CHAPTER EIGHT

(Description of the Hell)\textsuperscript{231}

Citragupta said:—

1-2. O ye sinners, of evil actions, stealers of other man's riches, outragers of the modesty of other's wives, arrogant by your comeliness and might, why was sin

\textsuperscript{231} The chapter mentions several hells and their cells to each of which it assigns a group of five emissaries who look after the tortures inflicted upon the wicked in accordance with their sins. The purânas vary greatly as to the number and names of the hells. Manu mentions twenty one hells only.
committed by you all, for your own ruination? The actions committed by you shall be endured and the fruits thereof shall be reaped.

3. Why do you lament now? You are being tortured by your own actions. Reap the fruits thereof. This is not the fault of anyone else.

Sanatkumāra said:—

4-5. Similarly, the infuriated great lord Citragupta, the knower of virtuousness, at the behest and instruction of Yamarāja imparts the following advice to the kings who proud of their might had committed many misdeeds and had been brought near him ultimately.

Citragupta said:—

6. O ye wicked kings, who had tyrannised over and repressed your subjects, why were misdeeds committed for your rule of a very short duration?

7. O kings, let the fruits be reaped now (of the evil actions) in having punished your subjects unjusticiably due to your fascination for kingly pleasures. You have misused your might.

8. Where is that kingdom? Where is your mistress? Where are those for whom sin and evil have been perpetrated? You have left them all and stand here alone.

9. I see that might quelled, the might that suppressed the subjects. How will you fare when you too are subjected to the same treatment by the emissaries of Yama?

Sanatkumāra said:—

10. The kings who are treated with these and other similar taunts by Yama bewail their own lot and stand silent.

11. After having proclaimed their evil actions, Yama, Dharmarāja speaks to the messengers thus, for wiping off the sins of those kings.

Yamarāja said:—

12. O Canda, O Mahācanda, seize these kings forcibly and purify them gradually in the fires of hell.
Sanatkumāra said:

13-14. Then they immediately catch hold of the kings by their feet, whirl them with great velocity, throw them up and when they fall they catch them again and dash them against a heated rock. They are thus felled like great trees smitten with the thunderbolt.

15. Then the man sheds blood through his ears. He is wholly shattered. He becomes unconscious and motionless.

16. When the wind blows against him he is resuscitated to life again. In order to purify him of his sins they throw him into the ocean of hell.

17. At the end of the seventh nether-world Tala, there are twenty-eight Narakakotis situated in terrible darkness.

18. The first cell is called Ghorā. Sughorā is situated beneath it. Atighorā and Mahāghorā come next and Ghorarūpā is the fifth.

19. The sixth is named Talātalā. The seventh is Bhayānakā. The eighth is Kālarātri and the ninth is Bhayotkaṭā.

20-21. The tenth beneath the previous is Caṇḍā. Mahācaṇḍā is lower still. Caṇḍakolāhalā is another. Pracaṇḍā, Caṇḍanāyikā, Padmā, Padmāvatī, Bhītā, Bhīmā, Bhīṣaṇa-nāyikā and Vajrā are terrible, very terrible.

22. The next eight cells are Trikoṇā, Paṅcakoṇā, Sudirghā, Akhilārtidā, Samā, Bhīmabalā, Atyugrā and the eighth Diptaprayā.

23 Thus the cells of Naraka have been mentioned to you by their names. Each of these is meant for the torture for a particular sin. Thus the twenty-eight cells for twenty-eight type of sins.

24. For each of these cells there are five officers-in-charge. Now I shall mention the names of the hells of each of these cells. Understand them well.

25. Raurava is the first where the embodied beings cry. Mahāraurava is the next. Due to the tortures here even greatmen cry.

26-42. There are cool and hot hells. The first five are the leading hells. The hells are named thus: Sughora Sumahāṭikṣaṇa, Saṃjīvana, Mahātamas, Viloma, Vilopa
Sanatkumāra said:

43-45. Thus for twentyeight cells there are five officers in charge of each. Raurava and other hells are thus hundred and more. The great zones of hell are forty hundreds. Thus O Vyāsa, I have described the hells to you. The enumeration arouses detachment from the sin. Now listen to the pangs of sinners.
CHAPTER NINE

(Pangs of hell)

_Sanatkumāra said:_

1. In the hellish fires, the sinners are roasted and dried up by diverse tortures till their action is exhausted completely.

2. Just as metals are melted in fire to remove their impurities so also sinners are put in hells in order to remove their sins.

3. The hands are tightly tied and the men are battered. Then they are suspended from the branches of tall trees by the attendants of Yama.

4. Then they are pushed by the servants till they begin to oscillate a Yojana unconscious by their rapidity.

5. Even as they are suspended in mid air, iron hundred Bhāras in weight is tied to their feet by the emissaries of Yama.

6. Afflicted by such a heavy weight the sinners begin to think about their evil actions and keep quiet and motionless.

7. Then the sinners are beaten with goads of fiery colour and terrible iron rods by the terrible servants of Yama.

8. Then they are again smeared with glowing acid more unbearable than fire.

9-11. Their limbs are cut and smothered, gradually torn and severed and smeared with molten metal. They are then roasted like brinjal in red-hot iron cauldrons. They are then cast into wells full of filth, swarms of worms or in tanks full of putrid fat and blood. They are eaten by worm and crows with beaks strong as iron.

12. Dogs, mosquitoes, wolves and tigers of terrible and hideous faces too devour them. They are roasted like fish over glowing heaps of coal.

13-14. Due to their sinful actions men are pierced through with sharp spears. They are put in oil extracting machines called Cakra and crushed like gingelly seeds and beaten into pulp. They are fried in iron cauldrons red hot in the blazing sunlight.
15. They are fried in boiling oil in cauldrons again and again. Their tongues, chests and feet are struck in many ways.

16. Here the tortures to the body are very severe. Men thus go from one hell to another and are tortured in all the hells.

17. O vyāsa, terrible tortures are inflicted in diverse ways in all the hells by Yama’s emissaries. They are grievous and painful to every part of the body.

18-19. Their mouths are filled with the burning coals and again with acid red hot, copper hot clarified butter and oil and they are beaten afterwards.

20. They are filled with faeces and worms and are forced to embrace the red hot fierce iron-silk cotton tree.

21-22. They are then beaten on the back with heated hammer. Their heads and their limbs are crushed with too blunt tooth-edged strong scissors. They are thus tortured by their own actions. Their flesh is eaten and their blood is drunk by them.

23. Those who fed and nurtured only themselves and never made any gift of food or drink are crushed with iron rods like sugarcane.

24. In the terrible hell Asitālavana they are cut into pieces. Their limbs are pierced through with needles. They are staked on to heated spearheads.

25. Tossed about many times their bodies do not perish but are severely pained. They become used to bear the pleasure or pain.

26. Flesh is torn off their bodies and they are pounded with iron clubs of tooth-edged shapes by terribly mighty emissaries of Yama.

27. In the hell Nirucchvāsa they are forced to stand without breathing, for a long time. In the hell Ucchvāsa they are hit and thrashed in a house of sand.

28. In the hell Raurava they are made to cry and inflicted pain by various tortures. Due to the tortures in the hell, Mahāraurava, even great men cry.

29. They are beaten on the faces, feet anus, skull,
eyes and forehead with blocks of iron and sharp-edged redhot iron spikes.

30. They are again and again rolled on hot sand. Cast into boiling marsh of creatures they make harsh shrieking sounds.

31. O sage, in the hell kumbhīpāka sinners of ruthless misdeeds are fried in unbearable boiling oil.

32. The sinners are felled and dragged along various torturing places again and again in the hell named Lālābhakṣa.

33. Sinners devoid of merit are beaten by Yama’s servants. They are hurled into the torturous hell Sūcīmukha.

34. They are put into iron pots. They breathe hard and slow. They are scorched by great fire, as if by their own sins.

35. They are tied tightly with ropes and are rolled on rocks and harassed. They are cast into deep gloomy wells. They are subjected to bee-bites.

36. When their bodies are cut, bitten and gnawed by worms in a hundred places, they are hurled into wells of pungent acid.

37. In the blazing hell the distressed sinners, shriek and run about here and there scorched by its flames.

38-39. People are clubbed and tied together with mouths resting on shoulders and hands brought through the hollow and tied with nooses and ropes to the back. Such bundles of bodies are seen in the Mahājvala undergoing tortures.

40. They are tied with ropes, smeared with mud and scorched in husk and cowdung fire but do not perish.

41. Dragged and rolled through rough and coarse rocks, beaten and burnt like straw, the sinners of ruthless conduct, are tortured.

42-43. The worms eat through their bodies with their sharp mouths and teeth. With their bodies gradually hurled over swarms of worms, heaps of putrid flesh and bones they stay there distressed, dejected and crushed between two mountains.

44. They are kept with face down and legs up and
scorched in fire. Their bodies are smeared with hot adamantine solution.

45. Red hot iron clubs are thrust into their mouths. They are helplessly forced to gnaw at it. They are then beaten with iron threshing rods.

46. O Vyāsa, thus the sinners of misdeeds are cooked and scorched in hells. I shall now describe their various modes of undergoing the tortures of hell.

CHAPTER TEN
(The mode of sufferings in the Hell)

Sanatkumāra said:—

1. He who follows false scriptures goes to the hell Dvijihva. He is tortured by the tongue-like ploughshares extending to one and a half kilometres.

2. The mouth of the man who had been cruel to his parents and had reproached them is filled with faeces and worms and he is beaten.

