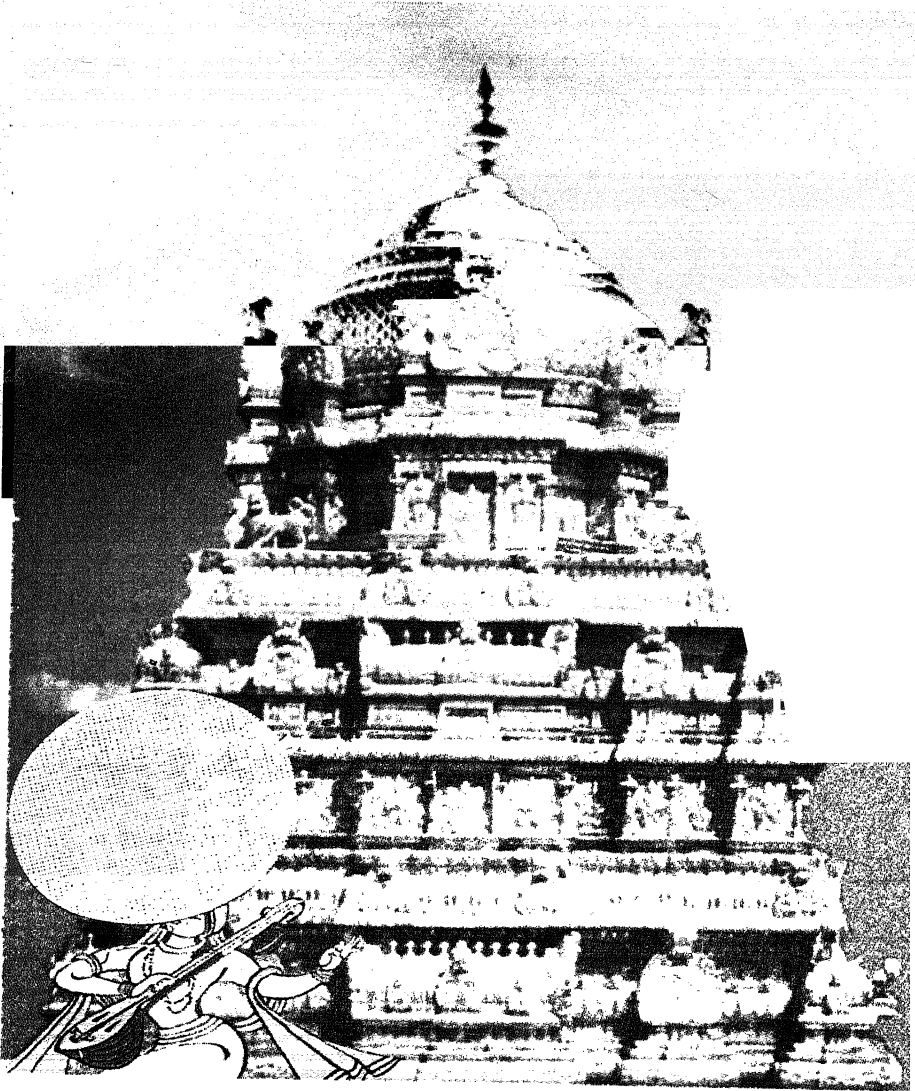


THE PROCESS OF CREATION

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IN DASA SAHITYA



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1999

THE PROCESS OF CREATION IN DASA SAHITYA

V. BADARAYANA MURTHY



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**The Process of Creation in Dasa Sahitya
(Philosophy)**

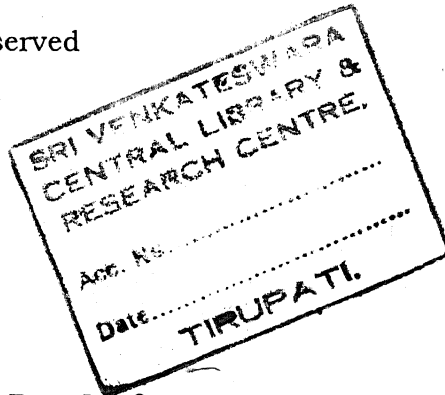
By : V. Badarayana Murthy

T.T.D. Religious Publications Series No.: 571

First Edition : 1999

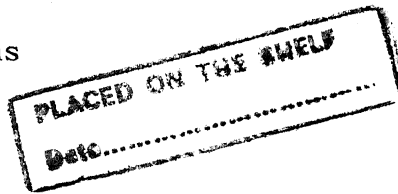
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Copies : 5000



Published by

Dr. I.V. Subba Rao, I.A.S.,
Executive Officer
T.T. Devasthanams
Tirupati



Printed at

T.T. Devasthanams Press
Tirupati

FOREWORD

The saint composers of Karnataka, popularly known as Karnataka Haridasas, – have composed thousands of lyrics praising the glory of Lord Sri Venkateswara, thus furthering the Bhakti movement.

Through their lyrics in simple Kannada, the Haridasas have succeeded in bringing within the reach of the common man, the great secrets of Vedas and Purāṇas.

The mystery of creation as revealed in the scriptures, found its place in the compositions of Karnataka Haridasas. Basing on these Haridasa Kṛtis, which are regarded as lyrical commentaries on the scriptures, the author, Sri V. Badarayana Murthy has done an excellent work of producing in prose the present “Process of Creation in Dasa Sahitya.”

We believe that the reader will be benefited by this valuable work, which throws light on the puranic concept of creation.

Executive Officer,
T.T.Devasthanams, Tirupati.

THE PROCESS OF CREATION IN DĀSA SĀHITHYA

(Devotional Literature of Karnāṭaka)

Chapter - I

INTRODUCTORY

I. The Need for Right Understanding:

The aim of every one is to secure happiness. But we cannot bag all the happiness that we aspire for. When we are making efforts to win or when we are in the act of enjoying happiness, we find a net-work of affliction all around us. If one asks why it is so, we get different answers from different persons. Among them, the more intelligent ones have attempted to proclaim to the world their verdicts. Some believe in the existence of God; yet they attach more importance to the will of man. "Where there is a will, there is a way." "Man is the architect of his own fortune." "God helps those who help themselves." These are some of the well-known adages. Some others say that man's will is all in all—they are atheists. Hanging on to the Darwinian theory of evolution, they ridicule the idea of separate soul or God and tell us that all that we see in this world is only an effect of material reactions. For them the aim of life is indefinite. Their only object is to know more and more about the world and to secure more and more happiness. They say that man has somehow come to live in the midst of natural surroundings; and that, by bringing nature under control, it is possible to make life happier. This is their religion. Since such ideas of the western civilization have invaded all parts of the world, people are chewing the same end and are groping in the dark.

There are also those who shape their views according to the preachings of religious teachers—they are theists. They believe in the existence of God who has created this world and is ordaining its activities. Their belief is, “God is the protector. Sins land us in sorrow. Good deeds bring us happiness and joy. If we surrender ourselves to the mercy of the creator and pray to Him, He pardons our sins and saves us. Ultimately He takes us into His Eternal Abode and favours us with perpetual happiness.

The theist and atheist ways run in opposite directions. It is not right to decide hastily which is right and which is wrong.

Every human being has the right to investigate thoroughly the modes followed by religious or other thinkers and to form one’s own judgement. It is not conducive to bow down like sheep and accept every word of the spiritual master as authoritative. Of course, there may be certain exceptional cases when such acceptance will be found necessary. Teachers and elders who really wish to guide and do good give scope for independent judgement. Even after imparting such valuable knowledge as found in the *Bhagavad Gītā*, the ideal teacher Śrī Kṛṣṇa said to Arjuna, “Yathecchasi tathā kuru” (You have the right to choose before you act.) Other teachers will do well to emulate this teacher of teachers.

II. Ways of Gaining Knowledge:

Not accepting that knowledge can be gained in different ways, it is not right that the modern-minded people should consider as true only what they see or what they find by their experimental methods. It is too much to think that everything can be understood by the ability of human intellect itself.

If we can appreciate reality as it is, we can see that Knowledge comes to us in different ways. The ancient ṛsis (Sages of high order) were great souls who visualised the Vedas; they are called 'Seers' of TRUTH in the form of 'mantras'. Great sages like Vālmīki were those who were blessed with divine vision and wrote what they visualised on their mental screens, in the form of epics from the earliest times. Sitting at the lotus feet of a spiritual master reverentially and receiving instruction and following the same has been the best way of gaining correct Knowledge. To some, Knowledge flashes all of a sudden although they may fail to get at it by any amount of effort. We have heard of many such instances. Rāmānujam, the mathematical prodigy, belongs to this group of knowers. Also, he has said that the deity 'Nāmagiriyanamma' used to provide him with solutions to the most difficult mathematical problems during his dreams. All are aware of another common way of gaining knowledge-it is by hard study of books. But the modernists' stand is to brush aside all other methods and to make efforts to know everything only by the experimental method.

These people who are aware of the loopholes in Darwin's Theory of Evolution still want to think that human Knowledge is growing also with civilization. This is only self-deception.

If the followers of theism are prone to become a prey to blind faith, we will be constrained to say that the followers of atheism are those who go in quest of knowledge like the lame or the blind. Even when one can clearly see the orderliness and organised beauty in the materials and activities of the universe, is it not sheer blindness to say that all this is the effect of insentient matter working within itself somehow? (Big bang theory!). Striding with faulty steps and condemning as false tomorrow what is held as true today-crawling thus in the path of Knowledge, is it not lameness?

Not being properly acquainted with Knowledge stored in religious texts, it is not wisdom to seek Knowledge only in the new way.

There is a proverb in Sanskrit which reads thus—*Siddhamannam parityajya bhikṣām atati durmatih*. It means, the fool kicks the dish served with delicious food accompanied by words of welcome and goes to beg for food. Another proverb in Kannada, almost equivalent to it, is, “Like selling away the tame milching cow and buying another that kicks.” When religious texts are treasures of truly scientific Knowledge it is not wisdom to give them up and try to build the structure of Knowledge afresh.

The wise ones should reasonably understand all that the modern scientists have discovered and are going to discover and compare them with the truths propounded in ancient texts; and thus they should add to their Knowledge gainfully. Supporting this view, Swami Chidbhavānanda has said in his book, *Facets of Brahman* thus—

“Knowing the truth about a phenomenon is the scope of science. Knowing the truth in its entirety is the scope of philosophy. Both the enquiries are at the point of meeting. It may therefore be stated that particularised philosophy is science and generalised science is philosophy.”

Religious texts generally answer the following cardinal questions— ‘Who created this universe? In what ways are we connected with it? What made us to be born here? For what purpose?’

Naturally, the answers to the above questions may be varied on account of time and clime. However, any unbiased thinker will discern that the Haridāsas of Karnāṭaka have expressed facts in the most satisfactory manner. Therefore, it is the object of this treatise to describe the process of creation and the true means of achieving happiness as described in the devotional

literature of the Haridasas of Karnāṭaka, backed by other Vedic literatures.

III. Greatness of the Vedas:

Vedic literatures form the very foundations of all Hindu religious texts. The greatness of the Vedas, which are praised as having no authorship, is very sublime and unique. The Vedas are a mine of faultless expressions conveying the greatest truths. All the teachings of the Vedas are beginningless and spiritualistic. For all righteous dealings in this world the Vedas form the basis. Righteous way of life is most necessary if mankind is to be happy, making life auspicious. The sole purpose of the Vedas is to declare the path of righteousness.

All the religious faiths that we see in the world today have taken shapes following the footsteps of Vedic teachings only. Long long ago, the learned ones of Bharat went to different countries for various reasons and spread Vedic knowledge in those countries. It is such Knowledge that bloomed into different religions in course of time. Many western scholars have asserted that this is true. Here is one such declaration—

“It is there (Āryāvarta) we must seek not only for the cradle of Brahmin religion but also for the cradle of the high civilization of the Hindus which gradually extended itself in the west to Ethiopia, to Egypt, to Phoenicia; in the east to Siam, to China, to Japan; in the south to Ceylon and to Colchis, whence it came to Greece and to Rome and at length to the remote abode of the Hyperborans.”

Will Durant, in his *Our Oriental Heritage* says—

“India was the mother of our race and Sanskrit the mother of Europe’s languages. She was the mother of our philosophy, mother through the Arabs, of much of our mathematics, mother through the Buddha of the ideals of Christianity, mother through the village community of our self-government and Democracy. Mother India is in many ways the mother of us all.”

A recent Russian History of India, in three Volumes, begins thus—

“India is the mother of a world civilization.”

Warren Hastings who was Governor General of India, while recommending the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* to the chief Justice of England, Mr. Mannings, praises India thus—

“There is nothing like oriental largeness for our narrow occident outlook. Here you will find thunder you have never heard, lightning you have never experienced.”

When scholars of foreign countries are thus showering glowing tributes upon the value of Vedic literatures, it is strange that wrong concepts have taken root among the people of our own country.

The direct cause for this state of affairs is the revolutionary wave of modernisation that took birth in England and spread to all the nooks and corners of the world, and has come to stay in our country. The Darwinian theory of evolution and the Industrial Revolution are the two sharp fangs of the monster of modernisation. Their poisonous sting has infused currents of corruption into every nerve of the people of all countries; it has deranged the ways of human life. It has created a keen struggle for existence giving undue importance for the procurement of food, clothing, shelter and the luxuries of life. So much so, men have gone crazy in their ways of thinking and have lost the power of judgement.

The western writers of Indian History argued thus-

“According to Darwin and the other scientists of that period, the world was created at least some 400 million years ago and it must have been some fifty thousand years ago when the human race evolved from the monkey stage. Such being the case, the Biblical statement that the world was created six thousand and odd years ago is utterly false. If this be the fate of the holiest of religious texts, what can be said about the reliability of the Vedas which were composed by the Aryans after they settled in the Punjab-just changing over their nomadic mode of life to that of settled agriculturists?”

Let us examine this standpoint. It is declared in the Indian ‘Pañcāṅga’, the yearly almanac, that upto the year 1981 A.D. 19, 72, 949, 803 human years have elapsed since the four-faced Brahmā began to create the creatures. Such counting of years is to be seen year after year in the Pañcāṅgas. The tradition has continued orally from the very beginning of Brahmā’s creation. The progeny of Vaivasvata Manu began 18, 418, 821 years ago. 5081 years have passed after the commencement of the present Kaliyuga which is the 28th in the series. 1903 years have passed after the commencement of Śālivāhana ‘Śaka’ (era). This refers to the reign of ‘Śālivāhana’ (Sātāvāhana) who is honoured as Āndhra Mahā Viṣṇu. It amounts to saying that his rule began in the year 78 A.D. Caturmukha Brahmā began creating living creatures from his 51st year. Therefore from the beginning of his birth it is 155521972949801 human years upto 1981 A.D.

When the Vedic system has maintained such precise counting of time in years, months, days and fractions of days, it is not right to compare the Vedas to the Bible or any other holy text and to brand it as a bundle of inconsistencies.

Modern scholars try to understand the progress of the world keeping the Darwinian theory in view. They allow their imagination to ride in the same direction to say that the Aryans, who came to settle in the Punjab, first composed the R̥gveda and later the other Vedas. Their attempt to understand the Vedas, Purāṇas and Itihāsas with this background is faulty. The modern historians also bank upon certain historical incidents, place names and linguistic differences to advance their views.

It is true that there are descriptions of certain geographical regions and a few famous rivers of India as also the names of certain Kings and their battles. There are also linguistic differences among the different Vedas.

Historians with the Darwinian outlook, say that civilization started from barbarian beginnings and that languages developed in the same way. By this process of argument they have attempted to fix the dates of the Vedas. And their guesses have been accepted as truth by the general masses.

On account of some of the latest discoveries the trust laid in the Darwinian theory is dwindling. Those in quest of fossils have discovered a skeleton of the newest order side by side with another skeleton which may be considered to be the oldest. This has blasted the theory of man developing from the monkey stage.

The American geologist Robert S. Cohen says,

“The discovery by Richard E. Leaky, of what has been called ‘Skull-1470’, a human skull found near Kenya’s Lake Rudolf is estimated to be nearly three million years old. The famous anthropologist stated, ‘Either we toss out this skull or we toss out our theories of earlier man.’ Thus, truly, the Darwinian theory is retreating.

The descriptions of incidents and places found in the Vedas are not only historical but they are also al-

legorical in as much as they stand for the perpetual fight between the deities and the demons- it is like the well-known Kuruksetra war between the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas. In the Vedas we find historical incidents which repeat in every Kalpa (period of creation during every day of Brahmā). The historical incidents during every Kalpa will be almost similar and Śrī Hari also comes down with His well-known ten incarnations. This truth is borne by the statement, *Dhātā yathāpūrvam akalpayat* (Brahmā created as before). The historical names such as 'Sudāsa' are symbolical just like the name 'Yajñadatta'.

Merely by looking at the linguistic differences it is not right to fix the dates of the Vedas separately. The Sanskrit language is not what has grown with the growth of civilization as is supposed by some scholars. That language and its alphabet are eternal. This aspect will be dealt with in detail at a later stage. It is but natural that there should be linguistic differences in accordance with the subject matter to be dealt with. In *Srīmad Bhāgavatam* which consists of twelve cantos, the linguistic style of the fifth canto dealing with Geography and Astronomy is quite different from that of the other cantos. In the same way it is quite natural that the style of each Veda should differ from those of the others in conformity with their contents.

Within the vast terrestrial area consisting of seven islands and seven oceans - thirty crore miles in width, Jambūdvīpa is famous. For special reasons Bhārata Varṣa in Jambūdvīpa is considered superior to others because it is the 'Karma Bhūmi'- land of fruitive actions. Even in this tract of Bharata Varṣa, Bharata Khaṇḍa is the most important land mass. And in the Bharata Khaṇḍa, Bhārata-deśa stretching from Cape Kanyākumāri to the Himalayas is the heart of Karma Bhūmi. It is for this reason that the geographical and the historical aspects of this country find place in the Vedas prominently as being typical.

Those of the Hindus, who perform daily prayers (Sandhyāvandana), recite at the commencement thus—"Jambūdviṇe, Bharata Varṣe, Bharata Khaṇḍe, Daṇḍakāraṇye". Really speaking, it is Daṇḍakāraṇya that goes by the name 'Bhārata deśa'. This aspect will be fully discussed in the supplement to this text.

Nature has endowed the country of Bharata with certain special features. It has all types of climate. The hills and the mountains, the rivers and the forests have all made people to come nearer to nature in their ways of life. The country has the quality of perfection denoted by its natural triangular shape. Among the spiritual symbols the triangle has special significance. It is a figure that can be formed by the least number of straight lines; and it can be sub-divided into any number of triangles, without wasting much space. The sacred Śrī Cakra' is formed by a large number of equilateral triangles, each of them being a perfect figure. From this point of view the country of Bharata is representative of the Śrī cakra. Then again, the triangle stands for the combination of the three primordial elements sattva, rajas and tamas. There is nothing in this world which is not made by the combination of these three elements. The triangular shape of Bhārata reveals this fact. In this way many have expressed their feelings about the significance of the triangular shape of Bhārata. It is for these and several other reasons that the Vedas have mainly described the features of this country.

The Vedas describe the ways of Creation and the sublime qualities of the Creator. At the beginning of Creation the Supreme Lord instructs the four-faced Brahmā with Vedic knowledge. At the time of final dissolution the alphabet forming the Vedas get dissolved into the single letter Om and the meanings and forms of the Vedas remain in the Lord's heart. Although our alphabets are material in form, the meanings and forms during pralaya are purely transcendental. Like

the Time factor, the prime material causes and the causes of actions (Kāla, Dravya, Karma), 'Prajāpati' or Omkāra too rests with Mahālakṣmī, who is the constant companion of the Lord in Time and Space. She too knows the Vedas in transcendental form very well. The Vedic knowledge remains in her by way of reflection of the original which stays in Śrī Hari's heart. This being the fact, Vedas were not composed by any one born in this world. Therefore they are called 'Apauruṣeya' or without human authorship.

When the night (period of no-activity after dissolution) nears its end, Śrī Mahālakṣmī in her Durgā form, motivated by the Lord, praises Him with non-material Vedic hymns, entreating Him to start Creation once again for the upliftment of souls.

Hence it will be right to say that the Vedas were clothed in material letters and sounds and expressed by the Lord. We may say that the Vedas came directly out of the Lord's mouth when they were taught to Brahmā. Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya has voiced this idea when he says, "Śrutigalātanamātu" (Vedas are the words spoken by God). The Christians say "Bible is God's word". The Muslims say, "Koran is God's breath." (Khudāke rūh). All these, statements are in agreement.

It is also right to say that the Vedas came to light in this world through the ṛṣis, who visualised them. Such sages are called as 'the seers of mantrās (mantra draṣṭārah). Since the Vedas were taught by oral instruction and listening through a long series of teachers and the taught, they are also known as 'Śrutis'.

The very terms 'Veda', 'Śruti', and 'Āmnāya' indicate that the Vedas are beginningless and authorless. They are called 'Vedas' because they are eternal, 'Śrutis' because they have been heard by the ancient seers and 'Āmnāyas' because they have come down

from beginningless time in the same form without the slightest difference in the order of letters, words, sentences, meanings, mode of recital and phonetics.

Here is the evidence of *Varāha Purāṇa* in this respect—

*Vedāste nitya satyatvāt śrutayaśca khilaiḥ śruteḥ,
Āmnāyōnānyathā pāṭat īsa buddhisthitā sadā.*

If we look at the vast wealth of Knowledge found in the Vedas and their concomitants and the systematic way in which the subject matters are dealt with, it will not be sensible judgement to state that the nomadic Aryans composed the *Ṛgveda* when they entered the Punjab about 5000 years ago and later they composed the other Vedas—all within a period 1500 years. Can any one imagine such a leap from nomadic life to scientific acme?

Maxmuller, the well-known critic of the Vedas has said, "The date assigned to the poetry of the Vedas is and will always remain hypothetical." Maxmuller - (*Physical Religion* p.22)

Another scientist also says— "Whether the Vedic hymns were composed about 1000 or 1500 or 2000 or 3000 B.C. no power on earth will ever determine."

—*Ibid* p.91

We may therefore conclude that the Vedas, which are meant to favour the world with general and super knowledge, are undoubtedly a treasure of wisdom not at all stored by human endeavour.

IV. Scientific Outlook in Vedic Literature:

In the eternal and infallible Vedas and their concomitants such as the *Smṛtis*, *Purāṇas* and the *Brahmasūtras* and also in the literatures of local languages such as *Kannāḍa* and *Telugu* keeping in line with Vedic literatures, we find many scientific facts, known and unknown to the modern scientists.

(1) How the bodies of living beings come into existence is clearly described in Śrī Harikathāmṛtasāra.

Text

*Mother, father, earth, water, sky
As they are called, in these five fires,
The pervasive presence and activities of the thirty forms of
Śrīman Nārāyaṇa
Remember thou, and the days as sacrificial sticks,
Offer thou every day as oblation and
Solicit supreme happiness from the Lord of lords who is the
purifier of purity.*

Purport : After death, the individual soul goes to hell and heaven to eat the fruits of bad and good deeds committed here, after which, he or she is lodged in the sky in one of the star worlds. Then the soul is brought to the region of the clouds (Varuṇa loka; not just the visible clouds). Then he comes down to the earth with the rain drops and dwells; and, by the will of God, enters a growing cereal plant. He gets into one of the grains growing on the plant. Then he enters the father's body and remains there for three months. Then, getting into the mother's womb, he stays there for nine months and comes out with the developed body of a child. The five aforesaid factors are like the fires of factories where the child's material body is forged. These details are found in the Garuḍa Purāṇa ('Preta Khaṇḍa).

We must consider all our daily acts as sacrificial sticks (Samit) and offer them through the five fires—mother, father, earth, water and sky, to the Omnipotent Motivator. Gratitude to the parents and to the deities of the elements is equal to holy sacrifice.

The speciality about the Bhāratiyas and the Upaniṣads, which are their treasures of Knowledge, is that they have described the process of the birth of a child not just in the material way, but they have pointed out the spiritual significance attached to it.

In the Upaniṣads we find the following verses—

1. *Asāvāva loko gautamāgnistasyāditya eva samid rasmayo dhūmo ahararciscandramāṅgāranakṣatrāṇi visphuliṅgāstasmin agnau devāḥ śraddhām juhvati tasyāāhuteḥ somo rāja bhavati.*
2. *Parjanyo vāva gautamāgnistasya vāyureva samidabhram dhūmo vidyurarcīḥ aśaniraṅgrāhva dhvanayo visphuliṅgāstasminnagnau devāḥ somo rājām (?) juhvati tasyā āhutervarṣaḥ sambhavati.*
3. *Ṙṥthvī vāva gautamāgnistasya samvat-sara eva samidākāso dhūmo rātrirarcirdiśāṅgārā avāntaradiso visphuliṅgāstasminnagnau devāḥ juhvati tasya āhuterannaḥ sambhavati.*
4. *Puruṣo vāva gautamāgnistasya vāgeva samit prāno dhūmo jihvārchīcākṣuraṅgārā śrotram visphuliṅgāstasmin agnau devāḥ annam juhvati tasya āhuteḥ retaḥ sambhavati.*
5. *Yoṣā vāva gautamāgnistasya upastha eva samidhadupa mantram yete sadhūmo yonirarcir yadantah karoti te aṅgārāḥ abhinandā visphuliṅgā tasminnagnau devah reto juhvati tasyā āhuter garbhaḥ sambhavati.*

These are the words of the Upaniṣads proclaimed with the noble intention of making every human being into a 'Mahāpuruṣa' (divine personage). Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya, the illustrious 'Haridāsa', who digested the message of the Upaniṣads and lived upto it, has thus put down into simple Kannaḍa verses the purport of the Upaniṣads.

(1) "The sky is the sacrificial fire; sticks (small dried twigs of the peepul tree) to put in is the sun; his rays form the smoke; day-light is the flame; the stars are the sparks; the moon is the cinder. The truly wise ones contemplate the five forms Nārāyaṇa, Vāsudeva, Saṅkaraṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha— in the noble boar form of the Supreme Being, it being the origin of all sacrificial systems, and considering words of devotion as 'mantras', they perform the sacrifice in the said manner."

(2) "Parjanya, master of the cloud-land is the sacrificial fire; Pravahavāyu, lord of the blowing wind is in place of the sticks; the clouds are smoke; lightning is the flame; the sparks are thunder; the thunderbolt is the cinder. Considering thus, the wise ones offer sacrifice to the Supreme Being reverentially through the agency of Parjanya, born of the ocean".

Note: Votaries of Vedas knew that clouds are formed by evaporation of waters.

(3) "The Sacrificial fire is earth; the period of a year is the sticks; the atmospheric jacket is smoke; Night is flame; the four principal directions—east, west, north, south—are cinders, the other intermediate directions—N.E., N.W., S. E., S.W.—are the sparks. You are advised to be dubbed as the best of sacrificial performers by offering each year into the fire of earth, thus pleasing the Supreme Lord who is in all forms."

(4) "Man (father) is Sacrificial fire; words spoken by him while taking food form the sticks; mind is the smoke; the tongue is the flame; the two ears are the sparks; the eyes are the cinders. If the man thinks that what he eats is an offering to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in himself, the Lord accepts it and gives protection."

(5) "Then, consider woman (mother) as the sacrificial fire; her genital is the stick to put into the fire; words rousing desire for contact form the smoke; the vagina is the blazing flame; the male organ entering the vagina is the cinder, the ecstatic ejaculations are the sparks; seminal ejection is the sacrificial offering to the Supreme Lord of Sacrifices. He rewards such a wise person richly."

The sky, the cloud-land, the earth, father and mother are considered as the five sacrificial fires. Indwelling them respectively are the five forms of the Lord - Nārāyaṇa, Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. The soul or jīva is the object to be sacrificed in these fires. (Incidentally, we can infer from

this that a rightly performed sacrifice has a definite, beneficial purpose; it is not merely killing an animal for sacrifice.) The gods in charge of the soul sacrifice him in the five fires remembering the five resident forms of Śri Harī. It means that they put the soul into the hands of the Supreme being.

After the soul undergoes punishment in hell and reward in heaven for his sins and merits of the previous birth, when he is sacrificed into the fire of sky, the Lord provides him with the sky element that forms part of his new body; similarly he gets the watery and the earthly portions too. Along with these he also gets portions of the wind and the fire elements during the successive sacrifices. In this way the new body consists of the five gross elements in various proportions according to the needs of the special species of body, human or otherwise.

No doubt, the gods in charge earn the reward for the five kinds of sacrifices they perform on behalf of the soul. But what about the embodied individual himself? In the human form there is scope for engaging oneself in similar sacrifices. For example, whenever one celebrates his or her birthday, it will be most profitable to think of the good and bad deeds performed during the year that has elapsed and to lay down those deeds at the lotus feet of the Creator. This is what is meant by offering the year itself as oblation. Then, the Lord will be pleased and He will free the person from the mundane effects of good and bad deeds.

Every day too, before going to bed, we can show our gratitude to the Lord indwelling the five fires that caused the fashioning of our bodies and earn His grace.

The last but not the least thing to remember in this connection is that the mating of man and woman is a holy act if viewed in the proper perspective. Marriage is surely a holy institution.

(2) How the embryo develops day by day in a mother's womb is described in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* by Śrī Vyāsa Maharṣi. The same fact is described in *Haridāsa Sāhitya* too.

Vijaya Dāsārya's *Suḷādi-*

".....On the first day it is in the form of mucus-like liquid. During the passage of three nights it takes the form of curd. In five nights it turns into frothy viscous material. In ten nights it becomes a round fleshy mass. During the course of a month it gets the shape of a figure with extensions like head and limbs. In the third month we can see hair, nails, skin and bone formations. in the fourth month the tissues of seven elemental parts - epidermis, dermis, blood, muscles, fat, nerves and bones - begin to show themselves independently. In the fifth month hunger is felt. Śrī Vijaya Viṭṭhala, the Supreme Lord, who is above the material modes, thus does things sportively in a double way - residing in the materials and in the sentient souls. In the sixth month, the infant in the womb changes position from left to right. In this way effort begins and the child is now encased in the placenta. During the seventh month the child recollects its actions of the previous birth and experiences, happy or sorrowful feelings. When it passes through the eighth month it develops reactions to tastes such as hot, citrous, bitter or saline and shrinks from heat or cold. When the ninth month sets in, the child in the womb suffers being stung all over by microbes and the head is bent down between the knees..... Being forced by the air pressure inside, the child comes out to be in touch with this earth.

(3) The Āyurvedic system of medicine, which is rightly, called as *Dhanvantari Veda*, is at present pushed into a corner; but it is veritably a mine of scientific gems for zealous research scholars. The western scientists who have tried to probe into its depths have been wonderstruck. The *Bhakti Vedānta* section of the

Hare Kṛṣṇa Mandir at Juhu in Bombay have taken up investigation of the Ayurvedic system in right earnestness.

The veterinary sciences relating to animals such as elephants, horses and domestic cattle are amazing. Modern scientists will do well to know the details of these sciences and examine them by experimentation. That will convince them of the ancient wisdom that found spontaneous expression by divine grace.

(4) In the days of yore, when modern developments were quite unknown, people made wonderful machines getting instruction from Vedic lore. If one learns something about those machines it will be possible to appreciate the greatness of Vedic information. One may get a fair idea of such mechanical wonders by going through a brochure named, *Yantras or mechanical devices in Ancient India* by V. Raghavan, M.A., Ph.D. (Transaction 10, The Indian Institute of Culture, Basavannagudi, Bangalore.).

(5) Not tutored by the masters of modern science. Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya, who lived in the 19th C.A.D. has casually described a few scientific facts, found in the sacred writings of old, in his *Harikathāmṛtasāra-*

“The Lord is like a peg, residing as He does in the iris of the eye with the name Pradyumna. He allows light to pass through the pupil of the eye. Śrīdevī with the name Āmbhraṇi is in the form of the rope used to tie the calf of a cow to a peg. In the case of the eye the ciliary muscles, elongating and contracting to afford the ‘power of accommodation’ to the eyes, are like the rope to tie the calf. Sri Mukhya Prāṇa (pavana), who is eligible to occupy the seat of Hiraṇyagarbha (Brahmā) during the next Kalpa, is like the calf tied by the rope. He is in the retina of the eye along with the other deities. At his intent the ciliary muscles contract or extend - It is like a calf pulling the rope this way or that way. Inverted objects fall on the retina. Sri

Mukhya Prāṇa, causing the power of accommodation with a view to get clear images, resides in the termini of the optic nerves touching the retina and he interprets the inverted images correctly to reach the brain. (Canto 8. St. 9.).

Whatever be the innate properties of material things, those properties cannot act by themselves without the will of an intelligent agent who can make use of them. Most present day scientists speak only in terms of matter. They are so obstinate in their arguments against the believers of ancient wisdom that they do not even try to think about themselves. Self-analysis will certainly show that within each one of themselves there is an intelligent agent with feelings and intuition which are not at all the properties of matter. Knowledge of self and 'Super Self' is true vijñāna or science. Mere knowledge of material things is only 'Sujñāna' or organised knowledge of common sort; its scope is limited to human ability to think. This kind of Sujñāna becomes vijñāna or true science only if the deities presiding upon the material principles and their Master are recognised. This is what Śrī Kṛṣṇa meant when He said to Arjuna,

Jñānam vijñāna sahitam pravakṣyāmyanasūyave.

(O, Arjuna, since you are free from jealousy, I shall tell you all that you should know along with the supreme secret behind it.)

Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya explains another scientific fact of which modern scientists too are aware somewhat superficially.

“Lord Vāsudeva resides in the fore-brain and, taking sixteen forms standing for the sixteen vowels of the alphabet, He holds lordship as well as does service in the organs such as eyes and ears. Thus the ever-joyful Lord sports hearing and making us hear, seeing and making us see, speaking and making us speak.” (Canto 8. St.17).

While receiving external impulses He is the servant; while actuating the motor nerves He is the Master. He acts both the roles because the individual soul, who is the master of the body for namesake is almost helpless by himself. He is helped to get experiences and to recognise his own individuality by the actorship of the Lord.

(*Bimba Kṛya*) who resides in the heart of the individual soul as well as in the limbs of the body.

The point to note here is, that Śrī Jagannatha Dāsārya has described such things as are quite familiar to modern biologists without depending upon modern scientific discoveries. Biologists tell us that the cerebrum sends forth six pairs of nerves and controls the five sensory organs and the muscles of the face. Śrī *Harikathāmṛtasāra* gives exactly a similar description.

Just one more example. "The main nerve strings going to the lower limbs are 12,000; the trunk has 14,000 and the arms have 4,000. The cranium contains 6,000 nerve strings. The total of all these is 36,000; but they are in pairs - one set working during day-time and the other set during night times. They are all operating under the agency of deities who are the heads of the several departments of the nervous system. Those, who know the working of the nervous system and the deities controlling them, are not ordinary human beings; they are divine beings born on earth."

They are the knowers of Bhūvarāhamurti (Bhū = The nervous system; Varāhamūrti = The Master in boar form) (Canto 12. St.2).

We may give innumerable examples of this sort. Therefore it must be believed that the Vedas and the concomitant literatures are all truly scientific and are not the outcome of flowery imagination.

V. Basis of Faith:

The votaries of Vedic Knowledge are not those who are a prey to blind faith. Without sufficient proof they do not believe anything. They always proceed with four determining factors of belief - Visual proof (Pratyakṣa), Logical conclusion (Anumāna), Vedic mandate (Āgama) and words of Well-wishers (Āpta vākya).

Although they give credence to visual proof, they do not readily believe all that comes as visual proof. They stand by the maxim that one should test thoroughly before accepting visual proof. They believe only what the faultless eye sees with the help of a clean, unbiassed mind. The wise ones of the Vedic school do believe what is visualised through modern scientific instruments; but they are not prepared to accept all theoretical guesses based on observation through such instruments.

'Anumāna' means the logical way or the process of correct thinking. Learning about the unknown factors by the analogy of several known things and by faultless argument is the way of logic. Logic is also very necessary to understand the Vedic literatures rightly such that no faulty interpretations are made, no superficial meanings are taken for granted, and such that truth is arrived at by the use of grammar and other aids to Vedic literatures. Modern scientists too advance their theories basing their arguments on logical lines. Often they succeed in establishing their theories as truths by a series of experiments. Although this method is sound so far as familiar and nearer objects are concerned, it is not wise to believe all theories formulated about the very distant heavenly objects as truths and to convince others too to believe as such. The nature of galaxies, the distance between stars and all such things should be credited only as guessess and not as established truths.

Vedas are the fundamental determining factors of true knowledge for the followers of the Vedic path. They have proved the authority of the Vedas by logical means. The evidence of the Vedas is indispensable with regard to notions about the divine worlds, the hosts of gods, and the omnipotence and such other attributes of the Supreme Being. Such things cannot be properly understood by visual means or by logical methods.

For the followers of the Vedic path the evidence of 'Āptavākya'— words of wellwishers is of great importance. In a way, such wellwishers are their laboratories. 'Wellwishers' means those who know things truly and are not wrongly motivated by selfish interests. They have no inclination to practice deception, but are eager to share with others the truths that they know, and have, perhaps, experienced.

There are innumerable examples of such illustrious persons in our country; and there are also many monumental evidences pertaining to them. In the other countries of the world too we come across the examples of such saintly persons. These great personages could also attract the masses for good purpose by their powers to perform miracles. However, they should not be branded as merely miracle-workers. They were persons, with god-vision and blessed by God's Grace. It is for this reason that they may be considered as the laboratories of Vedic Knowledge.

In order to convince modernised minds about the need of placing faith in the words of wellwishers we may cite the example of Tensingh (he who was the first to climb, to the top of Mt. Everest). When asked if he had seen the Yeti, he said, "I have not seen it. I don't believe what I have not seen myself. But my father said that he saw the yeti twice and I cannot disbelieve his words."

Just because in these days there are many who merely work miracles or duplicate miracles and attract people for selfish ends and speak random philosophy,

it should not be thought that every one belongs to this class. If one reads with open mind books such as *Mahārāstra Bhakta Vijaya* (The Glories of the Saints of Maharashtra), and *Karnāṭaka Bhakta Vijaya* (Glories of the Saints of Karnāṭaka) and the stories of the South Indian devotees of Lord Śiva as also the stories of the Saints of other parts of the world, it will be clear that in the past there were many many true devotees and saints and there may be some now also. Their experiences are guidelines for us and are, perhaps, better than visual evidences. The words of true well-wisher must be relied upon.

VI. Source Books and their authors:

For this treatise on the Process of Creation, the main source is Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and other Purāṇas of Vyāsa Mahārṣi. Generally the Process of Creation forms an invariable section in every one of the Purāṇas. We get more details in texts like *Prakāśa Samhitā* and *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. In the Purāṇas some portions might have been dropped and some portions purposely added. ("Kecit granthān prakṣipanti kecidantaritāni ca"). Therefore we must accept Śrīmad Bhāgavatam as the main source of information. What is said in other texts should necessarily be reconciled with Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, says Śrī Madhvācārya—

*Yathā bhāgavatetūktam bhauvanam kośa lakṣaṇam,
Tasyāvirodhato yojyam anya granthāntare sthitam.*

What has been said here about geographical and astronomical aspects applies equally to other aspects of creation too.

The Haridāsas of Karnāṭaka have described the Process of Creation in full conformity with the text of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. They have composed their works not merely by textual references; but, they have had the benefit of spiritual experiences too. Many of them were blessed with god-vision. Therefore they are our

wellwishers in assessing the right meanings of sacred texts.

The authors (wellwishers) chosen for reference in writing this treatise are the following – Śrī Vādirāja Svāmi, Śrī Purandara Dāsārya, Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya, Śrī Guru Purandara Viṭṭhala, Śrī Gopāla Dāsārya, Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya, Śrī Veṅugopāla viṭṭhala, Śrī Abhinava Janārdana Viṭṭhala, Śrī Vyāsa Viṭṭhala, Śrī Gokavi Anantācārya and others.

Śrī Vādirāja Svāmi:

As the Pontiff of the Sode Mutt of Udipi, he lived full 120 years. He was the contemporary of Purandara Dāsārya (16th Cent. A.D. – the period of Kṛṣṇadevarāya's rule in Vijayanagar). He has written many valuable commentaries in Sanskrit and has also composed many Kannaḍa texts of the types of Prose Verses (Sulādis), devotional songs and longer poems. His auto-biography styled *Vṛndāvanākhyānam* is a unique work of its kind. During his life time he did not reveal his identity; but, after he entered the holy tomb, he used to make his presence felt every day in a born-dumb person and would narrate his auto-biography. It is therefore needless to say that the words of such a wellwisher are the best source of correct information.

Śrī Purandara Dāsārya:

Recognised as a well-known jeweller at Purandaragaḍha, Śrīnivāsa Nāyaka was dubbed as 'Navakoṭi Nārāyaṇa' – the possessor of nine crore gold coins. He was given to see God's excellence in a palpable manner which made him renounce the world. He gave away all his wealth by way of charity in the name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and became a Haridāsa overnight. He is identified as the spiritual fraction of Nārada Mahārṣi

and is revered as the Veteran among the Haridāsas. He desired to adore Śrī Pāṇḍuraṅga Viṭṭhala with five lakh songs of his composition. He was able to offer four lakhs seventy five thousand songs at the feet of his Lord and prophesied that his own son would complete the rest in his next birth. Śrī Vyāsarāya Svāmi, the spiritual master of Śrī Purandara Dāsārya honoured the latter's songs by the nomenclature *Purandara Upaniṣad*. He is also remembered as the forefather of Karnatic music system which he rendered in easy style.

Guru Purandara Dāsārya:

He was one of the sons of Purandara Dāsārya. Before he was initiated as a 'Haridāsa', he was called Gururāja. He was initiated by his own father with the name of dedication- 'Guru Purandara Viṭṭhala'. He too has enriched the literature of the Haridāsas by many of his songs and poems. In one of his poems of rare quality starting with the line, "In the elephant Thou art in the form of the elephant", he has given a nice account of the nature of the soul, of Śrī Hari's form, indwelling the soul and acting like the soul, and of creation, maintenance and destruction.

Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya:

Vijaya Dāsārya, who led a glorious career during the 17th-18th centuries, was the one who had been born as the son of Purandara Dāsārya by the name Mādhvapati. He had to spend the earlier part of his life in great penury. He went on a pilgrimage to Vāraṅāsi. There, the Supreme Lord appeared in his dream in the guise of Purandara Dāsārya and, taking him to Vyāsa Kāśī for the darśan of Śrī Vedavyāsa deva, inscribed the word 'VIJAYA' on his tongue. The poor brāhmaṇa, who was not very learned, all of a sudden turned out to be 'Vijaya Dāsārya'. His words became prophetic. His

life now became dignified with respects and honours showered upon him.

Vijaya Dāsārya, respected as the spiritual fraction of Bhṛgu Maharṣi, composed the balance of 25,000 songs left over by Śrī Purandara Dāsārya and pleased the Lord. If we try to understand the versified prose compositions (sulādis) of Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya, we can easily gather philosophical gems.

This Vijaya Dāsārya was the spiritual master of Śrī Gopāla Dāsārya. It was he who helped Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya to be blessed with a new lease of life and to get spiritual enlightenment through his disciple Gopāla Dāsārya. And it was he who saved Śrī Mohana Dāsārya from untimely death.

The Sulādis of Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya from the basis of this treatise on creation.

Śrī Gopāla Dāsārya:

This renowned devotee of Śrī Hari lived in the 18th century A.D. He is respected as the incarnation of Gaṇapati. He suffered the severe pinch of poverty in his younger days; and he acquired spiritual success by the repetition of 'Gāyatrī mantra'. He was able to tell about the three previous lives of any one who came to ask him. He was initiated by Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya with the name 'Gopāla Dāsa'. By dint of his fame many flocked to him and he led them in the path of devotion to Śrī Hari.

Paṇḍit Śrīnivāsācārya was so puffed up that he scoffed at Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya; and, as a result of this he began to suffer with acute stomach trouble which seemed almost incurable. He grew pale and emaciated. Being tutored by Śrī Mukhya Prāṇa in a dream, he went to Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya to seek his pardon and

blessing. The elderly saint welcomed him kindly and sent him to Śrī Gopāla Dāsārya, for the needful. The latter cured Śrīnivāsācārya of his ailment by the repetition of *Dhanvantari mantra*. He also put up a fervent prayer on behalf of the suffering supplicant. This song of prayer is very popular among the devotees of Śrī Hari. It runs thus—

“Listen to my prayer, O Dhanvantari, and show Thy mercy, this devotee is yet an innocent boy.” He is said to have transferred forty years of his life span to Śrīnivāsācārya. He also initiated him in the path of true knowledge. Śrī Gopāla Dāsārya’s devotional songs are quite helpful to grasp the true import of spiritual mandates. For example, he defines *vairāgya* (detachment) in beautiful words to bring out its true implication. He says, “It is not real detachment to give up every pleasure as mundane. To enjoy happiness or to suffer pain considering both as the grace of God is true detachment.” Those who consider themselves hopeless sinners will do well to go through the devotional songs of Śrī Gopāla Dāsārya to get consolation and guidance. That will help them also to develop devotion to God. Śrī Gopāla Dāsārya has become the symbol for true devotion; and he is praised with the verdict, “*Bhāgaṇa* stands for *Bhakti*.”

Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya:

In between the 18th and the 19th centuries, Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya, of whom we already know something, was the contemporary of Dewan Pūrṇaiāh of Mysore. Before initiation he was known as Pandit Śrīnivāsācārya. Among the four well-known Haridāsas he is the fourth, the other three being Śrī Purandara Dāsārya, Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya and Śrī Gopāla Dāsārya. He was sent to Gopāla Dāsārya for cure and enlightenment because the latter (incarnation of Gaṇapati)

was the immediate spiritual master for Śrīnivāsācārya, who was the incarnation of Sahlādarāya, brother of the illustrious Prahādarāya.

Śrī Ācārya, fully blessed by Gopāla Dāsārya, went to Paṇḍarapura for the captivating darśan of Lord Pāṇḍuraṅga Viṭṭhala. While taking bath in the Candrabhāga river, he found a piece of flat stone settled on his head. On it was inscribed the word Jagannātha Viṭṭhala. Soon after seeing that, Śrī Ācārya fell into raptures and began to sing the glory of the Lord addressing Him as Jagannātha Viṭṭhala. Śrīnivāsācārya became Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya.

His songs directly touch the springs of devotion in the hearts of hearers. But he is best known as the author of *Śrī Harikathāmṛta sāra*, a hand book of Philosophical gems made easily available for every devotee. Though the text is in simple Kannaḍa, clothed in the Six-lined Stanzas (Ṣaṭpadi) of the familiar type, this epic, full of nine poetical excellences, is too sublime even for great pandits. It is because the essence of all the Sacred texts has been pressed into it. If *Śrī Harikathāmṛta sāra* is properly comprehended with the help of a proper spiritual master, there will be no necessity to study any other religious text. All the same, any earnest devotee can get much knowledge and devotional inspiration by making himself or herself familiar with the text even if deeper significance may be missed.

Śrī Prāṇeśa Dāsārya:

The Chief and well-known disciple of Jagannātha Dāsārya was Prāṇeśa Dāsārya. He came from Liṅgasūgur of Raichur district. He was originally called Yogindrappa and was a village accountant. He was initiated as 'Prāṇeśa Viṭṭhala' by his spiritual master. He has written fine poems such as *Gālava Caritre* and *Kālīyamardana* which are replete with spiritual truths containing hidden meanings. His works

are full of profound exposition. Prāṇeśa Dāsārya was blessed by Śrī Varadendra Svāmīji, the teacher of Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya.

Vyāsa Viṭṭhalārya:

Śrī Subbaṅṅācārya of Kallūr, Raichūr district, was a great Pandit well-versed in disciplines like Grammer and Logic. Being puffed up with the pride of learning he ridiculed the great Vijaya Dāsārya, at first. Later on he understood the intrinsic worth of the saint and got over his egotistic feelings by the grace of Vijaya Dāsārya. He became a pure devotee of God, fully detached from earthly desires. He was initiated and came to be known as a 'Vyāsaviṭṭhala'.

Abhinava janārdana. Viṭṭhalārya:

He is also known as "Prema Dāsārya". He hailed from Somapura of Gadwal in Andhra Pradesh. He got initiation from Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya. He was lame by birth; but, by the grace of Śrī Rāghavendra Svāmīji of Mantrālaya, he got the use of his legs and was so blessed that he could sing the praise of God and dance ecstatically.

Śrī Veṅugopāla Viṭṭhalārya :

He was the native of Adavāni in the Kurnool District and held the post of Dewan in the court of the Nawab of Adoni. When his son was defiled by Muslim pressure, he got disgusted of worldly affairs and appealed to the mercy of Vijaya Dāsārya. He was initiated as 'Veṅugopāla Viṭṭhala'. He also went by the pet name 'Panganāma Timmanna Dāsa'. It is believed that he was 'Vaikuṅtha Dāsārya' in his previous birth.

Anantādrīśa Viṭṭhalārya:

He came from Gokak of Belgaum district and bore the name Gokavi Anantacārya. A great sanskrit scholar, he was trained in the art of music too. He was an adept in the exhibition of artistic talents and in poetical composition. The following are the products of his fine literacy art— *Veṅkaṭeśa Pārijāta*, *Śiva Pārijāta*, *Dhruva Caritre*, and *Prahlāda Caritre*. He had the inherent ability to bring out hidden meanings of Vedic literatures through his writings. His description of the 'Brahmāṇḍa in *Veṅkaṭeśa Pārijāta* is wonderful.

* * *

Chapter - II

DESCRIPTION OF VAIKUNṬHA

The Abode of Eternal Happiness

I. Happiness here and hereafter:

*Namo Namo' gaṇyaguṇaika dhāmne
Samastavijñāna marīci māline,
Anādyavijñāna tamo nihantre
Parāmṛtānanda pada pradāyine.*

(Again and again I bow to Him who is the only abode of all auspicious qualities, who emits the rays of supreme knowledge which adorn Him like a garland all around, who weeds out the beginningless nescience and affords unalloyed joy of the highest kind in His Eternal Abode.)

Individual souls are enveloped by the covering of nescience from beginningless time. This is what Śrī Kṛṣṇa means when He says, "Ajnānena āvṛtam jñānam tena muhyanti jantavaḥ." That covering is beginningless but has an end is subscribed to by all the great ācāryas including Ādi Śaṅkarācārya. In order to break down such covering of ignorance and to enable the souls to find expression of the consciousness and joy within themselves, the omniscient, omnipotent Supreme Lord has created this universe. In the earlier stages, not aware of one's own inner self, the soul spends the whole time in catering to the animal instincts such as eating and mating. Gradually he develops discretion; he begins to realize what is really necessary and what is unnecessary. When in the human body, a strong desire develops to know how all obstacles might be overcome and unmixed happiness secured, it is then that he has the chance of seeking aid from the philosoph-

ical assets in the world. Such an individual gets the opportunity of being born in an atmosphere of Vedic learning, it will pave the way for knowing about the superior divine worlds, which in turn open the gateways for self-knowledge. Thus strengthened by knowledge, he is encouraged to make better efforts to find further progress.

When Arjuna asked what happens to a devotee if he cannot cope with the path of yoga which he has taken up, Śrī kṛṣṇa replied,

*Pārtha naiveha nāmutra vināṣastasya vidyate,
Nahi kalyāṇa kṛt kaścit durgatim tāta gacchati.
Prāpya puṇya kṛtām lokān uṣitvā śāśvatiḥ samāḥ
Śucinām śrīmatām gehe yogabhraṣṭo' bhijāyate.
Athavā yoginām eva kule bhavati dhīmatām;
Tatra tam buddhi samyogam labhate paura dehikam;
Yatate ca tato bhūyaḥ samsiddhau Kurunandana.*

.....
Aneka janmasamsiddhaḥ tato yāti parām gatim.

“O Arjuna, to him there is no loss either here or hereafter. My dear Arjuna, one who treads the auspicious path will never be ruined. Having attained the higher worlds meant for the meritorious and lived there happily for a long long period, he will be born again in a family of pure devotees or he may even take birth in a rich family or in the family of wise and adept yogis. When thus born, he revives the well-trained intellect of the previous birth and makes further efforts at perfection. Having attained perfection after a number of births, he then reaches the highest goal”.

The Vedas teach apparently, *Svarga kāmo yajeta* (one, who wants to enjoy heavenly happiness, must engage himself in offering sacrifices to the gods.) But there are the Upaniṣads to say that the chief aim of life is not the enjoyment of pleasures here or in the super worlds. The statement, ‘*Rocanārtham phalaśrutiḥ*’ shows that the Vedic instruction about the benefits to be accrued by sacrifices is just to create a desire

for higher ends; it is to divert human effort from the mundane plane to the higher plane of divine happiness, which in itself is not the ultimate goal, although it is far superior and of longer duration.

This idea has been very well brought out in simple Kannada language by Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya.

- (1) *"The paramount object to be gained is Vaikuṅṭha. Happiness enjoyable in Maharloka and the like is not so important. Enjoyment of pleasures in this world is of the least importance. Hence, serve the Destroyer of demons with great devotion and secure freedom from sorrows. At no time does the Father of the spouse of Bhāratīdevi forsake those that appeal to Him." (H.K.S. 16-14)*
- (2) *"Just as a mother mixes medicine with sweetened water and makes the sick child drink it, the all-knowing Lord, Sri Vedavyāsadeva, also known as Bādarāyaṇa, said at the beginning of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam that the object of life is to earn merit in order to enjoy heavenly pleasures; this was just to create interest in a still higher end." (H.K.S. 16-15)*

All the Vedas and the other Vedic literatures declare that 'Mukti' is the main goal to be achieved.

Those who want to gain 'Mukti' (unmixed happiness in the Eternal Abode), must develop devotion to god. (Bhakti).

*Māhātmyajñānapūrvastu sudṛḍhaḥsarvato'dhikaḥ,
Snehō bhaktiriti proktā tayā muktir na cānyathā.*

Thus Śrīmad Ānandatīrthācārya has asserted. Understanding the greatness of the Supreme Lord to the best of one's ability, one must develop greater friendship with the Lord than with one's own kith and kin or other connections. Such intimacy is known as true devotion or Bhakti. Freedom from the cycle of births and deaths and happiness in the Eternal Abode can be achieved only by such devotion; not by any other means. If such devotion is to be developed we should rightly apprehend the Lord's eightfold

is called 'Pradhāna Vyoma'. Therefore the description runs—"Pradhāna parama vyomno rantarā virajānadi" (The Virajā river divides the material sky from the non-material sky.)

Only those who have got themselves rid of the causation body of ignorance are eligible to enter the Ayodhyānagari. Such of the 'Siddhas' (jīvan muktas or souls who have reached perfection) who still have the load of 'Linga Śarīra' (causation body) may enter the outskirts of Vaikuṅṭhaloka on this side of the Virajā river and enjoy supreme bliss. But, having sojourned there for sometime they come back to Satyaloka or the other divine regions. When the present Brahmā takes a dip in the Virajā river after completing his hundredth year, the other Siddhas too have the dip and they are all rid of the causation bodies; it is like snake casting off its outer skin. Every one of these Jīvanmuktas has seen the Vaikuṅṭhaloka. Individual souls who may go upto Satyaloka on account of their meritorious deeds have heard of the Vaikuṅṭhaloka from the Siddhas or jīvanmuktas. Of course, Nārada Maharṣi, roaming through all the worlds, has full information about the three Abodes; he has spread the information here on earth for our benefit.

Taking the typical examples of those who attained Vaikuṅṭha, Śrī Vādirājasvāmi has said—

- (1) "For you; O thou, born of the Kurus
(Parīkṣit Rājā) Only seven days more of thy life span;
Get everything accomplished such that you may gain entrance
into the Lord's Abode."
- (2) "The sagely king named Khatvāṅga
knowing the limit of his life here,
Having given up all attachment within the short interval of a
muhūrta,
He reached the lotus feet of the 'Protector from fear'."

The above texts are from Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. Śrī Vādirajāsṡvāmi has translated them into Kannada in the following manner.

“One, who listened to the glory of Śrī Hari for seven days,
Did he not lay siege to and win entry into the city of Śrī Hari?
Keeping in mind the supreme glory of the Lord for a short
period of two ghaṡikas (48 minutes)
Did not one leap to the Eternal Abode above?”

When Parīkṡit Mahārājā, who had come under a curse, learnt that he was to live only for seven days more, he observed fast during that period and listened intently to the story of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam from the mouth of Śrī Śuka Maharṡi. Thus he managed to get into Vaikuṅṡha.

The sage king Khaṡvāṅga once helped the gods in their war and pleased them. They asked him to seek a boon from them. That king, without asking for any other boon, requested them to tell him how much longer he was going to live. When the gods said that he was to live only for two ghaṡikās more, he showed his gratitude to them. At the same time he abandoned all love and attachment to the things of this world. And, pleasing Śrī Hari by his concentrated devotion, he got entry into the Abode of Vaikuṅṡha. There are many more such examples.

Extent of Vaikuṅṡhaloka:

If we bear in mind the distances from the earth upto Vaikuṅṡhaloka, it will help us to understand the extent of that loka.

Height of Vaikuṅṡhaloka	81250000	Yojanas
Gap between Satyaloka and Vaikuṅṡhaloka	29850000	”
Height of Satyaloka	40625000	”
Gap	15000000	”
Height of Tapoloka	16875000	”
Gap	15000000	”

Height of Janaloka	11250000	”
Gap	15000000	”
Height of Maharloka	7500000	”
Gap	12500000	”
Height of Svargaloka	1300000	”
Gap	50000	”
Height of Antarikṣhaloka	100000	”
Gap	36000000	”
Height of Bhūloka (From the bottom of Meru)	1000000	”
	250000000	”

The Varāha Purāṇa speaks about the extent of Vaikuṅṭhaloka.

“Vaikuṅṭhaloka vistāro Yāvadaṇḍa kaṭāhakah;
Aṣṭavimśati koṭyastu yojanānām samantataḥ.”
“Śrībhāgo madhyamastatra pūrva paścima dīdhitau....”.

Basing his statements on such sources, Śrī Varada Vyāsa Viṭṭhala has given the following description in his *Tattvasāra*..

“The sublime Vaikuṅṭha is the eternal abode of the rarest gems
It shines with brilliance, there is nothing in this world to equal it;
.....

It is eleven crore, twelve lakh high including the gap.”

The height is really 11,11,00000 yojanas, not 11,12,00000, (may be printer's devil) because half of the gap and the height of the Vaikuṅṭhaloka make 11,11,00000 yojanas. If we add half of the gap towards Vaikuṅṭhaloka, then, that loka will be 15,38,25000 yojanas above the earth (nearly $15\frac{1}{2}$ Crore yojanas)- from the mid-point of Brahmāṇḍa. If we make a circle to represent the Brahmāṇḍa and contemplate another circle at a height of $15\frac{1}{2}$ crore yojanas (drawn to scale), the diameter of that circle will be 40 crore yojanas. A square within the second circle measures 28 crore yojanas each way. This forms the base of Vaikuṅṭhaloka.

And this corresponds with the statements in the *Varāhapurāṇa* and *Tattvasāra* of Śrī Varada Vyāsa Viṭṭhala.

Purport: The extent of Vaikuṅṭhaloka is upto the shell of Brahmāṇḍa. Everyway it is twenty eight crore yo-jans. The corners of the square base of that loka do touch the shell of Brahmāṇḍa on four sides.

