Available at
Shree Swaminarayan mandir,
Shree Narnarayan Dev Kothar
Opp City police Station Bhuj - Kutch
Pi.No. 370001

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First Edition :-  Copies :- 3000.

Samvat :- 2066 Vaishakh Sud 5
Date :- 18 - 5 - 2010

Price :- Rs. 60

Typing & set by :-
Dr. Swami Satyaprasad dasji

Printed in India at
Shree Narnarayan Dev Printing press
Bhuj
Forward

It is well known that the Vasudeva Mahatmya “Parabrahm Lord Vasudev”’s importance is depicted here hence without any doubt is rich in virtues. This important narration is told to saint Narad muni by god himself utmost valuable. Lord Sahajanad Swami has himself confirmed that this Vasudeva Mahatmya is the root of Udhavah sect. it is also admired by Lord Sahajanand Swami as it compromises all the methods of how to worship the god by his devotee. This volume has thrown light on the religion, knowledge, non-attachment and importance of bhakti (devotion). As well the non-violence in chapter 28 of Gadhada middle, if really praised and its pride to be taken, one has no need of further reading of extra reading.

The authentic eight scriptures believed by Lord Sahajanand in Vachanaramit, of them highly praised by him as the virtues of Shree Vasudev are described in the Vacchanamrit. Moreover it has dealt with four varnas, four ashrams and rules and regulations and the knowledge of soul and god and praise of non-attachment is highly impressive and the above the Vasudeva Mahatmya is my favorite one. This the Vasudeva Mahatmya is being read all over the village and thousands of listeners heartily believe that their ‘Istadev’ (deity) is only Shree Swaminarayan and he is worthy to be devoted.

Aksharnivasi Shastri Swami Shree Dharmajivandasji has published it Gujarati.

Today the spread of Uahadev (Swaminarayan) Sect is fast developing. The devotees in thousands of abroad or local make their lives worthy by praying to him. Originally written in Sanskrit with a view of understanding it easily it is being translated in Gujarati and so many additions have been published so that the Gujarati knowing devotees can easily understand. It is a dialogue between god and the devotee, but it is observed that NIR are not benefited, so if Vasudev Mahatmya is published with English translation more number of devotees can understand, hence it is being translated in English by authentic knowledge by having Sanskrit and English learned per-
Introduction to the Vasudeva Mahatmya
(found in the Skanda Purana)

According to the Indian tradition, the Vedas enjoy the most exalted position in Indian literature. All branches of knowledge are said to have originated from the Vedas only. However, it is very difficult for the common man to understand the Vedas because of the difficult language in which its literature has been formed. Therefore, our ancient sages authored the ‘Itihasa-s’ and ‘Purana-s’ to reach the messages of the Vedas to the masses and thus help them lead a virtuous life and also guide them in their quest for liberation. While the Ramayana and Mahabharata are known as ‘Itihasa-s’, the Purana-s are eighteen in number. Some of the important Purana-s are the Vishnu Purana, Skanda Purana, Bhavishya Purana and so on.

The Purana-s speak about different mythological stories in a very attractive manner. Through these stories, they convey the tenets of Dharma and give us counseling regarding the way of life we have to follow. They also let us know more about the paths of liberation like ‘Jnana’, ‘Bhakti’,
Sharanagathi’ and so on, and also guide us in practicing these paths.

The Skanda Purana is one of the premiermost Purana among the eighteen principal Puranas. The principal speaker in this Purana is Lord Skanda, also known by such other names like Shanmuka, Subramanya and so on. This Purana is divided into different ‘Khanda-s’ or divisions like Vishnu-Khada, Shiva-Khanda etc. The Vishnu-Khanda deals with the episodes that speak about the ‘leela-s’ (pastimes) that depict the greatness and supremacy of Lord Vishnu or Narayana.

Among the many ‘Mahatmya-s’ found in the Vishnu-Khanda, the ‘Vasudeva Mahatmya’ is one of the most important Mahatmya-s that we come across. These Mahatmya-s explain the greatness of particular aspects connected to the Lord. As far as the Swaminarayana Sampradaya is concerned, the ‘Vasudeva Mahatmya’ is one of the most important texts. It seems that Bhagavan Shree Swaminarayan advocated that all of his followers study the ‘Vasudeva Mahatmya’ with great devotion and dedication. During His time, Bhagavan Shree Swaminarayan strongly opposed those Vedic sacrifices in which animals were killed and offered to the sacrificial fire. He won many debates over the Brahmins who argued there was nothing wrong in killing animals as long as they were within the purview of the Sastras. One of the main instances Bhagavan Shree Swaminarayan quoted while winning the debates in this regard were instances found in the Vasudeva Mahatmya, where a great sage is considered to be a sinner since he supported the killing of animals as part of the Vedic sacrifices.

Apart from this, we also see the description of the Goloka, the blissful and exalted abode of the Supreme Lord Narayana in this part of the Skanda Purana.

The Mandala of the Lord Maha-Vishnu is also described here in a minute manner. Further, the method of worship of the Lord is also prescribed here. It is based on this part of the Purana, that Bhagavan Shree Swaminarayan has prescribed the method of worship to be followed by all His followers. The details of the duties and responsibilities of the four classes of people viz. Brahmana-s, Kshatriya-s, Vaidhya-s and Shudra-s are also described in great detail. The general principles as
well as the special principles to be followed by men and women during their various stages of life like childhood, youth, old age etc too are described in a very beautiful manner. Finally the procedure of performing the “Ashtanga Yoga” (Yoga having the eight aspects) and the procedure to meditate and worship the Lord is explained in a very concise and beautiful manner. At the end, the lineage of the knowledge of Vasudeva Mahatmya is described in the final chapter.

Thus, the Vasudeva Mahatmya is one of the most important and relevant Puranic texts in today’s context. It is more venerable to those who belong to the Swaminarayan Sampradaya since Bhagavan Shree Swaminarayan Himself used to quote this text and has advised that all devotees study and chant this great literature.

Since the Original text is in Sanskrit language, it was not accessible to people not knowing Sanskrit language. Later it was translated into Gujarati and Hindi. Thus it could reach a large number of devotees knowing these languages. However, nowadays, there are many devotees belonging to the Sampradaya in foreign countries. They are not
Chapter 1: The question of Sage Savarni

Saunaka said:

O Son of Suta Puranika! You have enumerated many means of welfare (for the souls) like Dharma (virtue), Jnana (knowledge of the Supreme Lord), Vairagya (detachment from worldly things) as well as the other courses that are to be followed by them. (1)

O one with a great intellect, You have also narrated many historical events stressing the aspects that we have to specifically understand and follow. We have listened to them with great reverence. (2)

However, these aspects are extremely difficult to practically implement, due to the impediments that trouble us from time to time. Since we are not able to follow the prescribed procedures in the right manner, the attainment of their fruits too is in doubt. (3)

It takes a lot of effort even for the most dedicated persons to even make an effort as you have prescribed. Even then, the fruits of these efforts are obtained only after a long time. Therefore, we beseech you, O revered one, to kindly let us know the means of salvation that are easy and achievable, within your capabilities. Please narrate the virtues that are to be followed by the Brahmans, (together with the duties of the respective ‘Ashrama-s’), as well the ‘shudra-s’ (people belonging to the lower caste) and ladies too. The means should
be such that, they should be very easy to follow, but the fruits attained should be great. Such means should not be affected by any impediments. After having thought about this well, kindly tell us the means that ensure the welfare of all beings and enable them to attain liberation ultimately. (4-7)

O learned one! By the grace of Balarama, Sage Vyasa and the great Janaka, you know every aspect of this subject. We too are very eager to know more about this. Please be kind enough to tell us what we have asked. (8)

Sauti (the son of Suta Puranika) said:

O Saunaka, Even the great sage Saavarni, similarly, modestly questioned Lord Skanda, the son of Lord Shiva: (9)

Sage Saavarni said:

O Lord Skanda, We have heard the many different Dharmas such as the Sankhya (a branch of divine knowledge), Yoga
Lord Skanda said:

Opious Brahmin! I will now spell out the easily achievable means of salvation that benefits all the souls of this world. I came to know about this from my own father Lord Shiva. (14)

This means of salvation that I am going to narrate propitiates all the demigods. It also bestows all the wishes of the performer. This benefits people belonging every category of humans. There is no other means that is equal to this. (15)

Even the smallest good propitiatory deed that is committed in a virtuous manner will yield a huge result and will help the coveted events to happen without any obstacles. (16)

All those ceremonies that are conducted in propitiation of either the demigods, manes (forefathers) as well as those performed as one’s own duty, will immediately yield the desired results by it being related to the God. (17)
Chapter 1

There are certain devotees who follow the path of renunciation. They are the yogin-s who are always immersed in the meditation of the Supreme Lord. They attain the world called the ‘Jana-loka’ which lasts for an entire period of the life of the creator, known as Brahma. (approximately 200 billion years) (22)

The ceremonies that you have mentioned are extremely difficult to perform. Even after having performed the, if a performer attains some momentary results, then who would venture to undertake them? (23)

I do not like to perform the propitiatory events of the gods that result in temporary and belittled fruits. (24)

O Lord Skanda, please tell me about such a Lord, who has Himself overcome all fears, and is able to rid of others or their fears as well; He should be most favourable to all his devotees; He should possess a divine world all His own; He should be able to bestow exalted and everlasting bliss to His devotees; By worshipping Him, and by invoking His grace, one should be able to have his desires fulfilled instantly. Tell me about such a Lord, O Lord Guha! (25-26)

I would also like to know the method of worshipping Him. That method should be acceptable to all the acknowledged elders. Please let me know of this with all the connected aspects. (27)

Thus sage Savarni asked Lord Skanda. Lord Skanda was delighted to listen to these questions from the sage. He happily accepted the words of the sage and continued the narration. (28)

Thus ends the first chapter titled “the question of Savarni” in the Vasudeva Mahatmya.

* * * * * * * * *
Chapter 2: Description of the means of salvation

Narada said:

O pious one, you have asked a very deep question. O pious Brahmin, one cannot answer this question by virtue of his own logic even after hundred years, unless he is the recipient of the grace of the Lord. (1)

O pious one, you are a person steeped in Dharma. There is nothing for me to hide from you. Hence I will answer your question, with the knowledge I have acquired by the grace of Lord Vasudeva. (2)

This is the very question that the great King Yudhisthira, who had no enemies, had asked Sri Bhishma at the end of the Mahabharatha war. Bhishma was the best among the knowers of Dharma; he lay on a bed of arrows; by constant and deep meditation, he had had the vision of the Lord Achyuta; he was undeterred by worldly attainments; he was a stalwart in the knowledge of the Vedas and their allied texts. (3-4)

Yudhisthira said:

"O grand father! Whom should a person, desirous of attaining all the four Purursharthas, be he of any caste or creed or belong to any of the four Ashramas, worship for attaining fulfillment? (5)

How will that person, with very little efforts and little virtue, be able to attain that exalted position in a short period of time, without any obstacles? O grandfather! You know everything. Kindly clear this doubt of mine. (6)
Skanda said:

O Sage! Bhishma, the son of king Shantanu, thus asked by the virtuous Yudhishthira, turned his gaze towards the lotus-like face of Lord Krishna and smiled. (7)

Lord Sri Krishna, by his very gaze urged Bhishma to speak about the greatness of Sri Vasudeva that he had heard from his own father (King Shantanu). Bhishma acted accordingly. Narada who was also present there, listened to the same. He then visited Kurukshetra; later he came to Kailasa and narrated the same to my father Lord Shiva. My father was kind enough to tell me the same. (9)

O pious one, you are a person who is devoid of deceit. Since you have asked me, I will now narrate the Vasudeva Mahatmya that clears spiritual doubts of even the great sages. This has been decided in the assembly of great men steeped in penance. (10)

Lord Vasudeva is the Supreme Being. He verily is Lord Sri Krishna and is the best among all persons. He is the Lord, who is worshipped by people having desires, people devoid of desires as well as souls who have already attained liberation. (11)

The Brahmins, women and people born of lower castes by devotedly performing the duties assigned to them propitiate this great Lord. (12)

Hence, one has to perform all the duties ordained (to him) towards God as well as his forefathers by the scriptures, with affection and dedication. (13)

The above mentioned auspicious duties have to be performed in such a manner that they are services to Lord Krishna. Those duties that are performed without the constant remembrance...
Chapter 2 Shree Vasudeva Mahatmyam

Chapter 2

of the Lord will not yield lasting fruits even if they are performed in the best possible manner. (14)

If an event is performed without the remembrance of the Lord, such an event will also be counter-productive; it will face numerous obstacles; it will not produce the desired results. (15)

If an event is performed with dedication and devotion unto Lord Krishna, that event will yield good results to all those involved in the event. (16)

Such an event will yield lasting fruits that are much more than the expectations of the performer. Any ill effects that arise out of performing the event at an improper place will also be negated. (17)

O Brahmarshi! By the grace of the Lord holding the divine discus, the event will not encounter any obstacles; it will instantly yield the desired results. (18)

Chapter 2

By the direct involvement of the Lord in the event being performed, even a small devoted event will become a great one (in terms of the result it yields for the performer). (19)

Just as a small spark becomes a terrific big fire when it comes into contact with a pile of (well dried-up) forest wood, a small event performed with the blessings of Lord Sri Hari will turn out to be a big one. (20)

Therefore, a virtuous person who wishes to have good attainment has to constantly meditate upon the Lord Vasudeva, irrespective of his involvement or keeping away from worldly events. (21)

Our forefathers often quote this ancient instance, where a conversation took place between Sage Narada and the Sage Narayana. (22)
That great Vasudeva who resides in his eternal abode, Himself appeared in the womb of Dakshayani for the well being of the world to spread the message of Dharma. (23)

Long ago, in the ‘Swayambhuva-Manvantara’ and in the Krita Yuga, He appeared taking the dual form of Nara and Narayana. (24)

Both Nara and Narayana proceeded to the holy place of Badarikashrama to perform severe penance for the well being of all humans on this earth. (25)

There, the two-some, who were slim and devoutly following the codes of conduct, secretly performed severe penance, such that they were invisible even to the gods. (26)

Only those who are the recipients of the grace are able to have a vision of these two. Without their grace, even those staying in the same location are unable to see them. (27)

Once, the great Yogi Narada, came to know within himself that Nara and Narayana wanted to meet him. (28)

He descended from the top of the mount Meru, directly through the sky and instantly arrived at the place known as Badarikashrama. (29)

Soon, sage Narada happened to see from a distance, Nara and Narayana who were deeply immersed in their oblations. (30)

Having seen them engaged in their oblations, Sage Narada was surprised. He thought, ‘Oh! How is that these two, the masters of the universe, the indwellers of everything in this world, are performing oblations that are prescribed for the
common man. (31)
These two, themselves are verily the fathers of all beings. They are the God of all Gods. Which God will they worship by performing these oblations? (32)
Thinking thus, Sage Narada, who was a great devotee of the Lord Narayana slowly approached Him and stood near Him in all humility with folded hands. (33)
O sinless one! The twosome, after performing their oblations, according to the procedure, received Narada with respect. (34)
The two-some was greatly surprised at the arrival of Sage Narada. They seated him nearby. Narada too was surprised. (35)

He saw Lord Narayana and with a focused mind, propitiated Him and then addressed Him. (36)

Here ends the second chapter in Vasudeva Mahatmya titled “Description of the means of salvation”. 

* * *
Chapter 3: Description of Vasudeva being worthy worshiping by all

Narada said:

Oh Achyuta! Your glory is sung in the Vedas, along with their subsidiary subjects and other minor works and the Puranas. You are the eternal, the creator, controller and eliminator of this world. You create the world through the four-faced Brahma. All the things in this universe rest in you. (1)

Oh Lord! People in the four stages of life and all others like Shiva, Brahma, Indra and so on, by their various activities worship You daily, who is in different forms. (2)

You are the eternal father and mother and God of everybody. But, we do not know which God or father you are worshipping. (3)

Shree Narayana said:

Oh Brahman! This is a secret that should not be revealed to anybody. Even then, I will explain it to you as it is, since you are a great devotee. (4)

That one God Who is described by the Vedas as the Supreme Brahman, possesses truth, knowledge, and limitlessness; He is beyond the three gunas, and is the person with divine form. (5)

He is said to be the supreme person, and Lord Vasudeva as he resides everywhere. He is said to be the sage Narayana, Vishnu, Krishna and the Lord possessing the auspicious qualities. (6)

Oh Narada! Know that He is alone is the God to both us and He is our Father and Mother. He is the Lord, who is worshipped in the ceremonies either connected with the gods or Manes. (7)
Chapter 3  Shree Vasudeva Mahatmyam

Oh Brahman! There is no other Father or God superior to him. That Krishna, the Lord of the Eternal abode known as Aksharadham, in the inner soul of both of us. (8)

Oh Brahman, those desirous of the well being of the world have to perform the prescribed duties unto Him without fail. Two types of duties viz, involving oneself in activities and detaching oneself from those activities are laid down by the Vedas. This has been laid down according to one’s own capacity to achieve the goal of life. (9-10)

All these activities called ‘Pravrtta’ in the form ‘Ishta’ and ‘Purta’ are said to be the causes of disturbance of peace. Ishta activities are, marrying a proper spouse as per the dictum of the Vedas, earning money in the righteousness way, performance of rituals, desirous of rituals, residing in a city or village. Purta is creating tanks, gardens, temples etc (that are beneficial to all people of scoeity). (11-12)

Chapter 3  With English Translation

Oh sage! The activities known as ‘Nivrtta’ are, giving up women and wealth, giving up passion, lure and anger, residing in forests, renunciation, penance, forgiveness, controlling the inner organs and external sense organs, meditating upon Brahman as our inner soul, meditating upon the Supreme Brahman, knowing the correct mature of Brahman and chanting the different names of Brahman. (13-14)

Oh sage! The move of those people practicing the path of ‘Pravrtti’ is limited to the three worlds and up to the heavenly regions. (15)

According to the result of ones own good deeds, they will enjoy desired varieties of pleasure and wealth in the regions of Indra, Moon and Fire. (16)
After enjoying the fruits of their Good deeds in those heavenly regions, they fall down from heaven helplessly; the result of the good deeds come to an end as well. (17)

Oh sage! When the result of their good deeds come to an end, due to the power of time; their enjoyment of pleasure and wealth comes to a close (quite against their own desire). (18)

Due to the passage of time, in the day of the four faced creator, the pleasure and wealth of the divine beings entrusted with different responsibilities come to a close (again and again). (19)

Those, who are practicing the path of ‘Nivrtti’, viz, the Yogis and ascetics, go to the three worlds called ‘Jana’, ‘Tapas’ and ‘Satya’, which are above the three worlds (mentioned earlier viz. ‘Bhuh’, ‘Bhuva’ and ‘Suva’) (20)

They enjoy the desired pleasures and luxury of those worlds.

They will continue to be happy even in the midst of the daily deluge. (21)

The pleasures and wealth of these three worlds will come to an end, at the close of the second ‘Parardha’ of the four-faced creator, due to the passage of time. Similarly, even the enjoyment of these comes to a close, in case of the people in the path of ‘Nivrutti’. (22)

Oh Brahmin! Both these activities though, lead to bondage and hence called Saguna; however, if done as service to Lord Vishnu, will become Nirguna i.e. will not result in bondage. (23)

The result of that selfless activity is unlimited and far superior to the one’s own desired result. Those devotees reach the heavenly abode of the Lord, transcending the eight enclosures of earth, water, fire, air, ether, buddhi (intellect), ego and Mahat. (24)
Hence, those who have the power of discrimination, always do all the activities either ‘Nivṛttta’ or ‘Pravṛttta’ only with the devotion to the Lord Vishnu. (25)

Those who are in ‘Pravṛttti Magra’, viz, the creator, Shiva, Manu, Daksha, Bhṛgu, Dharma, Yama, Marichi, Angiras, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vailaja, Vasishtha, Vivasvan, Soma, Kashyapa, the Prajapatis viz, Kardama etc, divine beings all the sages and all the people belonging to different classes and stages of life, worship that Lord Vishnu only. (26-28)

The great sages (practicing celibacy) like, Soma, Sanatsujata, Sanaka, Sanandana, Ribhu, Yati Hamsa etc worship Him following the path of ‘Nivṛttti’ only. (29-30)

Always, they conduct worship in a non-violent way the divine beings like Indra etc and the manes conceiving them as the limbs of Vasudeva. (31)

These, entrusted with different responsibilities simply follow the path of Pravṛttti or Nivrṛttti as per the dictates of the Lord. Both of them (That is the followers of Nivrṛttti and Pravṛttti) do not transgress their limits. (32)

The all-powerful Lord will fulfill the four goals of life as per the desire of the devotees performing these activities. (33)

If one does any deed with utmost devotion and dedication, then the Lord will be pleased and will bless him with unlimited results. (34)

Those, who have single-minded devotion to Him, devoid of
any ‘vasanas’ or desires except of Vasudeva, enter into the eternal abode of the Lord transcending the world of ignorance. There they will serve the Lord with utmost love and affection possessing divine forms. (35-36)

The other devotees, after the passage of certain time, at the end of all ‘vasanas’ (desires), due to the strength of their meditation, enter into the divine abode of the Lord (like the single-minded devotees). (37)

With some intention or the other, if one associated with the Lord, he will never undergo the transmigration like other souls. (38)

The speedy accomplishment of Karmayoga, or Jnanayoga, by the people without any impediments is only possible by taking refuge in him. (39)

Therefore, it is necessary for all the people in this world, to meditate upon Him with great love as prescribed in the scriptures to achieve the desired results. (40)

Those like Brahma, Shiva etc, devoid of impediments and even after having union with the Supreme Brahman are always devoted to the Lord Vishnu. This is because of His great virtue. (41)

Oh Narada, this most secret message is given to you since you are a great devotee most attached to me. (42)
Chapter 4: Free description of Sveta dvipa

Skanda said:
After hearing Sriman Narayana speaking thus, Sage Narada, the greatest among the self-realized, always interested in the welfare of the world, addressed the Lord known as Achyuta and the preceptor of the world, thus: (1)

Narada asked:
Oh Lord! I have listened to your words; You take the form of a sage; You are the repository of great wealth; O Lord of the world! I think all that is visible in this world is your divine sport itself. (2)

Oh, Great Soul! By merely seeing you, all the desires of my heart are fulfilled; now I have become totally content. Oh, Lord! Even then, I desire to see your earlier form. I am very anxious to so. (3)

Shree Narayana said:
It is not possible to see my form by giving away donations, performing sacrifices and yoga, or penance. O Narada! Only those excellent, sincere devotees with their matchless devotion can see me. (4)

You have matchless devotion unto me. Your knowledge coupled with detachment (towards worldly things) is your own distinctive quality. Hence, you will see that form of mine, which is very difficult to see for the chief of the gods and others. (5)

I am very much pleased with your devotion. Now, I command you to see that form. Go to the island called ‘Swetha-dvipa’. Oh, excellent Brahmin! There you will have your desires fulfilled. (6)
Chapter 4

Skanda said:

Narada, the son of Brahma, after listening to these words, worshipped the Lord, who Himself was a sage. Then, being a capable Yogi, he travelled in the sky and descended at once on the Meru mountain. (7)

Then the sage stood on the peak of the mountain in solitude for a short time (about 48 minutes). While standing, he saw a wonderful island in the northwest direction. (8)

That island was to the north of the Milky Ocean. It was famous as ‘sweta’ or white. It was vast. It was shining very bright with its mass of white light all around. (9)

It was full of the trees of mango, Asava (yellow Sal tree), Ashoka, hog, plum, Nimba, Kadamba (a kind of tree - said to put forth buds at the roaring of shimmering clouds), Neepa,
All of them had powers that were beyond the cognizance of the senses; they were free from all sins; they would not sweat or release anything dirty. They were spreading fragrance; some of them had two arms; some others four arms. Some were whitish and some were shining like the early morning sky. (14)

Some had eyes shining like the lotus bud; they had proportionate bodies, that were very handsome; they had divine limbs which were very powerful; with curvy hairs on their heads; they were eternally youthful (always having the age of twenty five); they had all the agreeable auspicious signs. (15)

Their arms and limbs were bright with signs of a kind of lotus. All of them were free from six kinds of undesirable entities – sorrow, attachment, old age, death, hunger and thirst; wearing white clothes, they were shining like the sun, engaged in meditation; they were people of poise. Even Yama, the Lord of death, would fear them. (16)

Savarni asked:

Who are those men, having powers beyond the senses, free from anxiety, sweat etc., and spreading sweet fragrance? How were they born? How is it that they have such a beautiful condition? Is the Swetadvipa situated central part of the Milky Ocean? How did you say that those who dwell there have powers that we cannot know about? (17-18)

They verily live in Brahman the Supreme Being, who is known as ‘Sachidananda’ (the form of eternal bliss); He is the eternal shelter of all! Only those who are full of pure intellect, free from bondage alone, can dwell here. Others cannot do so!(19)

Oh sage! Please clear my doubt. I am very inquisitive to know. You know very well about these things. Hence, I have approached you. Please instruct me. (20)
Skanda said:

Oh, Savarni! Those who have, in the previous Kalpas (a unit of thousands of millenniums), meditated on the Lord of Lakshmi, Lord Narayana in solitude, obtain the form of Brahman. They are free from birth and death. (21)

They are imperishable; they live in this island to serve Lord Vasudeva. Sage Narada saw them. (22)

When the dissolution of the world occurs, they are safely protected in the Akshaya-dhama (the eternal abode of the Lord that cannot perish). They are free people, with no fear of time and illusion. Even those possessing illusory knowledge overcome it by undertaking spiritual practices. (23-24)
O Sage! Listen! I will tell you an old story which mentions how ordinary men living here obtained that exalted state. (29)

Oh Brahmin! This is a long story. I heard this story in the presence of my father Parashiva (Lord Shiva). Now I will narrate it to you. That is the essence of the story. (30)

End of the fourth chapter known as ‘Free Desription of Sveta Dveepa’ in the second part of Vaishnava Khanda known as Sri Vasudeva Mahatmya.

