

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYFIVE

*The Birth of Heretics**Śrī Pārvatī said:*

1-2b. O lord, you told me that one should avoid conversation with heretics, and that it is more censurable than (talking to) a cāṇḍāla. (Tell me) of what kind they are said to be, and with what signs they are marked.

Rudra said:

2c-12a. Those who, deluded by ignorance, describe any other deity as being superior to Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, are said to be heretics. Those who use skulls, apply ash, use bones, have non-Vedic marks, have matted hair and bark-garments though they do not belong to the hermit-stage of life are (said to be) heretics. Those brāhmaṇas who are without such marks dear to Viṣṇu as conches, discs, ūrdhvapuṇḍra (upright sectarian marks on the forehead) are said to be heretics. That brāhmaṇa who does not follow the practices laid down in the holy texts and codes of laws should be known as a heretic and is condemned among all people. Those that have no devotion for the lord are said to be heretics. He who is free in all acts (i.e. performs all acts as he likes) and offers oblations into fire and gives gifts directed to deities (other than) Viṣṇu, the enjoyer of the fruit of all sacrifices and the deity of the brāhmaṇas, and who independently does all great acts laid down in the Vedas, should be known as a heretic. He who looks upon god Viṣṇu as equal to other deities like Brahmā, Rudra, would always be (called) a heretic. That brāhmaṇa who, in the three conditions, does not recognise Viṣṇu by means of speech, body and acts, would be a heretic. What is the use of saying much in this regard? Those brāhmaṇas who are not devotees of Viṣṇu, should never be asked (any question), should never be talked to and should never be seen.

Pārvatī said:

12b-15a. O lord, O best of gods, I am asking (you) a secret. Through love for me tell it. There is a great doubt. The holy texts have condemned wearing (i.e. using) skulls, (applying) ash and

(wearing) hide. You wear (i.e. use) them. (Then), O god, for what purpose is it condemned? O lord of gods, O you highly intelligent one, through fickleness of (i.e. natural to) women I am asking it. It may be that due to your great power what is told ought not to be done by you. (But) you have not formerly told me in detail what ought not to be done. Therefore, O lord, please pardon me my question.

Vasiṣṭha said:

15b-17a. Thus by the goddess Śiva was asked in a lonely place, free from people. He told her the great secret, viz. whatever he did.

Śiva said:

17b-21a. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you that secret which is very wonderful. O goddess, you should not speak what I have told you among people. O you of a good vow, I shall tell it to you since your body is not separate from mine. In the age of Svāyambhuva (Manu) in olden times there were great demons like Namuci, who were very powerful, very valorous, very strong and great heroes. All of them were devoted to Viṣṇu, were pure, and free from all sins. They followed the practices (laid down) in the triad of the Vedas. All gods, being frustrated, led by Indra, and overcome by fear, approached Viṣṇu and sought his shelter.

Gods said:

21b-22a. O Keśava, you alone can conquer these great demons who cannot be conquered by all gods, and who have washed off their sins with penance.

Mahādeva said:

22b-25. Hearing these frightful words of the gods, Viṣṇu, Puruṣottama, consoled those regents of the quarters, and said to me:

The lord said:

O Rudra, O you of mighty arms, O you best god, for deluding the enemies of gods prepare a course of conduct to be followed by

heretics. Narrate to them the dark Purāṇas (i.e. Purāṇas that will take them astray). O you very intelligent one, also fashion confusing holy texts. There will be brāhmaṇas and great sages who have given themselves away to me.

26-33. Approaching them through devotion for me, tell the vicious ones: Kaṇāda, Gautama, Śakti, Upamanyu, Jaimini, Kapila, Durvāsas, Mṛkaṇḍu, Bṛhaspati, Bhārgava and Jāmadagnya are the ten (?) vicious sages. Desiring to do the good of the world, approach them with your power of suggestion (bhāvaśakti?). By your power increased in viciousness infused into them they will be vicious in a moment. There is no doubt about it. Those brāhmaṇas with greater viciousness caused by you, will narrate the vicious Purāṇas and doctrines in the three worlds. O god, you yourself, wearing the marks like a skull, hide, ash, bones, fully delude the people in the three worlds. So also you, Śiva, prepare the Pāśupata order with its divisions like Kaṅkāla, Śaiva, Pāṣaṇḍa and Mahāśaiva; so also properly prepare the doctrine having no particular marks and outside the Vedic fold. All the mean men will wear ash, bones etc. and will be insensible. The vicious ones will describe you as the highest (god).