3-5. Men who defile the temple of Śiva, the park surrounding it and the wells, tanks and lakes therein, in various ways such as playing there, applying oil and unguents over the body, drinking bouts, taking food, indulgence in sexual intercourse, game of dice etc. are tortured by being crushed in the sugarcane-crushing machine and other mechanical contrivances. They are scorched in hellish fire till the final day of dissolution.

6. Sinners who indulge in illicit union with other’s wives are forced to embrace red-hot iron images of those women with whom they had illicit relation and struck in various ways.

7. Images of those men are made of red hot iron and the erring women are forced to embrace those images. They cry and shriek.

8-10. Those who listen to the censure of good people are punished thus: ears filled with red hot pins of
iron, copper, tin, lead or brass, or with boiling milk or oil or adamantine liquid again and again. The tortures in the hells are inflicted by filling the ears with these and other parts one after the other. The procedure here too is the same as in the case of ears.

11 Similar tortures are inflicted on all the organs of the body with which the acts of sin had been committed.

12. The hands of those sinners who touch other’s wives are filled with red hot fillings.

13. Their bodies are smeared with corrosive substances such as acid etc. Tortures are acute and grievous in all the hells.

14. The faces of men who show wry faces with knit eye-brows to their parents are scratched from end to end with sharp pikes.

15. The organs wherewith men defile or harass women are respectively tortured.

16. If they had looked at other women with greedy gaping eyes, red hot needles are stuck in their eyes.

17. O excellent sage, it is true, true. There is no doubt. Tortures of Yama by acids etc. take place here itself in the hells.

18. If people take food without first offering it to the gods, firegod, preceptors and brahmins, their tongues and mouths are pierced through and filled with hundreds of red-hot nails of iron.

19-20. If men, out of greed, pluck and sniff at flowers of the temple parks, or wear them on their heads, their heads are covered with iron spikes and their noses are filled with plenty of acid and other things.

21-23. Red-hot three-pointed iron rods are thrust and pushed through the chest, neck, tongue, tooth-joints, palate, lips, nostrils and all the limb-joints of those persons who slander and censure the noble-preacher of virtue, devotees of the gods, fire-god and preceptor as well as the eternal scriptural texts.

232. Adorning the locks of hair is the common characteristic of the people of Daksināpatha across the Narmadā river. This practice never prevailed among North Indian people.
24. The crevices of the body are filled with corrosive acid. Severe tortures are inflicted all over the body.

25-26. Those who take other’s wealth or kick or even touch a brahmin with their legs go from hell to hell serially. Those who touch illegally or stamp with the foot the materials for Śiva’s worship, cow, or a Manuscript in which words of wisdom are written, are tortured by filling—(as mentioned before).

27. In all hells various tortures of grievous nature are inflicted on hands and feet.

28-30. If sinners evacuate their bowels or pass urine near Śiva’s temple or in the premises of the lord’s parks their penis along with the scrotum is pounded into powder by iron-threshing rods. Red hot needles are stuffed into his anus and penis. Acute corrosive acid or molten metals are poured into them.

31-32. As a result of the previous tortures their minds and all sense-organs are put to great misery. Those who, despite being rich do not make monetary gifts due to greed, and those who dishonour guests visiting their houses at the proper time, commit sins and fall into dirty hell.

33-34. Those who take food before offering oblations to dogs and crows are tortured by beating two nails into their open mouths. They are further harassed through worms, fierce living beings and by means of crows with iron beaks. Various other sorts of tortures too are in store for them.

35-40. He who is dark and he who is multi-coloured—these two are the obstacles to the path of Yama. To these two dogs I am offering this oblation. Let them take this oblation. Let the pious crows in the direction of Varuṇa (west), of Vāyu (north-west), of Yama (south) and of Nairṛti (south-west), accept this oblation of mine”. Those who offer this Bali with Śiva’s mantras, after worshipping Śiva with devotion and performing Homa duly, do not face Yama. They go straight to heaven. Hence this oblation shall be offered daily. A square mystic diagram is made and sweet

233. The text mentions the two dogs and crows to whom the offerings shall be made in favour of the departed spirit. It mentions the cow that takes the spirits across Vaitarāṇī.
scents are offered. The oblation to Dhanvantari is made in the Isāna corner (north-east); that to Indra in the east; that to Yama in the south; that to Śiva with Dakṣa and Umā in the west; that to the Pīṭṛs in the south; that to Aryaman in the east and to Dhātṛ and Vidhātṛ at the entrance.

41-44. The offerings to dogs and lords of dogs and to the crows are made on the ground. A householder is depended upon by the gods, Pīṭṛs, ghosts, all sorts of living beings, Guhyakas, birds, worms and insects. The four nipples of the cow are respectively Svāhākāra, Svadhākāra, Vaṣaṭākāra and Hantakāra. The Svāhākāra nipple is sucked by gods; the Svadhākāra by the manes, the Vaṣaṭākāra by the other gods as well as lords of the Bhūtas and the Hantakāra nipple is drunk by human beings.

45-46. He who serves the cow thus with faith and reverence deserves to maintain the sacrificial fires. He who forsakes it is drowned in the hell Tāmisra. Hence after offering Bali to these at the door, the householder shall meditate for a short while.

47. One shall feed the hungry guest staying in the same village with auspicious food, in accordance with his ability and with the same dishes as he partakes of himself.

48. If a guest turns back from a house disappointed he takes away all the merits of the householder and leaves his own sins behind.

49. A man eating delicious food by himself stays in the hell for a long time fettered in the body and pierced in the tongue with force.

50-51. Bits of his own flesh, of the size of a small gingelly seed, are cut off from his body and are given to him for eating. Blood is similarly taken and given for drinking. He is then beaten with whips. Thus he is tormented with hunger and thirst.

52. These and similar things constitute the terrible

234. The gifts offered to the principal gods, manes, subsidiary gods, and human beings with the utterance of words स्वाहा, स्वच्छा, वपट् and हल्ल are likened to the milk-drops from the four teats of the cow.
tortures inflicted on sinners. What comes off in the end may be listened to in brief.

53. There may be a person who has done more sin than good or a person who has done more good than evil. Now listen to the result of their actions.

54. The fruit of good actions is immaterial because it is the sin that is prominent. His pleasure is insignificant since he has to undergo manifold suffering due to his bad deeds.

55. He is put to misery and distress. As sumptuous food is not pleasing to a person if that is not repeated every day so his small joys are of no avail in the face of various sufferings he has to undergo.\[15\\]

56. On the other hand a man of more good actions is not distressed by a few sufferings due to small sins just as a rich householder is not distressed by hunger when he fasts for a day.

57. There are great sins in the world which shatter a man into hundreds of pieces like a mountain struck down by thunderbolt.

**CHAPTER ELEVEN**

*(The glory of the gift of food)*

*Vyāsa said:*

1. Those who commit sins go along the path to Yama with great misery. O holy lord, now narrate the righteous deeds which render pleasure in the path of Yama.

*Sanatkumāra said:*

2. Auspicious or inauspicious, one has of necessity to reap the fruit of actions committed by him without thinking. I shall now mention those sacred rites that yield happiness.

235. The text of the second half of the verse is defective. We have adopted the reading अभावावश्यपतीन्यस्य for अभावावश्यपतीन्यस्य to suit the context.
3. Men who perform auspicious rites here, whose minds are gentle and who are merciful pass through the terrible path of Yama happily.

4. He who makes gifts of sandals of leather or wood to leading brahmins goes happily to the abode of Yama on a great horse.

5. By making gifts of umbrella they go holding an umbrella. By making gifts of palanquin he goes by means of a chariot.

6. By making gifts of beds and seats he goes with ample rest. Those who make shady parks or those who plant trees on the wayside go without weariness even in the hottest region.

7. Men making flower gardens go by the aerial chariot Puspaka. Makers of temples feel at home on the way.

8. The founders of hermitages of ascetics and Rest houses for the orphans feel as if they play in the house.

9. Worshippers of the gods, fire-god brahmins and their parents go along that path as they please. They are honoured on the way.

10. Those who gift lamps, go brightly illuminating all the ten quarters. By giving dwellings and asylums they go without ailments on the way.

11. Those who habitually serve their preceptors go without difficulty. They get ample rest on the way. Those who gift musical instruments to brahmins go happily feeling at home on the way.

12. Givers of cows go along the path flourishing with all their desires. They get those food-stuffs and drinks which they give away here, on that path also.

13. By giving water for washing the feet one goes along the path full of water. He who gifts oils for massaging the feet goes on horseback along that way.

14. O Vyāsa, Yama never comes near the man who always makes gifts of water for washing the feet, oil for massaging, lamps, foodstuffs and dwellings.

15. By making gifts of gold and gems he crosses all impassable hurdles. By gifting silver and oxen he goes to Yamaloka happily.
16. By these and similar charitable gifts people go happily to Yama's abode. They attain different pleasures in the heaven.

17. Of all charitable gifts the gift of food is the greatest. It is pleasing. It gives pleasure immediately. It enhances strength and intellect.

18. O excellent sage, there is no other charitable gift on a par with the gift of food. All living beings originate from food. In its absence they die.

19. Food gives blood, flesh, fat and semen and out of semen living beings are born. Hence the universe is identical with food.

20. Hungry men are not delighted even if they possess these things viz—gold, gems, horses, elephants, women, garlands, sandal paste and the like.

21. All persons, the child in the womb, the new born babe, the child, the middle aged man, the old man, the gods, the dānavas or Rākṣasas desire food.

22. Hunger is the acutest of all ailments. There is no doubt that it perishes on the application of the medicinal ointment viz food.

23. There is no misery equal to hunger; no sickness equal to hunger; no happiness on a par with being free from sickness and no enemy equal to anger.

24. All embodied beings die when scorched by the fire of hunger. That is why it is glorified that there is great merit in the charitable gift of food.