* * *

Chapter – 5: Description of the Qualities of Uparicharavasu

Skanda said:

Oh, Sage! Once upon a time, there live a king called ‘Uparicharavasu’. He was the son of Ayu Maharaja. He was famous as ‘Amavasu’. He was a friend of Indra (the king of gods) and a devotee of Lord Narayana. (1)

Being a righteous person and devoted to his father, he always satisfied the gods and manes; he was a follower of righteous path, he was efficient, free from jealousy; he always pardoned even those who had harmed him. (2)

He helped everyone; he was even minded; he observed celibacy; he was always clean, devoid of anger and took limited food; he was soft natured, free from addictions and
He was free from duality; he was without any kind of distortions; he was courageous, he was knower of the self; he free from pride; he respected his elders, yogi-s and sages and those who had attained control over their senses. (4)

This king, being unattached to wealth, wife, children, relatives and others, always repeated the sacred name of Narayana. Pleased with the devotion of the King, Lord Vasudeva, of his own free will, bestowed him with the Kingdom. But not interested in that Kingdom, he worshipped Lord Vasudeva with utmost respect. (6-7)

Having mental equanimity in all the five times, he worshipped the Lord according to the procedures laid down in the Tantras. At other times, he used to worship the gods and Manes. (7)

Dividing his time appropriately, he served the Brahmins and other dependents. After the guests had dined, he would take the food left over. Being truthful, he always observed the vow of non-violence towards all animals. (8)

He considered it a stigma to eat the meat of any animal considering that meat-eating was a great sin. He used to preach the same to his subjects. (9)

He sought refuge in Lord Janardhana, one who has no beginning or end and the protector of the world. He worshipped Him wholeheartedly. (10)

He placed his mind firmly on the lotus feet of Lord Sri Vasudeva. He listened to the story of the Lord with rapt attention. (11)
That king’s eyes were engrossed in seeing Lord Mukunda; he was intent in meeting devotees of the Lord; He words were devoted to enumerate the divine qualities of Lord Sri Hari. (12)

He always inhaled the sweet aroma of Tulasi (the sacred basil) and flowers sanctified by the lotus feet of Lord Narayana. He would smell other things. (13)

He employed his skin to touch the sacred robes and other clothes used by the Lord Srisha (lit. the spouse of Goddess Lakshmi) and his tongue to taste the food offered to Lord Narayana. (14)

He employed his legs in going to the temples, sacred places and to righteous men; his hands were always engaged in the service of Lord Sri Hari. (15)

He utilized his head to bow to the lotus feet of Lord Vishnu and cultivated intimate friendship with great Bhagavatas (devotees of the Lord). (16)

The Rajarishi (sage-king) who used to observe the Vratas (vows) related to Lord Lakshmirpati, never spent even a short span of time without expressing his devotion unto the Lord. He used to celebrate the birth festivals of Lord Vishnu with invaluable things. He constructed a garden temple, park and other things for the worship of Lord Vishnu. (17-18)

Oh, Noble Brahmin! Eventually, Indra arrived on his own, and generously offered his own bed and seat to this King, who was totally dedicated to the Lord. (19)

In addition to this, he gave him an auspicious non-fading garland of lotus beads, known as the ‘Vaijayanti’ necklace and...
other sumptuous gems. (20)

However, Uparicharavasu, (not being enamored of them) considered his kingdom, wealth, wife, vehicles etc always belonging to the Lord. (21)

He observed many types of rituals — daily rituals and other occasional sacrificial rituals — according to the prescribed procedures with magnanimity and equanimity. (22)

In the house of this great soul, leading Brahmins knowing the ‘Pancharatra’ (the scripture prescribing the procedures of worshipping the Lord) partook food that was offered to the Lord. (23)

Conquering enemies, putting down the unfriendly, protecting his kingdom, the king ruled righteously; his words were always truthful; his mind would never swerve from righteousness; he never committed even a minor sin. (24)

In order to strengthen his devotion to the Lord, he listened to ‘Pancharatra Mahatantra’ every day. (25)

That king ruled over his kingdom by establishing pure righteousness, catering to the happiness of all his people, like Devendra ruling over Heaven. (26)

There was no meat-eater in his kingdom, no eater of seven kinds of meat, no heretic or iconoclast. (27)

There were no unchaste women or men eyeing another’s wife; men and women of mixed castes were unheard of in his kingdom. (28)

During his regime, in his kingdom, no one even smelt the eleven kinds of liquor or other kinds of wine. (29)
The person, because of his lie and his partiality of the gods, came down from Heaven and entered the earth. (30)

Having entered the earth, being steeped in the path of righteousness, placing his mind firmly in Narayana alone, he performed the ‘japa’ (repeated chanting) of the mantra of Lord Narayana. (31)

At last, with the grace of that Lord Narayana, he once again ascended to Heaven and attained happiness having obtained all his desires. (32)

Once again, by the curse of the Manes, he was born as their king, giving up laziness, he worshipped Sri Hari as per the procedure laid down in Pancharatra (method of worship). (33)

Afterwards, that king obtained Heaven with a diving body. He lived there for some time by strengthening his adoration of the Lord, in the company of great sages. Further, he reached the fearless great dwelling of Sri Vasudeva itself. (34-35)

Thus Ends the Fifth Chapter titled “Description of the Qualities of Uparicharavasu” in Sri Vasudeva Mahatmya of Second Vaishnava Khanda in Sri Skandapurana.

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Chapter 6: Description of the downfall of Uparicharavasu

Savarni asked:
That king of the Vasu-s (a class of demigod) was a great devotee of the Lord! What kind of lie did he say as a result of which he descended to the earth? (1)

Who saved him again him from the earth? Why was he cursed by the Manes? Oh, Lord Skanda! Please tell me everything about it. (2)

Skanda said:
“Oh, Brahmana! Listen to the stay of that Uparicharaasuu, who was as radiant as Indra. One who listens to this story will be freed, at once, from all sins. (3)
On seeing the elaborate arrangements of the sacrifice being full of violence, the sages were taken aback by great surprise, even though the cause was a pious one. (8)

Being virtuous and righteous great Brahmins, they saw that unrighteous procedures being followed. Overwhelmed with mercy for the animals, they addressed Indra and others thus: (9)

The great sages said:

“Oh Mahendra! Both the demigods and sages are your fellow-beings; please should listen to our words. We will tell you about the eternal principal of righteousness as it is. (10)

At the time of creation of the world by Brahma the creator, you were created with eternal righteousness with all the four legs having predominant purity (goodness). (The rule of Dharma existed in its entirety at the time of your creation). (11)

Brahma with his second constituent quality — Rajas and with his third quality - Tamas, created the Manes, the Lords of men and the lords of Asuras respectively. For the welfare of all, he created the Vedas, which bestow all your desires and prescribe the method of performing sacrifices (which are the correct means of having the desires fulfilled). (12-13)

Those Vedas dwell at length, about non-violence and other allied aspects (as the basic tenets of the) greatest righteousness. The Vedas do not approve sacrificing animals in sacrifices. (14)

The essence of the Vedas is to establish ‘Dharma’ firmly with four pillars. Performing violent sacrifices is totally against the spirit of Dharma. (15)
Being possessed by *rajasic* and *tamasic* qualities and sickness of the mind, the Asura kings and kings of men, wrongly understood the meaning of the word ‘*medhyaena ajena*’ (Aja - means goat also) as a goat and not paddy and which is the right meaning of the word. (16)

As you are ‘*Sattvika-s*’ (driven by the effect of the quality of ‘*Sattva*’) it would be in the fitness of things to interpret the meaning of the Vedas in its right spirit. It is not right on your part to interpret it in a wrong manner. (17)

The nature of a person will be in accordance with his qualities and his doings will be in accordance with their nature. (18)

As you are ‘*Sattvika-s*’, Lord Vishnu, the spouse of Goddess Lakshmi, is Himself your God. You have the power to please Him by performing sacrifices which are non-violent. (19)

Oh, great angels! Performing sacrifices which involves killing animals is diametrically opposed to righteousness. (20)

These priests who conduct such violent sacrifices, are under the influence of the qualities *Rajas* and *Tamas* (that create aggression and lethargy respectively in the person), have taken refuge under demonical wealth, due to their ignorance of the correct meaning of the Vedas. (21)

Your association with them alone has changed your minds now. It is therefore, that you have begun to perform this kind of a sacrifice. (22)

According to their own qualities, Humans possessing the quality of *Rajas* and demons who possess the quality of *Tamas*, worship the gods like ‘*Bhairava*’ (a demigod who represents the quality of *Tamas*) and other gods respectively. (23)
The violent sacrifices are prescribed for appeasing those demi-
gods whom the violent people worship. These sacrifices are
prescribed for those types of people only. (24)

Violent sacrifices are prohibited even for the Rakshasas,
Daityas and humans, who are devotees of Lord Vishnu. When
it is so, how can it be appropriate for you, who are
*Sattvikas*? (Those who possess the quality of *Sattva.*) (25)

The Vedas have ordained that all those who perform the sac-
rificial rituals, must partake the residuals of the sacrifice that
they perform. (26)

We have neither heard from our virtuous forefathers nor seen
that the *Sattvika* demigods drink wine or eat meat. (27)

Hence sacrifices are to be performed only with paddy, milk,
ghee, sacred cooked rice, and other essences alone. It should
not be done by killing animals. (28)

There too, sacrifices should be performed with grains that
have been stored for three years and thus have lost the ca-
pacity to sprout. Such grains are known as ‘Aja’. (29)

It is said that loyalty, generosity, self restraint, kindness to
animals, penance, celibacy, truthfulness, humility, forgiveness,
courage - are the forms of eternal righteousness; whoever
transgresses these, is a slayer of righteousness, and will surely
have a downfall.” (30-31)

**Skanda said:**

“The great sages who knew the secrets of the Vedas,
taught them with great respect and sincerity. However, in
certain places, they could not understand the spirit of those teachings. (32)

They were possessed by pride, anger, insolence and such other characters and therefore, they started to look for weaknesses in others’ theories. (33)

Even as they were arguing that the word ‘Aja’ means ‘a goat’ and not ‘grain’ and the great sages were repeatedly abusing them, the wealthy King Uparichara who was wandering around came there. He was an intimate friend of Indra, and was spreading his luster in all directions. (34-35)

The Brahmins who saw Uparichara-Vasu arriving by the sky-way, told the demigods – “this king will clear our doubt”. (36)

This king has performed thousands of sacrifices in the past, as laid down in the Satvata Tantra (the procedure of sacrifice followed by devotees of Sri Hari) and Aranyaka Vidhana (another procedure of sacrifice). (37)

No animal was sacrificed directly in any one of those sacrifices. There was no indirect worship of any demigod. Neither was any particular dakshina (donation of money as part of the sacrifice) offered. (38)

He is well-known everywhere for his non-violence and protection of righteousness. He is the foremost among the devotees of Lord Vishnu and practices the vow of having a single wife. (39)

He is a great Dharmika (follower of Dharma), truthful, and a knower of the Vedas. Such a great soul, being the king of Vasu-s (a class of demigods) never utters a lie. (40)
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eवं ते संविदा कृत्या विवृधा ऋष्यस्तथा ।
अपृच्छन्त सहस्रभैरव वस्तुः राजानमूल्यः।।४१।।
देवमहर्ष्य ऊँचुः:
भो ! राजकेन वष्टवं पशुनाहस्विदोषधे: ।
एतं न: संशयं छिन्नया प्रमाणं नो भवान्ति:।।४२।।
स्कन्द उवाच
स तानु कृताज्ञानिभूतवा परिप्रच्छच वेतसुः: ।
कस्य व: को मतः पक्षः भूत सत्यं समाहित्वा:।।४३।।
महर्ष्य ऊँचुः:

Having decided thus, the demigods and sages gathered quickly before the Vasu King and questioned him eagerly: (41)

**The demigods and sages said:**

Oh, King! Which is the article that is to be used to perform the sacrifice? If it is animals or herbs? Please clear our doubt. We believe that you are the authority in this regard. (42)

**Skanda said:**

"With folded hands the Vasu asked them—‘Who is advocating which school of thought’? Tell the truth calmly." (43)

The great sages said:

Oh King! It is our opinion that sacrifices should be performed with grains only. It is the opinion of the demigods that it has to be performed with animals. Oh, great king! Please let us know of your opinion" (44)

**Skanda said:**

"Knowing the opinion of the demigods, the Vasu-king who had taken accepted their opinion, said—‘The sacrifice has to be performed with goat and other animals only’ (45)

Though the king was a knower of righteousness, he thus took the side of the proud, dishonorable demigods and uttered a lie, by saying that the Vedas advocated violence in the performance of sacrifice. (46)
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Immediately, the King, who was guilty of uttering falsehood, fell down from the sky and entered the earth. (47)  

Reaching the earth, the king got into a perilous life. But as he had taken refuge under Sriman Narayana, memory of his past birth did not vanish. (48)  

Thereafter, the demigods, being afraid of violence, freed the animals and went back to Heaven. The great sages also went to their hermitages. (49)  

End of chapter six, that describes “the Fall of Uparichara Vasu” in the second part of Sri Vasudeva Mahatmaya of Sri Skandamahacha Purana  

* * *

Chapter - 7: Description of salvation of Uparcharavasu  

Skanda said:  

Thus reaching the earth, the Vasu king, cursing his act and repenting very much for the same and respecting those great sages, continuously chanted the imperishable three-syllabled mantra of the Lord. (1)  

He worshipped Sri Hari, the Lord of the demigods, with utmost respect and devotion five times a day (during the two twilights, noon and midnight and at any other time he felt like). (2)  

Sri Vasudeva, the Lord of the world was pleased with the king, who was worshipping him even in his troubled times, in accordance with the sastra. (3)
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Lord Vishnu, desiring to bestow a boon to the king on his own, called Garuda, the king of the birds, who flies with tremendous speed, standing nearly, and told him thus: (4)

The Lord said:

O, blessed bird! It is my command that you go to that Vasu King, who is a righteous soul and who has sought refuge in me. Having transgressed the Brahmins, he now respects them. He has entered the earth now. (5-6)

O Garuda! I command you to go instantaneously to that great king. He moves around in the hollow of the earth due to his deeds; make him fly in the sky as before, immediately. (7)

Skanda said:

“Immediately, Garuda, spreading his wings, flew with the speed of the air and entered the earth where the silent Vasu King was living. (8)

Then Garuda, the son of Vinata, lifted the King by his beak, and flew very quickly to the sky and released him there.(9)

At once, the King Uprichara, had his rebirth, reached heaven with his body intact and enjoyed unalloyed bliss. (10)

Oh, Brahma Rishi! Despite censuring good persons and not being untruthful, the King, who knew the nuances of Dharma attained the position that is beyond the reach of performers of great sacrifices. (11)
Since he served the Supreme-Being Lord Sri Hari alone with utmost dedication and devotion, he had his sins washed off and obtained the heavenly abode. (12)

There he lived like a second Indra, enjoying all his multifarious desires, and having his qualities sung by the demi-gods. (13)

Once, accompanied by a heavenly nymph Adrika, he was flying by in a celestial flight. He was shining forth like the sun; at that time, a maid called Acchoda saw him. (14)

She was the mental daughter of the formless great souls, called Agnishwaatta manes, who live in the world of the moon. (15)

That lady of pure smile did not know her fathers as they were formless. She thought that Vasu was her father. The Vasu King too considered her as his daughter. (16)

Perceiving those thoughts in them, the Manes cursed them—

"Oh, daughter! you will be born as the daughter of this king. Oh, Vasu! You will be born as a man in earth and beget her as you daughter from this Nymph you wife. This is certain to happen." (17-18)

Being thus cursed by the Manes, they bowed to them and prayed for release from the curse. Those kind souls spoke thus: (19)

The curse came as both of you are to be related as father and daughter. This will be for your well-being. (20)

Oh, Vasu! You will be born as the son of Maharaja Kritayagna, a great soul, in the twenty eighth Dwapara Age. (21)
You will be a person of good qualities as you are now, capable of moving in the air, and you will be foremost among the Bhagavata-s (devotees of the Lord). (22)

Worshipping Lord Vishnu in accordance with the Pancharatra procedure, along with your subjects, with the remaining Prasadam, you will worship us and the demigods. Then getting a divine body, you go to the heavens, enjoying all divine things, you will attain the abode of Lord Vishnu. 23-24

Oh, Acchoda! You will also, with you ‘Amsha’ (divine portion), be born as ‘Kali’, on the earth, in the womb of Adrika, who will be of the caste of a fisherman. (25)

You will beget Lord Sri Hari Himself as your son, from the sage Parashara before you lose your virginity. By the grace of that son alone, you will enjoy the pleasures of this world and ultimately obtain salvation”. (26)

Skanda said:

After being cursed like this by the Manes and having obtained their blessings, the king was born in this world. He performed many sacrifices and became famous by his good qualities. (27)

As before, he became a devotee of Lord Krishna and a knower of the method of discharging his duties to the Devatas and Manes. Mahendra, out of his friendship to him, gave him great wealth. (28)

Mahendra also gave him the victory flag he had received from Sri Vasudeva which was adept in destroying enemies, in the Svetadvipa. (29)

That king, having power to travel in space, enjoyed all the
pleasures that are not easily available on the earth, and at the end of his life, assumed a divine body and proceeded to the Heavens. (30)

On account of the remaining merit he had acquired in the past, that King enjoying many kinds of divine pleasures that he desired; he also developed strong detachment towards worldly pleasures. (31)

Then he firmly sat on the peak of the Meru Mountain in a lonely place, and with purity, deeply meditated upon God Lord Ramaapati, in his lotus heart. (32)

Then becoming a sage, giving up his divine body by means of yoga, went to the region of the sun with his astral body. By the grace of the Lord Sun, he attained liberation from his astral body, and he gave up all his worldly 'vaasana-s' and becoming totally pure. Then he was taken to the wonderful Vaishnava abode called Svetadvipa by the ‘Ativaahika’ angels (divine angels who carry the liberated person) of the world of Lord Vishnu, which is marvelous and known as ‘Svethadvipa’. (33-35)

Oh Sage! Though the svetadvipa is on this earth, it is considered as supernatural; it is the habitat of the devotees of Sri Hari. It is possible to obtain that place only by devotees with focused mediation. (36)

This island is like the entrance to the ‘Golaka’, ‘Brahmapura’, and ‘Vaikunta’ to those great devotees who desire to go to any one of the worlds. (37)

The inhabitants of this island to go and reach that world that they desire (38)
That king, having obtained a divine body, lived in that Svetadvipa. Like the liberated souls of the Svetadvipa, he went to Golaka and enjoyed great bliss. (39)

Whoever worships the Supreme Being Lord Narayana with utmost devotion, will reach the Svetadvipa and become liberated. (40)

Oh, Sage! I have described fully the condition of dedicated devotees and the salient features of Sveta-dvipa as you had asked for. (41)

Thus ends the seventh chapter titled ‘Description of the salvation of Uparicharavasu’ of Sri Vasudeva mahatmya in the second part of Vaishnava Skanda of Sri Skandapurana.

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### Chapter - 8: The Curse to Devendra

**Savarni said:**

How did the performance of the sacrifices start once again after the sages prevented the gods from performing violent sacrifices? (1)

How did the eternal Dharma deteriorate gradually, among the gods, sages, manes as well as persons of the present and the past? (2)

O Lord with six faces! Now, I have got this doubt once again. You are the right person to rid me of this doubt. (3)

**Skanda said:**

Time is stronger than the strongest; Due to this, there is de-
cline in minds of the people who are under the influence of lust, anger, desire, as well as greed. (4)

On account of anger and ego, even the virtuous minds of people, get destroyed, due to the transgression of the words of great and pious people. (5)

Even pundits indulge in evil deeds. Later they repent and get engrossed in transmigration. (6)

Time is never capable of distorting the minds, of those devotees who are devoid of passion etc and whose mental impression is in the process of decrease. (7)

Never a person in any place who has not resorted to righteousness will be relieved of this transmigration. O best of among the Brahmins, this statement of mine in true. (8)

Now I will narrate, as before, the ills of involvement in the sacrifice that is full of violence as I have heard from my father. (9)

This ancient history is narrated here in this regard; the greatness of Lord Narayana and Goddess Lakshmi is also stated in this context. O Sage! Disrespecting those great sages, Indra, who performed a sacrifice called ‘Visvajit’ lost his mental balance. (10-11)

Once, Durvasas, an ascetic born of the part of Lord Sankara, came near the river Pushpabhadra roaming freely in various parts of this world. He saw there, the wife of Sumati a Vidyadhara (demigod), encircled by her friends. She had come there for water sports. (12-13)

He saw her, holding in her right hand a garland, by name
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‘Madakala’ made out of lotus flowers which were full of fragrance and born in the heavenly Ganges. (14)
The sage after seeing her, approached her and begged her for the garland she held in her hand, like a mad man. Knowing his greatness, she bowed down to him immediately. She adorned his neck with the garland with great reverence. (15-16)

Then, Durvasas, was very pleased and started singing like a mad man. While he was proceeding on his way, he saw Indra who was going towards that great river. He saw Indra mounted on the best elephant, whose victory was being sung along with beats by the heavenly nymphs, known as Gandharvas. Indra’s eyes were stationed on Rambha’s lotus-like face when he was overwhelmed by hearing her melodies music. He was shining forth with Umbrella and cowries. (17-19)
The son of Atri, Durvasa saw him (Indra) who however did not notice him (Durvasas). Then he laughed at Indra like a lunatic and threw the garland on the neck of Indra. (20)

Once, long ago, Indra was overpowered by unrighteousness. Hence, being overcome by passion he kept the garland on the temples of the elephant he was riding. The king of elephants was attracted by the fragrance of the garland; it dragged the garland with its tusk. (21)

Then the garland fell on the ground from the tusk. The elephant then trampled the garland even as the great ascetic Durvasas, the repository of penance was looking on. (22)

Durvasas was very angry at this; his eyes became read like fire when it is during the time of deluge. Then he told Indra...
“you are full of conceit, infatuation and evil mindedness, because you are lured by passion. (23)

You ought to have respected, with affection, the garland belonging to the abode of Lakshmi that was given by me. O idiot! Being infatuated you are not even bowing down to me. You are not even able to see me, who can punish people infatuated like you. You have become blind on account of acquiring the three worlds. Now I will punish you. (24-25)

By whose grace you have obtained the happiness on account of acquiring three worlds, let that goddess Lakshmi enter into the ocean deserting you and all the three worlds. (26)

Indra heard this statement which struck him like a thunderbolt. He immediately jumped from the elephant, and getting rid of his infatuation, fell at the feet of the sage. Shivering, bowing down again and again he begged O compassionate one! be gracious upon me, your servant. (27-28)

Then Durvasas said “O Indra! I am not sage Gautama; know me as Durvasa who essence is not to pardon. (29)

O wicked one! All the other sages praise you and follow you. Being dispassionate I will never care for worms like you. (30)

With my frowned eight sight and burning locked hairs, which sinner in this universe is not afraid of me? (31)

Thus ends the eighth chapter titled “The Curse to Devendra” found in Vasudeva Mahatmyam in Vishnukhanda of Skandapurana.

