavânî, that fellow is sure to pass his days in this world, wretched, impoverished, and surrounded by his enemies on all sides.

24. When Hari, Hara, Brahmâ, Indra, Fire, Varuna, Kuvera, and the Sun when all these possessing all the wealth and powers and filled with the highest felicities, when they meditate constantly the Goddess of the universe, Who is All Existence Intelligence, and Bliss, then what to speak of the human beings! How is it that persons do not worship that Chandikâ Devî, the One that leads all human pursuits to success!

25-26. Why should not the people worship the Goddess Bhavânî, the bestower of all happiness, whose other names are Svahâ and Svadhâ, the mantrams under whose intrinsic energies the Devas and the Pitris always get satisfied, and which are recited by all the Munis when they chant in every sacrifice the Vedic mantrams? Under Whose Will power Brahmâ the Creator, creates all this Universe? Under Whose energy, the

Visnu Janâradan, the Deva of the Devas, incarnates in this earth in various forms and preserves this world, and under Whose power, S'ankara destroys this whole Universe?

27. No body, in this whole universe, can have his existence without having recourse to that Prakriti Devî, the S'akti incarnate; be he a Devî, a human being or a bird, or a serpent, Gandharva, Râkhsasa, Pis'âcha, a mountain or a tree, he cannot move even of his own accord, without the help of this Force.

28. Therefore, why should not anybody worship that Chandikâ Devî, the Awarder of all desires and wealth? And how is it, that a man desiring one of the 4 objects of human pursuits, Dharma, wealth, desires, and the final beatitude, observes not the vow regarding that Deity.

29. So much so, that even a man who has committed a heinous offence, five such are enumerated, viz. (1) killing a Brâhman, (2) drinking liquor, (3) stealing gold, (4) adultery with the wife of a spiritual guide (5) associating with any such person, if he performs the Navarâtra vow, he will be absolved entirely from all such sins; there is no doubt in this.

30. O king! Once on a time there lived in the country of Kosala, a trader, poor and miserable, having under him many relations and dependants in his family, whose provisions he had to provide.

31. He had many sons and daughters; when they were very hungry and distressed, then they used to get a little food and that in the evening, only once in twenty-four hours.

32. That trader, too, worked under another, the whole day; and when it was evening, he used also to take his meals. Thus, being very much anxious and distressed, he maintained somehow or other his family members (that are to be maintained).

33-34. This trader was of a quiet temper, of a good conduct, truthful, always ready to act religiously, devoid of anger, steady and contented, void of vanity and jealousy; daily he used to worship the Devas, Pitris, and the guests and used to take his meals after all his family members had taken their meals.

35-36. Thus many days passed away when that good trader, named Sus'îla, being very much perplexed with poverty and hunger, asked a quiet tempered Brâhmin "O Bhûdeva! (deva incarnate on the earth) kindly tell me positively how this state of poverty can be got rid off!

37. O holy minded! Kindly advise me such as preserves my honour; I do not want wealth, nor do I like to be a rich man; O Brâhmin! I want just enough to meet with the expenses, incurred in maintaining my family; please advise so that I may be able to earn this much only.

38. I have many sons; I have not got any food, sufficient enough to give them even a handful of rice.

39. Alas! My youngest son was crying today for food; I have driven him out of the house by chastising him. O Brâhmin! What am I do? I have got no wealth; my heart is burning with grief and sorrow; my baby has gone out of the house, weeping and hungry.

40. My daughter has come to a marriageable age; I have no money. Her age has exceeded ten years; the marriageable age limit has been exceeded. Alas! What am I to do?

41-42. O Brâhmin! I am expressing my sorrow for all that. You are merciful, and all-knowing; tell me any means, be it asceticism, gifts, vow, or the reciting of any mantrams by which I can maintain my family; I want wealth just sufficient for that purpose and nothing more.

43. O high minded one! Kindly devise and tell me some means by which my family members become happy in this world."

44-46. Vyâsa said :- The Brâhmin that used to practice vows when thus asked by the trader told him gladly "O trader! Do now the Navarâtri vow, the most auspicious, and worship the Bhagavatî, perform Homa, and feast the Brâhmins. Have the Vedas and Purânas recited and recite then slowly the S'akti mantram and try, as much as you can, to do other concomitant ceremonies; and your desires will thus be undoubtedly fulfilled.

47. There is no other vow superior to this in this world; this vow is very holy and will bring unto you happiness.

48. This vow leads to wisdom and liberation; destroys enemies and increases posterity and prosperity.

49. In former days, S'rî Râma Chandra suffered very much owing to his being deprived of his kingdom; and, then on account of his wife being stolen away. Subsequently he performed this Navarâtra vow in Kiskindhyâ, his heart being heavily laden with grief.