34-36a. Taking to their doctrine all the ancient demons will be averse to me in a moment. There is no doubt (about it). O very powerful Rudra, in my incarnations I too shall worship you in every age to delude the vicious ones. Having upheld this doctrine, they will undoubtedly fall.

Mahādeva said:

36b-37. O you beautiful one, having heard what Viṣṇu had said, I, though having a very large mouth (i.e. though a good speaker) became helpless then. Then having saluted the highest god, I said:

38-43. "O god, if I do what you have said on the earth, it will certainly lead to my destruction. O Viṣṇu, it is possible for me to carry out this mission. Your command is not to be disobeyed. This is very painful." O goddess, when I spoke like this, Viṣṇu, having again cheered me up, said: "Let this not lead to your destruction. Do as I order you for the good of the deities. O best god, I shall also tell you about the means for your livelihood." Then with compassion he gave me his thousand names

(i.e. the hymn called *Viṣṇusahasranāma*): “Installing me in your heart, mutter my indestructible formula. The very great, six-syllabled formula is said to be Brahman, the emancipating one. Those who worship me with devotion obtain salvation. There is no doubt about this.

44-46. (Salutation to) him dark like the petal of a blue lotus, having eyes like lotus-petals, holding a conch, a disc, and the Śārṅga bow, and adorned with all ornaments. (To him) having put on a yellow garment, having four arms, the dear lord of Jānakī. ‘Salutation to Śrī Rāma’: this excellent formula should be muttered. It removes all sins, and gives salvation even to sinners. Muttering this formula everyday you will be free from blemishes.

47-51a. All that sin produced in you due to having (applied) ash and having bones, has all become auspicious due to the auspicious utterance of my formula. O best god, being gratified I shall destroy all sin. O you of a good vow, devotion to other god than me will not come up. Worship me, the lord, the Supreme Being, mentally in your heart. Obey my order. Due to my love, all this will be auspicious for you.” Having thus ordered me, O goddess, he dismissed the hosts of gods. The gods, dismissed by him went to their own abodes. Then gods, led by Indra, requested me.

Indra and others said:

51b. O god, quickly do that beneficial act as told by Viṣṇu now.

Mahādeva said:

52-56. O auspicious one, for the good of the gods, I took to the way of the heretics, and had skulls, hides, ash and bones. O auspicious one, as told by Viṣṇu, I prepared the vicious Purāṇas and the heretic Śaiva doctrines. O sinless one, having entered through my power, Gautama and other brāhmaṇas I proclaimed the texts outside the Vedic fold. Resorting to this doctrine, all the wicked demons became averse to the lord (i.e. Viṣṇu), and were enveloped in viciousness. Applying ash to their bodies, covered with (i.e. having) very severe penance, they worshipped me only with flesh, blood and sandal.

57-64. On receiving from me grants of boons, they were haughty with pride and power. They were very much attached to objects of senses, and were full of lust and anger. They, void of goodness and powerless, were then defeated by the hosts of gods. Fallen from all righteous paths, they will go to a mean position in (due) time. Those who, bereft of righteous paths, move on the earth by resorting to this doctrine of mine, always see (i.e. go to) hell. O goddess, (this) my course, that is censured, is thus (followed by me) (only) for the good of the gods. Following Viṣṇu's order I have (applied) ash and (use) bones. O goddess, this is an external mark intended for deluding the foes. In the heart however, I, always meditating upon god Viṣṇu, just mutter that emancipating formula, telling about Brahman. It is like the (hymn) Sahasranāma of Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa. O auspicious one, constantly muttering the great six-syllabled formula which increased the Raghu-race, we constantly obtain that Brahman which is filled with the nectar of constant joy, which is permanent happiness. O you of an auspicious face, I have told you all this that you had asked. What else do you desire to hear? Ask me that with affection.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYSIX

Characterization of Various Texts and Doctrines as Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa

Pārvatī said:

1. O sinless one, tell me about the vicious texts which were composed by the brāhmaṇas bereft of devotion to the lord. O lord of gods, tell me their names in a sequence.

Rudra said:

2-4. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you about the vicious texts in a sequence. By merely remembering them even the wise ones would be deluded, First I myself proclaimed the Śaiva, Pāśupata (texts) etc. Hear about the ones which were proclaimed

by the brāhmaṇas into whom my power had entered, after that: Kaṇāda proclaimed the great Vaiśeṣika text.

