

THE VIṢṆU-PURĀṆAM

BOOK I

प्रथमांशः

CHAPTER 1

॥ प्रथमोऽध्यायः ॥

(मङ्गलाचरणम्, पराशरं प्रति मैत्रेयस्य प्रश्नः,

पराशरस्योत्तरदानञ्च)

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय।

जितं ते पुण्डरीकाक्ष नमस्ते विश्वभावना

नमस्तेऽस्तु हृषीकेश महापुरुष पूर्वज॥ १॥

OM ! glory to Vāsudeva¹— Victory be to you, Puṇḍarikākṣa, adoration be to you, Viśvabhāvana; glory be to you, Hṛṣīkeśa, Mahāpuruṣa, and Pūrvaja².

सदक्षरं ब्रह्म य ईश्वरः पुमान्

गुणोर्मिसृष्टि-स्थिति-काल-संलयः।

प्रधान-बुद्ध्यादि-जगत्-प्रपञ्च सूः

स नोऽस्तु विष्णुर्मति-भूति-मुक्तिदः॥ २॥

May that Viṣṇu, who is the existent, imperishable, Brahmā, who is Iśvara,³ who is spirit;⁴ who with the three qualities⁵ is the cause of creation, preservation, and destruction; who is the parent of nature, intellect, and the other ingredients of the universe⁶; be to us the bestrew of understanding, wealth and final emancipation.

प्रणम्य विष्णुं विश्वेशं ब्रह्मादीन् प्रणिपत्य च।

गुरुं प्रणम्य वक्ष्यामि पुराणं वेदसम्मितम्॥ ३॥

इतिहासपुराणज्ञं वेदवेदाङ्गधारणम्।

धर्मशास्त्रादितत्त्वज्ञं वसिष्ठतनयात्मजम्॥ ४॥

पराशरं मुनिवरं कृतपूर्वाह्निकक्रियम्।

मैत्रेयः परिपप्रच्छ प्रणिपत्याभिवाद्य च॥ ५॥

Having adored Viṣṇu⁷, the lord of all, and paid reverence to Brahmā and the rest⁸; having also saluted the spiritual preceptor, I will narrate a Purāṇa equal in sanctity to the Vedas, Maitreya,¹⁰ having saluted him reverentially,

thus addressed Parāśara, the excellent sage, the grandson of Vasiṣṭha, who was versed in traditional history and the Purāṇas; who was acquainted with the Vedas and the branches of science dependent upon them; and skilled in law and philosophy; and who had performed the morning rites of devotion.

मैत्रेय उवाच

त्वत्तो हि वेदाध्ययनमधीतमखिलं गुरो।

धर्मशास्त्राणि सर्वाणि वेदाङ्गानि यथाक्रमम्॥ ६॥

त्वत्प्रसादान्मुनिश्रेष्ठ मामन्ये नाकृतश्रमम्।

वक्ष्यन्ते सर्वशास्त्रेषु प्रायशो येऽपि विद्विषः॥ ७॥

सोऽहमिच्छामि धर्मज्ञः श्रोतुं त्वत्तो यथा जगत्।

बभूव भूयश्च यथा महाभाग भविष्यति॥ ८॥

यन्मयञ्च जगद् ब्रह्मन् यतश्चैतच्चराचरम्।

लीनमासीद् यथा यत्र लयमेष्यति यत्र च॥ ९॥

यत्प्रमाणानि भूतानि देवादीनाञ्च सम्भवम्।

समुद्र-पर्वतानां च संस्थानञ्च तथा भुवः॥ १०॥

सूर्यादीनाञ्च संस्थानं प्रमाणं मुनिसत्तम।

Maitreya said— Master! I have been instructed by you in the whole of the Vedas, and in the institutes of law and of sacred science; through your favour, other men, even though they be my foes, cannot accuse me of having been remiss in the acquirement of knowledge. I am now desirous, oh you who are profound in piety! to hear from you, how this world was, and how in future it will be? What is its substance, oh Brahman, and whence proceeded animate and inanimate things? Into what has it been resolved, and into what will its dissolution again occur? How were the elements manifested? Whence proceeded the gods and other beings? What are the situation and extent of the oceans and the mountains, the earth, the sun, and the planets?