25. The giver of food is the giver of life. The giver of life is the giver of all. Hence one attains the benefit of gifting everything by means of the charitable gift of food.

26. If a man performs holy and sacred rites after being nourished with the food gifted by someone, the merit of the sacred rites is shared half and half by the two—namely by the giver of food and the performer of the rites. There is no doubt in this.

27. The giver of charitable gift of food obtains here and hereafter whatever means of pleasure there are in the three worlds such as gems, women and vehicles.

28. This body is the greatest of the means of achieve-
ment of virtue, wealth, love and salvation. Hence one should preserve one's body with food and drink.

29. They praise only food. Everything is founded on food. There has never been a charitable gift like that of food, nor will there ever be any.

30. O sage, the entire universe is sustained by food. It is food that infuses virility in the people. The vital airs are founded on food.

31. Even by putting one's family to inconvenience and trouble one should give food to a mendicant brahmin of noble soul, if one wishes for one's prosperity.

32. He who gives food to a suppliant brahmin in distress actually makes an excellent deposit facilitating his benefit in the other world.

33. A householder, desirous of prosperity shall worship a brahmin who has approached him at the proper time for his livelihood, or who is travel-weary and comes to his house as a guest.

34-35. O Vyāsa, a giver of food, of good conduct and free from malice, is honoured. A gift of food never goes in vain be it to a dog or a person who cooks dogs. If a person eschews anger that surges up he derives happiness here and hereafter. He should not encourage it even if it is natural. One shall try to eschew it somehow.

36. He who gives food to a weary, unknown traveller, without feeling distressed for the same will derive prosperity.

37. The meritorious benefit of the man, O great sage, who delights Pitṛs, gods, brahmins and guests with food-stuffs, in really immense.

38. Gift of food and drink whether to a Śūdra or to a brahmin is equally excellent. One should not ask the spiritual lineage,236 branch of the Vedas237 or the country of the recipient.

39. He who gives food when begged by a brahmin, goes to the highest heaven and remains there till the final

236. Gotra is a family name supposed to be sprung from and named after celebrated teachers as Vasiṣṭha, Gautama, Kaśyapa, Bharadvāja, etc.

237. Carapa signifies a particular branch of the Vedas to which a family belonged.
dissolution when all living beings are destroyed.

40. The garden of a food-giver acquires the fruits of his cherished desire as the brahmins do in the highest heaven.

41. O sage, O great sage, listen to the divine regions which are created in the heaven by the gifts of food, for the giver of food.

42. The abodes of those noble souls in the heaven shine in various shapes and are equipped with every desirable object.

43. The trees bear the fruits of all desires. The golden lakes in the mansions, the auspicious wells and tanks are all excellent.

44. The auspicious drinks of various varieties are proclaimed. There are huge mountains of food-stuffs, garments and ornaments.

45. Milk flows in rivers there. There are huge mountains of ghee. The palaces are white in colour. Beds are brilliant like gold.

46. The giver of food goes to these regions. One should be a giver of food if one wishes for one’s own good in this or in the other world.

47. These regions of the meritorious givers of food are very brilliant. Hence food shall be given as gift by the people.

48. Food is Brahmā himself. Food is Viṣṇu himself. Food is Śiva. There has never been nor will there ever be a gift on a par with that of food.

49. Even after committing a great sin if a man gives food to the needy he becomes rid of all sins. He goes to heaven.

50. The eight gifts are honoured most in the land of the dead viz food, drink, horse, cow, garments, bed, umbrella and seat.

51. If a man wishes to go to the city of Yama in the aerial chariot, he shall necessarily make these special gifts.

52. This sacred narrative gives instances of the virtue of gifts of foodstuffs; whoever reads this or teaches this to others flourishes indeed.
53. O great sage, if a person listens to this or narrates this at the performance of Śrāddha to brahmins, it results in a never-ending gift of food to the Pitṛs.

CHAPTER TWELVE
(The glory of penance)

Sanatkumāra said:—

1. The gift of drink is the greatest and the most excellent of all gifts. Water the enlivener is the most satisfying to all living beings.

2. Hence one should make gifts of drinking water-sheds lovingly and unrestrictedly. Making of water bases, tanks etc. is the cause of great bliss.

3. It is truthful, really truthful. There is no doubt in this, here and hereafter. Men should cause tanks, wells and lakes to be dug therefore.

4. A well that abounds in water removes half of the sin of the man who causes it to be dug.

5. If cows drink and good men and brahmins make use of the water in a water-base dug by a man, the whole family is redeemed.

6. If there is plenty of water in the water-base dug by a man, during summer, he never suffers distress or mis-haps at any time.

7. I shall mention the benefits of lakes dug by men. He who has a lake to his credit is honoured in all the three worlds.

8. Or the digging of lakes is conducive to the advent of fame and attainment of friendship in the abode of the sun but without distressing heat.

9. He who digs a lake attains an endless merit. The wise say that it is the fruit of virtue, wealth and love.

10. The lake is the greatest resort of the four classes of living beings. The construction of the lake etc. indicates excellent glory.
11. The gods, human beings, Gandharvas, Pitṛs, serpents, Rākṣasas and the immobile beings depend upon water bases.

12. Brahmā says that the benefit of the sacred rite Agnihotra is derived by a man in the lake dug by whom there is plenty of water in the rainy season.

13. There is no doubt at all in this that the benefit of gifting away a thousand cows is derived by a man, in the lake dug by whom there is plenty of water in the Autumn.

14. If there is plenty of water in the lake dug during the seasons of early winter and late winter, he derives the benefit of that sacrifice in which plenty of gold is given as a sacrificial gift.

15. If there is plenty of water in the lake dug during the seasons of Spring and Summer, the wise say that he derives the benefit of the holy rites of Atirātra+ and Āśvamedha* sacrifices.

16. O sage Vyāsa, the merit accruing from the digging of water bases, excellent and pleasing to all living beings, has been narrated to you. Now listen to the merits of planting trees.

17. If a man plants trees in the forests, he enables his ancestors and the successors of his family, to gain redemption. Hence one should plant trees.

18. There is no doubt that these trees become his sons. When he goes to the other world he attains the undying regions.

19. Trees honour and worship the gods through flowers, the Pitṛs through fruits, and the guests through shade.

20. The Kinnaras, the serpents, the Rākṣasas, the gods, the Gandharvas, the human beings and the sages depend upon trees.

21. While in bloom or when they bear fruits, the trees delight human beings. They are as sons by way of virtue in this world and hereafter.

22. These people never fail to attain heaven—viz. the digger of lakes, the planter of trees, the brahmin who performs sacrifices and those who speak truth.

* It is a part of the Jyotisjoma sacrifice.

* See P. 1506 note.
23. Truth alone is the great Brahman, the greatest penance, the greatest sacrifice and the greatest learning.

24. When others sleep, truth is wakeful. Truth is the greatest base, it is truth alone by which the earth is sustained, everything is founded in truth.

25. Penance, sacrifice, merit, the worship of the gods, sages and the Pitṛs, the waters, the Vidyās—all these things are established in truth.

26. Truth is sacrifice, penance, charitable gift, mantras, goddess Sarasvatī, celibacy and Ośhāra. These are really true.

27. It is truth whereby the wind blows, the sun blazes, the fire burns and the heaven is upheld.

28. By upholding truth the people can attain the benefits of keeping up the traditions of all the Vedas and taking the ceremonial ablutions in all holy centres.

29. When weighed against truth in a balance, a thousand horse-sacrifices and a hundred thousand other sacrifices do not equal it. Truth alone excels.

30. The gods, the Pitṛs, the human beings, the serpents, the Rākṣasas and the worlds including the mobile and immobile beings are delighted by Truth.

31. They say that Truth is the greatest virtue, the greatest region, the greatest Brahman; hence one shall tell the Truth always.

32. After performing very difficult penance, it is by depending solely on Truth, by maintaining truthful virtue that the sages have attained Siddhis and reached heaven.

33. The sages have attained heaven travelling in aerial chariots along with the celestial damsels. Truth shall be ever spoken, for there is nothing greater than Truth.

34. In the deep, extensive and pure eddy, the holy centre of Truth, one shall mentally take one’s ceremonial ablution. That is said to be the highest bliss.

35. Men who never utter a lie whether for their own sake, or for other’s sake, or even for their own son’s sake, do go to heaven.

36. The Vedas, the sacrifices and the Mantras exist in
brahmins for ever. They are never visible to the untruthful. Hence one shall always speak truth.

Vyāsa said:

37. O ascetic, please explain again with special emphasis on the fruit of penance for the brahmins as well as other castes.

Sanatkumāra said:

38. I shall explain the section on penance which is the means of achieving all the objects of desire, very difficult to be performed even by brahmins. Please listen even as I explain.

39. Penance is the greatest rite. Fruits are achieved by penance. Those who are engaged in penance incessantly rejoice along with the gods.

40. Heaven, fame and love are achieved through penance. Penance is the means of achievement for all objects.

41. One achieves great things through penance, One attains salvation, knowledge, perfect wisdom, good fortune and beauty by penance.

42. Man obtains different things through penance; he gets everything, whatever he wishes in his mind through penance.

43. Those who have never performed penance do not attain Brahmaloka; lord Śiva is not accessible to those who have never performed penance.

44. After deciding on a particular thing, if a man performs penance he attains it here as well as hereafter.

45. The wine-addict, the defiler of other women, the brahmin-slayer, the defiler of teacher's bed overcome all sins through penance and get rid of them.

46-47. Śiva, the lord of all, the eternal Viṣṇu, Brahmā, fire god, Indra and others are endowed with penance. The eighty-eight thousand sages of sublimated semen rejoice in heaven through penance, along with the gods.