50. Though troubled very much, on account of the bereavement of Sîtâ, still Râma Chandra observed the Vow of Navarâtra and worshipped the Goddess according to the prescribed rules and rites.

51-52. As a fruit of this worship he was able to bridge the great ocean and kill the giant Kumbha Karna, Meghanâda, the Râvana's son, and Râvana, the king of Lanka; and subsequently he was able to recover his Sîtâ. He installed Vibhîsana on the throne of Lanka (Ceylon) and at last returned to Ayodhyâ and reigned there without any enemies.

53. O best of the Vais'yas! Râma Chandra, of incomparable prowess, was able to obtain happiness in this world on account of the influence of this Navarâtra ceremony.

54-55. Vyâsa said :– O king! That Vais'ya, hearing thus the Brâhmin's words, made him his Guru, was initiated by him in the seed mantra of Mâyâ and ceaselessly, without any laziness, recited slowly the mantram for nine nights and worshipped the Devî, with great caution and with various offerings. Thus for nine consecutive years he devoted himself to the Japam (reciting slowly) of the seed mantra of Mâyâ till, at last, when the ninth year was completed, the Great Goddess appeared distinctly before his eyes on the night of the great Astamî tithi (the eighth day of the bright half) and gave him various boons and delivered the Vais'ya from poverty and bestowed on him wealth and his other desired things.

Here ends the 27th Chapter on the virgins fit to be worshipped and the Glory of the Devî in the Mahâ Purânam S'rîmad Devî Bhâgavatam by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa in the Third Adhyâya.

## Chapter XXVIII

On the incidents connected with Navarâtri

1. Janamejaya said :– O Muni! How did Râmchandra celebrate the Devî's Pûjâ, that leads to happiness? Who was He! And how was stolen away His Sîtâ? How was He deprived of His kingdom? Please satisfy me by narrating all these incidents to me.

2. Vyâsa said :– O king! There lived, in days of yore, in the city of Ayodhyâ, a prosperous king of the solar dynasty named Das'aratha. He always worshipped the Devas and Brâhmanas.

3-5. He had four celebrated sons Râma, Laksmana, Bharata and Satrughna. These four sons were equally learned and beautiful and they always did actions agreeable to the king. Of these, Râmachandra was the son of the Queen Kaus'alya, Bharata was the son of Kaikeyî, and the good looking Laksmana and Satrughna were the twin sons of Sumitrâ. While young, they learned the art of archery and began to play with bows and arrows in their hands.

6-7. Thus educated and purified, the four sons began to give delight more and more to the king; one day the Maharsi Vis'vâmitra came to Ayodhyâ and asked from the king Das'aratha the help of his son Râmachandra for the protection of his sacrificial ceremonies. The king could not cancel the Vis'vâmitra's request and sent with him Râma, accompanied by Laksmana.

8-11. The lovely Râma and Laksmana accompanied the Muni on his way back. There lived a terrible looking Râkhsasî, named Tâdakâ, in a forest on their way, who used to give great troubles to the ascetics; and Râma killed her with only one arrow. Next he killed Subâhu and shot arrows at another night-wanderer Mârîcha and made him senseless, almost dead and threw him at a great distance and thus saved Vis'vâmitra from all the obstacles troubling him in his sacrificial ceremonies. Thus fulfilling the great work, protecting the sacrificial ceremonies, Râma, Laksmana and the Muni Cowsick, the three, started for the kingdom of Mithilâ. On his way, Râma Chandra rescued Ahalyâ from the curse that she was suffering from.

12-13. At last the two brothers, accompanied by the Muni, reached the city Videhanagar. Just at this time the king Janaka of Ayodhyâ made a vow to give in marriage Sîtâ to anybody who will be able to break the bow of S'iva; Râma broke that bow into two and married Sîtâ, born of Laksmî's parts. The king Janaka gave in, marriage, to Laksmana his own-daughter Urmilâ.

14. The good and auspicious Bharata and Satrughna married respectively Mândavi and S'rutakîrti, the two daughters of Kus'adhvaaja.

