

48-49. A man seeks something and gains his object. Know that immediately (after getting the result) a sort of niggardliness besets him. Afterwards he dies and his merit becomes exhausted. As a result of this, Indra may turn into a worm and a worm may become Indra. Hence there is nothing more conducive to liberation than charitable gifts.

50. From charitable gift knowledge is acquired and from knowledge liberation is achieved undoubtedly. Devotion unto the Trident-bearing Lord (Śiva) is greater than liberation, O Brāhmaṇas.

51. Sadāśiva, the lord of all, gives away everything when his mind is pleased. Śaṅkara becomes satisfied with even a very little thing that is offered, say, even water of a very little quantity.

52. In this connection they cite this ancient legend. This has been undoubtedly done by the son of Virocana.¹

53. There was a roguish gambler, a great sinner. He used to censure Devas and Brāhmaṇas. He indulged in great fraud and dishonesty. He was an adulterer.

54-59. Once much wealth was earned by him through great sins and gambling. He took with him flowers, betel leaves and sandal paste for giving them to a prostitute. (On the way robbers took away all his garments and ready cash.) The gambler was left with only a loin cloth. Scents, garlands etc. which he had taken with him to be offered to the courtesan, were still with him. He clasped his shoulders with crossed hands, thereby making a Svastika sign to cover the nakedness of his body. Taking the scent etc. he was running towards the house. He stumbled on the way and fell on the ground instantaneously. After the fall he swooned. After some time he regained consciousness. Although he was a sinner causing unpleasantness (trouble) to others and though he was dull-witted, suddenly his intellect was directed towards good thoughts. Evidently it was the result of his previous deeds. The gambler was exceedingly disgusted with worldly objects. He was repentant and miserable for what he had done so far. The scent, the flowers etc. that had fallen on

1. VV 52-81. This story of the previous birth of Bali as a gambler-donor is given to explain Bali's nature of thoughtless liberality, his *atidāna*. The story however glorifies the liberality of the gambler to the detriment of god Yama.

the ground were dedicated to Śiva by that gambler unconsciously and unintentionally.

60-64. By this meritorious deed (something good happened). He was taken to the abode of Yama by the attendants of Yama. Yama who is dreadful unto all the worlds said to him after calling him a sinner: "O stupid fellow, you are to be cooked in the great hells." On being told by Dharmarāja thus, the gambler spoke these words: "O lord, no evil conduct has been practised by me. O Yama, let my meritorious deeds be truly considered."

Citragupta spoke:

Something had been given by you to Śiva, the great soul. What fell on the ground was given to Śiva at the time of your death. Due to that meritorious deed, understand, you will attain the position of Indra undoubtedly for three *Ghaṭikās* (1 *Ghaṭikā* = 24 minutes).

65. At that time the lord came there accompanied by all the Suras. Riding on Airāvata, this gambler was taken to Śakra's abode. Śakra was then enlightened and advised by Bṛhaspati of sanctified soul:

66. "O Purandara, for a period of three *Ghaṭikās* this gambler should be installed in your seat at my bidding."

67. On hearing the words of his preceptor, he betook (respected) them on his head (i.e. bowed down his head to signify assent). Śakra went elsewhere and the gambler was ushered into the wonderfully furnished abode of the king of Devas.

68. He was crowned and installed on the throne of Śakra. He attained the kingdom of Śatakratu, because he had offered scents to Śambhu along with flowers and betel leaves.

69-70. What then in the case of those people who are actuated by faith to offer large quantities of scents, flowers etc. always with great devotion to Śiva, the Supreme Spirit? (I.e. they deserve much greater reward.) They will attain *Śivasāyujya* (identity with Śiva). They will be accompanied by Śiva's army (*Gaṇas*) and acquire great joy. Indeed Śakra is the servant of such people.

71-72. The happiness that people of quiescent minds engaged in the worship of Śiva attain is very great. It is rare and difficult of achievement even by Brahmā, Śakra etc. Those who are

covetous of sensual pleasures are deluded. They are poor and pitiable. They do not know (these things).

Mahādeva is (i.e. deserves) to be saluted and Sadāśiva to be worshipped.

73. Mahādeva is to be worshipped and adored by all living beings knowing the truth. Thus the gambler attained the status of Indra for a period of three *Ghaṭikās*.

74. On being crowned by the priest, he occupied the seat of Purandara. At that time, this gambler of great fame was told by Nārada:

75. "Bring Indrāṇī by whom the kingdom is rendered very splendid." Then the gambler, the lover of Śiva, laughed and said:

76. "I have nothing to do with Indrāṇī. This ought not to have been mentioned by you, O highly intelligent one."

After saying thus, the gambler began (to give) charitable gifts.

77-80. The lover of Śiva gave Airāvata to Agastya. The gambler of liberal-minded nature gave Viśvāmitra the horse named Uccaiḥśravas. The gambler of great fame gave Kāmadhenu and Cintāmaṇi of great lustre to Vasiṣṭha. The gambler of great splendour gave Gālava the divine tree Kalpataru. The gambler of great fortune gave Kauṇḍinya a house.

Joyously he gave these and many other jewels of diverse kinds to sages. He gave everything for the pleasure of Śiva.

81. The lord continued his charitable gifts over a period of three *Ghaṭikās*. After the period of three *Ghaṭikās* was over, the previous lord arrived.

82. Purandara was seated on his own throne in Amarāvati. He was being eulogized by the sages. He was accompanied by Śacī also.

83. The evil-minded one said to Śacī: "O splendid and beautiful lady, you have been enjoyed by that gambler; were you not? Tell me the truth fully."