* * *
Chapter 9: Description of the reasons to perform violent sacrifices

Skanda said:

O Sage! At that time, Durvasas, was under the control of future time in which Dharma was to be destabilized. He went to Kailasa stating that “I will not forgive”. (1)

(Soon,) Even Goddess Lakshmi entered into the sea and disappeared, abandoning the three worlds. All the heavenly nymphs followed Goddess Lakshmi leaving Indra (alone). (2)

Penance, purity, compassion, truth, righteousness, prosperity, attainments, power, and essence — all of these followed Lakshmi. The mounts like elephants, jewels made out of gold etc., gems and diamonds and ores and instruments too disappeared. (3-4)

Within a short period of time, food, herbs and oils disappeared. There was no milk in the udders of cows, buffalos and other animals. All the nine types of wealth’s disappeared from the abode of Kubera, the god of wealth, even as Indra along with the groups of divine beings became like a ascetic. All the materials of luxury disappeared from the three worlds; all the divine beings, demons and human beings were poverty stricken. (6-7)

The moon that lost his effulgence became water in the ocean. There was severe drought which put an end to the seeds and corns. (8)

People became emaciated due to hunger. Devoid of any bright-
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ness, they started groaning, “where is food? Where is food?” They moved away from villages and cities and entered into the forests and mountains. (9)

Stricken by hunger, they killed both domestic and wild animals and ate their meat either after cooking it or without cooking it even. (10)

Those that were treading the path of Dharma (righteousness) like the learned ones and sages, were dying but never ate meat. (11)

Then, elderly sages, seeing the sages following the path of righteousness who were not eating, advised them about the righteousness to be followed during the time of calamity as advocated by the Vedas. (12)

Probably, the sages having their sense organs agitated due to hunger misunderstood the teachings of Vedas. (13)
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Some of them performed sacrifices to retrieve Goddess Lakshmi; others performed these sacrifices for the sake of women, sons and houses and others did so for the sake of their own profession. (19)

Those that were not capable of performing great sacrifices with intention of proliferating the manes, profusely killed animals in the ceremonies and ate them or made others to eat them. (20)

A few people took shelter on the banks of the rivers and seas. They used to eat fish as their food after catching them with nets. (21)

O sage! They offered animals like cows, goats etc after killing them to the distinguished guest, who had come their house. There were no proper rules in managing in one’s own community anywhere due to intermixture of religious and also due to the absence of money, houses etc. (22-23)

Due to the passage of time, to perpetuate their progeny, Brahmins married the daughters of the Kshatriyas or Kshatriyas married the daughters of the Brahmins. (24)

In the time of that great calamity, violent sacrifices took place and there was only the semblance of Dharma as the real Dharma had followed Goddess Lakshmi. (25)

Unrighteousness, with its followers having occupied the three worlds all over, proliferated within a short time. This could not be stopped even by wise men. The issues of the poor and wicked proliferated. Their dynasties expanded by leaps and bounds in this world. (26-27)
Those who became learned also taught that (unrighteousness) itself as the righteousness. They also wrote works supporting these ideas. (28)

Over a period of time, those works gained authenticity. In the first ‘Tretayuga’ Dharma was vitiated like this. (29)

Then onwards, killing animals in sacrifices was considered as age old Dharma in the Satyayuga. O Sage! After a long time, Indra along with the divine beings obtained the riches after worshipping the Lord who was the son of Vasudeva. (30-31)

Then, due to the grace of the spouse of Goddess Lakshmi, who is the abode of righteousness, the real righteousness spreads in all the three worlds. (32)

Even among them, there are a few sages, kings and men whose

accomplishments are dictated by the lust, enjoyment, anger and passion. Even now, they feel that the Dharma advocated during adverse circumstances as general Dharma that holds good now also. (33)

Those dedicated devotees of the Lord who have conquered passion did not consume meat even during those adverse circumstances. When they have not done so, what is to be told about them when, everything is fine. (34)

In this way, I have narrated the way the performance of violent sacrifices was carried out at the beginning of the Brahmakalpa which was advocated as Dharma during the adverse circumstances. (35)

Thus ends the ninth chapter titled “Description of the reasons to perform violent sacrifices” found in Vasudeva Mahatmya in Vishnukhanda of Skandapurana.
Chapter - 10: Description of the Grace of Sri Vasudeva

Savarni said:

O Skanda! How did Indra get back the Goddess Lakshmi who had gone into the ocean? Tell me this story based on the story of Narayana. (1)

Skanda said:

Indra the Lord of the divine beings, while being devoid of wealth, was even defeated by demons who too were devoid of wealth. He lost his position as well as his complete retinue. Indra along with Varuna and other Lords of different directions roamed about here and there in the mountains, cases, bowers and forests. (2-3)

(At that time), the divine beings, demons, human beings and serpents were all clad with clothes made out of deer skin and barks and ate the meat of animals and birds. In this way, all of them had the same way of dressing and eating. (4)

In all houses, earthen pots were being used. All the women folk were not faithful and they looked like goblins. (5)

At the beginning, in this world there was a drought for twelve years. Later when it rained, there was scanty rain in some places and in some places there was no rain at all. (6)

Thus, hundred years passed, when they were afflicted by the suffering of poverty. Even while suffering like this, they did not die since the results of their past deeds were very powerful. (7)

They lived almost an animal life, like the sinners in hell. Though they tried to get back their wealth by performing sacrifices,
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they could not get it. (8)

At the end of thousand years the divine beings took refuge in the creator who was in the Mountain Meru to get rid of the curse of sage Durvasas. (9)

After bowing down to him all the divine beings viz. Indra etc. conveyed to him their suffering. But he knew their problem even before they conveyed them, since he was omniscient. After scolding Indra, Lord Brahma (creator) along with Shankara wanted to please Lord Vishnu to alienate the suffering of Indra and others. (10-11)

Then, with a desire to propitiate that Lord Vishnu who would be pleased with penance, all of them came to the milky ocean. 12)

At the southern bank of that ocean which was beautiful, all of them performed penance standing on one foot, raising their hands and observing vows, not taking any food. (13)

All of them concentrated their minds and mediated in their hearts on Keshava, the spouse of Goddess Lakshmi and son of Vasudeva, who could put an end to all their sufferings. (14)

At the end of hundred years, Lord Vishnu, who is none other than Krishna, showered His grace on those who were in distress due to humiliation. (15)

Lord Vishnu, Whose form cannot be seen even by great ascetics who have realized their souls, appeared before them with compassion along with the splendor of the sun. (16)

First of all, these divine beings witnessed a great dense circle of light which was incomparable and which appeared suddenly. (17)
Brahma and Shiva saw the spouse of Goddess Lakshmi in the middle of that circular light, who had the hue of the cloud, holding the mace, lotus etc. in his four hands. (18)

He was adorned with a crown, girdle and ear rings etc. His form was beautiful and he was wearing a yellow silk cloth. (19)

Those two prostrated before Him like a staff, being overwhelmed by joy when they saw him. As per the desire of those two, the divine beings also bowed down in the joy to him after witnessing him. (20)

All of them were overjoyed seeing Him, just like the poor are when they get a treasure trove. All the divine beings with folded handed hands prayed to Him with devotion. (21)
We bow down to You who possesses the hue of the cloud and an enjoyable form. You have the fame of giving solace to those who are lost in the ocean of transmigration by rescuing them. (26)

We bow down to You, the protector of Dharma, the divine beings and Brahmins. You are holding with Your long hands, the mace, louts, conch and disc. (27)

You are fit to be approached by the people desirous of salvation. You grant boons fulfilling the desires of devotees who have taken refuge in you. We bow to You, who are well known in the scripture and Vedas and who resides in the Vedas. (28)

O Supreme Vishnu who has a beautiful form stationed in the orb of effulgence! We offer our respects to you. (29)

O Lord! Obiscience to You, who are ever expanding, the inner soul of all whose greatness is beyond the scope of speech and whose form is eternal. (30)

You are the only person who can give happiness to those who take shelter in You. Hence we, who are afflicted with great calamities, have taken shelter in You. (31)

O Lord of the divine beings! We have come to this sorry state of affairs of power due to our disrespect of sage Durvasas, a great devotee of Yours. (32)

Even Dharma has abandoned us, who are devoid of good dress, position, drinks and food and are gone with Lakshmi. You are the only capable master to protect us. (33)

Since it is said that we and Dharma belong to You, You alone are capable of bringing us to the happy state as before. (34)
Skanda said:

When the compassionate Lord was prayed like this by the divine beings, he told them the following words with a deep voice resembling that of thunder and causing happiness in them. (35)

The Lord said:

“\(^{36}\) I know all your sufferings caused by disrespecting the sage. I will give you a solution to reverse this; follow this immediately. Throw away all the hubs into the ocean. Along with the demons, churn the ocean using the Mandara Mountain, using the Lord of the serpents Vasuki as the rope. \(^{36-37}\) 

First enter into an understanding with demons and then churn the ocean. I will help you in this effort. You need not worry about anything. You will shine forth than before, being the receptacles of Nectar, and the grace of goddess Lakshmi. The demons estranged from Me, will be the receptacles of sufferings. \(^{38-39}\) 

Skanda said:

Having said thus, Lord Vishnu, the destroyer of the sufferings of the suppliants, disappeared. The divine beings after bowing down to Him, started doing the things as advised by Him. (40)

Thus ends the tenth chapter titled “Description of the Grace of Sri Vasudeva” found in Vasudeva Mahatmya.

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about anything. You will shine forth than before, being the receptacles of Nectar, and the grace of goddess Lakshmi. The demons estranged from Me, will be the receptacles of sufferings. (38-39)
Chapter - 11: Emanation of Poison during the churning of Nectar

Skanda said:

O sage! Brahma and Rudra returned to their abodes after ordering the divine beings to enter into some understanding with the demons. Hence, all the divine beings went to the nether world to contact the demons. (1)

Indra, having the diplomacy of using the proper language at the proper time, entered into a treaty with the demons after luring them with several results using convincing statements. Then the divine beings and demons assembled at the beach of the ocean. They quickly put all the great herbs into the ocean after collecting from various places. (2-3)

Then they were involved in bringing the Mandara Mountain, decorated with several herbs after removing it from root to the ocean. (4)

When they were not capable of removing the Mandara Mountain, which had spread to Eleven Thousand yojanas (a unit of about 10 miles) and land them, they prayed to Lord Hari. (5)

After knowing this, the Lord ordered Sankarshana the Lord of the serpents to uproot the mountain which was deep rooted. The Lord of the serpents, just by a single hissing sound of his, uprooted the Mandara Mountain and threw it away to a distance of two yojanas (about 20 miles) from the place. (6-7)

All the divine beings and the demons after seeing that awe-inspiring act, making sounds went near the mountain running. (8)
Though endowed with strength with robust arms resembling the weapon known as ‘Parigha’ they were not able to lift the mountain to take it to the destined place. Hence, their efforts went in vain and they became disappointed. (9)

The Lord who could see everything, on learning the desperation of the groups of divine beings, ordered the celestial eagle Garuda to bring the mountain to the ocean, fast. (10)

Garuda, having the speed of the mind, is capable of holding aloft even the entire cosmic egg along with its enclosures. He uprooted the mountain again with his beak itself and placed it on the beach of the ocean and came back. (11)

Then all the sons Kashyapa (demigods and demons) being pleased, invited Vasuki to participate in the churning of the ocean assuring him a part of nectar (that would be obtained after churning the ocean). (12)
Him they stood there holding the hood of the Lord of the serpents. (17)

Then the Lord also stood there where the gods were standing, showing his partiality to them. The Demons became angry at this. (18)

We are superiors in age, learning and penance. How can we hold the latter part which is inauspicious; we are not such fools to hold this point. (19)

Then Lord Vishnu along with gods as though respecting them smiled and gave them front portion and made the gods to hold the tail of Vasuki. (20)

But the demons did not know that this act of the spouse of Lakshmi (Vishnu) was only to protect the gods from the flames of poison that emerged from the mouths of the serpent when churned. (21)

[The meaning of the 22nd Shloka is missing.]

Then, those demons with great enthusiasm and great noise, kept the mountain which had height of thirty two thousand 'yojana-s' in the ocean. (23)

Even though well held by them, the mountain because of its heavy weight instantly slid to the bottom of the sea. Seeing this, they were very much disappointed. (24)

Then the Lord who always accomplishes the works of his devotees, at any cost, was prayed by the Gods, and accordingly lifted the mountain taking the form of a primordial tortoise in their very presence. (25)

The hearts and faces of all those (present there) blossomed...
when they saw the mountain coming up. It stood firm on the back of the tortoise which was very large. (26)

The gods and demons, breathing heavily, churned the ocean without any compassion (for the ocean) with great speed till they were exhausted. (27)

Then many of the trees fell from the rotating mountain; the fire that emerged from the friction of trees on the mountain burnt the lions etc living in the mountain. (28)

In that milky ocean, hundreds of varieties of aquatic animals being crushed by the Mandara Mountain perished. (29)

There arose a great sound resembling the thunder of the great cloud called ‘Samvartaka’ increased in its intensity by reverberation. (30)

The demons shone like the black coal, having lost their strength and exhausted by the breaths emerging from the mouths of Vasuki whose limbs had become very weak due to continuous dragging. (31)

The thousand hoods of the Lord of the serpents, hanging down, were emitting again and again, enormous amount of poison, which was impossible to withstand, (32)

Then the omnipresent Sankashana (as a manifestation of God) immediately held those hoods aloft as per the orders of the Lord, withstanding the poisonous fire. (33)

When they churned the ocean for one thousand and one years, there arose a venom by name ‘Halahala’ spreading in all directions. (34)
The gods and demons ran away from that poison when their limbs were burnt by that venom called Kalakuta which was torching all the worlds. (35)

O sage! Then all of them viz. the creator, the Lords of the subjects and gods with ardent prayers, requested the spouse of Uma (Ishwara) to drink that venom. (36)

Then the Lord (Vishnu) told Shiva, “You are the eldest among the divine beings. Hence O Shiva! You receive the first product of the ocean (viz venom). (37)

Having seen the tears of the gods, with pity, and by the order of Hari, Lord Shiva attracted all that poison towards himself, with the skills of yoga. (38)

Thus ends the eleventh chapter titled “Emanation of Poison during the churning of Nectar” found in Vasudeva Mahatmya in Vishnukhanda of Skandapurana.
Chapter - 12: The appearance of the fourteen gems

Skanda said:

Then the sons of Kashyapa (demons) being pleased, came back to the place of churning and churned the ocean for another thousand years. (1)

When all of them continued to churn the ocean, nothing came out. They became exhausted and the churners started gasping for breath. (2)

Even Vasuki the great serpent was on the verge of death. Even the Mandara Mountain was not in the same place during the time of churning. (3)
came out from big trees and similarly the juices came out from herbs. (7-8)

From that type of ocean came out of the moon, who is said to be the presiding deity of effulgence and herbs. (9)

Then came out the ‘Kamadhenu’ (celestial cow) the best of all the cows who grants the wish of every one. She had the hue of the moon. (10)

Then the presiding deity of the all the horses, ‘Ucchaishravas; a white horse and ‘Airavata’, the Lord of elephants with four tusks resembling the moonlight emerged. (11)

Then emerged the celestial tree ‘Parijata’, king of the trees, and the best among the gems by name ‘Kaustubha’ having the hue of ‘pushyaraga’ a type of gem. (12)

Then came out the heavenly nymphs, repositories of beauty and lustre. Then emerged ‘Suradevi’, who intoxicates everybody. Then there was the bow ‘Sharnga’ the divine bow among the weapons; similarly there came out the ‘panchajanya’ a conch which is the Lord of all the conches. (13-14)

Then, at that place, the moon, the ‘Parijata’ and the group of nymphs stood immediately in the path of the sun. (15)

The leaders of the demons immediately took over Suradevi and the king of the horses. Being permitted by Lord Hari, Indra took over the Airavata. (16)

The bow named Sharnga, and conch named Panchajanya went to Vishnu. All of them gave away the celestial cow to the ascetics. (17)
After further churning, there appeared Goddess Lakshmi who pleased with her eyes all the three worlds, which had previously lost their lustre. (18)

Everyone viz. gods, demons and human beings were eager to possess her, because of her power; however nobody was capable going near her. (19)

Lord Vishnu was immensely pleased, having learnt that she was none other than Goddess Lakshmi, since she was holding the lotus in her hand. Brahma and others also who knew her could recognize her. (20)

Then the ocean appeared in a human from made her sit in a golden seat and kept her at his lap saying she is my daughter. (21)

When the ocean was churned again by those who were powerful, desirous of getting nectar; it did not emerge at all. (22)

The demons gave up their efforts having no hopes of getting the nectar. Their faces lost their lustre and they were disappointed. (23)

Then the Lord of the ocean of compassion, (Lord Hari) having seen them in that state, himself got involved in churning the ocean. (24)

The Lord held the serpent in the middle and on both sides with two hand each; his upper garment was at tied at his waist, its girdle studded with gems and diamonds. Then the demons stood in one place holding the hoods of the serpent. In another place all the gods stood holding the tail of the serpent. The Lord stood in the middle of these two groups and churned the ocean with ease. While churning, the jewels in his hand were moving and it was happy sight to look at. (25-27)
Then, the creator, standing in the sky along with great sages, sprinkled flowers from above proclaiming the sound “victory, victory”. (28)

Then from the ocean which was being churned there, arose a person called Dhanvantari, a part of Lord Vishnu, with a white coloured body, holding the pot of nectar. (29)

He went near Goddess Lakshmi holding the great nectar, which was the essence of ghee etc and also of all juices. (30)

Thus ends the twelfth chapter titled “The appearance of the fourteen gems” found in Vasudeva Mahatmya in Vishnukhanda of Skandapurana.

Chapter - 13: Description of the drinking of nectar by the gods

Skanda said:

All those churners looked from a distance at this Dhanvantari who was emerging from the ocean and proceeding towards Goddess Lakshmi. (1)

O Brahman! Having seen the golden pot containing the nectar, held in his hand, the demons at once pounced upon him and took away that pitcher. (2)

There also, those who were more powerful took away the pot and ran away from there. Those who were weak tried to stop them and followed them advising them about ethics. (3)
“Alas, such unrighteousness should not be perpetuated by you who are steeped in Dharma (righteousness). Only after giving the share due to the divine beings who have put in equal efforts in churning the ocean, you should drink the nectar and not otherwise”. (4)

Without caring for these words, the demons ran away to a great distance with great hurry. There also was a tug of war among them. “I first”, “I first, not you”, “not you, I drink first” – thus quarrelling, they did not get the opportunity to drink the nectar. (5-6)

Then the divine beings after seeing the nectar carried away by the demons took refuge in Lord Hari, having no capacity to avenge them. (7)

“Oh Lord of the universe! Protect, Protect! All of our possession is totally lost! The demons are carrying away the entire nectar. What will happen to us? (8)

These are capable of killing us even without drinking nectar; when they drink the nectar the will become immortal. Then what can we do with them? (9)

Skanda said:

Seeing the pitiable plight of the divine beings, the Lord interested in accomplishing the job of his devotees, telling them not to fear, desired to take away the nectar from the hands of the demons. (10)

Having taken the form of a beautiful woman and attracting the entire world, He went to the demons and played with them in different ways. (11)

The demons, after seeing the beautiful form, were attracted
by her and became passionate. Having given up their mutual fighting, they approached her and spoke to her. (12)

The demons said:

O charming lady with a beautiful waist! Take away this pot of nectar. Divide this nectar and make all of us drink this ambrosia. We are the sons of Kashyapa. (13)

Skanda said:

Stating this, they gave away that pot to that lady though she was not willing to receive it. She said, “Do not trust me. I will do whatever I like. (14)

You did the wrong thing. I will distribute this nectar, as I wish to”. Even when she said thus, those fools said “Do whatever you like”. (15)

Then according the dictates of that lady, the divine beings, demons and Vasuki sat in rows of their own people. (16)

When all of them sat in rows, Mohini (lady of bewitching beauty) sat facing the divine beings on a golden seat. (17)

Keeping the nectar pot near her, she looked here and there, sporting her lady characteristics for a while. She stood as though she was not interested in anything. (18)

The leaders of demons like Viprachitti etc were entertaining some doubt about Mohini who was sitting near the divine beings. (19)

Slowly they came near her and without her knowledge treacherously they stole the nectar pot with a desire to drink the nectar in privacy. (20)

Then there came Nara and Narayana along with ascet-
ics. They could see the demons snatching away the nectar pot (21)

Nara sent by Narayana stopped them at once, forcibly taking away that pot. Nara gave it to Mohini immediately. (22)

The demons holding the weapons came running to kill the Nara. Then there occurred a disturbance in the formation. Then Nara who cannot be conquered by either the divine being or demons or humans fought alone truly with those demons. (23-24)

In the meanwhile the Lord in the form of Mohini, quick in movement, made the divine beings who were sitting in a row, drink nectar. (25)

There also the demon Rahu, stealthily crept in and sat in between the sun and moon in the row of the divine beings. (26)

When Mohini came there and was pouring nectar in the mouth of Rahu, the sun and the moon indicated to Mohini (that he was a demon). (27)

The Lord in the form of the great lady Mohini, instantly cut the head of Rahu which was full of nectar, with his disk, which at once came there even as the Lord remembered it. (28)

That head which was a like a peak of mountain fell down making a great sound overpowering all people. Then Lord Hari stationed him as one of the planets to bring in peace to the world. (29)

After making the divine beings drink the nectar, the Lord assumed his male form. Then the divine beings fought with the demons. There ensued a fierce battled between the divine beings who were much more powerful by drinking the nectar...
and the demons on the beach of the ocean. (30-31)

In the fierce battle with Nara and the divine beings, the demons who were being killed, ran away and entered the netherworld. At the time the sun was setting. All the divine beings who were happy to see Goddess Lakshmi went near her. (32-33)

Thus ends the thirteenth chapter titled “Description of the drinking of nectar by the gods” found in Vasudeva Mahatmya in Skandapurana.

**Chapter - 14: Description of the festival of marriage of Shree Lakshmi-Narayana**

Skanda said:

Oh, Savarini! Then the creator, Lords of the people, Shiva, the Manu-s, great sages, Aditya-s, Vasu-s, Rudra-s, Siddha-s Gandharva-s and Charana-s, Sadhya-s, Manes, Visvedava-s and the Lords of the different quarters, Asvini-Devatas, Agni, moon, the good of death, Gajendra, Kinnara-s and other Gandharvas, the Vaishnavite serpents like Adishesha, the wives of the divine beings, (1-3)

Savitri, Parvati, the earth, Saraswathi, Sachi, Gauri, Shiva,
Samjna, Radha, Svaha and Rohini, Dhumorna, Adithi and other wives viz. Murthi, Daya etc. Arundhati, Shandili, Lopamudra, and the other virtuous women like Anasuya etc and the wives of other great sages assembled all around; (4-5)

There also arrived all the rivers like Ganga, Saraswathi, Reva, Yamuna, Tapati, Chandrabhagya, Vipasha, Shatadru, Devika, Godavari, Sarayu, Kaveri, Kaushiki, Krishna, Veni, Bhimarathi, the great river Tamraparni, Kritamala, Visista, Nirvindhya, Surara, Charamamati, Payoshni, Viswa etc. (6-8)

There arrived all the celestial nymphs like Rambha, Grithachi, Vishvachi, Menaka, Tilottama and Urvashi. (9)

All the persons living in the world of Vaikuntha and similarly persons living in Golaka and leaders of the sections of Vishnu came there with joy. (10)

The eight accomplishments like Anima etc, the nine weathers in human from like Shankara and Padma etc. too came there. (11)

The full moon of the autumn season removed all the darkness to please Goddess Lakshmi and thus all the directions became clear. (12)

Then Indra started to perform the ablution of Lakshmi at the behest of the creator. The sculptor of the divine beings viz. Tvashta erected a beautiful a Mantapa-abode. (13)

The Mantapa constructed by Tvashta was shining forth with
the long rows of thousand pillars, studded with gums, endearing paintings, decorated with the plantain trees containing flowers of the heavenly tree ‘Kalpavruksha’, which were blooming with flowers full of fragrance having different colours. It was very attractive. It was brilliant with thousands of lights shining forth. It was also decorated with pendant of pearls and ‘Torana-s’ (welcome arches made of leaves). (14-16)

There the sages made Goddess Lakshmi to sit on the golden throne and coroneted her to the sound of music emanating from the different instruments. (17)

The great elephants Airavata, Pundarika, Yamana, Kumuda, Anjana, Pushpadanta, Sarvabhouma and Supratika poured the holy waters brought from the four seas with raised golden pitchers. (18-19)
‘Victory! Victory’. The chaste wives and ‘siddhis’ (having taken human forms) began serving Sri Devi. (24)

After she had had her auspicious bath, the ocean presented her two invaluable silk clothes and many gem studded ornaments. (25)

Indra presented her a gem-studded seat, Vishwakarma bangles and precious gem-studded signet rings. (26)

Sri Devi’s brother, Sudhakara, presented a nose-jewel and a beautiful crest jewel that was studded with gems. (27)

Then, Brahma, who was born of a lotus, presented her with a lotus, Saraswati a pearl necklace, Sesh in d a other Nagas precious gem-studded earrings. (28)

Durga gave her the collarium and ‘Kumkuma’, the symbol of prosperity. Savitri gave her the ‘Seemanta’ gem, and Sachi gave her a plate for betel leaves. (29)

The season Vasanta, presented flower garlands, Lord Sankara a necklace Varuna, the holder of pase (chord) a ‘Vaijayanthi’ garland and Kubera a gem-studded mirror. (30)

Agni gave an invaluable bodice, Yama an auspicious fan, and others gave her presents suited to the occasion. (31)

Then the Ocean-Lord asked Brahma “To whom shall I offer this fully ornamented maiden?” Then the all-knowing Brahma said as follows: (32)

Oh Ocean, this daughter of yours is the mother of Siva, gods, all the worlds and myself. This is a fact. (33)

Except Lord Narayana, known as Vasudeva, the Supreme
Being and the Lord of every thing, the greatest Purusha alone is fit to be her husband. (34)

Therefore, O ocean, by your special merit, he (Lord Narayana) has come and seated here on His own. Please gift this bride to that Lord who is the cause of the happiness of the three worlds. (35)

By offering her to this Supreme God, make your existence fruitful, purify your dynasty, and save it from Samsara (worldly bondage). (36)

Though you are one, by being divided into seven islands, you are famous as one who has seven divisions. By celebrating this excellent marriage, you will acquire great fame. (37)

Hearing Brahma say so, that king of ocean was thrilled with joy. Considering himself as a fortunate person, he decided to give his daughter to that Lord Mahavishnu. (38)

After offering prayer to the Lord of the universe accordingly, with conducting of vows and other procedures he celebrated the marriage. (39)

Dhanvantari, the moon, Vasava and all the gods comprised the party of the ocean king during the conducting of the marriage. (40)

They were prominent in gifting ornaments dresses, in feeding and honoring all the guests. (41)

O Sage! Ganga and other rivers, Sachi and other divine damsels, Mena and other wives of the mountains, Anima and other ‘Siddhi-s’, Moon’s wife, the divine damsel Kaanti and all the Nymphs were the prominent auspicious ladies in the festivity of wearing the thread of auspiciousness. (42-43)
Lord Brahma celebrated the marriage sport of Lord Narayana in a brilliant manner, having appointed ‘Murty’ and ‘Dharmadevata’ as His parents. (44)

Dharma is the support of the world, He is respectable to all living beings and He is full of affection. Hence, he is fit to be the father of the Lord. (45)

This Murthy, daughter of Daksha and wife of Dharma is famous as the mother of all good qualities. She is fit to be his mother” said Brahma. (46)

On the side of Dharma (representing the bridegroom’s side), Lord Sankara together with Nandishwara and Ganesha and others, Maricha and other sages, Lords of men, sage Narada,
He got the sacred platform ready, for keeping the sacrificial fire in the centre of the structure, installed by Brahmins knowing the Vedas. (53)

He decorated that platform with Sandalwood, flowers, yellow-colored rice and other various kinds of beautifications and vessels full of tender leaves. (54)

As the auspicious musical instruments were being played, the great sages conducted the ritualistic bath of Lord Vishnu. Then Lord Vishnu put on a divine crown, invaluable dresses and gemmed ornaments. (55)

The music of the instruments were filling all directions, the divine ladies were dancing and singing sweet songs, the Devas surrounding him were praising Lord Vishnu. At that time, Lord Vishnu entered that Mantapa and sat on the golden seat. (56)
The communities of Devas with their spouses, worshipped that parents of the world seated together in a single seat, with invaluable dresses and ornaments. (61)

Then Durga, Sachidevi and other divine ladies with charming smiling faces, sang auspicious songs describing the qualities of Sri Devi and Vishnu. The divine ladies sat in two groups facing each other. Sitting opposite to them filled with eagerness to see the couple, they were singing songs with love. All the Devas, sages and other ladies who listened, saw that Lord of the world with Sri Devi shining in their inner heart sat like immovable pictures. (62-64)

The Devas bowed with devotion and offering to both of them Akshata-s etc, being filled with joy, stood with folded hands in all humility, each one of them praising them with fine words and prayed to them separately. (65)

End of the 14 chapter titled “Description of the festival of marriage of Shree Lakshmi Narayana” of Sri Vasudeva Mahatmya in Sri Skanda Purana.