15. O king! Thus, in the great city of Mithilâ, the four brothers performed their marriage ceremonies, according to the prescribed rules and rites.
16. The king Das'aratha, then seeing Râma well qualified to take charge of the kingdom, proposed to install him on the throne of Ayodhyâ.
17. The queen Kaikeyî, seeing that various articles were being collected for the installation of Râma, asked for the two boons, promised before, from her husband Das'aratha, who was completely under her control.
18. The first request was her own son, Bharata's becoming the king of Ayodhyâ; and the second request was the banishing of Râma to the forest for fourteen years.
19. Thus Râmachandra went accompanied by Sîtâ and Laksmana to the Dandakâ forest, frequented by the Râksasas.
20. The high souled king Das'aratha felt very much due to bereavement of his son, remembered the curse given to him by Andhaka Muni and left his mortal coil.
21. Bharata, seeing that his father died solely on, account of his mother, refrained from becoming the king of Ayodhyâ, the prosperous city and wanted the welfare of his brother Râma.
22. Râmachandra went to the forest Pañchavatî. One day the youngest sister of Râvana, named Sûrpanakhâ became very passionate and came to Râma; whereon Râmachandra disfigured her by cutting off her nose and ears.
23. Seeing her nose thus cut away, the Râksasas Khara, Dûsana, and others fought very hard against the powerful Râmachandra.
24. The truly powerful Râma killed Khara, Dûsana and all other powerful Râksasas, for the welfare of the Munis.
25. Then Sûrpanakhâ went to Lankâ and informed Râvana of her nose having been cut and of the death of Khara, Dûsana and others.
26. The wicked and malignant Râvana, hearing of their death, became filled with anger and, mounting on a chariot, quickly went to the forest of Mârîcha.
27. Râvana expressed his desire to take away Sîtâ; so ordered that magician Mârîcha to assume the form of a golden deer and go to Râma and entice him away.
28. The magician Mârîcha assumed the form of a golden deer and reached the sight of Jânakî. Then that variously spotted deer began to move about near the Sîtâ Devî.
29. Looking at the beautiful golden splendour of the body of that golden deer, Sîtâ Devî, prompted as it were by the great Fate, spoke to Râmachandra like other independent women "O Lord! Bring me the skin of the deer."
30. Râma too, not judging at all, as if it was the work of Destiny, asked Laksamana to remain there and protect Sîtâ, took hold of his bows and arrows and went after the deer.
31. Infinitely skilled in magic, the deer seeing Hari in the shape of Râma sometimes came and sometimes came not within his sight and travelled from one forest to another.
32. When Râma saw that He had come very far away from His place, He became angry and drew his bow and shot sharp arrows at that deer, the transformed Mârîcha.

33. The deceitful conjuror Râksasa, being thus shot very violently and pained intensely, cried out "O brother Laksmana! I am killed" and breathed his last.

34-35. This loud awful cry reached Jânakî's ears. She took that voice for Râma's voice and told to Laksmana in a grieved tone "Laksmana, go quickly. I fear Râma is killed; hear the voice 'O Laksmana! come quickly and deliver me' is calling you to go there."

36. Laksmana then replied "Mother! You are alone in this forest; therefore I cannot leave you thus even if Râmchandra be killed.

37. O daughter of Janaka! Râma has ordered me to remain here. Now if I leave you and go elsewhere, then I will be charged with having disobeyed his order. Fearing that, I am unable to leave this place.

38. It seems to me, moreover, that some magician has carried Râma away from here; I am therefore unable to move a step from here and leave you alone.

39. Hold patience; let me consider; I find no such man as can kill Râma; I am unable to leave you by any means alone here and to go away, disobeying Râma's orders."

40. Vyâsa said :- O king! Then the young wife of Râma, having handsome teeth, began to cry aloud, fearfully, as if made to do so by Destiny, and uttered the cruel words to the pure Laksmana.

41. "O son of Sumitrâ! I know why you are so much attached towards me? I know very well that you have been sent here by Bharata to accompany us simply to obtain me.

42. O vile Ksatriya, skilled in magic! I am not that sort of woman acting to my wanton will; never I will accept you of my will as my husband in case S'rî Râmchandra be dead.

43. In case S'rî Râma does not return, I will certainly commit suicide; without him I would be very much grieved and afflicted with sorrows; and I would not be able to hold on my life.

44. O Saumitrî! Whether you remain here or do not remain, I won't request anything more to you; for I am quite unaware of your mind; but this much I like to say to you, where has your intimacy towards your religious elder brother now gone?"

45-46. Hearing thus the Sîtâ Devî's words, Laksmana became exceedingly sorry; and, being suffocated with heaving sighs on account of the internal pain told Sîtâ "O! One born from without any womb! Why are you uttering so cruel and malignant words; I clearly see when you are speaking such unworthy words, that some great evil is sure to befall on you very soon."

47. O king! Thus saying, the spirited Laksmana left Sîtâ and went out weeping very much, and, being very much afflicted with grief, traced the footsteps of his elder and went on in search of him.

48. When Laksmana thus departed, Râvana entered into the hermitage in the guise of a deceitful beggar (Bhiksu wearing a red garb).

49. Jânakî took that villain Râvana to be a Yogi and respectfully gave him offerings of worship and forest fruits.

50-52. That villain asked Sîtâ humbly, in a gentle tone, "O beautiful! Your eyes are beautiful like Palâsa lotus leaves; therefore it seems that you are not an ordinary woman; how is it that you are here thus alone in a wild forest? O fair one! Who is your father? who is your brother and who is your husband? Being such a beautiful one, how is it that you are in this forest here like an ordinary woman, dumbfounded? O good looking one! You are worthy to live in a

palace filled with nectar; why are you living, in this hovel, in this wild forest like an ordinary Muni's wife, when your beauty is shining in lustrous beams like a Deva girl?"