देवादीनां तथा वंशान् मनून् मन्वन्तराणि च॥ ११॥
 कल्पान् कल्पविकल्पांश्च चतुर्युगविकल्पितान्।
 कल्पान्तस्य स्वरूपञ्च युगधर्मांश्च कृत्स्नशः॥ १२॥
 देवर्षिपार्थिवानाञ्च चरितं यन्महामुने।
 वेदशाखाप्रणयनं यथावद् व्यासकर्तृकम्॥ १३॥
 धर्मांश्च ब्राह्मणादीनां तथा चाश्रमवासिनाम्।
 श्रोतुमिच्छाम्यहं सर्वं त्वत्तो वाशिष्ठनन्दन॥ १४॥
 ब्रह्मन् प्रसादप्रवणं कुरुष्व मयि मानसम्।
 येनाहमेतज्जानीयां त्वत्प्रसादान्महामुने॥ १५॥

What are the families of the gods and others, the Manus, the period, called Manvantaras, those termed Kalpas, and their sub-divisions, and the four ages: the events that happen at the close of a Kalpa, and the terminations of the several ages¹¹: the histories, oh great Muni of the gods, the sages, and kings; and how the Vedas were divided into branches (or schools), after they had been arranged by Vyāsa; the duties of the Brāhmaṇas, and the other tribes, as well as of those who pass through the different orders of life? All these things I wish to hear from you, grandson of Vasiṣṭha. Incline your thoughts benevolently towards me, that I may, through your favour, be informed of all I desire to know.

पराशर उवाच

साधु मैत्रेय धर्मज्ञ स्मारितोऽस्मि पुरातनम्।
 पितुः पिता मे भगवान् वसिष्ठो यदुवाच ह॥ १६॥
 विश्वामित्रप्रयुक्तेन रक्षता भक्षितो मया।
 श्रुतस्तातस्ततः क्रोधो मैत्रेयासीन्ममातुलः॥ १७॥
 ततोऽहं रक्षसां सत्रं विनाशाय समारभम्।
 भस्मीकृताश्च शतशस्तस्मिन् सत्रे निशाचराः॥ १८॥
 ततः संक्षीयमाणेषु तेषु रक्षः स्वशेषतः।
 मामुवाच महाभागो वसिष्ठो मत्पितामहः॥ १९॥
 अलमत्यन्तकोपेन तात मन्युमिमं जहि।
 राक्षसा नापराध्यन्ते पितुस्ते विहितं तया॥ २०॥
 मूढानामेष भवति क्रोधो ज्ञानवतां कुतः।
 हन्यते तात कः केन यतः स्वकृतभुक् पुमान्॥ २१॥

संचितस्यापि महतो वत्स क्लेशेन मानवैः।
 यशसस्तपसश्चैव क्रोधो नाशकरः परः॥ २२॥
 स्वर्गापवर्गव्यासेधकारणं परमर्षयः।
 वर्जयन्ति सदा क्रोधं तात मा तद्वशो भव॥ २३॥
 अलं निशाचरैर्दग्धैर्दीनैरनपकारिभिः।
 सत्रं ते विरमत्वेतत् क्षमासारा हि साधवः॥ २४॥

Parāśara replied— Well inquired, pious Maitreya, You recall to my recollection that which was of old narrated by my father's father, Vasiṣṭha, I had heard that my father had been devoured by a Rākṣasa employed by Viśvāmītra: violent anger seized me, and I commenced a sacrifice for the destruction of the Rākṣasas: hundreds of them were reduced to ashes by the rite, when, as they- were about to be entirely extirpated, my grandfather Vasiṣṭha thus spoke to me: Enough, my child; let your wrath be appeased : the Rākṣasas are not culpable: your father's death was the work of destiny. Anger is the passion of fools; it becomes not a wise man. By whom. It may be asked, is any one killed? Every man reaps the consequences of his own acts. Anger, my son, is the destruction of all that man obtains by arduous exertions, of fame, and of devout austerities; and prevents the attainment of heaven or of emancipation. The chief sages always shun wrath: be not you, my child, subject to its influence. Let no more of these unoffending spirits of darkness be consumed. Mercy is the might of the righteous¹²

एवं तातेन तेनाहमनुनीतो महात्मना।
 उपसंहतवान् सत्रं सद्यस्तद्वाक्यगौरवात्॥ २५॥
 ततः प्रीतः स भगवान् वसिष्ठो मुनिसत्तमः।
 सम्प्राप्तश्च तदा पुत्र पुलस्त्यो ब्रह्मणः सुतः॥ २६॥
 पितामहेन दत्तार्घ्यः कृतासनपरिग्रहः।
 मामुवाच महाभागो मैत्रेय पुलहाग्रजः॥ २७॥
 वैरे महति यद्वाक्याद् गुरोरस्याश्रिता क्षमा।
 त्वया तस्मात्समस्तानि भवान् शास्त्राणि वेत्स्यति॥ २८॥
 सन्ततेर्न ममोच्छेदः क्रुद्धेनापि यतः कृतः।
 त्वया तस्मान्महाभाग ददाम्यन्यं महावरम्॥ २९॥

पुराणसंहिताकर्ता भवान् वत्स भविष्यति।
 देवतापारमार्थञ्च यथावद् वेत्स्यते भवान्॥ ३०॥
 प्रवृत्ते च निवृत्ते च कर्मण्यस्तमला मतिः।
 मत्प्रसादादसन्दिग्धा तव वत्स भविष्यति॥ ३१॥
 ततश्च भगवान् प्राह वसिष्ठो मत्पितामहः।
 पुलस्त्येन यदुक्तं ते सर्वमेतद् भविष्यति॥ ३२॥