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Chapter - 15: Extolling the Divinity of Shree Lakshmi Narayana

After frequent enquiry into the purpose of the Vedas, I have come to this conclusion. All the various enjoyments of life will not perish for a living person who has unswerving devotion to you, the beloved of Lakshmi. And the world he obtains will be steady leading to his permanent stay in You the Supreme Person. (1)

Those are said to be fools, who without knowing this, propitiate us, the gods, who possess the three Gunas viz satva, rajas and tamas, by many deeds of worth. Hence, they do not get the permanent bliss. That is why I station Keshava, the Supreme Lord, in my heart. (2)

Shankara said:

All the three Vedas, Sankya, Vedanta, Yoga, Puranas, Pancharatra, Dharma-Shastras permanently extol your own greatness in different ways. In the beginning of this ‘Kalpa’ (a unit of time), these Shastras rested in you. Hence I take refuge in You, Vasudeva, the primordial one rooted in Shastras and whose lotus feet is served by Goddess Lakshmi. (3-4)

Dharma said:

Your story relieves us from the affliction of transmigration. This is really nectar to those who are afflicted by the three types of sufferings. It removes all the sins acquired in innumerable previous lives. It creates devotion unto You. It immediately generates the knowledge of Your Divine Self. O Ananta (endless)! Let this story narrated by pious people enter into the heart of my hearts; tread the path of my ears; let it remove all the vasanas (mental impressions) other then yours;
I bow down for You, who are the most powerful and an ocean of compassion. (5-6)

Prajapatis said:

These Kalpavrikshas (wish-yielding trees) are fortunate, because, You are sitting along with Lakshmi in their shade. Even the person who has created this Mantapa is for you is blessed indeed. The space on which you seat placed in fortunate. Indeed the whole world in blessed. This Lord of the ocean is the most fortunate who gave his daughter in marriage to You. We are blessed indeed since we are seeing you. Being blessed we are bending down in reverence to You, the spouse of Mahalakshmi. (7-8)

Manus said:

Among all the Dharmas the Dharma in the form of unswerving devotion (Bhakti) placed in You, who are the birth place of all Dharmas is the best one. (9)

Oh, Lord You are the soul of Dharma, You are the best among those treading the path of Dharma, You are the proprietor of Dharma. We bow down to You who are the most endearing Dharma to all and the originator of Dharma. (10)

The sages said:

O unlimited ocean of bliss! a person in the quest of knowledge will never get the knowledge of the Divine if he is devoid of devotion unto You. In that case, how can a person indulging in deeds, having desires of fruits can get that bliss? (11)

O Lord! You are the supreme among the supremely large hearted, beyond the scope of Maya, controller of the home of the beloved of Goddess Lakshmi; for the very same reason we always meditate upon You with devotion with dedication. (12)
Indra said:

O Lord! We were deeply grief-stricken due to the disrespect shown to the sages. Apart from, you nobody like Brahma, Shiva and others were capable of protecting us. (13)

Bereft of all riches, devoid of food we were reduced to the level of poverty-stricken people. You were the only one who rescued us from this suffering. O Sri Hari! We bow down to you. (14)

Agni said:

The Brahmins and pundits worship You in sacrifices by offering the food created by You for the sustenance of divine beings, demons and human beings. Then, with the remnants of the oblations offered to You they offer it other divine beings. (15)

Maruts said:

The single-minded devotees of You do not desire to live in your eternal abode, nor desire the wealth if it is devoid of the privilege of offering services to You. They neither desire the liberation known as ‘Kaivalya’ (Enjoying one’s own self) that is in the form of extreme bliss. On the other hand, they covet birth with great respect even in the family of a person who cooks the meat of the dog, if it is associated with you services. Now, we have come to You, the Supreme Person and the sole receptacle of Dharma. (17)
Siddhas said:
O Causeless One and the sole cause of innumerable Brahmanas! We bow down to who is in them and who is out of them. (18)

Rudras said:
You are seducer of the Maya who seduces everybody. You are devoid of Maya. You are the time of the great time. We bow down to You, O Supreme Person! (19)

Adityas said:
We are the illuminators of the worlds. But we illuminate, because of the illumination given by you. We bow to You, Who are self-effulgent; You have the highest effulgence and are the personification of Brilliance itself. (20)

Sadhyas said:
You are the Lord and Controller of Kings, great serpents, the leaders of the demons, the Lords of the divine beings, Manus and Prajapati; we bow down to You, the king of kings. (21)

Vasus said:
Whenever there is a severe fight in this earth between the well knowing, righteous and the unrighteous who are associated with demonic attitudes, You incarnate Yourself in this world. We bow down to You, the protector of Dharma. (22)

Charanas said:
Devotees sing of Your auspicious qualities and different forms with various tasks like the sacrifices and the listeners and speakers of good deeds; we bow down to You of auspicious fame instantly. (23)
Gandharvas and the nymphs said:

Those people who narrate or listen to the stories of others than You, will be in bondage and hence suffer. We offer our obeisance to You, the refuge of everyone. (24)

The ocean said:

O unconquered one! Even a downtrodden person who offers small services either by means of money, water, food, clothes or by bending down to You or to your devotees, is elevated to the highest state of great people. I bow down You, O compassionate one. (25)

The Divine Attendants said:

You are the parent, You are the relative, You are the most
desired preceptor, You are the friend and Lord of Your devotees. You are our Lord. You are the Supreme; You are of the form of all the riches to us. (26)

Murthy said:

With a relationship with You, even sinful souls like the lower animals, birds, demons, women, Shudras etc get elevated to the higher status of great people. Without that relationship even the kings or divine beings will lose that high status within no time. I meditate upon You in my heart always, O Lord of Golaka. (27)

Savitri said:

At the time of creation, You manifest the Matter and Souls with your will. Then You create the basic principles possessing those. Then with those known as Mahat your create sev-
eral ‘Viraja-s’. Taking their form you accept the responsibility of creating the world; You create divine beings, demons and serpents; You are the creator of things both animate and inanimate. I take refuge in You, O primary creator! (28-29)

Durga said:

Those who meditate upon You in their hearts with utmost affection and love, would not aspire for either the happiness of Brahma, happiness of heaven or for the position of a king. Even if this happiness granted by You, they will leave it aside without being interested in it. I bow down to You the Lord of the devotees. (30-31)

Rivers said:

O bestower of the boons! You protect those, who knowingly or unknowingly, bow down to You, or sing Your glory, from the fear of birth and death. We have taken refuge in You, O Narayana, the friend of Nara. (32)

The wives of the divine beings said:

Those who sing the glorious auspicious stories of your birth in this world will be devoid of all attributes (and thus attain Supreme Bliss); You are the one devoid of all inauspicious qualities. (33)

By taking refuge in You all people with the qualities of Rajas or Tamas or Sattva will become people devoid of all evil qualities. Therefore, we meditate upon You, who are devoid of all evil qualities. (34)

The wives of sages said:

Vishnu’s lotus feet alone is the destroyer of all calamities, three types of sufferings and the great sins of those who are afflicted. Therefore God of gods! We have taken refuge in you. (35)
The Earth said:
I take refuge only in Vasudeva, whose face is shining forth like the autumnal moon, whole eyes are broad like the petals of the lotus of the spring season, and who is the alleviator of the sufferings caused by poverty. (36)

Saraswathi said:
O Achyuta! My eyes have attained the status of the ‘Chakora’ bird with regard to your beautiful face which is like that of the moon. Let this form alone of Yours constantly stay in my heart. (37)

Skanda said:
When He was praised by all these divine beings like this, He just reciprocated and thanked them with his eyes. Then He told Lakshmi. “Please, see these divine beings.”(38)
there by serving four types of food with different tastes, which tasted like nectar. He also gave precious gems, clothes, jewels studded with gems and vessels to all the divine beings with great attention. He gave all of these things to them individually. (43-44)

There has nothing that could be given by ocean to please his son-in-law and his devotees as he was raining money like the cloud. Then the Lord also, having given away all the money received in the form of gift from the Lord of the ocean to the Brahmins, eventually disappeared along with Lakshmi. (45-46)

Being made happy by Lakshmi and Narayana the divine beings like Indra returned to heaven. Others returned to their residences. (47)
In this way, I have told how Indra got his wealth restored; I will also fully narrate how sage Narada went to the Svetadvipa. Listen to this with single mindedness. (53)

End of the Fourteenth chapter titled “Extolling the Divinity of Shree Lakshmi Narayana” of Shree Vasudeva Mahatmya in Sri Skanda Purana.

* * *

Chapter 16: Description of Goloka

Skanda said:

Narada, having ascended the peak of Meru, saw with his divine sight the Sveta-dvipa, also the people residing there, and the liberated who were thousands in number. At once concentrating his mind on Lord Vasudeva, he flew from that place and instantly reached that abode. (1-2)

Having reached that great island, Narada, with great happiness, saw those white devotees shining forth with the lustre of moon. He worshipped then mentally and by bowing his head. They also worshiped him. Narada, desirous of realizing that Supreme Brahman was spending his time in penance at that place. (3-4)
Those devotees of the Lord residing there realizing that Narada was a dedicated devotee of the Lord, told Narada who was chanting the twelve-syllabled mantra, with great joy.(5)

The liberated souls of Sveta-dvipa said:

O sage! Since you are the devotee of Lord of Krishna, you were able to see the scenes that could not be witnessed even by divine beings. Then, for what purpose are you performing this penance? (6)

Narada said:

I am anxious to directly see the Supreme Brahman, Lord Krishna, who is the King of the devotees; you are the dear ones of that Krishna; please show Him to me. (7)

Skanda said:

Then one of the liberated souls of the Sveta-dvipa (known as Svetamukta), being motivated from within by Krishna, stood in front of him stating “please come, I will show you that Krishna”. (8)

Narada, pleased with this, went along with him in the sky soaring high (celestial path) seeing the different abodes of the divine beings. (9)

O best of the Brahmins! Having seen the seven sages, Dhruva and not interested in certain places he crossed the worlds like Mahar, Jana and Tapas. (10)

Then seeing the Brahmaloka, following the Svetamukta, according to the will of Krishna crossed all the eight regions.

Having crossed the regions of earth, water, fire, air, space,
Ahankara, Mahat and Prakrti, one after another, each one having ten attributes, Narada reached the wonderful Goloka. (11-12)

That Goloka is the luminous abode of Lord Hari that can be attained, only by the ardent devotees of the Lord. While going to that place Narada saw the deep Viraja River with great expanse. (13)

The Viraja River had a sweet fragrance due to the sandal pastes, which were washed off when the cowherds and their spouses had ablution in the Viraja River. It was beautiful by red and blue water lilies. (14)

Narada reached the banks of that river, which was studded with transparent stones and shining forth with precious stones having white, red, green and yellow colours. (15)

It was beautiful with the groves of wish-yielding trees, rendered beautiful by the tender leaves having the colour of the corals. The mines of gems like ‘Syamantaka’, ‘Indranila’ and so on further decorated it. It was attractive by the flight of steps studded with precious gems. Many of the birds like swans, ‘Karandavas’, were making melodies sounds. The water of that river was being drunk by groups of wish-yielding cows, kings, elephants and horses. Narada crossed over that river. (16-18)

Having got up from that divine river at once, due to the will of the Lord, Narada reached the ‘Shatasringa’ mountain forming the rampart of that Goloka. (19)

That golden mountain with a height of ten million yojanas was
most beautiful. It was beautifully spreading over an expense of hundred million yojanas. It was very attractive by the thousands of wish-yielding and other trees. Other trees like ‘parijata’ etc, and creepers like clove, cardamom, jasmine and other creepers. Further, it was attractive due to the presence of golden plantain etc. and groups of divine animals and elephants and birds of chirping sounds. (20-22)

Narada witnessed large, beautiful sporting abodes of the Lord at the foot of the mountains forming the ramparts of that Goloka. (23)

They were surrounded by rows of gardens rendered fragrant with doors studded with gems with four entrances each. Decorated with varieties of festoons and thousands of gem-studded pillars. (24-25)

Adorned by with stock of plantains, pendant pearls and upper garments associated with ‘durva’ grass, fried rice, yellow rice and fruits that were auspicious. The yards of those mantaps were sprinkled with sandal, ‘Agaru’, ‘Kasturi’, and saffron. They were also endearing due to the melodious sounds emanating from different musical instruments. There he saw crores of groups of cow-maids. (26-27)

They were beautiful, decorated with invaluable clothes and jewels, with bangles and bracelets, studded with precious gems, girdles, anklets, bracelets, and were attractive because of their fingers. (28)

They were unparalleled by their youth, handsome lustre and mellifluous voice. They had the complexion of Radha and Lakshmi. They had decorated hands. (29)
They were seen in those Mantapas that were full of luxurious things. All of them are singing the glory of Krishna in a very attractive manner. (30)

O Savarni! Then, on the lands near that mountain, sage Narada perceived a great forest called Vrindavana. That place was the place of excursion of Krishna and Radhika. It was most enjoyable due to the groves of wish-yielding trees and lotus flowered lakes. (31-32)

It was shining forth with several trees like mango, ‘amrataka’, ‘nipa’, ‘badami’, pomegranates, dates, areca nut trees, orange trees, coconut trees, sandal trees, ‘jambu’ trees, ‘jambira’, and jack trees and ‘devadaru’ trees. Further, there were plantains trees, champak trees, grapes and golden ketaki flowers. (33-34)

Thus, this place appeared attractive with trees that bent down due to the weight of the fruits and flowers. (35)

The cool breeze that was rendered fragrant due to the smell of flowers of creepers of water from the ‘Satashringa’ Mountain and the waterfalls therein served that forest. (36)

The place appeared to be always associated with the spring season, being decorated by the rows of lamps in the form of gems. It was associated with several ornamental things and creeper bowers. (37)

It was reverberating all around with the sounds of songs sung by the cowherds and their maids, of sounds of birds, calves and cows, sounds of jewels and sounds of churning the curds. O sage! See this Vrindavan garden, which is further, associated with thirty-two other gardens, which are
beautiful on account of trees laden with blossoming flowers and fruits. (38-39)

After witnessing that Vrindavan Garden, Narada entered the brilliant place of Goloka that had a circular fort made out of precious stones and bedecked with a royal path. (40)

It was rendered attractive due to the presence of crores of aeroplanes of the devotees of Krishna, chariots decorated with precious gems and tinkling bells. (41)

The city was beautiful with crores of wonderful mansions constructed in rows with innumerable precious gems and decorated with gem-studded rows of pillars. (42)

It was most beautiful with the public reception places meant for excursions that were constructed with the essence of gems, decorated with rows of lamps of gems and gem-studded platforms. (43)

The courtyards were embellished by the stocks of plantain, Arecanuts, fried rice, ‘durva’ grass, curds and sprinkled with juice of saffron, ‘kasturi’, ‘Agaru’ and ‘Kesara’. It was rendered auspicious by festoons, water filled golden pitchers, and was full of elephants and horses moving in the royal roads decorated with precious stones. (44-45)

It was full of Kings of different worlds, Brahma, Shankara, and others, holding presents in their hands, who, had come there to have an audience with Krishna. The roads of that place were jam-packed by groups of cowherds and heir maids proceeding to witness Krishna. Sage Narada was overjoyed to see this Goloka. (46-47)
Then Narada reached the most beautiful palace of Krishna, which was awe-inspiring. It was surrounded by great bulls like Nandi etc and rows of mansions of the cowherds. These mansions had four entrances, encircled by sixteen ramparts, and moats surrounded by crores of cowherds and well secured by Chamberlains. (48-49)

In the entrances associated with doorjambs studded with gems, he saw the doorkeepers sitting in a row. (50)

After bowing down to the door keepers viz Virabhanu, Chandrabhanu Surbyabhanu, Vasubhanu, Devabhanu, Shakrabhanu, Ratnabhanu, Suparshva, Vishala, Vrishabha and others, Amshu, Bala, Subala, Devaprabhat, Varuthapa, and

Sridama, Sage Narada entered into the palace of Krishna after obtaining their permission. Then he witnessed great effulgence, which was spreading all over in a big hall. (51-53)

Thus ends the Sixteenth Chapter titled “Description of Goloka” of Vasudeva Mahatmya, of the Skanda Purana.

* * *
Chapter - 17: Description of the Darsana (vision) of Sri Vasudeva

Skanda said:

O Savarni! Narada witnessed a great divine effulgence which was resembling the brilliance when crores of and crores of suns are present at the same time. (1)

It was spreading in all the main and minor directions and further it spread on the top and bottom. This called the eternal Brahman, which is in the form of coconsciousness, and bliss. (2)

It pervades ‘Prakruti’ (matter), the souls, and their products/effects. Only those who have mastered yoga, after transcending the six yogic ‘cha rka-s’ inside the body and reaching the

seventh, which is in the upper portion of head only, realize this. This is attained exclusively by the grace of Lord Vasudeva only. He is self-effulgent and eternal; only with His effulgence the sun shines forth, similarly fire, moon and the stars. They make the entire world shine with His effulgence. (3-4)

That abode of the Lord is called ‘Brahmapura’ (Abode of the Lord) by the devotees of the Lord. Crores of worshippers stand around and worship it. That exalted place is often frequented by Brahma, Shankara and others holding presents in their hands. Similarly, cowherds and their maids also frequent it. (5-6)

O Sage! One who has the grace of Krishna will witness this in the midst of light; others will see only the light but not the Lord. (7)
In that effulgent light, Narada saw a wonderful divine temple full of varieties of gems, beautiful on account of thousands of rows of gem-studded pillars with a great reception place. (8)

He saw that place surrounded by brilliant mansions, which were full of men and women decorated with beautiful ornaments, jewels, who were dedicated to the service of Lord Krishna. (9)

Sage Narada saw with joy a throne created using the essence of jewels and gems, awe-inspiring in the minds of spectators. (10)

There he saw Lord Krishna called ‘Narayana’ devoid of all inauspicious qualities, sitting on the throne, who is adored as the ‘Ancient Lord’, ‘Supreme Person’, ‘Vasudeva’ by His devotees. Some of them call Him the ‘Supreme Self’ and some others call Him ‘Supreme Brahman’; others say He is the greater than the greatest. Some call Him as ‘Brahman’, others as ‘Bhagavan’; some devotees call him ‘Parameshwara’. (11-12)

His limbs are beautiful as though made of thousands of cupids. He is always a young boy and repository of compassion. He is most enjoyable to look at; He is always peaceful. (13)

He is independent and superior to the one that perishes (viz. matter) and the one that does not perish (viz. individual soul). He is the monarch of innumerable worlds and his eyes, just by their looks, are capable of taking care of creating, sustaining and destroying several worlds at ease. (14)

He is decorated with invaluable, yellow, silk clothes; He is impressive to look at, by the jewels made out of precious gems and diamonds. He is of the hue of the fresh (rain bear-
ing) cloud, bedecked with the bright earrings in the form of fish. (15)

Since light that has dispersed from His limbs encircles Him, He looks white. He is decorated with a brilliant crown using the most precious gems and diamonds. He possesses beautiful eyes resembling the lotus flowers of the autumnal season. (16)

His limbs are anointed with fragrant sandal paste, his chest region in marked with the sign of ‘Srivatsa’ (that is the mark of supremacy). He plays on the flute producing melodies music, keeping it in front of his mouth with the help of beautiful arms. That Supreme Being was being served by groups of friends Jaya, Sushila, Lalita and others together with the consorts of the Lord like Rama with Radha, Satyabhama, Kalindi, Jambavati and others. (17-18)

Lord Vasudeva was also being served by the ‘Dharmadevatas’, all the Vedas, the six-fold wealth and knowledge, many of his own weapons that had taken human forms and others with folded hands. Nanda, Sunanda and other important heads of the retinues of the Lord, having hues of emerald, ruby, gold and white color, sporting with their beautiful arms the disc, mace, lotus and conch, were mediating on the God. (19-20)

Surrounded by Sri-Daama and others devotees with their ornaments handed in the form of Gopas standing with heads bowed in devotion, Garuda, the forms of eight-fold wealth standing in front with bowed heads, the Lord was being worshipped. (21)

In addition to this, that Lord was being served by the presiding deities of the qualities of peace, mercy, plentifulness, intellect, intelligence, endeavor, mastery, friendship, detachment, memory and wisdom. Sage Narada saw that most marvelous
divine form of Sri Krishna, the Supreme Being. All his senses were attracted by the fragrance of that beauty; his eyes were filled with tears of joy; thrilled by his love for the Lord, he was filled with complete happiness. (22-23)

He prostrated to the Lord, with infinite love, and folded hands; he then stood looking at the face of the Lord alone. (24)

Seeing his ardent devotee whom he had Himself called, Sri Hari welcomed him with respect and enquired about his welfare. (25)

Tasting the nectar-like words of the Lord, which were streaming down by the wish of the Lord Himself, Narada who was filled with extreme joy on having the vision of the Lord praised him thus, with devotion: (26)

Narada said:

“O Sri Krishna! God! Narayana! Lord of the Universe! Vasudeva! O all pervading One, beloved of all ardent devotees! Victory to You! O Lord! Radha, Kamala and others worship your divine feet! You alone are the wealth of those who desire You! You alone are the ultimate refuge! (27-28)

O Hari! You are the everlasting soul of the immortal souls; Chetana of the Chetana, Supreme to both Kshara and Akshara you are the Supreme Brahman. (29)

Men with ardent devotion unto You will obtain the highest purity and accomplishment that cannot be obtained by means of penance and other means. (30)

Oh, Lord of upright men! The moonlight emanating from Your divine feet alone is capable of driving away the pitch-darkness settled in the hearts of those who desire salvation. (31)
You alone are the one to be worshipped by means of sacrifices; You alone are to be meditated upon; You alone are to be known; You alone are the cause of all causes. Oh, God! All the Vedas have described You alone in this manner.” (32)

The pure effulgence settled in each and every hair of yours, that radiant peace is brighter than that of a ten million moons. (33)

You, the Purushothama, the quality-less (one who is devoid of all bad qualities) dwelling always as the great effulgent form in this Aksharadhama, are regarded possessing the form of nectar. (34)

The power of worshipping You, will certainly free Your devotees from the face of Kala - Yama (death and the god of death) and also from the great fear of illusion. (35)
Chapter - 18: The narration of the incarnations of Sri Vasudeva

The Lord said:

“Oh, great sage! You, being my constant and intimate devotee, are free from pride; by to My exclusive will, you will have the ‘darsan’ (vision). (1)

Oh, Suivrata (one who undertakes good vows)! You are seeing Me here today, because of qualities of — non-violence, celibacy, ‘swadharma’ (performing the duties ordained to one own self), peace, detachment, self-knowledge, company of the virtuous, performance of the eight-fold yoga, control of the senses, earning a living by righteous means, penance, control of all desires, intimate devotion unto Me that is born out of wisdom of knowing my greatness — are constantly rooted in you. (2-4)

O Brahmin! Other men too who have all these qualities see Me in this manner, as a I am a lover of my intimate devotees. (5)

O Narada! I will be dwelling in this Aksharadhama (place beyond destruction) with Radha and Lakshmi and my consorts. (6)

I, in the form of Vasudeva, am the giver of fruits of all Karmas (acts); I am the in-dweller of all beings, I am the one that is free (beyond all bondages). (7)

I, having four arms, dwell in Vaikunta, the great resort, with Lakshmi and Garuda, Nanda and other attendants. (8)

I reside always in the divine Sveta Island, considered the
effulgent resort, granting my ‘darsan’ to the ‘Sveta-muktas’ in all the five realms. (9)

I create, preserve and destroy many millions of worlds taking the forms of Anirudha, Pradyumna, and Sankarshana. (10)

At the beginning of the process of creation, Brahma was created by me from the lotus that emanated from my navel. O Narada! He worshipped me, by means of sacrifices and penance. (11)

Then being pleased with him, granting all the boons, I said, “O Brahma, you are endowed with the ability to create people”. (12)

With the power of my boon, all of them whom you have created will be subordinate to you; even the eternal Vedas will be revealed to your mind. (13)
of herbs, Manus and others throughout the night like a ship, in
the form of a great fish. (18)

When the sons of Kashyapa churn the ocean with the Mandara
Mountain as the churning rod, which has no base to rest on, I
will carry that Mandara on my back, assuming the form of a
great tortoise. (19)

Oh, Brahma! For the benefit of the Devatas (demigods), I
will assume the form of the man-lion ‘Narasimha’ and kill the
destroyer of sacrifices, the demon Hiranya-Kasipu.(20)

The demon Virochana will beget Bali, a powerful Asura as his
son. He will bring the downfall of Indra from his kingdom.