This 'loka' is said to contain residential quarters decorated with valuable gems. But the gold and gems used are of super-natural brilliance. Not only this but, the gold and gems of the inner Śrībhāga are non-material; they are not made of material elements-sattva, rajas and tamas. In order to please the Lord, Śrīdevi herself is there in the forms of different things. We cannot easily imagine the grandeur of this part of Vaikuṅṭha. In the words of Śrī Vādirājasvāmi-

*"Gem-set golden fortifications seven
For the city of Manmatha's Father;
In their midst, the city called Ayodhya
Looks charming with its golden towers."
"Śrīdevī herself, in the city of Murahara,
In the form of wonderful houses. She shines brilliantly.
Of immobile matter
Are not made the houses there.
Matchless gem-set storeyed homes-*

*It is beyond my power to describe them
Due to the powerful rays of the gems decorating the doors
Darkness recedes of its own accord."*

*"Ayutārkasamaprabham' - thus the Pāncarātra-
The city of Ayodhya, where there is no fear,
It describes very affectionately
Is it any wonder that darkness from that city is dispelled?"*

It is proper to conceive that in Vaikuṅṭha there is an outer fortification of seven parts having slight touch of the material world and an inner one of seven parts which is fully non-material. Around the inner fortification, subsisting in the sweat of the Lord's body, Śrī Lakṣmīdevī flows as the Virajā river. (We should not forget that the Lord's sweat not different from Herself and that it is not any impurity shown out of the body.)

In his 'Vaikuṅṭha Varṇana Sulādi' Śrī Abhinava Janārdana Viṭṭhala says—

*“O Lord, from thy body born, the highest of beings,
Lakṣmīdevī,*

Flows around the city of Ayodhyā

Making a moat that fully surrounds it.

The seven inner fortifications are peopled with released souls.

*When your gate-keepers Jaya and Vijaya supplicated, to the
Outer peerless court you came; then the non-released eligible
souls*

Praised your glory, after which to the inner city again.

You returned O Lord, thou art all pervading.

In the Vaikuṅṭha Varṇana of Śrī Vādirājasvāmi it is said—

“Upto the seventh portal binding Māyā holds sway.

Between this and where the released souls are

And where Śrī Hari's private apartment is,

Is the river virajā surrounding.

*Jaya and Vijaya, who kept watch at the seventh portal,
were made to come down to earth; hence,*

*The mistress of matter causing fear from the time factor, unto
that limit,*

Establishes herself and binds the souls.

Into the region of the inner fortification released souls can go;

Other Eligible perfected souls cannot enter it;

Therefore Śrīman Nārāyaṇa Himself came out,

And gladdened Sanaka and the rest.”

Śrī Vyāsa Viṭṭhalārya has said-that only the released souls reside within the seven inner fortifications-

*“Within the seven fortifications beautified by the nine kinds of gems, looking novel for ever,
Those whose bodies are pure consciousness,
The finally Released Brahmā and the others, reside for ever,
listen carefully-*

*Within the first fortification reside the Brahmās,
In the second round are the Śeṣas (and Garuḍas),
In the third, Indras and Kāmas for ever,
In the fourth can be seen Sūrya and the rest,
In the fifth are the Maruts,
In the Sixth-Parjanya and the like,
In the seventh fortification are the sleepless Jayas and Vijayas.*

From this it is clear that the sleepless (finally liberated) Jaya Vijayas are in the inner fortification beyond the Virajā river, and the unliberated Jaya and Vijaya are in the seventh outer fortification nearest to, but outside the Virajā river.

It is said that there are fortyone gates to enter the palace of Śrī Hari in Vaikuṅṭhaloka. This number includes the gates of the seven fortifications of Ayodhyānagarī ($7 \times 4 = 28$), the gates of the three fortwalls around Śrī Hari's palace ($3 \times 4 = 12$) and the entrance to the palace itself ($1 = 28 + 12 + 1 = 41$).

The last mentioned is known as the upper-gate. It simply means, that Śrī Hari's palace is at the highest level among the fortifications which are higher and higher. Only if we construe like this, then the height of Vaikuṅṭhaloka will be 8,12,50,000 yojanas from its base.

At each of the gates there are two sentinels who are all released souls.

Below are given the names of the sentinels at the gates of the three fortwalls around Śrī Hari's palace. Śrī Ramādevī guards the palace gate and she also keeps watch at the four gates of the innermost fortwall. At the four gates of the middle fortwall the sentinels are Mukhya Prāṇa and Bhāratīdevī with different names at each of the four gates.

East gate	–	Sūrya and Dayus
South gate	–	Candra and Dik.
West gate	–	Vahni and Pṛthvī
North gate	–	Indra and Vidyut

Mukhya Prāṇa named Sūrya is the presiding deity in the eyes and he is also called 'Prāṇa'. Candra also known as Vyāna, presides over the ears. Vahni, also known as Apāna, presides over the faculty of speech. Indra, also known as Samāna, presides over the mind—all these are only names of Vāyudeva.

At the four outer gates (Third fortwall), commencing from the east, the following are the sentinels respectively—(E) Jaya and Vijaya, (S) Bala and Prabala, (W) Nanda and Sunanda, (N) Kumuda and Kumudākṣa.

Here is something to note and remember. The guards at the third gate are the released souls—Jaya, Vijaya and the other six. There are, numberless released souls of these cadres and they keep watch by turns just for the pleasure of serving the Lord.

But Mukhya Prāṇa and Bhāratīdevī are not released souls. Yet they have permission to cross the Virajā and enter the palace of Śrī Hari whenever they feel like doing so. Their merits are so high.

In the Vaikuṅṭhaloka, the Śrībhāga, dominated by Śrīdevī, is 28 crore yojanas in the east west direc-

tion. To its north is the Durgābhāga (bhāga=portion), Durgā being another form of Śrīdevī controlling the principle of darkness, and to the south of the Śrībhāga is the Bhūbhāga dominated by Bhūdevī, yet another form of Śrīdevī controlling the mundane principle. We can find details about the three regions in Vyāsa Viṭṭhala's Tattvasāra which is based on Varāha Purāṇa.

*“Within the two and a half crore Bhūbhāga
Know the difference between the portions of the liberated and
the unliberated,
It is certain one crore is the Bhūbhāga,
The nectarean lake ‘Ara’, fifty lakh yojanas,
Its shore is limited to twenty five lakh.
Always the unliberated partake of nectar here-it is material
and destructible.
This ‘Ara’ lake of nectar fifty lakh,
And shore-limit twenty five lakh,
On the side of Virajā is non-material and indestructible.”*

In the verses quoted from Tattvasāra there is some room to doubt the measurements given. The verses seem to indicate that the nectarean lakes, Ara and Nya, is each one crore yojanas and the shores of the ‘Bhūbhāga’ and ‘Durgābhāga’ is each 25 lakhs. The land at each end is one crore yojanas. When it is said that half of the lake disappears during ‘Mahāpralaya’, then, the measurement of the ‘Bhūbhāga’ or the ‘Durgābhāga’ will not come to $2\frac{1}{2}$ crores at all. (and 1 crore + $\frac{1}{2}$ the lake 50 lakhs + land side shore 25 lakhs = only one crore, seventy five lakhs.)

The solution is not very difficult to find. Yojana is taken to mean 6 miles by some and 12 miles by others. Therefore by doubling the measurements given in the verses, the correct measurements agreeing with those in other authoritative texts will be obtained.

In Prameya Muktvāli sāra of Śrī Vādirājasvāmi, the measurements given are as follows and the diagram given is in accordance with it.

Bhūbhāga	The land of Bhūbhāga	- 1 crore	(Where the seven outermost fortifications are)
	Shore of Ara lake	- 50 lakhs	= 2½ crores
	Perishable part of Ara lake	- 1 crore	
Śrī Bhāga	Non Perishable part of the Ara lake	- 1 Crore	
	Śrībhāga-Shoreland	- 50 Crores	
	20 Crore north south		
	Śrī Bhāga Shoreland	- 50 lakhs	
	Non-Perishable Nya lake	- 1 Crore	
Durgābhāga	Perishable part of Nya lake	- 1 Crore	
	Shore of Nya lake	- 50 lakhs	2½ Crores
	Land on Durgāsīde (Containing fortifications)	- 1 Crore	

IV. Differences in the released condition:

Mukti or Released condition is of four kinds- 'Sāyujya', 'Sālokya', 'Sāmīpya' and 'Sārūpya'. Entering into one of these, the souls enjoy pleasures according to their grades.

*"In the liberated condition, differences there are;
This is acceptable to all religious sections."*

After saying this Śrī Vādirājasvāmi has described the special characteristics of each class of 'Muktas'.

*"Sāyujya, Sālokya, Sāmīpya, Sārūpya,
Thus there are four kinds in Mukti;
After the detestable linga śarīra is got rid off,
They glow in particular classes according to merits."*

He has also explained the nature of each kind of Mukti thus-

"Being in touch with the body of the spouse of Śrīdevī is the most desirable Sāyujya Mukti"

"The master deities are those who deserve Sāyujya Mukti."

The liberated Brahmās and the other deities of high cadres find positions in the various organs of Vaikuṅṭha Vāsudeva and visualising His superb activities, they find greater joy than the others.

This fact has also been described in the Bṛhat tantra and in *Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa*:-

*Ādatte Hari hastena Hari dr̥ṣṭyaiva paśyati
Gacchecca Hari pādena muktasyaiṣā sthīrībhavet
Tadāṅānuḡṛhītaiśca svāṅgaireva pravartanam,
Kurvanti bhuñjate bhogān tadantarbahireva ca
Muktāḥ prāpya varam Viṣṇum tadbhogān leśataḥ kvacit
Bahīṣṭhān bhuñjate nityam nānandādīn kathamcana*

They take with Śrī Hari's hands, they see with Śrī Hari's eyes; they walk with Śrī Hari's legs. This state of behaviour is found in the Sāyujyamuktas to a very large extent giving the highest joy. (Other muktas too behave similarly but their joy is not so great.) In the verses quoted, the state of Brahmadeva is mainly described as he has a place in all the organs of Śrī Hari. The other predominant deities reside in particular organs (from where they were born during creation) and they find joy from those organs of Śrī Hari. This is not oneness with the Almighty from whom they are different. They act with their own organs graced by the organs of Śrī Hari.

Also, when it is said that the Sāyujyamuktas reside in the organs of Śrī Hari and enjoy pleasures, it does not at all mean that they share all the joys which are of the nature of Śrī Hari Himself or that they enjoy pleasures such as being served by Śrī Mahālakṣmī, which pleasures are exclusively meant for Him.

*"Sālokya is dwelling in Śrī Hari's loka;
On the outskirts of that loka all round,
In the milk ocean enjoying pleasures,
It is Sāmīpya (Mukti) in their case."*

For chariot, horse or elephant Himself acting the master and the driver,

He sports in wonderful ways;

And Acyuta acting, the roles of the couples in His devotees."

Merrily enjoys unlimited pleasures

From the above lines it is clear that Śrī Hari Himself is the master in the name of the soul and He Himself takes the roles of the driver, the chariot, the horse or the elephant. When it is said, 'acting the roles of the couples', we come to understand that Śrī Hari and Śrī Ramādevī, residing in the liberated couples, enjoy pleasures on their behalf and endow them with reflected pleasures.

Note:- In the case of a mirror the image is virtual; but, in the case of a soul the image is real.

Among the liberated souls there are castes; there are also souls in the forms of animals, birds, trees, bushes, herbs and the like. These castes and forms are of the very nature of the souls, not acquired by 'Karma' as here on earth. Yet, the lower classes derive great joy by respecting the higher classes - they don't feel jealous. The higher classes do not look down upon the lower classes; they recognise Lord Śrī Hari in them and treat them with respect. In other words, they worship them. The greatest of the spiritual masters, Śrī Vādirājasvāmi, has said that, to inculcate such spirit of even-sightedness, Śrī Hari appeared as the fish, the tortoise and the like.

In his Vaikuṅṭha Varṇane Śrī Vādirājasvāmi has given exquisite description of the pleasures enjoyed by the liberated souls—

"Of the liberated souls in the realm of Śrī Hari, Their state describing in laudable terms, are such Vedic statements—

"All rejoice" (Sarve nandanti); their purports I shall describe. Let the good souls listen.

*"The bestower of the food that washes away the sins of the heart,
Padmanābha, like the horse of the liberated ones,
Appears dancing before the eye and gives pleasures readily."*

Śrī Vādirājasvāmi says that for his statements there is Vedic evidence. He quotes, "Sarve nandanti yaśasā gatena sabhā sāhena sakhyā sakhāyau."

Washing away the sins born of ignorance, Śrī Hari shows Himself before the liberated souls in Vaikuṅṭha and affords them the joy of seeing Him always - like a pretty horse that comes to sight with dancing steps. Not only that; like the swift horse, He gives them pleasures instantly whenever they wish.

The Haridāśas have sung thus - "O Lord Raṅga, is happiness to be found in the Home of the Liberated or is it in singing Thy glory with devotion?" It amounts to saying that devotion to God gives happiness of the highest degree; not so high the pleasures of Vaikuṅṭha. As the people here worship God with material offerings and develop devotion, they worship Him in Vaikuṅṭha with non-material things and feel quite happy.

Devotion itself is identical with happiness there.

*"One Brahmā chants aloud the Rg Veda, it is true;
Another repeats the musical Gāyatrī;
With an ecstatic heart reads
Another Brahmā the Purāṇas;*

*"Another the form of Śrī Hari
Retains rapturously in mind and feels happy;
Another Brahmā the Soma juice (non-material)
Offers to Padmanābha through Agni;
Another Brahmā offers worship;
All the Gods in this manner
Are there in Śrī Hari's care.*

*"In this way, countless Brahmās and others in Vaikuṅṭha
Exist separately from each other—thus
The Vedic mantras praise; therefore*

How can one fully describe the glory of the spouse of Śrīdevī?"
(*Vaikuṅṭha Varṇane of Śrī V.R.*)

Reciting the Vedas, Worshipping the forms of the Lord, offering sacrifices—all such acts in Vaikuṅṭhaloka bring the souls into more and more intimate touch with the graceful ways of the Supreme Lord, which in turn makes them more and more elated, of course, within each one's limits. Every act is in the service of the Lord.

In the Abode of Śrī Hari the liberated male and female souls not only feel happy by worshipping the Lord in various ways, but they also enjoy a variety of pleasures in each other's company.

*"It is the behest of the Lord of Śrīdevī in these Eternal Abodes
Concerning the liberated dwellers—*

*Sloth, hunger, thirst, ravages of time or Karma - such
Discomforts never affect them.*

They enjoy divine happiness by way of sport,

They sing divine songs,

They smear their bodies with divine scents,

They are all divine men and women;

Luminous males and females

With non-material bodies, they are

Full of love, sometimes they unite

And delight themselves in various ways."

Men of this world generally eat to fill their stomachs; they dress themselves nicely to show off before others; and they mate for carnal pleasure. By such ways they commit sins and increase the ties of material bondage. But the knowers of truth dedicate all their acts to Śrī Hari; and, freeing themselves from the restraints of Karma, become finally liberated.

While in bondage, people desire for mating indiscriminately, being a prey to the lustful mind. The liberated ones are free from such mental distortions. They mate with their true companions only out of pure love.

"Riding in well-furnished divine planes of wondrous kinds,
 They are engaged in Cupid's game;
 They never swerve from the righteous path;
 Free from lawlessness are their natures.
 Like males and females on painted canvas,
 For none of the liberated souls, to another's partner
 The mind flies; each one with his own
 Wife engages in the sport of love."

To those who doubt the possibility of such purity of mind, Śrī Vādirāja svāmi gives the answer—

"When sons see the beauty of their mother's form,
 Do they abandon the lawful course?
 When a father looks upon the daughter's budding youth,
 Does he feel the pricks of lustful mind?
 Seeing the beauty of a sister, the minds of brothers,
 Do they incline to sinful mischief?
 If such be the natural course for those in Kali's grip,
 How can treacherous inclinations touch the liberated souls?"

Śrī Purandara Dāsārya has given us the cream of truth in the following verse—

"Abandoning the feeling of 'I' and mixing in the company of the wise knowers, if one does not feel within himself that whatever happens is only willed by the Almighty, all that he does in the name of detachment is merely pretension for the sake of the belly."

Śrī Vyāsa Viṭṭhala, like the other great knowers, has prayed to Śrī Hari, "O, Pāṇḍuraṅga, give me the knowledge that every act of mine is only Thy worship."

Such performance of deeds with full detachment, helps the soul to realize the Original Doer (Bimba) residing in his heart. It should be clearly understood that we are fully dependent and it is Śrī Hari who does everything and makes us feel that we are the doers. Such knowledge must become firmly rooted in the mind. Barring such remembrance there is no other way for liberation. Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya has expressed this truth in definite terms—

"There is no other spiritual practice which excels the feeling of utter dependence on the will of the Lord."

By putting into practice this excellent maxim, the recognition of the Original Doer (Bimba) within one's own self becomes a permanent habit. In the Abode of Eternal Happiness one always remembers that all the acts of worship and acts of enjoyment are only the doings of Śrī Hari and Śrī Hari in Ramādevī with His female form. When one enjoys pleasures with one's own established partner in Mukti, joy swells by recognising the Original Doer; this increases devotion to the Lord and increased devotion enhances joy. This is the secret of true happiness.

*"Like the mother caressing her child
With happiness welling up in her heart,
There is Mukti, if the devotional mind swells,
Surely the ocean of happiness begins to heave."*

—(Vaikuṅṭha Varṇana of Śrī V.R.)

The liberated souls desire devotion to the Supreme Lord; but the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha makes them go through pleasures— Such is the import of Vedic statements. Śrī Vādirājaswāmi says that we should rightly understand and reconcile both the aspects—

*"Ever self-satisfied and motiveless is Śrī Acyuta;
The liberated souls get their wishes always fulfilled.
On one hand their sports, on the other the Vedic words,
He who does not misinterpret is truly wise."*

In this world it is difficult to secure accessories of happiness; and when secured, if they are used up, it is very difficult to replace them. It is not so in the Vaikuṅṭhaloka.

*"Yielding the paraphernalia for the enjoyment of liberated souls,
Providing every time when wished for,
There are wondrous non-material trees, imperishable,
Around the Vaikuṅṭhaloka they glitter everywhere;
Their changeless fruits afford happiness
And again stay back in their original places."*

The fruit-yielding trees of Vaikuṅṭha are not born of material principles; Śrī Mahālakṣmī herself is in such forms. The fruits appear again in their original places after being used by the muktas. One need not wonder how this may be possible. When the Almighty Lord can invest such powers in material things, what to say of non-material objects!

*"This is not strange; having his body cut and made into a dish
By boiling, after feeding the brāhmaṇas,
The clever Vātāpi, when his brother called him,
Would come out as before - This we know."*

The story alluded to is this—Two demon brothers, Ivala and Vātāpi, used to put on the guise of saints and invite way-faring brāhmaṇas to dinner. The elder brother Ivala would convert the body of Vātāpi, the younger into foodstuffs and would cook food for the brāhmins and serve them with it. When a brāhmaṇa had partaken of the food and sat to rest, Ivala would call out, "Rise Vātāpi, and come hither." The latter would emerge tearing asunder the belly of the brāhmaṇa. Then both the demon brothers would cook the flesh of the brāhmaṇa and enjoy the repast. When the same kind of welcome was accorded to Sage Agastya, he saw through the guile and, with his yogic powers, said, "Vātāpi, be digested." His fate was sealed. When the demon Vātāpi had such powers, what to say of the wonderful qualities of the objects in Vaikuṅṭhaloka which are not different from Śrī Mahālakṣmī!

Another wonder about Vaikuṅṭhaloka is this. Śrī Hari's Mansion hall in Vaikuṅṭha affords accommodation to those who have already been liberated in the countless previous Kalpas and to those who are going to be liberated in the future Kalpas.

*"Of those that enter the auditorium of Śrī Hari's palace
Of the hosts of Brāhmās there is no counting;
Surging like waves - Garuḍas, Indras, Candras and
The other deities swarming - I cannot describe."*

How there can be accommodation for so many in the palace of Śrī Hari in Vaikuṅṭhaloka, which is only located within the Brahmāṇḍa. Śrī Vādirāja svāmi answers by giving an analogy.

*“The stomach of tiny sage, for all the ocean waters
Afforded place; when thus it is said, The Almighty Lord’s
Own palace hall, for all those that enter—
The liberated souls - does it not give room?”*

If Jahnurṣi is reputed to have drunk all the waters of the Gaṅgā and to have let it out of his ear, sage Agastya took at one gulp all the waters of the ocean.

The glories of Śrī Hari are infinite and very very sublime and evergreen. Mother Mahālakṣmī, who always keeps company with Him in space and Time and sees His wonderful presence and activities in the innumerable Brahmāṇḍas, is still unable to gauge His greatness. What can be said of others?

In *Harikathāmṛtasāra* Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya says—

“Just like a boat that whirls aimlessly being tossed upon the turbulent waters of the ‘Pralaya’ period, Śrī Mahālakṣmī stands perplexed, unable to understand the forms and qualities of Her Lord in spite of much contemplation. How can ordinary folks understand His glories?”

The ‘Puspaka’ plane described in *Rāmāyaṇa*, it is said, was accommodating any number of persons and was leaving place for still one more. If that material object had such powers, can there be any limitation to Śrī Hari’s glories? He, who finds Himself in the smallest particle and dwells in the biggest object, can also put a very big thing into the smallest space. He can sink a feather and make a heavy block of stone to float. He is Almighty.

Śrī Hari provides different kinds of pleasures for the liberated ones. There are two lakes of nectar, ‘Nya’

and 'Ara', to the north and to the south of Śrībhāga respectively. The muktas partake of this nectar and enjoy the drink. There is a peepul tree out of which proceed streams of another kind of nectar. The muktas gladly drink it. If we read such descriptions we come to understand the variety of ways in which Śrī Hari provides happiness to His brood by showing His gracious presence in every one of them. We should therefore understand that all things in Vaikuṅṭha loka are identical with Śrī Hari in Lakṣmīdevī; and, enjoyment of pleasures there means the joyful role played by that Loving Lord in the heart of each liberated soul.

VI. The Splendour of Vaikuṅṭha in the words of Purandara Dāsārya

In just one poem Śrī Purandara Dāsārya has sung of the splendour of Śrī Hari's township, its eternal nature, the beauty of the happiness available there, and the easiest way to gain access to it.

Burden of the Song:

"Search wherever you will in the Brahmāṇḍa, our township is the best;

The spouse of Ramādevī ever dwells there

With smiling grace.

The Song:

1. *There, no birth or death; no difficulty in obtaining food;
No tie of brother or son is there,
No room for doubting others' sincerity.*
2. *No sleep, nor sickness, nor other ailments,
There is no one who is vile,
He who rests upon the ocean knows all.*
3. *If in the company of devotees one makes efforts to secure
'Mokṣa',
Mādhava, who bears the name Purandara Viṭṭhalarāya,
Gives him hearty welcome, I know."*

To Purandara Dāsārya, the incarnation of Nārada Mahārṣi, born of Brahmā's mind, Vaikuṅṭha is the native township. In this song the devotee saint has shown the difference between the living conditions in this world and in that eternal Abode. And he has proclaimed that one can make fruitful efforts in the company of Haridāsas and thus gain the loving care of Purandara Viṭṭhala.

VII. The Sublimity of Vaikuṅṭha in the words of Gopāla Dāsārya:

'Sulādi' of Gopala Dāsārya:-

*They dwell in the realm of Mukti for ever,
And, having been freed from the impediment of 'Linga Śarīra',
They move and act truly with non-material bodies
With visible forms, well adorned with ornaments all over,
Fine clothes, garlands they wear and smear their bodies with
divine scents,
Holding up the conch shells and the discs,
Always enjoying, enjoying;
None of these are different from their native selves, but identical;
There is nothing transitory anywhere there."*

The 'muktas', who get rid of their causation bodies by bathing in the Virajā river, will never again be bothered by such stumbling blocks. Although they exist with bodies of pure consciousness, they have fine forms consisting of head, hands, legs and so on.

They are always happy wearing nice clothes and ornaments and adorned with sweet-smelling scents and garlands. The ornaments, dresses and the like that they wear are not different from their spiritual selves.

In this respect they are similar to the Supreme Being; but the similarity is very very minute. They have neither the fullness nor the independent volition that is characteristic of the Master. By virtue of the property known as 'Viśeṣa', Śrī Hari can perform any

act by any one of His limbs; the dependent soul has no such powers.

The conch shells and the discs in their hands show the minute similarity between the individual souls and the Master Soul.

*“Every one is chaste in mind, they have no fickleness, no jealousy,
No indecision, no dullness of mind.”*

Even the untainted souls who are eligible for ‘mukti’, are subject to impurities of mind and intellect while in this world; they experience such sinful shadows on account of the ‘Karmas’ arising from the causation bodies. After release there is no place for any such blemish even temporarily. All the Muktas are clean-minded and serene. In what is known as *Narasimhanakhastuti* composed by Śrī Madhvācārya, this condition is nicely summarised in a terse phrase—*“Pradhvasta dhvānta śānta pravīṭata manasā* (with blooming peaceful minds shorn of ignorance)

*Some have female partners, some others have not,
They are ever joyful, desiring naught;
Those with mates sport with their own wives
Always, never swerving from the right path;
And those without wives derive marital pleasure
Within their own conscious selves,
But there is no seminal spurt,
Those ‘muktas’ still experience joy;
Śrī Gopāla Viṭṭhala provides them such joy in their souls,
He, the Supreme Personality, the true Actor in every soul.*

Among the released souls many have partners who are truly their wives. Some, like the Sanaka brothers, have no wives at all. When they come down to earth for getting rid of their ‘Karmas’, they may take wives; not so in ‘mukti’. Example:- Nārada Maḥarṣi, always a brahmācāri, had his wife when he was born as Puraṇḍara Dāsārya.

The 'mukta' couples harbour no wrong feelings about other couples; they find joy with their inseparable partners. Those without wives can experience mating joy in their own spiritual minds. Śrī Gopālaviṭṭhala, the original actor in every soul, provides them with such joy.

*There is no pinch of hunger, yet they eat fruits;
The joy of eating is felt in their souls.
They have no desire to drink nectar or eat fruits;
Yet those objects reach them where they are.
Appetite, thirst, sleep and all, by the ten organs
Expressed, all are joyful experiences.*

The 'muktas' do partake of sweet juices and fruits, but not due to hunger. They experience innate spiritual joy by such acts. They don't ask for drinks or eatables; but the free souls in Vaikuṅṭha bring drinks and eatables to those with human forms. Whenever such statements are made, we should keep in mind the roles played by Mahālakṣmī and Śrīman Nārāyaṇa in every case. Eating, drinking, resting and every other act done by the sensory organs and the motor organs (all Spiritual!) are only expressions of native joy.

*With Spiritual selves they thus enjoy;
Also, they sport taking up the pure Sattva element,
And as that stuff is entirely different from them
They find pleasures taking different forms,
Elephant, horse, many other objects and vehicles,
Into these they change themselves in wonderful ways.*

Formerly it was said that the 'muktas' experience all kinds of joy with their spiritual selves. Now we are told that they also derive joy by making use of the pure Sattva element. (Of course this kind of sport using unmixed Sattva element is in the 'Śrībhāga of Vaikuṅṭhaloka outside the Virajā river.)

Further it is said, what is still more wonderful.

The higher souls with fractional parts,
 At the same time with those parts,
 They use the Sattva elements and at pleasure
 eight, ten, twenty, hundred, thousand personal forms
 They assume and take the shapes of white-umbrellas, fans, all
 Ornaments, fruits, flowers, scents, garlands,
 And becoming many a vehicle they carry those
 Who are their superiors and thus they sport;
 Serving thus the Supreme Lord,
 Again they get back into the original selves,
 No hard effort, every thing easy,
 It is like lighting one lamp from another,
 Likewise they create Sāttvic materials.
 Hear now about the fraction-less souls;
 At a time they take just one form
 And thus serve Śrī Hari the giver of joy.

Spirit souls are of two kinds - the fractionable and the fractionless. Those, of fractionable parts can take different forms at one and the same time and bring the fractioned parts together again. Even like the Supreme Self who is full in the smallest and the biggest, the fractionable souls have fullness according to each one's ability - there is no difference between one fractional part and the other. The experience gained by each fractional part reaches every other part. Keeping this explanation in mind, it will be profitable to admire the ability of Vāyudeva (Mukhya Prāṇa) who is the highest among living souls, who is responsible for all the activities in the universe, and who performs 'Śvāsa Japa' (the act of inspiration and expiration offered as service to the Supreme Being) in the four bodies of every living soul.

The fractionless souls can assume one new form at a time befitting their species. But the souls of higher grades can assume forms of the lower species too. Serving others in 'Mukti' affords higher joy within one's limitations, because those who serve as well as those who are served consider it all as service rendered to the Supreme personality, the source of all joy. In the ex-

ample of one lamp lighting another, Śrī Gopāla Dāsārya has in view the wick lamps. Lighting one wick from another burning wick suggests the use of the Sāttvic material in taking different forms.

For the muktas who are fully blessed by Śrī Hari, taking different forms presents no difficulty; it is easy like sport.

*God's creative and other powers to the Souls
Are always clinging fast, ceaselessly;
Aiding expression of The Soul's abilities in creation;
Not forsaking the soul at any time, thus indwelling
Is to take care affectionately;
When the worlds undergo final dissolution all the released and
unreleased
Keeping in the womb in the act of destruction;
Helping the souls to act by their Spiritual Selves in 'Mukti'
Is His power of ordering things;
The soul in Mukti, not losing self-identification
Is due to the Lord's gift of such knowledge;
A soul not knowing well the abilities of those higher than him-
self,
Is due to the innate ignorance maintained in the soul by the
master;
Keeping Souls within bounds so as to be unable to reap undue
joy
By means of the Lord's 'Will-Covering' is the imposing of
bondage;
Not giving birth in the world again thus freeing from material
bondage is the gift of 'Mokṣa'.
By these powers, the joys of the released souls
Śrī Hari gives expression to in full.*

Śrī Hari's Almightyness is obvious in eight ways in this world - He creates, takes care of, destroys, ordains, gives knowledge, imposes ignorance, keeps souls in bondage and frees them from such bondage. (These go by the technical phrase "Sṛṣṭyā di Aṣṭa Kartṛtva" - (1) Sṛṣṭi (2) Sthiti, (3) Laya (4) Niyamāna (5) Jñāna (6) Ajñāna (7) Bandha and (8) Mokṣa). How these

eight powers still hold good even in the Mukti State is explained in the above verses.

Giving opportunity to find expression of the Soul's innate abilities is like creation. The Supreme Self abiding in the individual self is the same as taking care of keeping even the released souls within His belly after the final dissolution of the worlds is like the work of destruction. The souls act with their own limbs in mukti, while it was not so during the course of training in the world. Helping to act with the spiritual limbs is the power of ordaining. The soul never forgets his real self in mukti. That is due to the knowledge of self endowed by the Master Self. Yet a Soul does not know everything about the higher souls. That is due to the Lord keeping the soul in ignorance of things beyond his reach. No doubt, the released soul is all joy; but it is limited to his capacity to enjoy. Such is God's will holding the soul within limits. This is like keeping one in bondage. The released soul is never again born in our world; he is ever free by the grace of Śrī Hari. This is like granting mukti in reality.

Śrī Gopāla Dāsārya concludes the poem saying.

"The sporting of the muktas is wonderful, ever more wonderful, Who knows but Gopāla Viṭṭhala, the bestower of Mukti,".

It means, words fail to describe all the glories of the pleasures enjoyed by the muktas; they are beyond human comprehension.

VIII. Brilliant description of Vaikuṅṭha by

Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya:

In one of his songs Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya has given a brilliant description of Vaikuṅṭha such that a clear enough picture is formed in the minds of the readers—

Burden of the Song:

1. How fine is Śrī Vaikuṅṭha, how fine!
 How fine is the realm of Vaikuṅṭha! there.
 Is spread the effulgence from the body of Manmatha's Father;
 its
 Interior is all ornamental gold. Its lustre
 Has put to shame the rays of the rising sun.
2. In the midst of the Milk Ocean Seven forts; inside
 Are seven others to cross; drummers and
 Pipers together three crore; His name
 Their leaders loudly proclaim; and lo,
 There are devoted sages, Gandharvas and Yakṣas;
 Also the qualified but unliberated devotees (Jīvan Muktas) are
 there in the land of Śrī Hari.

(Jīvanmuktas come to the outskirts of Ayo-
 dhyānagari beyond the Virajā river.)

3. It is the city of golden fortifications; there
 Look at the beautified streets; everywhere
 Wish-granting cows and trees; it is the Abode
 Of the happiest state of life; and O!
 The Vedas and Upaniṣads declare it as Śrī Hari Himself.
 That city where the great muktas have gathered.
4. In the outer areas around are devotee sages like Sanaka; divine
 Dancing and sounds of music every where; there
 You find showers of flowers, champak and jasmine; and there
 The quarters of the eight queens of the Lord, O!
 The never-separated queen Śrīdevī serves, massaging His feet;
 such is the palace of the Lord of Lakṣmī.
5. The dazzling doors are super-fine; there,
 Still more brilliant is the court hall, pearl
 Pendants hanging heavily in rows, look!
 At the centre of the 'mantap' bedecked with lustrous jewels,
 There is seated Jagannātha Viṭṭhala, the prettiest of all.

In between the two nectarean lakes 'Ara' and 'Nya', there are seven fortifications within the bounds of the Virajā river, surrounding the city of Ayodhyā. It is lighted by the brilliance emanating from the body

of Śrī Hari, excelling the effulgence of crores of suns. The Brahmās and other muktās sing His glory with divine musical accompaniments. Everywhere in that city are cows and trees yielding whatever is wished for. Describing the beauty of the realm of Śrī Hari, whose tender feet excel the tender palms of Śrī devī, is beyond the scope of mind and words.

In this way, all the sagely devotees have praised the solemnity of Śrī Hari's kingdom, each in his own special way, and have let down streams of their feelings in songs of praise to distribute joy to the listeners.

Many of the South Indian temples are so built as to put a model of Śrī Vaikuṅṭha before us. The most famous temple of Śrī Raṅganātha in the south, surrounded by the two branches of the Cauvery river, has seven fortifications and is like the replica of Vaikuṅṭha; the Cauvery river is in place of the Virajā river. In fact, at Śrīraṅga Paṭṭaṇa, near Mysore, that river goes by the name Virajā.

By listening to such descriptions of Vaikuṅṭha, our minds become purified by divine knowledge, devotion develops and Śrī Hari's Grace will be showered upon us.

Śrī Vādirājasvāmi has, in his Vaikuṅṭha Varṇana, recounted the beneficial effects of hearing the tale of Vaikuṅṭha thus—

*The story of the province of Vaikuṅṭha,
Those that hear with undivided attention,
They are taken care of by the consort of Śrīdevī;
Thus ends the first canto of this epic.*

Chapter - III

'MAHĀ PRALAYA' (Final Dissolution)

I. What is Pralaya?

'Pralaya' or dissolution does not mean merely destroying. It means destroying material bodies and collecting the fruits of actions performed by means of those bodies.

Dissolution is of two kinds—

'Dina Pralaya' and 'Mahā Pralaya'. Dissolution at the end of, each of Brahmā's day is 'Dina Pralaya' and at the end of Brahmā's one hundred years completed is 'Mahā Pralaya'. In addition there are intermediary 'Pralayas' at the end of each yuga and at the end of each 'Manu Kalpa'.

Visible effects of dissolution take place at the end of each Kaliyuga and also at the end of each Manu Kalpa and at the end of Brahmā's day. After each Manu Kalpa, the entire earth is covered by water and, at the end of Brahmā's day, all the world except Satyaloka will be immersed. At the time of Mahā Pralaya or Final Destruction, Satyaloka too will be dissolved; not only that, even the golden shell (Brahmāṇḍa) and the nine outer envelopes of matter will also be dissolved to get back into the original state of matter (Mūla Prakṛti).

Creation, maintenance and dissolution (Sṛṣṭi, Sthiti, Laya) have followed one another from beginningless time and they continue to follow endlessly.

Therefore, it will be profitable to know about dissolution before we begin to learn about Creation, because Creation means giving shapes to things which are already existing.

In this context what Sri Kṛṣṇa has said in the *Bhagavad Gītā* about creation, maintenance and dissolution is worth remembering—

*Sahasrayuga paryantam ahar yad brahmaṇo viduḥ,
Rātrim yugasahasrāmtām te'hō rātra vido janāḥ
Avyaktād vyaktayaḥ sarvāḥ prabhavantyaharāgame,
Rātryāgame pratiyante tatraivāvyyakta samjñake.
Bhūta grāmaḥ sa evāyam bhūtvā bhūtvā praliyate,
Rātryāgame 'vaśaḥ Pārtha prabhavatyaharāgame.
Paras tasmāttu bhāvo, nyo vyakto vyaktāt sanātanāḥ,
Yah sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu nasyatsu na vinasyati.*

Purport: Brahmā's day is counted by the rolling of the four yugas one thousand times, and the rolling of one thousand such mahāyugas is counted as his night. Those who understand this phenomenon are those who know the meaning of day and night. By these words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa we should take into consideration all types of days and nights. One day and one night for human beings is of twentyfour hours duration; for the 'Pitṛdevas', the waxing and the waning periods of the moon together make one day. The periods of the northern course of the sun (Uttarāyana) and the southern course (Dakṣiṇāyana) make the day and the night for the divine world. Brahmā's day and night, of course, comprise of two thousand Mahā yugas. And, the day and night of Para Brahmā are equal to twice the life period of Caturmukha Brahmā.

During Para Brahmā's day, all that appears in this universe is manifested or created out of primeval matter and during His night everything dissolves and gets back into that original matter which is termed 'Avyakta'. This same aggregate of matter that we see manifested during creation is born again and again and goes back to its original during the period of dissolution

without any effort on its part. It comes into existence again. He who is entirely different from material nature, He who exists before every other created being and He who is free from births and deaths in the world of births and deaths, He is the Supreme Being.

The word 'Bhūta' in the text means non-living as well as living things. As endorse by the statement, "Eko viṣṇur mahad bhūtam pṛthag bhūtānyanekaśaḥ....." the word 'Bhūta' applies to living beings too; the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu is called 'Mahābhūta'.

When we give the meanings of the stanzas quoted from *Bhagavad Gītā*, we should refer to the days and nights of Para Brahmā only. It is because, during the night of Caturmukha Brahmā, the created things find location within the Brahmāṇḍa itself; they do not get back into the primeval matter by dissolution.

The very same ideas expressed by Gitācārya we shall now see more vividly in the words of the Haridāsas.

II. The Process of Dissolution:

In one of his 'sulādis', Sri Vijaya Dāsārya has given a brief description of 'Pralaya' thus—

*"With the name 'Sūnya (zero) 'Śrī Hari upon the banyan leaf,
Like a small child, the Lord of the Brahmāṇḍa,
Within the fond embrace of the gem of womankind, Śrīdevi,
Of his own accord He lay down.
When Brahmā was completing his hundred years,
When still twelve years and a half remained,
He looked like furious and began the wild dance;
Hiraṇyagarbha and the rest, without sparing,
Throwing balls of fire from His eyes, those
That had come into existence swallowing, wearing the materi-
als of their bodies as ornaments,
Making the universe cleared of creatures and things,
The God of great glory, the mainstay of the Vedas,*

Without injustice to anybody, creation, maintenance and destruction

He is going through in a systematic way;

Keeps the innumerable souls within Himself;

One with smaller than the smallest forms, Vijayaviṭhalarāya,

If one sincerely praises, to him He graciously shows His form;

During the period of Mahā Pralaya, Śrī Hari is called 'Śūnya', because He is non-existent in the eyes of the souls in general. Also, 'Śam' means evil propensities; Ūna means removing them. Śrī Hari is the destroyer of evils. For this reason also He is called Sūnya' - He has put an end to the sins of the liberated souls.

"Śrī Hari upon the banyan leaf in a systematic way." This part of the Sulādi must be considered as denoting the ending of a creation as well as the beginning of a creation. It is the child form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa lying on the banyan leaf that is the root cause of creation, maintenance and annihilation. From Him come out the Vāsudeva form, the Nārāyaṇa form and the rest at the beginning of creation. Into Him all the things are gathered up by the act of annihilation.

Therefore the lines-

"When Brahmā was completing their bodies as ornaments" must be interpreted first and the rest of the lines from beginning to end must be tagged on to them afterwards.

When the period of creation and maintenance nears the end, i.e., when the present Brahmā is completing eighty seven and a half years, when still twelve and a half years remain to complete one hundred years, the Lord of the Saṅkarṣaṇa form, which is adored by Rudradeva, pretends fury and begins to dance in a tremendously wild manner. This kind of dance affords great joy to souls like Brahmā and his brood, while it brings painful restlessness to others. The Lord's affected anger is meant for the second order of souls.

With the wildest wind and the hottest fire and tremendous down-pour, Śrī Hari destroys everything in the universe. At the time of the destructive dance (Pralaya Tāṇḍava), He takes up the remnants of the bodies of Brahmā, Rudra and the like and wears them like ornaments. With His touch everything becomes beautiful.

This Almighty Lord, even as the Vedic hymns glorify His unerring decision, assigns different eternal abodes to different kinds of souls according to their varying natures. Since He gives due credit to the native inclinations of souls there is no room for any kind of injustice in His 'Intent' (Saṁkalpa).

TEXT

Vaikunṭha Varṇana of Śrī Vādirājasvāmi-

*Naṣṭe loka dviparārdhāvasane
Mahābhūteshavadhi bhūtam gateṣu
Vyakte (a) vyaktam Kālavegena nīte
Bhavānekaḥ śiṣyaste (a) śeṣa sauñjāḥ.*

(When the two parārdhas - halves of Brahmā's life span - come to the close, when the grosser elements get mixed up with the higher subtler elements, when all that had been manifested dissolves into the original matter, O Lord, only, you remain with the name 'Aśeṣa' or 'Sūnya')

TEXT

Sulādi of Śrī Guru Purandara Viṭṭhala:

*Brahmā's twelve years and a half remaining,
When morning commences, by the destructive process of a
hundred human years.
All the creatures meet death by drought
When the sun shines with unlimited rigour for a hundred years,
When from the mouth of Śeṣadeva in Pātāla
The fire called 'Samvṛta' comes out and burns all things,
When raging wind blows for a hundred years.
When the 'Samvarta' cloud brings heavy down-pour for a hundred years.*

*And everything is dissolved by the showers as thick as an elephant's trunk,
The supporter of all things and souls, Guru Purandara Viṭṭhala,
Thou art the bedrock truly supporting all; this is about Mahā Pralaya.*

The process of Pralaya described here is in the following manner. At first all living creatures meet their end when no rain falls for a hundred human years. After the draught, the sun shines with virulent rays spreading intense heat for a hundred years.

At the same time, Śeṣadeva, who supports all the worlds, sends forth the fierce fire called 'Samvarta' from his mouth and burns down everything to ashes. After that, a tempest rages for a hundred years and disturbs the ashes in such a way that they get readily dissolved in water. For another hundred years there is a tremendous down pour from the cloud named 'Samvarta'. By all these processes the fourteen lokas merge into the waters.

What expired so far, took four hundred human years. It was only destruction of things within the Brahmāṇḍa. How the outer envelopes were dissolved is explained by Śrī Guru Purandara Viṭṭhalārya-

*Water for earth, fire for water,
Wind for fire and the sky for air,
For sky in the form of sensory and motor organs
The mind with the presiding deities of its three aspects-
Vaikārika, Tajasa and Tāmasa;
The mind principle is taken up into
The Mahat tattva which has thirteen parts,
Twelve of Rajas, and in ten parts of Sattva
One 'Rajas in Rajas',
One 'Rajas in Tamas',
And one Tamas are intermixed;*

The three modes are in Śrī Hari's breast

In the unmixed state (sāmya); coming out and becoming Mahat tattva.

Is the mixed state (Viṣama); thus Śrī Guru Purandara Viṭṭhala creates.

As the creation of the universe proceeded, so it must recede at the end by the reverse process. This process of reversion takes place during the twelve years and a half of Brahmā's old age-the ten envelopes of the universe slowly get back into each other.

Earth merges into water, water into fire, fire into air and air into the sky. The five gross elements in air get back into their subtle counter-parts (tanmātras). The tanmātrās enter into the principles of the ten sensory and motor organs, the ten principles enter the Manas and the Manas enters the Mahattattva. Mahat tattva consists of thirteen parts - ten parts of Sattva, one Tamas, one Rajas + Rajas and one Rajas + Tamasa. When this mixed state is lost and the three modes of matter remain distinctly without animation, they are lodged in the breast of Śrī Hari under the supervision of Śrī Māyā devī, with the name 'Avyakta'. Bringing back to the inactive state is known as pralaya. Mixing them up and putting into the active state is creation. He who goes through the acts of creation and annihilation is Guru Purandara Viṭṭhala.

Using inanimate matter and creating the Universe is for the emancipation of souls. By the reverse process of taking the created things to the original state of matter, the souls also get back to their original home in the womb of Śrī Hari by the upward reverse process. It is thus-

“Souls of lesser abilities merge into those of greater abilities,
 To the deities - To Kubera and Gaṇapati, Varuṇa;
 Candra (Moon) to Varuṇa, Aniruddha to Candra,
 Kāma to Aniruddha, Sanaka and the like;
 Vāruṇi for Kāma and Śeṣa to Vāruṇi
 This is the course of Śeṣa.

For the rest of the deities, Agni; to Agni, the Sun,
 To the Sun, the ‘Sky’; to the deity of Earth, Guru (Bṛhaspati);
 The best of the human kind, all the pitṛs,
 To Niṛṛti Yama; to Yama and some of the Manus
 Priyavrata; to him Svāyambhuva; to Bhṛgu and others Dakṣa;
 To Svāyambhuva, Dakṣa, Guru and the Maruts - Indra;
 Sauparṇi to Indra, Garuḍa to Sauparṇi -

This is Garuḍa mārga.

To Garuḍa and Śeṣa, Vāṇi (Sarasvati),
 The four-faced Brahmā to Vāṇī,
 To him, the Brahmā called Puruṣa,
 to him the Brahmā called ‘Kāla’
 To Puruṣa Brahmā, Śrīdevī; and to Śrīdevī
 Being very close to Acyuta is called ‘laya’.”

Just as the grosser material manifestations get back into the subtler and subtler ones the original state of ‘Avyakta’, so too souls of the living beings merge into souls of higher abilities. Ultimately they enter the womb of Śrī Hari. The Process of laya described hitherto is detailed in the following chart—

III. Garuḍa Mārga; Śeṣa Mārga:

During Pralaya, the souls get into the forms of those from whom they were born, and enter the belly of Śrī Hari through the ‘Garuḍa Mārga’ or the ‘Śeṣa Mārga’. (Mārga means path.) What is described here is about those who are eligible for ‘Mukti’, the Abode of eternal happiness.

‘Śeṣa Mārga’

1.	Mānava gandharvas merge	into	Deva Gandharvas
2.	Deva Gandharvas and the Ājānaja Devas	into	Kubera
3.	Kubera	into	Varuṇa
4.	Varuṇa	into	Candra
5.	Candra (along with Jaya, Vijaya and others)	into	Aniruddha
6.	Aniruddha (with Sanaka and others)	into	Kāma deva
7.	Kāmadeva and Ratīdevī	into	Vāruṇidevī (wife of Śeṣadēva)
8.	Vārunīdevī	into	Śeṣadeva
9.	Śeṣadeva	into	Sarasvatīdevī
10.	Sarasvatīdevī	into	Brahmadeva
11.	Brahmadeva	into	Lakṣmīdevī Thus he enters the belly of the Supreme Be- ing
12.	For Lakṣmīdevī		Being in close prox- imity to her Lord is ‘Laya’

‘Garuḍa Mārga’

The souls entering into Indra deva from four different channels, get into Brahmā deva through Garuḍa deva. Along with Brahmā they enter into Lakṣmīdevī and then into Śrī Hari’s belly.

I	The best of the human beings	into	Nirṛuti
	Nirṛuti (along with Pitṛdevas, Karmajadevas and Manus)	into	Yama dharma
	Yamadharma	into	Svāyambhuva Manu
	Svāyambhuva Manu and Śatarūpādevī	into	Indra Deva
II.	The 49 Maruts (wind gods) led by Āhamkārika Prāṇa	into	Indra deva

III.	Gaṇapati, Mṛtyu group (deities of death), the Ṛbhus and sons of Āgni (Fire God)	into	Āgni
	Āgni	into	Āditya (Sun God)
	Āditya	into	Bṛhaspatyācārya
	Bṛhaspatyācārya	into	Indradeva
IV.	One hundred crore ṛṣis-less one hundred, the Seven ṛṣis such as Mārīci, Bhṛgu Maharṣi, Nārada Maharṣi	into	Dakṣa Prajeshvara
	Dakṣa Prajeshvara	into	Indradeva
	Indradeva & Śacīdevī Sauparnīdevi and the eight queens of Śrī Kṛṣṇa	into	Sauparnīdevi
	Garuḍadeva	into	Garuḍadeva
		into	Sarasvatīdevī and thus enter Śrī Hari's belly through Brah- madeva and Lakṣmīdevī.

IV. The Lord's Banquet during Dissolution:

Commencing from the annihilation of the very gross elements, how all the elements are finally merged into the unknowable original material cause is thus beautifully described by Śrī Vādirājasvāmi—

*“The juices of salt, sugarcane, wine, ghee, curd and milk
Putting together, in the golden egg (Brahmānda or Haimāṇḍa)
Forming the nice boiling pot and cooking,
Eagerly, one morsel after another,
“Opening the mouth of the Universal body
He began to swallow.
The wind-god, at sight of his father consuming eagerly,
He fanned as not to make Him sweat.
“For drinking water, the sweet water ocean
He took and had the ritual gulp.
That all these may be digested, the golden pot
He converted into medicated ash and swallowed it too.”*

The annihilation of the five gross elements is thus described metaphorically, in a sense. The Supreme Personality has no material body at all; but, it is only He who motivates the acts of annihilation by His omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent form which is purely transcendental.

It seems that the vast stretch of earth and the living creatures therein form the delicious food, as it were, to the Supreme Being. It seems as though Śrīdevī, His Consort herself, does the cooking using the Brahmāṇḍa itself as the cooking pot. It seems that the wind god does serving by fanning Him. (Here it may be remembered that terrible wind blows for a hundred human years during the period of annihilation). And it seems that the Lord converts the Brahmāṇḍa into powdered gold serving as the digestive medicine.

After the annihilation of the five gross elements, follows the destruction of the nine envelopes of finer elements.

Although He thus devours innumerable crores of Brahmāṇḍas moment after moment, He is not adversely affected. By eating and drinking He does not grow fat; by not taking food He is not emaciated. It is therefore that 'Puruṣa Sūkta praises Him thus "Sāśane anāśane abhi." On the other hand, if living beings eat a morsel more, their stomachs ache, their heads reel and they suffer like anything. This is the difference between God and the souls.

How Śrī Hari consumes what He Himself created is nicely described by Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya.

*"Sowing seeds into the earth,
Irrigating the field and growing crop
At last is reaped for food; even so the Delight of Lakṣmīdevi,
Giving shapes to 'Karmas' and the time factor,
Going through them and terminating,
He is always equipoised without joy or sorrow."*

(H.K.S. 23-53)

"Children, building houses of wet sand,
 Play for a while quite happily;
 Then they kick and demolish; likewise the sweetheart of
 Lakṣmīdevī
 Creates the worlds in multi-manners,
 Himself detached, takes care of them
 And swallows, like the snake its eggs- nor sorry, nor happy".
 (H.K.S. 3-28)

People in this world plough the earth and sow the seeds. They take pains to grow the crop well by irrigating the fields. But at the end, they mow the crop, cook the grains and eat gladly. They don't feel sorry while cutting or thrashing or cooking. In the same way, Śrī Hari put the seed-like souls in the field of this world and grows the crop of their 'Karmas'. He accepts the offering of such Karmas as food; but the strange part of it is that the effect of eating goes to the souls by His grace. He is not affected by the eating in any way; He is ever the same.

Another point to remember is this. During 'Pralaya' it is gross matter that undergoes destruction; nothing really happens to the spirit soul. After rain, when the sands are wet, boys and girls cover their feet with such mud and make sand houses by gently removing the feet after softly patting the sands upon their feet. They even create ventilators by boring small holes at the tops of such houses. They thus play for some time. At the end they kick and destroy such houses with great glee. They are not at all sorry. We should compare Śrī Hari's creation, protection and destruction to such play of the children. Also it is like the snake swallowing its own eggs without any feeling of regret.

The truth about Śrī Hari consuming the created things is that he takes them back to their original condition.

V. Dip in the Virajā and destruction of the causation body:

Śrī Hari, by His sport during Pralaya, dissolves all the created things into the original causal matter and, until the beginning of another creation, He lies down with Śrīdevi as if to sleep. At that time He draws into His belly all the spirit souls that had been brought into the Brahmāṇḍa. Among them, some will have completed their courses of realization; they have no need to take birth again. But they are to be freed from the bondage caused by their 'Līṅga Śarīras'. Freeing thus from the causation body is known as the 'breaking of Līṅga Śarīra'.

Brahmā and the other deserving souls will have a dip in the Virajā river, surrounding the city of Vaikuṅṭha like a moat, before they enter Śrī Hari's belly. Virajā means that which has no taint of the three material modes and that which is capable of destroying the causation bodies composed of such material modes.

When a bath is taken in this river, Brahmā's body, which has become like a piece of burnt up cloth, slips away. The Līṅga Śarīras of the other souls are plucked out.

The Virajā waters are found not only around the city of Vaikuṅṭha, but also outside the nine envelopes that cover the Brahmāṇḍa. Brahmadeva and the other deities, who had presided over material modifications, take bath in the waters of the outer Virajā too. For the souls of inferior cadres it is enough to bathe in the Virajā of Vaikuṅṭhaloka; but, for the superior deities another bath in the Virajā is necessary. That this is very befitting is rationally explained by Śrī Vādirājasvāmi—

*For the inferior ones it is enough to get rid of used up clothes,
They don't need a bath at all.*

*For the enlightened, after removing clothes,
Holy bath is necessary; this is well-known.*

To know the meaning of holy bath we should know that there are three kinds of bathing - bathing to re-

move dirt, bathing to cleanse the mind by means of appropriate mantras, and bathing to cleanse the self. Going through the ordeals of this world and getting rid of the load of Karma is like the first kind of bath. Bathing in the Virajā of Vaikuṅṭha is like the second sort. Bathing in the Virajā beyond the nine envelopes is like the third mode of bathing-it is like pouring water over one's head and body during a bath, reciting 'Puruṣa Sūkta'. By such 'shower bath' one remembers the 'Original' residing in himself and achieves self purity.

Some have doubts as to whether the bath in the Virajā is before the Lord goes to rest or after the Period of rest (Period of Yoga Nidrā)

*When the Mahattattva body was there,
All the souls of pure consciousness
Bearing, Brahmā, lord of Satyaloka
Gets ready for the holy bath.*

(Vg.V. 2-10)

*To the retiring Brahmā, after dip in the outer Virajā,
Entry into the Belly of Śrī Hari*

(Sulādi of Purandara Dāsārya).

*Brahmā and the rest, in the non-material Virajā
Giving bath, destroying the Liṅga Śarīras,
Keeping them in His belly.....*

(Sulādi of Guru Purandara Viṭṭhalārya)

From the three authoritative quotations it is clear that the destruction of Liṅga Śarīras is before Śrī Hari retires to rest.

If for those, who enter Vaikuṅṭha, "liṅga bhaṅga" is before the period of 'Yoganidrā', it is after the beginning of a new creation for two other types of souls. This fact is explained in one of the sulādis of Śrī Purandara Viṭṭhalārya-

*After some of the worlds were created - - - -
Beyond Śvetadvīpa, beyond the surrounding waters,*

And beyond the other regions is Andhatamas,
 Seven crore wide that hell,
 Impure beyond description, such filth;
 Therein those who have completed their courses of Karma,
 Those who hated Śrī Hari and His devōtees
 From beginningless time, of sorrowful nature,
 The sinful souls, when the servants of Vāyudeva are ordered,
 Have their Liṅga Śarīras smashed to pieces,
 And are hurled into Andhatamas.

Śvetadvīpa is situated in the Milk Ocean, beyond which is the Puṣkaradvīpa. Then there are the sweet water ocean, the land of gold, the land of diamond and the Lokāloka mountain. Around the Lokāloka mountain is a pit of darkness, seven crore yojanas wide. At the bottom of this pit are three eternal hells named 'Tāmiśra', 'Maha Tāmiśra' and 'Andha Tāmiśra'. Those who are put into these hells have no further births and deaths to afford any chance of improvement. Just as the Muktas enjoy eternal happiness, these undeserving souls suffer hellish sorrows eternally. Their Liṅga Śarīras are broken into pieces by the hard blows administered by the servants of Vāyudeva. For the less demonly, small strokes; but for the veteran demons, harder blows just like Duryodhana's thigh being smashed by the mace of Bhimasena. That is the plight of those who hated Śrī Hari and His brood from beginningless time. Then they enter their permanent abode of Hell fully immersed in such hatred.

When it is said that there is place for such sorrowful plight within the realm of the Supreme Being who is praised as the ocean of limitless Mercy, people of these days 'twist their noses' in disapproval. Such of these who are suffering from the malady of 'Universal Kindness' know not that there are three distinct types of souls who are in their courses of realization in this world, made of the three material modes.

Śrī Kṣṇa has made it clear that true Mukti can be attained only by 'Bhakti' (sincere devotion); not by hatred.

*Bhaktyātvanyayā labhyaḥ ahamevaṃ vidhō' rjuna,
Jñātum draṣṭum ca tatveṇa praviṣṭum ca Paraṅtapa.*

Meaning:- Only those, who are detached from desire of all other things except Me and thus are fully devoted to Me, can understand my real nature like you, see Me as I am and in the end gain admission into the Abode of permanent happiness which is not different from Myself.

Yamevaiṣa Vṛṇute tena labhyaḥ-

The Supreme Being is attainable only by those who are designated by Him. True. But, "*Bhaktiśca tatsādhanam*" is not said in vain. God chooses one for granting 'Mukti' only seeing the sign of innate faculty of 'Bhakti' in him. Therefore it is but right to say that, 'Bhakti' is the means for 'Mukti'. Only by the full expression of innate 'Bhakti' the relationship between the 'Original Self' (Bimba) and the individual self (Pratibimba) becomes well established. Śrī Hari's Grace is the Primary cause; the soul's devotion is the favourable cause.

VI. Three types of Souls:

The sixteenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gīta makes it clear that there are three types of souls. When there it is said that there are souls of divine nature and souls of demoniac nature, we can assume that there are also those of mixed nature like semi-malnad in between 'Malnad' and 'Maidan'. It is said in the Puraṇas that Brahmadeva is the leader of the souls of intrinsic sāttvic nature eligible for the 'Happy Abode; Kali is the leader of souls of intrinsic tāmasic nature; and Purañjana is the leader of souls of intrinsically mixed nature.

To get rid of Liṅga Śarīras and to find expression of innate abilities is the natural desire of all the three kinds of souls, Śrī Hari, the Omniscient, helps every one in this respect.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who has spoken about two types of souls in the sixteenth chapter, has said explicitly in the seventeenth chapter that the third type of souls are also there. The very name of the chapter, Śraddhātraya Vibhāga Yoga', suggests it.

*Trividhā bhavati śraddhā dehinām sā svabhāvajā,
Sāttvikī rājasī caiva tāmasī ceti tām śruṇu.*

*“Sattvānurūpa sarvasya śraddhābhavati Bhārata,
Śraddhāmayoyam puruṣo yo yacchraddhaḥ saeva saḥ.*

Its meaning: To the souls who are born with material bodies, preference of 'Karmas' depends on the qualities of their original natures. It may be of three kinds—Sāttvic craving, Rājasic craving and Tāmasic craving. To every one, interest in activities depends upon each one's original nature. What original nature one possesses we may know by his interests.

It is thus established that there are three types of souls by original nature.

In spite of this fact, while souls are undergoing the courses of realization in this world, the motives for their activities may be due to the material modes making up their bodies or they may be due to their original natures. The material conditions of their Liṅga Śarīras are responsible for such motivation. To whatever group a soul may belong, all the three material modes are found in his causation body. Śrī Hari makes the souls to go through activities by means of all the three modes and makes them ultimately realize their own spiritual natures and stay in them.