Being thus admonished by my venerable grandsire, I immediately desisted from the rite, in obedience to his injunctions, and Vasiṣṭha, the most excellent of sages, was connect with me. Then arrived Pulastya, the son of Brahmā,¹³ who was received by my grandfather with the customary marks of respect. The illustrious brother of Pulaha said to me: Since, in the violence of animosity, you have listened to the words of your progenitor, and have exercised clemency, therefore you shall become learned in every science: since you have forborne, even though incensed, to destroy my posterity, I will bestow upon you another boon, and you shall become the author of a summary of the Purāṇas;¹⁴ you shall know the true nature of the deities, as it really is; and, whether engaged in religious rites, or abstaining from their performance,¹⁵ your understanding, through my favour, shall be perfect, and exempt from doubts. Then my grandsire Vasiṣṭha added: Whatever has been said to you by Pulastya, shall assuredly come to pass.

इति पूर्वं वसिष्ठेन पुलस्त्येन च धीमता।
 यदुक्तं तत् स्मृतिं यातं त्वत्तत्प्रश्नाखिलं मम॥ ३३॥
 सोऽहं वदाम्यशेषं ते मैत्रेय परिपृच्छते।
 पुराणसंहितां सम्यक् तां निबोध यथायथम्॥ ३४॥
 विष्णोः सकाशात् सम्भूतं जगत् तत्रैव संस्थितम्।
 स्थिति-संयमकर्ताऽसौ जगतोऽस्य जगच्च सः॥ ३५॥
 इति श्रीविष्णुपुराणे प्रथमांशे प्रथमोऽध्यायः॥ १॥

Now truly all that was told me formerly by Vasiṣṭha, and by the wise Pulastya, has been brought to my recollection by your questions, and I will relate to you the whole, even all you have asked. Listen to the complete

compendium of the Purāṇas, according to its tenor. The world was produced from Viṣṇu : it exists in him: he is the cause of its continuance and cessation: he is the world.¹⁶

NOTES

1. ओम् नमो वासुदेवाय An address of this kind, to one or other Hindu divinity, usually introduces Sanskrit compositions, especially those considered sacred. The first term of this mantra or brief prayer, Om or Omkāra, is well known as a combination of letters invested by Hindu mysticism with peculiar sanctity, In the Vedas it is said to comprehend all the gods; and in the Purāṇas it is directed to be prefixed to all such formulae as that of the text. Thus in the Uttara Khaṇḍa of the Padma Purāṇa: 'The syllable Om, the mysterious name, or Brahmā, is the leader of all prayers: let it therefore, O lovely-faced, (Śiva addresses Durgā,) be employed in the beginning of all prayers:' ओङ्कारः प्रणवो ब्रह्म सर्वमन्त्रेषु नायकः। आदौ सर्वत्र युञ्जीत मन्त्राणां च शुभानने॥ According to the same authority, one of the mystical imports of the term is the collective enunciation of Viṣṇu expressed by A, of Śrī his bride intimated by u, and of their joint worshipper designated by M. A whole chapter of the Vāyu Purāṇa is devoted to this term. A text of the Vedas is there cited: ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म। 'Om, the monosyllable Brahmā;' the latter meaning either the Supreme Being or the Vedas collectively, of which this monosyllable is the type. It is also said to typify the three spheres of the world, the three holy fires, the three steps of Viṣṇu etc. ओमित्येव त्रयो वेदास्त्रयो लोकास्त्रयोऽग्नयः। विष्णुक्रमास्त्वेते॥ Frequent meditation upon it, and repetition of it, ensure release from worldly existence, इत्येतदक्षरं ब्रह्म परमोकारसंहितम्। यस्तु वेदयते सम्यक् तथाध्यायति वा पुनः॥ संसारचक्रमुत्सृज्य मुक्तवचनबन्धनः। अचलं निर्गुणं स्थानं शिवं प्राप्नोत्यसंशयः॥ See also Manu, II. 76. Vāsudeva, a name of Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa, is according to its grammatical etymology, a patronymic derivative implying son of Vāsudeva. The Vaiṣṇava Purāṇas, however, devise other explanations: see the next chapter, and again, b. VI. c. 5.