When he snatches the kingdom of three words from Indra,
the husband of Sachi, Indra will be turned away. Then, I
will be born as Vamana, the eleventh son of Aditi and
Kasyapa. (22)
In the Tretayuga, I will be born as Parasu-Rama in clan of Bhrigu. Then, I will destroy the dynasties of Kshatriya that are given to evil acts. (27)

During the conjunction of Treta and Dvapara Yugas, I will be born as Sri Rama, the son of Dasaratha and Kausalya. (28)

Lakshmi will also be born as Seetha, the daughter of Janaka. By breaking the great bow of Siva, I will marry her. (29)

Then, I will destroy the fearful demon Ravana, along with his brother, who abducts Seeta and is dangerous to the Devatas and sages. (30)

The great sage Valmiki and other sages will sing my historical stories in different ways. By listening to that story, all sins will be destroyed. (31)

When the transition period of Dwapara and Kaliyugas is about to end, I will be born as Sri Krishna, the son of Devaki and Vasudeva in the City of Mathura, to destroy the Asuras that are a burden to the earth and to protect Dharma and its followers. (32)

I, Devaki’s son will be famous as ‘Vaasudeva’ and ‘Sri Krishna’. Similarly Sankarshana will be born as Balabhadra. Pradyumna and Aniruddha too will be born in that community. (33)

Radha will be born as the daughter of Gopa Vrishabhanu; with her, I will be sporting in Brindavan. (34)

Lakshmi also will be born as Rukmini, the daughter of Bhism-Raja. Defeating the king’s followers, I will marry her. (35)

By destroying the Asuras, the enemies of Dharma and those
kings possessed by them and establishing Dharma, I will rid the earth of her burden. (36)

Whoever in whatever manner contemplates his mind in me, I will favour him with ‘Brahmagati’ (the path of God) in accordance with his desire. (37)

After establishing Dharma on this earth and causing the destruction of Yadu-kula (the dynasty of Yadu), and being seen by all the Devotees I will disappear from the earth. (38)

O Brahman! I being Krishna, sage Krishna-Dvaipayana (Vyasa) will sing about my prowess. Those songs will remove all the sins of the souls immediately, when one listens to them. (39)

Thereafter, I as Krishna-Dvaipayana, son of sage Parasara, will divide the Vedas into branches, like separating the branches of a tree. (40)

Then, I will incarnate as Buddha and I will mesmerize those prominent Asuras who frequent the three worlds. (41)

All those Asuras killed in battled by Arjuna, and me, will be born again. When they spread Adharma again on this earth, then, I will be born as Narayanamuni, in the Kosala country, as the son of my devotee Dharmadeva. (42-43)

O Aja! I will protect those sages born as men on account of the curse of a sage and establish righteousness. (44)

At the end of the Kali age, as Kalki, riding everywhere on a horse, I will destroy the great sinners, the Mlechas (pariahs). (45)

My incarnation takes place whenever the voice of Dharma will be ruined by the Asuras, to protect Dharma. (46)
Hence, I bestowed such booms to him, (Brahma) telling him, “give up your worries; create people as before. Moreover, I did all the things in accordance with the boons granted to him. Oh, Sage! With my powers, even now, I will do the same, and so also in future. (47-48)

O Brahmin! I am the indweller of all beings; My ‘darsan’ is very difficult to obtain, you have had it on account of you intimate devotion (unto Me). (49)

Oh, great sage! I am very much pleased with you; please ask for any boon desire; My ‘darsan’ will never be fruitless”. (50)

Skanda said:

“Oh, sage! Listening to those words of the Lord, the great sage Narada deemed himself a blessed person. He addressed the Lord thus: (51)

Narada said:

O Lord! By your very ‘darsan’ my desires have been completely fulfilled. I believe that the good fortune of your ‘darsan’ is very difficult to obtain by any living being. (52)

Hence, I have no other desire to obtain except your ‘darsan’, and that of your people and the nectar-like abode of yours. (53)

O Achyuta! There is nothing more formidable to obtain in all the worlds, by offering prayers to your pleased self. (54)
Other worldly pleasures obtained by performing the Vedic sacrifices, regarded highly by the Devatas and Manes, are momentary. (55)

Lord! I do not desire to have even a little of that great happiness from you. I beseech You, the greatest bestower of boons, to grant me only one boon. (56)

Let my mind be supremely enthusiastic in constantly singing Your qualities and those of Your devotees. Let my love for You be even increasing”. (57)

Skanda said:

Thus being prayed by Narada, Sri Krishna said – “Let it be so”, and giving him a ‘Mahati-Veena’ useful for singing, told him again. (58)
I follow them with Goddess Lakshmi as though I am subordinate to them. Wherever they are, I too will be there. (64)

Those people, who desire salvation on the earth, will get it only with the association of such devotees of mine. There is no other means. Oh, Divine Sage! Understand that this is true. (65)

Whenever men surrender to Me, they will become free from shackles of ‘Samsara’, this illusory world. With whatever desire man takes shelter in me as the sole refuge, he will get the happiness he desires. (66-67)

Skanda said:

Thus listening to the words of the Lord, Narada, with tears of joy pouring from his eyes, and being blessed with his intended desire, prostrated and returned. (68)

O great Brahmin! Playing on the ‘Veena’ and singing about God, he came and saw the same ‘Sveta-mukta’ (who had led him to the presence of the Lord before) and followed his footsteps. (69)

O Brahmin! Narada reached the Sveta Island soon. Bowing to the Svetamukas in that place, he returned quickly and came to Mount Meru. (70)

Then, he journeyed from Meru Mountain to Gandhamadana mountain and descended from the sky quickly, near the expansive Badari. (71)

End of Eighteenth Chapter titled “The details of the incarnations of Sree Vasudeva” of the Second Vaishnava Khanda of Sri Vasudeva Mahatmya - of Sri Skandapurana
Chapter - 19: Description of Narada’s meeting with Nara-Narayana

Skanda said:

Then Narada saw the two demigods, who were great ancient sages observing a great vow with integrity and performing penance. (1)

They were brighter than the Sun, who lights the three worlds. Having the features of ‘Srivatsa’ (a unique symbol of Lord Vishnu) and matted hair, they were venerable. (2)

Their shoulders, which had the sign of the lotus, and feet, which, had the sign of the divine disc, were sparkling. They had broad chests and long shoulders. They were wearing delicate white dresses. (3)

With auspicious features like a good mouth, a broad face, good eyebrows and auspicious nose - their forms were divine and they were shining brilliantly. (4)

Sage Narada, in all humility, approached them and circumambulating them with devotion, prostrated and stood before them with folded hands. (5)

Then the two sages, regarded as the personifications of penance, success and brilliance, after their morning ablutions, ending their silence, peacefully worshipped Narada washing his feet and hands with affection. Both of them then sat on the seat of Darbha grass. Narada also sat down. (6-7)

As they were sitting there, that region shone brightly like the great fire emanating from the sacrificial pit with oblations of ghee. (8)
Then, of the two, Narayana after receiving fine hospitality spoke to Narada sitting there in a relaxed manner. (9)

**Sri Narayana said:**

Oh, Brahmin! did you see that God in Brahmadhama, who is to us the greatest cause, eternal and supreme being? (10)

**Narada said:**

Oh, Lord! By your grace, I saw that supreme Lord Vasudeva dwelling in ‘Aksharadhama’. (11)

Sent by him to serve You, I have come here from that place. Thinking always of Him, I will be with you here itself” (12)

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Sri Narayana said:

“You are blessed and favoured since you have seen that Lord Himself. Oh, Brahmin! A person, neither a demigod nor a sage has seen him. (13)

Those devotees who have devotion (within their hearts) and have obtained indestructible likeness with Him, alone will see Him, the cause of everything. (14)

It is not easy to see that divine and supreme being. He is not easily seen. Narada! My words are true. (15)

Nothing in this world is dearer to him, than his devotee. Therefore, O Good Brahmin! On His own, He has been kind to bestow his vision to you. (16)
His body is enriched by the mass of brilliance; He has a wonderful form that is beyond qualities; it is of complete bliss and is eternal. (17)

His beauty, colour, age, state — none of these are materialistic. All his forms and implements are divine. He is the ultimate refuge of all devotees. (18)

Even those who know how to merge their souls with the Lord, and also those who are beyond the control of the ‘Gunas’ too devoutly worship that Vasudeva. He is the one who has such invaluable qualities. (19)

Oh, great Sage! Who can describe that Supreme Lord’s greatness, who is the Lord of endless powers that are beyond perception? (20)

He is the soul of souls. He is the soul of ‘Akshara’, as clear as the sky; Only with divine sight it is possible to see Him; He is the embodiment of knowledge and He is supreme Being. He is Vasudeva. He is also the one having all the auspicious qualities Supreme Lord of all Lords, one who can be understood by ‘Para-vidya’, fit to be meditated upon by all. He is the Lord of all those who know Brahma! (21-22)

One who pleases that Supreme Lord with penance and righteousness will be a blessed one. (23)

Therefore, Oh, Divine Sage! Stay here for some time, worshipping him with your righteous inner devotion. (24)

With penance, becoming a purified one, you understand the greatness of that supreme Lord. (25)
Oh, Sage! Please understand that penance alone is the means of accomplishing all desires. That penance is his heart. One who has not performed penance cannot have the vision of that Lord” (26)

**Skanda said:**

“Narada was pleased with the words of Lord Narayana. Desirous of performing penance, he addressed Lord Narayana-muni thus. (27)

Thus, ends the Nineteenth Chapter titled “Description of Narada’s meeting with Nara-Narayana” in Sri Vasudeva Mahatmya.

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Chapter 20: Exposition of the Dharma of the four classes

**Narada asked:**

“Oh, Lord! Tell me the ultimate Dharma according to you. By practicing the practice of which Vasudeva the soul of this universe is always pleased.” (1)

**Sri Narayana said:**

“Oh, Brahmin! You have asked right things. Your mind is very clear; I will reveal it to you even though it is a secret, since you are my ardent devotee. (2)

This Dharma was taught to Vivaswan in the beginning of the Kalpa by me. Oh sage! Now, I will teach the same old Dharma to you. (3)
That Dharma is considered to be dedicated Dharma, when one has devotion along with duty, knowledge and renunciation to the Lord Vishnu associated with Lakshmi. (4)

Only with that single-minded devotion the Lord of Gokula himself will be pleased. Even that devotee gets his desire fulfilled by this. (5)

**Narada asks:**

“I am desirous of knowing details of one’s own duty and others individually from you, authenticated by scriptures. (6)

Oh, benevolent Lord! You are the origin of all Vedas, Agamas and scriptures in which age-old Dharma is depicted. (7)

**Skanda said:**

Questioned thus by the Divine sage, the all-knowing God Dharma-nandana (Sri Narayana) described the Dharma-s in the correct order. (10)

**Sri Narayana said:**

“Good conduct is the common dharma laid down for to all classes. General regulations and special regulations separately
have been laid down for the Ashrama-s. They are known as ‘Swa-dharma’. (11)

Now, I will tell you the dharma that is common to all. Listen to me from the beginning. Non-violence is the greatest dharma. It is the first one in the general dharma. (12)

That which is not even mentally treacherous to one’s primary dharma, occupations and animals even under compelling circumstances, is said to be non-violence. (13)

Truth is said to be that by which no perfidy happens to any beings. To control the desires for sensual pleasures according to the scriptural regulations is penance. (14)

There are two kinds of purifications - outward and inward, not laying hands on things belonging to others indirectly or by deceit. (15)
these are common dharma-s of all human beings. (16-21)

Four classes viz. Brhamana, Kshatriya, Vaisya, Suras are mentioned. Oh Sage! I will tell you the special Dharma-s of each one of them. (22)

Peace, control of senses, tolerance, cleanliness, having faith in God and sastras, devotion to God, penance, knowledge of the nature of God and the self, having direct experience of God - these are the natural Dharma-s of Brahmana. (23)

Valour, courage, being liberal, strength, brilliance, forgiveness, sheltering the sufferers, protecting the cows and Brahmanas, Sadhus (saints), performing sacrifices - these are said to be the common Dharma-s of Kshatriya-s. For the Kings, in addition to the above, morality, protecting the people, establishing Dharma on this earth, punishing those deserving it - these are special Dharma-s. (24-25)

Faith in God, adherence to giving gifts, serving the Sadhus and Brahmanas, being discontent in gathering wealth, occupations like farming etc - these are the Dharma-s of the Vaisyas. (26)

Serving the twice born (Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas), Devatas and cows are the special Dharma-s of the Shudras. (27)

Teaching, conducting, sacrifices, receiving gifts from those who are pure - these are said to be the means of livelihood of Brahmanas. In times of emergency, other means are also accepted. If a good Brahmin sees drawbacks in conducting sacrifices and teaching, another occupation with four options has been laid down. Collecting the left-out corns, daily begging, managing with food which is obtained without begging, suit-
able agriculture - these are the four kinds. The former ones are to be understood as better than others. (28-30)

Narada! When faced with danger, the Brahmana has to live by means of the occupation of Vaishya or by means of the means of the occupation of Kshatriya. But, he should never be in the service of the wicked. (31)

A Kshatriya should live by protecting dharma everywhere by means of his arms. If in danger, he may follow the Vaisya profession. If that is not possible, he may also live like a Brahman. (32)

It is said that, a Kshatriya should live by keeping all his people happy, in keeping with the times and try taking tax and other things from them, except Brahmans. (33)

Just as the service of the wicked even in times of danger is forbidden for Brahmans, so also the Kshatriya is forbidden to serve the wicked, which ruins his mettle. (34)

Agriculture, trade, protecting cows, and living on interest - these are said to be way of life of a Vaishya. In times of danger, it is said that, a Vaishya may follow the Shudra profession. (35)

The Shudra has to live by the wealth obtained from the service of the twice born (Brahma, Kshatriya, Vaisya). In times of emergency, he may follow life-supporting occupations such as carpentry and others. (36)

After being freed from danger, all should amend and follow their important dependable occupations. (37)

All the people of four classes should cultivate friendship with virtuous men. Companionship of the virtuous will facilitate salvation. Companionship with the wicked begets hell. (38)

Those who have conquered desire and cultivate aesthetic
relishment, controlling the palate, conquering pride and hatred, without showiness, and are devotees of Vishnu are the virtuous men. They are said to be Sadhus. (39)

Those who are interested in women and subjects regarding women, and in this playful company, have the desire to gather wealth, indulging in violence, display with pride their possessions, act like devotees - are not Sadhus (wicked). (40)

Demonic wealth naturally exists in the wicked, and in the virtuous, divine wealth - deciding thus, those who desire happiness should serve the virtuous only. (41)

Their mind will work according to the kind of Sastras, they familiarize and the type of people they coexist with. Hence, one should not cultivate familiarity with bad Sastras and the wicked. (42)

There is no permanent wealth that cannot be attained by those, who have interest in serving the Sadhus according to their ability. (43)

If a person though righteousness is treacherous to the virtuous, will never get deliverance by any act. (44)

Vishnu will never be pleased even with his devotees if they are treacherous to the virtuous. (45)

Those who are treacherous to the virtuous will suffer from abdominal diseases as long as they live, in whichever form they take in the subsequent births. (46)

All the enormous merit, fame, and wealth even if righteously earned will at once decline by transgressing the virtuous. (47)

Hence, all those who are desirous of attaining happiness, should serve the virtuous, revere the meritorious teertha-s (sacred waters), worship cows and Brahmans. (48)
Wicked ones, who blame defame the teerthas, idols of gods, will have their profligate families certainly destroyed. (49)

If one satisfies a Brahman with good articles of food, Dakshina (offering) and other valuable things, he will be satisfying the whole world. Lord Sri Hari Himself will be satisfied. (50)

If a Brahman is cheated, it is akin to cheating the whole world. Hence, Brahmanas who are of the form of Vishnu should be worshipped according to one’s capacity. (51)

All the groups of Devatas are situated in the body of the cows. Similarly, all the Teertha-s dwell in those cows. (52)

Worshipping a cow is like worshipping all the angels, Oh, Narada! It will be like of all the Teerthas (places of pilgrimage). (53)
Chapter - 21: The Dharma of a celibate

Sri Narayana said:

“Oh great sage! The celibate (Brahmachari), the householder, the ‘Vanaprastha’ (one who retires to the forest after leading the life of a householder) and the hermit (ascetic) — these are said to be the four stages of life. (1)

The celibate (Brahmachari) is one who is born in a good family, initiated into the different sacraments, and has undergone ‘Upanayana’ (the threading ceremony). Now, I will tell you his dharma (duties and responsibilities) from the beginning. (2)

The celibate should live in his Preceptor’s house, and being pure, controlling his senses and anger, being courteous, speaking only the truth, should study the Vedas. (3)

Performing sacrifices in the morning and evening, he should seek Allis with firmness of mind; he has to perform ‘sandhya-vandanam’ (prayers during the morning, evening and noon) thrice. He should worship Vishnu daily. (4)

Without worry, having no desire to have more, with the consent of the preceptor alone, he has to take limited food everyday; he should be engaged in the service of the preceptor and give up bad habits (if any). (5)

He must observe silence while bathing, taking food, performing sacrifices and meditating. He should not cut his hair and nails and not brush his teeth too much. (6)

He should not wash his clothes too much; he should not be a hypocrite with his preceptor; whenever the preceptor calls, him he should come and study. Both at the beginning and at end of the lesson, he should prostrate to his preceptor. (7)
He should not touch untouchables; he should not converse with those whom he is not supposed to converse with; he should not eat that is unfit to eat; he should not drink (those liquids) that are not to be drunk, even once. (8)

He should wear the waist-string, deerskin; have a staff, water pot, two white sacred threads and a rosary. (9)

He should have Darbha-grass in his hand; giving up combing his hair, he should have matt his hair, he should give up using scents, flower garland and ornaments. (10)

He should not have oil bath, should not use collyrium for his eyes, he must give up any contact with wine and meat. (11)

The celibate should not see women or touch them; conversing or playing with them is also prohibited; he should never

become a victim of their looks. (12)

An intelligent celibate should not even touch the picture or wooden forms of women, except the image of God; he should not visualize them even mentally. (13)

He should never see even the female and male animals mating; he should not speak about the good or bad qualities of women or listen to them. (14)

He should prostrate to the wife of his preceptor without touching her by his hand; he should not be in a private place even with his mother at any time. (15)

With such conduct, he should live in the ‘gurukula’ of his preceptor until the completion of his education. Then, he may become an ascetic or a person of lifelong abstinence and chastity. It is said that in the Kali-age (Kali-Yuga) no one has the
power to observe the vow of abstinence. The use of the word Kali-age should be understood as not applicable to the transition period. Oh, Brahmin! If that is so, he may become a hermit; if he is not having detachment, he must become a householder. (16)

There are four types of celibacy - Prajapatyä - (one of the eight forms of marriage in Hindu Law), Savita, Brahma (State of a Brahmana), and Naïśthika (life long abstinence). One has to follow any one of these types according to ability. (17)

Here ends chapter Twenty-one titled “The Dharma-s of a Brahmachari” in Sri “Vasudeva-mahatmya”, in the second Vaishnava Kanda of Sri Skandamahapurana.

**Chapter - 22: Duties of a householder**

Sri Narayana said:

“One who desires to become a (Grihastha) householder must pay Guru-dakshina (preceptor’s fee) according to his capacity to his preceptor and return home after obtaining his permission only. Then he should marry a girl who is younger to him, suitable to his family, free from diseases, devoid of male features and sins, according to the prescribed regulations. Then in accordance with his position, to please the Sri Krishna, everyday he should worship the Devatas, Manes and animals as per the laid down procedures. (1-3)

Taking bath, performing Sandhya-Vandana, meditations, sacrifices, study of the Vedas, worship of Vishnu, offering oblations, performing ‘Vaisvadeva’ (a Vedic ritual) offerings hospitality to guests - all these to be observed everyday. (4)
With the wealth earned in a righteous manner, he should perform acts of merit according to his capacity; he should protect his dependents in a detached manner and should not torment them. (5)

For their sake of nourishing his body or sense organs, he should not behave like animals and antagonize others. He should give up ego and attachment towards the body and its organs. Without being lazy, he should cultivate companionship with Bhagavatas (devotees of the Lord) and virtuous persons; he should not have friendship with womanizers or those addicted to bad habits or stingy fellows. (6-7)

He should not look at others’ women with carnal ideas; he should not co-habit with his life on the Sraddha day (ceremony of forefathers), new moon day and other changing days and days when religious vows are observed. (8)

A person, though well versed in Sankhya and Yoga, may give in to his carnal cravings, and be attracted even towards his daughter, even if, by chance, he happens to be enclosed with her alone, in a secluded place. (9)

Hence, an intelligent person should not be alone, in a secluded place even with his own mother, sister or daughter; when this is so, what should be said about being with other maidens? (10)

The widow is most inauspicious person of all auspicious entities is the widow. Hence, her touch or sight will destroy all the merits of human beings. (11)

If a widow is sighted at the time of journey, it should not be undertaken; otherwise, the person will be surely encounter death. (12)
The blessings of widows are like the hissings of a blacksnake. Hence, just as the householder is afraid of demons, one should fear the blessings of widows. (13)

Wine, meat, intoxicating things, gambling and other things should be totally given up. He should not be treacherous to any animal under any circumstance. (14)

One should listen to the stories of the incarnations of Sri Hari everyday. Being a believer, he should discharge all his prescribed duties to please Lord Sri Vasudeva. (15)

He should follow the special regulations in the months of Kartika (October -November), Magha (lunar month occurring during January-February), Vaisakha (Second lunar month -April - May), in other meritorious times and Chaturmasya (a religious vow undertaken for a period of four months - at the beginning of Kartika, Phalguna and Ashadha months), which remove all sins. (16)

He must give gifts to the deserving, virtuous people in accordance to regulations in sacred places and sacred times. He must be kind to all animals. (17)

O Sinless one! I will tell you about the holy regions, meritorious times and meritorious people. They are capable of increasing virtue. (18)

The place where I am dwelling is the most sacred place on the earth. Groups of great sages will be meditating here, observing great vows. (19)

With the greatness of Sri Hari and the devotees of Sri Hari dwelling in those places, the places will become hallowed. Ganga-dwara, Madhu-puri, Naimisha-aranya, Kuru-kshetra, Ayodhya, Prayaga, Gaya-Siras, Varanasi, Puri, the holy place
of Pulaha-ashrama, Kapila-ashrama, Sri-Ranga, Prabhasa, Kusha-sthali, Siddha-kshetra, Pushkara Lake, Raivata-achala, the sporting place of Lord Lakshminarayana, Govardhana mountain, holy Brindavan, Mahendra, Malaya and other seven main mountains, the great and sacred rivers Bhagirathi, Yamuna, Saraswathi, Godavari, Sarayu, Kaveri, Gomati and other famous Puranic rivers and rivulets. (20-25)

All the places where Brahmanas adhering to non-violent virtues live, where the deer and other animals move freely without fear, places where the incarnations of Sri Hari have taken place, places where Lord Hari dwells — all these places, especially on the earth, are of great merit. (26-28)

Even a small act of merit performed in these places will yield the merit that is multiplied a thousand times; O Narada Now I will tell you the times which increase merit (and are therefore the best times to perform meritorious acts). (29)

The two ‘ayana-s’, (two half years), the period of ‘Vishuva’, the eclipses of the sun and the moon, the time of Sandhya (twilight), Vyatipata (any great portentous calamity) the ‘Sravana’ Stars (a group of stars), the twelfth day of the fortnight, eleventh day of the fortnight, the beginning of the ‘Manu’ day, new year days, other sacred days, New-moon day, the day of ‘Vaidhriti’, the four full moon days of the monthly stars, ‘ashtaka-s’, ‘birth-stars’, Sri Hari’s birthdays, his own birth-

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of Pulaha-ashrama, Kapila-ashrama, Sri-Ranga, Prabhasa, Kusha-sthali, Siddha-kshetra, Pushkara Lake, Raivata-achala, the sporting place of Lord Lakshminarayana, Govardhana mountain, holy Brindavan, Mahendra, Malaya and other seven main mountains, the great and sacred rivers Bhagirathi, Yamuna, Saraswathi, Godavari, Sarayu, Kaveri, Gomati and other famous Puranic rivers and rivulets. (20-25)

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days, birthdays of his wife and children, prosperous times and the arrival of virtuous men as guests (without invitation) — these are times of excellent merit. (30-33)

Worshipping the Devatas, Manes, Brahmins and virtuous men according to one’s own ability, sacred bath, donations and meditation — all these too bring endless merit. (34)

O Narada! It is God himself who is the most virtuous and fit to receive gifts. Just as watering the roots give satisfaction to the all branches of the tree, so also, the gift givens to the virtuous will gladden everyone in society. (35)

Those Brahmanas are the virtuous who are non-violent, possess the knowledge of Vedas, contented, joyful, following righteousness and have devotedly established Lord Vishnu in their hearts - they are the ‘Sat-patras’ (people fit to receive charity). (36)

The ardent devotees will be able to release those in bondage of ‘Samsara’; understand that these are the virtuous persons since God voluntarily dwells in them. (37)

A wealthy person should build Vishnu temples that have strong structures. He must arrange the resources for suitable and constant worship in those temples. (38)

He should build water reservoirs and parks for pleasing Lord Vishnu. He should gratify the Brahmanas and Sadhus by good feasts that are. (39)

He must perform non-violent Vaishnava sacrifices in accordance with regulations; conduct birthday festivals of Lord Vishnu and perform plentiful vows pertaining to the Lord. (40)

In the dark half of the Bhadrapada month, on the chosen day,
one should perform the ‘Shraddhas’ (propitiatory ceremonies) to the Manes especially his own forefathers and their wives, according to his ability. (41)

Brahmins, who are true devotees of God and who are engaged in virtuous acts prescribed to them, are to be fed as part of the ceremonies that are related to God and the Manes. (42)

In acts related to Devatas, two Brahmans have to be fed. In the acts related to the Manes three Brahmans should be fed in accordance with regulations or (in case of unavailability), at least one Brahman has to be fed on these occasions. One should not increase the numbers mentioned above in the ‘Shraddhas’ (death anniversaries). (43)

The region of worship, time of worship, articles of worship, person to be engaged during the worship – all these are prescribed in the Sastras in the most detailed manner; no where else is information pertaining to these is available. (44)

A person should never offer or himself partake meat in a ‘Sraddha’ ceremony; the Manes will be satisfied by the offering of food that is fit for sages like milk, ghee and variety of cooked rice. (45)

The most merciful Manes all will be satisfied by observing non-violence towards animals, physically, mentally and vocally. (46)

Therefore, a devotee of Sri Vasudeva, without knowing the intent opinion of Shatras, or by the influence of his company of the wicked, should never offer meat in Shraddha. (47)

On the Shraddha day, the rules of celibacy and vows related to Vishnu should be followed. He should be engrossed in performing the vow of Lord Vishnu and should not do other things. (48)

One should observe periods of pollution (physical contami-
nation) during the periods of births and deaths of his relatives and on the days of the Solar and Lunar eclipses, as prescribed in the Shastras. (49)

Those who are not householders, monks and widowers should not participate in business transactions, or resolve disputes. (50)

O Great Brahman! No efforts will be fruitful wherever there are widowers. There will be complete disaster. It has been thus decided in the Shastras. (51)

I have concisely told you the Dharma of the householders. Men will get imperishable happiness of their liking by observing these Dharmas. (52)

O Narada! Brahmans are of four kinds according to their occupations of livelihood and therefore, they are called by those names. (53)
causing pain and company of non-virtuous people. Men also should give up all these. (58)

Women should be engrossed in good acts; they should avoid always insolence (thinking that she is superior) and be full of humility, they should have complete control over the senses. (59)