Souls of truly Sāttvic nature suffer for their sinful acts and learn to avoid them; gradually they stick on to the righteous path. The evil ones, who reap rewards

for their meritorious acts, develop pride and get puffed up; they only pave their way to Hell. The middling souls stay in doubts and find themselves finally in a mixed state— a mixture of happiness and misery.

Just as He said that the souls of evil propensities never reach His Abode— “*Mām aprāpyaiva Kāunteya tato yāntyadhamām gatim*— Sri Kṛṣṇa says thus about the deserving devotees.

*Api cetsudurācāro bhajate mām-ananya bhāk,
Sādhureva sa mantāvyaḥ samyag vyavasito hi saḥ.
Kṣipram bhavati dharmātmā śaśvacchāntim sagacchati.*

Meaning:- The person with natural inclination for ‘Bhakti’, will always have inward craving for Me even if he be involved in the filthiest kinds of acts. He should be considered a saint. Very soon, in the very same life or in a few more life periods, he develops desire for righteousness and qualifies himself to enter My Abode of Eternal Peace.

It is thus established by the words of Bhagavad Gitā that good souls develop devotion to God and attain the Happy Abode; and the evil ones develop hatred and court Hell.

But some may raise the doubt that, according to Purāṇas, even those who hated the Supreme Being attained Godhead and therefore, it is not right to classify souls into three types. There should be no room for such doubt. Those who harbour this kind of doubt are not aware of the special significance attached to the stories of Kamsa, Śiśupāla and the like. Srimad Anantīrthācārya has pointed out such significance in his superfine work, ‘*Mahābhārata Tātparya Nirṇaya*’.

In the story of Sri Kṛṣṇavatāra it is declared that a few of the demoniac individuals - Pūtanā, Kāliya Nāga, Kamsa, Śiśupāla, Dantavakra and a few others— attained the Happy Abode. It is not said that all those who were killed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa were redeemed. In the

same way, in the Rāmāyaṇa, Laṅkiṇi who was to be killed by Hanumān was saved. The Rāmāyaṇa too has not said that all those who were killed by Śrī Rāma got the merit to enter the Happy Land. *Dānavāntaka* (killer of the demons) is the well-known title by which Śrī Hari is praised. It should therefore be understood that whenever a demon is said to have been redeemed, in the one and the same body there was a real demon in the company of a good soul on account of the latter's evil 'Karma'.

Kamsa, who hated Kṛṣṇa, did not gain 'Mukti'. Bhr̥gu Mahārṣi, who was also in the same body on account of his evil 'Prārabdha Karma', was cleansed by the death of 'Kamsa' and came out with purer devotion meriting redemption. In the similar case of 'Śiśupāla', Śrī Nārada Mahārṣi's statement in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is this-

"Pārṣada pravaraṇa viṣṇōr vipra śāpāt padacyutau."

They who were born in demon as Hiranya-Kasipu - Hiranyākṣa, Rāvaṇa- Kumbhakarna and Śiśupāla - Dantavaktra, were the door-keepers of Vaikuṅṭha; their downfallen condition was due to the curse given to them by the Sanaka brothers. The two good souls were born three times in the company of evil souls and by their hatred of Śrī Hari (Vairānubandha) got punishment and were purified. They went back to their original places. The evil companions were, of course, condemned to Hell. This truth may be gleaned by the words of Prahlada Kumār- "*Tadyaccha manyum asuraśca hatastvayādyā modeta sādhurapi vṛiścika sarpa hatyā.*" "Even a saint should rejoice when he hears about the killing of scorpions and serpents that harm innocent persons. For the same reason all should rejoice at the death of the demon who hated Śrī Hari and His devotee. Now that the demon is killed, O Lord, subdue thy anger." When Prahlāda kumāra said this, he did not mean that he was glad for

his father's death; on the other hand he prayed for the good of his father. The import of his words is that the true demon in the body was put to death and therefore there was reason for rejoicing.

This being the fact, one cannot charge Śrī Hari with injustice when He punishes evil-doers; it is only good souls who have sympathy for all and argue why the omnipotent Lord should not change the very natures of demoniac souls and put them also in His Abode. But these demons, with their natural hatred of Śrī Hari never desire for Śrī Hari's merciful gift; they only desire to hate Śrī Hari and His devotees. Duryodhana stands as a glaring example in this respect. He said, "I know full well that you are omnipresent and you are in my heart too, goading me in my ways. Yet, I will certainly bind you with ropes. This is Duryodhana's comprehension. *"Maurkhasya nāstyauśadham"*—There is no cure for the malady of obstinacy!

In all the 'Śrutis', 'Smṛtis' and the Purāṇas we came across the two types of souls mainly— the devotees and the haters. There are clear statements to tell that good souls develop devotion and reach the Happy Home; no where is it said that they fall into eternal Hell. But when the case of the demons comes up, only a few-countable on the finger's ends— are said to have attained happy release, while all the rest are said to have been put into eternal Hells like 'Andha Tamas'. Therefore, when we cite the instances of demons like Kamsa and 'Śiśupala' we must accept the existence of two or more souls in a single body. Again, if we accede that hatred too can earn merit, the importance given to 'Bhakti' becomes meaningless; and the incarnations of Śrī Hari and His brood will be no better than a farce. The conclusion is that Mukti is attainable by 'Bhakti' and not at all by hatred.

VII. Destruction of Causation Bodies in the case of the middling souls:

Happiness, sorrow and other experiences in this world are caused by the medium of the causation bodies. If original nature is to find expression, it is necessary for all the three types of souls to lose their Liṅga Śarīras. This point has been clearly stated by Śrī Vadīrajasvāmi.

Therefore, what is to be achieved is expression of the original Self;

All else is instrumental.

Let the intelligentia discern; for this effect;

Liṅgabhaṅga is necessary for all three types.

He says that, if this point is not accepted, it will amount to contradicting the Śrutis'.

That 'Bhakti' and hatred bear fruits—

This Vedic statement, if not applied to the middling group,

The meaning of Vedic words will be distorted;

Don't try to mar the Vedic meanings.

After 'Liṅga-bhaṅga' the middling souls experience their innate joy and sorrow at the same time in the 'Sāntānika' lokas. The statement, "Tridiva niraya bhū gocarān nitya baddhān", does not mean that they are forever prone to live in heaven, hell and earth. It means that they experience conditions of those lokas with their freed selves.

VIII. Entering the belly of Lord Śrī Hari:

Here is described how Śrī Hari dissolved all the materials of the universe and, putting all things within His belly, how He rested upon the 'Pralaya' waters.

The lotus-seated, in the Virajā

Of Vaikuṅṭha, with all the deserving souls,

He came and bathed and became free;

Quickly he entered the belly of Śrī Hari.

*Those whose bodies shone variously
Being given extension by the grace of Śrīdevī,
The released ones of earlier kalpas,
Also ran into the belly of Śrī Hari.*

*Placing all the jīvas in His belly
Śrī Hari put them to sleep,
So that they could not see His Sport
With His spouse Śrīdevī.*

When Brahmā entered the belly of Śrī Hari at the commencement of His 'Yoganidrā, those who had been released in the innumerable previous Brahma Kalpas and were happily residing in the Three Abodes, also entered Śrī Hari's belly. They were made to sleep when Śrī Hari pretended sleep. In the case of the higher divine beings it was perfect 'Dhyāna', while the others slumbered.

Those who entered Śrī Hari's belly were not only the released good souls; but there were also the souls who had their courses still to run, those of the middling and the demoniac souls who had completed their courses, and also those who had never come into creation yet. In what manner Śrī Hari kept them in His belly is described by the Haridāsas.

Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya has put it briefly thus—

*.....In His belly, commencing from
The left side, the muktas and the amuktas
Installing - all the three types,
Beaming like a boy - baby.....*

What is put very briefly here is explained in the Viṣṇu Rahasya in greater detail—

1. Nābheradho vāma bhāge prāptā tāmasikān

Below the navel, left side—the liberated demoniac souls who were in Eternal Hell.

2. Nābheradho dakṣiṇa bhāge yōgyām

Below the navel, right side - the demoniac souls still in the course of realization

3. Samapradese nitya samsāriṇaḥ

Right beneath the navel - the middling class of souls.

4. Nabherupari dakṣiṇa bhāge muktān

Above the navel, right side - the released devotee souls.

5. Nabherupari vāma bhāge mukti yogyān

Above the navel, left side - the devotee souls in the course of realisation.

In this way He put every one in His belly.

However cleverly we may try to picturise, we are apt to imagine the form of the Lord as a very small child—

*Karāravindena padāravindam mukhāravinde viniveśayantam,
vaṭasya patrasya puṭe śayānam bālam Mukundam manasā
smarāmi.*

With all the faculties of my mind I retain the memory of the boy-child Mukunda, reclining in the cradle that is the banyan leaf, holding His lotus-foot with His lotus-hand and putting it in is His lotus-mouth.)

We imagine Him to have a small form like any other child with all the charms of childhood. But His form is really unimaginably big - Listen—

*Brahmā and the others in the virajā of 'Avyakta'
Dipping, breaking off the causation bodies,
Keeping them in His stomach, the waters of Pralaya
Being Śrīdevī, Bhūdevī becoming the banyan leaf,
He changing into the boy-child - seven crore yojanas in size,
Durgādevī taking the form of the veil of darkness,
Upon the banyan leaf Guru Purandara Viṭṭhala reclined.*

In height Bāla Mukunda measures seven crore yojanas (42 crore miles; 68 crore K. M.). The length the cradle-like banyan leaf is fifty crore yojanas!

This aspect has been nicely described by the late Śrī Gorabāḷa Hanumantha Rao—

Reclining like a child measuring seven crore yojanas, sucking the toe of His right foot, He eagerly tastes the devotional fruits fondly offered at His lotus-feet by the countless Brahmas and the others belonging to the countless Brahmāṇḍas of the previous Brahma Kalpas—so it looks! He pretends 'Yoganidra' (meditative sleep).

When it is stated that all the pastimes of Śrī Hari are for the sake of His brood, for whose sake did He assume such mighty form of a child? Śrī Ramādevī, who is His companion for ever, and who has the three forms Śrī, Bhū and Durgā, looks upon the mighty child form again and again and goes into raptures. As Ramādevī she lies down embracing that child form and enjoys 'yoganidrā'. This fact is supported by the 'Suḷādi' of Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya—

*In the pralaya waters the only person Nārāyaṇa
Lay down with His wife;
As the Moon keeps company with the Sun,
Clasping Śrī Padmanābha, beneath His arm
Śrī Lakṣmīdevī lies unseen.*

Note:- The analogy of the moon with the sun makes it clear how it is one-way traffic - how the sun gives light to the moon, not vice verse.

Such form of the wonderful child was permitted to be seen by Mārkaṇḍeya Maḥarṣi; thus it is said in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.

It may be noted that Śrī Mukhyaprāṇa will be awake when Śrī Hari pretends Yoganidra and puts others to sleep.

When the whole world is in deep slumber
Surely Śrī Mukhyaprāṇa alone is awake

(Suḷādi of Guru Purandara Viṭṭhala)

In the womb of Acyuta, closing the eye of the causation body.

While the souls are all asleep,

Truly, only Mukhyaprāṇa is awake

In the midst of the clean-minded liberated.

When the embodied goes to sleep, those in his body-

The deities do not sleep;

The expirational and inspirational breathing he carries on,

This is the position during Pralaya.

(Vaikuṅṭha Varṇane of Śrī Vādirājasvāmi.)

The souls, whose courses of realization are still incomplete, are to be kept alive during the period of Pralaya, when they do not have the material body with the breathing system. This is done through the agency of Śrī Mukhya Prāṇa who next occupies the seat of Brahma, taking the unrealized souls with him. Therefore he stays in the causation bodies of those souls and carries on the breathing act in the form of 'Hamsa mantra'.

IX. The Period of 'Yōga Nidra':

Parabrahma's night equals the period of Brahmā's life time. Śrī Hari rested for (10½ hours) 87½ years of that night along with Laksmidevi. When still (1½ hours) 12½ years remained before dawn, Śrī Durgādevi, bearing the name 'Ambhraṇi', being prompted by her Lord, praised Him with the 'Śruti Gīta'. Well pleased with it, Śrī Hari woke up, as it were, and opened His eyes. Thus it is declared.

There are some who say that the work of 'Maha Pralaya' started in the evening of the last day completing Brahma's 87½ years and that Parabrahma rested for 10½ hours during the night that followed to complete 87½ years; and He woke up when actually Brahma's 1½ hours remained before the next dawn.

The accompanying diagrams are meant to picture the two different stands. The first one shows that the resting period was $87\frac{1}{2}$ years by Brahma's count. The second diagram shows that the resting period was actually for $10\frac{1}{2}$ hours by Brahma's count.

In the first diagram, the upper semi-circle shows Parabrahma's night and the lower semi-circle shows His day. In the lower part there are eight divisions, each division denoting $12\frac{1}{2}$ hours of that day. The period denoted by four such divisions stands for the first half the life period of Caturmukha (Prathama Parārdha) 'Para' in this context means the life period of the four-faced Brahmā. Creation outside the Brahmāṇḍa took place during 'Prathama Parārdha', till Brahmā was fifty years old. After that, Brahmā's creation and regime within the Brahmāṇḍa goes on for $37\frac{1}{2}$ years. During the remaining $12\frac{1}{2}$ years the work of dissolving the Brahmāṇḍa and the outer nine envelopes goes on. This division is denoted by dark lines.

The upper semi-circle too is having eight divisions, each standing for $12\frac{1}{2}$ years. The last division shaded by dark lines is the eighth and the last part of the night.

In the second diagram the entire circle is used to show Caturmukha's life period. It also contains eight divisions, each standing for $12\frac{1}{2}$ years. The small shaded part of the seventh division shows the night completing $87\frac{1}{2}$ years.

As shown in the first diagram, if each division is taken to show $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours of the night of Parabrahma, perhaps, there will be no room for difference of opinion. Instead, if the second stand point is accepted as correct, it amounts to saying that Brahma's life span is only $87\frac{1}{2}$ years. Since his Liṅga Śarīra is demolished before entering the belly of Śrī Hari, the next $12\frac{1}{2}$ years will not go to his account.

The required data for determining the period of rest during Mahā Pralaya are given here below. Except

the first one all the others are found in the publication by Śrī Gorabāḷa Hanumantha Rao. References to page numbers are noted. It is for the learned to decide the right way.

1. The duration of Pralaya is for a hundred years by Brahma's reckoning;
 In it, eighty seven and a half years
 Elapse without activity; at its end,
 Our Durgādevī wakes up.
 (Vaikunṭha Varṇane of Śrī Vādirājasvāmi – Ch.2. St. 42)
2. The period of final dissolution and rest (Kevala Pralaya) is for the number of years denoted by the word 'Para'.
 (Suḷādi of Vijaya Dāsārya p.80)
3. During the last part of the night, Durgā, the presiding deity of the Vedas, praised the Lord. (p.82)
4. When by Brahma's reckoning seven and a half plus eighty years rolled away, when the last part of the night remained, Durga praised Śrī Hari (p.87)
5. Of the hundred years of that night, one-eighth part still remaining, when Durga praised with the hymn 'Jaya Jaya' (p.12)

* * *

CHAPTER - IV

Process of Creation - Preamble

1. Benefits of Creation

Creation, maintenance and annihilation succeed each other continuously and are meant for the release of Souls from their beginningless bondage. Helping the souls thus is the chief benefit of creation. The creator's partner, Śrīdevī, derives joy from this in a double way-joy of helping others is one; witnessing her Lord's omnipotence in an eight-fold way, *Āṣṭa kartṛtva* and rejoicing is the other. The Creator Himself gets no benefits by the process of creation. His nature is one of Supreme, limitless joy. Helping others is His nature. Creation and the other activities give Him no fatigue; everything is just like play for Him. However, we should not think that He thus sports for His own pleasure.

Śrī Vādirājasvāmi has brought out this meaning nicely-

*This is sport for Him, to Lakṣmī it gives
The wealth of mighty joy; to the jīvas
Good, bad and mediocre results; Therefore
He created this wonderful universe.*

(V. V)

In the Words of Śrī Gopāla Dāsārya-

*All these activities-creation, protection, destruction,
To Manmatha's father, sport, wealth for His queen;
And to the three kinds of souls, eternal fruits.*

And then, it is not merely freeing the souls from the bondage of Liṅga Śarīras, the store houses of Karma; but it is to help the souls to realise their own selves and find expression to their innate abilities. The

good souls know themselves and the 'Original actor within' and thus enjoy pleasures in 'Mukti'. This is the real benefit accruing from the process of creation.

Therefore, the wise ones must listen to the story of creation for their own benefit. Śrī Vādirājasvāmi puts it thus—

*This is the blissful story, to those in this world
This is the sure path to Mukti,
He who listens to it is really blessed.*

Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya advises—

*Night and day brood over this in mind,
The kindest personality, Vijaya Viṭṭhala, will be pleased.*

II. Eternal Things:

Earlier, it has been said that, if we understand what remains after the dissolution of the universe every time, we will be able to know how the universe is created and out of what stuff. During the night of the Pralaya period Śrī Hari rests on a banyan leaf along with Mahālakṣmi, keeping the released and the unreleased souls, the unrecognisable causal matter (Prakṛti or Avyakta) the Praṇava and the time factor within Himself. Therefore the eternal things are the following—Prakṛti, 'Praṇava' and 'Kāla' (time); of course there are the jīvas, the mother of the universe and the Supreme Lord.

Only Śrī Hari is absolutely independent; all others and all else are dependent on Him. He who is well-known for His eightfold activities (Aṣṭa Kartṛtva) is brimming with all auspicious qualities.

Śrī Ramādevi, who is superior to the best of the jīvas by a crore of similar traits and by another crore of rare traits, is far far inferior to the Supreme Lord. Yet He graciously considers her as His partner and has conferred upon her the status of the mother of universes.

Jīvas from Brahmā down to the herbs are of different shades of original natures. They are bound by Liṅga Śarīras from beginningless time and they have to be freed by the course of experiences in the world. Although their original natures are unalterable, they are subjected to the changeful nature which is the property of their physical bodies. Hence they are classed under changeful entities- 'Kṣara puruṣas'. Śrī Ramādevi and Śrī Madhusūdāna belong to the changeless class at all times. They are the highest among the conscious entities.

Praṇava, Prakṛti and Kāla are material by nature; they are of changeful nature. Praṇava expands itself into the Vedas and their concomitants during creation and these merge into the letter 'OM' during Pralaya. The undisturbed and uncognisable state of the three material modes-Sattva, Rājas and Tamas is called 'Avyakta' or 'Mūla Prakṛti'. At the time of creation their state of equilibrium is disturbed and by admixtures they go to form the material cause for the things of the universe. 'Kāla' or Time is eternal but we do not recognise it during the 'Pralaya period'. In creation it is made recognisable.

Another eternal factor is 'Avyākta Ākāśa' - changeless sky. It gives space for the jīvas, for the original causal matter and for 'Praṇava' to stay.

Śrī Ramādevi holds sway over the jīvas, the causal matter and 'Praṇava'. She is considered the mistress of all. Śrī Hari is the Supreme Master.

III. Nature of Souls:

To begin with it is necessary to bear in mind clearly that spirit souls are immutable. In this respect, the generally accepted and most popular Bhagavad Gītā comes to our aid. While teaching Arjuna. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has informed the whole world that it is the body that dies, not the embodied.

*Avināṣi tu tad viddhi yena sarvam idam tatam,
Vināṣam avyayasyāsyā na kaścit kartum arhati.*

The *jīvātmas*, (spirit souls) by whom the whole world is inhabited, are indestructible. These immutable ones, no one can destroy.

That they are changeless is further explained—

*Acchedyoyam adāhyoyam akledyo aśoṣya eva ca,
Nityaḥ sarva gatas sthāṇuḥ acaloyam sanātānaḥ.*

The soul cannot be cut into pieces. Fire cannot burn him. Water cannot wet him. Wind cannot dry him. The *jīva* is beginningless and continues to exist for ever; he is not created. Because he acquires material bodies and loses them, he is said to be born and to die. Really he is not born; nor does he die. He is not confined to definite locations like matter; he can exist anywhere. As he cannot be subjected to any kind of change he is called 'Sthāṇu'. No material has power to move him; therefore he is 'acala'. Being not created and existing from beginningless time he is 'Sanātana'. According to the etymological derivation, *Sanātana ēva sanātānaḥ*, he is understandable by a study of the vedas.

These attributes recounted in the Bhagavad Gīta seem to apply to the Supreme personality of Godhead. True, but they also apply to the individual souls also to some extent. The word '*jīva*' or '*dēhi*' applies to God primarily and to the individual souls secondarily. The statements made in the verse are not meant to show equal status or oneness with the Supreme. That the '*jīvas*' are entirely different from the Master Soul has been declared by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself in the Bhagavad Gīta, leaving no room for doubt. —(Ch. XV)

*Dvāvimau puruṣau lōke kṣarascākṣara eva ca,
Kṣaraḥ sarvāni bhūtāni kūtasthokṣara uchyāte.
Uttamaḥ puruṣatvanyaḥ paramātmetyudahrtaḥ,
Yo loka trayam āviśya bibhartyavyaya īsvaraḥ.*

*Yasmāt kṣaram atītoham akṣarādapi chottamaḥ,
Ato'smi loke vede cā prathitāḥ puruṣottamaḥ.*

Meaning:- The embodied jīvas in this world (Pure śayānāḥ puruṣāḥ) are of two kinds- Kṣara and Akṣara.

The hosts of jīvas, who seem to undergo change, being touched by joy and sorrow on account of the Almighty Lord's powers, are called 'Kṣara Puruṣas' or changeful soul. Śrī Ramādevī, mistress of the three material modes in one undistinguished form (kūṭa) is called 'Akṣara Puruṣa' because she is not affected by joy or sorrow. [Although her forms are purely non-material like those of her Lord, she is said to be embodied because she pervades the entire material world like Śrī Hari in His Virāt form.] The Supreme Being, who is different both from Kṣara Puruṣas and from the Akṣara Puruṣa is considered as the highest among the Puruṣas; He is Puruṣottama. 'Therefore, I am far far from the Kṣara Puruṣas; I am also far above the Akṣara Puruṣa. The wise seers call me Puruṣottama; the eternal Vedas too declare me as Puruṣottama.

Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya has shown the difference between 'Jivātma' and 'Paramātma' thus very clearly-

Jīva is subservient; Hari is

Omnipotent and Happy for ever

Jīva owns nothing, he is bound, knowing a little, powerless and affected by joy and sorrow;

His form atomic, he is lorded over.

All pervasive, the real Doer, full in all respects,

Is Śrī Hari, adored by the Spouse of Sarasvati, praise Him thus.

This main aim of Bhagavad Gīta is to point out the difference between matter and spirit. No doubt, the spirit souls differ from matter in that they have three attributes of consciousness- knowledge, desire, effort; but they have no ability to act on their own accord. For this reason, the kindest Super Person stays in the 'jīvas' as the 'Original Actor' (Bimba) and does things verily according to the innate desires of

the individuals. Therefore the *jīvas* are reflections of Paramātmā (Pratibimba).

“Nahi pratibimbasya kriyā; sa hi bimba kriyayaiv kriyāvan.”

This quotation substantiates the idea stated above. In the ‘Nirguṇa Sāra Sandhi’ of Śrī Harikathāmṛtasāra, Śrī Guru Śrīnivāsa Viṭṭhalārya explains it in such a way that it touches our hearts directly.

Where is the ability to do anything for the one who is simply called ‘Caitanya’?

To act with any of the organs, the *jīvas* have no independence at any time.

The *jīva*’s plight is to be as Śrī Hari, keeps him Śrī Hari being in the form of the *jīva*’s actorship

and binding him with this power, Himself

unaffected, knowing the ripe time,

He clears the *jīvas* debt of Karma.

It is Śrī Hari, with the name and form of Hriṣīkeśa, that acts in the ten organs of the individuals through the agency of other presiding deities.

The *jīva* who is the so-called master of the body he inhabits, thinks that he does everything. Śrī Hari’s unthinkable power to create such illusion through ego is described as binding power (kartṛtva-bandhaka śakti). He knows as to the number of births and deaths that an individual has to go through to get rid of the load of his ‘Karma’. Knowing the ripeness of the *jīva*’s experiences, in right time, He frees him from bondage.

It has been said that the *jīvas* are different from matter and that the karmas arise from material contact. Let us now understand this more clearly.

If we ask any one, “Who are you?” he at once tells us about his name and lineage. Suppose, again we ask, “Not that; who are you?”, it is not easy to answer. The secret is this—Every one talks of this visible body; but

never for a moment considers that there are three other bodies within, standing for 'I'. As mentioned earlier, the spirit soul is qualified by the properties of knowledge, desire and effort. These together have a personal form denoted by the true 'I'. Covering this from beginningless time is the Liṅgaśarīra, the seat of material modes and karmas. Making use of this material Śrī Hari helps the individual to find self-expression. This body drops off at the time of 'Mukti'.

Its nature is explained by Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya thus—

Like husk to the grain is liṅga to jīva,

Surrounding him without contact

Like covering shell, it thus remains by God's will.

It is gross matter; its presiding deity

Is Mahā Lakṣmī;

It continues till a dip in the Virajā.

(H.K.S.)

In order to go through the karmas arising from the Liṅga Śarīra through the agency of deities and demons, Śrī Hari creates another body around it, out of its own stuff. This is called 'Aniruddha Śarīra'. The body that is the pure spirit soul, the Liṅga Śarīra and the Aniruddha Śarīra are not visible to the naked eye or by means of physical instruments. We just see our gross body made of the five gross elements. In the spinal cord of this body (chief nerve running through the vertebral column), there are 101 important fibres. That which is the middlemost is called 'Suṣumnā nāḍī', within this, at the point where we see the depression in the chest, there is the heart-lotus (Hṛtpadma). At the tip of the bud form of the lotus there is one form of Śrī Hari called 'Agréśa'. Near the stalk end is the form called 'Mūleśa'. Upon the pedestal of the flower sits 'Prādeśa' who is the 'Bimba' — the 'Original actor'. Pervading the entire lotus is the form, Puruṣa.

At the lotus feet of 'Prādeśa' sits Mukhya Prāṇa, at whose feet sits the jīva enveloped by the Liṅga and the Aniruddha bodies He is the eternal, unchangeable self.

How very fine the Suṣumnā nāḍi, is and how infinitely small the jīvas form is, described by Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya by a nice illustration.

If the hair is split into thousand parts,

So thin is the Suṣumna nerve

*Stretching straight from base to head in the middle-part of
body. (H.K.S.)*

If a single hair of the head is split into a thousand parts— thousand according to convention meaning many many — it will be superfine, imperceptible by means of the most powerful micro-scope. The 'Suṣumna' nerve fibre right in the middle of the body stretches straight from the bottom of the vertebral column upto the cranium of the head.

Here is something new for the modern scientists to carry on research and experiment. According to ancient Śāstras the commencement of the nervous system is not the brain; but, it is at the bottom of the vertebral column, in between the testicles and the anus. This starting point is known in Yoga Śāstra as 'Mūlādhāra Cakra'. The brain is only the secretariat. The true controlling centre is in the Heart-lotus.

At the mid-point of the mid nerve fibre,

At the base of the heart-lotus, sitting

At the lotus feet of 'Mūleśa' is Pavana; at the tip of his feet,

The jīva finds shelter with

Liṅga and Aniruddha body coverings

Lord Śiva and other deities take care of him.

Another stanza tells about the size of the jīva's form—

A hair at the tip of the horse's tail,

Its end if into hundred parts divided,

*And one such part again into hundred divided, so small,
Beginning with Brahmā and other deities
Down to the smallest gross-bodied soul,
Their sizes are the same; nor more, nor less it becomes, Jīva is
always super- atomic.*

The jīva's size is said to be the size of a single part out of 10,000 divisions made out of the tip of a tiny hair of horse's tail. By the tip of a tiny hair is meant a pin point which has no measurable dimensions. By referring to a single fraction of 10,000 divisions, the Śāstras only want to drive home the idea of the infinitesimal nature – not the exact size.

The 'Suṣumna' which is super microscopic, the heart lotus within it, a nicely decorated 'mantap' on the pedestal of that lotus, there the 'Bimbamūrti' beaming, Śrī Mukhya Prāṇa at his feet, the jīva residing at the tip of Mukhya Prāṇa's feet along with Līṅga and Aniruddha bodies, Śiva and other deities therein—Hearing such description the modern-minds may feel not only extremely surprised; they may even laugh it out.

But the answer may be given in their own language. According to modern scientists, an atom is the smallest unit of matter that cannot be seen. Each such atom is said to consist of a nucleus made of protons and neutrons and there are a few elliptical paths of electrons around it; and the whole is covered by a thin shell. This is readily believed by every one. But, when such wonder can exist in the material world, why not believe and admire the facts of the non-material world which are fine beyond our conception?

Although every one of the jīvas has an original body which is more minute than the minutest there are some with fractional parts and others without such parts. From the gross-bodied (Trṇajīva) upto Mānavagandharvas the jīvas have no fractionable parts. They can be put in one body at one time. From Deva-

gandharvas upto Brahmadeva, they have fractionable parts. The superior ones have larger and larger numbers of such parts. At one and the same time they can exist in different bodies.

If we take into account all kinds of jīvas, from the amoeba type upto the superior most Gods, they can be classified into eighty four lakh species— such is the verdict of the Śāstras. Jīvas may take the bodies of one species or other; but by their present condition we cannot ascertain the species to which they originally belong. We are told that the jīvas belong to particular species even with their original selves.

To whatever species the jīvas may belong— inferior or superior— among them there are those inclined to devotion to God, those that hate God, and those of mixed inclinations.

“Deva, mānava and dānava, thus
There are at all times ———” (H.K.S)

Here ‘devas’ means all the devotee souls whether the most inferior or the most superior. There are devotee souls even among the lowliest such as the gross-bodied. By ‘mānava’ is meant the middling ones found in all grades of souls. ‘Dānavas’ are from the mean insignificant jīvas upto the meanest Kali—those who are destined to eternal Hell.

In ever-day life too we meet with the three types of beings. But even those who are by original nature good, may behave in the filthiest manner until a particular Karma runs its course; and the meanest of the Souls may show good colours while Sāttvic Karma has its course. Therefore we cannot judge the type of soul merely by the present behaviour. Only souls of the topmost rank can see through a soul and tell about it; or those blessed by them can do so.

That souls are eternally of three types is a fact revealed by Vedic literatures; it is not fabricated. This

fact is confirmed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the sixteenth chapter of the Bhagavad gīta. At the beginning He tells briefly about the nature of good souls. Then he describes the attitude of the evil ones in full detail. Finally He says—

*Tānaḥam dviṣataḥ krūrān samsāreṣu narādhamān
Kṣipāmyajasram aśubhān āsurīṣveva yoniṣu.
“Āsurīm yonimāpannā mūḍhā janmani janmani,
Māmaprāpyaiva Kaunteya tato yāntyadhamām gatim.*

Hatred being their very nature, behaving in the most cruel manner the evil souls will be considered the lowliest of human beings. I will make them to be born again and again in families of demoniac nature. These obstinate creatures, not making proper use of their life periods, never reach me at all; and they go to eternal Hell.

The phrase, “mām aprāpyaiva” (not at all coming to me) decisively brands them as demoniac souls by their original nature. Thus, there can be no further argument about it.

In between the two types who are like the North Pole and the South Pole, naturally there must be the middling type.

Śrī Hari resides in all the three types of souls and acts on their behalves. Although His is the actorship, the differences in the nature of actions is only due to the differences among the souls. This has been explained by Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya with a good illustration.

*The Sun's rays that fall on precious stones
Show only the different colours of each of them
Without alteration to those who look at them.
The spouse of Ramādevi, in the three worlds,
stays in the three kinds of Souls
And sports in accordance with their natures and karmas.*

Śrī Hari, who is ever in the company of the jīvas, makes them taste the fruits of their karmas, Himself remaining aloof.

“Dvāsuparṇā sayujā sakhāyau —————

The meaning of the above ‘Śruti’ is brought out in simple language (Kannāḍa) by Śrī Jaganātha Dāsārya

In the tree called the body, two birds

Dwell always without parting company,

In great friendship, the jīva bird eats the fruits of Karma,

Śrī Hari partakes of only His own juice.

‘His own juice’ needs to be understood rightly. In everything Śrī Hari is like that thing. In the fruit juice He is like the juice; He is not the juice. It is only when He takes within Himself His own form of the juice that the material juice is taken into the material body and its effect carried to the embodied soul. Hence He is called ‘Sāra bhokta’.

IV. Gradations Among Souls:

‘Superior souls’ means those who have better qualifications; ‘inferior souls’ means those with lesser qualifications. It also means those with greater abilities and lesser abilities. Such gradations of souls exist among all the three types. So it is said in the Vedic literature:

Among those who are eligible for ‘Mukti’ (residence in God’s Abode), the ablest of the jīvas and their leader is Brahmadeva. Mukhya Prāṇa or the Lord of the Winds is equally able. The lowest among them are the gross-bodied souls and those of tinier abilities (Tṛṇa jīvas)

The leader of the middle class is Purañjana. In this group also there are gradations and those of least ability are ‘tṛṇa jīvas’.

Among those designated for eternal Hell, Kali is the leader. The weakest of the third type of souls are called ‘Anākhyāta asurāḥ’— the insignificant demons. Weaker than the weakest are ‘tṛṇa jīvas’ in the form of thorny plants and the like.

Good souls are graded from the lowest to the highest according to better qualities and abilities. But the evil souls are graded from the weaklings among sinners to the worst ones. Kali and his wife Alakṣmi are the worst criminals; hence they are the leaders of their group. The diabolical qualities of Kali are thus described in Śrī Harikathāmṛtasāra—

*“Sinful souls to compare with Kali
Are not to be found in the three worlds;
He is the seat for nine kinds of hatred
In hostility and in acquisition of gold,
In the harlot, in gambling and in drink,
And in falsehood he eters and deludes
Knowing thus the wise ones should manage to avoid him.”*

Just like the deities, Kali and his retinue are also lodged in bodies of all individuals. They have their chance when evil karmas come up and they spoil the individual's mind. If this is remembered one can avoid their influence by good thoughts and good company.

Along with Brahmā, equalling him in the process of realization over a period of one Brahmakalpa, is Kali; but his realization is the wrong way. After this Kali gets rid of his Līṅga Śārīra and finishes his course, another individual of equal capacity for evil will be made to occupy the post of Kali. There are many demon leaders who are some what better than Kali, but still of very bad nature. The names of some of them are given here below—

Vipracitti, Kālanemi (the one born as Kamsa, master of the wrong type of ego), Madhu and Kaitābha, Aila, Hiraṇyakaśipu, Maṇimanta, Baka, Tāraka, Śambara, Sālva, Hidimbaka, Bāṇāsura, Dvāpara, Namuci, Ilvala, Vātāpi, Keśi, Dhēnuka, Trṇāvarta, Lavānāsura, Ariṣṭa, Hamsa, Dibhika, Vena, Pauṇḍraka, jarāsandha, Rukmi, Kimmīra, Kālakeyas, etc. Those mentioned earlier are greater than those mentioned later in respect of their cruel natures.

The gradations among the good souls are briefly mentioned in the 'Arohana Tāratamya Sandhi' of Śrī Harikathāmṛtasāra (XXV). Its gist—

The gross-bodied and the insect jīvas are better than those residing in material objects like mountains. The animals are still better. Then come the human Souls. Among them the Sūdras, the Vaiśyas and the Kṣatriyas come one after the other. Brāhmaṇas engaged in holy rituals excel them all. Still better are Mānava Cakravartis and Mānava Gandharvas.

After the mānava groups come the divine beings of higher and higher orders in the following manner Devagandharvas, one hundred crore ṛṣis—less one hundred and their wives. Pitṛdevas, ninety ṛṣis, the Tumburas, one hundred Apsara dames like Ūrvaśī, Ājānaja devas, ten thousand sons of Agni (who were born as Śrī Kṛṣṇa's 10,000 wives) among whom 'Kaśeru and others, 74 in number, are graded higher), the ladies of 'Vraja' equalling Śrī Kṛṣṇa's wives, Puṣkara - head of the Karma department, Śanideva, Uṣādevi - wife of the Aśvinidevas with double form, Budha, Svāhādevī, not-very-significant deities and their equals, Parjanya the lord of cloud land, Anirudha's wife Uṣa, Gangādevi, Saujñādevi, Śyāmalādevi, Rohiṇīdevi. After them, Pṛthu, Nahuṣa, Śaśibindu, Priyavrata, Parīkṣit and other divine emperors (karmaja devas); among these Bali and six others who occupied Indra's seat for short whiles and eight of the Pitṛs are considered higher. Higher still are - Kubera, Viṣvaksēna, Gaṇapati, Aśvinidevas, Miṭra, Tārādevi, Niruruti, Prāvahīdevi, seven ṛṣis - Marīci, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vaśiṣṭha, Atri, Āngirasa, Sanaka brothers, Viśvāmitra, Vaivasvata Manu, Agni, Bhṛgumuni, Prasūtīdevi, Nārada, Varuṇa, Yama, Candra, Sūrya, Śatarūpādevi, Pravha Vāyu, Aniruddha, Brhaspati, Manu, Dakṣa, Śacīdevi, Ahamkarikapṛāṇa. After these, still more qualified and

abler deities - Indra, Kāma, Pārvatīdevi, Vāruṇīdevī, Sauparnīdevi, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's eight queens - Jāmbavati being superior to the rest of them; then, Rudra, Śeṣa and Garuḍa. Still far better and belonging to a special cadre of their own are - Bhāratīdevi, Sarasvatīdevi, Vāyudeva and Brahmadeva.

Compared with the high qualities and abilities possessed by Brahmā and Vāyu, Śrī Ramādevi is superior to them by a crore counts. She also excels them by another crore qualities not possessed by them. Hence she holds the position of the mother of the Universes.

Śrī Hari is at the top of all. This point is expressed in a very graphic manner thus—

*“Śrī Mukunda's queen Mahā Lakṣmī's
Greatness is beyond description; Brahmā
And other great gods she creates, looks after and puts
Each one of them in respective posts
She knows no old age or death; and
She always adores Acyuta as her Master.*

In the 'Ambhraṇi Sūkta' Śrīdevi says, “Yam Kāmāye tam tamugram kṛṇomi tam ṛṣim tam sumedham.” It means, “By the grace of Śrī Hari, I can make any one hold the post of Rudra or Brahmā and to become the greatest of Yogis if I choos.” But she derives her powers from Śrī Hari.

*Mahā Lakṣmi, with such great ability,
Compared to the countless qualities of Ananta
Never equals Him even by a fraction at any time
Lakṣmi who is beyond the bounds of Space and Time,
Only in His heart has to find
Shelter; where is there any equal to His great glory!*

(H.K.S.).

That Śrī Hari is far far superior to all others is therefore beyond all doubt.

V. R̥ju Gaṇa - The Spotless Souls:

How Bhāratī Devi, Sarasvatī devi, Vāyudeva and Brahmā form a class by themselves will now be explained.

Among the Jīvas eligible to enter God's Heaven there are four different cadres— Karmayogis, Jñānayogis, Vijñānayogis and Bhaktiyogis. The Bhaktiyogis need not acquire 'Jñāna' and 'bhakti' by means of 'Karma'. Yet they engage themselves in rituals with full knowledge and great devotion. Bhakti is their chief quality. Their devotion to God is inborn and quite natural; it is like a child loving its mother. Śrī Harikathāmṛtasāra speaks of them as follows—

*“Commencing from the Sovereign of Satyaloka
Down to the hundred chief deities, all
Are always considered as Bhaktiyogis
Among these Bhaktiyogis, by virtue of
Qualities like pure devotion and supreme knowledge
Greater than the greatest are Brahma, Vāyu, Vāṇi and
Vāgdevi (Bhārati).”* (H.K.S.)

The hundred chief deities are Garuḍadeva down to Gaṇapati.

There is particular class of Jīvas known as the 'R̥jus' who are eligible to hold the posts of Brahmā and Vāyu and their wives.

They are known by their special qualities. Each one of them undergoes the course of realization, during a long long period of two hundred Brahma Kalpas; they take birth in the different lokas in different species. After one hundred Brahma Kalpas they have a clear darśan of the Bimba (Original Actor) in their hearts although they are able to visualise him less clearly from beginning- less time.

The qualities of R̥jus are enumerated herein-

*To the group of R̥jus, qualities like Bhakti
Are inborn and natural; gradually they develop
Until the post of Brahmā is reached, devotion to 'Bimba' goes
on increasing.*

They are free from sinful acts;

*On them, the ugly effects of the three material modes never
make impact.*

While these modes do affect Rudra, Indra and rest.

(H.K.S.).

By increase in Bhakti and 'Bimba Darśana' is meant potent capacities becoming latent; however, there is no variation in abilities. The R̥jus are not touched by the sinful effects of this world - none of the three modes affect them adversely. They are therefore 'Acchinna Bhaktas', for whom there is no break or fickleness in their devotion. All the others are 'Chinna Bhaktas', in spite of a clear vision of the 'Bimba' (Aparokṣa), their devotion may flicker or may even be extinguished for some period on account of 'Prārabdha Karma'.

For all the jīvas, until a clear vision of the 'Bimba' is vouchsafed, 'Sancita' and 'Āgāmi' Karmas bother. Sancita Karma is what is gathered and left unused in a previous birth - such karmas remain heaped up like mountains. What further karmas they might breed are Āgāmi karmas. These two kinds of karmas will be burnt down by 'Bimba Aparokṣa'; but 'Prārabdha karmas' must be necessarily gone through, although there may be occasional remission by the grace of God.

The flawless R̥jus have no sinful Prārabdha Karmas. Therefore their courses are the happiest. After 'Bimba Aparokṣa' they spend one hundred Brahma Kalpas of supreme happiness which amounts to the joy within their own selves since the concord between the 'Bimba' and the 'Pratibimba' is perfect.

Taking the case of Vāyudeva, Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya says—

To this Samīra, one hundred period of Prārabdha bhoga of supreme Happiness;

With great ease he becomes the master of the worlds.

(H.K.S.).

Samīra means the chief of the wind gods, whose post is acquired at the end of a course of 198 Brahma Kalpas. 'Bimba Aparokṣa' takes place at the end of 100 Brahma Kalpas in the case of the R̥juyogis. From the 101st upto the end 200 Kalpas it is the happiest 'Prārabdha' course. The very auspicious names with which a R̥ju is designated during the second hundred Kalpas, we find in the Vāmana Purāṇa. Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya has collected them in a few stanzas of Śrī Harikathāmṛtasāra. Those memorable names are—Kalki, Sutēja, Dāsa, Dharma, Adharma Khaṇḍana, Varcasvi, Khaṣaṇa, Sādhu, Mahīpati, Sad-dharmajña, Dharmaja, Sampūrṇa, Śuci, Vaikṛta, Añjana, Sarṣapa, Kharpata, Śraddha, Sandhyāta, Vijñāna, Mahavijñāna, Kīrtana, Samkīrna, Kath-hana, Buddha, Jaya, Mahattara, Sumahattara, Vīrya, Suvīrya, Medhāvi, Rantimna, Manu, Moda, Pramoda, Santasa, Ananda, Santuṣṭa, Cārvaṅga, Cārusubāhu, Cārupada, Sulocana, Sārasvata, Suvīra, Prjña, Kapi, Alampata, Sarvajña, Sarvajit, Mitra, Pāpavināśaka, Dharmavineta, Śārada, Oja, Tapasvi, Sutapasvi, Te-
jasvi, Dānasuśīla, Yajñakartā, Yajñasukartā, Yajvi, Yāgakarta, Prāṇa, Trāṇa, Amaṛṣi, Upadeṣṭā, Māraka, Kālakrīḍana, Sukarta, Sukālajña, Kālasusūcaka, Kalisamharta, Kali, Kāla, Śyāmareta, Sadārata, Subala, Sahā, Sadākapi, Samyajjñāna, Daśakula, Śrotavya, Samkīrtitavya, Mantavya, Kavya, Draṣṭavya, Susakhya, Gantavya, Kravya, Smartavya, Savya, Subhavya, Svargavya, Bhāvya, Jñātavya, Vak-tavya, Gavya, Lātavya, Vāyu and Brahmā.

It is stated that one earns great merit by remembering and reciting these divine names—

*That which is said in the Vāmana Purāṇa,
The series of auspicious names of this great Personage,
If one devoutly remembers and recites every day,
The Consort of Śrīdevī their wished for
Desires grants and in His three Abodes
He puts them and gives them endless joy.*

Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya has picturised the greatness of the R̥jus in this manner—

*Listen to the account of R̥jus daily,
They are the best of the best jīvas,
They have no bad deeds to perform,
With just a little 'Raja' having plenty of 'Sattva',
Taking separate bodies in the three worlds,
They engage in activities till their Brahma Kalpa ends.*

The material bodies of the R̥jus are made up mostly of the 'Sattva' mode with just a little of the 'Rajas'. They have no sinful tendencies. They go on with their devotional activities until they occupy the post of Brahma and retire.

When the post of Brahmā is attained it is the last material body.

That person has then four hands; he holds the rosary and holy bowl,

Rides upon the 'Hamsa' bird (Swan)

And has Vāṇīdevī for his queen.

It is the great opportunity to create—

Just as a 'R̥ju' male comes up to the post of Brahmā, a 'R̥ju' female attains the post of Sarasvatī (Vāṇī). They are blessed with the great opportunity of creating the worlds.

*They are the main promoters of Karma in the born Jīvas,
Next only to the Lord of the Lotus - navel,
The full benefits of Sacrificial rites go to them
They reap the sweet fruits of what is done by the people.*

Śrī Hari (Padmanābha) is the sole promoter of all karmas performed by the embodied persons. Next to Him, the chief subservient promoters of all meritorious acts are Brahmā and Sarasvati. Since Śrī Hari does not partake of the fruits of Karma although he receives and distributes, the entire benefits of devotional acts are enjoyed by this illustrious couple. The embodied performer gets a small share according to his ability if only he remembers Śrī Hari's actorship and lays down his acts at His lotus feet.

*Even when they take birth on this earth
Their actions are never touched with pride; in every one
They see the Lotus-feet of Vijayaviṭṭhala and derive ecstatic
joy.*

.....
..... Their perception is Supreme

.....
*Off and on, they don't land in doubt or untruth,
The Mercy of 'Madhuvairi' is greatest upon them,
Their only lack is the lag in reaching the post of Brahmā.*

Their insight is always right and clear.

*Their ken is always undisurbed;
They don't seek office for selfish ends,
But they accept it in the service of Śrī Hari.*

Thus, the noblest souls in Śrī Hari's creation are the Ṛjus.

VI. Four Kinds of Creation:

Creation is of four kinds - 'Ātma Sṛṣṭi' (Self-creation), 'Parādhīnāvāpti Sṛṣṭi' (Assisted creation), 'Mīśra Sṛṣṭi' (Contact Creation), 'Kevala Sṛṣṭi' (Gross Creation).

Ātma Sṛṣṭi:

Sulādi of Śrī Vijaya Dāśārya:

*From one light another, still another, likewise,
From His original form other forms and forms of incarnation*

of Śrī Hari. That man is certainly of demoniac stock."
(H.K.S.)

Śrī Tāmraparṇi Ānandatīrthācārya has, in his *Sat-tatva Ratnamāla*, described the great glory of Śrī Hari who takes different forms and yet remains the same everywhere.

“Sarveṣvapi hi rūpeṣu dvādyanantānanta bāhukaḥ.
Cetanāntasthamārabhya sarvagāntaḥ svarūpān. (268)

“ Sarve nityāḥ śāsvatāśca dehāstasya parātmanah,
Paramānanda sandoha jñānamātrāśca sarvaśah. (269)

“Deśataḥ Kālatonantā vṛdhi hrāsa vivarjitāḥ,
Tathaiva guṇatonantāḥ sarve sarveśvaresvarāḥ. (270)

“Samasta bhoga bhoktāraḥ svabhoktāraśca sarvaśah
Mahālakṣmī mukhāmbhoja madhvāsvādana tatparaḥ. (271)

“Sarva lakṣaṇa sampūrṇāḥ sarvākārāḥ sadākhilāḥ,
Sarva varṇāśca sarvepi sarvakārya pravartakāḥ.” (272)

Purport:- In any one of the forms assumed by Śrī Hari all other forms exist. One head to countless number of heads, two hands to countless number of hands—like this, all kinds of limbs and the forms to which they belong find place in any single form. This is on account of His mysterious powers which we can never think of. He exists with His innumerable forms within the very tiny form of each individual soul; He exists in the whole universe similarly and is also beyond it. All the innumerable forms of the Lord do exist at all times although He shows only particular forms in particular situations. But His forms are not like our material bodies; they are of the stuff of pure bliss and consciousness. They are not subjected to change of any sort. Vāmana, no doubt, changed Himself into Trivikrama. This is from our point of view. But both the forms—Vāmana and Trivikrama—exist always; they are changeless. Our intellects are limited by the Space and the Time factors; hence it is very difficult to grasp the idea of Śrī Hari's forms. We must ponder deeply over the Vedic state-

ments about it. We should also understand that there is no distinction between each quality and another in any of His forms. Each quality has the potentialities of every other quality. The Advaita Philosophy perfectly fits His case. All edible things of this world are accepted by Him; He receives and distributes. But He tastes His own food forms found in the food stuffs offered to Him or eaten by creatures. He is always eager to suck the honey in the lotus face of Mahālakṣmi—not for His sake, but to enhance her joy. All sorts of colours are found in all the forms of the Lord; but He shows only particular colours in the particular forms that He manifests. Each one of His forms can perform the functions of all other forms.

Parādhīnāvāpti Sṛṣṭi:

Mahālakṣmi, being subservient to Śrī Hari, easily takes different forms to match the forms of her Lord, by His grace and at His Will. This is known as 'Parādhīnāvāpti Sṛṣṭi'. In each one of such forms Śrī Hari dwells with a smiliar female form, 'the original, or 'Bimba'. Śrī Ramādevi's forms are like reflections (Pratibimbas'). Therefore it is 'assisted creation'.

Miśra Sṛṣṭi:

Later on, when the eternal soul is brought into contact with the external matter, It is Miśra Sṛṣṭi.

(V.S.)

Creation is there to help the bound souls to realize themselves. For this purpose, bringing the soul into contact with matter for the sake of worldly experience is 'Miśra Sṛṣṭi' or 'Contact creation'. The soul is changeless; yet, being brought into contact with the material world, opportunity is created to feel the pinch of changeful phases. Śrī Hari, who dwells in the Spirit Souls as well as in the material objects of the world, puts the soul under illusion by His unthinkable power and makes the embodied one to think that he himself is the actor. He is under the influence of the 'I' and

'Mine' feeling—the Ego. Śrī Hari, 'Bimba' or the real actor is therefore praised as 'Jagannāṭaka Sūtradhāri'

Kevala Sṛṣṭi:

—“..... Kevala Sṛṣṭi is
Giving shapes to things to be destroyed later.”

Using the modifications of Primeval matter and creating new things is called 'Kevala Sṛṣṭi'. It is like making a pot out of mud, drying and baking, and beautifying with colours. 'To be destroyed later' suggests that the things of this world are destroyed during 'Mahā Pralaya'.

Mixing the three primordial elements, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas and creating the basic materials such as Mahat tattva and the like is called 'Vikṛta Sṛṣṭi'. Creating the 'Brahmāṇḍa and the worlds within it is called 'Vaikṛta Sṛṣṭi'.

Just as the primordial matter ('Mūla Prakṛti'), which is lorded over by Mahālakṣmi, consists of the three elements—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, the Liṅga śarīras of the souls also consist of those three elements. Just as Mahat tattva and further modifications are created out of 'Mūla Prakṛti', similar modifications are created out of the Liṅgaśarīras too to form outer and outer coverings. This also comes under 'Kevala Sṛṣṭi'. It is only through such modifications that contact between the souls and the external world is established.

Expanding the syllable OM and creating the heaps of Vedas and creating the cognisable factors of Time are also to be considered as 'Kevala Sṛṣṭi'.

In the following chapters the 'Kevala Sṛṣṭi' of 'Praṇava' and Kāla (Time) will be taken up first, and then 'Mīśra Sṛṣṭi' and 'Kevala Bhautika Sṛṣṭi' will be dealt with. Since the creation of the universe follows the line of Vedic descriptions and since all things are subjected to the time factor, this procedure is followed.

Paramātma, Jñānātma - with these eight forms-
 The Lord resides in Vedic literatures
 Great sages, by the repetition of this mantra
 Quickly reached My Eternal Abode
 Thou, the lotus-born, listen; from 'Ah'
 The sixteen vowels were born in their order
 They are presided by the comely forms Aja, Ānanda, Indreśa
 and the like-
 Eight in number, born of 'Viśva'
 From 'U', 'Ma', Nāda, Bindu and Ghoṣa - ka, ca, ta, ta, pa
 The five groups of consonants came out;
 Listen Brahmā, by the power of the Lord's
 Forms - Taijasa, Prājña, Turiya, Ātma and Antarātma
 The consonant group consists of twenty five letters
 Out of 'Śānta' the letter 'ya' 'ra' 'la' and 'va'
 Know thou, from 'Atiśānta' - 'śa', 'ṣa', 'sa', 'ha' and 'la'
 These five letters were born
 In them are the Lord's forms-
 Paramātma, Jñānātma and such
 Nine inimitable forms shining.

From the passage quoted we see that it is a translation of the 'Prakāśa Samhitā', as it were, wherein the Supreme Lord is telling His son Brahmā about the expansion of the letter 'Om', The passage explains how 'Om' consists of eight limbs - letters 'A', 'U' and 'MA' and the five other ways of uttering sounds—Nāda, Bindu, Ghoṣa, Śānta and Atiśānta. These eight are material aspects and they get their properites manifested by the eight forms of the Lord - Viśva, Taijasa, Prājña, Turiya, Ātma, Antarātma, Paramātma and Jñānātma. The passage also tells how the eight vowels come out, then the twenty five classified consonants, and then the remaining nine consonants. Altogether, with the long sounds, nasal and half uttered, there are sixteen vowels and thirty four consonants. The total of the alphabet in Sanskrit language is therefore fifty. There is an additional letter by the combination of 'Ka' and 'Ṣa' resolving into 'Kṣa'. Thus fifty one letters.

(Among all the alphabets, you can easily see Me in the letter 'A').

As said before, for the voicing of every letter there are different parts and different touches in the vocal system. And for the purpose of utterance, there are different deities for the different letters, all under the control of deities presiding over the mind. In every one of these are the different forms of the Supreme Lord as the main Source.

Such of the Haridāśas as Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya, with god-vision, have visualised the divine forces behind the material workings of the alphabets and have rejoiced.

*The group of 'A' has eight; then, the five groups,
And adding 'Kṣa', fifty one
Meaningful letters appear. Their presence
Is found everywhere. Vowels added,
They form four hundred and twenty letters
When these letters are multiplied,
Understand, the various letter combinations,
At thirty five to each consonant like 'Ka',
You may count carefully and see
Fourteen thousand seven hundred they are;
The Lover of Śrīdevi, Vijayavittalarāya,
Defends those who thus contemplate.*

The eight vowels beginning with 'A' convert themselves into sixteen with elongated sounds. The classified letters are twenty five. Including 'Kṣa' the alphabets are fifty one.

अ आ इ ई उ ऊ ऋ ॠ ए ऐ ओ औ अं अः क ख ग घ ङ च छ
ज झ ञ ट ठ ड ढ ण त थ द ध न प फ ब भ म य र ल व श ष स ह ळ क्ष

These alphabets fill all space by their utterance. The consonants, combined with vowels, make a total of 420 letters. If we take into account all sorts of combinations including the doubling of letters, we arrive at 14,700 letter forms. This number includes the multiplied, the doubled, and the elongated letters. (Elon-

gated - Ex. 'Rāmaaa!'). There are as many forms of the Lord in them as there are letter combinations.

*More is there to know; half sounds uttered
 These themselves make innumerable sounds;
 With these all, the Upaniṣads, all Vedas and Purāṇas,
 Pleasing Pāncarātra, Brahmatarka, Rāmāyaṇa,
 Instructive Bhāgavata, Yoga Śāstra, Bhārata,
 Dharma Mīmāṃsa for all occasions, all 'Siddhāntas'
 Are created; and thus distributed are Vedic and utilitarian
 sounds;
 All are linked by the knower with the presence of Brahmā and
 Śrī Hari,
 Morning and evening not forgetting,
 All such words as 'grief' or 'base'
 Therefore, Śrī Hari is denoted by Omkāra'
 Which is the treasure of all sounds."*

By the modes of utterance, the sound forms become countless; and they are impregnated by the countless forms of Śrī Hari. All the Vedic literatures are formed by these sound forms, which are therefore called 'Vaidik' sounds. The words spoken generally, and the cries of beasts and birds and insects are all 'Laukika' sounds.

But no sound form is meaningless, nor is futile. Every one of them contains the forms of Bhāratīdevi and Vāyudeva, Sarasvatīdevi and Brahmadeva and in them are the forms of the Supreme Being. Therefore every sound brims with the gestures of Śrī Hari. Every sound has reference to some aspect of the working of the universe and it contains the praise of the Lord's glory. Therefore a knower relates even such words as 'Duhkha' (Sorrow) and 'Tuccha' (Mean) to the Supreme Being; and he rejoices. In this connection Sri Vijaya Dāsārya says—

*Let anyone blame or spit,
 Let any one rebuke or reward,
 Let any one kick or save,
 Let any one one praise or push,*

Let any one feed or clothe;
 Let any one chastise,
 Let any one defame,
 Let any one crush,
 Let any one say anything-
 All, all are the names of God!
 He is a freed soul who thus knows.

A 'Knower' of this status has perfect knowledge as to how Śrī Hari, bearing all names, uses such names in the conduct of the affairs of the universe. Such a 'knower' is 'Sthita Prajña.' It is he who knows the full significance of 'Prajña' or 'Omkāra. Sri 'Śukamaharṣi' and 'Jadabharata' may be taken as examples of those thus knew and lived. We may see many more of this category in Srimad Bhāgavatam.

But that it is not possible for any one to know all that the 'Prajña' indicates has been thus said by Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya-

One and fifty alphabets
 Are names of the one Supreme
 Even Ramā, Brahmā and such
 Cannot know Him fully-
 Understanding thus makes life fruitful."

II. Expansion of Time:

Time is an eternal factor, whether we recognise it or not. Making Time recognisable into smaller and bigger divisions by certain devices is the creation of Time. As the expansion of Time is related to the modifications of matter, it is also known as 'Kevala Sṛṣṭi'.

The denizens of this world recognise Time by the movements of planets like the Sun, the Moon, Jupiter and others. It is calculated, beginning from the minutest fraction right up to the life span given to Brahmā.

Sri Vijaya Dāsārya has clearly described the glory of the Supreme Being who, being the Time, goes by the name Time. He has also related how one can recognise

the nature of Time and how to free oneself from the bondage imposed by it.

Śrī Viṣṇu, transcending the Time factor, the minutest and the vastest

*Time factor urging, from beginningless time
Being called 'Time', all the souls
He keeps in the cycle of the world,
And makes them suffer keeping the Time factor in view*

.....
*He is with Time, but not bound;
He who thus contemplates morn, noon and eve.
Knows past, present and future. Be he born in any species,
Lives happily with his kin, fearless of Time
Time is flawless; on account of relationship
It is called auspicious or inauspicious, you see
He who is praised by 'Kālakandhara' for
All kinds of Time is Master, know thus; from bondage He frees
you*

*Trust the saving of feet of Vijayaviṭṭhala and live in the light
of knowledge with full devotion.*

Starting from the minutest thinkable factor of time, covering the life spans of the simplest kinds of living creatures as well as the longest life span of Brahmā, Śrī Viṣṇu resides in the various Time factors with innumerable forms and supports the activities of this world. As He takes different minute forms in the smallest of the factors, He takes bigger and bigger forms in the bigger factors such as day, fortnight, month, season, half-year and year; and He assumes the names of those factors.