48. Kingdoms are achieved through penance. Indra,
the lord of gods and the slayer of Vṛtra, protects everything
day by day through penance.

49. Due to penance, the lords Sun and the Moon
are engaged in the welfare of the worlds. The stars and the
planets too shine by virtue of their penance.

50. There is no happiness in the world that can be
gained without penance. The knowers of the Vedas understand that all happiness is attained through penance alone.

51. Knowledge, perfect wisdom, health, beauty, goodfortune and perpetual happiness are the offshoots of penance.

52. It is by penance that Brahmā creates the universe; Viṣṇu protects it without any strain; Śiva annihilates and Śeṣa upholds the entire earth.

53. O great sage, the Kṣatriya king Viśvāmitra, the son of Gādhi, became a brahmin through penance. This is well known in the three worlds.

54. O intelligent one, thus the excellent glory of penance has been mentioned to you. Now listen to the glory of the study of the Vedas which is far more excellent than penance itself.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

(The glory of the Purāṇas)

Sanatkumāra said:—

1. O sage, the fruit is the same whether one performs penance in a forest restricting his diet to roots and fruits there or studies a single Vedic verse.

238. The sage Viśvāmitra was the son of Gāthīn or Gādhi of the Kuśika race descended from Kuśika. He is called Gādhi-ja and Gādhi-nandana. He was born a kṣatriya but by intense austerities raised himself to the Brāhmaṇa caste and became one of the seven great sages.
2. By teaching the Veda, an excellent brahmin attains twice the merit that he attains by studying it.

3. The universe will go without light if the moon and the sun were not present. The same will happen if the Purāṇas too, O sage, were not.

4. A Purāṇist enlightens the people through Śāstras, the people who are in distress in the hell due to ignorance. Hence he shall be worshipped.

5. Among all the deserving men the knower of Purāṇa is the most excellent. He is considered worthy because he saves people from fall

6. Never shall a Purāṇist be considered an ordinary man. A preceptor proficient in Purāṇa is omniscient. He is Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

7. For the welfare here and hereafter, wealth food-grain, gold, different clothes etc. shall be given to a Purāṇist as gift.

8. The good man who out of pleasure gives auspicious things to a Purāṇist who is a deserving person, attains the greatest salvation.

9. Listen to the merit that a person derives from lands, cows, chariots, elephants and good horses to a deserving person.

10. That man derives the fruit of horse-sacrifice, and realises all his cherished desires without wastage, both here and hereafter.

11. He who gives him a good fertile and well ploughed land facilitates the redemption of the members of his family upto ten generations before him and after him.

12. After enjoying all the pleasures here, he becomes endowed with a divine body on death and goes to Śivaloka, by a divine aerial chariot.

13. The gods are not satisfied so much with sacrifices, Prokṣaṇakas (immolations of animals at the sacrifices), oblations and floral worships as with the recitation of books.

14. Listen to the meritorious benefits of that man who
makes arrangement for the Sacred Text book in the temple of Śiva, Viṣṇu, the Sun or any one else.

15. The man derives the benefit of Rājasūyas and Aśvamedhas. Piercing through the sun’s sphere he goes to the Brahmaloka.

16. After remaining there for hundreds of Kalpas he becomes a king on the earth. He enjoys the pleasures without pinpricks. No hesitation need be entertained in this regard.

17. He who performs Japas in front of the deity obtains that benefit which is mentioned as the fruit of a thousand horse-sacrifices.

18. Nothing else is delightful to Śiva and the heaven-dwellers more than the recitation of Itihāsas and Purāṇas in the auspicious temples of Śiva.

19. Hence arrangements shall be assiduously made for the reciting of the book. Listening to it with devotion and love yields the fruit of all cherished desires.

20. Man becomes free from sins on listening to Śivapurāṇa. After enjoying immense pleasures he attains the world of Śiva.

21. Merely by listening to the story of Śiva one derives the merit similar to that resulting from Rājasūya and a hundred Agniṣṭoma rites.

22. O sage, by listening to the story of Śiva one derives the benefit and merit derived from ablution in the sacred rivers and from gifting away a crore of cows.

23. Those who constantly listen to Śiva’s story that sanctifies the worlds are not mere human beings, they are Rudras. There is no doubt in this.

24. Sages consider the dust in the lotus-feet of those

239. Rājasūya is a great sacrifice celebrated in the Śrautasūtras. It was performed at the coronation of a king.

The sacrifice of a horse (अश्वमेध) was performed by Kings. It was an exercise for attaining sovereignty of the world. The horse was let loose to wander at will for a year. The king or his representative followed the horse with an army. When the horse entered a foreign country, the ruler of that country was bound either to fight or submit.
who listen to the holy glory of Śiva and those who constantly glorify it, to be as holy as the holy centres.

25. Let those embodied beings who desire to attain salvation listen always the Purānic story of Śiva with devotion.

26. If any one is unable to listen to the Purānic story let him listen at least for a Muhūrta every day with pure mind.

27. O sage, if any man, is unable to listen to the story of Śiva every day let him listen to it in the course of holy months, days etc.

28. O great sage, he who regularly listens to Śiva’s story crosses the ocean of worldly existence after burning away the great forest of Karman.

29. No mishap befalls those men who listen to Śiva’s story even for a Muhūrta, or half that time or even for a moment with devotion.

30. O sage, certainly the fruit derived from listening to Śivapurāṇa is the same as that derived from making all charitable gifts or from performing all sacrifices.

31. O Vyāsa, especially in the age of Kali there is no greater virtue aimed at salvation and meditation than listening to the Purāṇas.

32. There is no doubt that the listening to Śiva-Purāṇa and the holy recital of his names yield fruits readily like the Kalpa tree to human beings.

33. Śiva has created the nectarine juice in the form of Purāṇa for the benefit of men of poor intellect in the Kali age who have eschewed virtue and good conduct.

34. Only one person becomes free from old age and death by drinking the nectar Amṛta. But by drinking the nectarine story of Śiva the entire family becomes free from death and old age.

35. O dear, one instantaneously attains by listening to the Purāṇas that salvation which meritorious ascetics and performers of sacrifices derive.

36. As long as perfect knowledge is not attained, Yogasūtras shall be learnt assiduously and the Purānic text be listened to.

37. By listening to the Purāṇas, sin is reduced and
eliminated; virtue is enhanced; and the wise man does not re-enter worldly life.

38. Hence indeed, the Purāṇas shall be assiduously listened to for the achievement of virtue, wealth, love and salvation.

39. Man attains, thanks to listening to the Purāṇas, that benefit which is attained by sacrifices, charitable gifts, penances and pilgrimages.

40. If there be no purāṇa showing the path of Dharma, there will be no person observing Vrata or interested in the life hereafter.

41. He who listens to at least one among the thirty six Purāṇas or reads it with devotion is liberated. There is no doubt in this.

42. No other path so pleasing is there. The path of the Purāṇas is the most excellent. Nothing in the world shines without the Śāstra as the worlds of living beings without the sun.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

(General charitable gifts)

Sanatkumāra said:—

1. Ten charitable gifts are called great gifts and are praiseworthy. They shall be given to deserving persons every day. They enable the soul to cross the ocean of worldly existence.

2. The charitable gifts of gold, cow and land, O excellent brahmin, are very holy. Those who make them redeem themselves.

3. There are gifts of gold, cows and land, by making these excellent gifts one is liberated from sins.

4. Tulādānas are highly praised like the gifts of cows.

240. The printed Sanskrit text is defective. Substitute शद्य बिन्दसित for शद्य बिन्दसित for the number of the Purāṇas and Upapurāṇas together is thirtysix and not twentysix.
Gifts of lands and of speech are of equal potency and deserve praise. But gifts of speech shall be greater.

5. These things shall be given everyday to those who beg for them—viz. oxen, cows, umbrella, cloth, pairs of shoes, drink and food.

6. An object which is given to brahmins, suppliants and distressed people after performing the Samkalpa rites enables the donee to become greatly intelligent.

7. There are ten great gifts—viz. gold, gingelly seeds, elephants, virgins, servant-maid, house, chariot, jewels, the tawny coloured cow and ordinary cows.

8. After taking all these a brahmin of great wisdom enables the donee to cross the ocean of worldly existence as well as himself.

9. If men make gifts of gold with pious mind, the gods bestow the same on him. Thus I have heard.

10. Gold is fire. Indeed fire represents all gods. Hence by making the gift of gold one makes the gift of all gods.

11. Gift of lands is very excellent and it yields the fruits of all desires. The gift of gold is also excellent and it was made by king Prthu formerly.

12. If plots of lands are given along with gold it is praiseworthy. They become liberated from all sins and attain the greatest goal.

13. O sage, I shall mention another gift which is the most excellent and whereby people do not see the forest of Yama, the cause of many miseries.

14. One shall make the charitable gift of forest with due observance of rules and pious mind. The wealth shall be earned by justiciable means. The donee shall be devoid of stinginess associated with affluence.

15-19. With a Prastha measure of gingelly seeds an image of a cow endowed with all qualities shall be made. The calf shall be made of gold. It shall be divine in shape and it shall possess all characteristics. The mystic diagram of the eight-petalled lotus shall be made with auspicious vermilion and raw rice grains. The devotee shall worship Rudra and all other gods there with great devotion. After the worship the cow and the calf shall be given to a brahmin along with
gems and gold according to ability and bedecked too in all ornaments. The devotee shall take food only in the night. He shall then make elaborate gifts of lamps. This shall be done on the full moon day in the month of Kārttika "strenuously. He who does thus according to his ability but strictly observing the rules does not see the terrible hell or the path of Yama.