53-55. Vyâsa said :- The daughter of Jânakî, hearing the words of Râvana, the husband of Mandodarî, unfortunately took him to be a good Yogi and replied in the following way :- "Perhaps you have heard that a prosperous king Das'aratha is reigning in the Ayodhyâ city. He has four sons; the eldest of these, S'rî Râm Chandra, is my husband. The king offered two boons to Kaikeyî; due to which Râm Chandra has been exiled in this forest and is with his brother Laksmana.

56. I am the daughter of the King Janaka; my name is Sîtâ; Râm Chandra has broken the bow of S'iva and has married me.

57. Resting under his prowess of arms, I am resting here fearlessly in this wild forest; seeing a golden deer, he has gone out to kill that for me.

58. Laksmana, too, hearing his voice has gone just now. O Yogi! I am living here depending on the strength of these two brothers.

59. Thus I have told you all about our living in this forest; shortly they will come and worship you duly.

60-61. The man who has controlled his passions and has become a Yati is like Visnu incarnate; therefore I have worshipped you. O Yogi! Our Âs'ram is in the midst of this terrible forest, surrounded by Râkhsasas. Therefore I am asking you how is it that you have been able to come here in this dress of Tridandi (a Sannyasi Yogi); please speak in the name of Truth before me."

62. Râvana said :- "O askance looking one! I am the king of Lankâ, the husband of Mandodarî. O beautiful one! it is for you that I have put on this dress of Yati.

63. O beautiful! My two brothers Khara and Dûsana have been killed in this forest; and being urged by my sister I have come here.

64-65. Now leave your this man-husband, residing in the forest as a pauper, devoid of fortune and wealth; and worship me as a husband. O fair one! I am Râvana, the king of kings; you now become my lord.

66. O daughter of Janaka! I am the lord of the Regents of the quarters; and yet I bow my head down to your lotus feet; better accept me and fulfil my desires today.

67-68. Formerly I asked of you from your father, the king Janaka; but he then said, that he had laid a pledge, 'Whoever will break the S'iva's bow will marry my daughter.' The Bhagvân Rudra is my Guru; hence I feared to break his bow, and therefore I was not present in your Svayamvara. But from that time my mind is always thinking of you and is in a state of bereavement for you.

69. O beautiful one! Hearing now that you are residing in this forest, I, impelled by my previous fascination for you, have now come hither; and you better now crown my labour with success."

Thus ends the 28th Chapter on the incidents connected with the Navarâtri and the description of Râmayanam in S'rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18000 verses, by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa in the 3rd Adhyâya.

Note: The story about the origin of Sîtâ Devî runs thus :- Râvana, the king of Ceylon (Lankâ) practised very severe austerities and got extraordinary powers. He brought the three worlds

under his subjection, levied taxes from all. The Devas and all the other inhabitants of the several worlds paid their taxes, as imposed by Râvana. Râvana sent messengers to the Risis and the Munis, the ascetics, dwelling in forests and asked them to pay their taxes. The Risis replied that they had no property. But Râvana insisted. The Risis gave, then, blood, cutting their thighs, in a jar that was carried to Lankâ. Râvana kept that jar under the custody of his queen Mandodarî, and instructed her that the jar contained poison and that she should not eat that. Mandodarî, however, ate a portion of that, out of curiosity, and became pregnant and gave birth to a daughter. Fearing Râvana, she floated the jar with the daughter, in the ocean, which, floating through oceans and rivers, came and touched the lands of the King Janaka. The peasants while tilling, found that and took the girl to the king, who reared her as his daughter. Thus Sîtâ, born out of the blood of the Brâhmanas, took away subsequently the kingdom, life, and all of Râvana.

Another version is this :– As before, the messengers advised the Munis to give something; otherwise Râvana would insist and put them to various troubles. So the Munis cut their thighs and gave blood as their tax, saying that that blood in the jar would cause ruin and desolation to the country where it will be kept. Râvana, hearing this, ordered the jar to be carried to the kingdom of the king Janaka, thus causing ruin to him. The jar was brought and placed in the fields of Janaka.

