

A GLORIOUS KING - PRITHU



The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, thus the brāhmaṇas and the great sages again churned the two arms of King Vena's dead body. As a result a male and female couple came out of his arms. The great sages were highly learned in Vedic knowledge. When they saw the male and female born of the arms of

Vena's body, they were very pleased, for they could understand that the couple was an expansion of a plenary portion of Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The great sages said: The male is a plenary expansion of the power of Lord Viṣṇu, who maintains the entire universe, and the female is a plenary expansion of the goddess of fortune, who is never separated from the Lord. Of the two, the male will be able to expand his reputation throughout the world. His name will be Pṛthu. Indeed, he will be the first among

kings. The female has such beautiful teeth and beautiful qualities that she will actually beautify the ornaments she wears. Her name will be Arci. In the future she will accept King Pṛthu as her husband. In the form of King Pṛthu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead has appeared through a part of His potency to protect the people of the world. The goddess of fortune is the constant companion of the Lord, and therefore she has incarnated partially as Arci to become King Pṛthu's queen.

At that time all the brāhmaṇas highly praised and glorified King Pṛthu, and the best singers of

Gandharvaloka chanted his glories. The inhabitants of Siddhaloka showered flowers, and the beautiful women in the heavenly planets danced in ecstasy. Conchshells, bugles, drums and kettledrums vibrated in outer space. Great sages, forefathers and personalities from the heavenly planets all came to earth from various planetary systems.

All the rivers, seas, hills, mountains, serpents, cows, birds, animals, heavenly planets, the earthly planet and all other living entities collected various presentations, according to their ability, to offer the King. Thus the great

King Pṛthu, exquisitely dressed with garments and ornaments, was coronated and placed on the throne. The King and his wife, Arci, who was also exquisitely ornamented, appeared exactly like fire. King Pṛthu thus satisfied and offered all respect to all the leaders of the brāhmaṇas and other castes, to his servants, to his ministers and to the priests, citizens, general countrymen, people from other communities, admirers and others, and thus they all became happy.

Vidura inquired from the great sage Maitreya:
My dear brāhmaṇa, since mother earth can appear in different shapes, why did she take the shape of a cow? And when King Pṛthu milked her, who became the calf, and what was the milking pot? The surface of the earth is by nature low in some places and high in others. How did King Pṛthu level the surface of the earth, and why did the King of heaven, Indra, steal the horse meant for the sacrifice?

Mahārāja Pṛthu, received knowledge from Sanat-kumāra, who was the greatest Vedic scholar. After receiving knowledge to be applied

practically in his life, how did the saintly King attain his desired destination?

The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, at the time King Pṛthu was enthroned by the great sages and brāhmaṇas and declared to be the protector of the citizens, there was a scarcity of food grains. The citizens actually became skinny due to starvation. Therefore they came before the King and informed him of their real situation. After hearing the lamentation and seeing the pitiable condition of the citizens, King Pṛthu contemplated this matter for a long time to see if he could find out

the underlying causes. Having arrived at a conclusion, the King took up his bow and arrow and aimed them at the earth, exactly like Lord Śiva, who destroys the whole world out of anger.

When the earth saw that King Pṛthu was taking his bow and arrow to kill her, she became very much afraid and began to tremble. She then began to flee, exactly like a deer, which runs very swiftly when followed by a hunter. Being afraid of King Pṛthu, she took the shape of a cow and began to run. Seeing this, Mahārāja Pṛthu became very angry, and his eyes became

as red as the early-morning sun. Placing an arrow on his bow, he chased the cow-shaped earth wherever she would run. The cow-shaped earth ran here and there in outer space between the heavenly planets and the earth, and wherever she ran, the King chased her with his bow and arrows. Just as a man cannot escape the cruel hands of death, the cow-shaped earth could not escape the hands of the son of Vena. At length the earth, fearful, her heart aggrieved, turned back in helplessness. Addressing the great, opulent King Pṛthu as the knower of religious principles and shelter of the

surrendered, she said: Please save me. You are the protector of all living entities. Now you are situated as the King of this planet. I am very poor and have not committed any sinful activities. I do not know why you want to kill me. Since you are supposed to be the knower of all religious principles, why are you so envious of me, and why are you so anxious to kill a woman? Even if a woman does commit some sinful activity, no one should place his hand upon her. And what to speak of you, dear King, who are so merciful. You are a protector, and you are affectionate to the poor. King Pṛthu

replied to the earthly planet: My dear earth, you have disobeyed my orders and rulings. In the form of a demigod you accepted your share of the yajñas we performed, but in return you have not produced sufficient food grains. For this reason I must kill you. Although you are eating green grass every day, you are not filling your milk bag so we can utilize your milk. Since you are willfully committing offenses, it cannot be said that you are not punishable due to your assuming the form of a cow.

Now, with the help of my arrows, I shall cut you to pieces and with your flesh satisfy the hunger-

stricken citizens, who are now crying for want of grains. Thus I shall satisfy the crying citizens of my kingdom. Any cruel person — be he a man, woman or impotent eunuch — who is only interested in his personal maintenance and has no compassion for other living entities may be killed by the king. Such killing can never be considered actual killing.