84-86. Then the lady without blemish said to Purandara: "Everywhere you see things and persons on the analogy of your own self, O Purandara. He is a noble soul in the form of a gambler. By the grace of Śiva, he has been the knower of the reality and ultimate truth. He is high-minded and detached (from worldly pleasures). He forsook for the sake of others the kingdom and other things that had come to him. All those great things were

considered binding nooses causing delusion. Hence he gave them to others. (Hence) he has become victorious.”

87. On hearing the words of Indrāṇī, Purandara, the lord of Devas, became ashamed. He sat silently in his seat.

88-91. The most excellent one among those conversant with arguments said to Bṛhaspati: “Airāvata is not to be seen. So also Uccaiṣravas, the horse. By whom have Pārijāta and other objects been taken away?”

Then Guru (Bṛhaspati) said to him the great thing done by the gambler. As long as he had power, he gave away (those) to the sages. Those who are not influenced by and not attached to their own great power and position, those who are continuously engaged in meditation on Śiva are the favourites of Śaṅkara.

Abandoning the fruits of the *Karmans*, they attain the greatest region by resorting to *Jñāna* (knowledge) alone.”

92-93. On hearing the words of Bṛhaspati, Indra said these words: “Mostly these things Yama will say, for the sake of his own prosperity.”

Thinking that to be so, Śakra, the king of Suras, suddenly went accompanied by Bṛhaspati. Purandara who desired his own objectives, went to the city of Saṁyamini.

94. On being welcomed and honoured by Yama, Śakra said these words: “My position and region was given to the evil-minded gambler by you.

95. But this highly despicable action has been committed by him. All jewels and fine things belonging to me were given to different persons by him. O Dharma, know this exactly.

96. Your name is Dharma. How did you give the gambler (this position)? Everything has been done by you for destroying my kingdom.

97. O highly fortunate one, fetch the elephant and other things back quickly. Other things, jewels etc. have been given to different persons.”

98. On hearing the words of Śakra, Yama spoke these words to the gambler furiously: “What is this that has been done by you, a great sinner?

99-102. Śakra’s kingdom was given to you for your enjoyment. But it has been given to Brāhmaṇas. A great thing has been done otherwise. What should not be done has been commit-

ted by you, (viz.) the removal (stealing) of other people's wealth, O foolish one. You will go to hell because of this sin." On hearing the words of Yama, the gambler said: "The fact that I am to go to hell does not deserve anxiety. As long as I had the possession of Śakra's throne, something was given to the Brāhmaṇas."

Yama said:

103-104. Charitable gift is commended on the earth where the fruit of *Karman* is had. In heaven charitable gift should never be given to anyone by anyone at any place. Hence, O stupid one, you are worthy of being punished. What is opposed to the injunctions of the scriptures has been perpetrated by you. The preceptor is the chastiser and guide of those who are wise and self-possessed. The king is the chastiser of evil-minded persons. I am undoubtedly the chastiser of all persons of sinful conduct.

105. After rebuking that gambler thus, the lord of Dharma (i.e. Yama) himself spoke to Citragupta: "Let him be cooked in the hell."

Then Citragupta laughed and said to Yama:

106-108. "How can this gambler be sent to hell? The great elephant Airāvata has been given to Agastya by him. The horse that came out of the ocean (Uccaiṣravā) has been given to the noble-souled Gālava. Welfare unto you, Cintāmaṇi of great lustre has been given to Viśvāmitra.¹ These and other jewels have been given away by this gambler. As a result of that *Karman*, he is worthy of being praised and worshipped in all the three worlds.

109. Everything that is given away with Śiva in view either in heaven or in the mortal world by men is, it should be known, everlasting. It is called a flawless *Karman*. Hence there is no question of this gambler falling into hell.

110-111. Whatever sins the gambler committed have all been reduced to ash by remembering Śambhu. He has become a noble soul. Thanks to the grace of Śambhu, many merits have been acquired by him at the same instant." On hearing these

1. Cp. vv 77-80 which state it differently.

words of Citragupta, the king of the departed spirits bent down his head. He laughed and said this to Śatakratu (Indra):

112-114. "Indeed you are the king of the leading Suras. (Though) old you are too covetous of the kingdom. One good thing of the whole of your life has been earned by you by means of a hundred sacrifices. There is no doubt about it.

You have to request all those sages, Agastya and others, particularly by falling at their feet or offering them monetary compensation in order to get back the elephant and other jewels, whereby you can become happy. You are to hasten."

115. Thinking that it should be so (after hearing) those words, Purandara of indiscriminate vision went back to his city. With his neck bent down in humility, he requested the sages. Then he got back (the tree) Pārijāta.

116. In the same manner, Purandara got back the whole of the kingdom. He became (once again) the king in Amarāvati along with noble-souled (persons).

117. A rebirth was granted to the gambler by Yama. As a consequence of some noble action, he became the son of Virocana.

118. Suruci, the daughter of Vṛṣaparvan, the principal queen of Virocana, became the mother of the gambler. He remained in the womb of that noble-souled lady.

119. From the son of Prahlāda and from Suruci, he inherited the great inclination for virtue and charitable gifts.

120. Even as he was staying in the womb, his own mind was made excellent by the gambler. What is difficult of access even to learned men, O Brāhmaṇas, has been accomplished by that gambler.

121. Śakra once went to Virocana, the lord of Daityas, in the guise of a Brāhmaṇa beggar.¹ He was desirous of killing him.

122. After reaching Virocana's abode, Indra spoke these words on assuming the guise of an old Brāhmaṇa: "O king of good holy rites, O lord of Daityas, you are (the most celebrated) learned man and donor in the whole of the three worlds. Give me (what I am going to ask).

1. VV 121-136 describe how Bali's father Virocana offered his own head to Indra in the guise of a Brāhmaṇa.