

THE ACT OF PRACHETAS



The great sage Maitreya continued: Vijitāśva, the eldest son of Mahārāja Pṛthu, who had a reputation like his father's, became emperor and gave his younger brothers different directions of the world to govern, for he was very affectionate toward his brothers. In his lineage came

Havirdhāna, who had a very powerful son named Barhiṣat.

By his great qualifications, he became known as Prajāpati. Mahārāja Barhiṣat — henceforward known as Prācīnabarhi — was ordered by the supreme demigod Brahmā to marry the daughter of the ocean named Śatadruti. Her bodily features were completely beautiful, and she was very young.

While Śatadruti was thus being married, the demons, the denizens of Gandharvaloka, the great sages, and the

denizens of Siddhaloka, the earthly planets and Nāgaloka, although highly exalted, were all captivated by the tinkling of her ankle bells. King Prācīnabarhi begot ten children in the womb of Śatadruti. All of them were equally endowed with religiosity, and all of them were known as the Pracetās.

When all these Pracetās were ordered by their father to marry and beget children, they all entered the ocean and practiced austerities and penances for ten thousand years. Thus they worshiped the master of

all austerity, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

When all the sons of Prācīnabarhi left home to execute austerities, they met Lord Śiva, who, out of great mercy, instructed them about the Absolute Truth. All the sons of Prācīnabarhi meditated upon the instructions, chanting and worshiping them with great care and attention. All the Pracetā princes simply stood in the water for ten thousand years and recited the prayers given to them by Lord Śiva.

The great sage Maitreya said: The sons of King Prācīnabarhi, known as the Pracetās, underwent severe austerities within the seawater to carry out the order of their father. By chanting and repeating the mantras given by Lord Śiva, they were able to satisfy Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. At the end of ten thousand years of severe austerities performed by the Pracetās, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, to reward their austerities, appeared before them in His very pleasing form. This appealed to the

Pracetās and satisfied the labor of their austerities.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear sons of the King, I am very much pleased by the friendly relationships among you. All of you are engaged in one occupation — devotional service. I am so pleased with your mutual friendship that I wish you all good fortune. Now you may ask a benediction of Me.

Because you have with pleasure accepted within your hearts the orders of your father and have executed those orders very

faithfully, your attractive qualities will be celebrated all over the world. You will have a nice son, who will be in no way inferior to Lord Brahmā. Consequently, he will be very famous all over the universe, and the sons and grandsons generated by him will fill the three worlds.

O sons of King Prācīnabarhiṣat, the heavenly society girl named Pramlocā kept the lotus-eyed daughter of Kaṇḍu in the care of the forest trees. Then she went back to the heavenly planet. This daughter was born by the coupling of the Apsarā named Pramlocā with the sage Kaṇḍu.

Thereafter the child, who was left to the care of the trees, began to cry in hunger. At that time the king of the forest, namely the king of the moon planet, out of compassion placed his finger, which poured forth nectar, within the child's mouth. Thus the child was raised by the mercy of the king of the moon. Since all of you are very much obedient to My orders, I ask you to immediately marry that girl, who is so well qualified with beauty and good qualities. According to the order of your father, create progeny through her. After the Personality of Godhead spoke

thus, the Pracetās began offered prayers to Him.

Thereafter all the Pracetās emerged from the waters of the sea. They then saw that all the trees on land had grown very tall, as if to obstruct the path to the heavenly planets. These trees had covered the entire surface of the world. At this time the Pracetās became very angry. My dear King, at the time of devastation, Lord Śiva emits fire and air from his mouth out of anger. To make the surface of the earth completely treeless, the Pracetās also emitted fire and air from their mouths.

After seeing that all the trees on the surface of the earth were being turned to ashes, Lord Brahmā immediately came to the sons of King Barhiṣmān and pacified them with words of logic. The remaining trees, being very much afraid of the Pracetās, immediately delivered their daughter at the advice of Lord Brahmā.

Following the order of Lord Brahmā, all the Pracetās accepted the girl as their wife. From the womb of this girl, the son of Lord Brahmā named Dakṣa took birth. Dakṣa had to take birth from the womb of Māriṣā due to his disobeying and

disrespecting Lord Mahādeva [Śiva]. Consequently he had to give up his body twice. His previous body had been destroyed, but he, the same Dakṣa, inspired by the supreme will, created all the desired living entities in the Cākṣuṣa manvantara.

After being born, Dakṣa, by the super excellence of his bodily luster, covered all others' bodily opulence. Because he was very expert in performing fruitive activity, he was called by the name Dakṣa, meaning “the very expert.” Lord Brahmā therefore engaged Dakṣa in the work of generating

living entities and maintaining them. In due course of time, Dakṣa also engaged other Prajāpatis [progenitors] in the process of generation and maintenance.