It is customary to consider time as auspicious or inauspicious while performing religious duties. But, really speaking, Time by itself is flawless. By its relationship with evil factors it will be considered inauspicious. For example, 'Rāhukāla' is not propitious because of Rāhu's connection with the particular fraction of Time. For those, who bear in mind that Śrī Hari is

the background of all kinds of Time, every moment is really auspicious. Many have heard the verse—

Tadeva lagnam sudinam tadeva.....

Lakṣmipate tenghriyugam smarāmi.

This idea has been declared with great emphasis by Sri Jagannātha Dāsārya in one of the verses in Sri Harikathāmṛtasāra thus-

"Every fraction of Time is propitious."

(Its Kannada equivalent- "Sarva Kālavu parva Kālavu")

Any time when Śrī Hari is pleased with the performance of our duties is certainly the most auspicious time. To those, who remember the Master of Time and lay down their actions at His lotus feet, all time is propitious.

Śrī Purandara Dāsārya has expressed this truth in his own inimitable way—

*Today is the auspicious day,
Today's week name is the most auspicious,
The star of this day is auspicious,
The 'Yoga' today is auspicious,
The 'Karaṇa' today is auspicious,
Today Śrī Purandara Viṭṭhala
Has graced us with His Presence.*

(The time of the day, the week name of the day, the star of the day, the 'yoga' of the day and the 'Karaṇa' of the day—these are the five important items to be taken into consideration while observing religious duties.)

Another song of Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya also tells us about the supremacy of the creator in the form of Time; but the song is very meaningful—

*"I am your servant,
I am your servant,*

*Original reads thus—
"Dāsoham tava
Dāsoham tava*

I am your servant,
Always your servant.

Dāsoham tava
Dāsoham tava

You are without evil traits,

I am your servant,

I am your servant

You are in Time, you control time,

You are above Time, you know past, present, future

You motivate Time, you put a stop to Time,

You create Time, you are in the form of Time.

I am your servant, your servant."

Śrī Hari exists in the divisions of Time and is Master of it, but he is not bound by the Time factor. If He so minds, He can make Time to retrace its pace; He can make the Sun visible at midnight. It is He who gives a start to countable Time and it is He who subjects it to dissolution. To those who accept His servitude there is no fear to Time.

In the following Sulādi Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya acquaints us with the divisions of Time.

Two 'anus' one 'paramāṇu'; three such ones—

One 'tryaṇu' its name;

This itself is called by the name, trasareṇu-

Conceivable by humans, in the sun-streak through the 'roof hold',

The time taken by dust particle to pass

Three trasareṇus a 'ṛṭi'; three ṛṭis

Go by the name one 'vedha';

Three vedhas one 'lava'; three lavas

You count as a 'nimeṣa'; three nimeṣas

Make a 'kṣaṇa'; five kṣaṇas put together

They go by the name a 'kāṣṭha';

There is no reason to doubt, fifteen kāṣṭhas

You should consider as one 'laghu',

Fifteen laghus form one 'nāḍī';

Eight such nāḍis go to make one 'yāma';

If you count four such yāmas

It is sun-set time-twelve hours are gone;

Twelve such hours-the four yāmas of night;

*The two together make one 'day' or vāsara
Of five aspects, with 'Tithi', 'Tāra' 'Yoga' and 'Karaṇa'.
This is considered a 'day' by human count;
This the beginning unit for all auspicious religious duties.*

In the mud-built houses of olden times there used to be round openings in the roofs to serve as ventilators. They were protected by wooden bars through which sun beams poured down in streaks. One could see dust particles crossing such sun streaks. The time taken to pass the lateral space occupied by a streak of sunlight is considered as 'trasareṇu' or 'tryaṇu'. Then the count is given upto twenty four hours making a day for human beings. Three trasareṇus make one 'ṛṭi', three ṛṭis, one 'vedha'; three vedhas, one 'lava'; three lavas, one nimeṣa (time taken for the winking of the eye); three nimeṣas, one 'kṣaṇa'; five 'kṣaṇas' one 'kāṣṭha'; fifteen kāṣṭhas, one laghu'; fifteen laghus, one 'nādi'; eight nādis, one 'yāma'; four yāmas, one bright part of the day-twelve hours; and four yāmas, one night. The two together are taken as the starting unit for counting auspicious periods for religious duties. The sum total of twenty four hours contains five aspects- 'Vāsara' name of the week day; 'Tithi' name of each day of the fortnight; 'Nakṣatra' star of the day; and two others- 'Yoga' and 'Karaṇa'.

It is not easy to comprehend the smallest units of Time, such as 'Paramāṇu; yet, we may try to imagine. Of course, we know that modern scientists have created instruments to record very very minute fractions of Time.

In order to aid our imagination in this respect Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya has given a very fine illustration.

*The minutest of the Time factor to consider,
You must imagine this way-
Put together a hundred thousand tender lotus petals,
Quickly pierce through by the needle end,
Each petal, though separate from each other,
Holes are made in every one of them;*

See you that there is the first, the last and all others between,
 Requiring separate time divisions to pass through-
 It is because each of the thin ones occupies separate space
 We can surely imagine, though beyond worlds
 Each petal bears the mark denoting divisions of time and
 space;
 And if thus you stretch imagination,
 It goes beyond the 'Paramāṇu' division of Time
 Śrī Hari's glory is sublime.

Śrī Hari's glory is here specially praised because
 He is in the minutest division of Time, helping and
 watching all the activities in the universe.

Keeping the Time divisions thus in view, the In-
 dian Almanacs indicate the auspicious times in relation
 to the movements and positions of stars and planets.

There are many who say that they have no faith
 in the influence of such Time factors indicated by the
 Almanac; however, the śāstras do not mean to put the
 unwilling load on their backs. Those who evince faith,
 they tread the path of wisdom; others roll down the
 capricious path of 'Karma' - until they grow wise! Hav-
 ing such wanton folks in view, the Urdu proverb says,
 "There is the horse; the field is wide!" For the same
 reason, Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya has said, "I shall tell only
 those who lend their ears."

In the 'Kalpasādhana Sandhi' of
 Śrī Harikathāmrtasāra, the divisions of time are given
 as follows—

5 Kṣaṇas	—	1 Tṛṭi
50 Tṛṭis	—	- 1 Lava
2 Lavas	—	1 Nimeṣa
8 Nimeṣas	—	1 Mātra
2 Mātras	—	1 Guru
10 Gurus	—	1 Prāṇa
6 Prāṇas	—	1 Paḷa
60 Paḷas	—	1 Ghaṭika
60 Ghatikas	—	1 Day

We should not take the different ways of naming time divisions as contradictory because they are variously considered with reference to the stars and the different planets.

Having first appraised us of the minor divisions of the day, Śrī Dāsārya then tells about the fortnight, the month, the season, the half-year and the year. He says that a year by human count is one day for the divine beings. The northern course of the sun is day for the gods; the southern course is night. Similarly, our bright fortnight is night for the Pitṛs and our dark fortnight is day for them.

Now we are told about the time divisions of 'Yugas' and 'Kalpas'

*There three and one yugas by human count,
I shall now give details of these;
For the first yuga, seventeen lakh,
And twenty eight thousand you reckon;
For the second, twelve lakh,
Ninety six thousand years do roll;
For the third yuga, eight lakh plus
Sixty four thousand years go by;
In this way you calculate for the fourth,
It will take in four lakh, thirty two thousand;
Now summing up together,
The number of years encompassed by yugas,
It is forty three lakh, twenty thousand,
Different are the meaningful names of the four yugas;
They are 'Kṛta,' 'Treta', 'Dvāpara' and 'Kali'.
Let those with pure hearts listen;
The spouse of Śrīdevī, our Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya,
Bears the names of the four yugas, you must know.*

By human reckoning, Kṛtayuga has 17,28,000 years; Tretāyuga has 12,96,000 years; Dvāparayuga has 8,64,000 years; and Kaliyuga has 4,32,000. The total number of years that go to make up the four yugas 43,20,000. The Lord of the universe takes the names

the four yugas and goes with them to see that the living conditions of His creatures are befitting the changing times.

In the sum total of the four yugas Śrī Hari resides with a different name-it is 'Mahāyuga'. In the same way He bears different names and forms in the Manu Kalpas. He who is in the form and name of the Brahmakalpa is 'Virāṭ Puruṣa', He is called 'Mahākāla'.

*When the four yugas once revolve, it is Mahāyuga-
Twelve thousand years by divine count;
Well-known it is, that if thousand Mahāyugas
Run through by Śrī Hari's Grace, then
It will be one day for the Master of worlds,
Four hundred and thirty crore it is
A period of another thousand Mahāyugas
Gone through, makes a night for the Lotus-seated;
It is also four hundred and thirty crore
As it is clear now, the two together,
Eight hundred and sixty four crore years
This makes a complete day of Brahmā;
Sri Vijayaviṭṭhala with His beautiful form
Gave this span of years by human standard.*

One Mahāyuga, consisting of the four yugas-Kṛta, Treta, Dvāpara and Kali, is equal to 12000 years of the divine beings. One thousand Mahāyugas make the bright part of Brahma's day and another thousand Mahāyugas make his night. The duration of his day is therefore 4,32,0000000 human years; his night also is of the same number of years. One complete day of the lotus-seated Brahmā is equal to 864,0000000 human years.

During the bright part of each of Brahmā's day, fourteen Manus, the progenitors and law-makers of mankind, hold sway in this world. The period allotted to each one is 71 Mahāyugas; for fourteen it will be 994 Mahāyugas. The remaining six are the interim periods. This fact is described in the following Suḷādi.

“During each day of Brahmā,
Fourteen Manus their posts
Do hold, one after another,
Their periods you may count,
For each Manu, seventy four Mahāyugas,
The remaining six are distributed.

Details about interim periods—
They are fourteen Manus, Svāyambhuva
Among them is considered the first,
Know thou that the Manu called Tāpasa
Is the manifestation of Nārāyaṇa Himself
The wise ones understand the limits of the interim periods,
Knowing which and praising brings merit
To the first Manu it is two thousand years;
A thousand and four hundred years for the next five;
From Vaivasvata Manu, to the eight remaining
Fifteen hundred is multiplied by eight.

Knowing and praising the interim periods means knowing the changes brought about by Śrī Hari during these periods. It is this knowledge that earns merit.

The interim period after

(1) Svāyambhuva Manu is	2,000 years.
For (2) Svārōciṣa (3) Uttama, (4) Tāpasa, (5) Raivata and (6) Cakṣuṣa 1400 x 5	7,000 years
For, (7) Vaivasvata, (8) Sāvārṇi, (9) Dakṣasāvārṇi, (10) Brahma Sāvārṇi, (11) Dharma Sāvārṇi, (12) Rudra Sāvārṇi (13) Indra Sāvārṇi and (14) Deva Sāvārṇi— 1500 x 8	12,000 years

Total	: 21,000 years
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These years are by divine reckoning to be counted at the beginning and at the end of each Manu Kalpa.

Just as there are interim periods between Manu Kalpas, there are such periods between each yuga and the next Yuga too.

The interim periods together, twenty thousand,
 Six and one lakh years they come to;
 The figure of each take both sides of it;
 Without change, at the end of Kali age
 The connecting periods is eighty thousand
 And one lakh-established; the end of Kṛta, beginning of Treta
 Connecting - two lakh, fifty two thousand;
 Thus joining end of Treta, beginning of Dvāpara,
 One lakh and eighty thousand years,
 The inter regnum between Dvāpara and Kali,
 Know you, it is one lakh eight thousand.

	Explanatory details of interim periods	Human years	
(1)	End of Kaliyuga	- 36,000	
	Beginning of Kṛtayuga	- 1,44,000	1,80,000
(2)	End of Kṛtayuga	- 1,44,000	
	Beginning of Tretāyuga	- 1,08,000	252000
(3)	End of Tretāyuga	- 1,08,000	
	Beginning of Dvāparayuga	- 72,000	1,80,000
(4)	End of Dvāparayuga	- 72,000	
	Beginning of Kaliyuga	- 36,000	1,08,000
	Total:		7,20,000 years

Each of Brahmā's day comprises of 432,0000000 human years, distributed among 14 Manus. Their periods, including the inter regnums are given now-

For each Manu, the period of Sovereignty,
 Consider thirty crore human years, over
 And above add eightyfive lakh and twnty one,
 And count thousand four hundred and twenty eight years,
 Months six, and after that, twenty five
 Days, hours seventeen, twenty one 'paḷas';
 This is definite; in this wise for fourteen
 Manus you must take the counts.

Explanatory :-

31,85,71428 years, 6 months, 25 days, 17 hours, 21 Ghatikas (Paḷas). If these are multiplied by 14 we get the period equal to Brahma's day- 432,0000000 years.

III. Utility of Time:

In the minuter than the minutest and in the greatest Time factor

residing, Incessantly motivating that Time division

Śrī Hari bears that name, the Holiest person,

He occupies the whole Time from morning to sun-set,

And He takes different names;

He thus appears glorious, foreigner to sin,

Night and day He thus takes care of us,

There is naught to compare with His kindness.

Śrī Hari dwells in the minutest as well as the largest Time factor, the latter being called 'para'-life span of Brahmā. He aids every one to go through the particular karma fixed for each period—small or big. He bears the names of the Time divisions and bestows auspicious results. Since He is far from sin, it is beneficial to remember Him while we go through our actions; He purifies them and makes them bear good fruits. Day and night, He cares for us. Such kindness we can find in no one else.

Now the different forms of the Lord presiding over the different divisions of the day are recounted—

Mark, at dawn, the bearer of 'Kaumodaki'

Lord Keśava; at sunrise the connecting period,

Remember the flute-player Govinda,

Śrī Nārayaṇa is there during morning hours,

The discus-bearer Viṣṇu at noon,

After that, for after-noon, bow bearer

Madhusūdāna is the presiding form;

For late after-noon, joyous Mādhava

Spending time with devotional attitude,

If one remembers these forms of Śrī Hari,

The hosts of gods, well pleased, drive our deeds in right paths,

And taking care of us, they prepare us for the goal.

Period of day

Presiding form of God

(1) Dawn

Śrī Keśava, bearing mace

(2) Day-break

Śrī Veṅu Gōpālakṛṣṇa

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------|-----------------|-------------|
| (3) | Morning hours | Śrīman Nārāyaṇa | |
| (4) | Noon | Śrī Viṣṇu | |
| (5) | Afternoon | Śrī Madhusūdana | bearing bow |
| (6) | Evening | Śrī Mādhava | and arrow |

*At dusk of evening, Hṛṣīkeśamurti,
For night till the Zero hour, He
Who is the father of the lotus-born;
For the rest of night, listen, it is Śrīvatsa;
In this way well understand the Time factor;
Vijayaṅṅhalarāya, friend of Śiva,
Is the giver of all kinds of auspicious fruits.*

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Period of night | Presiding form of God |
| (1) Night fall (dusk) | Śrī Hṛṣīkeśa |
| (2) Until midnight | Śrī Padmanābha |
| (3) Latter part of night | Śrīvatsamurti |

Thus Śrī Hari is always with us, day or night.

For our counting of Time, the Sun God is the chief associate. Now we are told about the forms of the Supreme Being in the Sun God.

*“In the Sun’s orb, Pradyumna, Vāsudeva,
Varāha, Nārāyaṇa, Aniruddhamūrti,
Narasimha, Sankarṣaṇa— these seven forms
Are there always; thus contemplate.*

Śrī Hari resides in the Sun God with seven forms and names as mentioned in the verse. These seven forms—Pradyumna, Vāsudeva, Varāha, Nārāyaṇa, Aniruddha, Narasimha and Sankarṣaṇa, respectively preside over the seven divisions of day-dawn, sunrise, morning hours, noon, afternoon, evening and night. When it is thus said, it should not be construed that the present statement is contradictory to what was said earlier. They fit into each other in special ways.

*Puruṣa, Puruṣa Prakṛti, Prakṛti Prakṛti—in all
These inter-relations Śrī Hari pervades; this pervasion
Recognising, consider the flow of time from morning till night;*

In the same way visualise Time,
 Its expansion going upto the 'Para' period,
 Contemplate upon Śrī Hari's forms in all the divisions and earn
 grace;
 At all times, when prescribed duties are performed,
 This, kind of visualisation must be practised;
 Then, the minutest time spent, the place of action, materials
 used and
 The deed itself become auspicious.
 All sins are washed off, no exaggeration!
 In the Time factor, the Lord with its name
 is Śrīdevī's sweet heart, Vijayaviṭṭhala; remember Him.

In this verse, the spirit soul is signified by the word 'Puruṣa'; His material body is denoted by the word 'Puruṣa Prakṛti'; and 'Prakṛti Prakṛti' means the material objects around. Śrī Hari has given material bodies, out of the three modes—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, to the three kinds of souls and is taking them through the courses of Karma, subjecting them to the Time factor with its variety of divisions. In the souls, in their bodies, in the material world and in the Time factor Śrī Hari abides, Himself unaffected. We should thus remember Him.

Just as we should purify and dedicate our deeds by remembering the seven forms of Śrī Hari, we should make our entire life pure and dedicated. How this can be done is explained by Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya in Śrī Harikathāmṛtasāra.

Learn from the wise knowers, morning
 Time, mid-day time and even-tide;
 He who shines in the 'Vasus', in 'Rudra' and in 'Āditya'
 Through 'Pavana', His forms along with Kṛti, Jayā and Māyā
 Three forms bear in mind and
 Sacrificing days as offerings, learn to worship and be happy.
 (H.K.S. 12-34)

We have to learn from those, who truly know, the morning, the noon and the evening of life; then we

should fix our minds upon (1) Pradyumna, husband of Kṛtidevi, residing in the 'Vasus', (2) Saṅkarṣaṇa, husband of Jayādevi, residing in Rudradeva and (3) Vāsudeva, husband Māyādevi, Āditya; and then, considering all our daily deeds as sacrificial articles, we should dedicate them to the Lord of all Yajñas. By doing so, one can be free from the evil results of Karmas and enjoy pure bliss.

In order that the act of dedication be purified, we should think of Śrī Mukhya Prāṇa in the 'Vasus', in Rudra, and in Āditya; and in Mukhya Prāṇa, we should adore Pradyumna, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva respectively.

Twenty four years, in the 'Vasu'
Deities, Pradyumna shows Himself;
Fortyfour years, with the form of Saṅkarṣaṇa
He dwells in the fire-eyed; Māyā
Patī, for forty eight years
Resides in the Sun God as Vāsudeva. (H.K.S. 12-35)

During the first twenty four years of a man's life, Pradyumna in the 'Vasus' is the presiding Deity; this is the morning of life. In the second forty four years, Saṅkarṣaṇa in Rudra is the presiding Deity; it is the noon life. During the last forty eight years, Vāsudeva in the Sun god presides; it is the evening of life.

Really speaking, the normal life span of man is 116 years. It should be considered as having three divisions-morning, noon and evening; in other words-young age, middle age and old age. Pradyumna, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva are the Lord's forms taking care of man in his three stages of life.

During the one hundred and sixteen years,
With one hundred and sixteen auspicious forms,
He sports residing in the 'Vasus', in Rudra and in Āditya-along
with His consort.
With shyness cast away, the devotees who worship,
Are protected from sins that haunt them.

Driving sins afar, He always remains dispelling fear.

(H.K.S. 12-36)

Śrī Hari is with man not only with the three principal forms-Pradyumna, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva; but, He also takes one hundred and sixteen subsidiary forms and conducts man's life as if it were sport. His consort is also with Him in her three forms-Kṛti, Jayā and Māyā. A true devotee does not feel shy to express his devotion in various forms before others. If such be the devotion, Śrī Hari drives away the sinful tendencies of the devotee and keeps him free from fear of all sorts; and makes life happy for him.

IV. Chart of Time Factor:

Minute divisions of Time

In Suḷādi of Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya

3 Trasarēṇus	1 Tṛṭi
3 Tṛṭis	1 Vedha
3 Vedhas	1 Lava
3 Lavas	1 Nimeṣa
3 Nimeṣas	1 Kṣaṇa
5 Kṣaṇas	1 Kāṣṭha
15 Kāṣṭhas	1 Laghu
15 Laghus	1 Nāḍi
8 Nāḍis	1 Yāma
4 Yāmas	1 Day
4 Yāmas	1 Night
8 Yāmas	1 Complete Day

- (i) A day takes the name of the week day as well as the fortnightly day.
- (ii) Nimeṣa=winking of eye

In Śrī Harikathāmṛtasāra

5 Kṣaṇas	1 Tṛṭi
50 Tṛṭis	1 Lava
2 Lavas	1 Nimesa

limeṣas	1 Mātra
Mātras	1 Guru
Gurus	1 Prāṇa
'rāṇas	1 Paḷa
Paḷas	1 Ghaṭika
Ghaṭikas	1 Day

man Count	For the Pitṛs
- 1 'Pakṣa'	1 Day or 1 Night
s'-1 Month	1 Whole day

man Count	For Divine Beings
is-1 Season (Ṛtu)	
is (Ṛtus)-1 'Āyana'	1 Day or night
(half year)	
as'-1 Year	1 Whole day
s	1 Month
rs	1 Year

a	4,32,000 Years	1,200 Years
ayuga	8,64,000 years	2,400 years.
ga	12,96,000 years	3,600 years.
ṣa	17,28,000 years	4,800 years.
ṣa	<u>43,20,000 years</u>	<u>12,000 years.</u>

man Count	Brahmā's Count
[ahāyugas (2000000 years.)	1 day or 1 night
[ahāyugas (40000000 years.) 0000x360	1 whole day
000000 years	1 year. One hundred such years
000000000 years	Brahmā's life span; it is called 'Parā'.

Antique mode of counting:

Eka=1; Daśa=10; Śata=100; Sahasra=1000;
 Daśa Sahasra=10,000; Lakṣa=100000;
 Daśa lakṣa=10,00,000;
 Koṭi=1,00,00,000; Daśa koṭi=10,00,00,000
 Śata Koṭi=100,00,00,000;
 Arbuda=1,000,00,00,000;
 Nyarbuda=10,000,00,00,000;
 Kharva=100,000,00,00,000;
 Mahākharva=1,000,00,00,000;
 Padma=10,000,000,00,00,000;
 Mahā Padma=100,000,000,00,00,000;
 Kṣoṇi=1,000,000,000,00,00,000;
 Mahā Kṣoṇi=10,000,000,000,00,00,000;
 Śamkha=100,000,000,000,00,00,000;
 Mahā Śamkha=1,000,000,000,000,00,00,000;
 Dīpti=10,000,000,000,000,00,00,000;
 Ananta=1 followed by 144 zeros.

To put in antique terms, Brahmā's life span is counted as- 3 Padmas, 11 Kharvas, 4 Arbudas of human year.

The regimes of 14 Manus-Brahma's one day (The bright half) or 432000000 human years.

The regime of one Manu-70 Mahāyugas; or 302400000 human years.

The interim periods between the Manus-2 Mahāyugas, or 86400000 human years

Net regime periods of the 14 Manus-423360000 years+Interim periods 86400000 years = Total 4320000000 years.

ote:

-) From Simple creatures upto 'Manuṣya gandharvas' (inclusive)-human count.
- i) For the group of Pitṛs- 'Piṭr māna'
- i) From 'Devagandharvas' upto Garuḍadeva and Śēṣadeva (inclusive)- Divine Count 'Deva māna'
- r) For Brahmā, Vāyu, Sarasvati and Bhārati- 'Brahmamāna'

From our point of view, Para Brahmā-The upreme Being, creates, sustains and destroys during a period equal to Brahma's 100 years; and He lies quiet with Sri Ramādevi for an equal period. But this is like the winking of the eye in His case. Even saying so is just for our understanding. He is beyond the Time factor.

* * *

Chapter-VI

BEGINNING OF CREATION

I. Sport with the Released Souls:

Having described the creation of 'Prajāna' and of the Time factor, now we are told what Śrī Hari, who was pretending yoganidrā, did at the beginning of creation of the universe.

In the 'Prajāna' waters, Śrī Padmanābha,
Where the 'Sribhāga' of Vaikuṅṭha was,
There He stretched Himself and slept soon
With His wife; when it dawned,
The time, let the wise ones understand as before;
His consort, Ambhranīdevī, pleasing Him,
When she offered prayers, He was joyful;
With ease He swallowed darkness completely;
The banyan leaf became Bhūdevī and the waters became Śrī
devī;
He was inclined now to create, like building a den of sand
... difficulty;
... as wife's request,
... the prettiest of ... pretty gods, Vijayavittala ... va;
He thus rejoices, time after time.

As was explained in the chapter on 'Mahāpralaya', Śrī Hari took everything and went to sleep, as it were. He was in 'yoganidrā' for $10\frac{1}{2}$ hours of His night which is Brahmā's $87\frac{1}{2}$ years. When $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 1 hour of night still remained, He was awakened by the prayer of Ambhranīdevī. This is what is meant by "stand as before". He swallowed the dark

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rounded, when Bhūdevī, who was in the form of the banyan leaf, became herself; and Śrīdevī, who was in the form of the 'Pralaya' waters, took her own form. [In this context it may be profitable to compare the Biblical statement— "At first, there was only darkness, and the spirit of God floated upon the waters.] Ambhraṇīdevī, the controller of the principle of darkness, praised the Lord and requested Him to begin a new creation. Śrī Hari, gladly assented. Creation for Him is like children's play of building sand holes as houses—so easy it is!

How Śrī Hari, who lay upon the banyan leaf like a boy child, took the form of Vāsudeva and sported with the released souls, will now be described.

*The Almighty Lord, Śrī Vijayaviṭṭhala,
During the rest of the night sported with the 'mukta's.*

Śrī Hari took out the released souls from His belly, and to give them Supreme joy, He sported with them.

Four, twenty four, ten forms,—

Hundred thousand forms Śrīpati took; Śrī Lakṣmīdevī also assumed gladly forms befitting the forms of Śrī Hari; when Her Lord took the form of a horse, she too became a horse.

Śrī Hari took the form of a horse to indicate that He is as quick in affording pleasures to His devotees; also because He is in the form of the Vedas and is praised by all the Vedas. 'Hayagrīva, the horse-faced Śrī Hari is the Master who teaches Vedas. Lakṣmīdevī became a female horse. When the two partners merrily neighed, the meanings of the Vedas flashed upon the hearers, the 'muktas'.

*Numberless Gods, Gandharvas, deities called Rākṣasas
and Yakṣas,
Guhyakas, Siddhas and the Ṛṣis,
The ever merry Apsara dames and others,
All with non-material bodies, and Śātānanda (Brahmā)
with their*

Chapter-VI

BEGINNING OF CREATION

I. Sport with the Released Souls:

Having described the creation of 'Pranava' and of the Time factor, now we are told what Śrī Hari, who was pretending yoganidrā, did at the beginning of creation of the universe.

*In the 'Prajaya' waters, Śrī Padmanābha,
Where the 'Śrībhāga' of Vaikuṅṭha was,
There He stretched Himself and slept soon
With His wife; when it dawned,
The time, let the wise ones understand as before;
His consort, Ambhranī devi, pleasing Him,
When she offered prayers, He was joyful;
With ease He swallowed darkness completely;
The banyan leaf became Bhūdevī and the waters became Śrī
devi;
He was inclined now to create, like building a den of sand
Like a small boy, with no difficulty;
He thus gladly granted His wife's request,
The prettiest of the pretty gods, Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya;
He thus rejoices, time after time.*

As was explained in the chapter describing 'Mahāpralaya', Śrī Hari took everything into Himself and went to sleep, as it were. He pretended 'yoganidrā' for $10\frac{1}{2}$ hours of His night which is equal to Brahmā's $87\frac{1}{2}$ years. When $1\frac{1}{2}$ or $12\frac{1}{2}$ years of the night still remained, He was wakened by the prayer of Ambhranīdevī. This is what is meant by "understand as before". He swallowed the darkness that sur-

rounded, when Bhūdevī, who was in the form of the banyan leaf, became herself; and Śrīdevi, who was in the form of the 'Pralaya' waters, took her own form. [In this context it may be profitable to compare the Biblical statement— "At first, there was only darkness, and the spirit of God floated upon the waters.] Ambhraṇīdevī, the controller of the principle of darkness, praised the Lord and requested Him to begin a new creation. Śrī Hari, gladly assented. Creation for Him is like children's play of building sand holes as houses—so easy it is!

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*Numberless Gods, Gandharvas, deities called Rākṣasas
and Yakṣas,
Guhyakas, Siddhas and the Ṛṣis,
The ever merry Apsara dames and others,
All with non-material bodies, and Śatānanda (Brahmā)
with their*

*Partners gathered; when they took innumerable forms,
The sporting Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya
Manifested His supreme abilities, ever new to His devotees.*

All the released souls, including Brahmā, assumed different forms by the grace of the Lord of Śrī Ramādevī. The muktas have no material bodies. They took different forms only with their non-material selves.

To such spiritual selves Śrī Hari teaches how to enjoy pleasures, taking upon themselves bodies of pure Sattva material.

*In conformity with Śrī Hari's will, the gods and other muktas
Took different forms; then, with pure Sattva,
Rivers, hills, trees, precious stones, gold, silver,
Sporting ground, different heavens, oceans-all
He created; in the waters, He Himself along with Śrīdevī,
Forms of aquatic creatures cheerfully
The kindly Master took; Brahmā and other
Muktas too took such forms. Then structural skills to
His devotees He taught. Immediately, the forms of domestic
and wild animals.*

*And forms of the ruler and the ruled He assumed.
Śrī Hari made Brahmā Prime Minister
And he made the other merited muktas to be the subjects;
The evil souls rotting in the Eternal Hells
He made to be the rogues in society; to these and the good
souls
Creating rubs and smashing the evil doers.*

Pure Sattya element is free from any trace of the other two elements-Rajaś and Tamas. It is not used in the creation of the universe. With this Sattva element Śrī Hari created land, hills, rivers, trees and all other things necessary for the enjoyment of pleasures. In the ocean He took the forms of aquatic creatures along with Śrī Ramādevī. Following the example, Brahmā and the others too took such forms and sported. Then, Śrī Hari taught them engineering skills and sculptural art such that they might take more and more complex forms.

*Their right performances and understanding He approved;
He is the friend of His dear devotees-Vijayaviṭṭhala;
There is no end to the marvels of His creation.*

Our universe is verily the university of experiences. Śrī Hari sports with the muktas just to impress upon the released souls His role in the here and the hereafter. Even in the Vaikunṭhaloka they perform sacrifices and listen to Itihāsas (Histories) and Puraṇas, glorifying the marvellous Sport, (Līla) of God. This gives impetus to the experience of their innate joy in full measure. And they realize how very dear to them is Śrī Hari. Their encounter with the eternal sufferers and the punishment meted out to the latter confirms the three varieties among souls and enhances the joy while listening to the Itihāsas and Purāṇas in the Happy Abode.

II. Rudimentary Creation:

*Towards the close of night, Durgādevī, the mistress of the Vedas, Prayed to her Lord again,
Deserving and the undeserving souls discriminating,
To give them gross bodies such that
The obstructive subtle 'Karmas' might be expanded
And the souls might be helped in the path of realization;
She prayed to put the souls into the terrestrial field
Almighty certainly He is, and His intents (Samkalpa) stand on Truth;
The Purifier of purity- He showed His Mercy upon His devotee souls;
Putting together the three kinds of souls, bringing out their innate qualities,
And managing them in friendly ties, their original natures,
He does not disturb; that is His intention
According to the decisions taken by Vāyudeva,
Bearing the name 'Sūtra'*

*He looks after every one, He the Director of the mystic drama
of life,*

Our Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya, In the three

Worlds, He agrees with the dealings of Prāṇadeva.

After sport with the muktas during the last part of Para Brahmā's night, Durgādevi prays to Him again to bring the bound souls into the arena of the world in order to deprive them of the causation bodies, which obstruct the expression of the abilities of souls. Her motherly kindness is so great. Śrī Hari, the Almighty Lord is called the Director of the mystic drama of life. It is said to be mystic because the Master's wonderful powers are described as 'Māyā' or Magic of the highest order. Although the souls are of three distinct types, the Director of the drama gives them such roles as to make them live together in society; but their original natures are not disclosed. In this drama, the role played by Śrī Mukhya Prāṇa is very great. He holds the position of Assistant Director and is in charge of every department connected with the drama of life. It looks as though the Supreme Being listens to whatever Śrī Vāyudeva says. Such is the harmony between them.

Having assumed His Original form, Vāsudeva,

Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha-

These four forms He manifested; their roles

I now describe; liberation, creation, maintenance and

*Annihilation are their portfolios. In this manner all the world
filling,*

*They go through the activities of the moving and the
stationary.*

Śrī Hari had come out with His four forms like Vāsudeva to have sport with the muktas. At the end of the sport, He assumed His original form. Again, He came out with the Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha forms to engage Himself in the four kinds of activities-Liberation, Creation, Maintenance and Annihilation. These four forms fill the entire world

and they are behind the activities of all kinds of creatures.

For the sake of the body of sixteen abilities

Śrī Vāsudeva gave rise to river Virajā

Out of His body sweat; it helps

Souls who go through their courses and those who are realized."

Līṅga Śarīra or causation body is the abode of sixteen abilities. These are mind, five sensory and five motor centres and five elemental principles. (Tanmātras). From the sweat of His body Śrī Vāsudeva created the flow of the Virajā river which helps the causation body to expand.

In the form of sweat of Śrī Hari's body

Śrī Devī herself comes out

And flows like water; the three modes indicated by 'Raja'

Not being there, she is called 'Virajā' (Vy. V. 1-82)

The word 'Rajas', forming part of the combined word 'Virajā, indicates the two other material modes also. Since she is free from Sattva, Rajas and Tamas material principles, Śrīdevī is called 'Virajā' in the form of sweat-flow coming out of Śrī Vāsudeva's body.

This Virajā appeared in the original material principle called Avyakta as well as in the causation bodies of souls.

Śrīdevī in the form of Virajā waters becomes the agent in bringing the souls into contact with their causation bodies. The same waters help the realized souls to cast off the causation bodies later on. Creation of souls only means creating contact between them and their Līṅga Śarīras.

When Śrī Hari took four forms, Śrī

Lakṣmīdevī as Māyā, Jayā Kṛti and Śānti,

Took separate forms and in conjunction with her spouse,

She begot children; she gave birth

To Brahmā with the name 'Puruṣa' and Vāyu with the name 'Sūtra'

And the others in proper order;

Sarasvati known as 'Prakṛti' and 'Śraddhā'-

These two maidens she bore as Kṛti;

It is really wonderful-celebrating their marriages

You yourselves acted as parties of brides and parties of bridegrooms!

In this way showing indescribable sport,

Always young-is Vijayaviṭṭhala;

No one is there to equal Him.

Śrīdevī assumed four forms-Māyā, Jayā, Kṛti and Śānti to match with the four forms of Śrī Hari-Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. And she became a happy mother. Brahmā, named 'Puruṣa' was born of Māyā and Vāsudeva. Vāyudeva was born of Jayā and Saṅkarṣaṇa, with the name 'Sūtra'. Kṛtīdevī, wife of Pradyumna, bore two daughters- Sarasvatī, with the name 'Prakṛti' and Bhāratī, with the name 'Śraddhā'. Kṛti and Pradyumna formed the bridal party, while Māyā and Vāsudeva on the one hand and Jayā and Saṅkarṣaṇa on the other, formed the two parties of bridegrooms. Sarasvatī was married to Brahmā and Bhāratī was married to Vāyu. Those, who can appreciate the beauty of such conduct, will be able to know the truth when, later on, it will be said that Brahmā married his own daughter and that he was born as the son of his own wife.

Brahmā and Sarasvatī, and Vāyu and Bhāratī have settled relationships as husband and wife in whatever other relationship they may appear.

When it is said that Brahmā is father and Sarasvatī is daughter the Supreme Being in Brahmā truly acts as father. And when it is said that Saṅkarṣaṇa (Gāyatrī) is mother and Brahmā is her son, Śrīdevī in Sarasvatī is truly the mother. Thus, there is no dis-

tortion of relationship between Brahmā and Sarasvatī, and between Vāyu and Bhāratī.

*Two years after Brahmā, named Puruṣa was born,
Pradhāna Vāyu (Chief of the winds) took birth;
And then, Brahmās queen and 'Sradhādevī'
The two were born after another three years
These four hold sway on their material principles.*

From the above lines we understand that the marriages mentioned previously took place during the fifth year of Brahmā. It also means that they came out in full-blown form instantaneously; not like babes. They were made to hold sway on the expansion of their Liṅga Śarīras, forming new material coverings or bodies.

*Two years after Sarasvatī was born,
'Jiva' was born with serpent form, and bearing the name 'Kāla'
Garuḍa was born-these two form Brahmā and Vāyu respectively.*

By this time, Vāsudeva's son (Brahmā) was seven years old.

Śeṣadeva being the guardian of souls, he is called 'Jiva'. Garuḍa is called 'Kāla', because he has mastery over Time. Their offices are subordinate to those of Brahmā and Vāyu.

*.....To the principle of 'Ahaṅkāra'
They were designated as masters;
And one becoming bed, and the other, chariot,
They are well-known in the world.*

The first expansion of the Liṅga Śarīra was into the three elemental principles out of the 'Avyakta' principles therein. The combination of the three modes created the principles of Mahat tattva and Vijñāna tattva-almost similar presided over by Brahmā and Vāyu respectively. The further modification was Ahaṅkāratattva, the mastery over which was given to Śeṣa and Garuḍa.

Here is another course of conduct.
 From Brahmā, named Puruṣa, was born 'Bala',
 The same as Sūtra Vāyu;
 Bhārati too was born
 Again, to these two, Garuḍa and Śeṣa
 Were born, children of the same parents
 Śrī Hari is the Supreme most among beings;
 Who can think of His wonderful ways!

In order to carry on the activities of the universe in various ways, Śrī Hari goes on with His work of creation in unthinkable manners. In the above lines of Suḷādi we are told that Vāyu was born as the son of Puruṣa Brahmā. He was called Bala. Bhārati was born like his sister. But they were married, begot the brothers, Garuḍa and Śeṣa.

The world, in which we live is created out of the primordial matter consisting of three modes-Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. By their various combinations, modified materials are created for further creation. Each of the modified principles is called as a 'Tattva'. Examples—'Akāśa tattvā', 'Manas tattva', 'Ahamkāra tattva'. From 'Mahat tattva down to 'Pṛthvī tattva' they are twenty four in number.

Brahmā and Vāyu have mastery over all the tattvas including their own. Śeṣa, Garuḍa and Rudra have mastery over the Ahamkāra tattva and the futher modifications below it; not upon Mahat tattva, which is superior. Similarly, Indra has control over a section of the Manas tattva, its exterior aspect; and also controls other tattvas lower still.

One year after Garuḍa and Śeṣa were born,
 By the will of the Supreme Master, the first Brahmā (Puruṣa)
 Became the son of Pradyumna; and again
 In Sarasvatī, lordess of the three material modes,
 Vāyu, named Sūtra, was born as son;
 Thus the Sāstras say.

Telling us that the first Brahmā, born of Vāsudeva, was once again born as the son of Pradyumna and that Sūtra Vāyu was born of this Brahmā and Prakṛti (Vānī), Śrī vijaya Dāsārya assures us that all that is said is in full conformity with the śāstras.

The question arises as to why the same persons are born again and again by different parents. Bringing the souls into contact with their causation bodies is the first step in creation. The second step is the creation of what is called 'Aniruddha Śarīra'. Giving the coverings of the twenty four material principles is still another step while these different steps are being adopted, the same controllers are made to take new births to fit the particular modifications.

That Brahmā acquires mastery over the different tattvas is explained in the following lines—

*And this Brahmā, with his many fractional parts,
Assumed many divine forms;
The Vedas with their alphabets the time factor, primordial
matter,
And 'Akāśa', and the sixteen abilities of Manas,
For all these he became master;
Remember he takes finer and finer forms;
Brahmā, who was born as Puruṣa,
Became guardian of all the souls.*

Brahmadeva, being the highest among the souls, has the ability to divide himself into innumerable fractional parts, both small and big, and he can play many well co-ordinated roles at the same time.

Now, how subtle bodies were created for Rudra and the other deities will be explained.

*Brahmā, who was born of glorious Vāsudeva,
Became the son of Pradyumna and Kṛtīdevī;
Great mystery is here Brahma's wife
Sāvitrī, with her other form Sarasvatī,*

When she was with three forms (including the form of Gāyatrī),
 She mated with puruṣa Brahmā,
 And putting the three forms into one, she
 Begat Brahmā and Vāyu as her sons;
 In this manner, of his own wife
 He was born as son and showed his distinction,
 You must know the secret of father becoming son
 By his own wife-Gāyatrī.

When Brahmā was born of Vāsudeva, he acquired the covering body of unmanifest original matter (Avyakta tattva), wherein the three material modes showed themselves in their unmixed states. And when he was born as the son of Pradyumna, there was a slight mixture of the three modes and Brahmā now had his Mahat tattva body around his Liṅga Sarīra.

When he next takes birth as the son of his own wife, he gets the next covering of Ahaṁkāra tattva. The secret involved in this case is this. Brahmā as father is secondary and Śrī Hari in him is primary; similarly, Śrī Ramādevī in Gāyatrī is primary.

.....Born of Prāṇa, Jīva In serpent form, and Rudra of
 'Vaikārika' mode

Were born along with their wives.

Śeṣadeva with the name 'Jīva', who was formerly born of Vāyudeva, called Bala, was now born as the son of Brahmā, the son of Gāyatrī; his wife Vāruṇī was born as his sister. Similarly, Rudra, connected with the Vaikārika or Sāttvic mode, was also born of the same Brahmā; his wife Pārvatī was born with him.

Garuḍa, bearing the name Kāla and Rudra of 'Tajjasa' mode
 were born along with their wives.

Just as Brahma was born of Gāyatrī, Vāyudeva was born of Sāvitrī, another form of Brahmā's wife. With Vāyu and Bhārati as parents, Garuḍa and Sauparṇi were born; of the same parents, Rudra, connected with the Tajjasa or Rājasic mode, was born along with his wife, Pārvatī.

*Jīva, son of the Lotus-born (Brahmā),
From him of serpent form, 'Tāmāsa' Rudra and Pārvati,
Took birth gladly out of their 'amśas'*

Amśa means fraction; 'Amśi' means the whole containing fractions. From Brahmā, Rudra got Sāttvic body; from Vāyu he got the Rajasic body; and from Śeṣa, he got the Tāmasic body. His wife Pārvati, too, received such bodies.

All the three forms are of the same person; but the second and the third are fractional parts of the first. However, these are not like material fractions. The experiences of all fractions belong to the original, finally or immediately. In the case of Brahmā, Vāyu and their partners, the experiences of all fractional parts go to the originals immediately; in the cases of others, it is at the final stage. Spirit souls are not broken into parts like matter; yet they can come out as fractional parts in smaller or larger numbers according to their abilities. This, indeed, is mysterious.

"Śiva bore three forms as Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Īśa....."

Vaikārika Rudra, born of Brahmā, came to be called Viṣṇu, Tajasa Rudra, born of Vāyu was called Brahmā and Tāmāsa Rudra, born of Śeṣa, was called Śiva.

.....Rudra of the Superior mode

Begat sons, the mistress of Buddhi

His wife, with her mating joyfully;

The king of gods (Indra), Manmatha, Āhamkārika Prāṇa,

*The preceptor of the divine beings, (Bṛhaspati) Sacī, Śukra,
Aniruddha*

Pavamāna's friend (Agni) Nirṛuti, Gaṇapati,

*Vaiśrava (Kubera), the Rudras (10), Svāhā, Svadhā, Budha,
custodian of Karmas (Puṣkara)*

*Bhūdevī, the Piṭṛs, Gandharvas, and all the chief beings de-
serving mukti, He, the bearer of the name Viṣṇu*

That Rudra begat. They form one group

From Vāyu, named Sūtra, and his wife Bhārati,

Were again born Garuḍa, Indra and others;
 To her, who is the caretaker of sacred sacrifices,
 To Sauparn̄idevī, wife of Garuḍa the door keepers of
 Śrī Hari's palace-Jaya and others, Viṣvakṣena and
 The rest were born as children. When all this took place,
 Ten years of Brahmā's life period were over.

One group of divine beings were born as the children of Vaikārika Rudra. Another group of the same divine beings and a few others were born from Garuḍa and Sauparn̄idevī, who were the children of Sūtra Vāyu and Bhāratidevī. By now ten years of Brahmās life period had elapsed.

III. Chart-details of Rudimentary Creation:

(Before the creation of Brahmāṇḍa)

I. Śūnya

(Supreme Being called Śūnya as He is void (Śūnya) of all activity relating to Creation)

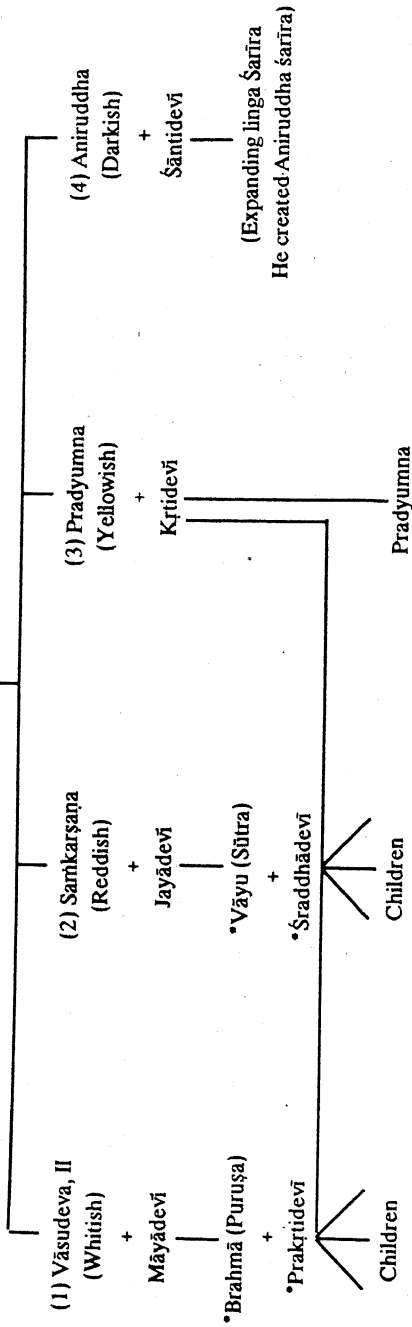
|
 Vāsudeva I
 (Puruṣa)

(He located Śrīdevī in His body sweat, and calling it Virajā, He expanded the causation bodies of the souls who came into creation for the first time; thus He established contact between the souls and their causation bodies (Liṅga Sarīras). By such contact, the abilities to know, to will and to endeavour manifested in the souls, these abilities had lain dormant before contact.)

|
 Nārāyaṇa

(This manifestation causes disturbance in the souls and makes them feel the pinch of hunger, thirst and other bodily needs. They become prone to external impulses)

II Nārāyaṇa



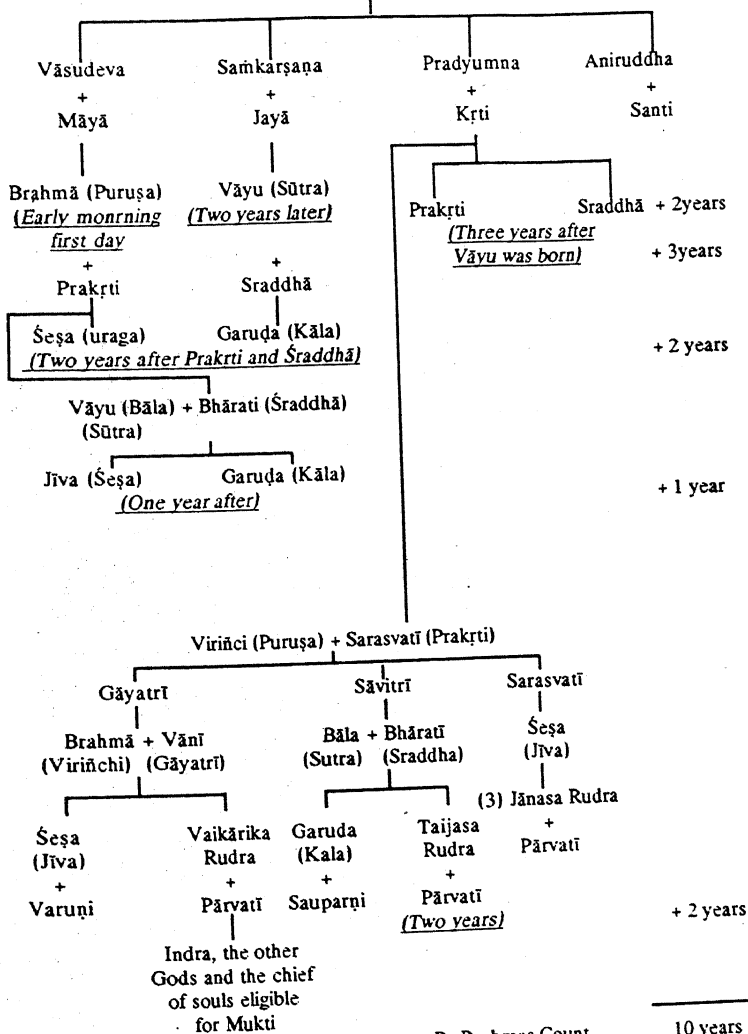
(He put into himself all those who had been brought into creation till then, and, classifying them into castes and giving codes of conduct, He handed them over to Aniruddha

• Those who assured the offices of Brahmā, Vāyu, Sarasvatī and Bhārati (Prakṛti and Śradhā)

III The Lord united all the four forms, and once again assumed those forms in order to endow the souls with subtle bodies of external matter.

II Further details about the second round of creation.

Nārāyaṇā



By Brahmas Count

10 years

IV. Division into Castes:

(From the beginning of Brahmā's eleventh year)

In this and the next few sections we find how Pradyumnadeva made the caste divisions and how external matter was created in a rudimentary manner before the creation of Brahmāṇḍa.

Śrī Pradyumnadeva, half female form

Took on Himself gladly. According to quality differences,

The Lotus-seated, Agni, Ṛṣis such as Marīci,

Śrī Vāyudeva, Śiva, Indra, Candra and others,

In conformity with rule-Rudras, Vasus and the rest,

Bhūdevī, Goddess of Death, Nirṛti and Yama, From His right

And His left sides He bore; by this

Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras came into existence.

Śrī Pradyumnadeva took the form of Half-male and Half-female and gave rise to the caste system from His right side and the left side. The males in charge of caste were born from His right side and the females from the left side. Brahmā, Agni and the Ṛṣis represented the Brāhmaṇa caste. Vāyu, Śambhu (Śiva), Indra, Candra and others lorded the Kṣatriya caste. The ten Rudras, Vasus and others were created to be in charge of the Vaiśya caste. Bhūdevī, the Goddess of death, Nirṛti, Yama and others were there for the Śūdra caste.

The gods are not bound by caste rules; but they are meant to help the conduct of duties connected with the different castes. In the four classes of these divine beings Śrī Hari Himself resides with His four forms and looks after the castes and their duties. This is very nicely explained by Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya in Śrī Harikathāmṛtasāra. (V-29, 30, 31).

In Brahmā the ward of Brāhmaṇas,

Vāsudeva resides; Vāyu, Garuḍa, Sadāśiva and Śeṣa, Indra,

Vivasvān, the Sūrya,

Candra, Kāma, Agni and Varuṇa-
 In these gods, who watch the Kṣatriyas,
 Śaṅkarṣaṇa dwells; they adore Him and feel happy." [29]
 Aniruddha, son of Kāma, Prāṇa,
 Apāna, Vyāna, Udāna and the
 Rest-forty nine in number-the Maruts, Rudras and Vasus,
 Son of Maināki-Gaṇapati, and
 Viṣvaksena, Kubera and such other Gods
 We should reverently see the Vaiśyas in them, Pradyumna."

[30]

Nāsatya and Dasra are there,
 Also Nirrti, Yamadharmā, his servants,
 Bhūdevī, goddess of death, Śanaīścara and others,
 These are called the Śūdras; and
 Always they are in the Śūdras; in them
 Dwells the sinless Aniruddha. Know thus and show respect.

[31]

This procedure of caste division by Śrī Pradyumna took ten years of Brahmā's period. Thus, by now, Brahmā was twenty years old.

Even before creating the Brahmāṇḍa, Śrī Hari created the castes and appointed watch and ward deities; so that, people in this world might co-operate with each other and live happily. More than that, He Himself dwells in the guardian deities and conducts the caste system. Therefore, although there is so much confusion about it in this Kaliyuga, it is not right to blame the caste system itself. The wise ones should regard every caste with all due regard. This has been the warning voiced by Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya.

Purports: St. 29 Brahmā, the four-faced, is the guardian of the Brāhmaṇas. He is actuated by Vāsudeva. Of the Kṣatriyas, the protectors are Vāyudēva, Garuḍa, Seṣa, Rudra, Indra, Kāma, Sūrya (Vivasvān) Candra, Agni, and Varuṇa. Lord Śaṅkarṣaṇa is in them. (Agni is also among the Brāhmaṇas).

St.30 Aniruddha, Prāṇa-Apāna-Vyāna-Udāna-Samāna and the other Maruts, forty nine in all, ten Rudras, eight Vasus, Gaṇapati, Viṣvaksena, Kubera and a few others are in charge of the Vaiśya caste. Lord Pradyumna guides them.

St. 31 Nāsatya and Dasrā (the Āśvins), Nirṛti, Yamadharmā, the servants of Yama, Bhūdevī, the goddess of timely death, Śanideva and other deities look after the Śūdra caste and safeguard their interests. They also protect them from sins natural for their occupations. Lord Aniruddha is their chief warden. Knowing thus, the Śūdras must be treated with respect.

Śrī Nārāyaṇa is the protector of all the four castes. Therefore He is called 'Catuspāt'. He engages the votaries of each caste in their respective duties, Himself being the chief Actor.

Facts being as detailed so far, it is not right to interpret Śrī Kṛṣṇa's words in whatever manner one pleases. The verse, "Cāturvarṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam guṇa karma vibhāgataḥ" means—Śrī Kṛṣṇa as Pradyumna, made arrangements for the conduct of caste duties and created the castes even before He created the Brahmāṇḍa. When He gives birth to a soul in this world, he puts that individual into the particular caste family, which is conducive for the Karmas to be gone through by the person during the specific period.

Hence, although social reformers want to wipe off the caste system, no one is generally prepared to give up caste ingrained in his blood. When it is the Lords' will, He Himself will permit relation and will dissolve it finally. This is what is actually happening in this Kaliyuga.

Therefore those, who believe in the cycle of births and deaths, need not be afraid of the GHOST which is the caste system. But those, who imagine that the caste system is man-made, will never sleep in peace.

V. Two Kinds of Creation:

One kind of creation is to expand the materials of the Liṅga Śarīras and to provide the souls with coverings of newer subtle bodies. The other kind of creation is to give gross bodies of external materials created out of the primordial matter (Jaḍa Prakṛti), which is under the control of Śrī Ramādevī (Cit Prakṛti). The two kinds of creation will now be described.

Śrīman Nārāyaṇa is praised as the 'Disturber of properties', because He will agitate the three material modes which are inactive during the 'Pralaya' night; and He will cause them to mingle and to become active. Their undisturbed state is known as 'Guṇasāmya' and their active state is known as 'guṇakṣobha' or 'Guṇavaiṣama'. It is this Nārāyaṇa who is truly called Puruṣa. He is the Lord of the jīvas (souls), who are also called Puruṣas, and of Prakṛti (Primordial matter), also known as Pradhāna. He enters into Prakṛti and Puruṣas the elements of creation and creates in various wonderful ways.

*Nullifying the 'Sāmya state' of Prakṛti in the 'Jīvāvaraṇa' (Liṅga Śarīra),
Lord Nārāyaṇa brought about 'Guṇa Vaiṣama' among the
three kinds of superfine atoms;
And created thirty six material principles (tattvas)
Mixing Sattva, Rājasa and Tāmasa in different ways;
Understand twelve, ten and one—
This is the 'Avyakta' body for Viriñci (Brahmā):
This is the first covering above the Liṅga Śarīra-created by
disturbing the three modes.*

Śrī Hari caused the latent atoms of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas of the Liṅga Śarīras and made them potent. By mixing these in various ways He created thirty six material principles. Thirty six ways of mixing the three modes are here spoken of as thirty six new principles.

Sattva-Sattva, Sattva-Rajas etc.	9
Sattva-Sattva-Sattva, Sattva-Rajas- Sattva etc.	27
	<hr/>
	36
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Full details about these mixtures are given in the section, 'Creation of Fine Elemental Units'

Śrī Vāsudeva, Ruler of the 'Avyakta' principle, created that principle in the Liṅga Śarīra (causation body) of Brahmādeva. Here, by Brahmā is meant the individual soul going to occupy that post during the new creation. That principle consists of 12 parts of Sattva, 10 parts of Rajas and 1 part of Tamas. Since the three are still in the unmixed condition, together they are called 'Avyakta'. This is the first envelope around Brahmā's causation body.

Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Master, having created Avyakta tattva,

Into the hands of the Second Vāsudeva

He delivered Brahmā and the others

The spotless Vāsudeva impregnated His wife Māyādevī.

And begat Brahmā, the wisest; who

Thus earned the Mahat tattva covering;

This Brahmā is known as Puruṣa

Śrī Vāsudeva II mixed the three modes in such a way as to form the Mahat tattva principle before He made His wife to conceive. While Brahmā got the Avyakta and the Mahat tattva bodies, Vāyu, Sarasvatī and Bhārati also acquired those bodies. This has been hinted by Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya in the line, "The purest among souls are the four and their creation similar."

After that, Lord Aniruddha

Took into Himself Brahmā and the other souls

And to every one the body of the same name.

He granted before the creation of external Prakṛti.

Śrī Hari being instrumental cause, with the materials of the three modes,

He creates various kinds of jīvas;

(He brings souls into creation)

Having given aniruddha bodies,

Later, He gives gross bodies of external Prakṛti

Men should thus, contemplate in mind

And visualise Śrī Hari in the several principles,

At all times, the lotus feet of Vijaya Viṭṭhala,

Who fully pervades everywhere, one should trust and remember.

Śrī Hari creates the world and enters into it. He gives bodies to the souls and enters into their bodies. And for ever He is within the souls themselves. He takes them through their courses in the world and helps them to reach their realized states. It is therefore profitable to keep in mind at all times the all-pervasive forms of the Supreme Personality and to put trust in Him. This helps one to live happily here, freed from all fear; and ultimately it helps to reach the goal of the soul.

Knowing the two kinds of creation, contemplate within yourself;

Vijaya Viṭṭhala, never bound like others, appears before you.

Creation of Subtle bodies out of the causation body is one sort; creating gross bodies out of external matter is the other. We should deeply think about these two kinds of creation. This helps us to remember God's pervasion in material expansions and in the souls. If one practises musing about the presence of God in his own body with the fullness of His presence in the whole Universe, Śrī Hari shows Himself to such a person. That is why Śrī Jagannātha Dāsārya has said—

Sighting God in your own body,

Quickly reach the Abode of Śrī Hari.

It is only when we fully understand, that all the materials of the Universe and all the deities therein

are in our own bodies along with the Supreme Being who is in every thing and in every one, that we attain true knowledge. Only such a knower is the 'Nija Bhakta', 'Virakta' and 'Jivanmukta'. (A true devotee, a detached soul, one who is liberated even in the course of this world.)

VI. Bodies Acquired by Brahmadeva:

*Manmatha's father, our Vijaya Viṭṭhala,
Count the bodies that He bestowed upon Śātānanda.*

We are now told about the bodies given to Śātānanda (Brahmā) by expanding materials of the Liṅga Śarīra.