5-7. Similarly Gautama (proclaimed the doctrine of) Nyāya, and Kapila (proclaimed) Sāṅkhya. Dhiṣaṇa (Bṛhaspati) in the same way (proclaimed) the much censured Cārvāka (doctrine); Viṣṇu of the form of Buddha proclaimed the false Buddhist doctrine and those of the naked and wearing dark blue garments for the destruction of the demons. The doctrine of Māyā (illusion) is a wicked doctrine and said to be pseudo-Buddhist. I myself, of the form of a brāhmaṇa, proclaimed it in Kali (age).

8-12. It shows the meaninglessness of the words of the holy texts and is condemned in the world. In this (doctrine) only the giving up of one's own duties is expounded. And that is said to be religiousness by those who have fallen from all duties. I have propounded the identity of the Highest Lord and the (individual) soul. I stated this Brahman's nature to be qualityless. O goddess, I myself have conceived, for the destruction of the worlds, and for deluding the world in this Kali age, the great doctrine resembling the purport of the Vedas, (but) non-Vedic due to the principle of Māyā (illusion) (present in it). By my order formerly Jaimini propounded the great doctrine of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, stating godlessness and making the Veda meaningless.

13-17. O Girijā, know from me the vicious doctrines. I shall also narrate the names of the vicious Purāṇas* in succession: Brāhma, Pādma, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, so also Bhāgavata. So also Nāradya and Mārkaṇḍeya as the seventh. Āgneya is said to be the eighth, and Bhaviṣya to be the ninth. Brahmavaivarta is said to be the tenth, and Liṅga to be eleventh. Vārāha is said to be the twelfth and Vāmana the thirteenth. Kaurma is said to be the fourteenth and Mātsya the fifteenth. Gāruda is said to be the sixteenth, and Skānda to be the seventeenth. The eighteenth is Brahmāṇḍa. (These are) the Purāṇas in succession.

18-22a. Know from me that Mātsya, Kaurma, Liṅga, Śaiva, so also Skānda and Āgneya are tāmasa (vicious). O you of

*The immediately following list is not actually that of the vicious Purāṇas but of the Purāṇas in general. The vicious six Purāṇas follow this list of eighteen Purāṇas. The word 'tāmasa' in this verse is not appropriately used. (Ed.)

an auspicious appearance, the Purāṇas, viz. Vaiṣṇava, Nāradiya, so also the auspicious Bhāgavata, similarly Gāruḍa, Pādma, Vārāha should be known to be sāt̥tvika (or virtuous). Know from me that Brahmāṇḍa, Brahmavaivarta, Mārkaṇḍeya, Bhaviṣya, Vāmana and Brāhma are rājasa (endowed with the quality of passion). The sāt̥tvika ones are said to give salvation and are always auspicious. Similarly, O goddess, the tāmasa are said to be the cause of (i.e. lead one to) hell.

22b-27. Similarly Smṛtis endowed with the three qualities are proclaimed by the sages. O you of an auspicious appearance, they are sāt̥tvika, rājasa and tāmasa. Vāsiṣṭha, Hārīta, Vyāsa, Pārāśara, Bhāradvāja and Kāśyapa are said to sāt̥tvika, giving (i.e. leading to) salvation and auspicious. Yājñavalkya Ātreya, so also Taittiri, Dākṣa and Kātyāyana and Vaiṣṇava are rājasa, giving (i.e. leading to) heaven, and auspicious. Gautama, Bārhaspatya, Sāṁvarta, Yama, Sāṁkhya and Auśanasa are said to be tāmasa, and giving (i.e. leading to) hell. What is the use of talking much in the case of the Purāṇas and the Smṛtis also? The tāmasa do lead to hell. A wise one should avoid them. As the occasion has come, I have told you all the auspicious doctrines. Listen. I shall tell you about the nature of the remaining birth (i.e. of the other incarnations) of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYSEVEN

The Boar Incarnation of Viṣṇu

Śrī Rudra said:

1-3. Kāśyapa's two sons, Hiranyaka and Hiranyākṣa were very powerful. They, the two sons of Diti, were great warriors and the lords of the demons. In Śvetadvīpa they were with Viṣṇu (as his doorkeepers) named Jaya and Vijaya. O goddess, (once) the two very powerful ones prevented the greatest meditating sages who were eager to see Viṣṇu. The two best, very powerful gods, the doorkeepers were cursed by them.