20. O Vyāsa, even after committing sins, the man enjoys in the heaven along with his kinsmen and friends as long as fourteen Indras rule over it.

21. The gift of the cow duly performed is the most excellent. O Vyāsa, no other gift is glorified so much as this.

22-23. If any one makes the gift of a tawny cow along with its calf adorning the horns with gold, the hoofs with silver and endowed with other characteristics and also gives a bell metal vessel, that cow returns to him in the form of the wish-yielding celestial cow. O Vyāsa, the donee is thus blessed both here and hereafter.

24. One shall make gifts of such things to a man of good qualities, such thing as he likes most in the world, as are very dear to him in the house and as are wished for by him to be his permanent possessions.

25. Gift of anything equal in weight to the giver is the most excellent of all gifts. If he wishes for his prosperity he shall ascend the weighing balance.

26. The weighing balance is highly meritorious. It eliminates all sins. On making the gift of it one gets rid of sins arising from slaughter and captivity.

27. Even after committing sins if a man makes the gift of weighing balance he becomes free from all sins and goes to heaven.

28-30. (The following shall be recited before making the gift). "May the presiding deity of the weighing balance remove the sin committed by me physically, mentally or verbally during the day, night, the twilights, midday, the close of the night or in any of the three times. May the presiding deity of the balance, lord Śiva, enemy of the cupid, remove all the sins done by me, whether as a boy or a
youth, or an old man wakefully and consciously. Wealth has been consigned by me to a deserving person. It has been deposited in the balance according to my weight. May merit accrue to me along with this.”

31. The presiding deity shall be made after reciting the above formula. It shall not be given to a single person. There is no benefit in it. It shall be distributed among many brahmins.

32. O Vyāsa, he who makes this excellent gift of the presiding deity of the balance destroys his sins and attains heaven. He stays there as long as the fourteen Indras rule over it.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

(Description of the Nether worlds)

Vyāsa said:—

1. For the benefit of human beings tell me that which when given as gift makes it possible to derive the benefit of all gifts.

Sanatkumāra said:—

2. Listen. I shall mention that gift on giving which, at the proper time, men obtain the benefit of all the gifts

3. This is the most excellent of all gifts. The whole universe shall be given as gift by those who desire salvation for crossing the ocean of worldly existence.

4. A man becomes the lord of the seven worlds, with a fraction of the benefit that he obtains when the whole universe is given as a gift.

5. The man who gifts away the universe sports in the abode of the gods along with his kinsmen as long as the moon and the sun are in the sky or the earth is steady or everyone in the abode of the heaven-dwellers is favourable. Afterwards, for rejoicing, he attains the region of Viṣṇu which is difficult of access even to the gods.
Vyāsa said:

6. O holy lord, please explain the universe, its extent, its main soul, its support and its structure so that I can have a full idea.

Sanatkumāra said:

7. O sage, listen. I shall explain how high and how extensive is the universe. On hearing it succinctly one gets rid of sins.

8. That which is the unmanifest ultimate cause becomes manifest as Śiva, free from ailment. When that becomes dichotomised, Brahmā is born of that in due course.

9. Brahmā creates the universe consisting of the fourteen worlds. O dear, I shall succinctly explain that in proper order. Listen to it assiduously.

10. The nether worlds are seven only. The upper worlds are also seven. The height of the universe is twice as such and it stands in the middle of water.

11. Its support is the serpent Śeṣa. He is glorified as Viṣṇu. At the instance of Brahmā he supports all this.

12. Even the gods and the Asuras are incompetent to describe the attributes of Śeṣa who is worshipped by the gods, sages and the Gaṇas and who is called as Ananta by the Siddhas.

13. He has a thousand hoods. By means of the thousand jewels on his hoods, he illuminates all the quarters. He has the brilliant ornament Svastika.

14. He has only a single ear-ring. He has a crown and wears garlands. His eyes are rolling due to inebriation. He shines like a white fiery mountain.

15. He is like a Kailāsa mountain which shines white due to the flow of the Gaṅgā. But he wears a blue cloth and is inebriated.

16-17. He is worshipped by the gold-complexioned...
Nāgavirgins in this aspect—viz. the tips of his hands are in contact with the ploughshare. He is bearing an excellent threshing rod. He is Rudra in the form of Saṅkarṣana. He is brilliant with the flame of the poisonous fire. At the end of the Kalpa, flames of fire come out of his mouths. After consuming the three worlds they subside.

18. Holding the sphere of the earth on his back, Śeṣa, the lord of Bhūtas stands at the root of Pātāla. He is worshipped for his endless attributes.

19. The power of his virility cannot be adequately described even by the ambitious gods nor can his form be known.

20. Who will adequately express his prowess? The series of his hoods, pink with the jewels go round the entire earth like a garland of flowers.

21. With his eyes rolling due to inebriation when Śeṣa stretches himself, the earth quakes along with all its mountains, oceans and forests.

22-23. O excellent sage, each of the nether worlds extends to ten thousand Yojanas. The seven nether worlds are Atala, Vītāla, Sutala, Rasātala, Tala, Talātala and the Pātāla. The seven worlds are beneath the earth. So say the learned people.

24. The height of each of these is twice its extent. The surfaces of all are grounds of gems. The palaces are full of gems and their terraces are made of gold.

25. Dānava, Daiteya, Serpent, and Rākṣas of the Dāitya origin reside there.

26. Nārada who came to heaven from the nether region announced in the middle of the celestial assembly that the nether worlds are more beautiful than heaven.

27. There, in all sorts of ornaments, lustrous jewels are present. They are white and delightful. What is there equal to it?

28. The nether region is here and there brightened up by the daughters of Dāitya and Dānavas. Even to the liberated soul, the nether region is pleasing. Which liberated soul does not like it?

29. There during the daytime there are no sun's
rays, nor the moon’s rays during the night. There is neither chillness nor bright sunlight. There is only the lustre of the jewel:

30. O excellent sage, all sorts of foodstuffs and drinks are consumed there by extremely joyous persons. The time that passes by is not known there at all.

31. The cooings of the male cuckoo are there. Lotuses are there. There are lotus-ponds. There are rivers and lakes. Each of them is more excellent than the other.

32. There the ornaments are very brilliant. The unguents are sweet-smelling. O brahmin, the sound of Vinās, flutes and MRdāṅgas can be heard there. There are songs everywhere.

33. There the Daityas and serpents rejoice and enjoy pleasures. It is by performing penances that Dānavas and Siddha beings attain the same.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

(Uplift from the hell)

Sanatkumāra said:—

1. O excellent sage, above the nether regions are the hells where the sinners are scorched. Listen to their description from me.

2. They are—Raurava, Śūkara, Rādha, Tāla, Vivas-vat, Mahājvāla, Taptakumbha, Lavaṇa, Vilohita.

3. The river Vaitarani consists of putrid stuff flowing in it, Kṛmiṇa. Kṛmibhojana, Asipatravana and Lālābhakṣa are the terrible hells:

4. Puyavaha has usually flames of fire outside and is topsyturvy. Sandarśa, Kālasūtra, Tamās, Avicirodhana

5. Śvabhohjana, Ruṣṭa, Mahāaurava and Śālmali—these and other hells are there; all of these are very grievous.
6. Men who are indulgent in sins are scorched there. O Vyāsa, I shall mention them in order. Listen attentively.

7. He who commits perjury except for the brahmans, gods and cows and he who utters a lie always goes to Raurava.

8-10. The following sinners viz:—the destroyer of the child in the womb, the stealer of gold, of cows, one who commits the breach of trust, the wine-addict, the brahmin slayer, the stealer of other’s wealth and he who associates with these—go to the hell Kumbha, O Vyāsa. He who kills his preceptor, sister, mother, daughter or a cow too goes there. He who sells his chaste wife, he who is addicted to usury, he who sells tresses of hair and he who forsakes a devotee—all these are scorched in redhot iron.

11-13. He who insults preceptors, he who dismisses visitors and then dines, he who commits blasphemy, he who sells idols and he who cohabits with forbidden women—all these, O brahmin, go to Saptabala hell. A thief, a slayer of cows, a fallen man, a defiler of boundaries, the hater of gods, brahmans and Pitṛs and the defiler of gems go to Kṛmibhakṣa hell. They eat worms and other displeasing things.

14-16. The base man who eats before Pitṛs, deities and gods and he who ignorantly or deceitfully misquotes sacred texts—these go to Lālābhakṣa hell. The brahmin who associates with evil men and is surrounded by outcastes, the brahmin who officiates as priest in the sacrifice of undeserving persons, and eats forbidden food, and he who sells Soma juice—these fall into Rudhiraugha hell. He who spoils honey and creates disturbances in the village falls in the ruthless river Vaitaranī.

17. Those who are arrogant in the freshness of youth, who transgress the bounds of decency, who are unclean and who maintain themselves on the earnings of unchaste women go to Kṛmya hell.

18. He who cuts off trees without purpose goes to Asipatravana hell. Those who hunt deer with Kṣuraprakas (arrows with horse-shoe-shaped heads) fall into Vahnijvāla hell.

19. O brahmin, the brahmin, the Kṣatriya or the
Vaiśya who swerves from the path of good conduct ultimately fall into the hell prescribed for dog-cooking caṇḍālas.

20. Those who drop sacred rites in the middle and those who are fallen off from their duties in accordance with the stages of their life fall into the hell Sandamśa where the tortures are very terrible.

21. The students who are guilty of nocturnal emission of their semen and the fathers who do not properly educate their sons fall into the Śvabhojana hell.

22. There are hundreds and thousands of these and other hells where thousands of sinners undergo tortures and are scorched.