Now it happened that there was a very severe drought; rains were absolutely wanting; and a dire famine was imminent. The Brâhmin Pundits informed the king that if the king and his wife ploughed themselves the fields, rains would fall. So the king with his wife did that, the king holding the plough and the queen holding the hand of the king. The fore end of the plough accidentally hit upon that jar, out of which came out Sîtâ Devî with two women Riddhi and Siddhi, waving chowries on her two sides. The two ladies disappeared and Sîtâ Devî looked like a girl. The king Janaka reared her, as if his daughter. Sîtâ Devî used to lift daily with her left hand the bow of S'iva, kept in the king's house, and daily worshipped that, and thus cleansed the place. Seeing this, the king Janaka pledged the vow that, whoever would break the S'iva's bow, would marry Sîtâ.

## Chapter XXIX

### On the stealing of Sîtâ and the sorrows of Râma

1-2. Vyâsa said :– Hearing these vicious words, Jânakî became very much confounded with fear and began to tremble; somehow collecting herself she began to say :– “O descendant of the family of Pulastya! Why are you, prompted by lust, uttering these sinful words? I am born of the family of Janaka; therefore I cannot act wantonly according to my own inclination.

3. O ten faced one! Better you go to Lankâ quickly; else Râmchandra will take away your life; you will no doubt incur death for my sake.”

4-5. Thus saying, Sîtâ Devî went towards the Sacred fire called Gârhapatya, placed in the house, with words “go away” “go away” in her mouth. He, whose wickedness has caused all the Lokas cry out “save” “save”, the same Râvana, of perverted intellect, then assumed his real form, went towards the hut and caught hold of Sîtâ Devî who was crying, bewildered with fear.

6. Sîtâ cried “Râma” “Râma” “Laksmana”, and the sinful Râvana caught hold of her and quickly mounting her on the chariot, fast got away.

7-9. On the way Jatâyû, the son of Aruna, met Râvana; and a terrible fight then ensued between the two, when the evil minded Râvana, the king of the Demons, killed Jatâyû.

Râvana carried Sîtâ to Lankâ. Then Sîtâ cried like a forlorn deer and Râvana kept her in the As'oka forest (Jaffna),

surrounded and guarded by the Râksasis. The king of Lankâ tempted Sîtâ with comforting words, and the kingdoms, etc., but she never swerved from her own pure and stainless chastity.

10-12. On the other side, Râmachandra after killing the deer and taking it was coming back calmly, when he saw Laksmana going to him and said "O Laksmana! What a great blunder you have committed! Hearing the voice of that villain conjurer, how is it that you have left my dear Sîtâ alone and come here!" Laksmana said :- "O Lord! Being pierced sharply by Sîtâ Devî's words (coming like sharpened arrows) and being driven away by her, under the guidance of the Inevitable Destiny as it were, I have come here; there is no doubt in this."

13. They, then, both hurriedly went to their hut, made of leaves; and there not finding Sîtâ, they were very much afflicted with sorrows and went in quest of Jânakî.

14. Râma and Laksmana in their search for Sîtâ, came at last to the spot where Jatâyû, the king of birds, was lying on the surface of the earth, with his life ultimately on the point of parting away from his body.

15-16. Jatâyû said :- Râvana, the king of Lankâ, carried away today stealthily Sîtâ Devî; I resisted that villain who then fought with me on that account and threw me down on this spot by weapons. Thus saying, the king of birds died; whereupon Râmchandra performed the burning of his dead body as well his funeral ceremonies. Then both of them went out of that place.

17. Then the Lord Râmachandra killed Kabandha and freed him from his curse; and, through his advice, he made friendship with Sugrîva, the king of the monkeys, and was thus bound under a tie.

18. Next Râma killed the hero Balî as a duty and gave the excellent kingdom of Kiskindhyâ to his new friend Sugrîva according to his promise.

19. Then, he began to ceaselessly think of the stealing away of Sîtâ by Râvana and passed away the four months of the rainy season there with his brother Laksmana.

20. Râma, being very much shaken on account of the bereavement of Sîtâ, began to address Laksmana thus :- "O Saumitre! The desires of the daughter of the king of Kekaya are now fulfilled.

21. Jânakî will no more be obtained; without Jânakî I will not go back to Ayodhyâ; without Jânakî I won't be able to live any longer.

22. Kingdom lost, dwelling in forests happened, father left his body, at last the dear wife is lost; the cruel hands of Destiny are tormenting me now thus; what more it will inflict, how can I say now?

23. O Brother Laksmana! What is to happen is very hard to be known beforehand by men; I cannot say, what is written on my fate after this, painful or otherwise.

24. See! Both of us, the descendants of Manu, though born in a royal family, are exiled in forests due to our past deeds.

25. O Laksmana! It is by Fate, too, that you, abandoning the pleasures of the royal surroundings, have come out with me; and you, too, are now suffering heaps of dire troubles with me.

