

month of Mārgaśīrṣa in accordance with the injunctions, obtains the merit of all Kratus. It (the Purāṇa) contains sixteen thousand verses.

49-50. In the context of the events of Aghorakalpa, the Four-faced Lord of the universe explained to Manu the characteristics of all the Bhūtas (living beings, elements, spirits) on the basis of the greatness of Āditya. It is called *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* because mostly future events are described. It contains fourteen thousand five hundred verses.

51. He who is free from jealousy and makes a gift of the Purāṇa on the full-moon day in the month of Pauṣa along with a pot of jaggery, shall obtain the merit of Agniṣṭoma.

52-53. With reference to the events of the Rathantara Kalpa, the story of Brahma-Varāha along with the greatness of Kṛṣṇa was narrated by Sāvārṇi to Nārada. It is called *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa*. It contains eighteen thousand verses. He who makes a gift of *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* to an excellent Brāhmaṇa on the full-moon day in the month of Māgha, is honoured in the world of Brahmā.

54-55. Lord Maheśvara staying in the middle of a fiery Liṅga expounds (the Puruṣārthas) Virtue, Wealth, Love and Salvation in the context of Āgneya Kalpa. It is called *Liṅga Purāṇa* by Brahmā himself.

56. It contains eleven thousand verses. He who makes a gift of it on the full-moon day in the month of Phālguna along with *Tiladhenu* attains identity with Śiva.

57. With reference to the greatness of Mahāvarāha Viṣṇu expounds (virtue etc.) to the Earth. It is called *Varāhapurāṇa*.

58. O excellent sages, it is in the context of Dhanya (a blessed one), the son of Manu. That Purāṇa contains twenty-five thousand verses.

59. A devotee should make a gold replica of Garuḍa and give it along with *Tiladhenu* to a Brāhmaṇa of a large family. He attains the region of Viṣṇu with the favour of Varāha.

60-61. It is with reference to the religious practices of (the followers) of Maheśvara and with special reference to the Six-faced Lord. It describes in details the events which happened in Tatpuruṣa Kalpa. That Purāṇa called *Skanda* is said to consist of eighty-one thousand one hundred verses. It is thus recited among mortals (people).

62. He who copies it and makes a gift of it along with a trident made of gold when the Sun enters Capricorn, attains the region of Śiva.

63. With reference to the greatness of Trivikramā as the basis, the Four-faced Lord expounds the three aims of life. It is glorified as *Vāmana Purāṇa*.

64. This Purāṇa contains ten thousand verses. It is a Śaiva Purāṇa consisting of (the events of) Kaurmakalpa.

65. He who makes a gift of it on the autumnal equinox along with gold and garments, covered with a silk cloth and accompanied by a cow, attains the region of Viṣṇu.

66-68. In Rasātala, in the presence of Indra and sages, Janārdana, in the form of a Tortoise expounded the greatness of (the Puruṣārthas, viz.) Virtue, Wealth, Love and Liberation, in the Lakṣmīkalpa in the context of the interlude of Indradyumna. It (*Kūrma Purāṇa*) consists of seventeen thousand verses. He who makes the gift of the *Kūrma Purāṇa* along with a gold replica of tortoise, shall obtain the merit of gifting a thousand cows.

69-70. For the propagation of the Vedas at the beginning of a Kalpa, Janārdana assumed the form of a Fish and expounded to Manu the events of seven Kalpas in the course of the description of Narasiṃha. O sage of holy rites, know this as the *Matsya Purāṇa*. It contains fourteen thousand verses.

71. If anyone makes the gift (of this *Purāṇa*) covered with a silk cloth on the day of equinox along with a gold replica of a fish and a cow, it is as though the entire earth has been gifted by him.

72. In Garuḍa Kalpa, Garuḍa came out of *Viśvāṇḍa* (Cosmic Egg). Kṛṣṇa expounded this Purāṇa on that as the basis. It is called *Garuḍa Purāṇa*.

73. It is recited in (i.e. consists of) nineteen thousand verses. He who makes a gift of it along with a gold replica of a swan in the latter *Ayana* (i.e. Southern transit) [If *pare* is taken to mean "the great", then the *Ayana* will be the Northern] one achieves the principal Siddhi and a stay in Śiva Loka.

74. Brahmā again expounded the greatness of the Cosmic Egg. That is *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* containing twelve thousand two hundred verses.

75. A detailed description of the future Kalpas is found therein. That *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* is narrated by Brahmā.

76-77a. A man who makes the gift of that Purāṇa along with two woollen cloths, attains the merit of a thousand Rājasūyas. If the gift is accompanied by a gold replica of a cow, it bestows the region of Brahmā.

77b-78. Thus (the whole range of Purāṇas) was spoken by Vyāsa of miraculous deeds in four hundred thousand verses briefly in Dvāpara, O Brāhmaṇas, for the sake of the benefit of all the worlds.

79. The same tract of literature called Purāṇa among the celestial beings extends to a hundred crores.

[Upapurāṇas: Extent and Contents]

Now I shall narrate the different Upapurāṇas that have been established in the world.

80. The description of Narasimha has been included in *Padma Purāṇa*. It contains eighteen thousand verses. It is called *Nārasimha (Upa) Purāṇa*.