23. These sins and others are thousands in number similarly, which the beings in the hells experience and try to wipe off.

24. Those who perpetrate misdeeds contrary to the injunctions of caste and stages of life whether physically, mentally or verbally fall into hell.

25. The beings in the hells are seen standing upside down by the gods in the heaven. These beings see the gods also similarly with heads down, beneath them.

26-27. Immovable beings—plants etc. and movable beings worms, insects, birds, beasts, righteous men, gods and liberated beings, all these are equal in number in heaven as also in hell. A sinner who is averse to the performance of expiatory rites goes to hell.

28. Svāyambhuva Manu has ordained expiatory rites for great sins and small expiatory rites for small sins in the Kali age

29. Of the many rites mentioned by way of expiation the remembrance of Śiva is the greatest.

30. If a person commits a sin but repents after committing it, it is also an expiation. There also the remembrance of Śiva is the greatest expiation.

31. A man remembering lord Śiva in the midday or other occasions attains lord Śiva. By remembering the lord in the morning, night or dusk, he gets his sins eliminated.
32. It is only by remembering Śiva, the lord of Umā that a man attains salvation, the annihilation of all pains or heaven.

33. O leading brahmin, Japas, Homas, worship etc. are obstacles in the path of sins. O excellent sage, they do not occur anywhere in the three worlds.

34. The attainment of the status of Indra, lord of the gods, is the fruit of the merit attained in Japa, Homa, worship etc. performed by the man whose mind is in lord Śiva.

35. O sage, he who devoutly remembers Śiva day and night never goes to hell since his sins are eliminated without any vestige.

36. O excellent brahmin, sin and merit indicate hell and heaven. One is conducive to misery and the other to pleasure and rebirth.

37. That at the outset is conducive to happiness but later brings in misery. Hence ultimately everything is of the nature of misery. There is nothing in fact of an invariably pleasurable nature.

38. Happiness and misery constitute only a temporary transformation of the mind. But knowledge is the greatest Brahman. Knowledge is conducive to the understanding of reality.

39. The entire universe consisting of the mobile and immobile beings has knowledge as its soul. O sage, there is nothing greater than the perfect knowledge of the greatest being.

40. Thus the entire sphere of the hell has been explained by me. Hereafter I shall explain the sphere of the earth.
CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

(Description of the Jambudvipa)

Sanatkumāra said:—

1. O son of Parāśara, listen succinctly to what I explain, the sphere of the earth consisting of seven Dvīpas (continents).

2. The seven continents are Jambu, Plakṣa, Śālma, Kuṣa, Krauṇca, Śaka, Puṣkara. These seven are surrounded by seven oceans.

3. The seven oceans are salt sea, sugarcane juice sea, wine sea, ghee sea, curd sea, milk sea and pure water sea. Jambu Dvīpa is situated in the middle of all these.

4-6. In the middle of it is the golden mountain Meru, O Kāleya. It extends below to sixteen Yojanas and its height is eighty-four Yojanas. Its expanse on the top is thirty-two Yojanas. This mountain is situated on the back of the earth and expands on all sides. It is sixteen thousand Yojanas at the base. It has the shape of a pericarp. The mountains Himavat, Hemakūṭa and Niṣadha are to its south.

7. The Varṣa mountains in the north are Nila, Śveta and Śṛgın. The extent of these is ten thousand Yojanas. They are full of gems and have pinky lustre.

242. SP. mentions seven continents. Their indentification is uncertain. Scholars hold different views: See Geography of the Purāṇas Ch. II. Each of the continents is surrounded by one of the seven seas and divided into several Varṣas. For instance, Jambu comprises nine Varṣas of which Bhārata is the one. The continents comprise mountains variously classed as मयांव, कव, कुल, विष्कम्भ and वेद. These give rise to innumerable streams and rivers that flow in the lands and fall into the sea.

243. This most celebrated mountain forms the northern boundary of Bhārata, extending from the eastern to the western sea.

244. It is held to be identical with the Kailāsa, a sacred hill situated to the north of Mānasarovara.

245. SP. places it to the south of the Meru, along with the Himavat and Hemakūṭa.

8. Their height is a thousand Yojanas and their width too is the same. Bhārata is the first sub-continent. Then there is the Kimpuruṣa.

9. Hari Varṣa is another which, O sage, is to the south of Meru. Ramyaka is on the northern side. In its part is Hiraṇmaya Varṣa.

10. In the north are the Kurus as well. O excellent sage, the extent of each of these, as in the case of Bhārata, is nine thousand Yojanas.

11. Ilāvṛta Varṣa is in its middle and Meru rises up in its middle. In all the four quarters, peaks nine thousand Yojanas in height rise up.

12. O excellent sage, such is Ilāvṛta and there are four mountains here which appear as supporting beams to Meru, which are joined to it and rise above.

13. Mandara is in the east. Gandhamādana is in the south. Vipula is in the western portion and Supārśva is situated in the north.

14. Trees acting as the flagstaff of the mountain are Kadamba, Jambu, Pippala and Vaṭa. Their height is eleven hundred Yojanas.

15. O great sage, listen to the origin of the name Jambūdvipa. There are great trees shining here. I shall explain their nature to you.

16. Fruits of the Jambū tree are of the size of a huge elephant. They fall on the top of the mountain and become shattered and scattered everywhere.

17. The famous river Jambū is made up of the juice of Jambū fruits. It flows there and is drunk by the residents of the locality.

18. People staying on its banks do not perspire. They do not emit bad odour and they do not want in the exercise of their sense-organs.

19. The mud of the stream dried by blowing with

247. The mountains Mandara, Gandhamādana, Vipula and Supārśva are placed to the east, south, west and north of the Meru respectively.

248. Its identification with the stream of that name near the mount Abu is uncertain.
the mouth transforms itself into golden ornaments for the Siddhas. It is called Jāmbūnada.

20. Bhadrāśva Varṣa is on the east of Meru. Ketumāla Varṣa is on the west. Between these two there is Ilāvṛta.

21. The forest in the east is Caitraratha,249 that in the south is Gandhamādana, that in the west is Vibhrāja and that in the north is Nandana.

22. There are four lakes viz. Aruṇoda,250 Mahābhadra,250 Śitoda250 and Mānasa.250 These four lakes are worthy of being enjoyed by all the gods.

23. The filament-mountains of Meru on its east are Śatāñjana, Kuruniga, Kurara and Mālyavat. Every one of them is important.

24. The filament-mountains on the south are Trikūta, Śisīra, Pataṅga, Rucaka, Niṣadha, Kapila and others.

25. The filament-mountains on the west are Sinīvāsa, Kusumbha, Kapila, Nārada, Nāga and other mountains.

26. The filament-mountains on the north are Śaṅkha-cūḍa, Rśabha, the mountain named Hamsa, Kāpañjara and others.

27. Śatakaumbha, the golden city of Brahmā, is on the top of Meru and in the middle. It extends to fourteen thousand Yojanas.

28. All round that city are the eight cities of the eight guardians of the quarters, which have been assigned to them according to their quarters and forms.

29. Issuing from Viṣṇu’s feet, the river Gaṅgā falls in that city of Brahmā flowing through the sphere of the moon.

249. Caitraratha forest is placed on the bank of the Acchoda lake.
250. Aruṇoda, Mahābhadra, Śitoda and Mānasa are the lakes of gods near Sumeru.
30. Falling in four directions the river Gaṅgā flows into four streams viz. Sitā,²⁵¹ Alakanandā,²⁵² Cakṣus,²⁵³ and Bhadrā.²⁵⁴

31. Sitā flows to the east of the mountain, Alakanandā flows to the south, the Cakṣus flows to the west and the Bhadrā flows to the north.

32. Thus the holy river Gaṅgā flowing along three paths, flows into the great ocean in the four quarters after crossing all the mountains.

33. Meru is situated in the middle of the four mountains: Sunila, Niṣadha, Mālyavat and Gandhamādana. It has the shape of a pericarp of a lotus.

34. The four Varṣas Bhārata, Ketumāla, Bhadrāśva and the Kurus are the petals of the world-lotus. The Lokaparvatas constitute the boundary.

35. The Devakūṭa²⁵⁵ constitutes its belly. Its extent is from south to north. Gandhamādana and Kailāsa extend from east to west.

36. The Niṣadha and the Nila mountains issue from the east and the west of Meru, curl down to south and north and terminate within the pericarp.

37. These Kesara mountains Śveta and others, constituting the belly of Meru in twos, are very beautiful.

38. To the north of the mountains are watertroughs resorted to by the Siddhas and Cāraṇas. The forests and the cities beside them are very fascinating.

39. The cities are of the gods, Yakṣas, Gandharvas and Rākṣasas. The gods and the Daityas sport about on the mountains day and night.

²⁵¹. Sitā, one of the seven currents of the Ganges rising from Bindusara, a Himalayan lake, flows towards the west. For details see Studies in Skandapurāṇa PP. 149, 150, under Sitā-Cakṣu group.

²⁵². It flows through Garhwal and Shrinagar, the capital of Garhwal is situated on it.

²⁵³. Cakṣu is one of the seven branches of the Ganges often identified with Vasu, Vṣau or Oxus or Amu Darya.

²⁵⁴. According to the Purāṇas (Viṣṇu. BK II. ch. II) Vāmana (51, 52), Bhāgavata (V. 175), Bhadrā branched off from the main stream of the Ganges when the latter escaped itself from the locks of Śiva.

²⁵⁵. Devakūṭa is one of the eight boundary mountains which together with Jathara stretch across from the north to the south on the east side of Meru (Mār. 54. 22-26, 59. 3-4.)
40. These are the abodes of righteous men. They are glorified as heavens on the earth. Sinners can never go there. They cannot be seen in their vicinity.