26. No one in our family suffered so much as we are suffering; why we talk of our family! No human being was ever born or will ever take his birth that suffered or will suffer like me so many troubles, will be like me incapacitated and a penniless pauper.
27. O Saumitre! I am drowned in the ocean of pains and troubles; What am I to do now? I have no means to cross this ocean; I am quite helpless, no doubt.
28. No money, nor armies, O hero! you are my one and only one companion; O brother! On whom shall I be angry when I am suffering on account of my own deeds?
29. Alas! The kingdom that could have been compared in prosperity to the Indra Sabha, was almost obtained by me when, in an instant, I lost it and am now in exile in forest. Laksman! Who can ascertain what is in the womb of Destiny?
30. Oh! That soft bodied Sîtâ, with her child like nature came out with us in this forest; but the inexorable Fate has now drowned her, that perfectly beautiful woman, into an ocean of sorrows, difficult to be crossed?
31. That fair daughter of Janaka is extremely devoted to me; she is pure and holy. How will she be able to suffer troubles in the house of the king of Lankâ!
32. O Laksmana! Sîtâ Devî will never come under the control of Râvana; how can that excellent chaste woman act like an ordinary public woman?
33. O Laksmana! Rest assured that in case Râvana exercises, out of his lordly position, any violence on Sîtâ, she will rather put an end to her life than come under his control.
34. O Laksmana! And when Jânakî sacrifices her life, I will assuredly do the same; for, of what use, then is this body to me when that fair Sîtâ has gone away with her life?"
35. While the lotus eyed Râmchandra was thus weeping and expressing his regrets and sorrows, the religious Laksmana consoled him with the following sweet, truthful, words :—
36. "O Hero of the heroes! Kindly cast aside this weakness and have patience; I will soon kill that villain demon Râvana and get you back your Sîtâ Devî.
37. The wise steady persons remain on account of their fortitude, unshaken in their hearts whether in joy or in sorrow; whereas men, of little intellect, indulge in sorrows when they are happy.
38. Coming in union and going out in disunion, both are under the hands of Destiny; What, then, there is the need for expressing sorrows for this body, which is not soul.
39. As we have been banished from our kingdom into this forest, as there has happened this bereavement of Sîtâ, so, in proper time, we will again get back Sîtâ Devî.
40. O Darling of Jânakî! There must come a time when sorrows will be converted into happiness and vice versa; there will be nothing otherwise. So avoid this sorrow now and have firmness.
41. There are multitudes of monkeys, who are our helping hands; they will go to all the four quarters and bring back to us the news of the daughter of Janaka; there is no doubt in this.
42. O Lord! Knowing the way to Lankâ, we will go there and kill by our prowess the villainous Râvana and bring back Sîtâ Devî.
43. Or we will call Bharata with Satrugna and with all the armies we all united will kill our enemy; why, then, are you thus expressing sorrows in vain.

44. O Lord! our ancestor Raghu, the hero of heroes, the monarch; won his victories over the ten quarters; and you belong to that family and are now plunged in grief!

45. Alone, I can defeat all the Devas and the Demons; and if I get help, is there any doubt, then, in my killing, that Râvana, the disgrace of the family of Râksasas.

46. O Powerful One! We may call to, our aid the king of Janaka and root out that wicked source of enemy to the Devas.

47-48. O Descendant of Raghu! Like the rim of a wheel, happiness and pain come alternately; it is not that happiness, or pain comes and remains for ever. He whose mind is very much overwhelmed. with pain or happiness, is the man who is always plunged in an ocean of misery; and he can never expect to become happy.

49. See! In days of yore, Indra once got addicted into vicious habits. The Devas united put in place of Indra, the king Nahusa.

50. Then Indra, terrified, relinquished his post and passed very many years into an unknown and unnoticed state within the lotus.

51. Again, when time changed, he got his own post back; and the king Nahusa fell down on this earth and became transformed into a boa constrictor (a big serpent), through the curse of a Risi.

52. The king Nahusa wanted the wife of Indra and insulted a Brâhmin; therefore, he was, under the curse of Maharsi Agasti, transformed into a snake on the earth.

53. Therefore, O Râghava! One ought not to plunge in grief, when a danger comes; rather one should be quite energetic in times of danger and remain firm; thus, the sages do.

54. O Lord of the world! You are high minded, omniscient and omnipotent; why are you now overwhelmed with grief, like an ordinary mortal.”

55. Vyâsa said :- Oh king! Thus consoled by Laksmana, Râma discarded all his heavy sorrows and began to remain with his heart firm and at rest.

Thus ends the 29th chapter on the stealing of Sîtâ and the sorrows of Râma in the 3rd Skandha of S'rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa.

### Chapter XXX

On the narration of the Navarâtra ceremony by Nârada and the performance of that by Râma Chandra

1-2. Vyâsa said :- O king! Râma and Laksmana, discussing thus, remained silent; when the Risi Nârada appeared there from the sky above, singing the Rathântara Sâma Veda hymns in tune and musical gamut with his renowned lute.