*To the Lotus-born, from the Liṅga Śarīra of three modes,
The bodies that were given, count
Know you, the first is Avyakta tattva
With three divisions, Mahat, Ahaṅkāra-threefold,
Manas and the ten Indriyas,
The five Tanmātras (faculties), Sky, Air,
Fire, Water, Earth-like this separately,
The bodies are formed like envelopes.*

The three divisions of Avyakta-Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are together considered as one although counted separately. Similarly, Ahaṅkāra is treated as one; but the Vaikārika, Tajasa and Tāmasa bodies are counted separately. Considering their properties, these coats are grosser and grosser as we look at the outer and outer coverings, the inner coverings extend into the outer coverings; but the outer coverings have no place in the inner ones. Mahat tattva, for example, extends into all the tattvas below it, down to the Earth (Pṛthvī) principle.

The bodies of Brahmā

1. Sattva āvaraṇa (covering)
2. Rajo āvaraṇa
3. Tamo āvaraṇa

4. Mahat tattva āvaraṇa
5. Vaikārika Ahaṁkāra āvaraṇa
6. Taijasa Ahaṁkāra āvaraṇa
7. Tāmasa Ahaṁkāra āvaraṇa
8. Manas tattva āvaraṇa
- 9-18. Ten Indriya āvaraṇa
- 19-23. Five Tanmātra āvaraṇa
- 24-28. Five Mahābhūta āvaraṇa

[9-18. Materials required for five sensory abilities and five motor abilities.

19-23. Materials required for the five faculties - Sight, Smell, Hearing, Taste and Touch.

24-28. Five gross elements - Sky, Air, Fire, Water and Earth.]

*To the Lotus-born, you see, twenty nine
Bodies of fine qualities developed.*

Including 'Aniruddha Śarīra', the count will be twenty nine.

*To Brahmā, from two kinds of 'Prakṛti',
Fifty and six bodies were made ready.*

The material medium for the several bodies is found in two sources (1) Liṅga Śarīra; (2) Mūla Prakṛti (External Primordial matter). From each of the two sources, twenty bodies were made; fifty six bodies in all. Including 'Aniruddha' the total will be fifty seven.

.....In addition,

*There are subsidiary bodies of 'Vijñāna', 'Citta', 'Buddhi',
'Aśraddha', 'Vairāgya', 'Bala', 'Vīrya', 'Loka', 'Mantra'
'Nāma', 'Anna', 'Tapas', 'Karma', 'Kala'*

All these are in the first seven envelopes.

In the first seven envelopes of Brahmā's bodies there are seven subsidiary bodies connected with special faculties. These are—

sidered superior to all other deities including Paśupati (Rudra).

Śrī Vādirajasvāmi has described the greatness of Brahmā's post in the following manner:

*Blessing Māruti with the post of Brahmā, then again
He gives him equal share in His repast
What the hosts of jīvas perform,
The fruits of their good deeds-
The resulting happiness, along with each of the Brahmās
The Spouse of Lakṣmīdevī enjoys. (Vy. V. 2-4; 2-5).*

(In His incarnation as Śrī Rāma, Śrī Hari embraced Hanumān and promised him the state of 'Sahabhoga' - the privilege of enjoying equal share.

"Sevāprasanno amṛta kalpa vācā dideśa devaḥ Sahabhogam asmai." [Being pleased with his services, Śrī Rāma promised 'Sahabhoga' to Hanumān (Māruti).

The essence of the fruits of good deeds performed by every one of the jīvas is enjoyed by the Almighty Lord. Brahmā is blessed with fifty per cent of such Joy.

7. Review:

A section of Śrī Vijaya Dāsīya's Sulādi gives the following details.

After the night of Mahā Pralaya, when the new day of Para Brahmā dawned-

1. Creation by Śrī Vāsudeva Brahmā, named Puruṣa (Born at the Zero hour) Zero to 2 years.
2. Creation by Śrī Saṅkarṣaṇa Mukhya Prāṇa (Born two years after Brahmā) 3 years.

By now Brahmā was fifty years old $35 + 15 = 50$

This is the first half of his life period known as 'Para' - 'Prathama Parārdha'.

V. In the Second half- 'Dvitiya Parārdha':

'Padma Kalpa' - 'Virāṭa Kalpa': 'Śveta Varāha Kalpa' and the other Kalpas during each of Brahmā's days - We are living in the Śveta Varāha Kalpa during the second day of Brahmā's 51st year. Six Manus have completed their regimes. The seventh, Vaivasvatī Manu, is the ruler now. In his regime, 27 Mahāyugas are over; we are now in the 28th Kaliyuga.

Chapter-VII

RUDIMENTARY MATERIAL CREATION

I. Creation of Five Elemental Units:

Those who are born in this world are endowed with bodies made of five gross elements - sky, air, fire, water and earth (Ākāśa, Vāyu, Agni, Āpas, Pṛthvī). How the twenty four material principles from Mahat tattva down to Pṛthvī tattva were created will now be described by Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya.

*Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are of superfine atomic form;
They are countless and each atom is fractionable;
Like Time and the others, they are eternal;
When they are mixed and used,
Their potentialities are unimaginable
It is a fact that from the beginningless matter
Every Brahmāṇḍa is created
It is like this - to begin with,
The quantities of Prakṛti taken for creation
Are in the order of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas being respectively
less and less
Four handfulls, two and one, you may suppose.*

Like Avyākṛta Ākāśa, Praṇava and Kāla, the three ingredients of Mūla Prakṛti - Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are eternal in their atomic states; they are innumerable. Each of these atoms consists of innumerable divisible parts. Therefore, each atom is said to be 'Sāvayava' or 'made of parts'. Mūla Prakṛti or Primordial matter is the material cause for the creation of Brahmāṇḍas. By the word Brahmāṇḍa we should understand also the bodies given to creatures in the Brahmāṇḍa. In order to have some idea of proportions we may suppose that

God takes four handfulls of Sattva, two of Rajas and one of Tamas for the creation of Brahmāṇḍa and of the bodies given to creatures in it. (4:2:1)

*The heap of Sattva atoms is not for creation,
It is meant for the use of the sporting muktas
The two other heaps are the material cause of creation.*

Excepting Brahmā and Vāyu, in all the others, the activities of Rajoguṇa are prominent. In the composition of Vāyudeva's body there is a negligibly excess portion of Rajas, which is active. He is the leader of the Kṣatriya clan. Yet, all his activities are on behalf of the other jīvas and they are all dedicated in the service of Śrī Hari; they do not bind Him. In the case of every one belonging to the 'Rju' group—those who are eligible for the post of Vāyu, and later, Brahmā, their may be more and more of the Rajas and the Tamas principles; but their activities always lean towards the Sāttvic.

The above explanation, however, leads us to conclude that the bodies of all creatures, including those of Brahmā and Vāyu, are made by the mixture of the three guṇas or modes. Sattva heap, in its pure (unmixed) state, is meant only for the sport of the Muktas in the Eternal Abodes. Similarly unmixed Tamas heap is not also used in creation. It is meant for the suffering of those who are assigned to Eternal Hells.

Because the workings of the two modes, Rajas and Tamas, are glaringly prominent in this world, it was said that only the last two heaps form the material cause of creation.

*In limited quantities, to each group
Adding parts of other groups, qualified
Rajas group converts itself into three groups.*

This verse gives us a hint as to how new groups of material principles are formed by admixtures. At first we are told how new Rajas heaps and Tamas heaps are

formed by mixing the three modes in right proportions; and then how there are three groups in each of the three heaps.

Mixing one part Tamas, its hundred times

The red (Rajas) and its hundred times Sattva, understand.

Mixing one part of Tamas, hundred Rajas and ten thousand Sattva, we get the new Rajas heap. This is the first stage. In the next stage—

For the new Tamas heap, addition is thus—

One part of the Rajas atoms and then

Its hundred times Tamas and its ten times

Sattva—in this way two heaps.

One part of Rajas hundred parts of Tamas and one thousand parts of Sattva make the new Tamas heap.

I Rajas heap of Particles (Bindus)
Tama=1; Rajas=100; Sattva=10,000

II. Tamas heap particles (Bindus)
Rajas=1; Tamas=100; Sattva=1,000

Further combinations;

Each of these heaps, in three ways

Are joined together, listen, Tamas, Rajas, Sattva

In the middle part clearly showing.

If two particles of Rajas are put together, the new Rajas-Rajas particle arises. If one Tamas particle is added to a Rajas particle, the new Rajas-Tamas particle results. To one Rajas particle, if one Sattva particle is added, the new Rajas- Sattva particle is the outcome. In the same way particles are added to the Tamas unit. 'Bindu' is the recognisable unit for purposes of calculation. The names of the new groups are seen by the middle terms underlined—

I. The three divisions of the Rajas group:

(1) Rajas-Rajas; (2) Rajas-Tamas; (3) Rajas-Sattva.

II. The three divisions of the Tamas group :

(1) Tamas-Tamas; (2) Tamas-Rajas, (3) Tamas-Sattva

The first is the Rajas-Tamas group where Rajas leads and the second is the Tamas-Rajas group where Tamas leads. It is unlike $a+b=b+a$.

If Sattva particles are again added to the divisions I and II, newer types of particles are formed.

Distinction of Sattva Group	Distinction of Rajas Group	Distinction of Tamas Group
1. Sattva-Sattva-Sattva	Rajas-Sattva-Sattva	Tamas-Sattva-Sattva
2. Sattva-Sattva-Rajas	Rajas-Sattva-Rajas	Tamas-Sattva-Rajas
3. Sattva-Sattva-Tamas	Rajas-Sattva-Tamas	Tamas-Sattva-Tamas
4. Sattva-Rajas-Sattva	Rajas-Rajas-Sattva	Tamas-Rajas-Sattva
5. Sattva-Rajas-Rajas	Rajas-Rajas-Rajas	Tamas-Rajas-Rajas
6. Sattva-Rajas-Tamas	Rajas-Rajas-Tamas	Tamas-Rajas-Tamas
7. Sattva-Tamas-Sattva	Rajas-Tamas-Sattva	Tamas-Tamas-Sattva
8. Sattva-Tamas-Rajas	Rajas-Tamas-Rajas	Tamas-Tamas-Rajas
9. Sattva-Tamas-Tamas	Rajas-Tamas-Tamas	Tamas-Tamas-Tamas

If two enclosed groups are not used in creation—Sattva-Sattva-Sattva; and Tamas-Tamas-Tamas.

In the enlarged Rajas group with three divisions—

Rajas-Tamas, Rajas-Rajas, and Rajas-Sattva,

Truly, twelve particles of it

Have occupied all the three worlds by their fractional expansions;

For the bodies of creatures and other things

The Rajas-Sattva division is the material cause.

It is really surprising to note that only twelve particles of the Rajas-Sattva division (II-3) go to make up all the materials of the entire Universe. Each particle is capable of expanding into innumerable fractions. Even the present day scientists are of opinion that, if all the materials of the world are compressed together, it will be perhaps the size of a big pea seed. If vedic knowledge is viewed in the light of the scientists opinion just

now cited, one will come to understand the sublimity of the Vedas.

*With the twelve units of Rajas-Sattva particles
Brahmā's body principle was made; know the special point,
In the admixture of Sattva in the Rajas group,
Take Sattva-Sattva particles ten,
Add Rajas-Sattva and you get it.*

The details of the quoted verses are thus given by a great Pandit of the older generation, Vedagarbha Padmanābhācārya by name, in his work 'Padārthasaṃgraha'.

*In the Rajas particle in question, there are ten parts of Sattva,
one part of Rajas and its tenth part of Tamas.*

If we consider it as 1 Tamas + 10 Rajas + 100 Sattvas the total will be 111 parts. Again, if each of the components is considered as one unit, it will be read as

1 Tamas + 1 Rajas + 10 Sattva = 12 Parts.

$\frac{1}{10}$ Tamas is taken as one, because it is there as a unit though insignificant. For better comprehension, the same is also read as—

10 Tamas + 100 Rajas + 10,000 Sattva.

This Rajas-Sattva element with Sattva predominating is considered as Pure Sattva in Creation; Mahat tattva, the body material of Brahmadeva is composed of such 'Suddha Sattva' or pure sattva.

When the particles of the Rajas group and the Tamas group are added on the the Mahat tattva principle in the required proportions, Ahaṃkāra tattva and the others are created. By such subtle modifications the bodies of the divine beings and the nine envelopes covering the Brahmāṇḍa are created. Creation by subtle modifications goes by the name 'Vikṛta Sṛṣṭi'. Creation by grosser modifications is known as 'Vaikṛta Sṛṣṭi' by which the elements of our experience are created.

How all such modifications are made possible by the admixtures of only three elemental modes may be understood by an illustration. The three original and distinct colours are yellow, red and blue. By mixing these a clever artist can produce different other colours and countless shades of those colours. Sattva and the other two elements are also of the three principal colours.

Regarding the three primary modes Śrī Vādirājasvāmi says—

*The Sattva mode is a heap of yellowish atoms,
The Rajas mode resembles blood,
And the heap of Tamas is darkish;
Each one has different potentialities.*

To understand the potential capacities of the three material modes, one should well study the 14th Ch. 5-8, of Śrīmad Bhagavad Gīta. Just a few stanzas are given in illustration.

*Sattvam rajas tama iti guṇāḥ prakṛti sambhavāḥ,
Nībadhnanti mahābāho dehe dehinam avyayam
Tatra sattvam nirmalatvāt prakāśakam anāmayam,
Sukha saṅgena badhnāti jñāna saṅgena cānagha,
Rajo rāgātmakam vidhī tṛṣṇā saṅga samudbhavam
Tannibadhnāti Kaunteya karma saṅgena dehinām,
Tamastvajñānājam vidhī mohanam sarva dehinām,
Pramādālasya nidrabhiḥ tannibadhnāti Bhārata.*

The three modes, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, born of Prakṛti (original matter), tie up the changeless Jīva with the workings of the body in which he is lodged. Among them, Sattva guṇa, which is pure in colour, allows the light of knowledge without obstruction. It brings happy experiences and provides the materials for True knowledge. The red-coloured Rajoguṇa gives room for desires and makes the embodied individual to toil and moil endlessly. Tamoguṇa is another form of ignorance. It is the cause of illusions and it paves the way for wrong attitudes, idleness, and sleepiness.

II. Rudimentary material Creation outside the Brahmāṇḍa:

How materials of creation were made in a rudimentary manner out of external Prakṛti and how the divine beings were endowed with subtle material bodies will now be explained.

*What is necessary for worldly affairs was born
Out of the three material modes; for all,
Bodies were given to start the functioning of karmas.*

Wordly affairs are managed by means of higher intellect, the feeling of Self, the mind, the ten abilities of the sensory and the motor organs and the five faculties of hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch. We are aware of the outward organs connected with worldly activities and we know to some extent about the abilities behind them. These abilities are all managed by different deities who reside in our gross bodies with their subtle bodies. We go through our 'Karmas' with their backing. Their subtle bodies are made of the nineteen material principles from Mahattattva upto the Tanmātras. As soon as they acquire such bodies, they are ready to give the start to our Karmas.

Here is a description of the gods who were born with their subtle bodies.

*Brahmā, the lotus-born, himself, as before,
Was born of his wife along with Pavana.*

Just as Brahmā was born of his own wife while getting Mahattattva Sarira out of Liṅga Śira, now too he was born in the same manner along with Vāyudeva to acquire the external Mahattattva Śarira made out of Prakṛti.

*And then, from Brahmā, Vāyu and Śeṣa
Named Jīva, Rudra, Garuḍa and Śeṣa
Were born with bodies of Vaikārika, Taijasa
And Tāmasa Ahaṅkāra tattvas along with their wives;
Among them, Rudra came out with three forms and names.*

From Brahmā, Vāyu and Śeṣa (Jīva), Rudra-Garuḍa-Śeṣa were born with Vaikārika-Taijasa Tāmasa Ahaṁkāra bodies respectively. Rudra had acquired the Vaikārika (Sāttvic Ahaṁkāra) body from Brahmā. He was born with another form as the son of Garuḍa, son of Vāyu; and he became Taijasa Rudra with the body of Rājasic Ahaṁkāra. With yet another form he became Tāmasa Rudra, born of Śeṣa, with body of Tāmasic Ahaṁkāra.

*The Sovereign of gods and Kāma, and their wives,
Their births must be considered with modified bodies.*

Indra and Kāma were now born of Vaikārika Rudra along with their wives. Their bodies contained more of the Rājasic element compared with the Vaikārika body of Rudra. Similar modifications must be taken into account in the cases of other deities also.

There is no end to describe Rudra's creation giving further material modifications.

*He now combined his three forms into one,
And making his wife part of himself, he took the half-female form;*

*This mighty fire-eyed god, from his left and his right sides,
He created the twelve Suns, the group of winds (Maruts), ten Rudras,*

Visvedevas, Aśvins, the group of Ṛbhus,

Eight Vasus, Gandharvas, serpents,

Dogs, all kinds of humans, elephants, horses,

Trees and plants, all varieties of living creatures.

He gave birth to by the grace of Śrī Hari;

Our lotus-eyed Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya

Is the head of a very big family during every Kalpa.

In Rudra's creation we see that, not only the lesser gods, but all the creatures destined to come into the Brahmāṇḍa, were given the subtle elements of external Prakṛti with required modifications in each case.

The material modifications effected by Rudradeva are recounted here—

Putting together his three forms, Mahārudra
 Went through various types of Creation;
 From Vaikārika he made 'Manas' (Mind) and the bodies of
 deities;
 From Tajjasa the five sensory abilities
 And the five motor abilities;
 And from Tāmasa Ahaṅkāra,
 The five gross elements and the five Tanmātras,
 He, the highly detached Soul, himself created.

In the previous verses the details about the body-bearers were given. In the verses now quoted, the modifications necessary for the several kinds of bodies are related. The five gross elements, it must be understood, were created in very subtle forms; not as we know them.

III. Creation of the Outer Coverings of Brahmāṇḍa: Sulādi of Vijayadāsārya-

The three guṇas are eternal
 Who knows to understand them fully!
 The mind cannot grasp-it is like looking at the banyan seed;
 They contain fractions which give rise to further fractions,
 Every fraction has numberless other fractions;
 Why speak and only speak!
 All the grosser and finer material modifications are encompassed by them.

'Mūla Prakṛti, is eternal. Each one of its superfine atoms is capable of giving rise to a series of innumerable atoms. In each case, the original is called 'amśi' and the fractional part is called 'amśa'. Each superfine atom is like the seed of a banyan tree which contains every 'amśa' required for the growth of a big tree spreading over a very wide area and giving shelter to numberless birds and insects. In the same way, just, in a handful of the three kinds of matter-Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, all the amśas required for the twenty four principles making the nine envelopes of Brahmāṇḍa are found. Therefore it is said,

A trifling heap is the material cause of the universe.

Creation of the Envelopes—

The Sattva heap, He expanded
 In a moment and created
 By taking a few Sattva particles of fractional parts;
 Just by His will He made it occupy a wide space,
 Twice that of Rājasāvaraṇa, round in shape.

At first Śrī Hari took just a few Sattva particles from the original heap and by expansion, created the Sattva envelope such that it would be twice that of the Rajas envelope. It is like a round hollow ball of unimaginably enormous size. This He created without any effort, just by His will.

The thickness of this envelope is $5714285714285714\frac{2}{7}$ yojanas—a number of sixteen figures.

.....Then, the reddish elemental envelope, how created, listen;

In right proportions - with one part of original Tamas,
 From the Rajas, heap, lying separate,
 Came out one hundred parts;
 From the first envelope ten parts
 Then added; with these
 The Mighty Lord emanated with his queen;
 Modifying the three put together.

Śrī Hari put together ten parts of Sattva taken from the first envelope, one part of Tamas from its original state and one hundred parts of Rajas from its heap. He entered into them with His queen and brought about the required modifications; and by gradually expanding it, He created the Rajas envelope to be twice the size of the third, the Tamas envelope. Its thickness is $2857142857142857\frac{1}{7}$ Yojanas.

Think of the creation of Tamas, Āvaraṇa;
 From the Rājasa āvaraṇa one part,
 From the original Tamas heap
 Twelve parts are taken for mixture,
 And truly just a few sattva parts—
 These three mixing in the proper manner,
 Being in them with his wife, He developed it round,
 And created the Tāmasa āvaraṇa,
 Making it ten times that of Brahmā's;
 Thus He created the Avyakta āvaraṇa.

To one part of Rajas taken from the second envelope, twelve parts of original Tamas and just a few parts of Sattva are added to make the Tāmasa āvaraṇa. Its thickness is— $1428571428571428\frac{4}{7}$ yojanas. Putting together the three envelopes described so far, the thickness will be 10,000,000,000,000,000, yojanas (17 figures). All the three āvaraṇas are together spoken of as Avyakta Āvaraṇa which is ten times thicker than the Mahat tattva envelope presided over by Brahmā.

Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya tells us about the benefit one reaps by knowing the vastness of these envelopes. In this way, let people praise the first envelope of matter

It shines with the lustre of gems,

Śrī Vijaya Viṭṭalarāya, whose personality is joy sublime,

Dances in the mind with the name Avyakta.

Remembering the pervasive presence of Śrī Hari in the envelopes of very vast dimensions, is itself a covetable reward. He shows His presence and fills the mind with joy. The proverb goes, "He who has tasted sugar, knows its sweetness." The very name of the Almighty Lord brings us joy. Hence it is said.

*Dadhi madhuram madhu madhuram
 drākṣā madhuram sudhāpi madhuraiva;
 Madhurādapi tanmadhuram Madhurānāthasya
 nāma mādhyam.*

Yogurt is sweet, honey is sweet; the grape is sweet; nectar too is sweet beyond words. But the sweetness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's name is sweeter than the sweetest.

The Second āvaraṇa is Mahat tattva of Prakṛti;
 Ten of Sattva group and one of Tamas,
 And, in addition, one from the 'Red' group;
 Let the wise ones listen, in the equilibrium state (guṇasāmya)
 They are red particles of the Avyakta āvaraṇa;
 They turn out to be material cause in the disturbed state
 (guṇavaśmya),
 A third Rajas particle coming out and one from Tamas,
 All mixing together without disturbing harmony;
 With His wife Śrī Hari entered them,
 And He developed it into round shape
 And thus created Brahmā's tattva (Mahat tattva);
 Hence it is said four parts and five parts,
 This is according to 'Sāstra, to a portion of Mahat tattva, the
 Same particle from the subtle first āvaraṇa
 Came out in exact measure and mingled,
 It rightly became of similar category;
 The Four-faced and our Vāyudeva,
 Sarasvati and Bhārati are in them;
 It is always ten times the Ahaṅkāra.

From the Sattva āvaraṇa, the very first, ten particles are taken. To it one particle of Rajas and one particle of Tamas from the original heaps are added. Again one Rajas particle and one Tamas particle from the Avyakta āvaraṇa are taken out and mixed. With the presence of Śrīdevī and her spouse, this mixture converts itself into Mahat tattva, the abode of Brahmadeva. It is like this $10+(2+2)$.

A portion of the Mahat tattva is Vijñāna tattva, wherein one Rajas particle from Mahat tattva itself is added. It is thus $10+(2+2)+1$. Because there are two principles in the same envelope with slight difference, it was said 'four parts' and 'five parts'. Mahat tattva is for Brahmā and Sarasvatī; Vijñāna tattva for Vāyu and Bhārati.

Taking a portion of Tamas from the Vijñāna tattva and mixing Sattva, Rajas and Tamas taken from Avyakta āvaraṇa, separately, three modes of Ahaṁkāra tattva are created. Vaikārika Ahaṁkāra results by Sattva of Avyakta mixing with Tamas of Vijñāna tattva; Taijasa Ahaṁkāra by the mixture of Rajas; and Tāmasa Ahaṁkāra by the mixture of Tamas.

We should note that the Rajas and the Tamas particles of the Mahat tattva or Vijñāna tattva are diluted by their contact with the Sattva property of those tattvas. By further addition of Rajas or Tamas taken from the already diluted ones in the Avyakta āvaraṇa, the new modifications become somewhat gross, comparatively.

The Ahaṁkāra tattva gives rise to the material principles which are lower still.

.....From this Ahaṁkāra tattva, citta,
 Buddhi, Manas are made; and from the three Ahaṁkāras
 The other principles are also made, altogether twentyfour;
 The deities got their different bodies; Ahaṁkāra with manas,
 Forming the third envelope; to the material Sky, its
 Pervasion is ten times more
 The master of Pavana, Vijayaviṭṭalarāya,
 Nine kinds of Bhakti and Virakti He gives.

Three material principles - Citta (Memory), Buddhi (Intellect) and Manas (Mind) were created out of Vaikārika Ahaṁkāra.

The mind is there to get experiences of the external world through the sense organs. Without the backing of Intellect and Memory (Buddhi and Citta) the mind cannot retain the Knowledge received by it. Hence the Knowledge reaching Manas is termed 'Vṛtti rūpa' or it is Knowledge of impulses only. Very often it may get wrong or illusory impressions. But, Buddhi has the ability to reason out and to define the impressions. Citta (Memory) judges and retains those impressions. It helps one to gain peace of mind.

From the three types of Ahaṁkāra the bodies of deities lesser than Mahārudra were created. The extension of this āvaraṇa is ten times less than that of Mahat tattva, but ten times greater than that of the material sky envelope.

The sky and the other four gross elements make the jīvas to be attracted by worldly things and makes them indifferent to God. If one remembers that Mahārudra, the Presiding deity of Ahaṁkāra tattva, is the chief master of Manas, that his detachment to worldly affairs is perfect, and that he is the right spiritual master to initiate one in the meanings of 'Rāma Mantra', he will be helped by Śrī Rāma to develop nine kinds of Bhakti in newer and newer ways and to practise detachment (Vairāgya).

*The Second Ahaṁkāra is Taijasa
It beams with red colour;
The Lord, taking a portion of Taijasa,
Developed ten kinds of sprouts,
The ten Indriyas were thus formed.*

The abilities of the five sensory organs and the five motor organs were developed out of Taijasa Ahaṁkāra.

*Then, from the Tāmasa Ahaṁkāra portion,
Making ten divisions of it, hearing,
Touch, sight, taste, smell-these
Five Tanmātras and five gross elements upto Prthvi,
were created.*

From Taijasa Ahaṁkāra five elemental Principles, grosser than the abilities of organs but subtler than the five gross elements, were created. They are connected with sensory organs and are called Tanmātras. And the five gross elements are only further modifications of the Tanmātras.

Relationship between the Indriyas (Organs), the Tanmātras and the gross elements is shown here below:

	Sensory Organs	Tanmātras	Gross elements
(1)	Śrōtra (Ear)	Śabda (Hearing)	Ākāśa (Sky)
(2)	Tvak (Skin)	Sparsā (Touch)	Vāyu (Air)
(3)	Netra (Eye)	Rūpa (Sight)	Agni (Fire)
(4)	Rasana (Tongue)	Rasa (Taste)	Jala (Water)
(5)	Ghrāṇa (Nose)	Gandha (Smell)	Prthvi (Earth)

The five gross elements spoken of are not those which are known to us. They are only very subtle and form the lesser deities functioning in them. However, they are gross when compared to the higher elements.

Below Ahaṅkāra āvaraṇa is the Ākāśa (sky) āvaraṇa; and further below are the envelopes of air, fire and water. The envelope of earth is Brahmāṇḍa created later. Each of the envelopes is ten times bigger than the envelope immediately below it.

Thickness of the envelopes. (āvaraṇas)

Prthvi āvaraṇa	100 crore Yojanas
Jala āvaraṇa	1000 crore Yojanas
Agni āvaraṇa	10000 crore Yojanas
Vāyu āvaraṇa	100000 crore Yojanas
Ākāśa āvaraṇa	1000000 crore Yojanas
Ahaṅkāra āvaraṇa	10000000 crore Yojanas
Mahat tattva āvaraṇa	100000000 crore Yojanas

*Know the truth; Citta, Buddhi, Manas, Ten
Indriyas, five Tanmātras, the nine Envelopes the materials*

*of all these, with each other
 Are very well connected, you must know,
 The states of the Sky and the other four,
 Wise devotees should very well understand;
 Vijayaviṭṭalarāya, who has fullness of all auspicious qualities,
 Along with master deities and with his consort
 resides in each of them.*

The material envelopes of the universe, extending upto crores and crores of yojanas, and the principles of Citta, Buddhi, Manas and the rest are all very well inter connected in their functions. They are all manned by several deities and guiding them, Śrī Lakṣmīpati is there. He takes care of the universe. If such knowledge is acquired by the wise devotees, they will be happy here and hereafter.

*Is there any limit to the kindness of the Saviour of sinners!
 Searching among all the gods, one who
 Is so easily accessible, I have never never seen
 Cursed is he who turns away from Him;
 Cursed is his food and drink, his ageing and his body are worth-
 less;
 Literature that does not praise Him is damnable;
 Forgetting Him and visiting holy places is all wasteful;
 Observance of Āsrama dharmas is futile without Him;
 With Sāttvic mind, if one offers even a drop of water
 In the name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he earns such high merit that it
 excels the Meru mountain,
 The conqueror of daityas, who has fullness of superb qualities;
 Vijayaviṭṭhala
 Always sports in the minds of devotees.*

Purport: Being born in human form, it will be profitable to know the glory of the creator and of His creation, and to develop devotional attitude. It is only this that ensures eternal happiness in God's Abode. We should always remember and praise Him, not for His sake, but for our own sakes. Knowing that He is the conqueror of daityas and knowing that He is always with us as He is everywhere, will make us peaceful and

happy without any sort of fear. He will save us from sins and sinners.

IV. The Gods Offer Prayers:

So far we have seen that before the Brahmāṇḍa was created, the three envelopes of Sattva, Rajaś and Tamas and other six Mahat Tattva, Ahaṁkāra Tattva, Akāśa Tattva, Vāyu Tattva, Tejas tattva, and Vāri (water) Tattva - altogether nine envelopes were created. Brahmā and Vāyu became the presiding deities over all the Tattvas. Rudra, the master of Ahaṁkāra Tattva, gave birth to the over lords of the material principles such as the sky and to those who were to preside over the sense organs and motor organs (ten in number), as well as to those whose realm was over the five subtle elements (Tanmātras) and the five gross elements - sky, air, fire, water and earth that we know of. After all this was done, then Brahmāṇḍa was to be created. All the presiding deities were to enter the Brahmāṇḍa and to carry on their functions. But none of the deities were capable of creating the Brahmāṇḍa or to carry on their functions by themselves.

Not knowing the further course he stood

Having no potency to initiate, the deities

*Designated to control the Tattvas were struck with fear
this Brahmāṇḍa (to create)*

*By combining the Tattvas in right modes not knowing the skill,
the deities prayed to Śrī Hari.*

Within the Brahmāṇḍa too the deities had to manufacture different kinds of bodies for the variety of creatures. They had to put together the tattvas already created in the necessary modes. Therefore they appealed to the Mercy of Śrī Hari.

The presiding deities stood like statues;

Entering into their souls

He stationed them into the Tattvas (material principles)

Along with these controllers, combining,

In this fashion all the envelopes and

The Brahmāṇḍa He made-the Giver of abilities.

When it is said that Śrī Hari entered into the sphere of the controlling deities who were stone-still, it may be asked if He was not there already. It is true that He is always in all the souls and in the material causing them existence. Entering into the deities in various new forms to enable the manipulation of material changes and activities is known as 'entering anew'. Here, Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya has made explicit the maxim 'Tena vinā tṛṇamapi na calati' (not even a blade of grass moves without His urging). Also, 'He created Brahmāṇḍa' means that He made everything ready for the creation of Brahmāṇḍa by entering into material principles and their presiding deities.

*Ten years of Brahmā, born of the golden egg, elapsed
By now truly he had completed forty five years of his existence*

Creation by Rudradeva took fourteen years; he spent one year in 'tapas', by which time thirty five years of Brahmā's life span was over. For the creation of the nine envelopes, Śrī Hari entering into the material principles and the deities, it took another ten years. Hence, Brahmā had seen the wonderful creation by the Lord during a period of forty five years.

In the ninth watery envelope the particles of the earth principle were inter-mixed. The tenth envelope of Brahmāṇḍa had not yet come into existence. With the sphere of the earth principle contained by the watery envelope, Śrī Vāsudeva reclined and enjoyed material happiness with Māyādevi for two years.

*Again Mahālakṣmi, for one year, the Lord
She praised and worshipped.*

Women of this world serve their husbands for the sake of fulfilling their desire for motherhood. But there is no such desire for Mahālakṣmi. However, she serves her Lord for the upliftment of the souls out of her immeasurable kindness. She praised and worshipped her husband for one full year entreating Him to create the

providing the environment necessary for realization of the souls.

There is in praising the glory of Śrī Hari, devotees know. It is therefore that Śrī āsārya sang, "To praise Govinda, the son hārāja, is the sweetmeat of Supreme joy."

Brahmā was fortyeight years old. During the next two years, how Śrī Hari went through a chemical combination of material principles for the creation of Brahmāṇḍa, is nar-

1 region of earth particles in the watery envelope,
by Mahālakṣmī

2 wife who displayed Śrī, Bhū and Durga forms,

3 as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa

4 anābha with His own portions (as full as Himself)
create the Brahmāṇḍa,

5 the material principles by admixtures

6 put them together for further modifications.

7 ana, Pañca Vṛtti and Trivṛtkaraṇa:

8 sion, creating gross materials and Three-
9 ations)

10 manābha whose form combines within it-
11 other of His forms, was born in His own
12 hmā. Viṣṇu and Maheśa. (His ways are
13 Then He proceeded with the task of the
14 of the material principles. After that He
15 Brahmāṇḍa; and keeping within Himself
16 idra and the others along with the mate-
17 He entered it. Before knowing more details
18 reation of Brahmāṇḍa, it will be necessary
19 ails about the creation of gross materials.

20 we have learnt about the inter-mixture of
21 iginal principles - Sattva, Rajas and Tamas
22 for the creation of the nine envelopes. The

When it is said that Śrī Hari entered into the souls of the controlling deities who were stone-still, it may be asked if He was not there already. It is true that He is always in all the souls and in the material cause giving them existence. Entering into the deities with various new forms to enable the manipulation of material changes and activities is known as 'entering anew'. Here, Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya has made explicit the maxim. 'Tena vinā tṛṇamapi na calati' (not even a blade of grass moves without His urging). Also, 'He created the Brahmāṇḍa' means that He made everything ready for the creation of Brahmāṇḍa by entering into material principles and their presiding deities.

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By now truly he had completed forty five years of his existence.

Creation by Rudradeva took fourteen years; He spent one year in 'tapas', by which time thirty five years of Brahmās' life span was over. For the creation of the nine envelopes, Śrī Hari entering into the material principles and the deities, it took another ten years. Hence, Brahmā had seen the wonderful creation by the Lord during a period of forty five years.

In the ninth watery envelope the particles of the earth principle were inter-mixed. The tenth envelope of Brahmāṇḍa had not yet come into existence. Within the sphere of the earth principle contained by the watery envelope, Śrī Vāsudeva reclined and enjoyed marital happiness with Māyādevi for two years.

Again Mahālakṣmi, for one year, the Lord

She praised and worshipped.

Women of this world serve their husbands for the sake of fulfilling their desire for motherhood. But there is no such desire for Mahālakṣmi. However, she serves her Lord for the upliftment of the souls out of her immeasurable kindness. She praised and worshipped her husband for one full year entreating Him to create the

Brahmāṇḍa providing the environment necessary for the courses of realization of the souls.

What joy there is in praising the glory of Śrī Hari, only the true devotees know. It is therefore that Śrī Purandara Dāsārya sang, "To praise Govinda, the son of Nanda Mahārāja, is the sweetmeat of Supreme joy."

By now Brahmā was fortyeight years old. During the course of the next two years, how Śrī Hari went through the chemical combination of material principles, required for the creation of Brahmāṇḍa, is narrated.

*Lying in the region of earth particles in the watery envelope,
praised by Mahālakṣmī*

*In His own wife who displayed Śrī, Bhū and Durga forms,
He was born as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa*

That Padmanābha with His own portions (as full as Himself)

In order to create the Brahmāṇḍa,

To expand the material principles by admixtures

And then to put them together for further modifications.

. Pañcīkaraṇa, Pañca Vṛtti and Trivṛtkaraṇa:

(Expansion, creating gross materials and Three-fold modifications)

Śrī Padmanābha whose form combines within itself all the other of His forms, was born in His own wife as Brahmā. Viṣṇu and Maheśa. (His ways are mysterious!) Then He proceeded with the task of the mixture of the material principles. After that He created the Brahmāṇḍa; and keeping within Himself Brahmā, Rudra and the others along with the material things, He entered it. Before knowing more details about the creation of Brahmāṇḍa, it will be necessary to know details about the creation of gross materials.

Earlier we have learnt about the inter-mixture of the three original principles - Sattva, Rajas and Tamas necessary for the creation of the nine envelopes. The

inter-mixtures made for Mahat tattva and the other eight tattvas, however gross they may be called, yet they are very very subtle in structures; of course, as the proportions of Rajas and Tamas increase, the material principles become more and more gross comparatively. Taking up the subtle enough principle of the envelopes and combining them to form really gross principles is made possible by the processes of 'Pañcikaraṇa', Pañcavṛtti' and 'Trivṛtkaraṇa'.

In the 'Sulādi' of Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya these matters are just hinted briefly; we have to know more details from other source books.

*It is this, for human beings, for aquatic creatures,
for birds and insects,
For worms and for airy creatures (Piśācas)
that gives the bodies.*

Pañcikaraṇa: (Expansion of material principles). Two units of the subtle enough principles of each of the last five envelopes (sky, air, fire, water and earth) are taken; each one is divided into a hundred parts. The hundred parts of one in each is divided into five units of twenty parts. Such units are added to the other five original units to give grossness. This kind of combination is known as 'Pañcikaraṇa', which may be comprehended by the following table.

Explanation:- When 20 parts of the same subtle principle and 20 parts of each of the other four principles mix together with 100 parts of the sky principle, the gross sky matter is formed (Ether).

When 20 parts of the same subtle principle and 20 parts of each of the other four mix with 100 parts of the air principle, the gross air matter is formed. In the same way, the other three gross elements are also formed.

Thus, the formation of the five gross elements by the inter-mixture of the subtle elements is called 'Pañcīkarana'. Śrī Vādirājasvāmi has provided such tables and he has also provided the means to play the game of 'Pañcīkarana'.

In the previous table, the five elements shown in the top horizontal column, forming gross elements (tattvas), shall be considered as the principal elements and those fractional parts in the lower horizontal columns shall be considered as similar fractions.

Remembering that the material particles of Nature (atoms) are countless and each particle has countless fractional parts (sub-atomic), let us take each principal element now mentioned and divide each one of them into six parts of 100 units. Then, if we keep five parts of each as principal and divide the sixth into five even fractional parts of 20 units, and inter-mix them as before, let us see what new elements arise.

Principal Part	Even Fractional Part	Principle of motor organ; Sense organ
1. Earth - 100 +	Sky - 20	= Principle of Speech (Vāk)(Mouth)
" "	Air - 20	Principle of Handling (Pāni)(Hands)
" "	Fire - 20	Principle of Motion (Pāda)(Legs)
" "	Water - 20	Principle of Excretion (Pāyu)(Rectum)
" "	Earth - 20	Principle of Reproduction (Upastha)(the genital)
2. Fire - 100 +	Sky - 20	= Principle of Hearing-Ear (Śrotra)
" "	Air - 20	Principle of Touch (Tvak) Skin
" "	Fire - 20	Principle of Sight (Cakṣu) Eye.
" "	Water - 20	Principle of Taste (Rasanā)-Tongue
" "	Earth - 20	Principle of Smell (Ghrāṇa) Nose

3) *In the same way,*

Principal water element in combination with even fractional parts of sky etc. goes to form the five 'Tanmātras' - the finer parts of the gross elements - sky, air, fire, water, earth. They bring the grosser elements in touch with the sense organs.

4) The principal air element, in combination with five fractional elements, goes to form the five life breaths - Prāṇa, Apāna, Vyāna, Udāna and Samāna.

5) The principal sky element, in combination with the five fractional parts, goes to form the five departments of 'Antaḥkaraṇa' which is commonly called Mind (Manas). The five departments are - Antaḥkaraṇa, Manas, Buddhi, Citta and Ahaṁkāra. (Life principle, mind, intellect, memory and ego respectively).

(Note : A complete picture of the five principal elements, their presiding deities and the forms of the Supreme Lord in them - the outcome of 'Pañcīkaraṇa' - can be gathered from the Appendix).

The five principal forms of Śrīman Nārāyaṇa get into one another to form the combined personalities, which motivate the deities presiding over the elements. How the combined personalities are formed is shown here below:

	Ani ruddha	Pradyu mna	Samkar ṣaṇa	Vāsu deva	Nārāyaṇa	
Aniruddha	Ani ruddha + Ani ruddha	Ani ruddha + Pradyu mna	Ani ruddha + Samkar ṣaṇa	Ani ruddha + Vāsu deva	Ani ruddha + Nārā yaṇa	Nārāyana
Pradyumna	Pradyu mna + Ani ruddha	Pradyu mna + Pradyu mna	Pradyu mna + Samkar ṣaṇa	Pradyu mna + Vāsu deva	Pradyu mna + Nārā yaṇa	Vāsudeva
Samkarṣaṇa	Samkar ṣaṇa + Ani ruddha	Samkar ṣaṇa + Pradyu mna	Samkar ṣaṇa + Samkar ṣaṇa	Samkar ṣaṇa + Vāsu deva	Samkar ṣaṇa + Nārā yaṇa	Samkarṣaṇa
Vāsudeva	Vāsu deva + Ani ruddha	Vāsu deva + Pradyu mna	Vāsu deva + Samkar ṣaṇa	Vāsu deva + Vāsu deva	Vāsu deva + Nārā yaṇa	Pradyumna
Nārāyaṇa	Nārā yaṇa + Ani ruddha	Nārā yaṇa + Pradyu mna	Nārā yaṇa + Samkar ṣaṇa	Nārā yaṇa + Vāsu deva	Nārā yaṇa + Nārā yaṇa	Aniruddha
	Nārā yaṇa	Vāsu deva	Samkar ṣaṇa	Pradyu mna	Ani ruddha	

Pañcavṛtti: The elements sky and air, fire and air, water and earth are separately mixed to endow individuals with gross bodies to help them to go through the process of realization. This kind of mixing is known as Pañcavṛtti. Details are hereunder-

- I (1) Sky - 99 + Air - 1 = Sky (Ākāśa)
 (2) Air - 99 + Sky - 1 = Air (Vāyu)

II (1)	Fire - 99 + Air - 1	= Fire	(Tejas)
(2)	Air -99 + Fire - 1	= Air	(Vāyu)
III(1)	Water - 99 + Earth - 1	= Water	(Udaka)
(2)	Earth -99 + Water - 1	= Earth	(Pṛthvī)

Trivṛtkarana :

The fiery, airy, watery and earthy elements of groups II and III become materials for giving bodies to the various creatures. Mixing these elements in a variety of ways is called Trivṛtkaraṇa. Its use is as shown in the table below:-

Trivṛtkarana

Sl. No.	Bodies	Earthy Portion	Watery Portion	Fiery Portion	Airy Portion	Group to which it belongs
1.	Divine Beings	1	3	4	-	Luminous group
2.	Human Beings	4	3	1	-	Terrestrial group
3.	Quadrupeds					
	Aquatics	3	4	1	-	Aquatic group
4.	Denizens of the sky, birds, ghosts etc	1	1	1	5	Aerial group

VI. The value of material elements:

Having described the creation of the outer envelopes of Brahmāṇḍa, Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya heartily praises the glory of the material principles out of which they are made.

*Even before my birth, my ancestral well-wishers,
While they had hidden rare treasure,
I did not dig the earth; wandering away,
Without wisdom, I did not search;
On my return, I found it fondly stored
Where is the limit for my good luck!
What treasure is there greater
Than praising the Lord with four names, Vijayaviṭṭala!*

The treasure hidden by well-wishing ancestors for our sake is the wealth of Vedic literatures. We forget to make use of them and suffer. But, when a spiritual master gives us guidance, we get the use of such treasure. No worldly wealth can compare with knowledge of the Supreme Being and His ways. One should be very very lucky to gain such knowledge. The

four names of the Lord mentioned here are Aniruddha, Pradyumna, Sannkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva; it is with these forms that He goes on with the work of creation.

*There are twentyfour old coins,
Each bearing a different name,
Well impressed; the coin earth bears its name clearly;
You can search and find them in every Veda;
The devotees of Vijayavṛthala who has four forms and names,
Their grace is blessing for me.*

When it is said that the 'old coins' bear clear impressions, it means they contain scientific knowledge which can be verified and experimented. Such knowledge is found in every Veda. One should be really fortunate to secure such knowledge by the grace of those who are true devotees of Vijayavṛthala, who is the same as the one who took four names and forms - Vāsudeva, Sannkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha.

Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya then tells that the twentyfour coins-the twentyfour material principles prove to be very valuable if used in the name of Śrī Hari.

*Their colour exceeds sixteen carats,
No goldsmith can test it on the touch stone,
Jewellers cannot fix their values;
You can see them to be multi-coloured
The coins are self-made, not minted by others
The prettiest one, shining like gold-Vijayavṛthala,
That goldsmith alone knows their worth.*

The worth of anything depends upon the use to which it can be put. We know the value of our coins according to their economic worth. But, the value of the twentyfour material principles cannot be understood by us. Their value depends upon the abilities of users. The divine beings know their value much more than human beings. Brahmā knows still more. Only Mahālakṣmī knows all the uses of the 'twenty-four coins'; but even her knowledge is incomplete when compared to that of the Supreme Being.

*These cannot be melted; if any one begs,
No piece can be cut and given away;
Go wherever you will, it is no unbearable burden;*

Carry it for any length of time, it does not seem heavy;
 You cannot swing it away and throw it down;
 O coin, You care for him, who
 Seeks refuge of Śrī Vijayaviṭṭhala.

If only we remember that our bodies are made of these twenty four coins, we can appreciate the meaning of the verse quoted.

*With one coin we can buy Indra and the other gods
 Along with their wealthy abodes;
 We can put an end to the poverty of
 One hundred generations of our kins, old and new;
 If one suffers with penury of head
 It can be dispelled instantaneously,
 No doubt about it, Vijayaviṭṭhala, called 'Sama'
 Becomes our kinsman by means of these coins.*

The least of the twenty four coins is Pṛthvītattva. This envelope, which is Brahmāṇḍa, is the purest gold and has a thickness of one hundred crore Yojanas. All the fourteen worlds are contained in it. Then, is it any wonder that Indra and the other gods can be bought off with it? The material principle acquires such value, not by itself, but by its association with all the gods in it, lorded over by Mahālakṣmī, the dearest queen of Śrī Hari.

Penury of head means ignorance about the Spiritual world. If one learnt about the creation and the working of the twentyfour principles, he becomes a 'jñāni and lives in the light of such knowledge. The scriptures tell us that, if one such there be, his ancestors and his progeny will be saved from hells.

When Śrī Hari Himself is gratified by the deeds of a devotee, what is there that the latter cannot achieve! That is why Śrī Purandara Dāsārya challenged Śrī Kṛṣṇadevarāya of Vijayanagar with the question, "Is your wealth great or is our (devotees) wealth great?"

*In my youthful lusts I did not know their value even a bit;
On account of merits earned in previous births, the travails of
my cycles have borne fruit,
My mind is collected and can follow in the footsteps of the
devotees*

Of the Lion-faced-Vijayaviṭṭhala.

The verse quoted tells us about the value of births and deaths, which is what we are all going through. Maybe it is a long long course; but it is necessary for the soul to realize his or her original nature. We are not the judges in this respect; it is the Omniscient and mighty who knows all about the soul and its needs. Only at the far end of the course of realization does the original mind (part and parcel of Liṅga Śarīra) become composed and will be able to walk the path of devotees.

Keeping in His belly, expanding it into the earth

The Possessor of boundless wealth,

Vijayaviṭṭhala, lends for interest.

Śrī Hari is compared to a money lender who takes heavy interest. He has boundless wealth (materials) stored in His belly. He spreads it in the form of the universe with the earth in it. He puts the jīvas upon the earth with gross bodies for the sake of realization. In other words, He lends out His wealth. The interest He expects is our Liṅga Śarīras (causation bodies). Can we expect any one else to lend His wealth in this manner? By relieving us of our false property, He makes us richer with the joy of spirit.

VII. The glory of the five gross elements:

In order to remove the dirt of our bodies fully, such as us, who are accustomed to take oil bath, rub oil into the skin and later wash it off by using hot water and soapnut powder. In the same way, if the seeds of Karma sticking to our Liṅga Śarīras are to be got rid of, and if that body should be dried up and made thin enough

to be washed away in the Virajā waters, rubbing and washing are necessary. The sprouts of the Liṅga Śarīra—the twenty four material principles must come to rub with the twenty four external material principles, of which the universe is created. We must get into hot waters, and cleanse ourselves by the soapnut powder of wisdom.

It is this expedient that the All-knower has adopted in bringing souls into the arena of the universe. The role played by the twenty four material principles in this drama of life is very great. Look at the exquisite manner in which Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya has portrayed it.

*Whence did these elements emanate?
They are haunting everywhere!
They are sticking to us life after life full pervading,
They never leave us and stay on.*

The workings of the five gross elements throw us into confusion. They are continuously with us; they don't leave us.

*Earth, water, fire, wind and sky
They are always called,
The higher ones have wider expanse,
And are in close contact with each other.*

The water element contains the earth element also; the fire element contains earth and water. Air contains fire, water and earth; and, the sky contains all the other four. Conversely the sky is found in all the other four elements. Similarly the other three exist in their lower neighbours.

*All the words spoken and all the deeds done,
Sowing, growing, moving about,
Eating and all other actions are due to the elements
In this Brahmāṇḍa of activities;
Pearls, diamonds, gold, silver, all other materials
Consist only of these elements.*

The connection between organs, Tanmātras and the elements, shown previously, will help us to understand the statements made in the above verse.

Children are shown charcoal, sugar and diamond in their science classes and are told that all the three substances are the allotropic forms of carbon. With this much of knowledge they feel proud. But, if any one can create a piece of diamond out of carbon, his knowledge and skill may be extolled. Not that it is impossible; but one should know the right proportions and mode of preparation. With proper use of the five elements, not only diamond, but a new world itself can be created as was done by the sage Viśvāmitra.

*Surrounding the Brahmāṇḍa they are
Envelopes, each ten times bigger;
Even Rudras and others cannot shake off,
They will not leave till karmas end;
Higher and higher deities support them
With their graded qualifications;
He who fills all, has ordained them harmoniously.*

Since the elemental envelopes lie around and around, the higher ones being ten times bigger, even higher gods like Rudra cannot escape from their grip.

But it should not be construed that the five elements are a hindrance to us. They are there only to help us. Our sorrows or our happiness depends on the manner in which we use them.

*From these elements we gain exaltation;
From these elements we enjoy happiness;
From these elements all auspicious results;
From these elements all our gains;
From these elements wealth springs up;
From these elements all our ornaments;
From these elements lands and garments;
From these elements all importance;
From these elements looming sacred
All castes flourish, Brāhmaṇas, Kshatriyas;*

*From these elements there is honour;
From these elements the worlds are there;
Vijaya Viṭṭhalarāya, the most opulent,
From these elements cuts our bonds.*

The binding elements are made to disappear by the grace of Him from whom we got into bondage. Hence is He praised, "Bandhako bhāva pāśaśca bhāva pāśena mocakaḥ". But, if we misuse these gross elements it will be like the fox biting hard sugarcane and suffering pain.

Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya takes his own example and advises others.

*Having seen both the good and the bad sides,
Such that the elements do not land me into sin,
I seek the means to cut across the darkness
By always singing the glory of Śrī Hari's lotus feet.*

The true means to free oneself from the sorrows of this world is to cling to the lotus feet of Śrī Hari.

The saintly Haridāsa says further—

*I have not stolen anyone's property,
I did not poke my nose into other's matters,
In pursuance of vanity, imitating the better placed,
I did not go on beating my drum;
Which foolish man, sitting near a sugarcane grinder,
Goes in for a drink of dirty drain water!*

The saint has told us what not to do and what to do. Pursuit of pleasures is compared to a drink of dirty drain water. Remembering Śrī Hari and enjoying easily available pleasures is compared to sugarcane juice.

Still further he says about human folly—

*Jealous of others' prosperity, and
Like fasting on a feasting day;
For eyebrows sake, losing the eye, and
Like living in the world disgraced;
Giving two measures of gems and exchanging
With ashes to manure the thorny tree.*

Finally he says—

*Why do you throw mud upon others?
This body is like a water bubble;
Using bad words, earned merit is lost,
And drowned in the ocean of sin, there is no way out;
He who praises Śrī Hari even for a while,
Him Śrī Vijayaviṭṭhala truly blesses.*

A glaring human weakness is to find fault with others and to speak ill of them. This, our saint says, is doubly harmful. Merit is lost; sins accrue. And it is very hard to get out of the whirlpool of sin. One who spends even a few seconds in praising the glory of Śrī Hari will be considered holy.

Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya described the glory of the five gross elements and drew our attention to the necessity of remembering the lotus feet of the Almighty Lord. The activities of the five elements involve also the activities of the nineteen higher elements pervading them. Śrī Vādirājasvāmi describes the good and evil of all the elements in his Vaikuṅṭha Varṇane. (III-33-35)

*The Mahat tattva brings prestige,
Ahaṅkāra makes one proud,
Buddhi enables true perception
And the Mind goes after this or that.*

33

Vijñāna tattva, being almost the same as Mahat tattva, it is the abode of Vāyudeva. This material principle helps one know the truth about God who works through the agency of subordinate deities. It is for this reason that Śrī Vāyudeva is praised in the following manner.

*Buddhir balam yaśo dhairyam nirbhayatvam arōgatā,
Ajāḍyam vākpaṭutvam ca Hanumatsmaraṇād bhavet.*

34

Higher intellect, strength of mind and body, reputation, steadiness, fearlessness, immunity to sickness,

unimpeded conscience, elocution - all these result by remembering the name of Hanumān.

The light of Truth that he bestows is known as 'Mahimā' or Prestige. That is the gift of Mahat tattva

Ahaṁkāra tattva creates three kinds of ego. To say, "Aham tattva jñāni" or "I have learnt the truth" is Sāttvic ego. Knowing the indwelling agents of God and still saying, "I did this; I did that" is Rājasic ego. Forgetting the spiritual back-ground and proudly saying, "I am the doer, I am happy, I am enjoying luxuries all this is mine" is Tāmasic ego. This is what is really called 'Pride'.

When it is said, "Buddhi enables true perception," we must take into account one of the five aspects of the mind, which is also called Buddhi.

Śiva's wife Pārvatī is in charge of it. It is immediately connected with the mind of impulses; and it helps right perception of things brought to the mind by the five senses. It will not be wrong to say that the psycho-analysis of modern scientists stops here although they speak hazily of the 'sub-conscious mind.'

Citta, Cetana, Ahaṁkāra, Buddhi and Manas are the five compartments of the Ahaṁkāra tattva, which is often called as Manas too. But the Manas, the exterior-most section, is in direct contact with the external world. It creates immediate responses such as, "I want this, I want that, I must do this, I must not do that" and so on.

*The ten Indriyas always towards
Worldly objects tend and this mind
They pull that way; if thus engaged by ego,
Can man ever earn prestige?*

The sensory organs fix the mind in worldly attractions and the motor organs run forward, with the mind, towards them. Those, always engaged in mundane pleasures, can never rise to respectable heights. Mahat tattva does not come to their help.

The worldly man,

*Forgetting the daily and occasional religious duties,
Feels jealous of his superiors,
And puffed up by his possessions,
Rotates in the worldly cycle and suffers.* 36

*Legs pull where damsels display charms,
Eyes show their beauty,
Making to part with gold, with their spitting feed,
Ears go mad with their words.* 37

Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya has given very sound advice in this respect. In his *Sulādi* on 'Woman', he says- "If you are hyper-sexed, give pleasure to your lawful wife; it makes you happy and brings credit to you and to your forefathers."

The human body often behaves very badly.

*Makes one to eat unholy food for the sake of belly,
Drives into bad company,
Praising donors and blaming others,
One goes down and down into hells.* 38

'The guardian deities are also in the same human organs, they are the promoters of all actions. Do they not suffer?' - one may ask. Śrī Vādirājasvāmī gives the answer-

*The deities residing in the tattvas
Are not ruined by evil acts;
As everybody knows, the hand-cuffs at the command of a king,
Are they used to bind his own hands?* 39

*To the hosts of jīvas, by these tattvas
Administering sorrow, in the world
They are free from shackles by
Virtue of Śrī Hari's Grace.* 40

In their posts as masters of tattvas, the deities are unaffected. But, when they are born with human frames, they find no exception. They must also suffer if only to complete their courses of realization.

Śrī Vādirājasvāmi now tells about the benefit yielded by the tattvas.

*The very same tattvas that give rise to illusory wants,
When in the company of good souls
Always lead to the righteous path
And help to see the God in all.*

4.

Here, the Svāmiji has shown the importance of 'association with devotees'. That is the only way to get out of the maze of this world.

The words of Śrīmad Bhāgavata support this statement.

*Na hyanmayāni tīrthāni na devā mṛtsilā mayāḥ,
Te punanyuru kālena darśanādeva sādhaveḥ.*

Merely visiting holy places and temples does not purify one quickly; it takes a long time. But, true devotees purify the worst of sinners merely by their sight.

This point has been still further clarified by Śrī Jagannāthadāsārya in his *Harikathāmṛtāsāra*.

*Even if fire is touched unwittingly
It burns; does it not burn if touched wantonly?
Those who are like honey-bees sucking the nectar of Śrī Hari's
lotus feet,
Devotees who are as such,
If their company is sighted, immediately
They purify the one who prostrates before them.*

For this very reason, the elderly wise ones of the previous generation used to repeat often and often, "Let us be blessed by 'Sādhu Saṅga' (company of devotees) and let us get rid of our *Līnga Śarīras*".

Śrī Vādirājasvāmi concludes—

*The tattvas lead us towards Śrī Hari, they make us repeat His
name,
They help us to worship Him;*

Showing up His form, and making us to praise,
 They break down the fortresses of our pride
 They melt our Self-importance and removing haughtiness,
 Put us into the path of religious duties;
 They relieve us of false ego, and
 They always take care of us. 43

Thus if we tread the path of virtue, and by prayers
 Please the Lord of Śrīdevī, He
 Shows us His lustrous form and
 Drives our sins far away. 44

Knowing that the tattvas stand in the way of native joy
 Which is really eternal,
 Thinking well about it, at the end they pray
 To the Lord to free them from such bondage. 45

Śrī Prāṇeśa Dāsārya has given us a welcome advice
 thus—

What is past is past; let it go by;
 From now on, you take to the path of right.

This is the advice that every one of us needs in this
 age of Kali. It removes the desperate feeling haunting
 the mind of a perpetual sinner.

Though too sweeping, as it looks, the following
 proverbial saying is also mostly true.

Every saint had a past;
 Every sinner has a future.

VIII. Creation of Brahmāṇḍa:

In the 49th year of Brahmā, after the processes of
 Pañcīkaraṇa and the rest were over, Śrī Hari mixed the
 24 principles created so far and put them in Śrīdevī's
 womb in the form of generating fluid. The following
 are the 24 principles—Avyakta Tattva, Mahat Tattva,
 Ahaṁkāra Tattva, Manas Tattva, the ten principles of
 the sensory and the motor organs, the five Tanmātras
 (subtle elements) and the five gross elements - all of
 subtle nature, created earlier.

Śrī Vādirāja svāmi has described, in simple terms, this act of creating the Brahmāṇḍa thus—

*Again resting in the waters with His queen,
Taking particles of the twenty four principles,
Converting them into the wonderful creating fluid, the globe
of golden shell*

He, the Designer of reality (Satyasamkalpa) created.