41. O great sage, in the eight Varṣas beginning with the Kimpuruṣa etc. there is no sorrow, danger, agony, hunger or fear.

42. The people are healthy, without terror and devoid of miseries. They have the longevity of ten to twelve thousand years.

43. Time is calculated there as Kṛta, Tretā etc. The lord does not shower earthly waters there.

44. In all these seven Varṣas, the rivers are well arranged. They have sands of gold. There are hundreds of small rivers too. Auspicious men sport in them.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

(Seven continents)

Sanatkumāra said:—

1-2. I shall explain the Bhāratavarṣa. South of the Himālaya mountain and north of the ocean is the land of Bhārata. O great sage, its extent is nine thousand Yojanas. This is the land of sacred rites for attaining heaven and salvation. So say the wise people.

3. Heaven and hell are attained by men from here only. I shall mention nine subdivisions of the Bhārata Varṣa to you.

4-5. Indradyumna, Kaseru, Tāmravarṇa Gabhastimāta, Nāgadvipa, Saumya, Gandharva, Vāruṇa and the ninth is the sub-continent Sāgarasambhṛta. This sub-continent lies North to South extending to a thousand Yojanas.

6. To the east of Bhārata live the Kirātas,256 to the south the Yavanas; to the west Khaṇas and to the north the ascetics.

256. Kirāta, a Himalayan tribe, is placed in the east. Yavanas, identified with the Indo-Greeks, never lived in the south but they are
7. In the middle live the Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras maintaining themselves by sacrifices, battles, merchandise and service.

8. There are seven Kulaparvatas viz Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Sudāmā, Ṛkṣaparvata, Vindhya and Pāriyātra.

9. O sage, Vedas, Smṛtis, Purāṇas and other things issue from Pāriyātra. They dispel all sins, it should be known, by their very sight or touch.

10. The great rivers issuing from Vindhya are seven, such as Narmadā, Surasā etc, and thousands of smaller ones are all auspicious. They quell all sins.

11. Godāvari, Bhimarathī, Tāpi and other important rivers issue from the mountain Ṛkṣa. They dispel fear of sins immediately.

12. The rivers Keśā Venī and others issue from Sahya Kṛtamālā and others issue from Malaya.

placed there. Khasas, identified with the modern Khakkas lived about Kashmir which in fact is not exactly to the west of Bhārata. The identification of the Tāpasas placed in the north is quite uncertain.

257. See P. 628 note 76.

258. See P. 164 note 166 ; p 628 note 72.

259. See P. 164 note 161 ; p 56 note 28, p 623 note 63.

260. Mount Sudāman is placed in the Panjab on the Vipāś (Beas) river. Rāmā. II. 68. 18-19. For details See GAMI p 185-186.

261. Mount Ṛkṣavat is associated with the central part of the Narmadā valley of which Mahīṣmatī (Māndhātā in the Nimar district of Madhya Pradesh, Mahēsvara in the former Indor State according to some) was the most important city and Daśārṅa a notable river. See Sircar, GAMI P. 49.

262. See P. 623 note 69.

263. See P. 629 note 77.

264. See P. 75 note 55.

265. The source of the Surasā, a river of the Narmadā group is actually the Ṛkṣavat and not the Vindhya, Sircar, Op. cit, P. 47 note 3.

266. See P. 75 note 56.

267. It is identical with modern Bhīmā, a tributary of the river Kṛṣṇā.

268. It is identical with the modern Tapti, the celebrated river that flows into the western sea.

269. Kṛṣṇāvept is identical with the Kṛṣṇā river. See P. 75 note 57.

270. It is identical with the modern Vaigai running past Madurai.

271. It is identical with the modern Tambravari which combines its stream with the Chittar in the Tirunelveli district of Madras.
13. Triyāmā, Rṣikulyā and others issue from Mahendra. Rṣikulyā, Kumārī and others issue from Šuktimat.

14. Many territories, countries are situated in their basins. People drink from these rivers as well as from other lakes.

15. O great sage, all the four Yugas Kṛta and others are followed in Bhārata and not in the other Dvīpas.

16. Charitable gifts are offered here by meritorious sacrificers. Ascetics perform penances strenuously for the attainment of better worlds.

17. O great sage, it is so because this is the land of sacred rites in the Jambūdvīpa. Here too Bhārata is the most excellent. The others are lands of pleasure.

18. O excellent sage, after a thousand births rarely does a man get birth as a human being here and that too due to hoarded merits.

19. It is said that the gods sing songs like this:—It is only the blessed who are able to live in the land of Bhārata which is the pathway leading to heaven and salvation. They are born as men there.

20. After getting human birth once in a way, and sporting about in the great soul form of Śiva I shall attain the fruits of all sacred rites in that form.

21. Only blessed human beings derive this pleasure. They are happy and their minds are interested in sacred

272. Triyāmā or Trisāmā not identified.

273. Rṣikulyā, still bearing its ancient name flows into the Bay of Bengal near Berhampur on the SE Railway in the Ganjam district of Orissa.

274. The other Rṣikulyā is identical with the Koal in Chhota Nagpur.

275. Raychaudhuri identifies Kumārī with the river of the same name in the Mānbhūm district in south Bihar. The identification is quite probable in view of the plausibility of his identification of the Kula parvata called Šuktimat with the hills of Eastern India extending from Chhatisgarh to the Santal Parganas.

276. The name of the Šuktimat is preserved in that of the Šakti hills in Raigarh, Madhya Pradesh and possibly in that of the Suktel river which joins Mahānadi river Sonepur in Orissa. The name Šuktimat was probably applied to the chain of hills that extends from Šakti in Raigarh M.P. to the Dalma hills in Mānbhūm drained by the Kumārī and perhaps even to the hills in Santal Parganas washed by the affluents of the Bāblā.
rites. Those who take birth in Bhärata have the two gains of attaining heaven and salvation.

22. This Jambūdvipa extends to a hundred thousand Yojanas including all its internal zones. It is well surrounded by the salt ocean. 277

23. The continent of Plakṣa is glorified as surrounding the briny sea extending to a hundred thousand Yojanas. O brahmin the Dvipa is twice that in extent.

24. The seven Varṣa mountains are Gomanta, Candra, Nārada, Dardura, Somaka, Sumanas and Vaibhraja.

25. On these beautiful Varṣa mountains, all the subjects, gods, Gandharvas etc. live together for ever.

26. There the life expectation for men is ten thousand years. Neither physical sickness nor worries nor agonies torment the people anywhere there.

27. The seven holy rivers here are Anutapta, Śikhi, Pāpaghni, Tridivā, Kṛpā, Amṛtā and Sukṛtā.

28. Insignificant rivers and mountains are there in thousands. The people in the countries are delighted in drinking the waters of these rivers.

29. In all the seven subdivisions in it there is no differentiation among the various Yugas. O great sage, the time there is on a par with Tretā Yuga for ever.

30. O excellent sage, there are brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras there. In its middle there is a big tree like the celestial Kalpa tree.

31. That tree is called Plakṣa and hence, O excellent brahmin, the continent is called Plakṣadvipa. 278 Lord Śiva, the benefactor of the worlds, performs a sacrifice there.

32. Lord Viṣṇu and Brahmā too perform worship here with Vedic mantras and Tantras. Now listen again to the description of Śālmali in brief.

277. It refers to the salt sea placed in the west of Bhārata. See P. 1198 note.

278. It has been identified with the basin of the mediterranean. It derives its name from the fig trees growing abundantly on its soil. See Geo. of the Purāṇas Pp. 41-42.
33-34. There are seven Up-Varṣas (sub-continents) there too. Please listen to their names. They are Śveta, Harita, Jīmūta, Rohita, Vaikala, Mānasā and Suprabha the seventh one. The continent is called Śālmalī because of the Śālma tree.

35-36. It is always surrounded by the ocean, twice extensive as it. The rivers indicate the Varṣas significantly. Listen to their names. They are Śuklā, Rakṣa, Hiranīyā, Candrā, Subhrā, Vimocanā and the Nivṛtti. All these have cool sacred waters.

37. All the seven Varṣas contain people of the four castes. They worship lord Śiva always with various kinds of sacrifices.

38. In this beautiful place the gods are always present. This Dvīpa is surrounded by the ocean of wine.

39-40. The ocean of wine is twice as much as the Śālmalī Dvīpa. Kuśa Dvīpa is all round it externally. Daityas and Dānavas live there along with human beings. So also the gods, the Gandharvas, the Yaksas, the Kimpuruṣas and others too. There also the castes are devoted to their respective duties and conduct.

41. People in Kuśa Dvīpa worship Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, the bestower of the fruits of all desires.

42. The seven mountains are Kuśeśaya, Hari, Dyutimāt, Puṣpavat, Maniḍruma, Hemaśaila and Mandarācāla.

43-44. The rivers are seven. Listen to their names factually. Dhūtapāpā, Śivā, the holy Sammitī, Vidyā, Dambhā, Mahī and Alpā. These quell all sins. There are thousands of other rivers of auspicious waters and golden sands.

45. In the Kuśadvīpa the main plant is the stump of Kuśa grass. It is surrounded by the ocean of clarified butter. O fortunate one, listen to the description of Krauṣica Dvīpa, the other great continent.

279. It is identical with the tropical part of Africa bordering the Indian ocean on the east. Ibid P. 45.
280. It corresponds to Iran, Iraq and the fringing lands of the hot desert. Ibid P 40.
281. It is represented by the basin of the Black sea. Ibid P. 45.
46. It is surrounded by the ocean of curds and whey twice as large. O intelligent one, listen to the names of the Varṣa mountains.