2. In this stanza occurs a series of the appellations of Viṣṇu: I. Puṇḍarikākṣa, having eyes like a lotus, or heart-pervading; or Pundarika is explained supreme glory, and Akṣa imperishable:

the first is the most usual etymon, 2. Viśvabhāvana, the creator of the universe, or the cause of the existence of all things. 3. Hṛshikeśa, lord of the senses. 4. Māhapuruṣa, great or supreme spirit; puruṣa meaning that which abides or is quiescent in body (puri sete). 5. Purvaja, produced or appearing before creation; the Orphic 'πρωτοῦ σπυος'. In the fifth book, c. 18, Viṣṇu is described by five appellations, which are considered analogous to these; or, 1. Bhūtātmā, one with created things, or Puṇḍarikākṣa; 2. Pradhānātmā, one with crude nature, or Viśvabhāvana : 3. Indriyātmā, one with the senses, or Hṛshikeśa : 4. Paramātmā, supreme spirit, or Māhapuruṣa : and Ātmā, soul; living soul, animating nature and existing before it, or Pūrvaja.

3. Brahmā, in the neuter form, is abstract supreme spirit: and Iśvara is the Deity in his active nature, he who is able to do or leave undone, or to do any thing in any other manner than that in which it is done: कर्तुमकर्तुमन्यथा कर्तुं समर्थः।

4. Pumān which is the same with Puruṣa, incorporated spirit. By this and the two preceding terms also the commentator understands the text to signify that Viṣṇu is any form of spiritual being that is acknowledged by different philosophical systems, or that he is the Brahmā of the Vedānta, the Iśvara of the Pātañjala, and the Puruṣa of the Sāṅkhya school.

5. The three qualities, to which we shall have further occasion to advert, are Satya (सत्यं), goodness or purity, knowledge, quiescence; Rajas, foulness, passion, activity; and Tamas, darkness, ignorance, inertia.

6. Pradhanabuddhyādisūh. This predicate of the Deity distinguishes most of the Purāṇas from several of the philosophical systems, which maintain, as did the earliest Grecian systems of cosmogony, the eternal and independent existence of the first principle of things, as nature, matter, or chaos. Accordingly, the commentator notices the objection. Pradhāna being without beginning, it is said how can Viṣṇu be its parent? To which he replies, that this is not so, for in a period of worldly destruction (Pralaya), when the Creator desists from creating, nothing is generated by virtue of any other energy or parent. Or, if this be not satisfactory, then the text may be understood to imply that intellect (Buddhi) etc, are formed

through the materiality of crude nature, or Pradhāna.

7. Viṣṇu is commonly derived in the Purāṇas from the root Vis, to enter, entering into, or pervading the universe, agreeably to the text of the Vedas, तत्सृष्ट्वा तदेवानुप्रविशति। "Having created that (world), he then afterwards enters into it; being, as our comment observes, undistinguished by place, time, or property; देशकालस्वरूपतो व्यवच्छेदाभावात्। According to the Matsya Purāṇa the name alludes to his entering into the mundane egg: according to the Pādma Purāṇa, to his entering into or combining with Prakṛti, as Puruṣa or spirit: स एव भगवान् विष्णु प्रकृत्यामविवेश ह। In the Mokṣa Dharma of the Mahābhārata, s. 165, the word is derived from the root vi. signifying motion, pervasion, production, radiance; or, irregularly, from krama, to go with the particle vi, implying, variously, prefixed.

8. Brahmā and the rest is said to apply to the series of teachers through whom this Purāṇa was transmitted from its first reputed author Brāhmā, to its actual narrator, the sage Parāśara. See also b, VI. c. 8.

9. The Guru, or spiritual preceptor, is said to be Kapila or Sārasvata: the latter is included in the series of teachers of the Purāṇa, Parāśara must be considered also as a disciple of Kapila, as a teacher of the Sāṅkhya philosophy.

10. Maitreya is the disciple of Parāśara, who relates the Viṣṇu Purāṇa to him; he is also one of the chief interlocutors in the Bhagavata, and is introduced in the Mahābhārata (Vana Parva, s. 10.) as a great Ṛṣi, or sage, who denounces Duryodhana's death. In the Bhāgavata he is also termed Kaushāravi, or the son of Kusharava.

11. One copy reads Yuga dharma, the duties peculiar to the four 14 ages, or their characteristic properties, instead of Yugānta.

12. Sacrifice of Parāśara. The story of Parāśara's birth is narrated in detail in the Mahābhārata (Adi Parva, s. 176). King Kalmāṣapāda meeting with Śakti, the son of Vasiṣṭha, in a narrow path in a thicket, desired him to stand out of his way. The sage refused : on which the Raja beat him with his whip, and Śakti cursed him to become a Rākṣasa, a man-devouring spirit. The Raja in this transformation killed and ate its author, or Śakti, together with all the other sons of Vasiṣṭha, Śakti