Rooted in chastity, she should be devoted to Ramapati (Lord Vishnu); she should never think about herself as an independent. (60)

The widow should always worship Lord Vishnu regarding Him as her husband; she should not listen to information related to sex, or speak about it. (61)

Except in times of emergency, she should not touch other men other than close relatives, or look at them with carnal desires. (62)

No blemish will occur by touching the breast-suckling baby or a very old man. If a widow inevitably has to talk to men, she should do so without arguing much, even in business dealings. Only in case of emergency, she may talk with them in an open place. (63-64)

She should not purposely see, even once, animals cohabiting; she should give up all sensual pleasures; she may have limited meal only once in a day. She should not wear red, yellow, green and other colored or beautiful dresses; She should not wear ornaments or sleep in during daytime. Except in times of emergency, she should not sleep on a cot. (66)

She should not take betel leaves; she should not have oil bath or use collyrium; she should always be afraid of the company of men, as that of a black snake. (67)
Except Goddess Lakshmi there is no woman that is not attracted by man. Hence, women desiring to have prosperity should be faithful and virtuous; she should even mentally visualize the form of a man or touch him directly. (68-69)

She should observe expiation, the vow of ‘Chaandraayana’ (a religious observation regulated by the Moon’s waxing and warning) and other vows with devotion and follow the regulations regularly. A young lady should not be in a secluded place with her father, son, a youth or others, and discard the company of the wicked, by all means. (70-71)

Neither a woman (having her husband) nor a widow should keep the time of her undergoing periods a secret; she should not touch humans or others (animals as well as plants) during those three days. It is said that a woman undergoing periods will have pollution equal to an untouchable on the first day; she will have pollution equal to that of a killer of a Brahman on the second day; she will have pollution equal to that of a washerwoman on the third day and will ultimately become pure on the fourth day. (72-73)

Thus, I have concisely told you about Dharmas of women. Those women who follow these Dharmas will obtain happiness both in this world and the world that is attained after death. (74)
Chapter - 23: Description of the Dharma of the third stage – Vanaprastha and Sanyasa (Fourth stage)

Sri Narayana said:

“Oh sage! Hereafter I will tell you the code of conduct to be followed during the third stage of religious life. In a person’s span of life, this is said to be the third stage. (1)

A person undertaking this stage should go to a forest. If he has a wife who is devoted and unattached and interested in penance, he should go accompanied by her. (2)

If it is not so, he should handover the responsibility of her protection to his children (and other relatives); detached to all worldly attainments, he can enter the forest alone. (3)

Without fear and laziness, he should live in the forest attracted to penance. For the upkeep of the sacrificial fire, he should erect a hut, but should live outside. (4)

In summer he should do penance in the midst of ‘Pancha-agni’ (a group of five sacred fires). In the cold season, he should live in water, controlling his senses; he should live enduring continuous downpour in the rainy season. (5)

He should wear cloths of leaves, skin and barks; eat corn fit to be eaten by sages, or fruits and roots of the forest. (6)

He has to eat the food that is baked in the fire or sunshine, or even unbaked food; whatever is available; if he has no teeth, he should eat the food pounded in a stone mortar. (7)

He should get his food everyday at the proper time. He may
also take the food offered by others within the stipulated time. He should not take untimely food. (8)

He should not take cultivated any food items even in times of danger. He should offer the fire oblations with corn that is grown naturally in the forest. (9)

He should safely keep the water-pot, staff, sacred fire, covering articles. Hairs of the tuft, armpit, moustache, and nails should not be removed. He should not clean his teeth even when they are dirty. (10)

A hermit should bathe without rubbing his organs; he should sleep on the floor only; he should meditate according to the region and the times, strength and conditions. (11)

It is said that there are four kinds of forest dwellers – ‘Phenapa-s’, ‘Audumbara-s’, ‘Valakhilya-s’ and ‘Vaikhanasa-s’. (12)

He should live in the forest according to his ability for twelve, eight, four, two years or one year. There after he may enter asceticism (‘Sanyasa’). (13)

If his renunciation is very resolute, then enter asceticism will be very beneficial. If it is not so, then the ‘V anaprastha’ should live in the forest as long as he lives. (14)

One who embraces the fourth stage of life (‘Sanyasa’) after renouncing everything as per the procedures laid down should wear a loin-cloth as a covering and a patched garment. (15)

The ascetic (Sanyasin) should have a staff, water pot and a water pipe. He should receive alms in the house of a righteous Brahman. (16)

He should not receive alms from the same house everyday.
He should not be attached to the different cuisines; he should take limited food. (17)

The ascetic, who begs may take alms from a hermit who lives in the forest, by taking that pure food, his mind will certainly become pure. (18)

Even if he smells meat and wine, he should observe the vow known as ‘Paaraaka’. He should be very clean in his oblations. He should not touch ‘Shudras’ and others. He should worship Vishnu daily; he should eat only those things that are offered to Vishnu; he should constantly repeat either the ‘Ashtakshara’ mantra or the ‘Dvadashakshari’ mantra of Lord Vishnu. (19-20)

He should not chitchat; he should not utter lies; he should not give discourses to eke out a living; he should not have interest in the bad Shastras (like the Shastras propounded by the Buddhists etc.); he should not have any particular vocation. (21)

The ascetic should study the good Shastras (which show the disadvantages and advantages respectively) of bondage and salvation; he should not build Mutts; he should give up his ego and belonging-ness. (22)

Except during the vow of ‘Chatur-masya’ and in times of danger, he should not live at a particular place. By means of knowledge, he should understand his self and that of Lord Sri Hari properly. (23)

He should give up desire, anger, fear and enmity; he should not store money, corn etc. He should always follow the ‘Yama’ and ‘Niyama’. (This will be explained during chapter on Ashtanga Yoga) (24)

Even if an ascetic is endowed with true knowledge and re-
nunciation, he becomes corrupt by the association of women, wealth, ornaments and attractive dresses. (25)

The ascetic should give up the use of flowers, sandal oil and other scented things. If not, he will come to believe that the mortal body itself is the soul. (26)

Depending upon the nature and quantity of food, he will have desires for (the company of) women; hence, he has to partake a limited quantity of sapless food; this will be beneficial to the ascetic. One who desires to achieve salvation should not listen to rustic talk; by listening to it, the interest that men have in the stories of Vishnu will be destroyed at once. The ascetic should not look at or touch the woman even in pictures; many ascetics have their downfall just by looking at the images of women. (27-29)

Based on their level of renunciation, four types of ascetics are mentioned – ‘Kuteechaka’, ‘Bahoodaka’, ‘Hamsa’ and ‘Paramahamsa’. (30)

O Sage! Since the two Ashramas of the ‘Vanaprastha’ and ‘Sannyasa’ are extremely difficult to undergo, one should not take to these Ashramas in this age of Kali; I am sure about it. (31)

Serving Lord Vasudeva day and night is the sole Dharma that is to be followed by His devotees who have intense detachment. (32)

Those having complete renunciation towards worldly objects will not waste even a moment, without engaging in the nine types of Bhakti unto Lord Mahavishnu. (33)
True devotees of Lord will surely reject the company of a person indifferent to God, though he may be a relative and full of good qualities. (34)

Virtuous people will take food everyday, deeming it the gift of Sri Hari, only after sprinkling it with the sacred water of the sacred feet of Sri Hari and mixed with Tulasi. (35)

Devotees of Vishnu are prohibited from engaging in discussions concerning women and those who are attracted towards women. Otherwise, the meditation would be counterproductive. (36)

Except Lord Vasudeva, there is no one who is not enamored by seeing a woman. (37)

The ascetic should not live in a place where the voice of women is heard often, where women are often seen. If he lives there, he will lose his Dharma. (38)

Desire, greed, tasting different cuisines, friendship, ego and anger are the six entities that are to be given up since they will result in bonding the soul. (39)

The ascetic should give up these six entities by putting in serious efforts. If a person is unable to follow the respective Dharmas mentioned above, he should compulsorily undergo atonement for the same according to his ability. (40)

Oh, Narada! Thus, I have concisely told you the duties of the four classes, four stages of life as well as the Dharma-s of the ‘Vaishnava’. (41)

The celibate and ascetic rooted in their Dharma-s will attain the abode of Brahma. The Vanaprastha (person in the third stage) who steadfastly follows his Dharma will obtain the abode
of the seven sages and the householder who does so will obtain heaven. (42)

Those who follow their respective Dharma-s with devotion unto Lord Vishnu will all attain the abode of Lord Vishnu when they leave their mortal bodies. (43)

Thus, ends the Twenty-third Chapter titled “Description of the Dharma-s of the Vanaprastha and Sanyasi” in the Vasudeva Mahatmya in the second Vaishnava Khand of Sri Skanda Mahapurana

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**Chapter - 24: Description of the features of knowledge**

Sri Narayana said:

Hereafter, I will tell you the features of knowledge as determined by the ‘Sankhya’ system. True knowledge is that by attaining which the precise features of the body, soul and greatest soul (God) are understood. This is the meaning of the word ‘Jnana’ according to Nirukta (one of the six subsidiary aspects of the Vedas). Vasudeva is the Supreme Being; in the beginning He used to live in his huge abode known as ‘Aksharadharma’, He was beyond all attributes, having a divine form and was totally, unique. (1-2)

Eventually, the primordial nature (Prakrti) was covered by the effulgence of the ‘Akshara’ the Supreme Being just as the night becomes day by being covered by sunlight. The Lord is
beyond illusion. (3)

When that Supreme Being willed to create, the worlds and the primordial nature manifested. She (the primordial nature) is known as Mahamaya. (4)

Perceiving that Prakruti, Sri Vasudeva, looked at her, intending to create the world. At once, she became agitated. (5)

Oh Sage! Crores and crores of important men were born from her. As per the desire of the Lord, those men mixed with the Prakrti-s. The men placed the embryo in wombs of the Prakrti-s; from the Prakrti-s, innumerable worlds were born, now, only one among them will be looked into. (7)

From the golden semen of that ‘Purusha’, the entity called

‘Ahankara’ was born in the beginning. Afterwards the qualities of Satva, Rajas and Tamas were born. (8)

From Tamas, the five ‘Tan-matra-s’, ‘Mahabhoota-s’ (the five elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether) were born; from Rajas were born the ten ‘Indriyas’ (sense organs) and the eleventh sense organs viz. mind was born. (9)

The presiding demigods of the senses and mind were born from the quality of Satva. These demigods are generally known as ‘principles’. (10)

Inspired by Vasudeva, these demigods created the body of ‘Isvara’ known as ‘Virat’, where all the moving and non-moving objects reside. (11)

Since that Viraatpurusha slept on the water created by him, he came to be known as Narayana by the Nigamas (Vedas) and other texts. (12)
From the naval-lotus of Narayana, having the quality of Rajas, Lord Brahma was born; from the heart lotus of the Lord Narayan, Satvic qualities was born Lord Vishnu. From the face of the Lord Narayana. With the quality of ‘Tamas’ Lord Hara was born. (13)

From the three central places, three powers originated of them; the one with quality of ‘Tamas’ became Durga, the one with quality of ‘Rajas’ became Savitri, the one with the quality of ‘Sattva’ became Sri Devi. All these were shining with ornaments and dresses. (14)

On the command of the Viratpurusha, these Sakti-devi-s chose their spouses respectively. Durga chose Rudra, Savitri chose Brahma, and the last Sri-Devi joined Vishnu. (15)

Oh, Sage! From the fraction of Durga, Chandika and other thousands of power goddesses were born. From Savitri’s fraction, Trayi and other power goddesses were born; from the fraction of Sri-Devi, Dussaha and other goddesses were born. (16)

At the beginning of creation, Brahma who was born from the navel-lotus of Viratpurusha, settled on that navel-lotus on the ocean spread everywhere; he could not see anything. (17)

He knowing how to create, He was not aware of even himself; he could not see any place of refuge anywhere in that great ocean; he was thinking, “Who am I? Why did I come?” (18)

Entering the stalk of the lotus and searching for its origin, he began to go downwards; hundreds of years elapsed, he could not see its end. (19)

Again, he came up and being tired, he sat there alone. Then
the invisible God told him “Perform penance! Perform penance”. (20)

Hearing that, he turned around and could not see the Lord; following the command of that invisible preceptor, he performed penance for a thousand divine years. (21)

Doing penance, sitting on that louts, he became a pure soul. Later, Achyuta in Samadhi in Vaikunta dharma was seen by that Brahma. (22)

In that Vaikuntha abode, the three qualities of Satva, Rajas etc. are non-existent; there is no fear of the Prakrti also. (23)

There he saw the bewitching, divine from of Vasudeva, which was of pure white color; He was shining with the brilliance of like ten thousand suns raised at the same time. (24)

He saw the Lord, adorned with a mace, lotus, conch and disc in his four arms; wearing a yellow robe, decorated with a great crown and ornaments, surrounded by praising attendants, the eight ‘Siddhi-s’ standing with folded hands, the six godly qualities serving him having taken human forms, seated with Goddess Lakshmi, on the throne,. On seeing him, Brahma was filled with joy and saluted Him and stood before Him with folded hands. (25-27)

The Lord said to him, “Oh Brahma! I am pleased with your penance. As you are dear to me, you ask for any boon you like” (28)

Thus spoken to by the Lord, Brahma understood that he is the Lord of inspiration for his penance and prayed for the boon he wanted. (29)

“O God! I bow to you! Grant me the ability to create
people and also that I should not be bound by my own creation.” (30)

Then the Lord said, “Your wish will be fulfilled. By being one with me by means of Samadhi, you may create people; while doing so, when you feel unable to perform your task, think of Me. If you do so, I shall fulfill your desires”. (31)

Having said thus, Lord Vishnu disappeared. Brahma, who was in a state of ‘Samadhi’ (communion) with the Lord, saw within himself all the worlds, which were in the past, but submerged now. (32)

Having obtained the powers of creation, he decided to create (the world). By then, the Sun arose with a divine light. (33)

Then, he established the Sun in the centre of the cosmic egg (Anda). With great devotion, penance and a pure mind, he

created the first four sages namely Sanat-kumara, Sanaka, Sanandana and Sanat-sujata. (34)

He told them - “Now you have to create people”. However, the four sages, who were steeped in great abstinence, could not grasp his words. Brahma (the creator of the world) became angry with them (at their being unable to understand them). (35)

Then, Rudra, full of the quality of Tamas, was born from the angry face of Brahma. Then controlling his anger, he created Marichi, Atri, Pulaha, Pulastya, Bhrigu, Kratu, Vasishtha, Kardama, Daksha, Angirasa known as the ‘Prajeshwaras’ (the leaders of the people). (36-37)

Then, he created righteousness (Dharma) from his heart, wickedness (Adharma) from his back, desire (Kama) from his mind, speech (Vani) from his mouth and anger (Krodha) from his eyebrows. (38)
Purity, penance, mercy and truth are the four pillars of Dharma. He created these four from his four faces. (39)

He created the Rigveda from his eastern face, Yajurveda from his Southern face, Samaveda from his western face and the Atharva Veda from his northern face. (40)

Then, Itihasas, Puranas, sacrifices, hundred Brahmanas, and Vasus, Adityas, Maruts, Visvedavatas and Sadhyas (all different types of demigods) also were created from his face. He created the Kshatriyas from arms; he created a hundred Vaisyas from his thighs, and one hundred Shudras along with their occupations, from his feet. (41-42)

He created ‘Brahmacharya Ashrama’ (the institution of learning and celibacy) from his heart, the ‘Grihastha-Ashrama’ (institution of the householder) from his buttocks, the ‘Vanaprastha-Ashrama’ (institution of the one who retires to the forest to perform penance after having undergone the pleasure of life) from his chest and the ‘Sanyasa-Ashrama’ (institution of the ascetic) from his head. (43)

He created groups of Manes from his chest region, the Asuras (demons), from the loins, death, Niruruti and hell from his anus. (44)

The Gandharvas, Charanas, Siddhas, serpents, Yakshas, Rakshasas, Nagas, clouds, electricity, oceans, rivers, trees, animals, birds, and all animate and unanimated things were created from his palms by that Brahma with the soul of Narayana. (45-46)

He was not pleased on seeing this creation. Then he remembered Sri Hari and created the sages who were im-
mersed in penance and ‘Samadhi’, Svayambhu, other Manes and men. (47)

Then being pleased, he created Heaven, Bhuvarloka and Bhuloka as suitable dwelling places for them. (48)

According to the merit attained by his previous penance, he established everyone in his proper place, creating suitable occupations for them. (49)

He created Nectar for the angels, food for men, roots and fruits for the sages, wine and meat for the Yakshas, Rakshasas, Asuras, tigers, serpents and others, Grass and other herbs for the cows and other animals for their living. (50)

He ordained a portion of oblations in sacrifices for all the angels as their vocation. Havya as the occupation of ‘Amrutas’ (shapeless beings) and the corporal manes. (51)

For the Sakti-s born of Durga, he ordained a portion of the offerings of wine and meat offered by the Daityas, Rashasas and Devils and others who worship them accordingly. (52)

Similarly, for those Sakti-s born of Savitri, he ordained the offering of cooked rice and herbs offered in sacrifices by those sages who offer them in sacrifices as ‘Vrithis’. (53)

For the Saktis born of Sri-Devi, he ordained sweet pudding, ghee, milk and other dishes offered by the Devas, Suras and humans as the ‘Vrithis’ (offering). (54)

Then, Bramha, the chief of Prajapatis addressed all the people thus – “You should worship the Devatas and Manes with oblations of Havya and Karya respectively in sacrifices. (55)

These people being pleased with your worship will fulfill your
desires fully. Those who do not worship them will go to hell. (56)

Thus, the rules of conduct for the Devatas and Manes were laid down by that Brahma whose soul was none other than the Lord Narayana. These rules are to be always followed by the people. (57)

Then, for the protection of Dharma, he appointed those who were chiefs of the groups and known as ‘Manus’. (58)

Oh, Sage! By the will of Vasudeva who is in the form of ‘Virat-purusha’, such different creations will take place in Kalpa after Kalpa (a day of Brahma or 1000 yugas, being equal to a period of 432 million years of mortals.) (59)

The different names (of objects), the Vedas, the Sastras, other works, the Dharma-s, and the office-bearers who preside over the different happening in this world, will all be the same as they were in the previous Kalpa. (60)

That Supreme-one called Vishnu, is also known as the ‘Virat-purusha’. He protects all the worlds and sees to it that the rule of law prevails. (61)

Whenever the Dharma that is protected by the Manus and others is ruined by the Asuras, who are able take any form, then Brahma and others pray to, Vasudeva will incarnate Himself on the earth. (62)

It is not possible even for expert mathematicians, to keep the count of the number of past incarnations of the Lord Vasudeva. (63)

To protect the correct Dharma, Devatas and the pious people, and to destroy their enemies who torment them, and for the
welfare of all beings, the Lord of the good incarnates. (64)

That Vasudeva will be inherently present in Prakriti (nature), humans (purusha) and in their acts. He will also maintain his presence exclusive of these, and be He being the master of all, resides in His divine mansion. (65)

O Sage! Just as the gods like Agni, Varuna and others simultaneously permeate in this world and happily reside in their own abodes, similarly Lord Vasudeva too is simultaneously present at all places. (66)

Just as he had the divine form of ‘Sat’ ‘Chit’ ‘Ananda’ before creation occurred, he continues to be afterwards too being devoid of all fallacies. (67)

Just as the ether (space) exists in all entities like air, fire water etc, and still is totally unaffected by its association with them, the Lord too resides in everything, but is unaffected by His presence within them (68)

The Lord is fit to be worshiped by all; He is the controller of everything; He is all pervading. There will be no change in Him even after the dissolution of this Universe. (69)

O Narada! Understand that the Virat-purusha who is known as the Iswara here, is free from all bondages, omniscient, and the one who has complete control over ‘Maya’. (70)

Brahma, Vishnu and Siva — all the three are his very forms, consisting prominently of the qualities of Rajas, Satva and Tamas respectively. (71)

Those souls created by Brahma and known as Deva-s, Asura-s etc, are ignorant and dependent. (72)

The bodies of the Jiva-s (individual souls) and Iswara are
known as ‘Kshetra, and have the cosmic entities of ‘Mahat’ etc. Those who know that ‘Kshetra’ are known as ‘Kshetragnya-s’. (73)

Real ‘Jnana’ is that which enables us to precisely understand the exact nature of the ‘Kshetra-s’, ‘Kshetragnya-s’, the primordial nature, the ‘Purusha’, ‘Maya’, time, power, ‘Akshara’ (the everlasting) and the Supreme Soul (74)

Thus, ends the Twenty-fourth Chapter titled “The description of the exact nature of Divine Knowledge” in the Vasudeva Mahatmya.

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Chapter - 25: The Description of Renunciation and Devotion

Sri Narayana said:

O great sage! Now I will let you know the definition of renunciation. Total disinterest in the momentary and transitional objects is the main characteristic of renunciation. (1)

Beginning from the illusory person, everything that is under the control of the Supreme Lord, perishes due to the divine power of ‘Time’ of the Lord. (2)

Those who are wise should realize the temporary nature of all things of this world as well as the eternality of the soul alone by the different means of knowledge like perception, inference and verbal testimony. (3)

The ‘Time’ that is responsible for dissolution of the world has
three forms viz. the eternal form, the natural form and the continuous form. (4)

These bodies of the souls, where the different stages like childhood, youth and old age are seen, are always in a state of transition and ultimately decay due to the passage of time. However, the transition is not noticed, since it is very subtle, just as the passage of the flame of the oil-wick lamp or the growth of a tree that bears fruit due to the passage of time. (5-6)

A lot of misery is experienced in each of these stages (like childhood, youth etc.). Similarly misery is also experienced again and again during the different states of consciousness like the waking state, the state of deep sleep and so on. (7)

All the persons experience three types of misery, viz. the Adhyatmika (misery arising due to the past deeds of the soul), Adhidaivika (misery arising out of the wrath of the demigods and other celestial beings) and Adhibhoutika (misery arising out of the wrath of the elements like floods, earthquake and so on). (8)

"Alas, my son died!" "Alas, My wife has expired"! O God! A tiger has eaten my father! Alas, my wife has been bitten by a serpent! My big house has been burnt by fire together with all the valuables in it! How do I support my family since Indra the god of the cloud has not blessed me with sufficient rains. (9-10)

Alas! All the plants that were about to be harvested have been destroyed by the snowfall! All my riches have been destroyed! My cows have been stolen by thieves! (11)

The King has punished me for a crime that I have not committed! My enemies have afflicted me incorrectly! How or whom
can I tell that my mother is a debaucherous person? (12)
I will consume poison since my wife has been abducted by my enemy! Alas, my daughter has been abducted by the pariahs! I have been fatally wounded by the enemies! I am dying by severe fever! The commandants of Yama the Lord of death are at my doorstep!” — Thus severely weeping people are seen everywhere. (13-14)
People always experience misery at all times according to their past deeds, and undergo the different stages of life like birth and death. (15)
After experiencing these miseries, they ultimately experience the unsurpassed misery of death. Even after death, they experience severe misery. (16)
Then the soul is born in the different forms of animals, reptiles, birds and so on and then again he dies and thus rotates in the cycle of births and deaths again and again. (17)
Thus, I have explained with a subtle vision, the nature of dissolution, known as ‘Pralaya’. Now, I will tell you about the ‘Naimittika Pralaya’, the dissolution that occurs due to a particular cause. (18)
The dissolution that occurs due to the nightfall of the creator is known as the ‘Naimittika Pralaya’, the dissolution that occurs due to a particular cause. (19)
O great sage! The cluster of the one thousand four ‘Yuga-s’ is equal of one day of the creator of the Universe. Similar is the extant of the night of the creator. These two put together, is known as one ‘Kalpa’. (20)
In each of the days and nights of the creator, there will be
fourteen ‘Manu-s’ (leaders of men) who protect the ‘Dharma’. (21)

Among them the first Manu is known as ‘Swayambhuva Manu’. The second one is known as ‘Swarochisha Manu’. The succeeding Manus are known as ‘Uttama, Tamasa Raivata and Chakshusa’. (22)

Then come ‘Shraddhadeva, Savarni, Bhautya, Rauchya, Brahmasavarni and Rudrasavarni’. (23)

Then come ‘Merusavarni’ and last one among the fourteen is ‘Dakshasavarni’. These are the fourteen Manus who come in a single day of the creator of the Universe. (24)

The time of existence of each of the Manus is seventy one Yuga-s, which include twelve thousand divine years. (25)
beings of the world perish. (30)

Then the earth will become like the shell of the tortoise, where there will be no water, and devoid of all beings both movable and immovable. (31)

The form of Lord Rudra known as ‘Kalagni Rudra’ (the dissolutory fire) will emanate from the mouth of the primordial serpent Adishesha, that will burn all the seven worlds that are below the earth as well as the earth itself and the two worlds that are above the earth. (32)

Then having burnt all the ten worlds the fire will approach the eleventh world known as the ‘Mahar-loka’, the destructive fire burns forth. (33)

The demigods who live in the worlds of Bhuvar-loka and the Mahar-loka, will lose their positions and unable to withstand the heat of the flames, proceed to the ‘Jano-loka’. (34)
Then all the demigods, the sages under the influence of the guna-s of Rajas, Sattva and Tamas, together with the creator will enter the stomach of the Lord Aniruddha and sleep there for a long long time. (40)

Those who have realized the divine form of the Lord and have overcome the effects of the three Guna-s will continue to worship the Lord Vasudeva, treading the path of renunciation. (41)

They will stay in the four upper worlds known as ‘Mahas’ etc, continuing to worship the Lord Vasudeva, with exalted happiness. (42)

The Supreme Lord Narayana, contemplating on His own divine form known as ‘Vasudeva’ too sleeps in a divine state at that time. (43)

At the end of the night, all the beings resting in the stomach of the Lord, will once again reappear, according to their own past deeds in the respective forms. (44)

So far, I have explained the dissolution known as ‘Naimittika-Pralaya’ where all the three worlds will be destroyed. Now, I will explain the nature of ‘Prakrita Pralaya’. (45)