47. They are Krauṇca, Vāmana, Andhakāraka, Divā-vṛti, Manas, Puṇḍarika and Dundubhi.

48. The subjects live on these Varṣa mountains which are very beautiful and golden. Free from terror, they are accompanied by their friends and the gods.

49. Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras live there in their due order. There are seven great rivers and thousands of other small rivers there.

50. They are Gaurī, Kumudvati, Sandhyā, Rāṣi, Manojavā, Śānti and Puṇḍarikā and they make others drink their holy water.

51-53. The lord in the form of Yogarudra is worshipped there. The ocean of curds and whey is surrounded by Śākadvīpa twice as large. The mountains are seven. Listen to their names from me. In the east is the mountain Udayagiri. In the south is the mountain Jaladhāra. The Astagiri is in the west and Avikesa in the north. The great tree is Śāka there, worshipped by Siddhas and Gandharvas.

54. The countries are very sacred populated by the people of all the four castes. The rivers too are very holy, dispelling all terror due to sins.

55. They are Sukumārī, Kumārī, Nalini, Veṅkā, Ikṣu, Reṅkā and Gabhasti.

56. O great sage, there are thousands of small rivers there. The mountains too are in hundreds and thousands.

57. There is no question of loss of virtue in them. Men come from heaven to those Varṣas on the earth and sport about with one another.

58. In the Śākadvīpa, the sun is lovingly worshipped by the people of all countries pious in mind and activities as mentioned before.

59-60. It is surrounded on all sides by the milk-ocean.

28a. It can be identified with Malaya, Siam, Indo-China and Southern China. Ibid 31-40.
twice as large. O Vyāsa, the milk-ocean is surrounded by Puṣkara continent twice as large. Thgre at Varṣathere is famous by the name Mānasa. It is five thousand Yojanas in height.

61. There is a great ring round it, five hundred thousand Yojanas in length. The Puṣkara Dvīpa ring divides it into two.

62. The Dvīpa and the Varṣas are of similar shapes namely gyrated. Men live there up to ten thousand years.

63. They are free from ailment. They are not unhappy. They are devoid of passion and hatred. Evil is never approved of by them. O sage, nor do they imprison or kill anyone.

64. There is neither truth or lie there. It is always night there. Men are of equal dress and features, all being gold-complexioned.

65. This Varṣa, O sage, is Bhauma which is like a heaven on this earth and the life herein is pleasing to all, free from old age and sickness.

66. O great sage, in the Dhātakīkhaṇḍa and the Mahā-vita in the Puṣkaradvīpa, the holy fig tree is the excellent abode of Brahmā.

67. Brahmā resides there, worshipped by gods and Asuras. Puṣkara is surrounded by the ocean of sweet water.

68. Thus the seven continents are surrounded by seven oceans each twice as large as the one within.

69. The speciality of the oceans is mentioned thus. The water is always equal in quantity. It is never reduced.

70. O excellent sage, if the water kept in a pot is heated it goes up. Similarly when the moon rises the water of the ocean rises up.

71. At the time of rising and setting of the moon waters flow and ebb. Hence in the bright and dark halves the waters vary in quantity; they increase and decrease.

282. It is identical with Japan, Manchuria and the south-eastern Siberia. The milky ocean enclosed by this Dvīpa is the Sea of Japan. Ibid. 42-44.
72. O great sage, the increase and decrease of the waters of the oceans are seen hundred and thousands of times. This has been mentioned to you.

73-74. All the people in the Puškaradvīpa, O brahmin, take as food Sugarcandy which appears there by itself for ever. Beyond that there are no living beings. The land is golden and devoid of living creatures.\textsuperscript{283}

75. Beyond that is the mountain Lokāloka. It is a thousand Yojanas in height and an equal number of Yojanas in extent.

76. O great sage, therefore, along with this universe the earth is fifty crores of Yojanas in extent inclusive of all the continents and mountains.

77. This world is the support in due course of all living beings. It has more attributes than all other elements have.

\textbf{CHAPTER NINETEEN}

(\textit{Worlds and Planets})

\textit{Sanatkumāra said:—}

1. The extent to which the rays of the sun and the moon shine and illuminate is the size of the earth. It is called Bhūloka.

2-3. The sun’s sphere is situated a hundred thousand Yojanas from the earth. The moon is situated thousands of Yojanas from this earth and a hundred thousand Yojanas from the sun.

4. The spheres of the planets are entirely situated above the moon along with the stars about ten thousand Yojanas one above the other.

\textsuperscript{283} The Skt. text of the first half of this verse is defective.
5. Budha (Mercury); above that is Kāvya (Venus); above that is the sphere of Bhauma (Mars). Bṛhaspati (Jupiter) is above that and Śanaiścara (Saturn) is above that.

6. The sphere of the seven sages (The Ursa Major) is situated a hundred thousand Yojanas above it. The Pole Star (Dhruva) is situated a hundred thousand Yojanas above the sages.

7. The Pole star is the prop of the circle of luminary bodies. The Bhuvarloka and Svarloka are above the earth but beneath the Pole star.

8. A crore Yojanas above the Pole star is the Maharloka where the seven sons of Brahmā are stationed. They live even during the time of Kalpa.

9. The seven sons are—Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana, Kapila, Āsuri, Voḍhu and Pañcaśikha.

10. Above that is stationed Śukra (Venus) at a distance of two hundred thousand Yojanas. Two hundred thousand Yojanas below it is stationed Budha (Mercury) the son of the moon.

11. O sage, Bhauma (Mars) is stationed two hundred thousand Yojanas above it. Bṛhaspati (Jupiter) is stationed two hundred thousand Yojanas above it.

12. Two hundred thousand Yojanas above Jupiter, Saturn is stationed. These are the seven planets that stay in their respective zodiacs.

13. The seven sages (Ursa Major) are stationed eleven hundred thousand Yojanas above the planet Saturn. The Dhruva star is said to be stationed fourteen hundred thousand Yojanas above the great star.

14. Sixty-three hundred thousand Yojanas from Janaloka is stationed the Tapoloka where the gods called Vairājas stay. They are free from burning sensation.

15-16. Eighty four thousand Yojanas from Tapoloka is stationed the Satyaloka. It is known as Brahmaloka where the pure-minded, perfectly wise Brahmācārins engaged in truthful virtue stay. Men who go there from the earth also stay there.

284. See P. 88 note.
17-18. In the Bhuvarloka, the sages of great Siddhis stay in the form of gods. In the Svargaloka, the gods, the Ādityas, the Maruts, the Vasus, the twin Aśvins, Viśvedevas, Rudras, Sādhyas, Nāgas, Khagas etc. stay. Above that are the nine planets and above them are the seven sages free from sins.

19. O sage, thus the seven worlds have been mentioned to you. The Pātālas too are also seven. Thus the universe has been explained to you.

20. As the wood-apple is both above and below the earth, so the universe is enveloped by the cauldron of the Cosmic Egg.

21-23. It is surrounded by water ten times as large all round the fire, wind, ether and darkness. It is encompassed by the elements and the principle of Mahat, eight times as large. There surrounded by the Mahat and Pradhāna is stationed the Puruṣa. The supreme soul is infinite. He is therefore called eternal since he has no limitation.

24-27. This eternal is the cause of all. O sage, it is the great Prakṛti. From that infinite of unmanifest origin thousands and hundreds of thousands of cosmic eggs are born. The self-known great soul contains everything just as the wood contains latent fire, the gingelly seed the latent oil and the milk the latent ghee. From this primordial seed emerge all those beginning with Mahat and ending with Viśeṣa. Then the gods and others are born. Then are born birds, their progenies and the seeds of others.

28-29. When the tree comes out of seed it does not suffer any depreciation or diminution. Just as fire appears from the solar stone coming in contact of the sun so also the creation takes place. Śiva has no desire for it. As a result of the contact of Śiva with Śakti, the gods and others are born naturally.

30. They spring up through their own action. Śiva manifests himself as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra.

31. Every thing springs up from him and finally merges in him. Śiva is sung as the performer of all activities.

Vyāsa said:—

32. O sage Sanatkumāra, O omniscient, please clear my doubts. Are there worlds above this universe?
Sanatkumāra said:—

33. O great sage, there are worlds above the universe. Please listen. I shall explain them clearly but briefly.

34. The world Vaikuṇṭha is beyond the world of Brahmā. It is here that Viṣṇu is stationed and it shines with great brilliance.

35. Above it is the extremely wonderful world Kau-māra. The general Kārttikeya, the brilliant son of Śiva shines here.

36. Beyond that shines the excessively divine world of Umā, where Śakti—Śivā, the mother of the three deities shines.

37. She is the Prakṛti, greater than the greatest, with the attributes of Rajas, Sattva and Tamas. But the goddess Śivā herself is devoid of attributes, free from aberrations.

38-39. The eternal Śivaloka is above that. Here lord Śiva, the great Brahman, shines. He is indestructible, excessively divine and endowed with great brilliance. He is the lord of all, greater than the three attributes. He is the progenitor of the three deities.

40. There are no worlds above it. The Goloka is near it. Mother cows named Suśilā are there. They are favourites of Śiva.

41. The protector of that world is Kṛṣṇa. He is established there at the behest of Śiva by Śiva himself who moves about as he pleases due to his power.

42. O Vyāsa, Śiva’s region is wonderful and beautiful. It has no support. It shines with different objects. It cannot be specifically described.

43. The presiding deity of that region is Śiva. He is the crest-jewel of all the gods. He is worthy of being served by Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva. He is the unsullied great soul.

44. O dear, thus the situation of the entire universe is narrated to you. What more do you wish to hear about the position of the worlds.