left his wife Adrisyanti pregnant, and she gave birth to Parāśara, who was brought up by his grandfather. When he grew up, and was informed of his father's death, he instituted a sacrifice for the destruction of all the Rākṣasas, but was dissuaded from its completion by Vasiṣṭha and other sages or Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, and Kratu. The Mahābhārata adds, that; when he desisted from the rite, he scattered the remaining sacrificial fire upon the northern face of the Himalaya mountain, where it still blazes forth at the phases of the moon, consuming Rākṣasas, forests, and mountains. The legend alludes possibly to some trans-Himalayan volcano. The transformation of Kalmaṣapāda is ascribed in other places to a different cause; but he is every where regarded as the devourer of Śakti or Saktri, as the name also occurs. The story is told in the Liṅga Purāṇa (Purvārdha, s. 64) in the same manner, with the addition, conformably to the Śaiva tendency of that work, that Parāśara begins his sacrifice by propitiating Mahādeva Vasiṣṭha's dissuasion, and Pulastya's appearance, are given in the very words of our text; and the story concludes, 'thus through the favour of Pulastya and of the wise Vasiṣṭha, Parāśara composed the Vaiṣṇava (Viṣṇu) Purāṇa, containing ten thousand stanzas, and being the third of the Purāṇa compilations (Purāṇasamhitā). The Bhāgavata (b. III. s. 8) also alludes, though obscurely, to this legend. In recapitulating the succession of the narrators of part of the Bhāgavata, Maitreya states that this first Purāṇa was communicated to him by his Guru Purasara, as he had been desired by Pulastya: प्रोवाच मह्यं स दयालुरुक्तो मुनिः पराशरः) पुलस्त्येन पुराणमाद्यम्।) i.e. according to the commentator, agreeably to the boon given by Pulastya to Parāśara, saying, 'You shall be a narrator of Purāṇas; पुराणवक्ता भविष्यसि) The Mahābhārata makes no mention of the communication of this faculty to Parāśara by Pulastya; and as the Bhāgavata could not derive this particular from that source, it here most probably refers unavowedly, as the Liṅga does avowedly, to the Viṣṇu Purāṇa.

13. Pulastya, as will be presently seen, is one of the Rṣis. who were the mind-born sons of Brahmā. Pulaha, who is here also named, is another. Pulastya is considered as the ancestor of the Rākṣasas, as he is the father of Visravas, the father of

Rāvana and his brethren, Uttara Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, Vana Parva. s. 272. Pādma Purāṇa Liṅga Purāṇa s. 63.

14. Purāṇa samhitā karttā bhavān bhaviṣyati. You shall be a maker of the Samhitā or compendium of the Purāṇas or of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, considered as a summary or compendium of Pauranic traditions, in either sense it is incompatible with the general attribution of all the Purāṇas to Vyāsa.

15. Whether performing the usual ceremonies of the Brāhmaṇas. or leading a life of devotion and penance. which supersedes the necessity of rites and sacrifices.

16. These are, in fact. the brief replies to Maitreya's six questions (p. 3). or. How was the world created? By Viṣṇu how will it be? At the periods of dissolution it will be in Viṣṇu. Whence proceeded animate and inanimate things? From Viṣṇu. Of what is the substance of the world? Viṣṇu. Into what has it been. and will it agnir be. resolved? Viṣṇu. He is therefore both the instrumental and material cause of the universe. 'The answer to the "whence" replies to the query as to the instrumental cause: "He is the world" replies to the inquiry as to the material cause.' अनेन यतश्चैतदस्य निमित्तप्रश्नस्योत्तरं जगच्च स इत्युपादानप्रश्नस्योत्तरं। 'And by this explanation of the agency of the materiality, etc. of Viṣṇu. as regards the universe, (it follows that) all will be produced from, and all will repose in him.; अनेनैव विष्णोः सर्वजगदुपादान-रूपकर्तृत्वादिकथनेन विष्णोरेवोद्भविविष्यति तत्रैव स्थास्यतीति। We have here precisely the TO nav of the Orphic doctrines, and we might fancy that Brucker was translating a passage from a Purāṇa when he describes them in these words: "Continuisse Jovem (lege Viṣṇum) sive summum deum in se omnia. omnibus ortum ex se dedisse, omnia ex se genuisse. et ex sua produxisse essentia. Spiritum esse universi qui omnia regit vivificat estque; ex quibus necessario sequitur omnia in eum reditura." Hist. Philos. I. 388. Jamblichus and Proclus also testify that the Pythagorean doctrines of the origin of the material world from the Deity, and its identity with him, were much the same.—Cudworth. l. c. p. 348.