3-4. Râmachandra, of indomitable prowess, on beholding him rose up from his seat and gave him quickly an excellent seat and offerings of water for washing his feet. Then he worshipped the Muni and stood with folded hands. When the Muni ordered him, he took his seat close by Nârada.

5-8. On Râmachandra taking his seat there with Laksmana with a grievous heart, Nârada asked him in a sweet tone “O Descendant of Raghu! Why are you being afflicted with sorrows like an ordinary mortal? I know that the evil minded Râvana has stolen Sîtâ Devî. I heard while in the heavens that Râvana, the descendant of Pulastya, stole away Jânakî, out of fascination, could not know that would be the cause of his death. O Descendant in the family

of Kâkutstha! It is for the killing of Râvana that your birth has taken place; and for that purpose Jânakî has been stolen now.

Note :- The real Jânakî was not stolen; Her shadow form was stolen.

9-12. O Râghava! The Devî Jânakî, in her previous birth, was the daughter of a Muni and practised asceticism. While engaged in her austerities, in her holy hermitage, Râvana came and looking at her, prayed that beautiful woman to become his wife. Hearing this, she gave a good reproach to Râvana, when he perforce caught hold of her hairs. That ascetic woman got very angry, and, considering her body polluted by the devil's contact, resolved to put an end to her life and cursed Râvana, thus :- "O Villain! I will be born on the surface of the earth, not from any womb but simply for your destruction and ruin." Thus saying, she parted with her life.

13. O Tormentor of the foes! Râvana, the king of the Râksasas, mistook a garland for the extremely poisonous serpent and has stolen away Sîtâ Devî, the part incarnation of Laksmî, in order to root out his race.

14. O Kâkutstha! When the Devas prayed for the destruction of that wicked insolent Râvana, difficult to be subdued, you are born on this earth, in the family of Aja, as a part incarnate of Hari, beyond birth, old age and death.

15. O mighty-armed! Have patience; Sîtâ Devî is meditating you, day and night.

16-17. Indra himself, the king of the Devas, sends the nectar and the Heavenly Cow's Milk in a pot to Her daily; and She subsists on that, alone.

O Lord! On drinking the Heavenly Cow's Milk, the lotus eyed Sîtâ Devî is living without any hunger or thirst! I use to see Her daily.

18. O Descendant of Raghu! I am now telling how that Râvana can be killed. Perform, in this very month of Âs'vin, the vow with devotion.

19. Fasting for nine nights, the worship of the Bhagavatî, and repeating the Mantram silently and performing the Homa ceremony, observing all the rules, will certainly fulfill one's all the desires.

20. O the best in the race of Raghu! You should offer the sacrifice before the Goddess of a sacred and unblameable animal, perform Japam and Homa ceremony equivalent to one-tenth of Japam. If you do all this, you will certainly be able to release Sîtâ.

21. In days of yore, Visnu, S'iva and Brahmâ and the Devas in the Heavens all performed this worship of the Goddess.

22. Therefore, O Râghava! Every person desiring happiness, specially those that have fallen under great difficulties, ought to do this auspicious ceremony, without the least hesitation.

23-24. O Kâkutstha! Vis'vamitra, Bhrigu, Vas'istha and Kas'yapa all of them did this worship before. When some stole away the wife of Brihaspatî, the Guru of the Devas, he, too, by the force of this worship, got his wife back. Therefore O king! dost thou also celebrate the Pûjâ for the destruction of Râvana.

25-26. O high minded one! This vow was practised before by Indra for the destruction of Vritra, by S'iva for killing the demon Tripurâ, by Nârâyana for the killing of the demons Madhu and Kaitava; so you should also firmly resolve to perform duly this vow with your whole heart."

27. Râma replied :- “O Ocean of Knowledge! Who is that Devî? What is Her influence; whence has She sprung? What is Her Name? And how is that vow to be duly observed? Kindly describe all these to me in detail.”

28. Nârada answered :- “Listen, O Râghava! That Goddess is Eternal and Ever Constant Primordial Force. If you worship Her, all your difficulties will be removed and all your desires will be fulfilled.

29. She is the source of Brahmâ, Visnu and others and of all these living beings. Without Her force, no body would be able even to move their limbs.

30. That Supreme Auspicious Goddess is the preserving energy of Visnu, is the creative power of Brahmâ, and is the destroying force of S’iva.

31. Whatever there exists in this infinite Universe, whether Temporal or Eternal, She is the Underlying Force of all; how, then, can She have an origin!

32-33. Her origin is not Brahmâ, Visnu, Mahes’a, Sun, Indra, or the other Devas, not this Earth nor this Upholder of the Earth; She is devoid of any qualities, the Giver of Salvation of all, the Full Prakriti. In the time of the final dissolution of this Universe, She lives with the Supreme Purusa.