At this time Pṛthu Mahārāja became exactly like Yamarāja, and his whole body appeared very angry. In other words, he was anger personified. After hearing him, the planet earth began to tremble. She surrendered, and with

folded hands began to speak as follows. My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, You are transcendental in Your position, and by Your material energy You have expanded Yourself in various forms and species of life through the interaction of the three modes of material nature. Unlike some other masters, You always remain in Your transcendental position and are not affected by the material creation, which is subject to different material interactions. Consequently You are not bewildered by material activities. My dear Lord, please pacify your anger completely and hear

patiently whatever I submit before you. Please turn your kind attention to this. To benefit all human society, not only in this life but in the next, the great seers and sages have prescribed various methods conducive to the prosperity of the people in general. My dear King, the seeds, roots, herbs and grains, which were created by Lord Brahmā in the past, are now being used by nondevotees, who are devoid of all spiritual understanding. My dear King, not only are grains and herbs being used by nondevotees, but, as far as I am concerned, I am not being properly maintained. Indeed, I am

being neglected by kings who are not punishing these rascals who have turned into thieves by using grains for sense gratification.

Consequently I have hidden all these seeds, which were meant for the performance of sacrifice. Due to being stocked for a very long time, all the grain seeds within me have certainly deteriorated. Therefore you should immediately arrange to take these seeds out by the standard process, which is recommended by the ācāryas or śāstras.

O great hero, protector of living entities, if you desire to relieve the living entities by supplying

them sufficient grain, and if you desire to nourish them by taking milk from me, you should make arrangements to bring a calf suitable for this purpose and a pot in which the milk can be kept, as well as a milkman to do the work. Since I will be very much affectionate towards my calf, your desire to take milk from me will be fulfilled.

My dear King, may I inform you that you have to make the entire surface of the globe level. This will help me, even when the rainy season has ceased. Rainfall comes by the mercy of King Indra. Rainfall will remain on the surface of the

globe, always keeping the earth moistened, and thus it will be auspicious for all kinds of production. After hearing the auspicious and pleasing words of the planet earth, the King accepted them. He then transformed Svāyambhuva Manu into a calf and milked all the herbs and grains from the earth in the form of a cow, keeping them in his cupped hands. Others, who were as intelligent as King Pṛthu, also took the essence out of the earthly planet. Indeed, everyone took this opportunity to follow in the footsteps of King Pṛthu and get whatever he desired from the planet earth.

All the great sages transformed Bṛhaspati into a calf, and making the senses into a pot, they milked all kinds of Vedic knowledge to purify words, mind and hearing. All the demigods made Indra, the King of heaven, into a calf, and from the earth they milked the beverage soma, which is nectar. Thus they became very powerful in mental speculation and bodily and sensual strength. The sons of Diti and the demons transformed Prahlāda Mahārāja, who was born in an asura family, into a calf, and they extracted various kinds of liquor and beer, which they put into a pot made of iron.

The inhabitants of Gandharvaloka and Apsaroloka made Viśvāvasu into a calf, and they drew the milk into a lotus-flower pot. The milk took the shape of sweet musical art and beauty.

The fortunate inhabitants of Pitṛloka, who preside over the funeral ceremonies, made Aryamā into a calf. With great faith they milked kavya, food offered to the ancestors, into an unbaked earthen pot. After this, the inhabitants of Siddhaloka, as well as the inhabitants of Vidyādhara-loka, transformed the great sage Kapila into a calf, and making the whole sky into a pot, they milked out specific yogic mystic

powers, beginning with aṇimā. Others also, the inhabitants of planets known as Kimpuruṣa-loka, made the demon Maya into a calf, and they milked out mystic powers by which one can disappear immediately from another's vision and appear again in a different form.

Then the Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, ghosts and witches, who are habituated to eating flesh, transformed Lord Śiva's incarnation Rudra [Bhūtanātha] into a calf and milked out beverages made of blood and put them in a pot made of skulls.

Thereafter cobras and snakes without hoods, large snakes, scorpions and many other

poisonous animals took poison out of the planet earth as their milk and kept this poison in snake holes. They made a calf out of Takṣaka. The four-legged animals like the cows made a calf out of the bull who carries Lord Śiva and made a milking pot out of the forest. Thus they got fresh green grasses to eat. Ferocious animals like tigers transformed a lion into a calf, and thus they were able to get flesh for milk. The birds made a calf out of Garuḍa and took milk from the planet earth in the form of moving insects and nonmoving plants and grasses. The trees made a calf out of the banyan tree, and

thus they derived milk in the form of many delicious juices. The mountains transformed the Himālayas into a calf, and they milked a variety of minerals into a pot made of the peaks of hills. The planet earth supplied everyone his respective food. During the time of King Pṛthu, the earth was fully under the control of the King. Thus all the inhabitants of the earth could get their food supply by creating various types of calves and putting their particular types of milk in various pots. My dear Vidura, chief of the Kurus, in this way King Pṛthu and all the others who subsist on food created different

types of calves and milked out their respective eatables. Thus they received their various foodstuffs, which were symbolized as milk.

Thereafter King Pṛthu was very satisfied with the planet earth, for she sufficiently supplied all food to various living entities. Thus he developed an affection for the planet earth, just as if she were his own daughter. After this, the king of all kings, Mahārāja Pṛthu, leveled all rough places on the surface of the globe by breaking up the hills with the strength of his bow. By his grace the surface of the globe almost became flat. To all the citizens of the

state, King Pṛthu was as good as a father. Thus he was visibly engaged in giving them proper subsistence and proper employment for subsistence. After leveling the surface of the globe, he earmarked different places for residential quarters, inasmuch as they were desirable. In this way the King founded many types of villages, settlements and towns and built forts, residences for cowherdsmen, stables for the animals, places for the royal camps, mining places, agricultural towns and mountain villages.

Before the reign of King Pṛthu there was no planned arrangement for different cities, villages, pasturing grounds, etc. Everything was scattered, and everyone constructed his residential quarters according to his own convenience. However, from the time of King Pṛthu, plans were made for towns and villages.