CHAPTER 2

द्वितीयोऽध्यायः

(विष्णुस्तुतिः, सृष्टिप्रक्रिया च)

पराशर उवाच

अविकाराय शुद्धाय नित्याय परमात्मने।
 सदैकरूपरूपाय विष्णवे सर्वजिष्णवे॥ १॥
 नमो हिरण्यगर्भाय हरये शङ्कराय च।
 वासुदेवाय ताराय सर्गस्थित्यन्तकारिणे॥ २॥
 एकानेकस्वरूपाय स्थूलसूक्ष्मात्मने नमः।
 अव्यक्तव्यक्तरूपाय विष्णवे मुक्तिहेतवे॥ ३॥
 सर्गस्थितिविनाशानां जगतोऽस्य जगन्मयः।
 मूलभूतो नमस्तस्मै विष्णवे परमात्मने॥ ४॥

Parāśara said, Glory to the unchangeable, holy, eternal, supreme Viṣṇu, of one universal nature, the mighty over all : to him who is Hiraṇygarbha, Hari, and Śaṅkara,¹ the creator, the preserver, and destroyer of the world: to Vāsudeva, the liberator of his worshippers: to him, whose essence is both single and manifold; who is both subtle and corporeal, indiscrete and discrete: to Viṣṇu, the cause of final emancipation.² Glory to the supreme Viṣṇu, the cause of the creation, existence, and end of this world; who is the root of the world, and who consists of the world.³

आधारभूतं विश्वस्याप्यणीयांसमणीयसाम्।
 प्रणम्य सर्वभूतस्थमच्युतं पुरुषोत्तमम्॥ ५॥
 ज्ञानस्वरूपमत्यन्तनिर्मलं परमार्थतः।
 तमेवार्थस्वरूपेण भ्रान्तिदर्शनतः स्थितम्॥ ६॥
 विष्णुं त्रिसिष्णुं विश्वस्य स्थितौ सर्गे तथा प्रभुम्।
 प्रणम्य जगतामीशमजमक्षरमव्ययम्॥ ७॥
 कथयामि यथा पूर्वं दक्षाद्यैर्मुनिसत्तमैः।
 पृष्टः प्रोवाच भगवानब्जयोनिः पितामहः॥ ८॥
 तैश्चोक्तं पुरुकुत्साय भूभुजे नर्मदातटे।
 सारस्वताय तेनापि मह्यं सारस्वतेन च॥ ९॥

Having glorified him who is the support of all things; who is the smallest of the small;⁴ who is in all created things; the unchanged,

imperishable⁵ Puruṣottama;⁶ who is one with true wisdom, as truly known;⁷ eternal and incorrupt; and who is known through false appearances by the nature of visible objects:⁸ having bowed to Viṣṇu, the destroyer, and lord of creation and preservation; the ruler of the world; unborn, imperishable, undecaying: I will relate to you that which was originally imparted by the great rather of all (Brahmā), in answer to the questions of Dakṣa and other venerable sages, and repeated by them to Purukutsa, a king who reigned on the banks of the Narmadā. It was next related by him to Sārasvata, and by Sārasvata to me.⁹

परः पराणां परमः परमात्मात्मसंस्थितः।
 रूपवर्णादिनिर्देशविशेषणविवर्जितः॥ १०॥
 अपक्षयविनाशाभ्यां परिणामद्विजन्मभिः।
 वर्जितः शक्यते वक्तुं यः सदास्तीति केवलम्॥ ११॥
 सर्वत्रासौ समस्तञ्च वसत्यत्रेति वै यतः।
 ततः स वासुदेवेति विद्वद्धिः परिपठ्यते॥ १२॥
 तद्ब्रह्म परमं नित्यमजमक्षयमव्ययम्।
 एकस्वरूपं च सदा हेयाभावाच्च निर्मलम्॥ १३॥
 तदेतत् सर्वमेवासीद् व्यक्ताव्यक्तस्वरूपवत्।
 तथा पुरुषरूपेण कालरूपेण च स्थितम्॥ १४॥
 परस्य ब्रह्मणो रूपं पुरुषः प्रथमं द्विज।
 व्यक्ताव्यक्ते तथैवान्ये रूपे कालस्तथा परम्॥ १५॥
 प्रधानपुरुषव्यक्तकालानां परमं हि यत्।
 पश्यन्ति सूरयः शुद्धं तद्विष्णोः परमं पदम्॥ १६॥
 प्रधानपुरुषव्यक्तकालास्तु प्रविभागशः।
 रूपाणि स्थितिसर्गान्तव्यक्तिसद्भावहेतवः॥ १७॥
 व्यक्तं विष्णुस्तथाव्यक्तं पुरुषः काल एव च।
 क्रीडतो बालकस्येव चेष्टां तस्य निशामय॥ १८॥