34. She is also Saguna, full of qualities, and is the Creatrix of Brahmâ, Visnu and Mahes’a, and has empowered them, in every way, to create the three Lokas.

35. She is the Supreme Knowledge, existing before the Vedas, and the Originator of the Vedas. The individual souls, knowing Her Nature, become able to free themselves from the bondages of the world.

36. She is known by endless names. The Brahmâ, and the other Devas might choose to call Her according to their actions and qualities. I am unable to describe those names.

37. O descendant in the race of Raghu! Her endless names are formed by the various combinations of the various vowels and consonants from the letter ‘A’ to the letter ‘Ksa.’”

38. Râma said :- “O best of the Munis! Describe briefly all the rules and regulations as to how that vow and worship are to be performed. With my heart, full of devotion and faith, I will worship the Goddess today.”

39. Nârada said :- “O Râghava! On a level plot of ground, prepare an altar. Place the Goddess there and fast for nine days.

40. O king! I will be your priest and I will, with great energy, carry out this yajña to fulfil the work of the Gods.”

41-42. Vyâsa said :- Then the powerful Bhagavân Hari, hearing all from the Muni, believed them to be true; and, on the approach of the month of Âs’vin, prepared the altar on the top of a hill and placed the Auspicious Goddess, the World Mother and, observing all the rules, performed the vow and worshipped the Goddess.

43. Fasting for nine days, Râma celebrated the vow and duly offered sacrifices, performed the worship and Homa ceremonies.

44-46. When, on the grand night of the Eighth lunar day, the two brothers completed the vow as told by Nârada, the Supreme Bhagavatî was pleased with the worship and appeared before them, mounted on a lion, and remaining there on the mountain top, addressed Râma

and Laksmana, in a sweet grave tone, like the rumbling of a rain cloud, thus :– “Râma, I am satisfied with your worship; ask from me what you desire.

47. Râma! You are sent by the gods for the destruction of Râvana and are born as a part incarnate of Nârâyana, in the pure and stainless family of Manu.

48. It is You that, in ancient times, incarnated as a fish for serving the purpose of the Devas and preserved the Vedas by killing the terrible Râksasas for the welfare of the Universe.

49. It is You that incarnated as a tortoise and held aloft the Mandara mountain, churned the ocean and nourished the Devas.

50-51. O Râma! It is You that incarnated, in days of yore, as a boar and held aloft on your teeth this earth. It is You that assumed the form of a Man-Lion and preserved Prahlâda, by tearing asunder the body of Hiranya Kas'ipu, by Your sharp nails.

52. O Descent of Raghu! It is You that assumed, in ancient times, the form of a dwarf and served the purpose of the Devas, by deceitfully cheating Balî, the younger of Indra.

53. O son of Kaus'alya! You incarnated as the son of Jamadagni in the Brâhmin family, extirpated the line of Ksatrîya kings and gave over this whole earth to Bhagavân Kas'yapa Risi.

54. So You are now born as the son of Das'aratha, in the stainless race of Kâkutstha, at the request of the Devas, harassed by Râvana.

55-56. These powerful monkeys, born as Deva incarnates, all endowed with great power by Me, will help you. Your younger Laksmana is the incarnate of S'esa serpent; this indomitable man will kill undoubtedly Indragit, the son of Râvana.

57. You will kill Râvana; then you would worship Me, with great devotion, in the vernal season and then enjoy your kingdom according to your liking.

58. O best of the Raghus! For full eleven thousand years you will reign on this earth; and after that reenter your heavenly abode.”

59. Vyâsa said :– O king! Thus saying, the Devî disappeared. Râma Chandra became very glad and, completing that most auspicious ceremony, performed the Bejoyâ Pûjâ on the tenth day and gave lots of presents to Nârada and made him go towards the ocean.

60-61. O king! Thus stimulated by the Supreme Energy, the Highest Goddess brought front to front, Râmachandra, the husband of Kamalâ, went to the shores of the ocean, accompanied by Laksmana and the monkeys. Then he erected the bridge across the ocean and killed Râvana, the enemy of the gods. His unparalleled fame spread everywhere throughout the three Lokas.

62. He who hears with devotion this excellent account of the Devî, will get the greatest happiness in this world, and, in the end, will get the final beatitude. There is no doubt in this.

63. O king! There are extant many other Purânas, but none is equal to this S'rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam. Know, this is my firm belief.

Here ends the thirtieth chapter on the narration of the Navarâtra ceremony by Nârada and the performance of that by Râma Chandra in the 3rd Adhyâya in S'rî Mad Devî Bhâgavatam of 18,000 verses by Maharsi Veda Vyâsa. Here ends the Third Book.

The Third Skandha completed.