I have already explained the definition of one ‘Kalpa’. Three hundred and six such Kalpa-s constitute one year of Brahma, the creator. (46)

Fifty such Kapla-s constitute one ‘Parardha’. Two such ‘Parardha-s’ known as ‘Paraa’, constitute the life of Brahma. After this period of ‘Paraa’ is completed, there will be a great destruction. (47)

Then the Lord will Himself take the form Samhara-Rudra that
Then, there will be a severe drought for one hundred years as before. Then the destructive fire known as ‘Samkarshana’ will burn the Cosmic egg. (49)

Then the destructive clouds will arise, that shower fiery rains, the rain drops resembling sharp pestles, for one hundred years. All the entities like ‘Mahat’ etc. will perish due to the wishes of the Lord Vasudeva. (50-51)

The waters will inhume the quality of the earth viz. the odour. Then the earth that is devoid of odour will prepare for dissolution. Then the entity of ‘tejas’ will inhume the quality of the water viz. the juice. Then the water that is devoid of juice will prepare for dissolution. Then the entity of ‘Vayu’ will inhume the quality of the ‘Tejas’ viz. the form. Then the ‘Tejas’ that is devoid of form will prepare for dissolution. Then the entity of ‘Akasha’ will inhume the quality of the ‘Vayu’ viz. the sense of touch. Then the ‘Vayu’ that is devoid of the sense of touch will prepare for dissolution. Then the Vayu dissolves and the Akasha will stand without any boundaries. (52-54)

Then the quality of ‘sound’ disappears and then the ‘Akasha’ dissolves. Then the sense organs in the Taijasa-Ahankara’. Then the sense organ ‘manas’ dissolves into the Satvika-Ahankara’. All those entities dissolve into those entities from which they have emerged respectively. (55-56)

The three types of ‘Ahankara’ dissolves in the entity of ‘Mahat’. That ‘Mahat’ dissolves into the ‘Pradhana’ and that Pradhana dissolves into the ‘Purusha’ and the ‘Purusha’ dissolves into the ‘Mula-Prakruthi’. (57)
This process is known as the ‘Prakurthika-Pralaya’. In this process, all the lords of the living beings, disappear into Mula-Prakruthi’ by the will of the Supreme Lord Sri Hari. (58)

O sage Narada! When the Maya, Purusha and Time dissolve into the Ultimate Tejas, and nothing except the Supreme Lord exist, such a thing is known as ‘Atyantika Pralaya’. (59)

Thus, by the power of time of the Lord, there are four times of Pralaya. Detachment towards all worldly objects and knowledge of the evanescence of these objects is known as ‘Vairagya’. (60)

One should understand that all other deities other than Vasudeva are all under the influence of Time and Maya. He should not have devotion unto those deities. He should be totally devoted only to Lord Vasudeva and serve Him only. That is known as true ‘Bhakti’. (61)

Listening to His pastimes, chanting His names, remembering Him, serving His divine feet, worshipping Him, prostrating before Him, surrendering to Him, being friendly towards Him, offering himself to Him – These are the nine ways in which one should worship the Lord with great dedication. One who does so with an unflinching mind in known as the model devotee. (62-63)

This path of devotion is inclusive of three aspects. This is also known as “Ekantika Dharma as well as ‘Bhagavata Dharma’. (64)

One will be able to tread this path only by the association of the Lord Himself or by the association of His exclusive devotees. There is no other way to follow this path of ‘Ekantika Dharma’. (65)
There is no other path that is similar to this for those who want to attain emancipation. This path is capable of destroying all evils. (66)

One should engage in the ‘Kriya-Yoga’ to attain proficiency in the ‘Ekantha-Dharma’. Following this path, he will attain ‘Naishkarmya’, wherein he will go beyond the effects of his past deeds. (67)

O Great sage! I have described to you, the secret entity of the path of renunciation, that is secretly told in the Vedas and Puranas. Listening to this rids us of the ocean of sin. You have to store this great knowledge in your mind, with great concentration and a pure mind. (68)

There is no one who is as pious as Vasudeva! There is no entity that is as auspicious as Lord Vasudeva! There is no deity that is beyond Lord Vasudeva! There is no entity that is as desirable as Lord Vasudeva! (69)

A person who chants the name of this Supreme Lord even one, even unintentionally, will go beyond this Samsara (cycle of births and deaths), and will be emancipated. Worship this great exalted Lord! (70)

End of the Twenty-fifth Chapter titled “The Description of Renunciation and Devotion” of the Vasudeva Mahatmya”.

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Chapter - 26: Description of the Kriya-Yoga  
(Procedure of Worship)

Skanda said:

Having listened to the description of the Dharma to be followed by an ardent devotee from the Lord, Narada was filled with great joy; he once again asked him thus. (1)

Narada said:

“Oh Lord! You have explained the Dharma to be followed by an ardent devotee very well. My mind is filled with great joy by listening to it. (2)

O God! I wish to listen to the procedure of Kriya Yoga to accomplish this Dharma that is agreeable to you.” (3)

Sri Narayana said:

“Narada! the method of worshipping Vasudeva is known as Kriya Yoga. It has been described in many ways in the Vedas and Tantras. (4)

Owing to different tastes of the devotees and different types of idols of Lord Vasudeva, this Kriya Yoga has been described in different ways. (5)

There will be no end if all those are to be explained separately. Hence, I will concisely tell you that method of worship, which increases devotion (towards the Lord). (6)

All those belonging to four classes, four stages of life and the ladies of those classes who have received initiation into the Vaishnava faith are qualified to perform this Yoga. (7)
The initiated Brahmans should perform the worship with the original texts as well as mantras of the Vedas, Tantra and Puranas. Ladies and Shudras should perform the worship with the ‘Mula’ mantra, i.e. the six-letter mantra of Sri Krishna. (8)

All should perform the worship of Lord Vasudeva with inner purity in accordance with their respective Dharmas. (9)

He should receive the Vaishnava initiation from a preceptor, who is the ocean of kindness, born as a Brahman, and is an ardent devotee of the Lord. (10)

A person, though full of knowledge and devotion, should never be accepted as preceptor if he bereft of his Dharma, and is attracted to women. (11)

Initiation from a preceptor attracted to women can never confer knowledge and devotion, to the spiritual aspirant, just as a young woman cannot beget a child from association with a eunuch. (12)

Hence, after getting initiation from a good preceptor one has to wear a garland of Tulasi beads, Oordhwapundra (tilak that is vertical) made of ‘Gopi Chandana’ on his forehead and other parts. (13)

The devotee interested in the worship of Vishnu should begin only after listening to and understanding the correct system as mentioned in Agama-texts from the preceptor alone. (14)

The devotee should wake up early in the morning or ‘Brahmi-muhurta’ (approximately at 4.30 a.m.) and meditate for half a ‘muhurta’ (24 minutes) on Lord Keshava, the destroyer of troubles. (15)
After singing His names and those of His devotees, he should brush his teeth and perform the purificatory processes to purify his own body. (16)

First, he must bathe to clean his body and then bathe with mantras to cleanse his inner being. Taking clean mud and other purificatory items, he should perform ‘tarpana’ (propitiation), a part of bathing. (17)

After wearing two clean-washed clothes, he should sit in a clean seat, wear ‘Oordhwapundra’ etc. and then do the ‘Sandhyavandana’ (prayer performed during twilight), ‘Homa’ (oblations) and meditation. (18)

Then offerings such as clothes, sandal, flowers and food that are to be offered to God are to be procured. While doing so, care has to be taken to ensure that meat, wine and other unclean things do not associate these. (19)

These (offerings such as clothes, sandal, flowers and food) should not have been offered before either to the Devatas, Manes and others; one should not smell them before offering them to the Lord; they should not be polluted by insects and should be devoid of hairs and other objects. (20)

Keeping all these articles of worship on the right side, a lamp should be lighted either with oil or ghee. (21)

Then, the worshipper must sit near the Sanctum sanctorum of Lord Vasudeva’s icon, on a seat made of Silk or wool, but bereft of wood. (22)

O Sage! The icon of the Lord may be made of stone, metallic elements, wood, or gems. It may be white, red, yellow or black hued. (23)
Sri Krishna’s image should have two or four arms; (in the two-armed icon) the two-arms should hold the flute. (24)

Otherwise, (In the two-armed icon), the right hand of that image should sport the disc, the left hand the conch. If it is not so, the right should hold a lotus and left hand should display the ‘abhaya’ pose (showing the full face of the hand pointing upwards). (25)

O Sage! (In the two-armed icon), beginning with the lower right hand, the mace, lotus, conch and disc should held in that order. (26)

The image of Radha, the queen of Raasa, should be placed to the left of Lord Sri Hari irrespective of the type of idol of Lord Hari being four-armed or two-armed. If these two types of images are made of a single piece, in such a way that they have all parts proportionately with auspicious features, the worshippers will obtain fulfillment. (27-28)

Lakshmi in the presence of Vasudeva should be two armed; the image should be made to hold the lotus in the hands and should shine forth with dress and ornaments. (29)

Similarly, like Lakshmi, Radhika too, should have two arms, holding lotus or a flower garland in her hands, and should sport a fine, sweet smile. (30)

There are two kinds of images of Sri Hari — the immovable and the movable; of these, one should not perform the invocation and farewell procedures with regard to the immovable image. (31)

The invocation and farewell procedures should not be observed even with regard to the attendant Devatas of that idol.
No particular direction is fixed to worship that image. The worshipper should sit, facing the image, while worshipping.(32)

The same rule applies to ‘Salagrama’ (the Lord in the form of holy, black-predominantly-round stones) also. Except in these above-mentioned cases, the worshippers can observe the rituals connected with the invocation and farewell procedures rituals to the movable images. (33)

Pouring water or smearing should not at all be done to the icon of the Lord that is made of wood. Simply ‘Marjana’ (symbolic application of water, sandal paste etc.) has to be observed. (34)

As far as worshipping the moveable image of Sri Hari, one must sit facing north, east or facing the Lord Himself, with the articles of worship procured according to one’s ability. (35)

The Lord who is the Universal soul will be pleased even with simple water that is offered with earnestness and pure devotion. There is no need to say that offering other things that are collected for the same purpose too will please Him. (36)

Sri Hari will not accept with pleasure, even gems, gold and other ornamental things, the four kinds of cooked rice offered by a person who is bereft of earnestness and pure devotion. (37)

Therefore, O Sage! The devotee should everyday worship Sri Krishna, who fulfills all desires, with pure devotion for the attainment of prosperity. (38)
Chapter - 27: Description of the Poojamandala procedure

Sri Narayana said:

“A seat with four legs should be placed on the ground which has been clean-swept, which is devoid of impurities and then purified and made shining with different kinds of decorations.  

The worshipper should sit facing the east. Legs of his seat, on the four corners should have carvings of a lion. Dharma and should be invoked in the four legs. In the southeastern corner, a white coloured image of Dharma should be established; in the southwestern corner, a red coloured image of ‘Gyana’ should be established; in the northwestern corner, the yellow hued image of ‘Vairagya’ should be established and in the northeastern corner, the sky hued image of the god of wealth should be established. (2-3)
‘Gyana Shakti’ and Kriya Shakti, wearing yellow dresses, shining with the hue of the rising sun should be established in the South. (8)

‘Yogaa’ and ‘Prahavyaa Saktis’ should be established in the west, both of them sky-blue coloured, wearing red coloured dresses. They should be playing on the flute separately. (9)

Then, ‘Satyaa’ and ‘Ishaana Saktis’ should be established in the north, they should be of a strong yellow colour; they should wear blue-coloured clothes, and should be playing the instrument ‘Parivaadini’. (10)

A single Shakti with folded hands called ‘Anugraha’ should be established on the roll; all these should be having two arms and finely decorated. (11)

From a white cloth, the (model of) ‘Sveta Island’ has to be constructed. A beautiful lotus, having eight petals, shining brilliantly with a Karnika (its pericarp) has to be made in its centre. (12)

Outside the area of the lotus, leaving one-twelfth of its space, the centre is to be divided equally and form three circles. (13)

Of these, the first circle is the place of ‘Karnika’, the central one is the place of ‘Kesaras’, the third is the place of the petals and the outward portion should be occupied by the edges of the petal. (14)

Around this, a city with four exterior entrances has to be constructed with ‘red-colored Kumkum’ and ‘yellow-colored Kumkum’, and decorated with other suitable things. (15)

With grains of rice of different colours, the lotus and other surrounding parts are to be decorated; the ‘Karnika’ of the lotus should be decorated with golden colour. (16)
O Sage! The worshipper has to construct coloured leaves around its eight directions with golden coloured leaves. (17)

The eastern tower should be made of read colour, the southern one with blue, western one with yellow and the northern one with the colour of crystal. (18)

In between, the City and lotuses, different flowers have to be made and then Sri Krishna and to his left Radhika are to be seated. (19)

Behind the image of Radha Krishna, Lord Sankarshana, who is white-hued, dressed in blue coloured clothes, having four arms and holding an umbrella should to be established. (20)

To the right of that God, Pradyumna, who is blue-hued like the cloud, wearing a Yellow silk cloth, having four arms, holding a hand fan, is to be established. (21)

To the left of Hari, Aniruddha, who is blue hued like the gem ‘Indraneela’ (bluish-diamond), wearing a red coloured dress and holding a hand fan should be established. (22)

These three images should be decorated with many ornaments like an incomparable gem-studded crown, and should look youthful and attractive. (23)

Afterwards, the incarnations of Lord Sri Hari have to be established in all the eight ‘Kesaras’ of the lotus, two in each. Thus, it will be sixteen incarnations in the eight petals. (24)

At the end of the eastern ‘Kesara’, Vamana and Buddha
should be established. These two will be celibates, youthful and blue hued. They should wear white clothes and the sacred thread on their bodies, hold a blooming lotus in the right hand and the left hand should show the gesture of ‘Abhaya’ (fearlessness); they should have a look of serenity. (25-26)

Then, in the southeastern corner, Kalki and Parasurama should be kept, Kalki holding a sword and Parasurama holding a battle-axe. Both of them should be white-hued, red-eyed have matted hair, wear white cloths and sacred thread, and have the gesture of having given up the great instinct of anger. They should be constructed in this manner. (27-28)

In the south, Hayagriva and Varaha are to be established. Hayagriva, with four arms, should have a human body and the face of a horse. (29)

He should hold the conch etc. in his four hands; He should be of a golden hue and wear white clothes; Varaha should have a human body with four arms and the face of a boar. (30)

He should hold the conch, disc, mace and lotus in his four hands, wearing Pitambara (yellow robes), and be of the hue of honey; He may also have only two arms. (31)

In the southwestern corner, Matsya and Kurma are to be established; they have the body of the fish and the tortoise below the waist, and a human form above the waist. (32)

They should be constructed with a beautiful body of sky-blue hue, wearing ornaments and holding the conch in the left hand and mace in the right hand. (33)

On the west, Dhanvantari and Narasimha should be established; Dhanvantari should be adorned with white clothes, be white hued and should holds the vessel of nectar in his hands. (34)
Nrisimha should have the face of a lion with a mane and a human body. The colour of the body should resemble the blue water lily; He should holds a mace and disc in his two hands. (35)

In the northwest petal, Hamsa and Dattatraya having matted hair, the dress of a mendicant, shining white, holding the staff and water pot in their hands, have to be established. (36)

In the North, Vyasa and Ganapati are to be placed; Vyasa should be black-hued with large eyes, wearing a white dress, have two arms holding the Vedas, and have dull-yellow matted hair, Pavitra (a ring of ‘Kusha’ grass worn on the fourth finger on certain religious occasions) and sacred thread. (37-38)

Ganapati should be elephant-faced having a single tusk, red-hued, wearing blood coloured clothes, having a serpent as his sacred thread, a trunk, with a huge belly, and the four arms holding shackles, hook and having the ‘varada-mudra’ (gesture) and a beautiful book and pen respectively. (39-40)

Then the worshipper has to place in the southeast, Kapila and the eternally celibate sage Sanatkumara. (41)

Kapila has to be made having a white body, wearing pleasingly white clothes, holding a lotus and Varada (gesture granting boons) in his hands and a peaceful face. (42)

The worshipper has to make sage Sanatkumara having a brilliant naked body of a person aged five years, having little matter hair. (43)

Thus, the worshipper should place the Devatas in the petals
of the lotus and then place the attendants in the centres of the eight petals. (44)

First Viswaksena and Garuda should be placed in the centre of the eastern petal; then in the clockwise direction, the following have to be placed in order - Prabala, Bala, Kumuda, Kumudaksha, Sunanda, Nanda, Srutadeva, Jayanta, Vijaya, Jaya, then Prachanda, Chanda, Pushpadanta, Satvata - these to be placed in groups of two in the eight places. (45-47)

All these should have four arms, holding the conch, disc, mace and lotus, wearing blue crowns and yellow coloured clothes and decorated with ornaments. (48)

In the place below the centre of all the eight petals, the ‘Siddhi-devata-s’ (representing the eight types of divine accomplishments) viz. Anima, Laghima, Praapti, Praakaamya, Mahima, Ishitva, Vashitva, Kaamaavasaayita, who are experts in playing different auspicious musical instruments should be established in order. (49-50)

These should have bodies of brilliant golden hue, decorated with all ornaments, holding flute, lute and other musical instruments in their hands and wearing clothes of different colours. Then in the edges of the eight petals, the Vedas, Shastras are to be placed; The Vedas should be placed in the principal directions of the east, south, north and west and the Shastras in the intervening directions. (51-52)

In the east the Murthy (icon) representing the Rigveda is to be placed, wearing a garland of beads, white hued, short and pot bellied with a calm face, having eyes like the lotus and dressed in white clothes. (53)
In the south, the Murthy (icon) representing the Yajur-Veda is to be placed having a medium body, lean stomach, with red-eyes, thick neck, yellow hued, dressed in red clothes, holding a garland of beads in the left hand, and a diamond in the right hand. In the west, the Murthy (icon) representing the Sama-Veda is to be placed having a tall countenance, shining like the sun, holding a garland of beads in the right hand and a conch in the left hand, large-eyed, wearing gold hued clothes and engaged in singing. (54-56)

In the north, the Murthy (icon) representing the Atharva-Veda is to be placed, with a white hued body, wearing blue dress, holding a garland of beads in the left hand, ‘Khatvanga’ (an instrument) in the right hand and shining red like fire, with copper hued eyes and controlling deluge. (57)

In the southeastern corner, the Murthy (icon) representing the Dharma Shastra is to be placed. It should be white hued, wearing plenty garlands made of pearls on the arms and shining. (58)

In the southwestern corner, the Murthy (icon) representing the Sankhya-Shastra is to be placed; he should be white hued, with long hair and nails, holding a garland of beads and a staff in his hands and having a big tummy. (59)

Then, in the northwestern corner, the Murthy (icon) representing the Yoga Shastra is to be placed; he should have a golden hue, with a lean stomach, keeping his hands on the thigh and fixing his sight on the tip of his nose. (60)

In the northeastern corner, the Murthy (icon) representing the Pancha-ratra Shastra is to be placed; he should be white-hued, wearing the ‘Vanamala’ (garland made of forest flowers), holding a garland of beads and plough in his hands. (61)
All these four should be made wearing thin and strong white clothes; the eyes should be wide like the lotus. (62)

Great sages with their wives, reciting the Vedas should be placed below the edges of the petals in order from the east, south-east etc. (63)

Marichi with Kala, Atri with Anasuya, Angiras with Sraddha, Pulastya with Havirbhu, Pulaha with Gati, Kratu with Kriya, Bhrigu with Khyati, Vasishta with Arundati - these sages should be placed in order. (64-65)

All these should have two arms, matted locks, beards and moustache; they should be lean and holding a staff and water pot; they should be portrayed as ascetics. (66)

Outside the lotus in all the directions and intervening directions, Indra and other guardians of eight directions with their vehicles should be established in their respective directions. (67)

In the east, Indra sitting on his elephant ‘Iravata’, having four arms holding the weapon ‘Vajra’, a hook, lotus, and having the ‘Varada-mudra’, brilliant like the gold, wearing a beautiful ‘kausumbha’ dress, shining with various ornaments should be placed; the edges of his eyes should be red; he should have big eyes and have all the good bodily features. (68-69)

In the south east corner the God of fire, Agni should be placed; he should be copper hued, four armed holding the spear, Sakti, Sruk and Sruva respectively, sitting in a chariot drawn by four parrots with Vayu as Charioteer, having three eyes, wearing smoke coloured clothes, having a faded red-hued beard,
moustache and matted hair. (70-71)

In the south, Yama the god of death should be placed. He should have a dark blue-hue, wearing golden clothes, four arms holding a staff, sword, pickaxe, and a cord respectively, decorated with a variety of ornaments and sitting on a domineering male buffalo. (72)

In the southwest corner, Nairuta is to be established; he should have roused hair, two arms holding the sword and a cord, and wide-eyes, sitting on a human; he should have a green moustache, smoke-hue, wearing black clothes, decorated with black clothes, many gold hued flowers; Non-Vaishnavas are frightened by his sight. (73-74)

Then in the west, Varuna the god of water, should be placed.

He should have a body shining like the gem ‘Indra-neela’; he should be wearing a white dress, be four-armed holding a cord in two hands and a gem-vessel and conch in the other two hands and decorated with pearl garlands. (75-76)

In the northwestern direction, Vayu should be placed. He should be of a green hue, with two arms, wearing dark blue clothes, sitting on a rock, united hair, holding a flag and open-mouthed. (77)

In the north, Kubera should be placed. He should be of a golden hue, four-armed, holding a mace, ‘Sakti’ (a weapon), trident and gem vessel in his hands, wearing blue clothes, having a beard and moustache, sitting in a palanquin, with a fading red left eye, wearing several ornaments. (78-79)

Then, in the northeastern direction, Maharudra (Lord Shiva) who is Ardhanariswara (halfman and halfwoman) is to be placed. The left part of that image should be Goddess Parvati and the right part is to be Lord Sankara have to be placed. (80)
Lord Ardhanarishvara should have matted locks decorated with the moon, and the other half with Goddess Uma having ‘tilaka’ and divided hair (81)

Half the portion should be covered with ‘Bhasma’ (sacred ash), the other half with ‘Kumkum’. In one-half the sacred thread will shine forth, the other half will shine with a garland. (82)

On the left half, a round breast covered with a blouse has to be made. The waist should have a golden belt and legs with golden anklets, and is to be decorated with (ornaments) bracelets; they should be adorned with gem rings holding a ‘trisul’ (trident) and a garland of beads. (83-84)

On the right half, a serpent waist-string has to be made; the elephant skin is to be used as the dress; the two hands should have serpent bracelets and hold a mirror and the ‘Utpala’ flower (blue water lily). (85)

Thus decorated, Mahadeva has to be placed sitting on a bullock. Thus, the worshipper should establish the guardians of eight directions. (86)

Then, the worshipper should place outside the City, eight planets standing in their respective chariots. (87)

In the east, the Sun is to be established. He should be wearing a yellow dress, with a red-hued ‘Sindhura’-like body, the two arms holding a lotus and sitting in his chariot. (88)

His very bright chariot will have only one wheel with 12 spokes; on the left are yoked seven green-hued horses. (89)

In the southwestern corner, Bhrigu (Sukra) has to be placed. He is of white hue, wears white clothes, holding a staff and water-pot in his two hands; he is having tender looks, sitting
in a golden chariot yoked to ten horses of various colors. (90)

In the south, the Mangala (also known as ‘Bhouma’ or Mars) is to be placed. He should be blood coloured, wearing blood-hued clothes, and four armed holding a mace, Sakti, Trisul and having a ‘Varada Mudra’. He should have a golden chariot yoked to crimson-hued eight horses. (91)

In the southwestern corner, Rahu is to be placed. He should have blue clothes, be four armed, have a terrible face, the form of Tamas (darkness), and should hold a shield, sword, Shakti and spike in his hands; Rahu should be made sitting in an iron chariot drawn by eight bee-coloured horses. (92)

In the west soul, Shanaishcara the son of Surya (also known as Saturn) is to be placed. He should have a body shining like the gem ‘Indra-neela’. Two-armed, he holds a bow and a ‘Trisul’. Thick-eyed and dressed in black clothes,

he sits in a black iron chariot drawn by eight variegated coloured horses. (93)

In the northwestern corner, Chandra (moon) with a white dress, white-hued, holding a mace in his hand, two armed, sitting in a chariot has to be placed. His chariot, which is made of water, should have three wheels with hundred spokes each; they should be yoked on two sides by ten horses each that resemble the ‘Kunda’ flowers. (94-95)

In the north, Budha with two arms, sporting the gestures of Abhaya and Varada, having the hue of light red, wearing green clothes, sitting in a golden chariot yoked to turmeric-hued eight horses is to be placed. (96)

In the northeastern corner, Guru, with a golden hue, wearing a white dress, two armed, holding a staff and water vessel,
having lotus-like eyes, sitting in a very fine golden chariot, yoked to slightly white-hued eight horses is to be established. Thus, the worshipper should place all the subsidiary Devatas in different places of the Lotus that represent the City. (97-98)

The images of the members of the retinue of Lord Vasudeva should be grand. If that is not possible, beetle nuts or flowers and ‘akshata’ (rice mixed with turmeric) and other things should be kept to represent them. (99)

Thus, ends the Twenty-seventh Chapter titled “Procedure of preparing the Pooja-Mandala” in Sri Vasudeva Mahatmya in the second Vaishnava Khanda

Chapter 28: Description of the method of meditation on the form of Sri Radha-Krishna

Sri Narayana said:

After performing ablutions like ‘Aachamana’ (sipping of the water) and ‘Pranayama’ (breath-control), one should, with a pure and calm mind, prostrate to personal and other deities and pronounce the region and time (according to the procedure). (1)

Then he should perform the ‘Sankalpa’ (mental resolution) by saying, “I worship Vasudeva for the attainment of inner absolute devotion” and then perform the Nyasa Vidhi (the ritual of assigning different parts of the body to different form of the Lord). (2)

It should be understood that the mantra having twelve syl-
lables viz. the ‘Gayatri’ related to Vishnu, the mantra having eight syllables viz. the ‘Ashtakshara’ related to Lord Narayana and mantra having six syllables viz. the ‘Shadakshara’ related to Lord Vishnu are the sacred ones to be used in the ritual of Nyasa. (3)