Who can describe him who is not to be apprehended by the senses: who is the best of all things; the supreme soul, self-existent: who is devoid of all the distinguishing characteristics of complexion, caste, or the like; and is exempt from birth, vicissitude, death, or decay: who is always, and alone: who exists every where, and in whom all

things here exist; and who is thence named Vāsudeva¹⁰? He is Brahmā,¹¹ supreme, lord, eternal, unborn, imperishable, undecaying; of one essence; ever pure as free from defects. He, that Brahmā, was all things; comprehending in his own nature the indiscreet and discrete, He then existed in the forms of Puruṣa and of Kāla. Puruṣa (spirit) is the first form of the supreme; next proceeded two other forms, the discrete and indiscrete; and Kāla (time) was the last. These four—Pradhāna (primary or crude matter), Puruṣa (spirit), Vyakta (visible substance), and Kāla (time)—the wise consider to be the pure and supreme condition of Viṣṇu.¹² These four forms, in their due proportions, are the causes of the production of the phenomena of creation, preservation, and destruction. Viṣṇu being thus discrete and indiscrete substance, spirit, and time, sports like a playful boy, as you shall learn by listening to his frolics.¹³

अव्यक्तं कारणं यत् तत् प्रधानमृषिसत्तमैः।

प्रोच्यते प्रकृतिः सूक्ष्मा नित्यं सदसदात्मकम्॥ १९॥

अक्षय्यं नान्यदाधारममेयमजरं ध्रुवम्।

शब्दस्पर्शविहीनं तद् रूपादिभिरसंहितम्॥ २०॥

त्रिगुणं तज्जगद्योनिरनादिप्रभवाप्ययम्।

तेनाग्रे सर्वमेवासीद् व्याप्तं वै प्रलयादनु॥ २१॥

वेदवादविदो विद्वन्नियता ब्रह्मवादिनः।

पठन्ति वै तमेवार्थं प्रधानप्रतिपादकम्॥ २२॥

That chief principle (Pradhāna), which is the indiscrete cause, is called by the sages also Prākṛti (nature): it is subtle, uniform, and comprehends what is and what is not (or both causes and effects); is durable, self-sustained, illimitable, undecaying, and stable; devoid of sound or touch, and possessing neither colour nor form; endowed with the three qualities (in equilibrium); the mother of the world; without beginning; and that into which all that is produced is resolved.¹⁴ By that principle all things were invested in the period subsequent to the last dissolution of the universe, and prior to creation¹⁵. For Brahmanas learned in

the Vedas, and teaching truly their doctrines, explain such passages as the following as intending the production of the chief principle (Pradhāna).

नाहो न रात्रिर्न नभो न भूमि-

र्नासीत्तमो ज्योतिरभून्न चान्यत्।

श्रोतादिबुद्ध्यानुपलभ्यमेकं

प्रधानिकं ब्रह्म पुमांस्तदासीत्॥ २३॥

विष्णोः स्वरूपात् परतो हि तेऽन्ये

रूपे प्रधानं पुरुषश्च विप्र।

तस्यैव तेऽन्येन धृते वियुक्ते

रूपान्तरं यत् तद् द्विज कालसंज्ञम्॥ २४॥

प्रकृतौ संस्थितं व्यक्तमतीतप्रलये तु यत्।

तस्मात् प्राकृतसंज्ञोऽयमुच्यते प्रतिसंचरः॥ २५॥

अनादिर्भगवान् कालो नान्तोऽस्य द्विज विद्यते।

अव्युच्छिन्नास्ततस्त्वेते सर्गस्थित्यन्तसंयमाः॥ २६॥

गुणसाम्ये ततस्तस्मिन् पृथक् पुंसि व्यवस्थिते।

कालस्वरूपरूपं तद् विष्णोर्मेत्रिय वर्त्तते

कालस्वरूपं तद्विष्णोर्मेत्रिय परिवर्त्तते॥ २७॥

ततस्तत्परमं ब्रह्म परमात्मा जगन्मयः।

सर्वगः सर्वभूतेशः सर्वात्मा परमेश्वरः॥ २८॥

प्रधानं पुरुषञ्चापि प्रविश्यात्मेच्छया हरिः।

क्षोभयामास सम्प्राप्ते सर्गकाले व्ययाव्ययौ॥ २९॥

यथा सन्निधिमात्रेण गन्धः क्षोभाय जायते।

मनसो नोपकर्तृत्वात् तथासौ परमेश्वरः॥ ३०॥

स एव क्षोभको ब्रह्मन् क्षोभश्च पुरुषोत्तमः।

स सङ्कोचविकाशाभ्यां प्रधानत्वेऽपि च स्थितिः॥ ३१॥

विकाराणुस्वरूपैश्च ब्रह्मरूपादिभिस्तथा।

व्यक्तस्वरूपश्च तथा विष्णुः सर्वेश्वरेश्वरः॥ ३२॥

"There was neither day nor night, nor sky nor earth, nor darkness nor light, nor any other things, save only One, unapprehensible by intellect, or That which is Brahmā and Pumaṅ (spirit) and Pradhāna (matter)"¹⁶. The two forms which are other than the essence of unmodified Viṣṇu, are Pradhāna (matter) and Puruṣa (spirit); and his other form, by which those two are connected or separated, is called