*All the particles of the earth principle,
Collecting and lodging in Himself,
Then, bringing it out of the genital of Ramādevī,
He created the Brahmāṇḍa.*

*One hundred crore yojanas all round,
Shining like the bright sun,
That enchanting Brahmāṇḍa He entered again,
And took rest in the waters.*

(Vaikuṅṭha Varṇane. Canto. 2)

In the 'Sulādi' of Vijaya Dāsārya the Brahmāṇḍa is said to be fifty crore yojanas in all directions. In the Vaikuṅṭha Varṇane of Śrī Vādirājasvāmi it is said to be one hundred crore yojanas all round. We should understand that the first one refers to the internal diameter and the second one tells how thick the shell of Brahmāṇḍa is all round.

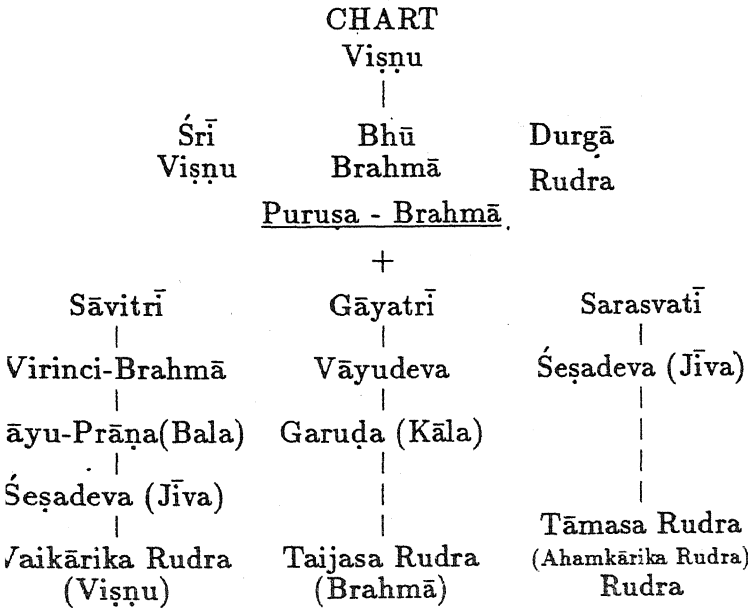
As there will be watery juice in a tender coconut to begin with, the newly created Brahmāṇḍa was filled with water. How Śrī Hari entered into it with Śrī Ramādevī, keeping all the individual souls from Brahmā downwards in His own body, is described by Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya—

*Then again, the Supreme Being going by the name Brahmā,
Swallowed all the other divine beings
And entered into Brahmā the master of Mahat tattva
The Supreme Being, separately bearing the name Rudra
Entered into the shining body of Rudra, the Lord of Ahamkāra
tattva, who
By the behest of Śrīman Nārāyaṇa,*

Entered gladly into Brahmā (Lord of Mahattattva)
 That Brahmā, Lord of Supreme intellect, with the
 Whole multitude of individual souls,
 Into the Supreme Being Viṣṇu be entered
 This is truth visualised, surely, Śrīdevī, called Prakṛti (Mistress
 of material causes),
 Bore all this in her womb by the agency of Śrī Hari
 Along with His wife, the all-pervading Viṣṇu (Vāsudeva)
 Sportively entered into the Brahmāṇḍa.

To understand this description clearly we should
 recollect the descent of the divine beings recounted ear-
 lier. We should also look into the relevant details in the
 Appendix.

Garuḍa, Śeṣa and Rudra - all the three preside
 over Ahamkāra tattva. Rudra has three forms with
 the names Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Rudra- 1. Vaikārika
 Rudra, the great grandson of Viriñci Brahmā; 2. Tai-
 jasa Rudra, the grandson of Vāyudeva; 3. Tāmasa
 Rudra, the son of Śeṣadeva.



Note: In all the gods shown in the chart the portions of Vāsudeva are present according to their grades. In Vaikārika Rudra the portion of Viṣṇu is in greater measure; Indra and the other deities were born of this Rudra. (To talk of divisible parts in the indivisible looks like a paradox. Wherever Śrī Hari is immanent in the universe, there He does not display His fullness; He acts the role of the thing or person. It looks as though a portion of Him is at work in each of them. But He is in His fullness wherever He be).

As shown by the arrow marks in the above chart, Viṣṇu who had come down by the name Brahmā, took into Himself all the deities and entered into Puruṣa Brahmā. Viṣṇu, with the name Rudra entered into Āhaṁkārika Rudra. He, along with Taijasa Rudra entered into Puruṣa Brahmā separately. Puruṣa Brahmā entered into Viṣṇu, son of Śrīdevī.

The creation of the gross elements within the Brahmāṇḍa are through the agency of Taijasa Rudra and Tāmāsa Rudra. Therefore it is but proper that he entered into Puruṣa Brahmā separately.

Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya says, "This is truth visualised, surely." Śrī Hari showed the process of creation to Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya even as He showed His 'Viśvarūpa' to Arjuna. Hence, what he has described is not with the material gathered from various texts as is done by research scholars.

After taking everything into Himself, Śrī Mahāviṣṇu who is not different from Vāsudeva, deposited all the materials of further creation into the womb of Śrīdevī, and along with her He entered the Brahmāṇḍa.

We may guess why Śrī Hari thus keeps within Himself all souls and materials and then brings them out. What we call as instincts in our daily life are not de-

ped by ourselves. They develop when the grow-child lies in the mother's womb. Such processes the outcome of the Lord's Will. Urges are seen material factors ("Prakṛti"); but they proceed only in the Will of the Omniscient Lord ('Puruṣa'). In way, the whole world is activated by the conjunction of 'Prakṛti' and 'Puruṣa'. The fully independent or who is all-knowing sows the seeds of urges into individual souls who have the ability to know and is them to use those urges in the world of experience. Seed-sowing in relation to urges takes place in womb.

For this reason, He lodges everything in Śrīdevī's womb and, entering the Brahmāṇḍa, He rests there in with His wife in the waters. The happy conversation, based on Vedic contents, going on between the divine Lovers, forms the seeds of urges.

*filled with the waters,
While the entire Brahmāṇḍa was filled with darkness,
peasuring from its bottom upwards,
t the region fifteen crore yojanas above,
ill the passage of four yugas The Lord,
miling, stretched Himself in the waters of the Brahmāṇḍa.
oving Master of His servants, our Vijaya Viṭṭhalarāya,
he renowned Puruṣa, created in this way.*

* * *

*reation of Brahmāṇḍa, Viṣṇu's forms of Brahmā and Ívara
ntering into Viriñci and Puruṣa Brahmā
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enumerated from the beginning, by now fifty years,
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nd are pleasingly wonderful, being called 'Visarga'.
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The renowned Puruṣa, created in this way.*

* * *

*Creation of Brahmāṇḍa, Viṣṇu's forms of Brahmā and Ívara
Entering into Viriñci and Puruṣa Brahmā
These and the earlier happenings
If enumerated from the beginning, by now fifty years,
Elapsed for the Lotus-born; and thereafter
What happened should be understood listening to the words
of elderly knowers.
Padma, Virāṭa and Varāha Kalpa they are called
And are pleasingly wonderful, being called 'Visarga'.
Vijaya Viṭṭhala, killer of the demon Madhu, being truly the
independent Actor,*

*In union with His spouse Padmādevī, enjoying marital happiness,
He creates the three worlds.*

Having got everything ready for the creation of the worlds and their activities and locating everything in the womb of Śrīdevī, where did Śrī Hari stretch Himself within the Brahmāṇḍa? The text says—

*Measuring from its botton upwards
At the region fifteen crore yojanas above.*

From the bottom to the top of the frozen waters within the Brahmāṇḍa it measures twentyfive crore yojanas. Fifteen crore yojanas from bottom upwards is the region where Śrī Hari reclined in the waters as Padmanābha, there being a gap of ten crore yojanas upto the surface of the frozen waters (Ghanodaka or Garbhodaka). The lotus of the fourteen worlds begins one lakh yojanas beneath the surface of the waters and rises above it upto Satyaloka. Underneath the lokas is Ādiśeṣa supported by Vāyu Kūmra.

It is said that Padmanābha rested for four years for four yugas or one Mahāyuga; some say that it was for one hundred Mahāyugas.

By that time Brahmā had completed his fiftieth year.

After this there is description as to how the worlds were created to resemble the lotus flower. Hence that period of creation is called as Padma Kalpa. The creator entered the fourteen lokas and on account of His huge form pervading all the lokas to support them, He is called Virāṭ Puruṣa. Hence Padma Kalpa is also called as Virāṭa Kalpa.

Chapter - VIII

PADMA KALPA - VIRĀṬA KALPA

I. Creation during Padma Kalpa:

Śrī Hari Himself, having gone through the work of external creation,
He then filled the interior with His creation
Keeping Viriñci in His womb and merrily
Entering the Brahmāṇḍa along with Śrīdevī,
He the Super Soul rested for a thousand years of the devas;
Pleased to do good, out of His navel
He fondly gave birth to Brahmā
Who was then called Hiraṇyagarbha.

Formerly it was said that Śrī Hari rested in the waters of Brahmāṇḍa for four yugas. Now it is said that he rested for one thousand divine years. We should cleverly try to reconcile these statements; we should not say they are self-contradictory.

One day of Brahmā (day and night) will be equal to 846 crore human years and his one year will be 360 times that.

We should understand thus - when just a small part of Brahmā's fiftieth year was left, Śrī Hari created the Brahmāṇḍa and entered into it. After that, one hundred Mahāyugas still remained. During that period Śrī Hari enjoyed marital pleasure for one Mahāyuga and then went to sleep, as it were, for one thousand divine years (360,000 human years); after which Śrīdevī again offered prayers to her Lord. At the commencement of the 51st year, Śrī Hari gave birth to

Brahmā out of His navel. Since Brahmā's body, pervading the fourteen lokas, is made of gold, of which the Brahmāṇḍa is also made, he is called Hiraṇyagarbha.

The lotus representing the fourteen lokas upto Satyaloka,

It swelled up, beginning from Pātālaloka

In this way beamed the glorious form of Vijayaviṭṭhala,

The same as the exalted Padmanābha, lying on His serpent bed.

When it is said that Śrī Padmanābha lay on His serpent bed, here we must note that it was Śrī Devī herself who was in the serpent form. The lotus that rose from the navel of Padmanābha was not like the pigmy lotus that we see in pictures; but it was of the height that is between Pātāla and Satyaloka and was proportionately broad and bulky. On the pedestal of that lotus sat Hiraṇyagarbha, the lotus born.

The description of Brahmā, who was thus born, is wonderful.

As soon as he was born, looking at the four directions,

Four faces he acquired, know you,

Brilliant jewels beset with gems, the string of beads, instructive hand,

The holy prop, the sacred pot, four hands,

The bright sacred thread (Yajñopavīta),

Clean white cloth (One for the loin, the other to cover the body),

With these sitting in the middle of the lotus as the son of God,

The lotus-born looked at himself.

When Brahmā wanted to look in all directions, his very wish was enough to form the four faces - two at the sides, one behind and one above; he did not look round. Even at birth he was fully adorned with the finest jewels. In his right upper hand he held the string of beads; in the second upper hand was the prop. His other upper hand was so held as to indicate the ability to teach.

The fourth hand held the sacred pot. Brahmā wore the yajñopavīta too. The significance of the thread is described in the purānas. Brahmā looked at the sacred thread he wore and contemplated. Instantly he visualised Omkāra (the shape of the letter AUM). Vedas emanated from it. They took the shape of bright loose cotton. Nine threads formed out of it and in them the presiding deities showed themselves. The meaning was clear that Yajñopavīta furnishes one with purity and knowledge while performing the prescribed sacrifices.

*Simultaneously the spirit of the lotus,
Durgādevī, created a wild storm-
With drops of water; Brahmā's body,
She wetted by besprinkling
Vidhi (Brahmā), amazed in the darkness,
Shivering much on account of the biting wind,
Tormented by the waves of water,
Got frightened awhile his father,
Brahmā recalled he to mind.*

Just as a child lies playfully in its mother's lap, Brahmā sat in the lotus, which was Mahālakṣmī herself. It is that mother, with her 'Durgā' form, who raised the storm. She raised big waves in the 'Garbhodaka' and sprayed the body of Brahmā all over. Brahmā wondered. There was darkness everywhere. Shivering in the darkness, he remembered his father. This shows that he was not an innocent child. We need not also be surprised to think how he could see when it was all darkness. He had the ability to combine the use of his inner eye. (Incidentally we may note that darkness is something that exists and not merely the negation of light).

*.....Listen; to Brahmā,
Wanton ignorance and fear, four times and twice
Occurred, you see, for different reasons
What happened to Brahmā in this context
Say not that it is the truth, Flawless ever,
How can such weakness arise? This, you know,*

*Is like the sun coming overhead at noon
And seeming to quiver, you see;
To the ignorant folk he appeared innocent,
With mysterious powers though,
That new-born babes may thus experience,
The son of Padmanābha shivered.*

It was only Brahmā who was born at that time. One may ask, if it was wanton ignorance and fear, who was there to witness it? One answer is that there is such description in the Vedic literatures and those who read it may try to understand properly or may think that Brahmā is also a prey to ignorance and fear. The other answer is that the 'Ṛjus' and the other deities of high cadre could see the behaviour of Brahmā from where they were in the pervasive body of Brahmā. The gods of the higher cadres and those of the highest cadre (the 'Ṛjus') can see everything in a general way without the use of gross eyes according to their abilities. Full realization of the Godhead helps them to see things to the best of their abilities.

It is not surprising when we say that Brahmā does not become a prey to ignorance and fear. The more wonderful fact is that all the eligible souls are knowledgeable and fearless by their very nature; they are not ignorant. But there is one fundamental difference between the 'Ṛjus' and the rest—

*Let this alone; another secret
There is of plain truth, though strange.
In souls of divine nature no cause for sorrow lies
Only joy increases as days passby;
They are full of excellences.
When slight demoniac influence
Is superimposed, they are subjected to sorrow
In the same way, you see, to the hosts of demoniac souls no
real happiness;
To them it comes by super-imposed divine influence;
To the enemy of Madhu, the demon, to that Lord of Vaikunṭha
I offer my
Obeisances by joining hands, admiring His sport.*

To those who belong to the 'Rju' class there is no question of ignorance or other flaws at any time. The other deities and the ordinary individual souls are also not ignorant or sorrowful by their own nature; they are purely of the stuff of knowledge and bliss. But they are enveloped from beginningless time by what is called the *Līṅga Śarīra* (Causation body), which is the seat of ignorance and which contains the seeds of Karma. Until they come into creation and go through the process of realization, they are not free from the evil effects of ignorance. Before creation, the causation body is an impediment for the experience of innate joy and during the course of births and deaths it makes them suffer, when the seeds of Karma sprout and develop. The 'Rjus' too have causation bodies; but those bodies contain very little of the Rajas and Tamas materials and they do not stand as impediments.

After bringing the souls into creation Śrī Hari develops the '*Aniruddha Śarīra*' to cover the *Līṅga Śarīra*', and there He puts the deities and the demons crowding as if it were a fair. The deities under the leadership of Brahmā, demons under the leadership of Kali and the mediocre souls under the lead of Purañjana.

When evil deeds are done, the Lord of Mukhya Prāṇa motivates the actions through the agency of demons and makes the individual soul, the possessor of the body, to become a suffering partner in the deeds and their fruits, by projecting the shadow of the foul medium. At that time the owner - soul of the body feels "I did wrong", and therefore comes under the faint influence of sorrow (*duḥkhasparśa*). This aspect is clarified by the following verse - "Sukhaduḥkhaprado nānyat puruṣasyātmavibhramah." In this way, connecting the good souls with evil-doers is known as '*āsurāveśa*' (subjecting to the influence of demons).

The '*Līṅga Śarīras*' of demons are also of the stuff of the three modes - Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Their

innate nature is ignorance which is the cause of sorrow. When they are in the course of realization, if they engage themselves in good deeds and enjoy happiness, we must understand that it is due to motivation through the agency of the deities residing in their 'Aniruddha Śarīras'. They experience the faint influence of happiness (Sukhasparśa) and they are never fully happy.

When the demons come to know of their utter dependence and realize that the shadow of happiness was due to the agency of Gods, they grind their teeth angrily and say, "Have your happiness for yourselves; we don't want your company; we wish to be in our own original state even if it be sorrow." The great English epic Poet Milton makes Satan, the hero of *Paradise Lost* to say thus "I can make a heaven of hell".

In the same way when the souls of divine nature realize their utter dependence and lose the false ego, they develop deep love for God and become 'Haridāśas'-devotees of Śrī Hari.

Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya has said, "I offer my prayers to this Director of the Drama of Life, with uplifted hands.

Virāṭa Kalpa:- This name is given to the act of Śrī Hari creating the three worlds within the Brahmāṇḍa; and, Himself being in Brahmā, to make the latter to be pervasive in all the worlds. This is not different from Pādma Kalpa.

*Lost in amazement, upon the mighty ocean,
Was the Lotus-born.
He saw and for each one of the Lotus petals,
He thought he must find the sign (indication)
Then he quickly went down the green stem; very
Hard it was, and he saw that it
Was the delusive work wrought by the Supreme Being; Brahmā
By the waves, the strong wind and uproarious noise and whirls
Being hit hard, within the waters he,
not knowing aught, looked as though frightened.*

Brahmā is a 'Tyakta Vaidika' - one who needs no instruction from the Vedas, knowing as he does more than their purport. Even as he understood the significance of the Yajñopavīta by contemplation, he wanted to learn about the lotus upon which he was seated. To know the origin of that lotus he entered the stem by his yogic powers. It was to no purpose as the stem was too hard to get into. The supreme creator had spread his 'Māya' in such manner.

*Thinking it vain He came up again; in
The lotus that was his seat,
With full ardour in prayer to Śrī Hari,
He engaged himself by means of 'Recaka' (exhaling), 'Kumbhaka' (retention) and 'Pūraka' (inhaling)-
The three limbs of Prāṇāyāma, he made effort
And, he fully lost himself in deep meditation,
When Śrī Hari Himself spoke (unseen) the words, 'Tapa, Tapa',
(mediate with austerity)
Brahmā did Tapas for a thousand divine years.*

Note: Brahmā engaged himself in the practice of perfect yoga, where true understanding and devoted meditation form the chief means of realization. If some one engages himself in ordinary yoga by means of breath control, he may attain only eight-fold siddhi and gain worldly rewards which do certainly pull him down very soon.

*Aṇimā mahimā caiva garimā laghimā tathā,
Prāptiḥ Prākāmyam īśitvam vaśitvam ca aṣṭa bhūtaḥ.*

Śrī Hari was pleased with Brahmā's yogic meditation and asked him to do more severe penance. And, Brahmā did such penance for a thousand divine years.

*With mighty Kindness the Lord showed
Himself bearing sweet smile;
Along with the host of released souls, being well adorned with
fine garments and a variety of superb jewels,
He showed sixteen of His forms like Vāsudeva,*

Connoting the supreme powers such as 'Utkarṣiṇī', consisting
 of 'Aṇimā' and others,
 Being served by the retinue of His devotees
 By Parameṣṭi He was praised for a thousand divine years with
 the supreme prayer,
 Then very kindly all the Vedas, the Brahmataṛka
 As also Pāñcarātra He taught;
 And Śrī Hari vanished.

Śrī Hari appeared before Brahmā with all His yo-
 gic aspects in visible forms. Brahmā, who had done
 penance for a thousand divine years, now praised the
 Lord for another thousand divine years. 'The Supreme
 Prayer' means Puruṣa Sūkta. Śrī Hari taught the Vedas
 etc., to one who is considered 'Tyakta Vaidika' only to
 show more of His glory.

Brahmataṛka is not current in this world. The
 all-knowing Pūrnaprajñācārya often quotes from Brah-
 mataṛka in his commentaries.

*After Śrī Hari disappeared, Brahmā,
 The Vedas that he had thus learnt directly,
 He ruminated upon for another thousand years
 Then soon he made up his mind to create,
 The incomparable source of non-material bliss, Vijayaviṭṭhala
 He meditated upon, remembering His innumerable forms.*

It is interesting to note that Brahmā did penance
 for a thousand divine years, read the Vedas from his
 father for a thousand years and then meditated upon
 their contents for another thousand years. There is an
 important lesson for us to learn from this. If we want
 to do anything that will surely be pleasing to God, not
 merely for self-glorification, we have to serve Śrī Hari
 through the spiritual master for long long periods and
 earn His Grace. We have to think deeply upon the
 words of instruction. And then, we should make an
 endeavour to achieve an object when the urge comes
 from within by way of the Lord's will.

*The lotus into the fourteen worlds
 Expanded; supporting it
 The lotus-born his 'Vairāja' form bore
 So well made of 'mahat' and 'Ahaṁkāra' materials;
 Lord Padmanābha Himself, all the hosts of jīvas
 Taking with Him, entered with His Puruṣa form;
 From head downwards upto the feet
 There stood the fourteen lokas.*

We know that the four-faced Brahmā wished to know the meaning of the fourteen petals of the lotus upon which he sat. By penance and by ruminating the words of instruction, everything was now clear. He created the fourteen worlds. It is not that he sat somewhere and created the worlds elsewhere. He entered into Ahaṁkāra tattva with his body of Mahat tattva, and creating the worlds from Satyaloka upto Pātālaloka, he himself entered into them with his 'Puruṣa' form. Now, the fourteen worlds, formed by the twentyfour elements from Mahat tattva down to the five gross ones, became the body of Brahmā. The earlier material modifications outside the Brahmāṇḍa are called 'Vaikṛta' and the later modifications within the Brahmāṇḍa are called 'Vaikṛta'. Therefore, Brahmā with the Vaikṛta body is called 'Vairāja'. To assume this Vairāja form, the four-faced Brahmā has no independent power. The Omnipotent Independent Actor, the Parabrahma, called Puruṣa (Vāsudeva) enters into the fourfaced and does everything with regard to creation.

II. Quarrel among the deities:

Just as Brahmā is the master of Mahat tattva, Vāyudeva is the master of Vijñana tattva (slightly different from Mahat tattva), Rudradeva is the master of Ahaṁkāra tattva, there are other masters like Indra and the rest overlording the other material principles such as manas, sensory abilities, tanmātras and gross elements. For the activities of every material Principle, the particular master is like Brahmā in his own

sphere. But as Vāyu and Brahmā are subordinate to Parabrahma, the other deities are subordinate to Vāyu and Brahmā. They are unable to act independently.

Brahmā and his spouse 'Vānī' (Sarasvatī) are like storekeepers in the affairs of the worlds, they supply the required materials. But the active agents are Prāṇadeva (Vāyudeva) and Bhāratīdevī. Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya points out that the other deities are powerless without the active presence of Vāyudeva in them—

*Many were born, the masters of material principles,
Born of the mighty Rudra as before
Know thou; after that, in the Virāṭa Kalpa
Started thus, "I am great, I am great" –
'The life-giver question'. The masters of the material principles
together,
In order to decide, tested their powers in a body;
As the mightiest, the true master of souls and deities,
Prāṇadeva named 'Sūtra', was proclaimed.*

(Sūtra means the holder of strings as in a puppet show.)

Before the creation of Brahmāṇḍa, the other master deities were created (given bodies) by Rudradeva, the master of Ahaṅkāra tattva; similarly they were created by Rudradeva within the Brahmāṇḍa too. These deities, who had formerly admitted their inability to create the Brahmāṇḍa and had offered prayers to the Supreme Being in order to be established in their principles, now grew proud to think that they could carry on the activities in their principles independently. They failed to understand that the respiratory function was the basis for all the other activities of a body. Each one boasted that he could act by himself. This led them to decide the question as to who was the ablest among them.

In this connection, Śrī Vādirājasvāmi has collected the stories contained in the Talavakāra, Chāndogya, Śaṭpraśna, Bṛhadāraṇyaka and the Aitareya Upaniṣads

and summarized as follows, in his work 'Sarasa Bhāratī' (Eighth Section)

*Kiñ ca Pañcōpaniṣadām bhāvam tvam ca vicāraya,
Sureṣu Vayoh sadṛśam sancīntaya na kañcana.*

You can yourself find out from the five Upanisads; think well. There is no one among the gods to equal Vāyudeva.

*Balinā Kalinā teṣām viparītā kvacit kvacit,
Surāṇām ca bhaved buddhirna tu Vāyormahātmanah*

Sometimes the other gods may come under the influence of wrong comprehension due to their association with the powerful Kali. But this does not happen in the case of the pre-eminent Vāyudeva.

*Yasyotthāne praveśe ca dehaḥ patati tiṣṭhati.
Sa eva sarvadevānām guṇaih śreṣṭho bhaviṣyati
Vayasā ca sa evaikah sarvajyeṣṭho bhaviṣyati.*

He, by whose exit the living body falls dead and He, by whose entry it rises up again, that person is the highest among gods both by virtue of qualification and of age.

*Itthamuktāh śarīrātte nirīyuh kramaśah surāḥ,
Tadā prāṇasya balato deho 'sau nāpatatkila.*

Hearing the words of Brahmā, the gods left the living body, one after the other, to test the truth. Yet the body did not fall dead because of prāṇadeva's ability.

*Cakṣurmātram nekṣate' rtham cakṣordevo gate sati,
Deho' ndha dehavajjīvanneva prāṇa balādabhūt.*

When the presiding deity of the eye left, the eye could not see; but the body lived like that of a blind person; this was by the strength of Prāṇadeva.

*Evam manaḥ 'śrotra mukhya devānām ca kramādgatau,
Deho'yam nāpatadvāyoh sattvenātibalīyasaḥ.*

Similarly, when the deities of Manas, ear and the other organs left, the body did not fall dead; it was still alive by the strength of the most powerful Vāyu.

*Ittham dehe vāyu gatau patite tasya cāgate,
Utthite sati sarve ca devā vismitamānasāḥ,
Anvaya vyatirekābhyām vāyoruttamatām hr̥di,
Nīscitya tuṣtamānasāstuṣvustam surottamam;
Tvameva Vāyo jyeṣṭho 'si Śreṣṭhaścāsi divaukasām.*

When Vāyudeva left, the body fell dead; and, when he entered, it rose up alive. Then, by the rule of comparison and contrast, the gods were convinced of the greatness of Vāyudeva, and they praised him with the words, "O, Vāyudeva, you are the oldest and the highest."

III. Pūrva Sādhyas:

Every act that is performed in this world converts itself into a sacred offering (Yajña). Recognising that all that is enjoyed in this world is a gift from god, that every act performed is only by the presence and actuation of the Supreme Lord, that it is He who distributes the fruits of actions and with such knowledge dedicating every act to Him is 'Yajña'. Dedication means showing gratitude. If one should be capable of such all embracing dedication one should have extensive practice of several kinds of Yajñas prescribed by the Vedas. It is stated that the master-deities at first performed such Yajñas—

*Having created the wonderful world with
The host of deities (controlling several aspects), for performing
Yajñas at first,
Creating the materials to be offered, Śrī Hari was propitiated'
The Supreme Lord, Spouse of Lakṣmīdevī was pleased.*

With the backing of the Supreme Lord, Brahmā created the wonderful world along with the controlling deities and he provided the materials with which to make sacred offerings. The deities praised the Supreme

Being with the Vedic hymns and performed Yajñas. Śrī Hari was pleased and blessed them; and He disappeared. For this reason the master-deities came to be called 'Pūrva Sādhyas'.

IV. Day-to-day Pralaya of Padmakalpa.

*Brahmā took care of the deities in the 'Anuloma' and the 'Pratiloma' ways,
He made them all wise;
When thus the affairs progressed, at the end of the 'Padma Kalpa',
To start the work of annihilation, on the last day
The lotus-seated desired; The earth
He submerged under water by rain and the other destructive agents;
Along with his wife Gāyatrī, in the Satyaloka
Resting, having blessed all the Souls,
He, the Puruṣa, enjoyed in the company of Prakṛiti
With unabated spirits; This is the end of Padma Kalpa.*

In another Sulādi, Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya has stated that not only the shapes of the fourteen worlds were created; but mountains, rivers, animals, birds and ghosts too.

*.....All the controlling deities, the alphabets,
The material principles of organs, materials necessary for yajñas,
The variety of metrical styles, the Vedas and their contingents;
Mountains, oceans and islands; nailed, horned, gilled and den-
tured
Animals, birds, aquatic creatures, bushes,
Trees, ghosts of such varied types,
Brahmā gave bodies to creatures.*

Purport of the two quotations:

Brahmadeva cared for the master-deities in the way befitting them, and he reared the created trees, bushes, animals, birds, insects and other creatures, ghosts and the rest in their own ways. These two

ways are here referred to as 'Anuloma' and 'Pratiloma'. 'Anuloma' means the befitting way, 'Pratiloma' means that which is not befitting. The masters of the material principles and the host of their assistant deities were to enter all kinds of bodies in the ensuing Kalpa to carry on the functions in those bodies. Before the deities were brought into the Brahmāṇḍa they had already been invested with bodies predominantly of the bright fire element. At first they performed the yajñas with such bodies only. Teaching Vedic texts and metres necessary for their prayers and providing them with materials for sacred offerings and thus taking care of the deities according to their requirements, is the 'Anuloma' way. Installing the deities with their spiritual sparks in the bodies of hills, trees, animals, birds, aquatic creatures, ghosts and the like, and guiding them to go through the functions of those different kinds of bodies, is the 'Pratiloma' way. The deities became 'Pūrva Sādhyas' in both these ways.

When it was the last day of the 'Padma Kalpa', Brahmadeva desired to annihilate all that had been created so far. As has been already said, annihilation does not mean merely destroying, it is the gathering of the fruits of the activities of beings during creation and maintenance considering them as sacrifices - it is like the harvesting of crops grown. This kind of collection will be useful for what is to be done thereafter. It decides salvation for the realized ones and the next step to be taken in the cases of each of the others. Annihilation at the end of each of Brahmā's day is for continuing the courses of realization; but the annihilation at the end of the last day is to grant liberation to Brahmā and to those who have completed their courses of realization during the period of that Brahmā.

As it is during final dissolution, the created worlds undergo destruction by Sun's heat, fire, wind and rain; but Satyaloka remains untouched by those forces of destruction. So also the Brahmāṇḍa' (shell of the universe) and the nine other envelopes remain in tact. All

the worlds below Satyaloka collapse down to the level of 'Pātāloka' and remain submerged in the waters.

When annihilation thus takes place, just as Śrī Hari rests upon the banyan leaf during 'Mahā Pralaya', Brahmadeva happily goes to bed in his palace along with Gāyatrīdevī - for a period of one thousand 'Mahāyugas' (4320,000,000 human years). In this instance the name 'Prakṛti' refers to Gāyatrīdevī. Although all the other worlds undergo destruction, Prakṛti and Puruṣa (Gāyatrīdevī and Brahmadeva) remain with unabated abilities.

Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya tells us that it is meritorious to hear the story of creation, maintenance and annihilation as it helps to know the sublime glories of Śrī Hari, gives joy and becomes the means of liberation.

To him who hears the story of Padmakalpa, Padmadevī's spouse, our Vijayaviṭṭhala gives protection.

* * *

Chapter-IX

CREATION OF LIVING BEINGS

I. Śveta Varāha Kalpa:

Now we are living in the Śveta Varāha Kalpa. For one thousand Mahāyugas by human reckoning, it is night for Brahmā. When he awoke early the next morning, there was no earth for him to create the living beings. The demon Adi Hiranyākṣa had held it down in Rasātala without allowing it to go-up. It had been submerged during the previous night before Brahmā went to sleep. How this obstacle was removed and how creation went on again, is described in this chapter.

The Kalpa of Śvetādivarāha

Is during the second day,

It is so said in the Purāṇas;

*Brahmā (Dhātā) the four-faced awoke and pondered upon
His father's lotus feet in his heart;*

To create living beings earnestly,

When he anxiously thought that there was no earth,

The never born Śrī Hari, from Brahmās nose

Manifested as the white Boar;

The demon Adi Hiranyākṣa who had taken birth earlier

Stayed without fear there, (holding the earth);

Being pleased by the prayers of Brahmā,

Śrī Hari dexterously entered the waters;

When the demon came across to obstruct,

He killed him by his tusk;

And when Śvetavarāha was on his way,

The demons grown powerful by

Vāyudeva's backing stood in the way;

He in the Boar form, 'Śauri, hacked them,

Made the earth hard and gave it to Brahmā

The earth had been submerged; this Brahmā knew. His anxiety was not born out of ignorance. He was only thinking of His master's glory in the way He would bring the earth up.

Even as this thought came in his mind the demon Hiranyākṣa came out of Brahmā's left nostril. He had premonition of Śrī Hari's readiness to raise the earth. If it went up, it would be useful more for human beings and the gods. This he did not want to happen. His desire was to hold it under the waters so that it could be like another Pātāla for the demons to enjoy. This is demonical intelligence which underrates Śrī Hari's prowess. This is the ugliest facet of Ahaṁkāra.

Very soon Śrī Hari came out of Brahmā's right nostril like the young one of a pig. He changed His form like that of an elephant and plunged into the disturbed waters. He killed Hiranyākṣa by his sharp tusk.

This is the story of Ādi Hiranyākṣa or the one who made his first appearance. The second time he appeared as the uncle of Prahlāda Kumar, when he stole Bhūdevī and carried her in his arm pit, down to Rasātala; he did not take away the earth itself. Only, the western coast of India went down due to the kick he gave while plunging into the western sea. This part of the earth was lifted up by 'Bhū Varāha' - the marks of His tusks are there in the Varāha Parvata from whence proceed the rivers Tungā and Bhadrā.

Ādi Varāha is at Śrīmuṣṇa and Bhū Varāha is upon the Tirupati Hills, right at the brink of Svāmi Puṣkarīṇi lake!

The demons backed by Vāyudeva were Madhu and Kaiṭabha. The Lord of the Boar form killed them also. He mixed the fat of their mangled bodies into the earth and made it hard before lifting it up.

II. Creation of Living Entities:

Late in the morning, by the power vested in him,
 As per proper procedure, 'Pañcaparva' the
 Form of Sin he created-it is called Avidyā.
 Knowing its uselessness, again he-
 The 'Lātavya' of two Kalpas, Sanaka and others
 He created affectionately.

Proper procedure means, accord to Śrī Hari's will. The five sins that he created are called Moha, Mahā Moha, Tama Moha, Tamisra and Andha Tāmisra. It is the demon perpetrators of sin that he created with those names. Since demons were created before the creation of deities, they are called as 'Pūrva devāḥ'. [Compare: Lucifer (Satan) was the first son of God according to the Bible]

What is required for the cultivation and harvest of Karma is the rub between the demons and the divine beings both within and without. For this reason the demons are created in the first instance. It is like the thieves lying in ambush even before the gathering at the fair. The creation of demons, however, is not pleasing to Brahmā. Therefore, with love, he created Sanaka and the other divine personages. But, when they were asked to procreate, those born devotees declined.

Upon these who defied his words, angrily
 He looked with reddened eyes; from his eyebrow cenure,
 See the wonder, immediately
 He created 'Sadyojāta'-Śiva;
 And he ordered him to create-
 And Śiva gave birth to horrible creatures.

Śiva was born from the middle part of Brahmā's eyebrows. Associating with his wife Pārvati, he created very large numbers of males and females, who hungered and were ready to eat their own parents. Brahmā felt dissatisfied.

When such horrid creatures were created, Brahmā put a stop;
 He himself, out of his ears, nose, face, tongue, teeth, hands,

*Eyes, private parts and from every hair pit created.
 Now were born Indra, Kāma, Aniruddha,
 The Fire God, Bṛhaspati, Śukra, Candra, Dakṣa,
 Sūrya, Varuṇa, Manu, Prāṇa,
 All classes of creatures as children of Brahmā.
 The Boss of Vāyu, our Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya,
 Created through the agency of Brahmā.*

Brahmā, the four-faced, has his 'Virāt' (Pervasive) form in this universe. In him is Śrī Hari as the original 'Virāt Puruṣa'. When it is said that Brahmā created, it only amounts to saying that Śrī Hari created and gave credit to Brahmā, making him the instrument of creation.

*With those already created, population still not being complete,
 Brahmā gave birth to ten sons,
 Who were all wise persons
 Atri, Vasiṣṭha and the other sages.
 Now, those that were born after them
 I shall describe their names later
 Listen to this also; from breast, heart, eyebrows, eyelids;
 Thighs, lips, face, back, testicles,
 Private organ, and the hair pits,
 Brahmā created evilminded 'Kāma', 'Lobhā' and the like;
 He then created the goddess of human speech;
 And brought out the Vedas, Vedāṅgas, rules of caste,
 conduct, and
 Materials for holy sacrifices;
 In this way Brahmā filled the world.*

The ten sons of Brahmā, great sages like Atri and Vasiṣṭha, bore many children in accordance with Brahmā's wish. The latter created agents of evil deeds from the parts of his body as he had created divine beings. He created all facilities for the performance of caste duties and religious rites. Thus, creation was now complete, as it were.

III. Procreation by marriage:

The creation described so far was all by mental willing. Now, Brahmā wanted to make creation still more complete by means of the marriage institution.

*Reflecting thus, Brahmā, simultaneously
To Ādi Svāyambhuva Manu and Śatarūpādevī
Gave birth and, advising them nicely,
When he celebrated their marriage,
By their mating children were born, listen,
Goodnatured Uttānapāda and Priyavrata,
Their sisters Ākūti, Prasūti
The charming maiden, Devahūtidevī;
These three, very virtuous, to sage Ruci,
Dakṣa and Kardama—all great ones,
Ādimanu gave in marriage; by this
A very important stage of creation was reached.*

How the earth was densely populated by means of marriage will now be described.

*Here about creation, its three and one varieties;
Count them—sweat-born, seed-born, animal-born and egg-born;
These together eightyfour lakh species—
Men, beasts, birds, insects, plants, aquatic creatures—
With these specifications they were born.*

Brahmā is known as 'Svayambhū.' The one born of him is called Svāyambhuva Manu. His role is very prominent in the creation of living beings.

The Bible gives just a few details about creation, gleaned through the notes made by the Arabs and the Egyptians during their contacts with India. That was the period of religious renaissance after the catastrophes of Dvāpara Yuga. Perhaps, Adām of the Christians and Adam of the Muslims is the same as Ādi Manu or 'Adima'. Svāyambhuva Manu's wife was Śatarūpādevī, one who could take a hundred forms with a hundred names. One of her names, Yuvādevī must have been the one differently called as 'Eve' (Yū)

and 'Hawai'. For the Christians and the Muslims, Adam, is the first of the human race, his name pronounced differently.

This dilation is purposeful. Such comparisons drawn and studied will, perhaps, pave the way for universal brotherhood.

Ādi Svāyambhuva Manu took different forms along with his wife and brought forth eightyfour lakh species of living beings. As it should be always comprehended it is Śrī Hari in Brahmā and both in Svāyambhuva Manu, who were responsible for the entire creation.

Details of 84 lakhs species

1.	Sweat-born (Śvedaja)	Insects	-	11 lakhs.
2.	Seed-born (Udbhijja)	Plant life	-	20 lakhs.
3.	Ēgg-born (Aṇḍaja)	Aquatic creatures	-	9 lakhs.
		Birds	-	10 lakhs.
4.	Animal born (Jarāyuja)	Beasts	-	30 lakhs.
		Human beings	-	4 lakhs.
Total			-	84 lakhs.

Modern scientists have laboured hard and found out the classifications and their numbers among living creatures; but their analysis is not complete. We may say categorically that they have not distinguished four lakh varieties among the human beings. This assertion is made just to point out that the oriental sciences (Śāstras) are the commentaries on the Vedas; they are not based merely on human experimentation.

*To Kaśyapa Muni, Dakṣa Prajēśvara his
Daughters, thirteen in number, gave
In marriage by good consent;
Danujas, Daityas, Devas, Serpents,
Men and many other kinds-all denizens
Gradually he brought forth, variously;
The dispeller of devotees' distresses, our Vijayaviṭṭhalaraya,
Of His own will, He does all this in sport.*

Sage Kaśyapa has an equally important role, like Svāyambhuva, in the creation of living beings. He is therefore known as Kaśyapa Brahma. He married the thirteen daughters of Dakṣa Prajesvara and begot all varieties of living creatures. Creation was now complete.

The children of Danudevī were dānavas; children of Diti-devī were daityas; those of Aditi-devī were Āditeyas (devas). Kadrūdevī gave birth to serpents and Vinatādevī to birds. In this way Kaśyapa maharṣi was the parent of all kinds of creation.

*Kaśyapa Manu's creation plentifully
Crowded the whole earth; and
There was not an inch of space left;
Brahmā reviewed the progeny of son and grandson and
contemplating,
With a smile he created the goddess of Death
It seems that the dame wept saying,
Why do you want to burden me with the sin of killing your
brood!
For the death of creatures, fevers and other sicknesses arose;
The Mine of numberless auspicious qualities,
Vijayaviṭṭhaladeva,
Created this world, He the Master Genius.*

Thus, the deities of death in the forms of fevers and sicknesses are those of a base order.

“Why were creatures created? Why were they doomed to die?” This is a legitimate question. The answer is in the Suḷādi itself:

*Perpetually accepting food and drink,
The Agency of creation, maintenance and nullification,
Brahmā limited.
The multitudes of men and women, acting wisely and unwisely,
They reach their goals through karmas;
Making such arrangement, with the agency of deities,
Manmatha's Father, Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya
Sports; Brahmā, the creator, is His 'reflection' (Pratibimba).*

An object or person before the mirror is 'Bimba' (original); what is seen with exactness in the mirror 'Pratibimba' (Reflection). The behaviour of the reflection or image is always similar to that of the original. From this analogy we should understand all the things in this world. The Original of all originals Śrī Hari. The immediate Pratibimbās (images) are Brahmā and Vāyu, the masters of Mahat tattva and jñāna tattva, respectively. Brahmā is responsible for creation; Vāyu is responsible for all activities in this universe. The forms of the Supreme Being in Brahmā and Vāyu, acting in every one of us through spiritual masters, are differently the originals in us; we are all reflections.

Brahmā, the chief Pratibimba of Śrī Hari, has ordained that the bodies of living creatures should grow nourished by food and drink, that creatures should go through their karmas impelled by presiding deities and demons, and that they should die at the end of particular series of karmas. In this way he is causing creation, maintenance and destruction. For changing varieties of karmas, the chain of life and death is necessary. The goodness of death removes our worn out clothes and Brahmā gives us new ones. This is real benediction; it answers the question raised.

I have described creation to the extent of my understanding of what I have heard

By the grace of Vijāyaviṭṭhala, my Creator, my Adorable, my Father.

Having described almost everything that we need to understand about the process of creation in the simple lucid Sulādi style, Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya says, 'to the extent of my understanding'. For those who doubt about the correctness of his statements, the Dāsārya tells, 'By the grace of Vijaya Viṭṭhala'. The words of one, who visualised God inside and outside, one who guided master Haridāsas of God Vision like Gopāla Dāsārya and Jagannātha Dāsārya, are certainly above board; no doubt about it.

Chapter - X
CREATION OF THE WORLDS
Virāt Puruṣa

1. *Suḷadi of Śrī Vijayadāsārya:*

*“The form of the Lord of Śrīdevī, from Pātāla to
Satyaloka it pervades; in each of the limbs
Of the Lord of the worlds, the fourteen worlds,
The divine beings and the other souls reside
Meditate upon each of these, especially
The worlds and the activities in them,
With attentive word, body and mind,
With discrimination and devotion - detached from worldly
thoughts,
Sitting undisturbed, put your trust in the lotus feet of Śrī Hari,
The guide of the mistress of the ‘Word’ (Vedas = Lakṣmīdevī)
Our Vijaya Viṭṭhalarāya,
Nullifies our sorrows if thus one meditates”.*

Here is described the glory of the Supreme Being pervading the fourteen worlds and at the same time lodging them within His body because it is highly useful to contemplate upon the mighty pervasive form of the Lord with devotion. [Those, who have in earlier days made pictures of the Lord’s pervasive form for the sake of devotional meditation, have shown the location of the worlds in the limbs of the standing posture of the Lord. In this treatise their locations are shown in the sitting posture. In whatever manner we attempt, it is impossible to show the distances between one world and the other within the figure of the master of the worlds. The distances look more reasonable in the sitting posture but never perfect according to scale.

It measures only 89 thousand yojanas from Pātāla upto Bhūloka; and it is 16 crore and 25 lakh yojanas to the upper limit of Satyaloka. Therefore, the sense of measurements is not very important so far as the picture is concerned.

The purpose of the picture will be served, if we, picturise in the mind the Lord's pervasive form and then consider that the spark of a particular limb is found in the world shown as located in that limb and that the world is sustained by the particular limb. Here there is yet another feature of importance. The limbs of the Lord, who is in His fullness even in a sub-atomic particle, are not like our limbs. We find every one of His limbs in every spot; also each one of His limbs can carry on the function of any other limb. Therefore, when we speak of the location of the worlds in His limbs, it just means denoting the particular limb of the pervasive form which gives importance to the particular world.

Although the supreme personality appears in the forms of the different worlds, those forms are the effects of innumerable other forms put together they being entirely different from the worlds. In this way, the mighty Lord assumes, apparent minute fractional forms and bigger forms resulting from the fractional forms. If we think of a form of fullness pervading the worlds and identify the same with the picture presented in this book, it will be very helpful for devotional meditation.]

If we bear in mind that the Lord with His pervasive form is supporting the divine beings and the other souls and is always doing good to them, and if we trust Him fully in word, action and mind, where is there any room for fear or sorrow? Hence have the Haridasas said, "Nambi kettavarillavo Rangayyana, nambade kettare kedali" (Kannada) (= There is none ruined by placing faith in God, who bear the charming name Raṅga; None can help those who seek ruin by not keeping faith.)

There is yet another significant fact to be noted. Whatever material, situation or forms of the Lord exist in the universe, they are all found in the body of every individual like Prototypes. Therefore the universe is called 'Brahmāṇḍa' and the body of an individual is called 'Piṇḍāṇḍa' (that which has developed from the muscular lump). Of course, it is necessary to contemplate the pervasive form of the Lord and His glory filling the universe; but it is much more important to contemplate such form and glory in one's own body in order to get over the dirty sense of EGO. One becomes a true knower only when this is achieved. Till then, whatever knowledge is acquired and amassed ends in pedantry.

(2) The fourteen worlds:

Now let us see the relationship that exists between the fourteen worlds and the pervasive form of the Lord. Śrī Vijayadāsārya says thus—

Pātālaloka:

*The origin of Pātāla, its support and yet different from
Understand properly that it is His Pātāla arises from the bot-
tom of His foot;
The famous Vāsuki, Śankha, Kālike, Prabala,
Svēta, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Mahā Śankha, Dhanañjaya,
Dhāta, Śaṅkhacūḍa and such great serpents
Along with their brood fill that world,
enjoying opulence, diamond of the rarest variety and other
gems,
Displaying their lustres; quite furious they are;
With His luminous form Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya
Supports the Pātāla loka - thus meditate.*

The Pātālaloka that appears in the universe is the effect of a spark emanating from the foot of the supreme Lord; it means that the shape of the Pātāla lōka arises from the property of the Lords feet and He resides in it with the same shape as that of the loka.

But the Lord's feet itself is not that loka; it is entirely different from the material world.

The most famous serpent lord's such as Vāsuki and Śaṅkha spend their time happily there along with their families and relatives. Temperamentally they are quite irritable. These serpents with five, seven, ten, hundred or thousand hoods dispel the darkness of Pātāla loka by the light of the gems in their hoods - thus it is said in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.

*Pañca sapta daśa śata sahasra śīrṣāṅām phaṇāsu viracitā
mahāmaṇayo rociṣṇavaḥ pātāla vivara timira nikaram
svarociṣā vidhamanti.”* (V Canto-Ch. 24)

This loka is provided with all the luxuries necessary for the enjoyment of mundane pleasures.

Rasātāla loka:

*“The producer of earth and its support,
worshipped by Brahmā, Śiva and other Principal deities,
Bearing the marks of ‘Dhvaja’, ‘Vajra’, ‘Ankuśa’, ‘Śaṅkha’,
‘Cakra’,
Also ‘gadā’ and ‘padma’, origin of ‘deva gaṅgā’,
Creator of the four castes, resembling the rising sun in colour,
Maker of horses, Camels, elephants and such animals,
Having toe-nails excelling the lustre of gems, to devotees
firm support, such feet give rise to Rasātāla;
Diti's sons are here; with varying names,
In creation and such endeavours skilled,
With their kin they are hiding in a cave
for fear of hearing the ‘mantra’ of Śrī Hari's name;
Here is a wonder - He who was in the form of a dog
During the ‘Śatamedha’, Śrī Hari of that name,
Is being worshipped there along with the master deities.
He is the redeemer of sinners, our Vijaya Viṭṭhalarāya;
Always meditate upon the backs of His feet”.*

In this suḷādi it is said “The producer of earth and its support”. It means, the producer of ‘Pṛthivī’ principle and not the creator of Bhūloka. From Pātāla

upto and inclusive of Bhūloka, all the worlds consist largely of the 'Prithvi' or earth element. The statement is in conformity with the *Puruṣa Sūkta* which says "Nābhyā āsīdantarikṣam Śīrṣṇóh dyauḥ 'srotrāt tathā lokān akalpayan." (The Antarikṣaloka was created out of the navel, the upper worlds out of the head, the earth from the feet and the sky from the ears.) In respect of meditation upon the *Vīfādrūpa* (Pervasive form) of the Lord, the description is very meaningful. It says that the lokas mentioned were created from specific parts of His body; however, it is not said that the lokas are located in those parts.

The back of the feet means the upper part not the bottom, which gave rise to pātāloka. The *Rasātala loka* was created from the tip of the toe-nail and is supported (maintained) by it. The demons of that loka are afraid of Śrī Hari's name uttered by the devotees there. Hence, they hide in caves and spend their time in gross pleasures.

From *Atala* down to *Pātāla* there are not only demoniac creatures, but there are also many many devotees.

That Śrī Hari is worshipped in Dog form in the *Rasātala loka* must be an eye - opener to us. When the Supreme Being took on Himself the forms like those of the fish and the pig and is in the dog form too, necessarily we must give due regard to every kind of creature in this world. Śrī kṛṣṇa's words in the *Bhagavadgītā* bear witness to this point *Śuni caiva Śvapākeca paṇḍitāḥ samadarśinaḥ*. Knowers of truth recognise the Lord who is called 'Sama' and who looks upon every creature with equal grace, whether it is in a dog or in the basest person who cooks and eats dog's flesh. When this is the basic truth, it is indeed a great crime to look down upon the depressed classes and to illtreat them. It is the duty of every enlightened person to educate the down - trodden sections of people and to lead them

to live clean and useful lives. In this age, such service surely amounts to worship of God.

Mahātalaloka:

*In the two ankle knobs, born and supported,
Is the Mahātalaloka, and there,
Serpent lords with numbers of hoods
Are everywhere with their kith and kin;
And, Kulahaka, Takṣaka, Kāliya, Suṣeṇa-
Such serpents, all very furious, live
Always in fear of Garuḍa they move about
With their families, yet intoxicated as it were.*

The mighty serpents of Mahātalaloka forget themselves in their pleasures; yet, they are in constant fear of Garuḍa.

Talātalaloka:

*Understand that the creation of Talātala is from
The well-rounded inner thigh, which support it;
The architect of the demon clan, Maya,
When the three sky-cities he had created
Were destroyed by the disc hurled by Rudra,
He did penance and earned Śrī Hari's grace;
Now guarded by Mahā Rudra, he is
Living happily there with all his powers.
Remember the greatest among gods, Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya
And contemplate upon Talātalaloka.*

Maya is the architect for demons as Viśvakarma is for the gods. For his three demon friends, he had created three floating cities which could not be destroyed by any ordinary power; those demons were pestering the people on earth, Backed by Brahmā and Viṣṇu, Śiva destroyed those three cities. After that, Māya found shelter in Talātalaloka after propitiating Śrī Hari. Śiva also blessed him.

Sutalaloka:

*The Sutalaloka is there,
 Mirror like shining at the two knee caps,
 It was very nicely made;
 The jewel among devotees, person of great fame,
 Whose holy deed is praised, that Balicakravarti
 Is highly blessed; offering his head to kṛṣṇa who came as
 Vāmana,
 He earned the Grace of the killer of demons,
 He worked up and got the post of Indra;
 Remember in this way; Vijayaviṭṭhala
 Becomes pleased, accepting 'bhakti'.*

The sutala loka emanated from the kneecaps of the Virāṭ Puruṣa and it is cared for by that part of Śrī Hari's body. Balicakravarti is there enjoying the opulence of Indra's state. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself guards his palace gates. This status, Balicakravarti gained by the charitable tendency he displayed when Śrī Hari came to beg him like a bachelor boy, Vāmana. He offered his own head to Vāmana who had assumed the 'Trivikrama' form filling the entire Brahmāṇḍa and measuring the whole earth by one foot, and the entire firmament by the other. According to promise, Balicakravarti had to give land measured by the three steps of Vāmana - a boy of tender age. But to Trivikrama, Vāmana's changed form, Balicakravarti had to show his head as the ground for measuring the third foot. While thinking of Sutalaloka, we must think of Śrī Hari's kindness to Balicakravarti.

Vitalaloka:

*The seat of Indirādevi, birth place of vaisyas and their shelter,
 Of great beauty - the two thighs, from
 Them created is the Vitalaloka; Mayas
 Son, Bala, a veritable demon,
 Produces ninety six kinds of magical effects;
 They fill Vitala; there are learners
 Thronging. If Bala yawns, from his mouth*

Come out 'Pum̄scali' belles,
Smiling, with the males as they like
They revel very amorously.

Śrī Hari's thigh is the seat for Indirādevi - goddess of wealth. The thigh in a person is the reservoir of strength. The Vaiśyas strengthen a nation by creating wealth by their commercial dealings; hence were they born of the thighs of Virāṭ Puruṣa.

The Vitalaloka was created from the thigh, the seat of wealth and strength. Bala, son of the demon Maya, dwells here. He is an adept in ninety six kinds of magic. There are many eager to learn magic from him. Just if he yawns, beautiful, smiling, youthful girls come out. They enjoy pleasures with the males so as to tire them. These females are therefore said to be of the 'Pum̄scali' type.

*"The Moon-crested (Śiva) is there beside river 'Hāṭaka',
Surrounded by his many followers,
Served by them in different ways
And rejoicing in the company of the Mountain-born (Pārvatī).
The denizens of that loka, who have
Strength of ten thousand elephants, at all times
From the Hāṭaka river, worshipped by gods,
Drink deep and using Hāṭaka gold
They wear many a wonderful ornament,
And they spend time in the adoration of Śrī Hari;
To the god of multi-million forms, Vijayaviṭṭalarāya,
Offer obeisance and know about Vitalaloka.*

In the Vitalaloka, as in the other nether worlds; there are good souls as well as those of evil tendencies. In this loka, Śiva and Pārvati dwell in pleasures and are served by many attendants. The people there are very very strong and they enjoy life always remembering the grace of Śrī Hari, who is everywhere with His innumerable forms in the wonderful objects of His creation.

That there are wise devotees of God in the midst of pleasure seeking demons is a matter of strange existence. The demoniac souls forget their creator and, finding themselves in the whirl-pool of pleasures, they go to damnation. The devotee souls enjoy pleasures remembering the giver of life and its comforts and they earn blessings.

Atalaloka:

*In the Atalaloka, all kinds of beasts and birds
Are created from the buttocks of Śrī Hari; there
Are beautiful gardens and many kinds of beings - Daityas,
Dānavas, serpents, who
Spend their time happily with their wives,
children, relatives and others.
There is no end to Maya's magical products
Big palaces decorated with gems, towers steeples,
Roads with perfect squares and many many beauty spots
Mating beasts, birds and other kinds there enjoy life;
Flowers like the lotus of hundred petals and other flower plants
are there in plenty;
This loka provides satisfaction to every one
Let men know that the unalterable
Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya is the core of all,
And thus meditate upon Atalaloka."*

In Śrīmad Bhāgavatam it is said that Maya's son, Bala, spreads his magic in the Atalaloka. Again, it is said that Maya's architectural skills are to be seen in all the seven nether worlds. In the sulādi of Śrī Vijayadāsārya, Maya is said to be residing in the Talātalaloka under the protection of Lord Śiva. We should learn to reconcile all these statements.

The strange objects of pleasure in the seven subterranean heavens are all created by Maya, whose head quarters are in Talātalaloka. The magical creations of Bala are to be seen both in Atala and Vitala.

Sri Vijayadāsārya has made mention of a few things fitting with his description. A few more details taken from Śrīmad Bhāgavatam are given here below-

Fifth Canto - Chapter-24

*Avanerapyadhastāt sapta bhū vivarā
ekaikaśo yojanāyutāntarenāyāma vistarē
nopakliptā Atalam Vītalam Sutalam, Talātalam,
Mahātalam, Rasātalam Pātālamiti.*

Below the level of Bhūloka, within the hollows of solidified waters (ghanodaka) are the seven nether worlds, each ten thousand yojanas broad and ten thousand yojanas high.

*Eteṣuhi bila svargeṣu svargā-
dapyadhika kāma bhogaisvaryānanda
bhuti vibhūtibhiḥ susamṛddha bhava -
nodyāna kriḍāvihāreṣu Daitya Dānava
Kādraveyā nitya pramuditānurakta
Kalatrāpatyabandhu suhr̥danucarā
gṛhapataya īśvarādapyapratihata
Kāmā māyā vinodā nivasanti.*

In these lokas, which are heavens of the underground worlds, there are the progeny of Diti, (daityas), of Danu (dānavas) and of Kadru (serpents), always in the company of their dear wives, children, friends, servants and others. These house holders out of best enjoy illusory pleasures unhindered even by the Lord of all the worlds, all the time. There are facilities to enjoy more pleasures than available in Svargaloka - houses and recreational grounds filled with all kinds of treasures.

The pleasures enjoyed by the organs of the physical body, using material things of this world, are all provided by the Almighty Lord externally; those are not pleasures springing from the inner joyful nature of the soul. They are transitory; and illusory, because they result by the wrong concept of the body as being all in all.

*Eṣu mahārāja Mayena māyāvinā
Vinirmitāḥ purā nanā maṇipravara praveka
Viracita vicitra bhavana prākāra gopura
sabhā caitya catvārāyatanādibhiḥ
Nāgāsura mithuna Pārāvata Śuka Śāri-
Kākīrṇa kritrima bhūmi bhiḥ vivareśvara
Gṛhottamaiḥ samalanīkṛtāścakāśanti.*

Śrī Śuka Maḥarṣi addresses king Parīkṣit:

In the seven underground worlds, Maya has created beautiful cities houses decorated with gems, surrounded by pretty fortifications, towers, assembly halls, worship places, quarters for sacrifices and all other conveniences. The palaces of the leading denizens are crowded, with loving pairs of Nāgas, Asuras, as well as parrots and other pet birds.

*Yatra ha vāva na bhayam ahorātrādibhiḥ
Kālavibhāgairupalakṣyate.*

In these worlds there is no fear of day breaking and night setting in. It means, it is no work and all pleasure.

From this we should understand that God does not hasten the course of realisation as many would unduly desire. He gives plenty of chance by giving birth in the different worlds to enjoy mundane pleasures and to realise that the soul can enjoy happiness if opportunities are provided. The soul is also made to realise the transitory nature of the things of this world and to think of securing eternal happiness. Then only the vedic literatures come to help they lead him on to the Eternal Abode of Śrī Hari.

*Yatra hi mahāhipravara śiromaṇayah
Sarvam tamaḥ prabādhante*

The gems in the hoods of the mighty serpents dispell all darkness from the sub-terranean lokas.

*Udyānāni cātitarām mana indriyānandibhih
Kusuma phalastabaka kisalayāvanata
Rucira viṭapa viṭapinām latāṅgalingitānām
Śrībhiḥ samithuna vividha vihaṅgama
Jalāśayānāmamala jala pūrṇānām jhaṣa-
kulollaṅghana, kṣubhita nīraja kumuda
kuvalaya kalhāra nīlotpala lohita śatapatrādi
vaneṣu krita niketānāmeka vihārākula
madhura vividha svanādibhirindriyotsa-
vaiḥ amaraloka śriyam atīśayitāni.*

In the sub-terranean heavens there are lovely gardens pleasing to the senses and the mind. They are thick with trees overhanging by the burden of fruits, flowers and sprouting tender leaves. The creepers embracing them add to their beauty. In those trees and upon the waters of the neighbouring lakes, there are always male and female birds happily moving together. When the fish leap up from the waters and go down again, artistic ripples rise in circles and make the lotuses dance in glee. The sweet noises made by birds enhance the merry aspect of the gardens.

