

Lord Appears As Fish



At the end of the past millennium, at the end of Brahmā's day, because Lord Brahmā sleeps during the night, annihilation took place, and the three worlds were covered by the water of the ocean. At the end of Brahmā's day, when Brahmā felt sleepy and desired to lie down, the Vedas were

emanating from his mouth, and the great demon named Hayagrīva stole the Vedic knowledge.

Understanding the acts of the great demon Hayagrīva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who is full of all opulences, assumed the form of a fish and saved the Vedas by killing the demon.

During the Cākṣuṣa-manvantara there was a great king named Satyavrata who was a great devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Satyavrata performed austerities by subsisting only on water. One day while King Satyavrata was performing austerities by offering water on the bank of the river

Kṛtamālā, a small fish appeared in the water in his palms.

Satyavrata, threw the fish into the water of the river along with the water in his palm.

With an appealing voice, the poor small fish said to King Satyavrata, who was very merciful:

My dear King, protector of the poor, why are you throwing Me in the water of the river, where there are other aquatics who can kill Me? I am very much afraid of them.

To please himself, King Satyavrata, not knowing that the fish was the Supreme Personality of Godhead, decided with great

pleasure to give the fish protection. The merciful King, being moved by the pitiable words of the fish, placed the fish in a water jug and brought Him to his own residence. But in one night that fish grew so much that He could not move His body comfortably in the water of the pot. He then spoke to the King as follows.

O My dear King, I do not like living in this waterpot with such great difficulty. Therefore, please find some better reservoir of water where I can live comfortably.

Then, taking the fish out of the waterpot, the King threw Him in a large well. But within a moment the fish developed to the length of

three cubits.

The fish then said: My dear King, this reservoir of water is not fit for My happy residence. Please give Me a more extensive pool of water, for I have taken shelter of you.

The King took the fish from the well and threw Him in a lake, but the fish then assumed a gigantic form exceeding the extent of the water.

The fish then said: O King, I am a large aquatic, and this water is not at all suitable for Me. Now kindly find some way to save Me. It would be better to put Me in the water of a lake that will never reduce.

When thus requested, King Satyavrata took the fish to the largest reservoir of water. But when that also proved insufficient, the King at last threw the gigantic fish into the ocean.

While being thrown in the ocean, the fish said to King Satyavrata: O hero, in this water there are very powerful and dangerous sharks that will eat Me. Therefore you should not throw Me in this place.

After hearing these sweet words from the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the form of a fish, the King, being bewildered, asked Him: Who are You, sir? You simply bewilder us.

My Lord, in one day You have expanded Yourself for hundreds of miles, covering the water of the river and the ocean. Before this I had never seen or heard of such an aquatic animal. You are certainly the inexhaustible Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, Śrī Hari. It is to show Your mercy to the living entities that You have now assumed the form of an aquatic. All Your pastimes and incarnations certainly appear for the welfare of all living entities. Therefore, my Lord, I wish to know the purpose for which You have assumed this form of a fish.

When King Satyavrata spoke in this way, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who at the

end of the yuga had assumed the form of a fish to benefit His devotee and enjoy His pastimes in the water of inundation, responded as follows.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O King, on the seventh day from today the three worlds — Bhūḥ, Bhuvah and Svah — will all merge into the water of inundation. When all the three worlds merge into the water, a large boat sent by Me will appear before you. Thereafter, O King, you shall collect all types of herbs and seeds and load them on that great boat. Then, accompanied by the seven ṛṣis and surrounded by all kinds of living entities, you shall get aboard that

boat, and without moroseness you shall easily travel with your companions on the ocean of inundation, the only illumination being the effulgence of the great ṛṣis.

Then, as the boat is tossed about by the powerful winds, attach the vessel to My horn by means of the great serpent Vāsuki, for I shall be present by your side. Pulling the boat, with you and all the ṛṣis in it, O King, I shall travel in the water of devastation until the night of Lord Brahmā's slumber is over. You will be thoroughly advised and favored by Me, and because of your inquiries, everything about My glories, which are known as param brahma, will be manifest

within your heart. Thus you will know everything about Me.

After thus instructing the King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead immediately disappeared. Then King Satyavrata began to wait for that time of which the Lord had instructed. After spreading kuśa with its tips pointing east, the saintly King, himself facing the northeast, sat down on the grass and began to meditate upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, who had assumed the form of a fish.

Thereafter, gigantic clouds pouring incessant water swelled the ocean more and more. Thus the ocean began to overflow onto the

land and inundate the entire world. As Satyavrata remembered the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he saw a boat coming near him. Thus he collected herbs and creepers, and, accompanied by saintly brāhmaṇas, he got aboard the boat.

The saintly brāhmaṇas, being pleased with the King, said to him: O King, please meditate upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Keśava. He will save us from this impending danger and arrange for our well-being.

Then, while the King constantly meditated upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a large golden fish appeared in the ocean of

inundation. The fish had one horn and was eight million miles long. Following the instructions formerly given by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the King anchored the boat to the fish's horn, using the serpent Vāsuki as a rope. Thus being satisfied, he began offering prayers to the Lord.

My Lord, You are the supreme well-wishing friend of everyone, the dearest friend, the controller, the Supersoul, the supreme instructor and the giver of supreme knowledge and the fulfillment of all desires. But although You are within the heart, the foolish, because of lusty desires in the heart, cannot understand You.

O Supreme Lord, for self-realization I surrender unto You, who are worshiped by the demigods as the supreme controller of everything. By Your instructions, exposing life's purpose, kindly cut the knot from the core of my heart and let me know the destination of my life.

When Satyavrata had thus prayed to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who had assumed the form of a fish, the Lord, while moving in the water of inundation, explained to him the Absolute Truth.

At the end of the last inundation [during the period of Svāyambhuva Manu] the Supreme Personality of Godhead killed the demon

named Hayagrīva and delivered all the Vedic literatures to Lord Brahmā when Lord Brahmā awakened from sleeping. King Satyavrata was illuminated with all Vedic knowledge by the mercy of Lord Viṣṇu, and in this period he has now taken birth as Vaivasvata Manu, the son of the sun-god.

This story concerning the great King Satyavrata and the fish incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, is a great transcendental narration. Anyone who hears it is delivered from the reactions of sinful life. One who narrates this description of the Matsya incarnation and King Satyavrata will certainly have all his

ambitions fulfilled, and he will undoubtedly
return home, back to Godhead.