These are the prescribed mantras for the Brahmanas; for others, the Vasudeva Ashtakshara (eight syllables), Hari panchakshara (five syllables), Keshava Shadakshara (six syllables) - these three mantras are respectively approved for the performance of the rituals of Nyasa and Homa (fire ritual). (4)

Just as on the parts of our body, the ritual of Nyasa should be observed on the different parts of the image of Lord Vishnu with these mantras. Then ‘archana’ (worship) should be done and later, the image of the Lord should be wiped with a cloth. (5)

Keeping the vessel to his left, invoking teerthas (sacred waters like the Ganga etc.) in it, sandal-paste, flowers etc should be offered into vessel. (6)

He should sprinkling that water on the articles of worship, on himself and worshipping the conch and the bell, the ritual of ‘Bhuta-shuddhi’ (purification of the elements like earth, water, fire, air and ether that surround us) should be purified. (7)

One should mentally imagine that his sinful body is burnt by the inner fire and air and is thus purified (so that it is ready to worship the Lord). Sitting steadily, he should then think that his pure soul is merged with the Supreme Brahman. (8)

Then, thinking himself to be of the form of ‘Akshara Brahma’, removing all mental anxieties, performing pranayama (breath-control) he should meditate on Lord Radha-Krishna as dwelling in the heart. (9)

Having meditated on the naval-lotus, which is like that of the plantain flower facing downwards and arresting the downward air (in our body), it should be merged with the ‘Prana Vayu’, the breath that moves upwards (in our body). (10)
Bringing that air (the breath of our body that moves upwards) through the symbolic lotus stalk of the heart, it is to be attracted by it upwards. Then with an intense sound, it reaches the heart. There it will blossom and shine. (11)

Then one has to meditate upon Sri Radha-Krishna who is brighter than the heart-lotus, is fittest to be seen, and is calmness personified. (12)

One has to meditate upon Radhika-pati, who is either in the sitting or standing posture; He is of the form of pure intelligence, and is as beautiful as crores of Manmatha-s (cupid); He is eternally young; (13)

That Lord of Radha has suitable and completely divine, beautiful physical features; He is shining like the Moon of the autumn and is having two bewitching two long arms. (14)
He is wearing different kinds of flower garlands giving out sweet scents; He is also wearing golden sacred thread, and bracelets and other ornaments on his wrists, shining like the just-blooming red lotus. (19)

Wearing many sparkling rings having great gems on his fingers with delicate knots, He is playing on the flute, the sound of which is enchanting to all. (20)

He has high shoulders that are shining with armlets around his them and wears ‘Vanamala-s’ (garlands having the fragrant forest-flowers) full of musical sounds and attracting gathering humming bees. (21)

He wears around his conch-like neck, a shining neck-ornament called ‘Kaustubha’; He has auspicious cheeks and pleasing lips that are red like the cherry fruit. (22)

With a disarming smile, face glittering like the full moon, nose shaped like the ‘gingelly’ flowers that are worth seeing. (23)

He wears on his proportionate ears, shining Kundalas (ear-ornaments) of the shape of Makara (crocodile); the top of the ears are decorated with clusters of coloured flowers. (24)

He has five delicate dentures emanating lustre like the moonlight, cheeks, and eyes wide like the edges of red-hued lotus. (25)

He has a beautiful big high face, eyebrows like the rainbow, soft, black, delicate and attractive curly hair. He wears a crown embedded with different kinds of priceless gems; His steady looks, full of love are pleasing even as he looks at His devotee. Thus meditating on that Sri Krishna, one has to meditate on Radha who is on His left. She has two arms, all parts of her body are of golden hue and white, she wears the pure ‘Kausumbha’ dress. (26-28)
On the mutually complementing ears, she wears sparkling gemmed ornaments; she has a parrot-like nose; she is youthful; she has eyes like the young deer and has robust solid breasts. (29)

She has a small waist decorated with a gemmed-belt; she is wearing many beautiful ornaments and emits a child-like smile from her face that is blooming like the lotus. (30)

Her lands are displaying gemmed ring; she is wearing armlets, bracelets and other ornaments; her lotus feet are adorned with rings of ‘Hamsaka’, ‘Manjira’ emanating sweet tinkling sounds. Wears a shining ‘tilaka’ made with saffron on her broad forehead, she has cherry-red lips, beautiful cheeks, and her plaint is adorned with the ‘Malati’ flower. After meditating on that Radhika who is holding a lotus in her hand and looking at the Lord with love, and shining with beauty, Sri Krishna is to be worshipped along with her. (31-33)

Thus, ends the Twenty-eighth Chapter titled “Description of the method of meditation the form of Sri Radha Krishna” of the Sri Vasudeva Mahatmya

* * *
Chapter - 29: Description of the worship of Sri Vasudeva

Sri Narayana said:

Thereafter, worshipping Sri Radha-Krishna with different kinds of services and invoking the Lord in the image, the worshipper should establish the Lord with the gesture known as ‘Sthapana Mudra’. (1)

Then the demigods belonging to the retinue of the Lord should be invoked with their respective mantras and names and they should be installed separately. (2)

The Bell and other instruments or the cymbals should be sounded. Then as though serving one just getting up from sleep, the Lord should be served with brushing the teeth. (3)

Water with ‘Shyamaka’, ‘Vishnukranta’ and ‘Durva’ grass, and lotuses should be offered to the Lord for washing His feet. Then, one should offer the ‘Arghya’ (water to wash the hands) and later water should be offered for ‘Achamana’ ablution (water to wash the face / mouth). (4)

Then sandal, unbroken rice, flowers, the upper portion of ‘Darbha’ grass, sesame, mustard, wheat and ‘Durva’ grass and other items are to be put into the ‘Arghya’ vessel filled with water. (5)

Then water scented with ‘Jati-phala’, clove, cardamom, elaichi, ‘Kankola’ (Asoka) and ‘Usheera’ is to be offered for ‘Achamana’ ablution. Then, Lord Hari should be given the ritual bath. (6)

First, he should be bathed with sweet, scented flower oil, and then with a paste of sweet scented items, He should be washed. Milk, curds, ghee, honey and sugar - with these ‘Pancha-amrita’ (five items) Lord Sri Hari is to be separately bathed, without haste, chanting respective mantras. (7-8)
After bathing with pure, scented hot water, the Lord is to be worshipped on the bathing seat, in a manner that is comfortable to the Lord. (9)

Then the worshipping Brahmin should removing the used flow- ers etc. and dispose it off to the northern direction; he should then bathe the Lord, chanting the Sri Sukta and Purusha-suktas. (10)

Ladies who are initiated and Shudras too can perform the ritual bathing of the Lord chanting the 108 or 1008 names of Sri Hari. (11)

Then the image of Sri Hari should be wiped with a cloth and dressed with priceless dresses with love. The images of Radha and others should also be worshipped according to one’s ability. (12)

Then, a delicate, pure, auspicious upper cloth should be offered to Lord Sri Hari and his retinue. The Lord should then be decorated with gold, gems and other ornaments. The Lord should be adorned with a sacred thread that is clean, white and auspicious. (13)

According to the seasons and the weather, the Lord should be adorned in the prescribed places with ‘tilakas’ made of saffron and sandal. (14)

Radhika should also be suitably decorated and dressed and her ‘tilaka’ should be constructed with ‘Kumkum’ and ‘akshata’ (coloured rice). (15)

Thereafter, after showing the mirror to the Lord, and decorating Him with flowers, garland, crown etc, the Lord should be worshipped with clusters of flowers and ‘Tulasi’ leaves. (16)

Chanting the names of Vishnu one after another by adding the
word ‘namah’ at the end of each name, the Lord should be worshipped with ‘Tulasi’ leaves or flowers. (17)

Thereafter, with auspicious sweet scented powders he should be worshipped. The ‘Dasanga’ or ‘Amrita’ form of ‘Dhoopa’ (incense) should be used for worship. (18)

Two lamps lighted with two wicks soaked in ghee should be kept. Then according to one’s capacity, pure food should be offered. (19)

Sweetmeats, rice boiled in milk, a small round cake with sugared spices, ‘Sashkuli’ a kind of baked cake, ‘laddu’, ‘puri’, ‘holige’ - a round sweet cake, boiled green gram with sugar etc, seasoned condiments, curds and ghee should be kept on a bench with four legs and then offered to the Lord. (20)

Then the Lord should be served with food, full of love; intermittently pure sweet water is to be offered. After half a

‘muhurta’ (about half an hour), water should be offered to the Lord for washing the hand. (21)

After the food is offered to the Lord, the remaining items should be offered to Vishvakshena and other ‘Devatas’ who are seated separately. Afterwards that place should be swept clean. (22)

Thereafter, beetle-nut, clove, and cardamom, ‘Jaya-phala-mixed- Thamboolam’ (beetle leaf and areca nut) are to be offered to Lord Hari to make His mouth sweet scenting. (23)

After offering coconut and other fruits, ‘dakshina’ (monetary offering) according to one’s own capacity, one should worship the Lord with songs and the playing of musical instruments. Later the final waving of ‘Arati’ should be done. (24)

Offering flowers with folded hands, prayers are to be offered to Him, chanting his stotras (verses composed in His praise). Then ‘Nama Sankirtan’ (chanting of His divine names) is to be done by singing and dancing. (25)
After doing this for a while (48 minutes) and going round the Lord (circumambulating), the worshipper should prostrate at his feet on the right side of the Lord. (26)

Men should prostrate with eight or five parts of the body touching the ground, woman should prostrate with only five parts of the body touching the ground. Oh, Sage! They should not do it in any other manner. (27)

When one prostrates to the Lord with two feet, two hands, two elbows, chest, head, sight, words and mind - it is known as ‘Ashtanga’ Prostration. (28)

When one prostrates to the Lord with hands, mind, head, words and sight - it is known as ‘Panchanga’ Prostration. While worshipping, these two are the best methods of prostrations. (29)

“Oh, Lord! I am afraid of ‘Samsara’; I have come to You alone and seek refuge in You! Protect me!” - praying thus,
method with devotion becomes the God’s attendant. (34)

Such a worshipper boards the brilliantly shining the divine vehicle (plane) that is desired by the Devatas also, and with his divine body goes to Sri Hari’s dwelling called Goloka. (35)

Even a person who worships the Lord daily, even for the sake of worldly desires also gets his desires of ‘Dharma’, ‘Artha’, ‘Kama’ and ‘Moksha’ fulfilled. (36)

One who is unable to worship the Lord together with Radha according to this procedure, should worship Hari alone with devotion, with things that are available to him. (37)

Brahmanas with the twelve-syllable mantra, others with ‘Nama-mantra’ should worship Sri Radha-Krishna. Devotion alone unto the Lord will be fruitful. (38)

On the eleventh day of the fortnight and on Sri Hari’s birthday and other days too, all the Vaishnavas should do perform the special worship according to their capacity. (39)

Whoever establishes the Lord in a shrine even if it is built by another person, will be freed from all his sins and will get the sovereignty of an empire. (40)

A wealthy person, who builds a strong and beautiful temple for Sri Hari, will become the King of the three worlds without troubles. (41)

Whoever gives endowments and increases the flood of worship, will certainly get great happiness after attaining the ‘Vishnu Loka’ (world of Lord Vishnu). (42)

Whoever establishes the Lord, or builds a temple, or arranges for worship of the Lord - gets wealth that is equal to the wealth of Vasudeva. This is certain. (43)
Whoever steals the endowments given by him or others to Sri Hari will suffer immensely in Naraka for a period of one ‘Kalpa’. (44)

The performer, one who coaxes the performer to perform that deed, the person who helps the performer in performing that deed as well as the person who commends the performer for having performed that deed – all these four persons will be equal recipients of the respective fruits that accrue by performing good or bad deeds. (45)

Oh Narada! Thus, I have described the Kriya-Yoga (practical procedure) (of offering worship to the Lord) to you. By performing this with singular devotion, the person will attain fulfillment. (46)

If a person outwardly worships Sri Hari, but thinks about other things in his mind while doing so, will not get any of the aforesaid fruits even if he uses all the paraphernalia. (47)

A person desiring salvation should control his mind from wandering hither and thither and in mundane pleasures, and engage himself in the worship of Lord Vishnu. (48)

Followers of great vows, observers of great penance, profound Vedic scholars, intellects knowing Sankhya and Yoga, whoever one may be, without worshipping Lord Sri Hari, he can never attain ‘Siddhi’ (fulfillment). (49)

Thus, ends the Twenty-ninth Chapter titled “The procedure of the worship of Lord Vasudeva” in Sri Vasudeva Mahatmya

* * *
Oh Savarni! After listening to the method of worship of Vasudeva, Narada was pleased. He asked Lord Narayana, the preceptor of preceptors, once again. (1)

Narada asks:

“You have described the method of practical yoga that bestows great fruits, in a very good manner. Those desirous of attainment should do it single-mindedly. (2)

O great preceptor! When even knowledgeable persons find it very difficult to control the mind what can be said of those who are under the influence of Karma in this world? (3)

Without control of the mind, Lord Sri Hari’s worship will not bear the desired fruits. Hence, please tell me the means of controlling the mind”(4)

When Narada requested Narayana, the Lord of the sages, who could visualize everything in this world, in this manner, He (Narayana) addressed Narada as follows. (5)

Sri Narayana said:

“O sage! You have spoken the truth. The mind has great power; even though one may be able to conquer and control it, the wise should not trust it; they should look upon it as an enemy. (6)

The mind itself is the main enemy of us all. By practicing meditation on Vishnu, it loses its flaws and becomes calm. (7)

It is very difficult to control the mind, which is like a wild horse. Hence, only persons who are detached towards worldly
objects can control the mind by good means. (8)

There are many ways for do so; O good minded one! The best among them is the practice of ‘Ashtanga Yoga’ as it bears fruit immediately. (9)

Oh, Brahmana! ‘Yama’ (restraining), ‘Niyama’ (regularity), ‘Asana-s’ (yogic partners), ‘Pranayama’ (controlling breath), ‘Pratyahara’ (restraining the organs), ‘Dharana’ (retention), ‘Dhyana’ (meditation) and ‘Samadhi’ (abstract meditation) are said to be the eight parts of yoga in that order. (10)

Among them, these five are said to be the ‘Yama-s’ — non-violence, celibacy, truthfulness, overcoming the desire to steal and the desire to possess other’s objects. These should be achieved by practice. (11)

Purity, penance, joyfulness, study of the Vedas, ‘Vishnu-pooja’ (worship of Lord Vishnu) - these are the five regulations, considered as the second part. (12)

The happiness that is attained by giving up restlessness and resting in the prescribed bodily postures like ‘Swastika’ etc are known as ‘Asanas’ that help the practitioner to overcome the dilemmas in life. (13)

Controlling the ‘prana’ (air that is in the form of breath) that runs all around the different parts of the body, and restraining it in a particular location by following the techniques preached by the preceptor, is called ‘Pranayama’. (14)

If the air is the breath is wavering, the mind wavers; if the breath is firm the mind too will be firm; therefore the breath is to be controlled by the ‘Puraka’ (breathing in), ‘Rechaka’ (breathing out) and ‘Kumbhaka’ (holding the breath). (15)
To draw away the senses from their objects, by the strong will of the mind is known as ‘Pratyahara’. (16)

To establish in the Lord Vasudeva, the soul with Prana in the navel or other locations of the body is known as ‘Dharana’. (17)

To meditate on the lotus feet and other individual parts of the Lord Vasudeva is known as ‘Dhyana’ - meditation. (18)

To concentrate both the ‘Prana’ and the mind with great love in the Lord Hari and retain it there alone is called ‘Samadhi’. (19)

A person who practices these eight ‘angas’ after receiving good education from a preceptor who has attained fulfillment through yoga, will attainment fulfillment, which is of the form of mature ‘Samadhi’. (20)

O Narada! Understand that there is no other better means to control the mind very well, for those desiring Salvation. (21)

The yogi will have no fear even from cupid, the great enemy of ascetics and the disturber of the world. (22)

The yogi, who knows the time of his end, will give up his body by his own free will, by practicing this kind of Samadhi. (23)

He will tighten his rectum and will gradually withdraw the air that is in the two feet; thus he will slowly proceed to death. (24)

Thinking of Kesava in his mind, repeating the six lettered mantra, he pulls that air to the region of Brahma. (25)

Thereafter, the knower of Yoga, thinking of nothing else except Vasudeva, takes the air from the navel to the heart, chest, throat, and eyebrows in that order. (26)
In every one of these places, the Yogi practices staying and discharging the ‘prana’ in the mind and senses, as much as he can. (27)

Giving up the conquered regions, he reaches the next higher regions, one after another. When he reaches the sixth place, he will have no difficulty in its practice. (28)

Afterwards, the Yogi closes all the seven openings; he takes the ‘Pranas’ with senses and mind, to the upper region and to the Brahma-randhra. (an aperture in the topmost portion of the head through which the soul is said to escape on its leaving the body) (29)

Then throwing away all the illusive desires, keeping his mind in Vasudeva alone, he gives up his body. (30)

Then he reaches the divine dwelling of Lord Sri Krishna, who is beyond ignorance; he gets a divine body and enjoys the bliss of serving that God. (31)

Oh Brahmana! Thus, I have told you the summary of Yoga-Sastra. Hence, conquering your mind, worship that Supreme Lord constantly. (32)

Thus, ends the Thirtieth Chapter titled “The Description of Ashtanga Yoga” in the Vasudeva Mahatmya.
Skanda said: Getting rid of all his doubts by listening to these words of God that were full of Dharma, sage Narada saluted the Lord with folded hands and further requested Him as follows: (1)

Narada said: “O God! By your grace, all my doubts are cleared and I have completely understood the greatness of Lord Vasudeva. (2)

I will perform penance here together with you for sometime; By listening to the path of knowledge etc, I will strive to wisdom. (3)

Skanda said: “Saying thus, sage Narada, with the approval of Lord Naryana also, lived there for a thousand divine years performing penance. (4)

There, everyday, at the proper time, he understood the right spirit of dharma, knowledge etc by listening to the words Lord Sri Hari. In due course, Narada, the King of Yogis, attained maturity in yoga. (5)

He attained ardent love for the Supreme-Being Sri Krishna. Narada, he great Bhagavata, engaged himself is constantly singing the qualities of God. (6)

God, the benefactor of all living beings, being pleased with that Siddha Yogi (Narada), who had obtained the greatest ardent devotion, said: (7)

Sri Narayana said: O Sage! Now you have become a ‘Siddha’, Go, work for the benefit of the world; spread the Dharma of single-minded devotion everywhere. (8)

Skanda said: Accepting the command of that preceptor of
the world and getting ready to go, sage Narada wanting to proceed addressed the Lord with folded hands and prayed as follows: 9

Narada said: O God! Salutations to you! O, preceptor of the Universe! Narayana! You have divine form! You are the storehouse of endless auspicious qualities! You have constant love for me, your servant. (10)

You are Vasudeva, who dwells everywhere in the world; You perform penance for the welfare of the world; You are the Lord of all the ‘yogeswaras’ (the premier Yogis); You are in the form of assuagement; You yourself are the preceptor of even the ‘Paramahamsa-s’ (the greatest of the yogis who attain content within themselves). (11)

You are Vibhu (the all-pervading), the greatest among the sages, the soul of ‘akshara’ (the imperishable); You are the control-
Your dwelling even once; such is Your prowess. (15)

You are the embodiment of ‘chandas’, knowledge, the path of immortality and righteousness; You are the best protector of the righteous; You are the one who roots out unrighteous creation; O great soul! You are imperishable! You are the unseen relative (of your devotees). (16)

You are the form of faultlessness; you are quality-less; all your acts are beyond the control of the qualities; O Lord! You are the Lord fit to be worshipped by those desiring the four ‘Purushartha-s’, viz. Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha (salvation). (17)

You are the only one capable of protecting us from the illusion of time, death and ‘Samsara’ and great fear; you are merciful enough not to take cognizance of the sins of your devotees; You are an ardent lover of Your devotees. (18)

O Lord! Anyone who remembers your name or your form, or your incarnations, at the time of death, will immediately be freed from terrific mass of great sins and will instantly attain the heaven abode. One who is much interested in his own body, its three elements, his wife, children, relatives, wealth and so on without being attracted to You, who are so great — such a fool will surely be cheated by illusion. (19-20)

The human body is the fittest entity thing for your devotion alone; even those dwelling in Heaven desire to have this human body. I believe that without devotion unto You, heavenly happiness too is equal to hell. You perform penance for the happiness of the three worlds. There also, you have a special grace for those living in the land of Bharata (India), since you incarnate and shine forth moving about in this land. (21-22)

Therefore, those who do not take refuge in You, are regarded as ungrateful by the Sastras. Hence, may You be pleased with me, who has taken refuge in You. (23)

Thus, ends the Thirty-first Chapter titled “The Prayer of Nara-Narayana” in the Vasudeva Mahatmya.

***
Chapter 32: Explanation of the tradition of the text

Skanda said:

O Brahmana! After praising the Lord like this, that Narada proceeded and reached Vyasa’s hermitage, called ‘Shamyapraasada’. (1)

Narada was welcomed by Vyasa, who came forward to receive him and seated him with respect and offered him hospitality. Narada narrated the ‘Bhagavata-Dharma’ to sage Vyasa, who was desirous of knowing the same. (2)

Later, Narada proceeded to the abode of Brahma. Sage Narada preached the ‘Bhagavata-Dharma’ to the Devatas and Manes and great Sages assembled there, even as Brahma was listening. (3)

O Sage! The Sun-God, who had heard that Dharma from Lord Narayana earlier, was present there. He wanted to listen to this Dharma once again from Narada. (4)

The Sun-God taught that Dharma with respect to the Valakhilya-s (a category of divine beings) who used to proceed before him. They, in turn imparted the same knowledge to Lord Indra and other Devatas who had assembled at Mount Meru. (5)

O great Brahmana! Sage Asita, having listened to this dharma from them, explained it to the Manes in their region, where he had gone once. (6)

The Manes, Aryama and others, in turn, imparted it to King Santanu. He told it to his son Bhishma in the correct manner. (7)

Bhishma, lying on the bed of arrows at the end of Mahabharata war, explained it to Dharamaraja, who asked him about it in a big assembly. (8)

Narada who was standing respectfully listening to the description of Dharma, then went to Kailasa and told it to Lord Sankara. Oh, great sage! My father told me the same. (9)

As you are treading the path of righteousness, and you asked...
me, I have told the same to you. My father had told me “tell it to only the fittest”. (10)

All those who listen to the greatness of Sri Vasudeva, the Lod of the ‘Satvata-s’, will have ardent devotion unto him which will result in their salvation. (11)

Even Yudhisthira, the sage-king, who, along with his brothers, listened to the greatness of the son of Devaki (Lord Krishna), as described by Bhishma, was filled with immense joy. (12)

Hearing that his own maternal uncle’s son Sri Krishna is the cause of everything, that great intellectual Yudhisthira was immersed in the ocean of wonder. (13)

Yudhisthira, understood now came to understand that Vasudeva and the other Vyuhas, the form of Varaha etc were the incarnations of none other than Lord Vishnu, the consort of Goddess Lakshmi. (14)

Oh, great Brahman! Then, along with his brothers, that king became an ardent devotee of Sri Krishna who possesses the divine form of a man. (15)

The Brahmarishi-s Rajarishi-s, Devarishi-s and all others who were present in the assembly were filled with amazement after listening to the story. (16)

Understanding that Sri Krishna Himself is the Supreme Brahma in the human form, were filled with devotion and saluted Him with great respect. (17)

Oh, noble-minded one! Such is His greatness. Hence, you too should worship that greatest Vasudeva by all means. (18)

I have told you the greatness of this Lord Vasudeva, which removes all bad instincts and enhances devotion unto God. (19)

O Brahmana! I have told you the essence culled out of all the incidents that are narrated in this epic. (20)
Oh, sinless one! This is the essence of the Vedas and Upanishads; this is the essence of Sankhya Yogas, Pancharatra and all Dharma-sastras. (21)

This great story is grand; it bestows success; it augments longevity; it bestows great auspiciousness; it destroys all inauspiciousness, it is told by God Himself. (22)

Whoever listens, tells or recites this meritorious story, will attain purity of mind such that it will stay steadily in Vasudeva. (23)

(By listening to this story), those men will become his ardent devotees. At the end, obtaining the form of Brahma, they will go to the dwelling of Brahma, which is beyond ‘Tamas’ (darkness of illusion). (24)

(By listening to this story), one who seeks Dharma will obtain it; one who desires something will have his desires fulfilled; the seeker of money will obtain it; the seeker of salvation will obtain salvation. (25)

(By listening to this story), the pupil desiring knowledge will get knowledge; the sick will be freed from the disease, even by listening to this all sins will perish. (26)

(By listening to this story), a Brahmin will get the lustre of Brahma; the Kshatriya will become the King. A Vysya will beget prosperity; a Shudra will attain happiness. (27)

The king who goes to the battle after listening to this will be victorious, the woman who listens to this will get auspiciousness, the maid will get the bridegroom whom she hikes. (28)
well-versed in the study of the Sastras, will obtain anything he desire without fail. (29)

Oh, great Brahman! Therefore, by constantly studying this with devotion with your mind, body and words, worship the God who is the lover of devotees. (30)

Sutapuranika said:

The great Savarni, listening to this nectar-like of words emanating from the lotus-mouth of the great warrior Shanmukha swamy strengthened his ardent devotion for Vasudeva, the all-auspicious, Supreme Being in the human form. (31)

All of you know the Nigamas and Agamas very well. You are all well established in your Dharmas. Now, I advise all of you to worship Sri Vasudeva, the unique, who alone is fit to be worshipped, the Supreme Ruler, and who is famous as ‘Brahmanya-deva’. (32)

I bow to Sri Vasudeva, the Lord of Goloka, who possesses a form full of effulgence, so that my devotion unto Him and joy may flourish. (33)

Thus, ends the Thirty-second Chapter titled “Explanation of the tradition of the text” in the Vasudeva Mahatmya

End of Sri Vasudeva Mahatmya

End of Vaishnava Khanda

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