Here is a description of trees and flowers in the worlds where no sun or moon appears. With the knowledge of ordinary modern science it may be asked how plant life flourishes without the sun. But we cannot judge the mysterious ways of God by the standards of modern science. However, as science advances, it may not be difficult to find answers even by human experiments.

Bhūloka:

*The origin of Bhūloka and its support
Is the waist adorned by brocaded silk and golden belt;*

Bright like the sun in many a way
 Is the Jambūdvīpa with nine continents,
 Unique in the entire stretch of earth; there are
 Islands, mountains and rivers; beasts-cattle-birds-men,
 All engaged in the paths of 'Karma';
 Deities and demons take birth here,
 Śrī Hari comes down with His incarnations;
 Days and nights are made for this loka, the sages affirm;
 Here there is room for earning great merit
 Ever changeless is Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya;
 He should thus be comprehended as the Bimba of Vāyudeva.

The Bhūloka was created from the waist of Śrī Hari, the Viṛāṭ Puruṣa. Whenever something is described, it is natural for knowers of truth to praise the connected form of the creator. Hence it is that Śrī Vijayadāsārya praises the adorned waist of Śrī Hari.

Although there is no distinction between one part and the other in the form of the all-pervasive God, yet, according to human understanding, the head occupies the top rank and the feet take the lowest position, the waist is in between the two.

In order to continue the courses of realisation through karma, denizens of heavens as well as those of subterranean worlds must take birth only in Bhūloka. Thus, we find in the human beings qualities of heavenly beings mixed with those demoniac beings - devotion as well as disregard. When demoniac nature prevails in general and devotees find it hard to survive, Śrī Hari appears with His incarnations to curb indiscipline and to promote righteous living (dharma).

In this Universe there are creatures of all the 84 lakh species every one undergoing the course of ordained 'Karma'; but cope for understanding and quick progress is provided only in the human form. Going through the prescribed course of Karma one attains true knowledge gradually. - Karmanā jñānam āpnoti jñānena amṛti bhavati.

But the courses of life in the form of other species is not futile. For instance, a pair of bullocks ploughing the field and helping to grow corn to feed hundreds of mouths earns merit, though unwittingly. On the other hand, if those bullocks were used to carry smuggled articles and for such dirty purposes, it does carry the load of sin. Hence, the lines of the *suḷādi* have said—

*“Beasts - cattle - birds - men
All engaged in the paths of Karma”.*

Even in the human frame, there are opportunities for ordinary merits and sins, and special opportunities too. Doing good to others, speaking kind words - all such things bring merit. Harming others is certainly sinful. But giving up one's prescribed duties or going through them in hap-hazard manner brings heavy sins; while their sincere and regular performance brings copious merits. It is merit earned by prescribed duties that leads to true spiritual knowledge; and it is their negligence that throw one into the dark ways of ignorance.

In the lines quoted, there is also special reference to *Jambūdvīpa* as the land meant for going through ones prescribed duties profitably. Later, it will be clearly pointed out that *Bharata Varṣa* in *Jambūdvīpa* is the ‘*Karmabhūmi*’ - especially that part of it known as *Bharata Khaṇḍa*.

Yet another point to be noted in the above lines is this -

Days and nights are made for this loka the sages affirm

Śrī Vijayadāsārya has made very clever use of words in this respect. It is because, matters relating to the *Antarikṣaloka* are quite knotty. It becomes much more so, especially for those who say that the earth is a planet going round the sun. But it is not really puzzling to our *Dāsārya*, who is no other than *Bhṛgu Maharṣi*. Yet, unless it is God's signal, he would do nothing; say nothing. He simply says, “Sages affirm”.

The sages have also explained the divisions of day and night and the right periods of the day for specified duties. In the self lighted upper worlds there are no nights at all; and in the lower worlds there are no days at all. Hence it was said *Days and nights are made for this loka.*

Finally, Śrī Vijayadāsārya has advised that one should make his life on earth fruitful by always remembering that Śrī Hari is at the root of every thing in this creation and that true knowledge accrues by serving Śrī Vāyudeva through whom the Lord gives every benefit.

Antarikṣaloka or Bhuvarloka:

*From the part of the navel, Antarikṣaloka
Was made, its details you learn from
The region of the clouds and texts; others
Are at heights as indicated in them
There are deities looking after the different directions,
Spouse of Śrī Lakṣmīdevī accepts their service;
There are other deities above and below.*

Telling that the Antarikṣaloka was made from the navel of the Virāṭ Puruṣa, Śrī Dāsārya has said that more details may be gleaned from texts like Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. He wants to be pertinent to the point, which in this case is the picturisation of Virāṭ Puruṣa for purposes of meditation. More details would make the present Sulādi too voluminous.

In the same way he gives a brief description of the scorpion form of the Lord over the Meru Mountain, controlling the movements of the heavenly bodies, the stars and planets.

*Supporting the mountain of gold,
The Lover of devotees, Śrī Śimśumāra,
The Almighty Supreme Being, in His form
Holding the heavenly bodies, controls;
Look! at the tip of the tail end is Dhruvarāya; at the tail end
Are Agni, Prajāpati, Indra and Dharma;*

*At the beginning of the tail are Dhātā and Vidhātā,
 In His belly are the Seven ṛṣis;
 Śukra in the navel, Candra in the mind,
 Sūrya in the chest, Bṛhaspati upon the shoulders,
 Maṅgala in the mouth, Śani in the genital,
 And the others - Budha, Rāhu, Ketu and
 The Stars in different positions in His form,
 At all times they are under His control,
 Wheel-like He turns ordaining times,
 The wheel-bearer is in scorpion form;
 He shows Himself to the released ones, our Vijayaviṭṭhala;
 He controls the innumerable divine vehicles looking like stars.*

The mountain of gold is the Meru. This is right at the centre of the earth standing to a height of eighty four thousand yojanas or 1,286,400 K.M. Its peculiarity is that it is thin at the base and broad at the top. Above this mountain, the Supreme Lord is standing upside down in the form of a scorpion. The height of this form is 3,600,000 yojanas or 34,560,000 K.M. He holds the Meru mountain in position. He also controls the movements of all the celestial bodies.

The seven ṛṣis are the group of seven stars, the Great Bear in modern terminology. Śukra is Venus. Bṛhaspati is Jupiter and Maṅgala is Mars.

The Lord in the Scorpion form is called Śimśumāra. He is the wheel-bearer in two ways. He is Cakradhārī or bearer of the discus weapon. He also bears or controls the wheel of Time (Kālacakra).

Svargaloka:

*“The producer of Suraloka, its sustainer, yet different,
 (The most charming Person, always
 In the embrace of Indirā) is His
 Breast bedecked with jewels and garland of Tulasi leaves
 Indradeva worships Vāmanamūrti;
 He enjoys whatever pleasures he chooses,
 His elephant Airāvata, Uchchaisśrava the horse, his queen*

*Śacīdevī, Mātali the charioteer, his garden named Nandana,
Amarāvati his capital city - seated
On his throne, he is gladly served by the deities
Who have taken different forms to play their roles in the world;
Blazing with the lustre of the Sun, our Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya,
Takes one to Suraloka if he meditates in the right manner.*

It is the well adorned breast of Śrī Hari, embraced by Śrī Lakṣmīdevī, that gave rise to Svargaloka and gives it protection. Here it is important to note that Śrī Hari Himself is different from that loka as in the case of every other creation. The proper interpretation of the text is this. The qualities and abilities of the breast show themselves in Śvargaloka; it is ruled by the emotions natural for the breast.

There are innumerable deities behind the physical aspects of our world. They care for our world as the deputies of Indra, the king of the gods. His position is so exalted that he is permitted by the Supreme Being to enjoy all sorts of pleasures; yet, he is not unmindful of the master of the whole universe. He worships Upendra, who came as Vāmana before Balicakravarti.

One who meditates upon the glories of Svargaloka, naturally longs to be there. Śrī Hari takes him to that loka if he is sincere and dutiful.

Maharloka:

*That which gives rise to Maharloka and supports it
Being different from it, shining like the conch shell,
Wearing the Kaustubha jewel, reciting the Vedas always, it
is the neck.*

*Vṛtra's rival Indra is the Lord there,
All the Gods Kāma, Aniruddha, the great
Nāradamuni, are there worshipping Śrī Hari,
Adoring him in their hearts.*

That Śrī Hari is always reciting the Vedas is very meaningful. Śrī Mahālakṣmī, the chief presiding deity

of the Vedas, is always in them, thus, she who is also in the form of jewels worn by Śrī Hari, adorns His neck both inside and outside. The statement, again, denotes that the Vedas are eternal. Their expression in the material verbal form is transitory, but they are ever the same with their non-material form.

One may ask, "What need is there for Śrī Hari to recite the Vedas?" He does so principally to give joy to His eternal companion and to give joyful impetus to Brahmā and the gods having their shares in creation.

Devendra, lord of Svargaloka, is also the master in Maharloka where gods and sages are engaged in the worship of Śrī Hari.

Janaloka:

*Listen to this; creator of Indra, Agni, Sarasvati,
The source of all knowledge, glowing
With lustre excelling thousands of moons
The destroyer of devotees, impediments, that face brings up
the Janaloka;
Maitreya, Sanaka and other ṛṣis, under Rudra's
Regime, are in that loka;
The Gods and goddesses of spiritual powers, the groups of
'Bhūtas' - all
Worship Lord Śiva; Bṛhaspati is there;
There are marvellous gardens, and
Birds and beasts giving voice to wondrous sounds,
The Lord of our souls, Vijāyaviṭṭhalarāya,
Meditate upon Him in the form of the loka.*

Janaloka, ruled by Mahādeva, is created from the charming face of Virāt Puruṣa. The deities of spiritual powers and those with terrible forms – the retinue of Śiva, worship the Supreme Being through their Lord; Bṛhaspati is there. Great sages worship Śrī Hari under the guidance of Mahā Rudra.

Beasts and birds, and trees and plants of gardens are in the nether worlds, and they are in the upper

worlds also. This leads us to conclude that the behaviour among the lower categories of living creatures is similar to those of higher beings in as much as there are the well-behaved and the ill-behaved among those creatures too.

We have to keep in mind the original of all, Śrī Hari, when we think of Janaloka or any other loka. He acts the roles of all objects and beings, Himself unaffected by consequences.

Tapoloka:

*Rudra's origin, Śrī Haris forehead, for Tapoloka;
Brahmā is the overlord there;
Rudra dwells in that loka with all the ṛṣis,
Worshipping the awe-inspiring form of Narasimha,
With minds very will cleansed;
Taking shelter under Mahā Rudra and adoring him,
The Lord of three worlds (Indra) and other Gods
Worship Rudra with perfect courtesy;
And there are wise minor deities of the Vedas;
There are splendid gardens cities and buildings with high towers;
To pay their respects to Brahmadeva,
All the deities and ṛṣis go with Rudra;
The giver of all auspicious benefits, our Vijayaviṭṭhala;
If His lotus feet you desire, meditate upon Tapoloka.*

The Supreme Being, with His all-pervasive (virāt) form indwelling Brahmās virāt - form, gave birth to Rudra from the mid-brow of His forehead; He gave rise to Satyaloka from the same point. Brahmā holds sway here. Rudra worships Narasimha with cleansed mind along with the ṛṣis that follow him. The minor deities of the Vedas and all other gods take the lead of Mahā Rudra to approach Brahmā or to seek the grace of the awe-inspiring form of Śrī Narasimha.

Tapoloka too has its pleasure gardens and homes of supreme comfort.

Satyaloka:

*Brahmā's Satyaloka was created from the head,
 There, the Fourfaced worships in different ways,
 All the incarnations of Śrī Hari,
 Himself adored by all the other gods;
 Śrī Māruti dwells in that loka
 Acting the primary role in the world
 River Gaṅgā flows there with the name
 Viraja, making every-thing holy;
 And then she displays her greatness
 Washing away the sins of those on earth.*

Satyaloka, born of the Virāṭ Puruṣa's head, stands at the top of all other lokas; and is superior to every one of them. The capital city of Brahmadeva is in it. There, Brahmā is engaged in the worship of all the incarnations of Śrī Hari, remembering the glorious acts of those roles. The other deities assist him in his act of worship. Vāyudeva is the Prime Minister of the divine kingdom; he holds the reigns of the entire administration. Hence he is called 'Sūtra Vāyu'.

The waters of the 'Jalāvaraṇa' immediately outside the Brahmāṇḍa, entered into it through the crack made by the touch of the toe nail of Śrī Trivikrama. Washing his foot, it flowed downward and reached Satyaloka in due course. Brahmā collected the waters in his bowl and let down a part of it to flow around his capital city. Purifying the citizens of Satyaloka, this Devagaṅgā reached the lower worlds of gods and ultimately, this holy river touched the top of the Meru mountain and surrounded Brahmās city there. The river is called Virajā because it is really as holy. It nullifies the influence of the linga śarīra to such an extent as to make the mind turn towards God.

Then the river divides itself into four branches flowing in the four principal directions. The southern branch, Alakanandā, reaches Bharata Varṣa to flow down from the Himālayas and to sanctify this

karmabhūmi. More details may be gathered from the supplement in this text.

*“The description of the fourteen lokas, understand well;
Think of them both day and night;
In the head, at the foot and in between
All the details contemplate in the different parts of the body
Of Virāṭ Puruṣa that sustainer, Śrī Vijaya Viṭṭhala,
Praise His ways and look at Him to your hearts content.”*

Knowledge leads to liberation. True knowledge is the understanding of the glory of the Supreme Being in the activities of the Universe so kindly created for the liberation of souls from their beginningless bondage. This is called ‘Mahātmya Jñāna. Therefore Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya advises us to think of the fourteen lokas day and night in order to understand the Virāṭ Puruṣa in them. Such understanding develops detachment from worldly affairs and devotion to God.

Satyaloka affords greater joy in its recreational grounds than any other loka.

Having grown wiser by vedic studies, if one acts according to the injunctions of the Śāstras, he can reach up to Satyaloka and enjoy more and more opulence. But, there is a limit to the enjoyment of pleasures in the higher worlds even if it be for thousands and millions of years. Soon after the account of earned merits is closed, one has to return to Bhūloka to complete the remaining course of Karma. Hence it is said, “Kṣiṇe Puṇye martya lokam viśanti” The same thing is said by Sri Kṛṣṇa in Bhagavatgītā “Abrahma bhuvanālokāḥ punarāvartinorjuna”. Even those who get into Satyaloka by virtue of very high merit, must come back to Bhūloka one day or the other.

Good souls continue their march in the light of knowledge and by the strength of detached devotion, they rejoice in the realm of ‘Bhakti’; and they hasten to ‘Mukti’. But sinful souls increase their fascination for illusory pleasures tormenting others for their

gains, and, by reviling and illtreating devotees, they get branded as enemies of Viṣṇu; ultimately they rush to the depths of eternal Hell.

With this understanding, one should praise the Lord who has created the fourteen worlds.

As Śrī Hari has created the worlds and dwells in them, supporting, He has created all the deities to dwell in these worlds and to serve Him. But it is really He who, being in them, does their work. It is His kindness that He gives them credit. The following suḷādi-lines speak about it.

*Jayanta from the feet, Dakṣa from the genital,
And mitra was of the testicles*

* * *

*Listen, they were born in the required manner;
Do ordinary souls possess such powers?
Therefore, the Highest Being, Vijayaviṭṭhala
His qualities praise every day with steady mind.*

As the *Puruṣa Sūkta* relates “Candramā maṇaso jātaḥ cakṣoḥ sūryo ajāyata, mukhād indraścāgniśca prāṇād Vāyurajāyata”, Sri Vijaya dāsārya has described in great detail the birth of the different deities from the different parts of the Virāṭ Puruṣa’s body. Since, the list is very long, just a few important details are listed here below to enable contemplating upon the pervasive form of the Supreme Being. Feet - Jayanta; Genital - Dakṣa; Testicles - Mitra; Breast - Dharma; Ears - Controllers of the directions; Tongue - Varuṇa for taste and Agni for speech; Mind - Brahmā, Moon and others; Teeth - Gāyatrī and the other deities of metrical compositions; Skin (epidermis) - Ahaṁkārika Prāṇa etc.

Furthur:

*From head to foot, the pervasive form
Of two types, meditate in three ways;
Knowing that all, all materials and creatures are in Him,
And learning about it from sagely persons, washing off sins*

Of all the previous births and developing clean conscience,
 Shaking off the 'Ego' - the root of all troubles,
 Keep your trust in Śrīpati and Śraddhāpati,
 Gaining supreme knowledge, contemplate
 That, variously, all forms, karmas, time factors, reactions of
 material modes,
 All activities pertaining to the bodies of creatures
 Are only due to Śrī Hari in them;
 He protects those that engage themselves in 'dharma', thought
 simplified; He is the only independent Actor.
 He, whose form is pure joy, destroys the wrathful demons
 He is Gopāla, full of perfect attributes,
 Weal-worker of the world, the most benevolent,
 Free from all material contamination, flawless,
 He is the Lord of Lords
 In this way, In Mukhya Prāṇa His presence
 Recognising, of that beginningless being
 All forms and activities remembering,
 In the southern part of Jambūdvīpa make efforts;
 For him, who thus meditates within himself where is room for
 any fear!
 If this practice is continued steadily without break,
 He takes you across the dark abysmal ocean of life;
 In order to reach the lotus feet of
 Who is dear to the Vijayaṅṅhala, sweet heart of Draupadi,
 This and this only is the means
 In each and every visible form adore
 The Matchless Master, Vijayaṅṅhala with His pervasive form.
 (Visvarūpa or Virāḍrūpa.)

In describing every stage of creation, Śrī Vi-
 jayadāsārya has been impressing upon us the need of
 understanding the aim of life and the way to achieve
 it. How this can be done is explained very clearly in
 the suḷadi section quoted above.

He has said that the pervasive form of Śrī Hari
 should be understood in two ways and that it should
 be contemplated in three ways. The Almighty Lord
 is in the material objects like them. He is in the pre-

siding deities behaving like them. Thus His pervasive form is in those two manners. Knowing how the Benevolent Supreme is doing good with the two fold pervasive forms and considering how with the two forms He is also in our bodies doing our deeds and helping us, we should show our gratitude to Him whole heartedly. This is the third way of understanding Him. Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya seems to have said everything that one should necessarily know. Yet he says, "learn about it from sagely persons". This points out to the need of sitting at the feet of a spiritual master and getting personal instruction in addition to whatever is learnt in a general manner. That is why, after having taught the whole of the *Bhagavadgītā*, the Teacher of all teachers told Arjuna,

*Upadekṣyanti te jñānam jñāninaḥ tattvadarśinaḥ;
Tam viddhi praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā.*

(Sages, who are the knowers of truth, will give you direct instruction. Gain such knowledge from them by serving them and by questioning.)

Then only our false 'Ego' dies and we are free from the sinful loads of innumerable births; they are all burnt down and the mind becomes tranquil and happy.

Śrī Vijayadāsārya has specifically said that one should contemplate upon the helping hand of God through the 'sweet heart of Draupadī' - Bhīmasena. Earlier it was said "Keep your trust in Śrīpati and 'Śraddhāpati'".

Śraddhā is another name of Bhārati, who played the main role in the individual body of Draupadī, indeed there were other souls also in the same body 'Śyāmalādevī' - wife of Yamadharmā, Śacīdevī - wife of Indra and Uṣādevī wife of the Asvins; also Pārvatī devī.

Why take the name of Bhīmasena, we shall now understand. We should know that, as there are the good and the evil ones in this world, there are impellers of good and bad actions in our own bodies. If we should stick to the path of right, we must free ourselves from the clutches of the demons in our own minds. That this is the true position, is corroborated by the words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the Bhagavadgītā.

Arjuna questioned:

*Atha kena Prayuktoyam pāpam carati pūruṣaḥ,
Anicchannapi Vārṣneya balādiva niyojitaḥ*

(O Kṛṣṇa, by whom impelled does one commit sin although unwilling, as it were?)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa answered:

Kāma eṣa krōdha eṣa rajoguṇa samudbhavaḥ, pāpmānam prajahi hyenam jñāna vijñāna nāśanam.

(Listen, Arjuna, the evil in one's mind is due to the workings of demons like Kali and Kālanemī who are seated in the rajoguṇa, backed by Tamoguṇa; they are the presiding demons of properties like 'Kāma' and 'Krōdha' endeavour to conquer them; otherwise they make you lose both ordinary and extraordinary understanding).

But the question arises as to how one can conquer his evil mind Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has given the answer.

*Indriyāni parānyāhuḥ indriyebhyaḥ param manaḥ
Manasastu parā buddhiḥ yo buddheḥ parastu saḥ
Evam buddheḥ param buddhvā samstabhyātmānam ātmanā,
Jahi śatrum mahābāho kāmārūpam durāsadam*

(The deities presiding over the indriyas (sense organs) are stronger than those presiding over sense objects. The duties of the mind are stronger still Mukhya Prāna, master of the higher intellect is much more powerful. The Supreme Being is the mightiest. Knowing thus and seeking their help according to need, gain victory over the master of sins.)

The Almighty Lord does not come to our aid directly. He gives us succour only when we think of Mukhya Prāṇa (Bhīmasena) as His deputy, who only was daring enough to smash veteran villains like Duryodhna. It is this Bhīmasena who is the immediate 'Pratibimba' (Reflection) of Śrī Hari, very dear to Him; and it is he who is going to occupy the seat of Brahmā during the next Kalpa. Next only to Śrīman Nārāyaṇa and Ramādevī, he is the all-knower (Sarvajña) and rightly the first and foremost spiritual instructor in the world (Lokaguru). Śrī Hari showers His grace only through the spiritual master. Hence it is said *Guruvārāprasāda kṛit*.

The Mādhvas believe that Śrī Madhvācārya is the incarnation of Mukhya Prāṇa. Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya, belonging to the Madhva Sampradāya, has rightly instructed that the surest way of smashing the demons like Kali is to take shelter under the name "Draupadīpati-Priya"; and, by this advice, he has rendered yeomen service to the 'Haridāsa Paramparā'.

When describing the creation of Bhūloka it was said that it is the earth to which all souls should come to undergo their courses of Karma in a fruitful way. Now, Śrī Vijayadāsārya tells precisely where on earth the 'Karma bhūmi' is. He says "Pursue your course of Karma at the southern end of Jambūdvīpa". By this he means that, in the whole universe, it is Bharata Varṣa which is designated as the benevolent 'Karmabhūmi'; it is therefore a precious jewel of creation. In the other parts of the earth and in the other worlds one can enjoy inconceivable pleasures; but to cross the ocean of births and deaths, it is necessary to get rid of the Karmas and to earn merit only in Bharata Varṣa. The ordeal of Karmas makes one to realise the flatness and transience of worldly pleasures. Learning about the munificent ways of God, one will certainly learn to seek the Grace of the Saviour, especially when he is for-

tunate to get the blessings of devotees. The spiritual master will give the final touch! Then, the individual will be inclined to sit in close meditation. This does not mean that he shuts himself in a secluded place to think of God. Close meditation (Ekānta dhyāna) means to think of God in all our dealings and at all times. For the true knower, even, the noisy fair will be a fit place for such meditation. The right way of meditation is to recognise the pervasive form of Śrī Hari in every one; every where. This is the expedient, this the real one!

Neglecting this gradual and solid course of realisation, if any one were to preach a sharp and painful course, it is not in conformity with the teachings of Vedas and Upaniṣads. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has said this in unequivocal terms.

*Manuṣyāṅām sahasreṣu kaścidyatati siddhaye,
Yatatāmapi siddhānām kaścīn mām vetti tattvataḥ
Bahūnām janmanām ante jñānavān mām prapadyate.*

(Among thousands of men, some one endeavours to know the truth. Even among those who get at the truth, only a few understand ME as I am; they are the true knowers. Such knower reaches me after a long series of births, during which time he develops devotion and endears himself to Me.)

Chapter - XI

THE EXTENT OF THE EARTH

1. The Meru Mountain:

Although Bharata Varṣa is the chief 'Karma Bhūmi' yet the embodied souls are in all the fourteen lokas. Having therefore described life in the other lokas, now Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya gives a detailed account of Bhūloka.

*The Meru mountain is a lakh yojanas high,
Sixteen thousand yojanas of it underneath the earth;
It is brilliant being made of gold;
The rest of the measurement is thus
It is eighty four thousand above the earth;
The divine abode has eight mountain peaks around;
There are lovely gardens and lakes and ponds;
The palace of Brahmā is ten thousand yojanas wide;
Right in the heart of it, the Divine Gaṅgā
Descends and jumps down to a depth of one yojana;
Then gaily flowing, it divides itself into four;
The river enters the sea of the east;
It has four different holy names
The palaces of Indra and other directional gods
Is each two and a half thousand yojanas wide.*

The Meru mountain stands at the very centre of the terrestrial stretch and it is fixed there. The peculiarity of this mountain is that it is thin at the base and broad at the top, where its diameter is thirty two thousand yojanas. From the surface of the earth it

rises to a height of 84,000 yojanas. While 16,000 of it is inside the earth. From bottom to top it has extensions with mountain peaks so that the whole looks like a lotus of one hundred thousand petals. The extensions contain divine recreational grounds with gardens, lakes and ponds. In this connection the Vāyu Purāṇa says – (Ch.4. St.35,36)

*Aneka varṇa nicayam sauvarṇamāruṇaprabham,
Kāntam sahasra parvānam sahasrodakakandaram;
Sahasra śata padmam tam viddhi merum nagottamam.*

Meaning: The golden mountain Meru, which looks like the early rising sun shines with multi colours. It has a thousand projections and looks like a lotus of one lakh petals.

River Gaṅgā flows round the palace of Brahmā atop the meru and then descends in four directions with four names - Sitā, Alakanandā Cakṣu and Bhadrā.

*The hub of the wheel of the Sun's chariot is in full contact with the Meru,
And the chariot makes its daily rounds about it;
Twelve deities of the Sun's cadre, month after month
Hold office in the orb; Observer of Karmas
Śrīman Nārāyaṇa, Himself to the Meru
Gives stability in the form of 'Śimśumāra';
That mighty Lord stands to a height of thirty six lakh yojanas*

There are six other islands around Jambūdvīpa at different distances. In the last of them; Puṣkara dvīpa, there is the Mānasottara mountain like a vast ring around the Meru. Just above it, is the time wheel upon which the sun's chariot makes its daily rounds. This chariot has but one wheel. Its hub is in contact with the top of the Meru mountain, as it were; actually its control line starts from the mouth of the scorpion form of Śrīman Nārāyaṇa stationed above the Meru, head down and tail up. Another control line

starts from the tail tip where Dhruva Mahārāja rules in the pole star. In a similar manner, control lines starting from the pole star and from the different parts of the Śimśumāra form keep all the heavenly bodies going round and round at different velocities. The control lines are called 'Vāyupāśas' while these proceed from Śimśumāra Mūrti Himself, the reputation of wielding the Vāyupāśas goes to Dhruva Mahārāja.

The Śimśumāra form is 36 lakh yojanas in height, it is like the measuring rod of Antarikṣa loka. To understand the arrangement made for the movements of heavenly bodies the example of the native oil pressing machine is given. The beam at the bottom stands for the control line proceeding from Śimśumāra Mūrti's mouth and that from the pole-star compares with the rod connecting the beam to the top of the huge wooden club within the stone mortar of the machine.

Śrī Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa is the true deity worshipable in the sun's orb. Yet there are others who get the credit, they are eleven of them, the twelfth being Śrī Viṣṇu Himself. Thus there are twelve Ādityas. The Sun not only gives us light to work; but he also watches our deeds. Therefore he is called 'Karma Sākṣi!

The very high meru mountain, quite broad at the top and thin at the bottom, stands steady because, of the support it receives from Śimśumāra Mūrti in the form of magnetic attraction, we may say.

II. Other important Mountains:

*It is like this, listen,
At the foot of the Meru mountain
To the east and in other directions,
Twenty filamental mountains there are,
Each has a different name;
Kuraṅga, Kuravaka, Vāikaṅka, Kubumbhakādri,
Trikuṅga, - all these to the east.*

*Pataṅga peak, Utsaṅga, Niṣādha,
Sita and Vāsuki to the south;*

*To the direction of Varuṇa (west) Kapila, Śamkha, Vaidūrya,
Jārudhi and Hamsa-these five mountains;*

Similarly count Vṛṣabha, Nāga, Kālāñjana

And Nāradaḡiri to the moon's direction (north);

These are the mountains around the Meru base.

As there will be filaments all round the pedestal of the lotus, there are mountains around the Meru which is like the pedestal of the lotus - the terrestrial world.

East: Kurāṅga, Kurara, (Kurava) Vaikaṅka,
Kusumbha, Trikūṭa;

South: Pataṅga, Utsāṅga, Niṣadha, Sita, Vāsuki;

West: Kapila, Śamkha, Vaidūrya, Jārudhi, Hamsa;

North: Vṛṣabha, Nāga, Kāla, Añjana and Nārada.

Furthur I will tell you; Mandarādri,

*Mērumandara, Pārsva, Kumuda these four are supporting
mountains,*

Each one is ten thousand Yojanas high;

There are in each of these mountains, the trees Jambu

(rose-apple) Cūta (mango), Kadamba and

Mighty Nyagrodha (banyan); each one has

Branches spreading over eleven hundred Yojanas'

They yield milk, honey, ghee and clear water

Which flow to collect into pools measuring

one hundred yojanas each;

There are other four lakes - Arunoda, Bhadrā,

Beautiful Siloda and Mānasa and

There are parks four - Sanandana,

Citraratha, Vibhrājika and

Sarvatobhadra are their names.

Supporting Mountains & Height	Direc- tions	Trees Height & Branch	Pools	Lakes	Parks
1. Mandara 10,000 Yojanas	East	Chūta (Sweet Mango) 100;1100	Milk	Aruṇoda	Sanandana
2. Meru Mandara 10,000	South	Jambū (Rose -apple) 100;1100	Honey	Bhadrā	Citraratha
3. Supārśva 10,000	West	Kadamba 100; 1100	Ghee	Sita	Vaibhrājika
4. Kumuda 10,000	North	Nyagrodha (Banyan) 100;1100	Sweet Water	Mānasa	Sarvato- bhadra

The pools all contain sweet water but the first three provide milk, honey and ghee respectively when wished for.

The juice of rose apples flows as the Jāmbū river and forms a fine variety of gold called Jāmbūnada. The divine beings visit this region, make ornaments of such gold for themselves and drink the sweet juices coming from the four trees mentioned earlier. Having enjoyed enough pleasures in Svargaloka for merits earned, other beings too stay here to go through the happy life still to be enjoyed. Since they remember the Supreme Being during their stay here they develop devotion; their actions are not meant to go through the regular karma when they are in Bharatavarṣa. Therefore, those parts of Jambūdvipa other than Bharatavarṣa are called 'Bhoga Bhūmi' (Land of Enjoyment).

*Trees like the sweet mango, visited by gods,
Always provide whatever is wished for;
In the company of wines and other relations
All the gods sport here as they like,
Wearing gold ornaments and enjoying a variety of pleasures;*

birds, beasts and other creatures are there,
 forgetting hostilities and playing together;
 the garden trees look like decorated festival cars,
 it is beyond words to describe them.

This description leads us to construe that *Ilāvṛta* is a secluded inner part and the open exterior part surrounded by divine beings and inhabited by others. The mountains just now mentioned must be standing impenetrable fort walls all round the secluded part, which is the private sporting ground for Śiva and Parvati. Other males should not enter this area. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* it is said that trespassing males are held out to be females here on account of the curse pronounced by *Bhavānīdevī*. Since every *Varṣa* has one or two 'Khaṇḍas' (continents or well defined clumps of certain dimensions), the secluded central part of *Ilāvṛta* must be *Ilāvṛta Khaṇḍa*, a high platform surrounded by the four supporting mountains.

Keeping within bounds, like the four pedestal mountains, beyond them there are sequestering mountains, they are in pairs, each one two thousand *Yojanas* wide and in length, one thousand and nine thousand they are; they are laid down thus - to the east *Āṅgāra*, *Devakūta*; and in the north *Āilāsa*, *Karavīra*; *Pavana*, *Pāriyātra*; and *Āṅgapūrita* and *Makara* - these four look like holy *Kuśa* grass bundles, they look.

The sacred fire meant for oblations will be surrounded by thin, long bundles of *Kuśa* grass to protect it from the influence of evil influences. The golden *Meru* is like a sacred blazing fire and the eight mountains under consideration look like those *Kuśa* grass bundles (like *istīrṇa*). In this respect, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* says, *Meruḥ paristr̥to'gniriva paritaḥ cakāsti kāñcana girih* (the golden mountain surrounded by these on all sides, the golden mountain glitters like blazing fire). There are two mountains

together on each side, making a total of only four for all practical purposes, the length of each of these eight mountains is nine thousand yojanas; width two thousand yojanas. It will be reasonable to imagine that the four supporting mountains and the eight secluding mountains are somewhat bow-shaped. There are two reasons for this. If the mountains in pairs were straight and continuous, they would not be considered as two on each side. Also, since the eight other bounding mountains of Jambūdvipa are definitely said to be bow shaped, the mountains of Ilāvṛta must also be bow-shaped to keep artistic harmony. Again, since Ilāvṛtavarṣha is thirty four thousand yojanas wide, if we allow a straight measurement of eighteen thousand yojanas to the sequestering mountains, the outskirts of Ilāvṛtavarṣha would measure only eight thousand yojanas on each of the four sides. But if each of the pairs of mountains bulges inward, the width of the exteriors would be nine thousand, consistent with the other varṣas. Śrī Vādirājasvāmi says, "Navatvam ca na hīyate" - The measure of nine thousand yojanas for each Varṣa will not be broken.

These mountains are:

East	-	Jaṭara, Devakūta;
South	-	Karavīra, Kailāsa;
West	-	Pavana, Pāriyātra;
North	-	Trisṛṅga, Makara.

The suḷādi lines also state,

*The spouse of Gaurīdevī, dwelling in Kailāsa,
Devotedly meditates upon the name of Śrī Rāma.*

Śiva and Pārvatī have their abodes in several parts of the worlds and they are in every one of them simultaneously. They are in the Kailāsa mount of our Himālayas, in the Kailāsa of the Bigger Himālayas, in the Kailāsa mountain of Ilāvṛtavarṣha, at the foot of the Meru and in Janaloka too.

3. Jambūdvīpa:

Six by six, less two thousand yojanas,
Is the extent of the middle khaṇḍa,
It goes by the name Ilāvṛta;
All that is said is from authoritative texts.

While describing Jambūdvīpa, a description of Ilāvṛta is first taken up because it is the mid point of Jambūdvīpa. Its measurement is given as $6 \times 6 - 2 = 34$ thousand Yojanas. It is almost a square as described in the previous section. Its bounding mountains bend to some extent towards the Meru.

All round the Ilāvṛta Khaṇḍa
The remaining eight varṣas are situated;
These are Bhadrāśva and Ketumāla,
Each one measures thirty one thousand yojanas,
Adding, count, to the east and to the west.

In the two quotations given above, we see that the words 'Varṣa' and 'Khaṇḍa' are used as though they were synonymous. Really it is not so; it is just usage. Reasonable thinking will show that 'Khaṇḍa' is only part of a 'Varṣa'. The Vāyu Purāṇa says, "Samudrajalasambhinnam khaṇḍam khaṇḍī kṛtam smṛtam", and "Plakṣa khaṇḍaḥ Kimpuruṣe" "Sumahān nandanopamaḥ; "Varṣe Kimpuruṣe puṇye Plakṣo madhuvahaḥ śubhaḥ". (1. A part of the earth, distinct from others by virtue of being surrounded by oceans, is a khaṇḍa. 2. In the Kimpuruṣa Varṣa, Plakṣa Khaṇḍa is beautiful like Nandanavana. In the auspicious kimpuruṣa Varṣa there are 'Plakṣa' trees secreting pure honey.) From this example it may be concluded that there are distinct khaṇḍas in the varṣas of Jambūdvīpa.

To the east of Ilāvṛta is Bhadrāśvavarṣa and to the west, Ketumālavarṣa. Each of the two measures thirty one thousand yojanas. But the circular Jambūdvīpa is said to be one lakh yojanas in diameter. That is why

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They are in pairs, each one
Two thousand Yojanas wide and in length,
Nine thousand and nine thousand they are;
They are laid down thus - to the east
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Kailāsa, Karavīra; Pavana, Pāriyātra; and
Śṛṅgapūrita and Makara - these four
Like holy Kuśa grass bundles, they look.*

The sacred fire meant for oblations will be surrounded by thin, long bundles of *Kuśa* grass to ward off evil influences. The golden Meru is like the sacred blazing fire and the eight mountains under consideration look like those *Kuśa* grass bundles (*Paristīrṇa*). In this respect, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* says, *Etaih paristṛto'gniriva paritaḥ cakāsti kāñcana girih* (Surrounded by these on all sides, the golden mountain glitters like blazing fire). There are two mountains

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the hint was given, "Adding, count". Thus it would be as follows:-

Ilāvṛta Varṣa	-	34	thousand yojanas.
Bhadrāśva	-	31	thousand yojanas.
Its boundary mountain		2	thousand yojanas.
Ketumāla Varṣa	-	31	thousand yojanas.
Its boundary mountain		2	thousand yojanas.
—————			
100 thousand yojanas			
———— (one lakh)			

*Established are Harivarṣa, Kimpuruṣa and Nābhi
On the side of the sun's son; on the north,
You must know, are Ramya, Hiraṇmaya and Kuru Khaṇḍa;
Each one stretches upto the sea;
The width of each, nine thousand yojanas,
Six varṣas have thus spread out,
Side by side, longer in the east west direction,
They have clearly the shapes of bows;
The other three varṣas are some what straight but bent
Śrī Padmanābha, the charming Lord (Raṅga),
Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya,
For the clear minded gives the true picture.*

(Son of Sun = Yamadharama, Lord of the south)

To the south of Ilāvṛta are the three varṣas - Harivarṣa, Kimpuruṣavarṣa and Nābhivarṣa. Because Nābhi cakravartī had earned great fame, Bharata Varṣa is known also by his name. To the north of Ilāvṛta are the Varṣas Ramyaka, Hiraṇmaya and Uttara Kuru. These six stretch upto the salt sea, surrounding the Jambūdṛpa. Their width is nine thousand yojanas, in each case. The boundary mountains like Niṣadha and Nīla are bent like the bow; hence the varṣas bounded by them are also bowshaped. The parts of mountains bounding Ilāvṛta are only parts of the bow-shapes. Therefore that Varṣa is like a square but the sides are not perfect straight lines. Similarly the Bhadrāśva and the Ketumāla Varṣas are bounded only by parts of the bow-shaped mountains. For this reason

Śrī Gokāvi Anantācārya, author of Śrīnivāsa Kalyāṇa' in Kannaḍa, has described the two Varṣas as drum-shaped.

It is interesting to note that Śrī Vijayadāsārya asserts that he has described the Jambūdvīpa as visualised by his inner eye by the grace of Vijayaviṭṭhala. His is not a scholarly attempt; but, it is a masterly stroke.

*The boundary mountain of each varṣa
Is firmly set; for Ketumāla and Bhadrāśva,
Mālyavanta and Gandhamādana are the boundaries;
These mountains of two thousand broad, each,
Their lengths thirty four thousand yojanas.*

The two mountains lie between the Niṣadha and the Nīla mountains; they are therefore thirty four thousand yojanas long, the same as the breadth of Ilāvṛta Varṣa. Like other mountains of Jambūdvīpa, their bases are two thousand yojanas broad in each case.

*Then, to the remaining six varṣas, boundary
Mountains of these, to the south Niṣadha,
Hemakūṭa and Himālaya are there; to the
North Nīla, Śveta, and Śṛṅgavān
They are called; and they measure
Two thousand yojanas wide, and in length
The Nīla is ninety six thousand yojanas,
The next two less by ten and ten,
These mountains reach eastward and westward
upto the salt-water ocean.*

The Nīla mountain divides Ramyaka Varṣa from Ilāvṛta and it is ninety six thousand yojanas long. The next one, Śveta mountain divides Ramyaka from Hiraṇmaya and it is eighty six thousand long. The Śṛṅgavān divides Hiraṇmaya from Uttarakuru Varṣa; it is seventy six thousand yojanas long. These three seem to touch the salt-water ocean at each end.

The Niṣadha mountain is similar to Nīla Mountain towards the south of Ilāvṛta. It separates Harivarṣa from Ilāvṛta. It is ninety six thousand yojanas in length. He Hemakūta, eighty six thousand miles long, is between Harivarṣa and Kimpuruṣa Varṣa. The Himālayas stand between Kimpuruṣa Varṣa and Bharata Varṣa. The mountain bearing the same name, lying to the north of Bhāratadeśa, is different from it. The former is seventy six thousand yojanas long (456000 miles), two thousand yojanas wide and ten thousand yojanas high like the other important mountains of Jambūdvīpa, whereas, the Himālayas known to us, is only about two thousand miles long.

The salt sea ocean, spoken of is, different from all the seas and oceans with which we are familiar; it surrounds the Jambūdvīpa and has a width of one lakh yojanas.

*In the different parts of Bharata Khaṇḍa, by sinful or
Meritorious deeds,
Men get opportunity to make themselves eligible for divine
worlds
Or even to reach the Abode of Eternal Happiness;
They may go to hell or to heaven;
Even for gods to get rid of the load of karmas,
This is the right place
Śrī Hari appears with His incarnations and shows
His merciful ways;
Bharata Khaṇḍa is the veritable karma Bhūmi;
Divine Gaṅgā and other rivers, holy places,
Prayāga known as the holiest place of pilgrimage,
Are here; to carry out all kinds of vows, for charity,
for religious purity and for seeking knowledge,
And thus gain purity of mind, one should
This is the surest land to see Śrī Hari face to face;
One can develop knowledge, detachment and devotion
By the grace of a spiritual master.*

There are other worlds and wide stretches of the earth itself, where one can enjoy the fruits of Karma.

But, to give momentum to the seeds of karma imbedded in the Liṅga Śarīra and to get rid of them gradually, one must find birth inevitably in Bharata Khaṇḍa.

Bharata Varṣa is a very wide area, about 70 thousand yojanas long and nine thousand yojanas wide. But whenever mention of Karma Bhūmi is made in the Purānas, they seem to describe only Bhāratadeśā lying between the Himālayan range and Cape Kanyā Kumāri. This aspect is fully discussed in the supplement incorporated in this text.

In the nine Varṣas of Jambūdvīpa, the devotees worship different forms of Śrī Hari. Instead of quoting them from the Suḷādi, the necessary list is given here below-

Varṣa	Form of God worshipped	Chief devotees
Πāvṛta	Saṅkaraṣaṇa	Śiva and Pārvatī
Bhadraśva	Hayagrīvamūrti	King Bhadrāśva
Ketumāla	Pradyumna	Ratīdevī & Kāmadeva
Uttara Kuru	Varāhamūrti	Dharaṇīdevī
Hiraṇmaya	Kūrmamūrti	Āryama
Ramyaka	Matsyamūrti	Manu
Harivarṣa	Narasimha	Prahlāda
Kimpuruṣa	Śrī Rāma	Hanumān
Bhāratavarṣa	Nara Nārāyaṇa	Nārada Mahārṣi

The salt sea: (Lavaṇa Samudra)

“To the Jambūdvīpa of nine continents

The salt sea is like a girdle;

In it there are eight cities and islets;

Their names are Svarṇaprastha Candraśukta Āvartana,

Ramaṇaka and after that Mandara Hariṇa,

Pāñcajanya, Simhala and the one over which

Rāvaṇa ruled - Laṅkā;

The truth is, when Sagara's sons, sixty thousand
in a body went

And dug holes in the sea and raised mounds;

*These became the eight islets;
 Let devotees hear the greatness of Jambūdvīpa,
 To describe every detail of it,
 There is no end; knowers must tell.*

The eight islets (Upadvīpas) mentioned are Svarnaprastha, Candrasukla, Avartana, Ramaṇaka, Mandara Harina, Pāñcajanya, Simhala and Laṅkā. The capitals of these islets bear similar names. The Purāṇas say that sixty thousand sons of Sagara Cakravartī went with their servants to find out the stolen horse meant for sacrifice. Thinking that the horse might have been taken down into the nether-worlds, they began to dig the sea and raised big heaps of earth. These, in course of time, became the eight islets.

'In it' means in the salt-water ocean mentioned; it also means, with in the Jambūdvīpa where there are continents and their seas. As we know Simhala or Ceylon is just to the south of Bharatadeśā. The Laṅkā of Rāvaṇa is said to lie one hundred yojanas away from the southern tip of this country. Therefore, it must also be within the Indian Ocean, 600-800 miles away from Cape Comerin or the pier of Dhanuṣkoṭi. One, Sampat Iyengar, B.Sc., has in his calendar, argued that Laṅkā is some where in the Indian ocean, 600-800 miles away in the south-west direction.

From what has been gathered so far, we can say that the sons of Sagaracakravartī dug holes in the oceans around Bharatakhaṇḍa - Indian Ocean, Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean. Since Bharatadeśā is the chiefest part of Jambūdvīpa, it being the rallying point of Karmabhūmi, and since the Purāṇas were addressed to the people of this country, it is but natural to talk more about it only. A few of the eight islets may be in the bigger salt-water ocean too. For example, Candradvīpa is said to be to the west of Uttara Kuru Khaṇḍa within the 'Lavaṇa Samudra'. More about this may be learnt from the supplement (Chapter XII)

Now, the six other islands and their surrounding seas will be described.

The story of the creation of the seven islands and oceans of the earth is very interesting.

At first, when the earth was created, the seven islands and the seven oceans were not there. The credit for creating them goes to Priyavrata Mahārāja.

When Ādivarāha lifted the sub-merged earth, it was like a big mound all round the Meru mountain. Priyavrata Mahārāja, prompted by the Supreme Being, created the islands and the oceans for the convenience of people to come. For this purpose he raced in his chariot keeping pace with the sun's velocity. Therefore, even nights were turned into days for him. The deep ruts made the wheels of his chariot became the seas and the parts of earth left in between became the islands. Even the internal divisions of the islands were created by him.

In this connection there is something that we should understand. Modern Geographers say that the continents were formed by the breaking and moving apart of the earth's crust. The reason given for this assumption is that the edges of the continents seem to fit into each other's. For example, the coast lines of the Americas are so formed that, if they are moved forward, they will exactly fit into the coastlines of Europe and Africa. But, the reason may be, and really is different. It is the work of Priyavrata Mahārāja. If one sees the furrows made by a plough, it will have left on either side, land parts which seem to fit with each other, their shapes depending upon the courses taken by the plough. The wheels of Priyavrata's chariot took the required directions to create the required land shapes.

The chariot of Priyavrata was like a divine bulldozer which could alter its size according to needs. The

mighty task achieved by Priyavrata is thus described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam—

“Priyavratākṛtam karma konu kuryādvineśvaram,
Yo nemi nimnai rakarot cāyām ghanan sapta vāridhīn”
“Bhū samsthānam kṛtam yena saridgiri vanādibhiḥ
Śīmāca bhūtanirvṛityai dvīpe dvīpe vibhāgaśaḥ.

(V-1-39-40)

(Without the utmost grace of the Supreme Lord, who can achieve a task as was done by Priyavrata, dispelling darkness and creating seas and islands by the deep ruts and mounds of earth made by his chariot wheels and planning boundary mountains, hills; rivers and other features within the divisions of the islands?)

“Yāvadavabhāsayati suragirimanu parīkraman Bhagavān
Ādityo vasudhātalam ardhenaiva pratapati
ardhenāivachchādayati tadāhi Bhagavadupāsanopacitāi
puruṣa prabhāvastadanabhinandan samajavena rathena jyotir-
mayena rajanīmapi divam kariṣyāmīti saptakṛtvastaraṇimanu
paryākramatsa dvitīya iva pataṅgaḥ” (V-1-30)

“Ye vā iha tadrathacaraṇa nemikṛta parikhāstāḥ sapta sind-
hava āsan yata evam kṛtāḥ sapta bhuvō dvīpāḥ”. (V-1-31).

(The Sun God, going around the Meru, gives light only to half of the earth and keeps the other half in darkness. Thus reflecting, Priyavrata Mahārāja, grown powerful by his deep reverence to God, did not approve of the sun's course of conduct. He decided to convert nights into days and racing with the sun with equal velocity, he rode in his chariot seven times around the Meru like a second sun. The moats created by the wheels of his chariot became the seven seas, leaving the gaps as islands.)

This famous Priyavrata Mahārāja made his seven sons the rulers of the seven islands. Their names are Agnīdhra, Idhmajihva, Yajñabāhu, Hiranyaretā, Gṛtāpṛṣṭha, Medhātīthi and Vītihōtra.

IV. Plakṣa and the other Islands and the Seven Seas:

Here is a description of Plakṣadvīpa which engirdles 'Lavaṇa Samudra' (Salt-sea ocean).

"The second island is called Plakṣa,
It is twice the size of Jambūdvīpa in breadth;
There is in it a tree of the same name,
Eleven hundred yojanas it spreads, its height the same;
The Varṣas, rivers and mountains are seven in each case
Śiva, Īśa, Subhadra, Śantānu, Kṣama, Amṛta and
Abhaya are the seven varṣas there;
Maṇikūṭa, Pavikūṭa, Indraśayana,
Jyotirbhānu, Dhūmravarṇa, Hiraṇyagrīva,
Meghamāla - are the mountains;
Aruṇā, Vimalā, Āngirasā and Sāvitrī,
Suprabhā, Ṛtambharā as well as
Satyambharā - these are seven rivers;
In this island, ruling over the divisions,
Sovereigns are seven of the same names of Varṣas;
Always, Śrī Sūryanārāyaṇa mūrti
They worship, being in their respective tṛacts,
And they pray to Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya
To take them into His Abode by making them eligible through
Bhakti.

The Plakṣadvīpa is two lakh yojanas in width. In it there is a plakṣa tree 1100 yojanas high and its branches spread 1100 yojanas. The tree gives its name to the island. Plakṣadvīpa has seven mountains dividing the island into seven varṣas. Idhmajihva, lord of Plakṣadvīpa, gave rulership of the seven varṣas to his seven sons and retired.

	Varṣas	Mountains	Rivers
(also names of rulers)			
1.	Śiva	Maṇikūṭa	Aruṇā
2.	Īśa	Pavikūṭa	Vimalā
3.	Subhadra	Indraśayana	Āngirasā
4.	Śantānu	Jyotirbhānu	Sāvitrī
5.	Kṣama	Dhūmravarṇa	Suprabhā
6.	Amṛta	Hiraṇyagrīva	Ṛtambhara
7.	Abhaya	Meghamāla	Satyambhara

The rulers of these seven varṣas worship Śrīman Nārāyaṇa dwelling in Sūrya (Sun god). In Plakṣa and the other islands and in the Varṣas of Jambūdīvīpa, other than Bharatavarṣa, worship helps to enhance joy in mukti; it does not end in the pleasures of the higher worlds. In Bharatavarṣa, especially Bharata Khaṇḍa, the result of activities is mostly expending karmas and gaining experience by pleasure and pain, the suffering may be in heavens or hells too. But the activities in other parts of the earth result in joy and the enhancement of devotion.

Śālmaladvīpa:

*“The sea of sugarcane juice surrounds Plakṣadvīpa;
It is also two lakh yojanas in width
Crossing it you reach Śālmaladvīpa
Know its width to be four lakh yojanas
A tree of the same name spreads its fragrance
In this island too are seven varṣas,
Hills and rivers with different names,
Are there; Surocana, Śāsinasya, the holy
Ramaṇaka its neighbour, Devabarha,
The strong Pāribhadra, Abhibarha and Paryadānu
Are the seven varṣas all well-known
The boundary mountains are Surasa, Śataśṅga,
Vāmadeva, Kundaka, Mukunda, and the
Divine Puṣpavanta and also Sahasrati
The rivers - Anumatī, Sinīvālī, Sarasvatī, Kadrū,
Dexterous Rañjini, Nanda and Rākā are the seven;
The rulers of the Varṣas with the same names,
Worship the Lord residing in Candra
And earn merit for the best of Abodes;
Knowing the ‘do’s and don’ts’ (vidhi-niṣedha) in their palaces,
They carry on religious worship separately
Like a girdle around Śālmaladvīpa
Four lakh yojanas is the sea of Surā;
Keep our Vijayaviṭṭhala, adored by all gods,
In your heart while listening to these accounts.*

Ikṣurasa (Sugar cane juice) ocean lies between Plakṣadvīpa and Śālmaladvīpa, its width being two lakh yojanas. Śālmala tree of sweet aroma gives its name to the island.

	Varṣas	Mountains	Rivers
1.	Surocana	Svarasa (Surasā)	Anumatī
2.	Śaśinasya	Śataśṅga (Sumanasa)	Śinivālī
3.	Ramaṅaka	Vāmadeva	Sarasvatī
4.	Devabarha	Kuṇḍa	Kadrū (Kuhu)
5.	Pāribhadra	Mukunda	Raṅjini (Rajani)
6.	Abhibarha (Āpyāyana)	Puṣpavanta (Puṣpavarṣa)	Nandā
7	. Paryadānu (Avijnāta)	Sahasrati (Sahasraśruti)	Rākā

The rulers and the inhabitants of Śālmaladvīpa know the do's and dont's prescribed by the Vedas; they act accordingly. The Lord's form worshippable by them is Vāmanamūrti, dwelling in the Moon land. The sea of Surā is as broad as the Śālmaladvīpa - four lakh yojanas.

Śrī Vijayadāsārya never fails to remind us that we learn about the different parts of the Universe mainly to recognise the glory of the All Pervasive Lord.

Kuśadvīpa:

*A column of Kuśa grass is there, shining like gold,
Eleven hundred yojanas in height;
The island containing it is Kuśadvīpa,
Eight lakh yojanas in width;
It has seven varṣas in it-
Vasu, Vasudāna, Dṛḍharuci, Nābhigupta,
Shining Satyavrata, Vipra, Vāmadeva;
Well-laid Cakra, Śṅga, Kapila
Devānika, Ūrdhvaroma and Draviṇa*

Are the mountains; then, Kulya, Madhukulya,
 Bright Śrutavindya, Mitravindya,
 Vedagarbhā, Ghṛtācyutā and Mantramālā - seven rivers.
 The seven rulers with the names of varṣas
 Are famed in all the ten directions;
 They worship the Lord indwelling the eldest of Vasus,
 Each one in his own city,
 Offering the best of flowers and other substances;
 The peerless Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya
 Shows Himself to his devotees, shining like the moon;
 The ocean of ghee spreads around, as wide as the island.

	Varṣas	Mountains	Rivers
1.	Vasu	Cakra	Rasakulya
2.	Vasudāna	Catuśśṛṅga	Madhukulya
3.	Dṛdharuchi	Kapila	Śrutavindya
4.	Nābhigupta	Trikūṭa	Mitravinda
5.	Satyavrata (Stutyavrata)	Devānīka	Vedagarbha
6.	Vipra (Vivikta)	Ūrdhvaroma	Ghṛtacyuta
7.	Vāmadeva	Draviṇa	Mantramālā

The rulers and residents of Kuśadvīpa worship Śrī Paraśurāma, residing in Agni (fire god). The ferocious, blazing form of Paraśurāma looks soft and cool to His devotees.

The surrounding ocean of Ghee is eight lakh yojanas wide like Kuśadvīpa.

The fifth one is the Krauñcadvīpa,
 Extending sixteen lakh yojanas, it is very beautiful;
 There is in it a mountain of similar name;
 Varṣas, mountains and rivers seven each;
 The Śāstras confirm, Amogha (Ama), Madhuruha,
 Meghapṛṣṭha;
 Sudhāma, Ṛṣi (Bhrājiṣṭa), Lohitārṇaka
 And Vanaspati are the seven varṣas;
 Śuklagiri, Vardhamāna, Upabarhaṇa, Upabhoja,

Nanda, Nandana, Sarvatobhadra-mountains;
 Abhayā, Amṛtaughā, and Āryakā
 Slow-moving Tīrthavati, Rūpavati, Śuchāvati,
 And Śuklāvati are the seven rivers;
 All the rulers worship Matsyamūrti
 Resident in the consort of Gaṅgādevī.

Varṣas	Mountains	Rivers
Āma	Sukla	Abhaya
Madhuruha	Vardhamāna	Amṛtāughā
Meghapṛṣṭha	Upabarhaṇa	Āryaka
Sudhāma	Upabhōja	Tīrthavati
Bhrajīṣṭha	Nanda	Rūpavati
Lohitārṇa	Nandana	Pavitravati
Vanaspati	Sarvatobhadra	Śuklāvati

Consort of Gaṅgādevī is Varuṇa, who is the
 worshipsper of Matsyamūrti.

Whitish like the moon, around Krauñcadvīpa
 There is the sea of Curds,
 It is sixteen lakh yojanas wide,
 Thick and lovely it is to look

The sea of curd surrounds the Krauñcadvīpa; it is
 sixteen lakh yojanas wide.

Anusākadvīpa is thirty two lakh wide,
 There is a Sāka tree in it;
 Count the seven Varṣas, mountains and rivers
 Purojava, Manojava and Pavamāna,
 Ghana and Vicitrarūpa, Bahurūpa and Viśvadhāra;
 Mountains - Īśāna, Varaśṅga, Balabhadra,
 Śatakesara, Sahasrota, Devapālaṇa,
 And Mahāmaha; the seven rivers
 Amogha, Āyurdā, Ubhayasprīṣṭha, Aparājītā,
 Pañcajanā and Sahasroti, and Nijadhṛṭi;
 As elsewhere, seven rulers with names of Varṣas,
 And they worhsip the Lord of Vāyudeva;
 In regular shape encircling, the
 Milk ocean is there, similar in width,

*In its heart is the enhanting śvetadvīpa,
It shines like a cluster of gems,
The wise knowers are aware of its extent;
If Manmatha's father, Vijayaviṭṭhalarāya
Condescends, there is nothing impossible*

Description of Anuśāka (Śaka) Dvīpa-

Varṣas	Mountains	Rivers
1. Purojava	Īśāna	Amōghā (Anaghā)
2. Manojava	Varasṛṅga (Urusṛṅga)	Āyurdā
3. Pavamāna	Balabhadra	Ubhayasprṣṭā,
4. Ghanarūpa (Dhūmrāṇika)	Śatakesara	Aparājitā
5. Citrarepha	Sahasrasrotā (Pañcapadī)	Pañcajanā
6. Bahurūpa	Devapālaṇa	Sahasraśruti
7. Viśvādhāra	Mahāmaha (Mahānasa)	Nijadhṛti

The rulers and inhabitants of Śākadvīpa worship Śrī Hari, immanent in Vāyudeva. The milk ocean, surrounding it, is thirty two lakh yojanas wide; it is the same as the width of Śākadvīpa. The Milk ocean (Kṣīra Sāgara) is truly the rarest jewel within the terrestrial bounds. How, we shall learn presently. When Śrī Vijayadāsārya says that nothing is impossible if one is blessed by Śrī Hari, we may guess that he himself was so blessed and had the good fortune to visualise the things that he has described. Being an incarnation of Bhṛgu Maharṣi, it is but right for him to say so. Indeed, it was he who actually went to Śvetadvīpa in the Milk Ocean and kicked at the breast of the Lord there!

The speciality of the milk Ocean is that one of the three permanent abodes of Śrī Hari is in it. It is called Śvetadvīpa. Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya has thus described its super eminence.