Kāla (time)¹⁷. When discrete substance is aggregated in crude nature, as in a foregone dissolution, that dissolution is termed elemental (Prakṛta). The deity as Time is without beginning, and his end is not known; and from him the revolutions of creation, continuance, and dissolution unintermittingly succeeds: (or when, in the latter season, the equilibrium of the qualities (Pradhāna) exists, and spirit (Pumān) is detached from matter, then the form of Viṣṇu which is Time abide?¹⁸. Then the supreme Brahmā, the supreme soul, the substance of the world, the lord of all creatures, the universal soul, the supreme ruler, Hari, of his own will having entered into matter and spirit, agitated the mutable and immutable principles, the season of creation being arrived, in the same manner as fragrance affects the mind from its proximity merely, and not from any immediate operation upon mind itself: so the Supreme influenced the elements of creation¹⁹. Puruṣottama is both the agitator and the thing to be agitated; being present in the essence of matter, both when it is contracted and expanded²⁰. Viṣṇu, supreme over the supreme, is of the nature of discrete forms in the atomic productions, Brahmā and the rest (gods, men. etc.)

गुणसाम्यात् ततस्तस्मात् क्षेत्रज्ञाधिष्ठितान्मुने।

गुणव्यञ्जनसम्भूतिः सर्गकाले द्विजोत्तम॥ ३३॥

Then from that equilibrium of the qualities (Pradhāna) presided over by soul²¹, proceeds the unequal development of those qualities (constituting the principle Mahat or Intellect) at the time of creation²².

प्रधानतत्त्वमुद्भूतं महान्तं तत् समावृणोत्।

सात्त्विको राजस्वश्चैव तामसश्च त्रिधा महान्।

प्रधानतत्त्वेन समं त्वचा बीजमिवावृतम्॥ ३४॥

वैकारिकस्तैजसश्च भूतादिश्चैव तामसः।

त्रिविधोऽयमहङ्कारो महत्तत्त्वादजायत॥ ३५॥

भूतेन्द्रियाणां हेतुः स त्रिगुणत्वान्महामुने।

यथा प्रधानेन महान् महता स तथावृतः॥ ३६॥

भूतादिस्तु विकुर्वाणः शब्दतन्मात्रिकं ततः।

ससर्ज शब्दतन्मात्रादाकाशं शब्दलक्षणम्।

शब्दमात्रं तथाकाशं भूतादिः स समावृणोत्॥ ३७॥

आकाशस्तु विकुर्वाणः स्पर्शमात्रं ससर्ज ह।

बलवानभवद् वायुस्तस्य स्पर्शो गुणो मतः॥ ३८॥

आकाशं शब्दमात्रन्तु स्पर्शमात्रं समावृणोत्।

The Chief principle then invests that Great principle, Intellect, and it becomes three fold, as affected by the quality of goodness, foulness, or darkness, and invested by the Chief principle (matter) as seed is by its skin. From the Great principle (Mahat) Intellect. threefold Egotism, (Ahaṅkāra)", denominated Vaikārika. 'pure,' Taijasa, 'passionate; and Bhūtādi. rudimental.²³ is produced; the origin of the (subtile) elements and of the organs of sense; invested, in consequence of its three qualities, by Intellect, as Intellect is by the Chief principle. Elementary Egotism then becoming productive, as the rudiment of round, produced from it Ether, of which sound is the characteristic, investing it with its rudiment of sound. Ether becoming productive, engendered the rudiment of touch; whence originated strong wind. the property of which is touch; and Ether, with the rudiment of sound, enveloped the rudiment of touch.

ततो वायुर्विकुर्वाणो रूपमात्रं ससर्ज ह॥ ३९॥

ज्योतिरुत्पद्यते वायोस्तद्रूपगुणमुच्यते।

स्पर्शमात्रन्तु वै वायु रूपमात्रं समावृणोत्॥ ४०॥

ज्योतिश्चापि विकुर्वाणं रसमात्रं ससर्ज ह।

सम्भवन्ति ततोऽम्भांसि रसाधाराणि तानि च॥ ४१॥

रसमात्राणि चाम्भांसि रूपमात्रं समावृणोत्।

विकुर्वाणानि चाम्भांसि गन्धमात्रं ससर्जिरे॥ ४२॥

संघातो जायते तस्मात् तस्य गन्धो गुणो मतः।

तस्मिंस्तस्मिस्तु तन्मात्रा तेन तन्मात्रता स्मृता॥ ४३॥

तन्मात्राण्यविशेषाणि अविशेषास्ततो हि ते।

न शान्ता नापि घोरास्ते न मूढाश्चाविशेषणा॥ ४४॥

भूततन्मात्रसर्गोऽयमहङ्कारात् तु तामसात्।

तैजसानीन्द्रियाण्याहुर्देवा वैकारिका दशा॥ ४५॥

एकादश मनश्चात्र देवा वैकारिकाः स्मृताः।