81. (The text) wherein the greatness (of the Lord) has been described by Kārttikeya to Nandin has become well-known in the world as *Nandi Purāṇa*, O excellent Brāhmaṇas.

82. O Brāhmaṇas of holy Vratas, that Upapurāṇa of Sām̐ba is famous in the world and the story therein pertains to Sām̐ba.

83. Thus the *Āditya* Upapurāṇa is mentioned there itself. It is seen as separate from the eighteen Upapurāṇas, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, know that it has been taken out of these.

84. There are five Aṅgas (limbs or sections) of the Purāṇa. They are: *Sarga* (creation), *Pratisarga* (subsidiary creation), *Vam̐śa* (the royal lineage), *Manvantaras* (the periods of the rule of Manus), *Vam̐śānuvam̐śa Carita* (the description of the dynasties of Sages etc.). Thus a Purāṇa has five characteristics.

85. Another interpretation : the five characteristics are the description of the greatness of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Arka (the Sun god) and Rudra and the annihilation of the universe. All these five are seen in a Purāṇa.

86. In all the Purāṇas virtue, wealth, love and salvation as well as the benefit contained in them have been explained.

87. In the Sāttvika Kalpas the greatness of Hari is supreme. They know that the greatness of Brahmā reigns supreme in the Rājasa Kalpas.

88. Similarly the greatness of Śiva is to be found in the

Tāmasa Kalpas. In a Purāṇa of a mixed nature, the greatness of Sarasvatī and Piṭṛs is narrated.

89. Among the eighteen Purāṇas, Lord Viṣṇu is extolled in four (Purāṇas), Brahmā and Ravi each in two and Lord Śiva in the remaining ones.

90. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, I think that Purāṇa is steady (unchangeable) like the Vedas. All the Vedas are established in the Purāṇas. There is no doubt about it.

91. The Veda is afraid of the men of insufficient knowledge of the lore and feels: "Oh! This man will move and dislodge me." It (Veda) has been rendered firm and steady formerly by means of Itihāsas and Purāṇas.

92. What is not seen in the Vedas, O Brāhmaṇas, what is not seen in the Smṛtis and what is not seen in both of them is being sung about in the Purāṇas.

93. A Brāhmaṇa who knows all the four Vedas along with their Aṅgas and the Upaniṣads, but who does not know the Purāṇa is not learned.

94. After composing the eighteen Purāṇas, the son of Satyavatī (Vyāsa) wrote the narrative (epic) of Bhārata rendering it strengthened through the topics of the Vedas.

95-97. It was propounded by the noble soul by means a hundred thousand verses at the end of Dvāpara.

Brahmā composed the story of Rāma in a hundred crores of verses. He spoke (transmitted) it unto Nārada and through him to Vālmīki and Vālmīki narrated the excellent story of Rāma that enables one to achieve virtue, wealth and love in this world in one-fourth of a Lakṣa of verses i.e. in twenty-five thousand verses.

98. Thus these twenty-five thousand verses are glorified as meritorious. Learned men understood everything about the ancient Kalpas from the Purāṇa.

99-100. In accordance with the demands of the age (*Kāla*) the Itihāsas and Purāṇas differ, O leading Brāhmaṇas. Different versions of the Purāṇas, *Skanda*, *Brahmāṇḍa* and *Liṅga* are current in the Vārāha Kalpa. Indeed Brahmāṇḍa is different in eighteen ways.

101. Therefore, the Purāṇas came to be eighteen in the world. The splendid *Liṅga Purāṇa* was divided into eleven different sections in Dvāpara.

## [Khaṇḍas of the Skanda Purāna]

102. The intelligent Vedavyāsa has divided the *Skanda Purāna* into seven Khaṇḍas. The number of verses in the *Skanda* is eighty-one thousand one hundred.

103. The first Book or Khaṇḍa is called *Māheśvara Khaṇḍa*. It contains the greatness of Skanda. The second one is remembered as *Vaiṣṇava Khaṇḍa*.

104. The third one is mentioned as *Brahma Khaṇḍa*. It briefly expounds the creation (of the universe). The fourth one is cited as one containing the greatness of Kāśī (*Kāśī Khaṇḍa*).

105. The fifth one is glorified as describing the greatness of Revā along with that of Ujjayinī. The sixth one is *Nāgara Kalpa* (Khaṇḍa). It indicates the greatness of the Tīrthas.

106. O Brāhmaṇas, this seventh book is remembered as *Prābhāsika* (Khaṇḍa). Each of these Books is glorified as containing twelve thousand verses (approximately).

107. In this *Prābhāsika Khaṇḍa* all the details of holy spots, greatness of the Tīrthas and greatness of Śaṅkara are explained.

108. Of course the greatness of the other Devas too is mentioned.

Thus, O Brāhmaṇas, the different Purānas are succinctly told.

109. One who reads this enumeration of the eighteen Purānas at the time of the offering of *Havyas* and *Kavyas* goes to the abode of Hari.

110. This is indeed the storehouse of renown. This is a favourite of the Pitṛs. This gives satisfaction to the Devas always, like nectar. This destroys great sins of men.