In the midst of the milk ocean, twenty lakh yojanas
 In expanse is Śvetadvīpa
 Three parts in it - twelve and eight;
 Bhū, Durgā and Śrībhāgas eight lakh;
 Two seas are there - Arā and Nyā,
 Each one lakh yojanas wide,
 One lakh in Śrībhāga too; And
 Within the central twelve lakh,
 The lotus-eyed, Vijayaviṭṭhala dwells
 Joyfully in the company of Ramādevī

The milk ocean is thirty two lakh yojanas wide. In the north part of it the abode of Śrī Hari, Śveta dvīpa lies spreading over an area measuring twenty lakh yojanas long and equally wide. It has on the eastern side the Bhūbhāga-the earthly portion; on the northern side the Durgābhāga - the portion of Darkish touch. Each of these two is four lakh yojanas in width.

The middle part of Brightness Śrībhāga contains fortification surrounded by the Virajā river. Inside is the Ayodhyānagarī, right at the heart of which is the palace of Vāsudeva, Lord of Śvetavīpa. The Bhūbhāga contains the outer fortification and the Ara laka with its banks of Bhūbhāga and Śrībhāga. Similar is the Durgābhāga with its lake, Nyā.

Śvetadvīpa is similar to Vaikuṇṭha in all respects; only, measurements are different proportionately. As shown in the picture Tridhāma, the Śvetadvīpa is located upon a heap of solidified milk, one and a half lakh yojanas high. Śrī Hari's palace is at the top of a tall column of hardened milk. It is said to exceed the height of Svargaloka.

Here is a description of Lord Vāsudeva, reclining on the serpent bed (Śrī Mahālakṣmī serves as His bed).

*"The superb form of Śrī Vāsudeva is two lakh and a half
yojanas long,*

*Stretching upon the bedstead, you see;
The length of the feet thirty six thousand,
Then upto the waist it is one lakh,
The navel is eighteen thousand higher,
And the belly and the chest fifty two,
The face is twenty two thousand long;
Understanding this huge form of Vijayaviṭṭhala
Seek His refuge as the Supreme Master.*

Śrī Vāsudeva of Śvetadvīpa is reclining upon a bedstead (serpent form) which is three lakh yojanas in length. His form has the following measurements:

Length of the feet	36	thousand yojanas
From foot to waist upto the navel	100	thousand yojanas
Belly and chest	18	thousand yojanas
Face	52	thousand yojanas
Crown upon the head (to be imagined)	22	thousand yojanas

250 thousand yojanas

The great shepherd saint, Kanakadāsa, has spoken of the human frame as being one of eight cubits whereas we generally come across bodies of seven cubits. The former measure is peculiar to divine beings. Śrī Hari's form described belongs to this category. (face 22 full measure $22 \times 8 = 176$, plus neck, crown of the head and the ornamental crown - $38 +$ feet $36 = 250$ yojanas)

*The forehead is three hundred high,
Each one of the ears is one thousand,
The two eyes reach upto the ears,
Each eye-brow is two thousand inlength,
The nose itself is three hundred long;
Those who listen and know, earn merit,
This is the Original, Vijayaviṭṭhala, on serpent bed.*

The measurements of the facial parts given are not in conformity with the size of the face. However, we must remember that the words ten, hundred and thousand mean 'many' according to the Śāstras. In this way we have to reconcile.

The word 'serpent' referring to 'Śeṣa' should not be confused. It refers to the soul that occupies the post of 'Śeṣa' as is generally understood. But, strictly speaking, it refers to the Supreme Being who has the serpent form; it also refers to Mahālakṣmi in that form, serving as the bed for her spouse. But, whether it is the Śeṣa we know of or whether it is Mahālakṣmī in serpent form, Śrī Hari is also in them in the same form, only He being the original.

That Śrī Vāsudeva is lying on the serpent bed in His abode of Śvetadvīpa, need not be doubted. The words of Śrī Varadavyāsaviṭthalārya support this view. He says in his Tattvāsāra' "The bedstead is three lakh and the serpent form is the same length"

*Each arm is hundred thousand long,
And each finger, one thousand yojanas;
The ornamental pedestal is seven lakh from bottom to top,
The tower of Śrī Hari's palace rises to a height of fifty one
lakh yojanas,
The Almighty, Omnipresent Lord, our Vijayaviṭṭhala,
Has condescended to take this form on earth.*

The fingers in the palm coning down to touch the knee almost is said to be a royal feature. Such is the description. The entire figure is $2\frac{1}{2}$ lakh yojanas, and each arm is one lakh yojanas.

The tower being 51 lakh yojanas high, goes beyond Svargaloka.

The mighty Lord who is everywhere, unseen, is staying on our own earth. Only we should make ourselves eligible to see such glorious form.

Now, a description of Puṣkaradvīpa, the last of the seven.

Puṣkaradvīpa :

*The one highly blessed is Puṣkaradvīpa,
Sixty four lakh yojanas it is,
Ramaṇaka and Dhātaka, its two Varṣas
Occupying the inner half and outer half;
There is a very holy lake, in which eleven hundred
Yojanas wide, blooms a golden lotus
Birds of various kinds flock together
And play without hurting each other;
The rulers of the two Varṣas worship
Śrī Hari in Brahmā, with pure hearts.*

The ringlike Mānasottara Mountain, a huge ring nineteen crore miles in diameter, runs right in the middle of the Puṣkaradvīpa, which has a width of sixty four lakh yojanas nearly four crore miles. The Ramaṇaka Varṣa is towards its inner side and Dhātaka Varṣa towards the outer side. The rulers too bear the same names . Ramanaka and Dhātaka. In one of the lakes of the Puṣkaradvīpa, there is a lotus of gold, eleven hundred yojanas wide; and, it has ten crore petals. This is the seat of Brahmadeva on earth. The inhabitants of Puṣkaradvīpa worship Śrī Hari through Brahmā.

*There is a mountain in the middle
Manasōttara by name; it is circular;
It is ten thousand yojanas broad and the same height;
It beams with great lustre;
The sun travels over this mountain
In his chariot having but one wheel
Śrī Hari, the supreme, with His four forms,
Is present - Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa,
Pradyumna, Aniruddha, in the four directions; the gods adore
Him.*

On top of the Mānasottara mountain there are the abodes of Indra, Yama, Varuṇa and Candra in the four directions - East, South, West and North re-

spectively. Indra worships Vāsudeva, Yama worships Saṁkarṣaṇa, Varuṇa worships Pradyumna and Candra worships Aniruddha.

*“Of the Sun’s course in his chariot
you must know hereafter”*

Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya has said that he would describe the Sun’s movements later on. Unfortunately, the Sūladi bearing on that subject is not available. This topic will be dealt with in the supplement to this text, Chapter XII, basing conclusions on texts such as Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.

*And then, with the same breadth, the sweet water ocean,
Is like a very huge wristlet, quite profound;
It is sixty four lakh yojanas wide
Beyond that is the land of gold,
Its breadth is ninety six lakh,
And then is the diamond ring
Five lakh yojanas, its breadth;
That marks the limits of dame earth.*

If we consider the entire stretch of earth from end to end, it will measure seven crore, fourteen lakh and odd yojanas every way, it being a perfect circle. It is like this—

Śrī Vādirājasvāmi has defined the measure of the yojana in the following table.

7 mustard seeds	-	1 paddy seed
(Sarṣapa)		(Vrihi)
(Big seed of Kṛtayuga)		(of Kṛtayuga)
3 Vrihis	-	1 Inch (Aṅgula)
24 Aṅgulas	-	1 Hasta (Cubit)
4 Hastas (cubits)	-	1 Daṇḍa (Staff)
1000 Daṇḍas (staves)	-	1 Krośa
4 Krośas	-	1 yojana
1 Yojana	-	32000 feet or 6.06 miles

Some take the yojana to measure 8 miles or 10 miles or 12 miles or even sixteen miles according to different standards. But, in this text the measure of 6.06 miles per yojana is accepted for the following reason.

According to modern calculation, the sun is 9,30,00000 miles from our globe. The distance between the Meru Centre and the Sun's globe according to Śrī Vādirājasvāmi is $9,51,00000 \times 6.06 \times 7$ divided by $22 \times 2 = 9,50,00000$ miles.

Note : The diameter of the time wheel, upon which the sun's chariot races, is 9,51,00000 yojanas formula used $D \text{ II} \times 1/2$)

Śrī Vādirājasvāmi has divided the diameter of Brahmāṇḍa (50 crore yojanas) in the ratio of 1:2:4 and has given precise measurements of the terrestrial, the Hellish darkness and the solid water rings (Bhūbhāga, Tamobhāga and Ghanodakabhāga respectively).

	Yojana	Krosa	Daṇḍa	Hasta	Angula	Vrihi	Sarṣapa
Bhūbhāga	71428571	$1\frac{1}{2}$	214	1	3	1	2
Tamobhāga	142857142	3	428	2	6	2	4
Ghanodaka							
bhāga	285714284	6	856	4	12	4	8
	500000000	0	000	0	0	0	0

Shining with great lustre is *okāloka*,
 The mountain, adjacent to the land of gold,
 It is all round the earth like a whirl,
 Half lit by the sun, the other half, not,
 Hence is it called *Lokāloka*
 (*Loka* = seen; *Aloka* = not seen)

The mountain ring known as *Lokāloka* stands to a height of 51 lakh yojanas, so that only the inner side of it receives light from the sun and the other luminaries. The outer side is completely dark and slopes towards the pit of darkness '*Tamobhāga*'.

*The limits of earth include the seven islands and seven seas;
 Imagining always their shapes and extents; praise;
 Śrī Hari, who is in every one of them, takes care of you,
 In every one of the whorls, think of the forms of God,
 It is not a wasteful pursuit; you earn merit
 The enemy of Mura, Lord of three worlds, Vijaya
 Viṭṭhala rāya,
 Has put all these into our bodies, look!*

Knowing details about the seven islands and the seven oceans is not a purposeless job. One gets to know how Śrī Hari is in those parts of the earth aiding souls to achieve realisation, and this in turn brings devotion as well as merit.

It is very important, however, to recognise that all the elements of the seven islands and seven seas are in our own bodies along with the presence of the universal being. Śrī Abhinava Janārdana Viṭṭhala Dāsārya says,

*Know that the seven body elements are the seven seas,
 All the smaller rivers are in each of the nerve strings*

Epidermis, dermis, museles, blood, fat, nerves and bones are the seven elements of our body. All the features of the seven islands and the seven seas are in them in miniature forms. Every nerve string represents a river.

To know that our bodies are miniature universes, that they are the true temples of God and to lead clean and devoted lives is the surest way to smash our egos and to reach the Abode of Eternal Happiness.

All this has been beautifully summarised by Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya in the following lines:

*To the knower who listens to the holy account of the seven islands
 Śrī Vijayaviṭṭhala becomes a loving well-wisher.*

Chapter - XII

CREATION

Supplement

Introductory Remarks:

Our forefathers have described creation in the Purāṇic way. People of our times describe it with the new scientific outlook. These two views seem to contradict each other. This treatise, 'Śṛṣṭi Prakaraṇa' (Creation) is written for the sake of contemporary readers. Of them, only a few have the Purāṇic frame of mind. All others are admirers of the modern rational outlook. Some flaws are found in the views of both. Therefore, at the outset it is necessary to tell how the Purāṇic thinkers should develop more broad-mindedness and the moderns should become much more rational.

Modern scientific equipments are growing vastly in newer and newer ways. Not only did man set foot on the moon-land, but information is being collected about the far off planet, Saturn. It has been made possible to control space crafts by means of different light rays; facts are precisely described in mathematical terms. Just because their findings appear to contradict Purāṇic statements it is not right (clinging to the Purāṇic seat) to condemn modern scientists as false and deceitful. Purāṇic thinkers who put trust in visual evidence (Pratyakṣa) cannot but accept at least some of the findings of scientists as true.

Modern thinkers, too, must accept that there are defects in their way of thinking. However great be the intellectual ability of human beings, it cannot equal

the intellect of the Supreme Being who has created this wonderful universe. Also human ability of rational understanding, by itself, cannot probe into all the secrets of God's wonderful creation. His 'Māyā' (Power) is overwhelming. Keeping this in view, Vijayādāsārya says, 'God can sink a feather or float a rock'. This remark applies to all material concepts such as time, space and speed.

All those who have faith in the words of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam must agree that individual souls are always of three types. The story of Vena found in the seventh Skandha confirms this statement. "Jaya and Vijaya were born in association with the demons Hiranyakaśipu and Hiranyākṣa; Vena was a demon without any good association, therefore, he courted eternal hell." Thus said Nārada Mahārṣi to kind Dharmarāya. In our daily lives also we can meet with three types of souls. There are those who repent for their sins when they reap bitter consequences, and there are those that foster only evil tendencies and indulge in criminal acts. There are scientists who believe, like Einstein, that the hand of a Universal Master is perceivable behind this marvellous universe, and there are those who declare that everything in this universe is but an effect of physical factors. Therefore, the wise ones should not become a prey to deception in the name of modern science.

Gist of the argument - we should respect scientific attitude, and we should study the Purāṇas with a discerning mind.

In order to understand the meanings of Vedas we need the aid of historical epics and the Purāṇas. The events narrated in the epics and the Purāṇas are not accidental happenings. God, who is the Director of the drama of life, brings into creation the necessary characters and causes dramas to be enacted in reality; and through them He enables us to understand easily the secret meanings of Vedas and Upaniṣads. Many are

not aware of the fact that Śrī Vyāsamaharṣi had composed the Mahābhārata even before the Mahābhārata war took place. But that is a fact. From this we come to know the real purpose of Mahābhārata.

Śrī Vyāsamaharṣi has himself said that he has used three types of languages in the Purāṇas and the epics - 'Guhya' 'Darśana' and 'Samādhi'. The import of 'Guhya bhāṣā' can be understood only by proper instruction. 'Darśanabhāṣā' requires critical insight to be understood. 'Samādhibhāṣā' is easily comprehended. Those who are familiar with the first two types of bhāṣas or languages can see that all the Purāṇas mean the same thing. They can also find out if stanzas are deleted or newly added. Eventhough there may be 'guhya' and 'darśana' languages in Sattvic Purāṇas they don't come in the way of general understanding.

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is a Sāttvic Purāṇa venerated by one and all. While describing the process of Creation the Haridāśas of Karṇāṭaka have strictly followed Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. If we find any difference in the words of some Haridāśas we should reconcile them with the facts in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam; or, we may safely omit them as interpolations. The 'Suḷādis' of Śrī Vijaya Dāsārya and the 'Bhūgola Varṇanam' in Saṁskṛt by Śrī Vādirājasvāmi are in close conformity with Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.

There is another reason to say why we need not accept all that is offered by scientists as visual proof. There is a wise saying in Kannada meaning that we should inspect rationally even if something comes as a visualized fact. By means of modern scientific equipments many evidences might have been gathered to help understanding the universe. But fresh evidences might be found later to refute the older ones. This is accepted by scientists too. When such is the case, it would be soul-destructive to steer one's course of life in the light of modern scientific knowledge without

properly understanding the Vedas and their concomitants (Smṛtis) which form a veritable collection of true knowledge.

With the background so far painted, we shall now try to understand judiciously Purāṇic Geography and Astronomy.

The Fourteen Lokas:

Within the golden shell of 100 crore yojanas thickness (Brahmāṇḍa) there is space which measures fifty crore yojanas every-way. At the bottom half of it the shell water (Andodaka, or Garbhodaka) is frozen. It is said in the Purāṇas that upon the surface of this frozen water, in the middle of it there is Bhūloka (Terrestrial world) stretching over a circular area of seven crore yojanas in diameter; above it there are six upper worlds like 'Antarikṣa' and 'Svarga'; and below it are the seven lokas like 'Pātāla'. But according to the opinion of modern scholars the whole universe is filled with star galaxies lying very far from each other; in the galaxy known as the Milky way (Ākāśa Gaṅgā) our sun is an average star; among the planets that go round the sun, our earth is also a planet, round like a ball (a globe). Its diameter is about 13000 K.M. its circumference is about 40000 K.M. The most distant star from us is at least 2000 light years away - $300000 \times 60 \times 60 \times 24 \times 365.25 \times 2000$ K.M. There seems to be no end to the measurements of the universe. Some are of opinion that the universe is still expanding. But according to Einstein's opinion, it is within the confines of a circular limit. "However vast the universe you may conceive, yet it is not infinite. It is finite, elliptical and curved like our earth which gives the false impression of its infinity" (quoted by G.S. Sampath Iyengar, in his book 'Calendar').

Points to ponder over:

There may be defects and shortcomings due to natural causes in the guessing of the nature of stars

and their distances from each other, however fine the modern instruments may be. Some scientists themselves agree that the error may be upto 50% in their calculations. Scientists do not answer in definite terms when asked if they have observed galaxies towards the east or west or south as they have observed towards the north. As such, it is only a guess to say that the Milky Way is one of the galaxies and that our solar system is a part of it. It is not a confirmed fact. Charts may be prepared. Coloured pictures may be placed before us. We cannot but say that they are more the products of imagination.

What we see as stars are described in the Purāṇas as worlds of light and heavenly vehicles of divine beings. Accordingly, Śrī Varadirājasvāmi has said in his 'Bhūgola Varṇanam'.

*Madhyadharāsu Gāndharva Siddhādyāḥ puṇya karmaṇaḥ,
Bhāsvadvimāna koṭisthā ramante Śāstriaiḥ sadā.*

Upon the mid-way strips of the Kālacakra, crores of bright divine chariots of Gandharvas and others are always moving. Those merited beings spend their time happily with their wives.

*Tārārūpeṇa tadyānānyasamkhyāni bhuvi sthitaiḥ,
Narairadyāpi dṛsyante jyotiścakram tatoviduḥ.*

The countless divine vehicles appear to men on earth like stars. Hence Kālacakra, consisting of such vehicles of light, is called 'Jyotiścakra'. In addition to these there are also other divine vehicles in large numbers in and around the upper worlds like Svargaloka. Perhaps, these have been called galaxies by scientists due to illusion. To try to find out the nature of such 'light worlds' by means of modern instruments is to look at one's face in a concave or convex mirror. If the creator's illusory power is clubbed with it, all the calculations of scientists go to dogs.

Instead of trying to grow knowledge out of ignorance, it would be more profitable to organise life in a useful manner in the light of true knowledge.

If we look at some of the geographical facts recounted in the Purāṇas without the aid of modern equipments, we can understand that they have spoken only the truth based on scriptures. Let us take an example. The mid-point of the ringlike Mānasottara mountain, situated in the Puṣkaradvīpa, is 9 crore, 50 lakh miles (1.575×6.06) from the base of the Meru mountain. The course of the Sun's chariot is above the Mānasottara mountain. Therefore, the distance between the sun and our part of the earth is about 9 crore, 40 lakh miles. It is the same distance as found out by scientists.

The rim of the Kālacakra supporting the Sun's chariot has a circumference of 9 crore, 51 lakh yojanas according to purāṇas. Its radius, then, is 1.54 crore yojanas, or 9 crore, 25 lakh miles. This calculation is also correct.

Earth, the globe:

Purāṇic people say that although the vast earth may have ups and downs, it is round and flat as a whole. On the other hand, even school children in these days give the following reasons to say that the earth is a globular planet - 'Aeroplanes fly round the earth. Rockets too go round similarly and they have provided photographs of the earth by means of cameras lodged in them. Seasons occur because the earth goes round the sun with its axis inclined at $23\frac{1}{2}^\circ$. Because the Polar regions are far away from the equator, they receive the slanting rays of the sun and are snow-capped. Days and nights recur since the earth makes one rotation about its axis every twenty four hours. Foucault's Pendulum experiment has definitely proved that the earth rotates about its axis.

When the Purāṇic and the modern views are thus divergent, how can we decide the shape of the earth? There is a proverb in Telugu - "Ayyavāri māṭa mīrakūdadu; gaḍḍapāra mingarādu" (You cannot gain-

say the words of elders; at the same time you cannot swallow a crowbar). We cannot lay aside the Purāṇas and the epics which speak the eternal truths; and we cannot take in all scientific theories as truth. Such is our plight.

To put things in a nut-shell, the earth is both flat and round. As described in the Purāṇas, the earth comprising of the seven islands and seven oceans is flat and round like a rupee coin. But big lumps of earth (Khaṇḍas) in those vast ring-like islands are of different shapes. The middle-most Ilāvṛita Varṣa of Jambūdīvīpa is more or less a square, while the Ilāvṛita Khaṇḍa is like a round platform at the base of the Meru mountain. Bharata Varṣa at the southern end of Jambūdīvīpa is bow-shaped; Bharata Khaṇḍa is globular - almost like a round ball.

When Bharata Khaṇḍa is thus described, it satisfies the modern mind to some extent, but thinkers of the old school feel dissatisfied. They pick up a quarrel questioning, "where is it thus said? What is the basis to say so?" Let us answer them first.

Suppose the entire earth is only flat in general; it is improbable that the sun should appear overhead at noon while he is going round above the Mānasottara mountain at a distance of $9\frac{1}{2}$ crore miles. If only we concede that Bharata Khaṇḍa, the present known world, is like an inverted round pot, the sun appears overhead to those living in the tropical zone. This kind of answer is no escapism. It is supported by the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa.

*Vidūrabhāvādarkasya bhūmīrlekhāvṛtasya ca,
Līyante raśmayo yasmāt tena rātrau na dṛśyate;
Ucchrayasya pramāṇena jñēyamastam athodayam.*

The sun is very far from the earth. The earth is girdled by lines of longitude and latitude; because the earth resembles a pot, we can imagine 360° of longitude and 180° of latitude from pole to pole. As the sun

moves towards the western longitudes, his rays are not seen by those at the eastern longitudes, and the sun too vanishes from sight. As we go farther to the north or to the south of the equator, differences in the periods between sun-rise and sun- set are observable; days and nights become longer or shorter.

There is another objection raised by the older school. They say that the words 'Varṣa' and 'Khaṇḍa' are equivalent terms - they don't mean differently. It is true that the two words are used as equivalent terms in the Purāṇas. But in Vāyu Purāṇa we find such expression as "Kīmpuruṣa Varse, Plakṣa Khaṇḍe". It is also a well-known fact that while reciting the preliminary of 'Sandhyāvandana' we do say Bharata Varse, Bharata Khaṇḍe. Therefore we should admit that 'Varṣa' is a wider terrestrial stretch and 'Khaṇḍa' is a part of it. In the Vāyu Purāṇa (Ch.48) it is also said- "Samudrajala sambhinnam khaṇḍam khaṇḍikṛtam smṛtam" = A Khaṇḍa is a detached unit separated by the ocean from other parts.)

Now let us meet the objections of modern thinkers. The first objection is, when rockets are able to go round the earth and take its photographs, how can it be said that the earth is like an inverted pot?' Our answer - Rockets go round the earth in oblique directions; not in the north-south direction. Hence the analogy of the inverted pot cannot be ruled out. What is wrong in saying that the part of Bharata Khaṇḍa near its South Pole extends again to be connected with the other parts of Bharatavarṣa? Secondly, the photographs of the earth taken piecemeal are arranged together in the desired way to form a mosaic picture; rocket cameras have not photographed the earth as a whole, the photographs of the earth taken from the moonland are also partial, not entire; they have not shown the earth to us like a floating globe. As the proverb goes, 'one-tenth inspiration and nine-tenth perspiration', if an artist creates a picture out of the few available data provided

by the Camera, to believe it as the whole truth is also blind faith.

Let us now meet another objection based on the experiment made by Foucault, a French Scientist. It is said that his experiment has, definitely proved that the earth is rotating on its axis; as such, it is wrong to say that the earth is firm in its place. The experiment is this. A pendulum, suspended from a great height and made to swing automatically, changes its direction westward, moment after moment, and completes 360° in 24 hours. This can be only due to the fact that the earth rotates eastward on its axis. This is the modern view. But the reason for the change in direction shown by Foucault's Pendulum is quite different. That pendulum being a part of the earth's atmosphere, it cannot change direction independent of the earth's gravitational pull. It will be more reasonable to say that such change in direction occurs because of the concentric air currents created by the fast-moving 'Kālacakra'.

"If we conceive that Jambūdṽpā is a circular stretch, one lakh yojanas wide, and that Bharata Khaṇḍa is at its southern end, the moon, which is about two lakh miles from India, will be at least seven lakh miles away, from America situated on the northern side of Bharata Khaṇḍa. Therefore the moon should appear smaller to the Americans than it appears to the Indians. But it is not so; it appears the same size. How can it be? There is still another objection. It is known to scientists that small things appear bigger due to refraction of light in the atmospheric medium. Instead of thinking that the globular earth has a globular jacket of atmosphere, if we consider that the almost flat and circular Jambūdṽpā has a circular atmospheric covering above it, upto 'Antarikṣa Loka', then the moon's rays reaching America through seven lakh miles of atmosphere cause the moon appear the same size as to the Indians. Then there is also another point to remember. Although other parts of Jambūdṽpā are covered

by the layers of atmosphere, the atmospheric properties in those parts are not the same as around Bharata Khaṇḍa. The effect of refraction is there; but not exactly as it is through the atmosphere known to us. This is a guess; perhaps, it is right.

When such objections are raised and answers given, we should not forget that Śrī Vyāsa Maharṣi, who composed Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, does not belong to the ordinary class of sages. He is Śrīman Nārāyaṇa Himself. To say thus there are evidences like the following statements.

We should make efforts to understand properly the geographical and the astronomical aspects described in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and reconcile other findings with the statements found in that text. We must not contradict them.

In the eyes of the present day generation what looks highly contradictory to the Purāṇic view of Astronomy is the nature of stars and the distances between each other among them. Scientists have classified stars into six grades according to their colours and brightness. And, keeping in mind the time taken by light to travel across space at 3,00,000 K.M. per second, they have said that the sun that we see is within the galaxy known as the 'Milky way' and is an average star. They say that there are stars far bigger than our sun and that they are millions of miles apart from each other. All this is a matter of mathematical calculation and not a proved fact. As has been often remarked, there may be many flaws and defects in the calculations made by scientists, there may be unknown physical factors causing illusion. Therefore we should not revile Vedic literature depending on theoretical guesses.

One more objection still remains to be answered. "The Meru mountain stands to a height of 84 thousand Yojanas, measuring 16 thousand yojanas at its base. How can the sun or the moon be seen by Americans

with the Meru mountain standing as an obstruction?" Here is the answer. A conical mountain with a diameter of 32 thousand yojanas at the top cannot have a diameter of 16 thousand yojanas at the base above the earth, the true base point being 16 thousand yojanas underneath the earth. The diameter at the surface base is 5 thousand yojanas, not 16 thousand. Here is a description of the shape of the Meru mountain given by Śrī Vādirājasvāmi in his 'Bhūgolavarṇanam':

The golden mountain is thin at the base and goes on becoming wider and wider gradually; it is quite broad at the top. This mountain resembles the *unmatta* flower. Apart from this aspect, excepting Bharata Khaṇḍa, the Karma bhūmi all the other terrestrial regions, meant for enjoyment only, are made of finer material elements. Among these, the Meru mountain is the most wonderful. Although it is made of gold and presents four different colours in four different directions, it is still transparent like glass. In the 34th Chapter of the Vāyu Purāṇa, in stanza 37, it is said—The materials of the Meru mountain, including lakes and such other features, are invisible. Therefore, the mountain does not obstruct the sun or the moon from view; it is invisible to the human eye.

The Sun's Chariot:

The Purāṇas describe that Śrī Sūrya Nārāyaṇa goes round upon the Kālacakra sitting in a Chariot having one wheel and drawn by seven horses of seven colours named after the Vedic metres such as Gāyatrī. At first sight this description looks to be metaphorical and we are prone to think that there is no chariot or horse or driver in reality. We are aware of descriptions comparing the human body to a chariot with the sense organs and motor organs as horses, the mind as the reins, the individual soul as the driver with half-grown limbs like Aruṇa, Śrī Mukhyaprāṇa as the truly able driver and the Supreme God as the Master in the

chariot. The body is also metaphorically picturised as a boat sailing upon the turbulent ocean of life. And it looks as if the description of the sun's chariot is also metaphorical. But God's deeds are surpassingly wonderful. Truly there are the chariot and its paraphernalia, all of the stuff of light predominantly, and they also convey metaphorical significance. The sun's rays convey not only heat and light, but also propagate Vedic meanings. The horses draw the chariot and also act as presiding deities of Vedic metres.

The length, breadth, height and such other details of the sun's chariot are noted in the Purāṇas. According to Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, the length of the chariot is 36 lakh yojanas and its breadth, 9 lakh yojanas.

According to figures gathered by a devotee, Śrī Uppali Madhava Rao, from various sources, the total height of the Sun's chariot comes to 2 lakh yojanas or 1,200,000 miles. If we suppose that the sun's globe of light appears with a diameter of 1,200,000 miles, the calculation made by modern scientists and the calculation provided by the votaries of Dāsa Sāhitya come very close together. According to modern astronomers the diameter of the sun globe is 110 times bigger than that of the earth. The diameter of the earth is about 8000 miles and the diameter of the sun should be 880000 miles. The difference of about 300000 miles may be taken as the extent of the corona around the sun's globe.

According to the calculation of measurements mentioned in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, the size of the Sun's Chariot will be far too big. Its width itself will be 54 lakh miles; and its extensions at the front and the back sides will be another 54 lakh miles each. It is difficult to guess the import of these figures. Perhaps, the bigger dimensions include the Chief central part of 1200000 miles and the further extensions provided for other purposes.

While describing the wheel of the sun's chariot, it is said to consist of 'Triṇābhi', 'Ṣaṇṇemi' and 'Dvādaśāra' (containing three-fold hub, six-fold rim and twelve spokes). There is also a description of the presiding deities on each side of the wheel, sixty thousand pigmy sages named Vālakhilyas, as small as a man's thumb, in the front part of the sun's chariot, of divine beings like the Gandharvas at the rear worshipping Sūryanārāyaṇa with songs and dances, and of great devotees like Nārada maharishi around the middle part of the chariot. This description makes us think that the details given are true as well as figurative. The three-fold hub suggests the three 'Cāturmāsya' periods of the year; the six-fold rim suggests the six seasons counted by the Indians; and the twelve spokes refer to the twelve months of the year. If this metaphorical picture should be shown as something real, the wheel of the Sun's Chariot must be made and adjusted in a model of the Kālacakra to make the starting point of the wheel to touch the starting point of the Kālacakra, where it started, at the end of 360 rounds.

We actually see a circus lady mounted on a wheel with just a seat and peddles and riding upon a wheel. As such we need not feel surprised at the single wheel of the sun's chariot. That Chariot is not driven just by the agency of Aruṇa, with his undeveloped limbs. Although he is called the driver, the Chariot is actually moving by the authority of Lord Śimśumāra. A ray of force proceeding from the mouth of Śimśumāramūrti and another proceeding from the Pole Star (wind rays as they are called) keep the Sun's Chariot in position and make it go along its course. The movements of all stars and planets are also controlled in the same manner.

Although Śimśumāramūrti has taken the form of a Scorpion standing upside down above the Meru mountain, He pervades the entire system of the Time Wheel.

(Kālacakra) and the whole universe in unseen form. Thoughtful Newton, no doubt, discovered some features of the Laws of Gravitation; but though gravitation is a property of material objects, that force cannot act by itself. It is active because of the presence of Śrīśūmāramūrti in all material things. He is in 'Vāyu Kūrma' (Tortoise form of the chief of winds) beneath the fourteen worlds and He himself is Viṣṇu Kūrma supporting the Brahmāṇḍa (golden shell of the universe). It is on account of this that there is another gravitational or magnetic field created in the North-South direction. Instead of questioning the basis for such surmise it is better to think that it is possible to arrive at such conclusions only by means of the available data.

(The grace of a spiritual master gives the ability to arrive at correct meanings.)

*“Yasya deve parā bhaktiḥ yathādeve tathā gurau,
Tasyaitehya kathitahyarthaḥ prakāśante mahātmanah.”*

(To him who has as much reverence for the spiritual master as for God, hidden meanings reveal themselves.) We must give credit to the sayings cited above.

Scientists tell us that there are two kinds of magnetic fields surrounding the earth; and therefore rockets cannot fly round the earth in the North-South direction. The truth of this statement lies in the secret of the two types of gravitational force set up by Śrīśūmāramūrti as controller of the time wheel and as the supporter of the worlds in His Tortoise form. It may be possible to overcome the effect of these lines of forces by the use of specially designed mechanism. The Lord of the universe, who goes by the name 'Yugādikṛt', previously promoted the 'Mantrayuga' (age of mantras) and 'Tantrayuga' (age of secret manipulations); and now He is running the 'Yantrayuga' (the age of machinery). If it is His will, nothing is impossible.

In the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam it is said that the sun's chariot races keeping the Meru to the right, also to the left. It is said that Aruṇa looks forward as well as backward.

Suppose an ant is moving upon a potter's wheel in the same direction, when the point of the wheel where the ant started reaches the same starting position after one complete round, the ant will be far behind that point. It lags behind more and more during each round. When the ant is moving forward, the hub of the wheel is to its right, while lagging behind, the hub is to the left. In the same manner the movements of the planets like the sun are also of two kinds.

The Kālacakra (Time Wheel) covers a little more than 9 crore, 51 lakh yojanas in 24 hours. The Sun's Chariot moves on that wheel in the same direction with less velocity. For this reason the lag of the Sun's Chariot is one degree every day; it lags 30° in one month. Thus it covers each constellation of the Zodiac every month by retardation. Aruṇa, the driver controls the forward motion of the sun's Chariot keeping in view the retardation to be effected. Hence he is said to look forward as well as backward.

The velocity of the moon's Chariot exceeds the velocity of the Sun's Chariot in retardation; hence it covers each constellation in 2½ days.

The Meru is to the right of the sun or the moon in view of their forward movement; and it is to the left in view of the retrograde motion.

Śrī Vādirājasvāmi has made this point clear in his Bhūgola Varnanam.

*Lakṣocchriṭaḥ sūryarathassāruṇaḥ saptavāhanaḥ,
Kālacakra sthitān rāśīn mandam mandam vrajan kramāt;
Pṛṣṭhe pṛṣṭhe sthitam rāśīm spṛṣṇennottara gāminam,
Atō vāma gatih proktā cakradhārā sthitasya ca,
Kramaṇa Pṛṣṭha rāśīm tu māsamātre spṛṣṇedraviḥ;*

*Candraścāpi tato mandagatitvāt pṛsthasthitam;
Rāṣim sārhdhadina dvandvenaiva samspr̥ṣat kramāt
Atastvarā Pṛiṣthagatau natottara gatau vidhoḥ;*

The Moon:

Followers of the Purāṇic way of thought may understand the situation of the sun somewhat easily. But when the question of the moon comes it is very difficult to convince them. According to the Purāṇas the sun is one lakh yojanas above the earth and the moon is one lakh yojanas higher. Clinging to this statement they argue, "the moon must be above the sun. It is not right to say that the moon is two lakh miles from our earth as is opined by the modern folk. That men landed upon the moon is but a black lie". By geometrical calculation it will be found that the moon is about two lakh miles from us. It is thus - Look at the moon or the sun simultaneously from two distant places on the same latitude, with a difference of 30° - 40° longitude. Observe the angles made to the moon or the sun from the two points of observation and construct a triangle accordingly. The altitude of the triangle gives the distance between our earth and the sun or the moon. There may be some physical factors unknown to us, giving room for some illusion. Yet the geometrical observation is almost correct. To close one's eyes to such open facts in the name of Purāṇas is ridiculous.

Let us now see if reconciliation can be made with the Purāṇic statements. In Śrīmad Bhāgavatham the text runs as follows:

*Evam candramā arkagabhastibhyaḥ
Upariṣṭallakṣa yojanata upalabhyamānah.*

(Canto V. Ch. 22)

The moon is situated one lakh yojanas above the rays of the sun. Śrīmad Bhāgavatam does not say that the moon is above the sun. Even if we say that the moon's path is very near to our earth and show that

it is one lakh yojanas above the sun's rays, it will not be wrong. The Gāyatrī mantra says that the Sun's rays spread from the earth upto the Heavenly abode of Indra (Svargaloka).

*Om bhūḥ, Om bhuvāḥ, Om suvāḥ,
Tatsavituh vareṇyam bhargaḥ*

We may say that the influence of the Sun's rays even reach upto Satyaloka as seen from Praṇava Mantra.

It is also said that the path of Rāhu is 10 thousand Yojanas below that of the sun, that there are the playgrounds of Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Pretas, Piśācas and Bhūtas below Rāhu and that the atmosphere extends upto that.

*Tato, dhastāt yakṣa rakṣaḥ piśāca pretā bhūta
Gaṇānām vihārājiram antarikṣam yāvadvāyuh
Pravāti Yāvan meghā upalabhyante"*

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam Canto V, Ch. 24)

It is further said that lower still there is the earth upto 100 yojanas and strongwinged birds like swans and vultures are found flying there.

*Tato, dhastāc chata yojanānantara iyaṃ pṛthvī
yāvadd hamsa bhāsa śyena suparṇādayaḥ patatri
pravarā utpatantīti*

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam Canto V. Ch. 24)

Since we find the paths of the sun and the moon swerving to the north and to the south of the equator of our earth, it will not be right to consider the entire terrestrial stretch from Jambūdvīpa to Puṣkaradvīpa as being uniformly flat. If we take into consideration the measurements of the Sun's Chariot, the gap between its course and Rāhu's path and the rest, it will be seen that the rim of the Kālacakra supporting the Sun's chariot should be one lakh yojanas above the terrestrial level of Puṣkaradvīpa. If the height of the Sun's chariot is two lakh yojanas, the mid point of the Sun's

orb, which is almost in line with the earth's equator (Bharata Khaṇḍa in Jambūdvīpa) will be about two and a half lakh yojanas above the land of Puṣkaradvīpa. Therefore when we want to picturise the entire stretch of earth, we should understand that it slopes from Jambūdvīpa upto Puṣkaradvīpa, step by step considering Rāhumaṇḍala and other features mentioned underneath, the Salt-water ocean surrounding Jambūdvīpa must be one lakh yojanas down below. To say that the moon's path lies one lakh yojanas above the Salt-Water ocean touched by the Sun's rays, would be agreeable to the words of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and to the rational outlook. Here we must make use of the hint thrown by the Matsya Purāṇa that knotty points concerning Bhūgola and Khagola (Geographical and Astronomical questions at issue) must be resolved under shelter of logic.

When it is thus said, naturally some one may ask, "Is the moon's path a lakh of yojanas above the salt-water ocean? What is the Purāṇic basis to say so?"

In the 45th chapter of the Vāyu Purāṇa we find the following stanzas-

*Uttarāṇām Kurūṇāmtu pārśve jñēyantu dakṣine,
Samudram ūrmimālāḍhyam nānā svava vibhūṣitam;
Candradvīpam iti khyātam Candramaṇḍala samsthitam,
Sahasra yojanānām tu sarvataḥ parimaṇḍalam.*

Candradvīpa is within the bounds of the moon's path. As there is Bharata Khaṇḍa to the south of Jambūdvīpa, Uttarakuru Khaṇḍa is to the north. To its west, a little to the south is the Candradvīpa in the midst of the Salt-Water ocean. Therefore it is but right to say that the moon's path is above the Salt-water ocean, about two lakh miles from Bharata Khaṇḍa. This agrees with the finding by the geometrical method.

Those of the older school have to bear another point in mind. Instead of actually counting the heights of the planets one above the other, it would be proper also to take into account the controlling points in the body of the Śimśumāra form of the Lord. For example, the Sun's chariot is controlled by the mouth and the moon by the 'Manas' (Heart) since Śimśumāramūrti standing head down, tail up, the heart is above the head by one lakh yojanas. This control point is also known as Candra Maṇḍala as seen from Śrīmad Bhāgavatam when the Descent of Gaṅgā is described. (V-17-4)

*Tatoneka sahasra koṭi vimānānīka
Samkula devayānenāvatarantīndu
Maṇḍalamāvarya Brahmasadane nipatati.*

Having watered the Saptarṣimandala the holy Gaṅgā, covered the Candramaṇḍala and then descended to the top of Meru mountain where there is an abode of Brahmā.

If the moon were above the Sun; this description looks ridiculous.

Hence we have to cleverly reconcile well-known facts with Purāṇic words.

The chariot of the moon is said to have three wheels and ten white horses. We may guess that there are two wheels causing the full-moon and The new-moon phases and a third regulating the retardation necessary to cover the constellations. Since the sun's rays of seven colours unite to form the white rays, it is said in the Vedas that one horse is designated by seven names – Moon's light is derived from the sun in the form of white rays reflected. Therefore it is represented as ten horses having domain over properties of water, growth of plants human psychology, etc. The presiding deities of the above factors are in the forms of horses attending to concrete and abstract functions.

As such, it need not be called repetition if it is said that such descriptions are both figurative and substantial.

Any one can easily observe at nights how the moon changes her path during every dark phase and bright phase to the south and to the north. As the northern course of the sun is day and the southern course night for the divine beings (six months each), the moon's northern course during the bright phase is day for the deities of the moon sphere and the southern course during the dark phase is night for them. Conversely, the fortnight of the dark phase is day for the 'pitrs' (Parental deities) and that of the bright phase is night. Full-moon day is auspicious for the deities of moonland; new-moon day is auspicious for the 'Pitrs'.

The cause for variation in the moon's brightness during the two phases is explained in a particular way by modern astronomers. However, we can show by diagram that the variations occur because the sun's lagging in the constellations is slower and that of the moon is quicker. During a period of two weeks when the sun has covered 15° degree of a particular constellation, the moon will have reached the constellation right in the opposite direction. Then it is full-moon. At the end of the next fortnight the sun and the moon will be at the same constellation. Then it is new-moon. The increase or decrease in the moon's brightness occurs gradually during the successive fortnights.

Extension of the Orbits:

*Yadadas taraṇer maṇḍalam pratapatas tadvistārato
Yojanāyutamācakṣate dvādaśa sāhasram
somasya trayodaśasahasram rāhoḥ.*

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam Canto V. Ch. 243)

Commentators have opined that 'dvādaśa' may be taken to mean 'dvidaśa' and 'trayodaśa' to mean 'tridasa'. Basing their concepts on this provision and the words of other Purāṇas, many say that the orb of the sun is ten thousand yojanas wide, the orb of the

moon is twenty thousand yojanas and that of Rāhu, thirty thousand yojanas. Some say that Rāhumaṇḍala is 40,000 yojanas. But all this is contrary to visual proof.

Therefore this aspect must be comprehended with a different meaning. The word 'maṇḍala' has two meanings globe and circle (orb and orbit). By sūryamaṇḍala we mean the Sun's orb as well as the orbit of the sun above the circular Mānasottara mountain. Similarly by Candramaṇḍala we mean the moon's orb as well as the moon's orbit around the Meru mountain. The part of Antariksaloka encompassed by the orbit and the point of control in the body of Śimśumāramūrti must also be considered as meaning 'maṇḍala'. The whole sky under the umbrella shape formed from the mouth of Śimśumāramūrti upto the moon's orbit is 'Candramaṇḍala'. There is good reason for this interpretation. While describing the descent of Gaṅgā that came down from the crevice in Brahmaṇḍa caused by the touch of Lord Trivikrama's great toe of the left foot, Srimad Bhagavatham (V. 17.4) says,

Tato' neka sahasrakoṭi vimānānīka saṅkula devayānena avatarantīndumaṇḍalamāvārya Brahmasadane nipatati.

The moon's orb is at a lower level than that of the Meru top. When it is said that the flow of Gaṅgā reached Candramaṇḍala and then came down to Brahmā's abode atop the Meru mountain, it must be understood that it touched the region of Śimśumāramūrti's heart and covered the sky down to the top of that mountain. This description also proves that the moon's orb is not above that of the sun. If the two were one above the other, the flow of Gaṅgā should have deviated its path horizontally to reach the moon about ten crore miles away from the Meru and then returned to reach Brahmā's abode.

We shall now consider how the orbits are relatively bigger. In the 53rd chapter of Vāyu Purāṇa it is said-

*Dakṣiṇāyana mārgastho yadā bhavati raśmivān
Tadā sarva grahāṇām saḥ suryodhastāt prasarpati
Vistirṇam maṇḍalam kṛtvā tasyordhvam carate śāśī* (95-96).

During the southern course of the sun, when he is to the south of the equator, the sun's path is below that of every other planet. The moon extends his orbit during that period and keeps company with the sun in the matter of rising and setting. 'Tasyordhvam' does not mean above the sun. It means, 'upon the extended path! In this context we should take into account the width of the orbit in the north-south direction with reference to the word 'maṇḍala' we know that the bangles worn by women-folk may be thin like a wire or wide like a broad strip. In the same manner we should consider Sūryamaṇḍala or Candramaṇḍala. The side width of the Sun's orbit is equal to the diameter of the sun's orb. Then, when we speak of the extension of the orb, it means that the sun's path extends 10 thousand yojanas to the north or 10 thousand yojanas to the south. The time wheel rises up for six months and goes down for six months by the influence of Śiṃsumāramūrti. This fact is stated in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam thus:

*Yanmadhya gato bhagavānstapatāmpatis
Tapana ātapena triloḱim pratapatyava bhā
sayatyātma bhāsā sa eṣa udagayana
dakṣiṇāyana vaiṣuvata samjābhir māṇḍya
śaighryā samānābhir gatibhiḥ arohaṇāvaro
haṇa samāna sthāneṣu yathāsavanam abhipadyamāno
makarādiṣu rāśiṣvaho rātrāṇi dīrgha hrasva samānāni vīdhatte.*

Canto V Ch. 21

The glorious sun god, who is in between the two hemispheres of the Brahmāṇḍa, and who is the Lord of all the bright worlds, gives heat to all the three worlds and brightens them by his own light. This sun, having three courses, viz. Uttarāyana, Dakṣiṇāyana and Viṣuvadāyana (equatorial path) and moving with quick, slow or mean velocities, appearing in the upper,

the lower or the middle courses, according to seasons, goes through the constellations like Makara and makes the days and nights longer or shorter or even.

From the above description it must be now clear that Bharata Khaṇḍa is globular like an inverted pot. Because the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn, lying to the north and to the south of the equator, are smaller than the equator in circumference, the sun rises earlier and sets later for those in the northern hemisphere during the northern course (uttarāyana) when the days are longer and nights shorter. At the same time days are shorter and nights are longer for those in the southern hemisphere. The effect is reversed during the southern course of the sun.

Here we may also note down that the northern and the southern courses of the sun are due to the raising and lowering of the time wheel and not due to the earth going round the sun with inclined axis as proposed by Kepler.

As the rim of the Time wheel, supporting the sun's chariot, goes up or goes down ten thousand yojanas each way, the rim supporting the moon's chariot goes up or goes down twenty thousand yojanas each way; and that of Rāhu, forty thousand yojanas up or down. On account of this arrangement eclipses take place when the sun, the moon and Rāhu (including ketu) are at the same constellation, close to each other.

ECLIPSES:

School children of these days tell us that Lunar Eclipse occurs when the earth comes between the Sun and the moon, and Solar Eclipse takes place when the moon comes between the earth and the sun. They even make figures as found in their books and place before us. Similarly the Indian Almanac framers follow the Helio Centric Theory of modern astronomers to say that the sun is the centre of the planetary system. They say that the earth is a planet and do not include Rāhu

or Ketu in this system. In line with the modern thinkers, they say that Rāhu and Ketu are only nodes that seem to form by the apparent intersection of the orbits of the sun and the moon. Yet, strangely enough, they give places to Rāhu and Ketu in the 'Navagraha Worship' (Worship of the nine planetary deities) and keep idols of Rāhu and Ketu in the Navagraha Temples.

Therefore it is clear that our Almanac framers have been caught in the whirlpool of modern astronomy, though unwilling to give up the ancient system. They are struggling because they have not been able to point out Rāhu and Ketu as planets.

If it be so, one may ask, how do the Almanac Framers arrive at precise calculations? Whether we say that the earth goes round the sun or that the sun goes round the earth, there will be no difference in calculations. Śrī Arka Somayaji, the author of Jyotir Vijnānam (Sampūrṇānanda Granthamālā) says that this is a fact.

*Ravim parito bhramati bhūrnāvina paddhatyā,
Asmāsu bhū pṛṣṭhe vartamāneṣu bhūmim sthirām
Prakalpya ravireva bhramati iti vaktum śakyate.*

(According to modern Astronomy the earth goes round the sun. We, living on earth, may consider the earth as fixed and we may say that the sun goes round the earth.)

Rāhu, the Son of his demon mother Simhikā, is a planet with the lion's head. A hundred serpent-like tails, attached behind Rāhu, go by the name Ketu. The course of these two united planets is upon the lowest rim of the time wheel, ten thousand yojanas below the sun's path.

*Kālacakrādi dhārāyām rāhormaṇḍalamīritam,
Tatraiva ketu śatakam rāhuṇā saha tiṣṭhati.
(Bhūgola Varṇanam of Śrī Vādirājasvāmī)*

Rāhu is a black coloured planet, he throws a jet of black shadow. Ketu is a brown planet, throws a brown jet.

*Svarbhānostu tathaiāvāśvāh kṛṣṇāhyaṣṭau manojavāh,
Ratham tamomayam tasya 80
Atha ketu rathasyāśva palāla dhūma samkāsāh (82)
Vāyupurāṇa - ch. 52.*

The sun's orb or the moon's orb observed during an eclipse may sometimes look blackish and some times brownish. This may be varified. When the eclipsed part looks black, it is the eclipse caused by Rāhu; when it is brown, it is caused by Ketu. These shadows do not affect the sun or the moon actually. Because the black or the brown jets intercept the rays coming towards us, it looks as though shadows have fallen on the Sun or the Moon. Therefore it is said that Rāhu or Ketu swallows the sun or the moon. But the shadows do fall on the earth.

Right at the moment, when the nodes are said to be formed according to modern astronomers, the sun, the moon and Rāhu come together in about the same longitudes of particular constellations of the Zodaic, they don't actually obstruct each other.

*Yadaika rāśau yogassyāt tadāhurgrahaṇam budhāh;
Adhovāpyūrdhvadeśevā rāseḥ sāmyena yā gatiḥ
Saeva yogaḥ sarveśām natvekatra saha sthitiḥ,
Ūrdhvādho gāminām teṣām kathamekatra saṅgamaḥ.
(Bhūgola varnanam of Sri Vadiraja svami)*

(Learned people say that an eclipse takes place when the sun, the moon and Rāhu meet together in the direction of a particular constellation. Either above or below, their appearance in the compass of a particular constellation is said to be their coming together, not their being in a horizontal line with the same longitude. How can they be in the same line when their paths lie above or below?)

If we ask a good modern astronomer to say whether the sun, the moon and the earth lie in a straight line at the time of eclipse, they say that it is not so; they appear to be in a line due to the effect of parallax.

The rays of the sun and the moon enter into our nervous systems through our skins (direct rays or their pervasive effects) and healthy influences on the functions of our organs. At the time of an eclipse this healthy influence is cut off; also, the evil effects caused by Rāhu or Ketu are there. Therefore, during the period of an eclipse, if we bathe and chant mantras and do such other things to please the gods, they will save us from the evil effects of the eclipse. To free the sun or the moon from the clutches of Rāhu or Ketu only means freeing ourselves from the evil effects. It is like saying, 'Let the Lord be victorious', which means, 'Let him help us to be victorious'.

Jambūdvīpa:

Śrī Vādirājasvāmi has said,

Idam lokātmakam padmam ghanodāmbujavad babhau.

(This lotus - form of the worlds has come up like a lotus from the water frozen at the bottom in Brahmāṇḍa)

Therefore, when we want to get a picture of the worlds, we should think of a lotus or a cluster of lotus flowers, variously arranged.

We may say that the shape of Jambūdvīpa is somewhat like a shallow basin because, the rim of the basin, called Jambūdvīpa, is high enough to prevent the light coming from the sun, the moon and the low-lying stars from reaching the middle parts of the island.

Madhyamam yanmayā proktam nāmnā varṣam ilāvṛtam,

Na tatra sūryastapati naca jiryanti mānavāḥ.

Candrasūryau ṣa nakṣatrā vaprakāśā vilāvṛte.

(Vāyu Purāṇa Ch. 46.)

(In the *Īlāvṛta Varṣa*, stretching around the Meru Mountain in the middle of *Jambūdvīpa*, sun's heat is not experienced. The people of that region do not grow old. The moon, the sun and the stars do not shed their light upon the *Īlāvṛta Varṣa*.)

Although *Jambūdvīpa* is basin like on the whole, the physical features of its nine *varṣas*, are varied on account of mountains and river valleys. The six *varṣas* (sub-divisions of the island) to the north and to the south are bow-shaped, each measuring 9000 *yojanas* north - south. The *Bhadrāsva* and the *Ketumālavarṣas* are on the eastern and the western sides of the island, each *varṣa* being 33 thousand *yojanas* wide. But, says *Śrī Vadirājasvāmi*, the sage of God-Vision, that each of these *varṣas* has two mountains such that the symmetrical shape of the island may not be spoiled.

*Ekasminnapi varshesmin dvaugire nirmitau kramāt;
Caturdikṣu ca sāmīyāya praciṣyām caivameva hi.
Ata ekopi varṣoyam tredhāsīyāt khaṇḍitodribhīh;
Sarva bhāgepi sāmīyāya navatvam ca na hanyate.*

This being the case, in each of the two *varṣas* - *Bhadrāsva* and *Ketumāla*, excepting the space occupied by the three ranges of mountains each two thousand *yojanas* wide, there will be three stretches of land left, each nine thousand *yojanas* in width.

If thus we conceive the basin shape of *Jambūdvīpa*, a doubt arises that the *Gaṅgā* waters coming down from the Meru mountain must collect in *Īlāvṛta varṣa* instead of reaching the salt-water ocean surrounding *Jambūdvīpa*. But, the *Gaṅgā* waters do not descend from the top of Meru mountain like torrential water falls, they descend in vaporous form and move from one mountain top to the other to run down like rivers in the plains of the *varṣas*. (*Bhūgola varṇanam* of *Vādirājasvāmi*).

As the rivers flow they cut through the hills and mountains to form gorges and they finally reach the salt-water ocean. (Vāyu Purāṇa. Ch. 42)

Bharata Varṣa, Bharata Khaṇḍa and Bhārata Deśa:

Bharata Varṣa, the 'Karma Bhūmi' (land of fruitive actions), is the most important region in the whole universe. While describing this varṣa, the Purāṇas have given enigmatic accounts making us almost helpless. It is difficult to guess the reasons for such misleading accounts.

A general statement is made that the width of Bharata Varṣa is nine thousand yojanas from the salt-water ocean to the Himālayas, its northern limit. But, all the mountains and rivers said to exist in Bharata Varṣa are only those found in Bharata Deśa (India). Let alone this oddity. In the Vāyu Purāṇa, chapter 45, it is said that the extent of Bharata Varṣa is from Kanyākumāri (Cape Comerin) to the Himālayas where river Gaṅgā takes its birth.

The extent of the varṣa, then, will be only 2000 miles instead of nine thousand yojanas or 54 thousand miles. Then again it is also said that this island is one thousand yojanas from south to north; which comes to 6000 miles. It looks strange when further it is said that Bharata Varṣa has nine islands and ours is the middle one of them.

Bhāratasyāsyā varṣasya navabhedāḥ Prakīrtitāḥ;
 Samudrāntarita jñeyā stē tvagamyaḥ parasparam,
 Indradvīpaḥ Kaseruśca tāmravarṇī gabhastimān;
 Nāgadvīpastathā saumyo gandharvastvathā vāruṇaḥ;
 Āyam tu navamasteṣām dvīpaḥ sāgara samvṛtaḥ.

(Vāyu Purāṇa - Ch. 45)

Having said such contradictory things, it is said again that the width of Bharata Varṣha is 9000 yojanas.

“Tiryaguttara Vistīrṇaḥ sahasrāṇi navaiva tu”

Matsya Purāṇa gives the same account.

Yojanānām sahasram tu dvīpo' yam dakṣiṇottaram;
Āyatastva kumārībhyō gaṅgāyāḥ prabhavava dhiḥ
Tiryagūrdhvam tu vistīrṇo sahasrāṇi navaiva tu.

(ch. 113)

With judicious interpretation we can solve the riddle created by the above descriptions. The entire stretch of Bharata Varṣa is nine thousand yojanas from the salt-water ocean to the Himālayas forming the border between Bharata Varṣa and Kimpuruṣa Varṣa. The land area of Bharata Khaṇḍa on our side is one thousand yojanas or 6000 miles from Cape Comerin to the Arctic ocean. The most important part of Bharata Varṣa, the Bhārata Deśa, spreads, only from Cape Comerin to the Himālayas with which we are familiar.

The Khaṇḍa or isolated lump of earth is surrounded by oceans indicates that land masses of Bharata Khaṇḍa are surrounded by the pacific ocean, the Atlantic ocean and the Indian Ocean. It is therefore that the Khaṇḍas like Indradvīpa and the rest have no intercommunication.

It is only Bhāratadeśa (India) which is meant for washing off sins and earning merit by means of sacrifices and penances, and to acquire spiritual knowledge, habit of detachment and devotion to god. For this reason Śrīmad Bhāgavatam gives a description of the hills, rivers and holy places of only Bhārata Deśa and tells that persons who have earned great merit get the chance of being born in this country.

Aho amiṣām kimakāri śobhanam,
Prasanna eṣām svidutassvayam Hariḥ;

Yairjanma labdham nṛṣu bhāratājire;
 Mukunda sevaupayikam sprhā hi naḥ
 Kalpāyuṣām sthāna jayāt punarbhavāt,
 Kṣaṇāyuṣām bhārata bhūjayo varam;
 Kṣaṇena martyena kṛtam manasvinaḥ
 Samnyasya samyāntyabhayam padam Hareḥ
 Prāptā nrjātim tviha ye ca jantavo
 Jñāna kriyā dravya kalāpa sambhṛtam;
 Na vai yateran na punar bhavāya te,
 Bhūyo vanaunkā iva yānti bandhanam.

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatām V - 19)

(Denizens of heavenly regions say thus. Those human beings who are born in that Bhārata Deśa, where we aspire to be born, must have earned very great merit or, Śrī Hari must have Himself showered His grace upon them. Being born in Bhārata Deśa is beneficial to serve the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha which only is the acme of a purposefull life.

It is better to live in Bhārata Deśa for just a while rather than to spend long long periods equal to 'Manu Kalpas' in the higher regions of happinesses. By dedicating the wisely done deeds to Śrī Hari in this land, one can achieve salvation in the minimum span of time.

Those, who are born in Bhārata Deśa, which is conducive for the performance of sacrifices and for gaining spiritual knowledge, will be caught once again in the net of worldly life if they do not endeavour to gain the 'Permanent Abode of Liberated Life' (Vaikuṅṭha Padavi)

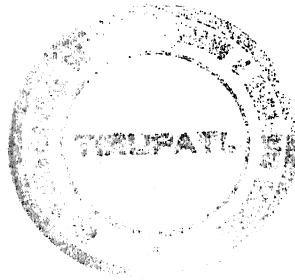
Living beings, wherever they may be found in the universe, certainly commit sins or do good deeds. They must necessarily eat the fruits of such deeds. Jaya and Vijaya, the gatekeepers of Vaikuṅṭha, are in evidence of this truth. It is not such deeds that cause Bharata Varṣa to be called 'Karma Bhūmi'. One is fully rewarded for his meritorious acts of wisdom in the form of sacrifices and duties prescribed for castes and stages

of life, if performed in Bharata Varṣa, especially in Bhārata Deśa, which is most congenial. Hence, those born in this land are the highly merited ones.

The performance of prescribed duties was of importance in the previous ages (yugas) ; but any activity which is sanctified by spiritual knowledge is what is prescribed for this age of democracy. Let the citizens and the domiciles of Bhārata, who are the owners of the rich mines of true knowledge, make use of such knowledge in their lives and disseminate the seeds of enlightenment through out the world to serve humanity in the right manner. Let everyone enjoy the Blessing of the Almighty Lord, Śrī Hari, the spouse of Śrī Devī.

V. BADARAYANA MURTHY

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